

**Kootenai Forest Stakeholders Coalition  
Board Meeting  
June 16, 2022  
6-8pm MT  
St. Joseph's Parish Hall, Libby, MT**



**Participants**

**Board Members**

Dawain Burgess  
Bob Castaneda  
Erin Clark  
Tim Dougherty  
Doug Ferrell  
Phil Hough  
Ed Levert  
Shawn Morgan  
Tye Sundt  
Jerry Wandler  
Cameron Wohlschlegel

**Board Members Not Present**

Chuck Ekstedt  
Josh Letcher  
Mark Peck  
Juli Thurston

**Guests, Advisors and Collaborative Support**

Hannah Anderson, Facilitator  
Brian Baxter, Kootenai Valley Record  
Chad Benson, FS, Kootenai NF  
Brooke Bolin, FSPW  
John Gubel, Retired FS  
Tim Love, Montana Forest Collaboration  
Steve Kimball, Montana DNRC  
Network  
Ben Palmer, YVFC  
Tony Petrussha, LORA  
Nick Raines, WR Grace  
Anthony South, Citizen  
Ashley South, YVFC  
Erik Nylund, Senator Tester  
Winston Taylor, Senator Daines  
Anthony Ciaramitaro, Weyerhaeuser  
Aubrey Bertram, Wild Montana  
Maddy Munson, Wild Montana

**Meeting Objectives:**

- Hear updates from the USFS on projects.
- Review the recent injunction hearing proceedings and implications for the Ripley project.
- Learn about the Stakeholders Common Ground Proposal.
- Review and finalize the KFSC 2022 Work Plan.
- Vote on KFSC bylaw revisions to add a Treasurer position.

**Meeting Summary**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Facilitator Hannah Anderson called the meeting to order and thanked participants for joining both in person as well as virtually via Zoom. Hannah prompted the Board members to introduce themselves, along with a statement about the interests they represent in serving on the board, and the number of years they have held a position with the KFSC. Non-board members were asked to introduce themselves as well, and were invited to provide background information for their interest in attending as well. Co-

chairs Tim and Doug thanked all for attending, remarking the turnout to be the largest they have seen for several years. Hannah reviewed the agenda for the evening.

### Kootenai National Forest Updates

Chad Benson, Kootenai National Forest, provided the following updates from the KNF:

- A review of the current and upcoming projects of focus, including: Pink Meadows, Knotty Pine, Ripley, Norman Mc, OU3 Jackson Creek, Swamped, Pleasant Pheasant, McKay Engle, Treagle, Edna Fortine, and Sunday Radler.
- A brief update on the infrastructure bill funding, and the KNF's continued efforts to plan for prioritized use of the funds.

Discussion:

- Board member Phil Hough asked about what parameters are in place around the \$18 million provided from the Infrastructure Bill.
  - KNF replied that much of the funding is allocated to two areas including, a) to build the workforce that will implement projects, and b) to the costs associated with project implementation.
- Board member Jerry Wandler asked if the KNF has identified any guidelines for selection of fire salvage projects, remarking on a recent fire in the Yaak. He wondered if the priority for saving harvestable timber was a motivator for fire management.
  - KNF remarked that South Yaak was sold a while ago, and that an objection meeting will be held in the next few days.

### Ripley Injunction Meeting Overview

EC members Tim Dougherty and Erin Clark attended the Ninth Circuit Court's preliminary injunction hearing on the Ripley project in May and provided an overview of the proceedings to the Board as follows:

- Judge Christensen quickly released a decision after the hearing granting the preliminary injunction. The Ripley project, therefore, will not move forward this summer.
- Since that decision the USFS requested a four-month stay to allow them to bring forward additional documentation and analysis around this project.
- KFSC was provided the opportunity along with AFRC and Lincoln County to support the request for a stay. The KFSC EC made a unanimous decision to support the USFS's request.
- A decision about the stay has not yet been released.
- Judge Christensen is the presiding judge for the project and will continue to hear the case.
- We do not yet know when the court will next respond.

### Common Ground Proposal

Information on the KFSC can be found at [Kootenaifuture.org](http://Kootenaifuture.org)

Co-Chair Doug Ferrell provided an overview of the KFSC Common Ground Proposal to familiarize the Board with its history and intention. Goals of the Proposal include:

- Consider and recommend land designations to improve opportunities for a variety of groups and interests.
- Protect areas of premier existing wild country.
- Increase opportunities for recreation, with emphasis on creating new opportunities for winter motorized recreation.
- Retain and in some cases increase opportunities for timber harvest.
- Create a map depicting the proposal's recommendations.

Doug gave further contextual information, including the following:

- The Common Ground Proposal is the product of a 7-year effort by the KFSC Board to assess and provide recommendation for management of the Kootenai National Forest.
- In the beginning years of its assembly, timber was a focal point of the KFSC's work. The proposal's intention is to provide balance by considering the varied interests ('three-legged stool') represented by the KFSC Board including timber, wilderness, and recreation.
- The Proposal was tentatively finalized in 2015.
- Since 2015, little work has been done to pursue the recommendations outlined in the Proposal.
- The EC proposed re-visiting the Proposal to consider opportunities for updating and pursuing the recommendations outlined.

### 2022 Work Plan Presentation and Adoption

EC member Erin Clark presented the 2022 Work Plan, explaining the intention of which is to serve as a guiding document for the Board to make decisions and actions towards accomplishment of the KFSC's goals. As a procedural document, the Work Plan demonstrates the KFSC's process for achieving its goals. The Work Plan also demonstrates a plan for satisfying the commitments made in the pursuit of grant applications.

The proposed 2022 Work Plan was distributed to the Board several weeks prior to the June 2022 meeting. The EC hosted a Zoom Q&A session to further review the Work Plan on 6/1 and give an opportunity to answer questions and receive feedback from the Board. Erin thanked the Board for their participation and work in refining the goals and actions outlined in the Work Plan. Erin invited members of the Work Plan to contact the EC or Facilitator if they would like to participate in any of the actions or tasks outlined in the Work Plan, noting that non-members are also welcome to participate.

Moving forward, the EC and Board will work to annually present the proposed work plan in the fall, to be adopted at the Quarter 4 meeting.

Facilitator Hannah Anderson proposed a vote on the adoption of the 2022 Work Plan as presented. The Board voted unanimously in favor of adopting the 2022 Work Plan.

## Board Interview Results

Co-Chair Doug Ferrell thanked the KFSC Board for participating in a recent assessment, by way of one-on-one check in interviews with the KFSC facilitator, to audit the current and potential effectiveness of the Board in meeting its goals and mission. He explained that the results of that survey were summarized and presented to the EC for review. The EC feels this was a valuable exercise and would like to implement it as an annual process. This year, the EC identified and committed to responding to the Board's feedback through the following key action items:

- Creating an orientation process for new Board members
- Sending EC meeting minutes to board
- Scheduling more community events
- Send contextual/background information on articles that are forwarded to the board
- Invite County Commissioners and delegation staff to our meetings
- Consider forming a recreation committee

## Board Vote

Facilitator Hannah Anderson reviewed topics proposed for the KFSC Board to vote on. In recent weeks, the EC opened a bank account registered to the KFSC Board's 501c3 nonprofit status in pursuit of financial independence. To ratify this accomplishment, the proposed revisions to the bylaws include the creation of a Treasurer position. Hannah Anderson led the Board in the voting procedure as follows:

- Bylaw Revisions – Approved Unanimously
- Election of KFSC EC member Bob Castaneda to the Treasurer position – Approved Unanimously

## Committee Updates

Subcommittees reported out as follows:

### Education and Outreach

- The 2022 Forest Fair is scheduled for Saturday, October 1, 2022 from 2-5pm. Planning is underway. Cabinet Mountain Brewing has generously donated a keg of craft beer.
- A communications consultant has been retained to help update the current KFSC website. Board members were asked to contact Hannah or a member of the EC if they would like to help with the update, future maintenance, and/or if they notice specific areas on the website that need to be updated.
- Brooke Bolin with the FSPW will help to arrange and plan Board field trips. The board was asked to please let the Education and Outreach committee know of any projects they would specifically like to visit.

### Grants and Funding

- Financial Updates
- Thank you Donors: IFG, Stoltze and Weyerhauser, and thank you to co-chair Tim Dougherty for helping to secure donations.

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- FSPW has secured funding to provide capacity for staffer Brooke Bolin to assist KFSC with outreach, communications and administrative support. Thanks to Phil and Brooke for their contributions.

Edna Fortine

- This is a fuels reduction project in an area that has been prioritized for action under the Mt FAP and CWPP. A group from KFSC including Bob Castaneda, Cameron W and Tye S met with the ranger and project staff and toured the area. They wrote a comment letter in support of the project which was approved by the board and submitted to the ranger.

McKay Engle

- Analysis is underway. This is a challenging project is griz habitat.

Knotty Pine

- A Notice of Intent to sue has been filed by AWR and YVFC. KFSC will consider options to get involved in this issue.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Action items before next meeting:

Action item	Responsible Party
All board members to aid in identifying and inviting new potential board members	
Distribute save the date for Forest Fair and sign-up for board members to volunteer to help in delivery of the event day of	
Review Common Ground proposal with all Kootenai NF district rangers and key forest level staff (recreation, etc.)	

Topics for the next meeting agenda:

Action item	Responsible Party
Common Ground Proposal	
New Board Membership Vote Opportunity	