

Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
June 20, 2016 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting – University of Idaho Extension Office

Board Members in Attendance:

Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner & KVRI Co-chair
Gary Aitken Jr., Kootenai Tribe of Idaho & KVRI Co-chair
David Sims, Mayor, City of Bonners Ferry & KVRI Co-chair
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry
Dave Wattenbarger, Soil Conservation District/Ag Landowner
Kevin Knauth, (Alt.) Bonners Ferry Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
Ed Atkins Jr., Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Dave Gray- Social/Cultural/Historical Interests (alt.)
Jim Cadnum- Landowner (Industrial)
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI
Brad Corkill, Idaho Department of Fish & Game

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Chip Corsi, Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch
Janet Paronto, Bureau of Land Management
Dustin Miller, Idaho Office of Species Conservation
Joshua Uriarte, Idaho Office of Species Conservation
Tim Dougherty, Idaho Forest Group

Opening:

Co-Chair, Dan Dinning opened and welcomed everyone to the meeting; introductions followed. Last month's meeting draft notes were approved by consensus.

Presentations

Dustin Miller, Idaho Office of Species Conservation (OSC), gave a description of his office and a summary of the issues they are working on. The office was created in 2000 by the Idaho Legislature with a mission to coordinate and implement policies and programs that are related to the recovery, conservation & delisting of species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). They do their work with state and federal partners, such as the Idaho Fish & Game Department. It's an important relationship between the departments.

One of the most important things OSC does is to engage partners in collaborative efforts to conserve species and do things in a collaborative fashion to preclude the need to list species. Species they are involved with include Sage Grouse, Salmon/Steelhead, Bull Trout, Grizzly Bear and Caribou. They continue to work on trying to find the right solutions to the recovery planning efforts and the collaborative conservation planning efforts through agreements with Fish & Wildlife Service, the Forest Service and BLM on actions that can be taken on the ground. The goal is to move to recovery of the

species or preclude the need to list. Most importantly they are trying to find the appropriate balance between conservation and maintaining traditional land use activities, such as logging and farming.

Dustin also reported that the Western Governors Association (WGA) has completed a year-long initiative on exploring areas within the Endangered Species Act that need improvement. They would like to find better ways not only in conserving species but to engage more parties in actions to participate in the process. A complete overhaul of the act is not a reality, but they do hope to get private landowners to view species as an asset not a liability.

Committee Updates:

Forestry Committee-Westside Project

Patty Perry began with a description of the Westside Project. After the last KVRI Forestry Sub-Committee meeting, it was agreed upon that there was a need to begin discussion with private landowners and the Forest Service as to what can be done to prevent the same type of fire damage as the Parker Ridge Fire in their area.

After meeting with another group of agencies, (Natural Resources Conservation Service, Idaho Dept. of Lands, Forest Service Fire services, Inland Forest Management and the County Community Fire Safe Program manager) the decision was made to hold a public meeting with the Westside landowners on June 27 to start discussions on how all the parties involved can work together on fire prevention. Although Kevin and his Forest Service staff caution us that the Forest Service process will take time, there is still a need to bring all parties together to discuss the opportunity of creating a Community Fire Protection Project together.

The meeting will include managing agencies and others that can inform the community and individual landowners of the potential project and offer assistance to private landowners who may wish to participate.

CFLR Program Review

Patty stated that Mary Farnsworth has asked for an internal review of the CFLR (Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration) program. She wants a complete review of expenditures, targets met and future targets, and where we are in the planning process. This helps the region to be aware of and prepare for upcoming funding challenges that may arise.

Patty added that the CFLR money can only be used for projects not for the planning process which has been a challenge.

Forestry Committee Update

- **Boulder Creek**

Kevin explained the Forestry Committee meeting on June 30 is to re-introduce everyone to the Boulder Creek project and the July 14 Boulder Creek Field trip is to actually see the project. It's a FY 2018 sale and they are right on track to have it ready for that year. The road is a challenge, looking for additional funding nationally for the road repair, ERFO money will eventually come but it is 2-3 years out, money is

needed up front to begin. The work they want to do is on the side of the creek that was damaged during the Dec 9th storm.

- **Deer Creek**

The specialists are looking at the comments and will respond to them, then they will be ready to release that draft decision, and then go into objection period. It's progressing to do the 1st sale in 2017 and the 2nd sale in 2018 as projected. The challenge that they may have with meeting the Grizzly Bear Access Amendment 2019 timeline is on the 2nd sale in the BMU; is that it's possible they may temporarily exceed road densities in that sale. They will work in conjunction with Fish & Wildlife Services.

They have had all the planning staff together to strategize on how long it would take to implement that one sale, site prep and planting. They hope to have a tighter schedule and get it done before the 2019 access amendment timeline.

Discussion continued concerning attached timelines, Troy district sharing the BMU, the flexibility of the timing of the 2 packages, GBA amendments, prescribed burn areas, road access and priority issues.

- **Camp Nine/Camp Dawson**

They have identified the working area for this sale, are getting units together, and the specialist/biologists will begin next summer. This project can be suspended if Westside project needs to be moved ahead.

- **Trout Ball**

This sale depends on the Westside project; dictates whether or not they leave it the same or enlarge it.

TMDL Update

Patty reported that there is a TMDL meeting on Friday, June 24 at 8:30 am at the Tribal Office. Bob Steed will be here to give us an update on any planning we need to know about. Dave Wattenbarger, Kevin Greenleaf & Jerry Garten have been out in the field and as of today have completed the installation of the monitors in the streams for this year.

WAC Update

Patty received some pictures from Bryce Sloan to show how well our wildlife auto collision radar system is working. Western Transportation Institute (WTI) staff is continuing to monitor the system as well. The Idaho Department of Transportation received a \$75,000 grant to hire WTI again to do the 3rd party validation. This system seems to be a better investment than building a stationary wildlife underpass. If the land around the underpass changes and animals move, this radar system can move with the animals. The Spokesman Review would like to do another news article about the system. Bryce will be coming up at the end of July and it's possible we will have meeting at that time.

Comments/Meeting Announcements/Correspondence

IGBC Tour

Dan reported that the IGBC (Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee) Summer Meeting is in town, starting tomorrow with a tour beginning at 9am. They will be traveling to the MacArthur Lake area, talking about the Twenty Mile project and KVRI's involvement and collaboration with the community. They will continue north to the overlook at the Junction of Hwy 1, looking at the fenced landfill/collections sites, maps available showing the Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone, travel to Boundary Creek Wildlife Management area and back to town. Then on Wednesday is the meeting at Kootenai River Inn and it continues through Thursday including a public comment period.

Patty reminded us that it is exciting to just have the group here in the heart of the Grizzly Bear issues, visiting our area. To be able to discuss the Twenty Mile project, TMDL process, Community Water system, access amendment/roads, and the fact that KVRI helped fund the analysis process initially with money up front to get the project off the ground. It's the first project that this group worked on that was not litigated on in 17 years on this district.

Chip also hopes to share on this tour that this occupied Grizzly Bear Habitat area is surrounded by a working landscape, 2 different small recovery zones and with the challenges that presents, it may be time we start getting some resources to work on that.

Mary Farnsworth 120 Day Detail

Patty was informed by Mary Farnsworth that she will be gone for a 120 Day Detail. (June 27-Nov 7) She is going to Region 4, Ogden, UT, detailing as a Deputy Regional Forester. She assures us we will be in good hands.

Fair Booth

Patty reported that at the next KVRI meeting we will be planning our KVRI Fair Booth. The theme this year is "Seasons of Scarecrows and Sunflowers". Come with your ideas. This is Sherrie's first year and she is working on the preparations.

TNC Press Release- Forest Legacy Project

Patty shared an email from Kennon McClintock about the press release of the Forest Legacy Project coming out sometime this week. Be watching for that.

OSU-Survey of Idaho Forest Collaborative Groups

Patty also shared she forwarded an email to everyone from Don Ulrich from OSU, about the upcoming survey and its link. Patty will be reminding everyone about that until the survey is completed.

Bureau of Land Management

Janet Paronto, BLM, said she had nothing to report. Dan asked her to let Kurt Pavlat know about the Westside Project.

Fish & Game

Brad Corkill shared that the next commission meeting is in Jerome, ID, July 6 and 7.

Senator Jim Risch Office

Sid Smith shared information about the press release from the Senator's office, Entitled "Wildfire Budgeting, Response, and Forest Management Act" described fully on the Senator's website. It's aimed at improving forest management and wildfire budgeting.

The next meeting will be July 18, 2016

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Sherrie Cossairt

KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant