

Meeting Notes
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
Forestry Committee
February 13, 2018, 1:00 p.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 & KVRI Co-chair
Ed Koberstein, Bonners Ferry Ranger District, US Forest Service (USFS)-Timber Management
Bob Blanford, KVRI, Business/Industry
Dave Wattenbarger, KVRI, Boundary Soil Conservation District/Ag Landowner
Norm Merz, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)
Dan Gilfillan, North Zone, US Forest Service (USFS)-Recreation
Beth Bigelow, North Zone, US Forest Service (USFS) - Archeology
Kat Sarensen, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Karen Roetter, Senator Mike Crapo's office
Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch's office
Judy Morbeck, Congressman Raul Labrador's office
Tim Dougherty, Idaho Forest Group (IFG)
Brad Smith, Idaho Conservation League (ICL)
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Opening:

Patty Perry opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Introductions followed.

Boulder Creek Restoration Project Update-Doug Nishek, USFS

Doug Nishek reviewed the Boulder Creek Restoration Project with the group highlighting the Purpose and Need objectives of the project and the comments received. Discussion followed.

Highlights included:

- Landscape management
- Values at risk (Watersheds, Ghost Town, Communication Towers)
- Fires and fuels, 7000 acres of prescribed burning
- Further opportunities (Beaver Habitat Restoration, AOP's, River Walk Trail and other trailhead improvements)
- Using Good Neighbor Authority, Conventional Sale and Stewardship Contract
- Commercial Harvest- 3400 acres, 1st sale 3rd quarter FY 2019
- Road maintenance and reconstruction to begin after Decision Notice is signed
- Boulder Creek Bridge work to begin this summer using FEMA (Federal Hwy)
- Haul routes included in sales contracts

Details of the Boulder Creek Restoration Project Draft EA are available on the KVRI website www.kootenai.org and the Forest Service website <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=44066>

After the ID Team has reviewed the comments received, they still feel they are meeting the purpose and need of the project, so no proposed changes from what was presented in the Draft EA. The timeline for the Boulder Draft EA is: Draft Decision goes out mid-March -45 days; Objection period - 30 days; Decision expected in June.

After discussion about Good Neighbor Authority and Stewardship, the tools used to accelerate forest restoration program, Kevin K. expressed the Forest Services' desire to meet with the Boundary County Commissioners to look at the future of these tools and the impact on the future economy of the County. Dan D. agreed.

Sid S. shared the items being discussed at the Congressional level

- Current Continuing Resolution lasts until March 23, but they weren't able to get SRS or any other forestry provisions included
- The Forest Service Fire budget is growing, but if we can get it to flatten out or go down, that will free up funding for different things other than fighting fires. That's the idea of the fire borrowing fix
- The need to switch from Continuing Resolution to appropriations allows room to talk about fire borrowing and Secure Rural School
- Secure Rural Schools are still being discussed in DC as is the Stewardship sales not contributing the 25% to the local counties, those conversations are still taking place

Kevin K shared they will meet with the Forest Supervisor on Feb 27, checkpoint meeting #3 for Camp Robin Projects and they will discuss scoping comments and alternatives.

Patty shared the next KVRI meeting on Feb. 26 will include a presentation about the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA).

Doug briefly reviewed the discussion on the Camp Robin Project, the ATV Trail System proposal, Bears Outside of Recovery Zone (BORZ) and road storage.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Sherrie Cossairt

KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant