

## Conservation Lands Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: 12/9/13

Time: 4 to 5:45pm

Place: Headwaters Conference Room – Currents

**Attendees:** Morgan Valiant, Bert Lindler, Giles Thelen, Kevin Verlanic, Beverly Dupree, Paul Parson, Greg Howard

**Others:** Rob Chaney/Missoulia

**Action Items:** Nov 4<sup>th</sup> minutes are approved

### Updates/Discussion Items

#### Mt. Jumbo Elk Monitoring - Citizen Science Project.

Track Elk movement and critical areas of use through monitoring:

- -Community based monitoring
  - East Missoula needs citizen monitors
  - Hotline #
  - Advertise for volunteers.
  - Log sheets and maps on website
- -Home based monitoring
  - Elk spotting through the winter, 2 times a day through May.
  - Provide monitors with a data sheet.
  - Individuals use spotting scopes.
- -Spring data collection
  - In spring survey crews will map fresh droppings and winter bedding areas
  - Survey season needs to be determined, probably after the snow subsides.
- -Mapping – areas dissected into zones.
  - Zones determined by landmarks and optimally areas seen from the valley.
  - Map bedding areas while the snow is still on the ground.

There's already been a spotting of 20 elk on Jumbo at the end of November.  
A press release has not been published yet.

Missoula Article:

Ron Chaney from the Missoulia is pursuing an article on the elk project.

- Discuss how the Jumbo herd is coming along.
- At What point does the herd become something other than a "scenic interest."

Possible resources:

Old Mount Jumbo advisory committee – existed before Mount Jumbo was purchased by the City.

- Vicky – Movement of the Elk
- Morgan – Management
- Bob Henderson – Historical
- Mike Thompson

## Grant Creek Elk Herd

Bert Lindler shared that the Grant Creek home owners love the Grant Creek elk herd. However the herd is 452 strong and there are concerns that the home owners positive views could easily change. The herd has increased since 1996 and doubles approximately every seven years. Currently the elk are located in public lands as well as private lands. They're accustomed to humans and show little if any fear unless they're chased by a dog.

A winter damage hunt has been instituted but managing a hunt to thin the herds is a challenge and has safety issues.

## Mt Jumbo – Forest Management brainstorming session

Identify Important Components for Plan Development

Forest management plan for Mt Jumbo - clear the back bone of trees. Photographs from the 1880's show there weren't trees on Mt Jumbo. Historically the Native American population cleared the trees. The primary goal is to provide winter coverage for the herd.

Manage the forest to make it more resistant to wildfire and disease.

- Young growth problematic for fires.
- Need to balance coverage and health

Brainstorm idea – Morgan can put together a 30 plus year plan – February- April 2014

One hundred and thirty thousand is promised for management.

- What prescriptions
- Need to establish specifics for how money should be spent
- Create fire breaks, half acre plots.
- FWP Suggests 250 acres for a herd of elk

Start with broad goals

- DNRC is committed to helping write the plan
- Need snow pack lower and trees.
- Need visual cover so herd feels safe.

Fire – Foresters

- Slope - 40% up to 60%
- Horizontal breaks.
- Vertical fire breaks between units of trees to prevent total devastation.
- Open ½ acre holes to monitor and determine returning elk.

## Other Professionals

Eric Norris

Amy Gannon

Dan Rogers

Fire prevention expert

Game Range expert

## Forest Management Goals

1. Increase Resilience
  - Forest vegetation
  - Disease
  - Fire
  - Climate
2. Species Diversity
  - Restore understory species

3. Improve wildlife habitat
  - Snow/visual center
4. Public safety related to fire
5. Revisit Recreation Management
  - Chapter 6. Mt Jumbo Plan
  - Thinning doesn't encourage use by the public
    - Rec. use – limits to impacts
 (Side Note: Timber production is not a goal; it's not going to drive the system. 30% of material can be left. One of the zones 50% material left, Forester uncertain of the fuels.)
  - Backbone trail corridor
6. Visual aspect of Forest Management

-Chapter

-Intro

-History

-Goals

**Chapter** – Monitoring

Fixed Monitory Plots

Elk Monitoring

**Chapter** - Restoration

Forage for all critters

Diversity

Weed Management, grasslands

(applied over 2000 lbs. of seeds a year)

**Chapter - Impacts**

Visual

Fire/Disease

Rec.

### Future Items

February, March, April – Next 3 meetings

**February**

#'s crunched

Review Management

Annual update – Need critique, streamline presentation – Parks Board, OSAC, City Council

**Spring Discussion** –March

Jumbo Winter Range management plan

Clark Fork

Broadway Island Development

Access point - Boon & Crocket to Madison St. Bridge

Issues erosion etc...

**Last Meeting** - April

Greenough Park

Encroachment