

2018 High Divide Workshop

Draft Agenda

What can we do today to leave a legacy of vibrant communities and healthy lands & resources?

When: April 18
April 19

9 am - 5:00 pm
8 am - 4:00 pm

Where: Lewis & Clark Room, University of
Montana Western, Dillon, MT

Drought Resilience - Forests and Fire Wildlife Connectivity and Conflict Reduction

Workshop Goals

- 1) Continue our process for High Divide Stakeholders to express their vision for the desired future condition of the High Divide Landscape, a vision that sustains vibrant local communities, economies and resources. To this end we will:
 - Confirm stakeholder community and conservation goals for the High Divide
 - Share current information on the status of some of our High Divide priority resources and issues: Wildlife Connectivity, Water Resources, and Forests and Wildfire
 - Update one another on resource issues and conservation
 - Learn stakeholder perspectives of the future for three of our primary goals: Water, Forests and Wildlife
 - Identify opportunities from each topic for how we can advance local action
- 2) Advance the High Divide Collaborative
 - Continue to build trust and credibility within the collaborative and amongst stakeholders
 - Continue to discover added value through collaboration
 - Build capacity to work toward our collaborative goals

The High Divide Collaborative's eight primary conservation goals, as stated by Collaborative stakeholders, are to conserve:

- **Ecological Linkage** among core habitat areas to conserve wide-ranging fish and wildlife populations that are resilient to climate change
- A **cultural legacy** of traditional food sources, tribal treaty lands, and travel ways such as the Nez Perce, Continental Divide, and Lewis & Clark Trails
- **Working Ranchlands** that are central to communities, economy and way of life
- Nationally important dispersed **recreation** lands and waterways where people enjoy nature
- **Clean & abundant water** for headwaters fisheries, wildlife, healthy riparian communities, and human uses.
- Intact, resilient **sagebrush steppe ecosystems** that support sustainable ranching communities and are critical for many wildlife species, including the greater sage grouse
- **Healthy forest lands** managed for sustained economic, social and ecological values
- Open land in the **wildland urban interface** to protect life and property, reduce fire costs, and allow wildfire to play its natural role.

High Divide Workshop Agenda

9:00 AM Start – Wednesday, April 18

9:00-9:20

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Coordinating Committee REpresentatives: Merrill Beyeler, Jim Berkey, Gary Burnett

- Framework of the collaborative: open, transparent, building trust and communication
- Why we are here and how can we be relevant? How does participation in this collaborative move things forward on the ground in our local communities? What is actionable?
- Open question – What do you as participants see as the value of continuing these workshops?

Review of 8 Visionary Goals – confirmation

Review Workshop Goals and general agenda

Update on LWCF projects – Michael Whitfield

9:20 – 2:00

WILDLIFE CONNECTIVITY & CONFLICT REDUCTION SESSION

9:20-9:50

Results from Idaho-Montana cooperative elk modeling project

Bray Beltran - *Science Coordinator, Heart of the Rockies Initiative*

Kelly Profitt - *Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks*

Brent Brock - *Wildlife Biologist and Modeler, Holoscene Wildlife Services LLC*

Scott Bergen - *Idaho Department of Fish and Game*

- Presentation of process and results – what does this project tell us? What doesn't it?
- Open Discussion with participants
- Data availability
- What are next steps? Next species? How best to use this information

9:50-10:50

Wildlife Disease Panel – Brucellosis and Chronic Wasting Disease

An information sharing panel: What are status of these diseases in wildlife in the High Divide? What new information are we learning? What are effects on landowners?

Kimberly E. Szcodronski, **USGS** - *Madison Valley Study on viability of Brucella pathogen once it hits the ground* Wildlife Disease Research Associate, USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center

Kelly Profitt, **MTFWP** - Brucellosis in Montana

Emily Almberg, **MT FWP** - Chronic Wasting Disease in Montana

Toby Boudreau, **IDFG** CWD and Brucellosis status in Idaho

10:50-11:00 Break

Conflict Reduction and Connectivity

11:00-12:00

Grizzly Bear in the High Divide

Presentation of the recent Interagency Grizzly Bear Connectivity Study with discussion of what people are experiencing in their communities.

Cecily Costello, **MT FWP** biologist – connectivity study

Jamie Jonkel, **MT FWP** biologist – ground truthing GYE north

Kevin Frey, **MT FWP** Region 3 Bear Biologist – ground truthing GYE west

12:00 Lunch

1:00 – 1:30

Overview of locally-led human-wildlife conflict reduction projects and how they come together across the landscape. Lessons learned from landowner led groups.

- Gary Burnett or project coordinator to talk about the NFWF funded project and how it is augmenting existing efforts and supporting new efforts across the landscape.
- Centennial Valley Association Range Rider report
- Lessons learned from the Blackfoot Valley
- Initial report on long-term funding models to support conflict reduction efforts - Brendan Boepple, Master's Candidate, Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies

1:30 -2:00

Shared Priorities: Working Lands and Wildlife

Closing discussion led by Gary Burnett on our shared priorities of working lands and wildlife connectivity - how do these goals complement each other. Is there a need/desire for working group?

2:00 – 5:00

FORESTS AND FIRE SESSION

2:00 – 3:00

What can we learn from other landscape-scale efforts? 4FRI Arizona project

Neil Chapman, The Nature Conservancy of Arizona

In previous workshop discussions, participants suggested we learn from existing successful forest collaborations. The Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) is a collaborative effort to restore forest ecosystems on portions of four National Forests in northern Arizona. We will learn from their efforts to restore forest ecosystems that support natural fire regimes, functioning populations of native plants and animals, and forests that pose little threat of destructive wildfire to thriving forest communities, as well as support sustainable forest industries that strengthen local economies while conserving natural resources and aesthetic values.

Farm Bill Good Neighbor Authority and Omnibus Update

TBD

Presentation and discussion of this authority that allows the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to enter into cooperative agreements or contracts with states to perform watershed restoration and forest management services. Also, the new federal budget has several pieces of interest to participants and an overview will be discussed.

Learning from Others Locally

A panel discussion on how we work together across the landscape to increase pace and scale of forest restoration. Presenters are working in their local communities and will share their experiences.

Tim Love - Montana Forest Collaborative Network

Alex Dunn – Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF

Leonard Wortman – Jefferson County Commissioner on BDNF Collaborative

Toni Ruth of Salmon Valley Stewardship and **Bill Baer** of Salmon-Challis NF –local forest partnerships

5:00 *Adjourn*

5:30-7:00 Reception at Patagonia Store

Join us for some informal networking, beer and light snacks

16 S Idaho St -Patagonia is offering an extra 30% off purchases available 5-7:30 only

8:00 AM Start – Thursday, April 19

8:00 – 12:00

DROUGHT RESILIENCE SESSION

8:00 – 8:45

Current Status and Trends

Overview of current drought resiliency planning efforts in both Montana and Idaho. A report from the recent Montana Water Summit.

- **Brandon Hoffner**, Henry's Fork Foundation – Idaho update
- **Ann Schwend**, Montana Department of Natural Resources Conservation – Montana update

8:45 – 10:00

Learning from our peers: Examples of action

Panel presentation detailing projects across the landscape:

- Building Drought Resiliency into the Mission: building blocks, scope, and examples of maintaining stream flow in the Big Hole River watershed – **Jenn Downing and Pedro Marques**, *Big Hole Watershed Committee*
- Incidental Recharge Study on the Teton River and impacts on local collaboration – **Max Ludington and Lynn Bagley**, *Teton Waters Users Association*
- Integrated water movement study on Lemhi River – **Breann Green**, *Lemhi Regional Land Trust*

10:00-10:15 Break

10:15 – 11:30

Long-term monitoring consistent across basins

A discussion on what are we experiencing locally. Where do we need more data? Tools that are useful for local efforts to be more resilient

- **Jenn Downing, Big Hole Watershed Committee** - stream gauges and surface water monitoring in Montana
- **Ginette Abdo or Andy Bobst** - ground water monitoring in MT (*invited*)
- **Bryce Contor, Henry's Fork Foundation** - surface and ground water monitoring in Idaho

11:30 – 12:00

Large-scale Funding opportunities

A discussion of potential funding opportunities for partnerships to support on the ground work. How can we work together? Is there a need/desire for working group? Discussion led by Gary Burnett

12:00 Lunch

1:00 – 4:00

FUTURE SCENARIOS & STRUCTURED DECISION-MAKING

The High Divide Collaborative has a broad vision identified by our eight conservation goals. Many aspects of these goals overlap, intertwine, and sometimes present tradeoffs and challenges. This session will introduce the goals of a multi-year structured decision-making process to assess the desirability of a range of possible landscape futures in the High Divide related to drought resilience. The group will discuss perceived outcomes and tradeoffs between actions that can be taken to achieve drought resilience strategies for (i) resilient working rangelands that are central to communities, economy, and way of life; (ii) ecological linkages among core habitat areas to conserve wide-ranging wildlife populations; and (iii) preserving clean waterways and fish habitat. This process will build on our ongoing landscape conservation design process.

This session will be facilitated by a research team led by:

- **Dr. Chloe Wardropper**, Assistant Professor in the University of Idaho's Department of Natural Resources and Society with research interests in natural resource policy and planning, watershed management, and environmental social psychology
- **Dr. Morey Burnham**, Research Assistant Professor of Sociology at Idaho State University with specialties in climate adaptation and vulnerability, agriculture, water and livelihoods.

Expected outcomes:

- Prioritized list of ideal characteristics of a drought-resilient landscape from each focal area
- Prioritized list of barriers to achieving a drought-resilient landscape from each focal area
- Brief discussion of common themes across geographies
- Describe next steps in the process

Breakout Group Discussion:

- How has drought affected you in the past?
- What do you see as the defining characteristics of an ideal drought-resilient landscape (for wildlife connectivity, water availability and quality, and ranch livelihoods)?
- What needs to change to achieve a drought-resilient landscape?

Synthesis, Report Back, and Next Steps

University Map

