

Meeting Notes
KVRI Forestry Committee
February 18, 2016 – 10:00 a.m.
Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

Attendance:

Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner & KVRI Co-chair
Kevin Knauth, Bonners Ferry Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
Matt Varcoe, USFS
Cleve Shearer, Citizen & Landowner
Dave Wattenbarger, Boundary County Soil Conservation District & KVRI
Kevin Greenleaf, KTOI
Norm Merz, KTOI
Russ Hegedus, IFG
Albert J. Helgenberg, USFS
Eric Sjoquist, IDL
Judy Morbeck, Congressman Labrador
Karen Roetter, Senator Mike Crapo
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch
Brett Lyndaker, USFS
Tim Dougherty, IFG
Tom Elliott, USFS
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Denise Winey, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Opening:

Patty Perry opened and welcomed everyone and began with introductions. Patty explained that Brad Smith was sorry he couldn't attend the meeting, but was supportive of the Deer Creek Project Alternative #4

The Deer Creek Project was the full agenda with AJ Helgenberg providing a 24 slide show presentation for questions and answers.

EA Comment Period

AJ began with addressing the differences of "Scoping" and what went into the "Environmental Assessment" (EA). Kevin Knauth explained that the Forest Service almost always has 2 comment periods. They chose to do 2 comment periods as they do not have enough detailed information by the time of the first comment period; which explains why there may be some differences between Scoping and EA. Patty pointed out that the comment period ends February 22, 2016.

Roads Overview

AJ supplied large maps for everyone to follow along, and continued to go over the effected roads and plans.

Vegetation Treatment

AJ supplied a Vegetation Treatment Summary (Table 6) with Road Management (miles)

Classified and Unclassified Roads

AJ explained how important it is to know the difference between "Classified" and "Unclassified" Roads, and the difference is whether or not they are on the Forest Service system. So in order to "Store" or "Decommission" a road, they first need to be on the system. AJ also explained that if there were an unclassified road that people were driving on in the BMU and it was added to the system and "Stored", it may help us with the BMU. Matt explained that there is no legal access for a lot of these unclassified roads, and so a big part of this is trying to clean some of them up.

Changes in Legal Access and Changes in Effective Legal Access and 33.6 Miles of Maintenance

AJ said what they are proposing in Deer Creek will show a net increase in "effective" legal access; That came by adding several unclassified roads to the system, and by fixing the 2533 Rd slide, which will allow people to get down to the river on the 2533, which is "Effective Legal Access" because it is already a system road. Then it is offset somewhat by the work we are doing in the BMU so that we can open up the 2536 road. So they had to put some roads into storage to get up onto the 2536 which would include a "U" Rd that was never on the system. Patty pointed out that 2533UL would be the last segment added.

Brett explained that Brad Smith's concern was that we were adding road miles to the system, which we are doing in several places in the project; there are several access points to the river that have roads that people are driving on; but currently, if they were to drive on them, it would be illegal; so were trying to clean some things of that up. AJ said "The question was asked "Does adding an unclassified road to the system, establish it?"

AJ then showed the areas of "Changes in Legal Access" and "Stored" Roads. Tim asked if the roads they were storing were in the BMU? Brett said that 2 of them were; and that following implementation, they will be maintained as restricted roads and that some pieces up there are currently unclassified so they will add them to the system and then store them.

Tim asked about one of the potential stored roads that goes to Soloman Lake Rd, and asked if it was stored for Grizzly Bear concerns or hydrological issues as well? Brett answered that he didn't see any hydrological issues. Tim was concerned about storing or obliterating a road, and how hard it would be to reopen for active vegetation management and fire suppression.

Brett explained that a stored road, even in the BMU could be opened at any time for emergency access. He also stated that it would be harder to open a road that was "decommissioned" as supposed to "stored".

AJ explained that there may not be a physical difference on the ground between and stored road and a decommissioned road, but the big difference is a decommissioned road comes off the system.

The committee went over what roads will be added to the system and stored, there were some that had seasonal closures.

Dan Dinning questioned parts of the project that show adding miles to the system and Patty agreed and stated that if you're adding these on the report but you're really not adding them, then you're creating a problem for CFLR and that they need to fix the report; Because as per the letter from Brad, you cannot add miles to the system.

Brett stated that we were focusing on the numbers and it's not about the numbers. Patty clarified that it's about whether or not it is a system road. AJ added that it shows on the table because by fixing the road we are improving public access.

Dan stated that if by chance we can "save" that "extra" mile by correcting the report, we wouldn't have to wait for Washington's approval and could move forward with the project.

Much discussion about access/legal access/effective legal access, system/non-system, classified/unclassified, stored/decommissioned roads and whether they were “adding” road miles to the system and whether or not they should correct the report.

Reconstruct & Leave Open 8.1 Miles and Reconstruct & Restrict 2.2 Miles

They talked about restricted and/or seasonally restricted.

The portion of the 2536 was discussed and will only be moving the gate up the hill. Brett said were not changing anything. AJ that road is technically legally accessible right now.

Reconstruct & Store 5.6 Miles

A portion of this road system will be reconstructed and stored. We could go back in there down the road. Brett said part of what they are doing is adding those roads to the system. We are reconstructing and then storing them. When it's stored it does not count against the BMU and noted that you can't have a drivable road in the BMU.

Obliterate w/Harvest Activities 3.7 Miles

These are unclassified roads that we are not going to need to haul logs out of for this project or foreseeable projects. You can't decommission an unclassified road. They are non-system roads and are not drivable.

Add To the System & Leave Open 2.1 Miles

They have legal access. There are 5

Add To the System & Store 1.7 Miles

They are unclassified now; we add them to the system and then store them. And at some point we will go back.

AJ's complete PowerPoint Presentation is available on Kootenai.org

The committee agreed that KVRI will send a letter of support of Alternative #2, and noting not all in agreement on Goshawk protection or the 2540 road. The County (Dan Dinning) and IFG (Tim Dougherty) mentioned that they will be sending letters of support as well.

Patty went around and asked each attendee if they were satisfied or had any additional questions before sending the letter.

The next meeting date to be announced.

Meeting was adjourned at 12 p.m.

Denise Winey

KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant