

Meeting Notes  
KVRI Forestry Committee  
May 12, 2016 – 1:00 p.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)  
Dave Wattenbarger, Boundary County Soil Conservation District & KVRI  
Kevin Greenleaf, KTOI  
Norm Merz, KTOI  
Russ Hegedus, IFG  
Judy Morbeck, Congressman Labrador  
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch  
Tim Dougherty, IFG  
Lee Colson, USFS  
Dave Cobb, USFS  
Jennifer Anderson, USFS  
Bob Blanford, KVRI-Business/Industry  
Brad Smith, ICL  
Don Ulrich, OSU/PNW Research Station  
Barry Wynsma, County Resident  
Doug Nishek, USFS  
Matt Staudacher, USFS, IPNF SO  
Ed Koberstein, FS, BFRD  
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI  
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

**Opening:**

Patty Perry opened, welcomed everyone and began with introductions.

Kevin Knauth, began his update with the Tower Fire Salvage on the North Zone. The four sales coming from that will be advertised by mid-June. As each sale requires its own package, the offerings will be staggered with all 4 sales being sold by mid-July. The anticipated projected harvest volume is 25 mmbf total.

Of the 47,000 acres burned in fires across the Idaho Panhandle National Forests last year, 18% of those acres are proposed for salvage. The public scoping documents for the fire areas proposed salvage on 47% of the 47,000 acres burned in the fires, but that percentage was reduced to 18% this spring due to concerns with topography, water, and access.

The Tower Fire Salvage on the NZ and the Grizzly Fire Salvage on the CZ were both analyzed as environmental assessments (EAs) and the Marble Fire Salvage on the SZ is a CE; the Marble decision memo has already been signed.

**Deer Creek Update**

Deer Creek is still envisioned as being split into two sale areas:

- Deer Creek 1<sup>st</sup> sale (outside BMU) - FY 17 (2<sup>nd</sup> qtr.)

- Deer Creek 2<sup>nd</sup> sale (inside BMU) - FY 18

Ed Koberstein explained that depending on the scale, size and complexity of the sale, strategically it makes sense for them to break the sales into smaller more manageable components. When they do that they contribute to a bigger pool of supply across the forest and that fits into the equation for the forest annual output for their targets. That affects the offering within the fiscal year to balance their targets.

Dan Dinning reminded us that we will be at zero (0) mmbf for our CFLR target this year (2016). Ed agreed there is a commitment to the CFLR to maintain that average over the life of the project. And our zero will be a carry over for this year. Kevin added that over the last three years we have averaged over 20 mmbf per year so it helps to soften the blow of a skip year. It will allow us to get back on pace.

### **Five Year Action Plan Process**

Matt Staudacher described the Five Year Action Planning from the Forest Perspective, why they do it and what it gains for them.

Basically they have a plan for implementation in the future. This forest has decided to do it openly and involve the counties and the collaborative groups to balance things. Jeff Lau is responsible to balance the timber sale program across the forest and to meet the Forest targets. They are funded based on the volume they put out and meeting their targets every year.

In 2012-13, the original guide that feeds the five year action plan was developed. The guide is the foundation for the projects. It has landscape screens and criteria. Through this guide, that was built collaboratively, they've looked at all the projects and figure out where they will go. They rank them and evaluate them with a point system, then it comes back to the forest and they have to balance them with everybody's input.

After 3-4 years, we have a 5 yr action plan that has been very successful. Now it's time to look at that guide to see what we have learned. The new things we are looking at are the Farm Bill, Good Neighbor Authority, and the latest insects/disease information. Those things now can be included in the latest guide update.

The working group consists of 5 counties, 2 collaborative groups and 10 on the forest service personnel. They've met twice and are half way through updating the guide.

Kevin explained that our role today is to start the discussion from a Bonners Ferry perspective as to what project areas for us to bring forward to this new 5 year action plan.

Barry Wynsma provided a suggestion:

For the forest to take a look at a forest wide project or program to include as many acres of plantation thinning that they can across the forest. And to look at the scale of projects of 500 to 1000 acres per year. The average is 30-40 year old plantations, too big to trip and leave the trees, slash and fuels. Yet large enough to have a small component of small diameter saw & pulp logs.

There is a backlog of these types of areas and lack of funding, but maybe it could work into stewardship contracts. It could help keep the smaller loggers in business. With it you are accomplishing fuels reduction, stocking control, right species mix that you want to carry those plantations through to re-generation. We have the infrastructure and have the specialized loggers capable that can help.

Patty stated that basically it's restoration work to include mechanical thinning on old plantations so that we develop resiliency on the landscape we are looking for without overgrown status that we have.

Tim Dougherty explained that the Kootenai National Forest is working on NEPA to analyze 100,000 acres forest-wide. And it could be classified as a Timber Stand Improvement because the growth in yield on those plantations, once thinned, will skyrocket.

More discussion followed and Patty agreed that is a good topic to bring to next Friday's 5 year review process for discussion.

### **Boulder Creek Update**

Doug Nishek's presentation included a Bonners Ferry Ranger District Planning Area Map for all to review.

- The Tower salvage project is starting to wind down, picking up Boulder shortly.
- When they are done, KVRI will go out and take a look before scoping this summer.
- In two road-less areas, small units along the road, BMU- Yes, there are harvest units in road-less.
- Flooding & washout of the Lower Creek Bridge makes it hard for field crews.
- East Fork Meadow is still washed out.
- The prospect of fixing the bridge/roads this year is not good, estimate of \$485,000, could be 2-3 years out.

The question was raised, would the sale be available before the road work restoration was complete. Matt explained that if the haul route is not available, there are contract term adjustments available to keep the sale in FY 18.

Patty stated that with everything that has taken place in this watershed and the effects of the storms of last Fall, if it would make a difference to the TAPS analysis, this group would like to see it again.

To summarize the plan for Boulder Creek:

- Early June- Meeting before the field trip
- Mid to late June – Field trip to the area
- Early July - Follow up meeting
- August scoping

Discussions continued on future projects/needs/desires for the County.

- Brad Smith inquired about a field trip and to talk about meadow restorations in Boulder Meadows and a beaver discussion.
- Kevin continued that because of the Parker Ridge Fire, they have opted to move Camp Nine/Camp Dawson project ahead of Trout/Ball to give them extra time to look at the opportunity to maybe enlarging Trout/Ball or finding separate projects areas adjacent to it. Trout /Ball is open to discussion for adjustments.
- Border Patrol is working on the EIS, addressing road needs in the Bluegrass BMU. The Forest Service will be a participant with input to the alternatives.
- American/Canuck area-30 year old plantations there also, road restoration potential there too.
- Myrtle/Snow area considered- future fire pattern is identical to Parker Ridge
- Taking another look at the watershed/road-less areas possibly being a different category than in the past.

- Consider Snow/Caribou area and the habitat issues.
- Interest in the Bug data available from the insect and disease flights.

Jennifer Anderson began a discussion on how to insulate the private land they are trying to protect and accomplish a good impactful burn on the ground. Could the collaborative help them reach out and contact those private landowners, to see if they could coordinate the field treatments together?

Dan believes with what happened last summer still on their minds, the landowners could be less resistant to access issues and open to the opportunities of working together and the possible opportunity available to them such as grant money, etc.

The group agreed to help with the collection of landowner contact information to make it possible for the Forest Service to contact and start dialogue with them for future collaboration of land/fire management.

The next meeting date to be announced.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.  
Sherrie Cossairt  
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant