

Draft Meeting Notes
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
March 17, 2014 – 7 p.m.
Board Meeting – University of Idaho Extension Office

Board Members in Attendance:

Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner & KVRI Co-chair
David Anderson, Mayor, City of Bonners Ferry & KVRI Co-chair
Gary Aitken Jr, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) & KVRI Co-chair
Sandy Ashworth, Boundary County Library, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Kevin Knauth, (Alt.) Bonners Ferry Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
Dave Wattenbarger, Boundary County Soil Conservation District
Ed Atkins, Jr., Corporate Ag & Landowner
Robyn Miller, Conservation
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry
Brad Corkill, Idaho Fish & Game Commission
Jim Cadnum, Landowner/Industrial

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

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Ron Abraham, KTOI Council
Kate Kendall, U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS)
Chip Corsi, Idaho Fish & Game (IF&G)
Kennon McClintock, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Nancie Lange, TNC
Ed Robinson, Idaho Dept. of Lands (IDL)
Don Gray, Community member
Bob Norton, Community member
Megan Kosterman, USFWS
Tabitha Graves, USGS
Scott Soultz, KTOI
Norm Merz, KTOI
Dorey Rowland, Community member
Bruce Rowland, Stimson Lumber
Wayne Kasworm, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Wayne Wakkinen, IF&G
Eldora Gatchell, Community member
David Gatchell, Community member
Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Phillip Sweet, Logger, Rancher
Dianna Ellis, USFWS, Kootenai NWR
Aaron Calkins, U.S. Congressmen R. Labrador
Sid Smith, U.S. Senator Risch
Judy Morbeck, U.S. Congressmen R. Labrador
Karen Roetter, U.S. Senator Crapo
Jon Meadows, Sportsman's Association

Ben Conard, USFWS
Mike Faler, Idaho Fishery Resource Office
Brent Lyndaker, USFS
Guest, Community member
Aaron Bohachek, Bonners Ferry Herald

Opening:

Dan Dinning opened and welcomed everyone to the monthly meeting; introductions followed.

The group approved the draft meeting notes from the February 24, 2014 meeting, by consensus.

Presentation: Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Project 2011-2013.

Kate Kendall, USGS-Emeritus scientist, presented preliminary results from her study to estimate the total size of the grizzly bear population in the Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem (CYE). The results will be preliminary until it is peer reviewed and accepted for publication in a scientific journal. Kate thanked the project staff, co-authors, and contributors to the study.

The study was initiated by local managers, agencies and representatives because the population was small and fragmented and estimates of population size lacked precision. Reliable baseline data on population status was needed to guide management attempting to recover this population that has been listed as threatened since 1975. The objective of the study was to understand the population size, density, distribution, and the genetic structure of the grizzly bears in the Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem. Hair snagging and sophisticated DNA fingerprinting techniques were used to sample the population by identifying the species, sex, and individual bears leaving the hair. The study used two concurrent hair sampling methods – hair corrals and bear rubs.

Kate described the study area, field methods, and the scientific analysis used in detail. A total of 18,761 hair samples were collected and 11,280 were sent for scientific genetic analysis. DNA results supplied the unique identity of thirty-eight (38) grizzly bears; four bears were detected by other methods for a definite minimum count of forty-two (42). Capture-recapture models were used to assess the number of bears that were not sampled and to estimate total population size. Total grizzly bear abundance in the CYE in 2012 was 49 (95% CI: 44-62) with an average of 45 (95% CI: 42-65) present at any one time. Population size in the Cabinet and Yaak regions was equal: Cabinet: 22 (95% CI: 20-36); Yaak: 22 (95% CI: 22-39). Grizzly bear density in the CYE was 4.5 (95% CI: 3.7-5.3) grizzly bears/1,000 km². With parentage analysis, she documented the first natural migrants to the critically low and interbred Cabinet population and the Yaak population by bears born to parents in neighboring populations.

To see additional information, Kate suggested Googling “Grizzly bear DNA” and selecting the Cabinet-Yaak links. There are also links to her other grizzly bear studies and videos of bears.

The value of replicating this type of study as a valuable tool for the local area was mentioned.

Committee Updates:

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Committee – Patty Perry

The next meeting will be held on March 19, 2014, 9:00 a.m. at the Tribal office. Comments received on the TMDL Plan will be reviewed.

Wildlife-Auto Collision (WAC) Committee Update – Patty Perry

The next meeting will be held on March 19, 2014, noon at the Tribal office. An update on the wildlife detection system located near Moose Valley Farms will be presented by Brice Sloan. The equipment is scheduled to be moved by ITD to a location north of Bonners Ferry.

Forestry Committee Update – Patty Perry

The committee met March 10 to discuss the Boulder Project. The committee and FS staff discussed the potential and the purpose and need for the project. It is the committee's role is to provide the community perspective to the FS's technical aspect on projects. During the forestry committee meeting a discussion was held on the Grizzly Bear Access Amendment requiring a reduction in road density in Grizzly habitat. This could be met through storing roads, and also discussing which roads are important to improve and continue to maintain. The forestry committee recommended to the KVRI board that a forestry committee meeting be held on April 7, 2014 to reach-out to the public with information of what needs to be accomplished and discuss how we might work together to get there. (The location will be in the Memorial Hall at the fairgrounds at 6:30 p.m.) The board was agreeable to support the meeting.

Another potential project for management in the Trout/Ball Creek area was discussed with the Forest Supervisor, Mary Farnsworth. District staff will be providing more detailed information before a decision is made.

Correspondence:

A copy of the letter signed by the KVRI Co-chairs was provided to the board members expressing the support the nomination of landscape treatment area projects that meet the intent of the Farm Bill.

Notice was received from the Three Rivers Ranger District requesting public input on the O'Brian/Lower Yaak Planning Area. For more information contact Sarah Canepa, Team Leader, at 406-295-4693.

Comments/Meeting Announcements:

Robyn Miller shared the news that two Idaho projects ranked very well in the Forest Legacy Conservation Easement Program. The Hall Mountain Forest Legacy project ranked second nationally, and the Clagstone project in Bonner County ranked sixth. Proposed funding is less than requested and further information will be provided. The goal of the Forest Legacy program is to keep those forests working and continued harvest on those properties as well as protect some of the fish and wildlife habitat.

The next KVRI board meeting will be April 21, 2014.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Janet Satchwell
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant