

**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF BLAINE COUNTY
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE JUNE 2019 SESSION**

BLM WOOD RIVER VALLEY RECREATION AND ACCESS PROPOSAL

Seventh Day – evening meeting

Tuesday, June 18, 2019

Pursuant to Statutory Provisions, the Board of Blaine County Commissioners (BCC) met this evening at 6:00 p.m. Present were Chairman Jacob Greenberg, Vice-Chair Angenie McCleary, and Commissioner Dick Fosbury; Blaine County Planner Allison Marks; BLM Shoshone Office Field Manager Codie Martin and BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner John Kurtz; Idaho Conservation League representative Ron Stradiotto; Fish & Game Staff Biologist Mike McDonald and F&G Environmental Staff Biologist Frank Edelmann; Blaine County Recreation District Executive Director Jim Keating; Wood River Land Trust Stewardship Coordinator Cameron Packer; Wood River Trails Coalition Executive Director Sara Gress; Mountain Humane representative Kyle Baysinger; Idaho Conservation League Conservation Associate Josh Johnson; Indian Creek Board of Homeowners representative Jean Latham; Clark Shafer; Anne Aganon; Ray Salmon; Larry Newton; Martha Bibb; Eric Rector; Elvis Fernandez; Jim Laski; Adam Angel; Matt Wieland; Marc Corney; Jim Phillips; Sandra Hesselbacher; Richard Hesselbacher; Emily Williams; Leigh Morse; Karin Lindholm; Josh Commons; Alan Hogg; Courtney Hamilton; Nat and Barbara Campbell; Gerry Morrison; Julie Weston; Janet Carter; Wendy Chase; Mary Mills; John Mills; John Delivenzo; Chris Kastner; Kiki Tidwell, John Stevenson; Brooke Diamond; Bree Littleton; Chris Leman; Anne Haggadon; Jim Phillips; Megan Stevenson; Tom Page; Recording Secretary Sunny Grant; and *Idaho Mountain Express* reporter Mark Dee.

Vice-Chairman McCleary called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The BLM worked with the public for over 10 years on a Travel Management Plan, which was suspended at the federal level with the new administration. The BLM is currently only working on Travel Management Plans being litigated. The BCC is looking for public comment on whether it should recommend the BLM pursue an alternative public process and Environmental Assessment on a Recreation and Access Proposal of new trails and roads to the public, since the Travel Management Plan has been suspended.

The suspended Travel Plan included existing trails and roads; the new Recreation and Access Proposal only refers to new trails and roads. They both go through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. BLM Field Manager Martin is the decisionmaker on how the BLM goes forward on plans from the Little Wood drainage to the Little Creek drainage. The current administration is pushing all forms of access, with no restrictions. BLM Recreation Planner Kurtz described BLM's currently proposed options. Some non-motorized trails would allow Class I e-bikes.

Public Comment:

- Ulrich Reiss, Anne Haggadon, and Richard and Sandra Hesselbacher, all Indian Creek residents, expressed concern about a nearby trail that was proposed as motorized, but is steep and heavily weeded, and dangerous. Noise, air pollution and fire risk are of special concern near this residential area. Jean Latham and the Hesselbachers expressed concern about wildlife as well.
- Jim Laski suggested the BLM focus their efforts in areas where there could be partner funding, such as with the Blaine County Recreation District.
- Karen Lindholm asked that motorized traffic be kept away from residential areas.
- Josh Johnson said this is an opportunity for the community to weigh personal values of recreation against the needs of wildlife.
- Leigh Morse said winter closures benefit animal population. Hikers and their dogs can stress wildlife.
- Lili Simpson continues to advocate for a wildlife winter range area and migration corridors.
- Sharon Barnes said there are already a lot of roads and trails in the Wood River Valley. Weed infestations are spread with the expansion of roads and trails.
- Jim Phillips asked the BCC to listen to the public concerns about motorized trails out Lee's Gulch and Indian Creek. Phillips expressed concern that the BLM might propose new trails as non-motorized that would become all-access through the current administration.
- Bree Littleton said increased trail access in Hailey would provide more access to people who don't have as many trails, but is concerned that they will encourage motorized use.

Answers to Questions:

- Trailhead designations on a map would generally indicate parking and toilet.
- BLM will design and build future trails in a sustainable fashion, that can be maintained more efficiently; and will be looking for partnerships and agreements to maintain the trails.
- Hailey and Bellevue have grown, and connections are a priority.

The BCC discussed motocross trails out Kelly Canyon. Based on public comments, the BCC doesn't want to see motorized trails off neighborhood streets and in residential areas.

After one more public meeting, the BCC intends to draft a letter to the BLM recommending they pursue an Environmental Analysis (EA) at this time, incorporating public input received at the recent three BCC meetings and past input into the suspended Travel Management Plan. The BCC can request status as a Cooperating Agency to the BLM, and submit additional comment to the BLM during the EA process on trails and roads in the area of County roads and neighborhoods.

ADJOURN

At the hour of 7:32 p.m., with no more business before them, the County Commissioners adjourned.

Attest: _____ Approved _____
JoLynn Drage County Clerk Jacob Greenberg Chairman