

# Seeley Lake Trails Advisory Council

## Proposed Charter

*Revised October 20, 2016*

### **Purpose of this Charter**

To provide a clear road map for how this group will work together and what we expect to achieve

### **Purpose of this Group**

This group will develop and implement a comprehensive trails plan for the Clearwater Valley that has the support of all community user groups and large land managers and input from regional partners, out-of-town visitors and the interested public. We will coordinate with local and regional trail planning efforts and integrate their work as appropriate, including but not limited to: Seeley Lake ROCKS, Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project, Connecting the Community and other groups involved in design, implementation and maintenance of recreational trails.

### **Goals**

Our goal is a comprehensive trails plan across ownerships for the Clearwater Valley that will benefit all user groups and include 1) improvements and maintenance for existing trail infrastructure, 2) some development of new trails, and 3) marketing to promote outdoor recreation and tourism. Once the plan is developed, community partners will work with land managers to go through the appropriate review and approval process following their policies and procedures. Although it should not be assumed that proposed trail improvements will be approved by land managers, it is our goal to develop a plan that can be feasibly implemented.

New trail development will prioritize:

- in-town access to the trail system,
- enhanced recreational opportunities, including motorized trail access for seniors and alternatively abled and development of loop trails where possible, and
- connections to nearby towns and regional trail networks.

When implemented, the trail system is expected to:

- improve community access to healthy, safe, all-season outdoor recreation for all user groups,
- enhance visitors' experiences and attract more visitors to benefit local businesses,
- support sustainable economic development, and
- protect the area's unique ecosystems and sensitive wildlife species.

## **Time Commitment**

This planning effort is an ongoing, long-term, iterative process, which will likely take years. CRC has obtained grant funding to support a 12-18 month planning effort starting in August 2016. CRC will continue to seek funds to support development of a community-supported comprehensive plan in this timeframe. Once there is a strategic, comprehensive plan that establishes priorities, it can be implemented as funding and circumstances allow.

## **Scope of Work**

The group will work on the following activities to develop a comprehensive trail plan.

### **Administration and Coordination led by CRC:**

- Create a charter and update annually
- Write grant applications
- Manage the timeline and budget
- Track progress, coordinate committees and contract for project needs
- Coordinate internal communications such as announcements and meeting minutes
- Build collaborative skills and strengthen relationships

### **Communications led by CRC and the Public Engagement & Communications Committee:**

- Develop a communications plan that engages all entities working on trails and integrates communications about the trails (marketing) with the public planning process
- Keep the public engaged and informed about the planning process
- Maintain a webpage and social media that coordinates volunteer work and public engagement in the planning process

### **Marketing led by the Economic Development & Marketing Committee:**

- Identify and describe the target audiences for the trail system in a marketing plan
- Develop a name and branding for the trail system, including a trails website, social media, signage and print advertising materials
- Identify funding for implementation of the marketing plan

### **Public Engagement led by CRC and the Public Engagement & Communications Committee:**

- Organize evening meetings and an online map and comment card for public input
- Engage the public in prioritizing options for the final trail plan

### **Planning led by CRC and the Technical Committee:**

- Develop a trails and road inventory across jurisdictions (USFS, MFW&P, MDNRC, TNC)
- Understand land manager constraints and opportunities
- Develop a prioritized “wish list” considering all public input, land manager constraints and evaluation criteria with input from other committees
- Build consensus within the Advisory Council, land managers and community to select a preferred option for the comprehensive trail plan
- Synthesize information, analysis and public input into a final report

**Analysis led by EMRI, Technical and Economic Development & Marketing Committees:**

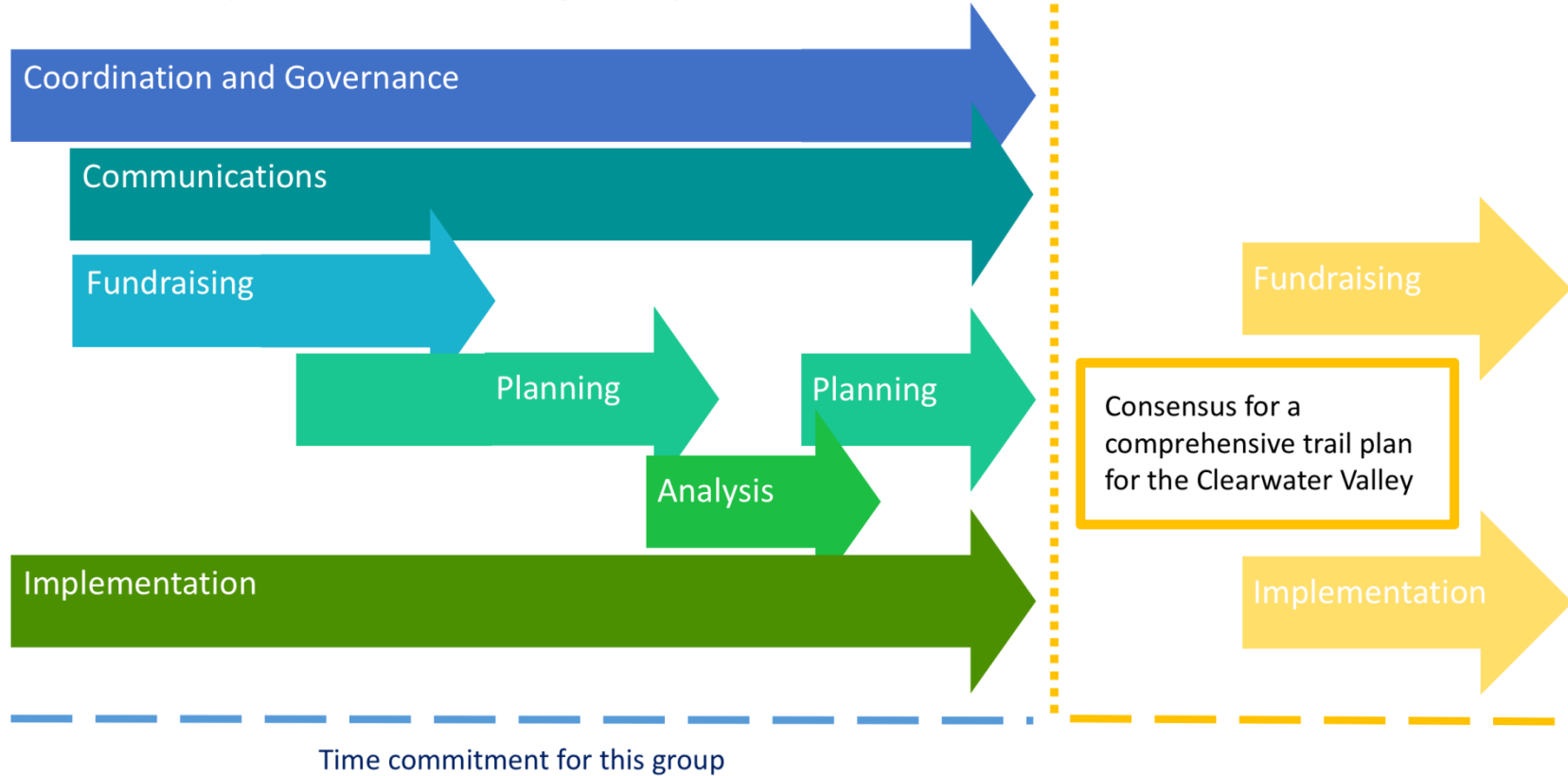
- Ecological landscape analysis – consider impacts to sensitive habitats and threatened and endangered species as funding is available
- Economic analysis – consider opportunities for economic growth to benefit Seeley Lake

**Implementation\* led by the Ground Crew:**

- Coordinate with land managers for review and approval
- Clear and maintain existing trails
- Mark, sign and map existing trails
- Promote the trail system with branding and marketing
- Secure easements and rights-of-way
- Develop new trails
- Support business development

\* Note: Implementation requires coordination with the appropriate land manager. Although proposed trail infrastructure, signage or changes in authorized uses may have support from the community, it should not be assumed that they can be implemented until they have gone through the appropriate review and approval process according to the appropriate land manager's internal policies and procedures.

