

Lloyd Dorsey's notes from the 1-11-17 TeCo WPLI Discussion in Jackson
Edited by Deb Kleinman, Abby Moore, and David Sollitt.

Deb Kleinman, Lisa McGee, and Tom Turiano attended on speaker phone.

Attending in person are David Sollitt, John Heberger, Lloyd Dorsey, Abby Moore, Bill Resor, Mike Mielke, Greg Buchko, Mark Newcomb, Wade Kauffman, Byron Baker (Blue Ribbon Coalition), CLIMB representatives, Bruce Hayes, Pat Kearney, Rob Shaul, John Summers, Jared Becker, Len Carlman, Mark Radford, and a few others.

The Discussion got started at about 2:10pm.

Mike M offered some introductory remarks and then David Sollitt did an introductory about why this is an informal meeting. E.g., no minutes, no formal vote, no formal comments.

David began discussion about the possibility of winter field trip. Also the possibility of a spring field trip, and summer trips. To be decided on during future WPLI meeting(s). Deb said that EcoFlight can donate flights during summer, PK was point of contact in August 2016.

David talked about past stakeholder meetings like the hunters meeting in Jackson, and the snowmobilers meeting at The Virginian in December 2016. David began a discussion about what is or is not an official meeting. David feels that anyone can convene a meeting of stakeholders and whether it is or isn't an official meeting doesn't matter. Bruce Hayse questioned what is a formal meeting. Dave explained more. Deb Kleinman weighed in. John Heberger did as well; and Mike Mielke talked about his duty and prerogative to keep his constituency informed. Abby offered her opinion: the Virginian meeting was informal but the participation of Deb K. and other WPLI members muddied the waters as to formal or informal.

David suggested more stakeholder meetings, when they're scheduled, and the need to spread them out conveniently over time. Abby suggested this could be a part of all WPLI meetings, to discuss the upcoming stakeholder meetings. Keep everyone in the loop. Rob and Abby discussed how to go about that process. Bruce Hayse asked how to remove WPLI Advisory Committee members. Some discussion ensued. Abby would like a list of groups that each com'tee member will reach out to.

Bill Resor recounted how he's tried to get grazing allotment information. Some discussion about if that info is on SLACK, posted by Lloyd. Rob said he saw it. Lloyd found it and showed to Bill. Deb offered grad student assistance in tracking down this information and will communicate directly with Bill.

Mike Mielke said he's concerned about the voting process. Concerned about some who may have their heels dug in, and that we may all be doing this in vain. We need

to keep an open mind so we don't waste a year of our time. Deb weighed in about com'tee mbrs operating in "good faith". Mike asked if those who vote 5 and are inflexible, can they be kicked off the committee? Deb said no. She explained how it's not for others to judge the reasons for voting 5, it's up to those who vote to explain their vote. If things can't change, then the committee must move on, can change the proposal, or other options.

Mike Mielke discussed how and why the options for some public lands are important, and why we're going thru the process. He favors going thru the process. He's trying to put a positive spin on the process.

Wade Kauffman also talked about his perspective. He tries to explain the process to his motorized constituency. So the process is effective for them. He said there's always some bad apples.

Bill Resor talked about the history of the 19843 (?) Wyoming Wilderness Act. The county and Town of Jackson wanted the GV Wilderness line against town. The reasons the WSAs weren't made Wilderness was the interest of industry, so the Wilderness decision was deferred. The role of County Commissioners was significant back then. This committee may not agree on a proposal, and the BOC may or may not pass it on. If we're all behind the proposal, it makes the BOC job easier. It should be a Wyo & Idaho proposal for Palisades. For Shoal Creek it should be Sublette County & Teton County combined process. Bill told of an example in the Flathead Valley Whitefish Range coming up with a plan. The mtn bikers were one of the stakeholders and they didn't have as much experience as other groups. The maturity of the user groups is important.

Byron Baker from Alpine: is this proposal going through a full NEPA? Or congress? Hayse said it's not a NEPA process. Bill Resor further clarified his example of the Flathead. More discussion about what happens after a congressional act. Some NEPA process could apply. Byron had more questions: Most folks don't know what a WSA is. He said that there should be some materials provided for the attendees.

Lloyd said that the public can and should contact whomever is on the committee who represent their interests and they can get info from them.

John Summers from Idaho also voiced concerns about informing the public. The public doesn't know what the process is. PK also weighed in on sharing the info.

Abby said there's a learning curve on this consensus process. She gave an example about her experience on mediations.

David moved us on to the next agenda item. Landscapes: explore what's in and around Teton County; there are other landscapes other than WSAs that can be considered also. What areas are there? PK has supplied maps. There's also an interactive map on the WPLI website. (question about SLACK; answered)

Lloyd spoke about the 2008 BTNF Wilderness Potential study. Lloyd committed to working with the BTNF to get maps, and a Powerpoint presentation to the committee about these areas. Bill Resor said he mostly wants to look at the contiguous USFS lands, both in Wyoming and Idaho. Abby suggests that we get the same presentation from the CTNF. Maybe aim for February. Byron said he hopes that the whole area should be presented and not just WQLs. Bill Resor isn't interested in the 2008 BTNF report; more interested in Palisades and what's outside and what's inside. Abby wonders if we start big or small? Bruce says we need to look at the whole landscape. Abby: understand the area holistically. And we need to have CTNF do the same. Some discussion ensued about what info is needed, and how big we need to look. Abby said we're getting hung up on outcomes, and we need to focus on our needs.

Bill Resor wants to see where heliskiing is happening, where snowmobiling, and where summer motorized use is happening. Some discussion ensued. Where it's happening? Or where it's allowed? And what's the difference if any. Bill explained he wants to see information on commercial uses of the WSAs, the list of permittees, etc.. Mike Mielke said the snowmobile info will be hard to get.

Abby, do we want presentations from the USFS or from snowmobilers to give presentation? Bill Resor said the heliskiing info will be easier. Abby wants to know where the opportunities are for snowmobilers if they're shut out of an area. Mike M. said he has a map showing where snowmobilers use the areas.

Lloyd asked about getting the USFS to present the committee with motorized use maps. Deb said she wants to get the stakeholders to present to the Committee, and wants them to use the geotag interactive maps.

Mike M will contact Jon Schick to give a heliskiing presentation.

Deb asks about cross country skiers using the Palisades area. Mike M talked about the skiers giving a presentation to the Committee. Tom Turiano said he could talk about the backcountry skiers and where they use the Palisades. Bill Resor said some of the backcountry skier/boarders use snowmobiles to access the backcountry. Some discussion ensued. Mike M said folks come from Oregon come here to recreate in the winter, and parking at trailheads can be congested. Rob asked if Shoal Creek WSA will be discussed; Mike M said he'll get it covered.

Now we moved to a discussion about if the BTNF-CTNF wilderness characteristics presentation to the committee may be put off until March? Abby: have the Feb meeting about winter use. Some discussion about if CTNF should attend the meeting also. Deb said she's contacted Greg Cowan of WCCA to come speak. Greg Buchko asked about the Lincoln Cnty portion of Palisades. John Heberger asked about the Dec 14 meeting in Pinedale. Abby gave a description about that meeting

which presented information about various USFS and BLM designations. Discussion ensued.

Lloyd & Deb pledged to get CTNF personnel to attend along with BTNF when appropriate.

John H asked about the Sublette WPLI committee and if they can share and attend our meetings. Deb said she would inquire. It was mentioned that Dan Smitherman is on both WPLI committees.

Next agenda item; Deb mentioned wildlife issues that Steve Kilpatrick will round up. Also that Paul Spitler could give us a presentation. Discussion ensued how to get Paul to talk to us.

Mike M suggested having the wildlife info meeting along with outfitters presenting.

David moved to the next item about what research is available. David said peer reviewed research about wilderness. Deb said that possibly a UW student could do literature reviews for the Committee is needed. Specific and well defined topics need to be clearly spelled out for a grad student to be effective in this role.

Abby asked about the organizing of information (including research materials); she feels overwhelmed. Deb weighed in. Discussion ensued. Abby and Mike M discussed how to organize literature to make it user friendly. Deb said that the final recommendation to the BOCC needs to list the key research materials and documents.

David invited members of the audience to make their comments:

Jared Becker spoke about focusing on Teton County first, then other areas after that.

Len Carlman from Wilson talked about the public lands letter from Lincoln County Commissioners. He hopes we develop a strategy to deal with that. (He was assured by some committee members that we are.) Len spread out a map of the Wild & Scenic River from the 2009 Craig Thomas Legacy Act. He also pointed out some roadless areas in the 2008 BTNF WQL report. He focused on the area between Buffalo Valley and Gros Ventre for our consideration. He suggested that we not focus just on the WSAs but also on other WQLs.

'Mark Radford' from Idaho Falls: A dirt biker, he spoke about the open loop in Indian Creek, from Idaho. There's also snowmobiling up there. No elk up that high that he's ever seen. Wants to leave the status quo in the area he recreates. It's already a Wilderness Area without stamping it a Wilderness. The actual Wilderness areas are overused and abused; he gave examples. Thinks leaving it alone is a good compromise. Attacks (?) (maybe he means bear attacks on people?) happen in the Parks and Wilderness areas not in the Palisades. So leave it alone.

John Summers from Rexburg: A multi-interest recreationist. Hunts, cycles, snowmobiles, dirt bikes, hikes, backpacks with his family. All groups have impacts. Let's look at solutions to manage these areas better. He works on trails. Rather than excluding groups, let's come together for a good solution.

I took no more notes after this. The discussion was called to an end at about 4:40pm by David. Several folks stuck around for a half hour or more and talked in small groups.