

**Terrestrial Resources Technical Advisory Committee (TRTAC) Meeting Notes**  
**Winter Meeting January 21, 2025**  
**Noxon Multipurpose Room**  
**10:00 a.m. (MST)**

**TRTAC Representatives Attendees:**

Avista –Arthur Potts  
Cabinet Resource Group – (Alt) Ceaser Hernandez  
Elk Creek Watershed Council – Judy Hutchinson  
Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) – Ken Bouwens  
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality – Bob Steed (conference line)  
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks – Zach Farley (conference line)  
Noxon-Cabinet Shoreline Coalition – (Alt) Rich Reich  
Sanders County Commissioner – Tony Cox 10:16  
U.S. Forest Service (USFS) – Caleb Matthew  
U.S. Fish Wildlife Service – Wayne Kasworm (conference line)

**Other Attendees:**

Avista – Monica Ott, Eric Oldenburg, Paul Kusnierz, (conference line) Davina Brown, and Lisa Johnson  
Avista Grant Writer – Susan Drumheller (conference line)  
Lower Clark Fork Watershed Group – Sarah Poiesz (conference line)  
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks – Brian Schwartz, and Dave Landstrom (conference line)  
U.S. Forest Service (USFS) – Michael Fieger (conference line) departed 12:58

**Welcome**

Arthur welcomed those in attendance. The purpose of today's meeting is to review the draft 2025 Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs), make any necessary corrections, and recommend forwarding them for Management Committee's (MC) review and approval at their upcoming meeting March 11, 2025.

**Other business**

- Seasonal technicians for 2025 summer – hiring 1 position.
- Grant Writer Update (Susan Drumheller)
- Trying to finish a vegetation management plan that will go to TRTAC and CRMG for review.
- Fall Meeting Date set for **August 27, 2025**

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

1. Noxon Rapids Dam Vicinity Hunting Restrictions
  - a. Mike Fieger provided an update and shared the private boundary map.

2. Administration of the Land Use Management Plan (LUMP)
  - a. Commercial Use Subgroup.
    - Request MC approval to develop and implement policy for CFSA sites.
    - Develop a plan that identifies and assess each boat launch.
  - b. Five-year update of the LUMP
    - Planning for Pinnacle to facilitate both the LUMP and RRMP updates this year.
    - Thoughts for policy additions? (short term rentals, gazebo design)
  - c. Avista will replace permit markers at all Rec Permit sites
  - d. Inland Forest Management Risk Assessment
    - Partial funded under App. G for CFSA acquired lands.
3. Monitoring Associated with the Land Use Management Plan (LUMP)
  - a. Continue patrolling/observing lands for compliance with LUMP.
4. Enforcement Associated with the Land Use Management Plan (LUMP)
  - a. I DFG and MFWP wardens conducting routine patrols. IDFG provides monthly work summaries with invoicing; MFWP no longer requesting funding for patrols.
5. Managing Aquatic Invasive Plants on Noxon and Cabinet Gorge Reservoirs
  - a. Request is the same as last year for facilitation and other assistance to the Sanders County Aquatic Invasive Plant Task Force.

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix G as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

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

#### **Management Fund**

1. RRMP Administration and Resource Integration
  - a. RRMP Update will be completed in 2025
2. RRMP Monitoring
  - a. 2024 Recreation Monitoring Report is available for anyone that would like a copy.
    - Send copy of report to Judy Hutchins
  - b. Electronic Site Evaluations
    - 2017 update stipulates these will be implemented, not developed to date.
    - Consider removing the requirement in new update through normal operations.
3. Operation and Maintenance of Recreation Facilities
  - a. Moved road evaluation from Facility Find to O&M for 2024 and beyond.
4. Interpretation and Education Program
  - a. On-going kiosk management

#### **Facility Fund**

5. North Shore Expansion (Tier 1)
  - a. Conceptual design completed
  - b. Acquire acreage from Bill Nolen (est. \$800,000)
  - c. Hire design firm to complete engineering designs (est. \$200,00-\$500,000)
  - d. Seek construction bids (2026) (est. \$2-3M)
6. Thompson Falls State Park Group Shelter (Tier 1)

- a. Brian Swartz provided an update.
  - Identified Contractor, gates will be installed this spring.
- 7. Flat Iron Boat Ramp Engineering
  - a. Received bids from several consultants.
  - b. Morrison-Maierle (est. \$40,000); other bids significantly higher
- 8. Supplemental Projects (Tier 2)
  - a. Projects that will be completed if budget, resources, and time allows.
  - b. Unanticipated repair and improvement projects.
    - New snowplow installed in December (\$8,000)

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix H as presented to the MC for review and approval.- edit to redevelop project plan to Amend acquisition and fund design if funds are available*

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

\*Note there are no formal project plans, but tasks are detailed in the AIP.

