

Draft Meeting Record
KVRI Forestry Sub-Committee
November 14, 2024
Boundary County Annex Building

Attendance:

Brad Smith, Idaho Conservation League
Brandon Glaza, U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
Brandon Harper, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)
Doug Nishek, USFS
Ed Atkins, KVRI Corporate Agriculture
Ed Koberstein, USFS
Heather Fuller, USFS
Jada Fairchild, KTOI
Jennifer Anderson, USFS
Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Department of Lands
Kevin Knauth, USFS and Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF)
Lee Colson, KVRI Social/Cultural/Historical
Matt Slifko, USFS
Theresa Wheat, KTOI

- Welcome and introductions were made at 10:00 a.m.

Kevin Knauth, USFS and IPNF, stated that this meeting purpose is to discuss the current Katkee Fuels project and timber sale updates and receive updates on the prescribed burning of 2024 and their plans for 2025.

Katkee Fuels Project:

- **Field Trip:** The field trip took place in the summer of 2024 where the group toured the Katkee project interface with the neighborhoods, power lines, and community water systems.
- **Fire Risk Concern:** There is a concern with the private lands adjacent the project area including Katka, Paradise Valley, the emergency communication towers located on Black Mountain, BPA and NLI Power Lines, and underground water systems. If a wildfire sparks in this area, that much will be lost.
- **Challenges:** There is very good road access to most of this project, but once you get to the base of Clifty Mountain, it has very steep topography and road access is not possible.
- **Wildlife Impacts:** The Katkee project has a Bear Management Unit (BMU) that stretches from Katka to Timber Mountain. This BMU is at capacity as far as current operations go, there are vegetation treatments are occurring and should be completed in the next few years.
- **Summary:** This project was created as a fuels reduction project and the trees left behind will be those species with the best chance of survival against insects, disease, and fire. A draft Environmental Assessment is planned for January 2025 for a 30-day comment period that is open to the public. There won't be an objection period on this project because it follows a Wildfire Crisis Strategy (WCS).

Draft Meeting Record
KVRI Forestry Sub-Committee
November 14, 2024
Boundary County Annex Building

Consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): Planning on creating a biological assessment draft to initiate the consultation timeline of 135 days.

Challenges on the Boulder BMU: This community was particularly challenging due to the fact to it's the only one that currently is not meeting expectations and all standards must be met by 2028

Ongoing Timber Sales of 2024: There were several Timber sales that occurred in 2024, camps known as Robin Hood, Camp Stew, and Hellroaring were all sales that has activity. The Westside restoration project is being logged by Foust this year during the low snow sale. His team went and did a lot of slash piling early this fall and will continue their work this winter. The next sale offering out of the West Side Restoration project will be Caribou Snow and is scheduled for the summer of 2025.

- **Camp Stew and Hellroaring:** Camp Stew and Hellroaring are almost completed with logging portions
- **Robin Hood:** Robin Hood is still considered currently active.
- **Boulder Creek:** Boulder Creek had four different kind of timber sales this year, all at varying stages of completion. Boulder Creek currently has an abundance of activity. With a portion of Boulder Creek being located in the Katkee fuels, Boulder Creek also has a very active BMU. All of this activity requires a lot of coordination and communication between the USFS, purchaser, and the loggers.

Prescribed Burning in 2024: In 2024, the Bonners Ferry Ranger District safely and successfully implemented about 3,200 total acres of prescribed burning for fuels reduction, site prep for regeneration, wildlife habitat improvement, and other objectives. Contributing to the success was a slower wildfire season, as well as favorable weather and fuels conditions which provided an opportunity to burn approximately 1,450 acres in the Boulder Creek backcountry in early fall (September). In April and May, fire personnel burned 860 acres of natural fuels in the Boulder and Deer Creek projects and 140 acres of harvest slash in the Timbuck Stew, East Fork Stew and Robin Hood project areas. Finishing up this fall, over 700 acres of excavator piles were burned in the Hellroaring, Twenty-mile, Deer Stew, Camp Stew, Robin Hood, Snow Lo, Timbuck Stew, Black Boulder GNA, Smoked Trout, and Boulder Fuel Break projects. The Bonners Ferry Ranger District plans to continue burning natural fuels, slash fuels, and conduct pile burning in many of these same project areas in 2025, as weather and other factors allow. As we approach a spring burn window, please visit the Idaho Panhandle National Forests Prescribed Fire website for more specific information about burn projects and locations: [North Idaho Rx Fire](#)

Road Work Progress and Updates: This was a very successful year, with 193 miles of road work touched up or re-done, upgrades on Aquatic Organism Passage's (AOP's), improved three raft access sites on the Moyie River, and more.

- **Road Work:** Out of all 193 miles of road work, 27 miles were reconstruction, 131 miles of grading, and the rest on brushing. The reconstruction took place from Myrtle Creek to Snow Creek to Ruby Pass near Roman Nose, West Fork Cabin, and Brush Lake Road. The grading miles

Draft Meeting Record
KVRI Forestry Sub-Committee
November 14, 2024
Boundary County Annex Building

were all over the district, some miles needed to be done twice due to the heavy traffic. This roadwork took \$822,000 to complete. The Good Neighbor Authority funded \$743,000, USFS timber sale related projects contributed \$68,000 and \$12,000 was spent from USFS contracts.

- **Black Creek and Cabin Creek AOP's:** As a part of the Boulder Creek Project, access to 1.3 miles of aquatic habitat was restored. This was completed as a stewardship item to the Timbuckstew sale and \$133,000 total were spent on these projects.
- **Moyie Raft Access Sites:** Improvements were made near Meadow Creek Campground, at the Moyie Crossing Day Use site, and near the Copper Creek Campground. At Meadow Creek, they were able to extend parking, and create a watercraft launch. At the Moyie Crossing Site, the parking was improved for trucks and trailers, and they also created a raft slide. The Copper Creek Campground is not yet completed, but they did improve parking and they plan on creating a raft slide there as well.

The meeting was called at 11:10 a.m.

Meeting Record prepared by Jada Fairchild