

Flathead Audubon Meeting April 6 2015

Present: Bob Lopp, Bruce Tannehill, Denny Olson, Kay Mitchell, Patti Mason, Lewis Young, Bob Lee, Kathy Ross, Paula Smith, Lois Drobish, Steve Gniadek, Gael Bissell, Jim Rychwalski, Jan Wassink

Meeting called to Order 6 pm by President Bob Lopp.

Announcements: About 25 brochures for the 2015 Wings Across the Sky Bird Festival will be handed out at our next public meeting. FAS received a nice thank you card from Meriam Emerson for the gift certificate the board gave to her for her work on the Calendar. The card was passed around. Bob reminded folks about Kathy's invitation to Bill Jayne's photography exhibition April 17 and 18. He also mentioned available board training by Ned Cooney April 9 at Museum at Central School.

Bob asked for any changes to last meeting minutes. No one had any changes. Motion to accept last meeting minutes: Denny moved; Paula seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Bruce Tannehill noted that there were not any significant changes to the report from the one he sent out. The Financial Committee must meet soon to adopt budget for the next fiscal year. Bob, Kay, Bruce, Jim will plan to meet sometime next week. Bruce is resigning from the Treasure's position some time after June 30th but can help with transition over the summer and into the fall. He will be gone most of next year. He will need someone to replace his and Gail's work on folding and mailing newsletters. He has been asked to provide more bird song CDs; he asked if he could get reimbursed to buy materials for another 40 CDs and CD covers. Bob Lee moved to allow Bruce to make 40 birdsong CDs. Jim seconded. Motion passed. Motion to accept financial report: Jan moved. Lewis seconded. Motion passed.

OSNA Weed Committee: Kay summarized the weed subcommittee meeting from today. Weed final committee report will be sent to all. Kari Musgrove (Flathead Conservation District) and Jack Jay (certified herbicide applicator who has helped in the past) attended. Weed committee will focus on a buffer zone and trail this year and then use adaptive mgt over time to see how we do. Rick Mace will attempt to map weeds spring and summer so the committee will have a weed base map and be able to monitor weeds over time. The plan is to continue to monitor and implement weed control work over next 3-5 years. Jim brought lots of information to the subcommittee meeting from Dow Chemical and Cenex Harvest States on various types of herbicides. General weed plan is to spray only as needed based on mapping/monitoring by Rick Mace and Brent Mitchell. Brent will be out in April to assess effectiveness/status on areas sprayed last summer/fall. The OSNA committees are hosting an OSNA work day for Sat. Aug. 22. Jobs will include weed clipping, mowing, pulling; putting up of boundary signs, and other jobs to be determined.

Birdathon: Sat. June 13. Bruce will send email to all so we can start to get our friends/contacts to commit/pledge; he will also develop the teams. John Hughes will be back for May meeting and to help. Rules may need some tweaking or changing.

Conservation: Lewis: Bob Rost mentioned FWP's Ninepipe Management Plan; comments due 4/22/2015; Want more pullouts for public viewing; mention it at next FAS meeting. Right now people are mostly parking on/along the road which is not that safe; he would like to see more pullouts. Often one needs to walk through ditches to get to wetlands which is not always easy to do. There is not good parking in many areas nor easy ways across the ditches. Steve G. received letter from FNF for Whitefish Mountain to expand size of Summit House a few feet, add bathrooms, and replace new Patrol House. He and the board agreed it did not need further comment. Steve G. attended Open House for the new Forest Plan. He has not had time to review to draft Plan or draft comments for FAS. He did submit comments to Joe, chief planner, earlier about his thoughts over the years.

Conservation Roundtable: Steve reported that at the last meeting, Ben Long, Resource Media, led a discussion on the Haskill Basin conservation easement (CE). Whitefish city residents will be voting in late April on whether or not they want to use their resort tax to help pay for the CE. Ben was letting folks know that the bond needed to be supported. There have been lots of issues at legislature. Conservation Lobby Day is coming up (Steve did not know the exact date); Betty Kuropat from Native Plant Soc. Suggested that we should put our meeting info into their newsletter and visa versa. Earth Day is Sat. April 25. Mayre Flowers and others are planning a big event in Whitefish. Both Denny and Patti are participating. Steve would like to know if Patti would like to participate on the internet radio in Whitefish next Wed. in April. Also at the next Roundtable, Keith Hammer will talk about FNF Plan. It is the first Wed in the month from 12-2 at the FWP public meeting room.

Wylie Dike: Dean Robbins completed the Conservation District application through Bob Lee who submitted it today for Dean. The observation blind will be on the Conservation District's agenda next week. Jan indicated that he will need volunteers to help reduce materials cost by getting donations. Bob Lopp will be meeting with one of the companies. Once we get the pylons in and the beams set, then Jan could use volunteers to help build the blind, perhaps some time in May. Steve mentioned that once this project is completed, he would like to see us work on re-establishing the blind on McDonald Creek in GNP. Money that is needed for the Robbins observation blind will come from Jack White Account.

Education: Denny mentioned that at the recent Community Resource Educators (CORE) meeting, he donated a few 2015 calendars as Auction items for the upcoming MEEA conference. Many CORE members are participating in the MEEA meeting in Whitefish. Patti mentioned that she is going to do another trunk workshop with CORE. Both Linda DeKort and Amy Jacobs volunteered to help her go through the trunks. They cleaned them up but need to replace and update many items. She has done so and submitted costs to Bruce for payment. She needs updated thumb drives to replace slides and CDs; needs to get all photos scanned over to thumb drives; need to set up the information so that teachers can use Power Point software that works on all platforms. Bruce says some of the waterfowl slides have already been digitized. Other needs include a new trunk, missing binoculars missing out of two sets. Of the set of 12 binoculars (7 x 35s) one is missing. Of the 8 x 28's, there are only 7 of them that work or remain. She will work with Education Committee to put replacements, upgrades, and materials into next year's budget for the Education Committee.

For a class you need at least 20 binoculars. Patti mentioned that she recently judged at science fair at County level and in West Valley. She gave calendars for awards. Mary Jo Gardner joined Patti at Bissell School for the K-8 science fair. Pattie finished up teaching FVCCs Birds of NW Montana last week. She gave out course evaluations and got a 36% return rate. Results: 100% appreciate birds more; 92% plan to watch or spend more time watching; 83% will participate in FAS or other field trips; 92% plan to change things in their home to make it bird friendlier; 83% think they will support conservation more strongly. Upcoming events for Patti: Beauty of Birds starts on Wed. COCEC meeting April 14th Issac Walton; 3rd Week April she will work with 140+ 5-year olds with Head Start; Arbor Day with 200 3rd graders at Lawrence Park; Earth Day following weekend; early May Forestry Expo. *Give Local Flathead Fiesta for Philanthropy* is a new event that is happening to increase giving to local non-profits. Community Foundation in charge. Montana Nonprofit Assn. is offering Digital Media workshop. Steve asked about a BioBlitz coming up in May on FVCC campus.

Denny: Need to assess what has been going on since Patti started and then plan for next year. Want to ask Board if interested to work on the next year implementation. Suggested changes for next year? Anyone interested. April 27-29; May 1, 4-8. Kathy, Paula, and others are willing to come. Patti is going to bring the Hummingbird trunk to the next public meeting to show what is in these trunks with the goal of getting some of the members interested.

Calendar: Most of text for calendar squares completed. The contact info from GNP programs and foundations will be on the back. Thinking about putting an example of what is inside on the outside or hand out a calendars as a baker's dozen if they are shrink-wrapped so that people can see what is inside. The problem is that they do get damaged as people look at the samples and these can't be sold. Someone suggested that Denny talk to Jan Metzmaker to find out more about marketing and working in GNP.

Website/Publicity: Field trips starting in May through the summer will be in the Flathead's Go Local Guide. As for publicity, we need to get any event/field trip changes to Paula two weeks before the event/field trip to get it into the newspapers. Website committee met with Meriam Emerson about media/graphics. Came away with firmer vision of where we want to be with new dynamic looking Home Page. This template is not the template we have on the website now. Kay is setting up a test home page. Patti is helping. Work on the website is time-consuming and complicated within WordPress code. If conversion cannot be made, we'll report back in Sept. with alternatives. Virtual office and OSNA are just about done. Conservation pages are in final stages. Patti has more ideas on Life Long Learning. Google Analytics installed. Results show we have had 626 views with most popular being activities and field trips. Most people are coming from Google. Key words are "Audubon Field Trips", "beautiful water bird with long graceful neck", "When did Lewis and Clark found the magpie"; sources of web searches come from locations from all over the world but mostly US and Canada followed by China and Russia. If see additional things or something quirky, let committee know. New OSNA monitoring page wasn't working. Had discussion about posting timely things such as Conservation Awards on our website sooner rather than waiting a month so that the information doesn't come out long after the award or event.

Field Trips: The MWA/FAS trip to OSNA was cancelled due to confusion over the DNRC permit. Check with Linda Winnie as to why it was cancelled even though we are sponsoring the field trip. Rest of the field trips will be in the May newsletter.

Other Business: Bob Lopp is stepping down as President. Kay has agreed to run for President. For Treasurer, we can appoint someone until it is time for that election. Gael has agreed to become Vice President for the next term. Jim will consider filling in as Treasurer. Lewis is running again. Paula will run as a Board Member. Jan Metzmaker has agreed to run as a board member. Doug MaCCarter has agreed to run as a board member. Jake Bramante is considering being a potential board member. One additional new committee that Bob Lopp considers might be "Citizen Science". Monitoring, observational data that could be very helpful to National and FAS. Hawk Watch, Raptor Day, IBAs, etc.

Need budgets from all the Committees. Sum totals with justifications. Year-end report needed by middle May.

Hospitality: Bruce will help set up and help with the Whitefish Community Center for the May meeting. Lois would like the newsletter to be very clear that people must bring plates and silverware as well as pot luck items.

Newsletter: May newsletter: Will there be any Raptor Day events? Gael will check with Amy Jacobs. BOM (Jeanie Marcure-Burrowing Owl); Flathead Lake Biological Station Events separate article; Nominations; Forestry Expo; Birdathon; Financial Report; Education; Raptor Day dates (Sept 12, Sat. after Labor Day) but the event is no longer to be held in Honor of Rod Ash. June Ash says she can no longer attend and thinks 10 years is enough; OSNA work day is Aug. 22; Volunteer Loon Monitoring and Loon Banding Contest; Board Meeting highlights; Wings Over Montana; West Valley Naturalists; Local Farmers Info; Donations and thanks to all donors from the last year; Potluck; Silent Auction; Last PP until next Sept..

Program: Richard is out of town. Bob Lopp has the speaker system and all the other stuff and will be there by 6. Bob will introduce Ben Long. Steve and Gail will help with the Conservation Achievement Award for Mayre Flowers.

Meeting Adjourned 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gael Bissell