

Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative
February 13, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting – University of Idaho Extension Office

Board Members in Attendance:

David Sims, City of Bonners Ferry & KVRI Co-chair
Dan Dinning, Boundary County Commissioner & KVRI Co-chair
Ron Abraham, (Alt.) Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) & KVRI Co-chair
Sandy Ashworth, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests
Tim Dougherty, (Alt.) Business/Industry
Don Allenberg, (Alt) Corporate Agriculture/Landowner
Kevin Knauth, (Alt.) Bonners Ferry Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
Kennon McClintock -Conservationist/Environmentalist (alt.)
Jim Cadnum, Landowner (Industrial)
Dave Wattenbarger, Soil Conservation District/Ag Landowner
Brad Corkill, Idaho Fish & Game Commission
Patty Perry, KVRI Facilitator & KTOI
Sherrie Cossairt, KVRI Recording Secretary & KTOI

Agency/Others in Attendance:

Chip Corsi, Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Dave Gray, Social/Cultural/Historical Interests (alt.)
Karen Cathey, USFWS, NIFO
Steve Helfurt, ECAP Consultancy Group, Coeur d'Alene
Dianna Ellis, Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge
Norm Merz, KTOI
Sid Smith, Senator Jim Risch's office
Judy Morbeck, Congressman Raul Labrador's office
Stephen Howlett
Kurt Pavlat, Bureau of Land Management
Jonathan Luhnnow, Idaho Dept. of Lands
Jim Derrig, Idaho Department of Fish & Game

Opening:

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

The January 9, 2017, KVRI meeting draft notes were approved by consensus. Sherrie stated that she would add the presentations and website location in the notes.

Presentation: Overview of Annual CFLR Report-Kevin Knauth, USFS

Kevin walked the group through the handout of the 2016 Annual CFLR Report. The information prompted many questions throughout the discussion.

Match & Leverage Funds: Fund Sources

CFLN15- is a code with carry over dollars not spent in FY15. How the program works is that any current dollars that we do not spend in a given year will carry over one year and be available to us the next year. Only the CFLN dollars work that way.

Matching Funds-We get budgeted a certain amount and we are to provide a match to those.

Partner in kind contributions- Volunteer hours, including the KVRI meetings and field trips (count of people and equate a dollar value equivalent of their time)

Leverage Funds (new area): Utilized this area to showcase the restoration work the tribe was doing in FY15 and FY16. It gives Washington DC an idea of the work going on around the project area by other folks.

CFLR Progress to date: Existing fuel treatment tested by wildfire—The 2016 Twenty Mile lightning ignited fire was a good example of fire being contained as a result of successful fuel treatment in that project area.

Using the TREAT tool to show jobs created: Jobs analysis: This graph looks for a zone of emphasis, jobs identified, amount of harvest, amount of contracts we do, types of wood products from timber harvest and all this data generates this table. It also identifies the forest & watershed restoration (culverts, AOP, stream work, bridges).

Community Benefits: Implementation of the KVRI CFLRP has resulted in improved understanding of local resource issues and real improvements to the community's watershed. It has increased public awareness and education about restoration work done.

Monitoring efforts:

Natural fuels & logging slash burning and planting accomplishments.

Stocking surveys were completed.

Monitor Parker Ridge Fire area and trail damage assessment.

Zone aquatics staff continue to track Fish population.

Zone wildlife staff tracks changes in overall road densities within each BMU in project areas.

Zone staff utilize the INFRA data base for tracking current status of road /trail systems.

Zone Botanists and weed staff have established a monitoring unit within the Deer Creek project area for fuel treatment in regards to weed populations.

Accomplishment Table:

Kevin cautioned that the integrated targets shown on the tables are not always straight forward in this report. Some things to consider are: that they are broken out by funding sources; the total costs are accurate; total number of acres planted will be accurate; but less accurate will be which dollars accounted for which acres. The contracts do not break it out as such. Although we might do all the work, we only getting credit for a portion of it according to the report.

Discussion followed concerning the accuracy of the database, accomplishments reported, target adjustments and what may be actually showing up on the CFLR report as it was submitted.

Dan Dinning asked if KVRI can have something on file to show the accomplishments correctly. If Congress looks at it and questions our success, we need be able to justify that it's the Forest Service computer database and/or program that is the reason the accomplishments are not being properly recorded and submitted.

