

**Meeting of the Board of
Ferry County Commissioners
Tri County Forest Group
Thursday March 16th, 2017 12:30 PM**

**Location: Tri county Economic Development District 986 S Main St. Colville, WA 99114
Meeting Room**

Introduction of Attendees:

1. Amanda Rowton, Clerk of the Board, commissioners@co.ferry.wa.us
2. Mike Blankenship, FC Commissioner District 3, 6jment@gmail.com
3. Nathan Davis, FC Commissioner District 2, ndavis@co.ferry.wa.us
4. Tiana Luke, Conservation NW/NEWFC, tluke@conservationnw.org
5. Maurice Williams, NEWFC
6. Steve Parker, Stevens County, sparker@co.stevens.wa.us
7. Steve Kiss, Pend Oreille County Commissioner, skis@pendoreille.org
8. Gloria Flora, NEWFC – SOS, gflora@s-o-solutions.org
9. Dave Hedrick, Ferry County Conservation District, ferryco.3@gmail.com
10. Gary Nielsen, TCMRA & SC PLAC, grnielsen@ultraplix.com
11. Dick Dunton, NEWFC, lrdunton@centurytel.net
12. Matt Scott, Vaagen/NEWFC, mscott@vaagenbros.com
13. Mike Petersen, NEWFC & Lands Council, mpetersen@landscouncil.org
14. John Conner, Stevens County Resident, 509-328-7654
15. Bob Whittaker, Ferry County, misterbobbywhittaker@gmail.com
16. Bill Way, NEWT, lbway321@gmail.com
17. Ron Gray, B2E Consulting, woodhog250@gmail.com
18. Kathleen Ward, USFS, ktward@fs.fed.us
19. Michael Chiles, USFS, mchiles@fs.fed.us
20. Greg Frohn, greg.frohn@avistacorp.com
21. Tim Schwartz, timschwartz@hotmail.com
22. Jon Day, USFS
23. Nathan Hutchens, nate@evergreeneast.org
24. Joshua White, USFS, jpwhite@fs.fed.us
25. Holly Weiler, hweiler@wta.org
26. Mike Poulson, walf@bossig.com
27. Josh Anderson, janderson@vaagenbros.com
28. Cesar Ramirez, USFS, cesarramirez@fs.fed.us
29. Gayne Sears, USFS, gsears@fs.fed.us
30. Nancy Harshman, Back Country Horsemen, nancyhars47@gmail.com
31. Andrew Spaeth, aspaeth@sustainablenorthwest.org

Tri County Forest Group

Introductions

Mike Blankenship discussed the brief history of the group.

Russ Vaagen explained the USFS update and extra agenda.

Mike Petersen said the big picture of the forest is covered by a wide range of representative.

Jon Day discussed the retained receipts vs. the stewardship program. Of the money received from selling timber, the excess money goes into retained receipts. The Vandenberg Act was responsible for the creation of the retained receipts for the purpose of reforestation. The fund must be used within five years and it cannot be used for salary. Essential KV is reforestation, whereas non-essential is all other restoration. For example: Culverts

Mike Herron asked about using the retained receipts?

Gloria Flora asked about trail maintenance in regard to KV?

Jon Day said that KV generally would not be used unless the runoff was impacting a stream. There is a tight auditing system.

Mike Herron said if we don't use it in the right amount of time, we lose the money.

Russ Vaagen wondered if there was a particular area that could utilize the stewardship program.

Mike Herron said that some of these funds we cannot use but with KV we can.

Jon Day said the forest has stewardship area which includes all roads. Pending is the request to use money for trails.

Bob Whittaker discussed the potential to use these funds for match dollars with a NOVA grant.

Mike Blankenship said the issue historically was that matching funds needed to be local money, not federal or state grants.

Nancy Harshman asked if those funds could be used in the wilderness.

Jon Day responded yes they can be used in the wilderness.

Maurice Williams said he doesn't recall a timber sale in Ferry County in years.

Mike Herron said if he had to mitigate something, then he didn't plan it very well.

Gary Neilsen asked if we could add volume or make adjustments.

Cesar Ramirez said only if there is a catastrophic event, like a fire.

Joshua White said it hasn't happened so we don't have an answer for that.

Matt Scott asked of the \$600,000 what would the retained receipts be?

Jon Day said there is approximately 1 million dollars in that pot of funds and he said he could get an estimate of what has been done with that money.

Mike Chiles gave a presentation on Stewardship, discussing how the money generated by the sale in productive ways. Priority projects include; prescribed fire, road & trail maintenance, obliteration to restore water quality, vegetation removal, watershed restoration & maintenance, non-native invasive species control and wildlife & fish habitat. Unique features of stewardship include a blend of goods and services.

Maurice Williams said that NEWFC doesn't subscribe to the issue of not being able to plan and be funded through this.

Nathan Davis asked about litigation within a ten year contract?

Josh White elaborated on Nathan's question, clarifying it.

Mike Chiles responded to yes there would be litigation within a ten year contract.

Joshua White said that sometimes there is enough time in between from decision to action that usually it doesn't get filed.

Gary Neilsen asked what percentage is done under stewardship.

Jon Day said it is all done 75% IRTC.

Bill Way said that working trails are slightly different. Our group would restore Taylor Ridge if the working relationships between organizations were better. He said he doesn't understand the hold up on authorization on the project.

Mike Blankenship said this group would probably activate a sub group to discuss the project to make headway. Right now we can try to get an overall view. Smaller groups can discuss those details preliminarily.

Bill Way said that it makes sense to do that.

Mike Blankenship said the bigger groups' strength is making sure we aren't in conflict with another part of the whole.

Joshua White said we aren't any happier with the 20 year meeting with no results. We can expect a yes or no when it comes to where Joshua White stands.

Russ Vaagen asked what the path forward is.

Mike Herron asked when you start with these projects to keep the Forest Service in the loop to help facilitate action so people are aware of how to get a yes instead of just no.

Nancy Harshman said she like knowing how things are operating and how to approach people.

Joshua Anderson encouraged Mike Herron to keep asking for funding for trails, especially when it is restorative work on the trails.

Maurice Williamson said it would be useful to recreation to meet regularly.

Mike Blankenship encouraged the group to send requests for small groups and any changes on meeting notes to Ferry County Clerk of the Board Amanda Rowton. Especially if there was an important issue that was missed. There can be overlapping in the sub groups with all the different areas of interests. What are the interests?

Russ Vaagen has maps to bring in the next month or so.

Maurice Williamson asked what the good neighbor policy means.

Andrew Spaeth asked what groups we were talking about.

Mike Blankenship said they aren't formed yet, so send in your interests. For example; MTR, Timber, Horses etc.

Kathleen Ward presented on the good neighbor authority in Washington State. 2014 farm bill gives us the "authority" and the intent is to give us some tools to free us up. There is a partnership between the BLM and the State of Washington. The State can do the work for itself or contract out. We can ask the State to help with preparedness. There is a master agreement statewide and then specific agreements. There is a pilot program in Gayne's district to see how it goes.

Gayne Sears said we are still negotiating on the "what".

Maurice Williamson asked if it was money from the State.

Kathleen Ward said that the money is generated by the program. There will be seed money provided to start the program. The State will put it out to bid.

Maurice Williamson asked if it was a SEPA or NEPA process.

Kathleen Ward said it was NEPA for sure.

Mike Petersen discussed a similar project in Idaho and asked where the money was coming from.

Kathleen Ward said that we can use any funds other than retained receipts for the startup money.

Gayne Sears said getting access across lands has diminished opportunities to treat the land.

Maurice Williamson asked if the seed money be returned.

Kathleen Ward said no, but it would continue to go back into the ground.

Mike Petersen said the last meeting we talked about having a trial maintenance work group. Who is the USFS would be the contact person.

Mike Herron said Craig Newman is the contact.

Gayne stated that the Back Country Horseman, Washington Trails Association and other volunteer groups expanding and working extremely well. Then Gayne Sears announced at the last portion of the meeting that she would be leaving for another position until July or August, and introduced Cesar Ramirez.

Maurice Williamson asked how much seed money would be needed to start.

Kathleen Ward said possibly \$66,000 as that was the amount that was used by another forest.

Dick Dunton asked about fire fuels reduction.

Kathleen Ward said yes it would.

Joshua White said A to Z is open to the 45 day objection period.

Mike Petersen said if we submit an objection then we can participate in the meeting.

Joshua White said if anyone who has objected can be in the meeting.

Andrew Spaeth said it is up to the official who is presiding over the meeting whether or not it is open.

Steve Parker asked if there is any information on selection FPR alternate B.

Joshua White said there is a minor modification regarding temporary road access to quarry sites. USFS Supervisor removed it and it has more activity restoratively.

Gayne Sears said Limestone silver has received 2 comments; 1 in favor & 1 with lots of concerns. She asked if they should expect any more letters.

(No one responded)

Gloria Flora discussed possibly of a field trip to view the San Poil Project. She also asked what the San Poil Project is.

Mike Herron said it was regarding fuels reduction, forest health, timber work commercial and non-commercial plus roads to reduce sediment in streams by the reservation by Republic. Right now they are looking at concerns.

Dick Dunton asked if that included the Gibraltar Trail.

Mike Herron said no, that is someone else. Motorized Trail people are working on permission to use those old trails and cross private property.

Mike Blankenship said that we are waiting on the leases. There is a document drawn up for approval. Hopefully June 2017 we will wrap up paperwork. It will be a multi-mobile trail for bikers, hikers MTR etc. It will be like the Golden Tiger Pathway is now. The private land owners have been very agreeable.

Kathleen Ward noted the part where it says what can be done using the "Good Neighbor".

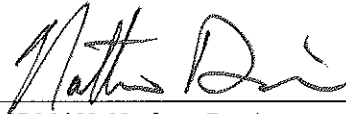
Gloria Flora is the contact person for the San Poil field trip.

Amanda Rowton will compile a list of people who have attended to distribute to the group.

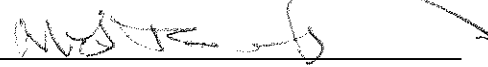
Kathleen Ward said regarding the FPR update; several program managers have to review it and the deadline is March 31, 2017. In June or July it will go out for objection or approval. Hoping Feb 2018 will be completed and approved.

The next meeting is going to be April 20th, 2017 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

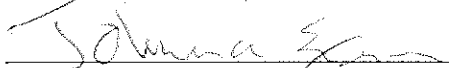
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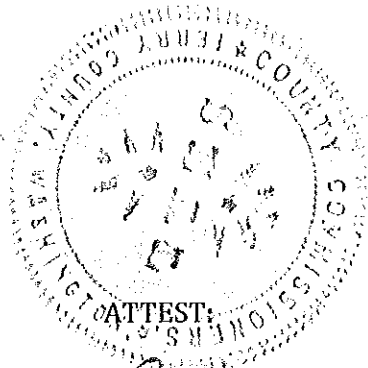
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VICE CHAIRMAN, Mike Blankenship



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