

Governor's Task Force on Rock Springs Draft RMP Group Charter

Approved unanimously by the Task Force Voting Members on December 11, 2023

1. PURPOSE

The Governor's Task Force, representing multiple Wyoming interests, will cooperatively develop recommendations for responsible and durable management of the Rock Springs Management Area of Southwest Wyoming.

It will accomplish this through mutual education; transparency in process; fostering communication between interests; and identifying, evaluating, and recommending options that will balance the needs of the many stakeholders involved.

2. PRODUCTS AND OUTCOMES

The Task Force will develop recommendations for revising the Draft Resource Management Plan to meet the interests of Wyoming stakeholders. Recommendations will be submitted to the Governor and the Bureau of Land Management, and made available to the public.

3. GEOGRAPHIC AREA

This effort will be limited to developing recommendations pertaining to the lands managed by the BLM's Rock Spring Field Office.

4. TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

The Task Force is representative of persons with interests in management actions pertaining to the BLM's Rock Springs Field Office. Although it is recognized that Task Force members have multiple interests and may participate in discussions from various perspectives, Task Force members broadly represent the following organizations and interest groups:

- Conservation
- Economic Development/Tourism
- Livestock
- Local Government
- Mining
- Motorized Recreation
- Oil and Gas
- Renewable Energy/Utilities
- Sportsmen/Hunting
- Wyoming House of Representatives
- Wyoming Senate

Task Force members have been asked and are expected to represent the interests of these groups. Ideas presented within Task Force discussions will not be assumed to be the official position of the organizations or groups represented unless specifically stated to be so. Task Force members have the responsibility to keep the organizations and interest groups they represent informed about the actions and outcomes of the Task Force's process.

Each interest group is represented by one voting member on the Task Force. Up to three supporting members (hereinafter "advisors") per interest group have been invited by the Governor to attend the meetings and provide counsel to the voting members. Advisors will not have the ability to vote, but instead may offer suggestions to the voting members. Break periods will be provided to allow voting members and advisors to convene.

In the event that a voting member cannot attend a meeting, he/she shall select an alternate from among their advisors without the concurrence of the Task Force. Alternates shall be fully briefed by the voting member before attending any meetings as the sole representative.

5. ROLE OF THE CHAIR

The chair will lead the Task Force through meetings in order to develop recommendations. The chair will work with the Ruckelshaus Institute to provide input and direction at various points throughout the process, as well as communicate with the Governor's office when necessary. The chair will participate as a non-voting member of the Task Force.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TASK FORCE

a.) Conduct of Task Force Members

Task Force members will engage in open communication at the meetings. This means disclosing interests, needs, actions, and issues in a timely manner and committing to the purpose of the Task Force. Task Force members will endeavor in good faith, and according to the Task Force ground rules, to develop recommendations that are satisfactory to all Task Force members. Task Force members will commit to using meeting time effectively to ensure that recommendations are completed within the allotted time frame.

b.) Keep Constituents Informed

Task Force members will engage in active communication with constituents about actions and outcomes of the Task Force. Active communication can include written, verbal, and electronic means of communicating. Members will have meeting summaries available to them for keeping constituents informed.

c.) Representing Constituents

In developing recommendations, Task Force members will consider the interests of other group members as well as their own particular interest group when reviewing issues and recommendations. Task Force members will invite proposals from their constituents that they will bring to the Task Force and will provide proposals from the Task Force to their constituents for feedback and input.

d.) Meeting Attendance

Each Task Force member is expected to attend and fully participate in each meeting, which includes being present for substantially all of the meeting. Task Force members shall read appropriate materials, complete tasks assigned by the chair, and arrive prepared to work.

In the event that neither the voting Task Force member nor any of the supporting Task Force members are able to attend a meeting of the Task Force, and the voting member is not in agreement with any actions taken by the Task Force during his/her absence, that member has five days after the meeting summary is released to register his/her dissatisfaction with actions taken. In this case, a reasonable amount of time will be devoted to the disputed action at the next meeting. Email may be used to expedite this process.

e.) Understanding and Abiding by the Charter

Task Force members are expected to read, fully understand, and conduct themselves in accordance with the requirements of this charter.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACILITATORS

The Task Force will be facilitated by staff of the Ruckelshaus Institute at the University of Wyoming. The roles and responsibilities of the Facilitators include:

- Facilitating meetings in a manner consistent with interest-based negotiations and this charter;
- Helping the Task Force stay on task and on process;
- Protecting Task Force members and their ideas from attack while ensuring that provocative issues are not avoided, but are discussed in a candid and respectful manner;
- Helping Task Force members to concisely describe their interests;
- Helping Task Force members find innovative and workable solutions;
- Helping Task Force members reach consensus;
- Providing for equitable participation by all Task Force members;
- Working, both at and between meetings, with Task Force members to assist in the free exchange of ideas between the Members and to resolve any impasses that may arise;
- Periodically surveying Task Force members to assess fairness, meaningfulness and efficiency of the process;
- Taking meeting notes and maintaining a list of significant topics on which the Task Force has reached consensus or have failed to reach consensus;
- Maintaining a public website that facilitates transparency in the process;
- Organizing meeting logistics including location, room arrangement, and food;
- Notifying Task Force members of meeting dates, locations, and logistics;
- Keeping meeting attendance records of all Task Force members;
- Maintaining a public website that facilitates transparency in the process;
- Hosting website with up to date agendas, meeting notes, and review documents; and
- Summarizing the work of the Task Force into a final report format and comment letter.

8. DECISION PROCESS

The Task Force will operate by consensus of all voting members represented at the meeting. Consensus is the decision rule that allows collaborative problem solving to work. It is a way for more than two people to reach agreement. Consensus prevents domination by the majority, allows building of trust and the sharing of information, especially under conditions of conflict. Consensus does not mean that everyone will be equally happy with the decision, but all do accept that the decision is the best that can be made at the time with the people involved.

Consensus requires sharing information, which leads to mutual education, which provides the basis for crafting workable and acceptable recommendations. Consensus promotes joint thinking of a diverse group and leads to creative solutions. Also, because parties participate in the deliberation, they understand the reasoning behind the recommendations and are willing to support them.

In making decisions, each voting Task Force member will indicate his/her concurrence on a specific proposal using a five-point scale. The scale allows Task Force members to clearly communicate their intentions, assess the degree of agreement that exists, and register their dissatisfaction without holding up the rest of the Task Force. The five-point scale is as follows:

1. Endorsement – Member likes it.
2. Endorsement with Minor Point of Contention – Basically, member likes it.
3. Agreement with Minor Reservations – Member can live with it.
4. Stand aside with major reservations – Formal disagreement, but will not block the proposal/provision.
5. Block – Member will not support the proposal.

If the reason for not being able to endorse a proposal is lack of information, the member must specify this and the information that is needed. Once the information has been obtained, the member must re-vote.

Facilitators will measure and record the Task Force's consensus on a given proposal by open polling of the voting members present. The levels of consensus are:

- Consensus - All voting members present rate the proposal as a 1, 2 or 3.
- Consensus with Reservations – All voting members present rate the proposal as a 1, 2 or 3, except at least one Task Force member rates it as a 4.
- No Consensus - Any voting member present rates the proposal as a 5.

Any voting member that rates a significant proposal (i.e., a proposal that involves significant discussion and has the support or qualified support of a majority of task force members) as a 4 or a 5 is required to specify their dissent in a written statement for inclusion in the final written report. Dissenters who share the same basic concerns can use a single dissention statement. Dissenters will also identify themselves by name on their dissention statements.

9. FINAL REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS & Comment Letter to the BLM

The Ruckelshaus Institute will assist the Task Force in drafting two documents:

1. A final report of Task Force Recommendations, to be signed by the chair, voting members, and advisors participating on the Task Force, and submitted to the Governor. The report will contain a detailed description of significant proposals discussed by the Task Force. Final recommendations to the Governor will include the proposals where consensus and consensus with reservations was reached (i.e., received votes of 1-4). The report will also contain the significant proposals that did not gain the consensus of the Task Force (i.e., received at least one 5 vote). In cases where a member rated a particular proposal as a 4 or 5, their dissent statement will be included in the report.
2. A comment letter from the Task Force on the Draft RMP/EIS for the Rock Springs BLM Field Office to be signed by the chair, voting members, and advisors participating on the Task Force, and submitted to the Rock Springs BLM Field Office. The comment letter will include the areas of consensus reached by the Task Force, but not the significant proposals that did not gain consensus. Dissent statements will also not be included in the comment letter.

10. GROUND RULES FOR INTERACTION

In order to have the most efficient and effective process possible, Task Force members will follow these basic ground rules:

Discussion Ground Rules During the Meetings

- Raise hand to be recognized by the Chairman/Facilitator.
- Speak one at a time in meetings as recognized by the Facilitator.
- Be concise and stick to the topics on the meeting agenda. Honor a two-minute time limit for statements and responses unless the Facilitator allows more time.
- Speak only on one topic per entry (no laundry lists).
- Speak to the whole group when talking.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Avoid off-topic questions.
- Treat each other, the organizations represented on the Task Force, the facilitators, and the Task Force itself with respect at all times.
- Refrain from interrupting.
- Monitor your own participation – everyone should participate, but none should dominate.
- Adhere to the agenda and time schedule with diligence.
- Put cell phones on “vibrate” and leave the room when a call is received.
- Be prepared to start on time.
- Recognize that everyone’s interests are important.
- Avoid repetitiveness (i.e., one-track-mind behavior).
- Agree that it is okay to disagree, and disagree without being disagreeable.
- Avoid “cheap shots” and/or sarcasm.
- Refrain from hostility and antagonism.

- Leave personal agendas and “baggage” at the door; put personal differences aside in the interest of a successful Task Force.
- Focus on the problem, not the person.

Process Ground Rules Throughout the Stakeholder Process

- Adhere to the charter.
- Review information and stay informed.
- Work as team players and share all relevant information.
- Ask if you do not understand.
- Encourage free thinking.
- Offer mutually beneficial solutions.
- Encourage candid, frank discussions.
- Be honest and tactful.
- Avoid surprises.
- Openly express any disagreement or concern with all other Task Force members.
- Actively strive to see the other points of view.
- When communicating with the media, Task Force members will treat each other, the organizations represented in the Task Force, the facilitators, and the Task Force itself with respect.
- Follow through on commitments.
- Communicate the requirements of this charter with the organizations you represent to minimize the possibility of actions contrary to the charter.
- Commit to issues in which you have an interest.
- Support and actively engage in the Task Forces’ decision process.

11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Ruckelshaus Institute will provide a portal on its Rock Springs RMP website that allows the public to submit comments to the Task Force throughout the duration of the process.

The Task Force meetings will generally be closed to the public but may include portions where the public is invited to provide comment.

Final summaries of Task Force meetings will be available to the public on Ruckelshaus Institute’s website.

12. WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Task Force members are free to speak with the media. When speaking to the media, members must make it clear they are representing themselves and not the Task Force at-large. If the Task Force member feels uncomfortable speaking with the media, they may refer the media to the chair or the Governor’s office.

Concise talking points will be generated by the Task Force at the end of each meeting, summarizing the discussion. These talking points may be helpful in communicating with the media, as well as constituents.

13. SCHEDULE AND DURATION

The Task Force will meet periodically at times and locations determined by the group. The intent of the Task Force is to provide advice and recommendations to the Governor. Duration of the Task Force is scheduled for six weeks.

14. AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER

Changes to the charter can be made at any meeting of the Task Force by unanimous consent.