

Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
September 18, 2017 – 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
Sandy Ashworth, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Bob Blanford, Business/Industry
Kevin Knauth, (Alt.) US Forest Service (USFS), Bonners Ferry Ranger District
Dave Wattenbarger, Boundary Soil Conservation District/Ag Landowner
Kennon McClintock, (Alt.) Conservationist/Environmentalist
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Karen Roetter, Senator Mike Crapo's office
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch's office
Judy Morbeck, Congressman Raul Labrador's office
Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land Management
Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Department of Lands
Dave Gray, (Alt.) Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Greg Becker, NRCS Boundary/Bonner County
Tim Dougherty, Idaho Forest Group
J. J. Teare, Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Diana Ellis, Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge
Tom Daniel, Boundary County Soil Conservation District
Erik Olson, Ag Producer Kootenai Valley
Jim Woodward, State Senate Candidate
Doug Nishek, U. S. Forest Service
Evan DeHamer, Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game
Cassie Olson, Boundary County Soil Conservation District

Opening:

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

The July 17, 2017, KVRI meeting draft notes were approved by consensus. A Fair Booth picture was shared and the notes for the August 29th meeting with Senator Crapo will be available soon.

Fleming Creek Road Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Project-Cassie Olson, Boundary County Soil Conservation District

Cassie presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Fleming Creek Road Project for the proposed 319 Grant Application. Cassie shared that she had written a 319 grant proposal in June and submitted it and is now in need of letters of support for the project. She is asking KVRI for a letter of support tonight.

She will also be going to the Panhandle BAG (Basin Advisory Group) committee meeting in Coeur d'Alene in October to present. She is open for questions and comments and constructive criticism tonight. Patty added that she had mailed the grant applications to the Board prior to the meeting so they would have time to review it. Cassie walked us through the project. The last 319 Project the District did and KVRI supported was the Twenty Mile Project.

Cassie began by showing the map and pointing out where this project is located; 6 miles north of town on the east side of the Kootenai River. The project will be on Fleming Creek and a small section on District 5 Road. The project will include 3 culverts.

The application categories for Management Practices include access road (gravel), drainage water management (replacing culvert and slope) and fish passage (replacement of the culverts). This is part of a TMDL effort that will reduce sediment and nutrients into the Fleming Creek drainage. The picture of Culvert #1 shows damaged culvert, not a good fish passage, it is all grown up around it and hardly any water coming through; it is the same in other culverts, damaged and not the right size.

This is the first phase of what we hope will be 3 different projects on this road addressing a larger watershed. This project will be the lower part of the larger project. She shared pictures she took earlier in March when she and Clint Kimball, Boundary County Road and Bridge Supervisor, did some project scoping. Pictures of further up the road showed the water runoff and she shared that later that week a mudslide occurred. Patty asked are these pictures showing the actual work area or are they out of the work area? Cassie explained these pictures are further up the road than this project. It was suggested that the presentation include pictures of the actual project area.

Total cost of the Project will be \$80,678.00 with Boundary County helping and doing all the labor and gravel and machinery. The Matching funds will be \$34,443.00 and the Boundary SCD is asking for a grant amount of \$46,235.00.

Pollutants to be addressed will be Nitrogen, Phosphorus and sediment. From the scale we used to predict what the reduction would be, it showed we would reduce 9 tons of sediment per year. Patty asked if the picture showed the actual culvert that would be replaced and it was not. It was actually in the next phase; Patty suggested the actual area be included. When Cassie talked to local landowners for support they told her that years ago there were a lot of fishing and recreation in that area and it is now gone.

The BCSCD (Boundary County Soil Conservation District) will be doing photo documentation and visual monitoring for two years and provide pre-project photos also. Idaho Fish and Game will consult and assist with fish survey. Brad Shelton with ISWCC (Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission) will provide technical assistance throughout the project.

The plan is to inform the community though the local newspaper, at the county fair, attending KVRI meetings for updates and signage during and after the completion of the project.

A slide showed the partners and support at this time. Cassie ended with a request for KVRI support and to open it up for questions. Greg Becker, NRCS, also attend to help answer any questions we might have.

Discussion followed including suggestions from the group:

- Include a reference note that an itemized budget is included in the application
- Show where the sediment is going in relation to the stream
- Use more pictures of the actual phase 1 and focus more on that stage
- Talk to Bob Steed about the TMDL in association with Fleming Creek
- Include a picture of where the stream actually comes out into the Kootenai River, the confluence
- Add a bullet in your presentation of what the actual 319 funds will be used for
- Add a map of where the stream is located in reference to the city of Bonners Ferry

After the presentation, Patty provided a draft letter that she read to the group to consider for KVRI's support of this project. With no opposition, the Board approved the letter of support for the Fleming Creek Road Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Project.

Cassie's full slide presentation is available online at www.kootenai.org.

