

Spring 2010 Swan Lands Coordinating Committee Meeting
Wednesday May 12, 1:00-4:00, Swan Ecosystem Center

Participants: Mike Palladini, Anne Dahl, Uwe Schaefer, Betsy Spettigue, Ali Vissichelli, Neil Meyer (Swan Ecosystem Center); Linda Smith (USFS); Tom Parker, Melanie Parker, Mo Bookwalter, Adam Lieberg (Northwest Connections); Beth Gardner (USFS- Bigfork); Arlene Montgomery (Friends of the Wild Swan); Jenny Cloutier, Mark Schiltz (MT Land Reliance); Ryan Lutey (Vital Ground); John Mercer (Swan Valley resident); Dan Roberson (Swan River State Forest DNRC); Gail Bissel, Alan Wood (MT FWP); Maria Mantas, Chris Bryant (TNC); Robert Rasmussen (TPL); John Gatchell (MT Wilderness Association)

Subcommittee Reports:

Conservation Strategies

Montana Legacy Project updates - *Robert Rasmussen, Chris Bryant*

- March 2010 Phase II donated to FS
- On schedule to purchase Phase III in December
- DNRC announced proposal to purchase land in Swan River State Forest
 - Use BPA funding to pay for conservation easement: Lands west of highway- DNRC could then buy underlying fee value. In north part, small portion to FWP.
- DNRC looking for management consistency from east (PC conservation easement) to west
- Overall goal to erase checkerboard
- May 30, PPL deadline
- TNC activity (Maria Mantas)
 - Fiber Supply: potential work in Swan 4th quarter of this year, but no plans yet.
 - Timber inventory on Phase II lands
 - This summer: water howellia monitoring
 - Phase II - Timber reservation with FS- Agreed Operating Procedure for 10 yrs of agreement. Land management is under FS
 - TNC submits plan to FS 45 days prior to activity.

Discussion of MT Legacy Project Phase 3 lands and potential for community ownership - *Mo Bookwalter, John Mercer*

- Sections being discussed: expanding 35- Sections 13, 3, 31
- Potential for community ownership - Co-op
- Challenge will be to fund easements
- Community ownership planning is limited by not knowing what land would cost
- Next meeting June (date TBD)
- Please email Mo if interested in being involved with planning group
- Potential for Land and Water Conservation Funding
- All sections were included in FS proposal – Section 3 top priority
- FS appraisal – will be available by end of May- not prioritization. FY 2011 purchasing

MT Land Reliance- *Mark Schiltz*

- Jenny Cloutier just hired as event coordinator

Vital Ground- *Ryan Lutey*

- Closed one easement this year
- Approved 2 more easements- about 80 acres

Forest Stewardship

Seeley-Swan-Blackfoot CFLRP proposal status report - *Anne Dahl, Mo Hartmann*

- Purpose is to promote, fund, and advance forest restoration - 10 pilot projects will be chosen from around the country
- Expected to be nominated by regional forester- Decision released Monday, May 17
- Handout- outlines scope and objectives
- Mo Hartman and Brad Gillespie are planning a community meeting in June to discuss what CFLRP could mean for community
- Looking for more support letters, Mo will send template letter to Mike to forward to group

*New District Ranger Rich Kehr, Chip Weber hired as new forest supervisor

Seeley-Swan-Blackfoot Stewardship Summit report - *Melanie Parker*

- Biomass topic came about after closing of Smurfit Stone
- Event held on Friday May 7, well represented: agencies, loggers, politicians
- Mo will forward "Next Steps" to this group

Scout Lake Timber Sale proposal description - *Dan Roberson*

- Public comment open until June 4th
- In initial phases of scoping
- SE portion Squeezer, Goat, Nappa, lower Soup
- Restoration maintenance on old growth
- Let Dan know if you would like more information- will include on mailing list
- Probably no opportunity for field trip before public comment phase- but there will be afterwards

Q&A and discussion

- Suggestion that SVGBCA needs to be revisited- TNC obliged to follow it with Fiber Supply Agreement for the next 8 years
- Suggestion that a revision would need to include lynx and bull trout as well
- County offices does use for land use planning- affects linkage zones
- Does DNRC have to ability to change HCP - DNRC does have a fall back if there is no longer SVGBCA

John Gatchell- Montana Wilderness Society

- Discussion being held about Swan Front being included in Bob Marshall (Wednesday, May 12)

Wildlife

Swan Valley Bear Resources Group updates - *Adam Lieberg*

- Subgroup of wildlife subcommittee
- Resources: Bear resistant garbage pail loaner program; Two education and outreach events: Spring Bear Wake-up Social, Bear Fair; Bear newsletter, meet with private landowners about reducing attractant on property- electric fencing for live stock with three different landowners

2010 wolf survey results - *Adam Lieberg*

- Community wolf track survey coordinated this winter by NwC
- About 20 participants
- Found two areas with concentrations of tracks- consistent with two know packs
- Let Adam know if you would like to be involved next year

Loon monitoring updates

- Loon count Saturday, May 15
- Population at about 200
- Monitoring goes from Pierce Lake to Swan Lake

Introduction: Betsy Spettigue, new SEC wildlife programs coordinator

- hoping to expand scope of wildlife subcommittee

Wildlife discussion

- Suggestion fisher be addressed by committee - NwC has a 10 year data set about forest carnivores, Jane Ingebretson has been trying to get hair snags out
- Possibly also wolverine
- How far north do NwC surveys go- wolf survey and carnivore surveys stop at N end of state forest: suggestion to look at zone between state forest and Swan Lake

Wetlands

Swan River watershed wetland prioritization analysis and wetland program status report - *Mike Palladini*

- Completed wetlands maps (National Wetland Inventory)- inventory on all lands- goes north to Swan Lake. Provided to NWI- it may not be available there yet
- Completed 1st wetland restoration project in Kraft Creek area
- Wetlands subcommittee meeting on May 22 to identify major conservation values with a set of criteria and rank the over 4,000 wetland basins for conservation purposes- effort funded through IWJD and FWS
- Water fowl counts- field work start date TBD.

Q&A and discussion

- FS Herp Hunt: June 29, experts; July 1, novices and kids. RVSP with Beth Focusing in two sections near Cold Creek
- Is there a way for us as a group to track aquatic invasive species?
Suggestions:
 - Training for people to recognize these species and come up with reporting system?
 - Gael Bissel- recommends a guidebook
 - In CFLRP- there is a portion dedicated to aquatic invasives
 - Prevention is another part- consolidate pamphlets and information
 - Develop plan about how to recognize and what to do when seen

Water Quality

Swan Watershed Restoration Plan updates - *Ali Visichelli*

- The plan's purpose is to be an adaptive plan that fosters collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders and community members, as a means of restoring, maintaining, and protecting the Swan's aquatic, hydrologic, and terrestrial ecosystems and their beneficial uses
- Subcommittees are separated into sections within the plan
- Committees' use for the plan still needs to be defined
- Mapping element intended for the plan that will show project areas and priority areas

EPA 319 Grant updates - *Anne Dahl*

- Road Restoration at Beaver Creek
- Road inventory for future restoration planning. Top 70 TMDL sediment producing sites; Glacier Creek subwatershed all roads
- Monitoring: Swan lake DO monitoring, stream temperature monitoring, FS PIBO monitoring

Native Fish

Westslope Cutthroat Trout plan development - *Beth Gardner*

- Not focusing on bull trout, but rather westslope cutthroat
- 20% of streams still strongholds for westslope cutthroat, 17 total- "conservation populations"
- Identified restoration needs and information gaps
- Will be setting priorities

Q&A and discussion

- Research needs: 1. role of brook trout on bull trout 2. lake trout movement
- Suggestion for consolidated list of research needs

Discussion: strategies for increasing subcommittee capacity – All

- All subcommittees are currently being chaired by either SEC or NwC, looking for co-chair from another group
- There has been several changes since committee first began, how does this affect SLCC status/role
- Group agrees twice yearly SLCC meeting is a good opportunity to meet and discuss
- TNC struggles to stay involved across all subcommittees
- Suggestions:
 - Come up with yearly work plan for each subcommittee?
 - We are missing community segment- we need to reach out for more on the ground people
 - Subcommittees are good opportunities to draw people in- do more report outs
 - Two day event- outreach events, subcommittee meetings
 - Electronic blog
 - More phone calls
- Dan Roberson, John Mercer, Ali Vissichelli will help continue this conversation

Wrap up and discussion of next meeting date- next meeting September