

Draft Meeting Notes
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
May 19, 2014 – 7 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 (KTOI) & KVRI Co-chair
David 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
Don Allenberg, Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Brad Corkill, Idaho Fish & Game Commission
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry
Jim Cadnum, Landowner/Industrial

Patty Perry, KVRI Coordinator & KTOI
Janet Satchwell, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Ron Abraham, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
Stan Galloway, Idaho Dept. of Lands (IDL)
Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Greg Hoffman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Libby Dam
Karen Roetter, U.S. Sen. Mike Crapo
Judy Morbeck, U.S. Congressmen R. Labrador
Aaron Bohachek, Bonners Ferry Herald
Russ Hegedus, Idaho Forest Group
Kevin Greenleaf, KTOI
Mike Faler, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fisheries
Dave Gray, Citizen and committee member
Ben Conard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Norm Merz, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
Lee Pinkerton, Boundary County

Opening:

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

The group approved the draft meeting notes from the April 21, 2014 meeting, by consensus.

Presentations

2014 Sturgeon Flows: Greg Hoffman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Libby Dam

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

Greg is well known for colorful graphs and information packed charts. He did not disappoint! Data included:

- Mountain Snowpack Data for the Columbia River and Pacific Coastal Basins: maps of rainbow color dots illustrate a snowpack percentage compared to a 20 year median.
- Libby: May Runoff Forecast & Flood Control Calculation: including whisker, bounds, averages, and plenty of data for the Water Year (WY) 2014 (began Oct. 1).
- Lake Kooconusa Elevation – Probability Chart: the data presented (observed, median and percentile) are provisional and are intended to provide an estimate of Libby Dam forebay elevation (Lake Kooconusa).
- System Operational Request: Based on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s February 2006 Biological Opinion the dam is within a Tier 4 operations year for Kootenai River white sturgeon. The 2014 sturgeon operations at Libby Dam will consist of two periods of peak flows. The Regional Team of Biologists determines the start of the first augmentation flow (began Friday, May 16, 2014 for a period of 5-7 days) utilizing many factors (one of which is the river stage at Bonners Ferry). Then there is a decrease discharge at Libby Dam to maintain a flow of at least 18,000 cfs at Bonners Ferry until commencement of the second peak as determined by the Regional Team of Biologists. Actual peak discharge during the second peak depends on local conditions (i.e. river stage at Bonners Ferry) and is maintained for 7-9 days – depending on real time conditions. Flows are then decreased at Libby Dam towards stable summer flows, to no less than bull trout minimum flows (9,000 cfs in Tier 4).
- Libby Dam Outflow – Probability Chart: the data presented (observed, median and percentile) are provisional and are intended to provide an estimate of outflow from Libby Dam.
- Bonners Ferry Stage: the data presented (observed, median, percentile, and flood stage) are provisional and are intended to provide an estimate of river stages at Bonners Ferry.
- Kootenai River Temperature and Flow – Pre-Libby Dam vs Post-Libby Dam.
- Kooconusa Reservoir Temperatures (1 April – 31 July): the colors and shapes fill this graph with reservoir temperatures and water elevations compared to gate elevation. Ideal water temperature leaving the dam is 46-48 degrees Fahrenheit for the sturgeon flow.
- Kootenai River and Kooconusa Reservoir Temperatures (1 April – 31 July): more colors and shapes illustrate the reservoir/gate elevation, dates, temperatures, and kcfs and stage.

KVRI Update: Patty Perry, KVRI Coordinator

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

Patty reviewed the history of the Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) which was formed in 2001 under a Joint Powers Agreement between the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, the City of Bonners Ferry, and Boundary County. The mission of KVRI is to act as a locally based effort to improve coordination on programs that can effectively maintain, enhance, and restore the social, cultural, and natural resource bases in the community. The board members and partners comprise the broad diversity of our community:

- Landowners (Industrial)
- Business/Industry
- Conservation
- Boundary Co. Soil Conservation District/Agriculture Landowner
- Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
- U.S. Forest Service – Idaho Panhandle National Forest
- Idaho Fish & Game Commission
- Social/Cultural/Historical

Important criteria for selection to the board included people who had the reputation of learning to talk with each other and be willing to share with their group what they are learning from the others.

KVRI's purpose is to use a collaborative approach to develop partnerships, and provide a proactive forum for the community while bringing key players to the table. Information sharing and exchange builds connectivity between the community and partners while providing a sounding board for community involvement to the political entities and agencies as they make their decisions. All KVRI board and sub-committee meetings are publicized and open to the public.

The KVRI Board has eleven appointed members. The current sub-committees include: Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), Burbot Recovery, Forestry, Wildlife-Auto Collision (WAC), Grizzly Bear Conservation and Wetland/Riparian Conservation Strategy. Patty discussed prior and current opportunities addressed by the committees.

Governor Otter, Senator Crapo, Senator Risch, Congressman Labrador, and prior political figures have been supportive of KVRI's efforts in trying to work together collaboratively. Contact Patty for further information on the KVRI presentation, 209-267-3519 or patty@kootenai.org.

Committee Updates:

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Committee – Patty Perry

The committee met on May 14, 2014, and Bob Steed discussed making the monitoring more consistent and reliable so that the data can be utilized in a fashion that will be more meaningful. This includes official monitoring and quality assurance plans. The new integrated report data is being verified on the ground for future planning. The next TMDL meeting will be July 1, 2014, 8:30 a.m., Tribal office. An informational presentation will be given on shade rules for forest practices.

Correspondence:

A reminder of the comment period ending May 20, 2014, concerning earlier correspondence sent out from Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game for the state's proposed management plans.

Notice of the Kreist Creek Project environmental assessment and draft decision notice dated May 9, 2014, was received. There is a 45-day objection filing period. The Project-Level Pre-decisional Administrative Review (Objection) Process is a new USFS procedure; Kevin Knauth will provide KVRI more information on the process.

Closing Comments/Meeting Announcements:

Dustin Miller, Administrator of Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation, will be in our area in June on business, and will stay for the KVRI meeting.

WAC sub-committee meeting: May 20, 2014, 7:30 a.m., Tribal Office.

Forestry sub-committee meeting: June 4, 2014, 1:30 p.m., Tribal Office.

Brad Corkill, Idaho Fish and Game Commissioner representing the Panhandle Region, discussed the Fish and Game Commission meeting that was held last week. Some of the highlights included:

The bag limit on Pend Oreille for kokanee has been raised from 6 to 15.

With local sportsman input, the spring bear season in Unit 1 will be extended to June 15 next year, and Unit 4A will be cut back to June 20.

Upper St. Joe region trapping season in Unit 7 and 9 and the drainage of the North Fork of the St. Joe River will now open on October 10 and proceed into March to the normal end, in an effort to get more trapping accomplished for wolf in that area. The Commission will monitor the situation. The Boise and regional IDFG staff will meet in June to continue the conversation on alternative practices.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Libby Dam Operations Meeting will be held in Bonners Ferry at the Kootenai River Inn, May 29, 2014, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Janet Satchwell
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant