

Panhandle Forest Collaborative Meeting Record

Wednesday, November 12, 2015, 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
County Administration Building, 1500 Hwy 2, Sandpoint

Members: Liz Johnson-Gebhardt, Mike Petersen, Bob Boeh, Glen Bailey, Laura Wolf

Partners/Guests: Karen Roetter, Sid Smith, Greg Becker, Kevin Wade, Don McIntosh

Forest Service: Tim Knight, Ryan Foote, Kevin Knesek

Facilitator: Emily Olsen

1. Greetings and Opening Announcements

- All introduced themselves
- Liz Johnson-Gebhardt announced that the Forest Service [Collaboration Cadre](#) hired her to provide collaborative capacity trainings. Liz noted that the PFC's work caught the Cadre's eye. Congrats to Liz and the PFC!
- Tim Knight, new Priest Lake District Ranger, attended his first PFC meeting.
- Glen Bailey noted that Bonner County, Kootenai County, and the Idaho Department of Homeland Security requested federal fire recovery assistance for the Cape Horn Fire. FEMA is offering \$300,000, and Glen encouraged PFC members to contact him directly with suggestions for the best use of the funding. He said that erosion control and soil stability projects have been discussed, but he's looking for more ideas.

2. Reviewed the agenda and last meeting minutes

- Unanimous approval of the September 16th meeting minutes

3. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

4. Policy Updates

- Karen Roetter and Sid Smith talked about the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, noting that bridging the gaps to form agreement has been more difficult than expected. Karen and Sid were not expecting inaction, but are continuing to work on the Act.
- Sid also updated the group about the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The LWCF expired September 30th (and is temporarily funded through the continuing resolution that will expire December 11th). Congress is currently in disagreement about reauthorization of the LWCF.

5. Post-Fire Salvage Logging and Restoration Update

- The Forest projects committee developed a letter and delivered it to Mary Farnsworth in October.
- The Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition delivered a similar letter to the Coleville National Forest.

6. Forest Service Update – Post-Fire Recovery and Salvage

- Ryan Foote updated the PFC on IPNF post-fire activities.

- Approximately 49,000 acres burned on the IPNF, and the Forest had 27 fires that were larger than 100 acres, signaling a big fire season.
 - The rapid assessment to identify fire impacts is complete.
 - The IPNF will move forward with many of the post-fire recommendations made by the PFC Forest Projects Committee, though the salvage work will move quickly. There won't be as many opportunities for collaboration with the PFC as there will be during the Potter's Wheel project. Staff are still figuring out how the post-fire salvage work will/should affect Potter's Wheel and green tree sales program.
 - The IPNF expects to move forward with two environmental assessments (EAs) – one for the Tower Fire and one for the Grizzly Complex fire.
 - Salvage work will require all of the district's capacity; they can handle one EA at a time and hope to complete the first in six months.
- Tim Knight updated the PFC on the Tower Fire.
 - The Tower Fire burned 13,000 acres, of which 4,500-5,000 acres may be salvage (fieldwork is still being completed).
 - The existing EA for roadside salvage has many limitations, and Tim is looking into other options to help get the work done. He hopes to have a signed decision by early summer 2016.
 - The BAER team finished work on the Tower Fire area.
 - **Action item:** Tim will contact Liz if he would like help from the PFC or Forest Projects Committee. The Priest Community Forest Connection is also a good resource. Tim also noted that he'd like Bob to visit the site.

7. Projects & Forest Plan Updates

- 5 Year Action Plan
 - No updates due to the fires; however, the IPNF has every intention of re-engaging.
- Bottom Canyon
 - IPNF staff are working on pre-sale preparations.
 - The Lone Cabin sale, a stewardship contract, is close to final.
 - Road/engineering work is needed for the Bottom Canyon sale to proceed.
 - Once implementation begins, the PFC will would like to schedule a field trip.
- Jasper Mountain
 - Implementation will likely happen during the 3rd quarter of FY2016.
- Buckskin Saddle
 - This project is delayed due to fires on the IPNF and other issues.
 - Staff completed reconnaissance surveys to gather initial information.
 - **Action item:** Brad & Bob met with Eric and resource staff to discuss the proposed 45,000-acre project. IPNF staff will follow up with insect and disease maps, and a better volume estimate.

- Hughes Creek
 - The project is moving forward with help from the Kalispell Tribe.
 - The big question at this point is whether LiDAR will be part of the project (may be too complicated for Hughes Meadow).
 - Decision is slated for 2016, and work is scheduled for 2017.
 - Granite Reeder
 - No updates.
 - Potter's Wheel
 - Project timeline is postponed until the post-fire salvage work moves forward.
 - IPNF staff will wrap up field work soon; they still need to complete soils.
 - Shoshone County is still interested in the project.
 - Lightning Creek
 - Students from the University of Idaho have been working on designs for the warming hut project.
 - Recreation
 - No updates.
 - Project tracking – Emily shared an updated project tracking sheet, which will be posted on the website. **Action item:** PFC members are encouraged to send Emily project updates to make sure the project tracking sheet stays up-to-date.
8. Available Funding for GIS work or contracted technical assistance
- PFC members asked NFF to request a one-year extension on the available funds (which were originally intended to be obligated by the end of 2015). The funds were originally intended to aid the PFC's work on the Buckskin Saddle or Potter's Wheel project; however, since the projects are on a longer timeline due to the summer fire season and other factors, it doesn't make sense for the group to hire a contractor yet. **Action item:** Emily will work with the grant manager at NFF to ask for the extension.
9. Miscellaneous Business
- Emily asked if PFC members would be interested in an end-of-year survey to gauge the PFC's collaborative strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to improve. The group was interested in the survey. **Action item:** Emily will send the survey around in December, and prepare the results for discussion in January.
 - Bob Boeh noted that Good Neighbor Authority is a new tool that may benefit the IPNF as they're looking to increase capacity. Bob suggested inviting David Groeschl to an upcoming PFC meeting to discuss the Authority.
10. Meeting adjourned.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- **Full PFC: Wednesday, January 13th from 12:00-3:30 PM**
****Note that meetings will switch to the second Wednesday of every other month, starting in January.**

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Action item:** Tim will contact Liz if he would like help from the PFC or Forest Projects Committee. The Priest Community Forest Connection is also a good resource. Tim also noted that he'd like Bob to visit the site.
- **Action item:** Brad & Bob met with Eric and resource staff to discuss the proposed 45,000-acre project. IPNF staff will follow up with insect and disease maps, and a better volume estimate.
- **Action item:** PFC members are encouraged to send Emily project updates to make sure the project tracking sheet stays up-to-date.
- **Action item:** Emily will work with the grant manager at NFF to ask for a one-year extension for the GIS/contracted technical assistance funds.
- **Action item:** Emily will send an end-of-year collaboration survey around in December, and prepare the results for discussion in January.