

Draft Meeting Notes
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
February 11, 2013 – 7 p.m.
Board Meeting – University of Idaho Extension Office

Board Members in Attendance:

Bob Blanford, Business/Industry
Dave Wattenbarger, Soils Conservation District/Landowner
Tony McDermott, Idaho Fish & Game Commission
Ron Abraham, (Alt.) Kootenai Tribe of Idaho & KVRI Co-Chair
Linda McFaddan, (Alt.), U.S. Forest Service – IPNF
Sandy Ashworth, Social/Cultural/Historical
Ed Atkins, Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioners & KVRI Co-Chair
David Anderson, City of Bonners Ferry & KVRI Co-Chair

Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Janet Satchwell, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Chip Corsi, Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land Management
Aaron Durham, Student
Don Gay, Naples Community Group
Shanna Kleinsmith, U.S. Forest Service
Laura Roady, Bonners Ferry Herald
Dianna Ellis, USFWS- Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge
Lon Postulka, U.S. Border Patrol
Wayne Wakkinen, Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Ed Robinson, Idaho Department of Lands
Eric Besaw, Idaho Department of Lands
Aaron Calkins, U.S. Representative Raul Labrador
Karen Roetter, U.S. Senator Mike Crapo
Sid Smith, U.S. Senator Jim Risch
Mac Lefebvre, Idaho Forest Group, Timber Supply

Opening:

Dave Anderson opened and welcomed everyone to the meeting; introductions followed.

Janet advised the word ‘reproducing’ in the draft minutes of January 14, 2013 should be made to the third bullet point on page three. The sentence should read, “The only known *reproducing* population of whitebark pine in the Purcell Mountains occurs in this resource area....

The group approved, with the correction, the draft minutes of January 14, 2013 meeting by consensus.

Presentations:

WAC Committee Update – Wayne Wakkinen, ‘McArthur’ Bear Study

Two years ago a federal highway grant project was started using GPS collars to build a model of black bear habitat use in the McArthur area, and there is another project in the Lookout Pass area. The trapping of 16 bears was done within three miles of Highway 95 with samples taken from both sides of the road. By the second year, two of the collars were lost. All collars were programmed to drop off October 1st, and all but two collars dropped—so the two that did not were retrieved from the bears in their dens. The data is in now so it will be compiled this summer, and the data from the Lookout Pass study is to come later in the year.

Underpass data has been collected from the Copeland area, Canada, and Montana. The projects have good telemetry on highway crossings made by bear in those areas and the models may be available this fall. Identified so far is that bears use cover that is near the road when they cross, and from a highway safety standpoint it is best when cover is away from the highway.

Comparisons could be made with the bear crossing and habitat areas to the road kill data of other wildlife (moose, elk, deer – with deer being 97% of the road kill).

Further WAC committee update – Patty Perry

The next committee meeting will be March 4th, at 1:30 p.m. at the Tribal Office. To address wildlife crossing and collision avoidance the committee is considering signage, to include “book end signs”, perhaps down at the county line and at Bonners Ferry. For hot spot areas the ITD put together a sample warning sign and lights design that could be used where hotspots have been identified.

CFLRP Forestry committee, Kreist Project – Linda McFaddan and Shanna Kleinsmith

Linda McFaddan, USFS, reviewed the handouts of the Draft Purpose and Need and the Draft Proposed Action.

Shanna Kleinsmith, USFS, presented a map of the areas of opportunity (~1975 acres) within the Kreist Project Analysis area (11,000 acres). A review of the project findings included: botany, archaeology, aquatics, wildlife, recreation, and soils.

The Kreist project is proposed to include: prescribed burn, commercial thin, group selection, improvement cut, seed tree, shelterwood, & shelterwood/burn areas.

Design features will be important since this area has high visibility. The County’s wildland-urban interface (WUI) includes the Kreist project area. The transportation analysis will be completed in February/March, the proposed action developed in March, scoping to the public also in March, specialist reports will be due in June, and the environmental assessment (EA) may be available to the public in September with a decision possible in December. The hope is to implement this project in the fall of 2014.

Discussion was held on the proposed temporary road construction to access areas requiring treatment, and that the road would be decommissioned after the project. Pretreating weeds in areas of equipment/vehicle use and on the south end of the project area, treating stands, protecting existing

trails (motorcycle, mountain bikers, and a nationally recognized trail), the maintenance of trails during the project, and improving/maintaining aquatic habitat.

The Kreist Creek project will return to the forestry subcommittee on March 12th to review wildlife considerations, transportation analysis plans, and weed treatments. The KVRI Board approved the continuation of the CFLRP forestry subcommittee to develop further project details. The project components address the CFLRP targets.

The PowerPoint presentation, maps, and the Draft Purpose and Need documents will be made available on the Kootenai Tribe website www.kootenai.org at KVRI – Documents.

Old Business:

Ron Abraham, David Anderson, and Patty Perry attended the Third Annual Idaho Restoration Partnership Conference in Boise. They reported of learning opportunities, and Patty gave the conference a report of the KVRI – Forest Service 2013 project opportunities and the 2012 accomplishments. Since the implementation of CFLRP it is obvious that collaboration is on the ground.

Dan Dinning will check with Brian Kelly about speaking at a KVRI Board meeting to discuss how the USFWS arrived at the recent decision on Caribou Critical Habitat & Recovery efforts.

New Business:

Eric Besaw, IDL Area Manager, spoke of the reorganization of the Idaho Department of Lands offices combining the Kootenai Valley (Bonners Ferry) and Pend Oreille (Sandpoint) offices under the supervision of the Pend Oreille office. Eric has accepted a position in the Coeur d'Alene area, but all other IDL staff members will stay in the office where they are now located, and the fire support and timber programs will be maintained.

Correspondence:

An invitation was received from the National Forest Foundation (NFF) to attend an open house to announce their selection of the Lightning Creek area on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) as a *Treasured Landscapes* conservation site. The NFF and other groups will work to restore and improve recreational access to that area. A public reception will be held on March 1, 2013. Contact Marlee Ostheimer, 406.830.3368 for more information.

A proposed action from the Kootenai National Forest in Troy, MT was received on their Buckhorn Project. Information on this project will also be available on the Kootenai National Forest projects web page located here: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/kootenai/landmanagements/projects>. To discuss the proposal, contact Kirsten Kaiser or Pat Shira at 406.295.4693.

As a point of interest, Tony McDermott forwarded a web link to the *Idaho Mountain Express and Guide* concerning the transportation department forming a wildlife committee to consider mitigation for vehicle-versus-wildlife accidents in Blaine County.

<http://www.mtexpress.com/index2.php?ID=2005146010>

Notice was received from the U.S. Border Patrol, Spokane Sector (CBP) in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service concerning a proposed project in the Continental Mountain area of the Idaho Panhandle National Forests within the Bonners Ferry and Priest Lake Ranger Districts. The main project objective is to provide safe east-west access to this section of the United States and Canadian border across the Selkirk Mountains. This area is managed by the Idaho Panhandle National Forests (Forest Service).

An open house to present the proposed project, answer questions, and accept public comment will be held on February 20, 2013, between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. with a short presentation on the project at 5:30 p.m. - Kootenai River Inn, 7169 Plaza St., Bonners Ferry, Idaho.

Closing Comments/Meeting Announcements:

Don Gunther and a group of interested folks are working on a Western States Competitive Grant Application. The competitive grant program addresses issues of national importance identified and supported locally which will provide meaningful, lasting and measurable outcomes. The pre-proposals are due March 8th to the Coeur d'Alene office of Idaho Department of Lands.

For more information on upcoming meetings, please contact Patty at 267-3519 or patty@kootenai.org.

2/15 Forestry Subcommittee

3/4 WAC Subcommittee

3/8 TMDL Subcommittee

3/12 Forestry Subcommittee

The next KVRI meeting will be held March 18, 2013, at the Boundary County Extension Office at 7:00 p.m.; the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Janet Satchwell
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant