

Meeting Notes
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
Forestry Committee
February 21, 2019 8:30 a.m.
Kootenai Tribal Office

Attendance:

Kevin Knauth, Bonners Ferry Ranger District, US Forest Service (USFS)-District Ranger
Doug Nishek, Bonners Ferry Ranger District, US Forest Service (USFS)-Planning Forester
Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner and KVRI Co-chair
Ed Koberstein, Bonners Ferry Ranger District, US Forest Service (USFS)-Timber Management
Beth Bigelow, North Zone, US Forest Service (USFS) - Archeology
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch's office
Tim Dougherty, Idaho Forest Group (IFG)
Kevin Greenleaf, Landowner
Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)
Erin Mader, Idaho Forestry Group (IFG)
Carol Kriebs, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Environmental Director
Scott Soult, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
Tim Kastning, Congressman Fulcher's office
Wally Cossairt, (Alt.) Boundary County Commissioner and KVRI Co-chair
Spencer Hanson, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)
Rhonda Vogl, KVRI Facilitator & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)

Opening:

Rhonda Vogl opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Introductions followed.

NEPA Process: Doug Nishek, USFS

Doug N. presented a brief description of the NEPA process involved in the projects.

Scoping begins:

- Scoping is the initial proposed action for a project
- ~~Analyze the impact of the proposed activities on the ground~~
- The Forest Service works with KVRI to assess where and why to treat in a proposed project area

Scoping goes out for public comment for 30 days

- Solicit comments from the public
- Review comments received with KVRI
- The review of those first comments are used to create Alternative proposals for a project that still meet the project objectives
- Suggestions that are dismissed do not meet the project objectives.
- Analyze the impact of the proposed activities on the ground.

Environmental Assessment (EA)-: goes out to the public for 30 days

- Meet again with KVRI [to explain suggestions](#)[review public comments.](#)
- All suggestions are integrated [as applicable](#) into the Environmental Assessment; refine units, trails, road routes, etc.

Draft Decision goes out for comment for -45 days

- This is a third (3rd) chance for comments or [to file an objection.](#)

Discussion followed - topics discussed:

- If there is a substantial change to an EA, it will most likely go back out for public comment
- Letters of support are always welcome
- Discussed procedures if a project ever goes into negotiations
- An EIS is used if there will be a significant change to humans or the environment- EIS is a 45 day comment period
- With each public comment period there is the ability to resolve issues along the way

Camp Robin Update: Doug Nishek

- At this time, still going through the objections from Camp Robin
- Will be briefing the Deputy [Regional Forester](#)[Supervisor](#) soon; and make a decision from there.

Projects Updates- Ed Koberstein

FY19 Timber Sale offerings

- Camp Stew-3rd quarter offering
- Black Boulder Timber Sale-GNA- IDL State offering
- Robin Hood timber sale at Robinson Lake proper -4th quarter offering- 400-500 acres
- Boulder Dash (2nd sale offering out of Boulder project) offering 1st quarter 2020
- GNA-Priest Lake
- North Star Stewardship-offering 4th quarter 2020 sale; final installment from Boulder
- The rest of the projects start to occur further across the North Zone into Priest Lake and Sandpoint after FY2020

Discussion continued on the following topics:

- 20mmbf is a sustainable target
- GNA partnerships allow for increase of pace and scale
- It is agreed that we all need 2 more years of our 10 year CFLRP
- Dan D. stated we want you to do what you can do to make sure that Moyie and Naples mills stay in existence

Tim Kastning reported that Congressman Fulcher has been appointed to the Natural Resource Committee in the House; he is very supportive in managing our natural resources and getting our forests under control. He is in a good position to give us good support from Washington DC. Kevin K. stated that they have always felt they had very strong support from our folks in Idaho back in Washington, D.C.

Future treatment opportunities-Ed Koberstein

Part of the CLFRP proposal of KVRI identified all the watersheds within the CFLR boundary from the standpoint of priority treatment levels.

- Myrtle Creek - High priority because of the municipal watershed, WUI, adjacency to private lands
- Snow Creek – Incorporated because of its adjacency to Myrtle Creek
- Caribou Creek - Forgotten drainage, part of the Sundance fire in 1967, hasn't been looked at since

There is work to do in these drainages to promote clean water to reduce the accumulation of fuels and do additional restoration activities. Although they haven't identified it as a formal project as yet, they'd like to move forward with guidance from KVRI to see how they might shape the project. Some of the opportunities are; road maintenance needs, AOP's, fuels, backcountry MA5, trail re-routes, recreation, etc.

Ed reported that Trout Ball is further out in the NEPA time line because of the Grizzly Bear Access Amendment and the Bog Creek Decision.

In the reauthorization of CFLRP /Farm Bill it talked a lot about a comprehensive watershed plan and emphasized the need for the development of long term maintenance plan for these municipal watersheds. It may be good to incorporate a long term management plan for Myrtle Creek that allows for reoccurring maintenance.

Sundance Fire of 1967 and Caribou Creek-Ed Koberstein

- The area is a continuous fuel bed
- Road system in Caribou Creek was abandoned in the early 80's
- Fell off of the radar because the stand was very stagnant
- A good proportion of it now is small saw logs
- Opportunities outside of the Sundance perimeter that can be treated as well, will take some infrastructure development but would not create a deficit sale
- If it caught fire again it would affect water quality
- If thinning is done the growth yield will increase exponentially

Over Snow Vehicle Travel Planning- Kevin Knauth

- Will meet to develop proposed action internally
- Solicit feedback
- Schedule public meetings (evening meetings) in different impacted communities; anticipated to begin in the spring
- They will not do an amendment to decisions already made in the Forest Plan as part of this analysis; the forest plan already designated no go locations
- Decision anticipated in FY2021

Sid S. added that in discussing Scotchmen's Peak with stakeholders in Bonner County and around North Idaho, the snowmobiling groups identify winter travel as an issue that they continue to be concerned with. If they can get the winter travel plan resolved that could alleviate some of that pressure they were feeling of not being able to ride where they preferred.

Dan D. said this topic would be good to talk about at the next KVRI Board Meeting Monday night and at the Commissioners meeting as well.

Farm Bill and extension of CFLRP Discussion

- No direction as yet
- KVRI project has a strong chance of getting the 2 year extension to match the 10 years that other project areas got
- Clearly have NEPA ready work that's undone
- Submitted ideas on how they might move CFLRP forward beyond FY19 that involved accomplishments that they might do based on NEPA already done; it was required in the annual report this year

CFLRP letter of support request-Kevin Knauth

Kevin reported that the Washington Office wants each of the collaborative groups to submit a letter of support for the CFLRP project area post 2019. A letter would reinforce the basic principles of restoration within the ecosystem and the economic support that the original proposal had. The mission or core principals of KVRI have not changed. There is still good work to be done and they have NEPA ready work waiting. They believe partnering through CFLRP with the Forest Service and other landowners is a good way to do business and they want to continue. A letter from IFG would be beneficial as well.

Dan D. stated that when applying for the initial CFLRP the KVRI co-chairs, Forest Service and others made a trip to Washington D.C. Kevin K. agreed another trip could be very instrumental.

Rhonda reminded everyone that the next KVRI meeting is Monday night February 25, at 7 p.m. Cassie Olson will be discussing the Fleming Creek project and Kennon McClintock will be presenting "How America uses Its Land".

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Sherrie Cossairt

KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant