

## **Minutes**

### **Crook County Natural Resources Committee**

**April 12, 2023**

**Committee Members Present:** Steve McGuire, Lynne Breese, Bill McCormack, Kim Vogel, Andy Gallagher, Melinda Kestler, Frank Porfily

**Members Absent:** Mike Lunn, Tim Deboodt, Cliff Kiser, Casey Kiser

**Guests Present:** Lisa Clark (BLM),

**Public Present:** Gayle Hunt, John Breese, Shelly Santucci, Don Vogel, Tory Kurtz

**Meeting was called to order** at 1:00 p.m. by Chair Steve McGuire @ COCC Crook County Open Campus

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

#### **Approval of previous meeting minutes:**

Steve asked for questions/corrections of previous minutes. Melinda asked if Gayle Hunt had a question about the last paragraph of the minutes.

Gayle explained that her concern is that she feels there could be a conflict of interest with Tim's dual role as a Farm Bureau representative and facilitator for NRAC when it relates to wild horse management issues since the Farm Bureau takes a strong stand against wild horses and has been known to promote killing them. It was noted by a few that as long as there are clear communications about which role he is in at any given moment, there is no conflict. Steve asked for further questions/comments. Shelly Santucci spoke up registered strong disagreement with Gayle's representation of the Farm Bureau policy on wild horse management, saying she is a member and the policy is far from what Gayle states. Some discussion was had and Steve asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Lynne moved to approve the minutes from the March 8 meeting, Bill seconded, the motion passed.

#### **Agency Reports:**

**Forest Service Report (written)** was handed to the Committee. Question was asked about our request at last meeting for an update on the Mill Creek Forest Restoration Project. Kim noted that Tim had said in his email that they could provide an update at May meeting. Kim reported that Shane Jeffries had stated at the recent forest grazing permittee meeting that the Ochoco Forest staff was looking for more and better ways to connect with the public. She suggested that this may be a time for us to approach and ask them back to the meetings since it is a convenient and easy way for them to connect. Steve reported that Tim continuously invites them back. Frank commented that Shane and Slater had both

recently stated that they would be returning soon. Andy commented that their absence appears to be intentional.

**Bureau of Land Management Report:** Lisa Clark pointed to handout and focused on the proposed public lands rule presently out for comment. There were several questions related to the process of the rulemaking, the best way to comment, the intention of the proposal, and clarifying questions about what is being proposed. Lisa answered all questions, providing examples and encouraged everyone to comment as it was described in the handout. BLM announced that the local applications for commercial solar development had been suspended.

**State Parks Report:** There was no representative or written report from State Parks present. However, Andy reported that there was enough water in Prineville Reservoir for the boat dock to be put in the water. This prompted a robust discussion about the local water and irrigation situation. It was noted that Prineville Reservoir is reported to be about 1/3 full and Ochoco Reservoir is reported to be 1/4 full.

Steve asked for **New Business**, hearing nothing he moved on to **Good of the Order**. Andy suggested that it was increasingly important for the Forest Service to be present at the NRAC meetings and suggested that we consider changing the format back to questions at the end of the meeting if that would help with the negotiations to seeking their attendance. Several spoke up that the reasons for the change worked much better for the flow of the meeting to have comments contemporaneous with the subject matter presentation. Steve noted that he didn't feel it was prudent to change back and that when the questions were at the end of the meeting the FS had usually exited by that time leaving no opportunity for the public to engage. Steve also noted that we could move their involvement to the County Court and a representative of the Committee could attend each County Court meeting. Everyone agreed that there was a need to continue negotiations with the FS to facilitate their engagement.

**Public Comment:** Shelly Santucci and Don Vogel informed the committee they had been informed at permittee meetings that the FS has chosen to move forward with Alternative 6 with minimal changes for the Lemon Gulch project. Discussion ensued about what that looked like, the density of trails, parking lots, shuttles, etc. that remain in project, and how they may address those concerns as they persist to move forward with a complex. They reported that a meeting has been requested with the line officers. Steve suggested that a county commissioner should be requested to attend the meeting with them.

Steve asked for a motion to adjourn, Andy moved for adjournment, Kim seconded. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.