

Priest River Watershed Group
Steering Committee Meeting
December 5, 2024
3:30-6:30 pm
West Bonner Library



Present Members

Allan Songstad, Stop the Priest Lake Siphon
Amy Anderson, Selkirk Conservation Alliance
Betty Gardner, Priest River
Cathy Gidley, Trout Unlimited*
Eric Bernsten, Kalispel Tribe
Eric Johnson, Priest Lake Cabin Association
Erin Plue, Trout Unlimited
Hank Jones, Fishing Guides on the Priest River
Kyle Maki, Idaho Wildlife Federation &
Sportsmen Conservation
Jennifer Ekstrom, Idaho Conservation League

John Quinn Hurst, Selkirk Conservation
Alliance*
Mike Lithgow, Kalispel Tribe
Paul Sieracki, Inland Empire Task Force
(Environmental)
Sean Stash, Boating on Priest River

Facilitators

Hannah Anderson, Lead Facilitator

Public Attendees

The Miner (press)

Goals:

- Learn about Projects and Sampling in the Easter River Basin, The Fisheries of the East River, and the East River Watershed Assessment in a public informational session
- Hear updates from sub-group work (task forces and sub-committees)

3:30-5:45pm | Public Informational Session, see separate agenda

Meeting Minutes

PRWG Steering Committee Meeting - Welcome and Overview

Hannah Anderson, Facilitator, welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda and goals for the day.

Strategic Plan Implementation: Sub-Committees and Task Forces Updates

The PRWG has established sub-committees and task forces to work on implementation of the goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan. Each of the sub-committees and task forces provided an update on their progress since the December meeting. The facilitator led the group through discussion as the steering committee provided feedback, as follows:

- Grants and Funding (Sub-committee)
 - A calendar has been created to track opportunities for funding, including associated deadlines, agency/organization contact information, and high level notes.
 - The calendar will be maintained and updated by the sub-committee on a regular basis.

PRWG Steering Committee meetings are open for public observation. To ensure efficiency of agenda items, discussion will be reserved for PRWG steering committee members with priority.

- A recommendation was made to distinguish federal vs. non-federal funding sources to better understand which sources may have opportunities for matching.
- The steering committee is encouraged to review the draft calendar and provide recommendations for any additional columns or opportunities.
- Education and Outreach (Sub-committee)
 - The sub-committee presented a high-level outline of a draft Communication Plan, in an effort to focus on the document structure that will be most effective, and to gain steering committee feedback early on before fleshing out the content.
 - The sub-committee explained that in crafting the outline, they gave particular consideration to the audiences and individuals the group may need to work with or communicate with.
 - A spokesperson for the PRWG will be an integral part of maintaining consistency in outward communication. The PRWG protocols identify Erin Plue as the point of contact. The sub-committee identified Mike Lithgow as a support (back-up) for Erin in this role.
 - There may be opportunities to coordinate with the Grants and Funding sub-committee to secure grants related to public outreach.
- PRWG Processes and Protocols (Task Force)
 - Prior to the meeting, the task force shared a draft document with recommended changes to the PRWG protocols document for steering committee review.
 - The Task Force gave a brief overview of the recommended changes, to provide context for the steering committee when reviewing the changes.
 - It was agreed that the steering committee should come to the January meeting with their prepared list of high-level comments or suggestions for incorporation by the task force.
 - The group discussed how much time and effort has been put into the document over the last 2 years, recognizing all of the hard work and collaboration that has already been invested into establishing protocols. The group agreed that these updates are relatively minor, and agreed that this process should be concise, in order to not belabor the effort.
- Work Plan Methodology (Task Force)
 - The task force presented a excel spreadsheet outline of the Work Plan to begin conceptualizing how the document will be structured.
 - The outline includes a line item for each of the goals outlined within the Strategic Plan plus additional tasks and goals for achieving the PRWG's mission.
 - The task force has a few final updates to make to the outline and will then share the document (via the Facilitator) with the group for review.
 - PRWG steering committee members should come to the January meeting with high-level recommendations and feedback for the task force.
 - Significant progress has already been made towards objective B-4. Project Area Map; the base map is nearly done.
 - The task force explained that the base map is intended to be updated and modified on an ongoing basis, as more data is developed and available.
 - An agenda item will be added to the January meeting to review the draft base map.

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Housekeeping (general discussion)

- Student Assistance Opportunity
 - A group of graduate students from Georgetown University, with guidance and mentoring from the Langdon Group, are performing a situation assessment for the PRWG.
 - The situation assessment will summarize feedback from community interviews which focus on exploring opportunities for connecting with the community, and the role the PRWG can play in raising awareness of the watershed.
 - Due to the course schedule, there was a quick timeframe associated with this process, and the draft document is expected by the end of the year (2024).
 - The steering committee discussed how this report will be used. One steering committee member expressed concern for whether the report will be published. The facilitator explained that the report will not be published, but will be provided to the PRWG to use at their discretion.
- Approval of November Meeting Minutes
- Review Timeline
 - A graphic of the strategic plan's timeline was shared with the steering committee.

Adjourn