

Advising the Bureau of Land Management

By Larry Hyslop



RAC members and interested public on a 2013 fieldtrip

Resource Advisory Councils (RAC) are charged with providing advice to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarding the management of public lands and resources. The local RAC, the Northeastern Great Basin RAC (NEGB) covers Elko, White Pine, Lander and Eureka counties. I am a member of this RAC, representing wildlife and the group has set an ambitious calendar of meetings and field trips for 2014.

The BLM formed 29 RACs throughout the western states, of which Nevada has three RACs. Our 15 members come from a wide range of backgrounds and each represents a particular interest. The categories are federal grazing, energy/minerals, transportation/right-of-way, archaeology, regional environmental groups, wildlife, wild horse & burro, dispersed recreation, Native Americans, public-at-large, state agency, elected official and academician.

The other two RACs in Nevada are the Mojave-Southern Great Basin RAC covering southern Nevada and the Sierra Front-Northwestern Great Basin RAC covering the northwest part of Nevada.

The three RACs meet together once a year for what is called a Tri-RAC and we recently gathered in Elko. During the Tri-RAC, the NEGB set up three meetings/fieldtrips. Two fieldtrips will look at the effects of drought and wild horses on public lands, along with fire rehabilitation. These fieldtrips will be conducted both north and south of Battle Mountain.

A recent accomplishment for the NEGB has been to provide comments to the BLM concerning the sage-grouse EIS. In the past, we produced Standards and Guidelines for Grazing and Wild Horses and Burros, Vegetation Management Guidelines, and OHV Administration Guidelines (along with the other two RACs).

Each member serves a three-year term and the NEGB RAC is always in need of replacement members. At present there is a need for people to represent Natural Resource Academia, Wild Horse & Burro, Dispersed Recreation, Transportation/Rights-of-Way and Federal Grazing.

Consider joining the NEGB. It keeps members up to date on current issues and programs administered by the BLM. Contact Lesli Ellis-Wouters at the local BLM office, lellis@blm.gov or 775-753-0386.

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