

Flathead Audubon Society Monthly Meeting
March 1, 2010

Location: Jane Lopp & Associates, 295 Third Ave., E.N. Kalispell, MT

Present: Chair, Bob Lee; Vice-chair Paula Smith, Brent Mitchell, Linda Winnie, Dennis Hester, Ben Young, Kathy Ross, Lois Drobish, Richard Kuhl., Bill Schustrom, Bruce Tannehill, Steve Gniadek, Lewis Young, Mary Nelesen, Bruce Fanning, Jill Fanning, Rod McIver, Linda deKort, Melissa Sladek, and Kathy Ross.

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 5:51 p.m.

Minutes

MOTION by Richard Kuhl to accept the minutes from the February meeting. Seconded by Linda deKort. Unanimously passed.

Footloose Montana – Val Kurtzhaltz gave a short video and verbal presentation concerning “Montana Trap-Free Public Lands Initiative” (I-160).

COMMITTEES

Treasurer’s Report

Bruce Tannehill reported that the IRS has informed him that it has removed the penalty for the 990 report and also officially changed the fiscal year to starting 1 July.

Bruce has a new bird song CD that he is donating to FAS. He advised that the transition to Quickbooks software is being made. Bruce discussed the budget, dues distribution to the various budget funds, expenses and distribution of sources of income. A donation was received from Western Building Center for the birdseed sales and Mary Nelesen sent a thank you note.

Finance Committee

Mike Fanning informed the Board that the Finance Committee met immediately prior to the Board meeting and discussed allocating the monies in the Conservation Fund into three Funds: OSNA, Education and Conservation, and eliminating the Barb Baxter Fund. The intent is not that the Board will start spending down the money in the OSNA and Education Funds, but rather that the interest income or a certain percentage will be used for the programs associated with these two Funds. The intent for the Conservation fund is that it can be spent down. The allocation would be an expression of the Board’s current intent and direction for each Fund. The Board will retain the option of moving or spending the funds in the future for other needs. The Committee also recommended that the Board in the near future and on an annual basis make a decision how to allocate future substantial donations.

MOTION by Mike Fanning: That \$58,000 be transferred from the Conservation Fund into the Education Fund, that \$10,000 be moved from the Conservation Fund into

the OSNA Fund, and that the Barbara Baxter Fund be eliminated and those funds be moved into the Conservation Fund. The funds transferred into the Education and OSNA Funds are not intended to be spent down but rather that the income will be used for that Fund's programs and that the Board will retain the option of moving or spending the funds in the future for other needs. The funds in the Conservation Fund, including the monies moved into it from the Barbara Baxter Fund, may be spent down. It is further moved that in September of each year the Board prioritize how to allocate any small to moderate sized donations received during that coming year (including donations made with the payment of membership dues). For substantial donations that are not targeted by the donor for a particular program, the Board will decide at the time the donation is received how it should be allocated. It is further moved that in September of each year the Board prioritize how to allocate any donations received during that year.

Seconded by Bill Schustrom. Passed unanimously.

Education

The strategic planning session with Janet Ellis as facilitator will be held Saturday March 6th at the Summit Room 3 @ 10am. Bring a lunch

Planning an activity for Migratory Bird Day (May 1st) was discussed.

Melissa commented very favorably on Nancy's education programs with the Toyota grant and OSNA. Linda deKort informed the Board that Nancy's father has died and a card with a donation in Nancy's name will be sent to the NW Montana Humane Society

OSNA

Linda Winnie advised that the Volunteer Monitoring program is beginning this month. Brent agreed to monitor during the first half of the month. Mike agreed to help Kay Mitchell establish a monitoring database for OSNA.

Linda and Brent visited with Larry VanRinsum of the Flathead Conservation District. Larry said he would try to notify Linda and Brent when there is a 310 application that might impact OSNA. In 2011 an election will be held for 2 Conservation Commissioner positions on the District Board. It was suggested that FAS look for and encourage potential candidates.

The OSNA Lease with DNRC has been finalized and signed between Montana Audubon and DNRC. A 10-year lease with an annual 2% increase in the lease payment was agreed upon. Now the MOU between MA and FAS needs to be renegotiated. Specifically the dollar amount contributed toward the lease by each party must be agreed. Originally FAS contributed a set amount and MA paid the yearly increase over that amount including covering liability insurance and the lawyer that helped during negotiations. Linda will report back to the Board what the amount of liability coverage is. Linda wants to establish a real OSNA budget, which incorporates the cost of the lease to FAS.

Brent reported on FDP 10-1 being proposed by a landowner on Wild Goose Island, near OSNA, adding substantial development to an existing substantial development. Commercial development may result. Brent has contacted the Flathead Planning and Zoning Office and the Flathead Conservation District (FCD) and will be involved as an

individual. The Board asked Brent to draft a letter asking the FCD to carefully scrutinize this application.

Conservation Award

Richard Kuhl informed the Board that Bob Lopp will present the Award to the Carlsons at the March meeting. Lewis Young will present the award to Leonard Howke at the April meeting.

Conservation

Brent attended the last Flathead County River Commission meeting, which consisted of getting peoples' opinions as to what works and doesn't work for river stabilization, but not much science was discussed.

Linda deKort suggested that a Wetlands Committee person from FAS could pay close attention to this and Mike added that FAS put a note in the newsletter and ask at the meeting for a volunteer Chair for this committee. There is a lot of development activity in riparian areas at several governmental levels that needs to be closely tracked.

Bob Lee offered that a letter of support on the Tester Bill be resent to the Board for comment. The changes that have been made to the Bill since the first draft of the letter of support were mostly for clarification. The consensus of the Board was the Bill was a good collaborative effort and compromise, and FAS should get on the record supporting it.

Trapping

Brent commented on the presentation made earlier by Footloose Montana. It was agreed that because of the length of the Agenda that there should t be no further discussion tonight and that Footloose Montana should not be allowed to circulate their petition at FAS general meeting until such time as FAS takes a position on I-160.

Programs

Butterflies at the March general meeting and Steve Gniadek will present in April on Birds in GNP.

Lois said that 65 people signed in attendance at the last general meeting.

Bob Lee reminded the Board to start thinking about the May Silent Auction.

Website

Melissa stated that the new membership form is updated on the website. Archiving conservation letters under the conservation section on the website could be built and the time involved depended on the number of letters. Hillary estimated it would take approximately 2 hours. She charges \$80 per hour. A question to be resolved at the annual Website Meeting is how far back the Board wants to go in incorporating letters in the archive. Lewis thought there were 60-80 letters in the last 6 years. Melissa solicited ideas for what to put on the Home Page. Thanks Melissa for keeping the Website current.

Paula Smith reported that FAS has been provided a password to access the Whitefish Visitors' Bureau website. Also, thanks to Kathy Ross for filling in for Paula while she was out of town.

Field Trips

Ben Young will lead the Beauty of Birds field trip on April 28th. Linda deKort will lead the Marty Cohen Stroll on April 17th.

Quality of Life

Linda deKort is looking into presenting the movie *Home* at the O'Shaughnessy Center. Linda reported that founding FAS member Loren Kreck is in Brenden House Room 415 and not doing well.

Newsletter – Everyone read the newsletter if you want to know what is in it. All are looking forward to Steve's *Board Member's Viewpoint* article.

Linda Winnie reported that Kay encountered difficulty in getting an immediate response from a private printer and changing printers will not be pursued.

Other items

Nominations - Bruce and Gail have agreed to run for another term in their positions. Suggestions for new Board members were discussed.

NW Regional Audubon representative – There is a new person in this position. She has requested input from Board members and individuals are encouraged to respond to her. Mike is willing to collate responses from Board members.

Jewel Basin – Bob Lee said that Dan has sent out the report on Hawk Watch and Bob will send it to the Board. Dan has leveraged the FAS grant to obtain additional funding from the USFS that will fund his program next year.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ Dennis Hester
For Gail Sullivan, Secretary