

**Meeting Title:** Big Wood River Working Group April Meeting

**Date:** April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

**Time:** 6:00 PM – 8:40 PM

**Location / Platform:** In-person, IDFG Magic Valley Regional Office, 324 S 417 E, Jerome ID 83338

**Facilitator:** Matthew Corsi, IDFG

**Recorder:** Tucker Brauer, IDFG

**Attendees:** Mike Peterson (IDFG), Matt Corsi (IDFG), Tucker Brauer (IDFG), Braden Lensing (IDFG), Chad Chorney, James Harper, Dirk Zondag, Jr., Ryan Santo, Tim East, Ed Northen, Amanda Bauman, Greg Cameron, Kent Sanders, Bob Jost

**Absentees:** Mike McKenna

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- The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by Matt Corsi
  - M. Corsi provided a brief welcome message to the group and all IDFG representatives gave short introductions (name, title, background)
  - M. Peterson gave an overview of the purpose of the working group and a justification for the use of this model to help set fishing regulations in the Big Wood River.
  - M. Corsi provided a brief overview of the rules of engagement for the group and instructed each group member to prepare a 5-minute introduction to be shared during the provided dinner. Introductions included the following for each member: Your name, where you went to high school, where you live now, why fishing/fishing the Big Wood River is important to you, and why being a part of this working group is important to you.
  - Group broke for dinner, after a short break to eat, each member provided their personal introductions, starting with C. Chorney and proceeding counterclockwise.
  - Following introductions, M. Corsi opened the floor to members to discuss shared sentiments from each member's introduction. Shared sentiments were as follows:
    - J. Harper expressed his desire for the group to not forget the fish themselves when considering new regulations.
    - D. Zondag commented that the variability in conditions in the Big Wood is an important consideration for these meetings and when discussing change.
    - E. Northen commented on the difficulty of maintaining balance when setting rules and expressed his belief that the ecosystem and fish themselves should be considered prior to opportunity.
    - T. East reiterated E. Northens comments and stated that doing so is difficult today.
    - R. Santo was pleased to hear everyone was obviously here with positive intent for the resource and that he looks forward to working with this group.
    - C. Chorney stated the importance for the group to remember that we are here to address fishing opportunity, and first and foremost the goal of this group is addressing opportunity and the quality of the fishery. Both B. Jost and J. Harper added to this by saying this river is very diverse and has something for everyone and can be managed for that diverse opportunity.

- G. Cameron stated his experience hearing from many folks during his time as a commissioner that they avoid this river due to its complicated rule structure. K. Sanders concurred with his statement and added his first exposure to the river was through magazine articles citing landowners complicating access along the river. J. Harper and C. Chorney disagreed with the complicated and contentious access statement, stating their experience has been the opposite, and landowners have been very accepting toward anglers.
- D. Zondag reminded the group to keep their eyes forward and work to address the things this group has influence over (i.e., regulations) and try to keep blinders on towards things the group does not have influence over (i.e., access, habitat, etc.).
- M. Corsi called for a short 15-minute break
- At 7:30 PM, the meeting resumed.
- M. Peterson provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining the working groups charter document. Topics of discussion were focused on expectations of group members, and IDFG representatives. The sideboards of the group were explained, as was the process for which recommendations would be developed and their potential path toward becoming regulations.
  - Subsequent discussions over how the group would involve the public in discussions was held. After back and forth, it was agreed that any public involvement should occur after the data has been presented to the group and they had begun the deliberation process and considered recommendations. There was broad interest in gathering public sentiment towards group deliberations, but timing was considered important and that timing can be discussed at a later date agreed on by the group.
  - C. Chorney encouraged the group to watch the available presentation by T. Brauer at a previous Hemingway Trout Unlimited Chapter meeting as it covers much of the data that will eventually be provided to the group. A. Bauman stated that she would provide members of the group with a link to the presentation on the Project Big Wood webpage if they wanted it.
- The group then discussed the dates, times and locations for future Working Group meetings. The dates agreed upon were as follows, but subject to change if necessary:
  - May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026; 6PM – 9PM, Hailey (venue TBD)
  - June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026; 6PM – 9PM, Hailey (venue TBD)
  - July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2026; 6PM – 9PM, Jerome (IDFG Regional Office)
  - August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026; 6PM – 9PM, Hailey (venue TBD)
- M. Corsi thanked the group for attending and wished safe travels. Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

**Minutes submitted by: Tucker Brauer**

**Date submitted: 4/3/2026**