Kevin stated that Mary will be creating a report that adjusts the targets based on what they believe they should be. Mary would like to be on the next KVRI meeting agenda to present this new report to the Board. It should show dollars and targets and how we are suggesting edits to be made. And road decommission adjustments will be included.

Patty stated that if we are adjusting the targets down it could appear that we are not doing what we said we would do. Will that be what it looks like?

Kevin agreed that it may but that's the option Mary would like to proceed with. " The alternative is to show that we were going to fall well short of what we said we would do. We can show we only accomplished 40% or we can adjust the targets and it will show approximately 95%.

After more discussion, it was agreed that we would reserve a meeting for Mary Farnsworth to come and to explain in more detail the report and the options she has chosen to report.

Kevin continued to explain the table.

Soil & water resource improved: Road decomposition feeds this number; it's artificially high; the target is inflated; will be addressed in that report.

Some Areas in good shape are: Habitat enhanced stream, in miles; Habitat improved-acres, Rangeland improve; all road maintenance categories; Stream crossing AOP- is close but will get there; Trail maintenance; Timber volume harvested; Timber volume sold Acres of hazardous fuels WUI and Non WUI, and brush disposal.

Road decommission: The database that we report in didn't have a drop down option for "storage", consequently it was left open, it shows a zero but we did store roads.

Timber sale treated: Timber sale-numbers are low now, we don't control when that will happen, those acres will come eventually. Sales are sold, but not treated at this point.

Bioenergy-green tons-tough one, made adjustments in this target; hoping some facility will come online; it just hasn't yet.

FY 16 Planning & future implementation: Describes the projects that are currently in NEPA that we are doing the planning work on and the future implementation of those projects.

Outyear planning & implementation: It lets them know where all the projects are, when they are coming on line, and when we anticipate planning and decisions to be done. The busy fire salvage efforts in FY2016 across the Forest have resulted in some adjustments to outyear project schedules. This area also includes the Brushy Mission stewardship project and list of the projects done in the Brush Lake recreation area.

Footprint acres are acres we have treated, (acres not double counted).

Unexpected Challenges describes the challenges faced this year with fire salvage efforts, delay in target accomplishments, and no sales in FY2016 because of this issue.

Feedback area for internal issues: Kevin replied that the way they fund CFLR is difficult to track and we get short changed in the long run.

Planned FY 2018 accomplishments: The report looks at FY2016 and 2 years out to FY2018. Although projects will go past FY 2019, we are not sure how we will report or count that information just yet.

And finally Kevin pointed out there is a link to short video highlighting the work done around Brush Lake included in the media recap.

A copy of the 2016 Annual CFLR Report is available online at kootenai.org

Management Areas in the Bonners Ferry District-Kevin Knauth

Patty explained at the last meeting we did a “fly over” of the Bonners Ferry District, reviewed the 5 year plan, the projects and what we could do under a Categorical Exclusion (CE) provided for under the Farm Bill, and where that makes sense to do so.

Mary Farnsworth had suggested at a recent meeting that she wanted to use the CE and Farm Bill and enlarge into the Management Areas identified under the Forest Plan as Backcountry (MA5) and General Forest (MA6).

We asked Kevin to show us if we were going to use that kind of authority in those management areas, what that would look like.

Kevin added in order to utilize the CE in Farm Bill; we have to first designate priority landscape areas.

What we did in the first round, was we identified all project areas within the existing 5 year plan. We now need to do it again and look for other high priority areas. A lot of it is driven by insect and disease maps showing problem areas are. And the other would be tied to WUI and how they overlay with the insect/disease areas.

Initially Mary wanted to identify all MA6 and MA5 as priority, within the project boundary areas. The Panhandle Forest Collaborative’s feedback questioned that concept. Today Kevin received a new map from Mary with her new proposal. This approach is less aggressive than what she wanted to do. She wants feedback from both Collaboratives and Patty hoped she will be asking the County Commissioners as well.

Dan Dinning stated that the Boundary County Commissioners sent a letter of support of MA5 & MA6. Discussion followed. Kevin suggested that the Forest hoped to submit how they would like to move forward, by end of the month and would like KVRI’s input. It was agreed upon by the Board, after discussion about how we could effectively provide feedback, that we should have a conference call for more information to Mary Farnsworth along with Kevin, the KVRI co-chairs and Patty before we compose a letter of support. This will be done & a letter composed as soon as possible.

