BDWG Members: Tony Colter, Paul Olson, Maureen Connor, Mark Thompson, Nathan Korb, Dave Schulz,

Guests: Erik Nylund, Bryan Lorengo, Spenser Merwin, Jeremy Carpenter

Forest Service: Melany Glossa, Dave Sabo, Charlene Buchas, Scot Shuler, Jim Brammer

Facilitator: Karen DiBari

ACTIONS

- Share letter RE discounting collaborative with group (Karen)
- Schedule BDWG Steering Cmte meeting (Karen)
- Jeremy Carpenter will send out summary of bill to BDWG
- Check with Dave Sabo to make sure all BDWG participants were added to the forest-wide communications list (Karen)
- East Deerlodge Valley Landscape project:
  - Charlene will share list of EDVL collaborative participants to enable BDWG members to ask questions
  - Karen will send link to the Forest Service site on EDVL
  - Tony Colter will research options for comment on EDVL and report back
  - Karen will put on August 20 agenda
- Alex Dunn will come to next meeting and present about Pintler Face
- Selway Meadows:
  - FS staff will review draft Selway Meadows objectives
  - Committee will flesh out vision with areas, objectives, timeline as well as articulate key questions and concerns

MINUTES

1. Welcome, introductions and approve minutes
   - Minutes approved unanimously

2. Public comment
   - No public comment

3. Updates/Announcements
   - New deputy: Scott Snelson
     - From Minnesota – Superior DR
     - Prior to that on White Mountain and Tongass
   - Action Item: Share letter RE discounting collaborative with group
   - Dave Schulz: Spoke with Bob Harrington about bill that was passed in Montana state legislature that includes collaboratives. (NEED MORE INFORMATION)
     - Spoke with Dave because he is the president of Montana Association of Counties (MACO)

2015 Meeting Dates (generally 3rd Thursday of the month):

- August 20, 2015
- September 17, 2015
- October 15, 2015
- November 19, 2015
- December 17, 2015
Committee established – hiring a coordinator
1. John Prinkki – Carbon County
2. Greg Chilcolt – Ravalli County
3. $240,000/year allocation
4. Dave plans to do some follow up to get a better sense of the legislation

- Dave participated in National Association of Counties meeting in Charlotte, NC last month.
  - He is on a committee associated with forests.
- Karen thanked the BDWG for supporting the reauthorization of the NFF by submitting a letter.
- Tony met with Robert Bonney and the Governor last week with some other timber representatives
  - Discussed fire borrowing
    - In the meeting, Tony Colter made a plug for the BDNF and that the policy for punishing a forest for not meeting timber target is not working and is hurting local communities and the Beaverhead-Deerlodge.
    - Lots of discussion around collaboration

4. Policy Updates
- Still working on Wildfire Disaster Funding Act
  - Have a start in the appropriation bill with an end to fire borrowing
  - Senator Tester met with Vilsack about Farm Bill implementation; funding is a big problem - the “elephant in the room.”
  - Planning on introducing the Foresters Jobs and Recreation Act
  - All of delegation supports efforts to reduce litigation
- Senator Daines visited the 10-mile watershed in Helena with Bill Avery (Helena Forest Supervisor). Then they went to the Frenchtown Face project on the Lolo NF
  - Senator Barasso’s bill – having a hearing today
  - Senator Daines hasn’t taken a position yet
  - Senator Tester offered any help he can provide with regards to NFF’s reauthorization
- Land and Water Conservation Fund – up for reauthorization and funding
  - Senator Daines and Tester supportive and working on it
- Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP)
  - Question about funding
  - President’s budget includes a request for additional funding for existing projects and a new round of projects
- Congressman Zinke – Forest Resiliency Act passed in the House
  - Action item: Jeremy Carpenter will send out summary of bill to BDWG

5. Boulder Lowlands update and identification of next steps
- 20 page letter came in at very end of comment period for Boulder Lowlands from Sarah Jane Johnson, Native Ecosystems Council
- Farm Bill – 5 categorical exclusions have been signed nationally
- Jasper Mountain – 2500 acres treatment on ID Panhandle NF, no litigation
  - Boulder Lowlands summary of activity
    - May – interdisciplinary team came and did field work
    - May 20 – open house in Butte, about 12 people participated
      - Several local residents were very supportive and excited about reducing fuel loads
      - Revised the proposed action
June 5 – sent out an update

Commenters included:
- Sun Mountain Lumber
- Alliance for Wild Rockies
- Local property owners
- Capital Trail Vehicles Association (Helena)
- Peter Nelson, Defenders of Wildlife
- Native Ecosystem Council (Sarah Jane Johnson)
- Phone call with Maureen, Tony, Peter and BDNF about from comments from Peter.

Sarah Jane Johnson’s comments focused greatly on forest plan and also connections between Yellowstone. Spoke about cumulative impacts of B-L, Ten Mile project on Helena NF, and East Deerlodge

Project still on track for a decision memo in September
- In a CE there is no administrative review and no objections process – would go straight to litigation
- There hasn’t been litigation on any of the CE’s so far.
  - General comments about new objections process – Forest Service likes the new process a lot.
    - Action Item – Karen will ask Dave Sabo if the full BDWG contact list was added to the forest-wide communications list

East Deerlodge lessons
- See two pager about project (attached)
- 9 year project
- Contracted out NEPA
- Project done under transition between old and new forest plans
- 2 objections
  - Sarah Jane Johnson
  - Michael Garrity
  - Objections had names of other forests in them and disallowed a large number of contents
  - May 11 – Notice of Intent (NOI) to sue under the Endangered Species Act
  - BDNF has been coordinating with USFWS to respond
- Moving forward with timber sales
- Have grant funding for aquatic organisms issues
- Bringing in an Americorps group this August
- Restoration work will likely be done
- No changes due to grizzly bears
- Weed treatment big part of the project
  - Have received $90K over the last 9 years for weed treatments and have $25K for FY15 and 16
- Link to EDLV project docs: http://tinyurl.com/odaabsh
- Letter from BDWG
  - Group discussed potentially writing a letter or statement of support for the EDLV project based on it being a project that involved many stakeholders
  - Action Item: Charlene will share list of EDVL collaborative participants to enable BDWG members to ask questions
  - Action Item: Tony will research options for comment and report back
  - Action Item: Karen will put on August 20 agenda
7. Pintler Face
- Have identified area boundaries
- No purpose and need yet
- General identification of timber acres, road decommissions, wildlife habitat, aspen regeneration
- BDWG interested in working on this
  - Comment: need to engage Big Hole Watershed committee
  - Could boundaries be broadened to include larger area?
  - BDWG members took a field trip in July 2013 and follow meeting at Wise River District Office; A lot of stream work needed and high road density
  - Could perhaps engage Chris Marchion due to hunting value
  - Need to frame up what BDWG engagement would look like
  - Desire for sideboards from FS
- Suggestion that Douglas Fir forests need attention
- May need another BDWG committee
- Action Item: Alex Dunn will come to next meeting and present about project

8. Selway Meadows update and identification of next steps
- Tom Rice has been talking with Roger Peters (current permittee) and he wants to get involved
- Concerns about losing family friendly fishing opportunities
- Paul is developing a list of issues
- Jim: have evaluated two barrier locations
  - One below the base of the meadows
  - The second 1/2 mile below that
- Need to put up a 7’ drop at barriers
- Wouldn’t have substantial impact on brook trout fisheries; FWP could stock hybrids during transition
- Permittee (Roger Peters) is doing an excellent job and meeting standards for grazing
  - Standards will change with west slope cutthroat trout
- Concern: would reestablishment of cut throat trout reduce multiple use
  - Important part of process to identify concerns and talk about them as the project is designed
  - Why not timber first, fish boundaries later?
    - BDNF doesn’t have money for timber, but does have money for fish projects
- Action Item: FS review draft Selway Meadows objectives
- Action Item: After FS review, committee will flesh out vision with areas, objectives, timeline as well as articulate key questions and concerns

9. Gravelly Landscape Restoration update
- Two field trips planned
- Mid-July had a field trip to Greenhorn Creek to see what fish are left after rotenone
  - Discussed treatment recommendations and effectiveness
  - Prescribed burn
  - Westslope Cutthroat Trout
- August – managing conifer encroachment in grasslands
  - Hoping to work with BDNF specialists to develop a monitoring effort and frontload NEPA
    - Amount of sediment produced by roads
- Aspen location
- Horizontal cover for lynx

   - They are not correct for BDNF
     - Problem with FS databases for timber tracking
     - There is value of timber that is not reflected in this database

11. Review of IPNF integrated restoration criteria
   - Discussion about need to maintain “healthy” areas on the forest and not just those that are the most in need of restoration
   - Big question: what are restoration priorities on forest?
     - For preliminary screens
   - Develop plan for different funding levels
   - BDNF prioritizes projects based on timber primarily because they haven’t been able to reach timber targets.

12. Membership – **Tabled till next meeting**
   - Suggestions for filling seats:
     - Charlie O’Leary (Backcountry Horsemen)
     - Joe Willauer (fishing guide)
     - Chris Marchion (wildlife)
     - Barb Cestero (conservation)
     - Rick Franke (timber) – was serving as a committee member previously