

Meeting Minutes

Idaho Panhandle RAC

June 21, 2019

Attendees

RAC Members (quorum present)

Glen Bailey (Chair)
Alan Harper (Co-Chair)
Jeff Connolly
Phil Hough
Leslie Marshall
Tim Mueller
Ed Short
Brad Smith
Laura Wolf

US Forest Service

Jeanne Higgins (Designated Federal Officer, IPNF Forest Supervisor)
Phillip Blundell (RAC Coordinator, CdA River RD Deputy District Ranger)
Matt Davis (St. Joe District Ranger)
Kevin Knauth (Bonners Ferry District Ranger)
Jason Smith (CZ Rec Staff)

Public

John Hanson (Shoshone County)
Betty Morris (Idaho Forest Products Commission)
Karen Roetter (Senator Crapo)
Sid Smith (Senator Risch)
Tom Weitz (Priest Lake Nordic Club)
Anne Weitz (Priest Lake Nordic Club)
Carol Young (Shoshone County)
Chase Youngdahl (Bonner County)

Minutes

Meeting was called to order by Glen Bailey at 9:02 a.m.

Introductions

All present introduced themselves to the audience and described the interest they represent on the Idaho Panhandle RAC (RAC) as well as a bit about themselves.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Brad Smith moved that the minutes from the previous March 8, 2019 meeting be approved with the edit of changing "March 8, 2018" to "March 8, 2019".

Tim Mueller seconded the motion.

Motion carried by unanimous approval.

Treasury Report

Ed Short moved to approve the updated Treasury Report for June 21, 2019.

Phil Hough seconded the motion.

Motion carried by unanimous approval.

Discussion on Project Criteria

The RAC stressed the importance of NEPA having been completed

- Would accept cases where "small" NEPA would be all that is required

No new infrastructure would be voted for

- The RAC noted the grey area when it comes to items such as toilets which can have a substantially positive impact to the environment

It was noted that the RAC can approve more than they actually have money for

- There always seems to be some projects that are unable to be funded
- Projects will need to be ranked in order of receiving these access funds

Road or watershed work will make up at least 50% of the recommended funding (in accordance with the statute)

Project Recommendations

The RAC went through the projects one-by-one to decide which projects were to be funded and to what amount

Once all projects were funded, the RAC went back through and ensured that at least 50% of available funding went to Road & Watershed uses as well as adjusting funding levels to stay within the budget

Projects are approved for recommendation on the following Excel Spreadsheet:

1. FY19 RAC Proposal Tracking_Meeting_FINAL

Solicitation

The RAC began to question whether it was necessary for them to withhold 5% of funding for their own travel and per diem expenses (~\$60,000)

- At the last meeting it was decided to do so

A voice vote was called to do away with withholding 5% for travel and per diem and put all money to projects and none for member reimbursement

- The motion carried by unanimous approval to do away with the withholding so that all monies could be applied to projects

Meeting was closed at 3:58 p.m. by Glen Bailey

Key Items

Decisions:

- Approved minutes from March 3, 2019 with change of date to “2019”
- Approved Treasury Report
- Approved to eliminate the 5% withholding of RAC funds for member travel and per diem
- Approved projects for recommendation of funding to the Designated Federal Officer

Key Takeaways for Future Applications:

- NEPA needs to be completed or the project needs to only require small NEPA
- Application needs to specifically state how the project benefits NFS lands

Questions:

- Can we pay a contractor for work that has already occurred outside of NFS lands?
- Can we fund an existing contract?
- Can we fund an item (e.g. trailer) without requiring matching funds?