

**Draft Meeting Record**  
**Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) Hybrid Board Meeting**  
**Boundary County Annex Building**  
**January 13, 2025 6:00 p.m.**

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Ben Robertson, Boundary County Commissioner / KVRI Co-Chair  
Carson Watkins, Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG)  
David Gray, Social/Cultural/Historical  
Ed Atkins Jr., Corporate Agriculture/Landowner  
Erik Olson, Soil Conservationist/ Landowner  
Gary Aitken Jr., Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) / KVRI Co-Chair  
Genny Hoyle, Conservationist/Environmentalist  
Heather Fuller, U.S. Forest Service (USFS)  
Kennon McClintock, Conservationist / Environmentalist  
Lee Colson, Social/Cultural/Historical  
Rick Alonzo, Mayor of Bonners Ferry / KVRI Co-Chair  
Remington Daniels, Business/ Industry  
Tim Bertling, Boundary County Commissioner/ KVRI Co-Chair

**Others in Attendance:**

Austin Terrell, Idaho Office of Species Conservation (OSC)  
Caleb Davis, U.S. Representative Russ Fulcher's Office  
Chris Bachman, Conservation Director of Yaak Valley Forest Council  
Dennis Weed, KTOI  
Eddie Whitcomb, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)  
Greg Hoffman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)  
Jada Fairchild, KTOI/KVRI Administrative Assistant  
Jeremy Sheffield, IDFG  
Karen Schumacher, KTOI  
Kathryn Kolberg, Panhandle Health District  
Keegan Bordeaux, KTOI  
Leon Basdekas, USACE  
Les Pinkerton, Boundary County Commissioner  
Marc Kilmer, Senators Risch's Office  
Michelle Richman, Department of Water Resources (IDWR)  
Megan Parnell, Idaho Farm Bureau  
Nate Jensen, KTOI  
Pat Bennett, Citizen  
Shelby Therrian, KTOI  
Susan Tyndall, Citizen  
Theresa Wheat, KTOI/KVRI Facilitator  
William Barquin, KTOI

- **Welcome and Introductions** were made at 6:00 p.m. to begin the meeting.
- **Celebration of KVRI 24th Birthday**, homemade macarons were served and pictures taken.
- **Presentations:**

**Genny Hoyle**, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, explained that the Ambush Rock Project, a \$1.9 million initiative fully funded by the U.S. EPA Grant, is one of eight projects to receive this prestigious funding. Goodfellow Brothers, was selected as the contractor for this environmental cleanup effort. Work began on June 17, 2024, with the primary objective of clearing the site of wood and metal debris left over from the old

**Draft Meeting Record**  
**Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) Hybrid Board Meeting**  
**Boundary County Annex Building**  
**January 13, 2025 6:00 p.m.**

County dumpsite. Over the course of the project, a dedicated team of 11 individuals worked to remove more than 2 acres of accumulated waste. There were 11 team members and five of those were from Goodfellow Brothers, contributing their expertise and resources to ensure the project's success. The clean-up included removal of wood waste, old tires, and heavy metal debris from approximately 2 acres. Once the majority of the waste was cleared, a clay-based topsoil layer was applied to provide a contaminant-free and healthy environment for the native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers to grow.

As part of the ongoing cleanup efforts, the team successfully removed cars and other metals from the shoreline with the invaluable assistance of the Boundary County Search and Rescue Dive Team. Utilizing a new innovative airbag equipment, the dive team was able to keep the vehicles afloat. A boat then transported the vehicles to the boat dock, where a tractor was used to move them for proper disposal. This efficient and coordinated operation helped to eliminate significant debris from the site, further advancing the restoration process.

Once the topsoil was in place, the team proceeded with seeding and planting 181 native trees and various plants sourced from Clifty View Nursery. To protect the newly planted vegetation from wildlife browse, ten large fence enclosures and 40 individual enclosures were established around the site. Plans are in place to return in the spring for a second round of seeding and tree planting. Additionally, Northwest Tree will be watering the newly planted trees for the next several years, ensuring the habitat's successful establishment until it can thrive independently. The project is expected to take several years to fully recover.

**Dennis Weed**, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, provided a brief update on the electrical issues at Twin River Resort. Currently, the resort is unable to offer electrical connections for recreational trailers. Mr. Weed's plan is to seek approval from the Tribal Council for an electrical grid grant to fund a complete electrical re-wiring and the installation of new paneling, which will restore electrical service to the campground. If all proceeds as expected, the grant is anticipated to be approved in April or May of 2025.

**Theresa Wheat**, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, gave an update on the National Forest Foundation Grant. The project has received an additional \$25,000, for a total of \$31,312, further supporting its goals. A 15-25 minute long Netflix narrative style documentary will be produced, two 1-3 minute video snippets, with several 1-3 minute versions of the documentary tailored for social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts.

Currently, the team is collaborating with the U.S. Forest Service, utilizing Scattered Lands, a Shared Stewardship Project as the location for this video project. Work has been completed to remove unwanted vegetation, reduce fuels and lower the risk of forest fires. In addition, a draft sign was shared that will be placed in the Post Falls Community Park to inform the public about this partnership project and raise awareness of potential fire hazards in the community.

Additional photos, videos and interviews will be captured this spring and summer, to further document the progress of the project and raise awareness of the ongoing efforts.

**Draft Meeting Record**  
**Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) Hybrid Board Meeting**  
**Boundary County Annex Building**  
**January 13, 2025 6:00 p.m.**

- **Legislative Updates:**

- **Marc Kilmer**, Senator Risch's Office, is currently focusing on preparing for the upcoming presidential transition.
- **Caleb Davis**, Representative Fulcher's Office, is currently focusing on natural fuels management. Recently, they passed the Explore Act, which aims to reduce bureaucratic barriers by allowing videos and photos to be taken on federal land without the need for permits.
- **Carson Watkins**, IDFG, have received a total of 1,200 Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) samples, with approximately 200 still pending. To date, only two CWD-positive samples have been identified, keeping the incidence rate in North Idaho under 1%. IDFG is also focusing on increasing public education about CWD and the impacts of feeding wildlife.

In an effort to prevent moose extinction in North Idaho, IDFG has been collaring calves annually. Additionally, there are plans to expand the moose hunting range for the 2025 hunting season.

Regarding concerns about avian influenza, also known as Bird Flu, there was a brief discussion about the potential risk in Idaho. However, as there has been no significant bird die-off, the issue does not pose a major concern at this time.

**The Next Meeting** is scheduled for February 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting ended at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Recorded by Jada Fairchild