B-D Working Group
Minutes
Thursday, June 15, 2017
Butte Archives
1:00-5:00 p.m.

Present: Darcie Warden, Tony Colter, Dave Schulz, Karen Laitala, Mark Thompson, Rick Sandru, Leonard Wortman, Brian Ohs, Nick Gevock, John Kountz, Maureen Connor

Others: Dave Stone, Chris Marchion, Erik Nylund

Forest Service: Alex Dunn, Scot Snelson, Clint Kolarich, Tessa ______________

Minutes approved
Tony 1st
Darcie 2nd
Group approved

BDWG Funding Update
$1,000 go towards Dave Schulz working with the group from Forest in Focus – (Matt Arno)

Congressional Update - Erik Nylund
Timber – cottonwood decision. Tester/Daines fix
   - Injunction on Lewis and Clark with no further action until programmatic lynx is done
      o Many things will come to a halt and may require a forest plan amendment
   - DOJ declined to appeal to the 9th
      o DOI weighed in late with wish list changes
Budget – bad for rural America
   - Tester committed to funds for rural communities
   - Collaboration very important
      o Erik wants collaborative to educate the public, congress, opeds, ltes
      o Educate legislatures
      o Talk about our achievements
      o Weigh in with Leanne Martin
   - Line items (cuts will go towards building a border wall)
      - FS $850 million dollar cut (Roads, trails, facilities, maintenance budget cuts)
      - Secure rural schools – need reauthorization
      - Refuge (ask Erik about this)
      - PILT – severe reduction $70 million
      - LWCF – $64 million (down from
         - All requested level funding coming from Sen Tester. Team Tester is hopeful
   - Timber targets
      o Sen Tester wants a budget to make the saw log target
Discussion around BDNF as a timber forest and how to think about the forest as compared to the Kootnei.
Forest Service Updates
- Greenhorn Project update
  - Integrated restoration based project based from Gravelly Landscape Collaborative
    - Scoping out next month (July)
    - Decision date fall of next year (18-month timeline)
- Farm Bill CE next to the prison
  - Partner with state and use good neighbor authority – state and FS lands work
  - Collaborative process kick-off in January
  - Decision 9-12 months
- Pintler Face Project
  - Currently behind the scenes analysis is taking place. Resource reports being written.
  - Mid July public comment period begins
  - Final decision a year from now (June 2018) – 2-year total time frame
    - Lots of habitat work
    - Doubles acres of commercial timber harvest compared to past projects
      - July 25 field trip date 9:00am

Improving People’s Lives – workshop with group

Forest Service Budget
Question: Should the group submit a letter requesting no decrease in funding for the Forest Service?
A generic letter to legislature may not be as impactful but if we are specific about where and why it may be more effective. Include rural America in the letter. Include success. Maintain current level of funding.

Unanimous yes to write a letter

Next Steps:
Understand the budgets coming in
Look at the old budget and current allocation and line items
Scott Snelson get copy of basic budget to Karen DiBari to share with the group
A draft letter will be written for the group to review

Resource for letter: To congressionals and regional office
Ask region about budgets. Regional office can help.
The President’s budget is out. Congress will do the rest regarding allocating
Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC): sign on letter about the budget that B-D Working Group can look at for ideas
Nick Gevock will ask about sharing an internal letter with the B-D Working Group as a resource
Infrastructure bill coming as well. Might want to keep this in mind with rural areas

Facts:
135 employees now
When forest combined there were 400 employees
Department of Ag is 21% less than the last budget

Big Hole Divide Landscape Strategy
Full group finished draft review
Darcie will send draft to Karen DiBari to circulate to the group
**July Meeting Date:**
Field trip set for July 25, 9:00 am Wise River Ranger Station
Afternoon meeting after the field trip

**July Agenda Items:**
Steering committee will put it together
- Timber sale economics
- Erik and Spencer to talk about current legislation