

Template: Project Updates for Forest Collaboratives

Summary

Use the following example as a template to standardize and streamline communications about projects with your collaborative group.

Keys to Success

- ◆ Ask the collaborative what project information they want in each update.
- ◆ Follow a standardized format to enable project tracking.

This example of a project update came from Dan Scaife, USDA Forest Service District Ranger at the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District in north Idaho. Dan uses this project updates format to share project information with each of the forest collaboratives he works with. Using a consistent format provides him with something that is easily updateable before each month's collaborative meeting and provides the collaboratives with information that is easily trackable over time.

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For effective project communications from the USDA Forest Service to collaborative groups

On the follow page is an example of a USDA Forest Service District Ranger's project update for a collaborative group. Use this example to help create a project format that works best for your unit and your collaborative group.

What does a collaborative want from a project update? For any Forest project, a collaborative group wants to know: 1.) How far along is the project in the planning or implementation process? 2.) What is the schedule moving forward? 3.) Has anything about the project changed? 4.) Are there any potential hang-ups? and 5.) How can we help? Project updates should be brief without glossing over complexities and unresolved challenges. Don't take our word for it, ask your collaborative what they want from a project update!

What are the benefits of providing a project update? Collaborative groups are well-informed stakeholders that can add value to projects by providing constructive feedback, suggesting potential synergies and solutions from a variety of stakeholder perspectives, and serving as a litmus test for how the broader community of stakeholders may react. Project updates create a shared understanding of the complexities and challenges of today's public land management.

Why use this example as a template? This example is easy to read, easy to update, and makes it easy for collaboratives to track progress. This approach to project reporting gives collaborative members a big-picture understanding of the unit's overall workload, a project-by-project rundown of timelines, status, and insights into some of the interesting and actionable challenges involved.

How to use this example: The content and format of the template serve only as guidelines and suggestions for formatting and populating a template with information relevant to your collaborative. If you are unsure what information is relevant or not, just ask the collaborative. To enable collaborative groups tracking progress over time, be consistent in your formatting of project updates.

Links

- **NFF Conservation Connect Tools Search:** <https://www.nationalforests.org/collaboration-resources/tools-search>
- **NFF Conservation Connect Blog Posts:** <https://www.nationalforests.org/blog/category/collaboration>

COEUR D'ALENE RIVER RANGER DISTRICT PROJECT UPDATE

Ongoing Timber Sales

Sale Name	County	Volume (MMBF)	Purchaser	Status
Grassy*	Shoshone	4.783	Tricon Timber	Approx 20% of volume hauled
Lower Flat North*	Shoshone	14.494	Tricon Timber	Approx 50% of volume hauled
Lower Flat South*	Shoshone	4.509	IFG Timber LLC	Approx 70% of volume hauled
North Grizzly*	Shoshone	4.452	Tricon Timber	Less than 5% of volume hauled
South Grizzly*	Shoshone	4.158	Tricon Timber	Hauling complete
White Beaver	Shoshone	17.3	Potlatch	Road work in 2016, may start harvest 2017
Rolling Hills Larch	Shoshone	2.95	Thompson River	Approx 80% of volume hauled
Two Mile	Shoshone	4.262	IFG Timber LLC	All harvesting and road work complete
Fern Hardy	Kootenai	10.4	IFG Timber LLC	Approx 50% of volume hauled
Red Beauty	Kootenai	8.3	IFG Timber LLC	Approx 50% of volume hauled
Kings Pass	Shoshone	0.359	Jenneskins, Inc.	Operations initiated Feb 2017
Prichard-Murray	Shoshone	4.920	IFG Timber LLC	Helicopter units remaining, planned 2017

*Grizzly Salvage Sale

Planned Timber Sales (NEPA complete)

Lone Cabin Stew (7.1 MMBF): Currently advertised; to be awarded May 2017 (Kootenai Co.)
King Beaver (10.4 MMBF): Scheduled for sale 1st Quarter 2018 (Shoshone Co.)
Bottom Canyon (13.5 MMBF): Scheduled for sale 3rd Quarter 2019 (Kootenai Co.)

NEPA Projects

Lookout Pass Expansion: Final EIS and Draft Record of Decision was released in December of 2016. Two objections were received; discussions with objectors resulted in one objection being dropped. Final Record of Decision scheduled to be issued in May 2017.

Potters Wheel: The Potters Wheel project area is approximately 29,000 acres in size and is located in portions of Shoshone and Kootenai counties, south of the Magee Historic Site. A scoping letter is scheduled to be issued in the Summer of 2017. Road maintenance to facilitate project planning and timber haul will be completed in the vicinity of the project this year. LIDAR data has been collected and is being analyzed. Objectives of the project are to improve stand structure and species composition, improve watershed health, and provide forest products that contribute to a sustainable supply of timber from National Forest System lands.

South Mullan: Scoping letter was issued March 30, 2017; proposing 26 acres of commercial thinning adjacent to recent BLM harvest.

St Joe Divide: This project proposes approximately 16,000 acres of prescribed burning activities on both sides of the St. Joe Divide. Areas proposed for treatment are either in Forest Plan Management Area 5, Backcountry (MA5), or General Forest (MA6) and are all in Shoshone County. A Decision Memo is expected to be complete in summer 2017.

Honey Badger: The Honey Badger project is in the preliminary stages of project planning. The project is located on the western side of the district, encompassing an area from Fernan Creek, north to the Bunco Road. There are many opportunities in this area related to vegetation, fuel reduction, watershed improvement and recreation management. Data collection is the primary activity occurring in 2017, including LIDAR analysis.

Recreation

Settlers Grove: The district will be assessing conditions at Settlers Grove, logging out the trail, removing hazards in the trail corridor, and assessing bridge replacement needs. A public information effort will I prepare public information for trail visitors.

Trail Maintenance: Trail maintenance will be completed on the following trails: Bunco Bypass, Centennial Falls, Fern and Shadow Falls, English Point, Mt. CdA/Caribou Ridge, Pleasant Creek, Beauty/Carlin, Canfield Mtn. complex, State Line, Trail 16, Trails 801A/B. Approximately 190 miles of single track motorcycle trails will be cleared through the state Trail Ranger program. We will also conduct meetings with members of the Trails Working Group to identify priorities and coordinate trail maintenance work by partners (including a Pulaski Trail work day).

Spyglass Lookout: The ground house associated with the Spyglass Lookout will be restored in cooperation with volunteers from Shoshone Mountain Retreat. The lookout structure will be removed because the structure is no longer stable.

Facility Maintenance: Bell Bay Beach will be cleaned up in cooperation with Kootenai County Parks and Waterways. Maintenance of 38 non-concessionaire toilets is an ongoing process across the district. Crews will be coordinating vegetation management activities needed at Kit Price campground. The Magee barn will receive some much needed stabilization work to preserve the historic structure.

Cooperation: District personnel will participate in the coordination of a River Clean-Up Day with IDEQ and North Fork CDA River WAG. These cooperators also have plans to construct and install an informational kiosk along the NF CDA River.

Watershed

eDNA: Environmental DNA will be gathered in the Upper Teepee Creek drainage above Trail Creek (near Magee), which is designated as Critical Bull Trout habitat for spawning and rearing. The eDNA samples will be used to determine the presence or absence of Bull Trout. Samples can detect the presence of a fish within 0.5 kilometer (0.3 mile).

Road Maintenance

Sissons Bridge: A contract will be awarded in 2017 to strengthen Sissons bridge, which spans the the CDA River approximately 2 miles above Shoshone Mtn Retreat.

CDA River Road (208 Road): The main 208 road on the CDA River will be brushed by Shoshone County as part of our Schedule A road maintenance agreement.

Blading/Roadside Brushing: Several contracts for road maintenance will be in operation in summer 2017. The Potters Wheel project will be an emphasis area for road maintenance to facilitate planning access and project implementation.

206 Relocation: Survey and design will be completed for the relocation of 1.3 miles of road under Bottom Canyon NEPA. Relocation is intended to reduce sediment delivery to the stream while maintaining access. Funding of the relocation itself has not been secured; however, when funding is available the old section of road would be decommissioned and the stream restored.

Prescribed Fire (www.northidahorxfire.com)

Activity Fuels Burning: Prescribed fire for hazard reduction and site preparation for planting will be occurring in Red Beauty, Fern Hardy, Hoodoo Ames and Two Mile. Burning would occur in both spring and fall, depending on weather conditions.

Natural Fuels Burning:

Upper River: Upper River is a landscape-scale burning project with units primarily within or near Inventoried Roadless Areas (Management Area 5). The focus areas this year will be in Lost Creek and the Spion Kop area. Burning would be completed in late summer, depending on weather conditions.

Prichard-Murray: Burning of natural fuels in the vicinity of Prichard and Murray is an ongoing project designed to reduce the risk of wildfire to these communities. A 24-acre fuelbreak near Marmon road was initiated last year; those piles will be burned in 2017. Prescribed burning of landscape units could occur in the fall, depending on weather.

Deerfoot: The Deerfoot project near Hayden Lake is nearing completion; approximately 500 acres remain to be burned.

Blue Alder: Up to 500 acres of natural fuels could be burned in the fall in continuation of fuel reduction activities in the vicinity of Wolf Lodge east of Coeur d'Alene.

Fuelbreaks: Thinning, pruning, piling and burning of hazardous fuels immediately adjacent to private property and structures will likely occur in a couple of areas on the district.

Approximately 31 acres of fuelbreak work will be completed via contract in the Fern Hardy project in Fern Creek, Bentley Creek and Hardy Gulch. Additionally, Forest Service crews will begin work on several acres of fuelbreaks in Beaver Creek near structures.