

**5B Restoration Coalition
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, January 20, 2016, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Community Campus, 1050 Fox Acres Road, Hailey,

Meeting objectives

- Review accomplishments of past year
- Discuss future goals for the 5BRC and develop action plan for 2016

Present:

5BRC Members: Lynn Campion-Waddell, Jim Keating, Dani Mazzotta, Chip Deffe, John Kurtz, Angenie McLeary, Chris Leman, Nancy Humphrey

Forest Service: Bobbie Filbert, Zachary Poff, Erika Phillips, Deb Taylor, Kurt Nelson

Facilitator: Karen DiBari

Guests: Emily Olsen

Welcome and Introductions

- Karen welcomed members to the first 5B Restoration Coalition (5BRC) meeting of 2016 and reviewed the meeting objectives. She announced that the NFF contracted with Chris Leman for conducting interviews with members in January, and thanked him for the work he did.

Review of 5BRC purpose and goals, and 2015 accomplishments

- Karen reviewed the “activities and accomplishments” document, which highlights the tasks successfully completed by the full 5BRC and committees in 2015 (see attached).
- Other activities and accomplishments the group added after discussion:
 - During a Trails and Recreation Committee meeting, Chip Deffe and Zach Poff made a plan to do a quick trail connection in Deer Creek to prepare the trail to be opened to the public. Chip and Zach gathered volunteers and completed the work quickly.
 - The NFF is granting funds to the Idaho Conservation Corps (ICC) for 5 weeks of trail work in Deer Creek this summer, thanks to support from the Wodecroft Foundation, the Helen K. & Arthur E. Johnson Foundation, an individual donor, and the NFF match.
 - The Blaine County Recreation District raised funds from multiple sources to continue supporting the Blaine Country Trails Coordinator position in 2016.
- Members noted that the examples highlight that this group eases collaboration and makes it coordination more effective, efficient, and organized in the community.

5BRC Assessment

- Chris Leman presented themes that emerged from interviews he completed with 5BRC members in January 2016 (see attached).
- Presentation notes:
 - Meeting frequency: some questions about sending fewer people from different agencies, and perhaps also meeting less frequently
 - Need to define and focus the group's mission, both to group members and the broader community; group is falling a bit short in efforts to quantify and share progress effectively with the community
 - Support for following through on the Deer Creek effort, continuing to build support for the restoration efforts, and continuing to support the Blaine County Land, Water and Wildlife Program (LWWP) proposal
 - Some asked how participating in the group adds value to the participants' organizations
 - Resiliency and restoration – people are looking for more balance between resiliency, restoration, and protection (and supporting a FireWise program could help)
 - Perhaps a partnership with the Sun Valley Institute for Resiliency could be mutually beneficial
- Discussion following Chris's presentation
 - Ketchum Ranger District made the Deer Creek project its priority after the 5BRC adopted Deer Creek as its focus, and now the project is the highest priority for the entire Sawtooth National Forest.
 - Restoration takes time – it's much harder to keep the community engaged when there's not fire at the door.
 - A strong group like the 5BRC will be key to building community support and securing LWWP levy funding.
 - The 5BRC has only been talking about Deer Creek for one year; it's not unusual for a collaborative effort to take five or six years.
 - The group needs to advise the community on a more regular basis so that people know that the 5BRC is an ongoing, involved effort.
 - As a "layperson" amongst agency staff, Chip Deffe is often questioned about the group's progress. Through working with the group, Chip learned that every process takes time, everything on public lands requires a process, and there are continuing funding needs. It's important to focus on resiliency, but in terms of restoration, we chose Deer Creek, and there are still many needs in Deer Creek. There are huge opportunities to help communicate with the community.
 - There's magic in the group, and an opportunity to focus on three or four big projects, whether it's adopt-a-trail, travel planning, Deer Creek, etc.
 - **Summary:** The group is committed to working together and believes there is value in the 5BRC effort. The group needs to focus on 2016 goals that will lead to concrete accomplishments, while also recognizing the intangible successes.

Deer Creek/LWWP Levy Fund Proposal - *What's happening in Deer Creek?*

- **Land, Water, & Wildlife Program proposal**

- The Levy Advisory Board gave full approval 1.5 months ago to consider proposal; all materials are available for the public to view on the website
- Primary proposal is for removal of the road out of the riparian corridor and up onto the hillside, restoration of that streambed, noxious weeds work, and some restoration for whitebark pine
- There's been some opposition from community members who believe the road project would threaten the mountain overlay district; county attorney's legal opinion states that concerns about the overlay district are mostly unfounded
- 5BRC should speak collectively and pointedly in support of the project. The Forest Service could also talk more publically about why the work in Deer Creek is beneficial for ecological reasons. The 5BRC can help educate citizens in the community; currently the public doesn't know a lot about the proposed project.
- **Action Items:**
 - (1) Levy Advisory Board (LAB) is meeting on February 23rd to discuss the proposal.
 - (2) During the LAB meeting, Chip Deffe will speak on behalf of the 5BRC, and also as an avid user of Deer Creek and someone who lives in Deer Creek. Several 5B representatives will also speak so that there's a balance of citizens and organizations. Other 5BRC members are also encouraged to attend and speak in support of the proposal.
 - (3) The NFF will draft a single 5BRC letter in support of the proposal, to send to the Blaine County Commissioners, LAB, and Forest Service. The NFF will sign the letter on behalf of "consensus support" from the group, and will deliver the letter by February 16th (deadline to send materials to the BCC for meeting packets). (DONE – see attached)
 - (4) Prior to the February 23rd LAB meeting, the 5BRC will host a community forum to talk about Deer Creek and help mobilize public support. Idaho Conservation League will find a venue for the forum, and will figure out if it's possible to send emails from participants to the BCC during the event. NFF staff and Chip Deffe also said they could help organize the event.
 - (5) Nancy, Lynn, and Chris will either send short letters or emails to the BCC and their networks. Other 5BRC members are encouraged to do the same. *Letters and emails should be sent prior to February 16th if possible. If members send emails after February 16th, they should go directly to the BCC. The NFF will send out talking points to help the group craft these emails/letters.*
 - (6) Approximately the week of February 15th, the Forest Service will send out the official legal notice for the Deer Creek project.

- **Overall project advancement**

- Forest Service is working on environmental analysis for overall project.
- Funding is already identified for this FY since the project is the top priority for the Sawtooth National Forest.
- Timeline is aggressive. Initial pre-NEPA scoping is complete. Formal 30-day public comment period for scoping will start by early February. The decision notice may be

- signed as early as late June, pending objections. Implementation could begin by August, pending several outstanding requests for funding.
- Environmental analysis is for post-fire restoration treatments (added to the Deer Creek project after the fire), including a road-to-trail conversion, trailheads reestablishment, and riparian restoration not associated with road realignment.
 - Road realignment project includes removing ½ mile of current road, three bridges, and realigning the road on the hillside. Recently the Forest has been looking at moving the road lower on the hill than originally planned.
 - Project is moving at “rocket speed,” and is unique because of the multiple funding sources and many moving parts.
 - **Action Items:**
 - (1) The 5BRC will send a letter to the Sawtooth National Forest saying thank you for prioritizing the project.
 - (2) The 5BRC will send a letter during the 30-day public comment period (same letter going to the Commissioners by February 16th). The letter would then be part of the public record.
 - **Trails and recreation plans**
 - Forest Service is optimistic that they will be able to open several trails in the coming year with internal funding, grant funding, and involvement from other folks.
 - Planning to improve one trailhead and construct another trailhead on the North Fork of Deer Creek. The trailhead will be similar to the one at Greenhorn; it will accommodate horse and ATV trailers. There’s also funding for interpretation. Funding is still needed for infrastructure (restrooms). The Forest Service is also going to try to come up with new dispersed camping spots.
 - Will work on a pavilion at Greenhorn; matching NFF funds could support the project.
 - Zach also worked with Dani to secure funding for a project with Idaho Trails Association to support volunteer groups during summer 2016.

