

Meeting Notes  
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative - July 20, 2015 – 7 p.m.  
University of Idaho Extension Office

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner & KVRI Co-chair  
Gary Aitken Jr., Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) & KVRI Co-chair  
Dave Anderson, Mayor, City of Bonners Ferry & 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  
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry  
Kennon McClintock, (Alt.) Conservation  
Ed Atkins, Corporate Agriculture  
Jim Cadnum, Industrial Forest  
Brad Corkill, Idaho Fish & Game Commission  
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI  
Shandee Alexander, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

**Agency/Others in Attendance:**

Norm Merz, KTOI  
Sid Smith, Sen. Jim Risch  
Karen Roetter, Sen, Mike Crapo  
Chip Corsi, Idaho Fish & Game  
Judy Morbeck, Congressman Raul Labrador  
Shawn Young, KTOI  
Sue Ireland, KTOI  
Kurt Pavlat, BLM  
Russ Hegedus, Idaho Forest Group  
Greg Hoffman, USACE-Libby Dam  
Dave Gray, retired  
Dianna Ellis, KNWR  
Jason Flory, USFWS  
Billy Barquin, KTOI  
Wayne Wakkinen, IDFG

**Opening:**

Gary Aitken Jr. opened and welcomed everyone to the monthly meeting; introductions followed. The June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting notes were approved by consensus.

**Presentations:**

**Burbot Restoration in the Kootenai- Sue Ireland (KTOI):**

Sue set the context of Burbot restoration and the steps it took to get the conservation strategy where it is at today.

- By the 80's and 90's there was no evidence of successful spawning.

- Construction of Libby Dam (one of many threats to the population):
  - Winter flow and water temperature management
  - Reduced productivity in the food web
  - Habitat changes
  - Low population size
- 2001- Tribal council proposed an innovative approach to the burbot recovery, to the USFWS. This was to use the community, agency and tribal collaboration; KVRI formed
- 2002- Sen. Mike Crapo came and gave the community, KVRI, the agencies and the Tribe a boost of support. KVRI also agreed to form a Burbot Subcommittee to develop a conservation strategy.
- Support for the common goal: “Reestablish a native burbot population in the lower Kootenai River”
  - Habitat Restoration
  - Development of Conservation Aquaculture
  - Hydro Operation Plans
  - Monitoring and Evaluation
  - Education and Outreach
- Implementation:
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)- commitment by participants to implement strategy; secured funding, implement conservation measures, annual updates to KVRI.
  - 2005 MOU signed by 16 agencies and entities.

Gary remembered being proud of the Tribe, being the 1<sup>st</sup> ones to cultivate the burbot.

Shawn added that there is an annual program review with all of the co-managers and their designated representatives. The purpose of the structured meeting is to coordinate and discuss any potential differences, discuss what research the group wants to accomplish, release targets, and location of release. This process is a very important component to the conservation strategy.

### **Burbot Restoration Update- Shawn Young (KTOI):**

Goal: Restore a viable and self-sustaining harvestable burbot population in the Lower Kootenai River/ Kootenay Lake. The burbot conservation strategy (BCS) is for both Tribe and Community in the long term.

BCS main focal areas:

- Conservation Aquaculture
- Monitoring and Evaluation
  - Tribe raises them
  - IDFG and BC Ministry do the monitoring and evaluation; post release survival
- Alternative Hydro-operations Plan
- Habitat Restoration
- Education and Outreach

The KVRI BCS was signed in 2005 and put into effect for a 10-year period. Does the BCS need a formal extension or renewal, or proceed on the trajectory it's on?

Burbot program 2015-

- Moyie Lake- continues to be the Brood Stock Source.

- Twin Rivers Hatchery- Fully operational
  - 1<sup>st</sup> year of fish rearing: Staff are rearing burbot and sturgeon at designed capacities. Usually this takes a couple years to rear at designed capacities, Twin Rivers Hatchery is already there.
  - There are 3 water sources: Kootenai River, Moyie River and ground water.
  - 3 sections of the hatchery:
    - Sturgeon
    - Burbot- contains a mini-hatchery for live feed itself. Burbot require a live zooplankton diet for larvae phase
    - Administrative/Mechanical

#### Basis of Design-

- Still operating on a good portion of the original design. This design went through the BPA (Bonneville Power Administration) step process in order to receive funding and for the completion of construction.
- 4 Phases- 5 year plans. Came out of the original BCS.
- The hatchery is currently in Phase 3 of the master plan.
- Hoping for a significant amount of mature adults in Phase 4.

Shawn reviewed the numbers of burbot and the survival rate at the Twin Rivers Hatchery.

#### Burbot Cycle:

- February- Catching the brood stock, fertilizing the eggs and sperm
- March- Incubating burbot embryos.
- April-June- burbot hatch
  - April-May- Feed Rotifers to the young burbot
  - May-June- Switch over to artemia (2 diff. sized switched to over time.)

Cannibalism is extraordinary within the burbot.

- July- Fry, go to the bottom of the tanks
- October- tag burbot for post release monitoring.
- 5-10 years: would like large, healthy, reproductive adults.

Shawn showed slides of the Twin Rivers Hatchery and explained the layout of the facility and what is happening with the burbot at each stage:

- Incubation- 53 families (28 females, 53 males); 7.2 million eggs; 45 days @ 3°C
- Larviculture- Hatch 40-60 days post-fertilization; larval burbot kept at ambient water temps; initiated feeding 7 days after hatch, starting with rotifers and then transitioned to Artemia.
- Juvenile Rearing- Transition to dry feed; control cannibalism, density and water quality; release to Kootenai River, Kootenay Lake and tributaries.

Burbot Released: Moyie River, Deep Creek, Ferry Island, Shorty's Island, Porthill area, Boundary Creek, Goat Creek, Kootenay Lake.

Future Burbot Releases: Would like to hit the target of 125k 6-month juveniles per class; releasing in Kootenay Lake, Increase receiving tributaries in Idaho and BC, Montana, Kootenai River and in habitat restoration sites. Trying to keep the families separate for tracking genetic contributions.

Shawn mentioned that it is very encouraging that the hatchery reared burbot are surviving, growing and spawning in the river. The overall goal is to restore natural recruitment to levels supporting harvestable populations.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **TMDL Committee:**

Temperature monitors have been downloaded, the batteries have been checked, and deployed for this year. Kevin Greenleaf has the same program as IDEQ, so he can download from the monitors & track. He can also create reports -- Kevin will provide a more in-depth update at later meeting.

#### **Forestry Committee:**

The Washington and Regional Forest Service offices did an audit and reviewed on the Twenty Mile CFLRA project. KVRI participated in a meeting to talk about the collaboration and how it works, and specifically how it worked on Twenty Mile, and what we can do to help the projects along.

Kevin Knauth added that at the District level they reviewed documentation on project components such as roads, timber and NEPA. The review team also went out and looked at the roads, and sale packages. They looked at work that had been done before hauling timber and what will be done after hauling. The review generated discussion of how other places are doing things. There was also discussion on how to handle slash, prescribed burning and planting. They looked at marking, discussing a right or wrong way to mark trees.....the reviewed the entire picture of the project.

One team member spoke very favorably about storing roads instead of decommissioning. And there was discussion on if this should have been a stewardship or a sale project...it was determined that the Forest Service staff made a good decision based on the information that was present.

There will be a report generated within a few months, KVRI will only have a small portion in the report, it will be more for the Ranger District as a learning tool for how the Twenty mile project was executed.

Hellroaring- 2 objections; unsure if there will be meetings – the Objection meetings can be open for attendance.

Fire update: 12 total

#### **Old/New Business:**

Fair booth ideas/volunteers- Theme: "Home... where the heart is." - Combined with the County 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

#### **Closing Comments/Meeting Announcements:**

Dave Gray thanked everyone for the get well card and the encouraging comments he received. He is feeling much better.

The August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held at the fair booth. There will be Indian Tacos & Huckleberry Cobbler.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.  
Shandee Alexander, KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant