

BEAVERHEAD-DEERLODGE WORKING GROUP (BDWG) MEETING RECORD

1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Wednesday October 2, 2019

Butte Archives

ATTENDANCE

Members: Commissioner Dan Allhands, Madison County; Tony Colter, timber representative; Tom Harrington, motorized recreation representative; Nick Gevock, wildlife representative; Nick Jose, timber representative; Chris Marchion, conservation representative; Willy Peck, timber representative; Commissioner Tom Rice, Beaverhead County; Darcie Warden, conservation representative; Commissioner Leonard Wortman, Jefferson County

Technical advisors: Steve Kimball, MT Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation; Tim Love, Montana Forest Collaboration Network; Jeanne Dawson and Cheri Ford, USDA Forest Service

Guests and Observers: Dave Stone, Anaconda Sportsmen

Facilitator: Ben Irej, National Forest Foundation

MEETING OUTCOMES

Decisions

- October meeting agenda was approved.
- August meeting record was approved with one correction.
- Meeting ground rules were approved.
- Members present decided to form a "Capacity Advocacy Subcommittee" to seek funding and build more capacity for work on the BDNF.
- Members present decided to form a "Communications Subcommittee" with Nick Jose, Mark Thompson, Chris Marchion, and Tom Harrington as volunteers. This group will play a role in communicating the restoration strategy and communicating the role of fire on the landscape.
- Members present decided to form a "Partnerships Subcommittee" with Tony, Tom, and Commissioner Dan Allhands volunteering. This subcommittee will convene partners and landowners for cross-boundary work.

Action Items

- Reminder - the [Montana Forest Collaboration Network](#) is having their annual meeting in Missoula on November 7 and 8.
- Ben puts grizzly bear conflicts with hunters in the Gravellys on a future meeting agenda. How do we get rid of attractants? Carey Wall at Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) is the contact for this issue.
- Tony to get someone from the Granite County meeting to come to our meetings.
- Anton to present at the November meeting regarding his work to "edge match" the CFLRP restoration strategy with the IRS process.
- For November meeting, bring missing members up to speed regarding cadre work.
- Ben puts CWD conversation on the agenda for a future meeting. Nick Gevock is the contact for this conversation.

Bin Items

- Apply to the Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership fall 2020.
- At the Montana Forest Collaboration Network and Montana Watershed Council joint meeting, Oct 14 and 16 of 2020, Mark Finney will present fire modeling in relation to the municipal watersheds and WUI.
- Leona to come to November or December BDWG meeting to talk about her outreach efforts.
- Send all funding opportunities to full BDWG membership, as they arise.
- Talk about the potential for stewardship contracting on the BDNF.
- Look at Red Rocks boundary to look for other projects that could be fed into a partnership database.
- Have a presentation on Chronic Wasting Disease at an upcoming meeting.
- When grant funding opportunities arise, send the announcement to all BDWG members.

MEETING RECORD

Welcome, introductions, approve agenda, August meeting record, and meeting ground rules

- BDWG Co-Chair Tony Colter welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- The meeting agenda was approved.
- The August meeting record was approved with one correction, change “Jeanne Trip” in the first open bullet under “Dillon Ranger District” on page three to Jamie Tripp.
- Everyone agreed to abide by the ground rules.

BDWG member updates

- The Deadwood timber sale went to RY Timber and the Molten Copper timber sale will be going out for bid shortly. These are both salvage sales for the Myers - Little Hogback. Deadwood had three million board feet of timber in it. Molten Copper will have less.
- There have been a number of grizzly bear conflicts in the Gravelly Mountains this year. It has been reported that there were several cattle deaths in the area, likely due to larkspur poisoning. The area was closed for a while but opened back up for archery season. The BDNF sends out a news release every year for bear do's and don'ts. Put this topic on the list for a future meeting.
- The Gravelly Landscape Collaborative had a field tour of the Southern Tobacco Roots last month. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), USDA Forest Service, the Ruby Habitat Foundation, and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition were all present. They looked at cross-boundary work, conifer encroachment issues, aquatic organism passages, and they talked about how to get fire back on the landscape.
 - Q: What is the relationship between BDWG and the Gravelly Landscape Collaborative?
 - A: The BDWG and the Gravelly Collaborative share Darcie Warden as a member. The BDWG has supported the Gravelly Collaborative in the past through letter writing.
- Tony is going to the Granite County Forest Action Council meeting next week and will try to get someone from that organization to our meeting.

The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP), restoration strategy, and next steps

- The Continental Headwaters CFLRP Tier 1 application will not go onto Tier 2. This does not mean that the BDWG and BDNF cannot continue to implement the restoration strategy across the whole Forest.
- The Regional Office (RO) complimented the momentum the BDWG and BDNF have developed and the application that was put forth. They encouraged the BDWG and BDNF to continue to work on the restoration strategy and think about resubmitting if there is a 2022 application process for CFLRP. The RO also encouraged the BDWG to apply to the Joint Chief's Landscape Restoration Partnership. The Continental Headwaters application had the most letters of support go to the RO, which speaks to the amount of support there is for the restoration strategy. The RO is sending the Continental Headwaters CFLRP to the Washington Office to demonstrate how much need there is out in the field.
- The RO said that there could have been more of the "how" of specific project work in the application. For a future CFLRP application look for synchronicity in co-designing projects. Having a system in place for the co-development of projects that demonstrates a broad base of support is key. The BDWG is headed in that direction, but time is needed to be able to show that success. Not having a stewardship contract was another point of feedback from the RO. A future agenda item should be to talk about stewardship contracting.
 - Q: Can we look at existing signed projects to see how we can get this synchronicity?
 - A: Take the Red Rocks Project as an example. Look at the boundary and do some canvassing to see what work has been done out there and what the approximate costs are. What were the objectives of these projects? Other data to feed into a partnership database would be timelines for projects and volume harvested.
 - A: Gravelly Landscape Collaborative and the Greenhorn Project is a good example of the kind of synchronicity that needs to be built between the BDNF and the BDWG.
 - Expanding membership to the BDWG to include other groups working in the area could help with synchronicity.
- The Idaho Panhandle National Forest moved forward with their CFLRP application in part because they are a priority are Shared Stewardship. Helena - Lewis and Clark moved forward in part because they have a Joint Chief's project. The Bitterroot National Forest is moving on to Tier 2 as well.
- BDNF has been building more fuels reduction capacity on the Forest for the last four years, which will help for a future application. The BDNF truly has a fuels program now. The BDNF is getting a lot of work done for less money. The momentum is real. Last year the BDNF met all of their targets.
- The restoration strategy should continue moving forward. How does the strategy become a Forest-wide strategy? How do we convene more partners to take part in the strategy?
- There are going to be more opportunities for more money, we just need to continue to show the need.
- The next steps are to continue working on a forest-wide restoration strategy. Anton Brennick will be presenting at the next BDWG meeting on this topic. The CFLRP restoration strategy should pair well with the Integrated Restoration Strategy that the BDNF has been working on.

