CALIFORNIA RECREATION RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
August 29, 2013
Sacramento, CA
Draft Meeting Notes

Members Present**:** Monte Hendricks, Dick Dasmann, Don Amador, Bob Warren, Linda McMillan, Danna Stroud, Nate Rangel, Tom Severin, Paul McFarland (via teleconference)

Members absent: Chris Oberti

Designated Federal Official (DFO): Ramiro Villalvazo
Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Ex Officio: Este Stifel

Forest Service (FS) Staff: Tamara Wilton, Frances Enkoji, Jennifer Ebert, Al Watson (teleconference)

BLM Staff: Jane Arteaga

Bob Warren called meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. He provided brief overview of the meeting agenda and the Pacific Southwest Recreation Resource Advisory Committee's (R-RAC) role. Bob said that the R-RAC will be reviewing one fee proposal and providing a recommendation at this meeting. The meeting began with introductions of R-RAC members and the audience.

Bob reiterated the role of the R-RAC, Ramiro Villalvazo reviewed Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) procedures, referencing the R-RAC members' notebook documents for specific information. Frances Enkoji reviewed the R-RAC Bylaws and the Roles and Responsibilities. Ramiro covered the duties of the DFO as outlined in the R-RAC notebook

Tom asked if the notes from this meeting are approved as final at the next meeting. Frances explained that meeting notes are drafted after the meeting, posted on the website as draft notes until they are approved at the next meeting and then changed to final on the website.

Tom asked if the requirement to publish in Federal Register is at least 15 days in advance of the meeting, could we do it further in advance? Frances said that we could do it further in advance, but it is difficult logistically because of changes in the agenda and trying to finalize and the lead time that is required to get it published in the Federal Register. We need a quorum, location, and the agenda finalized several weeks before submitting to publish.

Nate stated that Peter Wiechers sent him an email saying that he saw we were going to have a teleconference. Mr. Wiechers' message said when asked before the Forest Service told him that there would not be teleconference availability and that it had not been published in the Federal Register so why is it okay now? Nate asked if that meant the teleconference option was made available at the last minute? Frances replied that it was not clear we would have a quorum late Wednesday afternoon so we arranged to have one member on by teleconference. It was either cancel the meeting or provide the teleconference option. Once the teleconference was set up she emailed Peter Wiechers and Kitty Benzar to notify them. Bob said we are allowed to have a teleconference among the R-RAC members without notifying the public if needed for R-RAC members. Nate said if we deal with a situation where it involves the public, we should have a teleconference option as a common procedure. Danna concurred with Nate and said that we want to

hear from the public and when their ability to participate is compromised we should provide the teleconference option. Bob reminded members that in this case it was needed to accommodate RRAC business. Nate requested that all future meetings have the teleconference option available, assuming we have the ability to do that. Ramiro said it is sometime logistically difficult but that it was a fair comment and duly noted.

Bob mentioned that in regards to the location of the meetings, we usually have many proposals in front of the R-RAC. Meeting locations are selected to accommodate R-RAC member travel. Dick stated that we all knew that the Sequoia proposal was going to be controversial, while the north coast BLM project was not. He said we should determine the more controversial issues and hold the meeting in that area. In the past, he felt that public notification from both Departments on proposals has been lacking, the Sequoia National Forest (NF) posted notices in Porterville and Kernville but there are thousands of people in the Los Angeles Basin and Bakersfield. He is sorry that this meeting is here as opposed to closer to the project. He said he understood though that the 45 day, 15 day requirements effect this too. Bob responded that more commonly there is more than one proposal, but this is a unique case where there is only one. We look at a variety of things to determine where the meeting will be held Ramiro said after the meeting date and location was scheduled and published in the Federal Register BLM decided to take their proposal off the agenda. He said the BLM project could be controversial. He received about 20 emails so far and if this project were still on the agenda, then the Sacramento location would have been the most ideal location. He agreed that if there is only one proposal, such as this situation, that it would be ideal to hold the meeting in that location.

Monte agreed with what Nate had to say and said he would prefer to be in an area where we can see people face to face since this is supposed to be a public process. Bob said to keep in mind we are here to represent the public using the public lands and not just the locals using the lands but whatever user group uses that area. We should not just be saying the locals should be there but that the public can make comment. Bob asked if there was any discussion about the meeting notes from the last meeting (June 23 and 24, 2010) before approving minutes. Dick wanted to comment that it was one of the most interesting and informative meetings we have had and appreciated the Inyo NF efforts. Don motioned to approve the June 23-24, 2010 meeting notes, Nate seconded. Dick and Tom abstained from the vote, (Tom was not present at the meeting and although Dick attended he had not been re-appointed as a member of the R-RAC at that time). Remaining members voted yes and the meeting notes were approved.

Bob wanted to provide someone else the opportunity to serve as chairperson of the R-RAC. He was voted in as chair a few years ago, and wanted to open the opportunity for someone else. There was a discussion about terms, expiration dates and future meetings. Members agreed that because most have less than a year left of their term, it doesn't make sense to have someone else take over as chairperson.

Jane presented a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of the California BLM fee programs. A packet was passed out which showed all BLM's developed recreation areas to give an overview of the variety of recreation opportunities. BLM has a variety of opportunities available that don't require a fee. The overview of the fee program included numbers of fees sites, revenues, and the Imperial Sand Dunes proposal presented to the Desert Advisory Committee (DAC). Jane also included an overview of the King Range National Conservation Area proposal and the timeline to complete. She referred to a letter from BLM to the R-RAC that addressed why they were not presenting the King Range Proposal and why they presented the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA) proposal to the DAC instead of the R-RAC. Bob asked if it was legal to do that even though Congress designated this R-RAC to review. Jane answered that the BLM Resource Advisory Committees across the country have the authority to review recreation fee proposals. Jane said that the DAC unanimously voted to go ahead and approve and recommend the fee changes at ISDRA to BLM for approval. Jane described the ISDRA proposal for an incremental fee increase over the next few years

and the difference between on-site vs. off-site pricing. Bob asked how much of the budget comes from fee revenue vs. appropriated funds. Jane replied that most comes from fee revenue. She said they had a 7% reduction in budget and expect another 7% reduction this year. Danna asked what role are partners playing at ISDRA and if the BLM is actively pursuing partners to come in and help? Jane responded that they have been more active in partner outreach. Don mentioned that Specialty Vehicle Institute of America Industry Council does some of the rider safety training. He also said that County Sheriff's Office receives Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) grant funding to augment the enforcement that BLM has, particularly on the heavy use weekends. Danna said as we move forward, the roll of partners as it relates to management of public lands are highly important. Where are the agencies reaching out and cultivating those partnerships? Partnerships are key and will be the norm more than the exception and there are expectations of the public with what those partnerships look like. Este said BLM is always cultivating a variety of partners and recognize the importance to enhance and leverage overall dollars. ISDRA has very specific needs and partner specific needs there, and a lot of negotiation. State Park OHV grant funds are huge for BLM, as well as partnerships with County Sheriff's. High visitation periods are managed through Incident Command System approach using BLM staff, partnerships, and local law enforcement agencies. Bob asked about anticipated revenues, how was appropriated funding before REA? Has the allocated funding gone down? Were the revenues similar, but just going to the treasury instead of staying onsite? Este responded that they couldn't answer that. Not sure how long the fee has been in place. We could research that for you. Bob said it would be interesting to demonstrate the role of REA in getting this area organized. If we can show it is a more pleasant experience to go there and demonstrate the benefits of REA. Don said it was unmanaged recreation to managed recreation. Maybe 30 to 40 years ago, very little was going to manage recreation. Over the last 15 to 20 years, FS and BLM have been putting in more bathrooms, trailheads, trail maintenance, hardened campsites, etc. With that comes a higher cost to manage the recreation. Linda stated that partner groups can be important sources of revenue, but equally valuable is compliance. Effective partners raise money, but also instruct members and affiliates to recreate safely and responsibly. The R-RAC is a good vector to do that because we can speak to our recreation segments. Federal monies will be tightening. R-RAC can play a role in communicating with partners. The BLM is not planning on implementing a seasonal permit due to concerns over passes being transferred to others. They are moving to a sticker program, which is how they will mitigate passes getting passed off to others. Jane then gave an overview of the King Range proposal and explained the Federal Register notice got delayed and the public comment period has not closed. The BLM will be expanding outreach to include outdoor stores (such as REI). The BLM is proposing to initiate a new overnight fee of $5 per person/per day, and to increase campground fee to $15 per night, per site.

Bob said they needed to go to public comment now.

Rich Platt thanked them for the opportunity to speak. Rich shared his background which includes 37 years with the Forest Service, retired Forest Service Resource Officer on Eldorado NF. He is now a stakeholder and gets to speak freely. He spoke about his many years of involvement with fee programs. He spoke about Robb's Hut, the first rental lookout in Region 5 which is on the register of National Historic Places and the Desolation Wilderness fee program. The public supported the program because they saw the benefits and improvements on the ground. We even got enough money in donations which started the wilderness volunteer program. Desolation won the national wilderness stewardship award in 2006. Public said don't like paying fees but if you show us accountability and you can show us what you are doing with money we will support you. This legislation could go away if we don't have user buy in. He would be disappointed because these programs would go down the tubes that provide tremendous public opportunity. He is asking the R-RAC for accountability and demanding performance. People don't mind paying fees if they see the benefits. Most people will support fees, but there needs to be performance. He has recently have seen the lack of accountability, performance, and maintenance. Survival of the program is accountability and performance, and the R-RAC represents

me as a stakeholder. Ask the questions. Are you getting the results that you want? If you are, then continue to support the projects.

Kitty Benzar said she hadn't planned on talking about the BLM, since the King Range is not on the agenda and there was nothing about Imperial Sand Dunes. Why is so much of the meeting agenda being devoted to the BLM? Bob replied it was informational. She said from a national perspective, the BLM is largely pulling out of the Forest Service R-RAC program. In her discussion with their WO BLM headquarters regarding the BLM fee proposal that was originally on the agenda, the BLM headquarters was wondering why they are doing that. They can go to their local BLM RAC. She said that they will probably never see the King Range proposal presented to this group. In regards to Lake Isabella proposal she emailed Ramiro within a day or two of the Federal Register notice to request a teleconference line. She did not hear back right away. She was told there would be no teleconference line so conclusion not interested in hearing from people around Lake Isabella. Bob responded that we have solved that problem for the future and will have teleconference available when possible. Kitty went on to say that this has been standard best practice in other R-RACs across the country. You are not getting a single voice from the Lake Isabella region. Peter would have called in today but he was sent an email at 7:00 pm last night notifying him of the teleconference. It was too last minute for him to be able to participate. He asked her to remind them that he has applied for the R-RAC 3 times, but has been denied 3 times. He follows the application process very closely. We did a FOIA request in December to know for sure who was on the R-RAC, when they were appointed and length of terms. That information shows that three of your appointments were in July 2010. This would mean that there three year terms would have expired last month. Trying to get confirmation that these three members have they been duly reappointed although no membership outreach to apply. Forest Service has not been responsive to the request for basic information. There are three that she is questioning are duly appointed to the R-RAC. Ramiro told her that they are, but has not provided any further information to confirm that.

In regards to Lake Isabella, this is not a valid public process. Very little of public knows about this. This was built as a no change proposal. Not a fee increase, but a revenue neutral proposal. Why are you having a costly meeting in Sacramento for one decision that is revenue neutral? This feels wrong. Why are they going through this effort…. because the FS has litigation pending against the Lake Isabella fee program. Kitty said that this lawsuit is the reason why you have been brought together a great expense for one revenue neutral proposal. She went on to say that if they were not uncomfortable with that, then the Forest Service has chosen their R-RAC members well – because we have long charged that the R-RAC process is little more than a rubber stamp procedure. She stated if you approve this proposal then go with God because I wouldn't be able to look at myself in the mirror if I were in your chair. Bob thanked her for her comments and asked if anyone else wanted to address any of these comments. He requested that Frances address a few of the questions especially on the terms. Monte asked if there was an opportunity for the public to make public comments following the presentation before we make a recommendation. Bob responded it was within their purview to invite the public to make a public comment after the presentation. Dick said he is one of three individuals in Kitty's question. He said he has letters from the Director and Forest Service reappointing him on March 9, 2011. Kitty responded that his appointment by the Secretary was dated July 2010. Was the March 2011 the first letter he received? Dick stated the only letter he had is from 2011. Ramiro said his term began on the date of his notification not on the date of the Secretary decision. Kitty said that would mean that every member of the R-RAC was appointed in 2011 so they are not serving staggered terms, but are on the same three year terms. Frances answered they were reappointed to three year terms. Kitty questioned if they were staggered three year terms. Frances replied that when all the members were reappointed nationally they were all reappointed to three year terms. Kitty said the cover letter says that for the California R-RAC, the members serve staggered three year terms. Frances explained they were on staggered

terms originally, but when reappointed they were on three year terms. Bob asked if Ramiro could answer by memo to Kitty. Ramiro replied that the most important point is if we are appropriately here. We contacted WO and made sure we were legally and appropriately here. We can follow up on other details, but we are legally and appropriately here.

Don stated that as a native of Humboldt County, the BLM proposal would be more contentious than Lake Isabella but there was a last minute change by King Range not to be on the agenda. Don wanted to encourage chair to have public comment following the proposal presentation. Bob said that was the intent. Kitty stated that the King Range proposal was taken to the NW CA BLM RAC and frankly the reception was lukewarm to negative. It may be more controversial proposal, but the decision to hold the meeting between the two proposals does not encourage anyone to show up for either of them. The intent was to hold the meeting as far away from the people that these proposals would affect. Bob said that was not the intent and they serve the public and know that we have publics that use those areas that are not just from the local area but from all over CA. Kitty said if the Lake Isabella is approved without you looking at it or visiting the site, then you should be ashamed of yourselves.

Dick stated why the terms are not staggered? It is because originally members on staggered appointments, but due to the inability of the government in Washington, the three original appointees were delayed … waited two years for the reappointment, which cut into second term. The other member's appointments were also in under review. So, to speed things up they decided to approve them all at once. Kitty said the Secretary signed your appointment in July 2010. The interpretation needs to be revisited and wants some documentation from Ramiro on the legal interpretation because that needs to be scrutinized.

Frances also said there were two comments provided in your folders: A letter to editor from Neil Olson and letter from Peter Wiechers. Need to be aware of those as they are part of public comment. Kitty asked if the letter from Chris Horgan from Stewards of the Sequoia was included and Bob responded yes. Bob closed the public comment period at 11:43 p.m.

Jane asked if she should finish talking about the King Range but Bob said they would wait on this.

Tom asked Este if Ms. Benzar's observations were correct regarding BLM moving away from FS R-RACs? Este said she was not an expert nationally, but the BLM wants to be involved with FS R-RAC. While the FS was working through procedural issues, the BLM was given the opportunity to go through their own RACs and went forward with the Imperial Sand Dunes. Anticipate that future proposals will come to this R-RAC. Bob requested that BLM get clarification for what the policy will be for the state of California.

Proposal Review

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation
Lake Isabella	Reduce boundary of existing fee area and split into 3 expanded amenity fee sites: Auxiliary Dam, Old Isabella and South Fork. Fee structure will remain the same $10 per day, $50 for annual Southern Sierra Pass. All Interagency (IA) passes will be accepted.	Tom Severin motions to approve. Don Amador seconds. Monte Hendricks votes No, all other members vote Yes. Proposal is approved.
Discussion & Questions:		

