

Public Lands Coordination Commission

October 4, 2011

PLCC Commissioners present: Frank Green, Zane Odell, Dennis Atwater, Slim McWilliams, and Matt Clark

Montezuma County Commissioners present: None

Citizens Present: Approximately 15

Federal Agency Representatives:

Forest Service; Tom Rice & Debbie Kill.

BLM/CANM; Marietta Eaton, Heather Musclow & Victoria Atkins

Hovenweep; Corky Hays

7:00 PM Meeting was called to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited & ground rules established.

First item of business was approval of agenda & minutes. Minutes were approved.

Old Business was discussed;

- **CANM Roads were discussed**, Dennis Atwater reported that he is assembling data and has the majority of the maps prior to 1976 that show roads that existed at that time. There was not enough time to thoroughly review all of the maps but the subcommittee is working on it.

Dennis noted that roads and access are only one issue beyond roads there is the issue of the consistency with the Montezuma County Comprehensive Plan. Dennis read a letter to the PLCC outlining the concerns that he has with the CANM/ RMP. The letter stated that coordination has not taken place as mandated by Federal Law and by the Montezuma County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and we have not negotiated with the Forest Service to reach consistency. Dennis pointed out that the County does not know where it stands with the coming plan.

Dennis also noted that the BOCC comments on the Glade/ Boggy Plan reflected the same concerns and he read the quote from the BOCC comments. Dennis then referred to the minutes from the last PLCC meeting which also stated that the County did not know where they stood regarding the plan. The concern was expressed that the county is not involved with the planning process as it should be and that this is one of the things that "coordination" would help to resolve. Dennis noted that there are inconsistencies in communication going out to the federal agencies, that are not consistent with the Federal mandate of coordination.

The inconsistencies regarding what coordination is were discussed for a time. Slim McWilliams asked what if we all are on the same page regarding

coordination then what? Dennis responded that the BOCC then has the obligation to enforce the law in Montezuma County. Slim asked what enforce the Law meant and Dennis stated that they should enforce coordination. Slim asked how a County can enforce coordination on a Federal Agency. Denis responded that they need to demand it from the agency in writing and then take legal recourse that is their obligation they took an oath. Slim McWilliams asked what should the BOCC do? They cannot enforce law. They are not a Law Enforcement branch of government, they can make law they are legislators. So once you send the letter to the Forest Service and nothing changes then what?

Dennis responded...they move it up the chain. They go to our elected representatives in Congress, and move it up to the State Attorney General, and they move it up the jurisdictional ladder to the Justice Department...a letter from the Justice Department carries a lot of weight. They should explore every avenue before going to court. All I want is for Federal Agencies to come to the table as they are mandated to do and if they do that we will not have all of this contentious activity going on.

Slim McWilliams added that he felt we should move forward with coordination but that we should not just refuse to look at the plan because we are going a different way. Drew Gordanier responded that we are making progress.

- **The BOCC letter to the Forest Service** was discussed and reported on. The letter was to request a coordination meeting but a meeting was set up in the mean time so no letter was necessary.
- **New Appointments to the PLCC were discussed.** There are three vacancies on the commission. The PLCC was informed that the County would be placing vacancy announcements in the local newspapers advertising the openings. Interested citizens should send a letter of interest to the Federal Lands Office at the County.
- **Debbie Kill from the USFS gave an overview of the projects that are on the current SOPA.** The projects are at the end of the fiscal year so there are not as many projects in the pre-proposal stage.

Debbie reported that there had been a lot of treatment accomplished on noxious weeds.

Debbie also reported that there is a new structure to their funding based on priority watersheds. The USFS has recommended the chicken creek watershed as a priority. This could lead to funding being funneled into projects within that watershed. Insect and Disease threats have become less but there is still a lot of forestry & fuels work to be done in this watershed including prescribed burning. This water shed is important because it falls within the high fire risk area identified by the County. It is also a source watershed for the Town of Mancos. This new funding structure will allow for concentrated work.

Debbie reported some small timber sales that were in the works. They are also trying service contracts as a new approach to timber sales. The Rock Springs project was discussed where there are also some forestry projects planned.

Firewood stashes were also identified on a map. The wood is from thinning projects and the wood is piled for firewood. People getting permits are being told about the opportunity.

Debbie noted that there has been some field work done on several allotments over the summer. It may be useful at a later meeting to meet with the Range people.

Kinder Morgan is also planning a seismic study in Dolores County along the Dolores River.

Debbie noted that the SOPA has been organized so that all of the Montezuma County Projects are lumped together.

- Alternative B was discussed and it was reported that the Alternative was not completed yet and that the USFS would meet with the BOCC to review the draft.
- Tom Rice from the USFS also reported that the service first dual delegation would be coming to an end within the District. Bill Dunkleberger would be made the lead for the BLM in the District.
- **Public Input was then taken.**
- Duane Likes noted that the roads being closed in the manner that they are at Haycamp would not happen if coordination happens up front.
- One member of the public noted that it is not the responsibility of the public to coordinate it is the responsibility of the BOCC and their appointees to coordinate.
- Dexter Gill asked if anyone knew the procedure for closing roads in Montezuma County. Drew Gordanier responded. Dexter cited state law that required public roads to come before the BOCC for a hearing before roads can be closed.
- Bud Gardner read from CRS 43-2-201.1

CANM Maps were reviewed and meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.