- Another next step is to put in a Joint Chief's application next year, probably in the fall. Joint Chiefs projects are for three years and funds can be used to pay for NEPA. This program comes off the top of USDA's budget and focuses on multi-jurisdictional projects. BDWG can help by convening landowners. Wildfire Adapted Missoula got one of these and private land treatments on the table was a big part of their success. A Mark Finney fire and fuels model for the BDNF would be a great asset for this application. Proposals must tie together municipal watersheds and Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).
- Several BDWG members met with the editor of the Montana Standard, David McCumber, and their environmental writer, Susan Dunlap, today before this meeting. BDWG was invited to submit a 600 word or less Op-Ed. There is also an opportunity to get into an editorial board meeting. They want to continue to hear about projects the BDWG and BDNF are doing together. Susan is working on a story about conifer encroachment. David and Susan would love to get out into the field with the BDWG. They asked about fire, climate change, and motorized vs. non-motorized recreation. The best part of the meeting was showing of the BDWG's working relationship and the positive energy of the Group.

Recap of National Collaboration Cadre work and resulting action plan

- The last Cadre meeting was a negotiation process, where the BDNF made a list of things they think the BDWG could help with. The BDWG then looked at the BDNF's list and boiled it down to three main categories of work. At the same time, the BDNF was refining their request. When the BDWG and BDNF reconvened, each group shared their refined list. It just so happened that there was a lot of alignment between the two lists and all agreed to move forward with forming a "Capacity Advocacy Subcommittee", a "Communications Subcommittee", and a "Partnerships Subcommittee".
- One type of work the BDWG would like to do is to advocate for more capacity. Part of the capacity issue can be linked to new employees cycling through the BDNF's staff. The BDNF has an on-boarding checklist that they use. Darcie Warden agreed to be the on-boarding liaison for the BDWG, to help welcome new employees on the Forest and to bring them up to speed on the BDWG.
- A big part of what the Capacity Advocacy Subcommittee would do is to advocate for the restoration strategy. This subcommittee would need to have a clear understanding of the BDNF's capacity needs. They could then seek grant funding to support that need.
- The first order of business for each of these subcommittees should be to develop a mission statement and build and action plan.
- Volunteers for the Capacity Advocacy Subcommittee include Tony Colter and Darcie Warden.
- A Communications Subcommittee was formed. Volunteers include Nick Jose, Mark Thompson, Chris Marchion, and Tom Harrington. The primary focus of this subcommittee will be to communicate the restoration strategy and the role of fire to the public through individual contacts with reporters, press releases, and attending other group's meetings. One of the first orders of business for this subcommittee is to develop presentation materials. They will also need to create a list of groups and events they can present to.
- A partnerships subcommittee was also formed. Volunteers for this subcommittee include Tony Colter, Commissioner Tom Rice, and Commissioner Dan Allhands. This subcommittee will attend the meetings of other groups to see where there is opportunity for partnership. The

specifics of the BDNF's ask for this subcommittee was to convene partners and landowners for cross-boundary work.

- Q: Who are these partners?
- A: Landowners, BLM, NRCS, State of MT, land managers, other collaborative groups, and watershed groups.
- This subcommittee should seek sign-on for the restoration strategy from these groups and document where cross-boundary opportunities exist.
- One of the first orders of business for this subcommittee will be to inventory partners working within the BDNF.

Innovative funding opportunities for the BDWG and BDNF

- Jeanne Dawson will send applicable funding opportunities to all members of the BDWG.
- Examples of other types of funding out there include:
 - The [Innovative Finance for National Forests Grant Program](#), which is for local communities and stakeholders who are looking for new ways of funding healthy forests. It is also for Forest Service managers and collaborators with projects that are ripe for private investment capital.
 - The [Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program](#) is run by Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks. This program makes funds available to restore priority wildlife habitats by managing noxious weeds. Two million dollars are available annually. For every three dollars granted, the grantee needs to put up a one dollar match.
 - [The Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#) promotes coordination of NRCS conservation activities with partners that offer value-added contributions to expand the collective ability to address watershed and regional natural resource concerns. Through this program, NRCS seeks to co-invest with partners to implement projects that demonstrate innovative solutions to conservation challenges and provide measurable improvements and outcomes tied to the resource concerns they seek to address.
 - [The Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program](#) is a competitive grant program that helps state governments increase public access to private lands for wildlife-dependent recreation such as hunting, fishing, or hiking. Only states are eligible to apply, while private forests, farms, or ranch lands are eligible for assistance.