

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group

Meeting Notes

April 23, 2008

1:00 – 4:00 pm

US Forest Service Bldg., Smelterville, ID

Participants: Kajsa Stromberg, Earl Frizzell, Fred Brackebusch, Bill Rust, Dan Guy, Mike Mihelich, George Hemphill, Roy Faler, Del Kerr, Jeff Legg, Kristin Keith, Mary Fritz, Bob Clark

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. The meeting focused on review of comments to the draft Temperature TMDLs, planning watershed tours, and discussing water quality improvement projects.

WAG Business:

- Meeting Notes from Feb and Mar WAG meetings: These were distributed for WAG Review and have been posted to the website.
- Protection of Recreational Beneficial Uses: A handout was distributed that describes protection of safe human recreation in the water. This handout will be posted to the website.
- Cutthroat trout presentations: The March 23 PowerPoint presentations about cutthroat trout are now posted to the WAG website.

Temperature TMDLs and WAG Comment: Kajsa distributed a compilation of all WAG comments to the draft Temperature TMDLs for the subbasin. There was brief discussion about the comments. DEQ is currently developing a revised draft that will be distributed for WAG review before soliciting public comment.

Watershed Tours: WAG members would like to have watershed tours this summer. We are planning a lower river tour for June 18th that will cover the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River up to Prichard along with Prichard and Beaver creeks. We discussed meeting at the park and ride at Kingston and carpooling for the tour. Lunch was suggested at the Prichard Tavern dining room or the Sprigpole.

We are also planning an upper watershed tour for later in the summer (tentatively Aug 20). The WAG suggested visiting USFS restoration sites and looking at Tepee Creek, Short-Riley, Yellow Dog, etc. We would like to look at sites that could potentially provide reference conditions. Several also suggested a floating watershed tour to view the issues from the river.

Next Meeting: Watershed Tour, June 18, 2008, details TBA.

Please visit the WAG Website:

http://www.deq.idaho.gov/about/regions/north_fork_cda_river_wag/index.cfm

Contact Kajsa Stromberg with any questions:

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

Implementation Plan and Projects:

- Potential erosion site at the 12 mile marker along the old river road, visit on tour? USFS ownership? Erosion also visible on private land across river.
- Jeff Legg has “Good Bad and Ugly” PowerPoint presentation that could be given to the WAG describing summer conditions and high visitor use impacts. Also, River Management Plan is being developed to address recreational use and impacts.
- Floating Watershed Tour – recommended floating from steamboat rock downstream. Several WAG members interested.
- Potential erosion site in Hopkins Creek drainage.
- Jeff Legg (Shoshone County) suggested targeting high temperature areas, areas identified with low shade, and bank erosion. He suggested we conduct effectiveness monitoring. He mentioned concerns on the main North Fork Coeur d’Alene and potential for sediment removal in the Prichard and Beaver watersheds.
- The Prichard Creek dredge piles were identified as water quality / habitat concerns.
- Dan Guy pointed out that the type of restoration strategies we use will matter. For example, there’s a difference between natural channel design and bank armoring.
- Bill Rust suggested we put together a 2-page conceptual plan since the scope of our planning and projects is large and there is some confusion.
- We discussed the geographic scope of planning and projects and what to tackle first. Some have suggested addressing Beaver Creek as a pilot, but we also need to look at the whole subbasin.
- We discussed looking at the entire subbasin for our strategy and breaking it into seven major watersheds to bring it to a more manageable scale for some purposes.
- There was question whether we have to wait until a subbasin-wide plan is complete before beginning projects. We do not have to wait until a full Implementation Plan is complete. We can take advantage of opportunities for projects now!
- We can address shade along the roads but need to consider snow plow and powerline concerns. There was some talk about whether Avista could bury more of the lines and if the snow plows could impact less vegetation.