

**Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex**  
**Limits of Acceptable Change Public Meeting – Saturday, April 14, 2007**  
**Flathead National Forest Supervisor's Office, Kalispell**

This will serve as notes for the BMWC Public meeting held on Saturday, April 14th in Kalispell. Amber Kamps, 2007 BMWC Chair.

**Westslope Cutthroat Trout Project - John Fraley, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

In 2007 implementation of the reintroduction of Westslope Cutthroat begins for lakes in the South Fork Flathead River basin. The project is designed to protect the Native Westslope Cutthroat Trout in the South Fork Flathead River. First lakes in Jewel Basin are Black and Blackfoot Lakes and will be done in late October 2007. FWP will host an open house on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Red Lion Inn at the Kalispell Center Mall. The open house will be from 6:00-7:00 p.m. and public input will be from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Rotenone will be used on the lakes to kill the fish. The lakes will be restocked with fish in the spring, some may be of a catchable size. Several lakes have been responding well to swamping. The FWP plan to monitor these lakes and may put off treating them to the end of the 10 year project to see if swamping is effective. FWP will have a website devoted to this project available to the public by May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Forest Service is working with FWP on an annual operating plan that will discuss camping, trail closures, etc. and notification of the public. FWP is discussing liberalizing the fishing limits on 2 lakes this summer, however FWP Commissioners will have to approve.

**Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem Grizzly Bear DNA Study Update – Cathy Barbouletos, Flathead National Forest**

There were 545 individual bears were identified in the study. There are 29 bears collared around the Complex and two are in Canada. The next step is to have the data peer reviewed. There are currently 7 population models in the world to look at and determine which works the best for this study. The week of May 16<sup>th</sup> the World Population Experts will convene in Kalispell to review the data and try to come up with a statistically sound population number.

**Fish, Wildlife and Parks Update – Mack Long**

FWP developed a framework in 1995 to manage Wildlife in the Complex and is still using it. This is the only agreement of its type in the nation. They are working on a new draft of the agreement that will recognize Wilderness values to manage wildlife in all Wilderness areas in Montana.

Mack gave a presentation on wolves with a powerpoint which included information on the current status of regulations and what could be coming in the future. The 60 day comment period on the FWP wolf management plan has been extended to allow for more comments. The schedule is to finalize the plan by 2008. The funding for managing the wolves is being discussed.

**Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation Update – Shannon Freix**

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Shannon extended a thank you to everyone for the long standing support for the foundation. More supporters and volunteers for projects are always welcome, please consider signing up. They still need some packing support for some projects, check the list and see if you can help out. A good way to support is to purchase the license plates the foundation has for sale at the DMV. They are providing some reliable income for the foundation.

**Forest Service Regional Office Update - John Favro**

The new Regional Forester is Tom Tidwell and Gail Kimbell is the new Chief of the Forest Service. Terry Knupp is the new Director of Wilderness in the Washington Office.

Budgets are down. Trails budget is down about 1%. John will distribute \$600,000 in blowdown money around the region this spring. There were request for upwards of \$1,000,000, so not all projects will get funded and most did not receive the full amount requested. The recreation/wilderness budget is down about 14% from 2006. The predicted 2008 trails budget will be down 8%.

In 2008-09 the Forest Service will cut 25% from the operating budget in the Washington Office and all Regional Offices.

**District updates and LAC Monitoring Status**

Lincoln Ranger District – Lincoln only has a few sites left to be inventoried and complete the five year monitoring which we will be able to accomplish this field season. The Helena National Forest is going through reorganization trying to cut our fixed costs and get more money to the ground. The district will be down to 3 staff as a result. This is the transition year prior to implementing our new organization and because of that, we will not have a trail crew. Casey Burns will host several volunteer groups to accomplish our trail target this year and will also be covering the Scapegoat as the wilderness ranger. Several of the public attending the meeting did not like hearing Lincoln would not be fielding a crew. Amber explained that 2007, because it is in organizational transition, will be difficult. However, in 2008 with our new organization implemented we will be in the best position we can to bring more money and people to the ground for doing the work.

Spotted Bear Ranger District – There is a lot of blow down this year, more than in past years. There are maps being made for trailheads around the complex to warn visitors of the slough on the lower Danaher Trail. Trail folks will be on the trail looking for a permanent solution. LAC monitoring is about 98% done and District will be able to accomplish the five year monitoring. District will have some trail crew folks, but not as many as in past years.

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Seeley Lake Ranger District - Most of the LAC monitoring is complete, however need to look at some of the problem areas. Seeley will have a trail contract for clearing on most trails. There are several non-Wilderness projects this year. There are weed problems in some areas including yellow toadflax in the Dry Fork.

Hungry Horse Ranger District – Site monitoring is almost complete with 19 yet to go, but should have completed in 2007. They will have 2 wilderness rangers and 2 trail crews this year. Work will be completed using contracts and trail crews. There will be a new river guide in 2008.

Stock for Hungry Horse and Spotted Bear are now located/managed at Spotted Bear. Hungry Horse and Spotted Bear have an excellent working arrangement to share across the Districts for packers as well as pack and/or riding stock. In addition, Hungry Horse river rangers will support Spotted Bear. Some of the public attending the meeting voiced their concern over Hungry Horse not having stock and/or a packer located on the district as the Bob Marshall Wilderness was built using stock and all districts should maintain a stock program. The Forest Service assured the public the use of stock and packing skill are not going away, but simply Hungry Horse doesn't have a large enough program to support stock on the District and is more efficient for the Flathead National Forest to share across District boundaries. This is also healthier for the stock.

Ranger DeHerrera discussed the new District office and how it is financed. Once construction/move in is completed they will host an public open house.

The District is expecting some flood damage this spring as a result of the extensive rainfall they have received.

Rocky Mountain Ranger District – Montana Conservation Corp will be doing some LAC wilderness projects, not trail projects this season. Weeds continue to be problematic and program still continues. Gates Park bridge work this year will be on the dead men and abutment work sometime in the future. Kraig Lang expressed how the blowdown is the worst he has seen since he came to the district and their blowdown money had come through thankfully because the trail budget is so low. Wilderness rangers for the District will not be funded from the Wilderness/Recreation budget, but instead with REA dollars. Wilderness rangers will be the trail clearing crew this year to clear trails to the wilderness projects they have planned.

**Minimum Tool Discussion – Deb Mucklow, Spotted Bear Ranger District**

An individual asked if the use of chainsaws will be considered/allowed to increase trail clearing efficiency particularly in light of reduced budgets/crews and the heavy extent of the blowdown. Deb explained that we may consider requesting approval for use of chainsaw only if it was clearly a need for safety reasons. Most trail crews are quite proficient with a crosscut saw and can be as efficient as chainsaws. Deb emphasized the need to select the best tool for the job.

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**LAC Information – Public Expectations for '08 Report – Deb Mucklow**

The complex will be on track for the five year period. We will have data for 20 years now, however this is the first 5 year period in which we will have data collected for 100% of the Complex.

The next question is what do you want/expect to see from this data? The response included the following:

- Management action plan to take care of the problem areas,
- Prioritize what we found,
- Weeds vs. campsite impacts,
- Map showing trends (improvements and conditions getting worse),
- River use has escalated and this amount of use was not anticipated – LAC info to reflect,
- Simple report on trends – Where are we and where are we going, with examples. What changes and improvements have taken place?
- National monitoring standards – Wilderness Character monitoring,
- Compare all wilderness areas in the US to compare wilderness character.

Deb thanked everyone for their input. The Complex Rangers will use this to determine what will be pulled together for next spring's meeting to report out.

**Flathead National Forest Travel Plan Update – Deb Mucklow**

Spotted Bear Ranger District will complete a map in 2007. This map is a motorized access map, which is a map standardized nationwide where only motorized routes will be included. It will be a legal map similar to the FWP hunting district map and will be available to the public for free. A visitor use map will also be updated/available which will include all motorized and non-motorized trails/routes. This map will be available to the public to purchase as it is now.

Hungry Horse and Tally Lake Ranger Districts will have a motorized map completed in 2008.

**Lolo, Bitterroot, Flathead Forest Plan Revision Update – Cathy Barbouletos**

Under the 2005 rule, the Flathead National Forest is one of the first Forests in the Nation to complete a revision effort under the new 2005 rule. The Bitterroot, Lolo, Kootenai, and Idaho Panhandle are close behind.

This 2005 Rule was published in the Federal Register and is now being appealed on the grounds it does not require adequate public involvement, consultation with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for species protected under the Endangered Species Act, or correctly

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follow requirement in the National Environmental Policy Act. Due to this appeal, the Flathead revision decision is on hold.

**Miscellaneous Items – All**

Pilots association is heavily involved in Schaffer & backcountry strips in managing to protect the Wilderness character and inform users on such. Brochures have been made and were passed out to continue educational awareness.

Districts are receiving complaints from users about outfitting, however too long after the fact to respond. Deb Mucklow encouraged folks if they encounter anything inappropriate, suspicious, or violations with outfitters/guides please let us know in a timely manner.

Commercial mushroom picking from fire areas in the wilderness is not allowed. Posters to alert people will be displayed at offices and trailheads along with information addressing requirements for harvesting for personal use.

Deb Mucklow also asked for help in informing the Forest Service of illegal drop floats. Not all outfitters are authorized to do drop floats. A suggestion was made to include a list of authorized outfitters at the trailhead for the public to view.

Food storage continues to be an issue with violations/warnings continuing. Please monitor yourselves and help others you encounter to comply with the regulations.

Smoke Elser asked the group if defensive horsemanship course is it working or not. He'd like some feedback.

**Closing Remarks & Thanks were given by Cathy Barbouletos and Spike Thompson**

Notes compiled by:  
Ernie Lundberg, Lincoln Ranger District

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People Attending the BMWC Public Meeting 4/14/2007

Ernie Lundberg, USFS Lincoln  
Smoke Elser, Missoula Backcountry Horseman (BCH), Professional Wilderness  
Outfitting Association  
Deb Mucklow, USFS Spotted Bear  
Tad Wehunt, USFS Spotted Bear  
John Favro, USFS Regional Office  
Spike Thompson, USFS Lewis & Clark National Forest  
Sue Johnson, USFS Spotted Bear  
Steve Penner, Volunteer  
Ken Phillips, Cabin Creek Outfitters  
Ed Langlois, Flathead BCH  
R. Fred Fitzpatrick, Eastslope BCH  
John Fraley, FWP  
Jimmy DeHerrera, USFS Hungry Horse/Glacier View  
Ken Ausk, Flathead BCH  
Jack Bradford, Flathead BCH  
Mike Chandler, Missoula BCH  
Joe and Debbie Perry, Sportsmen  
Shannon Connolly, USFS Seeley Lake  
Jim Blackburn, USFS Seeley Lake  
Tim Love, USFS Seeley Lake  
Colter Pence, USFS Hungry Horse/Glacier View  
Paula Peterson, USFS Hungry Horse/Glacier View  
Shannon Freix, BMWF  
Greg and Deborah Schatz, Flathead BCH  
June Burgau, Flathead BCH  
Edd Blackler, Flathead BCH  
Dale Luhman, USFS Spotted Bear  
Amber Kamps, USFS Lincoln  
Nevin Guderian, Helena BCH  
Merlyn Huso, Helena BCH  
Chuck Manning, MT Pilot's Assoc.  
Kraig Lang, USFS Rocky Mountain  
Harry and Clair Workman, Buckhorn Ranch  
Jack Meyer, Flathead BCH  
Gina Ternan, Bitterroot Valley  
Kay Lewis, Flathead BCH  
Jacob Long, USFS Seeley Lake  
Connie Long, Missoula BCH  
Cathy Barbouletos, USFS Flathead National Forest