5B Restoration Coalition
November 3, 2016 Meeting

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Bullion Room, Community Campus, Hailey

Present: Chip Deffe, Jo Heiss, Chris Leman, Chad Chorney, Lynn Campion Waddell, Kurt Nelson, Jim Keating, Dani Mazzotta, Susan Giannettino, Erika Phillips, Holly Crawford, John Kurtz, Zach Poff, Angenie McCleary (on the phone)

Facilitator: Karen DiBari

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

* Karen will schedule a call with Kurt, Dani, Zach and other FS staff to discuss how best to invest the remaining ~$78,000 of NFF/5BRC commitment toward Deer Creek.
* Deer Creek signs:
	+ Dani will call Evelyn to check in on her schedule.
	+ A committee of Zach, Dani, Chip, Chris and Karen will get together to discuss sign language
* Deer Creek: A committee of Dani, Chad, Erika and Deb will meet to plan a summertime tour and volunteer activities, as well as documenting progress through before and “in action” photos.
* Karen will send out the current 5BRC mission statement so everyone can review it.
* BLM Travel Planning:
	+ Jim Keating offered to incorporate spatial information into Trail Link to help the public understand existing trails vs. what is proposed.
	+ John Kurtz will meet with the BLM contractor in early December to further define the timeline, and will work with Karen to set an appropriate date for the 5BRC’s winter meeting.
	+ Interested members will share information about their own individual or organizational comments on the transportation planning process: Chip, Jo, Jim, Dani, Susan, and Zach (and of course, John) and also talk about how to best support a valley-wide trail network.

**Announcements**

Susan Giannettino reported that the Washington Trails Association worked on 17 projects in 2016 that are in the proximity of the Wood River Valley.

**5B Restoration Fund Update**

The 5B Restoration Fund totals ~$175,000, which includes private contributions and NFF match.

$71,825 has been invested toward the following:

* $30,200 – Greenhorn Pavilion materials, design and construction
* $41,625 – Idaho Conservation Corps (3 weeks of trailwork in Deer Creek in summer 2016)

We have pledged $10,000 toward interpretive signs for the Deer Creek trailheads.

ACTION:

* Karen will schedule a call with Kurt, Dani, Zach and other FS staff to discuss how best to invest the remaining ~$78,000 of commitment toward Deer Creek (reminder that the 5BRC and NFF pledged $130,000 total match to the Deer Creek Restoration project, and $51,625 has already been committed).

**Adopt-A-Trail Update**

Chris Leman reported:

* This past season, the BCRD and partners held approximately 12 volunteer work events, with 130 volunteers and 330 volunteer hours.
* Trailwork started in the Croy area early in the season (May), then moved north.
* June was very active, with July and August being a bit quieter.
* Bike shops and other outdoor gear stores were very supportive.
* The main objective of the Adopt-A-Trail program (besides getting work done) is to maintain consistent commitment of volunteers over time.

Discussion:

* Zach suggested doing an article in the spring about the Adopt-A-Trail events.
* Is there a way to build sustainability for the program? The group discussed potential funding mechanisms. What could the 5BRC do as a coalition of organizations?
* Idea: “I support the Wood River Trail System” stickers, sold for $10 each?

Zach Poff reported on the Ketchum Ranger District’s efforts to raise funding for trail reconstruction in Alden Gulch, which is an important connector between Baker Creek and the Osberg Ridge Trail.

* ACTION: Karen will communicate with Zach about a proposal opportunity for Alden Gulch.

**Deer Creek**

* The Deer Creek trail systems are open. 22 miles are open and being heavily used.
* Working on the North Fork trailhead to accommodate horse trails.
* Identifying locations for dispersed camping.
* The culvert and the road realignment is on schedule, and the culvert is already in place.
* The weather has been quite uncooperative for construction work due to rain and snow. The Forest Service is trying to finish this part of the project up by Thanksgiving.
* The new section of road up the North Fork is being roughed in.
* The FS has ordered plant materials from the nursery, and the topsoil is delivered. The plan is to seed in the next several weeks.
* Also plan to do willow stake planting with a “stinger” machine, using the FS crew.
* PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR:
	+ Complete two more bridges
	+ Tie in ½ mile of trail on Wolftone
	+ Complete dispersed camping
	+ Complete road
	+ Complete the 2 trailheads
	+ Remove 3 bridges and ½ mile of road
	+ Plant upland vegetation to stabilize