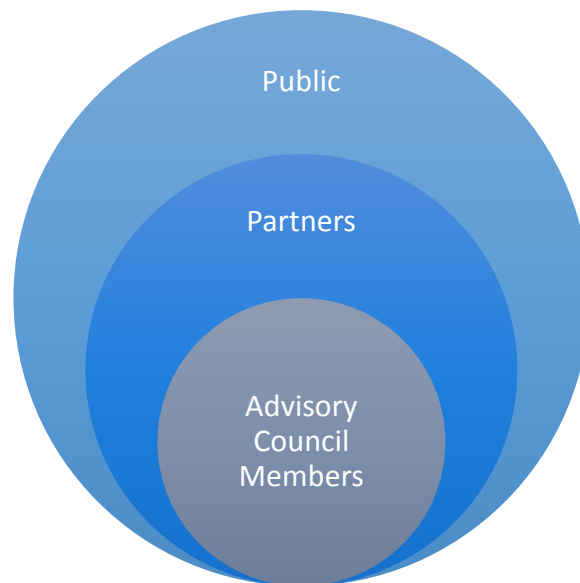
## Seeley Lake Trails Planning – Scope of Work



Note: This diagram may not be helpful based on the discussion of timing. All activities might be going on concurrently, and there is not necessarily a clear distinction between before and after the comprehensive plan is developed.

## Group Structure

The Seeley Lake Trails Advisory Council is made up of **community representatives, large land managers** and **regional partners and non-profits** (see attached list of members). Community representatives have decision-making power, while regional partners and non-profits play a supporting role, providing input and technical expertise. Large land managers are key partners and have been invited to participate in decision making or abstain as they see fit. The group process is coordinated by Clearwater Resources Council (CRC). The group meets approximately monthly, and meetings are open to the public. Committees will take on most of the work and report back to the Advisory Council.



**Community representatives** are Advisory Council members with decision-making power. The Advisory Council is responsible for recruiting and selecting members to fairly represent a cross-section of the Seeley Lake community, including active trail user groups, business owners and the Seeley Lake Community Foundation. Members are expected to commit time to attend meetings and stay informed. They are responsible for keeping the community engaged and bring more people into this process. They are the core working group of this effort and will actively participate in the committees. There is no upper limit to the size of the Advisory Council. CRC will maintain the list of current members.

**Large land managers** have one representative with decision-making power on the Advisory Council although they are welcome to abstain. Agency representatives have elected not to exercise voting authority at this time. The large land managers include the US Forest Service (USFS), Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP), Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Missoula County and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Staff from these organizations are responsible for explaining the opportunities and constraints specific to their lands to the rest of the Advisory Council. They are also responsible for keeping their organization's leadership and staff updated on the group's progress. Ideally, they will be

engaged at every step of the process. Their involvement in the technical planning work is most important. Within the context of their organization's policies and applicable laws, they will ultimately decide which aspects of the plan to implement on the lands they manage.

**Regional partners and non-profits** are valuable partners who provide input and technical expertise, but they do not have decision-making power. They include Five Valleys Land Trust, Headwaters Economics, Trust for Public Land, National Off-highway Vehicle Conservation Council and Bonneville Environmental Foundation. These groups provide regional perspectives, expertise and capacity to support the group's success. They may also take on substantial work in the committees, for example economic analysis and trail development.

### **Committees**

Committees will be formed as needed to advance the work. They will designate a person to take notes and report back to the Advisory Council. Each committee is responsible to bring any decisions needed back to the Advisory Council. As a rule of thumb, if the committee thinks Advisory Council members will feel strongly about something, then it should be brought to them for a decision. Currently proposed committees include:

- **Ground Crew** – to implement trail improvements in the near-term,
- **Public Engagement & Communications** – to communicate with the public about this planning process and opportunities for public input,
- **Economic Development & Trails Marketing** – to compile research to understand the type of economic development that would benefit Seeley Lake and to market the trail system and recreational opportunities, and
- **Technical** – to compile spatial data, information and public input to deliver a final plan.

