

## **Kootenai Stakeholder Coalition General Meeting(12/2/15)**

### **Attendees:**

#### Board Members-

Robyn King, Yaak Valley Forest Council  
Dawain Burgess  
John Konzen  
Bill Martin  
Paul McKenzie, FH Stoltze Land and Lumber  
Ed Levert, Lincoln Co. Forester  
Amy Robinson, MWA  
Mike Petersen, The Lands Council  
Tim Dougherty, Idaho Forest Group  
Jerry Wandler, Troy Snowmobile Club

#### Non-Board Members-

Dave Marsh, DNRC  
Jessie Grossman, YVFC  
Doug Ferrell, Friends of Scotchman Peaks  
Ashley South, MWA  
Don Truman, Ten Lakes Snowmobile Club(TLSC)  
Kurt West, TLSC  
Scott Mattheis, Montanas For Multiple Use(NLCC)  
Todd Butts, Montanans For Multiple Use(NLCC)  
Spenser Merwin, Sen Daines Office  
Kyle Schmauch, Sen Daines Office  
Chris Savage, Kootenai National Forest  
Paul Bunn

Following a welcome and introductions, Chair Robyn King opened the meeting. Robyn explained that the objective of the meeting was to decide if our board members could reach agreement on the recommendations from the Common Ground Committee on the Forest Management Guidelines and the Snowmobile-Wilderness-Backcountry Non-Motorized acres. She also instructed our group that an agreement tonight would only be the completion of stage 1 and we would then need to decide how we would implement our agreement.

Jessie Grossman, Chairman of the Common Ground Committee than presented the background information on the process and the members who participated.

### **Forest Management Guidelines-**

Paul McKenzie began by giving our group a detailed summary of the varying parts of the guidelines.

Tim Dougherty and Ed Levert then went through the Mason-Bruce-Girard study that was commissioned by our board to determine the outputs of our proposed guidelines. The key question was if our guidelines would produce an equal or better timber volume output as the proposed Kootenai N.F. Forest Plan. The study showed that our guidelines would produce as good or better results both in timber volume and in desired future conditions.

There were very few questions or comments from the general assembly.

### **Wilderness and Recreation Recommended Acres-**

Kurt West and Jerry Wandler represented the motorized interests from the committee. Jessie Grossman, Amy Robinson and Doug Ferrell were committee members who represented the Wilderness interests.

Kurt went on record as to his support of the agreement provided that such agreement meets the intent of the legalities for Wilderness inclusion.

Jerry then discussed some conflicts between the Idaho Panhandle N.F. and Kootenai N.F. recommendation's in the Scotchman Peaks area. Jerry expressed their group's support for the Wilderness designation of the Scotchman Peaks area except for the Savage Basin area. Jerry emphasized the importance of having permanent designations for the recommended snowmobile areas just like what is given to Wilderness areas.

Jessie discussed the later additions of the Saddle Mountain and Gold Hill West areas. These areas were looked at closely on Google Earth and then "ground truthed". Areas within these additions were then separated where snowmobile and motorized use is occurring.

John Konzen asked about Wilderness designations in Wildland Urban Interface areas based on this summer's fire experiences. How could you protect these private properties if you were limited in your response because of Wilderness policy? Chris Savage responded that they could respond aggressively although not necessarily with mechanized equipment. Ed Levert added that the new forest plan allowed for the use of prescribed fire in these areas and because many of these areas are steep, it would be difficult and expensive to do pre-suppression actions in these areas with or without a Wilderness designation.

Amy and Doug then discussed the recommendations for the Scotchman Peaks Wilderness area. Doug said there was overwhelming support on the Idaho side for Wilderness designation.

Amy then discussed the recent modifications that she, Doug, Jessie and Chas Vincent had come up with for the Cabinet Wilderness additions. Existing roads, mining interests and mountain bike use areas were removed from the proposal. Late additions included portions of the Cataract, Allen Peak and Galena Roadless areas.

Scott Mattheis expressed concern that the committee had not had a chance to look at the new Cabinet additions. Doug said that there was no loss of motorized access in the proposal. Doug also stated that designating Wilderness areas can be very difficult because of political differences.

Ed Levert then made a motion to accept the recommendations of the Common Ground Committee. Bill Martin seconded the motion. In a vote from the board members with Ed carrying Mark Peck's proxy there were 11 votes in favor of the motion and none against. The motion carried.

### **Chris Savage- State of the Forest-**

Chris discussed this summer's fire season. There were over 40,000 acres burned with ½ in Wilderness or Roadless areas. Most of the fires were of moderate severity and he was satisfied with the results. The total cost will likely be around \$20,000,000. There were 3 Type II teams.

Chris talked about recent proposed fire funding legislation and how the increased number and complexity of fires in recent years is affecting the agency. Fire costs are estimated to reach up to 67% of the agency's budget by 2025.

Tim Dougherty inquired regarding possible setbacks in this year's timber sale program. Chris alluded that there were going to be delays, but he thought the forest was still going to be able to reach their target volume.

Spenser Merwin from Sen. Daine's office discussed efforts to resolve the Forest Service's budget crisis. He cautioned that there would be many other interests seeking more funding in Congress.

Chris said that the Forest had filled quite a few positions, but they were short of "on-the-ground" implementers such as sale administrators and layout folks.

He said he expects our KFSC-KNF draft MOU will have completed the Regional Office review by next week.

The Young Growth EIS has two action alternatives . One would be limiting actions to areas accessible from existing roads.

Chris said that the sale layout schedule on the Forest by district was:

Three Rivers- Callahan after Oly

Libby- Flower Creek and East Libby after Miller-West Fisher

Eureka- Pinkam after Galton

Dry Creek after Helwick

Chris said that travel management changes were going to be based on project level decision.

He gave a rundown on the litigation on the East Reservoir Project. No injunction on the project. Several interveners including KFSC, State of Montana and Kootenai Tribe of Idaho.

**Next Meeting- 2016**

Ed Levert, Secretary

The meeting was opened by chair person, Robyn King at 5:30. Following a welcome by Robyn introductions were made.

## **State of the Forest- Chris Savage(Forest Supervisor)**

Still no word as to when the objection letters to the Forest Plan will arrive.

Chris discussed the proposed out year planning effort for the forest. He would like to get the stakeholders involved. Regional Office looking at a three year cycle but Chris would like to see a five-seven year cycle. Initial budget projections will be coming out soon and this will help with planning. He plans to bring this to the stakeholders after a forest review.

Chris would like to see the sale dates for the timber sale offerings staggered to avoid everything occurring at the same time.

Chris would like to see the forest focus on program changes that the new Farm Bill allows.

Chris felt that programatic NEPA documents have the potential of simplifying the whole process. As an example, he felt that one document could cover entry into regenerated stands for the first entry. Road side salvage sales could be much easier if such a document were in place rather than a separate document for every little project.

The forest is looking at doing an access travel management plan by the end of FY 2015. Such a larger effort has the potential of identifying larger areas of opportunities.

Chris felt that the forest was overlooking the opportunity for doing stewardship agreements besides stewardship contracts.

Ed Levert, Secretary/Treasurer