

Southwest Montana Resource Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

February 2, 2023

0800-1630

In person and virtual

Committee Members Present:

Abi King; Steven Carey; Carellen Smith-Nix (chair); Linda Marsh; Josh Bryson; Dan Olsen; Cody Marxer; Ann Marshall; Grete Gansauer; Arica Crootof; Mike McGinley

U.S. Forest Service Staff Present:

Carol Hatfield – Designated Federal Official

Catherine Mcrae – RAC Coordinator / Facilitator / Public Affairs Officer

Jackie Dumke – Notes

Welcome/Opening Remarks:

Cat Mcrae opened the meeting at 0830 by introducing herself and Carol Hatfield as Designated Federal Official. Roll-call conducted by Chairperson Carellen Smith-Nix and determined that minimum required attendance and a quorum to conduct official business to vote and approve projects was met.

Introductions & Agenda Review:

Cat Mcrae facilitated introductions and reviewed meeting agenda. At this time she provided the total available funds (\$212,600.00) available for allocation between the projects including the additional \$20,000 that each RAC was credited from incorrect amounts from previous years. At the end this springs meeting all funds will be caught up.

Elect Chairperson:

Carellen Smith-Nix

Review and Approve Operating Guidelines:

Carellen Smith-Nix reviewed the Operating Guidelines for the RAC.

Presentation of Submitted Projects:

Projects submittals presented:

South Boulder Road Improvements 2022 (Ron):

- To provide a smooth, safe and reliable road to first responders, full and part-time residents, as well as recreationists and tourists
- Requesting \$29,750

North Meadow Creek/Table Mountain Bridge (Jake Stewart):

- Reconstruct bridge over North Meadow Creek on the Table Mountain Ridge Trail. Bridge to allow for 50' OVH, stock, hikers, and full size administrative access
- Requesting \$16,000

Elkhorn Signs (Leah Compton Lewis and Bruce Bell):

- Improve visitor experience to the ghost town of Elkhorn by replacing old damaged historic signs, installing new “walking tour” education signs and updating picnic area signs that will direct tourist to improvement areas of interest
- Requesting \$4,300

Earthquake Lake Visitor Center and Madison River Weed Treatments (Daren Many):

- Contain and suppress noxious weed infestation. Treat spotted knapweed and other noxious weeds.
- Requesting \$12,032

Beaverhead-Deerlodge Road Maintenance Compaction Equipment for Motor Grader (Jeremiah Sperry):

- Provide quality roadway maintenance to the Ranger Districts within the Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF and counties
- Requesting \$33,280

2023 Beaverhead County Noxious Weed Management Project (Amber Burch):

- Managing the spread of noxious weeds. Containing and reducing known infestations in six focused areas
- Requesting \$65,000

Maud S Canyon Trail Maintenance and Weed Control Project 2023 (Leo ?):

- To maintain the utility and nature of the popular Maud S Canyon Trails
- Requesting \$9,300

Thompson Park Weed Control Maintenance Project (Jocelyn Dodge):

- Removal of invasive weeds and restore tread and drainage features to reduce erosion due to heavy use of trails by the public
- Requesting \$4,500

Madison Ranger District Developed Recreation Site Maintenance (Joel Sather):

- To improve the visitor’s recreational experience and safety in developed recreation sites by improving facilities (signs, fire rings, picnic tables and bear storage containers)
- Requesting \$22,220

Earthquake Lake Visitor Center Facility Improvements (William Bennett):

- ADA Bathrooms at Visitor Center – replace critical infrastructure for improved visitor enjoyment and comfort
- Requesting \$10,850

North Meadow Creek Road Improvement (Jim King):

- Provide adequate amount of personnel, equipment and gravel to re-build FS RD 160 and FS RD 965 as level 3 roads for approximately 3 miles
- Requesting \$30,000

Research Natural Area (RNA) Weed Treatment Project (Jessie Salix):

- Maintain the natural vegetation composition and function in Research Natural Areas
- Requesting \$26,928

Avalanche Beacon Checker and Beacon Training Pack (Adam Norlander):

- Increase public avalanche safety, awareness, and training opportunities
- Requesting \$5,520

Boot and Pear Lake Trail #1072 Heavy Maintenance (Adam Norlander):

- Reestablish drainage and remove hazard rocks along trail
- Requesting \$16,000

Forest Service Route 7441 Clark Cr. Drainage Corrections (Jeremiah Sperry)

- Correct drainage on FS route 7441 with and appropriately sized culvert to eliminate water accumulation and ponding during freeze thaw periods that cause ice damage
- Requesting \$26,970

Total of all projects received:	\$294,427
Title II funds currently available:	\$212,600
Projects requests exceed available funds by:	\$81,827

Discussion of Projects:

Cat Mcrae informed the committee that the forest had received one public response via email for both RACs in response to the Federal Register Notice for the meeting stating that grazing is illegal and should be stopped on all public lands

Group thoroughly discussed all projects presented:

Project 5 (Beaverhead-Deerlodge Road Maintenance Compaction Equipment for Motor Grader) Motion put forth by Dan Olsen to not fund project 5. Steven Carey seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Projects 4 (Earthquake Lake Visitor Center and Madison River Weed Treatments) and 12 (Research Natural Area (RNA) Weed Treatment Project) Motion put forth by Dan Olsen to fund these two projects for one year. Ann Marshall and Cody Marxer seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Project 3 (Elkhorn Signs) Motion put for by Linda Marsh to fully fund this for \$4,300. Dan Olsen seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 11-1

Project 10 (Earthquake Lake Visitor Center Facility Improvements) Motion put forth by Dan Olsen to fully fund at \$10,850. Steven Carey seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Project 15 (Forest Service Route 7441 Clark Cr. Drainage Corrections) Motion put forth by Ann Marshall to fully fund this project. Josh Bryson seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Project 2 (North Meadow Creek/Table Mountain Bridge) Motion put forth by Dan Olsen not to fund this project. Linda Marsh seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Project 13 (Avalanche Beacon Checker and Beacon Training Pack) Motion put forth by Dan Olsen to fund \$520 and have the proponent resubmit for \$5,000 this fall. Carellen Smith-Nix voted zero funding doesn't feel it fits Title II funding

Abi King supports funding portion or full. Motion put forth by Dan Olsen to fund \$520 and come back in the fall with more support. Steven Carey seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Project 14 (Boot and Pear Lake Trail #1072 Heavy Maintenance) Motion put forth by Linda Marsh not to fund this project and let proponent come back in the fall. Dan Olsen seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Project 6 (2023 Beaverhead County Noxious Weed Management Project) Motion put forth by Dan Olsen to fund project at \$53,000. Josh Bryson seconded the motion

- Linda made a motion to reconsider fully funding for project 6

Project 8 (Thompson Park Weed Control Maintenance Project) Motion put forth by Dan Olsen to fully fund project. Abi King seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Project 11 (North Meadow Creek Road Improvement) Motion put forth by Ann Marshall to fully fund project at \$30,000. Linda Marsh and Grete Gansauer both seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 11-0 (Abi King abstained from vote)

Project 1 (South Boulder Road Improvements 2022) Motion put forth by Ann Marshall to fund project at \$22,000. Linda Marsh seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 11-0 (Cody Marxer abstained from vote)

Project 9 (Madison Ranger District Developed Recreation Site Maintenance) Motion put forth by Dan Olsen to fully fund project at \$22,220. Grete Gansauer seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Project 7 (Maud S Canyon Trail Maintenance and Weed Control Project 2023) Motion put forth by Grete Gansauer to fully fund project at \$9,300. Dan Olsen seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

Holding \$500 back to cover outside expenses, i.e.

Motion put forth by Linda Marsh to take another look at project 1, 6 and 15 that were underfunded during the first review and allocate remaining funds to these projects.

- Motion put forth by Ann Marshall to increase funding for project 1 (Road Improvement) to \$26,700, project 6 (Beaverhead County Weeds) to \$62,000 and project 15 (Forest Service Route 7441) to \$27,000. Dan Olsen seconded the motion. Motion stands; vote 12-0

\$500 left for admin costs

Recommendations

All 15 proposed projects for the RAC funding were thoroughly discussed between Southwest RAC committee members and a quorum was reached to approve the following funding:

- South Boulder Road Improvements 2022
 - Recommend to fund at \$26,700
- North Meadow Creek/Table Mountain Bridge
 - Recommend not funding
- Elkhorn Signs
 - Recommend to fully fund at \$4,300
- Earthquake Lake Visitor Center and Madison River Weed Treatments

- Recommend to fund at \$6,016
- Beaverhead-Deerlodge Road Maintenance Compaction Equipment for Motor Grader
 - Recommend not funding
- 2023 Beaverhead County Noxious Weed Management Project
 - Recommend to fund \$62,000
- Maud S Canyon Trail Maintenance and Weed Control Project 2023
 - Recommend to fully fund at \$9,300
- Thompson Park Weed Control Maintenance Project
 - Recommend to fully fund at \$4,500
- Madison Ranger District Developed Recreation Site Maintenance
 - Recommend to fully fund at \$22,220
- Earthquake Lake Visitor Center Facility Improvements
 - Recommend to fully fund at \$10,850
- North Meadow Creek Road Improvement
 - Recommend to fully fund at \$30,000
- Research Natural Area (RNA) Weed Treatment Project
 - Recommended to fund at \$8,700
- Avalanche Beacon Checker and Beacon Training Pack
 - Recommend to fund at \$520
- Boot and Pear Lake Trail #1072 Heavy Maintenance
 - Recommend not to fund
- Forest Service Route 7441 Clark Cr. Drainage Corrections
 - Recommended to fund \$27,000

Total: \$212,106

Discuss Fee Proposal Review Option

Wrap up/Adjourn

Cat Mcrae let committee members know they don't need a federal register notice if they would like to have a meeting to see progress reports, go over budget, etc., if interested please reach out. Her recommendations for future proposals is to limit type/number of selection proponents make on their proposals. She is also going to ask Joel Sather if his proposal can be used as an example for future project requests. Final ask, please update contact info and if you are going to resign from the committee please contact her first and let her know of your upcoming resignation

Carellen Smith-Nix informed that there are some committee members, including herself that are nearing the end of their term. She will be done at the end of this year and the committee will need to consider a new chairperson and co-chairman.

Carellen Smith-Nix adjourned the meeting at 1640

CAROL NUNN
HATFIELD

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DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL
 Southwest Montana RAC
 Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest