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MINUTES LOG

Work Group for Senate Joint Resolution 15 Public Land Management Study

Date: July 25, 2013

Room 172, State Capitol Building
Helena, Montana

Please note: These minutes provide abbreviated information about committee discussion, public testimony, action taken, and other activities. To the left of each section in these minutes is a time designation indicating the approximate amount of time in hours, minutes, and seconds that has elapsed since the start of the meeting. This time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio or video recording is provided from the Legislative Branch home page at <http://leg.mt.gov>. On the left-side menu of the home page, select *Committees*, then *Interim*. Once on the page for *Interim Committees*, scroll down to the appropriate committee. The written minutes summary, along with the audio and video recordings, are listed by meeting date on the interim committee's web page.

Hard copies of the exhibits for this meeting are available upon request. Legislative Council policy requires a charge of 15 cents a page for copies of the document.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

SEN. JOHN BRENDEN, Chair
REP. BILL MCCHESENEY, Vice Chair

SEN. JENNIFER FIELDER
SEN. BRADLEY MAXON HAMLETT

REP. ED LIESER
REP. KERRY WHITE

STAFF PRESENT

JOE KOLMAN, Legislative Environmental Analyst
HELEN THIGPEN, Staff Attorney
NADINE SPENCER, Secretary

AGENDA & VISITORS' LIST

Agenda, [5 HJW a Ybh%](#)
Visitors' list, [5 HJW a Ybh&](#)

COMMITTEE ACTION

- The work group approved the SJ 15 survey.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

00:00:28 Sen. Brenden called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. The secretary called the role, [5 HJW a Ybh'](#) .

AGENDA

PROPOSED SURVEY QUESTIONS AND PROCEDURES

Overview - EQC staff

00:01:23 Mr. Kolman informed the work group that a copy of the draft cover letter and survey had been sent to their email addresses, [91 \ Jjh%](#)

EQC working group discussion

00:02:38 Sen. Fielder explained that the SJ 15 survey is being sent to counties in Montana that contain 15% or more land area under the management of the U. S. Forest Service (USFS) and/or the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The purpose of the survey is to identify risks and concerns associated with federal land management.

00:03:46 Rep. Lieser asked if additional questions brought up during the meeting can be included in the survey. Mr. Kolman confirmed that the purpose of the meeting is to finalize questions for the survey.

00:04:22 Rep. Lieser stated that it would be useful to know the relationship between the counties and the federal land management agencies within the counties. Rep. White recommended adding this information to question 20.

00:07:00 Sen. Fielder said that once the surveys are returned the work group may need to follow up with the counties on specific problems. Sen. Brenden agreed that follow up with the counties may be necessary.

00:08:28 Rep. McChesney agreed with Rep. Lieser and Rep. White to add the relationship between the counties and the federal land management agencies to question 20. Sen. Brenden also agreed and asked Rep. White to rewrite question 20 to include the additional information.

- 00:09:32 Rep. White suggested adding, "including current and past relationship or communication with federal agencies", to question 20. The work group agreed to add the additional information.
- 00:11:05 Rep. McChesney proposed adding a question regarding the amount of influence county commissioners think non-governmental entities have on the ability of federal agencies to develop and implement effective land and resource management plans.
- 00:12:29 Sen. Fielder agreed and recommended that the question be added under "ownership and jurisdictional responsibilities". Rep. Lieser said that he also agreed.
- 00:13:27 Sen. Brenden said that non-governmental agency is too broad of a term. He suggested adding examples or the use of special interests and Rep. McChesney agreed.
- 00:15:10 Sen. Hamlett asked if the counties could provide the amount of money they received from the federal government, through the different land management practices, and the percentage of that money in each year's budget. Sen. Brenden agreed that the information should be included.
- 00:17:13 Sen. Fielder said that the Montana Department of Revenue (DOR) had information on how much money the counties received from the federal government and that staff had already compiled the information. Mr. Kolman said that the list of Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) revenues for the most recent year was sent to the EQC before the September meeting. He said that questions 11 and 12 ask about PILT payments and the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) payments and that the percentage of money in each year's budget could be added to the questions. Sen. Brenden agreed that the information should be included in the questions.
- 00:18:45 Sen. Fielder asked if staff could obtain the information from the DOR and the county treasurers instead of asking for the information from the county commissioners. Mr. Kolman said that he can obtain the amount of the PILT and SRS payments, but would have to call each county in order to find out the percentage amounts.
- 00:19:59 Sen. Fielder asked for a break down of the current percent of federal payments per budget verses 30 years ago in order to obtain a historic comparison. Sen. Brenden thought going back 30 years may be too onerous for the county commissioners.
- 00:20:59 Rep. White said that the PILT funds and the SRS funds are subject to appropriations by the federal government and go up and down every year. He recommended looking at the budget information for only the last two to three years.
- 00:21:42 Mr. Kolman said that he can obtain historic amounts of SRS and PILT payments and can ask for an estimate of the percentage amount for recent payments in questions 11 and 12. Sen. Brenden and Rep. McChesney agreed with making the change to the questions.

- 00:22:26 Rep. Lieser also agreed saying that the current information is the most relevant. Rep. White agreed and recommended adding a footnote at the end of questions 11 and 12 asking the counties to include the percentage amount if available.
- 00:23:19 Mr. Kolman said he would also try to obtain the information independently.
- 00:23:26 Sen. Fielder suggested taking the unsure option off the questionnaire and asking the counties to fill in the percentage amount. Sen. Brenden agreed.

Action on survey questions and process

- 00:24:18 **Motion:** Rep. McChesney moved to adopt the SJ 15 survey as revised by the work group.
- 00:24:44 Sen. Fielder requested that the revised survey be sent to the work group before it is sent to the counties. Sen. Brenden asked staff to email the revised survey to the work group and if anyone had a concern to call Mr. Kolman. Rep. McChesney agreed that the work group should look at the revisions before the survey is sent to the counties.
- 00:25:50 Rep. Lieser asked about the time line for the survey. Mr. Kolman indicated that he will send the revised survey and letter to the counties by either Friday, July 26 or Monday, July 29. If the surveys are returned by August 23, they will be included in the September 2013 EQC meeting packets. If the surveys are not returned until November 1, then they will be included in the January 2014 EQC packet.
- 00:28:19 Mr. Kolman read the changes for question 20 and Rep. White added his addition to the question.
- 00:29:15 Mr. Kolman indicated that SJ 15 requires sending the survey to counties with 15% or more of their land owned by the BLM and the USFS. Since the EQC in June talked about adding Department of Interior lands he asked the work group if they wanted to also include Department of Interior lands in the survey which would add Glacier National Park in Glacier County and Fort Keogh in Custer County. He said Fort Keogh is owned by the Department of Agriculture. Sen. Fielder and Rep McChesney agreed with including the two additional counties in the survey.
- 00:32:11 Rep. White asked what percentage of federal lands were in Glacier and Custer Counties. Mr. Kolman said that Custer County has 14% USFS and BLM land. If Fort Keogh is added the total amount of federal land in Custer County would be 16%. He said Glacier County only has 2% federal land, but If Glacier National Park is added the total amount of federal land in Glacier County would be 20%.
- 00:32:52 Sen. Brenden thought Custer County should be included in the survey.
- 00:33:38 Rep. McChesney also thought that Custer County should be included in the survey, but did not know enough about Glacier County to give an opinion.

- 00:33:55 Sen. Hamlett thought it was important to include Glacier County in the survey because management on federal land impacts other entities in the county and gave the example that forest fires affect the watershed. Without objection from the work group, Sen. Brenden said to include Custer County and Glacier County in the survey.
- 00:35:15 Rep. White clarified that there was a total of 35 counties in the survey. Mr. Kolman confirmed that number was correct.
- 00:35:39 **Vote:** The motion to approve the survey as revised by the work group carried unanimously by voice vote.
- 00:36:05 Sen. Fielder confirmed that a copy of the letter to the county commissioners would be sent along with the survey.
- 00:36:30 Sen. Fielder requested that the work group be sent a list of the counties included in the survey. Mr. Kolman said that he will provide the work group with the information.

Public comment

- 00:37:07 Julia Altemus, representing Montana Wood Products Association, thanked the committee for their effort in putting together the survey and gave some background information on SRS funding. She suggested that in addition to SRS payments the EQC may want to ask about the economic impact of industries that rely on federal lands within each county.
- 00:41:19 Ben Lamb, representing himself, recommended that the survey also include looking at non-extractive or recreational uses on public lands.

Questions from the committee

- 00:45:11 Rep. McChesney indicated that the work group may want to consider asking about recreational use on public lands. Sen. Brenden agreed and said it could be included in a follow up survey.
- 00:46:08 Sen. Fielder said that some questions about recreational use are covered in the current survey. Rep. Lieser said that question 14 may provide some information on recreational use and agreed that it is a topic that should be included in a follow up survey.
- 00:47:25 Sen. Fielder asked if staff could provide the economic details of SRS, PILT and any other funding sources. Sen. Brenden requested staff to follow up on the information.
- 00:48:54 Sen. Brenden adjourned the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

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