

Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
September 23, 2019–7p.m.
Board Meeting – University of Idaho Extension Office

Board Members in Attendance:

Gary Aitken, Jr., Kootenai Tribal Chairman and KVRI Co-chair
David Sims, Mayor, City of Bonners Ferry & KVRI Co-chair
Dave Wattenbarger, Soil Conservation/Landowner
Tim Dougherty, Business/Industry (Alt.)
Jim Cadnum, Landowner (Industrial)
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry
Ed Atkins Jr., Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Chip Corsi, Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game
Sandy Ashworth, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Rhonda Vogl, KVRI Facilitator & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)
Karen Schumacher, Recording Secretary KVRI & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Dave Gray, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests (Alt.) KVRI Board
Karen Roetter, Senator Mike Crapo's office
Tim Kastning, Congressman Russ Fulcher's office
Christy Johnson-Hughes, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services
Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Dept. of Lands
Mike Klaus, City of Bonners Ferry
Micah Ellstrom, Idaho Fish & Game
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch's office
Barbara Castella'n, Resident
Matt Nykiel, Idaho Conservation League
Wayne Wilkerson, Kootenai Wildlife Refuge
Merritt Horsmon, Idaho Fish & Game
Norm Merz, Idaho Fish & Game
Evan Dehamer, Idaho Fish & Game
Scott Soultz, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
Shannon Ehlers, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
Scooter Drake, Boundary Back Country Access
Olivia Drake, 9B Trails, Boundary Back Country Access
Jacob Hinricks, Boundary Back Country Access

Opening:

Gary Aitken, Jr. opened and welcomed everyone to the monthly meeting; introductions followed.

Gary asked for comments or changes for both the July 15th and August 1 KVRI Special Board Meeting Minutes. Minutes were approved by consensus.

Presentations:

Chronic Wasting Disease – Micah Ellstrom, Regional Wildlife Manager, Idaho Fish & Game

This presentation is available on the KTOI website – www.kootenai.org

- Micah reviewed this disease which was first found in a captive mule deer herd in Colorado in 1967.
- CWD is an untreatable, fatal brain disease thought to be caused by an abnormally shaped, misfolded protein accumulating within brain cells.
- Now found in captive and free-ranging deer, elk, moose and reindeer in 26 states, 3 Canadian provinces, Norway, Finland, Sweden and South Korea
- CWD has NOT been detected in Idaho to date.
- Idaho Fish & Game are accepting voluntary sample submission from hunters as a part of their effort to acquire samples that will aid them in their efforts to detect CWD at a 1% prevalence rate.
- Discussion following the presentation: It was suggested people contact IDFG for guidance should they encounter an animal that appears symptomatic for CWD.
- How others are dealing with infected areas varies widely, but IDFG does have several courses of action in mind should it become necessary.
- It was stated that feeding of animals promotes artificial concentrations that is concerning for the spread of this disease.

Moyie Dam – 2019 Silt removal Project – Mike Klaus, Engineer, City of Bonners Ferry

This presentation is available on the KTOI website – www.kootenai.org

- The dam was built in 1948. Historical photos demonstrated the method and conditions of building the dam.
- In 2017 it was noted that the penstock was blocked by accumulating silt. A penstock is a conveyance that delivers water from dam to the turbines at the powerhouse. The flow of the water through the penstock can be controlled with a sluice or gate that is raised and lowered.
- An unusually high amount of ice (12 feet) in 2017 also created problems.
- Emergency silt removal in 2017 revealed that using a crane with a clam shell bucket was effective at removing silt without exceeding turbidity standards.
 - The City bid the project and awarded it to Knight Construction in late March, with the expectation of removing 7,000 cubic yards of silt and debris. Material removal was more successful than expected and an additional 14,000 cubic yards was removed.
 - Material removed was transported via dump trucks to 2 basins, owned by the city, upstream that had been proposed/approved a few years prior.
- The dam is licensed and regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The next FERC licensing cycle is in 2029.

Sub-Committee Updates:

Forestry Subcommittee updates provided by Rhonda Vogl and Tim Dougherty

August 14, there was a Field Trip for the Westside Restoration Project was well attended by approximately 32 people and represented a cross section of stakeholders as the project area represents many landowners. The field trip covered areas for the project with an emphasis on overall resilience of water

sheds, reducing fuel and recreational use of the areas. This is a CFLR project.

Pat Hart sent an email to Rhonda Vogl regarding the Boulder Creek Project which is another CRLR project. Pat had some volunteers up there and they worked on projects including fencing and a bulletin board. The group of kids did an amazing job. Input given to Rhonda from the parent of a volunteer was that this gives the kids a whole new perspective on how things get done in the forest.

