

Spotted Dog 5/19/2016

FWP present: Randy Arnold, Rick Northrup, Kelvin Johnson

Spotted Dog members: John Hollenback, Jim Flynn, Neil Horne, Dan McQuery, Bill Pierce, Jodi Pauley, John Beck, Bill Mosier, Brian Quigley, Liz Smith, Louis Smith, Brian Robbins, Pat Hansen.

John Hollenback said as we move forward we would like to have some sort of management draft by July and something that can be presented to the public. He said it is still unclear on who will write the briefs for the Spotted Dog management plan, etc.

Randy Arnold said they met with the commissioners and the county attorney. It is recognized that there is a county road right of way and there is a statute that says a county can go to the district court and request a recognition of a county road. He said that requires a hearing and parties to speak for or against, etc. He said right now the county is trying to see where they think the road lies and one thing the county is asking that FWP allow a right of way. He said as public ground they cannot just grant a new right of way. He said the county attorney did clarify that in the paper it stated that the road was open and that is not correct. He said the county wants to do this correctly and it sounds like they need to start with the district court. John H. said it is his understanding that they will not maintain the road. Randy said the law is written really loosely and county maintenance is not clarified very well. Brian said he thinks that recognizing a county right of way is different than maintaining a county road. Brian Robbins said there was the question on whether there would be restrictions on the road. He said they did not want to put any restrictions on it because then they are not eligible for gas taxes. They are open to road restriction though if that is in the best interest of the public. Randy said they also discussed fencing for private landowners along the right away, etc. Bill asked what if they decide to deviate from the original road. Randy said there are about 6 miles of historic road that is no longer there. There is an interest in connecting to existing FWP roads if it more feasible. Brian Robbins said from the reservoir toward Deer Lodge there is about 2 miles that is very difficult to put in a road because of landscape, etc. He said if the road is moved to a better spot that would make more sense.

John said at this meeting Liz Smith was going to talk about the history of the Spotted Dog. Liz had some maps from the 1970's and she has done some other research to see if there was a military route. She also talked about some grant funds that focuses on the historical aspect of the Spotted Dog. She said if we were to put an educational spin on it, she felt that people may be more respectful of the historical aspect of the Spotted Dog. The grant is up to \$5000. Liz used the example of bird viewing and if certain sites were set up for this the public would respect it for that use.

Jim Flynn said at the last meeting Dan McQueary handed out a lot of history of the area and we need to be capturing that from the surrounding landowners that have been in the area for a long time. He felt this may be a worthwhile project to show the history and give the public some ownership in this property. Liz said she agrees and feels the public would be more respectful of the property if there was a historical aspect to it.

Dan McQueary said in order for us to develop some sort of a plan for this WMA we need to know the history first. This would give us an idea of carrying capacity, how has mother nature affected our creeks when we had floods, timber harvest, what was done right in the past, what was done wrong, etc. This would give us a base to move forward to give recommendations to FWP. Rick Northrup said they originally did a summary of the property and this document could be used in drafting part of the management plan. Randy said there are a lot of people that go to the Spotted Dog for the first time and to give them some history would be very valuable. Liz said that perhaps utilizing Pat Hansen to do interviews with surrounding landowners and grant monies could be used to develop a history book, etc.

The committee broke into history and vegetation groups.

Next meeting is June 16, 2016.