**Deer Creek Interpretive Signs**

* The group discussed what should go on the signs: 1 panel for “where you are, map, safety information”; 2 panels interpretation
* ACTION: Dani will call Evelyn to check in on her schedule
* ACTION: A committee of Zach, Dani, Chip, Chris and Karen will get together to discuss sign language

**Summertime tour/volunteer activities**

* ACTION: A committee of Dani, Chad, Erika and Deb will meet to plan a summertime tour and volunteer activities, as well as documenting progress through before and “in action” photos.

**Travel Management**

John Kurtz and Holly Crawford provided context for the travel management planning process on BLM lands. Trails in the south end of the Wood River Valley contribute substantially to economic resilience. The diversity of opportunities in the valley offer a calling card, and it is important to think about a trails network.

Many trails and roads are in need of restoration just due to Mother Nature’s influence. BLM isn’t seeing a lot of new trails being created, but is thinking about how to maintain a sustainable trail system over time. The land ownership pattern presents a lot of challenges.

Through the travel planning process, BLM is required to consider the socio-economic component. Status/timeline of process:

* Thus far, the agency has initiated a cultural resource inventory.
* There will be two public opportunities to comment: 1) scoping and 2) when the preliminary environmental assessment is released. Following that, the next administrative option is appeal.
* BLM is identifying gaps in data and doing initial outreach to interested public/groups.
* During scoping the BLM will probably share 3 alternatives.
* KMZ (shape) files will be posted on the BLM website so the public can view the 3 alternatives and what the mean on the ground
* ACTIONS:
	+ Jim Keating offered to incorporate spatial information into Trail Link to help the public understand existing trails vs. what is proposed
	+ John will meet with their contractor in early December to further define the timeline, and will work with Karen to set an appropriate date for the 5BRC’s winter meeting
	+ Interested members will share information about their own individual or organizational comments on the transportation planning process: Chip, Jo, Jim, Dani, Susan, and Zach (and of course, John) and also talk about how to best support a valley-wide trail network

**FireWise**

Blaine County applied for state funding to support FireWise work but has not yet heard whether their proposal was awarded.

**Dark Skies**

Dani Mazzotta shared information about current discussions amongst Blaine County, Custer County, local cities, and citizens about ordinances to protect starry skies.

* The International Dark-Sky Association (<http://darksky.org/>) works with communities to protect dark sky resources.
* 90% of the world’s population can no longer see the Milky Way.
* One tool available is to establish a Dark Sky Reserve (there are currently none in the U.S.). A “reserve” means you have a swath of public lands plus communities committed to controlling light pollution in order to maintain dark skies.
* Ketchum and Flagstaff are Dark Sky Communities. Hailey has a good ordinance for Dark Skies but there isn’t any enforcement.

**Sustainability/Group Organization**

The group discussed the sustainability of the 5BRC and how to maintain momentum. People expressed their positive feelings about what the 5BRC has accomplished, as well as thoughts about strategies to improve next year. The NFF is able to continue coordinating the 5BRC over the coming year with support from the Johnson Foundation, but it will be important for the group to think further about how to continue support for that role in future years.

Successes:

* 5BRC brings people together across sectors; this doesn’t happen naturally and it is an important role of the group and is worth continuing
* Deer Creek funding – and affirmation of community support for public lands

Plans/Needs:

* Perhaps 2-3X/year instead of quarterly, with periodic phone calls
* Celebrate interim successes as much as possible
* Reach out to those groups/members who were initially at the table and try to get them engaged at the next meeting
* Develop ideas for a 5B Recreation & Restoration Fund (name?) with a local funding mechanism that taps into local businesses serving visitors to the Valley; the NFF can serve in the capacity of pooling funds and then redistribute through grants to local partners
* Consider broadening the mission of the group
	+ ACTION: Karen will send out the current 5BRC mission statement so everyone can review it
* Potential for mitigation dollars through Sage Grouse settlements