Discussion and action planning for 2016

- **Consensus agreement from group about how to use 5BRC Restoration Funds:**
 - We support the Idaho Conservation Corps work in Deer Creek.
 - We support matching the LWWP application for interpretation and other specifics.
 - We support the pavilion idea at Greenhorn.
- **Consensus agreement from the group to focus on these goals in 2016:**
 - Communicate with the public
 - Continue the efforts in Deer Creek (LWWP proposal, overall work that’ll be happening beyond the LWWP, and use of 5B Restoration Funds to support the project)

- Engage the community through an “adopt-a-trail” program or something similar, such as the following ideas:
 - (1) Support public engagement, stewardship, and bridge from restoration to resilience
 - (2) ICL would like to be involved in the discussion because they’re planning to do trail inventories and other work in the new Boulder White Clouds Wilderness area
 - (3) BLM would also support the adopt-a-trail program because the BLM doesn’t have the capacity to maintain the trail system over time.
 - (4) Forest Service suggested helping with planting/seedling projects that involve local schools, Wood River Land Trust, and the student conservation corps. The 5BRC could help recruit volunteers, though the Wood River Land Trust might also be able to continually support these efforts. It would be another way to get the 5BRC name out there (and call it a tangible outcome). The WOW project (Jr. High/HS) could also be tied in. Invite the WOW to join the group.
 - (5) Secondary (there’s interest but no clear action plan) - FireWise involvement through the University of Idaho (the U of I started the FireWise program)

- Engage in travel planning
 - (1) Is the group dedicated to providing input to travel planning? A subset of the 5BRC could follow the process, draft letters, provide comments, etc.
 - (2) 5BRC could set up a few cross-functional public forums to build public understanding around travel planning.
 - (3) BLM travel planning won’t begin until (likely) Fall 2016, but the support and facilitation from the 5BRC will be helpful.

Updates and next steps

- Funding opportunities: IDL grants, climate adaptation grants from the Wildlife Conservation Society
- IFRP Workshop in Boise, February 24-25 – Dani, Karen and Angenie are planning to attend. Scholarships to attend are available if others would like to go.
- Dave Peterson from the University of Washington will be in the Wood River Valley in May 13th to share his initial assessment from the climate study.
- Big Wood watershed assessment is continuing in the summer of 2016 (TU, WRLT).
- Continuing need to support overlap between recreation and ecological priorities locally around Ketchum (which are focused primarily on kayaking and fishing)
- Sun Valley Institute on Resilience - Continue the conversation & communicate with them about the 5BRC’s activities. It doesn’t seem like there are immediate opportunities to work together; the Institute’s goals don’t fit with the 5B’s on-the-ground initiatives.

Upcoming meeting schedule & committee organization

- The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for March 30, 2016 in Hailey.
- Committee/Meeting Organization
 - Convening so many smaller meetings without as much cross-walking isn’t valuable.
 - Take advantage of meeting in person as much as possible.
 - Share notes from small-group/ad hoc meetings with the full group.

- Convene full group meetings (move away from committees), except when there are specific needs or actions that need ad-hoc meetings. The report backs are helpful to have during full group meetings.
- Continue quarterly meetings. Hold project-specific breakouts during full group meetings if necessary.
- Instead of organizing around issue or topic, organize committees/working groups around projects.
- Create a press release and/or talking points during or directly after each quarterly meeting, and designate a liaison to draft a press release.
 - (1) Develop media list
 - (2) Create media announcements that are web and social media-friendly.
 - (3) Brand 5BRC communications – create a letterhead with member names. To help with 5BRC branding, include quotes from members in the press release.

Adjourn