

**Terrestrial Resources Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**September 12, 2018**  
**Noxon Emergency Services Building**  
**10:00 a.m. (MST)**

**Attendees**

**Designated TRTAC Representatives**

Avista – Nate Hall

Bull River Watershed Council – Kathy Ferguson (departed at 12:30 p.m.)

Green Mountain Conservation District (GMCD) – Terry Hightower

Elk Creek Watershed Council – Judy Hutchins

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) – Bruce Sterling

Noxon-Cabinet Shoreline Coalition – Rich Reich

Sanders County Commissioner – Tony Cox

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Wayne Kasworm

U.S. Forest Service (USFS) – Les Raynor

**Other Attendees**

Avista – Jason Pignanelli and Lisa Vollertsen

Avista Grant Writer – Susan Drumheller

Noxon-Cabinet Shoreline Coalition – Rick Robinson

**Welcome**

Nate Hall welcomed those in attendance and invited participants to introduce themselves. The purpose of today's meeting is to provide progress update on the PM&Es and identify any issues for the upcoming Management Committee (MC) meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Updates**

- Currently advertising for the Avista Terrestrial Program Leader Position.
- Wayne Kasworm provided a brief update on grizzly bear augmentation program.
- Nate provided an update on the HydroOne acquisition.
- Susan Drumheller provided a grant writer update.
- Nate provided an update on the Cabinet Gorge Dam Fishway.

**Appendix G: Implementation of the Land Use Management Plan (LUMP)**

The primary purpose is to manage Avista owned lands within the Clark Fork Project consistent with the LUMP and FERC License.

**Administration**

- Continue to implement the Private Recreation Permit Program. Jason let the group know that there are 212 active permits, as compared to 211 permits in place at this time in 2017.
- Continue to address property ownership/trespass issues as they arise – no major issues this year; however, some rock/log barriers were installed at Evelyn Boyd and an unpermitted dock was removed from Noxon Reservoir by Martin Creek area.

- Continue to process requests for leases/easements of Avista project property – Jason is working with Montana Department of Transportation on two year lease to revert State Shop property to original site. Bruce Sterling suggested expanding the ponds down the road.
- If a request is received, review and process Rock Creek Mine request to place discharge pipe across Project lands – Nate let the group know that there has been no new action or requests made of Avista regarding the Rock Creek Mine.
- Ongoing coordination of land use management program among TRTAC, Sanders County, GMCD, and the cultural resources, wildlife, recreation, aesthetics, and erosion programs.
- Continue implementation of the Pesticide and Herbicide Use Plan in consultation with the MC – a lot of work done this year as always.
- Continue to participate on the Sanders County Aquatic Invasive Plants Task Force (AIPTF) to implement an Integrated Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) Management Plan.
- Jason has completed first draft of the 5-year review and update of the LUMP, which is currently undergoing internal review. Jason will distribute the draft to the Land Use Subgroup and anyone else that is interested for review later this fall.
- The Special Uses Subgroup and other interested parties will evaluate new requests for special use permits by private and for profit rental companies to use Avista owned and managed recreation areas.
- Jason asked the TRTAC members to review two new applications that are located on Conservation 2 lands:
  1. Townsend, Noxon Reservoir, shared dock with 5-6 adjacent landowners, L-shaped dock anchored to the shore with 4x4 platform and four helical screws. Minimal ground disturbance associated with project. Water depth is good with a high bank. Foot trails (no ground disturbance or vegetation clearing) across Avista property to access dock. Jason recommends approving as a shared use dock between the multiple family members/adjacent lots to Avista property, as long as the dock location does not change. **The TRTAC members approved the application.**
  2. Ward, Noxon Reservoir, above ground fire ring, picnic table, lawn furniture, umbrella, and weed control. Jason recommends approving the application for requested amenities and cannot adversely affect public use of the Thompson Falls trail. **The TRTAC members approved the application.**

### Monitoring

- Continue annual inspections of Avista project lands to assure compliance with permit and lease conditions, and assure compliance with acceptable land uses and restrictions as defined by land use classifications. **Ongoing**

### Enforcement

- Continue to provide funding for MFWP enforcement personnel to assist in the prevention and when appropriate prosecute violations of the law, permit and lease conditions and other unauthorized uses of project lands and waters. Jason also mentioned the efforts underway to reauthorize the ~~bi~~annual rule with MFWP to provide greater enforceability

of rules and regulations on Avista property. This will go to the MT FWP Commission for review/approval later this fall.

- Continue to provide funding for Idaho Fish and Game enforcement personnel to assist in the prevention and when appropriate prosecute violations of the law, permit and lease conditions, and other unauthorized uses of project lands and waters.
- Continue to provide funding for Avista real estate, legal, land survey, and cultural personnel to assist in the prevention and when appropriate prosecute violations of the law, permit and lease conditions, and other unauthorized uses of project lands and waters.

## **Appendix H: Implementation of the Recreation Resource Management Plan (RRMP)**

### **Background**

The purpose of this measure is to provide for appropriate and adequate recreational opportunities and facilities associated with the Clark Fork Project through implementation of the RRMP.

Seven goals to be met through its implementation include:

1. Manage existing recreation resource needs.
2. Manage future recreation resource needs.
3. Provide adequate and safe public access.
4. Preserve recreation resources.
5. Coordinate recreation planning and needs.
6. Provide cost-effective and desirable recreation opportunities.
7. Provide compatible recreation opportunities.

Year 2018 work efforts are a continuation past efforts and remain focused on implementing the five distinct components of the RRMP:

### **Administration**

- Administer the RRMP with Recreational Specialist, clerical, consultant, and technical support.
- Integrate RRMP programs and projects with land use, cultural resources, wildlife, fisheries, aesthetics, and erosion control programs.

### **Facility Development**

#### **Objective**

Provide for appropriate and adequate recreational opportunities and facilities associated with the Clark Fork project – 31 projects listed in 2018 and will have 20 completed or will be by 2019.

- Montana Conservation Corps for one week in the spring and two weeks in the fall.
- Dust control at Finley Flats Campground and Two Rivers RV Park.
- Finley Flats Campground – added a swim area with buoys, designated parking area, camping area, and picnic tables.
- Trout Creek Recreation Area – remove three trees in the middle of parking area, remove part of the fence, and repave parking area. Initiate project in the fall.
- Frog Pond and Trout Creek Dispersed Campground – installed four ADA fire rings and removed rock fire rings.
- Heron Boat Launch – relocated boat dock to driver's side of ramp and removed old dock

bulkhead.

- Pilgrim Creek Park – installed underground sprinkler system for two baseball fields and area between fields.
- South Shore Campground – relocated boat dock to align with ramp.
- Kiosk Replacement – 24 new double kiosks and remove old kiosks. This project is in progress and will carryover to 2019.
- USFS Campgrounds – purchased six bear resistant trash/recycle bins for Big Eddy, North Shore (done), and Bull River (install in the fall).
- North Shore Campground – install a new boat ramp and dock, install no boat buoys around existing ramp to create a non-motorized use area. In progress and will carryover to 2019. Les Raynor explained the fencing portion of the project was completed earlier this year.
- Quinn’s Cut – NEPA completed, install vault toilet, grill, picnic tables, road sign, and road and parking improvements. Anticipate completing project this fall.
- Thompson Falls State Park – install trail to new shelter/fishing pier, remove and replace old shelter, convert old host site to ADA site. Anticipate completing the project this fall.
- Noxon Rapids Dam Overlook – removed four cottonwood trees and root systems damaging irrigation system, and planted 10 ornamental trees.
- Flat Iron Fishing Access Site – graded road for better drainage, added gravel and fines, and applied a double chip seal.
- Vermilion Bay Recreation Area – installed fire ring, vault toilet, extended dock, and tree thinning.

Projects that will carryover to 2019: low water boat ramp access on Noxon Reservoir, Kirby Gulch parking area expansion, Noxon boat ramp maintenance, install and remove kiosks, Clark Fork Access Site, Triangle Pond, Trestle Day-Use Area, North Shore Campground.

Rick Robinson suggested emailing private recreation permit holders if the Noxon Reservoir is closed.

Two Rivers RV Park – safety/hazard tree reduction was completed in 2018. Kathy Ferguson asked if the site will be replanted. Jason replied the original plan was to plant and will reconsider planting smaller trees/vegetation.

### Monitoring

#### **Objective**

Through monitoring use, management can be modified if needed to ensure that providing the appropriate and adequate recreational opportunities and facilities associated with the Clark Fork project.

#### **Tasks**

- Work with the recreation subgroup to implement electronic recreation site evaluations that were developed as part of the 2017 RRMP update.
- Continue to utilize up to 20 automated traffic counters to measure use at various developed and dispersed recreation sites and trails.
- Continue utilizing standardized reporting for recreation use at Thompson Falls State Park,

North Shore Recreation Area, and Bull River Recreation Area.

- Summarize 2018 recreational use data from Bull River and North Shore campgrounds, MFWP, Thompson Falls State Park, and Cabinet Gorge Dam and Noxon Rapids Dam viewpoints. Also, included in this summary will be maps showing dispersed recreation areas along the projects and permitted dock locations (showing dock densities per 0.5 mile segments of shoreline). These reports will be presented at the January 2019 TRTAC meeting.

### Operations and Maintenance

#### **Objective**

Ensure that recreation opportunities and facilities are operated and maintained in a manner to provide for appropriate, adequate, and safe use.

#### **Tasks**

- Maintain Avista controlled recreation facilities and undeveloped recreation sites on Avista lands.
- Assist USFS with the maintenance of Finley Flats Recreation Area, North Shore Recreation Area, Marten Creek Recreation Area, Triangle Pond, Bull River Recreation Area, Quinn's Cut Recreation Area, and Big Eddy Recreation Area. The current 5-year funding agreement is for 2014 through 2018.
- Assist MFWP with the maintenance of Thompson Falls State Park and Flat Iron Ridge Fishing Access Site.
- Provide low cost leases or permits to the community or civic groups providing recreation opportunities (i.e., Thompson Falls Golf Course).

### Interpretation and Education

#### **Objective**

Ensure that the existing information and education materials associated with the Clark Fork Project recreation resources and facilities are maintained.

## **Appendix I: Aesthetics Management Plan**

### **Background**

The purpose of this measure is to provide for the protection and enhancement of aesthetic resources associated with Avista's Clark Fork Projects and to mitigate for project related impacts to those resources through the implementation of the Aesthetics Management Plan (AMP). Aesthetic guidelines and considerations of the AMP are implemented by permit standards and land use classifications of the LUMP, site design and monitoring in the RRMP, and shoreline stabilization guidelines of the Shoreline Stabilization Guidelines Program. Ongoing coordination with other interest groups and agencies will occur as described for in the AMP.

### **2018 Project Plans**

- Monitor recreation, land management, erosion, and facility construction programs to ensure AMP guidelines are considered.
- Contractor is currently in the process of re-inventorying the 41 key viewpoints, with a final report due by the end of the year.

#### **Appendix J: Wildlife, Botanical, and Wetland Management Plan** (Nate lead discussions)

- Utilize the Wildlife, Botanical, and Wetland Management Plan to help guide implementation of Wildlife, Botanical, and Wetland PM&E programs.
- Continue to update the habitat protection spreadsheet as acquisitions are completed.
- As approved by the MC at the March 15, 2016 meeting observations regarding bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and common loons will be reported here annually.
- Under this program, Nate manages the property acquisition database and described work under this program: conservation easement on East Fork Bull River and transfer of one property from a conservation servitude held by Avista to a conservation easement held by Kaniksu Land Trust.

#### **Appendix K: Wildlife Habitat Acquisition, Enhancement, and Management Program**

Operation and maintenance, including fence/gate maintenance, noxious weed treatment, forest management plan development and implementation, public information and management, and taxes on Avista owned and managed habitat protection properties. Specific projects include:

- Trestle Creek site plan – development and implementation of site plan for the old Bear Paw Campground. Area is heavily used during kokanee spawning. Project is being implemented in cooperation with appendices A and D.
- Trestle Creek timber management plan – harvest on approximately 30 acres has been completed. Still some work to be completed: road rehabilitation, slash disposal, and installation of a gate. Net proceeds of approximately \$300,000 and will be split between appendices A and K.
- Twin Creek – continue to develop site plan and install infrastructure to allow for public use. A sign was installed and parking barriers will be installed this fall. Continue with haying contract as a means of noxious weed control. Idaho Department of Fish and Game wardens addressed some unauthorized use of the site (camping and trap shooting) this summer.
- South Fork Bull River Wildlife Management Area Complex – finalized the timber management plan. A MFWP forester is reviewing the plan and will make future recommendations.
- Monitoring of other Avista owned habitat properties and implement management measures, as needed.

#### **Bear Trust Conservation Easement Proposal – Mainstem Bull River**

- Nate provided an overview of a proposed project, the purchase of a conservation easement held by Kaniksu Land Trust on a 126-acre parcel along the mainstem Bull River. The group discussed the proposed project. The TRTAC members support the project proposal moving forward to the MC.

#### **Appendix L: Black Cottonwood Protection and Enhancement**

##### **Background**

The purpose of this measure is to provide for the protection of black cottonwood trees and stands on Avista owned project lands through the development of site-specific management and enhancement plans for three specific cottonwood sites identified by the Wildlife, Botanical, and Wetlands Work Group. Additionally, existing stands and trees will be protected through the implementation of land use classifications in the LUMP.

Site-specific management plans were developed in 2000. Efforts were focused on the continued protection of black cottonwood stands and trees through the implementation of land use classifications in the LUMP. The site-specific enhancement efforts at Hereford Slough (completed in early 2003 and treated again in 2007) will continue to be monitored to determine response, and implement additional management efforts as needed.

An 80 x 80 foot woven wire enclosure was built in the spring of 2015 at the Hereford Slough cottonwood site. Even though the spring and summer of 2015 and 2016 were unseasonably hot and dry, cottonwood generation was good within the enclosure. Regeneration occurred from exposed roots, cutoff stumps, and seed germination.

### **2018 Project Plans**

- Continue to protect black cottonwood stands along the Clark Fork Project through the implementation of the LUMP.
- Continue to monitor and maintain the enclosure at Hereford Slough.
- Based on success of the Hereford Slough enclosure, construct two more enclosures within this stand. One large enclosure or two smaller enclosures will be constructed in October 2018.

### **Appendix M: Wetlands Protection and Enhancement Program**

- Investigate the potential for a wetland enhancement project on the 2016 Twin Creek acquisition. Will meet with Ducks Unlimited Engineer onsite this fall.

### **Appendix P: Forest Habitat Protection and Enhancement**

#### **Background**

The purpose of this measure is to provide for the protection and enhancement of specific forest habitat parcels of Avista project land along the reservoirs. The Wildlife, Botanical, and Wetland Work Group identified these parcels as having significant wildlife habitat value.

### **2018 Project Plans**

- Continue to manage these areas that have been classified as Conservation 1, and as such are afforded the maximum protection provided through the LUMP.
- Honey Flats is being managed to minimize impacts to the site (e.g., no motorized vehicles, no timber harvest, and minimize public use of site). Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe and Cultural Resources Management Group (CRMG) have expressed an interest in having this site managed for traditional plants and uses. Continue to work with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe to define management options.
- Continue to monitor and enforce the road closure to Stevens Creek Point (closure was instituted in 2001).
- Continue to prohibit motorized use of Finley Flats Point.
- Continue to utilize the MFWP Block Management Program to provide hunter access to the Tuscor, South Fork Bull River, and Wood Duck properties.

- Develop Biannual Rule with MFWP to provide greater enforceability of rules and regulations on Avista property. This will go to the MFWP Commission for review/approval this fall.
- Continue weekly patrols of forested land surrounding the State Shop property to reduce disturbance and litter in this area.
- Jason explained that the Swamp Creek timber thinning project was completed this summer. Slash piles will be burned this fall.
- Jason noted that Phase 2 of the Two Rivers RV Park timber thinning project will be initiated this fall.

#### **Appendix Q: Reservoir Island Protection**

##### **Background**

The purpose of this measure is to provide for the protection of islands owned by Avista in the project reservoirs. The goal is to maintain the unique and high quality wildlife habitat functions and values of these islands.

- Continue to ensure restrictions developed for the protection of these areas utilizing the land use classifications described in the LUMP.

#### **Appendix S: Erosion Fund and Shoreline Stabilization Guidelines**

- Address erosion concerns identified by the CRMG.
- Address a site where erosion threatens to go past Avista ownership on Cabinet Gorge Reservoir (Laundry site). Rootwads will be set at the toe of the slope and willow cuttings planted this fall.

#### **Next Meeting Date**

Hall stated that the group needed to select a date for a January meeting to review the draft 2019 Annual Implementation Plans. The WRTAC meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2019 and the TRTAC meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2019. The MC meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2018 and Idaho tour on September 26, 2018.

The TRTAC meeting ended at 1:30 p.m.





*Memorandum*  
*Noxon Natural Resources Office*

**DATE:** August 27, 2018

**TO:** Terrestrial Resources Technical Advisory Committee (TRTAC)

**FROM:** Nate Hall, Avista  
Jason Pignanelli, Avista

**SUBJECT:** Fall TRTAC Meeting Announcement

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We would like to invite you to our upcoming TRTAC meeting to be held Wednesday, September 12, 2018 in Noxon, Montana. We will begin at 10:00 (MDT) at the Emergency Services Building, directly across the street from the High School. Lunch will be provided and we expect to adjourn early afternoon.

The primary objective of this meeting is to update the TRTAC on the progress of 2018 implementation efforts. The 2018 Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs; as approved by the Management Committee [MC] on March 13, 2018) will be used to facilitate our discussions; thus, it would be useful if you would bring a copy to the meeting. We will review the terrestrial resource AIPs with regard to what has been completed, what needs to be completed, and any variances.

In addition, we will be updating the group on new work and changes to existing programs that may be proposed for 2019. The goal of this effort is to ensure all Parties have the opportunity to participate and provide input as proposals are being developed. Lastly, we will identify any issues or actions that will need to be forwarded to the MC for their September 25 meeting.

The agenda for the meeting:

- Welcome and introductions
- General updates
- Other business
- Review of Consent Mails
- Summary of 2018 implementation efforts and anticipated changes for 2019
- Choose a winter meeting date (proposed: Wednesday, January 23, 2019)

If there are any other specific agenda items that you would like to discuss at this meeting, please let me know as soon as possible at 406-847-1281 or [nate.hall@avistacorp.com](mailto:nate.hall@avistacorp.com), so that I can ensure we have the appropriate information on hand. Please give me a call with any additional questions or concerns. I look forward to seeing you all on September 12.

Cc: Bruce Howard, Nina Paul, Heide Evans  
Ref: TRTAC\_MEMO\_2018\_08\_27