Committee updates: Patty Perry

Forestry meeting - February 16 at 1pm

Agenda includes the Boulder Creek Restoration Project, discussion of Comments received in scoping and discussion of the Roads in the project area.

TMDL Meeting -February 16 at 8:30 am

Bob Steed, Idaho DEQ, will be here for an update.

Correspondence: Patty Perry

We received a request from Joel Fenolio, USACE, through Greg Hoffman, to present the yearly forecast of Libby Dam at the March 20th KVRI meeting.

April 17th KVRI Meeting: Patty Perry

Mary Farnsworth will be added to the agenda to present the adjusted report we have talked about here tonight concerning the CFLRP Annual Report.

Idaho Fish & Game-Chip Corsi

Chip Corsi reported Idaho Fish & Game will be having a public meeting on Thursday, February 16th, at 5:30 p.m. in Sandpoint at the Ponderay Event Center to discuss Big Game Rule proposals.

We are proposing changes in elk hunting in the Panhandle. There hasn't been a general antlerless season in sometime. We are proposing to restore that or parts of that with two opportunities: controlled hunts and general hunts. Cow hunts in agriculture areas work well for the landowners but not for the sportsman. We would like to balance that for both groups.

They are also looking for input on the white tail population in the Panhandle. They are proposing an increase in doe tags but would appreciate feedback from folks up here.

We do know the elk survival is high right now from the data available.

Kootenai Wildlife Refuge: Dianna Ellis

They are still under continuing resolution until the end of the April and not sure how that will affect hiring YCC this year.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) -Kurt Pavlat - Nothing to report

Caribou Report: Norm Merz, KTOI

Norm reported that the Caribou census will begin after the next snow in the high country. That will create the flight window to accomplish that.

Senator Risch's Office: Sid Smith

Sid reported that Senator Risch introduced legislation on the Scotchman's Peak Wilderness in December. As he likes to operate, when he introduces legislation, it is the beginning not the end of the process. So it is out there for your consideration, wants all the input he can gather concerning the legislation. All suggestions are welcome.

The Senator is in the middle of the Confirmation process in the Senate.

Senator Risch was named Chairman of the Small Business/Entrepreneurship Committee. The vast majority of businesses in Idaho are small business. He believes this is a good opportunity to do some good things for Idaho.

Congressman Labrador's Office: Judy Morbeck

Congressman Labrador has been designated as Vice-chairman of the Natural Resources Subcommittee. He will want to work closely with this group and others in Idaho. And he is also on the Judiciary committee.

They have already requested & received input from Norm Merz from the Tribe giving them the overview of what we are doing with the Caribou in this area.

Idaho Department of Lands-Jonathan Luhn-Nothing to report

Fish & Game-Boundary Creek WMA Jim Derrig

We are working on plans for a spring work group; have quite a bit of prescribed burning planned for the spring & fall; working with NRCS to renew agreement in 2017; working on the annual report for BPA and will report on that when it is finalized; MacArthur is frozen; working with a part-time forester with IDL to do some timber harvest close to Hwy 95 and the U. P. tracks to improve that corridor for wildlife and traffic safety; and just been busy this winter plowing snow and keeping things open.

Idaho fish and game commission: Brad Corkill

At Thursday's meeting in Sandpoint we will also be discussing the status of two Bills that you may or may not know about, they were returned to us at the January meeting:

- Depredation Payment for Landowners
- Fee Increase Bill

Returned to us (the Commission) saying they were not right and we need to fix them. The Department has done a lot of work to come up with proposals on how to fix them and we need some sportsman input. So please come to the meeting and if you can, and bring someone with you. It would be greatly appreciated.

Boundary County Commissioner: Dan Dinning

Dan Dinning reported the snow labor crew will be leaving tomorrow. If there are homes or driveways that still need shoveling there are a list of phone numbers on news bf website.

Any damage needs should be reported for accumulate affect to the County, covered by insurance or not. Please send your information to Mike Meier at the following email address:
mmeier@boundarycountyid.org

Sandy Ashworth also reported that as part of the disaster relief, church members are helping members of the community shovel snow & it is free, please tell the elderly.

Next KVRI Meeting:

The next KVRI meeting will be on March 20, 2017 at 7 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.
Sherrie Cossairt
KTOI/KVRI Admin. Assistant