David Gray cautioned that the Boulder Creek road is very narrow and asked those venturing up there to be careful.

Tim Dougherty provided input and said Camp Robin proposals were due last Tuesday. IFG submitted one. There were some contractual things that needed clarification resulting in addendums needed by anyone that submitted a technical proposal. Hopefully the best option for the project will be determined by the end of this week. Also, there was work to be done at Smith Lake Campground by November 1st so the agency can utilize some grants for the remaining work to be done for camp ground improvements.

Rhonda discussed the WAC (Wildlife Auto Collision) Subcommittee meeting held on August 22nd. George Shutes provided input on the various road projects.

- Road improvement for McArthur is scheduled for 2022/23 with the temporary (Shoofly) road scheduled for FY 2021.
- The Alderson Lane to LaBrosse road project delayed until 2023/24.
- Looking for an October finish date for the road project now going on in Bonners Ferry.

Merrit Horsmon provided information on underpass usage. Chart handouts reflect the high use of underpasses located north of Bonners Ferry.

Other efforts to reduce animal/auto collisions include wildlife warning signs that George Shutes was placing on our highways this month.

TMDL Subcommittee met on August 22. The next meeting is scheduled for November 7th at 8:30 am, at the Kootenai Tribal Office. We will be hearing the latest monitoring results from Dave Wattenbarger and others who are doing the Citizens Monitoring using equipment provided by DEQ. Monitors went back in the water in June.

The Grizzly Bear Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on November 18th at KTOI headquarters at 10am. KVRI will also meet that night. Wayne Kasworm will present at both the Sub-Committee and KVRI meetings. IGBC (Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee) is now gathering data on accomplishments and efforts on the Grizzly Bear this past year.

Old Business: - None Noted

New Business:

Dates for KVRI 2020 meetings were proposed with suggested alternate dates for January and February due to holidays. Board agreed on dates with alternates being January 13th and February 10th.

CFLR Tier One proposal was submitted and the information needed was more complex than was originally thought. The effort with Shoshone-Benewah and Panhandle Forest will include a MOA. The proposal includes the whole forest within the boundaries and incorporates the Idaho Shared Stewardship Priority

Landscape area as well as projects as outlined in the five-year plan. We provided additional clarification and should know if we have passed into the Tier 2 phase by this Friday.

Correspondence:

Email from I.F.R.P. (Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership). IFRP Will hold the 2020 workshop in Coeur d'Alene at the CDA resort on April 14 & 15. The Agenda and registration will be available in November. The available spots fill up very quickly. KVRI will pay for the registration fee for board members if their agencies cannot.

Chip Corsi of IDFG referred to a recent news release informing the public that a Grizzly bear mistaken for a black bear last week in the Selkirks had been shot. It was self-reported and the shooter is cooperating with the authorities. It was a collared female with no cubs.

Norm Merz of IDFG updated the action plan looking at migration plan for big game. Expanded from just MacArthur lake to both sides of 95 up to the Canadian border.

Updates from Representatives:

Karen Roetter of Senator Mike Crapo's office said the Senator had recently introduced legislation regarding PILT (Payment in lieu of taxes) funds. The legislation authorized payments for ten years instead of one year. Counties will still be paid every year.

Sid Smith of Senator Jim Risch's office said there are a number of Senators along with the Dept. of Agriculture working on an expedited track for the Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) appointments as terms are expiring. Clock is ticking for initiating projects to utilize Title II funds. Funds have to be obligated no later than Nov 30 of 2021. Many of the RAC's don't have a quorum or if they do the terms are expiring.

Tim Kastning of Congressman's Fulcher's office informed the group that the Congressman will be in our area Thursday possibly doing Townhall meetings. Stops to include Sandpoint, Rathdrum then down to Lewiston. A Press Release is forthcoming with the details.

Christy Johnson-Hughes, US Fish and Wildlife Service stated that they had signed the final version of the White Sturgeon Revised Recovery Plan. Christy sent a copy of this to Rhonda and Rhonda will send out to the Board. Christy indicated that there should be "no surprises". She also reviewed that the changes to staffing (Jason Flory accepted another position) are concerning for the communications with the Tribe. They are working on having Jason provide 25% of his time over the next fiscal year for mentoring his replacement and for the transition.

Species Updates:

- Lynx are moving to recovery. We hope to finalize September 2020 following period of comments
- Wolverine: no changes- same
- Grizzly Bear: no changes
- Caribou – unable to comment due to legislation

Closing:

Next KVRI Meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 21st at 7PM – U of I extension office.

Meeting adjourned at 8:4 PM

Minutes prepared by Karen Schumacher
KTOI/KVRI Administrative Assistant