USDA-Forest Service
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests
and Thunder Basin National Grassland

Douglas Ranger District
How it Works: Staff, Budgets, Projects, etc.

Thunder Basin Cooperative Working Group
April 13, 2017
Newcastle, Wyoming
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland

- Contains nearly 2.9-million acres of National Forests System lands
  - Located in 16 counties, in 2 states
- 1 Supervisor’s Office in Laramie
- 6 Ranger Districts
  - 3 in Wyoming and 3 in Colorado
  - Manage day-to-day operations
- Approximately $21 million annual budget
Douglas Ranger District Overview

- Manages the day-to-day operations on approximately 723,000-acres
  - Thunder Basin National Grassland (553,000-acres)
  - Laramie Peak Unit of the Medicine Bow National Forest (170,000-acres)
- Located in 8 counties and 8 conservation districts
- Both units are made of intermingled lands
  - Public domain lands
  - Acquired lands
- Pilot Energy Office with the BLM Buffalo Field Office
Douglas Ranger District Overview

- Approximately $2 million annual budget
- Staff
  - 37 permanent fulltime positions
  - 25 seasonal fulltime positions
  - 1 permanent fulltime position from the Supervisor’s Office
  - Approximately 6+ other positions located in Supervisor’s Office (Laramie) or other Ranger Districts (Laramie and Saratoga)
Douglas Ranger District Workload

• Energy Development
• Grazing
• Sensitive, Threatened, and Endangered Species
• Wildland Fire
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Air, Soil, Water, Fish
  • Thunder Basin National Grassland Processing Stock Water Rights
  • Laramie Peak Soil Survey
  • Thunder Basin National Grassland Road Decommissioning
  • Weston Area Off-Highway Vehicle Management and Rehabilitation
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Air, Soil, Water, and Fish

• Fire and Fuel
  • Thunder Basin National Grassland Prescribed Fires
  • Pine Creek/Upton Fuels Reduction
  • Spring Creek Vegetation Management
  • Northeast Laramie Peak Fuels Reduction
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Fire and Fuels (continued)
  • Wildcat (Laramie Peak Unit) Grazing
  • Thunder Basin National Grassland Grazing
  • Laramie Peak Unit Maintenance Burn (planning)
  • East York Fuels Reduction (planning)
  • Helios Vegetation Burning (planning)
  • Responding to Lighting and Human Caused Wildland Fires
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Fire and Fuel Resources

• Rangeland and Invasives
  • Spring Creek Conifer Encroachment
  • Noxious/Invasive Weeds Treatments
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Rangeland and Invasives (continued)
  • Rangeland Vegetation Evaluation
  • Small Waters Projects
  • Rangeland Vegetation Improved
  • Thunder Basin Governmental Cooperative Working Group and Learning Series
  • Arapaho Burn Cheatgrass Treatment
  • Wildlife: Lethal and non-lethal Prairie Dog Colony Management
  • Thunder Basin National Grassland Restoration
  • Grazing Permit and Agreement Administration
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Rangeland Resources
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Timber and Forest Vegetation
  • Fuelwood Permits
  • Post and Beam Permits
  • Transplants (Bonzai Trees)
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Timber and Forest Vegetation

• Wildlife and Botany
  • Prescribed Burns (Mountain plover and monarch butterfly habitat)
  • Turner Reservoir Repairs
  • Dickinson Farm Restoration
  • Non-lethal and lethal Prairie Dog Colony Management
  • Riparian Habitat Improvement (willow planting and tamarisk removal)
Douglas Ranger District Projects

- Wildlife and Botany (continued)
  - Wetland/Riparian Habitat Improvements
  - Greater Sage Grouse Habitat Improvements
  - Greater Sage Grouse Plan Amendment Implementation
  - Enclosure Reservoir Cattleguards
  - Mapping Prairie Dog Colonies
  - Sage Grouse Lek Surveys
  - Focal Species Monitoring (Forest and Grassland Plan)
  - Mountain Plover Surveys
  - Burrowing Owl Surveys
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Wildlife and Botany (continued)
  • Migratory Bird Surveys
  • Bat Surveys
  • Raptor Surveys
  • Goshawk Surveys
  • Winter Roost Surveys
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Wildlife and Botany Resources

• Recreation
  • Signing (roads, trails, sites, campgrounds, etc)
  • Outfitter and Guide study
  • Outfitter and Guide Permit Administration
  • Dispersed Camping Limitation
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Recreation (continued)
  • Douglas Trails Fire Rehabilitation
  • Trail UTV Purchase

• Archeology
  • Evaluating or protecting archeological or historical sites
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Archeological, Historical, and Cultural Resources

• Engineering
  • Douglas Ranger District Office Security Door
  • Esterbrook Workstation Old Shop Front Door
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Engineering (continued)
  • Esterbrook Workstation Bunkhouse Roof
  • Douglas Ranger District Office Move
  • Administering Engineering Projects
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Engineering Resources

• Minerals
  • Converse County Oil and Gas Plan of Development Environmental Impact Statement
  • Greater Crossbow Oil and Gas Plan of Development Environmental Impact Statement
  • Coal Lease Readjustments
  • Wright Coal Lease By Application (West Highlight)
Douglas Ranger District Projects

- Minerals (continued)
  - Coal Mine and Special Use Permit Administration
  - Antelope Road Relocation Phase 2
  - Oil and Gas Special Use Permits
  - Oil and Gas Leasing
  - Oil and Gas Inspection and Enforcement Actions
  - Road Use Permit Processing
  - Road Use Permit Administration
  - Oil and gas spill response and remediation
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Minerals (continued)
  • Processing Oil and Gas Sundry Notices
  • Processing Abraxas Application for Permit to Drill
  • Processing Wave Petroleum Application for Permit to Drill
  • Processing HD Adams Application for Permit to Drill
  • Processing True Jibilian Application for Permit to Drill
  • Processing Four Corners Application for Permit to Drill
  • Processing Devon Energy Applications for Permit to Drill (23)
  • Processing Off-lease Application for Permit to Drill Developments
  • Processing Mineral Material Authorizations
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Minerals (continued)
  • Administering Mineral Material Authorizations
  • Administering School Creek and North Antelope Rochelle Mine Scoria Contract
  • Administering Black Thunder Coal Mine Scoria Contract
  • Administering Antelope Mine Gravel Pit
  • Administering Special Use Permits for Survey and Testing
  • Administering Wyoming Department of Transportation Special Use Permits
  • Administering Thunder Basin Coal Special Use Permit
  • Paleontological Education and Evaluation
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Mineral Resources
Douglas Ranger District

• Lands and Realty
  • Administering PRECorp Authorization
  • Administering Triton Coal Special Use Permit
  • Administering Phillips and Bell/Scranton Ditches Special Use Permits
  • Sage Grouse Plan Amendment Implementation
  • Administering Off-site Mitigation and Restoration
  • Processing Britannia Land Exchange
  • Processing Inyan Kara Land Exchange
  • Processing Laramie Range / Parsons Creek Land Exchange
  • Evaluating Projects for Potential Affects to Lands and Realty Resources
Douglas Ranger District Projects

• Administrative
  • Information Education
  • Smokey Bear Appearances
  • Job Fairs
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland Priorities

• Restoration and Resiliency
  • Project planning will utilize the suite of tools available to improve and increase efficiency, including the following authorities: Farm Bill, HFRA, and Good Neighbor.
  • Objectives and management priorities for an integrated vegetation management program include:
    • **Sage Grouse Implementation Plan – Completion of Fiscal Year 2017 Items**
    • Timber Harvest – produce a timber sale program of 100,000 CCF;
      • NEPA decisions completed on North Savery and Teller/Wheatley
      • NEPA decisions on Fallen Piles;
    • **Integrated invasive weed treatments – implementation under the Invasive EIS Decision**
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland Priorities

• Restoration and Resiliency (continued)
  • Adaptive Rangeland Management NEPA Decisions – Pagoda and Coulton Creek
  • Water – Progress on NEPA and authorizations of water facilities on National Forest System lands (Ditch Bill and Water Conveyance Right of Ways)
  • Programmatic Agreement – Complete a Programmatic Agreement with the Colorado State Historical Preservation Office that includes vegetation activities
  • Fire/Fuels – Continued implementation of Pole Mountain Vegetation Project, Divide Peak Prescribed Burn and Steamboat Front
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland Priorities

- Sustainable Recreation Program
  - Recreation Site Analysis – Implementation priority activities in the implementation plan
- Travel Management
  - As (if) directed by the Regional Office, begin implementation of Travel Management Subpart C
  - Complete the Pole Mountain Travel Management Decision
- Capacity Analysis – Support Outfitter and Guide capacity studies and related NEPA decisions in support of permit reauthorization
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland Priorities

• Energy Development
  • Converse County Oil and Gas Plan of Development Environmental Impact Statement
  • Greater Crossbow Oil and Gas Plan of Development Environmental Impact Statement
  • Devon Energy M Creek Oil and Gas Plan of Development Environmental Impact Statement
  • Processing Oil and Gas Leases
  • Process Application for Permit to Drill in a timely manner
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland Priorities

• **Improve Business Operations**
  • Empower Employees
  • Responsible administrative management
  • Implement the Facilities Master Plan
Douglas Ranger District Workload Priorities

Organized into three categories:
• “Have To Do” Work
• “Need To Do” Work
• “Want To Do” Work
Douglas Ranger District Priorities

• “Have To Do” Work
  • Employee development and work environment (training required of a Federal employee and to successfully fulfill one’s job duties);
  • Fulfilling supervisory roles and responsibilities for a smooth operating organization;
  • Directly related to significant human health and safety, and/or environmental quality (i.e. oil and gas spills) risks that are emergencies;
  • Inspection and enforcement (compliance) actions related to any authorization the district administers to enforce Federal law;
Douglas Ranger District Priorities

• “Have To Do” Work (continued)
  • Required by Federal statute (for example, processing leasable mineral actions, consulting on threatened and/or endangered species, archeological clearances); and
  • Taking action and/or processing non-discretionary authorizations per Federal statute, which are typically actions connected to exercising property rights.
Douglas Ranger District Priorities

• “Need To Do” Work
  • Directly connected in supporting the accomplishment of “Have To Do” work;
  • Processing discretionary authorizations;
  • General maintenance and repair – unless a safety issue – of government property; and
  • Other actions that are not required by Federal statute, but may be required by regulation, policy, and/or a land management plan.
Douglas Ranger District Priorities

• “Want To Do” Work
  • All other work that is not defined as “Have To Do” or “Need To Do” work.
Summary

• The Douglas Ranger District is part of and subject to the Supervisor’s Office of the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland
• Defined Capacity (budget, staff, and time)
• A lot of project
• Defined workload prioritization
The End

Thank-you