

**Forest Restoration Collaborative Meeting**  
**Salmon, Idaho**  
**Monday, April 24, 2006**  
**5:30p.m. – 8:00p.m. Meeting Minutes**

**Participants**

Adrienne Blauser, Jim Tucker, Bob Cope, Terry Hershey, Lyle Powers, Paul Wuesthoff, Steve Kimball, Jake Kreilick, Megan Huth, Fred Templeton, Marnie Criley, Rick Snyder, Joe Proksch, Maia Enzer, Karen Steer

**For affiliations, see contact list in Attachment B.**

**Attachments**

A – Meeting Agenda

B – Participant Contact Information

**Meeting Objectives**

1. To gauge interest in, and commitment to, exploring opportunities for collaboration in forest restoration projects in Lemhi County.
2. Discuss and decide upon next steps for moving forward.

**I. Background Information**

The group discussed the history of local restoration efforts that led up to this meeting:

- 2002 Community wildfire protection plan (County)  
The County has mapped the Wildland-Urban Interface and priorities for fuels reduction projects.
- 2004 Forest User Group meetings (BLM)  
The BLM initiated these meetings as a way to connect local contractors' needs with the new stewardship contracting authority.
- 2005 Hazardous Fuels Reduction projects (USFS)  
The Forest Service has been working to reduce hazardous fuels on the Salmon-Challis, in concert with the County's effort.
- 2005 Stewardship Contracting workshop (SVS)  
The December workshop focused on collaborative approaches to public land management and introduced the concept of stewardship contracting to the community.
- 2006 Ecosystem Workforce Assessment (SVS)  
This is an effort to compile information on what interest, skills, and workforce exist in Lemhi County to engage in restoration activities.

**II. Forest Restoration Concerns & Priorities: Ecological – Economic – Social**

The group discussed their concerns related to restoration activity as a way to establish mutual understanding and to identify areas of common ground.

**Collaboration defined...**

- Working together to solve problems or seize solutions.
- Broad-based participation that is open, transparent, and inclusive.
- Enhances understanding, encourages solutions and develops common objectives.
- Meetings are safe and civil.
- It's a team effort based on trust and built on confidence.

LCFRG Meeting Minutes

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**Concerns:**

Drought/climate change/carbon sequestration  
Forest is dying Watershed/water  
supply at risk Prevention of  
catastrophic wildfire

Improve technology to be light on ground and effective at restoration  
 Fuels might not be driver of fires – more about climate and where we live  
 Concern beyond just around homes and structures  
 Concern over the highest and best use of the material vs. burning a resource that is in demand (within ecological bounds)  
 Ecological damage of the forest  
 Watershed to West burning – water supply is at risk  
 Concern about getting past NEPA process  
 Multipliers for the resource use high for the community (5-7 vs. 1-3 for retail)  
 Air pollution is a big concern (health impacts)  
 Economic impact of poor air quality on the County Fair  
 Public access – business and recreation  
 Challenges in inventoried roadless areas  
 How to allow natural processes to occur outside WUI  
 Firefighter safety – need to increase their security  
 Need appropriate buffer between wild area and community – topography here makes it difficult  
 Recreation  
 Beetle management  
 Commercial use of byproducts of thinning and burning is negligible  
 Capacity problem – 1 mill (Gary England)  
 Workforce? Actual amount that can be processed?  
 There might be better ways to utilize what is coming off – need to explore what some of these opportunities are. Criteria: sustainability, local workforce  
 Noncommercial material – energy  
 Noxious weeds  
 Fish – culvert work for fish  
 Maintenance backlog on roads  
 There is contractor capacity to do road work  
 Emergency rescue  
 Grazing as a part of fuels reduction  
 Road density – rerouting  
 Concern over soils

### **Project priorities:**

Priority is to make people feel safer along their homes – maybe let other areas burn  
 Start where we can find common ground – houses and watershed  
 Common ground around 'lower hanging fruit' or 2 miles out – after that, start to lose agreement.  
 Need good process to determine priorities outside WUI

### **III. Collaborative process and tools**

Karen and Maia of Sustainable Northwest shared information on the collaborative process. This is the same information that was presented in eight workshops given to Region 6 of the USFS. Go to [www.sustainablenorthwest.org/policy](http://www.sustainablenorthwest.org/policy) for the complete Power Point presentation.

### **Learning**

- Define challenges and opportunities
- Identify shared issues
- Understand resource and community conditions
- Do we want a collaborative group?

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#### **Operations \*key to successful collaborative**

- Roles (convener, facilitator, member, resource)
- Ensuring diverse perspectives – everyone brings something
- Decision-making – define space, box, rules

- Info-sharing, outreach and communication (in and out)
- Governance structure

Planning, design and selection

- Identify projects to meet needs, goals, outcomes

Implementation

Multi-party monitoring (on-going) – can be a part of, or separate from, the collaborative

There was agreement that a collaborative should be formed to move this restoration initiative forward. The group agreed that a good process and organizational structure needs to be in place before setting out to do projects. Also, starting small and in areas where trust can be built is essential. More discussion about criteria and areas of agreement needs to happen. Overall, the tone of the meeting was very positive in terms of moving forward.

#### **IV. Next Steps**

1. A planning subcommittee (Adrienne, Jake, Fred, Jim - Karen and Maia as advisors) will work to schedule the next meeting and put together an agenda to discuss process, operations, and a project.
2. A meeting summary will be distributed to the participants (Adrienne).

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Year: 2006

**Attachment A –**

#### **Forest Restoration Collaborative Meeting**

**Salmon, Idaho**

**Monday, April 24, 2006**

**5:30p.m. – 7:30p.m.**

#### **Objectives-**

3. To gauge interest in, and commitment to, exploring opportunities for collaboration in forest restoration projects in Lemhi County.
4. Discuss and decide upon next steps for moving forward.

#### **Agenda-**

1. **Welcome & Introductions**
2. **Some Background Information**
  - 2004 Community wildfire protection plan (County)
  - 2004 Forest Stewardship meetings (BLM)
  - 2005 Hazardous Fuels Reduction projects (USFS)
  - 2005 Stewardship Contracting workshop (SVS)
  - 2006 Ecosystem Workforce Assessment (SVS)
3. **Forest Restoration Concerns & Priorities**
  - Ecological
  - Economics
  - Social

**BREAK**

#### **4. Project Opportunities**

Jesse Creek? Gibbonsville? Biomass?

#### **5. Collaborative process and tools**

Brief description of the collaborative process: what does it require?

Tips from other groups:

Restoration Principles, Multi-party monitoring, etc.

#### **6. Next Steps**

Group structure, roles, and process

Who's missing?

Field tour

Training

Project funding

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**Attachment B –****Forest Restoration Collaborative Participants – April 24, 2006**

Participant	Representing	E-mail	Phone
1. Adrienne Blauser	Salmon Valley Stewardship	salmonvalley@centurytel.net	756-1686
2. Bob Cope	Lemhi County	teacup@salmoninternet.com	756-2124
3. Jim Tucker	BLM	Jim_Tucker@blm.gov	756-3542
4. Terry Hershey	USFS	thershey@fs.fed.us	756-5247
5. Lyle Powers	USFS	lepowers@fs.fed.us	756-5557
6. Steve Kimball	USFS	skimball@fs.fed.us	865-2731
7. Paul Wuesthoff		pwaia@salmoninternet.com	865-2282
8. Jake Kreilick	National Forest Protection Alliance	jkreilick@forestadvocate.org	406/829-6353
9. Marnie Criley	Wildlands CPR	marnie@wildlandscpr.org	406/543-9551
10. Rick Snyder	Lemhi County	ricksnyder54@hotmail.com	768-2714
11. Joe Proksch	Lemhi County	jprox@cableone.net	756-2252
12. Maia Enzer	Sustainable Northwest	menzer@sustainablenorthwest.org	503/221-6911
13. Karen Steer	Sustainable Northwest	ksteer@sustainablenorthwest.org	503/221-6911
14. John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	jrobison@wildidaho.org	345-6942
15. Tim Foster	Idaho Conservation League	tfoster@wildidaho.org	726-7485
16. Fred Templeton	Remote Diagnostics	ftempleton@centurytel.net	756-1574

**Forest Restoration Collaborative Meeting**  
**Salmon, Idaho**  
**Monday, July 17, 2006**  
**9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**  
**Tuesday, July 18, 2006**  
**8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Meeting Minutes and Field Trip Notes**

**Participants**

Adrienne Blauser, Bob Cope, Terry Hershey, Lyle Powers, Jake Kreilick, Fred Templeton, Karen Steer, Chris Erca, Stan Davis, Gina Knudson, John Robison, Mark Davidson **For affiliations, see contact list in Attachment B.**

**Attachments**

A – Meeting Agenda

B – Participant Contact Information

C – Collaborative Structural/Business Document

**Meeting Objectives**

1. Discuss and define process and protocol for the collaborative,
2. Define common priorities for restoration projects,
3. Gain knowledge of restoration needs in the field,
4. Explore project opportunities for stewardship contracting.

**Collaboration defined...**

- Working together to solve problems or seize solutions.
- Broad-based participation that is open, transparent, and inclusive.
- Enhances understanding, encourages solutions and develops common objectives.
- Meetings are safe and civil.
- It's a team effort based on trust and built on confidence.

**I. Collaborative Process and Protocol**

The group reviewed and revised a sample business and structural document to reflect the specific needs of this partnership. The draft document is attached. The document provides guidelines such as :

- Mission, Scope, and Goals
- Collaborative Principles and Ground Rules
- Roles, Responsibilities, and Coordination
- Communication Strategies, Internal and External

**II. Forest Restoration Concerns & Priorities:** Ecological – Economic – Social

The group discussed their concerns related to restoration activity as a way to establish mutual understanding and to identify areas of common ground.

**Concerns:**

Drought/climate change/carbon sequestration

Forest is dying

Watershed/water supply at risk

Prevention of catastrophic wildfire like the 2000 Clear Creek fire

Air pollution (health impacts)

Public access – business and recreation  
Roadless areas  
How to allow natural processes to occur outside WUI  
Recreation  
Scenic values  
Beetle management  
Unfamiliarity of stewardship contracts  
Converting hazardous fuels to marketable energy via biomass

**Project priorities:**

The Jesse Creek watershed was acknowledged by all participants to be at significant risk from wildfire. However, the area's inventoried roadless status makes this a difficult project to initiate.

Eighteen people attended Tuesday's tour of the Forest Service's Napias Creek project. The project, which is in its final NEPA planning stage, would reduce the lodgepole pine on about 94 acres with the goal of improving the Douglas Fir stands and regenerating aspen. Field trip participants discussed that although the project area did not appear to be as hazardous as many other sites on the forest, the proximity to the road, and the aspen regeneration potential make Napias Creek the kind of project that collaborative members could work on together. Tour participants did indicate that discussions and strategies regarding Jesse Creek should continue.

**III. Next Steps**

1. Adrienne will seek approval from the Salmon Valley Stewardship board of directors to serve as the collaborative's coordinator (accomplished July 2006).
2. A meeting summary will be distributed to the participants (Salmon Valley Stewardship).
3. The group will meet next in Salmon on August 24<sup>th</sup>. Salmon Valley Stewardship, Sustainable Northwest, USFS, and BLM will plan field trip activities including the Jesse Creek watershed area.

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**Attachment A –**

**Forest Restoration Collaborative Group  
Organizational Development and Planning Meeting – Salmon, Idaho**

**FINAL AGENDA July 17 & 18, 2006**

Location: Salmon Valley Business & Innovation Center Board Room

**Objectives**

1. Discuss and define process and protocol for the collaborative,
2. Define common priorities for restoration projects,
3. Gain knowledge of restoration needs in the field,
4. Explore project opportunities for stewardship contracting.

**Day 1: Developing the Collaborative Group process**

9:00am Welcome, introductions, and overview of meeting objectives

9:15am Overview of first meeting

Discuss scope, vision, and desired outcomes for collaboration

10:45am            Break

- 11:00am Roles and expectations in collaborative group—Part 1
1. Review examples from other collaborative groups
  2. Discuss roles, expectations and decisionmaking space (FS, BLM, SVS, citizens, members, guests, staff)
  3. *Develop and decide on ground rules for meetings, field tours, etc.*
  4. *Discuss, design, and decide on a membership structure for this group*
  5. *Discuss role of, and how to work with, the media*
- 12:00pm Lunch (provided)
- 12:30pm Decisionmaking in the collaborative group—Part 2
1. Designing a decision-making process for collaboration
    - a. Review examples from other collaborative groups
    - b. Discuss needs and options for this group
    - c. *Decide on a decision-making process for this group*
- Internal and external communications in the collaborative group—Part 3
1. Communication protocols
    - a. Review examples from other collaborative groups
    - b. Discuss needs and expectations for meeting planning, coordination
    - c. Who keeps group records (minutes, decisions, financial, etc.)
    - d. Discuss needs for internal communications, public outreach, and information flow
    - e. *Decide on a communications protocol for this group*

2:00pm Introduction to Restoration Principles

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2:10pm Review and define regional concerns and priorities for action  
(including Forest Service presentation)  
Define criteria for project selection

3:15 pm Break

3:30pm Review of decisions made and outstanding issues

4:15pm Next steps and scheduling of next meeting/event

4:30pm Overview of field trip

5:00pm Adjourn – Drinks and informal networking, followed by dinner (on your own)

### **Day 2: Field trip to gain knowledge of restoration needs and explore opportunities for stewardship project implementation**

8:15am Meet at Public Lands Center in Salmon

8:30am Depart

9:15am Tour Napias Creek Project: discussion of current forest conditions, concerns, potential projects

12:00am Lunch in the field (provided)

1:00pm Return to Public Lands Center



## Attachment B –

**Forest Restoration Collaborative Participants – April 24, 2006**

Participant	Representing	E-mail	Phone
1. Adrienne Blauser	Salmon Valley Stewardship	salmonvalley@centurytel.net	756-1686
2. Bob Cope	Lemhi County	teacup@salmoninternet.com	756-2124
3. Chris Erca	BLM	<a href="mailto:alexis_erca@blm.gov">alexis_erca@blm.gov</a>	756-5468
4. Terry Hershey	USFS	thershey@fs.fed.us	756-5247
5. Lyle Powers	USFS	lepowers@fs.fed.us	756-5557
6. Stan Davis	City of Salmon	<a href="mailto:stanley021@centurytel.net">stanley021@centurytel.net</a>	756-3214
7. Hadley Roberts	citizen	hroberts@salmoninternet.com	756-2163
8. Jake Kreilick	Wild West Institute	jkreilick@forestadvocate.org	406/829-6353
9. Mark Davidson	Nature Conservancy	mdavidson@tnc.org	720-2475
13. Karen Steer	Sustainable Northwest	ksteer@sustainablenorthwest.org	503/221-6911
14. John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	jrobison@wildidaho.org	345-6942
15. Tim Foster	Idaho Conservation League	tfoster@wildidaho.org	726-7485
16. Fred Templeton	Remote Diagnostics	ftempleton@centurytel.net	756-1574
17. Gina Knudson	Salmon Valley Stewardship	<a href="mailto:salmonvalley@centurytel.net">salmonvalley@centurytel.net</a>	756-2266

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting**  
**Gibbonsville, Idaho**  
**Thursday, August 24, 2006**  
**9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**  
**FINAL**  
**Meeting Summary and Field Trip Notes**

**Participants**

Bob Cope, Stan Davis, Terry Hershey, Lyle Powers, Jake Kreilick, Jeff Juel, Fred Templeton, Paul Wuesthoff, Karen Steer, Maia Enzer, Chris Erca, Gina Knudson, John Robison, Lynn Bennett, Douglas Basford, Steve Kimball, Doug Graves, Gene Sundberg, Lynn Bennett, Wayne Hecker, Ken Rogers  
**For affiliations, see contact list in Attachment B.**

**Attachments**

A – Meeting Agenda

B – Participant Contact Information

**Meeting Objectives**

1. Approve organizational structure document,
2. Tour project sites and potential sites in the Gibbonsville WUI area,
3. Gain knowledge of restoration needs in the field,
4. Explore project opportunities for stewardship contracting.

**Collaboration defined...**

- Working together to solve problems or seize solutions.
- Broad-based participation that is open, transparent, and inclusive.
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- Meetings are safe and civil.
- It's a team effort based on trust and built on confidence.

**I. Collaborative Organizational Structure**

The group voted unanimously to approve and adhere to the protocols outlined in the structure document. The official name of Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group was adopted.

**II. Gibbonsville WUI Tour: Fuels Reduction Projects – Accomplished and Potential**

Attendees met at the Gibbonsville Improvement Association Building at 9 am to discuss the objectives of the field tour. Steve Kimball, USFS North Fork District Ranger, explained that Lemhi County officials, emergency services personnel, residents, Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management officials provided input that identified the Gibbonsville Wildland Urban Interface zone. Although that group used a 1.5 mile radius around the community as a starting point, many other factors were taken into consideration. A primary consideration was the historic burn pattern that moves in a northeasterly direction.

**Tour Stop 1 – Ladder fuel prescription - Gibbonsville cemetery:**

This project was part of the Gibbonsville Urban/Interface Fuels Reduction Project settlement negotiated in 2005. Residents have expressed concern that conifer crowns are still too close. A broadcast and pile burn are planned when snow is on the ground. Issues the group discussed included:

- Need for treatment on private land adjacent to FS land

- Potential for piles to be converted to biomass energy (Fred T. may use part of a grant to study energy potential in existing piles)
- Community sensitivity about cemetery

### **Tour Stop 2 – Ransack:**

Known as the Ransack Hazardous Fuels Reduction project, this area includes ongoing commercial harvest, pre-commercial thinning of Douglas Fir, and prescribed burning. The group seemed satisfied overall that the ongoing Ransack project was accomplishing stated objectives in a way that should be replicated elsewhere in the WUI area.

### **Tour Stop 3 – Hughes Creek Potential Project Zone:**

The group stopped at an area along Hughes Creek adjacent to private land that could serve as a potential project. Scoping has not yet been initiated but funding for the NEPA process is programmed. At the site and in a follow-up discussion back in Gibbonsville, some of the following issues were raised:

- Riparian area
  - Lynn Bennett, FS fire ecologist explained that treating the surrounding area and leaving the riparian area as is could defeat the purpose
  - Jon Robison of Idaho Conservation League explained that commercial harvest in the riparian area could be a sticking point for his organization
  - Maia Enzer of Sustainable Northwest asked that all parties maintain an open mind toward designing a dynamic project that accomplishes the group's stated objectives of both creating defensible space and enhancing the local economy
  - Stream restoration funded by stewardship contract
- Strategic importance of the area to the Gibbonsville WUI
- Hazardous fuels reduction projects leading to a reintroduction of natural fire
- Timeline (Forest Service would like to have a Record of Decision by June 2007)
- Possibility of engaging youth in monitoring project or other ways
- Working with adjacent private landowners, inviting to next meeting

### **Project Go-Ahead:**

**The group expressed a unanimous interest in moving forward with project design in Hughes Creek.**

### **III. Jesse Creek Watershed**

The group planned to spend one day touring and discussing the Jesse Creek area. Stan encouraged participants to consider the feasibility of a shaded fuel break on either side of the Ridge Road. Cope inquired about the possibility of amending the Forest Plan to allow for proposed hazardous fuels reduction projects. Lyle thought the best approach might be to pursue a site-specific plan amendment based on a collaborative proposal. Steve Kimball commented that another option is pursuing a designation of Adaptive Management Area for Jesse Creek. Stan reminded the group that Jesse Creek's roadless designation was based on a request from the City of Salmon intended to protect the watershed; not based on Forest Service recommendations to protect resources.

### **IV. Next Steps**

Next meeting set for October 10 and 11 will include site visits to Hughes Creek and Jesse Creek.

Ken Rodgers, the Salmon-Challis Natl Forest's Interdisciplinary Team Leader for Hughes Creek will work with his team to respond to information requests as feasible. Some of the data requests include:

- Condition class maps



- Grazing allotments boundaries
- Powerline corridors
- Private land boundaries
- Roads (showing system, non-system, etc.)
- Trails (motorized vs. nonmotorized)
- IRA boundaries
- Locations of structures on private land
- Old treatment units, with their fuel loading status (or otherwise resilience to fire) coded
- Fuel status outside all old treatment units
- Ingress and egress routes during fire
- Any fire "safety zones"
- Old growth.
- Any current Roads Analysis Process results
- Riparian Management Objective status in all Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas
- Existing culverts in riparian area
- Weed survey results
- Documentation of all Threatened, endangered, and sensitive species' presence in the watershed.
- Wildlife corridors

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**Attachment A –**

**Forest Restoration Collaborative Group  
Field Tour Itinerary**

Aug 24, 2006

Location: Gibbonsville Community Hall

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 9:00am  | Welcome, introductions, and overview of field tour objectives  |
| 10:00am | Gibbonsville field tour Stop 1 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completed project in the WUI treated for ladder fuels. Locals now are expressing that more needs to be done because of crown density.</li> </ol>  |
| 10:45am | Gibbonsville field tour Stop 2 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Three Mile sale up Dahlonge Ck. Examine an untreated stand area that has gone out to bid. Trees are already marked so group can visualize FS objectives for the area.</li> </ol>  |
| 11:30am | Hughes Creek field tour Stop 3 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Potential collaborative project. The entire drainage is considered in need of treatment. Some units have been treated already, including multiple types and experimental treatments that the group can evaluate for effectiveness.</li> </ol>                                     |
| 12:45pm | Lunch (provided)   |
| 1:30pm  | Return to Gibbonsville Community Hall <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-cap field tour             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What kind of stewardship should we pursue?</li> <li>b. What works and what doesn't?</li> <li>c. <i>Determine if Hughes Creek is a first project.</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Next steps</li> </ol> |

a. Plan Jesse Creek field trip for Sept/Oct

4:00 pm      Adjourn

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## Attachment B –

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Participants – August 24, 2006**

Participant	Representing	E-mail	Phone
1. Mayor Stan Davis	City of Salmon	mayorofsalmon@cityofsalmon.com	756-3214
2. Bob Cope	Lemhi County	teacup@salmoninternet.com	756-2124
3. Chris Erca	BLM	<a href="mailto:alexis_erca@blm.gov">alexis_erca@blm.gov</a>	756-5468
4. Terry Hershey	USFS	thershey@fs.fed.us	756-5247
5. Lyle Powers	USFS	lepowers@fs.fed.us	756-5557
6. Steve Kimball	USFS	<a href="mailto:skimball@fs.fed.us">skimball@fs.fed.us</a>	865-2700
7. Paul Wuesthoff	Contractor, Remote Diagnostics affiliate	<a href="mailto:pwaia@salmoninternet.com">pwaia@salmoninternet.com</a>	865-2282
8. Jake Kreilick	Wild West Institute	jkreilick@forestadvocate.org	406/829-6353
9. Jeff Juel	Wild West Institute	jeffjuel@wildrockies.org	407/728-5733
13. Karen Steer	Sustainable Northwest	ksteer@sustainablenorthwest.org	503/221-6911
14. John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	jrobison@wildidaho.org	345-6942
15. Doug Graves	USFS	dgraves@fs.fed.us	756-5200
16. Fred Templeton	Contractor, Remote Diagnostics	f templeton@centurytel.net	756-1574
17. Gina Knudson	Salmon Valley Stewardship	<a href="mailto:salmonvalley@centurytel.net">salmonvalley@centurytel.net</a>	756-2266
18. Maia Enzer	Sustainable Northwest	<a href="mailto:menzer@sustainablenorthwest.org">menzer@sustainablenorthwest.org</a>	503/221-6911
19. Douglas Basford	USFS	<a href="mailto:dbasford@fs.fed.us">dbasford@fs.fed.us</a>	756-5270
20. Gene Sundberg	USFS	<a href="mailto:gsundberg@fs.fed.us">gsundberg@fs.fed.us</a>	865-2700
21. Lynn Bennett	USFS	<a href="mailto:lbennett@fs.fed.us">lbennett@fs.fed.us</a>	756-5132
22. Wayne Hecker	USFS	<a href="mailto:whecker@fs.fed.us">whecker@fs.fed.us</a>	756-5200

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
Salmon, Idaho  
Tuesday & Wednesday, October 10 & 11, 2006  
Field Trip Notes and Meeting Summary**

**Tuesday – Jesse Creek Field Tour Participants**

Stan Davis, Bill Wood, Lyle Powers, Jake Kreilick, Fred Templeton, Jay Jones, Karen Steer, Maia Enzer, Chris Erca, Gina Knudson, Lynn Bennett, Larry Svalberg, Hadley Roberts, Jim Tucker, Dave Swanson  
**For affiliations, see contact list in Attachment B.**

**Attachments**

A – Meeting Agenda

B – Participant Contact Information

**Field Tour Objectives**

1. Visually assess Jesse Creek watershed from a variety of on-the-ground vantage points
2. Identify strategies to lessen threat to watershed from catastrophic wildfire
3. Gain knowledge of restoration needs in the field
4. Discuss challenges, including inventoried roadless area challenges, access issues and others
5. Visually assess Jesse Creek and Hughes Creek drainage from the air.

**Collaboration defined...**

- Working together to solve problems or seize solutions.
- Broad-based participation that is open, transparent, and inclusive.
- Enhances understanding, encourages solutions and develops common objectives.
- Meetings are safe and civil.
- It's a team effort based on trust and built on confidence.

**I. Jesse Creek Driving Tour:**

Attendees met at the Salmon Public Lands Center at 7:30 am to discuss the objectives of the field tour. Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor Bill Wood joined the group and expressed his support for the collaborative efforts. Mayor Stan Davis challenged the group to consider standards for any proposed action.

**Perreau Creek wildland urban interface:**

On the way to the Williams Creek Road, the group stopped at a housing development in the Perreau Creek drainage, viewed the Jesse Creek drainage from this residential vantage point and discussed wildland-urban interface issues. Fuels appeared to be continuous from this location to the Ridge Road.

**Ridge Road:**

This well-used road has had an approximately 100' buffer zone that was cut in 2000 during the Clear Creek Fire. Lynn Bennett, Salmon-Challis fire ecologist, surmised that the clearing was intended to provide some assurance to fire supervisors with regard to ingress/egress from the fire. It may have provided some opportunity to back burn as a fire suppression tactic. Stan Davis added that the work was done as a last resort. Stopping in a safety zone created in 2000, Lynn and Larry Svalberg, operations chief for the Salmon-Challis, explained that to effectively protect crews, a safety zone should be cleared on average an area four times a fire's flame length which this area fell short of. In many cases on the forest, flame lengths can range from 100' to 150'.

The Little Baldy communications site provided a blustery overlook. At the site, the group took the opportunity to discuss observations from the Ridge Road. Jim Tucker, fuels manager for Salmon BLM, talked about thinning along the Ridge Road from the Cougar Campground to the Wallace Lake turnoff, using a strategic “checkerboard” approach researched by fire scientist Mark Finney that would cause the fire to drop from the canopy and onto the ground.

Larry Svalberg talked about the possibility of helicopter logging in the Jesse Creek watershed’s mid-sections, using bundling to make the technique more cost-effective. In some places, temporary roads could be built to allow ground crews to thin. The group observed the pattern of bug-killed trees and crown density in the drainage.

#### **Lower End – Jesse Creek – Smedley Subdivision:**

The group’s last stop on the driving tour was in the Smedley Estates subdivision just west of the Salmon city limits. Participants observed that some private work had been ongoing to do some brush clearing in the area. Jim Tucker said the BLM has about 40 acres on the lower end of the drainage that the agency might be able to program for hazardous fuels reduction. There are grazing allotments in the area.

## **II. Flyover -- Jesse Creek Watershed & Hughes Creek Drainage**

#### **Participants**

Stan Davis, Jake Kreilick, Fred Templeton, Karen Steer, Maia Enzer, Lynn Bennett, Larry Svalberg, John Robison, Michele Crist

Upon take-off, the plane maneuvered to the west to give an initial orientation of the Jesse Creek watershed, including the Jesse, Creek, Chip Creek, and Pollard Creek drainages. Pockets of dying fir and pine trees were observed. The flight then headed north up the Salmon River corridor toward North Fork over Sheep Creek, then over the north end of Hughes Creek and down the south side of Hughes Creek. The plane looped back over the Alan Mountain area, over Alan Lake and then toward Clear Creek. Lynn showed passengers an extreme one-day event from the 2000 Clear Creek fire that moved from the upper end of Clear Creek into Hot Springs Creek, covering more than 12 miles or 28,000 acres in one day. The Beartrack Mine was flown over and another mid-elevation view of Jesse Creek was toured before Karen Steer assisted the pilot in the safe landing of the plane.

#### **Next Steps**

Explore treatment options on upper and lower ends of Jesse Creek

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**Wednesday, October 11, 2006  
Salmon Business and Innovation Center  
Hughes Creek Project Area Presentations and Discussion**

#### **Participants Included:**

Lyle Powers, Jake Kreilick, Fred Templeton, Jay Jones, Karen Steer, Jeff Juel, Chris Erca, Gina Knudson, Lynn Bennett, Larry Svalberg, Dave Swanson, John Robison, Michele Crist, Doug Wasileski, Karen Drnjevick, Ken Rodgers

The meeting began at 8:30 am. Ken Rodgers as the Hughes Creek interdisciplinary team leader for the Salmon-Challis introduced the technical specialists assembled to respond to information requests regarding the Hughes Creek Project area.

The technical specialists who presented and their subject areas are as follows:

David Deschaine, Hydrologist  
Lynn Bennett, Fire Ecologist  
Gene Sundberg, Silviculturist  
Cindy Haggas, Wildlife Biologist  
Kim Murphy, Fish Biologist  
Gail Baer, Forest Plan Directives  
Diane Schuldt, Weeds  
Jeff Parker, Roads Analysis  
Cammie Sayer, Archaeologist

Restoration group members requested clarification from the specialists on some key items. Some of those items included:

- Historical mortality rate from large fires in Hughes Creek drainage. Lynn said historical reports show that after the 1910 fire that occurred during August in a severe drought year, the area endured a 13% mortality rate. He said the average mortality rate forest-wide today is closer to 70%.
- Insect damage. Michele Crist inquired if pine beetle, spruce budworm, and dwarf mistletoe infestations were part of a cyclical pattern. Gene Sundberg agreed that they were.
- Indicator species in the area include bull trout, pileated woodpecker, spotted frog, and greater sage grouse, according to Cindy Haggas.
- Threatened/endangered fish species in Hughes Creek include spring/summer Chinook, steelhead, and bull trout. Kim Murphy said limiting factors for fish rearing habitat is the lack of large woody debris and large pools on the lower reaches. Most of this is on private land.
- Cammie Sayer was asked whether tribal involvement had been solicited. She said that neither Nez Perce or Fort Hall tribes had been contacted because a specific proposal had not yet been drafted.

### **Post-Presentation Discussion**

The technical specialists did a great job of answering questions during the presentation forum and informally through lunch. After lunch, Lemhi County Restoration Group members stayed to further discuss how to shape the proposed project.

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Steve Kimball, North Fork Ranger, expressed the need to focus on the driving factor of programmed NEPA funding for a fuels reduction project. Jeff Juel questioned whether the group should be constrained by external timelines and objectives.

The group determined that the narrower scope of the Hughes Creek proposal was part of the agreement from the August 2006 meeting. The need for a Summer 2007 record of decision had been discussed and agreed upon, with the understanding that the project would be a good starting point for the group with funding already in the pipeline. If the constraints proved too unwieldy for the group, the Forest Service would be willing to press forward outside the collaborative process although they would prefer to have the group's input, Kimball said.

Members agreed that they would continue to work on the Hughes Creek proposal as part of a phased approach to a broader watershed restoration goal. For the first Hughes Creek project, attending members agreed that stewardship contracting opportunities should be sought. One goal, however, was to extend

restoration activities beyond thinning. Noxious weed treatment and native plant reintroduction to include aspen regeneration were offered as possibilities. The Lemhi Resource Advisory Committee may be able to advance restoration activities above and beyond stewardship contracting receipts. An innovative approach to pre-and post-project monitoring activities was discussed with Fred Templeton informing the group that some funding was already available for his pilot monitoring stations.

The group determined that another field tour would be necessary to move forward in the project design process. A subcommittee made up of John Robison, Jake Kreilick, Karen Steer, Maia Enzer, Fred Templeton, Mike England, Karen Drnjevik, Doug Wasileski, Ken Rodgers and Lynn Bennett will get together and bring a proposal to the next meeting. The subcommittee will tackle defining a perimeter around structures and look at non-commercial activities w/in the riparian zones.

Larry Svalberg, USFS, commented that in other collaboratives landowners play a big role. Gina noted that Karen Drnjevik's presence at the meeting was a good step in the right direction and that her help would be critical in engaging North Fork and Gibbonsville locals. Karen agreed to help notify area residents and invite key community members. The group agreed that holding the next meeting in Gibbonsville and during non-business hours would be more appealing to that audience.

#### **Next Steps:**

Meeting scheduled for Friday & Saturday, December 8 & 9

Agenda will be firmed up but should include time for 1) scientist forum, 2) product utilization forum (invite local contractors), 3) project overview in an open house format for local landowners, 4) subcommittee recommendation on proposal design and discussion.

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#### **Attachment A –**

### **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Field Tour and Meeting Itinerary**

October 10 & 11, 2006

Location: Salmon, Idaho

#### Day 1: Field Tour of Jesse Creek Watershed/Overflight of Jesse Ck/Hughes Ck

Objective: To examine opportunities in the City of Salmon's municipal watershed and to fly over hard-to-access areas of Hughes Creek, the group's selected project area.

7:30am      Meet at Salmon Public Lands Center, Highway 93 South.

Stop/Discussion Points (not necessarily in order)

1. Travel to Little Baldy Communications Site via Williams Creek Road (021) and the Ridge Road (020) – overview of Jesse Creek from the top
2. Overlook of Phelan Creek basin and Roadless Area (immediately to the west of Jesse Cr) from the Ridge Road.
3. Stop at a Ridge Road Safety Zone created in 2000. What constitutes a Safety Zone?
4. Spur road/trail to overlook of Jesse Cr (short hike). **Lunch Provided.**
  5. Powerline Crossing (NW corner of Jesse Cr) – discussion of protection and possible fuel treatment area nearby (will not visit actual treatment site because of road condition)
6. Return to Salmon via Ridge Road to Stormy Peak Road.
7. Smedly Estates Subdivision – Urban interface and view into Jesse Creek from the bottom.

3:00 pm – Arrive at Salmon Airport for aerial tour of Jesse Cr and Hughes Cr watersheds

Overflight participants:

- 1) Jake Kreilick – Wild West Institute
- 2) John Robison – ID Conservation League
- 3) Michele Crist – Wilderness Society
- 4) Stan Davis – Mayor of Salmon
- 5) Mark Davidson – Nature Conservancy
- 6) Fred Templeton – Insightek
- 7) Lynn Bennett – USFS
- 8) Ken Rodgers – USFS
- 9) Pyramid Mtn Lumber or Westfall Logging??

4:30 pm          Adjourn

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Day 2: Hughes Creek Collaborative Project Meeting

Objective: To review resource issues and identify common goals for Hughes Creek project area.

8:30am          Meet at Salmon Business Innovation Center

Introductions and Welcome

8:45am          Forest Service Objectives in the Hughes Creek Project Area  
– Steve Kimball, North Fork District Ranger

9:00am          Resource Specialist data review (10-12 10 minute presentations)  
Ken Rodgers, Salmon-Challis National Forest Interdisciplinary Team Leader

10:00am          Break

10:15am          Data review continue

11:30am          Discussion

12:30pm          Lunch provided

1:00pm                  Begin to determine treatment goals, priorities and potential locations

2:00pm                  Explore opportunities for stewardship activities

4:00pm  
Next steps Establish  
next meeting Identify  
data needs Review  
timeline

4:30pm                  Adjourn





## Attachment B –

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Participants – October 10 & 11, 2006**

Participant	Representing	E-mail	Phone
1. Mayor Stan Davis	City of Salmon	mayorofsalmon@cityofsalmon.com	756-3214
2. Bob Cope	Lemhi County	teacup@salmoninternet.com	756-2124
3. Chris Erca	BLM	alexis_erca@blm.gov	756-5468
4. Lyle Powers	USFS	lepowers@fs.fed.us	756-5557
5. Jim Tucker	BLM	Jim_tucker@blm.gov	756-5490
6. Steve Kimball	USFS	skimball@fs.fed.us	865-2700
7. Jake Kreilick	Wild West Institute	jkreilick@forestadvocate.org	406/829-6353
8. Jeff Juel	Wild West Institute	jeffjuel@wildrockies.org	407/728-5733
9. Karen Steer	Sustainable Northwest	ksteer@sustainablenorthwest.org	503/221-6911
10. John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	jrobison@wildidaho.org	345-6942
11. Doug Graves	USFS	dgraves@fs.fed.us	756-5200
12. Fred Templeton	Bio-Power	f templeton@centurytel.net	756-1574
13. Jay Jones	Bio-Power	jayjones@custertel.net	756-1574
14. Gina Knudson	Salmon Valley Stewardship	salmonvalley@centurytel.net	756-2266
15. Maia Enzer	Sustainable Northwest	menzer@sustainablenorthwest.org	503/221-6911
16. Douglas Basford	USFS	dbasford@fs.fed.us	756-5270
17. Gene Sundberg	USFS	gsundberg@fs.fed.us	865-2700
18. Lynn Bennett	USFS	lbennett@fs.fed.us	756-5132
19. Wayne Hecker	USFS	whecker@fs.fed.us	756-5200
20. Dave Swanson	BLM	Dave_swanson@blm.gov	756-5100
21. Larry Svalberg	USFS	lsvalberg@fs.fed.us	756-5100
22. Doug Wasileski	Pyramid Mountain Lumber		406/239-2476
23. Michele Crist	Wilderness Society	Michele_crist@tw.s.org	343-8153

24. Karen Drnjevik	Lemhi County Emergency Services	kdlems@salmoninternet.com	756-2815 x271
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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Hughes Creek Subcommittee Meeting  
Gibbonsville, Idaho  
Tuesday, October 24, 2006  
Field Trip Notes**

**Tour Participants**

Jake Kreilick, Wild West Institute  
Jeff Juel, Wild West Institute  
Jay Jones, Bio-Power  
Gina Knudson, Salmon Valley Stewardship  
Lynn Bennett, USFS, fire ecologist  
Ken Rodgers, USFS, Hughes Ck IDT leader  
Ken Bell, USFS, acting North Fork fire management officer  
Doug Basford, Silviculturist  
Melissa Sarter, USFS, North Fork fire  
Doug Graves, USFS, acting North Fork asst. fire management officer  
Mike England, North Fork fire chief  
Doug Wasileski, Pyramid Mountain Lumber  
Karen Drnjevic, Lemhi County emergency services

**Field Tour Objectives Identified in Oct. 17 Conference Call**

(Conference call participants: Bob Cope, Jake Kreilick, Karin Drnjevic, Lynn Bennett and Ken Rodgers.)

1. Discuss Project Scope and Scale
2. Identify Strategic Zones at Topographic/Road Accessible Location Where Treatments Might Change Fire Behavior in a Way That Would Enhance Community Protection from Wildfire
3. Determine Proximity to Private Lands and Structures That Would Be Treated
4. Plan to Increase North Fork-Gibbonsville Community Involvement

**I. Hughes Creek Project Development Pre-Tour**

Attendees met at the Lewis and Clark Café parking lot between North Fork and Gibbonsville at 9:00 am. The group then moved to the North Fork Fire Station.

**Timeline**

Ken Rodgers reminded the group that the plan was for the Forest Service to have a proposed project to release to the public by January 2007. This subcommittee hopes to have a draft project proposal to present to the Lemhi County Restoration Group for the December meeting.

**Issues to Examine During the Tour**

- **Roads Analysis:** Jake said John Robison regretted not being able to attend but asked Jake to keep the subcommittee engaged about a roads analysis, specifically looking at what roads are not needed and which ones were for ingress and egress.

- **Wildland Urban Interface:** Lynn asked the tour participants to consider the project area in context of a larger scale zone for community protection.

Mike explained that since the Clear Creek fire, about \$100,000 had been spent making private property firewise between Sheep Creek and Gibbonsville. Jake emphasized landowner involvement would be key and that his group had taken part in work weekends to help private landowners make their homes more defensible in DeBorgia, MT. Mike stated he felt like area residents were hesitant to do more because the Forest Service lands adjacent to their property is in such poor health.

Karen said during the Community Wildfire Protection Planning meetings, participants considered 1.5 miles from structures and infrastructure to be the wildland urban interface zone. She said protection of rivers, streams and other water sources contributed to that delineation. Jake suggested that his organization feels more comfortable with ¼ or ½ mile from structures in most cases. Mike asked the group to consider the unique fire characteristics associated with the Salmon River country before adhering to a strict formula of proximity to communities. Ken pointed out that for the Hughes Creek project purposes the existing WUI map allows the Forest Service to accomplish the desired objectives with a compacted NEPA process (allowing a proposed action and no action without additional alternatives). He reminded the group that treatment options could vary throughout the acreage.

- **Funding:** Jeff commented that treating close to structures is the best way to spend the limited funding available. Mike said politically, the Forest Service will be forced to continue spending money fighting fires near communities in areas like Hughes Creek. He said he would prefer to see the dollars spent in preparation rather than in emergency situations when there is little time to weigh the cost effectiveness of options. Jay added that new technologies, like the biomass project he is working on, may supplement available funding by creating new revenue opportunities. Ken Bell mentioned that prescribed fire is a much less expensive way to treat more acreage. Like most things, prescribed burning gets more cost-efficient the larger the project.

#### **Hughes Creek Field Tour – 10 a.m – 4 p.m.**

**Granite Mountain Lookout:** On the way to the lookout, parts of the Gibbonsville and Ransack sale areas were visible. The group discussed the practicality of doing work adjacent to these areas to connect restored areas. Ken Bell and Mike England presented their concerns in terms of wildfire growth potential and firefighter safety. Ken explained that the most likely scenario is a lightning start high up on the ridge (which is what happened in 2003 w/ the Bear Springs Fire). Subalpine fir stands will enable fire to move quickly into the crowns with potential for spotting and large fire fronts.

The group determined that a common goal shared by all parties was the desire to see fire play a natural role in the Hughes Creek area once again. Lynn suggested a “confine and contain” firefighting strategy might be employed if certain conditions were restored, addressing issues like overgrowth through a variety of treatment methods.

Other factors and/or concerns that should weigh in to project design include:

- Firefighter observation that they do their best work on the tops and bottoms of units. Mid-elevation is more difficult to control.
- Monitoring of soil impacts of mechanical treatments may be warranted.
- Removing at least 20’ of competing vegetation around ponderosa pine allows the p. pine to thrive
  - The long-term maintenance of any proposed treatment should be examined so we are not setting the Forest Service and ourselves up to fail
- Elements such as noxious weed treatment can be written into a burn plan
- Private land owned by Meridian Mining disrupts the restoration pattern if left untreated. Karen Drnjevik will attempt to contact owners to see if they will become partners in the plan.

**Salzer Bar:** Doug Basford estimated that this unit had been logged between 20 and 30 years ago. The group noted that restoring the structure of these previously managed areas would offer some commercial

opportunities. Doug Wasileski of Pyramid concurred that although a lot of the trees were borderline marketable, overall a sale could be economically feasible.

**Hitching Post:** The group stopped at a popular trailhead that led to the Divide Trail and other areas frequented by recreation users. A pocket of old growth ponderosa is present in this area. A large number of young trees are coming up, and firefighters agreed that this is the type of area where prescribed fire could be introduced with little or no mechanical thinning done in advance.

This site is near Hughes Creek itself, and the group discussed riparian zone issues. Ken Bell emphasized that if the riparian zone was included in a burn plan, firefighters would not necessarily target the zone for prescribed burning but if, for instance, a burning log rolled streamside, crews could monitor the situation and allow fire to play a natural role without aggressively suppressing it. Some thinning and brush piling might be warranted in the riparian zone before a prescribed fire and near private property and the main road system. Jay noted that his company has already been in contact with David Deschaine, USFS hydrologist, about monitoring water quality in Hughes Creek.

Jake noted that he feels uncomfortable including the steep slopes on the south side of Hughes Creek in the treatment area. Access and other problematic issues might require that we table these sections for a future project.

#### **Next Steps:**

The subcommittee asked the Forest Service team to look at the approximately 15,000 Hughes Creek project area and present treatment options based on the following guidance:

- Depending on terrain, fuel load, etc, ¼ - ½ mile within private property, main roads, and powerlines should be identified for thinning and commercial harvest
- Prescribed burning could be considered anywhere within the area
- Areas where thinning and brush piling are required before burning should be indicated on the map
- Commercial harvest opportunities (with the goal of restoring structure, removing hazardous fuels, and creating economic opportunities) in previously managed areas

The FS will create a map and distribute to subcommittee members by Nov. 15. As soon as map is distributed, a conference call will be convened to discuss changes/additions/clarifications.

FS will adjust map accordingly and subcommittee designees will present proposal at the collaborative's December meeting.

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Year: 2006

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
North Fork Fire Department,  
December 8, 2006  
1:00 – 6:00 p.m.  
FINAL Meeting  
Summary**

**Participants:** Karin Drnjevic, Mike England, John Robison, Dave Swanson, Larry Svalberg, Ken Bell, Jim Tucker, Steve Kimball, Ken Rodgers, Paul Wuesthoff, Lyle Powers, Jake Kreilick, Lynn Bennett, Fred Templeton, Karen Steer, Gina Knudson (affiliations and contact information attached)

**Approval of minutes.** Members present voted unanimously to approve October 2006 meeting summary.

**I. Fundraising.** The Brainerd Foundation grant that Sustainable Northwest had been using to cover meal and other miscellaneous travel expenses has been depleted, Karen Steer reported. The group decided to form a fundraising subcommittee to explore opportunities to cover member travel expenses, as well as contribute to restoration projects. Jim Tucker mentioned that the BLM currently provides funding for the county to conduct wildland urban interface coordination and if available, the county might be able to apply some funds toward the restoration group. Maia Enzer referred the project to the Seattle-based Titcomb Family Foundation for consideration. These grant awards are typically in the \$2,000 range.

**Action: Gina, Karen, Jake, Stan, and Karin will head up an effort to identify funding opportunities by the January meeting.**

**II. Definitions.** To avoid confusion later on, the group spent time differentiating between hazardous fuels reduction and forest restoration. Members agreed that on dry sites such as most of the Hughes Creek project area, a fair amount of overlap exists. A narrow interpretation of **hazardous fuels reduction** involves a continuous management strategy of treating areas close to homes, private lands, and other community assets with the primary objective of making those assets safer in the event of a wildfire. **Forest restoration** may involve hazardous fuels reduction treatments but the intent is to modify forest structure so that natural processes such as fire are not entirely excluded from an area.

Riparian zones and riparian habitat conservation areas (RHCA) were also distinguished. The term riparian was agreed to mean an area where the vegetation expresses its water influences (thank you, Lynn). A riparian habitat conservation area indicates a more regulatory term. Where endangered species are involved a 300' buffer on either side of the stream restricts commercial harvest activities. The extent of other permissible activities was uncertain.

**Action: Determine what treatment activities could take place within the RHCA, including but not limited to non-commercial thinning and prescribed burn ignitions.**

**III. Private land treatments.** Mike England explained that when Marines were deployed to the area during the 2000 Clear Creek incident, they did some critical work next to homes in the area, including Hughes Creek. Karin Drnjevik explained that when she was first applying for grant funding, the standard was 60' from existing structures. Most homeowners had already accomplished that level of fuels reduction. New grant guidelines provide for a 100' zone of work.

Jeff Juel had distributed a summary of fire scientist Jack Cohen's paper concerning what he terms the Home Ignition Zone. Jake suggested that Cohen's estimation of a critical 130' around homes could be used around private property and community assets, moving to a 400' Community Protection Zone. Work beyond the 400' mark, depending on fuel type, would constitute the Forest Restoration Zone.

**IV. Hughes Creek Project Subcommittee Report.** Members who attended the October 24 Hughes Creek field trip described their initial steps to develop a project that meets forest restoration and hazardous fuels reduction objectives. General directions provided to the Forest Service interdisciplinary team included:

- a) Mechanical thinning along Hughes Creek and Ditch Creek Roads
- b) Commercial harvest in previously managed area to meet forest structure restoration objectives
- c) Prescribed burn analysis and consideration throughout an approximately 15,000 acre area understanding that multiple entries may be necessary

Ken Rodgers reported that given the basic areas of agreement, approximately 10,000 acres might be considered for prescribed fire and approximately 4,000 acres could receive mechanical treatment or hand thinning, both commercial and non-commercial. Ken advised that with the combined treatments, the equivalent clearcut area, or ECA, would probably continue to be below the 15-20% Forest Service hydrological standard for this type of project. Even though all of the potential work may not be accomplished under the group's Phase I project, Ken said the Forest Service considered the environmental analysis beyond the scope of a Categorical Exclusion and would most likely fall under Environmental Assessment level analysis.

[On December 19, Lyle Powers provided the following additional information regarding equivalent clearcut area: *The 15-20% ECA is NOT a standard, but is a guide based on research. The literature that our hydrologists cite indicates that changes in water yield are generally not measurable with a reduction of forest cover less than 20%. The [National Marine Fisheries Service] NMFS Biological Opinion on the Forest Plans under [Endangered Species Act] ESA indicates that an ECA of less than 15% "should confer a low risk of hydrologic effects on streams". The matrix for determining the effect on endangered fish species for NMFS uses the 15% as an indicator of effect.*

*We will consult with the regulatory agencies on an ECA that is greater than 15%. From a cumulative impacts point of view, if the ECA reaches 15-20% of the subwatershed, the hydrologists do some additional analysis to determine what the environmental risk of*

*exceeding 15-20% might be. The additional analysis would be documented in their specialist report for the project. Depending on the watershed and the project proposal (site specific), exceeding 20% ECA may be undetectable, or it might be significant and the NEPA would need to take that into account.*

*Our hydrologists commonly cite: John D. Stednick, Monitoring the effects of timber harvest on annual water yield. Journal of Hydrology Vol 176 (1-4) 1996 pp 79-95.*

**V. Public involvement.** Richard and Donna Rabe, Paul Werner, and Terry Smith joined the discussion along with Mike England on behalf of area residents. The residents expressed approval for the group's commitment to looking beyond the Home Ignition Zone concept and moving toward more restoration activities. They declared potential smoke from extensive prescribed burning treatments as a fact of life in their valley and generally expressed the sentiment that the positive long-term ecological effects would outweigh the short-term negative air quality effects. With the Ransack Sale as a general benchmark, commercial harvest activities were also seen as acceptable. Paul Werner stressed the importance of third-party monitoring to ensure that contracting requirements were fulfilled post-harvest. The residents also emphasized their concern about the invasiveness of noxious weeds in the Hughes Creek drainage and throughout the North Fork Ranger District.



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Year: 2006

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
North Fork Fire Department,  
December 9, 2006  
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
FINAL Meeting  
Summary**

**Participants:** Karin Drnjevic, Mike England, John Robison, Larry Svalberg, Steve Kimball, Ken Rodgers, Richard Rabe, Bob Schrenk, Vic Phillips, Paul Wuesthoff, Lyle Powers, Jake Kreilick, Lynn Bennett, Fred Templeton, Karen Steer, Gina Knudson, Stan Davis (affiliations and contact information attached)

**I. Purpose and Need Statement- Hughes Creek.** The group identified a laundry list for our purpose and need, including:

- a) Maintain/enhance visual qualities of Hughes Creek
- b) Identify status of roads, make recommendations for future management
- c) Fuels reduction around homes, private land, community assets
- d) Safely reintroduce fire into the watershed area
- e) Establish a safety zone for Hughes Ck urban interface while looking at long-term safety of Gibbonsville community and Hughes Ck watershed
- f) Protect transportation corridor – Hwy 93
- g) No net increase in weeds, target new species infestations in project area
- h) Restore stand structure/historic conditions in dryer sites

Ken Rodgers provided the Forest Service's initial language regarding purpose and need:

*"There is a need to reduce current risk of uncharacteristic wildland fire occurring on National Forest Lands within the Hughes Creek and Gibbonsville area which contains private lands and residences classified as wildland urban interface (WUI). The purpose is to reduce the density of forest vegetation and natural fuels to more effectively manage fire occurrence and potential spread within Hughes Creek and into the adjoining Gibbonsville vicinity".*

**Action: ALL. Refine Lemhi County Restoration Group's purpose and need statement.**

**II. Priority objectives.** The group rated listed objectives based on priority. The following are considered to be **Tier 1** priorities:

1. Establish fire resistant zone immediately around homes, private property, travel routes and other community values.
2. Modify fuel loads to restore ecological structure and functions, especially in regard to frequent fire regime. Establish strategic fuel breaks for community and firefighter safety.
3. Minimize catastrophic potential to riparian and old growth areas and help restore ecological function to those areas.

The following are considered to be **Tier 2** priorities:

4. Contain existing weeds and study different weed management techniques, such as pre-treating before a prescribed burn.
5. Identify status of roads and make recommendations for improvements such as replacing the Ditch Ck Bridge or the culvert at the west fork of Hughes Ck.

**III. Group standards.** The following were identified as **standards** that the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group should apply to every project, including Hughes Creek:

1. Monitoring and documentation of project results
  - 1.1. Tell the story so successes can be replicated, mistakes avoided
  - 1.2. Specifically highlight wildlife habitat enhancements
2. Economic development
  - 2.1. Identify opportunities for material utilization
  - 2.2. Encourage local econ development through utilization and restoration jobs
  - 2.3. Use stewardship contracting and best value contracting tools

**Action: ALL. Follow-up discussion on Thursday, Dec. 14, 1 p.m. conference call re: riparian, old growth treatment options.**

**IV. Material utilization.** Paul Wuesthoff and Fred Templeton gave a presentation on small diameter timber utilization. Vic Phillips explained that he is considering starting a post and pole manufacturing business in Salmon. All agreed that demand for products is high, but supply of raw materials is unreliable.

**Action: Karen Steer and others, develop a material utilization workshop for future meeting.**

Next steps:

Conference call, Thursday, Dec. 14, 1 pm MST to discuss riparian, old growth issues and large landowner involvement (Meridian mining).

Next collaborative meeting, Monday, January 29. Location North Fork, time TBD.

December 14, 2006 – Forestry Collaborative Conference Call Summary

Subject: Hughes Creek

Thanks to all the project planning subcommittee and other collaborative members for participating in yesterday's call. I think we were productive in achieving our objectives: to discuss more in-depth some key issues related to the restoration project to provided needed direction to the Forest Service as they begin the analysis process. Here were the main points I captured:

Participants: Karin Drnjevic, John Robison, Anne and Arden Westfall, Ken Rogers, Jay Jones, Lynn Bennett, Jake Kreilik, Karen Steer, John Goodman

Topics:

1. Private Lands - Karin contacted Meridian, the major landowner in the project area. The key contact, Adam, is out until next Monday, so she was not able to communicate with him yet about the project specifics; this is also why he was not in attendance at the last collaborative meeting. Karen will contact him Monday morning and discuss the project, thinning on their land, the type of harvest desired, etc. She will encourage him to attend our next collaborative meeting so we can have this in-depth discussion with him and gauge interest in working with us. Karin will report back to us next week with a summary of how the meeting went and any follow-up necessary.

2. Old Growth - There is desired old growth retention in the proposed treatment area. This might involve thinning to reduce competition and ensure resilience of old growth stands. There was agreement that non-commercial, ladder and surface fuels reduction as a possible treatment was acceptable if it achieved the desired goal. It was recommended that the Forest Service provide the collaborative group with data on the current stand conditions to prioritize treatment areas; then see what can be done first with non-commercial treatments; then, see if we need any commercial (much less desirable) treatments to achieve our desired end result of old growth retention. This information can be presented at the next full collaborative group meeting. We asked for information on how areas would be accessed and the specific types of prescriptions (burning or other) that might occur.

3. Riparian areas - As a point of clarification, NOAA will allow treatments in riparian areas with byproducts of restoration removed, but won't allow a timber sale. We need a fisheries biologist on-hand to have an in-depth conversation about treatments in riparian areas. We need to develop guidelines to help landowners with fuels reduction in the riparian areas, and then separate guidelines for public lands. We might also consider opportunities for creating pools. Phase 1 could identify opportunities; Phase 2 might be implementation. The group recommended that we have a conference call with Dan

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Garcia (FS fisheries expert) and others interested prior to our next collaborative meeting. This call was requested for the beginning of January. Ken/Lynn will check with Dan on availability and get back to the group. Karen Steer will then confirm and set up the call.

Ken Rodgers clarified: NOAA or other consulting agency allowance of activities in riparian area was a secondary point in this discussion. The Salmon-Challis NF fish biologist for this project currently estimates that limited activities in riparian areas (material removal and utilization not resulting in production of lumber like usual for a timber sale) could be assessed for impacts to fish species and habitats under the counterpart regulations allowed under the Hazardous Fuels Reduction Act. This potentially would eliminate the additional step (and more time) of consultation with the regulatory agencies.

4. Roads - The Forest Service requested feedback from the group on whether temporary road construction was possible in the project area. The group recommended using a 'three light system' - Red: No new roads unless there is a compelling case for it. And, no elimination of existing roads in this project; Yellow - possibility of constructing temporary roads if needed for desired end result; Green - Let's try to use existing roads system. We should also look for alternatives of building temporary roads, such as cable logging. With the three light system (and the understanding that temporary road construction was a possibility if necessary), the group asked that we wait for any more decisions until the roads analysis is ready to share at the next collaborative meeting.

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Subject: Hughes Creek Project Riparian Issues Conference Call,  
Thurs. Jan 11, 2007, 11 am – Noon

Participants: Dan Garcia (SCNF North Zone Fisheries Biologist), Ken Rodgers (SCNF Hughes Ck Interdisciplinary Team Leader), Jake Kreilick (Wild West Institute), Mike England (North Fork Fire Dept), Gina Knudson (Salmon Valley Stewardship)

Dan explained that Hughes Creek contains spawning and rearing habitat for three Endangered Species Act species: Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout. National Forest land starts above the Ditch Creek Road about 3 miles from the mouth of Hughes Creek.

In 2007, the FS is undertaking a North Fork Watershed Diversion and Restoration Environmental Assessment. After the assessment is complete, projects can be put on the Forest's priorities list. Prior to the assessment, some issues and opportunities on the National Forest section of Hughes Creek and its tributaries are known, such as:  
Culverts on the West Fork of Hughes Ck., the Ransack Loop Road, and Salzer Ck present migration barriers for fish  
Tailings piles from mining activities diminish riparian ecosystem  
Bank stability issues  
Not enough pools and large woody debris

Dan noted that some of the most significant issues are on the lower section of Hughes Ck that runs through private land. A 2-mile section of Hughes Ck from Ditch Ck to the West Fork of Hughes Ck is a strategic section of riparian area on FS property. Jake expressed an interest in touring that section either in the winter if travel allows or in early spring before the deciduous trees and shrubs have foliage.

We discussed how various treatment options would affect riparian issues in the drainage. Dan said his objective would be to protect the area from being denuded from wildfire and to see the riparian zone mimic what the riparian area would look like prior to fire exclusion. He has worked on previous projects (Moyer-Salt Rx Burn) where prescribed fire was allowable within the riparian area. His concern would be to keep the fire intensity low in the riparian area using techniques like buffering between the stream and burn piles. Low intensity fire right next to the stream would not be automatically objectionable if the burn achieved goal of reducing understory.

Dan is advising the Forest Service's interdisciplinary team of overstory and large woody debris needs critical to stream conditions, including water temperature. Commercial harvest in the riparian zone could be compatible with stream restoration objectives but would require consultation. Dan predicted that the proposed activities would fall into the "may affect" category, in which case consultation with National Marines Fisheries Service would be required anyway.

Trout Unlimited's Idaho Falls Chapter has been active in the area for many years and might be able to work together with the collaborative to approach private landowners about stream restoration projects in the important lower reach of Hughes Ck.

Dan responded to John Robison's emailed questions.

What types of fuel reduction activities in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas (RHCAs) areas trigger consultation?

- It's not the activity but their effect on fish. Commercial harvest would be an indicator of a "may affect" determination requiring consultation.

What are the main concerns of activities in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas (water temperature increase from shade reduction, increased sedimentation, decrease in future course woody debris recruitment, etc?)

Water temp is not a limiting factor for fish in Hughes Ck, and provisions would be added to keep 15-15 tons/acre of large wood debris on the ground. Keeping burn piles smaller to avoid sterile soil underneath and providing for bank stabilization near roads that would be impacted by logging are some of the methods that might be used for sedimentation concerns.

What types of ground-disturbing and log yarding methods are acceptable in RHCAs?

- Activities would be designed so sediment wouldn't get in the stream, using filter strips to trap fine material before they reached water.

What types of riparian restoration activities trigger consultation?

The Chinese hand-piled tailings from historic mining activities would impact a cultural resource and require consultation.

Does winter logging over sufficient snowpack help address sedimentation concerns? Definitely.

What are guidelines for pile burning in RHCAs to avoid adverse impacts to soils and water quality?

Filter strips would again be employed.

In other projects, materials were removed from RHCAs by hand so they could be burned farther away from streams. What ways exist to defray the costs of hand removal?

Not generally a fish biologist determination but roads in the area might lend themselves to bundling and removing by truck without much additional hauling.

Can hazardous fuels in the RHCA be used for stream restoration in areas where course woody debris is low?

Yes!

What are the comparative effects on soil stability of bringing the wood to the creek for coarse woody debris restoration instead of to the road for commercial uses?

The FS will most likely need to update the coarse woody debris inventory completed about 15 years ago to adequately determine this.

What time of year should activities be conducted to limit impacts to fisheries?

Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Project technical team has determined that in this area it's most important to avoid the initial spawning season if suitable spawning habitat is available. For Chinook that's around Aug 1 – Sept 30 and for bull trout it's around Aug 15-Sept. Hughes Ck is mostly lower elevation so winter treatments are usually an option but not necessarily a recommendation at this time.

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting**  
**North Fork Fire Department,**  
**January 29, 2007**  
**1:00 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**DRAFT Meeting**  
**Summary**

***Participants:***

Steve Kimball, Ken Rodgers, John Robison, Bob Cope, Gina Knudson, Bob Schrenk, Karen Steer, Jim Rineholt, John Goodman, Mike England, Fred Templeton, Jay Jones, Cindy Haggas, Dan Garcia, Gene Sundberg, Jeff Parker, Lynn Bennett, Paul Wuesthoff, Greg Painter, Karin Drnjevik, Ken Bell, Mike England, Hadley Roberts, Ken Thacker, Dave Melton, Ted Melberg, Brian Johnston, Stan Davis, Paul Werner, Adam Whitman, Terry Smith (Affiliations attached)

**Old Business**

- Approval of Dec 2006 minutes
  - List-serve: Gina explained that the list-serve is taking more time than planned to get up and running.
  - Participant list: Discussion that we need to have participants categorized to know who is a collaborative group member, who is an observer, who wants to be kept informed, etc.
  - Is anyone missing?: We reviewed whether there were still people missing from the table who should be brought into the process. New prospective invites include: Lowell Cerise, County Weeds person Dan Bertam, Gibbonsville Improvement Association (Earl Keating).

Action: Gina will: 1) continue working on the list-serve; 2) categorize participation categories; 3) follow-up with potential new members

**Fundraising Update**

Gina briefed the group that we currently have \$2,900 from the Titcomb Foundation that needs to be budgeted. We discussed funding needs: Meals, travel, collaborative group coordination, supplies/postage, workshops/events/trips, on-the-ground project implementation and monitoring. The idea of a 'Business Alliance' was also discussed. This Alliance would help organize the various potential local contractors to be able to bid on forest restoration projects. The Alliance could take various forms (nonprofit, business entity, clearinghouse, etc) which needs to be fleshed out based on needs, desires and opportunities. A grant might go towards funding the development of this Alliance, or towards exploring what this Alliance might look like.

We discussed possible grant from the National Forest Foundation. Funds might go directly towards the Business Alliance, or might be used to fund some of the other needs of the collaborative with some funds available to explore the Business Alliance Concept.

Action: Karen Steer will pursue this conversation with the National Forest Foundation

Action: Gina will convene a conference call with the Fundraising Subcommittee (Karen, Karin, Jake, Stan, Fred, Gina) to discuss other grant opportunities, strategies for pursuing grants, and possible project asks.

Action: The full group agreed that Salmon Valley Stewardship should take the lead on fundraising for the collaborative group, and would serve as the nonprofit organization in which grants would be housed.

## **Meridian Mining Update**

Gina and Karin have made significant progress with reaching out to Meridian. Conversations with Adam Whitman led to positive reception of the Hughes Creek project and assistance, stating interest in taking a similar fuels reduction/restoration approach on Meridian lands. Adam asked for a letter from the collaborative group stating that the project has community support. Once there is a proposed action, we can work with Meridian on specific prescriptions for their lands, also working with the ID Dept of Lands.

Action: Gina and Karin will draft a letter for distribution to the group.

There are three other property owners in Ditch Creek who have not yet been contacted, but are important for project implementation.

Action: Gina will provide the information to Karin, who will follow-up with the landowners.

## **Conference Call updates**

Several calls were held during the past months to share information related to resource issues within the project area, and to develop zones of agreement around acceptable project objectives and activities. A summary of these calls, with some additional information, was provided (minutes were sent out previously). Key points:

*Riparian Issues (January 11, 2007)*

- Endangered Species – There are trigger points for whether consultation will be needed. Shouldn't change project design, but might shorten NEPA depending.
  - Commercial timber cannot be sold in the RHCA. This is fine. Treatments can still be done
  - There is an opportunity to improve pools with addition of coarse woody debris. This, however, will not be part of the project, but will be a separate, expedited project.

*Old Growth and Roads (December 14, 2006)*

The project will include treatments (11) in old growth, but will not include any cutting of old growth. Mostly, prescribed burning with some handpiling. Concern was raised that it is difficult to design treatments in and around old growth without a better understanding of the condition of old growth stands – information is lacking on this.

We will continue with the 'Red-Yellow-Green' method of determining road/temporary road construction. Roads will not be closed for this project. *The group discussed the need to have a lengthier conversation about roads, flagged for a future meeting.*

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## **Collaborative Check-in: How are we doing?**

Discussion focused on how members are feeling about our work together. Mostly, the issue had come up that activities and conflicts outside of the Hughes Creek project (the work of the collaborative group) might be affecting relations within the group. We agreed on the importance of 'no surprises' and to use the collaborative group as a forum for sharing information, concerns, etc. without creating barriers for our work together.

The issue of old growth was discussed, particularly as it relates to the reason for other projects on the forest getting appealed. While this issue will not slow down the Hughes Creek project, it is a concern of the environmental community that old growth is not adequately mapped, and that

conditions are not well known. Jake proposed having an in-depth discussion and educational session around the issue of old growth, mentioning that colleague Jeff Juel would participate.

Action: We will plan a future (possibly March) meeting to include discussions about old growth

## **Hughes Creek Project Discussion**

### ***Project Budget***

Forest Service provided a review: Currently, there is funding to do the NEPA. A decision will be forthcoming in October or November. They hope to have funds for 2008 for the stewardship contract. Funds for work outside of fuels reduction (the bridge, for example) are not secured. While we do not yet have a project budget, and this will take time to develop, the sooner we have a sense of what we have available, the better we can plan for this project.

The project will most likely be funded through a combination of goods-for-services, appropriated funds, and grants. Suggestions were given on funding options: 'Above Base Funding Request'; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Trout Unlimited. Bob Schrenk emphasized the importance of putting a dollar value to project components (i.e., treatment costs, revenue potential). From his experience with Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, failing to do so results in "acres thought about versus acres treated."

### ***Noxious Weeds/Insects***

The current proposed project does not offer enough in terms opportunities for noxious weed mitigation/removal. The group is interested in going 'above and beyond' what is normally done, and would like to pursue this further.

There might be Partnership dollars for weeds. Fish and Game has contributed to weed treatments in this area previously.

John Goodman of Moose Creek Estates and Jim Rineholt of the Sawtooth Natl Recreation Area have been treating insect infestations with pheromone pouches. This could be a very cost effective way to keep insects out of specific areas, such as designated old growth units.

Action: Gina will set up a conference call to discuss opportunities around weeds for inclusion in the project.

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### ***Habitat Diversity***

Greg Painter from Idaho Fish and Game brought up the importance of creating habitat diversity beyond elk/deer. Need to keep this in mind as we develop treatments.

### ***Timeline for project process***

Proposed action will be out in the next few months

The decision will be in late summer

Project will start in 2008; unsure of length of contracts. Jake suggested that this phase should aim for a within 5 year timeline to complete work.

Draft will be under Healthy Forest Restoration Act and will have one alternative and no action analyzed.

### **Next Steps**

1. The group was not quite ready to 'sign off' on the project. They had full agreement that the project was almost there, but some final clarifications still needed to occur:



- Two conference calls to discuss weeds, old growth. A vote for approving the project will be taken via conference call or email confirmation for those who cannot make the call.
2. The group discussed the need for a stewardship contracting training. Karen Steer will work on the agenda for this.
  3. Next meeting scheduled for sometime in March. We'll figure out date later.
- Action: Gina will coordinate a conference call  
Action: Karen will begin developing stewardship contracting workshop

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Meeting Agenda**

FINAL January 29, 2007

Location: North Fork Fire Department

Our Mission: Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.

1:00 pm

Introductions, Approval of December 2006 summary, Contact information

1:30 pm

Fundraising  
Funding opportunities & priorities

1:45 pm

Meridian Mining and other private landowner updates

2:00 pm

Conference call summaries  
Riparian, old growth, roads, etc.

2:30 pm

Collaborative check-in  
Are we meeting our stated objectives?

3:00 pm

Hughes Ck Project Review/Discussion  
Review Forest Service map based on sideboards/discussion  
NEPA process update and timeline  
Project budget estimates  
Stewardship Contracting opportunities/ Utilization

5:00 pm

15 minute break

5:15 pm

Public forum  
Introductions, Summary  
Description of issue resolution or resolution needed

7:00 pm

Adjourn

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting**  
**North Fork Fire Department,**  
**April 10, 2007**  
**1:00 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**FINAL Meeting**  
**Summary**

**Attendance:** Mike England, Hadley Roberts, Jennifer Purvine, Ken Bell, Doug Graves, Doug Basford, Steve Kimball, Terry Hershey, Jake Kreilick, Jeff Juel, Bob Cope, Lynn Bennett, Roy Hoffman, Karen Steer, Gina Knudson, Jim Owens (affiliations and contact information are Attachment A)

**Approval of minutes.** Members present voted unanimously to approve January 2007 meeting summary.

**Old Growth discussion.** Forest Service wildlife biologist Jennifer Purvine joined the group to talk about designated old growth issues. Jennifer is the author of “Review of Old Growth Retention Stand Forest Plan Compliance for the Salmon National Forest.” She brought the most recent version (Feb 2007) of the study to meeting and provided an electronic copy after the meeting.

Jeff Juel gave a brief overview of the U.S. Forest Service’s old growth policies. In the late 1980s, Chief of the Forest Service Dale Robertson directed the agency to examine and designate old growth characteristic stands. Robertson cited social values, court challenges, and biological diversity as driving factors for maintaining old growth stands. It is unclear how the Forest Service determined that 10 percent of forest stands should be designated as old growth units, but it appears to have no scientific basis. The Salmon-Challis identified 80-acre “retention blocks” of old growth.

Jeff expressed concern about the state of old growth forests on the Salmon-Challis, including specific issues such as:

- Current inventory of old growth is inadequate
- Road density is causing impacts on snags, etc from firewood cutters
- Natural processes are not being allowed to happen

Jennifer explained that the purpose of her paper was to see if the Salmon-Challis is meeting the intent of their Forest Plan in terms of maintaining old growth retention stands. All present generally agreed that inventory needs to be updated and the 1988 Forest Plan is in need of revision to account for the role of high-intensity fires and to incorporate new definitions of old growth or old forests (*Characteristics of Old-Growth Forest in the Intermountain Region* by Hamilton 1993 was referenced). Additionally, the 80-acre retention blocks are now understood to be too small to benefit old forest dependent wildlife species.

Bob Cope questioned whether designated old growth is important because the natural processes of a decaying forest are allowed to take place (wildfire, beetle kill, or death by other natural causes) or because of results, i.e. mature trees create habitat for wildlife.

Does the forest add designated old growth to replace stands wiped out in large-scale wildfires?

Lynn Bennett noted that 80 percent of the Salmon-Challis National Forest is either wilderness or inventoried roadless areas thus no commercial timber activities are taking

place on these forest lands. If natural process is the key to old growth, than these areas should be meeting that criteria.

Hadley Roberts inquired if anyone knew of any scientific literature that addressed managing old growth stands for beneficial use, specifically using prescribed fire to enhance old growth qualities. Doug Graves and Ken Bell said both the Indian Creek and Hot Springs prescribed burns contained old growth components. The idea is to assess pre-treatment conditions, propose a treatment and predict outcomes.

**Action Item: Possible field trip or photo documentation of Indian Creek/Hot Springs project results. Plan a field trip to look at Hughes Ck. Phase I old growth stands.**

**Hughes Creek Phase I.** North Fork District Ranger Steve Kimball said the Forest expects to announce the proposed action and scoping in May. Steve announced that he has accepted a new job as the National Fire Plan Coordinator for Idaho, coordinating activities between the public and private sectors.

Mike England suggested the group look into accomplishing stream restoration on private lands as part of Phase I. All present agreed that such action would be a good way to get residents more involved.

Gina Knudson distributed a letter addressed to Meridian Mining requesting their participation in fuels reduction treatments on their lands. Gina will send the letter to Adam Whitman to coincide with the Forest's proposed action announcement.

**Fundraising.** Gina reported on her conversation with Mary Mitsos the vice president of the National Forest Foundation. Mary indicated that the grant recipient would be Salmon Valley Stewardship rather than the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group. Because of that technicality, the Community Assistance Program grant providing start-up funds was not suitable for SVS. The Mid-Capacity grant providing \$35,000/yr for 2 yrs is a good match, however, and funds can be used for restoration group activities as well as capacity building for SVS. The application is due May 18 and Gina will circulate a draft to fundraising subcommittee members. Karen Steer suggested that members might provide a letter of support for the grant.

Jim Owens from the Brainerd Foundation (Seattle, WA) sat in on part of the meeting. Brainerd has previously provided funding to SVS and Sustainable Northwest to enable both groups to work in Lemhi County.

**Upcoming Biomass Workshop in Salmon:** The Lemhi County Economic Development Association is sponsoring a community workshop in Salmon on June 1 titled "Forest Health, Working Toward Community Collaboration." Workshop organizers would like Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group members to attend and make a short presentation. Gina will be the lead on this and provide more information to the group as it is available.

**Future Projects:** Lynn Bennett and Terry Hershey presented two possible collaborative projects. The South Fork of Williams Creek is within the Wildland Urban Interface Zone and has a grazing allotment on it. Rancher Roy Hoffman was present to hear more about the proposal. The project has only about 100 acres of potentially commercial timber and would be primarily treated with prescribed fire. Roy expressed concern that he would lose access to grazing if the burning takes place all in one year.

Another project is on Bob Moore Creek, northwest of Jesse Creek. Lynn explained that Jesse Ck still has the roadless area hurdle in front of it, while Bob Moore does not and it could be strategic in terms of the city's municipal watershed. The group discussed that

the predominant direction of fire movement in the area is westerly so the Bob Moore project may not be the right place to start work. In further discussion continued at the Lewis and Clark Café, group members suggested that we gather more information about Jesse Creek options before trying to approach that project in small pieces. Phase II of Hughes Creek may be the most logical next project. The discussion will continue at our next meeting.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Saturday, June 2 in Salmon, to coincide with the June 1 biomass workshop.

The meeting adjourned at 7 pm.

## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

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Attachment A

April 10, 2007

Participants and Contact Info

Participant	Representing	Contact
1. Hadley Roberts	Citizen	708 Lombard St., Salmon <a href="mailto:hroberts@salmoninternet.com">hroberts@salmoninternet.com</a> 756-2163
2. Bob Cope	Lemhi County	1610 Main Street, Salmon <a href="mailto:teacup@salmoninternet.com">teacup@salmoninternet.com</a> 756-2124
3. Mike England	North Fork Fire Dept	2386 Hwy 93 N., North Fork, ID 83466 <a href="mailto:mwendland@hotmail.com">mwengland@hotmail.com</a> 865-2321
4. Gina Knudson	Salmon Valley Stewardship	513 Main Street, Salmon <a href="mailto:salmonvalley@centurytel.net">salmonvalley@centurytel.net</a> 756-1686
5. Karen Steer	Sustainable Northwest	620 SW Main, Suite 112, Portland, OR 97205 <a href="mailto:ksteer@sustainablenorthwest.org">ksteer@sustainablenorthwest.org</a> 503/221-6911
6. Jake Kreilick	Wild West Institute	PO Box 7998, 314 N. First St., Missoula, MT 59807 <a href="mailto:jkreilick@wildrockies.org">jkreilick@wildrockies.org</a> 406/829-6353
7. Jeff Juel	Wild West Institute	PO Box 7998, Missoula, MT 59807 <a href="mailto:jeffjuel@wildrockies.org">jeffjuel@wildrockies.org</a> 406/728-5733
8. Steve Kimball	USFS	1206 S Challis Street, Salmon <a href="mailto:skimball@fs.fed.us">skimball@fs.fed.us</a> 865-2700
9. Lynn Bennett	USFS	<a href="mailto:lbennett@fs.fed.us">lbennett@fs.fed.us</a> 756-5132
10. Douglas Basford	USFS	<a href="mailto:dbasford@fs.fed.us">dbasford@fs.fed.us</a> 756-5270
11. Doug Graves	USFS	<a href="mailto:dagraves@fs.fed.us">dagraves@fs.fed.us</a> 756-5200

12. Ken Bell	USFS, No. Fork AFMO	<a href="mailto:kbell@fs.fed.us">kbell@fs.fed.us</a> 865-2700
13. Jim Owens	Brainerd Foundation	1601 Second Ave, Suite 610, Seattle WA 98101 jimo@brainerd.org (206) 448-0676
14. Jennifer Purvine	USFS	208-879-4100
15. Roy Hoffman	Citizen	123 Highway 93 South, Salmon

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Attachment B

April 10, 2007 Agenda

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Meeting Agenda**

Tuesday, April 10, 2007

1 PM – 7 PM

Our Mission: Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.

Location: North Fork Fire Department

- 1:00 pm      Introductions  
Approval of January 2007 summary  
Finalize Meridian Mining letter w/ signatures
- 1:30 pm      Old Growth on the Salmon-Challis National Forest  
Roundtable Discussion  
Identify Next Steps for Collaborative Involvement in Issue
- 3:30 pm      15 Minute Break
- 3:45 pm      June 1 Workshop in Salmon (Lemhi Co Econ Development Corp sponsor) “Forest Health: Working Toward Community Collaboration”
- 4:15 pm      Fundraising Update  
National Forest Foundation grant  
Brainerd Foundation (Jim Owens)
- 4:30 pm      Project Review  
Hughes Ck. – Forest Service Status Check  
Potential New Projects
- 5:30 pm      Move to Lewis & Clark Café

(Pizza Courtesy of the Titcomb Foundation)  
Continue Next Project Discussion  
Establish Next Meeting Date & Agenda Items

7:00 pm      Adjourn

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Year: 2007

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
Salmon Business and Innovation Center  
September 14, 2007  
10:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.  
DRAFT Meeting  
Summary**

***Participants:***

Bob Cope, Gina Knudson, Jim Rineholt, John Goodman, Mike England, Fred Templeton, Lynn Bennett, Karin Drnjevik, Tim Metzger, Hadley Roberts, Russ Riebe, Russ Bacon, Bill Wood, Jim Tucker, Owen LeMaster, Arden Westfall, Doug Basford, Hoby Thomas, Jake Kreilick, George Miley, Vic Phillips (Affiliations attached)

**Old Business**

- Approval of April 2007 minutes
  - List-serve: Gina has set up a list-serve at Google groups. Members can now email the whole group by addressing [lemhi-forest-restoration@googlegroups.com](mailto:lemhi-forest-restoration@googlegroups.com).

**Hughes Creek Update**

Russ Bacon, the new North Fork District Ranger, introduced himself and updated the group about the Forest Service's progress with the Hughes Creek Environmental Assessment. He is aiming for a final signed document in April. This doesn't effect the timing of the actual work beginning on the project and gives the interdisciplinary team more time. A draft would be ready for review in January or February.

He commended Doug Graves and Mike Helm for inventorying and essentially ground-truthing the project's old growth stands. Based on conversations from the May 17 old growth field tour where group members indicated support of "exchanging" old growth reserve stands based on actual vs. mapped conditions, Doug and Mike were able to identify better old growth than what was on the map.

The Salmon-Challis received the above-base funding they requested for Hughes Creek in the amount of \$400,000. Russ indicated that he and the team are looking at the project and identifying potential opportunities where money could be saved on fireline and applied toward mechanical treatment. He explained that current costs for building handline is \$8,000/mile.

In response to the scoping notice, the Forest received very few comments with the exception of one Hughes Creek resident who was concerned about smoke levels.

Russ expressed his own concerns about some of the project's prescribed fire plans, particularly on the south side of Hughes Creek where fire would be applied to the north facing slope and many of the trees are dead. Jake questioned whether we had talked about mechanical treatments in those areas. Russ responded only in those areas that had been previously managed. His preference would be to helicopter log or leave it alone.

Jake mentioned that treatment to remove some of the brush from the creek area should be a priority, even if it is expensive, because of the proximity and fire danger it poses to homes. Russ

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said the team has been looking at innovative riparian treatments. There is opportunity to break the drainage up into blocks, removing conifers and keeping aspen while interrupting continuous fuels in the drainage. Jake reminded that one of our original goals was to increase woody debris in the pools, so the removed trees could be used to help with that.

Action: Field trip to refine project is being planned for Oct 22 or Oct 24 if possible. (Commissioner Cope can't make the Oct 22 date.)

### **Meridian Mining Update**

Adam Whitman sent a letter requesting that the Lemhi Forest Restoration Group develop a feasibility plan to reduce hazardous fuels "in order to create a zero-cost or profitable scenario for Meridian's consideration and approval."

Karin asked what the status of the Ditch Creek Bridge is. With the bridge out, travel costs are going to be higher so reaching a break-even point will be more difficult. Russ Bacon said he was requesting funds for the bridge replacement from the Resource Advisory later in the afternoon.

Action: Jim Rineholt is going to confer with the project's silviculturists so he understands the surrounding prescription and will do an on-site assessment.

Action: Gina will write a letter outlining the group's next action and coordinating the on-site visit to Meridian's land.

### **Hughes Creek Project Private Landowner Opportunities**

Karin said the county has secured \$94,000 for fuels reduction on private lands in the Hughes Creek area. The first phase will be focused on Hughes Creek and the second phase on Ditch Creek. Landowners are required to provide a 10% match.

Mike England said chipping the material on-site might be an option. Jake added that the Frenchtown Fire Department requires \$200 from landowners to pay for their chipping services.

Prescribed burns on private lands might also be a consideration. A cooperative agreement with the Forest Service and North Fork Fire Department might need to be developed. Landowners should be made aware of when the Forest plans to initiate burning in the area. John Goodman said Moose Creek Estates has a 400-gallon water pump that could be loaned to Hughes Creek residents.

Action: Mike and Tim Metzger, the North Fork Fire Management Officer, should determine what needs to be in place to help private landowners with burning activities.

Action: A committee should be formed to coordinate private fuels reduction activities. Volunteers included: Karin, Mike, Jake, John, Cope, Tim, and Gina

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**Williams Lake BLM and Lemhi County WUI Projects**

Two years ago, the BLM accomplished a fuels reduction project on the hillsides above the Williams Lake subdivision. Approx. 150 acres were thinned using a masticator and then followed with pile burning. Lemhi County now has \$10,500 through the Western Lands grant program to contribute toward fuels reduction on +/- 25 acres of private land at Williams Lake.

Both contractors and forest restoration group members are interested in a field tour of the area.

Action: Karin will write to the president of the homeowners association to see if we can schedule a half day trip to Williams Lake on the Oct 22 or 24th of the Hughes Ck field tour.

### **Woody Biomass Workshops in Salmon**

Salmon Valley Stewardship has been partnering with the Lemhi County Economic Development Association on presenting a series of workshops for the public about forest health issues and how they tie to economic opportunities. On June 1, the first workshop focused on collaboration. Pete Johnston traveled from Council, Id to talk about his community's work and Gina, Jake, and Mike gave their perspective on the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group. The second workshop took place on July 27 with the title of "Woody Biomass Products: Building Community Capacity." Guest speakers included Peter Stark of North Slope Flooring, Eric Hanson of Atlas Pellets, and Craig Rawlings of the Montana Community Development Association. Vic Phillips talked about his plans for a post and pole operation. Attendance was dynamic and included business people who had not previously participated, including Mike Allen one of the owners of Quality Beam. By the end of the meeting, participants agreed that a biomass boiler that utilized wood chips such as the Council schools use would benefit the community and provide an outlet for unmerchantable wood products from fuels reduction activities.

Future workshops include a September 27 funding session to including Fuels for Schools and Beyond, the Woody Biomass grant, and USDA Rural Development funds that could be used to improve forest restoration capacity. On October 23, a stewardship contracting workshop will feature the Forest Service's regional stewardship contracting official, Scott Truman from the Southern Utah Alliance, and Bob Schrenk from Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

Action: Mark your calendar for September 27 and October 23.

### **Five-Year Action Plan**

Sustainable Northwest has agreed to assist us with a 5-year action plan for the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group. Gina explained that funding our projects will be easier if we have clear direction and priorities. One of the major issues we need to address is whether we want to devote time to individual smaller projects or work on a more landscape or watershed scale.

Members agreed that this would be useful and would require several hours of intense work.

Action: Gina and Alden Boetsch will work on available times and get back to the group.

**Meeting adjourned at 2 pm.**



**Our Mission:** Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.

- 10:00 am Introductions, Approval of April 2007 summary  
Administrative business – lemhi-forest-restoration@googlegroups.com
- 10:15 am Hughes Creek Project Update  
Environmental Analysis – Russ Bacon, North Fork District Ranger  
Private Landowner Opportunities – Gina Knudson, Salmon Valley Stewardship
- 11:15 am Williams Lake Fuels Reduction – Jim Tucker, BLM  
Private Lands grant program – Karin Drnjevik, Lemhi County
- 11:45 am Lunch
- 12:45 pm Biomass Workshop Update and Schedule -- Gina
- 1:15 pm Planning for Future Projects - Gina  
National Forest Foundation grant  
5-Year Action plan
- 2:00 pm Forest Fuels Solutions Start-Up – Vic Phillips, owner
- 2:30 pm Next meeting, date, location, agenda
- 3:00 pm Adjourn

## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2007

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October 24, 2007 – Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Field Trip

Location: Hughes Creek

Subject: Designated old growth unit substitutions

Thanks to all who were able to attend our most recent Hughes Creek field trip. Those of you unable to attend missed a beautiful and productive morning. Following are a few key points (and fun photos) of the site visit:

Participants: Ken Rodgers, Jake Kreilick, Russ Bacon, Ken Bell, Tim Metzger, Cindy Haggas, Gina Knudson, Mike England

The main purpose of the field trip was discuss and examine designated old growth units from the Hughes Creek project area where substitutions were being proposed. Salmon- Challis National Forest employees **inventoried** examined the project's designated old growth units on the north side of Hughes Creek during the summer, as well as other mature forest stands exhibiting old growth characteristics. Cindy Haggas, wildlife biologist, and Gene Sundberg, silviculturist, later visited the area to determine from the ground if the Forest was in fact managing the right old growth. The results of these assessments were that seven units among designated old growth stands proposed for fuels reduction treatments contained some of the minimum criteria defined in R.C. Hamilton's

1993 document: "Characteristics of Old-Growth Forest in the Intermountain Region".

Six other units have had previous tree harvest entries and are deficient in meeting defined old growth. Additional forest stands **total** approximately 300 acres in the project area where inventoried and found to contain old growth qualities. These areas have been proposed in two assemblages (Humbug Creek and east of Ditch Creek) as substitutes for four of the designated units found to be lacking old growth character.

The group visited a site above the Salzer Bar area where a currently designated old growth unit is located. It exemplified the deficient stand conditions and roaded character that are reasons why substitutions **is** are being proposed. Next, the group hiked through the Humbug Creek/ridge area where roads are minimal and forest stands were found similar to

adjoining designated old growth with strong characteristics. The goal is to create a larger block of old growth on the creek/ridge. University of Montana data shows that the area is important migratory elk habitat.

The substitutions slightly increase the amount of old growth acreage in the project area. The Forest proposes to commercially thin for hazardous fuels reduction in the traded out units because they have previous harvest like adjoining timberlands. ~~and~~ The swaps are considered administrative in nature (Salmon Forest Plan provides for old growth substitutions without a NEPA decision), and the minor increase in commercial thinning acreage would not require the project to be re-scoped.

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Russ Bacon prompted the group to discuss appropriate management activities to enhance old growth characteristics. Everyone felt comfortable with a first low-intensity entry of prescribed fire, possibly with snow still on the ground to initiate a mosaic pattern of fire. A second entry would hand thin around large diameter trees and possibly move vegetation from around the base of big trees. A range of diameter ~~eap~~ of materials expected to be thinned~~ing~~ should be in place as should desired condition for post-treatment cover requirements. The third entry would most likely entail broadcast burning.

The goal would be to address encroaching Douglas Fir, and reinvigorate diversity, especially where small aspen stands and willows are present. After treatment, appropriate fire management would be expected to be less aggressive and therefore less costly. One acknowledged side effect is the possibility that trees stressed from burning might be more prone to bark beetles.

The experimental nature of the treatment makes the forest restoration group's multi-party monitoring plan all the more critical. Any plan should make sure that Forest Service monitoring and multi-party monitoring are coordinated. Citizens might play a useful role in monitoring through photo points tied to GPS coordinates. Aquatic monitoring might require technical assistance but could involve innovations like Fred Templeton's remote diagnostic sensors that can then be observed by citizens and/or students. Mike England suggested that students or others may want to analyze how much of the project material is being utilized versus non-utilized. What goes unused from a commercial standpoint and why? Jake Kreilick added that the benefits of seemingly wasted slash, etc. might teach students about nature's economy.

Russ Bacon said that although as much of the Hughes Creek project as possible will be aimed at private contractors, he is recommending work in the designated old growth areas be done by Forest Service crews.

Follow-up: The social acceptability of large-scale prescribed fire such as that proposed for Hughes Creek was discussed. Ken Bell suggested that if burn plans could be coordinated with Idaho Fish and Game, hunters would be able to plan around schedules or at least be informed of fire activity. Gina will contact Gary Power, IDFG commissioner, and/or other IDFG personnel about this idea.

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May 17, 2007 Hughes Creek Old Growth Tour Orientation

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Jake Kreilick, Tim Metzger, Ken Rodgers,  
and Russ Bacon check out this esteemed member of a Hughes Creek designated old  
growth unit (October 24, 2007, Humbug Ck Ridge area)

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Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Conference Call  
Thursday, December 6, 2007  
2:30 – 3:30 pm

Participants: Alden Boetsch, Bob Cope, Karin Djrnevik, Maia Enzer, Gina Knudson, Jake Kreilick, Vic Phillips, Ken Rodgers, John Robison

The first item of discussion was the October 24 Hughes Creek Old Growth Field Tour Summary sent out to collaborative members for review. No one had any changes. John had requested an overview of our efforts to address old growth issues on the Hughes Creek project. Gina provided the following information to John:

1. 12/9/06 – (North Fork meeting) Group established priority objectives and included in that list: Minimize catastrophic potential to riparian and old growth areas and help restore ecological function to those areas.
2. 12/14/06 – (Conference Call) Old Growth - There is desired old growth retention in the proposed treatment area. This might involve thinning to reduce competition and ensure resilience of old growth stands. There was agreement that non-commercial, ladder and surface fuels reduction as a possible treatment was acceptable if it achieved the desired goal. It was recommended that the Forest Service provide the collaborative group with data on the current stand conditions to prioritize treatment areas; then see what can be done first with non-commercial treatments; then, see if we need any commercial (much less desirable) treatments to achieve our desired end result of old growth retention. This information can be presented at the next full collaborative group meeting. We asked for information on how areas would be accessed and the specific types of prescriptions (burning or other) that might occur.
3. 3/9/07 (Conference Call) Hadley Roberts expressed concern about RX burning in old growth designated areas. Participants discussed the option of removing any old growth treatment from the project recommendation, but determined that analyzing the potential to “enhance or maintain” old growth dependent characteristics would be a step in the right direction. If the analysis cannot demonstrate benefit the units will not be treated.

