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Guardians of the Range

Dedicated to the Multiple Use of Public Lands & the American Way of Life

Newsletter No. 84

April 2011

Guardians at Work
Your Executive Director
Representing Your Interests

March 2
Government Affairs – Chamber, Cody

March 10
USFS national forum on draft Planning
Rule in Washington, D.C.

March 19
Farm Bureau – Thermopolis

March 22
Secure Rural Schools – SNF Thermopolis

Mark Your Calendar:

May 13, 2011
Sheridan, Wyo

**Guardians
Fundraising
Event**

For Information:
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USFS
Planning Rule Draft Revision
Serious Trouble Afoot Folks!

~ by **Kathleen Jachowski**

The Guardians participated in the March 10 national forum in Washington, D.C. relative to the draft revision of the Planning Rule. Planning Rules apply to all forests and grasslands. There were approximately 140 people in attendance.

We heard from the agency folks who wrote the different parts of the draft rule and they endeavored to explain what their thinking was behind this draft product.

Folks we are in serious trouble with this revision document. Your comments are needed!

Traditional multiple uses are recognized in such a faded and lip service way in this draft that one would be hard pressed to recognize the agency as a multiple use agency.

*Please see **Rule** on page 2*

BLM Wild Lands Inventory
Where cattle and sheep won't roam!

Part Two: (Weakness in the quality of the inventory and why that matters)

~ by **Kathleen Jachowski**

In the March newsletter we headed down a trail to try and help readers begin to fully understand this thing called an 'inventory of lands with wilderness characteristics aka (LWC). Now we are going to look at flaws, confusion and unnecessary costs and concerns. Limitations of space dictate that I make this as clear and concise as possible.

Certain areas within the Cody and Worland resource areas were suggested by agency staff and others, as pieces of BLM real estate which should be considered for listing on the Wild Lands Inventory ordered by Director Salazar.

*Please see **Inventory** on page 2*

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."
~ **Anais Nin, French born American author (1903-1977)**

Inventory *continued from page 1*

To make it onto the inventory list, these pieces of real estate were suppose to have met wilderness criteria.

Resource professionals of various disciplines within each BLM office were required to participate in the inventory process. They were also required to sign a signature sheet for each parcel reviewed.

When the lists were reviewed by members of the public, it quickly became clear that some of the areas characterized as LWC failed to meet wilderness criteria. Questions immediately popped up. How could an area be an LWC when there were oil wells, stock tanks, pipelines, grazing, etc. etc.?

No one expects perfection in the realm of natural resources, but accuracy is the operative standard. However, there were enough discrepancies to make a few eye brows fly off of a few heads.

Your county commissioners and conservation districts have had to expend time and money to get *complete (and available)* information. Individual citizens have had to take the time to fill in missing information and sign their name as to the accuracy of the information.

A careful use of maps from both the agency and the U. S. Geologic Survey and personal on the ground knowledge brought many 'non wilderness' characteristics to the forefront.

The agency has been more than reluctant to remove those parcels from the inventory list when presented with new information. This inaccurate list, more than likely, will find its way as an appendix in the draft environmental impact statement for the Resource Management Plan revision for Cody and Worland. We are told that after the draft hits the street, that such corrections can be made.

Why does our BLM want to have a document they know is incorrect to be included into the draft RMP? Why would it not want the document to be as accurate as possible now and not later?

Another very interesting reality is that the signatures of resource professionals who participated in the inventory process do not mean that these people either agree or disagree with any such parcel meeting the standard for Lands with Wilderness Characteristics.

Their signature only means that they participated in the process. I have personally checked this out with BLM management. Many of these resource folks did not and do not know that their signature only meant participation in the inventory process.

This is very troubling. Why? Because members of the public who also have knowledge of these parcels were shocked to see a signature they recognized on a piece of paper that seemed to indicate that the parcel had wilderness characteristics. It brought into question the credibility of that BLM employee who they know, respect and trust.

Some of the resource professionals clearly were trying to convey that they had questions about a parcel not meeting the LWC standard. They did this by clearly indicating on the signature page that 'such and such could be found there' and then they initialed it. This effort to clearly convey an accurate status is so very appreciated.

Please see **Inventory** on page 3

Brucellosis

Dollars available to help with some costs associated with testing and handling IF enough ranchers express an interest.

**Contact: Rory Karhu, District Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation Service
phone: 307.754.9301, ext 116
e-mail: rory.karhu@wy.usda.gov**

Don't delay if interested, timeliness is important!

Rule *continued from page 1*

Recreation is the 'flavor of the day'. In earlier newsletters I signaled that this one interest was acting as though they had never been allowed on national forests, or were tired of being a 'step child'. Rather than articulate how recreation is, has been, and always will be a part of multiple use, the agency has chosen to elevate this interest beyond reason and fairness.

The timber program has been essentially wordsmithed out of existence.

Plant and animal diversity has gone wild!

Global climate change considerations are being forced on the agency, whether it wants it or not.

They want to do large scale assessments and monitoring of forest plan compliance, and they think that the money to do that will come from sister agencies, and other entities who will not charge them. They don't seem to understand that if they say, 'via this Rule the agency is going to do something', but they don't do it, then all activities are challengeable and that's where anti-multiple use folks win. The judge looks for compliance with what the agency committed to do. If the judge doesn't find it, we lose. The judge will not care that the agency could not come up with the financial or human resources to assess and monitor forest plans. The judge correctly will focus on compliance.

Check out the Guardian website for talking points on various aspects of the draft. We will be adding to those so keep checking back.

Don't try and comment on the entire document, just pick one or two topics and point out where the draft planning rule is flawed. Offer positive suggestions for them to consider. The more thoughtful comments they receive the better.

There are some very troubling things in the draft. We encourage you to review it and send comments BY: May 16.

The proposed planning rule was released in the Federal Register on February 14, 2011, kicking off a 90 day public comment period. The proposed rule is now available online at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule>. I encourage you to take a look and let the agency know how it can be made better. Information on how to submit comments is available at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/planningrule/HowToComment>.





by Kathleen Jachowski

**Direct from the Director:
WOLF
We won an important battle!**

The U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service, et al., has dismissed their appeal to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. This means that Judge Johnson's decision stands. And that means the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service must renegotiate with Wyoming for their wolf management plan. Our thanks to those in the Wolf Coalition and Attorney Harriet Hageman and staff who have persevered so successfully. Our Thanks!

Kathleen

Kathleen Jachowski, Executive Director
307.587.3723 guardians@hughes.net

Inventory continued from page 2

The agency should have had these signature pages prepared to indicate that signatures reflected only participation in the inventory process and did not reflect either agreement or disagreement with an LWC designation.

Another appropriate choice would be to have a Dissention Clause at the bottom where the resource professional could sign as not agreeing to the LWC designation. These professionals deserved this careful respect of their signature and how their name (professional reputation) could be construed or misconstrued by a trusting public.

This is not a small error; not a small oversight - albeit unintentional. Attention to, and understanding of, such administrative details is absolutely necessary.

The way this nation-wide wild lands inventory has been handled, AND how it will be used, is in such serious question that a congressional hearing was held last month. What does that tell you---about something that is 'just an inventory'.

NEXT TIME: More why this matters and how the dots connect.



CRAIG THOMAS GUARDIANS OF THE RANGE ENDOWMENT

Supporting this endowment is a wonderful tax exempt way to show your support for the Guardians' effort, or to honor a family member or friend. We want to have a sustainable financial resource base to achieve our goals and objectives.

For more details, please contact a board member or Kathleen Jachowski (307)587-3723 or guardians@hughes.net.

BLM Plans Prescribed Burns Throughout Bighorn Basin

The Worland and Cody BLM Field Offices will conduct prescribed burns and mechanical vegetation treatments at various locations in the Bighorn Basin this spring.

Small prescribed burns will be east of Shell and north of Hwy 14/16/20, on Little Mountain east of Lovell and north of Ten Sleep along the west slope of the Bighorn Mountains, and on the north fork of the Shoshone River west of Cody.

Currently underway are a number of mechanical vegetation treatments throughout the basin. The projects include aspen enhancement, juniper thinning and Russian olive and salt cedar removal. Funding for these projects comes from a variety of public and private sources.

Prescribed burns create a mosaic of burned and unburned areas which improve wildlife habitat and increase forage production for livestock and wildlife. Burns can reduce the hazardous build-up of fuels which lessens the probability of a severe wildfire, remove slash from mechanical vegetation treatments and stop the conversion of productive grasslands into pine and juniper woodlands.

"In addition, sage-grouse will benefit from these prescribed juniper burns and mechanical treatments," said Wind River/Bighorn Basin District Ecologist Rance Neighbors. "The mosaic of small treatment patches in larger sagebrush areas and juniper removal improve nesting and early and late brood rearing habitat for sage-grouse."

For more information, or to participate in the planning of prescribed burns and vegetation projects for 2012 and 2013, contact Neighbors in the Worland Field Office at 307-347-5100 or Supervisory Range and Fuels Specialist Jack Mononi in the Cody Field Office at 307-578-5900. For more information on prescribed burning and vegetation management on public lands, visit: www.forestsandrangelands.gov/.

The BLM manages over 245 million acres - more land than any other Federal agency.



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Looking for a Real Ranch Job?

(Drug store cowboys need NOT apply! Those who love and respect what ranch life is about will want to continue reading!)

- Guardian member seeks qualified, energetic all round ranch employee, with immediate emphasis on irrigation!
 - April 1 start date preferred but not poured in concrete!
Location: Hyattville, Wyoming
 - Year round employment opportunity is a strong possibility for the 'right person'.
 - Seasonal employment opportunity certainly an option.
 - Irrigation duties involve: some pivots, some flood irrigation, some hand lines and some wheel lines. NO Tubes!
 - There will be a variety of ranch jobs, including fence fixing, haying, some cattle work, mechanical work---just about anything you can think of on a ranch. Summer time is very devoted to changing water and growing feed.
 - If you are a self motivated individual who wants to work, likes ranch work, has three work references and appreciates both the blessings and demands of what it means to ranch the real life than this might be the job opportunity for you.
 - Please be sure your resume gives a complete and straight forward picture of your skills.
 - Housing is provided and some beef will be provided.
- If interested please e-mail or send your resume to:
guardians@hughes.net or
Guardians of the Range
217 Road 6EH, Cody, WY 82414.

Wayne Barnett

3223 - Road 33
Greybull, WY 82426
Cell: 272.9662 or 765.2926

Wayne is very much under the weather right now. If you'd like to call or send a card of good cheer we've provided his contact information.



Range Improvements

They require planning time and money!

Members and potential members are encouraged to call us if you would like some help in getting a project planned and implemented. The agencies need lead time for environmental reviews and funding cycles for almost every project.

This includes reservoir maintenance!

The Guardians of the Range are happy to help facilitate the process.