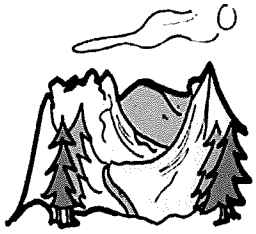

St. Joe/St. Maries Watershed Advisory Group (WAG)

Meeting Minutes

Location: St. Maries Fire Station, 308 West Jefferson Avenue, St. Maries, Idaho

Date/Time: December 05, 2014, 9-11am

Attendance:

Mark Hogen	ISWCC	Glen Pettit	IDEQ
Keith Swallows	NRCS, Plummer	Bob Witherow	IDEQ
Peg Carver	Landowner	Jamie Brunner	IDEQ
Tim Price	USFS Hydrologist	Dan Scaife	USFS Biologist
Laura Laumatia	CDA Tribe	Dean Johnson	Benewah Co. NR Committee
Bob Steed	IDEQ	Tina Blewitt	Ducks Unlimited
Harry Grubham	St. Maries Mayor	Rick Farrell	Farrell Bros.
Norm Suenkel	Benewah County	Richard Furman	IDL
James Pierce	Benewah SWCD	Craig Nelson	IDEQ

Craig Nelson from IDEQ called the meeting to order at 9:15am

Meeting Participant Introductions: Being the first meeting in nearly two years, participants of the meeting introduced themselves.

WAG Operating Procedure Review: The WAG operating procedure was provided and reviewed by participants of the meeting.

The meeting Agenda was provided and reviewed by the group.

Update on Implementation Activities:

Tiny Furman, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)-Tiny provided an update to the shade rule for forest practices. Stream temperature issues led to reworking of rule surrounding SPZ. There is a 75 foot equipment exclusion zone from Class 1 streams. Tree retention is based on dynamic rating of shade provided by various size trees.

Relative stocking based on mix of diameters that are available to harvest or not harvest. A relative stocking level must be maintained, can't harvest below the level. Harvesting is allowed within 50 feet, but need to leave more trees and shade within SPZs. Looking forward, forest managers will be leaving more shade on class 1 streams. The new rules were implemented in July of 2014.

Larger landowners have been doing a lot of upgrading of culverts and road rocking of main and secondary roads. Much of this upgrading is a result of the companies wanting to extend their working seasons to be responsive to markets. Sediment has come from winter work on roads when there is a rain on snow event. For the past five years there has been a great deal of road rocking throughout the Basin, but accompanied by heavy timber harvesting

Craig Nelson will set up future meeting with Archie Gray for more explanation on FPA (Forest Practices Act) changes. Tiny added that there are apps, and anticipates smart phone apps..., but you do have to take data and run through the program to see if you meet criteria of relative stocking rate.

Mark Hogen, Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission (ISWCC)-The ISWCC functions in partnership with conservation districts and the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to address conservation issues, hopes to improve involvement from last ten years. Mark provided a copy of "Tributaries of the St. Maries River Monitoring Report 2003", for review by the group.

Keith Swallows, NRCS Plummer Field Office-Keith provided a summary of NRCS activities on the St. Joe River from the previous five years by providing a fact sheet and with a Powerpoint presentation showing images of stream bank protection, riparian forest buffers, fencing and access control. NRCS has done extensive work on the St. Joe River in recent years.

It was asked if riprapping could actually accelerate the water. The roughness can actually cause sediment to drop out of the water near the structures. Keith would like to put in more logs and habitat from St. Joe City downstream, but currently it is not allowed. Fear is that installing such structures could increase the habitat for warm water predator species of fish. USFS biologist said there is no science to support the fears. USFWS is the opposing party via ACOE permits. Keith would also like to see the work from Lotus site downstream. What affect might some of these conservation structures have on recreation activities? On the upriver portion of the river the policy is float at your own risk. IDL requires encroachment permits of $650 for installation of barbs. Should the WAG consider looking at other ways to pay for permit for landowners, as it may inhibit some from participating and the action is viewed as helping with the health of the Watershed. Every year there are more boats and they are getting bigger. Boat wakes in combination with increased runoff from aggressive timber harvesting, is pointing towards perpetuation of erosion issues on the Watershed.

Craig Nelson, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ)-Craig distributed maps of the St. Joe Bank inventory. BEHI used to index, plus bank pins used to measure recession rates of banks. Twice a year the recession on rebar is measured. Referring to the distributed maps, the bigger the circle, the bigger the recession at the site. Treatment has occurred, so now only have about 9 bank pin sites remaining. There is strong correlation between bank type and recession-hesitant, though, to extrapolate. If there are two circles on location on map, there are two bank pins with different erosion rates. The rates were determined over three years. It was asked if this pin data could be used to estimate average losses, but the data is used just for specific measurement sites. It was stated that much of the erosion is caused by boat wake and the drawdown of Lake CDA in the Fall.

Jamie Brunner, IDEQ- IDEQ and Avista treated 6000 feet of St. Joe River bank, and are considering the nearby log landing for near future conservation work. If a landowner does not qualify for Farm Bill programs, IDEQ and Avista may be able to assist qualified applicants with certain conservation projects. They are working on a partnership design team for private landowners.

Jamie provided a Powerpoint presentation on nutrient inventory. The goal of the Lake Management Plan (LMP) is to keep Lake CDA healthy. This requires a focus on nutrient reduction. Preliminary results from Nutrient Reduction Action Plan: St. Joe larger overall than St. Maries; Comparable in load/area; more detailed study in St. Maries; 7 total monitoring sites. The presentation included a schematic of St. Joe/St. Maries relative contributions. The GIS exercise of loading risk assessment correlates with water quality data. It was noticed that according to the assessment, upper areas of Emerald Creek and Carpenter creek were higher. The road densities are comparable to other creeks, so curious as to why they appear higher? The garnet mining is predominately downstream, so why are these areas showing so high? It was asked, where does the road data come from? with a response of, IDL and Inside Idaho. It was also stated that when USFS is done with timber sales, it often closes roads in riparian area to eliminate sedimentation. This may not be reflected in the assessments. The GIS may not be updated to reflect the practice.

It was brought up that there isn't a tree left on Bond Creek and the lower drainages get hammered when it warms up in the Spring, so much deposited sediment that it inhibits hay production. A copy of the presentation was requested. The presentation will be posted on the IDEQ website along with NRCS's presentation.

2012 Integrated Report: The current report was approved in July of 2014. An update to the report is provided every two years

Comments & Questions: Is there an update to the TMDL status on lower portions of the St. Joe River from the CDA Tribe? More on Tribe TMDLs in the future.

It was explained the complimentary nature of the Lake Management Plan and the IDEQ WAG. It is an opportunity to identify projects for implementation. Certain grants, such as 319s might present opportunities. These projects require public direction on right way to move forward.

Next Meeting: Friday, March 20, 2015, 9-11am, same location (Determination: Quarterly, third Friday of Month)

Potential Agenda Items: Further Information on Shade Rule, Map of temperature TMDL, revisit of maps after further review, update to the Emerald Creek high assessment inquiries,……?

Meeting adjourned around 11am

Minutes respectfully submitted,

James W. Pierce, Benewah SWCD (with considerable note supplementation by Laura Laumatia)

Approved:_____

Dated:_____