

**Custer-Gallatin Working Group (CGWG)**  
**Meeting MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, December 9, 2020 (2:00 PM)**  
 Virtual meeting

Time	Topic	Lead	Outcomes
<b>Open meeting : Review Agenda, Meeting materials</b>			
<i>(The meeting began late (2:30pm) due to technical problems with getting attendees connected to the virtual meeting room in Zoom.)</i> Attending:			
John Prinkki	Hilary Eisen	Mary Erickson	
Jackie Walden	Barb Cestero	Corey Lewellan	
Steve Caldwell	Jeff Schmidt	Tony Colter	
Colin Cooney	Bill Wallace	Jeff Bollman	
Darcie Warden	Michael Harris		
Dominique Wilkins	Kerry White		
Ed Joiner	Joe Skinner		
<b>Membership applications and recruitment</b>			
No member applications. John Prinkki reported he is continuing his efforts to recruit tribal representation, having reached out to Terry Spang with the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Forestry office in Busby, MT. John has not received a reply, however Ed Joiner knows him and agreed to assist with a personal followup.			
<b>Consent Agenda: Past Minutes and Financial report/disbursements, Vote on consent agenda</b>			
Previous minutes and current funds report were approved on motion by Jeff Schmidt, second Michael Harris.			
<b>Discussion on use of grant funds, Purpose of grant funds, amounts available</b>			
Earl Atwood provided reviewed the status of current grant balances and eligible uses.			
<b>Report on Montana Forest Action Committee priorities (Schmidt/Warden)</b> <b>MFAC recent events, priorities and actions</b>			
Jeff Schmidt and Darcie Warden have been participating in recent MFAC meetings and tracking the development of the MFAC Action Plan. Jeff reported that \$6 million has been approved for qualifying projects. The Advisory Committee has been working on ways to implement cross boundary projects to improve the pace and scale of forest management efforts. Darcie added there are more meetings coming up to discuss RFP implementation and how proposals will be ranked for selection. Questions remain regarding the details for qualification. The Group asked			

Mary Erickson to evaluate opportunities for cross boundary efforts on upcoming FS projects. John Prinkki asked the members to discuss the idea of Working Group involvement on projects external to the forest, and possible roles the CGWG could fill in bringing more cross-boundary management opportunities to the table. This may include further advocacy on FS funding to enhance the Forest’s capacity to share resources and leverage cooperative projects in areas adjacent to the Forest. Jackie Walden noted the Extension Service wants to collaborate on insect management in her region (grasshoppers), and thought we should look into that issue.

**DNRC: LGA grant distribution, July LGA grants, other DNRC projects**  
**Stephen Kimball, Local Government Forest Advisor**

Stephen Kimball, DNRC, gave the group an update on Local Government Assistance, indicating a new round of grants will be announced soon. He reminded the Group that LGA grants can be used for analysis efforts, which may create opportunities to assist with project and legal evaluation/intervention, developing proposals and broadening cooperative engagement.

**Custer Gallatin Forest Team Report**

- **Forest Plan Revision status**
- **Current Projects (North Hebgen, Smith Shields) and litigation update**
- **BMW project**

Mary Erickson, Forest Supervisor – A new round of litigation has been initiated related to the North Hebgen project by Cottonwood Law, which the FS has asked to be dismissed. They are awaiting court review and disposition. A decision letter on the Greater Red Lodge Area (GRLA) project second round is done and awaiting signature. The Ease Boulder Project, which is the first Good Neighbor Authority project on the forest, is ongoing now. Corey Lewellan reported on litigation associated with the Bozeman Municipal Watershed project, however the FS has not been enjoined so are proceeding with the project as designed for the moment. Regarding the Forest Plan Revision, Supv. Erickson said the team has been reviewing input and objections covered in three days of meetings recently. The Regional Forester is expected to issue a letter in instructions for proceeding sometime in January.

3:00	Report form the three new committees: East Gallatin (Bozeman Ranger Dist.), Cooke City (Livingston Ranger Dist.), and South Otter (Ashland Ranger Dist.)	Prinkki	Review progress and discuss next steps from each committee Chair (East Gallatin, Kerry White) (Cooke City, Steve Caldwell) (South Otter, Jackie Walden)
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East Gallatin (Kerry White) – This project has been deferred to 2022, however they are looking at scheduling one or more field trips during the 2021 summer to gather information and provide an on-the-ground review for interested parties.

Cooke City Project (Steve Caldwell) - Initial meetings with DR are anticipated in January, 2021. Strike Team and NEPA work is expected to begin in June, 2021.

South Otter Project (Jackie Walden, John Prinkki) - Initial discussion already done with DR Hecker. Scope of Work has been in development and is nearly ready for release. They are working with local landowners to arrange access. Anticipating a field trip in the Spring.

**CGWG Meeting schedule - Set calendar for 2021 ( March 10<sup>th</sup>, June 9<sup>th</sup>, Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> & Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>)**

Given the timeline associated with the MFAC Action Plan and need for clarification on project prioritization and section criteria, it was suggested that we plan on an interim meeting in early to mid-January to further focus on that process. John Prinkki will work on setting a date/time for this interim meeting. Joe Skinner requested that the next agenda include a slot to discuss a potential project that is under discussion with DR Corey Lewellan. Our next quarterly meeting will be held on March 10, 2021.

Meeting adjourned