- Bob asked if Tamara was going to answer some of the questions that were in the public comments, Tamara replied yes, but if something missed, please ask.
- Tamara explained that the Forest Service conducted a review of the 33 standard amenity recreation fee areas (formerly called High Impact Recreation Areas -HIRA) in California in 2011. The changes were approved by the Washington Office (WO) in January 2012. As a result the FS has been preparing proposals to bring forward to the R-RAC. She referred to the Washington Office (WO) letter (handout) for a list of the standard amenity recreation fee areas; Lake Isabella is on that list. Monte asked if this review was prompted by lawsuits. Tamara - no, FS determined we needed to nationally complete a review. It took a while for the WO to establish process and get reviews started.
- Based on the review the Sequoia NF proposed to change Lake Isabella to a expanded amenity fee (EAF) and split into 3 separate EAF sites. The WO supported this proposed change. EAF sites are typically campgrounds and have the majority of 5 of the 9 amenities that are listed in the REA authority and FS Interim Guidelines. Tamara used the PowerPoint (handout) to show map and said the Forest has begun to manage these sites as if we already implemented those changes.
- Monte – are the hatched areas on the map non-fee areas and the other areas are still fee areas. Tamara - That was correct. He asked if this was still a HIRA and Tamara replied no, the decision was to eliminate the standard amenity recreation fee area.
- Dick - Were there any changes to the fee. Tamara - The fee did not change, from the public point of view there really is no change.
- Monte - How is this delineated on the ground? Tamara - The Forest has not posted a new map yet and because the lakeshore and the water levels fluctuate, they have not installed barriers. Visitors will know because they will see maps at sites and at FS offices.
- Dick - Is there one fee to use all three sites. Tamara - Yes and the Southern Sierra Passes are used at other fee sites on the Forest.
- Tamara - Lake Isabella is a popular recreation destination and important to the local economy. It is the largest lake closest to southern California. Visitors can camp in the upper part of the campgrounds, but most people like to get close to the water and camp on the shoreline. In the proposal there are tables showing what facilities are present within the site. Showers are also available at Auxiliary Dam. Portable toilets and trash receptacles are moved down to the shoreline during high use periods, and are not available year-round.
- Dick - Are there toilets in the free areas? Tamara - No. There are other areas with amenities around the lake that are free.
- Tamara - There would be no change in the fee structure. The forest has been using fee revenue for operations and maintenance; the facilities are old and require heavy maintenance.
- Tom – Please address expanded vs. standard and which passes can be used. Tamara – The local passes and Interagency (IA) passes are fee payment mechanisms and can be accepted at any of these sites. He asked what about the Senior Pass? Tamara - Yes, that is one of the IA passes. Bob - Can you answer the question more thoroughly? When you talk about expanded as opposed to standard, this is not typical to have the IA passes accepted at EAF sites. Tamara - It is up to us where we want to accept those passes as full payment of recreation fee. It is about providing benefit to the public and accepting passes is a very efficient fee collection method. Tom – Does it make a difference where the fees go? Tamara - If someone buys an IA pass then 95% goes to the unit where the pass is sold and 5% goes to the Regional Office with the FS, she was not familiar with other agencies. Don - The spirit and intent of IA pass was to simplify and for public convenience. Tamara - Acceptance of the IA pass is different in some agencies and even in the FS. Bob - If you are accepting the IA pass in an area in lieu of a camping fee is there a difference in service? Tamara - No, there is no difference in the level of service and amenities. Bob - With the Senior Pass, you pay half the camping fee, at Lake Isabella you get to camp for free, why the difference? Tamara - The decision is made by local agency. This is a very popular destination, and the Forest didn't want to change the fee or pass acceptance that was in place. Tom - One comment was concerned with the revenue for Lake Isabella if accepting this IA Pass. Tamara - There is no change here, they have been honoring the IA pass all along so there should be no significant change to fee revenue. Monte - Tom mentioned this and Kitty brought up the issue in her comments. My IA pass

specifically says for standard amenity fee and entrance station. There are a lot of inconsistencies. Bob - Why providing it in one place, but not another. Monte - It is up to the managers on the piece of ground that I happen to be on. Bob - It in no way affects the level of services provided. Tamara - No, it doesn't affect the services provided.

- Tamara summarized public involvement and public participation tasks. The forest issued press release, which was published in at least one newspaper (Kern Valley Sun). The forest posted the press release and proposal on the forest website, local officials were notified, and notices were posted on-site. Don - What sort of response did you get back from Kern County Supervisors? Tamara – Received one question via email (in your handout), believe it was from a staffer, asking if the public had to purchase an additional pass to recreate at these sites. Don -There has always been concern from his constituents that local county government be looped in. He wanted to make sure the local county government has input into the decision making process, and it sounds like they didn't have any concerns beyond the question raised about the additional pass. Danna -What was communicated and how were they contacted, was it a presentation at the supervisors meeting or was it one on one contact? Tamara - Forest sent an email message between the District Ranger and the staffer. Danna - So, it was not the entire five board members? Don - Wanted to make sure the County Supervisor for that district was engaged. Left it up to the county official whether they wanted it on agenda for Board of Supervisors meeting or not. Tamara - Yes. Tamara - In addition to the articles in the newspaper, there was a letter to editor, also email message with comments from Neil Olson and Peter Wiechers.
- Bob - You take away some amenities for part of the year, do you still have five of the nine to be able to charge for an expanded amenity. Tamara - Table on page 2 of the proposal displays amenities. Forest does remove the portable toilets and trash containers from the shoreline in the winter. The upper part of the campgrounds provide toilets and trash containers (near the bathrooms) year-round, this has been confirmed with the forest. Bob - There are still bathrooms, but they are not right on the lake, they just need to hike up the hill. Tamara - One comment received that stated there is not trash service or containers available year-round at Old Isabella. Confirmed with the forest, there is trash service year-round. They do remove the portable toilets, but there is a permanent CXT toilet in the site that is available year-round. Dick - One of the comments from Peter Wiechers included pictures and statement that the restrooms were out of order, for at least two months. Even with those restrooms being closed, still had enough amenities? Tamara - It depends on which facility it is. Referring to the table in proposal, for example at Old Isabella, there would still be at least five amenities. The forest knows if we cannot meet the amenity requirements we can't charge. Dick - That is part of the accountability. Paying fees for everything, but not getting access or services we are paying for. Even if there were still the five, then they should fix the toilets or install portable toilets. Ramiro - It is in the best interest of the agency and environment to remedy situation as soon as possible, independent of the fee situation. Dick - Nice there are free areas, but not toilet facilities in these areas which means probably using ones in the fee areas…which is still okay.
- Nate - Why no public meeting? Comment Kitty made is that this is only coming forward because of lawsuit? Tamara – Can't comment on litigation. The standard amenity recreation fee area review was completed in 2011 and is why this proposal has been brought forward. It has taken awhile, but didn't have a R-RAC Charter or a process for bringing proposals forward until recently, these proposals will move forward more quickly now.
- Nate - Why no public meeting? Tamara - Can't think of a time when have had public meetings to bring a proposal forward. Not a requirement and was not aware there was a request that a public meeting be held.
- Bob - Sign that was noted by Peter Wiechers about trash service discontinued?
- Nate – Did you consider having a public meeting, was it considered? Bob - Pointed out in Peter Wiechers comments to us that the public did not have an opportunity to provide input. Al explained he began in May, and process has been going on for a while. There was a gap in time between Acting District Rangers and new District Ranger. Changes in personnel probably prohibited some action from the line officer. Also, since proposal does not increase fees, not sure a public meeting would be needed. If we were increasing fees, probably would have more public involvement than just putting it in the local newspapers.
- Tamara –Referring to picture in Mr. Wiechers letter. The "Pack it in, Pack it Out", no garbage service; why is

that sign there? She asked forest and they confirmed trash cans there, don't know why sign is there. Al - Believes that the "Pack it in Pack It Out" sign is still relative because the garbage cans are located near the restroom facilities and related to items we provide (paper towels). Bob - Garbage service is in the restroom itself? Al - When the trash cans are moved away from the lakeshore, the "Pack it in Pack it Out" sign is a reminder for the public to take their trash with them and dispose of it properly.
Bob - There are still trash cans located at the toilets not just around the area? Al - Yes, near the permanent toilets outside the summer busy season. Tamara said it is when they are moved up from the lakeshore. Dick - Signs probably reminds people using the free areas. Linda - Seems like a general educational message for people who use public lands.

- Monte - Comment received that there is major dam reconstruction project starting, not the time to make a decision on Lake Isabella. Al - Dam reconstruction project will affect the Auxiliary site only because it will be used as staging area and borrow site. Tom - What happens when it is done? Al - The FS is negotiating with Army Corps of Engineers, but there is currently no mechanism in place to reimburse the FS for construction work at facilities. Danna - No impact from the construction work on dam, but lake level will be reduced significantly over a few years. I think there is an impact, entire experience will be impacted and changed, drain the water level and it is a mud puddle. Al - Army Corps of Engineers is not in charge of draining the lake, the current low water levels are due to drought. The water is currently at lower levels than will be needed for dam reconstruction. The low lake level and low water levels on the Kern River has been a huge impact to the economy of the area. Danna said there is perhaps a misconception by the community that the dam reconstruction is the additional reason for the low water levels. Dick said there are now free areas there that haven't been free areas.
- Bob- Any further discussion? Monte - Lake Isabella has been before us before. Obviously there is a lot of controversy around this, have seen very pointed comments from the public and organizations. Reached a point where one of the comments in the editorial in the newspaper expressed that people wanted to have meeting in the area. At a point where I am uncomfortable with level of public support and outreach.
- Danna - Concerned with the timing and economic impact because of the drought and lake levels. Not a burden this area needs to take on now. Not sure clear communication is available yet, not sure this is right to do at this time.
- Bob – Currently there is a fee, but for a larger area. The FS is currently managing it for a smaller area. Difficult to say we don't want to do anything since we would be leaving a larger area on the books. Legally the public can be cited for using a larger area. We should be trying to address that issue by making it better for the consumer.
- Danna - What about communicating the benefits to the consumer. Appreciate the comment about accountability. Want to make sure an increased level of communication and publicity about the benefits of change will have to the public. Bob - Can we make that a requirement, District does outreach saying what is changing, what has been approved, and why it is changing? Don - If we go forward with a vote, they don't always do that great of a job with the public narrative describing what they are doing. Can't mandate the tone and direction and text of the narrative, but we can encourage a narrative to describe more accurately what is going on.
  Bob – District Ranger is very cooperative and doing the right thing. We can help him out. Ramiro - If approved, immediate need to go out and explain the changes, if not approved, will have the larger area on the books and fees will be enforced. Dick - If we do that, and it doesn't happen, how do we go back to where it was? Give them to next meeting to do more public notification. Bob - There is a certain amount of trust we must have. If we give mandate to do something, then we have to trust that they will follow through. Dick - I don't disagree, but frankly with this area there was controversy last time and they were claiming the same thing. People at the meeting were 90% against what they were asking us to do. Then the DR gets changed. How do we ensure that happens? Good with trust with the FS, but they are responsible to the stakeholders. I like that the fees are not going up and there are areas where no fee, particularly with economic situation. Need to get locals and user groups to buy into it. Monte - Probably a majority of use is during the summer. We are at end of summer. Areas are already managed as this proposal reads. Still uncomfortable with whole

