

Draft Panhandle Forest Collaborative Meeting Record

Wednesday, January 11, 2017

Bonner County Administration Building, Sandpoint

Members present: Bob Boeh, Jeff Connolly, John Finney, Phil Hough, Liz Johnson-Gebhardt, Steve Klatt, Mike Petersen, Brad Smith, Laura Wolf (*Glen Bailey joined briefly to let the group know about his transition*)

Forest Service/Partners/Guests present: Alan Harper, Karen Roetter, Sid Smith, Cait Reeves, Emily Cleveland, Pete Robichaud, Anna Broers, Kurt Dyroff, Greg Becker

Facilitator: Emily Olsen

Meeting Objectives

- Organize committees for 2017 priority projects and outline next steps for each committee.
- Develop feedback on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest's Management Area 5 Proposal.

Approval of Minutes

- The November 9th meeting record was approved.

Announcements

- Bonner County Commissioner Glen Bailey is transitioning off the Panhandle Forest Collaborative. As a recently elected Commissioner, Jeff Connolly will represent Bonner County on the PFC moving forward. Members expressed appreciation for Glen's service on the PFC during the meeting, and gratitude for Jeff's continued service in his new role.
- Brad Smith introduced Emily Cleveland as the new Idaho Conservation League Community Engagement Associate. Emily will work with Brad on outreach and community engagement in North Idaho.

Policy Updates from Legislative Staff

- Sally Jewell recently expressed optimism that Congress will pass the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act in 2017. Congressional staff will keep the PFC posted about other updates related to the Act.
- Senator Risch is now Chairman of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, providing a great opportunity to represent Idaho's small businesses.
- Senator Risch recently introduced the [Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Act](#). Risch introduced the bill with the intention to allow the public to review it and provide feedback. Senator Risch's office and Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness will host a public meeting in Clark Fork on January 11th to discuss the bill. PFC members briefly discussed whether to submit comments, and decided to table the issue until the group can learn more about the Act and have a full discussion. Members asked Phil Hough to make a presentation during the next meeting.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Phil Hough will make a presentation about the Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Act during the March PFC meeting to allow the group to learn more about the Act.

Public Comment - None

Tower Fire Salvage and Reforestation Project Monitoring Update

- Anna Broers, a graduate student working with Pete Robichaud (Rocky Mountain Research Station) through support from the Panhandle Forest Collaborative’s technical assistance grant funds, provided an update on her Tower Fire Salvage & Reforestation Project fieldwork and image analysis. Anna also thanked Alan Harper for allowing the RMRS team to use Idaho Forest Group’s drone for additional imagery of the project area. Anna, Pete Robichaud, and Sarah Lewis from RMRS are currently working on a paper summarizing the project and findings.
- Anna shared early findings explaining when and where they found detrimental soil disturbance. PFC members asked how the team is defining “detrimental.” Pete noted the term comes from Deborah Page-Dumroese’s forest soil disturbance monitoring protocols.
- *Attachment: Anna’s presentation, “Using Remote Sensing Imagery to Determine the Effects of Disturbance from Salvage Logging in the Tower Fire Area.”*
- **ACTION ITEM:** Anna will share a draft of her report with the Panhandle Forest Collaborative for review prior to finalizing.

Post-Fire Salvage Logging Takeaways

- Pete Robichaud, Research Engineer, Rocky Mountain Research Station, shared takeaways he’s gathered from post-fire salvage logging research in several project areas around the country:
 - No real difference between tracks and rubber tires; all ground-based logging generally has the same impact on forest soils.
 - Skidders break up water repellency, which is an issue, but compaction is the bigger issue because it leads to more runoff.
 - The biggest ‘bang for the buck’ would come from spending time and energy reducing compaction and sedimentation on skid trails.
 - Post-fire, the most erosion occurs where there are rills of water, including where rills run into water bars and increase erosion. One solution is to add piles of mulch or forest debris to the end of a water bar.
 - Seeding in conjunction with salvage logging could be beneficial. Pete thinks seeding after a fire and salvage logging on the new seeding may lessen erosion and compaction issues.

2017 Priority Projects

- The PFC decided via consensus to adopt two priority projects, Honey Badger and Hanna Flats, and form committees for each project.
- **Honey Badger**, previously called Bunco Roush, is on the Coeur d’Alene River Ranger District and in the pre-planning stages. Mike Petersen will be the committee lead and point of contact with the Forest Service. Dan Scaife, District Ranger, Coeur d’Alene River District, will be the point of contact for the Forest Service. In addition to Mike, Alan Harper, Cait Reeves, and Phil Hough volunteered to join the committee. Liz will be an alternate. PFC members also discussed the need to reach out to new project-specific committee members to round out the committee.
- **Hanna Flats**, one of the first projects being planned and implemented under the Good Neighbor Authority in Idaho, is on the Priest Lake District. Brad Smith will be the committee lead and point of contact with the Forest Service. Ed Wingert will be the likely point of contact from Idaho Department of Lands, and Tim Knight, District Ranger, Priest Lake Ranger District, will likely be the point of contact for the Forest Service (though PFC members noted that they’ll need to clarify Dave Cobb’s role). In addition to Brad, Liz, Steve Klatt, Jeff Connolly, Bob Boeh, and Laura Wolf volunteered to join the committee.
- PFC members also noted that Potter’s Wheel is still on the table and a priority, however, the Shoshone-Benewah Forest Health Collaborative will be the lead on the project. Mike, Laura, and

others are involved in the Forest Health Collaborative. Buckskin Saddle is also still on the docket and of interest to the PFC.

- **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Mike will reach out to Dan Scaife to update him on the PFC's decision to adopt the project as a priority and his role as the point of contact for the committee.
- Brad will reach out to Tim Knight and Ed Wingert to update them on the PFC's decision to adopt the project as a priority and his role as the point of contact for the committee.

Farm Bill Priority Landscape Treatment Areas & MA 5 Discussion

- PFC members discussed Mary Farnsworth's request to collaborative groups to discuss and potentially develop a proposal in response to her idea to nominate Management Area 5 (backcountry) lands in the Farm Bill Priority Landscape Treatment Areas (PLTAs).
- Through meeting discussion, the group determined that members are unable to endorse the MA 5 idea with consensus as a "blanket" proposal; however, members are willing to discuss broadening the PLTAs to include five-year action plan project areas and other lands that are part of the roaded base.
- In order to capture the nuance of the discussion and the zone of agreement, Brad Smith volunteered to draft a letter for the members to review over email.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Brad Smith will draft a letter to Mary Farnsworth that captures the PFC's zone of agreement around the proposal to nominate MA 5 areas as Priority Landscape Treatment Areas under the Farm Bill. Brad will share the letter with the PFC to review and vote on via email.

National Wild Turkey Federation Presentation

- Kurt Dyroff, Director of Conservation Operations in the Western Region for the National Wild Turkey Federation, introduced the PFC to the Federation's history, current priorities, and ongoing programs, accomplishments. Kurt clarified the Federation's interest in partnering broadly across different landscapes, as wild turkeys are a "generalist species," so management that improves turkey habitat generally improves habitat for a variety of other species.
- Kurt also discussed the type of expertise and resources the Federation brings to collaborative groups in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, including expertise on active management, public access to federal lands, science-based management, and a knowledgeable sportsmen's voice.
- *Attachment: Kurt's presentation, "National Wild Turkey Federation – Dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of our hunting tradition"*

Project Timeline & Status Updates

- Hughes Creek – Priest Community Forest Connection and partners continue to move the project forward. The partners applied for a Matching Award Program grant from the NFF for implementation.
- Lightning Creek –
 - Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness are developing a bio control project to mitigate St. John's Wort, with opportunities to engage youth. The Friends applied for a Matching Award Program grant from the NFF for the project.
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) submitted a final proposal for a pilot project on private land in Lightning Creek. The NRCS hopes to build on the previous success with large woody debris (LWD) and expand the work to private lands.
- Good Neighbor Authority – Governor's budget includes \$250,000 for Good Neighbor Authority.

End-of-Year Survey Results

- Emily shared the end-of-year survey members completed, *Factors Influencing Successful Collaboration*. The results reflect a high level of commitment and trust among members.
- The PFC discussed the need to continue thinking about diversifying who sits at the table over time. There will be great opportunities to engage new members and communities via the Honey Badger and Hanna Flats project committees.
- *Attachment: 2016 end-of-year survey results*

Miscellaneous Business

- Emily Olsen is transitioning into a new position as Colorado Program Manager for the NFF. The NFF will refill Emily's role, and NFF will continue to facilitate the PFC.
- PFC members discussed strategies to on-board people who are interested in joining the group and becoming a voting member.
- Members suggested creating a one-pager with basic information about the group, including the goals, mission, Bottom Canyon accomplishments, and contact information, for members to have on hand to share if needed.
- Members also encouraged mentorships between new members and "veterans" of the group. Jeff volunteered to be a mentor to Cait, as both work in the Bonner County Administration Building.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Emily will draft a PFC one-page document for the group to use when speaking with potential new members and community groups.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

New time: 12:30-4:00 p.m.

All meetings will be at the Bonner County Administration Building

- Wednesday, March 29th
- Wednesday, May 17
- Wednesday, July 19
- Wednesday, September 20
- Wednesday, November 15

RECAP: Meeting Action Items

- Phil will make a presentation about the Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Act during the March PFC meeting to allow the group to learn more about the Act.
- Anna will share a draft of her report with the Panhandle Forest Collaborative for review prior to finalizing.
- Mike will reach out to Dan Scaife to update him on the PFC's decision to adopt Honey Badger as a priority project and his role as the point of contact for the committee.
- Brad will reach out to Tim Knight and Ed Wingert to update them on the PFC's decision to adopt Hanna Flats as a priority project and his role as the point of contact for the committee.
- Brad will draft a letter to Mary Farnsworth that captures the PFC's zone of agreement around the proposal to nominate MA 5 areas as Priority Landscape Treatment Areas under the Farm Bill. Brad will share the letter with the PFC to review and vote on via email.
- Emily will draft a PFC one-page document for the group to use when speaking with potential new members and community groups.