

Archaeological Resources Issue Team
Meeting Agenda and Notes
Redmond Library, Feb. 27, 2002

Issue Team members present: Ron Gregory (BLM IT lead), Susan Gray, Ward Tonsfeldt, Kay Yoder, Mollie Chaudet (BLM plan lead)

Not present: Sally Bird (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs)

The following items constitute the agenda for the Feb. 27 meeting:

1. Planning Boundary Adjustment
2. Review of issue goal and future desired condition
3. Discussion about “Resources “at-risk” strategic paper
4. What constitutes “significance”
5. Comments from the State Office about “at risk” matrix
6. Criteria for “at risk” resources (where it has been, where it is now)

Notes relative to agenda:

1. Planning boundary adjustment:

Ron Gregory passed around new maps to each IT member of the planning area. That map showed the location of inclusion of new lands to the planning area relative to a recent management decision. The expansion includes lands south of Prineville Reservoir and east of County Rd 27. After members had an opportunity to study the new addition, Ron asked IT members if that addition would require rethinking our issue description or if it would in any way change things relative to “at risk” significant archaeological resources across the planning area. After a brief discussion, the team members were in agreement that the boundary expansion would not have any effect on the issue description.

2. Review of Issue Goal and Future Desired Condition:

Before the team moved forward with any new discussions about “criteria” for at-risk resources, or development of alternatives, Ron asked the team if they were comfortable with the way the Issue Goal and Future Desired Condition had been written. Was there anything the IT members felt needed to be included or omitted from the statements that would make them more accurate. Team members talked briefly about the additional acreage to the planning area as noted in #1 and whether that would make any difference to the Issue Goal and Future Desired Condition. Ultimately, team members were in agreement that the new lands would provide no additional information about the Issue Goal and Future Desired Condition and that they needed no omissions or additions to the text.

3. Resources “At-Risk” paper:

Ron Gregory gave a brief presentation about the Resources “At-Risk” paper. The purpose of that presentation was to provide issue team members with a better understanding as to why the Prineville BLM is addressing the issue of “at-risk”, significant archaeological resources in the Upper Deschutes planning effort. The “At-Risk” paper was the direct result of an Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit of the BLM cultural resources program. Information provided to issue team members from the Executive Summary of the “BLM Cultural Resources At Risk” is as follow:

- ❖ Much of the cultural resource base is seriously threatened...and will soon lack sufficient integrity and representativeness to relate anything more than minor anecdotes.
- ❖ Although the BLM has done a good job of complying with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, they are failing to actively manage the resources entrusted to them.
- ❖ Section 106 is not the same as long-term management of cultural properties for the full range of values they contain.
- ❖ The OIG found that the BLM cultural heritage staff spend 70 to 99 percent of their time on Section 106 compliance work, as opposed to proactive cultural program work such as stabilizing and/or interpreting sites.
- ❖ A major reason for the deficiencies cited by the OIG is the flat staffing level maintained by the BLM cultural program for the past 25 years, especially compared to the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service which manage less land and fewer cultural resources.
- ❖ Despite the flat staffing levels, the Section 106 compliance workload continues to increase and what little free time there may be left outside of section 106, tends to be absorbed by other requirements such as Native American consultation or coordination with other agencies, entities, etc.

After the presentation, Ron gave copies of the Executive Summary to each team member to review more closely if they wished after the meeting.

4. What constitutes “Significance”:

The issue to be addressed by this issue team deals with how to manage “at-risk”, significant archaeological resources in a proactive manner. However, during previous meeting discussions it was uncertain whether the term “significant” had been adequately defined for issue team members. Ron Gregory informed issue team members that federal agencies used the term “significant” archaeological resources as

that defined by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as noted at 36 CFR 60.4, i.e., significant archaeological resources are those included on, or eligible for inclusion to, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Archaeological resources are evaluated against four criteria to determine if they are NRHP eligible. It was explained to issue team members that those criteria are as follows:

Criteria (a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Criteria (b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Criteria (c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Criteria (d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Ron informed team members that just because sites were not considered eligible for the National Register did not mean that they were not protected or managed by the BLM. Indeed, the BLM manages archaeological resources for a variety of values in accordance with its 8100 manual. But that for this particular planning issue, the primary focus was directed toward those resources deemed “significant” as defined by the Advisory Council and that are “at-risk” due to various direct or indirect threats.

5. Comments from the State Office (S.O.) about “at risk” matrix: Ron informed the IT members that he had sent a copy of the criteria for “at risk” resources matrix they had developed at the previous meeting to the State Office cultural resource program lead for review and that he had received comments back from the S.O. Those comments are as follows:

The “proximity” risk factors were redundant with the some of the threats that followed. Consequently, at risk sites were being treated twice.

The reviewers were concerned that the numerical ranking was too objective and the matrix might be more effective if subjectivity played a larger role.

They listed other risk factors such as fire or weathering that might be added to the matrix.

They suggested that we develop a matrix that included the following four ranking factors: 1) Severity and immediacy of threat; 2) Significance of the cultural property; 3) Partnership and/or cost-sharing opportunities; and 4) Opportunities for developing interpretive or public outreach products.

6. Criteria for “At-Risk” Resources: As a result of IT meeting discussion items 3, 4, and 5, team members developed the following criteria for “at-risk” resources table:

Severity and Immediacy of threats to Redmond Caves

	Soil Compaction	Vandalism	Artifact Collection	Erosion	Surf. Degradation	Dumping	Fire	
Activities								Total
Off road driving	Not Applicable							
Hiking	1	3	3	1	1	1	2	12
Biking	1	3	3	1	1	1	1	11
On-road driving	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	9
Camping	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	13
Rock climbing	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	9
Total	9	15	10	6	10	11	11	

Numerical ranking of impacts from activities at Redmond Caves where, High=3; Moderate=2; Low=1

For the next IT meeting, Ron was given the assignment of producing similar tables of Severity and Immediacy of threats for the other identified “at-risk” resources. He was also given the assignment to produce tables for Opportunities for Partnerships and Cost-Sharing, and Opportunities for Interpretive and public outreach products. Based on tables developed for Severity and Immediacy of Threats, Significance of Cultural Property, Opportunities for Partnerships and Cost-Sharing, and Opportunities for Interpretive and public outreach products the final table developed would be the one for Priority ranking of “at-risk” archaeological resources.

Once Ron had developed those preliminary tables, he would email them to the other team members to review prior to their meeting the following week on Wed. March 6, 2002 at the Redmond Library (*As a postscript, those tables were developed and Ron emailed them to team members Friday, March 1, 2002*).

