

# Gallatin RAC Meeting Notes

## February 28, 2020

## In Attendance

## CATEGORY A

Garry Edson

Joe Josephson - **CHAIR**

Esther Fishbaubh

Sam Magro

## CATEGORY B

Mark DeOpsomer

Robert Knapp

Daniel Porter

Tom Olliff

Aaron Clausen

### CATEGORY C

Allison Gidley

Patrick Cross

Ronald Normandeau

Peter Bennett

**Total Attendance: 13 voting RAC Members**

# Agenda

9:00 a.m.

## Call to Order and Welcome

Joe Josephson, Chair

Mary Erickson, DFO

## Quorum Determination

Karen Tuscano, RAC Coordinator

9:05 a.m.

Approval of November 12, 2019

Joe Josephson

## Meeting Minutes

**Patrick Cross asked if we could add into the notes the discussion that took place about projects that are a “study” being able to be submitted and do fall under the intent of the SRS Act. Karen Tuscano stated that she will add them to the notes and resend them out to all members. Tom Olliff moved to accept the notes from the November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. Patrick Cross seconded that motion with the inclusion of before mentioned amendment. Motion passed with all in favor.**

9:10 a.m.

### Current Status (2 yr. re-authorization)

Lin Goettlich

Mary Erickson

Lin Goettlich reported that the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) Authority was passed by Congress in the latest Appropriations Bill. The RAC will have funds from FY17, FY18, FY19, and FY20 to approve projects for. We will actual amounts for FY19 funds most likely by the end of March. All of these funds need to have projects approved by September 30, 2022, and all funds need to be obligated or spent by September 30, 2023.

Mary provided some options to the RAC members for approving projects today. They could approve projects that have funding that add up to just the FY17 and FY18 funds (~\$103,000). They could approve projects that have funding that add up to FY17, FY18, and FY19 funds (~\$150,000). They could approve projects that have funding that use all of the FY17 and FY18 funds, and only partial FY19 funds. The members chose to not make that decision right now, but wait until they all get back together after group breakouts to see what projects have a quorum out of each category to be approved.

9:20 a.m.

## Review of protocol, rules and ranking

Joe Josephson, Chair

### Prep for Group Breakouts

## Review Funding Estimates and Spreadsheet

Lin Goettlich

## Review of Project Proposals (Q/A, clarify)

Karen Tuscano

**Lin went over with the group the intent of the SRS Act. Mary explained that as they talk about projects in group breakout, each category will need a quorum in favor for a project to be approved for funds by the RAC.**

9:45 a.m.

## Review Project Proposals

## ALL – GROUP BREAKOUTS

10:30 a.m.

Project Submitter Presentations

Project submitters

**Project Submission Presentations limit to 5 minutes per project**

10:30-10:35	Wendi Urie for Cody Yeatts – Bozeman Ranger District – North Cottonwood Trail Bridges Project
10:35-10:40	Jason Brey – Hebgen Lake Ranger District – Oregon Short Line Rail Trail Project
10:40-10:45	Jason Brey – Hebgen Lake Ranger District – Rendezvous Youth Ski/Play Area Project
10:45-10:50	Geoffrey Godfrey – Bozeman Ranger District – Battle Ridge Campground Improvements Project
10:50-10:55	Hilary Eisen - Friends of Hyalite – Hyalite Day Use Area Improvements
10:55-11:00	Wendi Urie for Adam Norlander – Bozeman Ranger District – Pioneer Lake Trail Project
11:00-11:05	Jennifer Mohler – Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance – Conserve Our Canyon Project
11:05-11:10	Henry Glenn – Gallatin Valley Backcountry Horsemen – Trail Maintenance Project
11:10-11:15	Chris Nessel – Montana Conservation Corps – East Bridger Trail Maintenance Project

- Others not listed – first come – first serve (SIGN UP BACK OF ROOM)

**Quick Summary from Presentations:**

- **Wendi Urie –Bozeman Ranger District** – North Cottonwood Trail Bridges Project will install 2 new bridges on the North Cottonwood Access trail #546. The first bridge will be a double log treated foot bridge with hand railing. The second bridge crosses and irrigation ditch that has been impacted by users and doesn't function properly. The bridge will be laminated treated lumber with handrail. Most of the funds would go toward materials to build the bridges since the materials for treated lumber is so expensive.
- **Jason Brey –Hebgen Lake Ranger District** – The Oregon Short Line Rail Trail Project will improve the use of the Oregon Short Line Rail Trail, the only Montana-based section of the 125 mile-long Greater Yellowstone Trail. The project will place and compact gravel along the entire length of trail, creating a 10' wide usable surface. Three bridges will be placed across the South Fork of the Madison River. This portion of the trail will be non-motorized, but there is a motorized trail that runs parallel to this trail directly across the river that accommodates that type of use.
- **Jason Brey –Hebgen Lake Ranger District** – The Rendezvous Youth Ski/Play Area Enhancement project will re-purpose a surplus 16' wide x 40' long bottomless arch culvert that is currently used as a Quonset on the Forest Service administrative compound in West Yellowstone and turn it into a unique Nordic skiing opportunity by creating a bridge and tunnel where skiers, kids in particular, will be able to ski over and through the arch culvert. The project is designed to enhance the existing infrastructure located in the stadium area of the ski trails and encourage broader use of the area by youth skiers. The culvert would be free for the project.
- **Geoffrey Godfrey –Bozeman Ranger District** – The Battle Ridge Campground Improvements Project would construct five tent pads, refinish seven picnic tables, purchase 3 concrete picnic tables, and resurface portions of the campground road. This campground is highly used and hasn't seen improvements since the 1970's.
- **Hilary Eisen – Friends of Hyalite** – The Hyalite Day Use Area Improvements project would provide funding for one additional toilet pumping for each of the 3 outhouses at the Day Use Area. It would also replace 5 picnic tables with concrete picnic tables. Wendi Urie provided clarification on the price of pumping outhouses. The only contractor they could find that will pump Forest Service outhouses comes from Dillon, so he is also paid for travel.
- **Wendi Urie – Bozeman Ranger District** – The Pioneer Lake Trail Project entails the enhancement of an existing ATV trail in the Storm Castle drainage. The enhancement of the existing trail would address a significant safety hazard and increase riparian benefits by addressing a chronic wet area that creates a large mud hole in the trail. Currently, motorized users are navigating around the hole which increases resource damage and increases safety concerns. The area has been an ongoing safety and maintenance issue and with this grant we propose to utilize new technologies, Geoterra material, to create a more sustainable and safer trail. RAC members asked about the material and if it had been used in other places. Wendi clarified that the material is relatively new and other Forest are seeing success using the material.
- **Jennifer Mohler –Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance** –The Conserve Our Canyon project will fund the Montana Conservation Corps Wildlands Restoration Team to treat noxious weeds on public lands in the Gallatin Canyon. The MCC crew will work with the Custer Gallatin National Forest Weeds Program.

- **Henry Glenn – Gallatin Valley Backcountry Horsemen** – The Trail Maintenance Project would help pay for travel expenses and supplies for the Gallatin Valley Backcountry Horsemen as they clear trails as volunteers for the Forest Service.
- **Chris Nasset – Montana Conservation Corps (MCC)** – The East Bridger Trail Maintenance Project will engage local high school volunteers through MCC to maintain three trails in the Brackett Creek Trail System (#525 South Fork Brackett Creek, #551 and #538) and bring them up to USFS trail standards to prevent resource damage and keep trails safe for the winter and summer users.

11:30 a.m.                      Ranking process                      Joe Josephson-Group Breakouts,

12:15 p.m.                      Voting process                      Joe Josephson  
**Priority Ranking of ALL recommended projects if needed**                      Karen Tuscano

**Each Category presented to the group the amount of funding they wanted to go toward each project. Category A wanted to fund all projects at requested amounts except the Oregon Rail Trail project at \$30,000 and not fund the Rendezvous project. Category B wanted to fund all projects at the requested amounts except not fund the Pioneer Lake Project. Category C wanted to fund all projects at the requested amounts except the East Bridger project at \$11,000, not fund the Bee project, fund the Oregon Rail Trail project at \$30,000 and not fund the Rendezvous project. After much discussion, the RAC members chose to fund all projects at requested amounts, except for no funding for the Rendezvous project. The members thought the project was not needed like some of the other projects.**

**Esther Fishbaugh moved to fund the projects as reflected on the project funding spreadsheet.**

**Allison Gidley seconded that motion.**

**Motion passed with none opposed.**

**Ranking of projects was not needed since there is FY19 funds that weren't used.**

12:50 p.m.                      Discuss next Gallatin RAC meeting for fee proposal                      Joe Josephson

**Mary updated the members on where the Forest is in the fee proposal process. Currently, the Forest is waiting to hear from the Region and the Washington Office to be able to start the public scoping process. Once Mary knows more, the Forest should be able to set a time period that will work for the RAC members to meet to discuss the fee proposals. There will need to be a Federal Register Notice published, so the date will need to be set early enough to get the FRN published. Karen will set up a Doodle Poll for the members.**

**Esther Fishbaugh made a motion for the Gallatin RAC to meet at a later date (to be determined) for fee proposals.**

**Tom Olliff seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed with none opposed.**

12:55 p.m.                      Close-out                      Joe Josephson

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Secure Rural Schools information: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/pts>; Custer Gallatin website: [www.fs.usda.gov/custergallatin](http://www.fs.usda.gov/custergallatin).