Language was changed from "Conduct underburning in old growth designated stands..." to "Explore underburning..."

4. 4/10/07 (North Fork) Jennifer Purvine, SCNF wildlife biologist and author of "Review of Old Growth Retention Stand Forest Plan Compliance for the Salmon National Forest," and Jeff Juel presented information about old growth issues in general, but not specific to Hughes Ck.
5. 5/17/07 (Hughes Ck Field Trip) – Attended by Dave Melton, Jake Kreilick, Hadley Roberts, Mike England, Gina Knudson, Steve Kimball, Gene Sundberg, Cindy Haggas, Lynn Bennett, Ken Bell, Ken Rodgers, Doug Graves – Group discussed a decision tree to analyze if old growth could be treated with prescribed fire as the sole tool and meet objectives; if no, then move on to analyzing whether thinning the understory prior to Rx burn meets objective. The overarching question is "What are desired future conditions for old growth?" Steve Kimball stated that the intent of old growth designation was and is for species protection. Jake agreed that pre-treatment in D.O.G.s would be acceptable toward reaching the end goal if the work could be done by hand (chainsaws) vs. running

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equipment through the stands. The group stopped at a recently burned unit near Granite Mountain. The discussion focused on the inability for some ponderosa pine stands to meet their desired future conditions because the overstory of Doug Fir would inhibit the Ponderosa from re-seeding. Another issue discussed was the possibility of substituting old growth units in the project for stands that exhibited better old growth characteristics. The group agreed that this could be beneficial, based on ground-truthing of the project area, but questioned whether or not such a move would require greater analysis. Steve Kimball reported that the Forest Plan allows for substitution and the key would be no net loss of designated old growth acreage. We visited one unit that might not meet ideal old growth characteristics near the Ransack Meadow, adjacent to the road. Jake said he would not be opposed to finding a better suited unit farther away from the road. Mike England advised that moving all old growth stands away from roads might remove them from easy public viewing and therefore appreciation.

Cindy Haggas, North Fork wildlife biologist, stated that some species like flammulated owl rely on shrubbery so underburning in old growth units should be applied with some caution. Lynn Bennett stated that flowering shrubs would be stimulated by fire. Cindy agreed. Ken Bell commented that thinning in pockets of the units would ensure a more natural, mosaic-pattern burn, rather than a uniform clearing of understory.

Participants asked the Forest Service project team to ground-truth old growth and make suggestions about enhancing or maintaining stands. The group would then like to tour the area again.

There was general agreement that the way the collaborative and Forest Service interdisciplinary team worked together to examine old growth enhancement opportunities could prove to be a model for future projects.

Next, we attempted to set a date for a **strategic planning workshop** for the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group. Jake had indicated that President's Weekend (Feb 16-17) might work because it would give people an extra day of travel time. Sustainable Northwest has a board meeting the evening of Feb. 18 so would prefer not to travel that weekend. They will be the facilitators for the session so their participation is vital. The next best option is Spring Break which would allow Jake to participate on a weekday without missing student teaching. Both Salmon and Missoula have Spring Break the last full week in March, the 24-27. A conference call will be established to discuss an agenda for the planning session so an appropriate timeframe can be scheduled.

We discussed the lawsuit filed by Alliance for the Wild Rockies on October 22, 2007 challenging the Salmon-Challis National Forest's Salmon Interface/Moose Creek Fuels

Reduction Project. The text of the litigation is posted on Salmon Valley Stewardship's website.

Gina stated that the project development and environmental assessment preceded the formation of the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group (the group officially formed in July 2006, the EA was signed July 24, 2006) so emphasized that the project was not a product of our current collaborative process. However, segments of the Lemhi County population have the perception that the lawsuit proves that working collaboratively does not pay off. Gina brought up two specific points in the lawsuit that might conflict with the future goals of the forest group. The first is item G. on pg 27 "Enjoin logging under

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the Salmon Interface/Moose Creek Project." Vic Phillips was awarded the Wallace Sale, a 139-acre sale w/ primarily post and pole material. Vic is the entrepreneur awarded \$250,000 in March 2007 to establish a post and pole manufacturing business after the last such business became inactive. Without that kind of infrastructure in Lemhi County, the cost-effectiveness of fuels reduction projects becomes a serious issue.

The second conflict Gina pointed to is item I. on pg 28 "Enjoin the Salmon-Challis National Forest from taking any further actions that may adversely impact sensitive, old-growth dependent, or management indicator species until such time as adequate viability assessment have been performed." The concern is that Hughes Creek and future proposed projects might get hung up if a judge ruled in the Alliance's favor, depending on interpretation.

Vic Phillips addressed his position on the matter. He said the Wallace Sale is close to Salmon (about a 20 minute drive) so a perfect place to have a first project. He can frequently check in on the work being done. He said the 139 acre sale contained approximately 28,058 ccf of timber with about 65% categorized as non-sawtimber. A portion of the remaining 35% although categorized as saw timber (greater than 7 dbh) may be utilized for post and pole because that is where Vic's demand is. He said he will most likely sell whatever true saw logs he harvests to another operator. The area has been logged previously.

Jake said he had been in contact with Alliance's attorney Tom Woodbury and director Michael Garrity and they assured him that Hughes Creek would not be affected by the litigation.

John added that Idaho Conservation League feels significant updates need to happen on the Forest Plan. He agreed with Jake that the collaborative work done on Hughes Creek has addressed old growth issues in a positive way and should not be affected by the litigation.

Maia suggested that the collaborative ask the Alliance for Wild Rockies for formal clarification on Hughes Creek.

Cope joined the call and confirmed Gina's earlier observations about community perception. He said it is difficult to convince people that things have changed and the environmental groups are willing to work with the community when they hear about the lawsuit and it seems like the conflicts are the same. He stated that he thought the collaborative's voice on this matter was critical.

John said that Tom Woodbury and James Piotrowski, Alliance for Wild Rockies' attorneys, seem open to discussing Vic's sale. The Alliance had already approached the Forest about negotiating Vic's sale out of their litigation but the Forest would not deal. Cope added that the negotiation was brought up after the administrative appeal was turned down. The move amounted to blackmail, Cope said. Forest supervisor Bill Wood now has to get an OK to pursue any negotiations. Cope believes he has that OK from

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USDA under secretary for natural resources and the environment Mark Rey but still needs it from the new Region 4 Forest Supervisor Harv Forsgren.

Maia suggested that rather than collaborative individuals taking their case to outside parties, we develop a letter written in conjunction with Vic to ask Forsgren to consider negotiations. We should also develop a letter to present to the Alliance attorneys.

No one was opposed to the action item. Jake said Wild West understands the importance of keeping Vic "alive and operational." John agreed.

Vic commented that he appreciated the collaborative's efforts. He updated the group that his workers have already started work on the Wallace sale and estimates they are 50% done with the first unit. He said they are for all intents and purposes shut down until spring because the contract does not allow for snow plowing. He said the FS has conducted 7 inspections so far and they have all been very positive.

Gina and Vic will work together to put together a letter for the Regional Supervisor and a separate letter for the Alliance attorneys and will get the collaborative's review and consent before members present.

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting**  
**Salmon Business and Innovation Center**  
**May 14, 2008**  
**9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**  
**DRAFT Meeting**  
**Summary**

### ***Participants:***

Bob Cope, Gina Knudson, Lynn Bennett, Karin Drnjevic, Jake Kreilick, John Robison (via phone), Wayne Talmadge, Vic Phillips, Ken Rodgers, Ken Bell, Doug Graves (Affiliations attached)

### **Old Business**

- **Strategic Plan session from March 27 & 28**
  - Karin, Gina, and Jake have compiled a draft document and sent to Sustainable Northwest for review/input.
  - One section that needs refinement is measurements. This section is attached to these minutes. **Members were asked to select their top 3 – 5 priorities for items to measure, based on ability to accurately and cost-effectively measure and report data.**
  - Entire draft should be circulated to everyone by the week of June 2.

- **Salmon WUI/Moose Creek Litigation**

- Gina had a conference call with Michael Garrity of Alliance with the Wild Rockies and Jeff Juel on April 22. She explained the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group's frustration at not having received a response to the letter of clarification we agreed upon and sent in January. The two indicated that no response should be expected because their attorneys would most likely advise against such communication.
- Gina explored the possibility of addressing the group's two major concerns with the court through friend of the court standing. At the suggestion of the National Forest Foundation and Brainerd Foundation, she asked the Western Environmental Law Center if it would be possible to represent the collaborative if we agreed to go that route. Sarah McMillan from WELC determined that our concerns were most likely unfounded because Judge Lodge was unlikely to rule in AWR's favor. Furthermore, AWR is sometimes a client of the law center and that could cause potential complications.
- Jake explained that he has talked with Jeff, Michael, and their attorney Tom Woodbury and their intention is not to stop the Hughes Creek project. He has also worked to help them understand the importance of the Wallace Sale to Vic Phillips' operation and Vic's involvement in the collaborative.

- **Hughes Creek**

- Ken Rodgers, the interdisciplinary team leader for Hughes Creek, said all is going well with the analysis. The project has some unique aspects such as the re-configuring of old growth units and the emphasis on biomass utilization. He said

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the project is designed so the community and local industry can put fiber to work and where that's not feasible or ecologically sound, fire is the tool.

- The intensity of the Forest's travel planning process has delayed the EA completion somewhat but Ken said they are still looking to have the draft released in the next month. Because this is a project under Healthy Forest Recreation Act authority, the objection period is 30 days.

- If/when a positive Record of Decision is finalized, contract specialists are ready to quickly move forward with contracts for hand treatments along the road and that adjacent to private land (approximately 250 acres). This work is part of the Forest's above base funding request and would not be wrapped into a stewardship contract.

- Karin inquired about the Ditch Creek Bridge replacement. The county has received grant funding from the Idaho Department of Lands to do fuels reduction on private land in the Ditch Creek area to support the Hughes Creek project but the deadline to complete work is June 2009. Without the bridge, contractors would have to take a longer route so the work would be higher than she had estimated originally. Ken said the Forest is waiting for the Record of Decision to begin work but that they intend to use the programmatic agreement they have with NOAA so no special consultation should have to take place to replace the bridge.

- Karin asked about road fees for contractors working on private lands in the Hughes and Ditch Creek areas. Ken said the standard road use agreement will take all vehicle use into consideration in determining appropriate fees.

- Karin asked if landowners performing fuels reduction work on their land adjacent to Forest land would need to survey. Ken Bell suggested that a land use agreement/ memorandum of understanding would help eliminate issues over exact boundaries. If landowners were doing in-kind work (such as thinning or providing access to the Forest Service), the Forest could help with prescribed burning on private land.
- The Lemhi County Weeds Department has contracted with Ken Thacker who has attended a couple of forestry collaborative meetings to spray noxious weeds on the lower Ditch Creek private lands. At last count 23 landowners were participating in the cost-share program. Salmon Valley Stewardship through the National Forest Foundation grant provided \$5,000 for the weed treatment.
- Also through the National Forest Foundation grant, Jake is preparing a multiparty monitoring plan for Hughes Creek. Jake said he would like to have a couple of meetings with people interested in helping put the plan together. He needs to know what the Forest Service is monitoring and what are the gaps. By the end of summer, he hopes to have the plan in place and we will begin project evaluation.
- Lynn advised that units we pick to monitor should be able to be replicated and relevant to other projects rather than being Hughes Creek specific. Data collected should be answering important questions about project success.

## New Business

- **Salmon-Challis 5-Year Plan and Future Collaborative Opportunities.** Ken Bell and Doug Graves prepared a Google Earth visual demonstration of potential projects the

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collaborative might be interested in engaging in. They applied different colored layers over the digital mapping to show completed projects, in progress projects, potential projects, projects in the planning stages, and old growth units. The following projects were discussed in-depth:

- **South Fork of Williams Creek.** This project had been in the planning stages under a HFRA Categorical Exclusion 10 but since that authority is no longer available, the project essentially has to start from scratch. Doug and Ken described the potential elements of the approximately 3,000 acre project:
  - 70 – 80 acres of existing aspen stand could be improved by removing encroaching conifers
  - 300 acres additional could fall under pre-commercial and commercial thinning for aspen regeneration (using the assumption that aspen need a 150' buffer)
  - Fulfills WUI objective of stopping fires moving from west to east
  - Biomass opportunities
  - Old growth stands present but might need enhanced, re-structured (mistletoe is present)
    - NEPA analysis projected is HFRA Category 6, wildlife or timber stand improvement
  - BLM land adjacent to FS lands
- Potential challenges/issues of project:
  - Grazing allotment could be complicated (Nature Conservancy grass bank might be an opportunity to explore)
  - FS management will probably avoid commercial component under



○ Discussion

- Jake commented that there were some complexities in this proposal that were not present the last time we discussed South Fork Williams. More appealing as a collaborative project. While the project is designed as more of a forest restoration than fuels reduction, aspen is a good barrier to fire.
  - Karin expressed that this area is used by locals extensively for recreation and other uses so this meets our desire to work on a high visibility effort
  - McKinstrey & Assoc. has been selected as the design-build contractor for a new school if voters elect to move forward with bond. Their design would most likely include a biomass boiler for the school campus and therefore a new market for small diameter timber.
- Doug is the IDT leader for this project and his team meets May 28
- Collaborative members expressed interest in seeing this on the ground

○ **The Breaks.** This project would encompass about 13,000 acres along the River Road corridor in the North Fork district. The main goal of the project would be wildlife enhancement, specifically winter range for elk. The objective would be to use surface fire primarily and pre-commercial thinning secondarily to focus on conifer encroachment.

- Potential challenges/issues of project:
  - Steepness of slopes and access issues limit mechanical treatments

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○ Discussion

- Noxious weeds will have to be addressed

- Project has less dimension and complexity than others. Collaborative might be kept up on progress but no real interest expressed in on-the- ground involvement.

○ **Hawley Creek and Big 8-Mile.** These projects are near Leadore.

- Potential challenges/issues of project:
  - Pygmy rabbit/sage grouse studies in area
  - White bark pine restoration and aspen regeneration opportunities
- Discussion
  - Jake commented that the collaborative might look at these projects and make supportive comments but can't see this area being a priority.
  - Lynn confirmed that this is not historically prone to the same type of wildfire seen in the Salmon River canyon regions

○ **Upper North Fork .** This project would be on the Salmon-Challis side of Lost Trail pass and is similar to the scale and objectives as Hughes Creek. The project would encompass the FS owned slopes above Moose Creek Estates and other private property in that area where insect infestation has been a problem. Ranger Russ Bacon wants to keep all options on the table in the initial phases of design, including helicopter logging. The plan is to do an EA under HFRA and the realistic expectation is that no on-th-ground work would start for 5 yrs.

- Potential challenges/issues of project:

- Black Frog fire complex burned 1800 acres to north of project in 2003 and west side of project has been previously managed so ECA (equivalent clearcut acres) values have been diminished
- 3,000 – 4,000 acres is inventoried roadless
- Encompasses two watersheds
- Discussion
  - Jake is skeptical about logging in the roadless piece on east side. Cope said the latest roadless rule allows the Regional Forester to balance community protection with forest restoration on a project-by-project basis. Ken Bell added that the Forest was not looking at building new roads.
  - Lynn reminded that under HFRA, there is still a large tree retention requirement.
  - John said the Payette Forest recently had a project near Yellow Pine that incorporated helicopter logging under some of the same conditions. The collaborative should examine that project. John said given the roadless issues, it would be important to “put all the tools on the table” including helicopter logging, non-commercial thinning, and prescribed fire.
  - All agreed that the project would be a field trip candidate. Ken Bell said the trip could be arranged in the fall.

- **Salmon Interface Municipal Watershed.** This project includes the three drainages that make up Salmon’s municipal watershed – Jesse, Chips, and Pollard Creeks. It is on the planning docket because of the high level of public concern, but realistically accomplishing meaningful fuels reduction in the watershed is still a puzzle. Prescribed fire is the only economical way to accomplish the work, but the risks associated with burning are obvious and daunting. The project outlined is entirely included in the WUI and includes important community values like communication sites and power lines.
  - Potential challenges/issues of project:
    - Roadless area and steepness
    - Lack of community understanding about complexity of project
  - Discussion:
    - John noted that in our collaborative discussions working from the bottom up has been a point of agreement.
    - Vic added that a wider fuel break on top is also an essential strategy and then the ridges could be used as a burn start point.
    - Ken Bell said a patchwork of fuels reduction would be his ideal, using the scree and rock in the area as a burn buffer for multiple entries.
    - Cope explained that Lemhi County’s Community Wildfire Protection Plan notes that the Salmon municipal watershed would be their #1 Priority if a project could be implemented.
    - The group discussed the scale of potential fuels reduction work versus the cost of environmental analysis. A “bite-sized” approach might be more acceptable to the environmental community, but is cost prohibitive to the FS.

- The group agreed that organizing a community forum about any potential projects and limitations should be the next step. Gina and Cope will attend a city council meeting and invite participation from the city now that Stan Davis is no longer mayor and introduce the idea of this community forum.
- **Iron Creek.** This project is roughly 10,000 – 12,000 acres southwest of Salmon. The lower end reaches into the WUI. There are some fuels reduction objectives in protecting egress and slowing a fire from the Silver Creek area, but also noted were outstanding aspen regeneration opportunities. No unusual obstacles or issues to the project were identified.
  - Discussion:
    - The BLM is considering doing work on adjacent property and a joint NEPA document should be explored.
    - John would like to see more stream restoration opportunities explored on this and other projects. The Office of Species Conservation has more funding for this than they have in the past. Cope said we should coordinate this with the Upper Salmon River Basin Watershed Project. Gina said her understanding is that they have good funding sources but are having a hard time implementing enough projects so the collaborative might be a good

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partner. John would like to add streamside restoration projects to one of our field tours. Jake said we had discussed adding stream restoration to our larger Hughes Creek project.

In closing, the group identified Friday, June 20, Monday, June 23, or Tuesday the 24<sup>th</sup> as potential dates for the South Fork of Williams Creek field tour. September 6 or 13 were proposed as dates for the Upper North Fork field tour.

**Meeting adjourned at 3 pm.**

### **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting Agenda**

FINAL September 14, 2007

Location: Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center

**Our Mission:** Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 10:00 am | Introductions, Approval of April 2007 summary<br>Administrative business – <a href="mailto:lemhi-forest-restoration@googlegroups.com">lemhi-forest-restoration@googlegroups.com</a> |
| 10:15 am | Hughes Creek Project Update<br>Environmental Analysis – Russ Bacon, North Fork District Ranger<br>Private Landowner Opportunities – Gina Knudson, Salmon Valley Stewardship         |
| 11:15 am | Williams Lake Fuels Reduction – Jim Tucker, BLM<br>Private Lands grant program – Karin Drnjevick, Lemhi County  |

11:45 am Lunch

12:45 pm Biomass Workshop Update and Schedule -- Gina

1:15 pm Planning for Future Projects - Gina  
National Forest Foundation grant  
5-Year Action plan

2:00 pm Forest Fuels Solutions Start-Up – Vic Phillips, owner

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2:30 pm Next meeting, date, location, agenda

3:00 pm Adjourn

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting**  
**Field Trip**  
**South Fork of Williams Creek/Williams Lake**  
**June 20, 2008**  
**8:30 a.m.– 5:00 p.m.**  
**DRAFT Tour**  
**Summary**

***Participants:***

Rene Toman, Wayne Talmadge, Gina Knudson, Lynn Bennett, Karin Drnjevik, Bob Schrenk, Russ Riebe, Jim Tucker, Chris Erca, Jake Kreilick, Vic Phillips, Roy Hoffman, Jo Myers, Tom Keegan, Greg Painter, Ken Rodgers, Doug Graves, Kimberly Nelson, Kim Murphy, Wendy McCartney, Cindy Haggas, Gene Sundberg (Affiliations attached)

**Field Tour Objective/Background:**

In the May 14 Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group meeting, Doug Graves re-introduced the South Fork of Williams Creek project. This project had originally been presented to the collaborative in early 2007 and had not been pursued because 1) members felt like they did not want to initiate a new project until the Hughes Creek project was further in the process, and 2) the project seemed fairly straightforward using mostly prescribed fire and the value of collaborative involvement was in question.

The Forest Service pursued the project under a Category 10 exclusion and got part way through environmental analysis and then the Category 10 authority was removed. The agency is now considering the project as a Category 6 exclusion, but is asking for collaborative input. During the May 14 meeting, members were interested in the visibility of the project, aspen regeneration, and addressing grazing issues. **The field trip objective was to visit the site to better understand the opportunities and challenges of the project.**

**Stop 1 – Riparian Area (Unit 15)**

On the lower portion of the project, the South Fork of Williams Creek riparian zone was examined. Kim Murphy, FS fisheries biologist, noted that the Riparian Habitat Conservation Area (RHCA) is 300 feet from the bank and the Salmon-Challis has adopted the PACFish regulations as part of its plan. Those regulations do not permit commercial harvest within the

RHCA. Bob Schrenk asked if commercial harvest is actually prohibited or if additional consultation with Natl Marine Fisheries Service is required. Lynn Bennett explained that in other similar projects (such as 4<sup>th</sup> of July Ck) even when analysis shows a long-term benefit to the RHCA because of fuels reduction, the NMFS position is to issue the Forest Service a takings permit to conduct such activity. Lynn said the FS has been unwilling to proceed with the activity under a takings permit because that leaves the agency vulnerable to litigation.

Gene Sundberg explained that with no commercial removal allowed, a prescription might call for conifers to be dropped and possibly left to help reduce the potential for a crown fire. Roy Hoffman expressed concern over previous projects that left trees on the ground. Discussion was held about whether removing trees for biomass would be considered a commercial activity.

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Greg Painter commented that the spruce/fir bottoms are important for wildlife and taking shade out of the area could affect fisheries.

Tom Keegan asked for clarification on how much of the entire drainage would be included in a treatment area under the project. Doug said that he estimated that as far as RHCAs go, the amount would equal less than 5 % of the drainage or approximately 18 acres.

Lynn said restoration objectives would be to improve the resilience of the ecosystem. Spruce and subalpine fir do not have much resilience to fire. Lynn said the challenge would be to see if there was something the project could do to stop fire moving continuously down the stream. He suggested the group look strategically at achieving some kind of fuel break.

Greg said the argument that the action would protect more of the spruce/fir bottoms and the RHCA is more indicative of a desirable project.

Jake Kreilick added that the collaborative is grappling with issues of creating immediate fuel breaks versus long-term restoration objectives. He agreed that removing all conifers in the unit would not be his preference.

Russ advised that with the constraints of the RHCA, the group needed to be realistic that fuel breaks could be effective and could allow fire personnel a safer place to go in the case of an interim or lower-intensity fire, but that such treatments would not be foolproof in the event of a catastrophic or higher-intensity fire.

Jake said he could envision a lighter prescription near the creek with some heavier thinning above the road but still within the 300' zone.

### **Stop 2 – Riparian Area – Unit 16**

The runoff and higher water highlighted the marshy, wetland characteristics of this area which totals about 15 acres. The challenges involve crossing the creek to get to the forested area. Members of the interdisciplinary team visited the site last winter and observed that the creek does not totally freeze in winter. Most group members concurred that there was very little opportunity for heavy machinery to be in the area and hand work would be expensive.

### **Stop 3 – Ridge top overlooking Roy Hoffman's property – Unit 10B**

Lynn gave a brief lesson on basal area and how a prism is designed to help estimate basal area of a unit. Historically, mixed species conifer units at this elevation would have supported a basal area range of around 40 or 50. Currently, it is closer to 120. Such a variance from historical

conditions has the effect of allowing trees less water which stresses them and leaves them susceptible to disease.

Lynn also addressed fire regime condition class. He said in a dry Douglas fir ecosystem, 50% was large diameter, open forest, multi-aged; 20% younger age class, open canopy; 15% seedling; and 10% young pole sized, dense canopy.

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We walked below to an aspen stand and noted the competition between the aspen and the conifer. Russ mentioned that aspen stores water in its root system as opposed to conifers storing water in their needles. The result of aspen loss, conifer domination could alter perennial stream flow.

### **Stop 4 – Ridge top near Units 11 A & B**

From this overlook we could see a large V of conifers in a large drainage and similar conditions in drainages beyond our immediate vantage point. Tom Keegan addressed the group about his concern for the massive loss of aspen on the forest. He said his concern was not just for deer and elk but also for the neotropical migrants and other species that are diminishing or already lost because of aspen habitat changes. He said he would remove all the conifer from the units, but at a minimum work from the top to allow more water to get to the aspen stands below.

Jake said he would like to see more of a mosaic so that patches of conifers were left and the contrasting approaches could be monitored.

Kim Nelson agreed that a mosaic fit her intention more. Several of those in favor of aspen regeneration for wildlife benefit, however, would still like to see heavy treatment of conifer in the drainages where aspen is supported.

Jake confirmed that the plan would be to commercial thin and then burn later.

Jim Tucker said from the appearance of the slope, much of the work would be tractor and cable logging in Units 11.

Kim Murphy said one issue would be determining if the intermittent stream was fish bearing or not.

Jake noted that aspen regeneration in the presence of grazing would need to be managed carefully. Roy Hoffman and Russ Riebe addressed the current permitted cattle operation in the area. Roy runs about 180 head of cattle through four pasture units between mid-June to mid-October. The rotation of those pastures is dependent on the condition of vegetation and the stage of bloom larkspur is in (larkspur can be fatal to cattle if consumed).

Temporary electric fencing and an extra range rider have been used successfully on other fire rehabilitation projects (Tobias Fire). Vic estimated that electric fence would cost around \$1,500 mile. The collaborative might be able to help raise funds for this part of the project.

Tom said a simplistic approach would be to jackstraw fallen trees as a barrier around aspen clones or build some kind of rudimentary fence with log material on the ground that would last long enough to provide aspen protection.

Lynn asked how burning fit in with relationship to timing for grazing. Russ said typically two growing seasons of rest after a burn. Spring burning seems to give the vegetation the best response time. He suggested that if burning could be done all at once in the spring, Roy would miss only one summer of the allotment.

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Vic inquired about adjacent allotments that might be available to Roy. Roy said Randy Capps has an allotment in Henry Creek that has occasionally be underutilized. Roy said the plan to keep the cows out for one season seemed reasonable given the long-term benefit of improved vegetation and wildfire risk reduction.

### **Stop 5 – The Burn – Unit 1**

This mostly lodgepole and aspen stand was part of the 1985 Lake Fire. Lodgepole is coming in very densely. Doug said he has considered this section as an opportunity for biomass recovery, if any use can be found for it.

Lynn Bennett inquired about lynx restrictions because previously they had run into that problem. Cindy Haggas said the process of revising the forest's mapping of lynx habitat has not been completed yet so she could not say what the level of consideration would have to be. She said the project would have to show any impacts to the species' habitat.

Vic said that with the closest sawmill 200 miles away and fuel prices at \$5/gallon, material that can somehow be used locally is at the fringe of economic viability.

Bob concurred and said that by the time the project is analyzed, new uses and markets may have already been established. He predicted that woody biomass as an energy source is on the verge of a breakthrough in many places throughout the country and in Canada. He urged the group to use the stewardship contracting authority to try to accomplish as many objectives as possible, rather than defining the project as a fuels reduction or wildlife habitat enhancement project. From the tour, he observed that the cost of doing the project seemed to exceed timber value and challenged the group to think about identifying grant funding and additional partners to accomplish the work. He said from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation point of view, he would encourage as much aspen treatment as possible.

Bob also said that when the contract specifications are written, solicitations that leave room for the contractor to determine how to accomplish project objectives are often more effective and less costly than very specific prescriptions. If the group can talk about what members want the area to look like when the work is done, consensus seems to be easier to reach, he said.

Kim Nelson talked about next steps. She feels like from the group's input during the tour, a Category 6 would be appropriate.

Gina said that one issue that would come up as more details are known is roads. On the Hughes Creek project, John Robison of Idaho Conservation League, suggested a green light (no new roads), yellow light (some new temporary roads), red light (new roads) approach. Kim said the project would probably require some temporary roads. Gina suggested that when those areas are better defined, committee members will most likely want to take another look. Old growth units will also be an area of more detailed discussion.

Gina, Kim, and Doug will lead an effort to develop a statement of proposed action and a timeline.

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### **Williams Lake private land fuels reduction project**

Several members of the tour continued on to Williams Lake where Karin is administering an Idaho Department of Lands grant to do fuels reduction on 25 acres of private land adjacent to BLM land and next to the Williams Lake subdivision. Vic's crew is currently finishing up the contract.

Work still needs to be done next to houses, especially on the southern side of the lake development. Karin said the single point of access makes it difficult for work to take place and allow homeowners safe access to their homes. Jake suggested that volunteers could spend a day and make the project time much shorter.

We walked through BLM units where a mastication project had been accomplished two years ago.

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### **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting And Field Trip Moose Creek Estates/Upper North Fork September 6, 2008 9:00 a.m.– 3:30 p.m. DRAFT Summary**

#### ***Participants:***

Gina Knudson, Lynn Bennett, Karin Drnjevic, Jake Kreilick, Bob Wilson, John Goodman, Glen Brittain, Ken Bell, Russ Bacon, Alden Boetsch, Alaina Pomeroy, Mike England

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

The group thanked Bob Wilson and John Goodman of Moose Creek Estates for their generosity and hospitality in hosting the meeting. A special welcome was given to Alden and Alaina of Sustainable Northwest who traveled from Portland.

#### **Hughes Creek Update**

North Fork Ranger Russ Bacon said the **NEPA** document is in the hands of the writer/editor. Specialists have completed their work. "Three more weeks!" is looking closer to reality.

On the **private** portion of Hughes Creek, a biological assessment and permit to construct has been submitted to Idaho Dept of Water Resources and the Corps of Engineers by Lowell and Mary Cerise. The Cerise's have the large pasture with the huge tailings piles on Hughes Creek and cooperated with Salmon Valley Stewardship intern Jo Myers over the summer to design a stream restoration project. The project was proposed after Gina and Jo toured 2 different sites in Montana with the Montana Trout Conservancy's John Zelazny. The proposal calls for whole logs to be positioned without cable or re-bar, but rather using the logs' weight and position in the stream to anchor them to the banks. One project on Chamberlain Creek in Montana is 10 yrs old and has the kind of results that the group envisions for Hughes Creek – more woody debris creating pools and other hiding spots for fish, variances in stream velocity, and overall better



rearing habitat for fish species. If approved, logs from Hughes Creek will be positioned at the Cerise's property, and the structures would be put in place by draft horses trained in logging. The idea is to invite interested local contractors to observe and train with the gentleman who currently does these sorts of projects. He indicates there is more work in the region than he can handle so he welcomes newcomers to the business. The window of time to do the work is July 15 – August 15 of 2009. Gina and John Zelazny are searching for private funding sources for the project.

From the **County**, Karin Drnjevic has had a follow up meeting with private landowners in the Hughes Creek area and is making progress getting people on board to treat hazardous fuels. She has also been talking to landowners about the possibility of the Forest Service gaining access through some private land to conduct the public lands fuels reduction objectives. She expressed a need for silviculture training so her office can help facilitate tree-marking on the private property. A workshop for interested contractors might be appropriate.

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**Multiparty monitoring plan.** Jake reported that he has a good outline for the plan. He still needs to meet with Diane Schuldt, FS biologist, and Daniel Bertram, Lemhi County weeds coordinator, to finalize weed monitoring protocol. Dan Garcia and Kimberly Murphy provided R1/R4 stream analysis training to Jake and Jo this summer. A need identified is a pair of GPS units so that monitoring points have a precise, consistent location. Funding should be sought to help the monitoring committee conduct its work (travel, time, equipment). Jake expects to have a draft completed in late October.

### **Strategic Plan adoption**

Mike made a motion that the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group's Strategic Plan be adopted. All present were in favor of the motion. Gina said she knows the measurements outlined in the plan will have to be field tested and adjusted for relevance, etc.

### **Salmon-Challis Forest issues**

**Fire Funds Transfer.** Russ updated the group on several items that have implications for the collaborative. Funding transfers to pay for national fire bills could seriously hamper the Forest's ability to accomplish fuels reduction projects. Although money might be returned at the start of the new fiscal year (October), for now prescribed burning plans have been put on hold. Russ commented that wildland fires are the only natural disaster for which the federal government has a budget. He said the Forest is looking at re-prioritizing projects that have already been approved.

Alden explained that the Rural Voices for Community Conservation coalition is drafting an op-ed template about the illogic behind eliminating preventative programs to pay for wildland fire suppression.

Jake asked if there was a move to take fire out of the hands of the Forest Service. Russ said there was in parts of the country where National Forests are transferring funds to fire but don't experience much wildland fire of their own. Right now, almost 50% of the Forest Service budget is for fire. Of that amount, almost 90% goes to the 10% of fires that get big and expensive.

Jake is now board president of FireSafe Montana. He commented that it seems a systematic approach needs to be applied to a problem that is not going to go away anytime soon.

**Ranger Duties.** The Salmon-Challis is re-structuring its management and he and Kimberly Nelson (Cobalt District Ranger) will be in charge of programs rather than acres. When they fill

the Leadore Ranger position, that individual will assist Russ and Kimberly. Russ' programs include fuels and timber, so he will be the collaborative's contact for most issues. As such, he cautioned that the fuels and timber departments on the Forest have been "decimated by vacancies." That trend will continue to get worse, he cautioned.

Jake asked how many projects the Forest could reasonably attempt. Russ stated that he has in mind one larger more landscape-scale project (like Hughes Creek) and two smaller projects in a 3-yr timeframe.

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Mike asked if private contractors could be used to bridge the personnel gaps. Russ answered that some of the losses are being felt in very government-specific areas, like timber sale administrators and silviculturists.

Lynn added that the collaborative could help alleviate some of the dire situation by offering more efficiency than the Salmon-Challis has had in recent years. If fewer projects are appealed because of collaborative involvement, the public could still see a steady amount of work getting done.

Russ agreed and said he needs to help specialists understand that from a risk management point of view, if collaborative members help design a project and agree to certain objectives, the level of analysis needs to be thorough but not as detailed as when an appeal seems certain.

Mike added that the Forest Service is not alone in facing a downturn. Stimson Lumber, one of the biggest mills in North Idaho, has announced they are closing. His concern is that Idaho continues to send raw materials to Montana and other states for value added processing.

Jake said that strengthening regional capacity and new product lines needs to continue to be one of the group's focuses. We need to ask where is the material going to go and what products will be made from it. Russ added that the collaborative needs to be a proponent of a new model. He gave as an example businesses that are making custom beams out of dead Doug fir, a material once deemed useless now is creating some of the best value.

Alden reported that Sustainable Northwest has obtained financial backing for a wood distribution center, so that small suppliers can connect with larger customers.

### **Lessons learned from Hughes Ck for future collaborative projects**

Russ offered some lessons from Hughes Creek that might help on future projects.

- 1) Multi-phase projects might give the group an unreasonable expectation. If we put aside more complicated issues like riparian restoration or road issues until a future phase, we might never get to it and our Phase I project might not have the complexity that lends it well to stewardship contracting.
- 2) Agency specialists need to be involved upfront so they understand the collaborative's intentions.
- 3) Collaborative members or interested members of the public also need to be involved early on in the planning stage.

Mike hopes we can build in more community education for our projects. People in Gibbonsville need to have more buy-in. Moose Creek Estates is one of the few examples of landowners doing their part.

Russ explained that is why he wants the collaborative to address the Upper North Fork area. The Forest Service doesn't have any pre-conceived ideas at this time but is just soliciting suggestions. The big circle on the map right now encompasses 41,000 and two watersheds – the Upper North Fork and the Middle North Fork.

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A few of the elements that might be useful for developing a strategy for the area include:

Private land, including the hillside to the east of Moose Creek Estates  
Frog Pond Fire footprint from 2003  
Work that is completed or in progress at Johnson and Crone Gulch  
Forest Plan guidance on visual effects from Highway 93

Bob Wilson suggested that the beetle kill trees on the hill above his property present an opportunity to remove them and create strategic fuel breaks.

The Anderson Mountain Roadless area is also to the East of Moose Creek Estates. Jake said the roadless area's proximity to private land could prompt Wild West to have more flexibility concerning treatments within those units. Their concern will be to reduce visual impacts but help firefighters. He also noted that Clinton's original roadless rule allowed fuels reduction. If the group does go that route, we should monitor the area closely.

Mike added that not treating the areas in question poses some dire threats to the watersheds. He noted that the wind-driven, uphill moving fires that caused massive demonstration along Highway 93 in the Bitterroot could be expected to have very similar results in the Upper North Fork area.

Russ reminded the group that the issues for the area are complex. Roadless issues, soil disturbance factors resulting from the 2003 fires, Highway 93 visual impacts all will play a role. Additionally, some of the project area was part of the appealed Gibbonsville EA, so some of the analysis has been done but negotiations took project elements off the table.

Jake said it's going to be important to start where impacts are going to be the greatest such as adjacent to private land and then work in concentric circles.

### **Field Trip Stop 1 – Above Moose Creek Estates**

The group hiked up the ridge to the East of Moose Creek Estates and observed large, still growing ponderosa pine that are being encroached upon by lodgepole, most likely as a result of fire exclusion. The site might make a suitable old growth unit but is not identified on the Forest Plan. The Forest knows that old growth was lost as a result of the Frog Pond fire so this could help offset that loss. This particular area is dry enough that treatments would not necessarily need to take place in winter.

**Meeting Site – Bob Wilson's home at Moose Creek**

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**Stop 1 – On Hillside above Moose Creek Estates.**

## **Stop 2**

### **Highway 93 – Looking North toward Moose Creek Estates**

To help address visual impacts from the road, in other words, treatments that look artificial or have severe lines and deviate from the natural landscape, the Forest Service may use one of the agency's landscape architects.

Above Moose Creek Estates, the group could see a few large meadow openings that are seeing some conifer encroachment. These would be good restoration opportunities.

Not far from the stop is Twin Creek Campground, so the Forest Service would like to do some thinning around the campground to protect its assets.

**From Highway 93, looking north toward Moose Creek Estates.**

Jake commented that shaded fuel breaks could be applied next to existing road systems.

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### **Stop 3 – Crone Gulch**

This area on the East side of Highway 93 had been recently logged. The group could see the Granite Mountain lookout from the vantage point and thus could see how a proposed Upper North Fork project could tie the work from Hughes Creek and the Gibbonsville work together.

One opportunity noted was the possibility of re-opening the passage of a loop road between Votler Creek and Twin Creek that has been closed by a slide for several years.

**From the Crone Gulch overlook, the group observed a recent thinning project and could see the Granite Mountain lookout and other features to the West.**

**North Fork Ranger Russ Bacon and Moose Creek Estates project manager John Goodman at Crone Gulch.**

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
Salmon Valley Business & Innovation Center  
January 22, 2009**

**1:00 – 4:00 pm  
DRAFT  
Summary**

[Items in Blue Indicate Action Items]

### ***Participants:***

Steve Adams, Russ Bacon, Bill Baer, Ken Bell, Lynn Bennett, Karin Drnjevic, Chris Erca, Mike England, Gina Knudson, Vic Phillips, Hadley Roberts, Glenn Seaberg, Bob Schrenk, Larry Svalberg, Rene Toman, Ron Troy, Jim Tucker (for affiliations and contact information, see Attachment B)

### **Senate Bill 22, Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009**

- Passed Senate on 1/16/09
- Idaho Senators Mike Crapo and Jim Risch voted for the bill
- Includes Forest Landscape Restoration Act language
  - o Watershed-scale projects of 50,000 acres minimum
  - o 2 proposals per Region per year
- Still Must Pass House and Be Signed by President

Gina advised the group to follow this legislation because of its relevance to our work. Projects such as the Upper North Fork we toured in September would be candidates for this program. Maia Enzer and others at Sustainable Northwest are helping to keep us informed as the legislation progresses and if there becomes a need to travel to Ogden to acquaint Region 4 Forester Harv Forsgren with the collaborative's mission and targeted projects, SNW can help with that. Commissioner Cope is also well connected with Congressional reps and staffers and should be enlisted to help. The Nature Conservancy and Idaho Conservation League are leaders for the Clearwater Collaborative in northern Idaho. Since the Clearwater efforts are in Region 1, TNC and ICL could be strong advocates for our projects, as well, without competing.

Larry Svalberg, Salmon-Challis staff officer, said in addition to potential funding through the omnibus bill, economic stimulus initiatives could translate into hundreds of millions of dollars being made available for fuels reduction projects on both public and private lands. Larry will keep the collaborative group in the loop as the Forest Service gets more direction on this.

### **Hughes Creek Update**

- **Environmental Assessment released 1/15**
- North Fork Ranger Russ Bacon believes Record of Decision will be signed in Feb
- Objections not likely
  - o Alliance for Wild Rockies does not have standing (did not comment during scoping)

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- o 1 individual who expressed concerns about smoke during scoping has indicated to the FS he is satisfied for the project to move forward
- **Private Hughes Ck Projects**
- **Stream Restoration (Cerise Property)**
  - o Id Dept of Water Resources permit moving forward
  - o Id Fish and Wildlife Foundation chose not to make any awards this yr
  - o Formation Capitol/Id Conservation League grant application is still pending; ask was for \$11,000
- **Fuels Reduction**
  - o Karin is going to concentrate on lower Hughes Ck at first because grant \$\$ need to be spent and lower areas are accessible earlier in the yr
  - o Ditch Ck bridge replacement is still holding up upper work
  - o [North Fork FMO needs to help Karin identify where fuel breaks need to be constructed on private lands to match up with FS plans](#)
  - o Tara King of NW Management is under contract w/ High Country RC&D;

they may be able to assist Karin w/ tree marking

- **Collaborative Involvement in Implementation/Monitoring**
  - o Draft memo to SCNF Supervisor requesting continued collaboration throughout the stewardship contracting and monitoring aspects of Hughes Ck (see Attachment C)
  - o Bob Schrenk advised that collaborative and FS need to be careful to avoid appearance of conflict as contract specs are being written
  - o Collaborative should be able to assist w/o conflict by focusing on “end result objectives” of project
  - o [Conference call to vote on draft will be scheduled for Feb 10, 11, or 12](#)
- **Funding Opportunities**
  - o SVS and Id Fish & Game (Greg Painter) are requesting \$25,000 for aspen regen projects on FS lands
    - Deadline for grant is Feb 9
    - Projects need to be NEPA ready by late spring/early summer 09
      - Hughes Ck, Breaks
  - o Resource Advisory Committee (RAC)
    - Hadley Roberts, Mike England, and Cope are on RAC
    - Previous yrs funding has been +/- \$130K/yr; this year is \$1 million+
      - Group should identify needs as collaborative
        - FS has presented a \$3.6 million “wish list” of backlogged projects but citizens and groups are encouraged to approach RAC w/ projects
        - Match not a requirement but RAC has typically funded projects w/ at least 25% match
        - [It's unclear if RAC \\$\\$ can fund indirect collaborative expenses; Gina and Rene will research](#)
- **Future Projects**
  - o **Breaks I** (North Fork Ranger Station to Indianola Guard Station)
    - 12,000 acres, mostly Rx fire, no commercial harvest, non-commercial thinning in old growth and aspen stands for enhancement

- Colson Ck analysis showed 267 fires in 88 yrs, nearly all lightning starts, for a 5-yr burn interval
- Goal of project is to restore area to allow frequent natural fire cycle to resume
- Avoid mountain mahogany; address serious noxious weed problem
- Firewood opportunities in the area would continue to be available
  - Project is not trying to achieve high intensity burning, but rather spring burning over several yr time period
  - Companion projects could include private fuels reduction in Spring Ck area
- Mike England believes Breaks complements work in Hughes Ck.
  - [ICL commented during scoping period; Gina will contact ICL for a copy of their comments to help us draft a possible endorsement memo for the Breaks project](#)
- o **Napias Ck** (94 acres)
  - LCFRG toured in Summer 06 but did not select because of distance from WUI

- FS analyzed as Categorical Exclusion 10 (fuels) and that authority has been lost because of lawsuit in District Court (CA)
- R-Y Timber of MT had been awarded contract; FS now has to find replacement timber or cash the company out
- [Larry will advise when/if FS proceeds to new round of scoping](#)
  - [Gina requested collaborative members be invited if specialists re-visit the site](#)
  - Vic thought that already awarded projects were grandfathered under judge's decision; Larry clarified that 75% or more of the work needed to have been completed to be allowed to continue and R-Y did not meet that criteria

Russ recommended the group prepare to discuss Upper North Fork and Jesse Ck at the next meeting. Both are potentially large projects and the Forest may not have capacity to tackle both simultaneously. The Forest could use help from collaborative in reaching out to the community to explain which project is given priority. Gina reminded the group that at the Sept. 08 meeting, we expressed a willingness to host an open house to discuss Jesse Ck with the Salmon community.

Bill Baer of the BLM discussed a research project he did in 2003 titled, "An Evaluation of Landscape-level Fuels Treatment Patterns for the City of Salmon Municipal Watershed." He was surprised to find a low frequency of fire history in the area. Inaccessibility of the area was evident. Bill's research would be helpful information to present to the public.

Bob advised that the group considers the following as we move forward:

- 1) What do we have influence over (markets),
- 2) What do you want the land to look like in 8 – 10 years or further into the future,
- 3) How are you going to pay for it?

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[Dates suggested for the next meeting are Feb 24, 25 or 26<sup>th</sup>. Gina will send out confirmation on the best date for members by the first week of Feb.](#)

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.

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#### **Attachment A**

#### **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting Agenda**

Thursday, January 22, 2009  
1:00 – 4:00 pm

Location: Salmon Valley Business & Innovation Center, 803 Monroe, Salmon

Our Mission: Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.

1:00 pm

Welcome and Introductions

1:15 pm **Senate Bill 22** – Forest Landscape Restoration Act (Gina)

1:30 pm **Hughes Creek Update**  
EA Released – Russ Bacon, North Fork District Ranger  
Private lands update – Gina Knudson, SVS; Karin Drnevic, LCWUI  
Collaborative Involvement in Implementation/Monitoring -- Gina

2:30 pm **Funding Opportunities**  
ICL/Formation Capital – Hughes Ck pvt stream restoration  
NFF Matching Award Program – Aspen Regeneration  
RAC

3:00 pm **Future Projects**  
Breaks Project -- Russ  
Opportunity to Endorse During Scoping Phase  
Napias Creek – Larry  
NEPA change  
Upper North Fork  
Jesse Ck.

3:45 pm **Summarize Action Items**

4:00 pm **Adjourn** – *Reconvene downtown for Social Hour??*

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Attachment B

Participant	Representing	E-mail	Phone	Address
1. Hadley Roberts	Citizen	<a href="mailto:hroberts@custertel.net">hroberts@custertel.net</a>	756-2163	708 Lombard St., Salmon
2. John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<a href="mailto:jrobison@wildidaho.org">jrobison@wildidaho.org</a>	345-6942	PO Box 844, 710 North 6 <sup>th</sup> St, Boise, ID 83701
3. Bob Cope	Lemhi County	<a href="mailto:cowdoc75@hotmail.com">cowdoc75@hotmail.com</a>	756-2124	1610 Main Street, Salmon
4. Karin Drnjevic	Lemhi County Wildand Urban Interface	<a href="mailto:kdwui.lemhicounty@centurytel.net">kdwui.lemhicounty@centurytel.net</a>	756-2815 x271	206 Courthouse Dr., Salmon
5. Mike England	North Fork Fire Dept	<a href="mailto:mwengland@hotmail.com">mwengland@hotmail.com</a>	865-2321	2386 Hwy 93 N., North Fork, ID 83466
6. Gina Knudson	Salmon Valley Stewardship	<a href="mailto:salmonvalley@centurytel.net">salmonvalley@centurytel.net</a>	756-2266	513 Main Street, Salmon
7. Maia Enzer	Sustainable Northwest	<a href="mailto:menzer@sustainablenorthwest.org">menzer@sustainablenorthwest.org</a>	503/221-6911	620 SW Main, Suite 112, Portland, OR 97205
8. Jake Kreilick	Wild West Institute	<a href="mailto:jkreilick@wildrockies.org">jkreilick@wildrockies.org</a>	406/829-8426	PO Box 7998, 314 N. First St., Missoula, MT 59807
9. Vic Phillips	Business Owner	<a href="mailto:frmstore@centurytel.net">frmstore@centurytel.net</a>	756-3060	PO Box 1111, 415 S. Challis St., Salmon



10. Anne & Arden Westfall	Wildfire Risk Reduction	2westfalldigs@centurytel.net	756-3629	46 South Cherokee Road, Salmon
11. John Goodman	Moose Ck Estates	john@moosecreekestates.net	940-0776	3983 Highway 93 North, Gibbonsville 83463
12. Hoby Thomas	Business Owner	<a href="mailto:Jessica010@centurytel.net">Jessica010@centurytel.net</a>	756-2814	Salmon
13. Mark Davidson	Nature Conservancy	mdavidson@tnc.org	879-5575	116 First Ave. North, Hailey, ID 83333
14. Ron Troy	Nature Conservancy	<a href="mailto:rtroy@tnc.org">rtroy@tnc.org</a>	237-2266	Po Box 611, Salmon, ID 83467

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15. Doug Wasileski	Pyramid Mountain Lumber		406/239-2476	915 Hidden Valley Road South, Stevensville, MT 59870
16. Bob Schrenk	Rocky Mtn Elk Foundation	<a href="mailto:bschrenk@msn.com">bschrenk@msn.com</a>		
17. Michele Crist	Wilderness Society	Michele_crist@tws.org	343-8153	350 North 9 <sup>th</sup> St., Boise, ID 83702
18. Rene Toman	LC Economic Development Assoc.	<a href="mailto:renet@centurytel.net">renet@centurytel.net</a>	756-1505	803 Monroe. Salmon, ID 83467
19. George Miley	Gem Communities	<a href="mailto:imagem@custertel.net">imagem@custertel.net</a>	756-4550	707 Broadway, Salmon
20. Jim Tucker	BLM	<a href="mailto:James_tucker@blm.gov">James_tucker@blm.gov</a>	756-5100	1206 S Challis Street, Salmon
21. Chris Erca	BLM	<a href="mailto:alexis_erca@blm.gov">alexis_erca@blm.gov</a>	756-5468	1206 S Challis Street, Salmon
22. Bill Baer	BLM	<a href="mailto:Dave_swanson@blm.gov">Dave_swanson@blm.gov</a>	756-5100	1206 S Challis Street, Salmon
23. Russ Bacon	USFS	<a href="mailto:rmbacon@fs.fed.us">rmbacon@fs.fed.us</a>	865-2700	North Fork Ranger District
24. Larry Svalberg	USFS	<a href="mailto:lsvalberg@fs.fed.us">lsvalberg@fs.fed.us</a>	756-5100	
25. Lynn Bennett	USFS	<a href="mailto:lbennett@fs.fed.us">lbennett@fs.fed.us</a>	756-5132	Fire Ecologist
26. Jim Rineholt	Sawtooth Natl Recreation Area/Idaho Dept of Lands	<a href="mailto:jrineholt@fs.fed.us">jrineholt@fs.fed.us</a>	727-5021	5 North Fork Canyon Road, Ketchum ID 83340
27. Ken Bell	USFS, No. Fork AFMO	<a href="mailto:kbell@fs.fed.us">kbell@fs.fed.us</a>	865-2700	
28. Greg Painter	Idaho Fish and Game	<a href="mailto:gpainter@idfg.idaho.gov">gpainter@idfg.idaho.gov</a>		Salmon Region Office
29. Steve Adams	Youth Employment Project	<a href="mailto:sadams@phd7.state.id.us">sadams@phd7.state.id.us</a>	756-8100	

30. Glenn Seaberg	Youth Employment Project	Gseaberg2005@yahoo.com	756-8100	
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**TO:** WILLIAM WOOD, SALMON-CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST SUPERVISOR  
**FROM:** SALMON VALLEY STEWARDSHIP  
**SUBJECT:** HUGHES CREEK PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE:  
**DATE:** JANUARY 21, 2009  
**CC:** LEMHI COUNTY FOREST RESTORATION GROUP MEMBERS

### **Request for Collaborative Involvement in Implementation and Monitoring Stages of Hughes Creek Project**

This memo is a formal request from the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group to the Salmon-Challis National Forest as they move from the environmental analysis stage of the Hughes Creek Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project to implementation and monitoring of the project. In our initial recommendation memo of April 2007, the group outlined the following standards and methods they aspired to apply to all collaborative projects. Those were detailed as:

1. Monitoring and documentation of project results
  - 1.1. Tell the story so successes can be replicated, mistakes avoided
  - 1.2. Specifically highlight wildlife and fisheries habitat enhancements
2. Economic development
  - 2.1. Identify opportunities for material utilization
  - 2.2. Encourage local econ development through utilization and restoration jobs
  - 2.3. Use stewardship contracting and best value contracting tools

Some specific actions that should now happen to support those objectives include:

**Public Relations.** The LCFRG and the SCNF should work together to develop a public relations plan that would include a joint press release, a briefing package for key decision makers, and field tours. LCFRG members should commit to sharing the information with their respective constituents.

**Stewardship Contracting.** The LCFRG and the SCNF should form a joint committee to design the Hughes Creek stewardship contract. There are a number of ways a collaborative group can be involved during this stage of the process including helping determine what kind of work the contract will accomplish and which factors should be considered when proposals are evaluated. Involving the collaborative group in developing the contract can help ensure that a broad range of community needs is addressed, including identifying what constitutes “local economic benefit.”

The joint committee should develop the technical proposal requirements and help determine proposal evaluation ranking and weighting factors. The Forest Service’s Best Value and Stewardship Contracting Guidebook provides ways for contractors to be involved with some of the contract development stage without entering into an arena of providing unfair

advantage to participating contractors. Once the contract has been developed, the collaborative group as a whole should confirm that the contract reflects what was intended by the NEPA document.

**Monitoring.** Involving the collaborative group in project implementation monitoring is a good way to ensure that the project is meeting its objectives. The LCFRG has formed a Hughes Creek multiparty monitoring committee and has taken preliminary steps to collect baseline data before the project is implemented. Once implementation begins, this same team can continue to participate by gathering data, evaluating the results, and presenting their findings and recommendations to the Forest Service and the larger collaborative group. Funding for project monitoring should be pursued from both LCFRG and the SCNF once the final multiparty monitoring plan is adopted.

We appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with the Salmon-Challis National Forest on this important project and look forward to continue working together as this project advances.

If you have any questions regarding this memo, please don't hesitate to contact me at 756-1686.

Sincerely,

Gina Knudson  
Executive Director, Salmon Valley Stewardship  
Coordinator, Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Conference Call**

Tuesday, February 10, 2009  
10:00 – 10:45 am

Participants: Bill Baer, Ken Bell, Daniel Bertram, Alden Boetsch, Carol Daly, Karin Djrnevic, Gina Knudson, Greg Painter, Ken Rodgers, John Robison, Ron Troy, Jim Tucker

The first item of discussion was the **Draft Memo** to Salmon-Challis Supervisor Bill Wood requesting collaborative status in the implementation phases of the Hughes Ck. project. The draft memo was originally reviewed at the Jan. 22, 2009 meeting but members tabled a decision to approve.

Carol Daly joined the call. Carol is the director of the Flathead Economic Policy Center and has years of experience with stewardship contracting. She suggested a revision in the memo to replace the reference to the Forest Service's Best Value and Stewardship Contracting Guidebook to Forest Service Handbook 2409.19 Chapter 60. The specific language we are seeking is most likely in paragraph 61.12A.

All members present on the call agreed that Gina should incorporate the changes and present the final version to Supervisor Wood.

Secondly, the group discussed possible recommendations for an endorsement memo for the Breaks I Ecosystem Restoration Project. Idaho Conservation League had submitted some of the following comments:

- FS should use Breaks project as a means to educate public about benefits of reintroducing fire on the landscape.
- Burn pile sizes should be minimized to avoid sterilizing soils
  - Burn times should be scheduled to limit impact on wildlife species using winter range and fish species using Sage Ck or other streams for spawning/rearing
- Positive that no new or temp roads are being considered
  - Concern about domestic sheep being used for weed control; interaction with wild bighorn sheep could cause disease in wild populations

Daniel Bertram, Lemhi County Weed Superintendent, provided the following discussion:

Domestic goats have been extremely effective on leafy spurge in Carmen Ck area. In response to Ron Troy's question about what effect goat grazing might have on native species especially on steep, granitic slopes in the Salmon River canyon. Daniel said a herder stays w/ the goats and they prefer the weeds to the natives. He reported that the goats are proposed to be used near the river above Deadwater, not on the steep slopes.

Daniel provided the following comments:

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- Analyzing the use of goats for weed control is a positive step in making an additional tool available to the FS
- Due to slope steepness, water should be placed on site for weed crews to mix chemical (via helicopter)

Greg Painter said Idaho Fish and Game commented:

- IDFG is supportive of aspen regeneration objectives

Ron had questions about the old growth on the project. Ken Bell said they have conducted surveys and none of the 6 old growth units meet the Hamilton criteria. The old growth consists of ponderosa pine with Douglas fir mixed in, but the big trees have been logged in many of the areas and the ponderosa pine is not healthy.

Jake Kreilick was unable to make the call but conveyed to Gina that he had no issues with the project in terms of the purpose and need statement. He is interested in opportunities to be involved in design as the analysis moves forward. Ken said the time for such involvement would be w/in the next 30 days because field crews are getting on the ground as soon as possible.

Ken Rodgers provided information that the materials for the Ditch Ck Bridge (key to the Hughes Ck project) have arrived and a contract is being written for installation. The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group will meet Tuesday, February 24, from noon to 4:30 at the Salmon Business and Innovation Center, 803 Monroe. A vote on an endorsement for the Breaks project and a discussion on the next large Forest project will

be the main topics of discussion. Carol Daly from the Flathead Economic Policy Center is scheduled to attend as a guest.

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### **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting Salmon Business and Innovation Center February 24, 2009**

**12:00 – 4:30 p.m.  
DRAFT Meeting  
Summary**

#### ***Participants:***

Ron Troy, Dave Melton, Ken Bell, Bob Schrenk, Alden Boetsch, Carol Daly, Wayne Talmadge, Greg Painter, Gina Knudson, Fred Templeton, Lynn Bennett, Karin Drnjevic, Russ Bacon, Larry Svalberg, Jim Tucker, Jake Kreilick, Chris Erca, Vic Phillips (Affiliations attached in Appendix B)

#### **Economic Stimulus**

Larry Svalberg explained that the Salmon-Challis submitted \$24 million in capital improvement projects, \$7 million in forest health, and \$9 million hazardous fuels reduction. Larry said the Forest Service is expected to get \$330 million in stimulus money as an agency, so realistically only a few of the SCNF's projects would get funded. Larry commented that the downriver bridges over the Salmon River probably have the highest chance for selection.

Jim Tucker said the Salmon Field Office BLM also submitted some projects for the economic stimulus consideration. The BLM nationwide is slated to get \$320 million for fuels reduction, abandoned mine reclamation, and wildlife habitat restoration projects.

Karin Drnjevic will be working with Idaho Dept of Lands to identify possible projects in the likely event that some of the funding is directed toward State and Private Lands. The Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group will be meeting in Salmon June 10 & 11 and would like to tour Hughes Ck on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

Gina gave a report on her assignment to research RAC funding opportunities. She spoke with Andy Brunelle, the Forest Service's Region 4 Capitol City Coordinator, and he said although the legislative language leaves a lot of room for interpretation, he believes a RAC request would not be appropriate for collaborative activities in general. However, collaborative activities tied to a specific project like Hughes Creek do clearly meet the intent. Gina said given that direction, she will be working with the group to develop a RAC proposal that is tied to activities like multi-party monitoring for Hughes Creek.

#### **Hughes Creek Update**

Russ Bacon said the Record of Decision is expected to be signed the first week of March.

Supervisor Bill Wood received the collaborative's request for involvement in implementation (publicity, stewardship contracting, monitoring) and Russ said there are no obstacles to the group's involvement and Bill will be providing the LCFRG with a signed memo to that effect. Care will be taken by all parties to avoid involving contractors in the stewardship contracting collaboration in a way that would pose conflict of interest speculation. Contractors can and

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should be involved in contract design elements but should not be part of the selection criteria discussion.

A **subcommittee** to work w/ the Forest on the Hughes Creek stewardship contracting elements will include:

Fred Templeton  
Jake Kreilick  
Ron Troy  
Gina Knudson  
Vic Phillips

Mike England (TBD)  
Hadley Roberts (TBD)

Ken Bell said because Hughes Creek was analyzed under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act authorization, once the decision document is signed, work such as burning can start at once.

Jake stated that he is looking to have the multiparty monitoring draft plan completed by the end of March. Establishing monitoring protocols needs to happen before work begins, especially in old growth units where burning is planned.

#### **Carol Daly, Flathead Economic Policy Center**

Carol visited the group from Columbia Falls, MT. Carol has extensive experience with stewardship contracting. She shared her experiences and the group had many questions for her. Fred Templeton inquired as to how other group's have addressed the capital needed for **bonding**. Carol said creativity has been employed. In Priest River, a business was put up for collateral, and on the Yaak River project, a board member used several credit cards to bond their project.

Carol commented that bonding requirements are the Forest Service's way of ensuring that a company does not steal timber. The Forest's acquisition contracts (service work) have more leeway in setting bonding requirements. She said both the USFS and the BLM seem to be working hard to keep bonding requirements as low as possible.

Chris Erca said stewardship contracting doesn't have much favor in the traditional bonding world. Carol and Bob Schrenk pointed to Betsy McGreer in Lewiston. She is the president of McGreer and Company, a private insurance company that specializes in forestry bonds and who has experience with stewardship contracting bonds. Carol said Small Business Administration guaranteed programs are another option.

Other points that came up during the stewardship contracting discussion w/ Carol:

- Stewardship contracting intent is focused heavily on restoration; recreation projects are sometimes funded under SC but they should be tied to a ecological restoration objective
- Designation by description (any two people should be able to visit the site and describe the criteria used to get the work done) vs. designation by prescription (limited by law to low or no-value timber)
- Best value contracting is one of the big selling points for using SC

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- The agencies need to think differently when using best value contracting; you are selecting a partner rather than a contractor

Bob Shrenk brought up that Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation & groups like the Turkey Federation are using **agreements** in place of contracts and finding success. Idaho BLM has recently signed a statewide agreement w/ RMEF.

#### **Breaks Ecosystem Project**

Ron Troy spoke with someone from Foundation for North American Wild Sheep who expressed concern about using domestic goats as well as domestic sheep for weed control in the area. Domestic goats carry the same lung virus that can be transmitted to wild sheep. The FNAWS member said the Salmon River wild sheep population is one of the most important populations in the U.S. because they are one of the only native populations.

Russ Bacon said the FS is aware of the possibility of infection from domestic goats but they feel like they have addressed the concern adequately. The use of goats would be closely monitored and used only on the south side of the river on a narrow strip where leafy spurge has invaded. A herder stays with the goats and they would not be allowed to roam freely. The bighorn sheep do not use the area targeted for goat use frequently. Greg Painter from Idaho Fish and Game concurred that that agency's biologists had reviewed and approved the plan. Chemical treatments of the leafy spurge have not been effective because the ice jams scour the area every year, reducing the effectiveness.

Gina commented that a conversation like the one Ron was having with colleagues underlines the importance of a collaborative endorsement process. Although less involved than a larger collaborative project, the process presents an opportunity for group members to educate themselves about a project and alert the agencies to potential red flags within various stakeholder groups.

She reviewed the March 2008 strategic plan document concerning endorsement:

#### 2.1.43 Level of Collaboration

As the group may only be able to engage in full collaboration on a few projects in the next 3 – 5 years, additional projects that were not selected for full collaboration may be reviewed and endorsed by the group by consensus. This will help us use our time and resources as efficiently as possible and allow us to be involved in a larger number of projects.

The following elements will be considered when deciding whether to endorse a project:

- Project scope and size (could include acreage, costs). Smaller acreage projects, for example may not merit the time full collaboration takes but the group may find the overall objectives of a small, straightforward project to be very beneficial.
- Short-term or long-term project. Creating a fuels break along a roadway may have short-term impacts, yet contribute to firefighter safety and local uses of small diameter timber.
- Interaction between public and private land treatments. A recognized value of the collaborative is the ability to motivate private landowners to engage in treatments complementary to those being undertaken on public lands.

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- Restoration and/or defensible space/community wildfire protection objectives are present

Endorsement may come in several different forms. One option is to craft endorsement language by consensus and present a memo to the applicable public agency before or during the public comment period. The Forest Restoration Group may also work with the public agency to provide a project tour to members and the general public to raise awareness of the project purpose and dimensions. The goal of an endorsement process would be to better inform the public land management agencies of potential conflicts or opportunities for a proposed project, maintaining open lines of communication residents and citizens and public land managers.

Gina will prepare an endorsement memo incorporating the following comments:

The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group supports the following project elements:

- Increasing native plant diversity, notably aspen regeneration
- Educational benefits of reintroducing fire on the landscape
- Using existing road network
- Aggressive noxious weed control, including analysis of new biocontrol tools
- Fuelwood supplies will continue to be available to local residents and visitors

The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group made some of the following recommendations to ensure project success:

- Weed spraying crews should be aided by the strategic placement of water supplies for mixing
- Burn piles should be sized to avoid sterilizing soils
- Burn times should be scheduled to avoid conflict with critical wildlife and fish activities
  - Mountain mahogany and sage species are important wildlife habitat and do not respond quickly after fire so prescribed burning should largely avoid this habitat
- Domestic goats can infect wild bighorn sheep populations if they come in contact with one another so careful monitoring of goats in weed control activities is strongly suggested

Gina will circulate the document via email for a consensus recommendation.

## Future Projects

Russ reiterated the SCNF's plan of developing a staggered schedule of planning that would move forward one landscape level project, and 2 or more smaller projects within a 3-5 year timeframe. He presented maps of the two projects that have been discussed as the next

big project: Upper North Fork and the Salmon Interface. The South Fork of Williams Creek project has been dropped from consideration as a large project (Doug Graves, interdisciplinary team leader for the project has moved) but still might make the list of small projects.

Potential project area in Upper North Fork total more than 40,000 acres, while a potential project area for the Salmon Interface totals more than 90,000 acres). Gina stated that the terms of the

**Comment [AB1]:** Add something either here or right before the filter list about the process for applying the filters – who does it, how do they decide, how does group endorsement work (i.e. does the group send a letter to the FS with everyone's name on it? Etc)

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Forest Landscape Restoration Act, recently passed as part of the Omnibus Public Lands bill, appropriates funding for restoration projects scaled at 50,000 acres +. She asked if Upper North Fork could be expanded to that size. Russ said it could by including the Sheep Creek drainage, but the level of analysis increases greatly. Large projects are defined not only by acreage but by complexity. How many watersheds a project encompasses contributes to its level of complexity.

The Salmon Interface project includes the Salmon municipal watershed. Roadless issues and topography continue to pose daunting challenges. The southern part of the project interfaces with BLM so there is the possibility of interagency work. Jim Tucker said the BLM has recently outlined its 5-year plan and the areas in question were not BLM priorities for fuels reduction. He said those areas are mostly sage and grasslands.

Vic asked how the Salmon Interface project matched up with the Salmon/Moose project area. Russ said the north end of Salmon Interface touches the south end of Salmon/Moose. Vic questioned whether the controversy of Salmon/Moose could hinder the potential success of an adjacent project. Lynn Bennett expressed his concern that in the event of a catastrophic wildfire, residents might not appreciate being told that nothing was done to reduce the hazard because of fear of litigation.

Fire behavior and history were discussed. Larry pointed out that in Upper North Fork typical fire behavior and prevailing conditions would have fire moving away from Gibbonsville while Salmon Interface would have fire moving toward hundreds of homes in the Salmon area.

Wayne said Salmon Interface and the Jesse Creek area would offer a benefit in terms of inspiring public involvement and raising the profile of the group's activities.

Gina commented that using Salmon Interface as a landscape level project seemed to pose a greater risk to the community because of the amount of time required to do analysis on that scale. If the danger is so great and the threat so imminent, why not try to more quickly accomplish a fuels reduction project like the one Jim Tucker suggested two summers ago creating a break on the Ridge Road using Finney Bricks.

Other factors to consider include more access to lodgepole and more opportunities for old growth enhancement on Upper North Fork as compared to Salmon Interface.

**The group agreed by consensus that the Salmon-Challis should consider Upper North Fork as the next landscape level restoration project, while Salmon Interface should be analyzed for a shorter term fuels reduction project.**

The group re-visited their commitment to raising public awareness of the threats and challenges of forest conditions in the Salmon municipal watershed. A subcommittee was initiated to create a strategy of public outreach. The committee members include:

Fred Templeton  
Lynn Bennett  
Karin Drnjevic



Gina Knudson

The next meeting should include a half-day field trip. The date was set for Thursday, April 23. More information to follow.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.

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### Appendix A

#### **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting Agenda**

Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
12:00 – 4:30 pm

Location: Salmon Valley Business & Innovation Center, 803 Monroe, Salmon

Our Mission: Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 12:00 pm | Help Yourself to Lunch/Welcome and Introductions   |
| 12:15 pm | Economic Stimulus Update/RAC funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- BLM</li><li>- Forest Service</li><li>- Sustainable Northwest</li><li>- Lemhi County WUI</li><li>- SVS</li></ul>   |
| 12:45 pm | Hughes Creek Implementation (Contracting, Monitoring, Publicity)   |
| 1:00 pm  | Stewardship Contracting Lessons Learned <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Carol Daly, Flathead Economic Policy Center</li></ul>  |
| 1:45 pm  | Breaks I Ecosystem Restoration Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Endorsement memo</li><li>- Identify next steps</li></ul>  |
| 2:15 pm  | Prioritizing Next Group Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Upper North Fork</li><li>- Jesse Creek</li><li>- Other?</li></ul>  |
| 4:15 pm  | Next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Summarize action items</li><li>- Establish next meeting date</li><li>- Save June 10 &amp; 11, Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group</li></ul> |

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Field Trip Upper  
North Fork  
September 9, 2009  
8:30 a.m. – 4: 45 p.m.**

***Participants:***

Gina Knudson, John Goodman, Russ Bacon, Ron Troy, Jeff Huntman, Dan Garcia, Cindy Haggas, Justin Bezold, Laura Wolf, David Deschaine, Stacey Weems, Cammie Sayer, Vic Phillips, Hadley Roberts, Daniel Bertram, Jim Roscoe, Tim Metzger, Mike Smith, Lyle Powers, Ken Rodgers (affiliations listed in Attachment A)

**Welcome and Introductions**

Russ Bacon noted that the large presence of Forest Service staff reflected his philosophy that agency specialist should be involved early in the project design phase so a thorough understanding of the restoration group's discussions and intentions can translate into a more efficient and responsive analysis.

**Upper North Fork GIS Presentation and Conference Room Discussion**

The scope of the project thus far includes 41,000 acres stretching from Lost Trail Pass to the north end of the Hughes Creek Project, on both sides of Highway 93. Russ asked the group to consider if the project should be approached from a strictly hazardous fuels reduction standpoint or from a forest restoration perspective. Gina said during the April 23 meeting, the group selected Upper North Fork over other candidate projects because it lent itself to more forest restoration activities. The group then discussed issues that should be explored and hopefully settled before next field season. Issues that were raised included:

- **Roadless areas.** Based on the September 2008 field trip at Moose Creek Estates, the group re-affirmed the need to examine some kind of treatment in the Anderson Mountain Roadless Area on the east side of the proposed project area. Although the Obama Administration has reinstated the 2001 Roadless Rule under Clinton, Idaho's Roadless Rule will stand. **Lyle Powers, planning officer for the Salmon-Challis, said the Idaho Roadless Committee is very interested in the proposed Upper North Fork project because of its roadless area implications and would like to be able to attend a field trip/meeting concerning the area in question.**
- **Visual resources.** From the Highway 93 corridor, the Forest is supposed to retain existing visuals (i.e. treelines) and travelers are not supposed to see evidence of forestry work. It is uncertain if there is flexibility to compare the difference of altering the treeline through a restoration project versus the visual effects of a major event such as the 2000 fire in the adjacent Bitterroot Valley or bug kill near Stanley or Helena. The Forest Service does have software and specialists available with landscape architecture expertise who can be useful in designing treatments that mitigate visual resource concerns.
- **Old growth.** Using Hughes Creek as a model, Russ said he feels the Forest is committed to 1) figuring out what the current conditions are for old growth species, and 2) working

to enhance what is out there, if needed. He said he hopes to have plots in every old growth unit that is part of the project area. To date, he estimates there is around 1,300 acres of designated old growth. Lyle added that the Forest expects the existing old growth polygons to shift fairly significantly as a result of ground truthing and re-configuration.

- **Community wildfire protection.** Gibbonsville is the biggest concern. Some work has been completed on private land and close to the town, but a false sense of security might be present. Tim Metzger described the historical wildfire patterns in the North

Fork District as extremely predictable. Based on that information, Pierce Creek is perfectly aligned with prevailing winds and topography to experience a major wildfire event.

- **Project size/Forest Landscape Restoration Act (FLRA)**. The FLRA was recently signed into law in the Omnibus Public Lands Bill (P.L. 111-11) with an authorization of \$40 million to be competitively awarded to large landscapes (minimum of 50,000 acres) across the nation. The purpose of the Act is to selectively award sustained funding for fuels treatments to large landscapes where a collaboratively developed and science-based ecological restoration plan can be implemented. While the Act has been authorized, it has not been fully funded. The group needs to weigh the advantages/disadvantages of expanding the project's size to accommodate the minimum standards of the FLRA. Vic Phillips questioned whether the 16,000-acre Hughes Creek project analysis area could be joined together w/ Upper North Fork to reach the 50,000-acre amount. Russ reported that some agency staff at the Region 4 level are wary of some of the FLRA's "strings attached". Gina will ask Maia Enzer of Sustainable Northwest to help provide some guidance on this issue.

**Stop #1 – Lost Trail Ski Area.** Tim Metzger, North Zone Fire Management Officer, described how current vegetation conditions affect wildfire strategy. With the exception of the 2003 Frog Pond fire scar and a few other patches in the drainage, there are no openings in the forest canopy that present obvious places to try to hold a fire. Typically, fire would have moved through the area in 10-25 year cycles. Because of the lodgepole pine component, some of those fires would have been stand replacing fires. Because of fire suppression history and the subsequent buildup of forest vegetation, the stand replacing event is now on track to be on a landscape scale (i.e., entire proposed project area, plus some). Tim feels like he is in a position that when a fire starts in this area, he must suppress it with all available resources.

John Goodman pointed out that the Frog Pond fire moved from the western ridgeline to Highway 93 in about 5 hours.

The beetle and spruce budworm infestations are another contributing factor to the timeliness of this project. While the infestations are not as evident yet, the Stanley basin has experienced around 80% mortality of lodgepole pine creating a fire resilience of virtually zero.

The 1988 Forest Plan that is still in effect does not allow fires to be allowed to burn for resource benefit outside of the Frank Church wilderness. A Forest Plan amendment would be required to change this policy. The use of prescribed fire is allowed.

Jim Roscoe observed that there is potential for higher diversity habitat between Moose Creek and Hughes Creek. He concurred that the area is an important migratory corridor for large mammals such as elk and that the risk of losing a massive segment of habitat in a one-time wildfire event should inspire us to action. He urged an examination of treatment methods that do not have a large footprint, with the possible exception of prescribed fire use.

Daniel Bertram, county weed superintendent, said each year his crew sprays weeds along the highway, starting at Lost Trail and working south. This year they made it to Moose Creek Estates. He views new infestations as his main priority, including rush skeleton, dalmation toadflax, hound's tongue and diffuse knapweed. He is very encouraged with biocontrol results for spotted knapweed. Disturbance, whether fire, logging, or just increased traffic, usually spurs weed growth so a proactive weed management plan is a must for any project. Daniel learned

lessons from the cost share program initiated for landowners in the Hughes Creek project area and is looking forward to working with landowners in Upper North Fork in an even more productive manner.

### **Stop #2 – Royal Elk Ranch.**

We stopped on the west side of the highway and observed a small **aspen** stand. While not significant in terms of acreage, aspen is found in many parts of the project area and could benefit from conifer removal. Some of these areas may pose solutions in terms of the conifer having some merchantable value that can contribute to overall project objectives. Private dollars might also contribute to this type of restorative work. Organizations such as Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation have helped w/ aspen regen work in the past and Salmon Valley Stewardship is currently working under a grant from the National Forest Foundation to inventory aspen stands, remove conifers, and monitor post-treatment conditions in the Hughes Creek project area.

**Whitebark pine** is another species that is becoming increasingly rare. So far, whitebark pine has been found to exist on about 400 acres w/in the project boundary.

We crossed the highway onto private property looking east toward the Beaverhead Range and the Pierce Creek drainage. The roadless area adjacent to private lands falls within the Idaho Roadless Rule “backcountry” category, and fuels reduction and even temporary road construction are allowable under the rule. Helicopter logging options are becoming increasingly expensive and less available.

John Goodman reported the Moose Creek homeowners association met in June and Russ made a presentation to them about Upper North Fork. The homeowners initially favor the hazardous fuels objectives of the project, but John said the ecological restoration will be as important to them.

Russ said because the area is so steep and has not been roaded, the potential for big Ponderosa pine restoration is greater than in many areas throughout the forest.

Jim said American Wildlands has a program called Safe Passages that attempts to address issue of wildlife traffic fatalities. Some of the measures employed in that program could be focused on the Upper North Fork area.

### **Stop # 3 – Votler Creek**

We went through an area that had been recently thinned and hand piled. A burn will follow. The cost of the thinning is running the Forest Service about \$500-\$800/acre. The group discussed that a less uniform prescription than what we saw in Votler and across the valley in Crone Gulch would be more desirable.

With final Travel Plan recommendations, road issues may be more timely to discuss than during the Hughes Creek project design. While stream restoration opportunities are not as abundant as with Hughes, there are places within the project area where road re-contouring, decommissioning or culverts might have fish benefit.

#### **Next Steps:**

- Schedule a field trip of Anderson Mountain Roadless Area. Jake Kreilick from Wild West Institute will be contacted and then available dates forwarded to collaborative members. (Gina)

- Get more information to collaborative members about Forest Landscape Restoration Act. (Maia Enzer, Gina)
- GIS layer of travel plan recommendations in area (Lyle).
- GIS layer (?) of tree species and age class (Russ).
- Consider who else should be invited to participate in collaborative (All).

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Field Trip Upper  
North Fork  
October 9, 2009  
11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
DRAFT  
Summary**

***Participants:***

Bob Cope, Karin Drnjevik, Bill Grasser, John Robison, Bob Russell, Gina Knudson, John Goodman, Russ Bacon, Ron Troy, Jeff Huntman, Cindy Haggas, Beth Waterbury, Laura Wolf, David Deschaine, Stacey Weems, Cammie Sayer, Hadley Roberts, Bill Grasser, Mike Smith, Lyle Powers, Ken Rodgers (affiliations listed in Attachment A)

**Welcome and Introductions at North Fork Fire Department**

Russ Bacon announced that Regional Forester (4) Harv Forsgren named the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group as the Natural Resource Stewards for 2008. Gina will be circulating some talking points and requesting quotes for PR purposes.

**Idaho Roadless Rule and Its Relation to Anderson Mountain**

- Although Moose Creek Estates and neighboring landowners are adjacent to Forest Service lands, they are not technically defined as a “community at risk” under Healthy Forest Restoration Act (2003)
- The properties are within Lemhi County’s Wildland Urban Interface area as described in the Lemhi County Wildfire Mitigation Plan (2006)
- The Anderson Mountain Roadless Area is categorized as “backcountry” under the Idaho Roadless Rule. Therefore, the Regional Forester must determine that the community or water supply system is facing a significant risk from a wildland fire disturbance event, and the project will maintain or improve one or more roadless characteristics over the long term. A significant risk exists where the history of fire occurrence and fire hazard and risk indicated a serious likelihood that a wildland fire disturbance event would present a high risk of threat to an at-risk community or municipal water supply system. Officials must also determine that the project cannot be reasonably accomplished without a temporary road.
- The collaborative needs to put forward a recommendation as to our definition of “community protection zone” and whether Moose Creek Estates, et al should be considered a “community at risk.

**Discussion Summary**

The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group and the Forest Service are designing the Upper North Fork project as a landscape level restoration project rather than one with strictly hazardous fuels reduction/community protection aspects. Therefore, the group felt it was too early to pre-

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- Cope expressed the Roadless Area Conservation National Advisory Committee (RACNAC) of which he was a member believed the results to be more important than the methods in achieving sound project objectives. The RACNAC intended for communities to have flexibility in interpreting roadless based on local knowledge and on-the-ground conditions.
- We don't know where the next fire will start, but we do know where homes are. Any proposed treatments should be complementary and blur the lines across public and private boundaries.
- Issue is not whether commercial or non-commercial activities take place in a roadless area; issues are whether trees are to be cut and/or temporary roads built.

**Stop # 1 – Royal Elk Ranch**

- Viewpoint looking northeast into Anderson Mountain and Pierce Creek.
- Proposed Upper North Fork project has nearly every forest type found in the Intermountain West. Much of the ponderosa pine stands are second growth because early logging targeted the species.
- Beth Waterbury used a Dahlenega Creek project as a good example of a fuels reduction project. Jeff Huntman explained the end result left about 50 basal area remaining and is described in timber terms as a commercial thin from below. Beth said for wildlife, the percent of canopy cover remaining is another important factor.
- Moose Creek Estates currently consists of 18 homeowners with potential to have 30. The neighboring ground has not been split up yet and two landowners own large pieces.

**Stop #2 – Forest Service land adjacent to Moose Creek Estates on the east slope**

- Stand is primarily lodgepole pine, usually subject to a lethal fire regime. This stand could be described as later succession, about ready to fall down and most likely highly susceptible to mountain pine beetle.
- Lodgepole doesn't offer easy solutions
- Mother nature is going to thin from above
- One possibility is focusing on crown space

**Stop #3 – Further up on the hill**

- Estimated 55% slope
- We observed a fire scarred lodgepole indicative of a previous low intensity fire
  - Forest stand is mixed with a small patch of aspen, lodgepole, ponderosa, douglas fir all evident
- Spruce budworm is at work
- Russ commented that fire let ponderosa pine win species competition historically
- What will climate change do to the trend of species transitions?
- A variety of age classes and green tree recruitment are desirable
  - To move toward a more fire resilient ecosystem, small patches would be required for non lethal fire regime (such as ponderosa pine), a larger patch for mixed severity, and for lethal fire regimes (lodgepole), a large patch size or large mortality would be necessary

**Stop # 4 – The Ponderosa Pine savannah**

- A small stand of large, old ponderosa pine, typical dry pine site
  - The stand would likely withstand a ground fire, but understory and surrounding timber is dense enough that crown fire would be more likely to be lethal
- The stand is moving more toward a Douglas fir succession
- What, if anything, do we do to protect the ponderosa stand?

### **Stop #5 – Bushwhacking south to an intermittent streambed**

- PACFISH only calls for no commercial harvest within 100 feet of an intermittent stream, 150 feet of a perennial non-fish bearing stream and 300 feet from a fish bearing stream. Also, looking at your picture of that intermittent stream it was hard for me to tell if it was an intermittent stream or an ephemeral draw. To be considered a stream channel (intermittent or perennial) there needs to be defined bank incisement where you can definitely tell you are stepping down into a channel (may only be a few inches) and there also needs to be stream substrate in the bottom of the channel. In other words if you have a grassy or mud bottom with no rock substrate and the slopes of the bank are more rolling/gradual without defined bank incisement you are probably looking at an ephemeral draw. PACFISH does not have criteria for ephemeral draws. There are Best Management Practices to protect ephemeral draws but there are no set backs to commercial harvest. [Dan Garcia comment]
  - If temporary road was to be built, road would likely cross this drainage and require culverts.
  - Roadless rule would require decommissioning, but decommissioning can take a variety of forms.
  - To the south, large pocket of insect mortality. Large ponderosa pine component seems to be escaping beetle damage, but fuel loads could lead to fire mortality.

### **Wrap Up Discussion**

- Anderson Mountain is only a very small part of assessment area, but because of complex issues, looking at this early in the design phase makes sense
- We don't have to come up with all the answers in one day
  - Variety of methods to consider, including tractor logging/temp road, skyline/cabling, helicopter log operation, other possibilities yet to emerge...
- Keep an open mind, think about desired future conditions

### **Next Steps:**

- Schedule a field trip on West side of project area near Gibbonsville (Gina/Russ/ALL).
- GIS layer of travel plan recommendations in area (Lyle).
- Schedule a conference call re: Federal Landscape Restoration Act (Gina/Maia).
- Consider who else should be invited to participate in collaborative (All).

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**DRAFT summary**  
**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group**  
**Conference Call & Meeting**  
 Monday, December 21, 2009  
 11:00 am – noon

Participants: Daniel Bertram, Karin Drnjevic, Dan Maiyo, Gina Knudson, Bob Russell, Wayne Talmadge, Fred Templeton, Richard Larson, Michelle Tucker, Russ Bacon, David Deschaine, Bob Cope, Cal Lehman

The meeting was called because Cal Lehman, a citizen of Salmon, asked the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group to consider acting on his proposal to request Central Idaho RAC funding for a vegetation survey of the Salmon Municipal Watershed.

Cal had discussed this idea with Salmon-Challis National Forest personnel, as well as Bill Baer of the BLM who studied the municipal watershed a few years ago. Bill Baer confirmed to Cal that more on-the-ground information is needed to be able to accurately run models that can help predict fire behavior.

North Fork Ranger Russ Bacon confirmed that the Forest does not have enough information about this area.

Karin Drnjevic, the County's Wildland Urban Interface Coordinator, said the County listed the municipal watershed as their #1 priority in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, but the roadless issues have caused the County to advance other projects.

Dan Maiyo, the City of Salmon's planning director, explained the City is revising its comprehensive plan and includes an element about the municipal watershed's vulnerability to catastrophic wildfire in the Natural Hazards section and elsewhere in the document.

Russ said that the Idaho Roadless Rule establishment has removed the "brick wall" that was in place previously.

Richard Larson said from his previous experience another hurdle is the Forest Plan. There is a historic document signed by the Secretary of Agriculture that directs the Forest Service to leave the municipal watershed untouched. Immediately after the call, Richard forwarded the following reference from the SCNF plan: Chapter IV, page 44 c. The Salmon City municipal watersheds will be managed according to the Municipal Watershed Plan approved by the Salmon District Ranger on June 16, 1975 •.and the "Cooperative Agreement for the Purpose of Conserving and Protecting the Water Supply for the City of Salmon. Idaho" Dated June 8, 1939.

Gina said Cal's initial proposal is to fund a study to provide more information about vegetation. She also read John Robison's comment about a study that incorporated

watershed health and stream restoration opportunities into the study. All agreed that the vegetation information is lacking and would be a good place to start.

Russ Bacon said stand exams and old growth inventory will be required. Archaeological surveys will also have to be done in preparation for any future NEPA work. The Forest has staff time to do this and could possibly ask for RAC funding for this purpose. Dan Garcia, fisheries biologist, indicated that the Forest may want to ask for funding to do fish distribution survey info for the area because they already have the expensive equipment to do the electroshocking that would be required.



The vegetation survey, however, would be better to achieve with contractors because the Forest's timber shop has been plagued with vacancies. David Deschaine, hydrologist for the Forest, said they currently monitor stream data and the watershed meets water quality objectives. He suggested that the Forest does have some existing vegetation maps taken by satellite imagery that could help point a contractor in the right places to make the on-the-ground inventory more efficient.

The next question was which entity should propose to the RAC. Wayne expressed concern that Lemhi County Economic Development Association needs equal footing with Salmon Valley Stewardship in terms of having partnership agreements in place. Gina agreed that LCEDA would be a good option to move the proposal forward and get experience working as a partner with the Forest Service. Another possible entity would be the County. Cope pointed out that the Commissioners would need to approve and they don't have a meeting before the short proposal needs to go the RAC (Jan 4).

Bob Russell agreed to prepare the pre-proposal form for the RAC, working with Cal to review his cost estimates, as well as the Forest.

Russ estimated that accomplishing the inventories could advance any possible treatment projects in the Salmon Municipal Watershed by about a year.

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group members made no decisions or recommendations about treatment options in the watershed, but did agree unanimously to support the RAC request to fund a vegetation inventory to include stand exam and old growth information.**

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group**  
**Hughes Ck Stewardship Contracting Subcommittee**  
**DRAFT Meeting Summary**  
Friday, January 8, 2010  
10:00 a.m. – 11:45 am  
Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center

**Participants:** Russ Bacon, Tim Metzger, Mike Smith, Glenwood Brittain, Mike Christianson (Salmon-Challis N.F.), Wayne Talmadge, Bob Russell (Lemhi Co. Economic Development Assoc.), Daniel Bertram, Karin Drnjevic, Bob Cope (Lemhi Co.), Chris Erca (BLM), Dave Hiatt (Citizen), Vic Phillips (Forest Fuels Solutions), Gina Knudson, Sean Bascom (Salmon Valley Stewardship)

**Call-In Participants:** Jake Kreilick (Wild West Institute), Jerry Myers (Trout Unlimited), Michelle Tucker (SVS), Doug Radin, Connie Osborne, Judy Martin (USFS contracting IDAWY), Megan Timoney (Region 4)

**Key Discussion Items:**

- SCNF does not have a great deal of experience with stewardship contracting
- USFS contracting officials will play a big role in navigating process
- Salmon-Moose settlement resulted in timber value replacement in Hughes Creek
- Forest Service process, timeline and current proposal

**Details of Salmon-Moose timber “swap” in Hughes Creek**

- 156-acre Diamond Sale awarded to Pyramid Lumber was dropped as part of settlement
- Like product had to be found in a place where NEPA had been cleared
- Hughes Creek was the only area w/ right mix of species and NEPA complete
  - Units haven't been locked in from Hughes Ck, but 230-280 acres are estimated to be "spoken for"
  - Megan Timoney explained that the Forest is modifying Pyramid's existing timber sale contract; not able to change to a stewardship contract
  - Megan pointed out that although the Pyramid work will not be under a stewardship contract, the area will still be treated and the funds from the sale can be put to work on the ground
  - Gina said the situation is not ideal and not what the group had intended, and hopefully working together as a collaborative will ward off similar circumstances in the future

#### Salmon-Challis process/timeline to use stewardship contracting

- Regional Forester signs letter authorizing SCNF to use stewardship contracting
  - Forest determines if timber sale or integrated resource service contract is best approach
  - Subcommittee & FS work together to finalize the package of work and develop best value criteria

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- Judy Martin said contracting would like to have package by March 1 and they would expect to turn around to request bids within 90-120 days (June – August)
- SCNF Stewardship Contract Proposal (See Attachment A)
  - Unit #64 (181 acres) would be included as a commercial thin
  - Commercial unit includes approx. 750,000 board feet of timber
  - Low market values indicate an approx \$5,000 - \$10,000 value
    - 7 units along Hughes Ck itself and adjacent to private property have been identified for ladder fuel reduction: Unit 11A (35 acres), 13A (49 acres), 13B (50 acres), 14 (68 acres), 44 (14 acres), 45 (182 acres), 46 (108 acres) for a total of 506 acres
  - Russ Bacon said the idea was to make the contract simple to ensure success
    - Russ explained that because of the low value of the timber, the service work would be paid for with above-base funding received last year. This needs to be obligated this year and only allows for fuels reduction activities.
    - If an integrated resource service contract vehicle were used, the life of the contract could be expected to be 3 – 5 years
    - Bonding requirement scenarios are fairly minimal on the timber side of things. If value is in the \$5-10K range, about 10% of value is typically put up. Service work would typically not require a payment bond but may require a performance bond, but again this is not foreseen to be prohibitive.

#### