

**Custer-Gallatin National Forests Working Group**  
**Madison, Gallatin, Park, Sweet Grass, Stillwater and Carbon Counties**  
**C/O Beartooth Resource Conservation and Development**  
**P.O. Box 180**  
**Joliet, Montana 59041**

**Meeting Minutes**

August 13, 2014 – 1:00 PM

Gallatin County Detention Center, Bozeman, Montana

An organizational meeting of the Custer-Gallatin Working Group was led by John Prinkki, Carbon County Commissioner. Attendees present:

<b><u>Attendee</u></b>	<b><u>Affiliation</u></b>
John Prinkki	Carbon County Commission
Jim Hart	Madison County Commission
Marty Malone	Park County Commission
Bill Wallace	Sweet Grass County Commission
Pierre Martineau	Gallatin County Commission
Steve White	Gallatin County Commission
Joe Skinner	Gallatin County Commission
Dan Clark	MSU Local Govt. Center
Eric Nylund	Sen Tester's Office
Earl Atwood	Beartooth RC&D
Jennifer Madgic	Sen Tester's Office
Joe Josephson	Gallatin Community Collaborative
Alex Sienkiewicz	USFS
John Beaudry	Stillwater Mining Corp.
Alex Nixon	Carbon County Attorney
Kathryn QannaYahu	Enhancing Montana's Wildlife and Habitat (EMWH)
Robin Hoover	Yellowstone Country MT Tourism Region
Mary Erickson	USFS Custer Gallatin NF Supervisor
Barb Cestero	Greater Yellowstone Coalition
Jerry Furtney	RY Timber
Mike Penfold	Our Montana
Lisa Stoeffler	USFS
Bob Allen	Montana Mountain Bike Alliance
Richard Stem	Private interest
Nancy Schultz	Gallatin Wildlife Association

Commissioner Jerry Dell from Stillwater County could not attend this meeting.

At 1:00 pm Chairman Prinkki opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

**Introduction of members and guests.** Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and identify their affiliation or representation. A number of first-time attendees were present, in response to email invitations extended prior to the meeting. New attendees included:

Joe Josephson – Gallatin Community Collaborative  
Bob Allen – Montana Mountain Bike Alliance  
Alex Sienkiewicz – USFS, Yellowstone Ranger District  
John Beaudry – Stillwater Mining Corp.  
Alex Nixon – Carbon County Attorney  
Kathryn QannaYahu – Enhancing Montana’s Wildlife and Habitat (EMWH)  
Robin Hoover – Yellowstone Country MT Tourism Region  
Jerry Furtney – RY Timber  
Mike Penfold – Our Montana  
Lisa Stoeffler – USFS Custer Gallatin NF  
Richard Stem – interested citizen  
Nancy Schultz – Gallatin Wildlife Association

**Discussion of individual stakeholders interest in participation in CGWG**

Chairman Prinkki welcomed new attendees, and solicited from everyone around the table a brief statement to elaborate on their reason for attending and to identify specific interests, issues or perspectives relating to Custer-Gallatin forest management (summarized as follows):

Bob Allen – Montana Mountain Bike Alliance – group focus on volunteer assistance; finding methods to most effectively finish trails projects.

Joe Skinner – Gallatin County - help with mitigation of lawsuits

Pierre Martineau – Gallatin County – Expediting projects / reducing litigation

Steve White – Gallatin County - Public safety and welfare & watershed issues

Jim Furtney - RY Timber – Access to forest resources and keeping mills in operation

Barb Cestero – Greater Yellowstone Coalition - protection and restoration of habitats on public lands – concerned about FS Capacity to get work done (budget, personnel)

Bill Wallace – Sweet Grass County Commission – Getting our weight behind the FS to support projects

John Beaudry – Stillwater Mining Corp - SMC strives to mitigate the “culture of conflict” wherever possible.

Joe Josephson – Co-Chair, Gallatin Community Collaborative - Here to learn more about WG objectives, identify intersection of CGWG and Gallatin Community Collaborative.

Sidney Fitzpatrick – attending as liaison for Northern Cheyenne and Crow Tribe.

Marty Malone – Park County Commission – Concern over impact from large fires to Madison County. Identification of specific projects that need to be taken care of.

Richard Stem – strong belief in multiple use, but needs to be smart use. Looks for ways to assist in removing impediments on project implementation. Will have specific, process related suggestion later in meeting.

John Prinkki – shared information on the current Forests in Focus initiative at state level. It appears that one of the strategies might make funds available to assist startup for collaboratives.

Mary Erickson – here to share information about the Forest Service program of work and to discuss relationship between FS and WG (along with Alex and Lisa).

Chairman Prinkki thanked everyone for providing context on their attendance.

### **Organization & Operations Manual:**

Chairman Prinkki reminded the group that the Operations Manual adopted by the group at the July, 2014 meeting contained specific language to outline the purpose, objectives and methods to be used by the Custer-Gallatin Working Group. It is expected to be a working document, subject to revision and expansion as the Working Group proceeds. A key action item for the group at this time is to broaden representation of interests by including members from the various stakeholders outlined in the Operations Manual.

Those present were asked to consider the stated direction of the CGWG, and to let the current members know if they have an interest in formally participating on the group as a voting member, and to assist the group by identifying other parties not present that should be included.

Richard Stem was asked to share his perspective on the keys to forming an effective collaborative, based on his experience with other collaboratives. He identified three ( 3 ) necessary components to an effective formation strategy, which must be addressed concurrently:

1. Collaboration & Public Engagement
2. Capacity / \$\$ / Resources (for both the FS and the WG)
3. Clarity of Process

He emphasized that collaboratives share the goal of influencing outcomes and decisions pertaining to the use and management of public lands. An imperative for the group will be to focus on items 2 and 3, and not just the meetings and outreach happening under 1. A key question to keep in front of the group is “what does the collaborative want to see happen?” Examples of successful or effective collaboratives are out there, including Washington and California (Rim Fire).

Barb Cestero, representing the Greater Yellowstone Coalition inquired about the intention of the current members as to the balance of representation, given that there are currently six counties

represented on the Working group by elected officials (Commissioners). Collectively the Commissioners present provided assurance that they were seeking a diverse and balanced representation of interests on the Working Group, but that the CGWG would be positively differentiated from other collaboratives by virtue of the participation from the elected county officials who have a primary interest in the promotion of public safety and welfare for the residents of their respective counties.

### **Issues:**

Further discussion was brought forward to obtain specifics on some of the issues mentioned by attendees during the initial round-table remarks. These included:

*Watershed issues:* potential for fire(s) taking out an entire watershed supporting major population center (e.g. Bozeman) water systems (water quality and quantity); flash flooding on burn scars; reduction in snow retention affecting hydrology for the basin;

*Road issues:* many of these originate as logging roads. As logging discontinues, their maintenance priority is lowered, although they often remain in place and are used for public access but are not built into a maintenance plan. Often they are in too poor condition for fire access.

*Fire restoration, Burned Area Recovery and Rehab projects:* how to balance the need for restoration work with the resource burden – who bears the cost for that?

*Timber access for logging and Elevating Fuel Reduction as a key strategy:* these two items should be pursued as complimentary objectives.

*Multi-Use issues:* Gallatin is an economic driver for Madison County (Big Sky). Multiple public safety concerns and potentially devastating economic impact could result from one or more large fires.

*Development of WUI without planning:* funding is limited for projects addressing WUI concerns, plus over time the expectations have changed (increased) as the WUI becomes more populated.

Chairman Prinkki pointed out that the developing a *digest of shared interests* will be foundational to determining which issues will be undertaken by the group moving forward. Future meeting agendas will incorporate this work as an action item.

### **Intersection with Gallatin Community Collaborative:**

Part of the discussion during the meeting recognized that overlap existing between the Gallatin Community Collaborative, which seeks resolution of the management of the Hyalite-Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area (WSA), and the Custer Gallatin Working Group which is intended as a venue for a broad range of issues in the six counties containing and adjacent to the Custer-Gallatin National Forests.

After some discussion, there was consensus that the two groups were not working in conflict, or redundant, and they would be mutually interested in each others' efforts, being open to joint activity whenever their objectives coincide.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting is scheduled for September 10, 2014 in Bozeman, Montana at the Gallatin County Detention Center, 1:00 pm.

Preliminary agenda for the September meeting will include:

- Approval of past meeting minutes
- Seat additional members according to Operation Manual protocol
- Adopt mission statement and revisions (if any) to Operations Manual
- Take a presentation from Forest Service on their planning cycle
- Begin process of identifying shared interests as basis for group action

Chairman Prinkki thanked everyone in attendance, adjourning the meeting at 3:45 pm.