

Trinity RAC Meeting
March 17, 2014
Trinity County Office of Education: Weaverville, CA
6:30pm-8:30pm

Call to Order & Welcoming Remarks: Pat Frost

Handouts include: New RAC Charter, Project Spreadsheet, Agenda.

Thank you to Donna for work to get us to this point and all her extra effort. Mary St. John is RAC Assistant to help with notes, support and getting funds obligated.

We are here to strategize regarding money to be spent in the current fiscal year, to be obligated this year. In a meeting with the Forest Supervisor a couple months ago, it was made clear we want to get work done on the ground this year.

Roll Call: Pat Frost

Group A: Linda Wright, Steve (George) Hodges, Tom Walz

Group B: Arnold Whitridge, Joseph Bower, Irl Everest, Jerry Hauke

Group C: Roger Jaegel, Raymond Patton, Patrick Frost

Audience: Andrew Spain (USFS-SRF), Nancy Curran (USFS-SRF), Lynn Wright (USFS), Christine Hill (USFS), Lusetta Nelson (USFS-SFMU-TRMU), Tina Lynsky (USFS), Pete Schmidt (USFS-NRA), Zack Blanchard (TCRCD), Donna Rupp (TCRCD), Jim Gonzalez (USFS), Larry Shuman (BCHC Shasta-Trinity), Alan Hill (BCHC Shasta-Trinity), Alex Cousins (TCRCD), Kristen Lark (USFS), Donna Harmon (USFS-DFO), Mary St. John (RAC Assistant).

USFS items: Donna Harmon

RAC One-year Extension: This is similar to the last on-year extension, but this time they changed the dates from 2012 to 2013, and they didn't pass it until fiscal year 2014. Trinity RAC normally would have met in 2013, and the money would have shown up in 2014. We now have a shortened deadline. The RAC has to decide what they want to recommend, and then we'll work to get them obligated. This is just a one year extension.

Many of us hope RAC will be extended, but it's uncertain. The Forest Supervisor has not committed to recruiting for new members due to the uncertainty. All of Trinity RAC member's terms will expire as of October 2014, except Roger Jaegel. There may also be an effort to roll over memberships, but it's unclear if that's possible. Due to membership expiration, some RAC's will have trouble having a voting quorum and may not be able to recommend projects. There's a possibility this could free up monies to be used by other RAC's.

Deadlines: FACA conference calls relayed at one point we need to give 90 days to notice of meeting, but they have provided some flexibility to that. G&A has also allowed leniency for the April deadline to obligate funds, and they have not yet given us a new date.

Funding Amount: The Washington Office (WO) has not provided a money count yet. There was a promise there would not be a sequestration of this fiscal year funds. Last year our governor did what he was supposed to do to determine how to pay for the sequestration affect to Title I & III funds; but some states did not and they have deficit bills. The WO has not responded about this situation. The best we can do is assume it's a 5% drop over last year's budget, between \$450 and \$470,000. Because it's a one-year extension it's important we have contingency projects and obligate all available funding.

Today's Meeting: Today's meeting is not for voting on projects, but for deciding procedure. We have voting meetings scheduled for March 24, March 31, April 7.

Charter Update: There was some discussion about us not being able to have subcommittee meetings. But if you look at the charter, there is an exemption in FACA for subcommittee meetings open to the public or staffing purposes. That's what our subcommittee meetings were in the past, and RAC members should look at the segment on that.

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RAC members are encouraged to review the charter section on ethics, as those have changed as well and become more stringent.

Information Update: The Forest Supervisor and the Trinity RAC chair met. Concerns brought up by the FS included using projects that are NEPA ready, so we can better ensure money gets obligated without projects falling through. If money is not obligated by the deadline, it will be returned to the treasury. Last year leftover money from other RAC's was offered to forests if they could process it and obligate it in a short deadline. There were two \$20,000 supplemental funding amounts we were able to turn around in a week. This could happen again, since there are RAC's without a quorum.

Pat: The other thing mentioned with my meeting with Dave Myers, was that if there are high priority project that RAC recommended that needed NEPA done, he would consider funding for NEPA. But it would have to have a quick turn-around, and it would have to be in collaboration with the line officers. The possibility is being left open.

Donna: In this process its important proponents coordinate with line officers. Tonight, the RAC needs to consider how to approach the process of recommending projects. Ads ran in the paper last week for proponents to submit their proposals for the voting meeting by Friday, March 21.

RAC Items: Pat Frost

Elect chairperson:

Action: Joseph Bower nominates to elect the present chair. Roger Jaegel seconds. Patrick Frost is the new chair: passes unanimously.

Discussion: Pat Frost

Last year the RAC recommended a slate of projects. Sequestration took 62% of RAC money. RAC re-evaluated and made a suggestion to the FS regarding possible discretionary money to make up difference. The RAC also suggested a possible distribution to existing projects in the category of Non-Roads/Fuels, with reductions, and this is the option the FS signed off on.

This year we should assume we have \$450-\$470,000. Traditionally we discuss how we want to split Roads, Fuels, Non-Fuels and how do we give guidance to project proponents to submit proposals, and how to review them.

Donna: It is acceptable to take projects that you already recommended, but they didn't receive funding due to sequestration, and recommend them again.

Discussion:

Bowers: What we de-funded last year should be viable projects that are priorities.

Donna: Proponents need to remember that projects in lieu of other projects need their own proposal. Also, any projects that have changed funding amount or location would need a new proposal as well. A proposal that was submitted before, and recommended at a different amount would need to be submitted at the recommended amount.

Tom W: I would like to see proposals we saw before, and new proposals, and then re-prioritize. These projects may now have a higher priority.

Roger J: I agree with Tom. Possibly fuels projects would be more important.

Donna: To clarify, this means proposals that were recommended before do not have to be resubmitted if they remain the same and new projects can be submitted. I would recommend that they all are NEPA ready. These need to be submitted to me via email in a proposal form, in a Word doc format. The

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District Ranger Checklist form needs to be completed as well, and I'll send that out again in case not everyone has it. Show that you have line officer support and involvement.

Action: Jerry Hauke: Motion to accept new applications in addition to the applications we're bringing back from the last year, and then go through a re-prioritization. Roger Jaegel seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Discussion Continued:

Categories of Fuels, Roads, and Non-Fuels will not be changed. Percentages and formatting will not be changed. There is no poll needed.

Subcommittee Meetings:

Monday, February 24

Trinity County Resource Conservation District conference room

1:00pm Fuels Subcommittee

3:30pm Roads Subcommittee

4:00pm Non-Roads/Fuels Subcommittee

Proponents are strongly encouraged to attend to answer questions about their proposals. If a proponent cannot attend, a representative can attend. Also, proponents should brief Donna Harmon if they are not able to attend.

Proponents will want to come in knowing what they would like to have for funding, and the minimum amount they could use. This is important, as the RAC does not currently know the final funding amount for the one-year extension and often has more proposals than there is funding available.

Each subcommittee is open to all members of the Trinity RAC and the public.

Next Trinity RAC Meeting Information

Monday, March 24, 2014

Trinity County Office of Education, Weaverville, CA

6:30pm-8:30pm

This is a meeting to review subcommittee staff work, review proposals, and vote on recommendations for the Forest Supervisors. Linda Wright will call in at 6:30 for a vote. Linda will pick up hard copies from Donna on Friday for consideration.

Adjournment: 7:50pm