

Custer-Gallatin National Forest Working Group (CGWG)

Meeting MINUTES; Wednesday, April 12, 2017

Bozeman Ranger District Office, 3710 Fallon St., Bozeman, Mt.

Time	Topic	Lead	Outcomes
1:00 PM	Opening and introductions; Agenda discussion, Meeting materials:	Prinkki / Atwood	Welcome, introductions, agenda reviewed
1:05	Consent Agenda: Minutes, Financial report/disbursements	Prinkki / Atwood	Vote on consent agenda items
1:08	Membership seats/applications	Prinkki / Atwood	Review and vote on membership applications
1:15	Shields Farm Bill Project	Wallace / Brennan	Record of Decision/ CGWG consideration of support for project
1:45	North Hebgen Project Committee report; Monitoring options	Skinner / Brennan / Warden	Progress report; Consider options for white bark pine monitoring
2:00	CGWG Support Letters for North Hebgen and Smith-Shield Projects	Prinkki/Atwood	Discuss and authorize support letters
2:15	Custer Gallatin Forest Service Plan Revision	Prinkki / USFS	Progress report; Update on Community Outreach Plan
2:45	Custer Gallatin Forest Service Plan Revision Outreach	Prinkki / All	Further Work on CGWG Community Outreach events
3:15	Wilderness Study Area	Prinkki	Update on HJR 9 – WSA's
3:45	DNRC: Forest In Focus and Good Neighbor Authority	Matt Arno	FIF & Local Government Forest Advisor funding; GNA
4:15	May meeting plan		Agenda, location, homework
4:30	Close, if not sooner		

ATTENDING:

Margo Magnant	Mary Erickson
Jim Hart	Corey Lewellen
Joe Skinner	Don Bachman
Blake Christensen	Chad Benson
Darold Zimmer	Matt Arno
Hilary Eisen	Jason Brey
Ian Jones	Marna Daley
John Bailey	Neil Simpson
Jeff Schmidt	Richard Lyon
Jerry Furtney	Scott Barndt
Mike Penfold	Earl Atwood
Steve Caldwell	
Scott Brennan	
Darcie Warden	
John Prinkki	
Barb Cestero	
Mark Crago	

Meeting called to order by Chairman John Prinkki at 1:00 pm.

Minutes from the March, 2017 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Membership: Two changes in Commissioner representation were announced. Bill Bullock, newly appointed Commissioner in Carbon County will assume their representation succeeding John Prinkki, and Mark Crago, newly elected Commissioner from Stillwater County, succeeding Jerry Dell.

North Hebgen Project: The support letter initiated at the March meeting was put on the table for final review by members. With minor corrections noted, Steve Caldwell moved approval of the letter for distribution to Supervisor Erickson and the presiding Objection Officer at the USFS, seconded by Scott Brennan. APPROVED

Smith Shields Project: A draft support letter for the Smith Shield project was reviewed by members. Additional information was recommended to strengthen the CGWG position, and the Group asked John Prinkki to incorporate revised language and email final version to members for comment before sending to the Forest Service.

Forest Plan Revision: Mariah Leuschen-Lonnergan provided and update on the recent round of public meetings just completed. They had 389 unique participants, 518 overall attendees for two-stage events. In addition to the Forest Service events, an additional outreach event was organized in Big Sky by the Madison and Gallatin County Commission in concert with their annual joint Commission meeting. 15 attendees participated in the information event which received very favorable feedback. The 4th round of FPR meetings will begin around the first of June and tentatively are planned as follows:

May 31 - West Yellowstone
June 1 - Gardiner
June 5 - Billings
June 6 - Red Lodge
June 7 - Big Timber or Columbus
June 8 – Bozeman
June 12 – Ashland
June 13 – Camp Crook

These meetings will cover the status of the Forest Plan Revision project, inputs received so far on Desired Conditions, the uniqueness of certain area(s), management approaches and monitoring.

Virginia Kelly also reported on the timeline for additional FPR work beyond the next round of meetings. Wilderness Inventory will be a focus of their effort over the summer months along with Wild and Scenic Rivers. Desired Conditions information would be a later release. Mary Erickson suggested that the Group give consideration to principles that the CGWG would use to form its comments or positions on the new Forest Plan.

DNRC update: Matt Arno reported to the Group on his attendance at the Public Affairs Officer meeting the previous week. He noted they were recommending that collaboratives develop fact sheets for projects that could be available to help DNRC and others have information at the ready when the projects are discussed in different venues. In that light he asked the Group to consider ‘next steps’ relative to the Smith Shields project such as letters to editors, media interviews, or informational articles, etc. John Prinkki agreed and will place this topic on the next meeting agenda. Arno was also asked to reiterate points he had made at the Big Sky FRP

meeting about how to narrow the focus on desired conditions at the individual level. He agreed to develop some written points and make these available to the Group.

John Bailey commented on how the Forest Service rates roads for scenic value in their assessments (based on ingress but not egress views). This led to some detailed discussion regarding viewshed values on major access corridors.

Neil Simpson, DNRC Forest Liaison reported that it now appears that funding for the next FY for his position and for the County Coordinator (Arno) looks likely. He inquired of the Group if there is a specific direction established for the White Bark Pine monitoring projects within North Hebgen, i.e. the use of grad student. He recommended dialog with other White Bark Pine monitoring entities.

Joe Skinner requested that we look for additional presentations about Wild and Scenic Rivers and the Wilderness designation process. One factor in particular he would like to look into is the impacts on private landowners resulting from designation of rivers or area which are contiguous to their property. Also, whether there are considerations of impact to commercial enterprises such as Guides and Outfitters. Several options for speakers and resources were discussed, and will be looked into for future meeting.

Darcie Warden asked the Group to consider having one of our upcoming meetings in the Billings area. There was a quick consensus that it would be positive to host a meeting in Billings, with an eye toward the June meeting. Mike Penfold offered to assist with finding a suitable meeting location.

Next Meetings: May 10, 2017 in Bozeman

 June 14, 2017 in Billings