

Panhandle Forest Collaborative Meeting Record

Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Jalapeños Mexican Restaurant, Sandpoint

Members present: Bob Boeh, Jeff Connolly, John Finney, Alan Harper, Phil Hough, Liz Johnson-Gebhardt, Mike Petersen, Brad Smith, and Laura Wolf

Forest Service/Partners/Guests present: Valan Anthos, Ben Irely, Sarah Jerome, Jim Mateer, Judy Morbeck, Chandra Neils, Meghan Oswald, Karen Roetter, Dan Scaife, Sid Smith, and Erick Walker

Facilitator: Karen DiBari

Meeting Objectives

- Outline next steps for projects
- Schedule field trips
- Review and discuss Tower Fire Salvage monitoring
- Review and update protocols for project engagement/communication between the Panhandle Forest Collaborative (Collaborative) and the Idaho Panhandle National Forests (IPNF)

Approval of Minutes

- The March meeting record was approved with one minor amendment

Public Comment- *None*

Policy Updates from Legislative Staff

- 9th circuit ruled against Wild Rockies Pilgrim lawsuit
- There has been progress with Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) policy related to road construction

Updates from the Forest Service

- There were two sales in Jasper, one GNA and one stewardship.
- Decision regarding prescribed burns of regions will come in June, emphasizing white bark pine. The burns will likely take 3-5 years depending on burn windows.
- Phil Hough will be leading a direct seed sowing project in Scotch Peak Wilderness in June.
- National Forest Foundation (NFF) will lead some cone caging this summer with plans for planting next summer if there is a good cone crop.
- Funding was obtained for roadway reconstruction in Lightning Creek due to damage from 2015 flooding. Expect a decision within the next month.

Protocols on Collaboration

- Ben led the group through the Collaboration Continuum from the document, "[A Roadmap for Collaboration Before, During and After the NEPA Process](#)".
- IPNF could inform collaborative during scoping and inquiry in order to formulate better projects and focus efforts where they are needed.
- The Collaborative does not have capacity to be deeply involved with every project.
- The IPNF's Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) is continually updated and can be a useful tool for members to bring the Collaborative's attention to certain projects.

- There was general agreement of the importance of maintaining communication between INPF and the Collaborative.

Fire Salvage Monitoring with Remote Sensing

Pete Robichaud with the Rocky Mountain Research Station gave a presentation on the possibilities of utilizing remote sensing to measure soil disturbance after salvage logging [Pete's slides and draft paper are available for review].

- Salvage logging after a forest fire is a common practice to try and retain some economic value of the wood while removing excess fuel and debris
- The research on salvage logging's effect on soil erosion is mixed; further research is needed
- Typically soil disturbance is measured on the ground; the team wanted to compare those on the ground measurements with remote sensing to test its accuracy
- The wood being the same color as the bare soil complicated the remote sensing results, and made it so the difference logging methods did not show up as significant
- The sensing data had 66% accuracy for undisturbed soil, and about 59% accuracy for disturbed soil, though it could not sort the disturbed areas into class 0-3 well
- Logging increased bare soil, but not by a significant amount (from around 7% to 14%)
- Results might be improved by using high-resolution drone data rather than satellite imaging, and could potentially cost less over time
- This data was taken directly after salvaging logging, and might not be representative of the effects of salvaging logging 2-3 years down the line

Project Updates

Winter Travel Plan Kaniksu (Erick Walker, John Finney, and Brad Smith)

- Goal is to identify a decision space for snow travel
- Hoping for summer/fall town meetings with proposed action
- Anticipating high levels of public interest and involvement
- Trying to do the entire zone for efficiency
- The Collaborative may be able to expedite the front end of the process to help shorten the timeline
- The Collaborative will help with a public involvement plan: Brad Smith, John Finney, Jeff Connolly, and Phil Hough were interested
- Tribal consultation will take place prior to public scoping
- Funds for the project for this year have been obtained, but they must be reapplied for each year
- ACTION ITEM: Brad Smith, Phil Hough, John Finney, and Jeff Connolly meet with Erick Walker re: winter travel plan

Buckskin Saddle (Erick Walker and Bob Boeh PFC)

- LiDAR work in progress, getting roads identified
- Hopefully get foresters out soon to start evaluating stand health
- Still in the early stages of gathering data in order to identify potential activities
- ACTION ITEM: Erick Walker to plan an end of summer field trip to Buckskin (September 20th meeting?)
- ACTION ITEM: Bob Boeh and Erick Walker talk about drone support for Buckskin project

Bottom Canyon

- Lone Cabin stewardship small sale

- Anticipate a 2019 sale, trying to have a geographic distribution of sales

Hanna Flats GNA Project (Brad Smith)

- A subset of the Collaborative met with Dave Cobb and Ed Wingert
- Preliminary stands and prescriptions have been laid out
- The units are not located in grizzly bear management unit, but it does include some bears outside of recovery zone area that will put some provisions on work
- Some priorities include old growth recruitment and stream work improvement
- Hanna Flats letter drafted to reflect concerns about objectives alongside those of forest health such as watershed restoration and recreational opportunities
- Scoping in mid to late June
- There will be a field trip to Hanna Flats on June 3rd
- DECISION: Hanna Flats letter approved

Hughes Creek (Liz Johnson-Gebhardt and Brad Smith)

- Responses to Request for Proposals due on May 30th
- Three contracts established so far, but still in need of more funds
- If we end up short on funding, the project can be done in two stages but this is not ideal
- Work in the area starts on August 15th with trail construction
- The project has been well received so far

Potter's Wheel (Dan Scaife, Mike Petersen, and Laura Wolf)

- This project has some internal issues related to elk security
- Scoping will begin in late summer
- LiDAR is being utilized for this project
- Transportation analysis came out with a new engineer on the team

Honey Badger (Dan Scaife and Mike Petersen)

- Bring in other groups into communications for this project, including trails groups and county commissioners
- The IPNF will create a communications plan for this project, using the "Kaniksu Winter Travel Planning" document as a template. Winter Travel one to scope things out for a possible 2020-2021 implementation date
- Potential to get D.C. funds for treatment under 3000 acres with NEPA
- ACTION: Plan a field trip to Honey Badger to replace July meeting, work out date (Mike Petersen, Dan Scaife, and Ben Irely)
- ACTION: The Ranger District will draft a communications plan for Honey Badger
- ACTION: The Ranger District will outreach to county commissioners regarding Honey Badger

REMINDER OF PFC MEETING DATES

- Between July 20th-30th, one hour of business then Honey Badger field trip
- Wednesday, September 20th
- Wednesday, November 15th

RECAP: Meeting Action Items

- Bob Boeh and Erick Walker talk about drone support for Buckskin project

- Copy Ed and Brad Smith on Hanna Flats letter
- Field trip to Honey Badger to replace July meeting, Ben Irely will send out doodle poll to determine the date (from July 20th onward, excluding 24th, 25th, and 26th), with the day starting around 8am
- District public engagement planning for Honey Badger, use the “Kaniksu Winter Travel Planning: Public Participation and Collaboration Strategy” document as a template
- Outreach on Honey Badger to county commissioners by Mike Petersen and Dan Scaife, project around four years from implementation
- Erick Walker and Brad Smith to plan an end of summer field trip to Buckskin for the September 20th meeting
- Brad Smith, Phil Hough, and Jeff Finney meeting with Erick Walker for winter travel plan and letter of support
- Collaborative members and technical advisors will send Peter Robichaud their feedback on his draft paper by Friday, May 26
- Shoshana Cooper will send a digital copy of the draft “Kaniksu Winter Travel Planning: Public Participation and Collaboration Strategy” document to Ben Irely (birely@nationalforests.org)
- Collaborative members will provide Shoshana Cooper (smcooper@fs.fed.us) feedback on the Forest’s draft “Kaniksu Winter Travel Planning: Public Participation and Collaboration Strategy” document
- Send poster on Lightning Creek road work to the Collaborative; note locations posted