

Meeting Notes
Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
Grizzly Bear Subcommittee
January 23, 2020 – 10:00a.m.
Boundary County Fairgrounds – Memorial Hall

Attendance:

Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner and KVRI Co-chair
Rhonda Vogl, KVRI Facilitator & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)
Mandy Lammers, Landowner
Darcy Lammers, Landowner
Brian Johnson, IDFG
Brett Lyndaker, US Forest Service
Scott Soult, KTOI
Carol Kriebs, KTOI
Jessie Grossman, Y2Y
Evan DeHamer, IDFG
Wayne Kasworm, USFWS
George Hays, Landowner, ADC Board
Bob Blanford, KVRI Board
Dave Wattenbarger, KVRI Board
Matt Philbrook, Boundary Back Country Access
Rich Feickert, Boundary Back Country Access
Tonia Brooks, Bonners Ferry Herald
Shawna Kelsey, Yaak Valley Forest Council
Kiira Siitari, Idaho Forest Group
John Kellogg, Farm Bureau and Landowner
Kim Annis, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Dave Kramer, Boundary County Sheriff
Sandy Ashworth, KVRI Board Member
Tom Schneider, Hunter
Norm Merz, Idaho Fish & Game
Kristy Kellogg, Landowner
Frank McCormick, Landowner
John Alt, Landowner
Don Alt, Landowner
Mitch Doherty, Vital Ground Foundation
David Gatchere, Idaho Forest Group
Ken English, City of Moyie Springs
Karen Schumacher, KVRI Recording Secretary & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)

Opening:

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

Sheriff Dave Kramer introduced himself and provided information about the Nixle announcement program that is used for coordinated announcements. It was suggested that this system may be of good use for needed Grizzly Bear community announcements.

Presentation: Kim Annis, Grizzly Bear Management specialist, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks was introduced and shared some of the programs that Montana is doing with Grizzly Bear.

Kim stressed the importance of:

- Tailoring a bear management program to meet the specific needs of any given community.
- Decreasing Available Attractants
 - Garbage
 - Fruit Trees
 - Unsecured Livestock/Pet Feed

The methods for dealing with Grizzly Bear were discussed. The findings for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks are:

Relocation is no guarantee for the continued life of a grizzly bear

- Each relocation is considered on a case by case basis
- Teenage Males are most commonly involved in human/bear conflict cases
- Electric Fencing Program is psychologically effective
 - Stops the conflict
 - Teaches the bear to avoid that specific attractant

The electric fence program offers a loaned system as well as guidance for permanent and effective use. The program started in 2009. A guide was produced in 2010. The guide has been updated and is available to other agencies at no cost with the request that no changes are made.

Kim also covered available financial assistance programs for fencing as well as the effectiveness of bear resistant garbage containers and the importance of securing public waste transfer sites.

Public education and outreach programs have proven to be highly effective in prevention. It is hoped that prevention will de-escalate the number of human/bear conflicts despite the increase in bear population numbers. It is suggested that all measures should address both black bear and grizzly to more helpfully affect habits that invite conflicts.

Her presentation is available on the KVRI Website (<http://www.kootenai.org/main.html>)

Scott Soultz reviewed the benefits of additional personnel to accomplish some of what Kim outlined. A hand out was provided that lists the possible job duties for a proposed community liaison/conflict specialist. Discussion followed regarding how the community might want to approach funding for the position. Some drawbacks and benefits were discussed with respect to both private funding and agency support. It was agreed that we are early in the process for this and that there are many aspects to consider.

Scott provided handouts from sources that have formed methods and responsibilities for managing bear information. The Phone Tree and Management Outreach Plan handouts are available on the KVRI Website (<http://www.kootenai.org/main.html>). Scott reviewed the loaner fencing program that the Kootenai Tribe has been supporting. The program is an important proactive step but is limited in

application because there are not enough people and/or man hours with his group or with Idaho Fish and Game.

Dan Dinning stressed the importance of making a plan for notifying citizens when there is a known bear.

Notification items discussed:

- Education and Outreach
 - New Residents
- Needed difference between notification processes for bear events
 - Bear Sightings
 - Human / Bear Conflicts
- Volunteer Coordinator to assist with developing phone tree system
- Confirmation of bear information prior to Nixle announcement

A handout was provided on the current legal process in place for grizzly bear livestock depredation in Idaho. Currently there is no recourse as long as the grizzly bear is under federal jurisdiction.

The USFWS is requesting information for a 5-year status review on Grizzly. The last one was done in 2011. Wayne Kasworm underscored the interest in information on sightings of any female Grizzly with cubs.

The meeting ended at 12:30

Notes prepared by Karen Schumacher