



Location: Flathead Co. South Campus
(40 11th Street, Kalispell, MT)
Date: March 2, 2022
Time: 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM

FLATHEAD BASIN COMMISSION 3/2/22 Meeting Agenda

- I. 10:00 am: Call to order/Welcome & Introductions**
– Rich Janssen, Chair; Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator; Cassidy Bender, Commission Coordinator; All (name/organization or affiliation)
- II. 10:15 am: Commission Business** – Kate Wilson; Cassidy Bender
 - Staff Presentation: Activities, Projects, Committees and Programs
 - Meet new FBC Non-Point Source Coordinator
 - ACTION: Review/Approve FBC Minutes (9/8/21)
 - ACTION: Discussion/Approval updated FY22 FBC Operating Budget
 - Septic leachate and stormwater projects & plans
 - Montana Stormwater Conference (sponsor/panel)
 - Montana Waters Campaign plan and launch
 - Strategic Plan/Setting Priorities Approach/Discussion (winter/spring 2022)
- III. 11:15 am: PRESENTATION: Flathead River Erosion Study** – Samantha Tappenbeck, Flathead Conservation District
- IV. 11:35 am: Agency News: ARPA grants for water/sewer infrastructure; etc.** – Mark Bostrom, DNRC
- V. 11:55 pm BREAK FOR LUNCH** (provided)
- VI. 1:15 pm: PANEL PRESENTATION: Emergency Response & Preparedness in the Flathead Basin** – Nic Winslow, BNSF; Brian Heino, Flathead County OEM; Mark Clary, Lake County OEM; Dale Nelson, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes Emergency Manager
- VII. 3:00 pm: ELECTION: Member at Large** (Executive Committee)
- VIII. 3:10 pm: WRAP UP, NEXT STEPS & 5/18/22 MTG TOPICS** – Kate Wilson
- IX. 3:20 pm: PUBLIC COMMENT**
- X. 3:30 pm: ADJOURN**

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/ Project Name:	Flathead Basin Commission		
Date of Meeting:	March 2 nd , 2022	Time:	10:00am-3:30pm
Minutes Prepared By:	Cassidy Bender	Location:	Flathead County, Kalispell & Zoom/Call in
List of Acronyms			
AIS	Aquatic invasive species	FBC	Flathead Basin Commission
BOR	US Bureau of Reclamation	FLBS	Flathead Lake Biological Station
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration	FWP	Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
BSWC	Big Sky Watershed Corps (AmeriCorps)	GNP	Glacier National Park
CEMIST	Central Eastern MT Invasive Species Team	MCWD	Missoula County Weed District
CFC	Clark Fork Coalition	NPS	National Park Service
CRB	Columbia River Basin	NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
CRC	Clearwater Resource Council	UC ³	Upper Columbia Conservation Commission
CSKT	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes	UCLN	Upper Columbia Lakes Network
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality	USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
DNRC	Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation	USFS	US Forest Service
eDNA	Environmental DNA	USFWS	US Fish & Wildlife Service
E & O	Education & Outreach	WLI	Whitefish Lake Institute
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency	WRDA	Water Resources Development Act
EQC	Environmental Quality Council (Interim)	WRP	Western Regional Panel
1. Welcome and Introductions			
Rich Janssen (Chair)	Opened the meeting. Confirmed quorum present (for voting purposes).		
Welcome & Introductions (Roundtable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome by Pete Melnick at Flathead County • Each participant introduced themselves including name and organization/interest that they are representing. • The Flathead Basin Commission acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. Today, we honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come. 		
2. Attendees			
<p>FBC (voting members underlined): <u>Casey Lewis</u> (Vice Chair, City of Kalispell), <u>Sandy Beder-Miller</u> (Governor-appointed), <u>Lech Naumovich</u> (Flathead Conservation District), <u>Kate Hammond</u> (acting superintendent Glacier National Park), <u>Kurt Steele</u> (USFS), Myla Kelly (DEQ), Mark Bostrom (DNRC Helena), Kate Wilson (FBC Commission Administrator), Cassidy Bender (FBC Commission Coordinator), Emilie Henry (FBC Nonpoint Source Coordinator)</p> <p>Virtual members: <u>Rich Janssen</u> (Chair, CSKT), <u>Kathy Olsen</u> (DNRC Kalispell), <u>Jim Simpson</u> (Lake County Conservation District), <u>Jasmine Courville-Brown</u> (CSKT), Mark Reller (BPA), Bill Dykes (BOR), Jim Williams (FWP), Peter Brumm (EPA), <u>Brian Hughes</u> (Governor appointed)</p> <p>Absent members: <u>Jack Potter</u> (Governor-appointed), <u>Michael Freeman</u> (Governor's Office), <u>Randy Brodehl</u> (Flathead County Commission), <u>Steve Stanley</u> (Lake County Commissioner),</p> <p>Public/Other: Mike Koopal (WLI), Stephanie Hummel (FLBS), Brian Heino (Flathead County Sheriff and OES Director), Mark Clary (Lake County OEM), Pete Melnick (Flathead County), Nic Winslow (BNSF), Matt Jones (BNSF), Dale Nelson (CSKT DES), Rachel Malison (FLBS), Claire Kirk (FLBS/MMW BSWC), Saige Jibben (Lake County CD BSWC), Heidi Fleury (Lake CD), Kate Sheridan (Flathead Lakers), Tom Bansak (FLBS), Rep. Dave Fern, Nannette Nelson (FLBS), Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), Onno Wieringa (Flathead Lakers), Keely Larson (UM graduate student), Ron Catlett (Senator Daines Office), Samantha Tappenbeck (Flathead CD), Valerie Kurth (DNRC), Sheena Pate (Flathead Rivers Alliance), Mary T McClelland (West Glacier), Aaron Losing (Kalispell WWTP), Taylor Davison (Valley Journal Editor), Lynn Maas (Friends of</p>			

Lake Mary Ronan), John McLaughlin (Daily Interlake), Constanza von der Pahlen (Flathead Lakers), Evan Smith (CSKT), Sarah Lundstrum (NPCA Glacier Park), Eric Trum (DEQ), Jason Mohr (WPIC), Ruth Baker (MACO), Joe Bouroncle (BOR HH), Blair Libby (CSKT)

3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues

Presenter	Topic/Discussion
<p>Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator</p> <p>Approval of Minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specified virtual voting members shall use the chat to vote, for the record. • Overview of Agenda: ACTION: Approve 09/08/21 Minutes, Staff Report (New FBC NPS Coordinator, activities, budget, grants, projects, MT Stormwater Conference, MT Waters campaign launch, strategic planning process, etc.), Flathead River Erosion Study, Agency News Updates, Emergency Response & Preparedness in the Flathead Basin, ACTION: Election (Executive Committee), wrap up, next steps, May 18th meeting topics, public comment & adjourn. • Motion to approve minutes from 9/8/21 meeting (Casey). Second (Sandy). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i>
<p>Staff Updates</p> <p>Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator</p> <p>Cassidy Bender, Commission Coordinator</p>	<p>Staff Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FBC welcomes new full-time staffer: Emilie Henry as our Nonpoint Source Coordinator. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emilie holds a B.S. in Geology and Environmental Geosciences from Lafayette College in Pennsylvania. After completing her undergraduate education in 2019, she accepted a position as a Big Sky Watershed Corps Member serving with the City of Kalispell and the Flathead Basin Commission. During her two terms of service, Emilie focused on increasing awareness and knowledge of nonpoint source pollution in the watershed through technical monitoring and mapping projects as well as education and outreach initiatives to encourage resident participation. Her passion lies at the intersection of environmental science and policy, particularly as it applies to environmental justice and equity. • The FBC Executive Committee meets every other Tuesday at 11:15am, meetings are open to everyone and allows us to conduct business between quarterly meetings. If you are interested in attending, please let staff know. • Notable staff activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kate and Cassidy split their time 50/50 with FBC and UC³. ▪ Meeting follow up and planning ▪ Executive Committee planning and participation (bi-weekly) ▪ Grant & Budget management (writing/reporting/tracking) ▪ Monitoring Flathead Basin natural resource issues ▪ Flathead Basin Wastewater Partnership – new BSWC member ▪ Septic leachate committee and tech subcommittee support- GIS Risk Map, Synthetic DNA Study, etc. ▪ Stormwater projects support (MT Stormwater Conference- FBC panel) ▪ Education & Outreach committee- E&O WQ campaign, new FBC website. ▪ Legislative & Committee Tracking ▪ DNRC agency assistance & support ▪ Crown Managers Partnership steering committee (represent both Commissions) ▪ North American Invasive Species Management Association (president) ▪ Nutrient standards working group ▪ Western Regional Panel ▪ BC Columbia River Basin Steering Committee (member) ▪ Pend Oreille Basin Commission (Ex-officio, MT upstream rep) ▪ Upper Columbia Conservation Commission & AIS support (50% of staff time) ▪ County Assist Team (CAT) Public Information Officer & Liaison Officer (Kate)

Budget Updates

- Graduate School- MPA Certificate (Kate)
- Graphic Design specialization professional development (Cassidy)

Sources of Funding FY22

- State fiscal year = July 1- June 30
- Natural Resources Operating Fund FY22
 - **\$127,000**- base budget & OTO now permanent (operating)
- Natural Resources Operating Fund FY21
 - **\$20,000**- accrual from FY21 to Windfall contract
 - Accrual is a carry forward of money to the next year, the spendable amount is increased but does not change the base budget amount.
- Federal: EPA Multipurpose State & Tribal Assistance **Grants**
 - **\$51,113**- EPA grant 1 (stormwater project, 2 years)- **Total expended, complete.**
 - **Initiated \$26,191**- EPA grant 2 (septic leachate GIS mapping; synthetic DNA study) -\$5,345 Expended (2 years)
 - **Pending EPA Grant 3 (\$25,576)**- Increasing funding for NPS projects in the basin, specifically septic reimbursement program (\$3,200 to indirect and the rest to NPS projects= \$22,376)

FY22 Line-Item Budget (approved 9/8/21)

- **Red** is amount expended to date (3/2/22).
- **\$0/66,000** FBC 'Environmental Field Technician' a.k.a. Nonpoint Source Coordinator
 - Build capacity for FBC through DNRC modified FTE.
 - Tasks: Support all NPS projects, launch of campaign, FBC full time (vs. current staff split between 2 commissions). Work towards a full-time FTE.
- **\$8,721/20,000** Nonpoint source projects & support
 1. Septic Leachate contract (to date), study and/or water quality monitoring to verify model, report generation (\$15,000)
 2. Stormwater monitoring & outreach (\$5,000)
- **\$335/20,000** Education & Outreach: Water Quality Campaign, outreach materials, website
- **\$4,787/8,500** Member travel/meetings & sponsorships
- **\$3,500/3,500** Conference/meeting sponsorships
 - Prioritize MT-based events. Examples: CMP, NALMS, NAISMA, PNWER, MT Stormwater Conference, etc.
- **\$2,966/4,000** Staff supplies/Travel
 - E.g., virtual meeting equipment, hot spot, cell phone, printing, training, travel on FBC-related business, etc.
- **\$1,193/5,000** Other/Contingency funds
- **TOTAL: \$21,502/127,000 operating**

Existing Contracts

1. River Design Group—septic leachate risk mapping & additional technical support
 - **\$29,265/\$39,800** (Balance: \$10,535)
 - Amended June 2021 (added \$15k & one year)
 - EPA grant (8k)
 - FBC operating (7k)
2. Windfall—website, water quality campaign development, reports & publications, graphic design
 - **\$9,212/\$35,000** (Balance: \$25,788)
 - Amended June 2021 (added \$20,000 from FBC operating & one year)

**Committee &
Project Updates**

Current Committee Membership

- **Executive Committee:** Rich Janssen (Chair), Casey Lewis (Vice Chair), Kathy Olsen, Jasmine Courville-Brown, member-at-large (vacant), FBC staff
- **Onsite Wastewater Treatment Committee:** Mike Koopal (Chair), Ryan Richardson (Vice Chair-River Design Group), Casey Lewis (City of Kalispell/FBC), Abigail St Lawrence, Andy Crites, Tom Bansak (FLBS), Dean Sirucek, Craig Kendall (USFS), Diana Luke (Lake County), Eric Bryson (MACO), Eric Regensburger (DEQ), Eric Trum/Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), Sam Sill/Erica Wirtala (MT Association of Realtors), Evan Smith (CSKT), Rep. Dave Fern, Samantha Tappenbeck (Flathead CD), Hilary Devlin (Flathead Lakers), Kate Sheridan (Flathead Lakers), Lamont Kincaide, Roger Noble (Flathead Health), Steve Rosso (Flathead Lakers), Susie Turner (Kalispell Public Works), Tim Burton (LCT), Tom Cowan, Tom Cox (Flathead Lakers), Daniel Congdon (DEQ), Peter Brumm (EPA), Sam Bourret (FWP), Jeff Tuttle (Flathead Lakers), Heidi Fleury (Lake Co CD), Kristal Kiel (Flathead Health Dept.), Stephanie Adams (MACD)
- **Education & Outreach Steering Committee:** Casey Lewis (co-chair), Lech Naumovich (co-chair), Tom Bansak (FLBS), Ian Withrow (FLBS), Samantha Tappenbeck (FCD), Hilary Devlin (Flathead Lakers), Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI), Sheena Pate (FRA), Evan Smith (CSKT), Eric Trum/Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), FBC staff
- **Technical Committee Core Team:** Mike Koopal (Chair); Myla Kelly (DEQ); Ryan Richardson (RDG); Tom Bansak (FLBS); Rachel Malison (FLBS); Sam Bourret (FWP); CSKT – TBD; FBC staff
 - Supplemental Members (based on project/need): Septic leachate project(s); Stormwater project(s); Monitoring (potential)

Stormwater Projects Update

- EPA grant (2020-2022) Complete/Closed
 - \$51,113 Total Expended
- Both Phase I and Phase II Stormwater Reports available on [FBC website here](#)
- FBC NSP Coordinator to continue projects in 2022
 - Stormwater Presentations at Center for Watershed Protection Conference (April) and MT Stormwater Conference (May)
 - Build on recommendations from Phase II
 - Education & Outreach
 - Rain Garden Imitative
 - Adopt-a-Drain Program
 - Organize local river clean up event(s)

Septic Leachate Projects Update

- Next Onsite Wastewater Treatment Committee meeting- *virtual April 5th*
- EPA Grant- \$26k for septic leachate projects
 - \$8k to RDG Contract + \$15k to synthetic DNA project
- Septic Leachate GIS/Risk Mapping Project & Final Report
 - Internal Peer Review (technical committee) *Complete*
 - External Peer Review (March 2022)
 - Unpermitted Systems Analysis- post card survey results (to be incorporated into final report- March 2022) *Complete*
 - Cursory results ~200 respondents and most had systems that were pre-1978.
 - Launch of publicly available GIS 'Hub' on new FBC website (Summer 2022)

Committee & Project Updates continued

- Road show and/or webinar sharing model with planning departments, local gov, partners, MACO, League of Cities/Towns, etc. (Summer 2022)
 - Education and outreach focused on the map/tools, how to use, how to find, septic leachate pollution issue 101, FAQs, etc.
- Synthetic DNA study (Whitefish & Lake Mary Ronan)
 - Cornell contract signed
 - Tracer deployment (April 2022)
 - Sampling (April-October 2022)
 - Data Analysis (June-November 2022)
 - Currently seeking landowners and selecting sampling sites for project (help from locals, Friends of Lake Mary Ronan, etc.)
- Flathead Basin Wastewater Partnership
 - Saige Jibben - BSWC (Lake CD)
 - \$9,600 left for ~50 reimbursements in 2022
 - Application opening back up in the spring
 - EPA Grant submitted to continue project
 - Education & Outreach on septic cost-share program
- UM Graduate Project: Socio-economic impacts of septic leachate
- UM/FLBS National Science Foundation Smart & Connected Communities Grant (based on synthetic DNA project) – *Septic Workshop June 2022 @ FLBS*
 - Flying experts in from across the country to speak on and discuss septic leachate issue facets including financial, jurisdictional, social, monitoring, etc.
 - To be complimentary to the FBC Onsite Wastewater Treatment Committee to help prioritize the committee work and planning moving forward.

Discussion:

- The Septic Leachate GIS/Risk Mapping tool is a cutting-edge way to assess status of land and use for future planning, informative model will assist DEQ and counties. It is currently very specific to the basin but should go statewide. The Synthetic DNA study provides the validity for the GIS tool.
- Q: Are old septic systems bad? The rule of thumb is they are effectively treated effluent up to 25-30 years of age, after that efficiency starts to decline. There are many other factors including how often/much the system is used, how well it is maintained, the suitability of the site/soil in which it is installed.

Sponsorships: 2022 Montana Stormwater Conference FBC Panel

- FBC is a gold sponsor for the MT Stormwater Conference (sponsorship funds held from FY21 due to rescheduling conference for COVID), from May 2nd-4th (Missoula).
- FBC will be hosting a Nonpoint Source Pollution Panel (3-4 speakers)
- Panel topics:
 - Overview of FBC, basin, projects & strategic priorities (Kate)
 - Interfacing with local/state government, organizations, and agencies
 - Nonpoint source projects
 - Septic Leachate overview & highlights (Mike)
 - Community education & outreach efforts (Casey or Lech)
- We have four complimentary registrations (for commission members). Please let staff know if you would like to attend.
- The conference theme is resilience with a broad focus on anything related to watersheds, water quality protection, restoration, stormwater management, etc.

Education & Outreach Committee

- Co-Chairs: Lech Naumovich (FCD) & Casey Lewis (City of Kalispell)

**Committee &
Project Updates
continued**

- Steering Committee: FBC staff, co-chairs, Hilary Devlin-Flathead Lakers, Samantha Tappenbeck-Flathead CD, Tom Bansak & Ian Withrow-FLBS, Evan Smith-CSKT, Sheena Pate-Crown of Continent Geotourism, Cynthia Ingelfinger-WLI, Eric Trum-DEQ
- 2022 Projects:
 - New FBC website (2022) in development
 - About the Commission & Projects
 - Septic Risk Map GIS ‘Hub’
 - Stormwater Projects Page
 - Montana Waters vanity address & landing page
 - Flathead Basin Water Quality Campaign Launch (logo & tagline approved 9/8/21)
 - Address multiple water quality issues & increase consistency and effectiveness of messaging
 - Products in development
 - Launch at events and in publications in 2022
 - Collaboration Efforts
 - Flathead Living Guide for new homeowners in the Flathead Basin (Flathead Lakers, FCD, DEQ, FWP, etc.) assisting with water section
 - Septic Reimbursement Program Outreach
 - Events/Meetings: Septic workshop, Septic Risk Mapping Road Show, Stormwater Conference, Flathead Waters Clean Up 2022, NALMs, etc.
 - New website (2022)

Upcoming Events:

- Crown Managers Partnership Recreation Forum- March 7-10 Virtual
- Governors’ Conference on Tourism & Recreation - April 18-19 Billings
- Montana Stormwater Conference– May 2-4 Missoula, MT
- NSF Septic Leachate Workshop- June 8-10 Flathead Lake Bio Station
- North American Invasive Species Management Association– Nov 7-11 Sanibel, Florida
- North American Lakes Management Society (NALMS)– Nov 14-17 Minnesota
- **FBC presentations:** Center for Watershed Protection (April) & Stormwater Conf. (May)
- *Always happy to cover registration and travel for FBC members for meetings and conferences, if you would like to attend, please let staff know.*
- Next Flathead Basin Commission meeting- May 18 TBD/Virtual
- Focusing on Strategic Planning Efforts (2022-2025)
 - Big Picture Discussion: future of the Flathead Basin Commission
 - Non-Point Source Pollution focus: stormwater, septic leachate/wastewater, WQ monitoring?

Discussion:

- May meeting to focus on strategic planning: ½ day normal public meeting with morning session strategic planning (outside/field trips)
- Meeting topic ideas: DEQ Narrative Standards- nutrient working group update; “Future Flathead” panel - planned development in the basin in the next 5 years; FWP Conservation Areas Presentation: protected areas over the last 20 years with overlay planned development areas + septic leachate risk map; Water Compact update; Flathead Basin projects updates/field trips (Dam, Conservation easement, ARPA project, etc.).
- Additional strategic planning topic ideas: impact of population growth, new development, and recreation impact increases.
- FYI Joint Aquatic Sciences meeting is week of May 18th.
- **Action:** Launch FBC strategic planning survey ahead of May meeting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Provide strategic planning materials to commission members prior to May meeting (directed questions, compiled survey results, history of past strategic plans and efforts, etc.)
<p>Flathead River Erosion Study Presentation - SJ28</p> <p>Samantha Tappenbeck, Flathead Conservation District</p>	<p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Flathead Conservation District is partnering with the Flathead River Commission to address this issue and fill information gaps for the SJ28 WPIC interim study bill. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Flathead River Commission is a watershed group, administratively sponsored by FCD, of stakeholders with an interest in conservation of water resources of the lower Flathead Lake and river (formed 2008-2010). Early accomplishments included working with local stakeholders to lower the flood stage on flathead river from 14ft to 13ft so the agricultural production on the river would have fewer negative impacts. • Natural erosion forces: wind, current/flow and waves, soil types, shoreline slope, natural vegetation quantity/location, deep rooted vegetation or lack thereof can all contribute to erosion in a natural stream. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Un-natural and/or accelerated erosion occurs when those natural factors are exacerbated. • Unique challenges of the Flathead River: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Persistent wind and river forces are ongoing as part of natural river system ○ Lower 22-26 miles of river above the lake are influenced heavily by lake levels, essentially the river becomes a lake in the lower 22-26 miles and creates a 9-10ft vertical “dead zone” section of streambank that is inundated, and nothing can grow, it is raw and very susceptible to erosion. ○ Lake effect zone causes sections of the river with deep water to have a reduction in the number of waves compared to out on the lake (excellent spot for waterskiing and other forms of boating recreation causing waves, wakes, and wave trains). • Water Quality Concerns on the Flathead River: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Streambank erosion on the flathead river accounting for 20-30% of suspended solids, corresponding 60% of nutrient loading ○ Major contributor of downstream sediment transport to Flathead Lake ○ TMDL identifies erosion as major contributor to pollutant loading in FL ○ Identified as a priority in the Flathead-Stillwater Watershed Restoration Plan • Landowner Concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Riverfront landowners are losing substantial acreage. Failures are unpredictable, land that has been stable for decades may drop into the river almost overnight. ○ Threatening structures and agricultural land ○ Expense of stabilization measures • Although, the problem is getting substantially worse in recent years (acceleration due to exacerbation of existing factors that cause erosion on the river), erosion is not a new occurrence (photo from Flathead Lake shoreline showing erosion 1880-1900). • Historically, there have been many attempts to mitigate the erosion including old cars being embedded in the banks for stabilization, conventional rip rap, mixed approaches (bush bundles, stones, etc.). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 310 permit required for any project that affect the bed or streambanks on the streams or rivers (FCD has numbers of how many bank stabilization projects that have been done). • There is no simple solution or one-size fits all method. Projects are expensive and range drastically in size and effectiveness, and protecting existing riparian vegetation is vital, but natural recruitment is hobbled. Ongoing development is degrading those natural systems with added stress from the altered hydrology of the river with the upstream and

downstream dams affecting water levels (specifically affecting natural seed transportation of streambank vegetation, essentially disconnecting the natural systems from the local water quality).

- What are the impacts of recreational boating? Rive systems are complex and we only have anecdotal evidence: simpler to measure total erosion but difficult to measure the percent of erosion from specific drivers.
 - Boat use estimates from the Flathead River from ariel flights along with data from 1992, 2022 and 2008 show that boat use nearly doubled between 2002 and 2008 and more than quadrupled since 1992. Don't have a complete picture of the boat use over the past 12-15 years, data from 2018-2021 boat estimate data that was collected from the AIS inspection stations (ask for destination: Flathead River is vague not necessarily a picture of traffic on the lower river).

SJ28: Study of Erosion on the Flathead River

- Flathead CD resolution passed MACD, brought forward proposal for interim study bill that was passed and assigned to the Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC), who will report back to the 68th legislature with findings, recommendations, and actions.
- Objectives of study bill:
 - Compile existing data on the causes and impact of erosion on the river
 - Determine impacts of recreational boat use to streambanks and how to lessen those impacts
 - Examine information gaps and collect additional data including stakeholder input (language of bill identifies very specifically the folks that should be involved in this issue).
- FCD implementing scientific study and report to determine the amount of erosion specifically caused by boat wakes and evaluate potential impacts and implications for streambank stabilization.

Discussion & Questions:

- No wake zone will be an extremely contentious regulation with the public and a 200ft buffer between lakeshore and boating channel is not probable in some sections of river.
- Would like to see some kind of program assistance with funding from the state that will help landowners to offset costs of erosion on their property.
- Regarding the question of how much TSS and nutrient loading this stream segment specifically is contributing to Flathead Lake, if that information is not included in the 2014 TMDL, EPA might have more info about that in their modeling reports.
- Is FCD seeking a legislative solution at this point since no-wake zones are historically unpopular among recreationists? It's just one option on the table – they might just have WPIC give a recommendation to the Fish and Wildlife Commission about it.
- The relicensing of the dams might be the only real long-term solution if the fluctuations in lake levels are really the driving factor.
- The question was raised about any efforts in the works to survey actual boat usage and what types of boats are being used. FCD is looking to update that data since there's a large information gap.
- Lech Naumovich noted that armoring streambanks is an irreversible process and something FCD wants to avoid if they can. He said an RFP will be coming out soon and they are looking for funding sponsors for this project.
- Are there any regulations in place that require maintenance of riparian zones? Any streambank alterations require permitting through FCD, and they try to provide as much technical and financial guidance to residents to help protect and repair these zones.

<p>Agency News & Updates</p> <p>All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate Hammond, Glacier National Park- Second year pilot for ticketed entrance, superintendent Jeff Mow retired, vehicle reservations became available today 3/2 through June on a rolling 120-day availability. Day before tickets remain available in limited quantities with more North Fork access tickets available as day before and more Going to the Sun Road access available in advance. • Myla Kelly, DEQ- Undergoing the challenging process of moving from numeric nutrient standards to narrative standards, large stakeholder group working towards upcoming deadlines to have a draft of the new rule. E&O staffer for DEQ just started. • Kurt Steele, USFS- Currently working on distributing money for resources and infrastructure that is coming through the federal system. • Samantha Tappenbeck, FCD- It is a huge year for 310 permitting, conducting the flathead river study, restoration project on Trumble Creek (increasing conveyance and reducing flooding), new staffer Administrative Assistant Ginger Rigdon taking on 310 permitting, citizen science projects, education and outreach events including a landowner series. • Heidi Fleury, Lake CD- Held a well-attended, realtor workshop on natural resource management focusing on influx of new homeowners, hosting more realtor workshops in the future (water quality and septic focused). • Bill Dykes, BOR- Currently undergoing maintenance at the Hungry Horse dam and access road, visitor center is moving and will open Mother’s Day 2022. <p>Mark Bostrom, DNRC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARD division is currently administering ARPA grants (\$250 million in water and sewer projects), just finished second application round of competitive and minimum allocation grants, those will be ranked in order and then go to the infrastructure advisory commission who gives a list to the governor for approval. The \$2 million project cap dispersed the money giving it a better geographic distribution across the state. Carve out of money for irrigation projects (still have to meet clean water state revolving fund requirements, irrigation has to connect to a water quality element). • Infrastructure jobs act (bipartisan) is a huge feat with 300+ rows of projects with millions/billions of funding in each category (aquatic sciences, roads, schools, etc.) This includes 63 million per year (from EPA) for next 5 years for SRF water projects (these are loans and not grants like ARPA). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New law changing 20% to 49% of loan amount can be forgiven if community meets the criteria of rates and charges. Dedicated amount of funding going toward lead line replacement, emphasis in schools first, disadvantaged communities, etc. (~28 million a year). • Water smart grants and cooperative watershed management grants include aquatic ecosystem protection for areas that BOR infrastructure exists (could be a future FBC funding potential). If any organizations or the commission has a project that is ready and planned with partnerships in place, they should put in a RDG grant because the funding is there.
	<p>Overview of Programs (from each panelist)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dale Nelson, CSKT- CSKT emergency office participates in the Montana tribal emergencies manager coalition, as well as a national group. Heavy coordination with Lake County on emergencies. Majority are water responses- trucks, boats, or barges sinking (lots of trucks crashing into local waterbodies) rare that a spill mitigation needs to happen now with how vehicles are built. Missoula or Kalispell hazmat response teams are available and in coordination if needed. With the barge that sunk on Flathead Lake in 2021, no oils were leaking out of the barge it was the residual oils that had come off the outside of the barge that contaminated the water. A collaborative emergency response

Emergency Response & Preparedness in the Flathead Basin Panel

Dale Nelson, CSKT
Emergency Manager

Mark Clary, Lake
County Office of
Emergency Services

Brian Heino,
Flathead County
Office of Emergency
Services & County
Sherriff

Nic Winslow & Matt
Jones, BNSF Railway

was conducted with Kalispell and EPA. Constantly coordinate with 4 counties within the reservation (Sanders, Lake, Missoula, Kalispell).

- **Mark Clary, Lake County OES** (also director of 911 center)- Building on what Dale covered, the water response includes installing booms surrounding the downed boats and vehicles to isolate contaminants. Swan incident in 2021, oil tanker lost the top of his trailer, oil set up rather quickly which made clean up fairly easily. Lots of oil tankers moving up along the highways around the waterways, especially east side of Flathead Lake. Need more product available for the OEM responders, they used all the boom that Flathead County had. They have been in contact with the Flathead Lakers to purchase more of that boom to have on hand for emergencies. Boulder 2700 Fire in 2021, 90+ degrees at 11 o'clock at night that pushed the fire across the road and took the structures, good cooperation on that incident with responders and sheriffs department. No one was injured (first ever evacuation site set up for the residents in the area) some spots along highway 35 where all the vegetation was lost makes slides into the highway and lake more probable (boulder in the middle of the highway this morning 3/2). Tribes' forestry department is conducting stabilization work to mitigate the slide risk. Tribe's marinas have spill response equipment and annual training.
- **Brian Heino, Flathead County OES**- 5,200 sq miles is Flathead County's jurisdiction. "We would not survive without the partnerships with all the counties and resources." Provided overview of general response process/chain of command below.

General Process:

 - 911 call received reporting an incident involving hazardous materials being released in water or that there is a potential threat of release.
 - Flathead emergency dispatch center (9-1-1) dispatches the call to the fire district with jurisdictional authority and notifies the OES duty officer.
 - Fire department will deploy clean-up materials such as skimming pads, and sock booms to contain the hydrocarbon release.
 - OES duty officer will make phone contact with fire command and determine whether or not additional response materials are required, and bring them to the incident if needed.
 - During phone conversation with fire command on scene, the OES duty officer will obtain contact information for the responsible party, what mitigation actions have been completed, approximate quantity, type of hazmat release, and whether or not responders need additional support (additional responders, regional or BNSF hazmat team response, special boom deployment/materials, additional resources such as tow truck, dive team, etc.).
 - OES duty officer will respond to the incident if requested by fire command, or if additional resources are needed. If the fire department can handle the incident with on scene personnel and materials, OES duty officer will request photos of the spill and mitigation efforts be sent to OES staff via email or text
 - OES duty officer will contact the Montana disaster & emergency services (DES) duty officer to report the incident and notify their district field officer.
 - OES duty officer will then follow up with an emailed written report to Montana DES and include pictures received from the incident.
 - Montana DES duty officer then forwards the incident information to Montana DEQ, FWP, department of natural resources, and any other agency per their response plan.
- **Nic Winslow and Matt Jones, BNSF Railway**- Rail is the safest mode of land transportation and BNSF's safety vision is to prevent accidents in the first place with a broad-based risk reduction program. From 2021, BNSF's rail equipment incident rate has been reduced by nearly 28%.

Emergency Response & Preparedness in the Flathead Basin
Panel continued

Overview of BNSF Hazmat Safety

- Best Available Protection (BAP) program includes spill prevention, compliance and geographic response plans, technology and equipment, and emergency cold weather/fast water training.
- Multiple types of emergency response plans exist based on jurisdictional areas and Hazmat commodities, including an EPA Oil-Handling facility and spill prevention response plan, DOT and state-specific inland transportation oil-handling and hazmat contingency plans, geographic and local emergency response plans, wildfire response plan including AIS decontamination policies and an avalanche assessment, mitigation, prevention, and response plan (local to northern MT).
- Plans generally include roles/responsibilities, initial response checklist, health and safety plan/hazard analyses, ER contractor/stakeholder contact lists, required notifications (State and Federal), spill assessment and tracking methods, air monitoring, OSRO and BNSF equipment and personnel mobilization(s), incident management, training, communication, and resources/equipment.
- DEQ and local agencies take the geographic response plans and develop their own agency plan. Contract with virtually all the inland oil response companies nation-wide to respond to spill incidents. Incident Command System required to follow, lots of drill trainings and mobilization from 2 people to 200 people.
- Checklist and readiness trainings (training planned for April 20-21, 2022, in MT), oil spill school on the Clark Fork in Missoula, working with Avista at lots of the dam locations in MT to train first response.
- Benefits and Lessons learned:
 1. Improved First Responder Safety- Swift Water Safety and Rescue skills are critical to successful deployments.
 2. Improved Oil Containment & Recovery Equipment Training- Training in adverse conditions w/ good equipment improves first responder skills.
 3. Improved and Tested Geographic Response Strategies- Testing GRP strategies improves published plans, OSRO skill sets, equipment, or familiarity with actual river conditions.
 4. Improved Coordination between First Responders from Industry, Inland OSROs, Fire Departments, Agencies and Tribes- Collective training opportunities break down communication barriers and allows sharing of best practices.
 5. Improved Relationships with Key Stakeholders: Agencies, Tribes, Industry, Contractors, Critical Resource Trustees and Public- Working together outside always improves relationships.

Panel Questions & Discussion

Question 1: In the event of an emergency or natural disaster that impacted a large portion of the Flathead Basin, what kind of coordination exists between your entities related to requesting additional support or resources, sharing information, working on a team together, etc.?

- 9-1-1 dispatch centers, county coordination, social media, and delegation of responsibility is important to form the incident management structure. One advantage of COVID provided Microsoft teams and integrated software to increase coordination between all entities. BNSF has their own incident management team, combination of BSNF employees and local folks in every area around the country.

Question 2: Does your organization regularly practice response scenarios or table-top exercises? Do you do this collaboratively?

Emergency Response & Preparedness in the Flathead Basin Panel continued

- BNSF has a 12-month calendar of all the events coordinated with local, state, and federal entities. They keep the notes/documentation and complete after-action reviews (just as important as the tabletop exercises). Quarterly fire association meetings to discuss how it went, what to do better, etc.

Question 3: In the event of a water-based incident, what resources and equipment exist in the basin to respond quickly? Can equipment be shared if needed?

- Mutual aid agreements are a sharing of what equipment you have and what you can share in the event of emergencies. Working together is crucial, knowing who to call and when to call them (BNSF boom wheels that retract and roll out ~20,000 ft of boom). Jurisdictions don't matter as much with emergency response, all the folks are called, and all the resources are shared, it doesn't matter who is responding (if they can help, they will be there).

Question 4: Do you have a protocol or process in place related to how and when information is shared with the community/public when an incident occurs?

- Social media is the main resource. Initial response is difficult to coordinate with immediate press releases and news. First information that is released is usually not correct, response takes time. CSKT has a public information officer but not everyone has a PIO that is educated and available. The process usually includes sending out what you know and then updating it every hour because things change as the response progresses. With the incident command systems there are procedures to get information out and correct the bad information when it comes out (communication trainings with BNSF).

Question 5: What would you say is your organization's greatest accomplishment in emergency response and preparedness in the past five years?

- The number of incidents that occur on the railways since the 1980 has decreased by more than 80%. BNSF is investing 3.5 million dollars to prevent emergencies and investing in new technologies and the ability to analyze data from all the sensors across the network (testing heat of the rail, impact from the cars, etc.) Developing over time but they are dedicating the resources to find best possible results and achieving the goal of zero accidents. MT rail link has zero incidents and they run two trains a day.
- Big concern is the 52 semi-trucks running along shores of Flathead Lake, no tax dollars available to put into emergency response (only reason Flathead County had the sea curtain was because of the barge in Flathead Lake) for water entities and organizations to assist and support these emergency response offices to continue to operate.
- Possible funding from APRA- breakwater in bays, wider roads, etc. The ARPA funding's purpose is to make society safer and even though it is not available to private entities it could be available to counties. Difficult to use that funding for emergency response because you don't need those resources until you actually *need* those resources, but the stock of response material might qualify under the SRF funding requirements.
 - City of Kalispel and Kalispell Fire Department have response equipment (spill kits, booms, etc.).

Question 6: What future or present challenges do you see related to emergency response and preparedness in the Flathead Basin?

- Transition to new staffers and volunteers, community that is highly based on volunteers (if volunteers are not as present in the next few years, it will come at a cost to fund a paid response, or we no longer have a response plan). Twenty years ago, there used to be a waiting list to join the volunteer fire department and now you have to beg people to volunteer, and they only stay for a year. Community and volunteerism is a huge part of responding within these communities and keeping them safe, all new individuals that have moved here do not want to participate they just want to use the services.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can people reach out to volunteer? There is always a need and opportunity to volunteer, just reach out to your local departments. Search and rescue, EMS, fire departments, etc. in Flathead County, Ravalli, Lake, Swan, Polson, etc.
Election: Executive Committee seat	Motion to appoint Sandy Beder-Miller to the executive committee (Casey). Second (Lech). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i>
Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Wrap up & adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next meeting May 18th, 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field trip: HH, Forest, GNP, etc. Motion to adjourn (Casey). Second (Sandy). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i> Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.

4. Action Items				
Action		Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Send out draft minutes	Cassidy Bender	3/16/22	Complete
2	Launch FBC strategic planning survey ahead of May meeting.	FBC Staff	Mid-April	Complete
3	Provide strategic planning materials to commission members prior to May meeting.	FBC Staff	Prior to May 18 th	Complete
EXISTING ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS				
4	Myla will invite Jim Dunnegan to jointly present on the selenium topic.	Myla Kelly	On Hold	On Hold
5	Kate to reach out to Erin Sexton at the FLBS on transboundary issues and filling the BC vacancy on FBC.	Kate Wilson		In progress
5	Work with watershed staff on looking at opportunities that may work for state/federal partnerships	Agencies, Kate Wilson, Cassidy Bender	On-going	On-going
6	Reach out to other groups in basin for discussion on priority issues and potential partnerships	Kate Wilson, Cassidy Bender	On-going	On-going
7	Check with EPA and Lake/Flathead Conservation Districts (have watershed restoration plans to address TMDLs)	Kate Wilson	On-going	On-going
8	Address BC rep vacancy (ex-officio)	Kate Wilson	On-going	On-going



Location: Grouse Mtn Lodge
(2 Fairway Drive, Whitefish, MT)
Date: May 11, 2022
Time: 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM

FLATHEAD BASIN COMMISSION 5/11/22 Meeting Agenda

- I. **12:00 pm: Social/networking with partners** (light lunch provided)
- II. **12:45 pm: Call to order/Welcome & Introductions**
– Rich Janssen, Chair; Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator; All (name/organization or affiliation)
- III. **1:00 pm: Public Comment**
- IV. **1:15 pm: Commission Business** – Kate Wilson; Cassidy Bender
 - Staff Presentation: Activities, Projects, Committees and Programs
 - ACTION: Review/Approve FBC Minutes (3/2/22) + FY23 Budget (inc. partner proposals)
 - Montana Waters Campaign plan and launch
 - Strategic Planning Approach – session to be held 5/12/22
- V. **1:45 pm: PANEL: Watershed & Conservation Groups in the Basin**
 - Overview/current organizational priorities & project (5 min each)

Friends of Echo Lake	Lake County Conservation District
Flathead Conservation District	Little Bitterroot Lake Association
Flathead Lakers	Swan Lakers
Flathead Lake Biological Station	Trout Unlimited – Flathead Chapter
Flathead River Alliance	Whitefish Lake Institute
Friends of Lake Mary Ronan	

- VI. **2:45 pm BREAK**
- VII. **3:00 pm: PANEL – facilitated questions**
- VIII. **3:30 pm: Agency Reflections & Input on Flathead Basin Priorities (2022-2025)**
– State: DNRC, DEQ, FWP, Governor’s Office; Federal: BOR, BPA, EPA, NPS, USFS
- IX. **3:45 pm: WRAP UP, NEXT STEPS & NEXT MTG MTG** – Kate Wilson
- X. **3:50 pm: PUBLIC COMMENT**
- XI. **4:00 pm: ADJOURN & FIELD TRIP: Viking Creek Wetlands Tour** - Led by Mike Koopal (WLI)
- XII. **5:00 pm: Social! Networking at the Lodge at Whitefish Lake (lounge)**

 **Location:** Grouse Mtn Lodge
(2 Fairway Drive, Whitefish, MT)
 **Date:** May 12, 2022
 **Time:** 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM

FLATHEAD BASIN COMMISSION

5/12/22 Meeting Agenda

- I. **8:30 am: Call to order** (breakfast provided)
– Rich Janssen, Chair; Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator
- II. **8:35 am: Introduction, Intention + Discussion** - Kate Wilson
 - 2018-2021 Strategic Priority Review + Discussion
 - Survey results
 - Staff reflections + recommendations
- III. **9:00 am: Discussion + exercise** – Kate Wilson
 - Setting of priorities – approach
 - Meeting/facing of new challenges
 - FBC evolution/future
 - Exercise
- IV. **10:00 am: Break**
- V. **10:15 am: Strategies and actions to address/move to priorities**
 - Actionable, measurable, attainable
 - Metrics
- VI. **11:10 am: Wrap up + next steps**
- VII. **11:20 am: Public Comment**
- VIII. **11:30 am: Adjourn**

NOTE: This agenda for 5/12 session is a general outline and will be flexible/fluid

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/ Project Name:	Flathead Basin Commission		
Date of Meeting:	May 11 th 2022	Time:	12:00pm-4:00pm
Minutes Prepared By:	Cassidy Bender	Location:	Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish & Zoom

List of Acronyms

AIS	Aquatic invasive species	FBC	Flathead Basin Commission
BOR	US Bureau of Reclamation	FLBS	Flathead Lake Biological Station
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration	FWP	Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
BSWC	Big Sky Watershed Corps (AmeriCorps)	GNP	Glacier National Park
CEMIST	Central Eastern MT Invasive Species Team	MCWD	Missoula County Weed District
CFC	Clark Fork Coalition	NPS	National Park Service
CRB	Columbia River Basin	NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
CRC	Clearwater Resource Council	UC ³	Upper Columbia Conservation Commission
CSKT	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes	UCLN	Upper Columbia Lakes Network
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality	USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
DNRC	Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation	USFS	US Forest Service
eDNA	Environmental DNA	USFWS	US Fish & Wildlife Service
E & O	Education & Outreach	WLI	Whitefish Lake Institute
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency	WRDA	Water Resources Development Act
EQC	Environmental Quality Council (Interim)	WRP	Western Regional Panel

1. Welcome and Introductions

Rich Janssen (Chair)	Opened the meeting. Confirmed quorum present (for voting purposes).
Welcome & Introductions (Roundtable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each participant introduced themselves including name and organization/interest that they are representing. The Flathead Basin Commission acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. Today, we honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come.

2. Attendees

FBC (voting members underlined): Rich Janssen (Chair, CSKT), Casey Lewis (Vice Chair, City of Kalispell), Sandy Beder-Miller (Governor-appointed), Lech Naumovich (Flathead Conservation District), Kate Hammond (acting superintendent Glacier National Park), Kurt Steele (USFS), Mark Bostrom (DNRC Helena), Kate Wilson (FBC Commission Administrator), Cassidy Bender (FBC Commission Coordinator), Emilie Henry (FBC Nonpoint Source Coordinator), Jack Potter (Governor-appointed), Michael Freeman (Governor's Office), Randy Brodehl (Flathead County Commission)

Virtual members: Peter Brumm (EPA), Steve Stanley (Lake County Commissioner), Mark Reller (BPA), Myla Kelly (DEQ),

Absent members: Kathy Olsen (DNRC Kalispell), Jim Williams (FWP), Jasmine Courville-Brown (CSKT), Jim Simpson (Lake County Conservation District), Bill Dykes (BOR), Brian Hughes (Governor appointed)

Public/Other: Sam Bourret (FWP), Mike Koopal (WLI), Claire Kirk (FLBS/MMW BSWC), Saige Jibben (Lake County CD BSWC), Heidi Fleury (Lake CD), Kate Sheridan (Flathead Lakers), Wade Fredenberg (TU Flathead Chapter), Matt Church (FLBS), Tom Bansak (FLBS), Captain Dan Handlin (Little Bitterroot Lake Association), Mark Suppelsa (Echo Lake), Nannette Nelson (FLBS), Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), Onno Wieringa (Flathead Lakers/UC³), Keely Larson (UM graduate student), Sheena Pate (Flathead Rivers Alliance), Jim Baker (Friends of Lake Mary Ronan), Constanza von der Pahlen (Flathead Lakers), Eric Trum (DEQ), Pat Klever (citizen), Lynda Saul (citizen), Demi Blythe (DNRC), Brett Slaughter (Senator Daines Office), Jim Elser (FLBS), Asta Bowen (WLI intern), Dan Jessop (Matt Rosendale Office), Bernie Azure (Char-Koosta News), Rickey Schultz (HDR), Sarah Halvorson (UM, FLBS), Sarah Dakin, Liz Lodman (MISC), Tom Woolf

(FWP), Carol Treadwell (WLI), Jeff Kemp (Swan Lakers), Lauren Shotnik (Bitterroot Lake), Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI), Ryan Richardson (RDG)

3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues

Presenter	Topic/Discussion
<p>Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator</p> <p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>Public Comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Agenda: ACTION: Approve 3/2/22 Minutes & FY23 budget, Staff Report (activities, budget, grants, projects, MT Waters campaign launch, strategic planning process, etc.), Watershed & Conservation Groups in the Basin: Panel Presentation, Agency Reflections, wrap up, next steps, next meeting topics, public comment & adjourn. Field trip and social to follow. • Thank you to previous FBC commissioners: Kathy Olsen (accepted new position as DNRC Regional Operations Manager out of Helena) and Jim Williams (retiring from FWP, joining Heart of Rockies Initiative). • Public Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Onno Wieringa (Flathead Lakers/UC³)- After hearing from/participating in groups working on water quality and understanding the threats to Flathead Lake that everyone plays a part in (AIS, climate change, NPS pollution, increased development, etc.), we've realized we are lacking a visual representation of the current status/challenges to our environment. We want to put together a map pinpointing the threats to the basin, the successes we have already accomplished, and include some of the solutions/what can be done. The Flathead Lakers board likes the idea and maybe a map project like this is a partnership opportunity with FBC and CSKT. It is difficult to talk about each issue separately when they all affect each other; we need to show them together in order to find collective solutions for all these issues. • Motion to approve minutes from 3/2/22 meeting (Sandy). Second (Lech). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i>
<p>Staff Updates</p> <p>Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator</p> <p>Cassidy Bender, Commission Coordinator</p>	<p>Staff Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The FBC Executive Committee meets every other Tuesday at 11:15am, meetings are open to everyone, and allow us to conduct business between quarterly meetings. If you are interested in attending, please let staff know. ○ Notable staff activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate and Cassidy split their time 50/50 with FBC and UC³. Emilie is the only full time FBC staffer. • Meeting follow up and planning • Executive Committee planning and participation (bi-weekly) • Grant & Budget management (writing/reporting/tracking) • Monitoring Flathead Basin natural resource issues and projects • Flathead Basin Wastewater Partnership • Septic leachate committee and tech subcommittee support- GIS Risk Map, Synthetic DNA Study, etc. • Stormwater projects support (MT Stormwater Conference- FBC panel) • Education & Outreach committee- Montana Waters campaign development and launch, new FBC website. • Outreach, events & presentations: Center for Watershed Protection Conference, MT Stormwater Conference, Forestry Expo, etc. • Legislative & Committee Tracking • DNRC agency assistance & support • Crown Managers Partnership steering committee (represent both Commissions) • North American Invasive Species Management Association (Kate- president)

<p>Budget Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrient standards working group • Western Regional Panel • BC Columbia River Basin Steering Committee (member) • Pend Oreille Basin Commission (Ex-officio, MT upstream rep) • Upper Columbia Conservation Commission & AIS support (50% of Kate and Cassidy's time) • County Assist Team (CAT) Public Information Officer & Liaison Officer (Kate) • Graduate School- MPA Certificate (Kate) • Graphic Design specialization professional development (Cassidy) <p>Sources of Funding FY22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State fiscal year = July 1- June 30 ○ Natural Resources Operating Fund FY22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$127,000- base budget & OTO now permanent (operating) ○ Natural Resources Operating Fund FY21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$20,000- accrual from FY21 to Windfall contract • Accrual is a carry forward of money to the next year, the spendable amount is increased but does not change the base budget amount. ○ Federal: EPA Multipurpose State & Tribal Assistance Grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress \$26,191- EPA grant 2 (septic leachate GIS mapping; synthetic DNA study) - \$8,000 Expended/\$18,191 (2 years) <p>Existing Contracts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. River Design Group—septic leachate risk mapping & additional technical support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$37,516/\$39,800 (<u>Balance</u>: \$2,283) • Amended June 2021 (added \$15k & one year) • EPA grant (8k) • FBC operating (7k) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Windfall—website, water quality campaign development, reports & publications, graphic design, advertising, etc. ○ \$10,332/\$35,000 (<u>Balance</u>: \$24,668) ○ Amended June 2021 (added \$20,000 from FBC operating & one year) ○ Cornell University- Synthetic DNA tracer project ○ Tracer development, lab analysis and report ○ \$0/\$23,550 (to be expended upon billing) ○ \$14,898 EPA grant; \$8,652 operating funds <p>FY22 Line-Item Budget (approved 9/8/21)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Red is amount expended to date (5/11/22). ○ \$35,000/66,000 FBC Nonpoint Source Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacity for FBC through DNRC modified FTE. • Due to Kate's acting assignment, we had a savings in personnel, and we will only pull \$35k from operations in FY22 for this line item. ○ \$15,550/20,000 Nonpoint source projects & support ○ Septic Leachate contract (to date), study and/or water quality monitoring to verify model, report generation (\$15,000) ○ Stormwater monitoring & outreach (\$5,000) ○ \$3,400/20,000 Education & Outreach: Water Quality Campaign, outreach materials, website ○ \$8,500/8,500 Member travel/meetings & sponsorships ○ \$3,500/3,500 Conference/meeting sponsorships
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**Budget Updates
continued**

- Prioritize MT-based events. Examples: CMP, NALMS, NAISMA, PNWER, MT Stormwater Conference, etc.
- **\$4,000/4,000** Staff supplies/Travel
 - E.g., virtual meeting equipment, hot spot, cell phone, printing, training, travel on FBC-related business, etc.
- **\$5,000/5,000** Other/Contingency funds
- **TOTAL: \$74,950/127,000 operating- \$52,050 remaining**
- Because of Kate's acting assignment, we had a savings in personnel and will only spend half of NPS position amount (\$35k).

Proposed Remaining FY22 Budget Expenditures (\$52,050)

- **\$7,000-** Flathead Lakers project support request for the 'Living in the Flathead Guide'
 - Seeking \$7k contribution toward the production and development of a physical homeowner's guide and website focusing on how to live sustainably in the Flathead Watershed.
 - FBC staff has already assisted with leading and coordinating the Living by Water section of the guide.
 - We have created a 'Project Funding Request Form' for situations such as these, so any partners could request funding or participation from FBC. It will be posted on our website and when filled out will go to the executive committee and/or full commission for approval.
- **\$24,000-** contribution to continue the Flathead Wastewater Partnership septic cost share program

Discussion:

- Discover Kalispell is a partner in the guide production, and they are talking to the Northwest Montana Association of Realtors. Explore funding from realtor associations. The North Fork landowners and preservation association is working on their own materials, and we should collaborate.
- The Little Bitterroot Newsletter received \$100 each from businesses to have their name and phone number in their newsletter. Include industry/businesses in the guide.
- Distribution plan: website and physical handbook, through partner organizations, newsletter, sites.
- Ensure tribal involvement in the guide with the differences of living on the south vs. north end of the lake. Many people do not understand that tribal land is private land.
- Mike Derglow from the Salish culture committee has committed to reviewing every section and contributing their own section.
- **Action:** Constanza to reach out to Rich Janssen to connect with another CSKT representative on the Flathead Guide.
- How can we measure the effectiveness and success of the Flathead Guide? Include a coupon with a follow up survey, narrative responses will help gauge success of the guide.
- **Motion** to approve the proposed remaining FY22 budget expenditures (Casey). Second (Jack). All in favor. *Motion passes.*

Upcoming Events:

- NSF Septic Leachate Workshop- June 9-10 Flathead Lake Bio Station (invite only)
 - June 8th @ 6:00pm- public Septic Seminar at FLBS
- Upper Columbia Conservation Commission Meeting- June 15th FLBS
- 2022 Flathead Waters Clean Up- August 13th
- MWCC Fall Watershed Tour Sept 14-16th
- North American Invasive Species Management Association– Nov 7-11 Sanibel, Florida
- North American Lakes Management Society (NALMS)– Nov 14-17 Minnesota

**Budget Updates
continued**

- *Always happy to cover registration and travel for FBC members for meetings and conferences, if you would like to attend, please let staff know.*
- FY23 Sponsorships**
- TIER 1 = MT-based org/event in MT addressing relevant natural resource issues (Up to \$5k)
- TIER 2 = Outside MT but priority content (Up to \$2,500)
- Recap of FY22 Sponsorships: \$3,745 total
 - NALMS 2021 (virtual) \$2,500
 - MWCC Watershed Tour \$1,000
 - MWCC Annual Membership \$245
- FY23 Sponsorships: \$2,500
 - NALMS 2022 (virtual/MN) \$1,000
 - Governor’s Conference on Tourism + Recreation \$1,000
 - MWCC Annual membership + tour \$1,500
 - Other spring 2023 events/conferences?
 - Events to share Montana Waters Campaign
- FY23 Proposed Line-Item Budget for Approval**
- **\$66,000** FBC Nonpoint Source Coordinator
 - Comes out of operations until we can get FTE then move to ‘personnel’
 - Nonpoint source monitoring, tracking, project management and partnerships in the basin; outreach and education; Onsite Wastewater Treatment Committee; Technical Committee; administrative support
- **\$21,250** Water quality projects- nonpoint source mitigation & support may include:
 - BSWC member (\$6,250)
 - Stormwater mitigation and outreach (\$5,000)
 - Synthetic DNA study (\$8,652)
 - Septic leachate risk map – south basin
 - Build layer of state-owned/managed lands and facilities
 - Additional studies (drones, thermal studies, nearshore monitoring, etc.)
 - Digitization of electronic permit databases
 - Monitoring for target pollutants via automated or general grab samples, etc.
 - **\$21,250** Education & Outreach- Water Quality Campaign, outreach materials, websites, events, etc.
 - Includes: launch of Water Quality campaign and associated materials; materials for FBC tabling, events, activities; building new website at flatheadbasincommission.com; assist Flathead Wastewater Partnership with education & outreach; biennial report FY23
- **\$7,000** Member travel/meetings
- **\$2,500** Conference/meeting sponsorships
 - Prioritize MT-based events. Examples: CMP, NALMS, NAISMA, PNWER, MT Stormwater Conference, etc.
- **\$4,000** Staff supplies/Travel
 - E.g., hot spot, cell phone, printing, training, travel on FBC-related business, etc.
- **\$5,000** Other/Contingency funds
 - Associated project costs, materials, training, etc. (as needed)
- **TOTAL: \$127,000 operating**
- Additional FY21 \$20,000 accrued from savings (personnel/operating) to Windfall contract (website, E&O campaign, etc.)
- Discussion:**

Committee & Project Updates

- **Motion** to approve FY23 proposed budget (Lech). Second (Jack). All in favor. *Motion passes.*
- Grants: EPA multipurpose grant half expended, no response on the last submitted EPA grant (septic reimbursement). Future grant opportunities with America the Beautiful Act and the bipartisan infrastructure bill, possibility for FBC to get involved with these.

Current Committee Membership

- **Executive Committee:** *Rich Janssen (Chair), Casey Lewis (Vice Chair), DNRC representative (vacant), Jasmine Courville-Brown, Sandy Beder-Miller (member-at-large), FBC staff*
- **Onsite Wastewater Treatment Committee:** *Mike Koopal (Chair), Ryan Richardson (Vice Chair-River Design Group), Casey Lewis (City of Kalispell/FBC), Abigail St Lawrence, Andy Crites, Tom Bansak (FLBS), Dean Sirucek, Craig Kendall (USFS), Diana Luke (Lake County), Eric Bryson (MACO), Eric Regensburger (DEQ), Eric Trum/Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), Sam Sill/Erica Wirtala (MT Association of Realtors), Evan Smith (CSKT), Rep. Dave Fern, Samantha Tappenbeck (Flathead CD), Hilary Devlin (Flathead Lakers), Kate Sheridan (Flathead Lakers), Lamont Kincaide, Roger Noble (Flathead Health), Steve Rosso (Flathead Lakers), Susie Turner (Kalispell Public Works), Tim Burton (LCT), Tom Cowan, Tom Cox (Flathead Lakers), Daniel Congdon (DEQ), Peter Brumm (EPA), Sam Bourret (FWP), Jeff Tuttle (Flathead Lakers), Heidi Fleury (Lake Co CD), Kristal Kiel (Flathead Health Dept.), others?*
- **Education & Outreach Steering Committee:** *Casey Lewis (co-chair), Lech Naumovich (co-chair), Tom Bansak (FLBS), Ian Withrow (FLBS), Samantha Tappenbeck (FCD), Hilary Devlin (Flathead Lakers), Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI), Sheena Pate (FRA), Evan Smith (CSKT), Eric Trum/Meagan Gilmore/Anna Le (DEQ), FBC staff*
- **Technical Committee Core Team:** *Mike Koopal (Chair); Myla Kelly (DEQ); Ryan Richardson (RDG); Tom Bansak (FLBS); Rachel Malison (FLBS); Sam Bourret (FWP); CSKT – TBD; FBC staff*
 - Supplemental Members (based on project/need): Septic leachate project(s); Stormwater project(s); Monitoring (potential)

Stormwater Projects Update

- Emilie (NPS Coordinator) presented stormwater projects at the Center for Watershed Protection Conference (April) and the Montana Stormwater Conference (May).
- She will be working to build on the recommendations from Phase II, to be discussed during strategic planning session
- Ongoing stormwater education & outreach projects include:
 - Rain Garden Initiative
 - Adopt-a-Drain Program
 - Montana Waters: Clearly Connected stormwater messaging
 - **2022 Flathead Waterways Clean Up- August 13th**

Septic Leachate Projects Update

- EPA Grant- \$26k for septic leachate work
 - \$8k to RDG Contract + \$15k to synthetic DNA project
- Septic Leachate GIS/Risk Mapping Project & Final Report
 - Internal Peer Review (technical committee) **Complete**
 - External Peer Review (March 2022) **In Progress**
 - Unpermitted Systems Analysis- **Complete**
 - Launch of publicly available GIS ‘Hub’ on new FBC website **Summer 2022**
 - Road show and/or webinar sharing model with planning departments, local gov, partners, etc.
- Synthetic DNA study (Whitefish & Lake Mary Ronan)
 - Tracer deployment (April 2022)- **Initiated**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling (June-October 2022)- In progress • Data Analysis (June-November 2022) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flathead Basin Wastewater Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saige Jibben - BSWC (Lake CD) • ~\$9,600 left for ~50 reimbursements in 2022 • FBC proposing financial support to continue project • Education & Outreach on septic cost-share program: realtors workshop, poster, sidewalk signs, events. etc. ○ UM Graduate Project: Socio-economic impacts of septic leachate ○ UM/FLBS National Science Foundation Proposal (based on synthetic DNA project) – Septic Workshop June 9-10 @ FLBS is invite only but there will be a public septic seminar June 8th from 6-8pm @ FLBS. <p>Education & Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New FBC website (2022) in development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ About the Commission & Projects (septic & stormwater hubs) ○ Montana Waters vanity address & landing page • Montana Waters: Clearly Connected Campaign & Website Launch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Products/site in development ○ Launch via website, events, and publications in 2022 • Collaboration Efforts & Partner Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flathead Living Guide (Flathead Lakers, FCD, DEQ, FWP, etc.) assisting with Living by Water section ○ Flathead Rain Garden Initiative ○ Adopt a Drain campaign ○ Flathead Waterways Clean Up ○ Events/Meetings: Septic workshop, Septic Risk Map Road Show, Flathead Waters Clean Up 2022, NALMs, etc. <p>FBC Strategic Planning Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FBC strategic planning session to set strategic priorities for the next three years (2022-2025) is tomorrow May 12th at same location (Grouse Mountain Lodge). • Previous Strategic Priorities 2019-2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water quality – non-point source pollution ○ Conservation planning ○ ‘Orphan issues’ = emerging threats
<p>Watershed & Conservation Groups in the Basin Panel Presentations</p>	<p>Friends of Echo Lake – Mark Suppelsa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of Echo Lake is a small group of local volunteers that conduct weekend boat inspection shifts at local launch, partnering with FWP ranger. Third year of existence with 3 board members. Echo Lake is a lot of leased land/public access and private, there is one large development proposed they are aware of. Need bigger parking lot at launch. <p>Flathead Conservation District- Lech Naumovich</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCD, established in 1945, supports locally-led conservation and works with private landowners, state/federal agencies, and other organizations to promote resource conservation throughout the Flathead Valley. • Their main programs include education programs, stream permits, landowner assistance, and watershed restoration. Currently working on a Flathead River Erosion Study, secured funding to complete project (starting next month). <p>Flathead Lakers- Kate Sheridan</p>

Watershed & Conservation Groups in the Basin Panel Presentations

- The Flathead Lakers are a 501 c(3) Nonprofit organization located in Polson. They have a board of directors, an executive director, and 4 staff. Funding comes from membership dues, donations & fundraising, and grants.
- Key priorities are water quality issues specifically aquatic invasive species (AIS) and septic leachate with key areas of focus being advocacy, conservation, and education.
- Accomplishments include being an early advocate with CSKT to protect Flathead Lake from AIS, banning phosphate detergent in Flathead and Lake Counties, protected 6000+ acres of land, adding to a network of 12,000 acres (private + public) with the River to Lake Initiative, educating and providing best practices/resources to membership of 1,500+, and educate thousands of students through Watershed Citizen Science program.

Flathead Lake Biological Station- Matt Church

- FLBS is the 2nd oldest field station in the U.S. and was initiated for research and education on ecosystems in NW Montana.
- Water quality monitoring research dates back to early 1900s with routine monitoring since 1977 for nutrients, algae, and zooplankton (15 trips/year sampling lakes and tributaries). FLBS has been monitoring Whitefish Lake since 2001.
- Funding is a mix of philanthropic, WLI, and state allocation (originally funded with EPA and state funds, with additional support from CSKT and Flathead Lakers), and includes \$225k/year for Flathead Lake and tributaries and \$35k/year for Whitefish Lake. Expanding to international research and development through grants and other opportunities.
- Key priorities- nutrients (sources and cycling), AIS, plankton community structure, algal biomass and productivity, septic leachate, mercury in food webs.

Flathead River Alliance- Sheena Pate

- FRA mission is to support and enhance the outstanding and remarkable Three Forks of the Flathead River
- The FRA was formed in 2019, officially became a 501 c(3) nonprofit in 2020, launched a pilot River Ambassador Program in 2021, and launched a pilot River Recreation Monitoring Program in 2022.

Friends of Lake Mary Ronan- Jim Baker

- Initiated to object to a developer's proposal variance request and won, they are a 100% volunteer 501 c(3) organization, with board members and president but no paid staff.
- Key initiatives include participating in the Northwest Montana Lakes Monitoring Network monitoring 2 sites on the lake using a hydro-lab/nitrogen sensor, participating in the FBC Synthetic DNA study in 2022, and will be defining an AIS initiative soon. Do not have staff to monitor boat launches but could get involved with E&O.
- Developer owns and plans to develop 50% of east side of lake. Involved with Dayton elementary school activities, and Lake County planning board presentations. Previously completed an intensive 2-year DEQ supported water quality study, results are currently being analyzed. FLMR and DEQ will be defining a restoration program from the results of that study.

Lake County Conservation District- Heidi Fleury

- Soil and water conservation projects, promoting wise use of natural resources. Projects include issuing 310 permits, education and outreach, and landowner cost share programs.
- FCD does 100 310 permits a year, Lake CD does about 10. They have no jurisdiction on CSKT land, just Lake County outside of tribal land.
- Education and Outreach activities include a living with wildlife workshop with CSKT, a realtor workshop with realtors in Lake County (wildlife and septic issue), outreach for

Watershed & Conservation Groups in the Basin Panel Presentations

the septic reimbursement program, cover crop cost share, fuels hazard reduction cost share, and pollinator initiative.

- BSWC member put together septic maintenance reimbursement program in 2021 (\$20,000 spent in \$200 increments in short amount of time). BSWC member this year to continue the project with remaining funds and FBC contribution.
- Recent customer applied with a septic system that was already failing and unable to be pumped and we are helping with DNRC septic replacement. Program provides opportunities to identify bigger issues.

Little Bitterroot Lake Association- Dan Handlin

- LB Lake Association was created in 1988 and WET (Butte) has been sampling the lake since 1999. Little Bitterroot Lake is 3,000 sq. Ft. and 215 ft. deep.
- Priority issues include AIS, septic leachate, and more. Activities include membership expansion, newsletters, educational signage, partnering with school, volunteer boat inspections, asking boaters to become active boaters- mobilizing locals to protect lakes.

Swan Lakers- Jeff Kemp

- The Swan Lakers are a volunteer, 501 c(3) organization that has been protecting water quality in Swan Lake and the Swan watershed since 2005. The organization started with landowners that opposed an overly aggressive development project and were successful. Swan watershed headwaters are Grey Wolf Lake in Mission Mountains, flows south to north and pauses in Swan Lake, then into Flathead Lake at Bigfork. Tom Bansak (FLBS) is on the board, sampling and testing is done four times a year at 2 sites. Volunteers have been inspecting boats at Swan Lake launch, since 2014-15. Refer folks to LCD for septic reimbursement and fire program.

Trout Unlimited – Flathead Chapter- Wade Fredenberg

- Montana Trout Unlimited has ~4,500 members, Flathead Chapter has ~400 members.
- Board is run by interest, and all are volunteer’s, funding source is locally raised at events like the Flathead Valley TU Auction and regularly partner with agencies (Flathead Land Trust, etc.).
- Focus: native trout (especially bull trout), non-native species and human impacts on the resource (climate change).

Whitefish Lake Institute- Mike Koopal

- Established in 2005, focused on science, education, and aquatic resource initiatives.
- Science activities include water quality monitoring at 2 sites on Whitefish Lake and streams (with DEQ and FLBS) and the creation and management of two citizen science groups, the Northwest Montana Lakes Network, and Upper Columbia Lakes Network.
- Education activities include K-12 programs and college internships.
- Other activities include running two watercraft inspection stations at Whitefish City Beach and Whitefish Lake State Park, septic leachate work starting with a septic study locating septic pollution/presence in Whitefish Lake and now with FBC’s septic risk map/synthetic DNA study.

Facilitated Questions:

What do you see as the most urgent challenges or threats to the Flathead Basin?

- Development & Population Increases:
 - Nutrient input into waterways due to development.
 - Pressure on planning boards and commissioners to approve things that are not ready to approve.
 - Year-round recreational impacts of highly trafficked Airbnb’s and increased population.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Influx of people wanting to live here, GNP has had to address with the ticketing system. There needs to be a shift in how people interact and relate to resources. ○ Jewel Basin example, 10 cars 10 years ago now there is 100 cars in a very limited infrastructure location. Number of people coming to the state, on the internet Echo Lake shows up as top 3 best places to swim in Montana. We need to make people better stewards, manage, control influx of people. ● FCD supporting agricultural producers and landowners proves challenging, there is less connection with the farmer, more distance between them, and less community feel. ● Additions of species of fish have potential to devastate ecosystems. Potential for catastrophic event, train derailment or truck into the river/lake. Continue to put focus on that possibility. <p><i>What do you see as the most urgent threats to water quality (generally)?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Train derailment, AIS, and septic leachate. ● Drought conditions in the future and over allocation of water rights. ● People knowing or unknowingly polluting lakes. FWP developed a knowledge base among the public in 5 years with AIS, we need to bring the knowledge up to speed on all these other pollutants topic. ● Water conservation. ● Educating people on septic leachate and other nonpoint source issues- How do you show that to people who don't live on the lake, river, or water? ● Converting science to state law. We need a legislative champion, partnerships with DEQ/other state agencies, and accurate statistics on hand showing leachate in our water and the negative effects of it for the session. <p><i>Is there anything in particular that you would like to see the FBC address in the next 1-3 years?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Materials for local organizations to use in educating the public (stickers, top 10 threats to water quality brochure, septic leachate info, etc.). ● Boat launch focus groups on knowledge of these issues. ● Monitoring is a huge portion of a solution to the issue, FLBS near shore monitoring includes 2 annual long-term sites every year and 20 sites every other year looking for algal growth on rocks. FLBS does not have the funding for near shore monitoring (remote sensing) and it could be something that FBC looks into/provides. ● We know there are active gaps in water quality monitoring, we need to identify those gaps, compile existing data, and analyze/summarize in a visual way to educate the public. DEQ EQUUS database is where all of the monitoring exists. ● Housing crisis statewide, only way to fix is development. Include development communities in these discussions, work with them, bring together both sides of the debate/issue.
<p>Agency Reflections & Input on Flathead Basin Priorities (2022-2025)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mark Bostrom, DNRC- With the influx of ARPA money, there are opportunities for FBC to get more heavily involved with grant funding. Irrigation infrastructure in Montana is generally old and not measured or serviced. Septics is the other issue, could FBC be a grantor for local community septic projects or provide a similar service to make progress on these water quality issues. ● Eric Trum, DEQ- Updated Flathead Watershed Model identifies sources of pollution throughout the watershed, monitoring assessment program working on a lakes assessment for impairment (Abbie Ebert is leading this) and the volunteer monitoring program is active at FLBS. Nonpoint source systems are not accountable for their affects, it is a voluntary system and requires action from responsible parties to prevent nonpoint source pollution. DEQ cannot obtain voluntary action from the public, it requires local awareness that partners like FBC can bring to the issue.

Agency Reflections & Input on Flathead Basin Priorities (2022-2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kurt Steele, USFS- Caring for the land and serving the people is the USFS motto. Wildfire crisis and increased visitor use are the biggest issues the USFS is facing. Listen to locals but think of the whole nation at federal level. Be curious of all sides of the issues. • Kate Hammond, NPS- Climate change, increased visitation, AIS, nutrient enrichment in park waters, impacts on nonnative fish, and wildfire (post fire impacts to environmental quality) are all increasing dramatically and are the National Park Service’s priorities. • Sam Bourret, FWP- FWP is focused on legal fish introductions, fisherman moving fish around, aquaculture, and their impacts to ecosystems. Increase in people means increase in angling and we are focusing on how this is affecting fish populations. • Tom Woolf, FWP – Local groups’ passion and enabling the local groups to do this work is incredibly important. Local involvement is higher here in MT than it was in Idaho. • Mike Freeman, Governor’s Office- It is the Governor’s Office priority to be present at these meetings to hear what challenges local organizations are facing. Challenges need to be overcome; threats need to be neutralized. AIS issue is visual and understandable, NPS issues are not as easily described or understood. Addressing things on a community level is important (this is our problem and our responsibility), when things are left/managed by the government people lose ownership and empowerment.
Wrap Up & Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Meeting (Fall 2022) topic ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Future Flathead” panel - planned development in the basin in the next 5 years ○ FWP Conservation Areas Presentation: protected areas over the last 20 years ○ Overlay planned development areas + septic leachate risk map ☺ ○ Water Compact update ○ DEQ Narrative Standards- nutrient working group update ○ Flathead Basin projects updates/field trips? (Dam tour? Conservation easement? ARPA project? Etc.)
Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion to adjourn (Sandy). Second (Jack). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i> Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

4. Action Items				
Action		Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Send out draft minutes	Cassidy Bender	6/01/22	Complete
2	Constanza to reach out to Rich Janssen to connect with another CSKT representative on the Flathead Guide.	Constanza van der Pahlen	None	
EXISTING ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS				
3	Myla will invite Jim Dunnegan to jointly present on the selenium topic.	Myla Kelly	On Hold	On Hold
4	Kate to reach out to Erin Sexton at the FLBS on transboundary issues and filling the BC vacancy on FBC.	Kate Wilson		In progress
5	Reach out to other groups in basin for discussion on priority issues and potential partnerships	Kate Wilson, Cassidy Bender	On-going	On-going
6	Check with EPA and Lake/Flathead Conservation Districts (have watershed restoration plans to address TMDLs)	Kate Wilson	On-going	On-going
7	Address BC rep vacancy (ex-officio)	Kate Wilson	On-going	On-going

Flathead Basin Commission Strategic Planning Session

Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish

May 12th, 2022

Attendance:

Rich Janssen (Chair, CSKT), Casey Lewis (Vice Chair, City of Kalispell), Sandy Beder-Miller (Governor-appointed), Lech Naumovich (Flathead Conservation District), Kate Hammond (acting superintendent Glacier National Park), Kurt Steele (USFS), Mark Bostrom (DNRC Helena), Kate Wilson (FBC Commission Administrator), Cassidy Bender (FBC Commission Coordinator), Emilie Henry (FBC Nonpoint Source Coordinator) Jack Potter (Governor-appointed), Michael Freeman (Governor's Office), Peter Brumm (EPA), Mike Koopal (WLI), Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), Hailey Graf (DNRC), Demi Blythe (DNRC), Eric Trum (DEQ), Sam Bourret (FWP)

Top 3 priorities:

- Mitigating nonpoint source pollution
- Education & outreach
- Explore options to increase funding opportunities and incentives to address NPS pollution issues.

General Discussion:

- Commission would like increased communication during the lull between meetings, possibly spotlight an issue once a month in our bulletin or keep commissioners up to date on one issue we have been working on.
- Panel yesterday was great, having groups here was powerful. Seems to be a lot of duplication of efforts, FBC could be the clearinghouse and facilitate getting information to groups.
 - 'How to' information on our website, consistent messaging (example of Little Bitterroot Lake Association flyer), provide more materials, etc.
 - We should be strategic about what the role of the FBC is that we can be additive/complementary of our partners efforts.
- ARPA infrastructure and irrigation funds are available for a lot of the projects we are working on/could be working on (connecting mobile home communities to sewer and/or upgrading septic systems).
 - If we have an excess of funds in our budget or have opportunity to be a grantor, how would we do that? Let's go to our partners and ask what amount of money would help them achieve their goals.
 - They all have their individual groups, but FBC could bring them all together, support them, and then take on bigger picture to identify data gaps, analyze, and visually present data and information fast.
 - Capacity is important too, we have the money and capacity to work with Kalispell but if we had more funds/capacity we could work with Whitefish, Bigfork, Polson, Ronan, Pablo... everywhere in the basin.
 - If we give local groups money, they have to clearly define the goals/deliverables and all of that needs to be applicable to the whole basin/state + match FBC's priorities.

- How would partners use that money effectively if they don't have a staff person to use/allocate that money?
- Could develop more landowner stewardship programs to help promote sustainable decision making among the public. Targeted AIS examples, you come here to see this beautiful pristine environment. If you have a mussel, etc. you won't see that anymore. Scary but makes people care.
 - Pinch point in NPS is how do you compel/encourage private landowners to take voluntary action in something that doesn't show immediate benefit to them. Build momentum/local forums like yesterday, this is needed to tip the scales on this issue.
 - Empower the locals to do the work, locally led conservation priorities. Process of continuous improvement, moving the needle. Take pride in the community (what does it mean to be a Montanan). There is no next best place.
- Create measurable goals:
 - Contacts are a measurable goal (i.e., 50% percent of landowners have been contacted/know about the program/guide).
 - Look into measurable E&O goals with social indicators and measuring outputs versus outcomes, we reached these people... but what was the outcome.
 - DEQ NPS management plan indicates goals in social deliverables, community readiness assessment... they hire a consultant and assess how ready/aware a community is to take on an issues.
 - We could create a guide/handbook or a training session for creating/achieving measurable results (i.e., here are 3 methods that can help you quantitatively provide outcomes).
- GIS Septic Risk Map:
 - Develop instructions with publicly available septic risk map: how to use, how to zoom in to your area, etc.
 - Get synthetic DNA/septic GIS risk map in the newspaper 10 times, create success stories with septic ambassadors, really broadcast this tool.
 - Create local champions of people moving here are a different type of people, lots of them have some capacity to volunteer and many are looking for a more community-oriented home.

Walking Pair Activity Debrief:

- Peter Brumm, EPA- Septics and stormwater in the agency world are seen as local issues, so these are perfect things for FBC/DNRC to take on. Climate change and environmental justice are an EPA focus recently as well, so keep that in mind when looking at acquiring EPA funding.
- Rich/Mark- CSKT gets 55k from EPA for NPS with an emphasis on septic systems. Drought will be a thing on everyone's mind, a NPS catch all category with opportunity to expand/zoom in is appropriate for our main strategic priority.
- Lech/Sam- Keep NPS strategic priority with focus on local septic issue, focused on Flathead Basin research, report, and inform locally led conservation.
 - On the ground projects, FBC to maintain a leadership role
 - Tying development discussions to NPS pollution, septic systems, and stormwater as a whole to create discussions around sustainable development.

- FBC strategic priority to be an umbrella over all with reporting out on all those items.
- Sandy/Jack- WQ is our mission, groups yesterday are laser focused on lakes. How do we branch out and reach the people that don't live on the lake and are affecting Water Quality? What are we going to leave to our kids and grandkids? How do you hook people/make it personal?
 - Personal care products.
- Randy- One focus/priority but we can assist in other areas, support legislation (ad hoc legislative committee).
 - If we want to be seen as a convener in the basin, we need to invite media/legislators/get the word out (Chris? used to attend...).
- Eric/Kurt- Septic systems are meant to leach, meant to go back into lakes, they are designed to treat like that (this is not something the public realizes, general understanding of how these things work is lacking). We need to educate and let the public know at what scale the leaching/pollution is harmful/negative/matters. Will get more buy in this way.
 - Another topic lacking education natural erosion vs. unnatural (flood after fire).
 - Explain agriculture and stormwater as/how they are nonpoint source.
- Sam- Fish/habitat rely on WQ, FWP does not have means to conduct E&O.
 - Social media presence, informing about septic systems (educate people moving here that are coming here, incentivize realtors to care).
- Info/testing wells and septic system inspections are usually in the offer to purchase a property. Flathead Guide provided to realtors, CEU for realtors to include this information... NPS/septic focused opportunity for them to learn.
 - Possible product for FBC to create- realtor talking points, present campaign, and Flathead Guide at realtors' associations.
 - Need industry buy in with the Flathead Living Guide, ... having their logo/information in the guide and to have copies in their office. Realtors paid \$100 each to have names/ads included in publication.
 - Need to distribute guide to Title companies, verbal outreach to property owners/realtors... distribute pamphlets to title companies to give to realtors/homeowners.
- Casey/Mike- Synthesis of all the data that other groups have collected, where it is/how do we use it or show it (we could contract this out). There is a lack of visual representation of this monitoring data, and we could use this as a communication tool for the public and partners.
 - Then we could use the data to inform general direction and water quality project implementation and inform how to distribute possible future funds.
 - This would provide a technical aspect to feed the education and outreach component.
 - DEQ updating subdivision review rules, role for FBC to engage in that process. Engaging with the county more broadly.
 - No conversation on stormwater at our panel yesterday was really telling: the City of Kalispell and partnership with FBC is the **only work** being done on stormwater in the basin, we need to push the envelope now on making changes to prevent pollution with this increased flow and pollutant potential. Not work retroactively.
- Hailey G/Demi- FBC has wide view and we could send an invite to all the groups in the basin to host spring training (i.e., here are all the facts, the latest news and data, standardized data collection, create a survey for data collection with monitoring work being done, location, we

talked to this many people, about these topics, etc.) to train local groups on how to talk to the public on these issues. Additionally, have a fall/post season gathering (compile all reports and data from field season, reflect on season, challenges, successes and coordinate with all the groups). Empowering all of these local groups to do the work that they want to do.

- For future FBC meeting:
 - **Action:** Research counties and their rule making process/interaction with legislators (i.e., making more stringent rules), future meeting speaker topic.
 - Data from municipalities in the basin on where development is occurring before next meeting panel on a map, then overlay our septic map.
 - Planning boards and feedback from them on how subdivision review works, lake shore protection regs, sustainable development, and implications to/process on how changes to those rules happens and other rules in general work/if we had feedback or desired changes.
- FBC – 5 series of videos (similar to CRC AIS PSAs) each one specifically addressing one NPS issue. With one collective one addressing living/moving/recreating here responsibly (MT Waters campaign overview). Tie in fish/water/pristine environment to make people care, hammer home the connection element.
 - Seasonal concept to videos- spring run-off, winter recreating responsibility, etc.

Action Items:

- **Action:** Send email update to commissioners (once a month) on the status on the projects, events, and other relevant updates.
- **Action:** Research counties and their rule making process/interaction with legislators (i.e., making more stringent rules), future meeting speaker topic.
- **Action:** Compile planning session notes and develop 2022-2025 FBC strategic plan.



🏠 **Location:** Northwest MT History Museum
124 Second Ave. East Kalispell, MT
📅 **Date:** October 6, 2022
🕒 **Time:** 10:00 AM – 5:30 PM

FLATHEAD BASIN COMMISSION 10/06/22 Meeting Agenda

- I. 10:00 am: Call to order/Welcome & Introductions**
– Rich Janssen, Chair; Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator; All (name/organization or affiliation)
- II. 10:15 am: Public Comment**
- III. 10:30 am: Commission Consolidation Concept - Presentation & Discussion**
– Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras; Kerry Davant, DNRC Deputy Director; Mark Bostrom, DNRC CARD Division Administrator; Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator
- IV. 12:00 pm: Lunch** (for in person participants)
- V. 12:45 pm: Commission Business** – Kate Wilson; Cassidy Bender; Emilie Henry
 - Staff Presentation: Activities, Projects, Committees and Programs
 - ACTIONS: Review/Approve FBC Minutes (5/11/22) + FY23 Revised Budget
- VI. 1:30 pm: Presentation: Columbia River Basin Grant Opportunity**
– Peter Brumm, Environmental Protection Agency (virtual)
- VII. 2:00 pm: PANEL: Growth & Development in the Flathead Basin**
– Panelists (confirmed unless TBD noted):
 - *Flathead County – Pete Melnick, County Administrator; Lake County -Tiffany Murphy, Planning Director; Flathead County – Amy Dexter, Finance Director; City of Kalispell – Jarod Nuygen, Development Director; City of Whitefish – David Taylor, Planning Director; Montana Association of Realtors – Erica Wirtala; Montana Dept. of Commerce – Racene Friede, Glacier Country Tourism*
 - Panelist presentation followed by facilitated panel questions and public Q/A
- VIII. 3:45 pm: Wrap up, next steps, & next meeting** – Kate Wilson
- IX. 3:50 pm: Public Comment**
- X. 4:00 pm: ADJOURN & FIELD TRIP: Flathead Rain Garden Downtown Walking Tour**
– Led by Emilie Henry (FBC), Casey Lewis (City of Kalispell), & Samantha Tappenbeck (Flathead Conservation District)
 - *Starting at the History Museum, join us for a walking tour in downtown Kalispell to explore and visit 4-5 local rain gardens (~2 miles).*
- XI. 5:30 pm: Social at The KM Bar!** The walking tour will end at The KM Bar, please join us for some networking and socializing.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/ Project Name:	Flathead Basin Commission		
Date of Meeting:	October 6 th 2022	Time:	10:00pm-4:00pm
Minutes Prepared By:	Emilie Henry & Cassidy Bender	Location:	NW MT History Museum & Zoom

List of Acronyms

AIS	Aquatic invasive species	FBC	Flathead Basin Commission
BOR	US Bureau of Reclamation	FLBS	Flathead Lake Biological Station
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration	FWP	Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
BSWC	Big Sky Watershed Corps (AmeriCorps)	GNP	Glacier National Park
CEMIST	Central Eastern MT Invasive Species Team	MACD	MT Association of Conservation Districts
CFC	Clark Fork Coalition	MCWD	Missoula County Weed District
CRB	Columbia River Basin	NPS	National Park Service
CRC	Clearwater Resource Council	NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
CSKT	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes	UC ³	Upper Columbia Conservation Commission
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality	UCLN	Upper Columbia Lakes Network
DOI	Department of the Interior	USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
DOT	Department of Transportation	USDA	US Department of Agriculture
DNRC	Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation	USFS	US Forest Service
eDNA	Environmental DNA	USFWS	US Fish & Wildlife Service
E & O	Education & Outreach	WLI	Whitefish Lake Institute
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency	WRDA	Water Resources Development Act
EQC	Environmental Quality Council (Interim)	WRP	Western Regional Panel

1. Welcome and Introductions

Rich Janssen (Chair)	Opened the meeting. Confirmed quorum present (for voting purposes).
Welcome & Introductions (Roundtable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each participant introduced themselves including name and organization/interest that they are representing. The Flathead Basin Commission acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. Today, we honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come.

2. Attendees

FBC member(s) voting members underlined: Rich Janssen (Chair, CSKT), Casey Lewis (Vice Chair, City of Kalispell), Sandy Beder-Miller (Governor-appointed), Jasmine Courville-Brown (CSKT), Gordon Ash (Flathead Conservation District), James Ferch (Montana DNRC), Chris Downs (acting for Dave Roemer superintendent Glacier National Park), Jim Simpson (Lake County Conservation District), Kurt Steele (USFS), Jack Potter (Governor-appointed), Michael Freeman (Governor's Office), Randy Brodehl (Flathead County Commissioner), Brian Hughes (Governor appointed), Mark Bostrom (DNRC), Bill Dykes (BOR), Peter Brumm (EPA), Eric Trum (Representing Myla Kelly DEQ), Sam Bourrett (representing Lee Anderson for FWP), Kate Wilson (FBC Administrator), Cassidy Bender (FBC Coordinator), Emilie Henry (FBC Nonpoint Source Coordinator)

Absent member(s): Steve Stanley (Lake County Commissioner)

Partners/Public/Other: Kristen Juras (Lieutenant Governor), Amanda Kaster (DNRC Director), Kerry Davant (DNRC Deputy Director), Amy Dexter (Flathead Finance Director), Pete Melnick (Flathead County Administrator), Jarod Nuygen (Kalispell Development Director), David Taylor (Whitefish Planning Director), Erica Wirtala (MT Association of Realtors), Racene Friede (Glacier Country Tourism), Mike Koopal (WLI), Claire Kirk (FLBS/MMW BSWC), Saige Jibben (Lake County CD BSWC), Heidi Fleury (Lake CD), Tom Bansak (FLBS), Nanette Nelson (FLBS), Hailey Graf (DNRC), Jessica Dahlman

(Nursing Fellowship), Samantha Tappenbeck (FCD), Melissa Brickl (DNRC), D.J. Zor (BOR), Chris Runion (BOR), Mike Bullets (BOR), Kane Schafer (BOR), Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), Sheena Pate (Flathead Rivers Alliance), Jim Baker (Friends of Lake Mary Ronan), Constanza von der Pahlen (Flathead Lakers), Pat Klever (citizen), Jim Elser (FLBS), Liz Lodman (MISC), Tom Woolf (FWP), Carol Treadwell (WLI), Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI), Marie Watson (UM graduate student), Mayre Flowers (Citizen for a Better Flathead), Diana Gray (public), Jim Wardensky (Flathead Environmental Health), Lisa Anderson (public), Rachel Malison (FLBS)

3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues

Presenter	Topic/Discussion
<p>Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator</p> <p>Public Comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Agenda: Commission Consolidation Concept, ACTION: Approve 5/11/22 Minutes & FY23 revised budget, Staff Report (activities, budget, grants, projects, MT Waters campaign launch, strategic planning process, etc.), Columbia River Basin Restoration Grant Presentation, Growth & Development Panel, wrap up, next steps, next meeting topics, public comment & adjourn. Field trip and social to follow. • Thank you to previous FBC commissioners: Lech Naumovich (FCD) and Mark Reller (BPA). • Welcome to new FBC commissioners: Lee Anderson (FWP), Dave Roemer (Glacier NP), Gordon Ash (FCD), and James (Jim) Ferch (DNRC). • Public Comment: None
<p>Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor</p> <p>Kerry Davant, DNRC Deputy Director</p> <p>Mark Bostrom, CARD Division Administrator</p> <p>Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator</p>	<p>Commission Consolidation Concept</p> <p>Introduction from Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept arose from Governor Gianforte’s Red Tape Relief Initiative. State has more than 160 boards and commissions. Discussed with Senator Cuffe. Bill to consolidate the Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC³) and the FBC. The goal is to provide more efficient government and improve operations while continuing to provide the best service to citizens. <p>Introduction and Overview from Director Amanda Kaster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FBC has played a pivotal role in the last 39 years in natural resource protection and meeting community needs. • However, we do see some areas where we can gain efficiencies, offer more support to watersheds in the Montana portion of the Columbia River Basin headwaters, and still ensure a focus on key water quality and AIS issues. • The FBC currently has 3 FTE, 2 of which already serve both commissions. • The annual operating budget of FBC is currently \$281,511 which includes funds for staff salaries and benefits, non-point source pollution mitigation and mapping projects, outreach and education, member travel, meetings, and supplies. We are proposing that the budgets of the two commissions be consolidated. • DNRC reviewed the organization and roles of the boards and commissions administratively attached to us to determine if their operations could be streamlined or consolidated as part of the Governor’s Red Tape Relief Initiative. • History and mission of UC³ is to “protect the aquatic environment in Montana tributaries to the Columbia River from the threat of AIS to protect water resources, downstream interests, and the economic and ecological vitality of the region.” Created in the 2017 session. • But things have changed since 2017 – FWP has made enormous improvements to the AIS program. The UC³ has worked closely with FWP to ensure that this comprehensive program is preventing AIS to the best of Montana’s ability. It is proposed that this would

continue with the new Western Montana Conservation Commission as AIS remains a specific duty in statute.

- The Columbia River Basin is of utmost importance to the west – it supports hydropower generation across the Pacific Northwest; irrigation for crops; municipal drinking water; and more. It remains that last major river drainage known to be free of zebra and quagga mussels. We intend to continue our fight to protect our waters with the standing up the new Commission this session – perhaps in new and creative ways given that the Columbia River Basin also suffers from water quality issues in many areas.
- We believe that this would be a great opportunity not only to gain efficiencies for staffing, but also to provide the adaptability to assess the needs of the many important watersheds of western MT, and to be positioned well to support, assist, and lead projects needed by the individual basins and/or communities therein.
- This would allow for the Commission to focus on protecting and conserving aquatic resources across the board in western MT and being a convener, a facilitator, and an umbrella to support and assist our western watersheds.
- We could gain efficiencies in staffing, appointments, technical services, and administrative oversight with the combining of the UC³ with the duties of the FBC.
- This consolidation would allow for FBC’s critical natural resource focused mission, and track record of community-focused projects to be expanded to the entire Upper Columbia Basin, an area critical to MT and our many downstream partners.

Overview of Bill from Kate Wilson

- Currently FBC has 14 voting members and 1 vacancy.
- New bill proposes 15 voting members. Governor shall appoint 8 of the voting members and remaining 7 voting members shall be selected by sector/association.
 - Idea behind sector selected members is that the associations/organizations making appointments know which representatives would be most interested and engaged, promotes enhanced participation.
- 8 governor-appointed members shall represent: the hydropower utility industry or an electric cooperative; a private landowner who is a member of an irrigation district; a private citizen who is at-large; a representative of a private industry; and a director, officer, staff, or member of a natural resource, conservation, or recreation organization representing different geographic areas, including upper Clark Fork River basin, lower Clark Fork River basin, Kootenai River basin, and Flathead River basin.
- 7 “sector-selected” members shall be appointed by and represent the following sectors: MACO (one representative from county larger than 100,000 residents and one representative from county smaller than 100,000 residents), MACD (2 CD representatives), MT League of Cities and Towns (one wastewater utility representative from municipality greater than 20,000 residents), MT Rural Water Association (one representative from local water and sewer district), and CSKT Natural Resource Dept.
 - Both FBC and UC³ have a CSKT voting member. In this bill we specify NRD-appointed by CSKT tribal council. A tribal council member, is the representative on UC³.
- Ex officio members (non-voting) representing: DEQ; DNRC; FWP; department of transportation (DOT); department of commerce (DOC); UM; EPA; USDA, NRCS; USDA, USFS Region 1; DOI, BOR; DOI, USGS; and BPA.
 - DOT – owns a lot of stormwater infrastructure and would improve communication with them
 - DOC – conducts studies/research on population and growth trends in MT

- UM – FLBS is a key partner on many projects, could be nominated by university president
- USFS - Current FBC statute specifies positions to serve as members (superintendent, forest supervisor), does not specific position in new bill, just specifies region.
- Kate didn't highlight aspects of the draft bill that would remain the same.
- Commission members would have staggered terms, but everyone would be appointed at the same time. To ensure there's continuity in the transition, two current commission members from both commissions (FBC and UC³) will be appointed to the new commission. Current commission members would be appointed by two commissions, and a request would be sent to the governor to appoint these members to the new commission.
- Mission: To protect the existing high quality of Western MT's aquatic environment and the natural resources and environment of Western MT
 - "Aquatic resources" – incorporated AIS into water quality duties
- New Duties: 5-year monitoring strategy, ensure the continuation of a comprehensive aquatic invasive species prevention program
 - Many of the duties from the FBC will remain the same in new bill.
 - Biennial report
- Funding aspect remains the same as both commission in current statutes.

Discussion:

- Q: What are some examples of natural resource conservation organization?
 - A: Bitterroot Chapter of MTU, Swan Valley Connections, Blackfoot Challenge - individual members representing larger organizations.
- Q: Is two representatives enough to be fully representative of the full upper Columbia?
 - A: There was a lot of thought put into this on how to structure this to keep the commission small but allow these organizations to self-select the representatives that will have the most interest. MT Rural Water and other sectors will be asked to carefully consider and select wisely.
- Q: What if all the representatives are in a similar area within the basin?
 - A: Terms are staggered and expire every four years, so if the reps are close, they could be dispersed during reappointments or self-selections. Also, this is why there are sub-basin representative organizations built into the membership.
- Comment: There's a risk of who is appointed and potential dilution of focus when bringing two groups together that focus on different issues. We must keep the focus strong on the issues as we combine these into one group, adding in focus on AIS without diluting from water quality issues.
- Q: Would like to see how the engagement will be distributed and how responsibilities will be dispersed, both regarding commission members and staff.
 - A: These concerns pertain to creating the bylaws and would be addressed once the bill has been finalized and passed through the session. Some areas may have a need to focus on one particular issue, say if there is a group already covering AIS in an area then this commission can fill when it comes to water quality concerns. There's a lot of similarity in how FBC and UC³ are structured already.
- Q: Have you considered a representative from the MT Bureau of Mines and Geology?
 - A: Will consider, but USGS and UM (FLBS) are currently proposed (scientific perspective).
- **Action:** Edit in bill where ex-officio members are listed and correct 'National Forest' representative to 'U.S. Forest Service' representative (and throughout for consistency).

- Comment: FLBS would be glad to participate in new commission.
- Q: Both DOI and USDA are on the ex officio list twice?
 - A: No, USDA would appoint both an NRCS and a USFS representative, and DOI would appoint both a BOR and USGS representative.
- Comment: It will be tough to find someone at UM/FLBS who is familiar with the science in the Flathead, Clark Fork and Kootenai Rivers. That is a large geographic area, and the watersheds have very different geologies and water quality issues. Folks at UM in Missoula tend to focus on the Clark Fork, and FLBS focuses on the Flathead and Kootenai.
- Q: No mention of governance in the bill?
 - A: Only thing written into the bill is that the chair will be elected by the members. The rest will be developed in the bylaws upon creation.
- Q: Would this change the role of the commission from advisory to regulatory? Who will the commission answer to – would it be Director Kaster?
 - A: Section 6 of draft bill outlines commission authority. Role of commission would remain advisory/non-regulatory. All goes through the director of DNRC to the governor.
- Q: Is there a reason we haven't included eastern MT and Yellowstone in the bill?
 - A: There are similar bodies that already exist in Central and Eastern MT and a handful of councils for Yellowstone and Missouri. That doesn't exist on the west side, and this specifies/emphasizes the headwaters of the Columbia River.
 - Agriculture reigns supreme on the east/central sides of state, and the CDs do a good job of coordinating over there. CD councils are not administrative attachments; they are formed by the CDs because they choose to create them.
- Comment: USACE and BOR should have both seats at the table in the ex-officio role.
- **Action:** Explore and/or edit membership in bill to include representatives from both US Army Corps of Engineers and BOR.
- Comment: Expressed concerns about dilution. We're already having conversations within FBC about which WQ priorities we can reasonably take on given the size of the watershed, capacity, multiple partners, and limited budget – this will only become harder with a larger geographic area. Worried that this consolidation will prevent the new commission from sustaining some of the initiatives and focus that FBC has been able to make progress with.
 - Response: Maybe we set priorities per basin – would be up to the new commission to decide. All the sub-basins of the Upper Columbia would benefit from the work we've done here in the Flathead.
- Comment: Also worried about dilution of priorities. Growth in the Flathead is phenomenal – with a bigger area and more people at the table, someone will lose on this, and it's going to be the Flathead. Here there's been such a concerted effort to bring projects forward, and he sees that being lost under the larger commission. Sees a larger staff as necessary to execute the needs of the new commission with the focus necessary.
 - Response: Organizations that try to run at too big of a scale eventually fall (ex: tri-state water quality council). But with a solid staff and good representation this could be successful. Currently, water quality issues and solutions are being pulled together as one-off solutions by different groups. If there was one organization that could be a comprehensive group for the west slope, it could be successful. UC³ has the largest scale but a very narrow focus of AIS – FBC has a broad focus but a comparatively small area.

- Q: Sees how much City of Kalispell has been able to get done with FBC's collaboration. How capacity might be managed to keep the engagements of the existing partnerships with the expansion?
 - A: The strength of staff can bring this forward. There has to be engagement between NPS people and the cities that are bearing the burden of pollution control. There's a need for a more coordinated body to engage across all of the organizations and groups as multiple watersheds are affected by each other's WQ challenges. There is an advantage of the representatives in the statute across the four basins.
 - Casey sees benefit of additional staff to support the additional area.
- Comment: Consolidation would streamline administrative purposes. Maybe there is a committee for each of the subbasins to maintain focus. There is an advantage to the expanding our current Flathead projects (ex: septic risk model) to neighboring watersheds that could benefit. We could help, convene, and support so many organizations that have similar issues to what we're experiencing in the Flathead.
- Comment: Both FBC and UC³ have heavily relied on committees to provide advice to the commission and also to bring in experts on each topic/area. Committees should be well thought out in the bylaw creation. Advocates that we think about the staffing issues – more staff will likely be needed for the larger area.
- Comment: As you grow bigger, there is a little bit of dilution that inevitably occurs. One way to solve is to rely on sub-committees to not lose that focus and maintain local emphasis (ex: interagency grizzly bear).
 - Response: Once membership of new commission is approved, all of that could be structured in the bylaws – what are the priorities for the work plan, how do we structure these committees, etc.
- Comment: Supports any influx of capacity being added to the NPS issue. DEQ had a 5-year NPS plan, but amount of funding determines what projects they're able to focus on (~1 million dollars a year through EPA). Addressing NPS is voluntary and the crux of doing that is how do you convince private landowners to take the issue on – DEQ's approach is to work with local groups to focus on their priorities (ex: Clark Fork and Kootenai River Basin councils). How would the new commission work with DEQ and the local organizations together on NPS issues?
 - Response: This expanded commission with a bigger geographical area could leverage and provide the forum to pull all these partners together. Back to the idea of committees – actionable groups that could be effective.
 - Q: Does this concept step on the toes of any watershed groups?
 - Response: There won't be any stepping on toes, but it will be very complex and present challenges. Sees the consolidation as a reconfiguration of the same bureaucracy that we're already dealing with. Not seeing how the consolidation will make FCD's life easier.
- Comment: UC³ worked at the scale it did because it was working on a common threat – AIS. When it comes to WQ, there's not a lot of commonalities among the different watersheds in the Upper Columbia – the other watersheds have totally different thing than other watersheds focus on. Existing high WQ in the Flathead needs to be protected; Kootenai and Clark Fork watersheds are highly impacted watersheds (historic mining) that require restoration. The loser of this proposal is the Flathead Watershed because FBC has been around for a long time and been very successful in protecting WQ. All FBC meetings have more than enough to discuss, and we don't get to enough of the issues in the Flathead, so when we move to a bigger area there will absolutely be dilution and the

issues in the Flathead Basin will not be a top priority. Will be difficult to pull together the people who have the local knowledge of all these diverse basins.

- Comment: She's a CD specialist that represents CDs in the western portion of the state, most of which have very small staff and few resources. Because of this, CDs have little capacity to coordinate with other CDs in their area and are looking for regional coordination. With UC³ they were able to provide the zoomed-out view and provide the broader view that could be very beneficial to the bigger area.
- Q: Has anyone approached BC about this consolidation concept?
 - A: We've had a non-voting provincial seat on FBC since its conception (mining representative), but it hasn't been filled since the 1990s. On CMP, we have a BC seat, and no one is participating. It's been hard to engage with BC – they are not in the bill draft, but their participation is still desired. We'll need to approach it in different ways.
- Comment: Both these groups have been highly effective and much appreciated by NPS. We just want to ensure that this group stays effective, and you don't spread yourself too thin.
- Comment: In expanding to this larger area, we have 3 USFS regions and 3 regions with FWP. The citizens of the Flathead Basin will lose when we try to get that zoomed-out view with the larger commission. What FBC does and accomplishes is incredible for the citizens of the Flathead Valley and with the drastic amount of growth our local problems and needs are only going to increase.
- Comment: Study bill through EQC to fund CDs. What EQC found was a lack of capacity – incredible amount of attrition because they cannot pay their staff well and don't have benefits. Lots of disparity in the capacities of CDs across the state (ex: Lake CD has to come to DNRC to even afford a full-time staffer). There is a capacity issue at the watershed group level with small communities. The thing that makes FBC effective is that they can work with some functional groups. Capacity issues are being addressed with DNRC/ARPA funding, but the coordinating issue needs to be addressed – would be the main role of the new commission.
- Comment: This has been a very helpful conversation. We will be meeting with UC³ on October 27th in Helena and getting their comments. We will then be circling back as a team to discuss comments and deciding a way to move forward.
 - Themes addressed in conservation: Concerns about capacity and dilution of priorities, is staff administration going to be easier at larger geographic area?
- **Action:** Schedule a smaller virtual meeting after the UC³ meeting (Nov) for updates.
- **Action:** Prepare materials to delineate between what is created in bylaws vs. statute to discuss at Nov meeting.
- Comment: FWP has a well-run AIS program already – it's been hard to find ways to support their efforts without duplication in UC³. It would be a great benefit to cut half on administrative duties and then provide support or more focus to the issues that need more attention.
- Comment: FWP-perspective (fisheries) – there's a big difference between the types of species and challenges across the different basins, but there's not necessarily different approaches that are required to deal with them.
- **Action:** Share UC³ 10-27-22 meeting minutes with the group.
- Comment: The comments from Mark suggest that each of the communities of northwest MT deserve additional resources to manage their water resources and not a small slice of a small pie that is currently FBC. Kate and her staff have done amazing work given their capacity. Thanks Kate and team.

<p>Approval of Minutes</p>	<p>Staff Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion to approve minutes from 5/11/22 meeting (Jack). Second (Randy). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i> • The FBC Executive Committee meets every other Tuesday at 11:15am, meetings are open to everyone, and allow us to conduct business between quarterly meetings. If you are interested in attending, please let staff know.
<p>Staff Updates</p> <p>Kate Wilson, Commission Administrator</p>	<p>Sources of Funding FY23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State fiscal year = July 1- June 30 • Natural Resources Operating Fund FY23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$156,772- base budget & OTO now permanent (operating) • Federal: EPA Multipurpose State & Tribal Assistance Grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete \$51,113 expended- EPA grant 1 (stormwater project, 2 years) ○ In progress \$12,777/\$26,191- EPA grant 2 (septic leachate GIS mapping; synthetic DNA study) ○ In progress \$0/\$25,576- EPA grant 3 (Nonpoint Source Pollution Coordinator + BSWC member) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$16, 111 to NPS Coordinator’s salary/benefits (\$66k total) ▪ \$6,250 to BSWC member (\$12,500 total) ▪ \$3,125 indirect (DNRC)
	<p>Existing Contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Design Group—septic leachate risk mapping & additional technical support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$39,800 expended/\$39,800 – COMPLETE/CLOSED • Windfall—website, water quality campaign development, reports & publications, graphic design, advertising, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$23,872 expended/\$35,000 (Balance: \$11,128) ○ Amendment in progress – requesting to add \$40,000 and one year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FBC operating funds + FY22 accrual ▪ Websites! Biennial report, campaign design/materials • Cornell University – Synthetic DNA tracer project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tracer development, lab analysis and report ○ \$9,483 expended/\$23,550 ○ \$14,898 from EPA grant; \$8,652 from operating funds • Conservation Media – Videography projects, NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MT Waters campaign (x3 PSA style videos); 3 years ○ \$0 expended/\$20,500
<p>Budget Updates</p>	<p>FY23 Line-Item Proposed Budget Amendments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red is amount expended to date (10/6/22); blue is proposed change • \$20,000/\$52,000 FBC Nonpoint Source Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Position to build capacity – comes out of operations until can get FTE ○ Previously approved for \$66,000; \$16,111 now coming from EPA grant • \$3,760/\$28,000 Nonpoint source/water quality projects & support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Previously approved for \$21,250 ○ May include: SDNA study (\$8,652), BSWC Member – ½ of position cost (\$6,250), stormwater mitigation and outreach (\$5,000), septic risk map – southern basin, digitization of septic permit data, monitoring, additional studies, etc. • \$7,746/\$50,000 Education & Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Previously approved for \$21,250

Kate Wilson,
Commission
Administrator

- Additional support for creation of materials, content, and website for MT Waters campaign
- **\$1,641/\$7,000** Member travel/meetings & sponsorships
- **\$1,800/\$5,000** Conference/meeting sponsorships
 - Prioritize MT-based events. Examples: CMP, NALMS, MT Stormwater Conference
 - Includes water quality rotunda event for upcoming legislative session
 - Previously approved for \$2,500
- **\$5,222/\$9,000** Staff supplies/Travel
 - Additional staff, more activities/travel require more resources in this category
 - May include: cell phones, printing, training, FBC-related travel, etc.
 - Previously approved for \$4,000
- **\$1,078/\$5,000** Other/Contingency funds
- **TOTAL: \$41,247/\$156,000 operating- \$114.753 remaining**

Discussion:

- **Motion** to approve the FY23 revised budget (Jack). Second (Gordon). All in favor. *Motion passes.*

FY23 Sponsorships

TIER 1 = MT-based org/event in MT addressing relevant natural resource issues (Up to \$5k)

TIER 2 = Outside MT but priority content (Up to \$2,500)

- Recap of FY22 Sponsorships: \$6,000 total
 - NALMS 2021 (virtual) \$2,500
 - NALMS 2022 (MN) \$2,500
 - MWCC Watershed Tour \$1,000
- FY23 Sponsorships: \$5,000
 - MWCC Annual Membership \$250
 - Western States Water Council \$1,800
 - Water quality rotunda event \$1,450
 - Crown Managers Partnership \$1,500
 - Other?

Current Committee Membership

- **Executive Committee:** Rich Janssen (Chair), Vice Chair (Casey Lewis), DNRC representative (Jim Ferch), Jasmine Courville-Brown, Sandy Beder-Miller (member-at-large), staff
- **Onsite Wastewater Treatment Committee:** Mike Koopal (Chair), Ryan Richardson (Vice-Chair), Casey Lewis (FBC/City of Kalispell), Abigail St Lawrence, Andy Crites, Beth Norberg/Pat Klever (Lewis & Clark County), Craig Kendall (USFS), Daniel Congdon (former DEQ), Rep. Dave Fern, Dean Sirucek (retired NRCS), Diana Luke (Lake County), Eric Bryson (MT Assoc. of Counties), Eric Regensburger (DEQ), Eric Trum/Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), Erica Wirtala/Sam Sill (NW MT Assoc. of Realtors), Evan Smith (CSKT), Hailey Graf (DNRC), Heidi Fleury (LCCD), Jeff Tuttle (Flathead Lakers), Jim Baker (FLMR), Karin Hilding (City of Whitefish), Keely Larson, Kelly Lynch (MT League of Cities & Towns), Kerry Nuckles/Kristal Kiel (Flathead County), Lamont Kinkade, Marie Watson, Matt Church (FLBS), Mayre Flowers (Citizens for a Better Flathead), Myla Kelly (DEQ), Nanette Nelson (FLBS), Peter Brumm (EPA), Roger Noble (Flathead County), Sam Bourret (FWP), Samantha Tappenbeck (FCD), Sandy Beder-Miller (FBC), Sandy Lang (MT Municipal Interlocal Authority), Sarah Halvorson (UM), Steve Rosso (Flathead Lakers), Susie Turner

<p>Committee & Project Updates</p> <p>Emilie Henry, NPS Coordinator</p>	<p>(City of Kalispell), Tim Burton (MT League of Cities & Towns), Todd Walter (Cornell Univ), Tom Bansak (FLBS), Tom Cowan (Carver Engineering), Tom Cox (Flathead Lakers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education & Outreach Steering Committee: Casey Lewis (Chair), Lech Naumovich (co-chair), Tom Bansak (FLBS), Ian Withrow (FLBS), Samantha Tappenbeck/Gordon Ash (FCD), Kate Sheridan/Constanza van der Pahlen (Flathead Lakers), Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI), Sheena Pate (Geotourism Council/FRA), Evan Smith (CSKT), Eric Trum/Meagan Gilmore (DEQ), Heidi Fleury (LCCD), FBC staff • Technical Committee Core Team: Mike Koopal (Chair), Myla Kelly (DEQ), Ryan Richardson (The Barn Group), Tom Bansak (FLBS), Sam Bourret (FWP), Rachel Malison (FLBS), CSKT – TBD, staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supplemental Members (based on project/need): <i>Septic leachate project(s); Stormwater project(s); Monitoring (potential)</i> <p>Discussion: NSF workshop outcomes will be taken to the ONWW treatment committee for discussion and to move forward.</p> <p>Septic Leachate Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget for Septic Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EPA Grant (2020-2022) - \$26k ○ FBC Operating Funds (FY23) - \$28k • Flathead Basin Wastewater Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thank you, Saige! – BSWC terms ends in Nov ○ \$30k in FBC FY22 operating to fund septic cost-share program, BSWC member, & support program operations • Synthetic DNA Study - Whitefish & Lake Mary Ronan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tracer deployment (May-June 2022) - <i>Complete</i> ○ Sampling (May-October 2022) – <i>In Progress</i> ○ Data Analysis (June-December 2022) – <i>In Progress</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some data received but not enough to analyze trends • Septic Risk Assessment: Report & Products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal Peer Review - <i>Complete</i> ○ External Peer Review - <i>In Progress</i> ○ Unpermitted Systems Analysis - <i>Complete</i> ○ Publicly available, interactive GIS risk tool – <i>In Progress</i> ○ Road show and/or webinar sharing model with planning departments, local gov, partners, etc. – <i>Complete</i> • National Science Foundation Septic/Water Quality Workshop – June 9-10 @ FLBS - <i>Complete</i> <p>NSF Septic/WQ Workshop – June 9-10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connect science, technology, policy and education ○ Share lessons learned from policies and programs ○ Foster stakeholder communication ○ Define challenges and knowledge gaps ○ Prioritize research and scalable technology ○ Provide support/key findings to the FBC • 50 attendees representing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legislative & local leaders; researchers & scholars; regulatory & water quality agencies; interested parties and partner organizations
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Committee & Project Updates

Emilie Henry,
NPS Coordinator

- **Key Takeaways:**
 - Gathered diverse group of experts, advocates, decision makers, and field staff to discuss complex scientific, social, and economic perspectives
 - The magnitude of the septic issue needs to be better understood, quantified and shared to mobilize the public/decision-makers
 - A multi-pronged solution that moves toward centralized systems, better addresses replacements, upgrades & maintenance of existing systems, incorporates cutting-edge waste management technologies is required to solve this complex water quality issue

Septic “Road Show” – Aug 31-Sept 1

- Attendance: Flathead & Lake Counties (Commissioners, Environmental Health staff, Planning staff, Health Board members, conservation districts), CSKT Tribal Council, Municipalities (Kalispell, Ronan), Water & Sewer Districts (Lakeside and Evergreen), Agencies and Partners (DEQ & Flathead Lakers)
- Highlights
 - Septic risk assessment identified as useful by staff- an additional “screening tool”
 - Support from Lake County Commissioners and Tribal Council (some data with the Salish & Kootenai Housing Authority) to digitize permit data in southern basin
- Lake County interested in possibly digitizing their permits and sharing but they needed to discuss internally, and we will follow up on this topic.
- Perk is decreasing burden on county staff because the public could find general/baseline information on their own (do they have a permit, how old is it, what is it for, etc.); would also allow for safer data storage and easier data management
- Next Steps: Publish online, interactive GIS risk tool (in progress); present public webinar for engineers, real-estate agents, partners, etc.

Discussion

- Q: Funding to support the building out of the model in the southern basin?
 - A: DNRC contract cap moving to \$10k so we can still utilize Ryan, will come out of the NPS project line-item budget and there are possible grant opportunities available.
- Q: What does the maintenance of the model entail?
 - A: Recommend updating every ~3 years once the county permit database is updated. Emilie getting to a point that she could do this internally.
- Comment: Use this tool for the assistance grants for a landowner to show they are in a high-risk area and in need of assistance.

Stormwater Projects

- **Rain Garden Initiative**
 - July Walking Tour: 25 participants, 40+ on waitlist; toured 5 rain gardens in downtown Kalispell
- **Adopt-a-Drain – NEW, partnership with City of Kalispell**
 - Goal: To raise awareness for stormwater pollution by encouraging residents of Kalispell to adopt and regularly clean a local storm drain
 - Website is live! – Welcome Packet and Training Video online for more details
 - Next Steps:
 - Finalizing intro/advertising video
 - Marketing and spreading the word

Committee & Project Updates

Cassidy Bender,
Commission
Coordinator

- **Approved for BSWC Member in 2023** – focus on stormwater and E&O

Education & Outreach

Montana Waters: Clearly Connected Campaign

- Primary Campaign Goals: 1) **Increase public awareness of water quality issues** threatening the pristine water quality of the Flathead Basin, ultimately enhancing personal behaviors and inspiring residents and visitors to take pride and responsibility in conservation efforts. 2) **Increase coordination and collaboration with partners** working on water quality issues in the Flathead Basin by increasing consistency of messaging, improving accessibility and awareness of available resources, and enhancing partnership opportunities.
- 9/22 E & O Committee meeting
- ‘Soft’ launch underway: Sharing promotional materials, tabling at community events, getting the logo out there
 - MT Waters table/swag at: NSF Septic Workshop @ FLBS; Flathead Waterways Cleanup @ Sacred Waters Brewing; NW Montana Fair & Rodeo; Septic ‘Pump Party’ @ Flathead Lakers; Septic Leachate/GIS Map ‘Road Show’; MWCC Watershed Tour

2022 Flathead Waters Cleanup – Aug 13th

- 210+ volunteers cleaned up 5,100+ pounds of trash and debris and improved over 140 miles of riverbank and lakeshore
- Afterparty hosted at Sacred Waters Brewing in Kalispell – wildly successful and very fun, lots of community and partner support

Currently in Development

- **Water quality PSA videos**
 - Contract with Conservation Media in Missoula
 - 4 short water quality focused videos on nonpoint source pollution issues
 - Topics: Campaign focused, stormwater, septic leachate, agricultural runoff, erosion, and/or education/outreach messaging.
- **Montana Waters website**
 - About the Flathead Watershed: Indigenous History (under review by Salish/Kootenai culture committees); GIS map of waterbodies with impairments
 - About Campaign: Interactive version of Clearly Connected graphic
 - What You Can Do: Top actions, map of partner organizations, volunteer opportunities with partner programs and links
 - Resources Available: Logo, custom waterbody logos, brand/style guide; PSA videos; billboard ads, print advertisements, social media/digital ad files; sticker, magnets and other material designs; water quality infographics, factsheets, printable brochures, flyers, etc.; contact us form to start a new project!
- **‘Clearly Connected’ Infographic**
 - Introductory messaging about what ‘Clearly Connected’ really means, showing whole picture of water quality
 - Idea originated with Living in the Flathead Guide
 - ‘Sister’ graphic with clear actions

Future Plans and Tasks

- **Internal Launch - Partner**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Share within agencies/to partners with press release, video, and notice of materials available (swag, rack cards, stickers, and more)! ○ Partner meeting (with original 50+ partners) to present materials ● External Launch - Public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2023 Events: Water Quality Rotunda Event, Flathead Waters Cleanup, workshops, more pump parties, etc. ○ 2023 Outreach Plan: Billboards, video PSA runs, geo-targeting/native content advertisements, etc. ● Other Future Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flathead Rivers Alliance and FCD purchasing river clean up bags and placing 'MT Waters' bag pick up stations across the Flathead Basin ● 2023 BSWC member to focus on FBC projects and E&O! <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Q: Are there metrics for measuring the effectiveness of a campaign like this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: Something we've thought about but it's tricky – will discuss at next E&O meeting ● Action: Address metrics for measuring effectiveness of E&O efforts with committee <p>Upcoming Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whitefish Lake Institute Science Quencher– October 14th 5-7pm, Whitefish Lodge (Emilie presenting!) ● Montana Invasive Species Council Summit– October 25th-26th, Helena ● Upper Columbia Conservation Commission Meeting- October 27th, Helena ● North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA)– Nov 7-11th Sanibel, FL ● North American Lakes Management Society (NALMS)– Nov 14-17th Minneapolis, MN ● FBC Sponsoring: Emilie & Cassidy attending/presenting ● Legislative Info Session: Invasive Species– February 22nd, 2023 ● Legislative Info Session: Water Quality Rotunda Event– March 10th, 2023
<p>Columbia River Basin Restoration Program</p> <p>Peter Brumm, EPA R8 Program Coordinator</p>	<p>Program & Basin Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program Vision Statement: “The EPA Columbia River Basin Restoration Program will be a catalyst for basin wide toxics reduction work efforts, enabling communities to access unimpaired watersheds with healthy fish and wildlife.” ● Basin Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One of North America’s largest watersheds ○ Includes parts of 7 states including significant portions of ID, MT, OR, and WA ○ Provides vital cultural, environmental, economic, and social benefits to millions <p>Importance of Toxics Reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Past research and monitoring show toxics are present and widely distributed across the Basin that harm fish, wildlife, and human health ● Reducing toxics in fish is critical to protecting Tribal Human Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Columbia River Basin Tribal people have lived here for more than 10,000 years ○ Tribal people eat far more fish than most other residents ○ Toxics in fish pose unacceptable health risks to Tribal people and other high fish consuming populations ○ The Columbia River Basin Restoration Program grew from our work with Tribes to reduce their exposure to toxics from high fish consumption <p>Foundational Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1992 National Study of Chemical Residues in Fish

- 1994 EPA/CRITFC Fish Consumption Survey
- 2009 State of River Report for Toxics
- 2010 Columbia River Basin Action Plan
- 2014 Strategy for Chemicals of Emerging Concern

2016 CRB Restoration Act

- Amended Clean Water Act by creating Section 123 and directed EPA to:
 - Establish a Columbia River Basin Restoration Grant Program to support voluntary actions to reduce and assess toxics throughout the Basin
 - Establish a Working Group representative of states, tribal governments, and other entities in the Basin
- Elevates Columbia to short list of nationally significant waters called out in the Clean Water Act – only CWA geographic program in R8
- Work under CWA Section 123
 - 2019 Formalized Working Group; State of the River Report Update
 - 2020 Issued 1st Round of Grants; Contaminants of Concern Framework & Reference List
 - 2022 Program Report Update; Issued 2nd Round of Grants
- CRB Restoration Working Group:
 - Collaboration among tribal governments, states, industry, NGOs, etc.
 - Meets twice annually – next meeting on 10/20/22 meeting (open to public)
 - MT participants: DEQ, Missoula Valley WQ District, Clark Fork Coalition, TU

Competitive Grants

- Eligible grant recipients: state gov, tribal gov, regional water pollution control agencies and entities, local gov, NGOs, or CDs (not included are for profit, federal agencies, and private landowners)
- Allowed Activities: eliminating or reducing pollution, cleaning up contaminated sites, improving WQ, monitoring to evaluate trends, reducing runoff, protecting habitat, or promoting citizen engagement or knowledge
- Funding Details: 2 rounds of funding to date (<\$350k projects), 3 upcoming opportunities
- Existing Grants in MT
 - 2020 UM/FLBS/CSKT – Flathead Lake food web sampling and fish consumption advisory awareness; Nanette Nelson is principal investigator; [Link](#) to view Fact Sheet
 - 2022 Grants: MT TU fish tissue study, Salmon Safe’s Trout Safe Initiative, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho Kootenai monitoring, UConn selenium fish otolith Kootenai study
 - [Link](#) to more info on all grants

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding

- \$79 million BIL over the next five years + ~\$1.5 million annual appropriation = ~\$16 million a year
- Support program development, provide technology transfer, deliver grant funds, and support partnerships
- Coordinate work efforts and information exchange across the Basin to increase monitoring
- Build on previous successes
- Prioritize support to Tribes and other communities with increased risk for toxics exposure

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize actions over pure monitoring projects – 100% monitoring work unlikely to be funded • 25% non-federal match required - in-kind match allowed (staff time, etc.) <p>Upcoming Grants - 3 New RFAs in late 2022/early 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal Government RFA – match requirement waived <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Timeframe-RFA open 10/31/22-1/31/22 ○ Amount -\$16M total available; ~\$1M per award ○ Work period -4-7 years of funding ○ Informational webinars 9/21 & 9/27 –recordings available ○ Link to view fact sheet • Fund-the-Funder RFA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Timeframe–RFA targeted to open in November/December 2022 ○ Amount: Multi-million-dollar award (~\$5-8M) ○ Work period: multi-year workplan; incrementally funded ○ To support program development, fund staff, implement projects and/or run sub-award program • 3rd General RFA • Multiple entities can apply for multiple grant opportunities (i.e. Tribal gov can apply for both Tribal RFA and Fund-the-Funder RFA) • May even have monitoring specific RFA at some point in the future <p>Next Steps for Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants: Continue to manage 14 inaugural grants; complete awarding 25 new grants in Oct 2022; issue 3 new RFAs • Working Group: Continue engagement with working group and toxics monitoring sub-group; increase engagement with ID, MT, and WY • Ways to get Involved: Website link, participate in working group next meeting (10/20), reach out to Peter (brumm.peter@epa.gov), apply for upcoming grant, partner with another grantee <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: Because the grants are competitive, is there a ranking criteria that would favor TMDLs, working plans, etc.? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: The criteria does not get that deep, the grant process is not contingent on TMDLs. • FBC interested in partnering with another entity such as DEQ or CSKT. With the capacity discussion, this could be a great opportunity for MT. FCD was contacted by someone at EPA about our collaborative rain garden initiative – we are already doing things that could be fundable.
<p>Growth & Development in the Flathead Basin</p>	<p>Pete Melnick, Flathead County Administrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three principles that the county has to do: Respect the traditions/past, delivering in the present, and predicting the future • County is not focused on either promoting or limiting growth; they are looking to create the space where people can grow if they want to. • County’s role is to respond to emergencies and growth challenges and to be nimble to adjust/respond to needs within the county. <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: Issue of capacity – are we meeting our responsibilities towards natural resource protection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: The county is building those systems to address/manage that growth.

Panel Presentations

- County Commissioners meeting on Tues 10/11 on buy/sell agreement for property for the regional biosolids facility (~\$20-million total cost). Property is adjacent to the Lakeside water and sewer district.
- **Action:** Kate to write a letter or provide testimony at meeting in support of the septic biosolids facility.
- Q: Where in the county is the most growth occurring?
 - A: West valley is growing most. County does not have a strong voice in the county in support of more zoning laws. There is a loud voice in the county in opposition of any more zoning.

Amy Dexter, Flathead County Finance Director

- Flathead County is limited in its budget. Only two ways the county can get more tax dollars: inflation and new properties.
- It can take up to 3-4 years for new properties to show up on tax revenue.
- Handout on MCA 15-10-420

Racene Friede, Glacier Country Tourism MT Dept. of Commerce

- GCT is a regional nonprofit organization with a focus on ensuring economic sustainability while preserving the quality of life for residents and quality of place for visitors
- Region: Flathead, Glacier, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders counties
- Organizational Roles:
 - Destination Marketing: Promotes a community as an attractive travel destination and enhances its public image as a dynamic place to live and visit.
 - Destination Management: Develops partnerships with various organizations and stakeholders to support a strong tourism economy and quality visitor experiences.
 - Destination Stewardship: With a 'community-first' mindset, supports creating a thriving tourism economy that address community priorities while protecting and supporting a destination's unique assets.
- Shift after 2016 from destination marketing to destination management, to now destination stewardship
- Why this evolution? Accelerated by influx of visitors during/following COVID
 - 3 months after COVID, GCT started hearing about an influx of people moving to the state, lack of workforce, capacity, etc.
 - Really focusing now on balancing the quality of the visitor experience with the quality of life for those who live here and measuring success against the wellbeing of our environment
- Destination Stewardship Project currently underway – goal is to develop a stewardship plan and new strategic framework for GCT
- Key issues and challenges:
 - Community capacity challenges must be addressed through both seasonal and geographic visitor dispersal strategies.
 - Disrespectful and disruptive visitor behavior has increased in the past two years.
 - Lack of affordable housing is creating unlivable communities and exacerbating other challenges.
 - The impact of Montana's rapidly increasing population is sometimes confused with visitor pressures.
 - Workforce shortages in a time of increasing demand are impacting local businesses and the visitor experience.
- Core deliverable for stewardship plan is to create 5 strategic pillars with 33 actionable deliverables.

- 5 strategic pillars: Be an advocate for western Montanans; encourage responsible tourism and recreation; enhance experiences in rural communities; shape demand and disperse visitors; and foster stronger stakeholder alignment and collaboration.
- Communities surveyed will be deciding what the strategic priorities are.
- Tourism we've seen in recent years is unsustainable. We saw market correction this year in late spring likely due to global competition and borders opening back up. -22% decrease in visitors this summer, 1.63 visitor to resident ratio (2.08 previous year ratio).
- Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research statistics:
 - 12.5 million visitors in 2021 who spent \$5.15 billion in MT, (25% of this is spent in the glacier country region) - \$618 million in Flathead County and \$28 million in Lake County from nonresidents in 2021.
 - More than 68,000 jobs supported by tourism
 - \$387 million more than \$387 million generated in state and local taxes
 - Total contribution of tourism to MT's economy was \$7.56 billion in 2021.
 - 85% rate Tourism/ Outdoor Recreation as Extremely Important or Very Important to western MT's economy – tourism is in the top 2 industries for MT

Discussion:

- Comment: HH BOR has seen a huge influx of visitors and local hotels weren't giving the government rate.
 - Response: Ticketed entry at the park created a huge shift to HH BOR and river use because folks who can't get into the park until they can get into the park.
 - Average daily rate (ADR) has gone up
- GCT conducting 16 different focus groups and one-on-one interviews with prominent leaders around the counties. GCT will be circling around with those communities to touch base on those challenges and what their desired strategic planning priorities are.
 - Seeley Lake example: infrastructure issues, sewerage and difficulty obtaining septic permits, lost 2 motels to Paws Up purchasing for employee housing
 - GCT going in to see where they can help and where they can't help, maybe they can provide data.
- GCT works with Chambers of Commerce, funds them with visitor information, attends all their meetings, provides them with data, etc.
- Funded by the original lodging facility use tax

David Taylor, Whitefish Planning Director

- Whitefish is experiencing unprecedented growth – 768 new residential units in city limits since 2019, mostly single-family homes
- Some limitations in where building can take place in Whitefish due to high groundwater, steep slopes, utilities boundaries, and zoning issues. Mostly in-fill growth to avoid churning up agricultural lands on city boundary.
- Lake and River Protection:
 - Whitefish has been concerned with water quality protection for over four decades
 - 1975 Senator Bob Brown from Whitefish was concerned about water quality on Whitefish Lake and introduced a bill which became the Montana Lakeshore Protection Act
 - Gave local governing bodies primary control in protecting lakes and allowed them to adopt regulations
 - Guiding principles — work cannot materially diminish water quality, fish, or wildlife habitat, interfere with navigation or other lakeshore recreation, create a public nuisance or create a visual impact “discordant with natural scenic values.”

- Lakeshore Protection Regulations:
 - Whitefish was the first in the state to adopt local Lakeshore Protection Regulations in 1976
 - Regulations require a 20' Lakeshore Protection Zone where construction is limited to access paths and the preservation of native vegetation and trees is required.
 - In 2007, Whitefish added an additional 10' setback to the Lakeshore Protection Zone where no vertical structures could be built in order to further protect the lake and the buffer.
- 2017 Connect Whitefish Plan:
 - Whitefish has a 1999 Bike and Trail Master Plan, updated as the 2017 Connect Whitefish Plan, that calls for shared use trails along the Whitefish River
 - Shared use paths along rivers facilitate larger buffers and provide education and recreation opportunities
 - Not all sections of the trail have been built, but City has been diligent about getting easements and having developers build their portions when properties subdivide and develop
- 2022 Design Guidelines for Shared Use Paths in Riparian Areas:
 - Whitefish Parks and Public Works have put together a 2022 Design Guidelines/Best Practices manual for the construction of shared use paths in riparian areas
 - New guidelines provide a more comprehensive approach to trail construction, including tree protection, erosion and sediment control, retaining wall construction, unstable soils, and riparian vegetation protection
 - Provides predictability for coordination with other agencies such as Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and the Flathead Conservation District
- Non-Point Pollution, Septic Leachate, and Sewer Treatment
 - Whitefish Lake Institute identified Lion Mountain as a source of septic leachate into Whitefish Lake
 - City Council offered to extend sewer using a local improvement district bond without annexing them, and while some owners were on board, ultimately HOA turned down the offer due to the expense
 - The City Sewer Treatment Plant discharges into the Whitefish River. The City was issued an *Administrative Order of Consent* by DEQ in 2012 requiring us to bring our wastewater treatment process into compliance with new requirements for ammonia, nitrogen and phosphorous removal. A decade later, and over \$25M spent, the City is now operating a state-of-the-art mechanical wastewater treatment plant. The new facility was designed to meet stringent new standards, while minimizing energy requirements. Our Public Works staff is still working to optimize operations, but the new plant is another example of the City's dedication to water quality.

Discussion:

- Q: Fines for violating the riparian/lakeshore setback regulations aren't really a deterrent right now. Are there any discussions about how to make those regulations more of a deterrent for people?
 - A: Fines are set by state law – there's not a whole lot we can do. Ongoing battles to educate people.
- Q: Is there anything the City can do about Lion Mountain since they chose not to hook up to city sewer?

- A: They're out of city's jurisdiction (Flathead County), and they have septic permits. If it gets bad enough, the state can take action.
- City created ad-hoc Whitefish Community Wastewater Committee. WLI worked to get funding sources for the community, but it's a complex social, cultural issue – there are lots of reasons why people don't want to be annexed.
- Q: City helped fund Cow Creek restoration project. What was city's interest in funding that?
 - A: City is just generally interested in WQ issues.

Erica Wirtala, MT Association of Realtors

- Represents ~1300 realtors across Flathead and Lake County. Inducting ~20 new realtors, most of which are either right out of high school, undergoing midlife changes, doing side hustles, or people who have retired and want to do something on their own.
- 2019: 62 homes sold on Flathead Lake + 13 homes sold on Whitefish Lake = 75 homes total. All starting at \$1.5 million and up.
- 2020: 136 homes sold on Flathead Lake + 36 homes on Whitefish Lake = 172 homes total. Homes are dispersed around the lakes, high dollar homes.
- 2021: 85 homes sold on Flathead Lake + 13 homes on Whitefish Lake = 98 homes total
- 2022: 35 homes sold on Flathead Lake + 7 homes on Whitefish Lake = 42 homes total
- Market stats: Kalispell's median home price is decreasing at \$525,000 (peaked in April). Whitefish's median home price is \$840,000 (last month over 1 mil). Likely seeing this now because of savvier buyers/sellers and seasonal slowdown.
- In 2021, many cash offers, sight unseen, and \$50-100k over asking prices.
- Lakeside median home price going down to \$959k from 1.3 mil (peaked in Jan).
- Interest rates and inflation recently increased an average monthly payment of \$2,200 a month to around \$3,300 a month.

Discussion:

- Homes sold are likely to permanent residents. Seen an increase in corporations buying houses and using it as a short-term rental for employees. Many virtual showings during COVID – people buying houses without ever having been inside them.
- MT is one of 14 states that is a 'nondisclosure state' – this means that we don't know the final price that people pay for homes (between the buyer and their tax collector) and don't know the use of the house (Airbnb, vacation rental, etc.)
- Q: How to conduct outreach with realtors?
 - A: Realtors don't read. Erica writes an article once month in the At Home magazine. Newsletter goes out once a week.
 - They have a pot of money that goes toward outreach purchases, including the Clean Drain Dry magnets.
- **Action:** Get an article on water quality to Erica Wirtala for the NW MT Association of Realtors newsletter (coordinate with Heidi Fleury)

Jarod Nuygen, Kalispell Development Director

- [Link](#) to City of Kalispell infrastructure viewer map
- Late 90s through early 2000s, the city really started accepting and addressing the growth happening in the city – allowed them to keep on top of it
- City planned out 75-100 years regarding stormwater infrastructure, wastewater facilities, transportation. Plans all go along with the growth policy map with projected densities of commercial growth, housing, etc.
- Between 2018 and 2022, Kalispell has approved just under 5,000 units. Of that, 905 are single family homes. Current growth is not concentrated in one particular area – north, west, and south are all growing.

- Growth ebbs and flows historically, but they're not expecting that growth will slow down as much as it's done in the past.
- All these new roads constructed with these new developments are maintained by the developer. Infilling backward now – developments with wastewater, stormwater, and utilities infrastructure occurred far north that allow the city to easily fill back in the gaps with new development.
- Kalispell has annexation boundary and has development plans for all areas within this boundary if annexation was requested.
- Density increasing but is that going to be dense enough in the long run? 200 family unit apartments/condos in a relatively small area can house ~600 people that would historically have been a handful of single-family homes.
- Historical 2% annual growth, but city is currently above that.
- State minimum densities considerations with the housing task force, including providing sewer and how that affects downstream resources.
- In Flathead County, 2/3 of population is in the county and 1/3 is in the cities (usually flipped). This brings in considerations about septic, wells, etc.
- 70 to 90-foot-tall buildings will likely be the norm in the future – not only is land expensive, but it's expensive to build. Complimenting Kalispell's past while moving into the future is the goal.

Discussion:

- Q: Is there a policy regarding aging septic inside city limits?
 - A: It's a monthly or bi-monthly occurrence that septic/wells failing within the city. They can hook into city services, as long as they're in the annexation boundary. It does not require failure for the hookup, but it usually happens that way because homeowners don't want to pay impact fee for annexing (recently moved from \$12k to \$6k).
- Q: Does Kalispell's wastewater treatment plant have the capacity to keep up with this growth?
 - A: Yes – the plant was way overbuilt to begin with.
- Lakeside, Bigfork, and Evergreen are unincorporated areas and not considered cities. These communities consume a lot of county resources and are consuming more and more as they continue to grow. Getting these areas incorporated will be important for making sure growth is occurring as sustainably as possible.
- Planning for growing transportation infrastructure, police, and fire are in the works.
- Kalispell/Flathead Valley is the fastest growing micro-population area in the nation.
- USFS is at a turning point on how to think about planning and growth and need to figure out a way to get ahead and prepare for the growth (ex: Holland Lake Lodge controversy).
 - Q: Where hasn't the USFS kept up with growth? A: Operating on a declining recreation budget, so growth model is focused on reducing access instead of growing access.
- It's easy to place value metrics on people and experiences, but quantifying value of the resource is a much harder. What does it look like in 100 years, and can we sustain that level of growth in recreation? If we plan ahead, we can make sure it happens sustainably.

Facilitated Questions:

What element of growth are you seeing in your area as the greatest benefit and challenge to the Flathead Basin?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jarod: Benefit is MS4 requirement for stormwater and water quality requirements for old projects. Managing growth (logistically and culturally) is the challenge. • Erica: Challenge is dust abatement and air particulates. Wants to see these programs expanded/continued by the county. • David: Connecting failing septic to city sewer is huge benefit. Challenge is managing a way to accommodate all the folks who want to move here and do it sustainably. • Racene: We live in an area that people want to be in, and it benefits our economy. The challenge is to figure out how to educate the public on how to recreate responsibly. • Pete: Growth is always good philosophically because it brings new people and new ideas. Challenge is managing public safety and making sure we have the resources to support the growth safely – self-licking ice cream cone. <p><i>What messages do you think are most important for newcomers and how do we reach them?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racene: Windfall has been translating our WQ messages to GCT, who has the voice and venue to reach those people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action: Reach out to Racene and sit down collectively with Windfall on how to get the MT Waters campaign cross pollinated with GCT. • David: Water quality is key message. Need to target people who have been here for years to get them to change old habits (ex: dropping oil in backyard). • Jarod: Changing mentality – lots of people who get here and want to close the door behind them. <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: Possibility for requirement for septic to be inspected before sale? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A (Erica): Likely would be some pushback from real estate community there. Term ‘inspection’ needs to be defined better – what exactly does that entail? BMP that septic are pumped before sale, and lots of good relators are already doing this, but there is pushback as it holds up big sales. • Comment: Changing the message from “come here to enjoy the Flathead” to “come here and enjoy the Flathead and take care of it.” • Septic risk map update for panel – it’s a timely discussion since there are big grants out there (City of Kalispell applied for 2 \$725k public facilities grants to connect two resident-owned communities to city sewer) • ARPA received \$1.2 billion in applications for grants. Shows how far behind MT is behind the curve.
<p>Wrap Up & Next Steps</p>	<p>FBC Strategic Priorities Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5/12/22 Strategic prioritization discussion + planning • Top three priorities: (1) Mitigating nonpoint source pollution, (2) Education & outreach, (3) Explore options to increase funding opportunities and incentives to address NPS pollution issues (serve as convener, facilitator, compliment partner activities). • Other outcomes: More communication between meetings, utilize panels to tackle tough topics, create local champions/ambassadors, creative means of incentivizing individual behaviors, research counties rules + rule-making processes, ensure measurable goals + coach partners in creating/achieving, walking in pairs to discuss big topics is fun! • Next Meeting (Winter 2023) topic ideas: Water Compact update; DEQ Narrative Standards- nutrient working group update; Conservation Presentation, FWP & Flathead Land Trust (protected areas of the last 20 years); others? Field trips?
<p>Adjourn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion to adjourn (Randy). Second (Jack). All in favor. <i>Motion passes.</i> Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

4. Action Items				
Action		Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Send out draft minutes	Emilie Henry, Kate Wilson	10/26/22	Complete
2	Edit in bill where ex-officio members are listed and correct 'National Forest' representative to 'U.S. Forest Service' representative (and throughout for consistency).	Kate Wilson		Complete
3	Edit in bill where ex-officio members are listed and separate NRCS and USDA (and throughout for consistency).	Kate Wilson		Complete
4	Explore and/or edit membership in bill to include representatives from both US Army Corps of Engineers and BOR.	Kate Wilson		Complete
5	Schedule virtual meeting after the UC ³ meeting (early Nov) to for updates & next steps	Kate Wilson		Completed (to be held 11/21)
6	Prepare an overview of potential bylaws vs. enabling statutes to discuss at Nov meeting.	Kate Wilson		Complete
7	Share UC ³ 10.27.22 meeting minutes with the group.	Cassidy Bender	11/10/22	Complete
8	Address metrics for measuring effectiveness of E&O efforts with committee.	Cassidy Bender	3/15/22	In progress
9	Write a letter for Flathead County in support of the septic biosolids facility.	Kate Wilson		Complete
10	Get an article on water quality to Erica Wirtala for the NW MT Association of Realtors newsletter (coordinate with Heidi Fleury).	Emilie Henry	3/15/22	In progress
11	Reach out to Racene and sit down collectively with Windfall on how to get the MT Waters campaign cross pollinated with GCT.	Cassidy Bender	4/15/22	In progress
EXISTING ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS				
	Myla will invite Jim Dunnegan to jointly present on the selenium topic.	Myla Kelly		On Hold
	Kate to reach out to Erin Sexton at the FLBS on transboundary issues and filling the BC vacancy on FBC.	Kate Wilson		On Hold with new bill pending
	Reach out to other groups in basin for discussion on priority issues and potential partnerships	Kate Wilson, Cassidy Bender	On-going	On-going
	Check with EPA and Lake/Flathead Conservation Districts (have watershed restoration plans to address TMDLs)	Kate Wilson	On-going	On-going
	Address BC rep vacancy (ex-officio)	Kate Wilson	On-going	On-going