

Board of Commissioner Notes

22 March 2016, 1:30

BOCC notes: 1330 Mtg BOCC w/Michael Liu, USFS Methow District Ranger re: Mining et al

- Attendees:
- Michael Liu (USFS)
- Sheila Kennedy (BOCC)
- Jim Detro (BOCC_
- Perry Huston (Director of Planning and Development) and unidentified female planning staff
- Albert Lin (Deputy Prosecutor)
- Absent: Ray Campbell, dispatched to Wenatchee to attend ill-defined confab of feds, tribes, etc. of Eastern WA; BOCC unaccountably NOT invited, apparently
-

CONTENTS: Methow Valley Title II Projects; Mazama Copper Mine Exploration; Chewuch Transportation Plan.

FIRST order of business: Methow Valley Title II Project Proposals 2016 (see attachments)

Aside: Mike Liu reports has filled “trail position” starting April, long-term USFS guy out of AK, likes to vacation here.

Discussion of projects largely uninformative to the uninitiated. Kennedy concerned that invasive plants only #5 on the list; Liu clarifies that number on list does not signify priority

SECOND order of business: Mazama Copper Exploration (For copy of 12.11.15 Liu memo to BOCC on Draft Chewuch Transportation Plan, contact rocon2016@gmail.com)

USFS will have administrator and geologist on-site.

Blue River Resources has opened a US office in Cheyenne, WY.

Water needed for drilling fairly minimal: 1500-2000 gallons per shift, most of which will be re-used over and over again after spoils dewatered. Contaminated water to be contained in portable water tank(s). This level of usage qualifies for “exempt well” status. Not entirely clear from the discussion what becomes of this water (probably in attachments).

Spoils (“cuttings and fines”) should amount to about 2000 gallons (around one cubic yard, per Liu) per bore-hole; to be thoroughly de-watered and transported to “the nearest land-fill”. This is presumed to mean Okanogan. Detro requests that Liu inform OC public works; says he will try to remember to talk to them as well.

Kennedy wonders if a meeting would be possible with Discovery Consultants, the folks doing the planning and all for Blue River. Liu to inform DiscCon that BOCC would like a meeting and to transmit DiscCon's coordinates to BOCC.

Kennedy: Impact on grazing?

Liu: Area out of rotation, won't be grazed this year

Kennedy: We need all the grazing we can get because of the fires

Liu: I'll check, but pretty sure it's considered over-grazed, hence unavailable. We're looking for more grazing land.

----> Required Mining Mitigation documents: DRAFT

Liu hands out draft, says "Please don't disseminate, will probably change, but wanted you to know".

BOCC: "But we have to share it if anybody asks, this is an open meeting."

BOCC: "You'd better take it back"

Liu: "Okay"

BOCC: "Now you're not being transparent".

Lin: "What's so secret?"

Liu: "Uh....nothing is secret, you didn't want it."

Discussion over transparency, accountability, federal duplicity, and, for some reason, drilling fluids.

Huston: "How about I stamp it "Draft"?"

Lin, BOCC: "That will work."

Timing of drilling project: decision in April, Liu hopes, drilling to commence after spotted owls leave for vacation, August 1. Done by December 1, when USFS roads closed for winter.

One possible hang-up: wetland delineation required, but DiscCon should manage that in time.

THIRD order of business: Chewuch transportation plan

Chewuch is most heavily roaded area in District: 394 miles on 316000 acres. Need to close little-used roads, reduce maintenance on others. District budget covers only about 10% of what they'd like to spend on road maintenance, so no choice. Some money available through grants, etc., but not enough.

Kennedy: "What about FIRE?" Had to open closed roads in 2014-15.

Liu: "We've got no choice, trying to reduce work by 25%, outlays by 36%. What we gotta do, we do, just like you."

Detro: "When will the final report on all this be done?"

Liu: "Draft May-ish, then 45-day objection period."

Detro: “You had the Wilderness Society involved in this, didn’t you?”

Liu: “Well, they helped us get the word out so people could learn and comment and all.”

Detro MONEY QUOTE: “Well, when we buy a new cop car, we don’t get some con out of the jail to test drive it.”

Editorial note: Yup, that’s more or less what he said.

Kennedy: “Have we been at the table on all this? Is the 2011 data still good?”

Huston (at some length): there’s a process, delineated in the USFS Process Delineation of 2005 that delineates this. It has not been followed.”

Liu: “We talked with Bud Hover about this a lot, and, yes, the data are still good.

Kennedy: “ This wasn’t shared with us. We are the current BOCC. We’ll close the meeting now and take this up with legal in Executive Session.” (*Ed. Question : Which of the permitted reasons for executive session is this?*)

Liu: “Okay. FYI, our climatologists say it’s supposed to be really dry and warm this spring. Thanks for your time.”

Detro: “Lots of people think a heavy snow winter will help avoid a bad fire season. Actually tends to mean more dry grass come July, not so good.”

Meeting closed just before 3PM.