

Meeting Notes  
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative  
April 20, 2015 – 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  
Ron Abraham, (Alt.) Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) & KVRI Co- chair  
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry  
Chip Corsi, (Alt.) Idaho Fish & Game  
Dave Wattenbarger, Boundary County Soil Conservation District  
Jim Cadnum, Landowner (Industrial)  
Kevin Knauth, (Alt.) Bonners Ferry Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service- IPNF  
Kennon McClintock, (Alt.) Conservation  
Sandy Ashworth, Social/Cultural/Historical  
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI  
Shandee Alexander, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

**Agency/Others in Attendance:**

Dan Muir, U.S. Forest Service  
Dave Gray, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests  
Dianna Ellis, Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge  
Dwight Bergeron, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Greg Hoffman, USACE- Libby Dam  
Judy Morbeck, U.S. Congressman Labrador  
Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Norm Merz, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho  
Scott Soult, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho  
Sid Smith, U.S. Senator Jim Risch  
Stan Galloway, Idaho Department of Lands  
Tim Dougherty, Idaho Forest Group

**Opening:**

Dave Anderson opened and welcomed everyone to the monthly meeting; introductions followed.

The group approved the draft meeting notes from the March 16th meeting, by consensus.

There was a technical glitch, so the meeting started with committee updates and presentations followed.

**Committee Updates:**

**Forestry Sub-committee:**

The Forestry committee is scheduled to meet May 14<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am, at the Kootenai Tribal Office. The committee will continue working on the Deer Creek Project. The USFS Deer Creek project team will bring the proposed action and alternatives before the Forestry committee. Discussion and input will be

received so the team can move forward in producing a draft environmental assessment. The Forestry committee will have recommendations for the KVRI Board at the May KVRI meeting.

The proposed action will identify what is needed in order to decommission and store roads necessary for project implementation. Unclassified roads will also be identified. The team approached the process a couple different ways. Consider if the road will be utilized for timber sale, and make the necessary repairs; store/decommission after. If it is an unclassified road, the road will be put on the system if it is the primary access to private property. Roads being utilized by the public to access recreational opportunity were looked at individually; stable unclassified roads were proposed to add to the system. The team considered comment letters while studying the roads. The majority of the roads were outside the Bear Management Unit (BMU); an approach that addresses broad concerns was taken in keeping roads and providing access.

The Forest Service considers stored and decommissioned roads as one in the same. Both, providing equal restoration benefit. A stored road is re-contoured so it doesn't look like it can be accessed, however, it can be reopened (if an emergency dictated utilization) in part of a day. Decommissioned roads are re-contoured and the brush is directed. Eventually it won't look like a road.

An open house meeting is scheduled for May 13<sup>th</sup> to allow an opportunity for the community to see the proposal for Deer Creek Project.

#### **WAC Committee:**

The animal detection system is up and running. ITD has applied for a power drop through Northern Lights in order to run the system. ITD has a grant and is working with Western Transportation Institute to do the 3rd party validation.

#### **Presentations:**

##### **Kootenai Tribe Operation Loss Project- Norm Merz:**

Norm gave a presentation on the Kootenai River Ecosystem Operational Loss Assessment. The Kootenai Tribe is heading up the project and has been working with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and is funded by Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

##### **Legislative Framework:**

- The Northwest Power Act of 1980 directed the Northwest Power and Conservation Council to develop a program to protect, mitigate and enhance fish and wildlife that are affected by the construction and operation of hydroelectric facilities. BPA was directed to fund the program.

##### **Construction & Inundation:**

- Before dam construction: assess habit for different species- find Habitat Units (HUs).
- After dam construction: do the same analysis- find HUs
- Pre-Dam HUs – Post Dam HUs = Construction and Inundation effects.