1. Re- inventory of 41 key viewpoints was conducted in 2023 during the comprehensive rec survey. Pinnacle has finalized the report, and the AMP will be updated in 2024. This is scheduled to occur every 5 years; next re-inventory will be 2028.
2. AMP Update will be completed in 2025. Pinnacle performed Key Viewpoints re-inventory in 2023. The Re-inventory report will need to be added to AMO as an amendment.

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix I as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

### **Appendix J: Wildlife, Botanical and Wetland Management Plan**

\*Note that this is a continuing project approved annually and there are no formal project plans, but the AIP includes 3 annual requirements. Compliance is achieved through implementation of the LUMP and RRMP.

1. Review will take place at fall meeting.
  - a. 2025 Parcel for Review: Graves Creek- Steep Creek Ranch
2. Bald/Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, and Loon observations are no longer required, but Avista tracks sightings that are reported through this PM&E.

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix J as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

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

1. Operation and Maintenance of Acquired Property and Contingency Fund
  - a. Twin Creek- Acquired in 2016, Management Plan has not been developed. Thoughts on asking another ID agency (NRCS) or a contractor (KLT)?
    - Conversation of moving to IDFG.
    - IDFG will develop a wetlands management plan and send a copy of draft to Arthur to review with Ken Bauwens replacement.

2. Habitat Acquisition and Conservation and Contingency Fund: goal is to offset impacts from Project operation. Contingency Fund may be used with other PM&Es to maximize resource benefits.
3. Wood Duck Re-vegetation Maintenance – Sarah Busmire provided an update
  - a. Complete draft of Vegetation Management Plan for TRTAC review and MC approval in the fall.

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix K as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

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

\*Note that this is a continuing project approved annually and the AIP is the project plan.

1. Primary protection is provided through implementation of the LUMP.
2. Avista will continue to monitor and if needed repair existing enclosures at Hereford Slough.

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix L as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

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

\*Note that this is a continuing project approved annually and the AIP is the project plan.

Compliance is achieved through implementation of the LUMP and RRMP.

1. IDFG will develop a wetland management plan for Twin Creek property.
  - a. Remove and cover under Appendix K plan
  - b. Limit to monitoring beaver activity continues to function as wetland enhancement.
2. Continue to monitor enhancement projects at Hereford Slough, McKay Creek, Finley Flats, and Blacktail Bay/Islands.

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix M as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

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

1. South Fork Block Management Area Spotted Knapweed Treatment
  - a. Year 2 of 3; 3<sup>rd</sup> year may not include spraying.
2. Tuscor Block Management Area Road Development
  - a. Need to schedule site visit with Warden and contractor after calving season (mid-May).
3. Honey Flats
  - a. 2025 will include CRMG developing veg plan and working with grant writer to identify opportunities.

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix P as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

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

\*Note that this is a continuing project approved annually and the AIP is the project plan. This PM&E was developed in recognition of the importance of protecting the Avista owned island habitat along the project area.

1. Ensure protection of islands through enforcement of the LUMP.

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix Q as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

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

In 2024, work efforts will focus on addressing any erosion concerns identified by the CRMG; and utilize engineering assistance to help evaluate erosion control proposals received by Avista from adjacent landowners.

1. Kirby Gulch completed in December

*With no further discussion, the TRTAC approved forwarding Appendix S as presented to the MC for review and approval.*

- Davina and Arthur to send out TRTAC Fall meeting Outlook reminder
- Jet Boats- Jim Nash reached out to Avista to write a letter of intent to commissioner's office. Comments deadline is Jan 28<sup>th</sup>. Meeting in Helena is set for Feb 13, 2025 (Zoom only)
- Meeting Adjourned: 1:44 p.m. MST