

Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
November 20, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting – University of Idaho Extension Office

Board Members in Attendance:

David Sims, Mayor, City of Bonners Ferry & KVRI Co-chair
Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner & KVRI Co-chair
Sandy Ashworth, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Kevin Knauth, (Alt.) US Forest Service (USFS), Bonners Ferry Ranger District
Ron Abraham, (Alt) Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI), KVRI Co-chair
Don Allenberg, (Alt.) Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Tim Dougherty, (Alt.) Business/Industry, Idaho Forest Group
Chip Corsi, (Alt.) Idaho Fish & Game Commission
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Department of Lands
Jim Woodward, State Senate Candidate, District 1
Dianna Ellis, Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch's office
Karen Roetter, Senator Mike Crapo's office
Judy Morbeck, Congressman Raul Labrador's office
Norm Merz, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)
Jason Flory, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Jered Bowman, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Brandon Glaza, US Forest Service

Opening:

Co-Chair, Dan Dinning opened and welcomed everyone to the meeting; introductions followed.

The October 23, 2017, KVRI meeting draft notes were approved by consensus.

Overview of Implementation of Aquatic Organism Passage Projects Presentation-Brandon Glaza, USFS-Bonners Ferry District

Brandon's PowerPoint presentation included examples of aquatic organisms, aquatic organism passages, and a history of the accomplishments from 2012 to the present.

The Forest Service has been working with KVRI on the CFLR projects that began almost 8 years ago. It came with funding to accelerate forest restoration and included targets. One of those targets was Aquatic Organism Passages (AOP), primarily culverts.

Brandon discussed the importance for the fish to have access provided by AOP's. They need access for spawning and rearing, thermal refuge, resilience to localized disturbance and for genetic diversity. He also explained the types of barriers that affect the fish and the streams and how assessment is

conducted to make the decisions for repair or replacement of passages. Assessment considers the physical component (the structure itself), biological component (what lives there) and the administrative component (per the National Environmental Policy Act requirements).

The following is a detailed list of AOP accomplishments:

FY 2012

Meadow Creek/Trail 32

Access Restored/Retained: 2+ miles

Contractor: CE Kramer

Cost: \$44,180

Miller Creek/FSR 2841 D

Access Restored: 900 feet

Contractor: USFS

Cost: \$3000

FY 2013

Meadow Creek/Bee Line Dam

Access Restored: 2+ miles

Contractor: USFS

Cost: \$1000

FY 2014

Placer Creek/FSR 2541

Access Restored: 1.8 miles

Contractor: Wink Inc.

Cost \$68,626

Twentymile Creek/FSR 2686 Network

Access Restored: 1.5 miles from 3 crossings

Contractor: Integrity Excavating

Cost: \$7000 (items of a larger contract)

FY 2015

Wall Creek/FSR 2542E

Access Restored: 0.75 mile

Contractor: C.E. Kramer

Cost: \$119,290

Deer Creek/FSR 2541

Access Restored: Access retained over 10 miles

Contractor: CE Kramer

Cost: \$363,400

Kreist Creek/FSR 2517 A

Access Restored: 1.5 miles

Contractor: CE Kramer

Cost: \$213,224

Hellroaring Creek/FSR 2266

Access Restored: 1.5 miles

Contractor: S & L underground

Cost: \$225,000

FY 2016

NONE

FY 2017

Spruce Creek/FSR 2509

Access Restored: 1.25 miles

Contractor: SToneRidge Construction

Cost: \$115,245

FY 2018 Expected

Spring Creek/FSR 2540 (1500')
Copper Creek/FSR 2517 (1000')
Deer Creek Stewardship items

FY 2018/2019 Expected

Canuck Creek Tributary /FSR 2798 (4000')
Middle Fork Boulder Creek/ FSR 127A (1000')

Summary for the Bonners Ferry Road District

10.5 miles of access restored
2.9 additional miles expected
Cost: \$1,155,675 to date

Brandon took a moment to show pictures and describe the Forest Service Fish Passage Project Proposal on Canuck Creek. Canuck Creek is a stream full of Westslope cutthroat trout. The pipe outlet is submerged so it is not likely a jump barrier but it a velocity barrier in the spring time when the cutthroat would move up the stream. Pictures were shared showing material build up at the inlet. Should we deem it worthy of support, he would like to request a letter of support for the Grant Application. This project is high on their list of priorities.

Tim D. questioned the maintenance of the project for the long term, and encouraged consideration of removal with no replacement – noting that there's a minimal amount of area beyond to be concerned with for access/management. Kevin added that conversation has been had around this project and they are very sensitive to the cost and the significant return on the project. It has good fish habitat and fish density. Brandon added that they had pondered removal or replacement and they do have time to take another look at it, and would consider further discussion.

Brandon continued his presentation explaining that the new structures installed have a 100 year expected service life and the cost includes all projects; retained, restored and removals to date.

The Forest Service has also been busy on other parts of the North Zone as well doing these types of projects, so not just the Bonners Ferry Ranger District. They have done a handful of tributaries on Sandpoint District as well as the Priest River District. The Big Creek Culvert project is proposed and will include a new bridge and almost 12-15 miles of restoration next year. Funding partners include the US Forest Service, CFLRP and US Fish & Wildlife Service, their National Fish Passage Program.

Brandon's slide presentation is available on the KVRI website at Kootenai.org

Forestry Committee-Update Patty Perry

CFLR Washington Office Site Review Visit Oct 25 & 26, 2017

Patty reported that staff members from the Washington Office of the USFS were here for 2 days, joined by staff members from the Regional Office and Supervisors Office as well. They went over the program and spent a day and a half in the field and finished with a close out meeting. All went well and she was grateful for those Board members that were able to participate. The one thing they wanted to know more about was the monitoring aspect of our project, and the Forest Service staff has sent that to them. We will receive a report in 2-4 weeks.

Forestry Committee meeting update- Patty Perry

Patty explained the November 9th Forestry Committee meeting included an update on Boulder Creek Project, Deer Creek sale status, and scoping information for the Camp Dawson/Robinhood Project.

Boulder Creek Project

Eleven comment letters were received; all but one supported the project or had things we can easily address. The last letter from Alliance of the Wild Rockies (AWR) was 144 pages long. Doug and the specialists are working through that. It takes a lot of time to sort through and respond, but we are confident that we put together is a good project.

Deer Creek Stewardship sale

The District is working with industry representatives to figure out if there is any way forward or not, and how that might look.

Camp Dawson/Robinhood Project Scoping

The agency has determined to do an Environmental Analysis (EA) and cover both projects rather than doing it under two (2) Categorical Exclusions (CE's). With the resource concerns and recreation work they want to do, it made sense to move ahead with an EA. It will add about 3-4 months to the end of the timeline. The specialists have done their work and have turned it over to the NEPA Strike team. We walked through the purpose and need; resource considerations for fish, hydrology, soil, and wildlife. We talked a little about recreation and trails and the comment period. This will come back to this group in early January before going out for scoping.

Kevin K. then distributed a handout (*available on the KVRI website at Kootenai.org*) including CFLRP Project Updates and CFLRP Sales Updates. Kevin explained that with the new EA, Camp Dawson/Robinhood has a new name; Camp Robinson. The two sales will remain separate. Discussion continued explaining the handout and questions were answered. Kevin noted that sales in this District start to taper off in FY21 but return in FY25/26 looking at Snow Creek, Caribou and Trout/Ball areas.

Discussion followed concerning how much black wood (fire salvage) will come out on the market as a result of the salvage and what that will do to the green sales within Region 1. It can affect timelines because everything is tied together, especially the Stewardship projects. Idaho may not be affected as much in FY 18.

Brandon G. added that one positive thing from Tower and Grizzly is an Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) employee has since moved on to the Regional office to share all the things we learned when we did with those salvage sales which may help the Forests that are doing them this year. So there should be some efficiency gained from that.

WAC Committee Update- Patty Perry

Patty reported that the WAC Committee met on November 9th to evaluate the system with Brice Sloan, who built the system. ITD had a list of what they needed as far as upgrades for them to look at

purchasing another system. For now we are looking at keeping the system operable through the winter months with someone local who may be able to calibrate it for us.

