

least one representative from wildlife interest groups, grazing interests, minerals and energy interests, and established environmental/conservation interests. The Governor will chair the council.

(iii) *Quorum and voting requirements.* The charter of the council will specify that 80% or 12 members must be present to constitute a quorum and conduct official business, and that 80% or 12 members of the council must vote affirmatively to refer an issue to BLM. Formal recommendations require agreement of at least three council members from each of the three groups.

(iv) *Subgroups.* Local rangeland resource teams can be formed under the auspices of the Statewide council, down to the level of a 4th order watershed. These local teams will provide local level input to the advisory council. They will meet at least quarterly and will promote a decentralized administrative approach, encourage good stewardship, emphasize coordination and cooperation among agencies, permittees and the interested public, develop proposed solutions and management plans for local resources on public lands, promote renewable rangeland resource values, develop proposed standards to address sustainable resource uses and rangeland health, address renewable rangeland resource values, propose and participate in the development of area-specific National Environmental Policy Act documents, and develop range and wildlife education and training programs. As with the RAC, an 80% affirmative vote will be required to send a recommendation to BLM.

Rangeland resource teams will not exceed 10 members and will include at least two persons from environmental or wildlife groups, two grazing permittees, one elected official, one game and fish district representative, two members of the public or other interest groups, and a Federal officer from BLM. Members will be appointed for two-year terms by the RAC and may be reappointed. No member may serve on more than one rangeland resource team.

In addition, technical review teams can be established on an as-needed basis by the BLM authorized officer in response to a request by a RAC or rangeland resource team, in response to a petition of local citizens, or on BLM's own motion. These teams will address specific unresolved technical issues. When the team is requested by the RAC or a rangeland resource team, its charge will be established jointly by BLM and the council; membership will be determined by BLM and will be limited to Federal employees and paid

consultants. Technical review teams will be limited to tasks relating to fact-finding within the geographic area and scope of management actions for which the rangeland resource team or RAC provides advice. Technical review teams will terminate upon completion of the assigned task.

Model C was developed by BLM to accommodate other structures of public participation, consistent with the requirements of FACA, FLPMA, and the goals of this rangeland management program. It has the following characteristics:

(i) *Council jurisdiction.* The jurisdiction of the council shall be on the basis of ecoregion, State, or BLM district boundaries.

(ii) *Membership.* Membership of the council will be 10 to 15 members, distributed in a balanced fashion among the three groups defined in § 1784.6-1(c).

(iii) *Quorum and voting requirements.* The charter of each council shall specify that a majority of each group must be present to constitute a quorum and conduct official business, and that a majority of each group must vote affirmatively to refer an issue to BLM Federal officer.

(iv) *Subgroups.* RACs may form local rangeland resource teams to obtain general local level input necessary to the successful functioning of the RAC. Such subgroups can be formed in response to a petition from local citizens or on the motion of the RAC. Membership in any subgroup formed for the purpose of providing general advice to the RAC on grazing administration should be constituted in accordance with provisions for membership in § 1784.6-1(c). Additionally, BLM may form technical review teams as needed to gather and analyze data and develop recommendations to aid the council. These teams may be formed at BLM's own option or in response to a request from the advisory council.

The Department believes that the above three models for public participation can be adapted to satisfy the concerns and needs of all areas which include public lands or other lands administered by BLM.

#### Section 1784.6-3 Technical Review Teams

Under the proposed rule an MRAC could have established technical review teams, as needed, in response to a petition of an involved rangeland resource team or on its own motion. Rangeland resource teams chartered under FACA could also have established technical review teams. Technical review teams would have

conducted fact finding and provided input to the parent advisory council or chartered rangeland resource team. Their function would have been limited to specific assignments made by the parent council, and been limited to the geographical management scope of the MRAC or chartered rangeland resource team. Technical review teams would have terminated upon completion of the assigned task.

Members of technical review teams would have been selected by the MRAC or chartered rangeland resource team on the basis of their knowledge of resource management or their familiarity with the issues involved in the assigned task. At least one member of each technical review team would have been required to be selected from the membership of the parent advisory council or chartered rangeland resource team.

Some of the commenters on this section specifically opposed the concept of technical review teams, saying they would not streamline administrative functions, were not needed, would be obstacles to change, and would be expensive. Other commenters asserted that any such teams should be formed by BLM under the provisions of FACA. A number of commenters wrote to the make-up and operation of the teams, and asserted that members must be technical experts and should be local residents.

Most of the commenters' concerns about technical review teams have been addressed in the discussions of §§ 1784.6-1 and 6-2. In response to commenters' concerns, the Department has decided to require that any such technical team be formed exclusively by BLM. Because of the requirements of FACA, they will be made up exclusively of Federal employees, either regular staff or contract employees. Such technical teams could be formed under any of the three models presented in § 1784.6-2, either at the request of a chartered committee or on BLM's own motion. The Department believes this is the best way to ensure that the requirements of FACA are fulfilled, but that the RACs have available to them special expertise to address technical issues when needed.

Consistent with the above discussion, and the discussions of final §§ 1784.6-1 and 6-2, the Department is not adopting this provision in the final rule. Provisions allowing the formation of technical teams by BLM, as needed, are found in final § 1784.6-2.