

Kootenai Forest Stakeholders Collaborative Board Meeting Notes
Thursday, June 18, 2026, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
K.W. Maki Theater, 724 Louisiana Ave, Libby



Meeting Objectives:

- Represent our community in guiding forest management
- Receive updates on the Kootenai National Forest and KFSC committee efforts
- Host a guest speaker who will offer an educational topic of relevance
- Share the approved Kootenai Winter Travel Collaborative legislative proposal and maps

Time Topic

6:00 pm	Welcome and Introductions
6:15 pm	Kootenai National Forest Updates - USFS reorganization: most impacts are at the national and regional office levels, forests will be reporting to a new state director - Status of litigation: Ripley and Pilgrim: putting together memo affirming our decision and DOJ will be submitting them to the court shortly. Knotty Pine: no new news. - Flood and wind event: Contract awarded for Lower Granite and Ramsey Creek, temporary bridges to go in in July, other bridge work and perm work for Lower Granite and Ramsey will happen through federal highways and isn't likely until next summer - Ross Creek: accessible only by walk or bike and the trail system has not been maintained, work on Ross Creek won't be until 2027 - Salvage: have set up an accessible areas map viewer through their website, will show where USFS or public has done work to open roads, KNF crews are prioritizing areas with greatest public demand - Want to lessen the impacts of beetle outbreaks. 12 timber sales are being modified to add volume to to address blowdown, approx. 3 MMBF - 4-4.5 MMBF of additional blowdown has been estimated and evaluating how they can lessen impacts on forest health - Timber sale sold yesterday out of Trego that was predominantly blowdown - Two forest wide fixed wing flights are planned that will evaluate blowdown and flood effects, have been using drones as well - 13 temp employees hired for rec program - Question: Consultation with USFWS – is it a challenge with salvage? Consultation is required, but wouldn't categorize it as a problem - Public input opportunity coming out today or tomorrow: Six forest effort at a NEPA planning doc (EA) that will allow blowdown to be addressed across these forests. Likely a short window for comment (less than a week). Will be a focus on timber harvest - Update is not available on Upper Bunk timber sale's timeline - Anticipating comment periods soon on Flat Tail (projected mid-July), Greater Trego (sometime in autumn) - Harper GNA timber sale sold yesterday (11.5 MMBF)

	- Fire prediction for this year: we're in a good place right now, but things could change. Researchers are predicting an average year. <i>Additional notes provided by Seth Carbonari as a follow-up on 6/22:</i> - <i>The first timber sale from the Upper Bunk Project, Fording Foks, went out for advertisement today. We won't know on timing of any activities associated with it until it is awarded and the purchaser shares plans.</i> - <i>The 2026 Blowdown Emergency Project is on the Kootenai Forest Website. https://www.fs.usda.gov/r01/kootenai/projects contact details for more information are on the project page.</i>
6:40 pm	Guest Presentation and Discussion: Cabinet/Yaak Grizzly Bear Update Wayne Kasworm, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - See slideshow presented by Wayne - There are no female home ranges north of Hwy 2 is that because there aren't bears present or that portion of the population hasn't been sampled? They haven't captured and collared bears in that area yet - No citation has been issued for the mistaken identity mortality of an adult male in May 2026 north of Libby - Hair snare stations have captured hair from lynx, wolverine, and fisher as well as 52 individual bears (25 bears in the Cabinets, 28 in the Yaak, one bear moved between both)
7:00 pm	Legislative Committee: Kootenai Winter Travel Collaborative approved legislative proposal and maps - This collaborative was formed out of initial poor public interaction with the KNF on development of their Winter Travel EIS - Agreement was to identify the priority areas for winter recreation of all types and conservation - Unanimous support was achieved for the KWTC agreement and it was delivered to the KNF. They have received the agreement and their EIS process has been delayed by USFS changes and internal challenges - KWTC decided to not only issue a recommendation to the KNF Winter Travel process, but also to develop federal legislation to codify their agreement components - Current status: talking to the delegation about the proposal and waiting for the Kootenai to resume their EIS process - Questions: OSV access to Upper Hawkins Lake and Basin Creek Road?
7:20 pm	Committee Updates District subcommittees Cabinet (Doug and Shawn) Flat Tail comments are being created by Shawn Morgan. Libby (Ed) Talked to Keith in planning today. Focused on their salvage program currently. Using CE's primarily for salvage work, but having a hard time with the USFWS consultation timeline because they lost their wildlife biologist for four months.

	Brought up the green slip issue, where a few bad actors have messed up this program. Swamp project is ongoing, will be picked up after salvage is addressed. Rexford-Fortine (Cameron) Dead Meadow Salvage was sold yesterday within the GNA Meadow project. Another salvage project coming out later this summer/fall. Additional GNA sale on the W. Kootenai that's a mix of green standing and salvage on Young Creek is upcoming. Sold a GNA sale btwn last KFSC meeting and now near Glen Lake. Barely Haunted is being planned. Three Rivers – no update (Tim) Recreation (Kayla) Juli provided this on Kayla's behalf: Hasn't been in touch with the KNF recreation leads recently. MCC youth crews are supporting. Grants and Funding (Juli) See updated Treasurer's Report (attached). Matt Arno reported that KFSC will receive an LGA award, likely for \$6k. Encouragement to share the KWTC story even more than has already happened. Education and Outreach (Juli) Forest Fair: Planning for this year's fair on Sept. 26. Please reply to our invites to host booths at this year's fair. Planning to put together larger \$ value raffle prizes this year, including a unit of wood from IFG. Soliciting additional raffle prizes. New brochures are available.
7:50 pm	Wrap-Up and Next Steps Larry Miller: 110 year old community building refurbishment is partially being funded by a raffle. Tickets available through Larry. Steve Kimball: Thanks to Zach for coming to CDA and sharing the KWTC story at the workshop that happened in April. MFCN group reports are due on August 15, emphasize results. Nov 5-6 is the annual workshop in Missoula. Conversation will focus on all of the change in our space and will feature local leaders rather than national leaders. MFCN is struggling with funding and will be cutting back on their expenses, won't host many webinars moving forward. Recommends seeking funding locally to MT collaboratives. Action items If board members have ideas for education or outreach do not hesitate to share those with that committee. <i>Topics for next meeting</i> - KFSC bylaws revisions: will be sent out in advance of the meeting - New board members - KWTC legislative process update
8:00 pm	Adjourn