

 **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

<p>Emergency Response & Preparedness in the Flathead Basin Panel</p> <p>Dale Nelson, CSKT Emergency Manager</p> <p>Mark Clary, Lake County Office of Emergency Services</p> <p>Brian Heino, Flathead County Office of Emergency Services & County Sherriff</p> <p>Nic Winslow & Matt Jones, BNSF Railway</p>	<p>was conducted with Kalispell and EPA. Constantly coordinate with 4 counties within the reservation (Sanders, Lake, Missoula, Kalispell).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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%.
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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