



Monthly Meeting Minutes February, 22nd, 2022 1:30 – 3:00pm PST

Attendance

Ahlf, Reid – Idaho Forest Group
Zoanne Anderson – IPNF, St. Joe Ranger District
Castile, Al – CDA Trails Working Group
Caviness, Michelle – IPNF, Supervisor's Office
Bales, Stefany – Senator Risch's Office
Boyle, Mark – Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Bradley, Jeanne – Idaho Department of Lands
Daniels, Tyrone
Davis, Matt – IPNF, St. Joe Ranger District
Garringer, Jake – Governor Little's Office
Hughes, Christy Johnson, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Kilmer, Marc – Rep. Fulcher's Office
Nettles, Ashley – IPNF, Cda Ranger District
Parker, Darren – Senator Risch's Office
Petersen, Mike – Conservation interest
Polichio, Peg – Citizen
Scaife, Dan – IPNF, Cda Ranger District
Smith, Brad – Idaho Conservation League
Timchak, Ben – IPNF, St. Joe Ranger District
Amy Thompson – IPNF, St. Joe Ranger District
Witcomb, Hilary – US Fish & Wildlife Service
Wolf, Laura – Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game
Facilitation: Dani Southard and Maisie Powell, National Forest Foundation

Greetings, Introductions, Admin

January Meeting Minute Approval

January meeting minutes were prepared by Dani Southard and Maisie Powell. Hearing no opposition, the minutes were approved as written.

Round Robin

- Al Castile notes that there are education efforts on the Coeur d'Alene Ranger District around trail maintenance and NEPA processes.
- The annual conference for the Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership will be a joint conference with Montana Forest Collaboration Network on April 12 and 13th. This will be a virtual conference. The theme is around the bipartisan Infrastructure Bill and what it may mean for collaboratives operating in the Northern Rockies.

Legislative Updates

- Darren Parker noted that Senators Risch and Crapo wrote a bill to address the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) reauthorization. The September 30th allocation deadline was skipped for the counties, which made it impossible for counties to allocate these funds and automatically sent funds to Title I and II projects with 80% to Title I, 20% to Title II and 0% to Title III. This bill passed the Senate last week. In addition, Parker noted that the government is funded through March 11 and there is hope for an Omnibus Bill soon.
- Marc Kilmer added there is a hearing scheduled for this bipartisan bill mentioned by Darren Parker. This should pass easily as it is a technical fix and he assumes it should pass in March. There is another bill that is being considered by the public lands subcommittee, the Northern Rockies Protection Act. This hearing has been pushed back but may be considered in March.
- Jake Garringer has no updates from the Governor's office.

Summary and Discussion of Collaborative Feedback

Overview:

SBFHC member's time spent with the collaborative ranges from a couple months to seven years.

What keeps participants returning to SBFHC meetings? (Note: wordcloud generated from the answers received. Words that showed up most frequently are the largest in the word cloud). The main things that popped out of word cloud were opportunities, management, and learn. Other words include conservation, home, community, engagement, collaboration.



What topics or issues are most important? The main things from word cloud were habitat, wildlife, quality, wilderness, water, management, Mallard Larkins. Other words include restoration, fuels, timber, roadless.



Who else would we like to see at the table? Additional timber interests (PotlatchDeltic, Stimson), Coeur d'Alene tribe, more general public, varied recreation groups, fire districts, Shoshone county, and local cities and towns.

Are there certain geographic areas that are most important? There were lots of no responses to this question. Other responses include heavy fuel load areas, Roadless areas, WUI, St. Joe, movement area/natural recover zones, CDA river corridor, and Proposed Mallard Larkin Wilderness.

Goals for December of 2022? Get back to pre-covid effectiveness; in-person meetings and field trips; involvement with landscape approach to management; develop project recommendations; identify connectivity corridors; engage in recreation issues; and more.

Discussion:

- Al Castile notes that he represents six recreation groups. One of the things they ask him to do is help gain an understanding of federal processes, documentation, and regulations, and to communicate with the recreation constituent groups. Al fills this role and the NFF can help support this role in connecting collaborative members to helpful information.
- Peg Polichio commented that the collaborative needs more functional time together. She would like the group to address this further.
- Collaborative members are the best liaisons and should reach out to interested parties to invite them to meetings. As we begin meeting in person and going on field trips, those are great opportunities to extend those invitations.
- There is a question on whether now is now a good time to discuss action items based on this overview? Dani suggests determining project and then identify who else might be interested.

Other Federal (non-FS), State Agency or County matters and updates

No updates from non-USFS Federal Agencies.

Forest Service Updates

Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District (Dan Scaife, District Ranger)

Character Salvage: A large portion of this project is in the WUI for Shoshone County. The team is working through design criteria and responding to scoping comments to address in the EA. A draft is due to the Regional Office on March 15th. There will be another comment period with a final draft EA out in early May.

Potter's Wheel: There are portions of the sales from Potter's Wheel that are active in Shoshone County.

Copper John: The Forest is working on planning for Copper John, which has a portion in Shoshone County. This project keeps getting bumped due to the number of projects and sales on the Forest.

Collaborative members suggested the USFS uses the names in the NEPA planning, not the timber sale, to help the group follow along. The USFS will send a list of these and the NFF can make a landing page for resources for the collaborative. Dani will follow up with Dan.

Peg Polichio asked for the USFS to include the Five-Year Vegetation Management plan, which carries through 2028, on this list. Dan Scaife shares a link to IPNF project here:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/resources/ipnf/landmanagement/resourcemanagement>.

St. Joe Ranger District (Matt Davis, District Ranger)

Matt Davis has switched to Priest Lake and Zoanne Anderson covering for a few more weeks until they get a new detail for the District Ranger. Amy Thompson is the new Environmental Coordinator.

Supervisors Office (Michelle Caviness, Ecosystem Staff Officer)

CFLRP (Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program)

- Awaiting a final budget, waiting to see if they'll receive funding for their project this year. The plan is to bring on one more project this year. The Senate and House write ups indicate that there will be quite a bit of funding coming in from CFLRP. Funds may come through a different budget line in the infrastructure bill.
- The Supervisors Office is having a meeting Thursday with points of contacts, Mike Petersen, Liz JG, Linda Vogl To reconvene, reassess, and ask collaboratives what they would like to see moving forward re: communications and projects to tackle right out of the gate under the Forest-Wide CFLRP.
- Forest has decided to fill a CFLR/GNA coordinator. In the interim, Michelle will lead this effort.
https://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/documents/cflrp/2019Proposals/R1_IdahoCollaborative_CompleteProposal_NewProject.pdf

Lacey Lemoosh and Smeagle Projects (Amy Thompson, NEPA Planner)

Lacey LeMoosh: This project is named after two streams in the Southwest corner of St. Joe. They are preparing scoping. The Forest expects a signed decision notice within a year. The purpose and need is to move to a more resilient forest and reduce fuels with a goal of increasing larch and western white pine. There is a fair amount of field reconnaissance that has taken place. They are looking at 16000 acre+ project boundary, treating 4500 acres. Proposed treatments include precommercial thin and proposed burn. This project is currently considered in in prescoping. Project includes benefit to local economy/recreation through work with Nordic skiing trails groups. The USFS is working with the Idaho Department of Lands using GNA, mostly in Benewah County, with some portions in Latah County. The project might be interesting to the group, but the reconnaissance has already been done.

Q: Mike Petersen noted units requiring road building that are next to creeks. Are there numbers for roads yet?

A: *There is a need for roads, as well as redevelopment of existing roads. This is both for access and safety. The estimate is about 20 miles of roads, but the FS is still working through mileage.*

Q: Brad Smith asks if the 20 miles a combo of new and road reconstruction or just new permanent roads?

A: *New construction, but maybe some reconstruction as well. It is still undetermined.*

Q: Brad Smith asks if there are any resource restoration needs in the area other than forest restoration, such as water, fisheries, aquatic organism, etc. for resource integration opportunities.

A: There are opportunities to reduce sediment, and address aquatic organism passage.

Comment: Laura Wolf notes that with projects like this that are surrounded by IDL lands, she is glad there is a buffer of security cover for wildlife.

Comment: Reid Ahlf thinks that this could be a good opportunity for a field trip in May for the group to go out and look at different cuts due to the convenience of the location and the elevation.

Q: Al Castile asks how engaged this group could be in the scoping process?

A: Zoanne Anderson is going through the required pre-info for NFMA. They are close to pulling together the initial proposed action for the first round of comments. At this point, they will address comments and then send it out as a draft EA for another 30 days. It will then go to final EA and the objection process. If the group is deciding between the two projects, Smeagle might be the way to go.

Comment: Al Castile notes that the collaboratives involvement with this project could play a role in helping things move efficiently.

Smeagle: This is a large project encompassing 56,780 acres on the Montana border of Shoshone County. It is in the very preliminary stages, but they had a pre-proposed the treatment of 8,116 acres and then had some fire in the project area. Close to 1,000 acres were lost due to fire. It is in the very beginning stages which provides an opportunity for the SBFHC to engage from the start and do field reconnaissance. Help on either Lacey Lamoosh or Smeagle will be appreciated. This one might meet more of the collaborative's goals and is at a beginning point.

Christy Johnson Hughes adds that the Fish & Wildlife Service is coordinating on this project for potential lynx, grizzly bear, and likely bull trout considerations.

Q: Laura Wolf asks what proportion of the fire burn was a mosaic and if there is opportunity for harvest?

A: The USFS still needs to go out and look, but it is unlikely that all 905 acres are a total loss. Jory Johnson (Sp?) and Matt Slipko are great resources, and Amy will follow up on this question.

Q: Mike Petersen thinks this look like an excellent project. There are a lot of unknowns, for example, what's going on in Montana and the current road system. He appreciates being able to jump on the project early.

Brad Smith agrees. This is a good project with multiple resource interests. He recommends that the group engages.

Peg Polichio also agrees and likes multiple resource values. She thinks getting more prescribed fire back on the landscape in this area is intriguing.

Al Castile finds this project interesting from a recreation perspective as well and would like to be involved.

Dani Southard offers thoughts on the Lacey LeMoosh project. The group could go through an exercise of breaking down the proposed action and providing informal feedback all the way up to something more formal. Dani asks if there is any interest within the group. Laura Wolf, Mike Petersen, Brad Smith, Reid Ahlf, Al Castile, and Tyrone Daniels all express interest. Reid Ahlf suggested using Lacey for a field trip.

Q: Who else might be interested in these projects?

Darren Parker adds that it can be helpful to have a neutral third-party member like a Society of American Foresters member to help translate the silvicultural jargon into terms everyone can understand. This person can

also take the interests of the group to translate into technical language for the Agency. Peg is a member of the SAF and can help to the best of her ability.

Dani Southard asks about local fire districts. Are there any fire districts or departments that might be interested in participating in discussions based on the project locations? This is a question for the County Commissioners.

Brad Smith notes that the streams in these project areas are important trout fishing streams. Brad will reach out to Trout Unlimited to see if the group is interested in involvement with these projects.

2022 Calendar Updates and Field Trips

Dani will send a Doodle poll to find a time on calendars in late May or early June for a field trip. Zoanne and Dan will let Dani know if there are any date ranges that do not work.

Poll: <https://doodle.com/meeting/participate/id/1aMX0L3e>

Wrap Up & Parking Lot Topics for March Meeting

- Include a report from the CFLRP meeting on February 24th on the March agenda.
- Consider a Lacey Lamoosh field trip in May or June. This could be a good project to create a shared glossary of definitions of forest treatments. Dani will send a Doodle Poll for possible field trip dates.
- Brad will connect with Trout Unlimited about interest in the Smeagle or Lacey Lamoosh projects.
- Dani will explore if there are some already developed "glossaries" of Forest terms that could be adapted for use by the SBFHC. Al mentioned he was aware of a resource and will send to Dani directly. Dani to bring back a version to the group in April for review.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm PST.