

Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
July 16, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting – University of Idaho Extension Office

Board Members in Attendance:

David Sims, Mayor, City of Bonners Ferry & KVRI Co-chair
Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner & KVRI Co-chair
Gary Aitken Jr., Kootenai Tribe of Idaho Chairman & KVRI Co-chair
Sandy Ashworth, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Don Allenberg, (Alt.) Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Dave Wattenbarger, Soil Conservation/Landowner
Kevin Knauth, (Alt.) US Forest Service (USFS), Bonners Ferry Ranger District-District Ranger
Chip Corsi, (Alt.) Idaho Fish & Game Commission
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry
Kennon McClintock, (Alt.) Conservationist/Environmentalist
Dave Gray, (Alt.) Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Rhonda Vogl, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Karen Roetter, Senator Mike Crapo's office
Judy Morbeck, Congressman Labrador's office
Eric Anderson, 9B Trails Association, President
Katy Fitzgerald, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Wally Cossairt, Citizen
Larry Davidson, Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail & North Idaho Bikeways
Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)
Dennis Weed, Boundary Economic Development Council (BEDC) Director
Lisa Ailport, AICP, City Administrator, City of Bonners Ferry
Sarah Birkeland, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Carol Kriebs, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Environmental Director
Jessie Grossman, Y2Y
Marty Martinez, Citizen

Opening:

Co-Chair, Dan Dinning opened and welcomed everyone to the meeting; introductions followed.

The June 18, 2018 KVRI Board Meeting Draft Notes were approved by consensus.

City Wide Bike and Pedestrian Planning Effort Presentation: Lisa Ailport, AICP, City Administrator, City of Bonners Ferry

Lisa Ailport began her slide presentation with some background information to introduce herself. She is the current City Administrator and acting City Planner for the City of Bonners Ferry.

Lisa addressed the subject of Mobility Planning in respect to transportation, biking and pedestrian facilities. Mobility, in all forms, increases opportunities and economic vitality of a community. Transportation is an essential component of the quality of life for all who come to Bonners Ferry. The City's long range plans also support transportation planning. This is something the community has said is important to them.

The research has shown that walkability is high on homeowner's wish lists; people invest in communities that have addressed walkability. Young and old alike prefer walkable communities and short commutes. Preference surveys revealed that people are making decisions about where to live based on the walkability of the community; leading to increased quality of life. A full mobility plan includes both a transportation plan and a bike and pedestrian plan.

The City applied for and received the Local Highway Technical Assistance Transportation Planning Grant (LHTAC), the Blue Cross High 5 Community Transformation Grant and the National Association of Realtor's Place-making Grant. The combination of these grants will not only address off-highway connectivity options but also help develop bike and pedestrian facilities within the City. David Sims clarified that of the funds from the High 5 Grant (\$250,000) only \$10,000 will be used towards a bike/pedestrian plan.

What's been done so far?

- Contracted with Idaho Smart Growth (ISG) for public involvement and plan development
- Kicked off public involvement with Mark Fenton workshop in the fall 2017
- Creation of Technical Advisory Committee with reps from Bike /Ped
- Conducted a Community Wide transportation survey (Spring 2017)
- Bike/Ped Steering Committee to assist contractor in plan development
- Public open house/workshop in May 2018 to gather public input
- Council/PZ meeting in June on low stress networks

It is important to look at public involvement in developing a plan; any plan that the community adopts should be a representation of what the community wants. One question from the public survey results showed that improving safety was important in a transportation plan as well as promoting economic development in the community.

What's next?

- Technical Advisory Committee meets July 26, 2018
- Expected fall completion of 2018
- Implement immediately

All comments will be compiled, reviewed and results provided for a public review in August 2018. They used different public involvement methods to reach different demographics; public workshops and online comment maps, linked to social media pages and the webpage.

Lisa's full slide presentation is available on the KVRI website at www.kootenai.org

Trails and Walking Paths Boundary County Presentation: Dennis Weed, Director Boundary County Economic Development (BEDC)

Dennis Weed, Director of Boundary County Economic Development gave his presentation on the Trails and Walking Paths of Boundary County. Dennis explained that 9B Trails initially started out under economic development as he saw the need in other communities and how trails fit into the overall economic development of a community. It became its own entity with Eric Anderson as president.

Objective 9B Trails

- Create Trails & access to outdoor recreation opportunities
- Protect our Natural Resources
- Community involvement & partnerships
- Non-motorized public trails in Boundary County
- Fundraise, plan and develop

In our county we partner with everybody to insure we have great trails and to build them and be useable.

Dennis shared data from a Bonner County Trail Study survey that shows trails are an essential part of daily life in Bonner County. Some of their data; 3 out of 4 residents used the trails in the last year, 9 out of 10 residents believe that protecting the rural character of areas outside of cities is extremely important, more than half of residents identified proximity to trails and safe places to walk as important factors influencing their decision on where to live, and there is a strong interest in wheelchair accessible trails. As a result of the increased trail usage in Bonner County parking has become an issue.

Impact of trails and walking paths (Trails in local communities are essential for the following reasons)

- Attract future employees and tourists
- Health of the residents
- Tourists will stay longer to explore
- Businesses see revenue growth
 - Retail shops will have more customers
 - Expenditures for food, clothing outdoor gear

Varieties of economic impacts

- Tourism
- Events
- Urban redevelopment
- Community improvement
- Property value
- Health care savings
- Jobs and investment
- General consumer spending

Dennis stated that the recreational business in Idaho continues to climb. The amount of people that come to use our recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, walking on paths are coming to spend their money in the community. Trails are another avenue that will provide an economic benefit to our community.

Proposed Trails

Farnsworth Property

- 4 miles on the ground now and 8 miles proposed
- All volunteer labor and private donations to build that trail system
- Includes 1300 acres, Hoot Owl trailhead, existing roads, future circle route
- Located 15-20 min. from downtown southeast to Hoot Owl trail head
- Maintenance will also be volunteer work parties, people have volunteered to donate material and build bridges

Proposed wish list: State Land, County property, Dikes, Rails to Trails and ITD

State Land

- Top of Peterson hill on Kootenai Trail road
- State property proposed uses are mountain biking, walking, running, and cross country skiing
- Trails will not impact management ability of the IDL lands

County park trail

- Union pacific Foundation Grant (asking for a \$25,000)
- Would use the grant to put fencing near the tracks to provide safety on the trail
- Trail will be paved (ADA) and have benches
- Safety for kids using the County Softball Park

Rails to Trails

- Heavy lift but other communities have had great success with that

Further discussion included:

- Trails will be a positive impact here, healthier, cleaner, takes people out of cars
- Shared pictures of the Trails being proposed near the City Park under the Bridge, keep kids off the highway
- Discussion about lighting the Trail at night
- The High 5 grant is funding with the school district a trail behind the high school that will include fitness stations
- Still plenty of work to be done; acquisition of easements from City, County, ITD, Union Pacific, Planning & Zoning, and Drainage Districts

Dennis's complete slide presentation is available on the KVRI website at www.kootenai.org

TMDL Committee Update: Jonathan Luhnnow & Rhonda Vogl

Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), reported that the field trip to the Twenty Mile Pilot Project will be on July 26, 2018 at 1:30 p.m. This project is under the Idaho Forest Practices Act using option 2 for harvesting along fish bearing streams. Trail Creek used option 1. Both are the same study, guidelines and specs.

Rhonda reported that Bob Steed has received comments on the TMDL for Boundary County and Deep Creek and another TMDL Committee meeting is being planned to review those comments. Rhonda will send a notice out for the next TMDL meeting.

Forestry Committee Update- Kevin Knauth

Boulder Project

- Draft Decision notice will go out early next week, starts the 45 days objection period
- Final Decision will be in October
- Three (3) timber sales from the project

Camp Robin Project

- Notice for Draft EA will be released tomorrow (July 18) in the Coeur d'Alene Press to start the 30 day comment period
- Decision notice late November
- Two (2) timber sales, trails work included (motorized ATV trail work in the Camp Nine area)
- Connector bike trail in the Brush Lake area

Deer Stew Timber Sale

- Purchased by Foust, hauling now
- Solomon Lake campground work completed as well as road work
- Road work done for the Deer Placer sale

Deer Placer

- Will sell 4th qtr. this fiscal year, only 3mmbf but not encumbered with any of the road work costs

Double Bar,

- Third sale out of the project
- Sold to Idaho Forest Group (IFG) last week

Fire Season Update

Kevin K. reported that the fire season conditions are here and danger is high.

Next Forestry Committee Meeting Update

Kevin K. and Rhonda will work together to schedule the next Forestry Committee meeting after comments on Camp Robin closes Aug 17.

Grizzly Bear Update-Rhonda Vogl

Rhonda received and shared copies of the Overview of Ongoing Grizzly Bear Research Projects in Recovery Zones in the Lower 48 States; received from the Kootenai National Forest Supervisor Chris Savage.

KVRI Fair Booth 2018 Update: Sherrie Cossairt

Sherrie shared some examples of the decorations being planned for the Fair Booth. The theme this year is "Shout N' Loud, We're County Proud". Rhonda invited the Board to set up and have dinner and dessert afterwards on August 13, at 5:00 p.m. at the Boundary County Fairgrounds. A KVRI notice with a RSVP will be sent out next month.

Bog Creek Update- Rhonda Vogl

Rhonda shared that the Tribe, the City and the County put in a request for an extension of time for commenting and it was granted. We have until July 31 to submit comments. We are working diligently on coming to a consensus that will hopefully meet the needs of all the people involved. Dan D. stated that because of the help of our partners we received that 15 day extension to provide a better document.

Pacific Northwest Scenic Trail Update: Rhonda Vogl

Rhonda shared that there is ongoing discussion for a reroute of the trail. The concerns include; BMU, motorized access, and high trail use. A southern route is being proposed and there is a lot of dialogue going on with a lot of parties involved.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)– Kurt Pavlat

Kurt reported that BLM will be touring the old Two Tail timber sale that was completed about eight years ago this fall. Dan D. requested that the BLM inform the Commissioners when that date is scheduled. He agreed.

Congressmen Labrador Office Update: Judy Morbeck

Judy reported that the Senate will remain in session in August and will include judicial nominations

Idaho Fish & Game Commission Update: Chip Corsi

- The Commission has tasked the Idaho Department of Fish and Game with looking at the potential of having a limited swan (Tundra Swan) season. Surrounding states (MT, UT, and NV) already have a swan season. He will keep us posted.
- Idaho Department of Fish & Game has met with the Tribe and the Council is supportive and voted to move ahead with plans for a Burbot fishery. Rulemaking on that will occur at the F&G Commission's meeting in November.
- Wayne Wakkinen is retiring August 17.
- Chip will send Dan D. information on how to access the comment period schedule for IDFG fishing regulations.

Next KVRI Meeting

The next meeting is the Annual KVRI Fair Booth Set-Up Night and Dinner scheduled for August 13, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. at the Boundary County Fairgrounds.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Sherrie Cossairt,
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant