

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

Draft Meeting Notes
September 26, 2013
1:00 – 3:00 pm
US Forest Service Bldg., Smelterville, ID

Next meeting: October 26, 2013, 1-3 pm

Please visit the WAG website:

<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/north-fork-cda-river-subbasin-wag>

Contact Kajsa Stromberg with any questions:

(208) 666-4633 or Kajsa.Stromberg@deq.idaho.gov

Participants: Leslee Stanley, Jim Ekins, Tarita Harju, Sandy Podsaid, Ingrid Madsen, Bob Clark, Bill Rust, Fred Brackebusch, Larry Runkle, George Hemphill, Larry Yergler, Jann Higdem, Mary Terra-Berns, Ed Lider, Sandra Raskell, Chad Hudson, Claire Pitner, Aaron Prussian

Meeting Purpose: To convene the Watershed Advisory Group for the purposes of water quality improvements and protection in the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Subbasin through Total Maximum Daily Load development and implementation.

Introductions, review agenda, & distribute previous meeting notes

Updates and Planning

- Draft temperature TMDLs – DEQ submitted the draft temperature TMDL to EPA and is awaiting EPA's approval. Once approved by EPA, the temperature TMDLs will take effect.
- Restoration Partnership update – Kajsa provided a very brief description of the Restoration Partnership and shared that the public scoping public comment period had been completed. The Partnership is reviewing the comments and beginning restoration plan development. There will be more opportunities for public involvement in the future and Kajsa recommended visiting the website for more information: www.restorationpartnership.org.
- 2013 DEQ BURP sampling – Kajsa shared a map of 2012/2013 BURP stream bioassessment sampling sites visited by DEQ. In 2012, samples were collected from Deer, Calamity, Jordan, Cub, Burnt Cabin, Copper (upper), Copper (lower), and Graham creeks. In 2013, samples were collected from tributaries to Cougar Gulch and tributaries to lower Shoshone Creek. It will take some time for macroinvertebrates data to become available, but these bioassessment data will be useful for future water body assessments.

- Temperature monitoring – The WAG has recommended additional Solar Pathfinder monitoring for Graham Creek to test and document whether the stream has attained potential natural vegetation TMDL targets. Kajsa reviewed that a map had been produced to establish monitoring sites on Graham Creek, but said that new agency requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) and Field Sampling Plans were a hurdle that she didn't have the time or resources yet to overcome. The WAG remains supportive of pursuing this sampling. Kajsa said she would continue to try to move this effort forward.
- Updates from Forest Service for ongoing and future projects – Chad Hudson, District Ranger, provided brief updates on the Moose Drool project (completing another phase this year with work ongoing), Beaver Creek project (comment period complete on EIS and decision pending), Bottom Canyon (future project), and Jack Waite (completed end of last year and doing well).
- USFS staffing changes – Claire Pitner, USFS recreation planner, will be moving to Hood River, Oregon for a promotion with the USFS. Aaron Prussian, USFS fish biologist, and KK Prussian, USFS hydrologist, are moving to Sitka, Alaska. The WAG presented all three with certificates of appreciation. On the WAG's behalf, Kajsa expressed sincere appreciation for their hard work and cooperation and wished them well in the future.
- Someone said the Snakepit had been purchased and would soon re-open.
- Horse Haven – We discussed issues with people trespassing on Del Kerr's property at the Horse Haven landing strip in the middle of the Moose Drool restoration project area. Del does not support the damage they are doing, but is having a difficult time getting them under control. We discussed signage and help with outreach to the public. We discussed the recreational trespass law and recognized concerns about liability. Bob Clark suggested that perhaps we could approach some of the organized ATV associations and jeep clubs to help get the word out, and that maybe we could all work together to provide people with an alternative site where they can mudbog without the environmental impacts to the streams.

The WAG approved working on the project to help improve water quality. Shoshone County abstained from the vote because the project is in Kootenai County.

Recreation

The WAG discussed progress on recreation management goals during 2013 and plans for 2014.

- River Cleanup – This year's cleanup was Saturday Sept. 7th. It was very successful with more than 80 participants. We cleaned up more than 4,000 pounds of garbage and had a great time. We were hosted by Albert's Landing and they provided a BBQ.

- Facebook page – A Respect the River facebook page was launched in July 2013. It grew quickly in popularity and had more than 1,600 likes at the time of the meeting.
- Recycling bins – Bins constructed last year were out all summer and complete with signs, etc.
- Respect the River Fund – We have been looking into starting a fund for river projects that could take aluminum can recycling funds and other donations and put that towards river projects. The Panhandle Lakes RC&D is uncertain about their future and we will not be able to count on them as fund administrators. Kajsa contacted the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation and they were evaluating whether they could provide that assistance for us.
- Banner – The large banner has been up and highly visible. Wind damage was repaired. Both banners will be stored for the winter and put up again next year.
- Float patrols – Colter Smart, USFS River Ranger, was out floating nearly every weekend this summer to help educate people about our protecting our resources, promote river safety, and be a presence on the river.
- Mesh bags – A boy scout doing an Eagle Scout project helped pass out mesh bags all summer with help from his scout troop. They passed out hundreds of bags and felt it was successful. He also helped with the cleanup and getting raffle prizes.
- Vault toilet – Shoshone County installed a vault toilet at the Bumblebee parking area.

Projects for 319 Grant Application

Ed Lider gave a PowerPoint presentation about a grant application to DEQ's 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution Management program. The grant sponsor is the North Idaho Fly Casters and they propose to do TMDL implementation projects on two properties – one in the upper reaches of Beaver Creek, and the other along the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River. They are requesting \$62,760 from DEQ and have pledged \$42,380 in matching funds from the club, landowners, DEQ and UI Extension. They plan a combination of rock barbs and plantings on 1,550 ft of streambank to reduce sediment and temperature loads. The projects will also provide improved habitat for fish and wildlife.

The WAG agreed to support the grant application.