### **Group Coordination**

Clearwater Resources Council (CRC) coordinates the Advisory Council and overall collaborative process, including fundraising, internal communications, and public engagement. CRC works in partnership with Ecosystem Management Research Institute (EMRI), which coordinates the detailed technical work of the group and assists with mapping, GIS and ecological analysis. CRC and EMRI have no decision-making power on the Advisory Council. Their role is to support a fair and inclusive group process that considers all reasonable options for a comprehensive plan. CRC will participate in all committees to provide support and coordination. They may hire additional staff or contractors, for example to facilitate public meetings and manage social media. The following people currently play a coordination role:

- **Cathy Kahnle**, CRC's Executive Director, facilitates Advisory Council meetings, participates in fundraising and serves as the point person for coordination and feedback on how the process is working.
- **Bill Wall**, CRC's board president, participates in fundraising to support the process.
- **Jenny Rohrer**, CRC's Outreach Manager, assists with communications and outreach.
- **Jon Haufler**, EMRI's Executive Director, will coordinate the technical work, assist with GIS mapping and conduct ecological analysis as funding permits.
- **Scott Yeats**, EMRI's GIS Analyst, will provide GIS support and mapping.

## **Communications**

CRC will manage internal communications including maintaining the Advisory Council email list and creating meeting agendas based on suggestions and what is needed to advance the work. CRC will schedule meetings and send announcements at least two weeks before. CRC is responsible for taking meeting notes and distributing them within a week after the meeting. Decisions, next steps and action items will be clearly identified.

For external communications related to the public planning process, CRC will work with the Public Engagement & Communications Committee to create a web presence, manage social media, and hold public meetings so that the public can track progress and provide their input. For external communications related to promoting the trail system, the Economic Development & Marketing Committee will develop a marketing plan, including branding, a web presence and signage. These two committees will work together and with other interested community members to develop a Communications Plan that integrates all external communications related to trails.

## **Feedback**

Everyone is encouraged to share feedback – what is working and what needs improvement. Feedback works best when it's practiced early and often:

- Start each meeting with an opportunity for feedback and, as needed, create time on the next meeting's agenda for more discussion.
- Share sensitive feedback with Cathy, and she can bring it up anonymously at the next meeting.

Whenever you hear feedback, the best response is to thank the person, summarize what you heard, ask if you understood correctly and suggest a time to talk after you've had a chance to think about it.

## **Fiscal Management**

CRC will lead fundraising and manage the budget for the planning process, including the budget for staff and contractors to support the group's work. CRC will ask for input on the budget and provide a quarterly written treasurer's report on fundraising and fiscal management.

## **Decision-making**

When an important issue comes up, the facilitator or any member can ask the group to make a formal decision. The proposal will be described and Advisory Council members will show their support with Fist to Five system. When a vote is called for, each voting member will rate the proposal from zero (fist) up to and including five (5) fingers. Zero show no support for the proposal. One (1) finger shows the need for further discussion. Two (2) fingers show minimal support for the proposal but requests additional discussion. Three (3) fingers show increasing support for the proposal but perhaps some limited concern. Four (4) fingers show significant support for the proposal. Five (5) fingers show complete enthusiasm for the proposal with no reservations. A proposal passes and a decision is made when all voting members show three or more fingers. Any members with two or fewer fingers must be able to explain why they do not

support it, and offer a revision that will allow them to support the proposal or an alternative proposal for the Advisory Council to further discuss.

Non-voting members, as well as visiting community members are encouraged to engage in discussion and ask questions. A minimum of six (6) voting members is required to have a quorum. Decisions are by consensus.

Committees will be thoughtful about what issues matter to other members. They will contact Cathy to bring important issues to the Advisory Council for a formal decision.

### **A Spirit of Mutual Understanding**

People in this group come from all different backgrounds and perspectives. For the group to be successful, it is important for everyone to slow down and explain the “why” behind their words. If something isn’t clear and someone asks you a “why” question, you might feel put on the spot, but it is important that everyone try to explain clearly without getting defensive. It can be very useful to ask several layers of “why” to get a more in-depth understanding.



## Ground Rules for Advisory Council Meetings

These were introduced at the 11/17/15 training and can be adjusted as needed.

- **Be respectful**
- **Be fully engaged**  
*(If you have to step out, let someone know, but be fully present when you're with the group.)*
- **Step Up/Step Back so we hear from everyone**  
*(If you tend to be quiet in meetings, make an effort to step up and share your thoughts. If you tend to be a talker, make an effort to step back so others have space to share.)*
- **Listen to understand before reacting**
- **It's okay to disagree**  
*(Put some effort into listening even if you disagree. Practice suspending your judgment so that you can more fully understand. You may be surprised at what you learn. The person speaking may be surprised...and grateful that you listened.)*
- **One person speaks at a time**
- **Speak for yourself, not others**  
*(There are some exceptions if people can't make a meeting and they ask you to share their thoughts, but in general you are the best person to speak for yourself.)*
- **Use 'ouch' and 'oops' when toes get stepped on**  
*(This one takes some practice and trust within the group to figure out how to recognize when toes get stepped on and to demonstrate a forgiving attitude. The goal is for relationships to be strengthened through this process. When people receive thoughtful feedback, they can learn from their oversights and mistakes.)*

## Seeley Lake Trails Advisory Council – Members and Partners

Name	Primary Affiliation	Committee
<b>Community Members – Representatives</b>		
Mark Williams	Seeley Lake Community Foundation	Economic Development
Anne Beach	Seeley Lake Community Foundation	
Ken Barber	Seeley Lake Community Foundation; Seeley Lake Community Council	Economic Development
Chris Stout	Seeley Lake Elementary School; Seeley Lake Community Council	
Lee Boman	Seeley Lake ROCKS; Seeley Lake Nordic Club	Public Engagement Economic Development
Dave Sharbono	Seeley Lake ATV Club; Seeley Lake Driftriders	Public Engagement
Ken Kronsperger	Seeley Lake ATV Club; Elderly and Handicapped	Ground Crew Public Engagement
Curtis Friede	Downtown Businesses; Seeley Lake Driftriders	Economic Development
Jan Guelff	Wilderness Volunteer Seeley Lake Community Council	Ground Crew
Auguste Lockwood	Mountain bikers	Ground Crew
Rob Loveman	Mushers; Backcountry skiers	Public Engagement Technical
<b>Community Members – Other Volunteers</b>		
Carol Fulton		Ground Crew
Kathleen Dent		Public Engagement
Larry Dent		Technical
<b>Large Land Managers – Representatives</b>		
Rachel Feigley	US Forest Service	Public Engagement
Kristin Baker-Dickinson	Montana Department of Natural Resource Conservation (DNRC)	
Scott Eggeman	Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks	
Lisa Moisey	Missoula County Planning Office	
Steve Kloetzel	The Nature Conservancy	

## Seeley Lake Trails Advisory Council – Members and Partners

Name	Primary Affiliation	Committee
<b>Large Land Managers – Other Staff</b>		
Jeremy Harris, Trail Specialist	US Forest Service	Technical Planning
Katie Knotek	US Forest Service	Ground Crew (ad hoc) Technical Planning (ad hoc)
Garrick Swanson	Missoula County Planning Office	Technical Planning
Chris Bryant	The Nature Conservancy	
Andy Baur	The Western Conservation Project	Ground Crew
<b>Regional Partners &amp; Non-profits</b>		
Megan Lawson	Headwaters Economics	Economic Development
Vickie Edwards	Five Valleys Land Trust	Ground Crew (rights of way and easements)
Ben Alexander	LOR Foundation	Economic Development
Robert Warren	Bonneville Environmental Foundation	
Russ Ehnes	National Off Highway Vehicle Conservation Council	
<b>Coordination</b>		
Bill Wall	Clearwater Resource Council	Economic Development
Cathy Kahnle	Clearwater Resource Council	Ground Crew
Jenny Rohrer	Clearwater Resource Council	Public Engagement Economic Development
Jon Haufler	Ecosystem Management Research Institute	Technical
Scott Yeats	Ecosystem Management Research Institute	Technical
Jennifer Arnold	Reciprocity Consulting	Public Engagement