

**5B Restoration Coalition  
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, September 24, 2014, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Community Campus, 1050 Fox Acres Road, Hailey, Minnie Moore Room, 301-302

**Present:** Lynn Campion-Waddell, Holly Crawford, Mark Davidson, Chip Deffe, Susan Giannettino, Jo Heiss, Jim Keating, Chris Leman, Mike McDonald, Angenie McLeary, Kurt Nelson, Arlene Schieven, Brett Stevenson, Patti Lousen

**Facilitator:** Karen DiBari

**Introductions:**

Everyone introduced themselves around the table. Karen will be asking people to submit short bios via email so that we can develop a complete list in order to help people get to know each other.

Two main objectives for the meeting:

- Share information amongst the group about post-fire activity, and longer-term restoration planning, and gaps
- Determine next steps in terms of organizational structure and tasks

**Post-Fire Restoration Activity & Gaps Reporting**

- Several people have filled out the reporting form and returned the information to Karen DiBari, and others are still working on it. Deadline for sending information in is Wednesday, October 1.
- Kurt Nelson, Ketchum District Ranger, gave a substantial report about Forest Service and partner activities. A few highlights:
  - 91 miles of trails were affected by the fires, and 82 miles have been reconstructed and stabilized
  - 10,645 acres of habitat have been restored or maintained through aerial seeding, mulching, and planting of seedlings
  - Over 1000 volunteer hours
- Chris Leman and Jim Keating, Blaine County Recreation District
  - Chris started his position in late June 2014, which is jointly supported by the Johnson Foundation, the Forest Service, and the BLM. Chris has accomplished a variety of objectives, including improving communication with the public about trails conditions through [trailsblog.bcrd.org](http://trailsblog.bcrd.org), coordinating with the FS and BLM, preparing for and leading volunteer events, and responding to front-country issues (like downed trees), which helps free up the FS trails staff for other priorities.

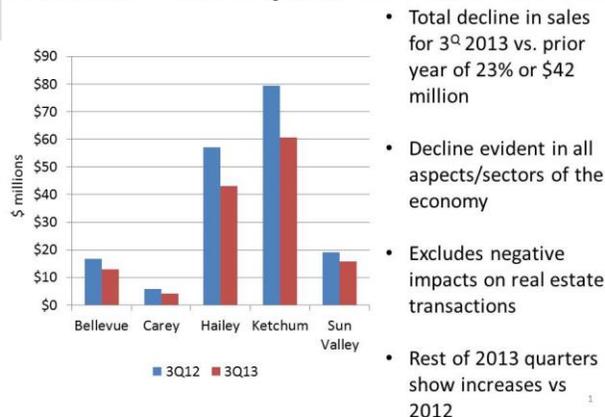
- Several people shared very positive comments about the seamless relationship between BCRD and the agencies, and how it is a testament to collaboration and cooperation. This will be something to highlight in the report for the Oct 8 economic summit.
- 7 ½ miles of new trail just opened in the Galena area – hopefully this will help meet the public’s demand for trail access impacted by the fire. Another 4 miles will be opened in October in the SNRA.
- BCRD has a mini-excavator and Sutter 300 trail dozer, and hopes there can be something set up so that agencies and organizations can share equipment.
- Holly Crawford, BLM
  - 3900 acres aerial seeding
  - 8000 acres treated for invasive weeds
  - 1000 acres trees and shrubs planted
  - Trail reconstruction on the Croy Trail Network will begin next summer (International Mountain Biking Association); until reconstruction is complete, those trails are closed to public use.
- Mike McDonald, Idaho Dept of Fish & Game
  - 20 miles of stream monitoring completed (turbidity, dissolved oxygen, etc.)
  - Worked closely with the BLM and FS to develop stabilization plans
  - Involved in a partnership project of post-fire monitoring of the Big Wood River (with Trout Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Wood River Land Trust)
  - Aerial surveys of big game planned to begin soon (not conducted last fall due to lack of staffing capacity)
  - Can help with volunteer work for shrub planting and seed collection in the future
- Arlene Schieven, Sun Valley Marketing Alliance
  - For the last two weeks of August last year, occupancy in Sun Valley and Ketchum was about half of what it would normally be at that time. Occupancy in Hailey was near capacity, due to emergency personnel (and potentially some displaced residents) staying in the hotels.
  - This August was up 17% in room nights compared to last August and represents a more normal August. The number of room nights sold in Sun Valley, Ketchum and Hailey was 30,506 this August compared to 26,026 last August. So it is reasonable to assume that we lost about 4,500 room nights as a result of the fire
  - On the positive side, September 2013 was a very strong month. Some of the groups that were displaced in August, rebooked their meetings for September.
  - The impact in the media was short-lived. Once the fire was under control, attention was turned to the next big fire.
  - In terms of more lasting impacts, the Writer's Conference moved their event to July, leaving a gap at the end of August. This leaves an opportunity for another event to move to that weekend.
- Brett Stevenson, Wood River Bike Coalition

- The Bike Coalition has coordinated 289 volunteers in post-fire restoration work, for a total of 620 volunteer hours. Thirteen local businesses have supported these volunteer events.
- Angenie McCleary, Blaine County Commissioner
  - During fire, there was excellent coordination between federal agencies and the local fire personnel; this set the stage for good post-fire collaboration
  - Flood mitigation is a big part of post-fire work due to heavy rains
  - \$1 million in treatments are recommended on private lands to prevent funding (NRCS assessment); Blaine County is in line to get funding but with the government shutdown last year, it didn't come through in FY14
  - County worked with NRCS, TNC, and FS biologists to purchase \$70,000 native seed mix that is more wildlife friendly
  - County partnered with USGS to purchase six roving precipitation gauges and one stream gauge installed for monitoring; developed trigger points for changes in flow to be used to alert residents if evacuations are needed; individuals can sign up to receive text message alerts
  - Road/bridge department has inventoried all culverts in the county, and are working to fix problems
  - Considering revisiting the firewise effort of past years, and also may develop a fireworks ordinance
  - Working to advocate for a shift in FS budgeting to support mitigation/restoration and stop drain on FS budget from fire suppression/response efforts
- Patti Lousen, Wood River Land Trust
  - Patti shared information she gathered from landscaping contractors about post-fire work done on private lands

**Information provided by 5BRC Members Not in Attendance**

- Harry Griffith, Sun Valley Economic Development Corporation

**Business – Fire Impacts on Blaine Co. Sales**



- David Sundholm, Idaho Mountain Dirt Riders Association (comments sent in advance of meeting)
  - We primarily clear trails of fallen trees and work on erosion issues. We do this across a wide area of forest and I have to admit we do not do as good of job as we could in keeping track of what we do. The IMDRA clears the entire Wood River Valley, the Stanley Basin, north of Fairfield in the Smokeys, The White Clouds, and the South Hills South of Twin Falls with help from the MVTMA. The main limiting factor we have is what is open to motorized use.
  - We also do trail building / repair. We are currently working on Rooks Creek out Warm Springs. Rooks was burnt badly in the Castle Rock Fire and was closed by the USFS forever. We convinced the USFS to let us rebuild the trail in the rocky canyon for a more advanced trail. This has been a bigger project then we thought but a good challenge. Rooks will never be an intermediate trail, and due to the advanced nature of its features volunteers are not as motivated. We do own trail building tools, enough for 30 people, as well as trailers we can pull on single track to remote locations for trail building. If the USFS would let us in to the more popular trails that were burned in the Beaver Creek fire volunteers would come out in mass.
  - The IMDRA also does education for the motorized community working on trail etiquette, noxious weeds, trail preservation, water, and noise.
  - The motorized community is the only trail user group that pays fees per motorcycle they own for trail maintenance. These funds are accessed through Idaho Parks and Rec and are a primary source of grant money to the USFS for trail repair / rebuild.

#### **Conservation efforts to identify watershed restoration needs (longer-term)**

- Mark Davidson (Trout Unlimited) – presented a powerpoint showing examples of maps that demonstrate the possibilities for restoration (see attached)
- Large effort in the High Divide with a focus on sage grouse conservation
- BLM and FS are currently labeling priority and general habitat (based on vegetation and grouse population presence)
- Conservation groups are interested in doing a finer scale approach in order to prioritize restoration activities

#### **Needs/Ideas/Opportunities**

- An agreement to cover volunteers working on private lands adjacent to federal lands (it would be great to have something that included BLM and FS)
- System to share monitoring data between agencies and nonprofits
- Community celebration in the spring (May) at the Greenhorn trailhead; consider making it a fundraising event

- Equipment sharing system
- Immediate need: compile information into a short document that can be shared at the October 8 economic summit on resiliency

### Structure

- The group reviewed the “egg diagram” and discussed it. There was general agreement that the diagram represents a good initial structure. Agreement that the 5BRC full group (leadership board) should plan to meet quarterly in person. In between meetings, work will be done through committees.
- Four committees
  - Steering
  - Ecological Restoration
  - Recreation/Trails
  - Community Engagement

### Next steps

- Develop 2014 Beaver Creek Fire Restoration document for presentation at the Oct 8 summit (Bill Possiel, Angenie McCleary, and Jim Keating are all presenting on different panels and different topics). **5BRC members are asked to send any information they have gathered for the document to Karen by Wednesday, October 1**
- Schedule quarterly meetings of the 5BRC (Karen/NFF)
- Schedule committee meetings (Karen/NFF)
- Committees will:
  - Finalize committee name and purpose
  - Identify other people in the community to invite to serve on the committees
  - Identify next steps and start work
- Compile bios of each person on the 5BRC (Karen/NFF)

### Committee Lists (need to add people who weren't present at the meeting)

#### Steering

- Kurt Nelson, FS
- Brett Stevenson
- Angenie McCleary
- Lynn Campion-Waddell
- Jim Keating

#### Trails/Recreation

- Jo Heiss
- Brett Stevenson
- Susan Giannettino
- John Kurtz
- Chris Leman
- Chip Deffe
- Angenie McCleary
- Jim Keating

### Ecological Restoration

- Patti Lousen
- Mark Davidson
- Dayna Gross
- Dani Mazotta
- Angenie McCleary
- Holly Crawford
- IDFG biologist (to be named by Mike)
- Deb Taylor, botanist (FS)

### Community engagement

- Brett Stevenson
- Susan Giannettino
- Dan Drackett
- Lynn Campion-Waddell
- Chris Leman

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