

**Special Meeting of the Board of
County Commissioners
Tri County Forest Group
Friday August 2nd, 2018 3:00 p.m.**

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

Introduction of Attendees:

1. Jennifer Knowles, Deputy Clerk of the Board, codeputyclerk@co.ferry.wa.us
2. Johnna Exner, Ferry County Commissioner
3. Nathan Davis, Ferry County Commissioner
4. Mike Blankenship, Ferry County Commissioner
5. Ray Entz, Kalispel Tribe
6. Mike Lithgow, Kalispel Tribe
7. Karen Skoog, Pen Oreille County Commissioner
8. Steve Parker, Stevens County Commissioner
9. Scott Nielsen, Cattle Producers of Washington
10. Merrill Ott, CNF Ambassadors
11. Gary Nielsen, TCMRA
12. Steve Kiss, Pend Oreille County Commissioner
13. Gloria Flora, SOS & NEWFC
14. Mike Pederson, The Lands Council
15. Russ Vaagen, Vaagen Timbers
16. Franklin Pemberton, U.S.F.S-CNF
17. Mathew Wemer, Capital Press
18. Wes McCart, Stevens County Commissioner
19. John Anderson, Vaagen Brothers Lumber
20. Duane Vaagen, Vaagen Brothers Lumber
21. Dave Hedrick, Ferry Conservation District
22. Bobby Whittaker, WTA/FCRTP
23. Bill Way, Northeast Washington Trail Blazers
24. Joshua White, USFS
25. Dianne Guidry, Acting Regional Forester
26. Kinsey Coots, TEDD
27. Mike Poulson, CMR representative
28. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Representative
29. Vicki Christiansen, Interim Forest Service Chief
30. Rodney Smolden, Forest Supervisor
31. Kevin Arneson, Boise Cascade

Call to Order

Commissioner Blankenship opened the meeting at 3:08 p.m.

Introductions

Cathy McMorris Rodgers introduced Interim Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen. Vicki Christiansen introduced Rodney Smolden and Dianne Guidry.

Vicki Christiansen and Cathy McMorris Rodgers spoke about the A-Z Project, forest stewardship, and SRS funding.

Tri County Forest Group Formation

Steve Parker said that they wanted to be part of the Forest Plan Revision by working together. They wanted the diverse groups to represent all the folks that use the forest and to represent all counties. With efficiency and effectiveness from all groups and open dialogue between the groups. He sees new doors open and new opportunities opening up between everyone. They would like to open the dialogue at the regional level.

Motorized Recreation

Gary Nielson discussed the Travel Management Plan. They would like to see more large loops to ride on. Discussion was held on WATV use on county roads in Ferry County, Stevens County, and Pend Oreille County. Gary Nielson said this group allowed them to make a proposal in Ferry County to allow connector routes to Stevens and Pend Oreille counties. They drafted a letter to the Forest Service to add those routes to the forest plan maps.

Non-Motorized Recreation

Bill Way said they would like to keep the forest open to hikers, bikers and skiers. He is interested in the process to work together to promote tourism but mostly to local people.

Grazing

Scott Nielson discussed the cattleman's concerns. Grazing allotment permits have dropped from 35,000 per year to 29,500. They aren't asking for much, just keeping to the numbers as they are. Scott Nielson discussed best use practices and said it's flawed. They have needs and concerns. Scott Nielson said that the Forest Service has excellent range staff that work well with permittees. The Forest Service has been supportive of this group.

Conservation

Mike Pederson is a fan of collaboration. He wants the certainties that each group wants. Conservation wants certainties that the forest will be protected forever. He hopes we can all come together to meet on common ground.

Closing Remarks and Q & A

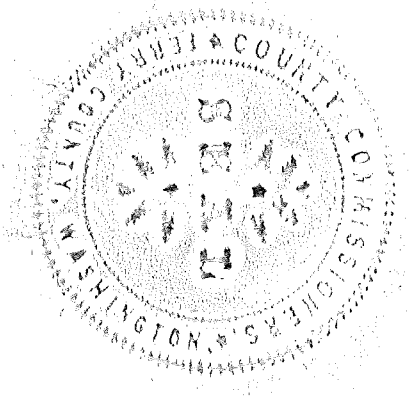
Mike Blankenship has been at this 20 years, there has been ups and downs. He feels things are positive and are looking up. We want to be heard, we are reasonable people. They are making sure that the needs of the citizens are being met. Nathan Davis said we are trying to figure out how to sustain our county and a big part involves the forest. He has put together charts that show recent data of total million board feet. It illustrates the Ferry County's financial struggle. Mike Blankenship discussed SRS funding and timber values.

Cathy McMorris Rodgers asked what it would take to fix that. Nathan Davis discussed bug kill, fires, and the need to take care of the forests. We need to bring back loggers, and a new sawmill some day would be nice. Josh White said the new forest plan should give us more flexibility with forest restoration. Mike Blankenship discussed restoration work and revenue loss from the mine and mill. Columbia Cedar mostly benefits Stevens County. He feels like we are making headway though with this group and the Forest Service.

Scott Nielson said the proposed Ferry County wilderness areas overlays go over grazing allotments. Steve Parker said these things come out in these meetings and it will help take the burden off the Forest Service. Bobby Whittaker feels NEWFC is effective. He discussed the Ferry County Rail Trail. He would like to see more recreation in Ferry County forests. Vicki Christiansen said input is very helpful. There are tough issues and she appreciated them working together to figure them out. The commissioners are a governing body and are important. There will hopefully be an announcement of the new Regional Forest Manager soon. They will start September.

The next meeting ended at 4:20 p.m.

BOARD OF FERRY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FERRY COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Johnna Exner
CHAIRMAN, Johnna Exner

Nathan Davis
VICE CHAIRMAN, Nathan Davis

Mike Blankenship
MEMBER, Mike Blankenship

ATTEST:

Amanda Rowton
Clerk of the Board, Amanda Rowton