

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

Draft Meeting Notes
January 23, 2014
1:00 – 3:00 pm
US Forest Service Bldg., Smelterville, ID

Next meeting: March 20, 2014 1-3 pm

Please visit the WAG website:

<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/north-fork-cda-river-subbasin-wag>

Contact Kajsa Stromberg with any questions:

(208) 666-4633 or Kajsa.Stromberg@deq.idaho.gov

Participants: Tarita Harju, Wayne Fitzpatrick, Mary Terra-Berns, Kjell Truesdell, Sandra Raskell, Sandy Podsaid, Ingrid Madsen, Bob Clark, Ryan Foote, Jim Ekins, Brice Shoemaker, Bill Rust, Fred Brackebusch, Jim Best, Larry Yergler, Kajsa Stromberg

Meeting Purpose: To convene the Watershed Advisory Group for the purposes of water quality improvements and protection in the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Subbasin through Total Maximum Daily Load development and implementation.

- Introductions, review agenda, & distribute previous meeting notes
- USFS Beaver Creek Project – The project record of decision has been signed by INPF Forest Supervisor and sent on to the regional office in Missoula. Publication is pending.
- Carbon/Beaver and Rivers Edge Projects – Kajsa provided an update and the WAG discussed the projects. Bill Lillibridge, engineer for the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission, will be completing the draft designs and permit applications. Bill asked whether a biological assessment would be needed for bull trout. Ed Lider, North Idaho Fly Casters, will contact Mike Burgan at Army Corps of Engineers to ask what kind of analysis and documentation would be needed. Kajsa and Bill Rust said the project had not been highly ranked at the statewide 319 grant program meeting. However, final funding decisions have not been made yet. Ingrid Madsen said she'd like to continue moving the projects forward.

At the Dec. meeting, Bill Rust suggested that we need to explain to the Basin Advisory Group (BAG) the proposed techniques for channel design using structures rather than dredging. The WAG supported inviting Mike Stevenson, BLM hydrologist, to the next BAG meeting. Mike has accepted the invitation and will give a presentation on 4/23/14.

- WAG membership – New representatives for environmental interests and forestry are needed for the WAG. Kajsa asked for any suggestions of contacts from other WAG members and said she'd be sending out letters and contacting prospects in the coming weeks.
- WAG meeting schedule – Kajsa proposed that the WAG begin meeting every other month now that the temperature TMDL is done and we move into a phase of monitoring and implementation. Kajsa will also be starting a South Fork Coeur d'Alene Subbasin WAG and will balance both WAGs under this new schedule.
- Respect the River Fund – A draft MOU is under review by DEQ and the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation for establishment of the Respect the River Fund. Once approved, a minimum balance of \$500 must be maintained in the fund. Above that, the WAG will identify fundraising or grant opportunities and projects for funding based on existing plans. A steering committee for fund decisions will also be established with WAG representation.
- Horse Haven – We are still considering planning a Conservation Festival for the Horse Haven area with the North Idaho Fly Casters this summer. Permission must be granted by the landowner and a plan must be developed. Bob Clark was invited to a related planning meeting with the Forest Service in February to discuss the ideas further. Will Young will be the primary USFS contact for this project.
- River Access – The North Idaho Fly Casters have submitted a grant proposal to the Federation of Fly Fishers to support improvements at river access for Graham Creek and Shoshone Gage Station sites. This work would be in cooperation with the Forest Service (who manage those two sites) and IDFG. The Spokane Fly Fishers have also provided \$500 in support. IDFG has completed their access site at Steamboat Pond and it will be ready for use this spring. Future partnerships for access are also proposed for Prichard Bridge Picnic Area if logistics and funding can be worked out. Mary Terra-Berns also mentioned that Jim Fredericks in the IDFG fisheries program will be taking over IDFG's regional access program.
- Pipeline and Highway Construction in 2014 – Shoshone County Commissioners Larry Yergler and Jim Best provided updates to the group regarding realignment of the Yellowstone Pipeline planned for summer 2014. The pipeline will be realigned under the main river road. Crossings in the river are being removed. Culverts under the road will be replaced and the road will be resurfaced. Construction delays can be expected.
- Basin Information Forum – Sandra Raskell, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, said the Tribe will be hosting a Coeur d'Alene Basin Information Forum at the casino Feb. 19th. The forum will include environmental issues besides Superfund that are being addressed in the Basin. The agenda is taking shape and Sandra passed around a sign-up sheet for those interested in further information.
- Moose Drool – Ryan Foote, USFS Deputy District Ranger, said that a significant amount of funding had just been made available for the Moose Drool watershed restoration project in the headwaters of the Little North Fork CdA River. Will Young will be very busy making plans and gearing up for the construction season. Kajsa said that was great news for important water quality improvements in the Little North Fork CdA watershed.

- Shoshone County updates – Larry Yergler described financial challenges being faced by the County and the need to identify revenue sources. Sandy Podsaid said the County was submitting grant applications to Idaho Parks and Rec and working on developing their website including a hub for volunteers. He said they'd like to become a clearinghouse for volunteer opportunities including ideas like maintenance days with ATV clubs for clearing trails and culverts. He said there could be lots of ongoing successes in Shoshone County with groups working together.
- Mine and Mill Site Cleanups in the NFCDA Subbasin – A USGS map was shared with the WAG depicting mill sites in the Beaver/Prichard/Eagle Creek drainages. It showed concentrations of lead in sediments within the stream systems prior to cleanup work. Another handout listed the major sites and a draft summary of cleanup milestones. Many sites have been cleaned up including the Jack Waite, Beartop-Orofino, Paragon, Monarch, and Idora. Mill sites that have not been cleaned up include Silver Strike, Giant Ledge, and Ray-Carlisle. Fred Brackebusch and Bill Rust provided information about cleanup status and contacts for further information. Kajsa will continue to compile this information to summarize cleanup activities in the subbasin and provide a foundation to address metals assessments and TMDL needs in the future.
- Sediment TMDL Review Streams – Kajsa reviewed some priority streams identified by the WAG for sediment status reviews. Several are too large for the DEQ BURP wadeable stream protocols – lower Tepee Creek, the North Fork between Tepee and Yellowdog. Shoshone Creek headwaters and Falls Creek may be other possibilities to use existing BURP and/or PIBO data. Progress will continue for the sediment assessments and possible delisting proposals for Cub, Calamity, Upper Jordan, and Lost Creek as recommended by the WAG.
- 2014 BURP Sampling Site Selection – DEQ is making plans to conduct rapid bioassessments of wadeable streams following the Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program (BURP) during summer 2014. Kajsa presented a map and handout with a proposal for 2014 BURP sites that would target the last remaining unassessed waters in the North Fork CdA Subbasin. There are currently 10 unassessed waterbodies in the subbasin. There are recent BURP data for 6 of these. Kajsa proposed to recommend BURP crews visit the remaining 4 waterbodies in 2014. If this can be achieved, all streams in the subbasin could be assessed within the next few years. The WAG supported this idea and recommended 4 waterbodies for BURP sampling in 2014.
- Graham Creek Solar Pathfinder Sampling – Larry Yergler asked about sampling for Solar Pathfinder in Graham Creek as we've discussed and the WAG has requested. Kajsa said that one of the challenges has been development of an adequate quality assurance project plan (QAPP). Ryan Foote said there may be some examples in California or Oregon that could help. Kajsa will follow up to find examples and pursue this sampling as time and funding allow.