

Columbia County RAC Meeting Notes

March 16, 2020 | Best Western Hotel, Dayton, Washington

Updated 4.9.2020

Participants: Shannon McDaniels, Jennifer Dixon, Glen Mindel, Brett Harting, Kari Dingman, Mike Talbott, Ann Walsch, John Foltz, Gerald Middel, Mike Rassbach (DFO), Darcy Weseman (Notes), Shannon Dunfee (FS employee)

SRS Overview/Indirect Overhead (3%)

- RAC approve 3% overhead on funded projects. In previous years, each approved project would be reduced by 3%. Those funds (3%) would cover agency overhead, such as: paperwork and accounting.
- **Decision:** Approved 3% overhead rate.
- Update 4.9.2020 – per follow up calls, all members approved.

Prior year projects approved

- **Action Item-** Mike will send out prior-year projects after the meeting for those on the phone.
- 2 meetings in 2017 (June 26 and Aug 14) and approved projects.
 - Write-up on how money was spent from Kenny Bott (bulletin boards and fire rating signs).
 - Another project on noxious weed control completed 450 acres in 2019.
 - Trail maintained in wilderness. Project completed, work done in Oct. 2017. All 5 miles trail maintained.
 - Meadow Creek trail maintenance. Project completed in Aug. 2018. 4.5 miles trail received maintenance, cleared and reestablished drain dips and culverts.
 - Little Tucannon PALs Phase 2 request stream restoration work. Not approved for funding. Completed in 2018.
 - 46 road work. Completed in 2018.
 - 64 road safety improvements. Combined RAC \$ with FS \$ and Ski Bluewood road maintenance project.
- **Action Item-** in the future on write-up of project completion reports would be nice to know if they requested more than what approved, what didn't get done or if able to get all of it done. Did they leverage other funds or did part of the project not get completed?

Overview SRS RAC Status and Available Funding

- We have until Sept. 30, 2022 to obligate funds for projects. Implementation must be complete Sept. 30, 2023.

- \$51,488 available to approve and spend now. An additional \$40,000+ that will come available as soon as work through our budget process.
- We have 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 funds to spend.
- We can approve projects today.

Project Presentations

Blues Crew and Wenaha-Tucannon trail signs

- Requesting \$7,000

Tucannon Recreation Improvements

- Repair horse mangers, fire rings, bulletin boards (replace) with larger ones to accommodate new signs, maps and fee information.
- Requesting \$7,500

Wenaha Tucannon wilderness

- Backlog maintenance on 15 miles of wilderness trail. Bring back to national standards and complete loop trail system. Completed with partners and volunteers.
- Provide users with more opportunities.
- Backcountry Horsemen, Blues Crew, Washington Trails Association (partners)
- Requesting \$10,000
 - Question on what the money is going toward? FS salary and equipment? The money would be for salary.

Little Tucannon PALs Phase 2

- Improve flood plain connectivity in Little Tucannon and habitat for Bull Trout.
- Additional funds needed to address maintenance of structure and more post assisted log structures (PALs). High flows removed some structures due to slope of stream and speed of flow.
- Requesting \$16,750.
- Interest from RAC in potentially deferring this project. \$1,500 for monitoring costs. Can't figure out what those will be. Interest in learning where that comes from.

Columbia County Noxious Weed Treatments

- Noxious weed treatments to maximize efficiency of efforts by treating cross-boundaries in vicinity of Rainwater and wildlife areas, as well as Col. Co. roads.
- FS and F&W work together in Tucannon and Asotin Creek to control noxious weeds. 500 acres controlled and 500 acres wildlife habitat restored or improved. Work coordinated with partners, including CTUIR and WDFW.
- Unused funds will be returned to RAC. How does that work?
- Requesting \$15,000

Decision Points and Action Items:

- **Action Item** – Mike will follow up with a few of the RAC members not present tonight to confirm they are comfortable with decision made by RAC at tonight’s meeting.
- **Decision** - RAC voted unanimously in support of **approving all proposals excepted Little Tucannon PALs project**, which will be deferred at this time.
- **Action Item**- Aaron Gagnon will be new Ranger and likely Designated Federal Official. Mike will transition information on RAC to Aaron. He may want to have meeting real quick once he comes on board since RAC times out in 2022.
- Unused funds would be available for additional projects later.
- Update 4.9.2020: Per follow up calls, 3 members supported decision and one person abstained from voting.

Public Forum

- No members of the public showed up at the meeting.

Next Meeting

- **TBD when new District Ranger beings.**