

Nedra Chandler
CADENCE
1209 Stuart Street, Helena, MT 59601
cadence@montana.com/406-457-1231

TO: Participants in the July 29, 2004 Canyon Ferry Working Group meeting

FROM: Nedra Chandler, Facilitator

SUBJECT: Summary Themes and Next Steps

DATE: July 31, 2004

Context/Purpose

The purpose and time for this meeting was set last January when Canyon Ferry Working Group participants agreed that each of their subcommittees would meet together in the summer to report progress and jointly consider their next steps. Recreation and operations, commercial services, and transportation & access were the three remaining subcommittees after environment and lands disbanded, and merged with recreation and operations.

After the January joint Working Group meeting, subcommittees met again in April/May 2004. There was low turnout for three of the subcommittees (recreation & operations, transportation & access, and environment & lands), but large turnout and public attention for the commercial services subcommittee. The summary from that meeting noted working group participants' questions about Reclamation's Directives and Standards agency-wide policy document, and how/whether that policy could affect the future of Canyon Ferry recreation in general, and the future of Yacht Basin in particular.

On July 15, Senator Baucus introduced legislation to provide for the continued operation of Yacht Basin Marina. Just prior to the July 29th meeting, Reclamation found that the 800 notification cards announcing the date and place for the meeting had been mailed late by the post office. Reclamation staff then put meeting notices in area newspapers and called their active list of interested people to let them know of the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting was to have an open discussion devoted to mutual learning and listening between key members of Reclamation's Montana Area Office leadership team (Jamie Macartney, Dan Jewell, Tom Sawatzke and Paul Backlund) and others with a stake in the outcome of recreation and land management actions at Canyon Ferry.

Among the Resource Management Plan implementation questions Reclamation had was, "is the working group process producing any tangible outcomes and is there value in continuing the working group process?" However, the most urgent question from meeting attendees appeared to be "how are we going to resolve the crisis related to Yacht Basin Marina?"

Approximately 100 participants in the meeting included Reclamation Montana Area Office leadership team members and staff, Canyon Ferry cabin owners, boaters, business

owners, all of the marina operators on the reservoir (Yacht Basin, Goose Bay and Kim’s), agencies (e.g., Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, Broadwater County, Gateway Economic Development Corporation), media (Helena Independent Record and KTVH), Congressional staff from Senator Baucus’ office and Congressman Rehberg’s office, others who simply described themselves as Canyon Ferry “users.”

Every participant was asked to introduce themselves and offer their perspectives in response to two questions:

- 1) What main thing(s) did you come here tonight wanting to express?
- 2) What main thing(s) did you come here seeking to understand?

Major, Common Themes

Want to Express	Want to Understand
Bureau of Reclamation is here tonight to listen and learn and to respond to peoples’ previous request to see agency leadership at a Canyon Ferry meeting.	Specific needs people have here, and problems people feel are most important to address in the near and longer term.
We are here because we love this place and want to leave it in good shape for future generations to love and enjoy.	Want to know how to help – here to listen and learn.
We are here out of respect, concern, and support for marina owners, especially the Fraziers, who have done so much for the community of boaters and Canyon Ferry users.	What now? Why has it come to this? How will the lease renewal be resolved? Where? There is genuine confusion about why Yacht Basin and the Bureau can’t sit down and figure this out. What is the way out of this divisiveness?
We’re here to say again that we have chronic low trust with the Bureau of Reclamation.	Is it too late to do anything given the Bureau of Reclamations Directives and Standards policy document already in place, and given that Reclamation is in the implementation phase of the Resource Management Plan?
We’re here to say again: this impasse over the Yacht Basin lease renewal is an urgent crisis.	Where do we go for answers? Why can’t Reclamation and the Fraziers and all of us take some risks to make sure we keep the marina open with the Fraziers there?

Other Themes/Questions Brought Forward by Participants

- Road safety and speed bumps are central concerns for some. Also very pleased with improvements at day use areas and response/management by Reclamation. Thank you.
- What's good for the south end of the reservoir is good for the north end. How about a little attention there, and a meeting in Townsend to have north end perspectives included in management decisions?
- Tired of "aimless bickering."
- Why can't the marina operators buy the land?

Themes from Commercial Services Plan Consultant

Bob Aukerman, professor emeritus from Colorado State University, is under contract to Reclamation to produce a Canyon Ferry Commercial Services Plan and an accompanying economic analysis. The draft is due in August. Aukerman let participants know that among his recommendations will be "no closures of commercial operations" and "there should be no big operator that takes over." After Aukerman delivers the draft, Reclamation will make it available for public comment and convene public meetings in Townsend and Helena this fall.

Next Steps

Dan Jewell, Deputy Area Manager for Reclamation's Montana Area Office said, with cautions about the time frame, Reclamation has the flexibility and ability to explore some of the ideas brought forward tonight and he will do that. Specifically, the idea of privatizing concessions is a difficult one, but probably worthwhile to explore. Reclamation is also willing to continue to discuss shorter-term options to resolve issues with the concessionaires.

Mike Sedlock and Darryl James, both working group participants offered their parting thoughts. Sedlock said, regarding continuity for the work group process, it's important to focus on first things first and see what the marina owners come up with, and then go from there. James observed that clearly people want answers they can't get tonight. It's also clear that Reclamation is going to find a way to keep Yacht Basin open, and that these issues are obviously going to require patience and trust building.

Paul Backlund, Canyon Ferry Facility Manager acknowledged that there is still lots of mistrust here, and then thanked everyone for their efforts to move forward productively. He emphasized his door is always open, and that anyone interested should call him or to stop by. Backlund said he is willing to listen, even though he may not always give the answers people seek, and he will work with interested people and partner agencies to find

solutions. The next opportunity Reclamation will have to engage the public will be through the two public input sessions later this fall for the Commercial Services Plan. After that, Reclamation plans to engage the interested and involved parties as the issues arise -- with the following premise in mind: if you get the right people together, with good information, in a process that has integrity, they invent solutions to public problems.

Process Advice

As the facilitator for the meeting, my procedural advice to all of you seeking to shape these public decisions, is to choose a primary strategy and pursue it with focus (e.g., voluntary problem solving, court, media, Congress). The point is to put the majority of your energy and attention on one strategy you think is most likely to get the results you want, rather than trying, shotgun style, to work all strategies at the same time.

As you consider the themes that emerged in this meeting, and what they mean for your own strategy, and for the decision making process moving forward in the most useful way, you might find it helpful to consider:

- Satisfaction: What is the likely outcome of each strategy and which one is most likely to satisfy your key interests and get results?
- Transaction costs: What will be most cost-effective in terms of time, energy, and resources consumed?
- Working relationships: Which strategy seems to have the most potential to build trust, working relationships and public understanding? What can you or your constituent groups do to build working relationships and get to practical options that can be supported together?
- Focus on the future: Does it seem like the strategy you are using will help generate public understandings or agreements that could minimize conflict over Canyon Ferry recreation and land management in the future? Which strategy seems most promising in this way? If not, what strategy would?

It was an honor to assist you at the meeting. All the best to you in creating the best possible outcomes at Canyon Ferry.

ATTACHMENT: Summary of Responses on Comment Sheets

Participants turned in six written public comment sheets at the July 29, 2004 Canyon Ferry working group meeting with the following themes:

1. What is your primary interest in the Canyon Ferry Resource Management Plan implementation? Which part(s) is/are most important to you?

Continued expansion for public access and recreation facilities enhancement, water and road safety and reducing the various user conflicts.

As a cabin site owner, I want to see enhanced recreation opportunities and protection of property rights. Yacht Basin provides fair competition and service for the area.

Initially, the preservation of Yacht Basin is in the hands of the Fraziers – hope they can buy the land with proper reservations and restrictions.

All of it, especially access and now Yacht Basin.

Saving Yacht Basin Marina.

That Reclamation will make the business climate so poor that the marinas will close even though they aren't "closed by the BOR."

2. Imagining it's five years from now, what evidence will you look for to know the public information & involvement process is working – that it's functional and is worth your time, and worth the time of Reclamation and its partner agencies to engage in?

Wider public highways and roads accessing public recreation facilities. Increased recreation facilities areas, road guard rails, water/water craft regulations posted at facilities, swimming regulations, etc.

If the government takes over the marinas, I suspect it will be run like the post office? Not like the wonderful job being done at the all the marinas now.

Canyon Ferry Reservoir Resource Management Plan.

Some action and decisions being made. Marinas owning the land. Plan for Court Sheriff is very good. Ramps and outhouses are a welcome addition.

Things here are not that much different. Only a large population would cause a change of that magnitude.

3. What is the best way, best method, or methods to keep you informed of the progress of implementation of the RMP, and about your opportunities to shape decisions? (e.g., website, emails, post cards, you call Reclamation, Reclamation comes to your meetings, Reclamation convenes meetings, other...)

All are good. Plus newspaper articles in all major cities. Update on meetings shortly after meetings. Give at least one week notice of public meetings.

E-mail.

Postcards and e-mail.

All of the above.

E-mail and website.

END