

CORE MEETING MINUTES

September 20, 2017, 2:30 – 4:30 pm

Location: Flathead Conservation District, 133 Interstate Ln, Kalispell

Attendees: Denny Olson, Monica Elser, Sheena Pate, Cynthia Ingelfinger, Hilary Devlin, Teresa Wenum, Diane Ericson, Carolan Coughlin, Patrick Jentz, Laura Law

Trunk Workshop:

- Save the date for the 2017 Trunk workshop on Thursday, October 19th at Lone Pine State Park Interpretive Center from 9am – 3pm.
- 14 educators are already signed up through PIRnet.
- Cynthia and Sheena met with Karla Miller at NWMT Educators Coop. She will help promote the workshop and email the educators who sign up about follow through on the day of.
- Sheena, Cynthia and Carolan are organizing this year's Trunk Workshop.
- Confirmed trunk presenters include: Denny Olson (Audubon Wetlands and Birds), Jenny Cloutier (FNF, Snow Safety), either GNP or FNF (FireWorks), Mosquito Control (Know Mosquitos)
- Potential presenters include: Cynthia (FCD, Rolling Rivers Trailer – weather dependent) and Kathy Martin
- Sheena will email the presenters the time slot options.
- Sheena is asking Brian about donated coffee and tea.
- Teresa and Laura will provide snacks.
- Monica has access to survey software for this year's evaluation. Sheena will send her last year's questions.
- We need questions about the trunks for the scavenger hunt. They can be the same as last years.
- We should all review the list of available trunks on the website. Teresa can help update the list

Flathead CORE Website

- We added Google analytics to help us understand visitor behavior on the site. The map for A Teacher's Guide to Outdoor Education Sites and Program in the Flathead Region is getting the most hits on the website right now.
- We updated photos on the slider and on some internal pages and have updated all the contact information for the Local Providers page.

General Updates

- Winter Trails day – scheduled for January 20, 2018
- Sheena Pate, Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council (COTC)
 - Sheena is in talks with the Associated Chambers and trails committee regarding using the National Geographic COTC platform for Flathead trails, and she is working with Flathead

County groups to spotlight a sampling of their trails on the NG website. Check out their Instagram account too. <https://www.instagram.com/crowngeotourism/>

- Monica Elser, Flathead Lake Biological Station (FLBS)
 - FLBS and Flathead Lakers are hosting a Science on Tap featuring new FLBS faculty member Bob Hall, who will be speaking about stream ecology on Tuesday, October 3rd at 6pm. FLBS is about to launch a new website.
 - MT Lake Book 3rd edition went to the publishers and should be available soon.
 - FLBS is hosting a 3-day teacher workshop in June with the MT Geographic Alliance. Water will be the focus.
 - FLBS is working to provide datasets for teachers for use in their classrooms. The new website will help facilitate this.
- Patrick Jentz, City of Kalispell stormwater engineer
 - The city of Kalispell is looking for ways to meet the education and outreach requirements of the federal EPA MS4 stormwater permits. They would like to work with the schools and Patrick attended the meeting to network with educators in the valley and learn what efforts are already underway for stormwater education. Sheena and Diane pointed him towards the Watershed Education Network.
- Cynthia Ingelfinger, Flathead Conservation District (FCD)
 - FCD created an Education Program brochure covering college and camp scholarships, grants for educators and other FCD educational programs
 - FCD is working with MSU Extension to plan a small acreage landowner workshop over 6 Wednesday evenings in February and March. Registration information will be available soon.
- Hilary Devlin, Flathead Lakers
 - The Lakers hosted various events this summer including educational programs and site visits with landowners. Hilary is working on completing 12 non-point source pollution related fact sheets that are available on the Lakers website.
 - This weekend is the Walk and Talk Native Plant Workshop and Tour
 - The Oil and Water Don't Mix film showing is being rescheduled. See the website for updates.
- Melissa Sladek, Crown of the Continent Research Learning Center
 - They hosted a couple of bioblitzes this spring/summer on mushrooms and butterflies. They will follow these up with articles and videos to highlight what they found.
 - GNP has a new Tumblr site - <https://glacienrps.tumblr.com/>
 - GNP Conservancy is hosting a speaker series in October in and the valley and also in Missoula on different topics including climate change.
- Teresa Wenum, Flathead National Forest
 - The Nature Center on Big Mountain had a very busy summer season. It was open for 80 days and had 14,300 visitors. The busy day saw more than 300 people and there were more than 35 days with more than 200 visitors. It will reopen for the winter season on weekends and for school programs.
 - 2018 is the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and there will be events planned.
 - PLT Montana is hosting a Facilitators' Refresher, 1 day workshop Nov. 4. at Lubrecht Experimental Forest. Contact Cindy Peterson for more info and to register, cindy.peterson@cfc.umt.edu.
 - The National Association for Interpretation is hosting their national conference in Spokane Nov 14-18. Pre-registration closes October 17. <http://bit.ly/2flgeFJ>
 - Plans are to kick off a Flathead Watershed Forest for Every Classroom in 2019, using 2018 as a planning year. The Glacier National Park Conservancy has contributed funds to assist with program planning. The planning group is working with the Forest Service Northern Region to secure additional needed funds for implementation. There is potential to work with the Montana Conservation Corps as the non-profit partner.
- Carolan Coughlin, Montana Conservation Corp (MCC)
 - MCC ran 8 youth crews of high schoolers this summer with great success. The adult crews are still running through the end of October. Carolan is now full time and is looking to expand MCC's middle school programming and looking for collaboration opportunities

- National Public Lands Day is Sept 30th and MCC will probably do a basic trail workday with planting and maintenance at Lone Pine State Park followed by a BBQ.
- Next Thursday, Sept 28th, MCC is hosting a Pint Night at Backslope Brewery in Columbia Falls. They will raffle off an ax made from a piece of the Old Steel Bridge as well as the MCC classic 1996 Chevy Suburban.
- Laura Law, Glacier National Park (GNP)
 - GNP was and still is busy with educational field trips. They recently received another \$4,000 for the 4th Grade Travel Grant to help get kids bussed to public lands for field trips.
- Diane Ericson, retired educator with the **Swan** Ecosystem Center
 - Diane has been involved with the Swan Valley Regional Land Use Plan which is almost complete. She is interested in helping with the Forest for Every Classroom effort
- Denny Olson, Flathead Audubon
 - More than 550 people came to Birds of Prey Day. There was a good line up of programs including presentations on climate change, black swift surveys in Glacier, bird intelligence and family activities. A dozen people were trained to be Hawk Watch volunteers as well.
 - Audubon has been hosting 2-3 events every month and Denny has also been busy leading Road Scholar and Glacier Institute programs.
 - Audubon received an FCD Education Grant to support a research project with Flathead High School International Baccalaureate students at Owen Sowerwine. They are collecting baseline data on the cottonwood forests at Owen Sowerwine and comparing them to those at an FWP property at Old Steel Bridge on the Flathead River. They are looking for any correlation between a diversity of cottonwood age classes and bird diversity. Future years will look at other variables including the effects of deer browse, flooding regime and invasive species.
 - Work has begun on the 2019 phenology calendar. 2018 calendars are still available for purchase.
 - Flathead Audubon has recently included a fact-based conservation message in all their outreach efforts in addition to the traditional natural history education. Visit Audubon's website for more information on programs and events. <https://www.flatheadaudubon.org/>

Whitefish Sustainability Center

- CORE is hoping to host Ryder Delaloye, Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Whitefish Schools, at our next meeting to discuss the new Center for Sustainability and Entrepreneurship Fund (CSE). This center, which they broke ground for this fall, will be an innovative educational center at Whitefish Schools, providing hands on learning experiences for K-12 students. The fundamental objective of the program is to prepare Whitefish students for college, career, and citizenship by immersing them in interdependent, real-world programs.