

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

Draft Meeting Notes
June 25, 2015
1:00 – 3:00 pm
US Forest Service Bldg., Smelterville, ID

Next meeting: Moose Drool Watershed Restoration Project Tour – July 23

Please visit the WAG website:

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

Contact Kajsa Van de Riet with any questions:

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

Participants: Will Young, Melissa Hendrickson, Ryan Foote, Kajsa Van de Riet, Rodney Cochrane, Aubrey Hoxie

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
- North Idaho Fly Casters – The 2015 Conservation Festival was Saturday June 13th and it was very successful!! The event included tree planting at a USFS restoration site in the Moose Drool Project Area (headwaters of the Little North Fork Coeur d'Alene watershed), and a demonstration from Jim Ekins (UI Extension) for the IdaH2O stream monitoring program. More than 80 volunteers participated including families and groups of all ages. We planted around 400 trees along Iron Creek and had a great time!! Thank you to Ed and the North Idaho Fly Casters for putting on a great event! Thank you to the Forest Service staff for supplying the planting project and helping with logistics! And thank you to the volunteers!!
- Moose Drool Watershed Restoration Tour – Please mark your calendar! We set a date for a tour of the Moose Drool Watershed Restoration Project with the Forest Service. The selected date is **July 23**. In the June meeting, we had an overview presentation of the project in preparation for the field trip.
- TMDL Implementation Plan – Kajsa shared the latest versions worked on by the WAG during the May meeting.
- Respect the River –
 - The large banner has been put up over the River Road. We discussed setting August 29th as the date for our annual river cleanup. Kajsa will check with the folks at Albert's Landing (they said it was okay). We discussed the needs for dumpsters and how to ensure we have a dumpster available for the cleanup.

- Also, the RV dump station at Shoshone Base Camp is temporarily closed. There are other options including the Exxon Service Station in Kingston. (See <http://www.sanidumps.com/> for other locations).
- Fire danger and restrictions – The fire danger was noted as High and resource agencies are implementing fire restrictions.
- Bull trout – Kajsa circulated an announcement from the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding a draft recovery plan currently out for public review and comment through 7/20.
- IPNF Travel Analysis – The Idaho Panhandle National Forest is completing a travel analysis required for continued road funding. They are evaluating road segments, needs, risks, benefits, etc. Workshops were held in early June. Comments are being solicited through 7/3. The analysis does not include decisions, but will contain information useful for making and implementing decisions.
- NRCS Funding Ideas – Aubrey Hoxie shared some possible funding sources from NRCS that could potentially fit WAG interests and goals.
 - One is an initiative shared between NRCS and the Forest Service to perform wildfire mitigation along the interface of public and private lands. The proposal would be due in November. Kajsa suggested Beaver Creek could be the best location in the NFCDA Subbasin for a project of that kind.
 - The other proposal is due 7/10 and would provide funding for private lands activities such as thinning, pruning, fuels and slash treatment. Kajsa suggested Beaver Creek could be the best location in the NFCDA Subbasin for a project of that kind also.
 - Kajsa said she'd like to get more information about these opportunities and would be willing to help put a proposal together. Rodney Cochrane (IDL) and Ryan Foote (USFS) also expressed interest.
- Bottom Canyon – We discussed the draft Decision Notice and Environmental Assessment recently distributed from the Forest Service for public review. . It is located in the headwaters of the Little North Fork Coeur d'Alene River in the Bottom Creek and Burnt Cabin Creek drainages, and is in Kootenai County entirely on Forest Service-managed lands. The project will include timber harvest and management as well as a large watershed restoration component. The Forest Service developed their proposed plan with the Panhandle Forest Collaborative and have done a good job keeping the WAG informed about the project and answering our questions. The draft decision letter is attached. For more information, you can visit <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=42483>.

In November, the WAG submitted a letter of support and comments on the project based on its goals for water quality improvements. We're now proposing to send in a letter of support for the selected Alternative for the project. Kajsa will circulate a draft letter based on the Nov 2014 version updated with the latest information and request WAG members weigh in by 7/8.

- Moose Drool – Melissa Hendrickson (USFS Hydrologist) provided a presentation about the Moose Drool Watershed Restoration Project to help us prepare for the 7/23 field trip. A copy will be posted to the WAG web page.

The watershed restoration project is located in the headwaters of the Little North Fork Coeur d'Alene River watershed and is entirely within Kootenai County. The project was launched in 2012 with support from the WAG and has completed 3 phases so far with a little over \$2 million. The project goals are to improve water quality, aquatic habitats, and watershed function. Problems in the watershed stemmed from legacy impacts of historical activities such as high road densities, railroad dike in the floodplain, and past riparian harvest, and some contemporary effects from intensive recreation. Methods to improve the watershed include full recontour in limited locations (within 300 ft of water or when hydrologically connected). In other sections, roads were decommissioned without full recontour. Other roads are stored for future use. This mix of methods reduces cost and provides protection for water quality. The project also includes floodplain restoration and large woody debris placement. More than 100 miles of roads have been treated and 30 miles of stream habitat improved so far. This summer there are plans for some stream channel modification and additional roads work.

Melissa also shared a video of the work being done.

The WAG will tour the Moose Drool site on July 23rd. Kajsia will distribute a flyer and request RSVPs for the tour. Will and Melissa will lead the field component and show us their great work!

Upcoming Events:

July:

- Have a Moose Drool Watershed Restoration Project field tour with the Forest Service (7/23).

August, we might:

- Schedule our Respect the River Cleanup - 8/29(?)