

Pennington County Resource Advisory Council Meeting

Date May 17, 2011

Time 5:00 – 7:50 p.m.

Location Mystic Ranger District Office
8221 South Highway 16
Rapid City, South Dakota 57702

Contact Lisa Sanders
Support Services Specialist, Mystic Ranger District
605-716-2059

This was the third meeting for the Pennington County Resource Advisory Committee.

RAC Members present – Don Hausle, Danielle Wiebers, Patty Brown, Ken Edel, Jim Glines, Jerry Cole, Skip Tillisch, Deb Black, Ervin Berg, Dan Conrad, Lori Litzen, Michael Verchio, Dirk Gustin, Quintin LaGrande

RAC Members not present – Carson Engelskirger, Patrick Brondos

Forest Service – Robert J. Thompson, Lisa Sanders, Lou Conroy

Public – none

Other – Jim Allen, Milt Stromer – Back Country Horsemen

Agenda:

- Election of RAC Chairperson – Committee unanimously elected Deb Black as Chairperson. Skip Tillisch and Jerry Cole will provide support to Deb as needed.
- Project Proposal – Back Country Horsemen of America – service organization working in the back country and educating the users of the back country.

Purposes of Back Country Horsemen:

- TO PERPETUATE the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness areas
- TO WORK to insure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use
- TO ASSIST the various government, state, and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.
- TO EDUCATE, encourage and solicit active participation in the use of the back country resource by stock users and the general public commensurate with our heritage
- TO FOSTER and encourage the formation of new state organizations and BCHA

Local chapter was formed in February 2010 with 100 dues paying members. Currently have volunteer agreements signed with all three districts located in South Dakota. On-going projects with the National Parks Service, and have assisted the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with Centennial Trail relocation work. Estimated value of volunteer work to date is \$32,000.

Project proposal goal is Maintenance of Forest System Trails through trail clearing, maintenance, improvement and building of new trails as needed and requested by the District. Requested amount is \$6935.00 – which will outfit existing trailer with remaining tools and equipment required for trail maintenance. Lawrence County and Custer County RAC have previously approved project requests from BCHA to purchase the trailer and some tools.

Back Country Horseman is committed to multi-use trails and is willing to work with other organizations on trail maintenance. The trailer, when ready, will be utilized on all three districts on the forest and will be available to other organizations for use on public lands. Estimated life expectancy is 20 years.

Committee will consider the proposal and a vote is scheduled for June 21st meeting.

- Power Point Presentation and Discussion of Possible Projects (Forest Service) – Many possible projects on the district. Presentation by District Ranger Bob Thompson and Wildlife Biologist Lou Conroy to highlight areas. These included: Gold Mountain Mine Preservation Project (need for trails and interpretive signage); Recreation sites (accessible walkways and fishing docks, Mitchell Lake foot bridge, Sheridan Lake boat ramp upgrade, Custer Trail improvements, Highway 385 dock access, Spring Creek fish habitat, etc.), Recreation trails; Beretta Road shooting area; Attention to illegal dumping on forest (no federal money budgeted for removal / clean-up); Noxious weed abatement; Range – spring development and improvements; Wildlife / Botany – aspen regeneration to maintain forest diversity; Wildlife guzzlers – in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; Forest health – address Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic and protect legacy trees and campground areas; Roads and travel management; Prescribed fire – introduction of a disturbance to promote forest regeneration; and Timber – future will bring heavy fuel loads as a result of tree mortality – MPB.
The Forest Service will be presenting some projects to the committee for consideration. Committee members with project ideas should contact Bob Thompson.
- Schedule Future Meetings – Next two meetings scheduled for June 21 and June 28, 2011. Meetings will be held at the Mystic Ranger District office, 8221 South Highway 16, Rapid City, SD 57702. Start time is 5:00 p.m. for both meetings.

Handouts - Back Country Horsemen Brochure and Project Proposal