

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

Draft Meeting Notes
February 19, 2015
1:00 – 3:30 pm
US Forest Service Bldg., Smelterville, ID

Next meeting: March 26, 2015 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: Bill Rust, Carol Lapan, Sandy Podsaid, Leslee Stanley, Jim Ekins, Craig Nelson, Kylie Rasmussen, Chad Petersen, Matt O'Donnell, Ed Lider, Rodney Cochrane, Fred Brackebusch, Barb Hansen, Kajsa Van de Riet

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
- USFS Updates – Kajsa delivered several updates on USFS projects from Will Young and Ryan Foote who were unable to attend the WAG meeting. Barb Hansen added some updates related to recreation.
 - **Moose Drool** – this large watershed restoration project is ongoing in the headwaters of the Little North Fork Coeur d'Alene River. Last year, more than \$1 million was received for road decommissioning, large woody debris placements, and other work. This year, approximately \$50,000 will be put toward continuing this work. The WAG discussed a tour in July and suggested July 16 or 17 as possible dates.
 - **Beaver Creek** – The USFS Beaver Creek project has been divided into two timber sale packages. The first, White Beaver, is planned to be awarded in April and will be 17 million board feet.
 - **Bottom Canyon** – This project includes timber management and watershed restoration in tributaries to the Little North Fork CdA River. It recently went through public scoping and the WAG submitted a comment letter. The USFS is now completing a draft proposal for the project and an environmental assessment (EA). These will be put out for public comment this spring. Kajsa said she will plan a WAG meeting during April to coincide with the planned

comment period so the WAG can put together comments on the full proposal and EA.

- **Future Project Areas** – Some areas for planning future projects in the North Fork Coeur d’Alene Subbasin include the “Buckskin” area in the headwaters of the NFCDRA River (above Jordan Creek) and the “Potter’s Wheel” area in the Tepee Creek drainage.
- **River Ranger** – the USFS will again hire a seasonal river ranger for the North Fork Coeur d’Alene River and the Respect the River program.
- North Idaho Fly Casters Updates – Ed shared information about the Fly Casters’ upcoming **2015 Conservation Festival**. It will be held with the USFS up in the Iron Creek/Moose Drool area in the Little North Fork CdA headwaters on Saturday morning June 13th. There will be some tree plantings to complement restoration work ongoing in the drainage. There will be lunch provided and a demonstration of the IdaH2O volunteer stream monitoring program from Jim Ekins, UI Extension. Ed said June 13th is also Free Fishing Day for Idaho and folks can fish after the event for free even without a license.

The Fly Casters are seeking volunteers and support for the event. Ed will share an updated flyer so we can help spread the word.

- DEQ Stream Sampling Updates and 2015 Sites Recommendations – Craig Nelson from DEQ presented a map and information about recent sites visited by DEQ’s Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program (BURP) to conduct rapid bioassessments of wadeable streams. The map included 30 sites in the subbasin that were visited in 2012-2014.
 - 2012: 8 sites sampled, several will be used to propose sediment delistings in Cub, Calamity, and Jordan Creek during the next Integrated Report.
 - 2013: 8 sites were visited. Samples were only collected from 2. The others were not sampled due to inaccessibility or low flows. These data will be used for future assessments.
 - 2014: 14 sites were visited. Samples were collected from 5 sites for future assessments. The others were not sampled due to inaccessibility or low flows.
 - Site selections have been focused on unassessed waters and streams that have previously been impaired by sediment but that are good candidates for evaluation and delisting due to water quality improvements.
 - Kajsa shared a handout with lists of unassessed waters and sediment TMDL waters. The handout highlighted recent sediment delisting proposals and suggested streams to visit in 2015 for evaluation and possible delisting if attainment of water quality standards can be demonstrated with BURP data. These sites included Lost Creek (2 segments), Falls Creek, and the headwaters of Shoshone Creek. Ed Linder said he thought there were USFS data from these streams already that could be used for assessment. The handout also included 10 unassessed waters. Nearly all of them have now been sampled and can be assessed in future integrated reports by DEQ. Kajsa suggested the BURP crews

visit the 3 remaining stream assessment units that have never been sampled before.

There was long and extensive discussion about the map and handouts and approach to sampling. Sandy suggested future maps not use red to indicate water quality impairment because the color suggests the waters are dangerous or closed.

Ed asked whether DEQ has discussed adding Solar Pathfinder monitoring to the BURP sampling protocol. Many WAG members chimed in about how helpful it would be to have more Solar Pathfinder data in order to demonstrate compliance with TMDLs and justify delisting. Craig said he wasn't aware of those discussions and that it might be more difficult to integrate the Solar Pathfinder sampling than it seems. Rodney, Ed and Jim discussed recent studies associated with IDL's new shade rules for forest practices. These studies are using Solar Pathfinder techniques and could give us helpful information about this monitoring tool. We also discussed the WAG's desire to get a monitoring plan and QAPP for Solar Pathfinder monitoring in Graham Creek to demonstrate attainment of TMDL goals.

Ed suggested getting data from USFS for Lost Creek, Falls Creek, and the headwaters of Shoshone Creek.

WAG members suggested identifying additional sites in case streams from the initial list were dry this year.

After much discussion, the WAG supported the list of suggested sites in the handout.

- WAG Operating Procedures and Updated Roster – Kajsa shared copies of the WAG's operating procedures that the group developed and adopted in 2007-2008. There have been many changes in participants in the group and an updated roster is needed. The operating procedures seem to have worked well for the group, but Kajsa wanted to review them with the group and ask whether there is any need for revisions. She provided some suggested updates in blue text. The WAG discussed the procedures. Two additions were suggested to item 5.7 – Voting issues will be identified in meeting agendas and members may vote by email if they can't attend the meeting. Sandy complimented DEQ on the WAG web page and the amount of information available there. Carol asked whether our expectations for a quorum are reasonable and if we usually have at least half of the stakeholder categories represented. Most people at the meeting said they thought the expectations were reasonable. Kajsa said we can change these procedures belong to the WAG and can be changed if needed. The WAG procedures will be circulated for review and discussion at the next meeting. Kajsa will also share the relevant sections of Idaho code.
- TMDL Implementation Plans – Most of this discussion was postponed until the next meeting since we didn't have the USFS aquatic staff representatives present. Melissa Hendrickson said an implementation plan would be helpful for their projects and that she would be willing to assist with developing the plan. Sandy and Fred requested an update about the Coeur d'Alene Basin Restoration Plan being developed by the natural

resource trustees. Kajsa said we could get an update at the next meeting. Kajsa will share example TMDL implementation plans that can be used as models. The implementation plan can be developed with a lot of flexibility to meet the desires and needs of the WAG and WAG assistance will be needed throughout the process of developing and implementing the plan. Jim said these plans can be helpful for seeking grants and funding assistance. He said he would be willing to help with education components. Leslee recommended monitoring be included in the implementation plan.