

IDAHO PANHANDLE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUMMARY OF MEETING

August 15, 2023

The Idaho Panhandle Resource Advisory Committee was convened for its first meeting at 9:00 A.M. on August 15, 2023, at the Interagency Natural Resource Center in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Acting Forest Supervisor Heather DeGeest, Designated Federal Official, opened the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda.

In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Committee members present:

Al Casile
Richard Fuller
Jeff Hildesheim
Julie Kallemeyn
Chuck Roady
Alan Harper
Regan Plumb
Liz Wargo
Jason Welker
J. Edward Short
Laura Wolf
Erin Plue (virtual)

Staff of the U.S. Forest Service attending were:

Patrick Lair
Ashley Nettles
Heather DeGeest
Jody Pliley
Heather Fuller
Jed Friedman
Abby Carroll

For the record, it is noted that to avoid a conflict of interest, Committee members absent themselves from the meeting when the Committee discusses applications from their respective institutions or in which a conflict of interest may occur. Members are asked to sign a statement to this effect.

Others present for all or a portion of the meeting were:

Phil Hough (Friends of Scotchmans Peak Wilderness)
Jessica Stutzke (Shoshone County)
Jim Rolletto (Benewah County)

RAC OVERVIEW

Patrick Lair provided an overview of the Secure Rural Schools Act and the role of resource advisory committees in the dispensation of Title II funding. He shared that the estimated sum of funding available to the RAC for this year was around \$1.525 million, based on historic timber receipts by county, and since the RAC had not met during the previous two years. The group also discussed the criteria set forth in the Secure Rural Schools Act for project eligibility and that 50 percent of the funding should be used on projects that benefit roads or watersheds.

ETHICS DISCUSSION

Heather DeGeest led the RAC in an ethics discussion and reviewed a national training video and PowerPoint on the ethical considerations surrounding FACA and membership on a federal advisory committee. RAC members then signed an ethics pledge.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND CO-CHAIR

Heather DeGeest encouraged the RAC to designate a chairperson and a co-chair to administer duties going forward. The RAC elected Chuck Roady as chairperson and Julie Kallemeyn as co-chair.

TIMING OF FUNDING AND AGREEMENTS

Heather Fuller provided a short presentation to the RAC on funding and the timing of agreements, noting that approved funding will most likely not be drawn into an agreement until the following year or years, so RAC members should not expect to see work begin immediately on approved projects, and that all funds must be obligated by September 2025.

PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

RAC members were given scoring sheets to take notes on each project and grade how they felt the project met the individual criteria of RAC project eligibility. Each scoring sheet had a block where a member could rate the project between 0 and 5 with 5 being the highest priority. These scoring sheets were not official voting records, as explained by Forest Service staff. Their purpose were simply for members to better track their impressions and thoughts around each project and use them to review while making final recommendations.

The RAC members heard project presentations and proposals from the proponents of 26 different projects. Each proponent was allotted 3 minutes for a presentation and then

RAC members had up to 10 minutes to ask questions of the project proponents. The RAC members had previously received all project application materials and had two weeks to read and review the materials prior to hearing the presentations.

At the end of the meeting the RAC members returned their scoring sheets to the Forest Service staff in agreement that the staff would create an online spreadsheet of project rankings for members to use at the following meeting to understand group dynamics and consensus around different projects.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A public comment period was announced at 3:30 P.M. but no members of the public spoke.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M. with the agreement of a follow up meeting to be held from 9:00 A.M. to 4 P.M. in the same location on September 15, 2023.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

Heather DeGeest
Designated Federal Official
Idaho Panhandle Resource Advisory Committee

These minutes will be formally considered by the Committee at its next meeting, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.