

Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
March 18, 2019 – 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
Angela Cooper, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho Vice-Chairman & (Alt.) KVRI Co-chair
Sandy Ashworth, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Ed Atkins Jr., Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Kevin Knauth, Bonners Ferry Ranger District, US Forest Service (USFS)
Chip Corsi (Alt.) Idaho Fish & Game Commission
Bob Blanford, Business/ Industry
Dave Wattenbarger, Soil Conservation/Landowner
Jim Cadnum, Industrial/Forest
Rhonda Vogl, KVRI Facilitator & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Dave Gray, (Alt.) Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land
Tim Kastning, Congressman Russ Fulcher's office
Wally Cossairt, Boundary County Commissioner
Marty Martinez, Citizen
Carol Kriebs, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Environmental Director
Greg Hoffman, US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE)
Scott Lawrence, US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE)
Logan Osgood-Zimmerman, US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), Water Management
Christy Johnsen-Hughes, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS-IFWO)
Wayne Wilkerson, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge
Sonja Michelsen, US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE)
Cooper Hanson, Coeur d'Alene High school student
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch's office
Ayla Neumeyer, Senator Risch's Office, Washington D.C. Office
Rachel Ackerman, University of Montana
Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)
Katherine Rowden, National Weather Service

Opening:

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

The February 25, 2019 KVRI Board Meeting Draft Notes were approved by consensus.

Winter Recap & Spring Outlook, Katherine Rowden, National Weather Service

Fall & Winter Recap

- El Nino Winter
- Oct 2018-Jan 2019- Above average temperatures
- Oct 2018-Jan 2019- Below average precipitation
- February 2019
 - Below average temperatures
 - Above average precipitation
- Bonners Ferry-Oct. 2018-March 2019
 - Above average temperatures until February then record lows
 - Snowfall records for Oct. 2018 through last week was average
 - February record 2-day snowfall of 24.7 inches, broke the 2017 record of 22 inches

Flood Potential

- Less than 5 % chance of spring flooding on Moyie River
- Heightened risk of small stream and localized flooding issues in and around Boundary County due to low-land snowpack
 - Current weather pattern good for melt-off
- It is favored to see above-normal temperatures and below-normal precipitation for April/May/June

Spring-Outlook

- Near to above normal temperatures
- Precipitation uncertain
- High elevation snowpack is below average to average
 - Low risk of major river flooding
- Low- and Mid-elevation snowpack above average for this time of year
 - Increased risk of small stream or localized flooding, although not currently

Katherine's full slide presentation is available on the KVRI website at www.kootenai.org

Libby Dam Operations 2019, Logan Osgood-Zimmerman, Senior Water Manager, USACE, Seattle District

Current operations

- March 1st water supply forecast for Libby Dam 93% of average
- Libby Dam currently at 2406.1 ft.
 - Flood risk target of 2441.3 ft. by 31 March
- Remaining on minimum outflow of 4kcfs through the end of March and anticipated to continue at minimum outflow until the start of refill
- Outflow- increased flows a week or two ago to help out the Twin Rivers Hatchery for Burbot spawning rescue
- Back to normal flows, minimum until the start of refill
- Good chance we will have a sturgeon pulse but lower than normal

What it all means for the spring

- Snowpack 70-90% of average

- Above average low elevation snow
- Below average high elevation snow
- Potential for early runoff with climate above average temperatures predicted in the 3 month outlook
- Soil saturation is below normal
- Flood Risk with current conditions is low
- Below average snowpack overall
- Normal to below normal precipitation anticipated for the spring

Columbia River Systems Operations EIS

- Schedule Revision-Draft EIS expected to be complete Feb 2020 and available for public review
- 45-day public comment period planned
- For more information about CRSO visit <http://crso.info/>
- To add your name to the CRSO EIS mailing list, send your contact information to info@crso.info
- Or leave a message at 800-290-5033

Logan's full slide presentation is available on the KVRI website at www.kootenai.org

Committee Updates

Forestry Update-Kevin Knauth

Camp Robin Project

- Signed decision last Tuesday – March 12th
- Stewardship Timber Sale coming out 4th quarter FY2019
- Robin Hood Traditional Timber Sale coming out 1st quarter FY2020

Grouse BMU Project

- This project is solely to reduce the volume of roads to bring BMU into compliance with grizzly bear standards
- No vegetative work will be done

Caribou/Snow Project

- Will begin NEPA this year
- Collect the initial field data this summer
- Do the analysis over the winter
- Deliver a decision probably a year from this fall

Bog Creek

- In objection period now
- Have a Draft decision out
- Open to folks who commented along the way; objections must provide some form of resolution
- Objection period expires April 2
- Copies of Bog Creek Draft Decision and EIS still available

Boulder Project

- FY2019- Black Boulder GNA sale
- FY2020-Two additional sales

Over Snow Vehicle Travel- Kevin Knauth

Winter Travel Planning on North Zone-EIS

- Forest Plan encourages motorized recreation across the forest including winterized but not at the detriment to wildlife
- A “Focus Group” met several times in hopes of building a map to serve as a starting point for the Forest Service
- Focus Group was unsuccessful at developing a map, so the Forest Service will develop an initial map internally
- This map should be ready to use for initial public comment and suggestions in a month

Further discussion included:

- The work done in Stewardship sales
- MS1 management standards
- Access amendment conversations

Correspondence

Email from Congressman Russ Fulcher-Rhonda Vogl

Rhonda read an email from the Congressman about the Camp Robin project decision congratulating KVRI and the Forest Service on their efforts to improve the forests, lands, and recreational areas.

Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership Workshop-Rhonda Vogl

Shared Stewardship: Building a Common Vision for Idaho

- Dates : April 30-May 1
- Location : Idaho Water Center , 322 E. Front St. Boise
- Registration : \$25, limited to 80 participants

Anyone interested in going let Rhonda know as soon as possible.

Congressman Fulcher’s Office – Tim Kastning

Tim reported that Congressman Fulcher will be in the District on April 15 and 16 and he would like to meet with the KVRI Board.

Fish and Wildlife Service-Christy Johnson Hughes

Christy reported that the Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) will be hosting the Regional Project Leaders Meeting in North Idaho in the month of June. They are just starting the coordination and will keep us informed.

Fish and Game Commission Update- Chip Corsi

- Commission approved Big Game Regulations
- Cut back on controlled Cow permits in this area, from 450 to 300
- Deer Season and Extra Doe tag permits did not change
- But what did change is the area is which you can use the extra Doe Tag- on or within 1 mile of a cultivated field
- Focuses those extra doe tags on areas where we have crop depredation problems
- Burbot Fishery has slowed down
- Video of the Burbot fishery, with some highlights of the efforts to bring it back, is available on the IDFG website

US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Update-Greg Hoffman

- Public meeting here in Bonners Ferry on May 6, 2019

Letter of Support-Rhonda Vogl

Rhonda presented a Letter of Support for the City of Bonners Ferry seeking funding for the Riverside Road Project. The Board approved the signing of the letter.

David Sims stated this is a re-submit to a project they submitted in 2017. They were encouraged to resubmit in 2019; it is a 2 year cycle.

University of Montana- Rachel Ackerman

Dan reported that Rachel Ackerman from the University of Montana will be staying after this meeting to talk to the Board about the Collaborative. Everyone is invited to stay and visit with her.

Next KVRI Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the Boundary County Extension Office.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Sherrie Cossairt,
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant