

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

Draft Meeting Notes
October 9, 2014
1:00 – 3:30 pm
US Forest Service Bldg., Smelterville, ID

Next meeting: October 31, 2014, 1:00-3:00 pm

Please visit the WAG website:

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

Contact Kajsa Van de Riet with any questions:

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

Participants: Will Young, Melissa Hendrickson, Bill Rust, Aaron Hackman, Meagan Hash, Larry Domingo, Sandy Schlepp, Larry Yergler, Carol Lapan, Mary Terra-Berns, 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
 - *Idaho Nonpoint Source Management Plan* – Idaho's management plan for managing nonpoint sources of water quality pollution was recently updated and a draft was distributed for public comment. Comments were due 10/20/14. The WAG declined to develop group comments on the draft plan.
 - *Air Quality Nonattainment Area* – Although the WAG is focused on water quality issues, Kajsa shared some information about the newly designated West Silver Valley Air Quality Nonattainment Area, which includes portions of the North Fork CdA River corridor. If there are questions about this, please contact DEQ's Coeur d'Alene Regional Office staff at 769-1422.
 - *Respect the River updates* – The 2014 River Cleanup was successfully held September 13th. We had a beautiful day and a good turnout. The folks at Albert's Landing were wonderful hosts. Great prizes for our raffle after lunch. Thanks to Shoshone County for providing the dumpster. Lots of garbage and recycling picked up. It was a great day!!
 - *USFS Beaver Creek Project* – The USFS Beaver Creek project has been finalized and a decision notice signed. This project was supported by the WAG. A sale package is being prepared 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/jpnf/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. Will Young and Melissa Hendrickson provided a short video “highlight reel” of their work this summer. Several WAG members had questions and concerns about road decommissioning, which continues to be a controversial topic. There were also questions about adding large woody materials to streams.
- *Possible sediment delistings* – There are several 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. Kajsa reviewed the Jordan Creek segments at this meeting and obtained consensus support for proposing sediment delisting. Kajsa also presented some information about Copper Creek (2 segments). The WAG also supported sediment delisting for these areas in the 2014 report.

There was some discussion about the challenges of modeling sediment, especially since models and databases change so much over time. The original TMDL model can no longer be run because the coding and documentation are not available. The 2009 approximation version based on GIS can no longer be run because of changes to the Forest Service RMRS timber stand database. We would like to update our sediment loading model, but currently lack the resources.

- Bottom Canyon

The U.S. Forest Service is proposing to conduct vegetation management and watershed restoration activities on National Forest System (NFS) lands in an area approximately 10 miles northeast of Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. The 11,000-acre **Bottom Canyon Project Area** is administered by the Idaho Panhandle National Forests (IPNF), Coeur d’Alene River Ranger District, and is located entirely within Kootenai County. Under this proposal, activities are proposed on NFS lands in the drainages of Burnt Cabin, Lone Cabin, Lost Mine, George, Bottom, Canyon, Nicholas, Beaver and Cathcart Creeks, all of which drain into Little North Fork of the Coeur d’Alene River.

A scoping notice was mailed October 7th to initiate a 30-day public comment period for the project. Will Young provided an overview of the project for the WAG and shared a map. There will be a public meeting **October 22** from 5-7pm at the Fernan Ranger Station in Coeur d’Alene. The WAG will meet Oct. 31 to develop comments on the project. Overall, the proposed project is around 11,000 acres and the proposed action was developed with the Panhandle Forest

Collaborative. It includes several timber prescriptions and watershed improvement activities. There were questions from the WAG about how GRAIP was used – a model to estimate sediment production and delivery to streams from forest roads. There were questions about the potential impacts from fire on the new air quality nonattainment area in the Silver Valley. There were questions about mining in the watershed, and potential relocation of roads. All these questions can be revisited on the 31st.