

RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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**RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

Teleconference

RMAC Members Present

Chair Marc Horney
Lance Criley
Billie Roney

RMAC Members Absent

Vice Chair Rich Ross
Sheryl Landrum
Katie Delbar, ex officio member
Taylor Hagata
Bart Cremers
Andréé Soares
John Van Duyn
Don Watson
Kristen Murphy

RMAC Staff

Deniele Cade, Licensing Analyst
Kristina Wolf, Environmental Scientist

Department Staff

None

The Board's mission is to lead California in developing policies and programs that serve the public interest in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable management of forest and rangelands, and a fire protection system that protects and serves the people of the state.

Items are numbered by their Item Number on the agenda and documented below in order of their introduction during the meeting.

1) Call to Order and Webinar Format – Dr. Kristina Wolf

2) Chairman’s Report

Member John Van Duyn has resigned due to time constraints; filling this seat with an individual having knowledge of forestry operations (e.g., Registered Professional Forester), could be valuable.

Member Sheryl Landrum has moved out of the state and will remain in her seat until it expires in January 2022 or someone is found to take the seat, whichever is earlier. If an individual from the natural resources and conservation community in brushland and grassland ecosystems in Southern California could fill this seat, that would be valuable. Member Landrum’s replacement at the San Diego Resource Conservation District may be willing to fill the seat, but it may take some time for that to happen as they get settled in. Member Criley indicated that Joel Kramer is a potential candidate.

Member Don Watson’s and Member Lance Criley’s terms are expiring in January 2022. Member Criley is willing to continue in his seat if he is reappointed. Member Watson has moved to Colorado and will be vacating his seat when it expires in January.

Nominations could not be made at this meeting without a quorum, and this will be revisited at the November meeting.

Member Kristen Murphy is no longer with the RCD, and Sara Letton, who has replaced her, is willing to fill the seat, and a nomination will be submitted for her. **Dr. Wolf will also send out a call for nominations and blank nomination forms.** All nominations must include a complete nomination form, a resume or CV, and a Letter of Interest addressed to Chair Keith Gilless with the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board).

Budget Update

Dr. Wolf provided an update on the budget. RMAC was allocated \$5,000 for travel expenses in 2021/22, which are the only allowable expenses at this time. In the past, it appeared that \$10,000 had been allocated, but this year only \$5,000 was allocated. The prior year’s funds (2020/21) have expired and may no longer be accessed.

3) Approval of June 2021 and August 2021 Meeting Minutes

The June 2021 meeting minutes were based on meeting notes and recollection, because a recording was not available. If members have additions or changes to make to the draft, they may provide Kristina with edits via email to Kristina.wolf@bof.ca.gov. August draft meeting minutes were also sent to members for their review prior to this meeting.

Lacking a quorum, the meeting minutes were not approved.

4) Update on Grazing License and Land Management templates presentation to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection – Dr. Marc Horney, Chair

Chair Horney reported on his presentation to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection on September 22, 2021. Chair Gillies thanked RMAC for taking the initiative to address this issue, and suggested that RMAC consider inviting the California Coastal Commission to provide input as well. The Board authorized the RMAC to form a subcommittee of experts including RMAC members and members external to the RMAC. The RMAC will solicit volunteers from appropriate organizations and plan to form the committee at the November meeting, if a quorum is present.

Member Criley asked for clarification of what a grazing license is in the context of the state. Chair Horney explained that “license” is being used in place of the commonly used term “lease”; Member Roney stated that the term lease allows for partial possession, while a license allows for designated use of the property for a specified period of time but does not imply any form of possession. Member Criley stated that the term “permit” has been used instead of lease for similar reasons.

5) Update on Potential Informational Hearings about fuels management treatment tools, with an emphasis on prescribed herbivory – Marc Horney, Chair

RMAC was contacted by California’s Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN), which works through policy to promote agricultural solutions to climate problems. They are interested in wildland fire and fuel topics as part of this picture. CalCAN asked if RMAC would be interested in participating in some conversations with one or more state legislative committees on natural resources. Topics would include prescribed burning and prescribed grazing. In the coming months there may be a chance to present to one of these committees regarding the use of prescribed grazing for fuels management. The RMAC is NOT a lobbying organization and cannot participate in promotion of any legislation, so Dr. Wolf is working with legal counsel to ensure there are no violations of the statute that created the RMAC. Currently, it sounds possible for the RMAC to provide impartial information at one or more of these hearings on the use of grazing for vegetation management, in the context of fire mitigation, and the Chair will keep the RMAC apprised of any developments on this going forward.

6) RMAC Letters to State Agencies – Kristina Wolf, Board Staff

Annually the RMAC is required to reach out to the agencies and Board that it is charged with advising in relation to rangelands. The RMAC must obtain the annual priorities of the Board, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), and California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), as those priorities would relate to rangeland resources in the state. An example of a draft letter to the CDFA was shared, and **members will receive a copy of these draft letters via email to provide comments or revisions. Once revised, letters will be sent to the Board and agencies, ideally no later than October 15th.**

At the January meeting, the RMAC would establish their annual priorities, incorporating those from advised agencies as appropriate. Those priorities will be presented for approval to the Board at their next meeting.

Member Criley asked about requesting priorities from the CCI (Carbon Credit Institute). ***Correction: CCI is California Climate Investments, and the RMAC is mandated to incorporate the priorities of the Board, CDFG, CalEPA, and CNRA.***

8) Updates from Partner Organizations & Public Forum

- Member Billie Roney and Vice-Chair Rich Ross shared photos of bulldozer work with the RMAC via email, showing bulldozed fire lines where significant damage was caused in a very productive 700-acre meadow with hand-dug irrigation ditches. Chair Horney proposed an agenda item for a discussion on dozer operations and guiding principles at the November meeting, including speakers from CAL FIRE to discuss this.

Member Criley stated that Resource Advisors are generally involved in assisting fire operations to minimize impacts to sensitive or valuable resources. Members Roney and Ross will gather more information on the extent of this kind of issue, and report back to the RMAC to determine if this should be agenda item at a future meeting.

- Member Roney provided an update on a letter from the California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) to Governor Newsom requesting state lands be opened to grazing in response to the potential emergency drought declaration in California.
- Chair Horney propose agenda item in November regarding rangeland management specialist (RMS) positions, prompted by a failed search for an RMS at the Inyo National Forest, as no applications for the position were received. Chair Horney may invite folks from BLM, USFS, and educators to have a conversation about where the problems seem to lie in producing students that could fill RMS positions.

Other Announcements:

- The California Rangeland Conservation Coalition (CRCC) Summit is Monday January 24th.
- The fall California Pacific Chapter of the Society for Range Management (Cal-PAC SRM) is Thursday Oct 21st.

Next meeting: Wed, Nov 10, 12:30 PM.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:29 PM.