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process. If not driven by time, proposal should be tabled and come back at a later time before the next recreation season.

- Nate - Question for Kitty, if you could put aside your concerns about the legality of the members, of this meeting, and lack of public involvement, do you see this proposal as a benefit to the public? Kitty - Have reviewed the proposal and consulted with several people from the area. What you just heard is very different from what you would see on the ground. What is described to you is not correct and the maps are inaccurate. Paul - Can you give an example? Kitty - Maps are inaccurate. The fee or free areas are not accurately depicted. Nate - How is it bad for the public to take a fee area and make free areas? Kitty - They are taking one large standard amenity recreation fee area, and converted that to three EAF areas, these are not traditional campgrounds, are gravel bar areas, half a mile hike to restrooms. Want the fee to stay the same and accept the interagency passes because if asked for a penny increase, the public would storm the Kernville Ranger Station. Would be a good idea if follow rules with new 3 smaller fee areas, why don't they want to follow rules? Why don't they want to run them as every other campground?
- Paul – Lake Isabella is a very large dispersed area, water's edge very low down. Charging for the roads to access and remote bathrooms. Most users are down near the water's edge. Proposal as presented is to benefit of the public, because it better defines the area, not satisfied it defines them appropriately. Proposal should be developed facilities only. But, most visitors not using developed facilities because they want to use lakeshore. Bob stated there are other places where there is a lesser fee for dispersed camping. Typically developed campgrounds have higher fees and this fee is taking in to account it is somewhat dispersed.
- Bob - There is fee now and we don't have the jurisdiction to make no fee. Asking us to change from a bigger area to 3 smaller areas. Odd situation, if we don't do anything then we make it worse for the consumer if we do something we are making it better but not better enough. Paul - Old Isabella doesn't have infrastructure to support the changes. Does the FS plan to sign the edges of the area, concerned about mechanics, how do you delineate the area down to lake level? It keeps coming back up and has been highly controversial in the beginning. Needs a deeper look, really needs more help than any kind of fee program can give it in terms of partners and other ways to look at it. Bob - From your perspective, would we go back to the FS and look at this as an area that has even further areas that would be no fee because services aren't provided? Or should we correct what we can now and ask to be clarified in a way it can be proven that the services are provided that fee authorizes, at least 5 amenities where fees collected? We have the potential not to do anything and ask the FS to come back. Option of saying no or yes. Anybody want to comment on 3 alternatives? Rich - With the no action, then there is still the authority to charge fees so confused. Monte - I would be inclined to vote no on this. But have been told that it is currently being managed per the proposal. If we say no today, what will happen in the interim? Bob - They would be obligated to collect fee in the no fee areas. Monte - they are currently not collecting a fee in proposed no fee areas. If no, it would be throwing gas on the fire to go back and turn it back in the larger HIRA area. Bob - I propose that we vote on it. Want report back at next meeting what happened. As R-RAC we can ask for fees to be rolled back or changed. Would ask that everyone vote to approve way currently being managed, but make them prove the management. Danna - What about timing, we are at Labor Day. Activity starts to fall off. Do we have the opportunity to ask forest to clarify some of our points at next meeting? Come back with revised proposal and make decision at the next meeting. Don - There was no communications with county officials on past projects. This one did and no concern. Based on his experience, if recommend yes, gives the opportunity to implement prior to the 2014 recreation season. If this is one piece of certainty then it could be doing the public a service. Danna - Understand that, but why didn't that happen before? Concerned that the positive public notification should have happened in beginning. All agree this is good thing, but why didn't the public notification happen before. Nate - Paul had concerns about amenities. For example, Old Isabella has fewer amenities. Question to Al - Why were these three sites chosen? Because they have the amenities that meet the expanded amenity sites? Tamara - These are three developed campgrounds that came with the lake from the Army Corp of Engineers.
- Nate - I move that we approve proposal. Dick - Can we approve proposal with amendment? Dick - Approve the proposal, except that Old Isabella a non-fee area until our next meeting when the public outreach has

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occurred. Don - Spending a lot of time on lake recreation, concerns about the toilet 50 yards, 100 yards, or 500 yards, we cannot make decision on water levels. Dick - What about the construction? Will be taking out of service during construction. Ramiro -If being used during the construction then site would be closed and no fee charged. This is in the best interest of public safety.

- Nate - Motion to approve proposal as presented. Don – Seconded. Ramiro – A lot has been said. If need additional information, and that feeling lingers, I would rather be tabled. Nate - Retracted motion.
- Tom - Made the motion to approve. Don – Seconded. Danna - It is no brainer taking larger area and reducing to three smaller areas, but struggling with the entire process. Beginning, middle, and implementation in the end. Bob - would it be more comfortable to move to next meeting? Danna - Would support that. Not sure there is a rush right now. Because it is a good idea, why can't we sell to the public as good idea? Tom - Could meet in Lake Isabella? Linda - Confused where people are adamant about voting against their interest. Seems to be net gain for the public, but worried about public perception. We can approve and then can immediately go out to the public and any organizations we work with about the benefit and how we saved them money, work with to show how can enjoy. Should make the vote and move forward and demonstrate that we came together and in the public interest. Ramiro - Tamara mentioned we had HIRA review over 2 years ago and recognizing the areas where we were charging were too large. Can pass the red face test that we feel we provide the amenities that meet FLREA.
- Bob - Have a motion and a second motion to approve. Any further discussion?
  Danna: Clarification that each of the county supervisors was contacted? Or was there one contact from that district. Al - I made direct contact with Dave Freeland, who is the lead advisor for Supervisor Gleason. He saw the press releases and articles. His only question was if this involves any fee increase, if no fee increase, then no concerns with proposal. Danna - No other district supervisors were contacted? Al - only contacted the Supervisor whose district this falls under.
- Bob - Any further discussion? None. Frances asked to clarify that Tom was still the first? A vote was taken, 9 members voted yes, one voted no, motion passed.
- R-RAC recommended immediate significant public communication effort to outline the changes, define the specific areas to eliminate the confusion where fee is charged. Declare victory for the public and define that fee is being charged for specific areas and some areas are free in these hard economic times and provide opportunity for people to camp free of charge. Danna - Can we add we want a report at next meeting of the initial efforts that have been done and what they are planning to do, implementation plan and progress report. Would like a plan for sure, but also signage, outreach and communication, press releases, etc. Ramiro - Update on implementation plan (signage, outreach and communication, press releases) will be on next agenda. Al - Agrees will do community outreach and to contact community groups.

Potential meeting dates were discussed. Danna asked if at next meeting could there be a brief tutorial on what the REA reauthorization process may look like. How is REA going to be considered or revisited? Ramiro said that FLREA is due to expire in 2014. It is anticipated that if Congress does not bring it up for a vote, it will likely go into budget with 1 year extension. Frances said it is in the FY14 President's budget to extend one year. Danna said that information was good enough.

Monte asked when will BLM and FS will start recruiting for replacements on the R-RAC? Frances said we will be beginning shortly. Dick said the delay has caused everyone to start at the same time. We are going to have to start from scratch again.

Bob said with no other business, need to make a motion to adjourn the meeting, Nate motioned to adjourn and Dana seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:20 pm.