

COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA
Mack Ridge Working Group Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2002

Attendees:

Robert Anthony	Pat Kennedy	Neal McKinstry	Jane Ross
Sue Benjamin	Mel Lloyd	Tom Nix	Lovell Sasser
Kevin Foote	Tom Lucks	Clark Rieves	

Greetings and Introductions

Kevin Foote opened tonight's meeting at 5:06 p.m. The group is meeting tonight to finish drafting its future management statement for presenting to the Advisory Council and also describe its vision for the Mack Ridge area.

There were no corrections to the November 12 meeting minutes.

Working Group Discussions

Jane Ross, Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA) Planning Team Leader, asked the group to focus on their goals statement tonight, cautioning them to be specific to aid in guiding both present and future BLM staff in managing the CCNCA, according to the Working Group's vision.

Kevin asked if it was appropriate to include off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in the activity category, and Jane agreed that, in the group's effort to create a quiet zone in the Mack Ridge area, that wording should be struck.

Lovell Sasser reported that Ken Currey is not willing to compromise on banning motorized traffic from the proposed overlook. Kevin indicated that he would not argue Ken's position but proposed that the group might still want to consider recommending this ban as a way to create the desired quiet use zone. The proposed sole overlook open to motorized traffic would then be the previously discussed far-south overlook.

Sue Benjamin would like to see the 4-wheel drive access road, up the front of Mack Ridge, reworked and improved. Kevin agreed with her, saying that it is a safety issue, as well as an eyesore.

Lovell wanted to reiterate and clarify that Moore Fun and the *front-side* of Mack Ridge Trails should be designated for mountain bikes only.

Jane stated that she would like to set triggers in the Resource Management Plan (RMP), similar to what was done in the 1998 Ruby Canyon Plan, but a more practical

strategy would be to set realistic thresholds. Then, once those thresholds are reached, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) should bring the public back into the process for implementing timely and appropriate management actions.

Lovell pointed out that, while it was agreed at the last meeting that competitive horseback events would not be encouraged, they should not be prohibited. Discussion ensued and the group agreed that horseback events should not be singled out – but decided they were not in favor of any competitive events, except for, perhaps, hiking/running events. Competitive events run a much higher risk for damaging an already vulnerable resource. The group felt the plan should limit these events, and any concerns in this regard would be controlled through the Working Group's proposed group event limitations. The Working Group agreed that competitive events should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The group decided to revise its definition, developed during the last meeting, of an event. A competitive event is composed of any amount of people, whether it is 5, 50, or 500 people. Revising a sentence in the November 12 meeting minutes: a group of 20 to 50 people *should*, rather than *could*, require a special use authorization by the BLM.

Bob Anthony asked about the issue of grazing allotments in the Mack Ridge area. After some discussion on this topic, the group agreed to recognize that grazing allotments might remain, yet the group does not want to encourage maintaining grazing allotments. The group would like to retire grazing allotments in the Mack Ridge area, if the opportunity presents itself.

The group also agreed that an important goal is to both monitor and improve the ecological health of Mack Ridge.

Jane explained what the coming months will bring during the CCNCA planning process. Jane stressed that the group's work is not completely done, and members will be asked to return next summer/fall to offer comment on the draft document. A map reflecting the proposed trail system will be part of the alternative document presented to the Advisory Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.