

Custer-Gallatin Working Group (CGWG)
MINUTES of 2nd Quarter Meeting
Wednesday, June 14, 2023

John Prinkki opened the meeting at 1:30 pm. Introductions were made by those attending:

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| John Prinkki | Mary Erickson, USFS |
| Randy Weimer | Robert Grosvenor, USFS |
| Jackie Walden | Sarah Hill, USFS |
| Dan Allhands | Jen Lane, Sibanye Mine |
| Richard Lyon | Linda Heaton, Gallatin Wilderness Alliance |
| Jeff Schmidt | Caitlin Avey (Sen. Tester's Office) |
| Hilary Eisen | John Durnal (Sen. Daines' Office) |
| Scott MacFarlane | |
| Joe Josephson | |
| Colin Cooney | |

Consent Agenda; Minutes and Financial report/disbursements were **approved** on motion by Richard Lyon, seconded by Jackie Walden.

Membership; CGWG Roster was reviewed. Newest members **Richard Lyon** and **Dan Allhands** were welcomed by the Group. **Joe Josephson** will be representing Greater Yellowstone Coalition prospectively. Noted for the group that Barb Cestero is on sabbatical over the summer. John is continuing efforts to recruit for vacant positions.

Sibanye (Boulder Mine) Tailings Facility Expansion update; Members reported on the recent tour of the mine surface infrastructure and proposed site for new tailings facility. Group discussed next steps, and considered the possibility of hosting a public event in Big Timber to promote public awareness of the project. EIS will be released for comment on June 23rd. Comment period will be short (45 days). Forest Service staff reported they have a public meeting planned in July 12th in Big Timber, which will include a virtual component. Members concluded the best option would be to promote participation in the July 12 event, and use it as a listening opportunity while finalizing our own public statements about the project.

Custer Gallatin National Forest staff updates; via Zoom.

Subcommittee Reports; East Boulder Tailings Expansion (covered above), Cooke City and East Gallatin (no progress to report), Red Lodge Mountain Fuel Reduction (further meetings pending revised planning by the Forest Service), and Bridger Infrastructure (steering committee will meet next week after receiving news that Winter Wildlands Alliance \$53,000 TPS grant request was approved which will provide \$20K projects for weed treatments and \$33,00 for trailhead kiosks and trail signage.

Montana DNRC Local Government - Steve Kimball reported the DNRC is working with Federal agencies to ramp up on cross-boundary projects across the State using additional federal and state funds (going from \$5 million every two years **to \$32 million every two years**). There are a lot of expectations about increased work, however available resources to accomplish the work are limited so there is a struggle to get work underway on the ground. Counties should be looking at their wildfire protections plans for opportunities to address needs with these additional funds. Not much happening right now with litigation. A new notice of intent to sue has been filed related to lynx protection on some projects in Custer Gallatin and Beaver Deer Lodge forests. MFAC is working on plans for annual workshop in November 2-3 in Missoula, and encouraged CGWG leadership attendance.

Next meeting in Bozeman on September 13, location TBA. Adjourned 3:15 pm.