

Draft Meeting Notes
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
January 27, 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
Ed Atkins, Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Brad Corkill, Idaho Fish & Game Commission
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry
Jim Cadnum, Landowner/Industrial
Kennon McClintock, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Dave Wattenbarger, Soil Conservation District (SCD)
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Janet Satchwell, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Laura Roady, Bonners Ferry Herald
Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land Management
Dianna Ellis, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Kootenai NWR
Dave Gray, Alt. KVRI and WAC member
Aaron Calkins, U.S. Congressmen R. Labrador
Sid Smith, U.S. Senator Risch
Karen Roetter, U.S. Sen. Mike Crapo
Ree Brannon, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Steve McNulty, TransCanada
Lee Pinkerton, Boundary County Commissioner
Steve Fioravanti, Citizen
Lynda Fioravanti, Citizen
Sue Ireland, KTOI
Kevin Greenleaf, KTOI
Chip Corsi, IDFG

Opening:

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

The group approved the draft meeting notes from the November 18, 2013 meeting, by consensus.

Presentations:

TransCanada Corporation Funding Award - Steve McNulty, Land Supervisor

TransCanada's community grant program presented a \$5,000 donation to KVRI's Wildlife-Auto Collision (WAC) sub-committee as matching funds for a grant aimed at developing strategies to reduce wildlife conflicts with automobiles in the identified collision hot spots within Boundary County. On behalf of TransCanada Corporation Steve presented a 'check' to the three KVRI co-chair members, a TNC representative and a WAC committee member. The TNC received and administers the grant on behalf of the WAC committee. TransCanada was proud to present the \$5,000 in the interest of safety for their workers, the public, in addition to the wildlife.

The Board recognized TransCanada for their willingness to be involved within the county and KVRI looks forward to working with them again in the future.

NRCS: Overview of Farm Bill Programs - Ree Brannon, District Conservationist

Ree discussed the current Farm Bill Programs and how they are administered in Boundary County. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) implements the Farm Bill and NRCS is one of numerous agencies under the USDA. The mission of USDA is to promote agriculture production sustainability and to preserve and conserve our Nation's natural resources. NRCS works with their conservation partners – Boundary Soil Conservation District (BSCD), Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission – to assist private landowners. Other partners include Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Lands, The Nature Conservancy, and local industry.

This program is voluntary; a landowner or producer contacts NRCS for technical or financial assistance, and time is spent on the ground developing a comprehensive plan based on the type of land uses (cropland, pasture, forest, stream bank and wildlife), the objective, and project resource concerns.

The PowerPoint presentation will be made available on the Kootenai Tribe website www.kootenai.org at KVRI – Documents.

Patty discussed the partnership with NRCS and KVRI. The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) sub-committee has had the opportunity to facilitate and write the plan with Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ). Across Idaho the state legislature has made the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission the agency in charge of and responsible for implementing voluntary practices to reduce non-point pollution on private lands. The programs administered by NRCS can help landowners to implement practices consistent with the TMDL plan. The BSCD and NRCS work with private landowners to address the water quality issues involved with stream bank erosion, sediment issues, and plantings along the stream bank.

Kootenai River Habitat Restoration Program Update - Sue Ireland, KTOI Fish & Wildlife Director

Sue's presentation updated KVRI on completed components of the restoration program and upcoming projects which are designed to help restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions for native fish species in the Kootenai River. The Kootenai Tribe is implementing the Kootenai River Habitat Restoration Program along with many agency and community partners. The project also assists the action agencies (Bonneville Power Administration and the Army Corps of Engineers) to be compliant with one of the Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives (RPA's) in the USFWS biological opinion for the Kootenai River white sturgeon.

From concept to construction Sue reviewed the oversight and coordination that takes place for each component. During 2011 - 2013 six habitat restoration projects have been completed that involved several types of treatments: pool forming structures and pool creation or enhancement, in river and bank structures, side channel reconnection and floodplain creation or enhancement, and riparian enhancement. These treatments benefit the Kootenai sturgeon and other native fish. Before, during and after photographs and aerial photos gave a good perspective of the restoration work.

Upcoming habitat projects through the year 2016 were outlined and Sue described the 2014 project as a rocky substrate enhancement for two areas in the river to support sturgeon broadcast spawning and early life stage survival. The BPA will be holding an environmental assessment (EA) scoping meeting in

Bonnars Ferry on February 26, 2014 for the Kootenai River 2015 and 2016 projects which includes: large deep pools, vegetated floodplain surfaces, rocky substrate, and biological benefits for other species.

A community meeting and tour day was held November 1, 2013 and those attending received an overview of the restoration program and were taken to a site overlooking the river to view a project and ask questions.

Additional construction is occurring at Twin Rivers for a new hatchery for Burbot (Ling Cod) and Gary (Tribal Chair) advised that the Twin Rivers campground will be open for the 2014 season.

BF Builders, Inc. is the local contractor for the building portion of the hatchery project, while Goodfellow Bros, Inc. manages the site, excavation and in-river work for the intakes. Additionally, Goodfellow Brothers, Inc. implements the construction of the river projects and incorporates local subcontractors to the extent possible.

Sue thanked the KVRI Burbot Subcommittee for their work on the Burbot Conservation Strategy. Dan reminded the board that the work accomplished by the committee led to a MOU which was signed by 16 entities both in the U.S. and Canada. Patty mentioned the committee was a pilot effort to put together a strategy for Burbot recovery in lieu of another listing by USFWS so that we could work toward recovery without a listing.

This PowerPoint presentation will be made available on the Kootenai Tribe website www.kootenai.org at KVRI – Documents.

Committee Updates:

Forestry Committee – Patty Perry

The next forestry sub-committee will meet February 13, 1:00 p.m. at the tribal office. The committee will be looking at the upcoming projects for this year in addition to the targets for last year, what was accomplished, and what we may be carrying over.

The Forest Service has allocated an additional \$3.5 million to the Idaho Panhandle forests for this year to implement timber production and projects. Allocations have not yet been made to the Bonnars Ferry District.

WAC Committee – Dan Dinning and Patty Perry

Last week a meeting was held with Sloan Security providing the sub-committee an overview of the wildlife detection system. The Idaho Transportation Department has been a good partner in this project, and the Bonnars Ferry High School Robotics Team looks at the data from the system which helps to fine-tune the setup. In addition to this system we have additional signs to warn drivers of high wildlife use areas. This work will continue to be refined.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Committee – Patty Perry

Legal notice has been published for seeking comment on the proposed IDEQ plans to reduce temperatures in the Kootenai River and Moyie River sub-basins. The Assessment of Water Quality in Kootenai River and Moyie River Sub-basins (Total Maximum Daily Load): 2014 Addendum was developed in coordination with the Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) TMDL sub-committee.

The document is available for review at IDEQ's Coeur d'Alene Regional Office and on their website at www.deq.idaho.gov/public-comment-opportunities. Submit written comments by 5:00 p.m. PDT,

Monday, March 3, 2014, on DEQ's website or by mail or email to: Robert Steed, DEQ Coeur d'Alene Regional Office, 2110 Ironwood Parkway, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814. Email: Robert.steed@deg.idaho.gov.

Patty discussed that KVRI's TMDL committee has worked for several years on the TMDL plan. The committee has helped lead the process with Idaho DEQ and Region 10 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to recognize that some of our pristine water cannot reach the temperatures they are suggesting. The committee sought approval to develop a Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) TMDL plan which determines what vegetation could have potentially been along the system and then attempt to mimic that vegetation again. The first PNV TMDL plans were approved & with everyone working together (agencies & the committee) we can ground truth stream information included in the document.

A copy of the public comment announcement will be available on the Kootenai Tribe website www.kootenai.org at KVRI – Documents.

The next TMDL meeting will be March 19.

Outreach and Other Comments:

Patty provided a handout of the administrative grant and revenue funds received by KVRI.

In conjunction with the March 17 KVRI board meeting, the Grizzly Bear sub-committee will meet. Dan has invited Kate Kendall, retired U.S. Geological Survey scientist, to discuss her DNA research efforts with the grizzly bear population studies in the Cabinet-Yaak ecosystem and the Northern Continental Divide.

Matt McGrath, Trail Administrator, USDA-FS Pacific Northwest Regional Office will be at the April 21 KVRI meeting. The Pacific Northwest Trail begins near the Continental Divide in Glacier National Park and travels more than 1,200 miles through Montana, Idaho, and Washington to the Pacific Ocean. Brad Smith, Idaho Conservation League (ICL), has coordinated this opportunity for KVRI.

At the Boundary Soil Conservation District (BSCD) meeting last month discussion was held on the Water Festival that is held in Bonner County each year. There is interest in extending it to the five northern counties, and BSCD has agreed to facilitate the festival in our county each year. A letter of support has been requested from KVRI, with a commitment to assist in voluntary activities as coordinated by the BSCD. The event is directed at fifth graders and the schools have agreed to participate. The Board agreed and Patty will draft the letter for the signatures of the KVRI co-chairs.

Sandy Ashworth provided information on the Boundary County Library District's presentation on their long range public facility planning. The link to view their PREZI presentation, *A 21st Century Library*, is at http://prezi.com/pnuvb09gfh2u/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy.

Meeting Announcement:

The next KVRI Board meeting will be held February 24.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Janet Satchwell
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant