

National Forest Advisory Board Meeting

March 11, 2020

Mystic Ranger District

Members Present:

Chairman Danielle Wiebers, Vice Chairman Dick Terry, David Wolff, David Miller, Dick Brown, Lloyd La Croix, Michael Golliher, Ben Wudtke, Tony Ortiz, Greg Josten, Lauris Tysdal, Patty Brown, Alan Johnson, Alice Allen, and John Gomez

Members Absent:

Dave Hague, Paul Pierson, Corissa Busse, Mary Zimmerman, Wayne Garman, Dennis Yellow Thunder, Bob Burns, Rachel Day, Kevin Robling, Travis Bies, Jennifer Hart, Keith Haiar, Richard Hanson, Ben Rhodd, Jessica Crowder, David Johnson

Forest Service Leadership & Speaker Representatives:

Andrew Johnson, Acting Forest Supervisor; Jerry Krueger, Deputy Forest Supervisor; Scott Jacobson, Beth Doten, Twila Morris, Jim Gubbels, Jon Word, and approximately 10 other Forest Service employees.

Others:

Approximately 10 members of the public were in attendance. Five Congressional Representatives were also in attendance; Mark Haugen (Thune – R, South Dakota); Katie Murray (Johnson – R, South Dakota) Jim Selchert (Rounds – R, South Dakota); Deanna Kay (Enzi – R, Wyoming), Jordon Fischer (Congresswoman Cheney – R, Wyoming).

Introduction & Welcome:

Wiebers: Welcome to the March NFAB meeting.

Andrew Johnson: Thank you for your flexibility with our rescheduling of today's meeting. We have a shorter agenda today, but a longer one in April.

Approve the March Agenda:

Wiebers: The first item on the agenda is to approve today's agenda. Motion made by David Wolff second by Greg Josten all in favor say aye, opposed nay; agenda is approved.

Approve the February Meeting Notes:

Wiebers: Motion to approve the February meeting notes made by Al Johnson second by Dick Terry all in favor say aye, opposed nay; February meeting notes are approved.

House Keeping:

Krueger: Restrooms out both doors of the conference room. There are exits in the front and the back of the building; in case of an emergency, we'll exit out the front of the building the way you came in; and gather out on the far parking lot.

Meeting Protocols:

Wiebers: Thank you to the board members, both primary and alternates that are attending today. I realize you're volunteering your time to participate and those who are slated to present to us today also have projects they have had to step away from to come share with us today so I will do my best keep things moving out of respect for everyone's time. If you are an alternate and the primary for your area of interest is not attending today please join us at the table.

The duties of this board made up of 16 individuals representing 16 areas of interest include providing timely advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture through the BHNFS Supervisor regarding forest issues and project level issues that have forest-wide implications.

There will be time allowed for board members at the table to ask follow-up questions at the end of each agenda item, please keep the questions and comments relative to the topic being covered. If you would like the topic to be expanded on in future meetings please let me or Forest Supervisor Johnson know after the meeting so that we can add it to a future agenda.

We do have public comment listed at the end of the agenda if time allows. We simply ask that comments be limited to three minutes and that they are relevant to topics on today's agenda. If you have questions for Forest Service staff or a Board member representing one of your areas of interest, please reach out to them at one of the breaks or after the meeting.

Hot Topics

Legislative Updates – Federal

Johnson: With that, we'll move on to the Legislative updates.

Katie Murray, Office of Representative Johnson:

- Dusty was in town last month.
- The main thing going on in Congress is talking about the Coronavirus. They passed an appropriations bill, \$8 billion dollars to reimburse local governments, including vaccines and tests, as well as to combat the spread over seas.
- Ag related issues that Dusty has been working on: Brazilian beef imports; we had a ban against Brazilian beef for a while, but that ban has been lifted. The SD delegation has been concerned over this that the requirements are being met, and it is healthy, etc. The other item is there is a new idea with USDA regarding beef labeling; if it's slaughtered in the US and processed in the US, it can still be labeled USA beef. The Administration and the Senators have a bill that would make this go through Legislation, but the Administration has been looking at doing this through the USDA process. So while the Senators are working on it as a Legislative process, they're also working on it administratively.
- Hot Springs VA: Senator Rounds, Senator Thune, Congressman Johnson, and Governor Noem were all in Hot Springs last week with the Secretary of the VA. The Delegation has been fighting to keep the VA open since it was announced that it was going to be closed years ago. The Secretary announced that he was reconsidering the record of decision to close the VA.

Mark Haugen, Office of Senator Thune:

- The Senator will be here next Wednesday for a Defense Symposium.
- Right now the Senator is in DC, they are working on an energy package.
- As Katie mentioned they completed the coronavirus package that passed as well.
- Brazilian Beef Ban: The Senator led a letter and circulated it among Senators expressing their concern. It's not live cattle coming in from Brazil, it is packaged beef. They're concerned because they lifted the ban after inspecting only eight of the 28 plants; and they want to know if they plan to inspect the other 20 plants.
- A concern we've been hearing from ranchers and bankers is the money situation and bankruptcy in general in the Ag community. Senator Thune and Senator Baldwin jointly sent a letter to urge the financial regulators to provide more flexibility to community financial institutions. Banks have a certain percentage that they can give for Ag loans and then they're told to diversify into commercial buildings, etc. Some of our rural areas don't have the option.
- Soil Health and Income Protection Program: The Senator has been pushing this since 2017 and it's finally been passed and signed into law. This is a scaled down version of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP); and it can only be applied to 15% of the worst crop lands you have.

Jim Selchert, Office of Senator Rounds:

- Senator Rounds has the honor of making Academy appointments: Zack Curd from Sioux Falls was nomination to the Air Force Academy.
- The Senator will be in town for the Defense Symposium.
- The Senator will host a coffee conversation on the 18th at the Journey Museum.
- Jean put out a statement saying that she is grateful for the prayers and thoughts of the South Dakota people.

Deanna Kay, Office of Senator Enzi:

- The Senator did add a couple of amendments to the Energy bill regarding rare earths. He has been keeping his eye out in Wyoming for opportunities.

Jordan Fischer, Office of Congresswoman Cheney:

- The Congresswoman recently joined with 129 colleges in the House in a letter to the Council on Environmental Quality supporting the efforts to modernize the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to help streamline environmental regulations.
- Also with the coronavirus, she has emphasized the importance of bi-partisanship and working to get through this.
- In Wyoming, she recently applauded the FCC with funding to expand broadband access in Wyoming.

Johnson: Thank you, does anyone have any State level updates?

Josten: Kevin couldn't be here today. Kevin asked me to mention a bill that has passed both the House and Senate and expected to be signed by the Governor; and that is the Habitat Stamp on hunting and fishing licenses. The stamp costs \$10.00 for residents and \$25.00 for non-residents and is required for purchasing on any hunting or fishing license except a one day license, youth license, private shooting preserve license, or landowner hunting license. The money will go to enhance terrestrial habitat on public lands, providing additional access to private lands and

aquatic habitat enhancements; public waters. The Bill was introduced by Senator VJ Smith from Brookings and it is expected to be signed into law.

Tomorrow is the last day of the South Dakota State Legislature, they'll wrap all of their business tomorrow, and then be back on March 30 to deal with any vetoes that the Governor issues.

Johnson: Dick, any updates from the State of Wyoming?

Terry: No update.

Forest Service Hot Topics – DFO Andrew Johnson

Introduce New Black Hills National Forest Staff

- We have two new Staff members here today; Jon Word, Jon is our new Forest Natural Resource Staff Officer, and Kris Hennings, Kris is our new Forest Wildlife Biologist. We're really excited to have both of these guys on board, both of them have gotten off to a very busy start. We'll keep plugging away at filling more vacancies.

Tribal Consultations

- Status update on Tribal consultation related to the F3 Gold exploratory drilling proposal. We initiated request for consultations with the 17 different Tribes we consult with. We've heard back from the Cheyenne River, Oglala Sioux, and Standing Rock. We have not yet scheduled the meetings, but we are attempting to communicate with them to do that. On our April NFAB agenda, we'll have a more in depth conversations about the status of the proposals; what they specifically are, what they are not; what we're analyzing, what we would not analyze, and have some good dialog on those proposals.

Josten: So you'd just meet with those three?

Johnson: Yes, but we'd be happy to meet with any others that are interested.

Bison on Forest

- We had a good conversation with President Rodney Bordeaux, of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe who own the bison. We're down to three loose on the National Forest. Our agreement with President Bordeaux was that the Tribal Game and Fish Department were going to attempt to harvest the three bison, but they were unable to do so in the agreed upon time period. We are moving forward with the USDA Agency, APHIS, who has wildlife services as part of their portfolio. They will arrive on Monday, to harvest the three bison on Tuesday.
- We got three escaped bison from Custer State Park; they were able to dispatch one of them yesterday and will hopefully get the other two today.
- It's important to us to get this resolved as soon as possible as spring is rapidly coming, and as we get closer to the on date for our ranch permittees; we need to get this resolved as soon as possible so we don't have those conflicts or continued property damage to fences, etc.

Newcastle Office Facility Update

- Status update on our Newcastle Wyoming office, the Hell Canyon RD office. That is a leased facility that is in tough shape. We're in the process of soliciting for a new facility. We work through the Federal General Services Agency (GSA) for building leases. We submitted our package of requirements and needs to GSA in December; they have the package to evaluate and prepare, so the next step is for GSA to begin the solicitation. First they research the area and look for government owned space in Newcastle, which we know doesn't exist to meet our needs. Then they'll go out for bids, and we'd evaluate the bids, and then move toward the final phase of awarding a contract. It is a time consuming process, so we're still a ways out from finding a new building space.

Regular Agenda

Black Hills Fish Management Plan – Jake Davis, SD GF&P

Wiebers: We're ready to move on to our regular agenda today, the first topic is our Black Hills Fish Management Plan with Jake Davis from the South Dakota Game Fish and Parks.

Johnson: Steve Hirtzel, our Forest Fisheries Biologist will kick this off.

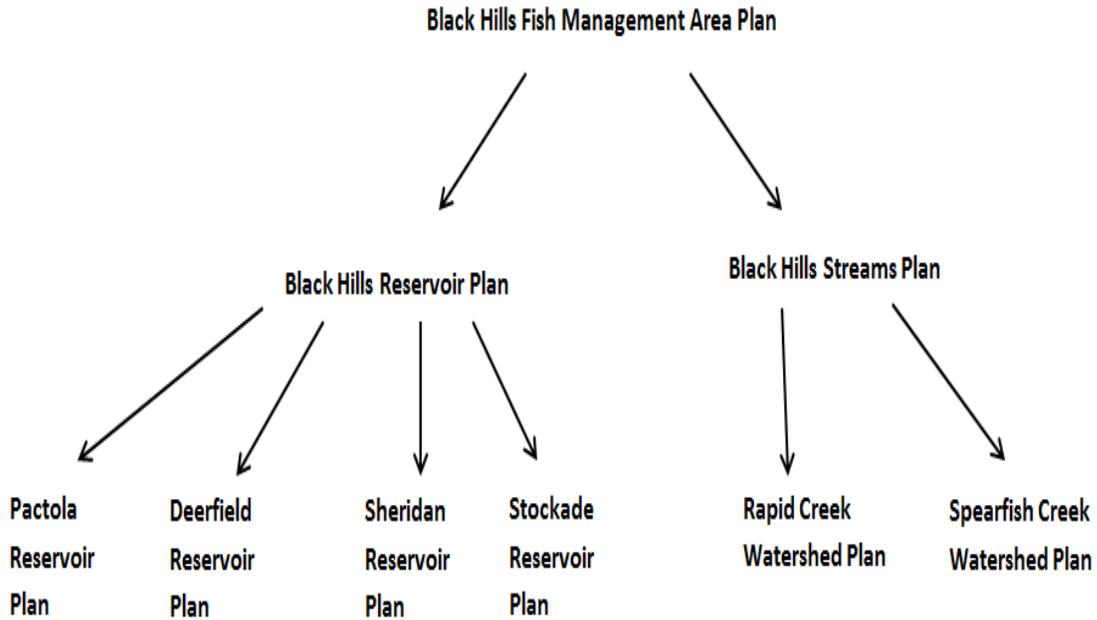
Hirtzel: A little bit of background on Jake's discussion, thinking in the context of a shared stewardship and a new resource, i.e. Fisheries; bigger picture, in the Rocky Mountain Region, we have 11 National Grasslands and Forests. The Black Hills National Forest has the lowest wildlife, fish, and rare plants budget. By the time you take out fixed costs which include salary and vehicles; we have about \$70,000 for project level, training, etc., so not a lot of discretionary funding. In that sense, we really look to SD GF&P as well as Wyoming Game and Fish to help us accomplish our management needs. Those management needs reflect fisheries habitat work; expensive work, especially when you start getting into the stream with equipment; that cost adds up quick. There's also the research component, we don't have a lot of money to fund research. Also from the monitoring standpoint, as far as looking at our recreational fishers as well as our native fish conservation, we rely on the seasonal crews and the permanent crew that State Agencies provide. The Aquatic Invasive Species component we rely heavily on SD GF&P to basically shoulder the brunt of that work. So with that, I'll turn it over to Jake.

Jake Davis: Thank you Steve, and thank you for having me here today; I'm the Area Fisheries Supervisor with the Game, Fish and Parks in Rapid City. The last time I gave this presentation was in January at which time it was a draft. Since then it has gone out for public comment and has been adopted by our Commission last week, so what I'll be talking about today is our new Fish Management Plan.



Black Hills Fish Management Area Plan Update

- Previous BHFMA Plan Structure: T
 - Three documents
 - 54 Objectives
 - 132 Issues



- Current Plan Structure
 - One document
 - Nine objectives
 - 36 Issues



BFHMA Priorities:

- Acquiring >40 cfs from Pactola Reservoir during winter
- Evaluating changes in stockings
- Instream habitat projects
- Improving angler access
- Gathering angler use information

Large Reservoirs:

- Deerfield, Pactola, Sheridan and Stockade Reservoirs
- Issues:
 - New stocking strategies haven't been evaluated
 - High use during summer impacts angling
 - Poor water quality limits use
- Objectives:
 - Evaluate stocking of large rainbow trout
 - Stockade Lake renovation

Small Reservoirs:

- Issues:
 - Shore fishing access can be limited
 - Angler information is lacking
- Objectives:
 - Improve at least 2 fisheries shore fishing areas
 - Gather angler information at 5 fisheries

Primary Watersheds:

- Rapid and Spearfish Creeks
 - Issues:
 - Winter flows below Pactola
 - Brown trout growth in certain areas
 - Objectives:
 - Improve instream habitat in at least 2 sections
 - Work to improve brown trout growth

Secondary Watersheds:

- Issues:
 - Land-use practices impact stream conditions
 - Elevated summer temperatures
 - Insufficient in-stream flows
- Objectives:
 - Complete at least one in-stream project

Davis: That's all I have, does anyone have any questions? If you're curious about the plan, you can find it on the Game, Fish, and Parks website.

Krueger: When Greg talked about the habitat stamp, he referred to it as terrestrial, but aquatic habitat is part of that as well correct?

Davis: Yes, so my understanding is that if the stamp is purchased with a fishing license, that money is earmarked for aquatic habitat; if the stamp is purchased with a hunting license, it goes to terrestrial habitat, and a combination license habitat stamp would be split 50/50.

Miller: You mentioned Stockade Lake, do you have any idea how much trouble you've had with the water at French Creek where the water comes in? What is the water quality of French creek coming into the Lake?

Davis: DENR might have some sampling data or a monitoring station close by. We do have an aeration system in Stockade and we've taken some samples for oxygen measurements. We do not have any standard surveys that happen regarding the water quality there.

Katie Murray: I think it was last year when they drained Canyon Lake, was that GF&P or was that the City?

Davis: When it was fully drained for the spillway to be replaced, that was 2014 or 2015; the plan was to dredge it at the same time. The spillway was able to be replaced. The idea was to divert the water around the dam, but that year we had too much moisture and the diversion couldn't keep up. Canyon Lake still had water running through it, there wasn't enough that they couldn't replace the spillway, but there was too much to dredge. GF&P with DENR, Black Hills Fly Fishers, and Western Dakota Water Development purchased a dredge that we are now operating; conducting open water dredging. Started last October, and dredged for two months before winter shut us down. We moved a couple thousand cubic yards of material, and have about 12 thousand left. The goal is to start open water dredging next week and finish by late summer early fall. The nice thing is that the dredge is owned by the State of South Dakota and can be used where needed.

Johnson: Thank you Jake. Our partnerships with GF&P are incredibly important to us because neither one of us have all the resources needed to do the work we need to do; and it's incredibly important that we work closely together because while Jake manages the fish, we manage the habitat and neither one of us would be successful without the other.



Wiebers: Thank you very much Jake, at this time we'll take a break.

Forest Sustainability Discussion – Andrew Johnson

Johnson: Status update on our ongoing discussion on forest sustainability. We still don't have the draft report from the Rocky Mountain Research Station which is the report that is being drafted to address the fifth and final question that the Working Group came up with about what do the sustainable harvest levels look like. The RMRS has a completed draft report which is out for peer review. Once the peer review is done, and the researchers incorporate the comments from the peer review, the report will be published and it will be available for all of us to use as we prepare for the April 3 stakeholder meeting. We've given them a target deadline of March 20 to publish. As soon as it is available, we'll share it with the Board, the public and the Stakeholder group that is attending the meeting on April 3.

The April 3 Stakeholder meeting is open to the public; space is limited in the office in Custer; to accommodate the desire of folks to hear the discussion, we will have a phone line available, and the meeting will be recorded; we will also transcribe the recording so people can read the notes.

We've also scheduled a second meeting on April 10 with our Counties and municipal governments. Lawrence County expressed interest in particular, for an opportunity to have a good informed and open dialog with the Forest. We'll meet with representatives from each of the Counties in SD & Wyoming and we've invited the local municipalities. This meeting will be here in the Rapid City office with a similar format as the meeting on April 3, presenting the same FIA data and having that good dialog. This is a really important and consequential decision, process, and discussion. These two meetings won't bring us to a decision point but it will be the start of a good engaged dialog around what the future of the timber harvest for the forest will look like and how we continue to manage the forest in a way that it is resilient, how we sustain our mill infrastructure so that we have the timber industry as the great partner that they are, and how we are still able to maintain a healthy green forest that is so loved by all who come visit and support the local economy, and continue to provide high quality wildlife habitat; all of those are needs that the Forest tries to meet. We have a lot of data that we can use to help inform that and a good science based decision.

Wiebers: Some of you will be at the meeting either presenting or representing another group at that meeting. Some of you won't be there but will be listening in, I will be at the meeting, so my contact information is in the directory; if you have any questions or comments during that meeting and want me to ask the question for you, please send me a text or an e-mail.

Miller: About two years ago, on my own, I decided to take a hard look at the origin of this National Forest; I kept it to those critical years up to about 1910. We turned a corner when Homestake decided to support the Black Hills Reserve. That is the origin of timber management. You don't deal without industry. One of the things that got me interested in being in the Norbeck Society is that they weren't interested in lawsuits. The second thing was a warning just to me. Someone asked me a question at a meeting last night, they said what do you think about what's happening on the forest, and they mentioned specifically this meeting that is coming up. It would be out of line for me to anticipate, before I've even heard what these scientists have to say.

Back in 2016 the Congressional Delegation asked for an increase in the annual cut. We knew the Jasper fire took 10% of the capacity, we know the beetle ate a lot of wood; we don't know how much – how could we ask for anything? I did a quick check, one of the things the delegation said was that the beetle was still a very high risk proposition. I checked the science on it at that time, and the scientist said it's officially done at the end of 2015. The request for the annual cut increase was in early 2016, and I said, come on, you guys can check the record as well as me. Having said that, I know recently there has been quite a flourish out on Facebook, arguing that we should sustain the present cut. I hope we can respect the integrity of the science; you won't find a better group of scientists with more integrity than the group that is doing this report. I would be out of line to comment on it now, let's wait and see what they have to say. The last time we had this deep of a look – I don't use the word sustain, I use the word technical conservation policy, the Forest Service created that. There wasn't any Forest Service when Pinchot and his people finished their work, they had created a policy that enabled the National Forest System and all of the Reserves. It wasn't that long after that they renamed it National Forest Service. I'll stop right there. But I just hope we keep that in mind, I appreciate what you do.

Haugen: Since you mentioned the Congressionals, I'll speak from our stand point. We just don't send out letters willy nilly, we do it at the urging or with further study with other groups and people who are informed on the subject. Also, I don't think there was an end date of when the MPB epidemic was going to be over. There were still people talking in 2016 and we didn't want the legislature to think we didn't need any more money. So there may be a scientist somewhere that said that, but I don't think that was the conventional wisdom at the time, whether it ended at the end of 2015 or the end of 2016.

Wudtke: The FIA data and the analysis is something our association is following closely. Dave, I appreciate your comment about not passing judgement until you know all the facts. In 2016 the MPB Working Group was still meeting, and I don't think I saw you at any of those meetings. The entomologist at the time were talking about their expeditions through the Forest and the research they were continuing to do and their observations that a significant part of the Forest was still at high risk for MPB infestation. I don't think any of the discussions in 2016 before the MPB epidemic was declared over in 2017 were based outside of science at the time including those letters, I've read those letters from the congressional delegates, and I think they were spot on for what was occurring at that time.

Josten: One comment I would like to add comes from Dr. John Ball; while the epidemic is over, they declared it over in 2016. What Dr. Ball has said to me repeatedly is that the time to preparing for the next epidemic is now, because if we wait till the next one starts, we can't keep up with it. The time to prepare the forest is before the epidemic starts. The same thing with wildfire the time to treat is before the fire gets started.

Johnson: As you wade into the FIA data, if you have questions, or if something doesn't make sense, please let us know, we'll likely point you to FIA, but if you do have questions, we want you to get answers, so we can have the most open and well informed discussions possible. FIA has received some questions already, and they are working on answering those.

Wiebers: How soon will they get the answers to their questions?

Johnson: If you do ask a question and don't get an answer, please let us know so we can elevate the issue.

Wiebers: If anyone in this group in particular has a question about the FIA data, send to me and I'll forward it up to hopefully move it along a little faster.

Timber Sustainability Working Group – Greg Josten

Josten: With regard to the Timber Sustainability Working Group, we had a preliminary meeting a month ago, basically just an orientation meeting; at that time the data was just released. At that time we didn't have a Forest Service Staff person assigned to the group, and we didn't have this publication yet, so we decided to put the process on hold till the publication came out. The members of the Working Group are myself, Corissa Busse, Bob Burns, Dick Terry, Paul Pearson, and Dave Johnson. We had a very brief conversation and were waiting for the rest of the information to come out. What we'll be looking for from the Forest Service, is a charge – what questions do you want us to answer? So this isn't a report by the Working Group trying to figure out what the FS wants. We'll try our best to answer the questions. Think about what questions you want answered. As I look through the data, I have my own questions; I'll try to get answered and I hope that you feel comfortable about looking at it yourselves. The FS is willing and able to answer questions; sometimes the best answers come from the source and that's the Forest Inventory Analysis. Working Group; you'll hear from me as soon as we have everything in hand and we can start up the process.

Implementation of Motorized Trail Strategy Recommendations – Jerry Krueger

Krueger: We are consumed with trying to staff and get ready for the upcoming season; that's our #1 priority. That is occurring without the presence of a Recreation Program Manager; most people know Annie Apodaca; she retired December 31st, and we have no replacement for Annie. We were unsuccessful in recruiting a detailer behind her. There is nothing on the horizon in terms of hiring behind Annie. Right now it might be difficult to find anyone in Recreation so please call myself, Andrew, or Ralph Adam.

We have now settled on a Motorized Trail Program Manager; can't be announced yet; it is an internal Forest Service candidate; has already begun to coordinate and collaborate with Steve Keegan. This individual will be doing the supervisory position and that transition should occur on the first of April. As a reminder that organization chart, the Motorized Trail Program Lead will work for whoever gets Annie Apodaca's job; until then they will work for Ralph, Andrew and myself.

In terms of the recommendations, one of the things we is to ask what did we learn last year that we need to apply this year? That runs the gamut from the disposition of the employees we hire through what kind of direction we are giving them as they work with the public. One of the priorities we are taking from last year and one of the recommendations from the Working Group is that we apply our lessons learned to this new season. We are focusing on hiring, staffing, training, purchasing equipment, so that we are ready for the influx of new employees into that program. Our veteran's recruitment event; we had a number of high quality candidates. We will on board the new employees; mix of grades and employees, in the Trail Ranger piece of the

program and Motorized Trail Maintenance piece of the program. Identified two work group leaders that will work for the trail coordinator position; excited about bringing new folks in who are interested in our trail program. We are well placed to be successful this year; it isn't instantaneous, we have to start from scratch with training and bringing them up to speed. Our law enforcement cadre is deeply invested in the success of this program. We want to engage in positive public interaction.

The focus of our maintenance program in the first year is to work on and apply their efforts on high use known maintenance problem areas. We will go to the areas that have maintenance issues, or a high public safety hazard. I have assured our Districts and their Recreation Program Leads that there will be high touch in terms of communication. Our maintenance and trail ranger folks need to be talking all the time. On the Trail Rangers side, our priority is to on board those Trail Rangers, to get them the training they need and get them out on the ground as soon as possible.

The Motorized Trail Program lead; responsible for two issues related to vendors. Those that sell our motorized trail permits, and their interaction with the folks buying the permits is critical, they are our first line of interaction. We are a multi-state destination for the OHV destination. All of the vendors attended a training session. Other responsibilities is the vendor locations that rent OHVs to the public; developing a relationship with them because they also are a first line of interaction with motorized trail users. Cautioning the renters about resource damage and where to go.

Patty Brown: Last year we had Trail Rangers, are they rehired; for consistency sake?

Krueger: One of them came back, but we are hiring experienced Rangers. One tactic was to alter the appointment both grade and appointment to encourage them to stay with us longer.

Wudtke: Last year we had the Trail Rangers were out and user groups discussed a number of factors contributed to their work load was and what was accomplished. Trail Rangers issued one violation regarding the sticker program. Is there going to be any change in priorities for the Trail Rangers?

Krueger: I've said many times, we're not fielding a group of law enforcement officers, our goal is compliance through positive engagement with the public. Compliance is their priority.

Orientation Topic – FY20 Forest Budget – Jerry Krueger

Krueger: We have a budget this year; which is awesome thanks to our Congressional delegation. This is so much better than a continuing resolution. Our budget has been flat for the last several years; our authorization really has been flat to declining in certain budget line items. Fortunately, we are well under way in the wildland fire, fire fix, and are thrilled in that there is an entire set aside that is fully funded to back up our wildland fire allocation so those funds are available and we don't have to pull out of any other accounts. This is a game changer for us because as we go into the fourth quarter of the fiscal year; depending on how bad the fire situation was, our budget was subject to reallocation.

With a flat budget comes challenges. Changes to retirement program contributions caused our budget to decline by 6%; Range Management, Recreation Program continue to be significant challenges for us. As it stands right now, we're somewhere in the range of about \$4.5 million down from last year and that is principally in our vegetation management budget. We get what are called O&M dollars through Congress, these are budget authorizations. And then we have other appropriated dollars that are prior year funds. We still have prior year funds banked but that authorization has gone now away. The third is the non-appropriated dollars; KV dollars, BD dollars, fees and other dollars we can collect.

This year's budget breakdown:

- O&M dollars: \$20.7 million (This is the category we are down this year).
- Other appropriated funds, prior year dollars: \$1,080,000
- Non-appropriated funds: \$7 million
- Total operating budget for FY2020 \$29 million

We have made application for additional funds in Vegetation Management program and Range Management program.

Gomez: Did you say you are \$4 million down on vegetation management? That sounds like a lot of money; \$4 million less than last year.

Krueger: Yes less, it means we can do less; we are trying to get more to see how we can make things happen; Jon Word is working the issues.

Allen: You don't have hard targets? Or have the targets gone down?

Krueger: We do have a hard target and there has been no adjustment.

Terry: KV funds can be used to supplement the vegetation management correct?

Krueger: Yes, and that's exactly what we are doing; that \$7 million includes \$2.6 million of KV.

Wudtke: With reduced funding in mind, what is the projection for what this Forest expects to accomplish in FY20 for veg management?

Johnson: It remains to be seen; we are looking to convert funds like KV, and put them into use on the ground and we're looking at leveraging resources from other places; but until this all falls into place we're not sure how far we'll get. We are not funded at the level we were funding at last year, but our targets remain the same.

Wudtke: Have you submitted estimates as low as 130,000 accomplishment to the Regional Office and Washington Office?

Johnson: Yes. What we have done is produced scenarios around what we could accomplish with the funding we've received. We gave scenarios that had a number of step points, they weren't specific, it was approximations; this is what it takes to get to here, here, and here. The lowest end scenario was 120,000 and the highest would be the current target of 197,000. We're

trying to be as clear as we can be with our Regional Office and the National Office about what it would take to do X, Y, or Z.

Terry: With the fire borrowing being fixed; was a lot of your vegetative management money getting snatched up in the fire funding?

Krueger: No, those weren't the accounts that were in play.

Wiebers: Are there any other questions? Thank you for that budget summary.

Public Comments:

Wiebers: If you would like to make a comment please identify yourself, and speak no more than three minutes. Hearing none, I would like to remind you that on the FIA portion of the presentation today; go ahead and send your requests for information to me, I'll combine them all and submit them as questions from the Board members; so rather than FIA getting questions from 32 different people they'll just get one request for each question, and maybe we'll get the answers a little quicker. Please have those questions to me by next Friday, March 20. I'll put it in a letter to Andrew, and whatever feedback we get, we'll get it copied out to entire group.

ADJOURN

Wiebers: Are there any more comments? If not, could I have a motion to adjourn? Motion to adjourn by John Gomez and seconded by Alice Allen. Meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m. Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 15, 2020.