##### **Operational Effects (3 Phases):**

- Phase 1- Operational Loss Assessment:
  - Tribal Approach to Fish and Wildlife Management:

- Holistic
  - Be consistent with Tribal Cultural values
  - Defensible science
  - Encourage adaptive management
  - Collaborative effort
  - Include social and economic issues
- Ecosystem Schematic:
  - Hydrology, hydraulic, Aquatic, Riparian and Terrestrial Components
  - Included scientist from all 3 of these fields
- Operational Impacts:
  - What happens in the river affects the floodplains, and cascades through the ecosystem; May affect ecological processes, habitats, and biological communities. The expression of the on-going impacts may take a while to be exposed.
- Results:
  - Norm put together a graph that compared historic and current situations by reach: Canyon, Braided and Meander.
- Phase 2- Mitigation Planning and Transferability Assessment:
  - Looking at how to improve the wildlife habitat in the river corridor, given the current constraints.
  - Is there value in trying to take this as a pilot program and move it to different areas within the Columbia River Basin?
- Phase 3- Protection, Mitigation, Restoration, and Monitoring
  - Implement Phase 1 & 2
  - Continually assessing the ecosystem, and tracking progress.

Benefits to the Community:

- KTOI Employment
- Utilizing local businesses
- Contracting local contractors for Restoration Activities

**USFS Fire Contracting Opportunities- Dan Muir/Kevin Knauth:**

Kevin updated everyone on prescribed burns. The USFS started burning Saturday evening, all day Sunday and Monday. Tuesday, there will be people out and about looking at what has been done already; make sure everything is contained and holding well. If so, there will be additional burning starting Tuesday. The FS will be burning up near Copper Falls. The crew has been in the Skin Creek Area by the Eileen Dam.

Dan gave a presentation on the Idaho Panhandle National Forests Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Contracts:

Dan gave us a brief overview and a better understanding of the fuels reduction contracts. The USFS is trying to develop local interest in contracting.

- The contract will cover several forms of fuel reduction or site-preparation activities:
  - Machine Fire line construction

- Hand Fire line construction
- Machine and hand slash piling
- Mastication
- Slashing of fuels such as brush, and small trees
- The contractor will bid for 3 years 2015, 2016 and 2017.
- Categories:
  - Excavator Piling
  - Hand Piling
  - Fire line & Fuel Break Construction
  - Fire line & Fuel Break Construction, with hand crew
  - Fire line & Fuel Break Maintenance, with hand crew
  - Fire line & Fuel Break Rehabilitation, with hand crew
  - Land Clean-up Piling
  - Slashing/Bucking Hazardous Fuels
  - Chipping & Mastication

### **Old Business:**

Underpass Cameras: Patty read a note from Wayne Wakkinen. He has a funding mechanism to purchase cameras and would likely have funds to pay someone to check the cameras periodically. Within a month, Wayne can have the cameras up and going again.

### **Correspondence:**

Patty read an email received from Mike Garrity, Alliance for the Wild Rockies. The Alliance does not want to participate in the collaborative process for developing the Deer Creek Project. KVRI will continue to encourage them to join the planning.

Patty announced that KVRI received a post card stating that 319 grants are coming up. Non-point source grants for projects and the cycle is open.

### **New Business:**

It's time to think about the 2015 Boundary County Fair. The Theme is "Home, where the heart is" and also coincides with 100<sup>th</sup> year of the county. The Fair booth application was approved. It will be submitted this next week. The Board was asked to submit thoughts about the theme and ideas to Shandee.

Dave Gray mentioned that May 9<sup>th</sup>, the Boundary County Museum will be having an opening that will include events from 10am till 4pm. "The Fish Between the Falls," movie by George Sibley will be playing that day as well.

Stan Galloway- April 21<sup>st</sup> the State Land board will be meeting to approve the annual sales plan of putting 238 mmbf of Timber up, statewide. 40 mmbf of that will be in Bonner and Boundary Counties.

Kurt Pavlat- Looking at a small 120 acre parcel.

Dan Dinning announced that Secure Rural Schools (SRS) was reauthorized for 2 years.

Chip Corsi- New Bonners Ferry conservation officer, Lucas Swanson. Prior to his move, Lucas worked for the Idaho Fish and Game, in the Powell, Idaho patrol area.

Dianna Ellis, Bryan Johnson did a presentation on Grizzlies out at the Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge, there were 72 people in attendance.

**Closing Comments/Meeting Announcements:**

**Next meeting-May18, 2015- Meeting Logistics- Topics:**

Greg Hoffman, USACOE- presenting Sturgeon Film and Water Management Update  
Meeting will start at 6:30pm.

Norm Merz, Kootenai Tribe Loon Monitoring

Patty will be absent for the June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting; she has asked the Board to consider moving it out 1 week to June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Meeting adjourned 8:38pm  
Shandee Alexander KVRI Recording Secretary