

Red Hill Council
June 17, 2004 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Scott Harris called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held at Carbondale Town Hall. Scott informed the Council that he had to leave the meeting early. Chris Beebe agreed to chair the meeting in Scott's absence.

Members present: Chris Beebe, Dave Johnson, Davis Farrar, Scott Harris (left early). Other persons present: Chuck Percy, Dorothy Morgan - BLM, Randy Dahl.

Dave Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Discussion took place about whether there was a quorum. No action was taken because a quorum was not present.

Discussion took place about motorized use occurring on the north side. Davis previously submitted pictures and a map to BLM showing evidence of current motorized use. Dorothy requested that Davis provide a map of adjacent property owners with a list of names of potential owners to contact about this issue.

Discussion took place about access to the North Side off of County Rd. 112. Options range from acquisition of an access easement to a land swap. Dorothy indicated that easements or land swaps require a willing seller/partner. Chris noted that the Red Hill Council wants to be poised to respond in the event that the opportunity arises for access in the future. Discussion took place about various land swap options, potential future subdivision of the property as it relates to access to Red Hill and other access potential off of County Rd. 112. Dorothy suggested setting up a meeting with BLM representatives that would include her boss, Vaughn Hackett, Brian Hopkins and possibly others. The meeting was tentatively scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on July 1. Davis suggested that he would talk with Aspen Valley Land Trust to investigate their possible interest/participation.

Dave Johnson gave an update on the cultural and botanical analysis completed on the north side reroute. The Penstemon found was no longer flowering. However, the botanist indicated that it is unlikely to be Harrington's Penstemon because it was under the Pinon canopy and that is not a habitat for the Harrington's Penstemon. No cultural sites were found. It is anticipated that the reports will be available in approximately two weeks.

Discussion took place about rerouting the trail around the Wikiup. A date was set for Saturday June 19 at 9:00 AM in the parking lot. Dave Johnson mentioned that an additional cultural analysis was made near the Wikiup to ensure that the reroute route would not adversely impact any other cultural site.

North side reroute discussion. After the cultural and botanical reports are completed, Dorothy will inquire about whether the reroute will have to go through NEPA. Her boss Carl will make that decision. Elk Traverse rerouting options were discussed. These included: contouring around the basin starting off to the right of the existing seasonal trail sign at the beginning of the route, working within the existing corridor and fixing the switchbacks by using major rock walls, using the area of slickrock for the climbing section instead of the switchbacks and possibly tying into a portion of the previously closed Buffy Trail. It was emphasized that the Elk Traverse reroute alignment should be finalized before the next meeting.

Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers are scheduled for September 18 for the Elk Traverse reroute/north side reroute.

BLM is not opposed to integrating portions of the Buffy Trail if it is a replacement for portions of the Elk Traverse. They would not support two separate routes. Red Hill must justify the purpose/need for these reroutes. Anything that is outside of the "plan" would be received with resistance by BLM. Projects that are outside of the "plan" would require a new public process to amend the plan. Chris Beebe inquired about the "resistance" from BLM and where that was

coming from. Dorothy responded that part of the resistance could be a result of the current office workload because of the work demand associated with extensive gas drilling in Garfield County. Chris clarified that he and others want to understand the issue of "resistance" from BLM and discussion about the topic was important.

Trail maintenance discussion. Davis presented various photographs of eroded sections of Trail showing exposed rocks and braids resulting from users bypassing rough/difficult (from wear/erosion) trail sections. Council members made various input on the topic and there was recognition that trail maintenance is an issue that needs to be addressed. Continued discussion of this topic will take place later in the year.

Survey status. Davis mentioned that the survey is on hold until volunteer assistance or paid assistance can be provided for this large-scale volunteer project. Fall was targeted as an alternative survey timeframe.

During the next few weeks Council members will finalize flagging and GPS the north side reroute so that the information can be forwarded to BLM.

A decision on the Elk Traverse reroute will be made at the July meeting. Chuck and Randy supported the need to include Scott Harris in the alignment investigation.

Items for the next agenda - report on the reroute around the Wikiup, decision on Elk Traverse reroute, Council elections, report on meeting with BLM about access, grazing and trail reroute project.

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.