

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

Draft Meeting Notes
May 22, 2014
1:00 – 3:30 pm
US Forest Service Bldg., Smelterville, ID

Next meeting: September 18, 2014, 1:00-3:30 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: Carol Lapan, Ryan Foote, Tom Woolf, Jim Ekins, Bob Burke, Amanda Parrish, Sandy Podsaid, Leslee Stanley, Kajsa Stromberg

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
- Announcements
 - *Temperature TMDLs approved* – The North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Subbasin total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) were approved by EPA in April 2014. The TMDLs are now effective for all Clean Water Act purposes. The TMDLs and EPA approval letter are all available on DEQ's website here:
<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/surface-water/tmdls/table-of-sbas-tmdls/coeur-dalene-river-north-fork-subbasin.aspx>
 - *2012 Integrated Report approved* – Idaho's 2012 Integrated Report of statewide water quality was approved by EPA in July 2014. This report of water quality for all of Idaho's lakes and streams is now effective for all Clean Water Act purposes. The report is available on DEQ's website here:
<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/surface-water/monitoring-assessment/integrated-report.aspx>

The approval of the 2012 Integrated Report included the **Success Stories** from North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Subbasin streams – Yellowdog Creek, Tepee Creek and tributaries (2 segments), and Steamboat Creek. These are the streams that were impaired by sediment and part of the sediment TMDLs. Extensive restoration improved water quality and they have attained water quality standards and are no longer impaired by sediment. They have been “delisted” for sediment. Ryan Foote noted this was good news to recognize the benefits of

restoration and said that the Tepee Creek watershed will be one of the next forest management planning areas for the Forest Service.

- *IdaH2O Training* – Jim Ekins of UI Extension said they would be hosting a Master Water Stewards training for volunteer water quality monitoring on Saturday July 26th. The cost is \$20 and the training is still open for sign-ups. The event will be shared through the Respect the River facebook page. For more info: <http://www.uidaho.edu/cda/idah2o>
- *USFS Beaver Creek Project* – The USFS Beaver Creek project has been finalized and a decision notice signed. This project was supported by the WAG. Bids are being prepared for sales now. Any further funding needs for the watershed components of the project have not yet been identified, and those activities have not yet been prioritized, but that will be done in the future. The WAG can assist with locating funds, identifying opportunities, and supporting those projects that will improve water quality through implementation of sediment and temperature TMDLs. The Beaver Creek Project information is available: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/ipnf/landmanagement/projects>
- *USFS Moose Drool Watershed Restoration Project* – More than \$1 million in funding was provided to the *Moose Drool* restoration project in the headwaters of the Little North Fork Coeur d'Alene River. This project was supported by the WAG and will provide important water quality improvements. Ryan Foote said that staff and contractors are working hard moving dirt and will accomplish a lot this summer.
- *USFS Bottom Canyon Project* – A project is in the early planning stages for timber management and watershed improvements for watersheds that are tributaries to the Little North Fork Coeur d'Alene River in Kootenai County. When ready for public scoping, the USFS will present the proposed project to the WAG. The IPNF forest collaborative is helping prepare the proposed project.
- Idaho's Aquatic Invasive Species Program – Tom Woolf of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture provided a presentation covering some of the major invasive species of concern for our area. These included Eurasian milfoil, flowering rush, New Zealand mudsnails, and zebra and quagga mussels.

So far, no invasive aquatic plants are known in the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Subbasin. However, populations of milfoil are nearby in the Chain Lakes and populations of flowering rush are nearby in the Clark Fork River delta.

Aquatic invasive species can damage fisheries and aquatic habitat, impact power generation and increase costs, degrade water quality, disrupt water delivery, reduce property values, and other negative impacts.

Early detection and rapid response are key to preventing the harmful impacts of aquatic invasive species. Everyone can help with this!

Idaho has a boat inspection program for boats coming into the state. The closest to the North Fork Coeur d'Alene is on west-bound I-90, west of the Hwy 3/Rose Lake exit.

More than 24,000 have been inspected this year and more than 10 boats were found with zebra or quagga mussels on them. These were stopped, cleaned, and prevented from spreading the mussels to Idaho waters.

Boats from Lake Havasu or Lake Powell are two of the most likely sources for quagga mussels being introduced to our area. Special care should be taken to clean, drain, and dry any boats that have been in those waters.

Clean, drain, and dry your boats, waders, and other equipment to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

The complete PowerPoint is available on the WAG website.

- 2014 Stream Assessments –
 - *Unassessed waters* – There is an emphasis on assessing any waters of the North Fork Coeur d'Alene Subbasin that are currently “unassessed.” There are 10 assessment units and 108 miles of unassessed streams. Many are being sampled this year. We have current DEQ monitoring data for 2 of the streams and they will be assessed for the 2014 Integrated Report. Kajsa gave a handout with a list of these streams.
 - *Possible sediment delistings* – There are 5 assessment units with current DEQ monitoring data that suggest they are not impaired by sediment. These are in the Jordan Creek and Lost Creek watersheds. Presentations have been made to the WAG about these delistings and the WAG has supported the proposals.
 - Ryan Foote and Will Young will provide any PIBO data for these streams if available.
 - Kajsa will provide updates on the assessments at the next WAG meeting.
- Horse Haven & Conservation Festival – A grant application was submitted to obtain funding from Yamaha Foundation for signs. The North Idaho Fly Casters planned to host their annual Conservation Festival at the site on August 23rd and want to install the signs and perform other work on private land in the area. The timing may not work out with only 3 weeks to obtain funding and work out logistics this year. The WAG suggested hosting the River Cleanup on August 23rd with the Conservation Festival and planning for a Horse Haven event in 2015 utilizing the grant funds, if awarded.
- Respect the River! – The Respect the River Facebook page has almost 1,900 likes and has been very active for discussion and sharing information. The giant banner went up over the main river road for Memorial Day weekend. Colter Smart is back for the season as the USFS River Ranger. Leslee Stanley said she'd be happy to help get the smaller banner put up near the riding arena/Bumblebee Bridge area.

The group strongly preferred an August 23rd date for the 2014 river cleanup. Kajsa said there were a few people to check with before finalizing the date, including Albert's Landing, USFS staff, the Fly Casters, and others.

- Beaver Creek workshops idea – Jim Ekins (UI) said there's approximately \$5,000 remaining from the Beaver Creek Watershed Assessment RAC grant. We asked for WAG input on the best use of these funds. The WAG endorsed an idea for a series of workshops focused on the Beaver Creek Watershed. One would be held on a Saturday this fall in the fire hall and another would be held later to instruct people on willow cutting and planting. Both will be advertised together in a targeted mailing to landowners in the Beaver Creek watershed and will be open to the public.
- WAG members mentioned there had been a small protest in the Pony Gulch area to protest EPA regulation of suction dredge mining.