



Clark Fork and Kootenai Basins Council

Summary of the First Annual Meeting

University Center, 3rd Floor Conference Rooms, University of Montana – Missoula
Facilitated by Jennifer Arnold, Reciprocity Consulting, LLC

Objectives

- Approve charter and elect members to executive and nomination committees
- Build collaborative skills and consider different partnership models
- Hear different perspectives on implementing the basin water plan
- Establish basin working groups

Participants

- Kelsey Anderson (MWCC/BSWC)
- Randy Arnold (MT FWP)
- Heather Barber (Bitter Root Water Forum)
- David Brooks (Montana Trout Unlimited)
- Chris Carparelli (DNRC)
- Meg Casey (Trout Unlimited)
- Maureen Connor (Upper Clark Fork Basin Steering Committee)
- Thomas Cox (Flathead Lakers)
- John Crowley (Bitter Root Irrigation District)
- Molly Davidson (MT Asso. Dams & Canal systems)
- Michael Downey (DNRC)
- Elena Evans (SWCDM)
- Erin Farris-Olsen (MWCC)
- Irma Gomez (University of Montana)
- Casey Hackathorn (Trout Unlimited)
- Gregory Hoffman (Army Corps)
- Bonnie Holzworth (University of Montana)
- Michael Howell (Bitterroot River Protection)
- Verdell Jackson (retired MT Senator)
- Amy Jensen (Regional Hydrologist)
- Susan Lake (Producer/Irrigator)
- Alex Leone (Clark Fork Coalition)
- Ethan Mace (DNRC)
- Kaitlin Mccafferty (University of Montana)
- Paul Parson (Trout Unlimited)
- Rick Potts (WildCOR)
- Mary Price (CSKT)
- James Rokosch (Bitterrooters for Planning)
- Travis Ross (Missoula Water Quality Protection District)
- Pat Saffel (MT FWP)
- Jennifer Schoonen (Blackfoot Challenge)
- Dave Shively (University of Montana)
- Brian Sugden (Plum Creek Timber)
- Michael Sweet (University of Montana)
- Samantha Tappenbeck (SWCDM)
- Eric Trum (DEQ)
- Joann Wallenburn (Clearwater Resource Council)
- Robert Warren (Bonneville Environmental Foundation)
- Vicki Watson (University of Montana)
- Kaeli Wells (Lolo Watershed Group/MWCC)
- Laura Zanolli (University of Montana)



Day 1 – Wednesday, April 19, 2017

Understanding the Potential for Basin-wide Collaboration – Jennifer Arnold

Ground Rules

Jennifer introduced some ground rules to guide our work over the next two days.

- Be fully engaged
- Be respectful
- Step Up or Step Back so we can hear from everyone
- One person speaks at a time
- Listen to understand before reacting
- It's okay to disagree
- Use “oops” and “ouch” if toes get stepped on

Theory of Collaboration and Partnerships

Jennifer introduced a framework to understand how different partnerships function drawing from the Public Administration literature (e.g., see Mandell, M. P. 2001.

Collaboration through network structures for community building efforts. National Civic Review 90(3):279.).

A continuum of partnerships

Networking ---- Cooperative --- Coordinative --- Collaborative
More autonomous ----- More interdependent

As you move from left to right on the spectrum, you find increasing:

- Complexity of purpose
- Intensity of linkages
- Formality of agreements
- Commitment to each other and greater whole
- Interdependence of purpose and operations
- Risk to individual organizations
- Capacity to achieve systems change
- Investment in governance and communications

Partnerships are dynamic and may shift from one end of the continuum to the other over time or in response to changes in leadership or some type of crisis or opportunity. As partnerships shift toward the right of the continuum, some challenges emerge that are inherent to a more collaborative partnership. For comparison, in organizations, power is typically exercised by a leadership board and staff structure with clear lines of authority, roles and responsibilities, but as you move toward more collaborative partnerships, increasingly power is exerted indirectly as influence rather than authority. Influence is increased by strengthening relationships, managing conflicts and building trust.



Thus, effectively leading a collaborative partnership requires:

- Managing conflict,
- Dealing with issues of power, influence and control,
- Developing new modes of leadership, and
- Building trust.

In the context of watershed partnerships, common challenges to collaboration include:

- Transaction costs required to work together (time, capacity, travel, communications),
- Communications linking the partnership and senior leadership within each partner organization,
- Filling key roles and skill sets,
- Tensions around advocacy, and
- Time and capacity to work through differences, which relates to the size, diversity and complexity of group structure and membership.

In any type of collaboration, each partner is continually assessing the value of participating versus the costs and risks of doing so. As long as the balance comes out positively, a partner will continue to participate, but if that balance shifts to a perceived net loss, partners may choose to step out, which can influence the cost/benefit ratio for others.

As we think specifically about the Clark Fork Basin Council, it likely falls somewhere toward the coordinative to collaborative end of the spectrum. As the Council begins to establish its structure, it's useful to think about these challenges so the structure can be designed to minimize the costs and maximize the value to potential partners.

Alternate Partnership Structures

Jennifer presented a range of different partnership structures based on other watershed partnerships, which relate to some of the upcoming governance decisions of the Council.

Organizational structures

- Volunteer/in-kind or staff driven
- Charter/MOU or 501c3 or government entity
- Leadership committee or member driven (with or without work groups)

Communications structures and practices

- Newsletters, webpage for the public
- Google docs, dropbox, basecamp, private webpage, mail for internal partners

Funding structures

- Legislative support, grants, donors, members

Decision-making rules

- Consensus to majority – important to choose whatever works best for the group and adapt it if it's not working



The “Groan Zone” of Collaborative Decision-making

The concept of the “groan zone” is an approach to collaborative decision-making that recognizes the need to open up the discussion to diverse perspectives in order to come up with creative, sustainable decisions (Community at Work 2014). Sustainable decisions are those that integrate the best thinking of the group and have the broad support needed for effective implementation. It is called the groan zone because listening to views that may be contradictory to your own can be uncomfortable, awkward and frustrating, yet there is great value in doing this. By calling it the groan zone, we can humorously acknowledge the discomfort and focus on getting through it productively.

Jennifer handed out a set of cards with tips for speaking authentically, listening and asking questions to understand. These may be different than your normal conversation style, but they are techniques that can help you open up the groan zone. Too often for efficiency or fear of confrontation, we focus on areas of agreement and don’t fully unpack our differences before making decisions or moving toward implementation. In the context of working collaboratively in a partnership, this may mean that decisions are made that don’t truly have the buy-in to be implemented. In the following exercise, we practiced skills to intentionally open up the groan zone.

Practice Opening Up the “Groan Zone”

In groups of three, each person took a turn speaking, listening and asking questions with the goal of opening up the groan zone. People were encouraged to form groups with those who may have different perspectives from their own. Everyone had a turn to respond to the question: What should be our first priority to work on as a Council? People were encouraged to speak freely even if they hadn’t reviewed the Clark Fork Basin Plan or its recommendations yet. The second day was the time to approach this question in a more structured way after hearing from the panels – this was just a practice exercise! Following the exercise, Jennifer asked for highlights from the group conversations:

Our First Priorities as a Council – Just for Practice!

- Water quantity decisions account for water quality
- Water availability and irrigation efficiencies
- Identifying a top collective priority to feel progress
- Make clear to farmers and ranchers that there will be no losers
- Allowing waterways to return to natural flow and vegetation
- Common geographies to work on and then unique areas supported by local entities
- Constitutional rights and duties upheld for environmental health
- Early season storage opportunities
- Understand mandates of council based on state water plan and know where our gaps are in representation
- Identify activities what we will do and not do and commit to these for the next year



- Basin to serve as a prototype to integrate DNRC, DEQ and EPA waer quantitiy and quality management and ground water and surface water connectivity
- Discussion of inclusion of Kootenai
- Our communication strategy to ensure continued work and inclusion
- Clarification of larger goals and objectives and package that to attache new stakeholders to demonstrate services and value council can provide
- Identify limiting factors or policies needed to promote forest health
- Aquatic Invasive Species (an issue)
- Columbia River Treaty with Canada (an issue)

Consensus Decision-making

In collaborative partnerships, the best and most effective decision-making rules are the ones that are customized to fit the group's needs. Usually, as you move on the continuum toward a cooperative or collaborative type partnership, consensus based decision-making becomes more meaningful than voting by simple majority. Jennifer explained that the goal of consensus is not that everyone has to love the decision, but that most people like it and everyone can live with it. This means that they can support it and won't undermine it in words or actions after a decision has been made. If people are invested in the larger vision of the collaborative partnership, then they will be more willing to flex to the interests of the group over time. There will be some give and take, but ideally, everyone feels free to speak their minds so that the decisions do integrate the best thinking of the group.

Consensus building is about building understanding and clarifying support, not voting. With this in mind, Jennifer introduced two tools that can be used to test for consensus – the “thumbs” method and “fist to five.” Both are variations with the same goal in mind – to quickly gauge the level of support for a proposal to make changes as needed. With “thumbs,” people hold their thumbs up, down or sideways to indicate their support. With “fist to five,” people hold up one to five fingers to show least to greatest support or a fist, meaning no support. If people indicate low to no support, it is their responsibility to explain their thinking and propose an alternative. The goal is to encourage people to show their true feelings so that differences can be unpacked and discussed quickly. Otherwise, people may sit in a meeting feeling like they have different ideas and something to say without an easy way to interrupt the flow when many other people are in agreement.

For practice, Jennifer chose three things from the earlier list of priorities and made a hypothetical proposal that these would be the Council's top priority for the next year. She asked people to show their support with thumbs and then their support with fingers. The group reflected on how this method works and which works better. Several people said they liked the fingers method because it didn't feel as oppositional to put a thumbs down when you just wanted some more discussion. They also felt it allowed you to see a wider breadth of where people were with a proposal. A couple people said they liked the simplicity of the thumbs. Several remarked that perhaps you could switch to the thumbs after a group got comfortable with each other, but there could be value in starting with the



fingers for a group that is still getting to know each other. For the purposes of this meeting since the Council's by-laws haven't been created yet, Jennifer used the "fist to five" method for decision-making.

Council Business

Charter

Vicki Watson gave an overview of how the charter was created and shared at the last meeting for discussion. People were given a chance to review it quietly.

Discussion of Geographic Scope – Kootenai

Joann asked why the description of Geographic Scope included "possibly the Kootenai Basin" as this sounded ambiguous. There was much discussion. In general, there was a desire to include Kootenai because they had been a part of the Clark Fork and Kootenai River Basin Plan. There were proposals to change the name of the council and definitively include them in the geographic scope, which some people thought might increase changes for legislative funding for both watersheds. However, because there were only two people from the Kootenai in this meeting and none formally representing the primary interests, some people were hesitant to include the Kootenai without knowing whether they wanted to be a part of the council. It was noted that the basins are distinct and have different issues, for example hydropower in the Kootenai. It was also noted that the Kootenai wouldn't be represented on the Executive Council, which already had 12 nominees that would likely fill all the available seats. People responded that the Executive Committee would be staggered and seats would be open to the Kootenai the following year. Also, it was suggested that for the first year, perhaps the Kootenai stakeholders would feel more comfortable acting as a work group instead of committing to the Executive Committee right away. Susan Lake texted Chaz Vincent, a legislator from the Kootenai who was contacted in preparation for this meeting but had been busy in the legislative session. She asked what he thought although didn't hear back. After several rounds of proposals and alternative proposals with about even numbers either way and no strong proposals. The group decided (all 3s, 4s and 5s) to reluctantly to change the wording from "possibly the Kootenai" to "and when appropriate, the Kootenai Basin" with the idea that this would leave the door open for their participation.

Interested Stakeholders

Joann proposed, and it was supported (all 4s and 5s) to change the language from "Participation may include interested representation..." to "Participation may include but is not limited to interested representation...." This was to avoid leaving out any stakeholder groups who might become interested in the future. It was also requested to use semi-colons in the list of stakeholders.



Technical Advisors

Joann asked why technical advisors cannot serve in positions in the Executive Committee. Members from the planning team explained the history of this issue from the Clark Fork Task Force. In the past, some technical advisors were private consultants and were prohibited from serving in a leadership capacity to avoid a potential conflict of interest. In other cases, representatives of state agencies felt they could not formally give an opinion on issues so it wasn't appropriate for them to hold leadership positions. Also, experts could sometimes play a unique role in educating the Council on certain topics if they didn't have a vote. Mike Sweet admitted that these issues have probably shifted since the Task Force days. If state agency representatives didn't want to serve than they didn't have to, but the council didn't need to prohibit them from doing so. Mike proposed that this last sentence be dropped from the charter and clarified in the by-laws, and it was supported by the group (all 3s, 4s and 5s).

Reporting

Laura suggested to add Bureau of Geology and Mines to Reporting section, and it was discussed. People generally felt they should be included in the reporting but discussed whether they should be officially included or not in the charter. The groups mentioned are water managers. It was suggested that the tribes could be added as well, but Mary responded that the reports should be available online to all entities and it was not necessary to add them here. It was proposed and supported (all 3s, 4s, 5s) to not add Bureau of Geology and Mines, but to change the language from "...members groups as well as private and public partners which will include..." to "...members groups as well as private and public partners which may include but not be limited to..."

Function

It was proposed and supported to include the official title of the basin plan.

Purpose

Casey proposed that it might be more inclusive to say "water interests" rather than "water user interests." There was some discussion about the meaning of the term "water interests" whether it implies human only uses. The history of the term is that it is used to refer to all uses anyone that uses water and non-human uses, like for fish. This was left as is.

Charter Approved

Considering all the changes that were made by consensus, Jennifer asked to see a show of support for the charter, and it was approved (all 3s, 4s and 5s). Everyone gave a round of applause. We successfully navigated the groan zone!

Executive Committee Elections

Mike S., Vicki, Jennifer S. and Verdell were members of the planning team and nominations committee who reached out to a diversity of stakeholders to invite nominations to the Executive Committee. Erin explained the diversity matrix that included geography,



interests and areas of expertise that was used to cast a wide net. The following nominees stepped forward and were given 3 minutes to speak about their interest in serving:

- **David Brooks**, TU state office
 - Advocacy and policy issues for habitat and water
 - Located in Missoula but works statewide
- **Meg Casey**, TU
 - Bozeman
 - Water rights attorney and project management
- **Maureen Connor**, Upper Clark Fork Steering Committee
 - Active in CFTF
 - Represents Upper Clark Fork
 - Active with Granite County
- **Tom Cox**, Flathead Lakers
 - Missoula
 - Biomedical research, biology and zoology and physiology
- **Bonnie Holzworth**, University of Montana
 - Missoula
 - 4th generation Montanan
 - Restoration and ecology, including research on Clark Fork
 - Committee experience
- **Michael Howell**, Bitterroot River Protection Association
 - Started local newspaper Bitterroot Star
 - Water Keepers Alliance (trained in water quality, Co-op water quality monitoring group in Bitterroot)
 - Irrigator
- **Verdell Jackson**, Flathead Conservation District
 - Business and accounting – taught HS and College
 - Specialist for Rural Education, implemented vocational education
 - Retired from MT legislature
 - Irrigator and farmer
- **Susan Lake**, Agriculturist and Irrigator
- **Mary Price**, Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribe
 - Withdraws her nomination; CSKT would like to be involved as a resource and support, not a leadership role at this time
- **James Rokosch**, Bitterrooters for Planning
 - Worked for FWP and as a private consultant in restoration
 - Served as a Ravalli County Commissioner
 - Irrigator
- **Travis Ross**, Missoula Water Quality District
 - Protection and monitoring of surface and groundwater



- Advocacy
- Riparian restoration
- Subdivision reviews
- **Jennifer Schoonen**, Blackfoot Challenge
 - River steward
 - Water quality and restoration plan
 - Irrigation efficiency projects
- **David Shively**, University of Montana
 - Professor of Geography (Environmental and policy, Community and environmental planning, Water policy and western water management, Appropriation and quality)
 - Involved with Task Force and helped implement the first water plan

Jennifer asked if there were any nominations from the floor, and there were none. Everyone was instructed to mark up to 12 candidates for the Executive Committee. Erin collected the ballots and everyone who was nominated was voted to the Executive Committee, with the exception of Mary Price who withdrew her name.

Nominations Committee Elections

Jennifer read off the names on the nominations committee: Meg Casey, Bonnie Holzworth, Jennifer Schoonen, and Vicki Watson. Jennifer asked for nominations from the floor. Maureen Connor and David Shively were added to the nomination committee ballot. David Shively was present and accepted. Maureen Connor was not present but she would be given the option to accept when she attended the second day.

David Shively, Maureen Connor, Meg Casey, Bonnie Holzworth, Jennifer Schoonen, and Vicki Watson were accepted as the Nomination Committee

Next Steps for Executive Committee

Jennifer asked if the group to list any next steps that the council would like the Executive Committee to address. Mike S. added some and said he would hand off a more detailed list to the Committee.

- Opportunity for charter amendments
- Write a letter to Water Policy Interim Committee before June
- Improving matrix
- Talk to Tribal Consul about representation
- Executive Committee should meet with Erin Farris-Olsen about admin support
- Internal communications
- By-law development and resources
- Setting date for next Annual Meeting
- Executive Committee to work with Kootenai
- Set meeting date for Executive Committee



- Develop work plan based on priorities
- How/whether to identify potential partners/members
- 501c3 status?

Montana Legislative Update

Erin provided a handout with updates on the current bills in the legislature and Elena was available to answer questions.

Day 2 – Thursday, April 20, 2017

Perspectives on Implementing the Basin Water Plan

Vicki Watson provided background on the Recommendations from the Clark Fork and Kootenai River Basins Water Plan, highlighting the four topic areas, around which the recommendations are organized:

- Maintaining water availability
- Ensuring natural systems health
- Water rights administration, protection, and enforcement
- Meeting future water demand and

She noted the fifth topic area describes the recommendation to establish a basin council, which we can now say we have done.

Panel Discussion – Montana agency and tribal perspectives

- **Eric Trum** – Department of Environmental Quality
- **Michael Downey** – Department of Natural Resources and Conservation –
- **Pat Saffel** – Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- **Mary Price** – Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Referring to the recommendations in the basin water plan (pages 144-152), panelists each had an opportunity to speak to the following questions:

- What are your top priorities for implementation?
- What has already been done?
- What are you currently working on?
- What should be next?
- Are there any barriers or opportunities that impact implementation?

Eric Trum (DEQ)

- Importance of bringing water quality and water quantity back together
- Project funding from EPA. Projects are often targeted at water quality, but there is usually a link to water quantity. Five million dollars has been invested in the Clark Fork Basin.
- The council has the opportunity to look at issues more holistically.



Michael Downey (DNRC)

- Does not think the council should spend time on broad policy and administration of how Montana handles water, at least not at first since even the legislators and WPIC struggle to make progress. The real goal of this Council should be education to build the grass roots support necessary to do the policy work down the road.
- “Divisions, Ditches, and District Courts” is an excellent article by Brian Shovers that tells the history of water allocation and distribution in Montana. In Montana, we don’t have a centralized approach.
- DNRC does not have the authority to enforce water rights. Enforcement is complaint driven. First a complaint goes to a district administrator and then to court. Legislative bills in favor of DNRC enforcement have not passed.
- State water plan has been criticized for not having objectives and specific projects. It is more of a visionary plan. DNRC’s objectives and priorities are within the state water plan. This basin plan strongly influenced the state water plan, in fact whole sections of the recommendations are word-for-word the same. The real value of this council is in taking those statewide priorities and recommendations and translating them into what matters at the basin level.

Mary Price (CSKT)

- The Confederated Tribes are water rights holders of reserved and aboriginal water in the Clark Fork and Kootenai Basins. The Compact was ratified in 2015, and she has been engaged in compact implementation.
 - Upgrading water system
 - Real time water flow reporting system
- Irrigation is important to the Tribes and not just the instream flow rights.
- An important role this council can play is gathering and interpreting data, including a focus on water measurement to improve water forecasting. Also the council can play a valuable role taking complex data and creating graphics or interactive tools that bring key issues to light and help raise awareness of the general public. She provided an example of a project that was done and reduced conflict and tensions.
- There is a huge need for education on water rights information. We need to educate ourselves and the public.

Pat Saffel (FWP)

- Murphy Right in the Blackfoot is the driver behind drought plan – nutrients and water availability. There are nutrient issues in Upper Blackfoot and Flint Creek.
- Outreach is important. People rely on information from people they trust. The Council can play a role in being a broad-based source of information that is trusted.



Questions and Discussion

Michael D. Work needs to be done to help people understand their water source and supply. Given climate change, what are the threats? The Council can play a key role here.

Vicki Are you saying that the Council should only focus on education not lobbying?

Michael D. I don't think lobbying would have helped the DNRC water rights enforcement bill. The group needs early successes and lobbying can come later. As an example, in Nebraska they charge a much higher rate per unit acre, but that fee gives them \$87 million dollars a year for farm efficiencies.

Pat Education and incentives. It needs to be easy for people to conserve water.

Mary Build your base before going for legislation.

Pat Water is a common resource but is complaint driven. Everyone is impacted by low water. Politics often don't reflect the reality of the issues happening on the ground. Education is vital.

Mike Howell Educating the legislature is critical in helping them make better, more informed decisions

Eric/Michael The future of water storage in Montana is in improved riparian habitats and floodplain management.

Panel Discussion – Local government, non-profit, and stakeholder perspectives

- **John Crowley**, Bitterroot Irrigation District
- **Verdell Jackson**, Flathead Conservation District
- **Travis Ross**, Missoula Water Quality Protection District
- **Alex Leone**, Clark Fork Coalition

Referring to the recommendations in the basin water plan (pages 144-152), panelists each had an opportunity to speak to the following questions:

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- What are you currently working on?
- What should be next?
- Are there any barriers or opportunities that impact implementation?

John Crowley, Bitterroot Irrigation District

- Maintaining water availability is a challenge. We have a lot of irrigators and not a lot of water. We are dependent on snowpack to feed reservoir. It's hard to deliver water to the smaller users.



- It is difficult educating users on how to use water efficiently. People become on-guard about losing water rights.
- Our irrigators pay \$33.50 per irrigated acre. That is a lot of money since people don't raise cash crops. They're just barely making it by in many cases.
- Importance of the Big Ditch to the Bitterroot Valley

Verdell Jackson, Flathead Conservation District

- The conservation districts issue the 310 permits. We're the ones who issue permits for rip rap. People usually come to us when they have a project ready. We're not legally allowed to give advice for liability reasons, but I try to talk to them early before they even submit their applications and give them some ideas about alternatives.
- Comment from Heather Barber – Perhaps there is an intermediary role that watershed councils can play to educate people on alternatives similar to the role Verdell has played.

Travis Ross, Missoula Water Quality Protection District

- We primarily target aquifer and surface water. We are now working on treating storm water, restoring access to floodplains, and removing contamination.

Alex Leone, Clark Fork Coalition

- We work a lot with sediment issues and road de-commissioning.
- The Upper Clark Fork is de-watered. A piping project would put 15 cf back in the river with canal lining reducing groundwater return.
- We take a holistic approach to solving problems. We have water rights in several basins. We buy water rights from BPA.
- The barrier that we've experienced is the water rights change process through DNRC. It is a laborious process to show there are no adverse effects to other water users.
- Agreeing with the earlier panel, the Council could play an important role in gathering more data. The more data, the better.

Lunch Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species

A Watershed Perspective – Joann Wallenburn, Clearwater Resource Council

- Monitoring lakes in Seeley Lake since 2009. Five major lakes interconnected by a single river. If one lake gets AIS, they all will be affected.
- Increasing outreach and education component
- Prevention-roving check stations

State of Montana Perspective – Randy Arnold, FWP Region 2, AIS Incident Command Team

- Communicated to legislature what it would cost Montana to respond
- First incident command system used for natural resources
- Increased budget from \$2 million to \$12 million for response



- Watercraft inspection stations are running and open all day.
- Decontamination stations in Tiber and Canyon Ferry are mandatory.
- Lab capacity has been increased and monitoring priorities have been identified.
- Education and outreach components are needed to change behavior and culture.

Research Findings on AIS impacts to recreation and tourism – Megan Schultz, Institute for Tourism & Recreation

- Survey research focused on non-resident tourists.
- Gap between AIS information between older and younger demographics
 - Older demographics were more likely to have heard of the AIS issues in Yellowstone and the Reservoirs.
- Report released March 2017. Contact Megan with questions or go to itr.umd.edu.

Follow-up to Charter Discussion of Kootenai Basin

During lunch, Susan Lake heard back from Chaz Vincent via text that he wanted the Kootenai to be a part of the Council and favored changing the name to include the Kootenai. This would have to be an amendment that the Executive Committee would make, but according to the charter any amendment would have to be discussed by stakeholders at an annual meeting. Jennifer asked for a show of support using “fist to five” and everyone showed 3s, 4s, and 5s for the proposal to change the name to “Clark Fork and Kootenai Basins Council.” There was some discussion about whether the name should include “river basins,” but this level of detail was left for the Executive Committee to decide.

Establish Work Groups

Building from the priorities discussed by the panels and the recommendations from the basin plan, Jennifer asked meeting participants to write on colored post-it notes what priorities they would like to work on in the next year. She asked people to post them on the wall at the front and move them around to form groups of similar post-its. Then, Jennifer asked everyone to gather, read the post-its and ask questions if any were not self-explanatory. After discussion and more moving, three clusters of post-its emerged as focus areas for implementation: 1) **stakeholder outreach, engagement and data interpretation**, 2) **data sleuthing**, and 3) **ensuring natural systems health** – along with a few individual topics that didn’t necessarily fit these categories.

It was emphasized that work groups should take any new ideas from these implementation priorities and incorporate them into the plan. The basin plan should be a living document that is updated as needed.

For the next hour, people met to discuss these three focus areas for implementation, which each had the potential to become a working group. They filled out their Work Group guides which included questions about scope, deliverables, near-term actions and commitments to continue developing this work group.



Stakeholder outreach, engagement and data interpretation

Meg (lead), Susan, Mary, Kaeli, Pat, Dave S., Erin, Kelsey, Laura, and Rick

- Water advocate, inform people-expert speakers, letters to editors, social media
- Water rights education for John Q Public
- Agricultural water user outreach (education, information, communication, engagement)
- Discussions on communicating science – how?
- Mapping of collected data for public information sharing (education) using GIS
- Develop outreach and education framework (not content-specific)
- Educational forums on basin issues
- Community outreach and information
- Environmental education and outreach
- Drought mitigation outreach
- Identify stakeholders
- Provide forum for coordination of or advocacy for basin-level funding opportunities or programs
- Build a network of water users and understand their interests
- Develop and share interpretive story of watershed water balance assessment study (Lolo Creek)
- Produce “watershed narratives” for each within basins that summarize stakeholder interests, management efforts, and challenges etc.

Data Sleuthing

Joann (lead), Ethan, Bonnie, Michael Howell, and Jim Rokosh

- Getting substantive info/data to decision makers for consideration in permitting/approval processes for site specific proposals’ public record
- Collection and analysis of existing data
- Assess and encourage improved Wx and Q monitoring
- Interpret data and reports for outreach and stakeholder engagement
- Data collection and sampling for basin priorities
- Identify and gather existing data
- Groundwater/ surface water as one integrated resource
- Land use and development trends – Info and analysis

Ensuring Natural Systems Health

Vicki (lead), Tom, Molly, Eric, John, Jennifer S., David B., Maureen, Verdell

- Ask for notes from Kelsey



Stand-alone priorities (not necessarily included in the work groups):

- Gathering agencies and stakeholders to integrate quantity and quality and groundwater and surface water
- Coordinate and network among smaller watershed groups on regional issues

After time to discuss, the three groups reported out on their progress. The stakeholder outreach group took the time to ask for contacts from the different sub-basins for future work.

Celebratory Toast with Cider

Everyone raised their glasses, and Verdell toasted the establishment of the Council and a promising start to the work groups. The annual meeting officially came to a close.

Executive Committee Session (open to full Council)

Present: David Brooks, Meg Casey, Maureen Connor, Tom Cox, Bonnie Holzworth, Michael Howell, Verdell Jackson, James Rokosch, David Shively (Not able to stay: Susan Lake, Travis Ross, Jennifer Schoonen)

Action Items

Administrative support

- BEF provided support for 3 meetings (\$1500/meeting)
- MWCC can continue to provide support and seek funding with the help of executive committee
- MWCC applied and did not receive funding for a watershed management grant. Another round of funding opens in June
- Meg can help with transition from MWCC to Council's executive committee. Erin can get her:
 - Email of the attendees, affiliation and where they came from, if available
 - Upcoming and current grants
 - List of current administrative support activities
 - List of recommendations for admin from Erin
 - Identify planning team

Work Groups

- Erin will reach out to Work Group leads and ask them to send their notes to forward to the Executive Committee:
 - Outreach: Meg
 - Natural Systems: Vicki
 - Data Sleuthing: Joann

Charter Amendment

- Decision to change the name of the Council to the Clark Fork and Kootenai **River** Basins Council.



- Discussion about whether or not to add “River” or “Water” before Basins
- Consensus decision using “fist to five” mostly 4s a few 3s and 5s

Next Executive Committee Meeting

- In 1 month in-person meeting via doodle poll
- Send list of EC emails to David Shively and he’ll send the doodle
- Possibly at UM (free)

Next Steps for Future Discussion

- Letter to WPIC by June
 - Get on the radar of WPIC and agencies (DEQ, DNRC, FWP, MBGM, MDT)
 - Dave to send Mike Sweet list of next steps
- Improve matrix for EC nominations
- Reach out to tribal council about representation
 - Maureen would like a Tribal representative for each meeting
 - Susan can talk to Rob McDonald
 - Mary Price will act as a technical advisor
 - Talk to hydrologist, Seth Makepeace?
 - Wait on talking to people until we meet with tribal council
- Mike Sweet sent resources for by-law development
- Set date for next annual meeting
 - DNRC might be doing a Water Summit in March of 2018 → possibly a good time for the next annual meeting
- Reach out to Kootenai
 - In progress
- Develop an annual work plan based on priorities from the work groups
- Whether/how to identify partner status so in the future if we talk about the council people know who the council represents
 - Maureen suggests starting with the bylaw template Michael Sweet provided
- 501c3 status – This is potentially the direction the council will go, so it needs discussion.