

Beaverhead-Deerlodge Working Group
July 21, 2016 Meeting Record
Butte Silverbow Archives, Butte

Attendees: Dave Schulz, Nick Jose, Steve Flynn, Tom Rice, Mark Thompson, Rick Sandru, Brian Ohs, John Kountz, Noorjahan Parwana, Matt Arno, Leonard Wortman, Sam Sampson

Forest Service: Scott Snelson, Scot Shuler, Kevin Smith, Breck Hudson, Alex Dunn, Dave Sabo

National Forest Foundation: Karen DiBari, Haley Wiggins, Charles Hayes

1. Welcome and Introductions – Dave Schultz

- Dave Schultz opened the meeting and all attendees introduced themselves.
- The June meeting record was approved without changes.

2. Public Comments

- There was no public comment.

3. Announcements

- Rick Sandru informed the group about a recent forest tour.
- Montana Forest Collaborative's Network (MFCN) workshop in Helena – Karen DiBari announced details of the upcoming MFCN workshop in December. There will be a chance to comment about what topics should be covered in the workshop through a survey.
- *Forest Service updates*
 - Alex explained the recent East Deerlodge legal decision.
 - A question was asked about Good Neighbor progress. Scott Snelson and Matt Arno discussed some projects that may be good candidates for Good Neighbor Authority.
 - Dave Sabo announced that the Boulder Lowlands advertisement came out in the paper today for approx. 11 million board feet. Dave plans to lead a field trip in the area in the future.

4. Congressional Policy Updates

- No congressional updates.

5. Membership

- Members voted unanimously to make Brian Ohs an official member of the BDWG.

6. Post and Pole Discussion

- Tom Rice shared a letter from Tash T Diamond Post and Pole and described to the group the company's difficulty in getting post and pole material.
- Breck Hudson explained that the FS prioritizes larger timber sales, and they are having difficulty even getting those sales completed. With the decline of road building and larger timber sales there has been a decline in post and pole availability. Breck mentioned that there is some conversation about a forest-wide categorical exclusion (CE) to speed up the process of post and pole sales.
- Scott Snelson brought up instances of how "logic and regulation do not always align" and some small, seemingly easy post and pole or firewood sales actually are complicated and can lead to litigation. Thus, NEPA is necessary for these sales. Snelson noted that timber sales have increased in the past three years.

7. Boulder Landscape Strategy Development

- Haley Wiggins began this discussion with a presentation on the history of analysis and planning on the Boulder Landscape (see attached presentation).
- Alex Dunn explained a bit of history on why older projects. Also, he explained how the forest plan revision has focused on diversifying the age of lodgepole stands to avoid the large scale tree death that resulting from recent beetle infestations.
- Some group members asked about the extent to which the previous assessments and plans for the landscape can simply be implemented without the need for a new vision. Some FS staff responded that visioning/strategy documents that express the BDWG's priorities are very helpful for getting resources and support for new projects. Moreover, if future competitive funding programs arise the forest is far more likely to be able to secure funds if project plans already exist.
- The group then discussed more specific ideas for the landscape strategy document. The ideas proposed were documented on tables by category in the draft vision document.

8. Collaborative Integrated Assessment Project

- This agenda item was postponed

9. Closing

- August Meeting Discussion: The group decided to not meet in August and reconvene on Sept. 15th.
- Rick Sandru proposed that a thank you letter should be sent for the Governor's support. Karen DiBari will draft letter.
- Dave Schulz closed the meeting.