Forestry Committee Update-Kevin Knauth

Kevin K. shared the upcoming **North Zone Timber Sale Schedule** with the Board, and Updates for Fire Restrictions, Roads Repair and Checkpoint Meeting #4 for the Boulder Creek Project.

FY17

Deer Stewardship- 17mmbf (Stewardship sale)

The solicitation is out for bidders, it is a stewardship project that will have timber sale components and the service items associated with it.

FY18

Deer Placer- 4mmbf (Traditional Timber Sale)

Double D- 6mmbf (Traditional Timber Sale)

FY19

Robin Hood- 12mmbf (Traditional Timber Sale)

Camp Dawson-15mmbf (Stewardship project)

The NEPA strike team is working on these.

FY20

Black Boulder- 8mmbf- GNA (Good Neighbor Authority)

Green Gable-10mmbf- (Traditional timber sale)

North Star-17mmbf- (Stewardship sale)

(All three sales are out of the Boulder Creek Project)

These sales take us through FY20 on this District which carries us beyond the CFLRP Program as it stands now. Both Sandpoint and Priest River Districts will begin to get projects. Such as Buckskin Saddle project estimated at 40-50mmbf from a series of sales.

Patty asked about Caribou and Trout Ball projects in the future. Kevin explained they tie into the Westside Road Project. They have yet to line up interested landowners to get them on board with this project but anticipate 3 different project areas.

Also Patty mentioned the discussion about the Border Patrol EIS on Bog Creek and the influence on the implementation of projects in the Bluegrass BMUs. Kevin stated that once we get the Blue Grass BMU in alignment with the Grizzly Bear Access Amendment then all of the those BMU's along the Selkirk's will be where they need to be. We need that flexibility in working with the Fish and Wildlife Service in the Trout Ball area.

Fire Restrictions

Kevin reported that due to the recent rainy weather the Stage 2 Fire Restrictions will be dropped soon. Tim D. stated that it happened earlier in the day.

Katka Road Washout Repair

The Katka Road contract to repair the washout was awarded last week; deadline for completion is November 15. Paving will take place next summer.

The Federal Highways work to repair the Boulder Creek Washout will go under contract in the spring and work will take place in the summer. The pros and cons of working with ERFO (Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads) dollars is that the Federal Highways are in control of the schedule but it does save the Forest Service a lot of money.

Checkpoint 4 Meeting for Boulder Creek Project

Kevin and his Forest Service staff will meet tomorrow (Sept. 19) with Mary Farnsworth, Forest Supervisor and her staff for Check Point 4 on the Boulder Creek Restoration Project. The Draft EA will be reviewed and when it is released will go out for public comment. The Forestry Committee reviewed the EA today and didn't see any issues...therefore, recommended the Board support the District in moving ahead.

Boulder Creek Restoration Project Draft EA - Doug Nishek

Doug shared pictures of the Project area and added project information in his first slide presentation that included the following:

- Views of the project; looking from Black Mountain Lookout Tower south.
- A map of the 40,000 acre watershed boundaries; analyzed the drainage as a unit and with KVRI we looked at the ecosystem; what is in there; what is functioning; and what we can fix.
- The communication equipment and forest composition around the area.
- View from the Lookout tower looking east; 40 acre blocks from the 80's; we propose to mimic fire and dissolve those geometric shapes.
- Historic photos from the 1930's, showing Leonia Bridge, mining history, aftermath of the 1910 fire, and the old growth stands that escaped the fire.
- Ghost town pictures; take advantage of the heritage and create a comprehensive recreation plan.
- Road systems resembling tree tunnels because of lack of maintenance.
- Boulder Meadows and fences used to divert illegal ATV use.

Doug's full slide presentation is available online at www.kootenai.org.

Boulder Creek Restoration Project Draft EA (Environmental Assessment)- Doug Nishek

Using the maps Doug pointed out the 40,000 acre watershed, the WUI (Wildland Urban Interface) boundaries and the two Inventoried Roadless Areas. When they look at a project of this size, they know they have continuous forest, fires generally burn from South to the North, there are community watersheds in Cow Creek and Paradise Valley and the Communication Site near the Black Mountain Lookout tower, so there is a definite need to look at fire suppression and to break up the fuel continuity.

The treatment includes 7400 acres Prescribed Burning and 3443 acres of cutting units; access is limited. Each unit has a number for commenting / feedback purposes. There is going to be a fuel break around the area where the Black Mountain tower will be relocated soon. Regeneration harvest (seed tree & shelter wood) would be a dominant tree every 30-50 feet. Less than 10% of the Forest is composed of dry site old growth stands. And there will be 806 acres of Pre-Commercial Thinning.

The Forestry Committee took great care considering the roads and wildlife in the project area. Stored roads can be opened in case of an emergency; recreation opportunities are created with better trailhead access and mountain bike trails. And the White Bark Pine populations will hopefully return after the burning is completed.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Aquatics- Road systems are in bad shape and there is the need to reduce the risk of sediment that is entering the stream systems from roads, trails and recreation sites.

Fires and fuels - Protect the communication site, return role of fire on ecosystem as a whole, provide safety for fire fighters, and disrupt the continuity of fuels.

Vegetation- Restore White Bark Pine back in the ecosystem; break the continuity of the high concentration of Lodgepole; restore old growth Ponderosa Pine; create openings in the drainage; 1910 was the last big fire in the area; meet the Grizzly Bear Habitat access amendment by 2019, and restore 13 miles of roads to meet core objectives. There is something for every resource.

Recreation and Heritage - Need a more comprehensive plan for the heritage sites, safer trail heads, curtail illegal ATV use, safer dispersed camp site areas.

Noxious Weeds- Control the existing noxious weed populations especially in Boulder Meadows.

Scenic Integrity- We want to fix the geometric shapes created on the landscape by the harvest in the 70's and 80's, especially those viewed from Black Mountain and Clifty View viewpoints.

Aquatics- Beaver habitat restoration in Boulder Meadows using beaver dam analogs (starter beaver dams). Three AOP's were identified for replacement.

Road Treatment

- Reconstruction and maintenance 76 miles
- Temporary road construction 3.2 miles
- Storage 13.4 miles
- Decommission 0.7 miles

Brett Lyndaker's main concern is getting the BMU (Bear Management Unit) under compliance with the Grizzly Bear Access Amendment and storing the 13.4 miles did that. Brad Smith asked at the Forestry Committee meeting for a reference as to what the core habitat looks like and it be included in the EA, to address the concerns of continuity.

After scoping last December, we received letters from the public. Most approved of the proposed project, but 1 had an issue with the Roadless areas. That issue was unresolved; alternatives were created to show the tradeoff of action and no action in Roadless areas.

Proposed Action

- Alternative 1 No action
- Alternative 2 Proposed Action
- Alternative 3 Proposed Action less any activity in the Inventoried Roadless Area (excludes all burn units in Roadless)

Doug and Kevin explained in reply to the question of "if burning in Inventoried Roadless Area is considered insignificant" that a natural burn is considered returning burning to the landscape, stumps are not.

Forest Service Washington DC office Visit October 24 & 25- Patty Perry

This visit was scheduled in July but had to be rescheduled. It is now on the calendar for Oct 24 and 25 and we are waiting for the details. We also may have time for mill tour.

WAC (Wildlife-Auto Collision) Subcommittee Meeting- Patty Perry

The WAC meeting is scheduled for October 10 at 1:30 pm at the Kootenai Tribal Office. We will take what we have learned from Marcel's presentation in June and discuss who owns the system; what we can do going forward; who would make commitments to run it; should we or should we not continue. They are also talking about setting up another system on Highway 3 for Caribou in Canada.

Boundary County Library News- Sandy Ashworth

Sandy reported that the Boundary County Library has won its second National Award, "The Best Small Library in America 2017" by the American Library Association, Library Journal and their corporate sponsors. This award also included prize money of \$5000. This award is from the Library professionals, our peers. First time the award has gone to an Idaho public library. The Fab Lab was the big piece that

attracted their interest. There are only two public libraries in America with Fab Labs at this time, our library and a library in upstate New York.

Update on MacArthur/Boundary/Smith Creek Work Group -JJ Teare

JJ Teare reported that the work group hasn't gotten together much in the last 2 years and they are making the effort to change that. They talked about some ideas at the MacArthur area, some landscape changes, and what benefits they have there. They asked the group if they would still be interested in serving as a sounding board for them. Those members have been serving on the group for a long time, provided a lot of support and have been instrumental in their success and acceptance. We are asking for help in seeking new members from the community to help us (IDFG) build trust and faith with the community. They plan to meet again soon.

Congressman Labrador's Office - Judy Morbeck

Judy reported that the Congressman is trying really hard to promote the Resilient Federal Forests Act; trying to get them to take another look at it and move it forward.

Senator Risch's Office- Sid Smith

We are teaming with Senator Crapo and Congressman Labrador on a number of things; future careers in logging with Congressman Labrador and working with Senator Crapo on Wildfire Borrowing; also working together to find a solution for Secure Rural Schools.

Senator Crapo's Office -Karen Roetter

Karen reported that we all heard from Senator Crapo in his visit here last month so she had nothing to add tonight.

BLM- Bureau of Land Management- Kurt Pavlat

Kurt stated that the BLM is doing ok; not looking at a big change. They have a lower budget and fewer folks. Secretary Zinke made it clear... to be good neighbors, work with their partners, try to get as much done on the ground as they can and reduce as much bureaucracy as they can.

Next KVRI Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for October 16th. Patty requested the meeting to be moved as Sherrie will be out of town in Seattle for training that week, and Kevin Knauth also acknowledged that he will not be able to make it. The Board had no objections to the move and agreed and it was approved to move the meeting to October 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.
Sherrie Cossairt,
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant