

**Meeting of the Board of
County Commissioners
Tri County Forest Group
Friday April 27th, 2018 1:00 PM**

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

Introduction of Attendees:

1. Amanda Rowton, Clerk of the Board, commissioners@co.ferry.wa.us
2. Nathan Davis, Ferry County Commissioner
3. Mike Blankenship, Ferry County Commissioner
4. Gary Nielsen, TCMRA
5. Merrill Ott, Colville NF Ambassadors
6. Stan Christie, TCMRA
7. Nancy Harshman, NE & Ferry Country BCH, nancyhars47@gmail.com
8. John Boyd, NEWT
9. Tiana Luke, NEWFC/CNW
10. Dick Dunton, NEWFC
11. Matt Scott, Vaagen Bros Lumber/ NEWFC
12. Kurtis Vaagen, Vaagen Bros, kvaagen@vaagenbros.com
13. Josh White, USFS, jpwhite@fs.fed.us
14. Maurice Williamson
15. Kevin Arneson, Boise Cascade, kevinarneson@bc.com
16. Gloria Flora, SOS & NEWFC
17. Jeff Koffel, TEDD
18. Johnna Exner, Ferry County Commissioner
19. Russ Vaagen, Vaagen Timber/NEWFC
20. Tim Coleman, KRCCG
21. Steve Kiss, Pend Orielle County Commissioner
22. Travis Fletcher, Colville National Forest, twfletcher@fs.fed.us
23. Kinsey Coots, TEDD
24. Eric McQuay, Colville National Forest, emcquary@fs.fed.us
25. Craig Newman, Colville NF
26. Larry Beardslee, Ferry County
27. Dave Hedrick, Ferry County Conservation
28. Mike Paulson, CMR representative
29. Jesse Abrams, University of Oregon, jabrams@uoregon.edu
30. Scott Nielsen, Cattle Producers of WA
31. Rodney Smolden

Introductions

Commissioner Blankenship opened the meeting at 1:00 PM.

Commissioner Blankenship discussed the mission statement in general and the functioning protocol. He asked for comments.

Gloria Flora asked about the purpose and wanted to know because it says to take input, she wanted to know to what end?

Commissioner Blankenship discussed the responses to the proposal from last month and introduced Gary Neilsen to explain.

Gary Neilsen reintroduced the TCMRA proposal from last month regarding the opening of forest service roads for ATV's. The maps were shown overhead.

Commissioner Blankenship discussed the areas in Curlew that could potentially be variable speed limit areas. Since 2005 we have tried to make a connector to ride to Okanogan. This proposal alludes to the objective.

Craig Newman said they are working with regional office and continue to push to get someone to work on this. Gary Neilsen presented maps of Vulcan, South Huckleberry Trail, Owl Mountain and Bodie Mountain to Empire Lake.

Maurice Williamson asked about the meaning of "side roads"?

Gary Neilsen said that these roads are open, just not to ATV's.

Commissioner Blankenship asked if this fixed the problem from Davis Lake.

Gary Neilsen said yes it does.

Commissioner Parker asked if the Forest Service roads were open to vehicles.

Craig Newman said yes.

Commissioner Parker asked the FS if they have an engineer to do an analysis to open the roads to ATVs.

Craig Newman said that motorized mixed use process that's his wheel house.

Commissioner Parker said there has been 6 years of history in Steven's County with only accident.

Kurtis Vaagen said only issue would be temporary closure when they are working on the forest.

Commissioner Blankenship agrees with Kurtis.

Matt Scott said that contracts don't go on the weekends. They work with the snowmobile group in a similar way.

Josh White asked about messaging information. How could we message that information?

Commissioner Parker discussed interactive forest maps.

Jeff Koffel said that they could do it on the NE Washington trails website.

Merrill Ott discussed the 10% who aren't online etc.

Nancy Harshman discussed a contract that was out and there wasn't good communication.

Josh White said we have closed roads for projects especially with larger truck traffic.

Merrill Ott asked how soon in advance we could be notified about a project.

Kurtis Vaagen said communication in the vehicle is key for safety.

Stan Christie said most maps doesn't have a bunch of logging trucks so it shouldn't be a huge issue.

Josh White said if we decided to close a road we would communicate it. It does depend on how much traffic. Weekends and holidays would be open as they don't work at that time.

Gary Neilsen presented the Swan Lake Region.

Tiana Luke asked about the Twin Sisters road.

Gary Neilsen said it was an existing road. He discussed the safety of riding.

Tiana Luke clarified that the road would complicate the analysis if it wasn't currently opened. Would the unauthorized roads be remedied as part of this process?

Josh White said we are doing that anyways.

Forest Service Update

Josh White said the comment period started Wednesday for the Orient Watershed. It goes for 30 days. It looks different. It looks small. Looking at Bulldog, he is interested in what people think. Trout Lake Sherman project scoping is coming soon. He said there will be a field trip in June and he will put the word out. It will happen after the scoping letter comes out.

Travis Fletcher said we are continuing to work on the San Poil project.

Josh White said as soon as the roads open the Sherman fuels reduction project will start. It takes the FS an exceptionally long time to create a large document. They are working on shortening the process.

Maurice Williamson asked if we could give kudos to the Colville NF for improving.

Forest Plan Revision

Rodney Smolden said there was no new news on the FPR.

Gloria Flora asked if this was going to be a voting group.

Commissioner Blankenship said he doesn't want to see a collaborative but people can provide input on what is supported, why and to what end? To give direction of what the community feels. It is not a formalized vote. He liked Tiana's questions or comments. By next month hopefully we can formalize the information.

Tiana Luke wants to visit those roads before she approves.

Russ Vaagen collaborative vs. non collaborative. He wonders if it would be fruitful to hand something off to other collaborative.

Commissioner Blankenship said if you have something, please bring it back to this group. Anything you say here doesn't tie you to a decision. You can as an individual go to the FS with your personal opinion. How do we speak for the constituents when we don't have regular contact with them?

Maurice Williamson said if you don't have a good set of ground rules it goes a rye. How could you go about disseminating the information? How we behave amongst ourselves.

Matt Scott volunteered Tiana and himself to do an update on Orient as Tiana has been working on it for the last year. Tiana could enlighten us on the issues they have researched on the projects.

Gloria Flora asked about educational opportunities that would be useful.

Commissioner Parker said his quick response is we could do a lot here but were missing a more general input. He feels this isn't an educational time. We should be doing our studying on our own.

Commissioner Blankenship agrees with Commissioner Parker and it would make these meetings long.

Stan Christie said he hasn't heard about the economic impact. FC is in a bad way economically. He is interested in possibly opening a shop in Curlew to do an ATV shop in the old Blue Cougar. Name it Blue Cougar Power Sports. He said he would like to open it but the FS roads need to be open to make it feasible.

Commissioner Blankenship said economics will play a part in this discussion on Deadman Crk as it is sliding regularly about a 4 mile section. There is about a100 families back there. The road crew is really good. Matsen Creek road is the backup road.

Maurice Williamson is glad that he didn't hear a flat no on the education. He has learned a lot that finds common ground.

Commissioner Blankenship didn't want to bog us down with regular education.

Gary Neilsen asked about the new A-Z project.

Josh White said there is a FS component, State component as an agency we have had discussions about what the Chewelah A-Z looks like.

Scott Neilsen said he wants to hear comment on Laclaire grazing project.

Rodney Smolden said we are at a point where agencies asking for plan are in DC. Haven't heard back.

Dick Dunton said communication is an issue and needs to be improved.

Matt Scott said he drafted a letter on the road use issue a few months ago and would like to look at it again in the future.

Maurice Williamson said we should think about a cut of stewardship to go to the county.

Josh White said Swan Lake, Orient are stewardships and there are retained receipts in those.

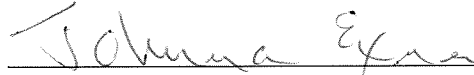
Gloria Flora said NEWFC looked at an area for special interest for recreation. Maybe we could look at that again.

Jeff Koffel discussed the North East Washington Sustainable Tourism & Recreation team that meets monthly at the TEDD office. Washington State doesn't have a department of tourism.

Commissioner Parker said he appreciates the ideas and topics of retained receipts & Stewardship categorical exclusions that do not allow for road construction.

The next meeting is going to be May 25th, 2018 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

BOARD OF FERRY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FERRY COUNTY, WASHINGTON



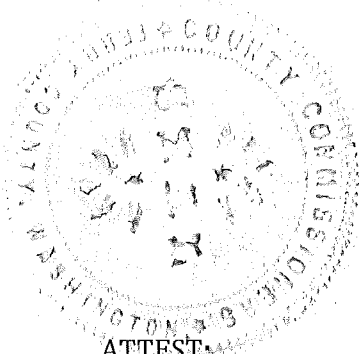
CHAIRMAN, Johnna Exner



VICE CHAIRMAN, Nathan Davis



MEMBER, Mike Blankenship



ATTEST:



Clerk of the Board, Amanda Rowton