Norm M. added that the system does do what it is supposed to do although the drivers are not showing changes in behavior due to the system. But increased awareness is not something you can measure. There seems to be the perception that the system needs to be moved because there are no dead animals being picked up so the animals must be changing their use patterns. My interpretation is people aren't hitting them on the highway in that area anymore because of the warning system. Also this system was a prototype and the upgraded version is all solar with an estimated cost of \$50,000. Dan added that the improved system has a line of site that is double the distance of the prototype.

TMDL Committee Update- Patty Perry

The TMDL committee met on November 7th with a Field Trip to the Trail Creek Project site. It was the pilot project that Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) put together to implement Forest Practices along a riparian area and take a look at what that looks like and how those Forest Practices are meeting the water quality concerns and meeting clean water act.

We looked at the project pre-harvest and now post-harvest. Pictures were shared. Jonathan L. discussed the data compiled, the overview of the project and shared that they met the targets they had hoped for. A second project is planned for next year and we will follow that one as well.

Grizzly Bear Committee- Patty Perry

Patty reported that she emailed the Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk Mountains Grizzly Bear Ecosystems Update 10-30-17 (*available on the KVRI website at kootenai.org*) from Wayne Kasworm to the Board.

Caribou Committee update- Norm Merz

Norm gave a brief Caribou Committee update. They are moving forward on the Maternal penning project in British Columbia. They built the maternal pen at the end of September. It consists of road fabric strung on wires in the trees and is 15 feet high. It provides a visual buffer while the Caribou are in the pen to reduce their determination to get out and also reduces the inclination of predators to go in after them. They also had to repair it in October after a wind storm. A pen manager has also been hired and funded by the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI). They are still looking for funding to do the Maternal penning operation in March.

Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge- Dianna Ellis

Dianna E. reported that the Federal Highways has been busy surveying on Riverside and West Side road.

Correspondence - Support Letter Request for Forest Service Fish Passage Project-Canuck Creek

Brandon Glaza, USFS, has requested a letter of support for the Forest Service Fish Passage Project on Canuck Creek that he discussed during the presentation. Patty provided a draft letter that she read to the group to consider. The letter supports the application for the project. Patty added that we are

supportive of the application and should the direction change she asked that Brandon to come back and have that discussion with us. Brandon agreed. The Board approved signing the letter of support.

Jered B. offered a suggestion to Brandon to be aware of the new Administrations goals for funding and to tier the funding request towards those goals.

Brandon added that if they do this project the road will receive several miles of road maintenance; brushing, ditch cleaning, and a bridge needs to be fixed as well in order to be able to move equipment to access the project.

Meeting dates for 2018- Patty Perry

A list of the Board Meeting dates for the Board to consider was distributed. Kevin K. reported that the date for January would be better later for scoping information included from Camp Dawson/Robinhood project.

Congressman Labrador's Office Update- Judy Morbeck

Judy M. updated that the Resilient Forest Act passed in the House and is now headed to the Senate.

Senator Risch's Office Update- Sid Smith

Sid distributed the quarterly Risch report. He also reported that the Resilient Federal Forests Act is on their plate as well as a number of other bills in the Senate right now.

Senator Crapo's Office Update -Karen Roetter

Karen reported that Senator Crapo has commented on the Westerman Bill but no decision has been made yet. Patty added that in reading through the bill and talking to Bonner County Commissioners who had questions on the Tribes perspective of the bill, the Tribal Timber Council supports the bill, as does the Kootenai Tribe. But if there is a change in the language that's been suggested - to remove Tribal provisions, there may be a lot of none support from those entities.

Jim W. commented about the issue of competitiveness on bidding on contracts on the Bonners Ferry Ranger District. He noted that the Hubzone designation for Boundary County limits the competitiveness by restricting potential bidders. Discussion followed. Brandon G. offered to give him the names of the US Forest Service contracting officers for him to contact at the Forest Supervisor's Office.

Next KVRI Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2018.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.
Sherrie Cossairt,
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant