

Teton County WPLI Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

December 13, 2017

USFS Building, Jackson, WY

Draft for Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved		
<table border="0"><tr><td data-bbox="175 407 834 1094"><p>Committee Members Present:</p><p>Gregory Buchko Amanda Carey John Heberger Jr. Lisa McGee Mike Mielke Don Saner Rob Shaul Siva Sundaresan Dan Smitherman Tom Turiano Bruce Hayse Lloyd Dorsey Steve Kilpatrick Harry Statter Jim Woodmencey Mike Brennan</p><p>Members Absent: David Sollitt, Abby Moore</p></td><td data-bbox="834 407 1485 1094"><p>Others Present:</p><p>Tom Sergerstrom, <i>Teton Conservation District</i> Len Carlman, <i>public</i> Alison Michalski, <i>GYC Association</i> Kim Springer, <i>public</i> Kathleen May, <i>Great Old Broads for Wilderness</i> Wade Kaufmann, <i>public</i> Matt Richards, <i>public</i> Ben Read, <i>public</i> Debra Patla, <i>public</i> Mike Merigliano, <i>public</i> Hank Phibbs, <i>public</i> Steve Smutko, <i>UW Ruckelshaus Institute</i> Nicole Gautier, <i>UW Ruckelshaus Institute</i></p></td></tr></table>		<p>Committee Members Present:</p> <p>Gregory Buchko Amanda Carey John Heberger Jr. Lisa McGee Mike Mielke Don Saner Rob Shaul Siva Sundaresan Dan Smitherman Tom Turiano Bruce Hayse Lloyd Dorsey Steve Kilpatrick Harry Statter Jim Woodmencey Mike Brennan</p> <p>Members Absent: David Sollitt, Abby Moore</p>	<p>Others Present:</p> <p>Tom Sergerstrom, <i>Teton Conservation District</i> Len Carlman, <i>public</i> Alison Michalski, <i>GYC Association</i> Kim Springer, <i>public</i> Kathleen May, <i>Great Old Broads for Wilderness</i> Wade Kaufmann, <i>public</i> Matt Richards, <i>public</i> Ben Read, <i>public</i> Debra Patla, <i>public</i> Mike Merigliano, <i>public</i> Hank Phibbs, <i>public</i> Steve Smutko, <i>UW Ruckelshaus Institute</i> Nicole Gautier, <i>UW Ruckelshaus Institute</i></p>
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<p>Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business / Administrative Matters• Discussion and Working Session: Generating Options• Moving Through Generating Options: Next Steps• Public Comment	<p>Handouts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. December Meeting Agenda2. Draft List of Potential Options3. Public Input Web Submissions Packet		
<p>Actions Taken</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A public outreach meeting is scheduled for Feb. 15th, 6-730PM at the Teton County Public Library2. Nicole Gautier will finish the Shoal Creek WSA Framework and Assessment document and share with committee members3. After the Jan. 3rd Sublette Meeting, Dan Smitherman will share any potential recommendation to the Teton Sub-Committee by e-mail, so that the Teton Sub-Committee can respond at their meeting on Jan. 8th. Siva Sundaresan and Steve Kilpatrick may be able to attend of the Sublette meeting Jan. 3rd to represent the Shoal Creek Subcommittee.4. Nicole Gautier will make Sublette County’s Shoal Creek Potential Options public, and share via e-mail with the Teton Committee5. Lisa McGee will put together a list of “low hanging fruit” options6. Siva Sundaresan will reach out to Billy Siddoway, with Wade Kaufmann’s help.			

Meeting Summary

The committee discussed the role of the Shoal Creek working group, and next steps. Len Carlman presented his public lands proposal. The committee worked on refining potential options for the WSAs, which were then shared and discussed. The possibility of a replacement to represent agricultural interests was discussed. Lastly, public comment was heard.

Business / Administrative Matters

Lloyd Dorsey and Tom Turiano attended a public mapping session facilitated by Susan Marsh, a local historian. They shared that it was a positive learning experience, and revelatory in regard to Teton County's complicated history.

Deb Kleinman brought up the possibility of trying to work a full day session into the meeting schedule. She reminded the committee of where they are in the process, and April/May as a soft deadline.

Shoal Creek Working Group

Siva Sundaresan recapped the Dec. 4th conference call he organized for the working group. The working group wanted to see a statement from the Sublette County committee about how they would like to work together. Dan Smitherman acts as a go-between for Teton and Sublette. He shared the results of the Sublette response to the working group in an e-mail, which he summarized for the committee:

- The committee wants to work with Teton but wants to flesh out the Sublette recommendation first
- The committee will not form a subcommittee and requests that the Teton Subcommittee works with the full Sublette Committee. Dan Smitherman will function as a go between.
- The Committee would like the Teton Subcommittee to define their level of latitude and decision making authorization prior to any joint meetings
- The Committee would like some level of interest in Shoal Creek by the full Teton WPLI Committee. The perception is that Teton is more interested in Palisades.
- The Committee is willing to share information on Shoal as it is developed
- The Committee requests that any meetings between the Sublette Committee and the Teton Subcommittee be in Pinedale.

Pat Myers, an outfitter in Sublette County, spoke to the Sublette Committee about his use of Shoal Creek WSA. Dan Smitherman relayed that Pat Myers's primary concern was protecting his commercial interest in access to Craig Cabin. Pat Myers operates winter snowmobile trips, hunting trips, and summer horseback trips. He was openly pro pro-wilderness, at least for the southern end of Shoal Creek. He was also concerned about erosion from summer motorized use just outside the WSA.

Lisa McGee asked if the Sublette Committee is looking outside the WSA boundaries. Dan Smitherman responded, yes as committee they are, but not necessarily for Shoal Creek. Sublette is open to looking outside WSA boundaries, but there is not much roadless inventory. Wild and Scenic River designation has come up.

Dan Smitherman asked for clarification over the role of the Teton County subcommittee.

Lisa McGee suggested waiting to speak with Sublette about Shoal Creek until Teton has their own ideas. Rob Shaul said his guess is that Shoal Creek is a bargaining chip in Teton County, but less so for Sublette County.

Siva Sundaresan asked if the committee is making recommendation for the entirety of Shoal WSA, or just the Teton county portion. Tom Turiano responded that, ideally, it would be for Shoal Creek WSA in its entirety. Dan Smitherman said he believes there is agreement over the desire for one proposal.

Steve Smutko shared that Sublette will be diving into Shoal Creek on 1/3, and asked about the possibility of the subcommittee joining the conversation. Siva Sundaresan and Steve Kilpatrick were both maybes for attendance. It was decided that after the Jan. 3rd Sublette Meeting, Dan Smitherman will share any potential recommendation to the Teton Committee by e-mail so that the Teton Committee can respond at their meeting on Jan. 8th.

Dan Smitherman said he believes there is overlap between the two counties vision for Shoal Creek, although Sublette has more ag/recreation interests, while Teton has more motorized/wildlife interests. Lisa McGee asked how Sublette's options are organized. Dan S. responded that the options are organized by WSA.

Len Carlman: Proposal and Committee Response

Len Carlman thanked the committee for their hard work on internationally significant resources, and shared his five "Options for Progress". The documents laying out his full proposal were shared with the entire committee by Siva Sundaresan on Dec. 6th. Len Carlman emphasized his main concern is to protect and respect roadless areas.

Bruce Hayse responded that a visionary proposal would be the protection and preservation of ecosystems, with a primary focus on the protection of all wild areas in this county. He mentioned a recent New York Times article highlighting wilderness as a draw to Jackson Hole and the surrounding area.

Dan Smitherman asked for clarification of Len's "Options for Progress". Dan S. pointed out that there are no management prescriptions in Len Carlman's proposal.

Len Carlman acknowledged that his proposal punts on tough conflicts. He clarified the toolkit he references is the forest planning array of Desired Future Conditions. Administrative tools are converted to legislative tools.

Jim Woodmencey asked for clarification on Option #2, and mentioned it could use some clarification.

Len said that edits, additions, and deletions are welcome.

Rob Shaul asked if Len C. was still in favor of creating a Natural Recreation Area. Len C. responded yes, he is still in support. He suggested using the "The Jackson Hole National Wildlife and Recreation Area" as an umbrella name, with Wilderness to be created in the Mt. Leidy highlands.

Steve Kilpatrick thanked Len for his big picture perspective, but mentioned the committee has struggled to wrap heads around just two WSAs. Steve K. said he was not trying to be negative, but he didn't know if Len's proposal was feasible. Len asked the committee to please take big picture in mind. He said he knew Palisades was particularly tough, but the lack of material progress from the committee on options involving maps has shocked him. He closed by emphasizing his openness to meeting with others.

Dan Smitherman clarified that if the committee doesn't decide on Wilderness designation, they will need to decide on specific management prescriptions. Wilderness codifies it, otherwise management is left up to the agency. Lloyd Dorsey would like to see Wilderness in the Mt. Leidy Highlands.

There was a discussion of roadless rulings.

Lisa McGee said legislated roadless management is a big deal, and better than status quo. The Forest Service is taking up the idea of roadless areas. She said it is easier to get rid of a Rule than a Statue. She really liked Len's idea. Lisa M. said a difference between roadless and wilderness, was taking timber and oil and gas off table, which is not nothing. She said it is one thing the committee can all agree on, and it is the recreational uses that are the sticking point.

Options

Don Saner suggested a focus on Shoal Creek WSA.

John Heberger Jr. brought up that he uncertainty as to whether the committee plans to focus on the two WSAs, or look at the entirety of lands in Teton county. He thought it would be a struggle to focus efforts without having some clarity around that, and was personally reluctant to move beyond the two WSAs in consideration of the scope and time allotted for this process. He said he could see potentially changing his position if there is a willingness to make tradeoffs on what is done with public lands.

Mike Brennan said it was hard to explore tradeoffs without first identifying what the tradeoffs might be. There was more discussion of the approach to take.

Reaching out to Lincoln County was brought up due to the Palisades WSA boundary overlap. John H. Jr. said he could not see a proposal that did not include the southern half of the Palisades going anywhere.

Bruce Hayse said that Teton operates under protection of ecosystem principles, a different set of values than Lincoln County. He is not in favor of offering any deals to Lincoln County.

Steve Smutko introduced himself as the facilitator for Carbon and Sublette counties. He suggested moving forward on a straw man proposal. It might change in a couple months, but the sooner that is drafted, the sooner the committee can be productive. He suggested picking a few people in the room to draft a straw man proposal.

Lisa McGee asked Deb Kleinman to clarify how today's option generation would be different than last month. Deb responded that the purpose was to build on last time: fill in the gaps, and add detail. She said if there is area the committee wants to have a focused conversation on, to go ahead and do so. The goal of the day was a complete list of options.

Mike Mielke suggested it would be constructive to go through what is off the table, and identify where the big problems are. Deb Kleinman said that work would come later.

Greg Buchko asked for clarification on the focus. He said he had not spent enough time researching areas outside the WSAs to consider them. Deb Kleinman suggested framing it differently. She said start with the WSAs, then look outside of them.

Rob Shaul said he wanted to reiterate what Lisa McGee asked. He did not see the difference from last time. He was disappointed there was not a new tool for this meeting.

The Committee was given an hour to refine their options.

Debrief of Options Generation

4:40 Deb Kleinman asked the committee to report back on their work.

Tom Turiano shared out from his small group discussion on Shoal Creek. They looked at areas for Wilderness, and areas for motorized recreation. They came up with a couple options, including designating the Teton County portion of Shoal Creek as Wilderness, or opening it to multiple use. In the small group, they agreed the removal of the SE portion of Shoal Creek was acceptable, and could potentially be added to adjacent FS lands.

Steve Smutko asked if they produced any lines on a map.

Using a map, Dan Smitherman pointed out the areas of most discussion. These included the northern area off of Deer Ridge, and the SW end of Deer Ridge to Jack Pine. They mentioned the Dell Creek parking lot as a source of snow mobile use. Dan Smitherman and his small group pointed out areas of potential compromise on the map. An addition to the Gros Ventres Wilderness was suggested.

Dan Smitherman summarized two potential proposals for Teton County. One proposal designated the entirety of Shoal Creek as Wilderness. The other proposal called for the northern tier of Shoal Creek to be added to the adjacent Gros Ventre Wilderness, the southern portion (tier) to be open to specific, though perhaps limited recreational uses not consistent with Wilderness. A portion along the north west where there is snowmobile use would be released. A portion along Jack Creek near the cabin would also be released. The Wilderness would be expanded on the south east. The exact boundaries and map drawings were not shown but an approximate outline was discussed.

Mike Mielke suggested a third proposal based on some seasonal use wildlife and hunting issues. He is interested in continued snowmachine use, although not necessarily throughout the whole WSA. He understands there are some sheep issues in Sublette and Teton county.

There was discussion of critical elk habitat closures, and summer mechanized use.

Steve Kilpatrick shared points from a discussion he had with Linda Merigliano. Linda M. spoke to the possibility of Wilderness with exemptions, which there is a precedent for in an area by Dubois. She said the committee could do something similar here to enhance habitat. She cautioned against many exemptions. Steve Kilpatrick mentioned that unique situations are good rationales for exemptions, like a preexisting cabin or sensitive species (bighorn). He asked the committee not to forget exemptions as an option.

Lisa McGee shared out from her small group discussion with Mike Mielke, Amanda Carey and Len Carlman. They liked the idea of trying to agree on things the committee does not want to see. They thought low hanging fruit might include exclusion of timber harvest and mining. They also wanted to deal with inholdings, and mentioned there was a state lands section that should not be overlooked. They talked about figuring out a bigger package, based on no new trails and no new roads, with the acknowledgement of front country mountain bike trails in Palisades. There was acknowledgment of winter motorized use in the Palisades, with areas of crucial areas of wildlife habitat in mind. They wanted to take industrial uses off the table, and dive deeper into recreational uses.

Don Saner asked if they addressed heli-skiing.

Lisa McGee said no, they did not discuss heli-skiing. She said her small group agreed it was difficult to answer the question “what is best for the resource?” Speaking for herself, she asked what restraint might look like in Teton County. She said the area is an international treasure, and what people come for. She said it would be a missed opportunity if the committee doesn’t strive beyond grandfathered uses. Lisa McGee would prefer to err on the side of restraint.

Mike Brennan brought up the difficulty of evaluating the economic interest in resource. He said the business community writ large was not necessarily represented here (in the Teton County WPLI committee). He mentioned Cache Creek as an example of bridging values, and a set of recommendations for use prescriptions.

Jim Woodmencey shared out from his small group discussion. They looked at Shoal Creek and Palisades, and made a list of recreational uses. They didn’t get into industrial uses. He sees heavy recreation use as an issue going forward. He pointed out that the Palisades has more user groups than Shoal Creek appears to have. There is a perception that there is more mechanized and motorized use in Palisades than Shoal Creek (mountain biking, snow machine, heli-skiing, and some ATV, along with hiking and horseback riding). Shoal Creek may have more snow machine use.

Mike Mielke responded that Shoal Creek WSA currently has limited use by snow machines, that it is more of a local thing. He said the Palisades usage is a local thing too, but boundary wise, the Palisades is an island surrounded by a road with multiple access points. In that sense he said that Palisades is not like Togwotee. Mike Mielke said he doesn’t want the area to be advertised, and that it is limited by parking (Pine Creek Pass), and somewhat by rider ability.

Lincoln County came up again. John Hebberger Jr. felt that putting a serious effort into talking with Lincoln County would strengthen what Teton County proposes. That way, in retrospect, Teton County can say they tried their hardest to see if any options would bring Lincoln County to the table. Lloyd Dorsey suggested framing the discussion with Lincoln County using language from the 1984 Wyoming Wilderness Act, which assumes lands will remain as WSAs.

The committee, by a show of hands, was in favor of “looking outside the WSAs in a focused way” when making their recommendations.

Public Comment

Kim Springer, *Great Old Broads for Wilderness*. Springer has been involved with public lands for more than 40 years. She mentioned the unique character of the GYE. She has attended several meetings, but had not heard discussion about population growth. She brought this issue to the committee’s attention by sharing growth projection maps and statistics. She said that the idea “if we don’t advertise it will stay the same” is not realistic, and the more the landscape is sliced and diced, the more challenging it will be to keep intact. In her opinion, the more wilderness, the better. She doesn’t think this process should be looking at little needs, but looking outside box and longer term.

Wade Kauffmann, *public*. Kauffmann has attended multiple meetings. He brought up the issue of a lack of

representation from the Idaho side of Teton county, where there are economic impacts. He encouraged the committee to have a broader scope, and look at the big picture. The Palisades are his backyard, and he said if any trails are being currently maintained, it is by himself or his family members. He asked the committee to focus on the big picture of economic impact, and said everyone drives cars, so everyone understands the importance of motorized recreation.

Matt Richards, *public*. Richards asked the question, “how can someone else pick how someone else recreates?” He said he thought there was a bit of hypocrisy that goes on with modern convenience and the tier-ing of recreation. He said that everyone pollutes, and he does not see why it is okay to burn gas in town, but not over here in another area. He asked the committee to please leave a piece for everyone to recreate in.

Mike Merigliano, *public*. Merigliano worked in natural resources management for 40 years, and was in attendance as a citizen. He shared a story about a similar situation with the Yellowstone River, and offered a comment of encouragement. The Yellowstone River task force thought could knock out their project in six months, and it took them three years. Merigliano saw whole process through his role as a scientist. He said this committee is farther along. He said there is some necessary muddling, and getting bogged down in detail, but it eventually coalesces. He said no one is ever totally happy with the final package. Merigliano was encouraged to see a shift to broader view, and said it would be a shame to let Wildlands go.

Mike Brennan thanked the public for their comment.

Lisa McGee will put together a list of “low hanging fruit” options prior to the January meeting.

Mike Mielke asked if a replacement agriculture stakeholder was needed for full representation. Don Saner said he thought the committee was too far along in the process to bring on another board member. Wade Kauffmann brought up a conversation he had with Billy Siddoway. He said he knew it was late in the game, but that she is educated about grazing and that area (Palisades WSA). Mike Brennan mentioned split jurisdiction issues with Idaho. He thought it would be plus to have someone who lives in Idaho providing input to the Committee.

Siva Sundaresan offered to reach out to Billy Siddoway. Wade Kaufmann would also be in touch with Billy Siddoway, and assess her level of interest. Kaufmann added that the Teton Committee would be receiving a letter from Teton County ID concerning their position on Palisades.

Steve Smukto brought up that the charter states the committee has to vote on bringing in someone new.

6:01 Meeting adjourns

Next Meeting

January 10th, 2018, 2-6 pm
USFS Building,
Jackson, WY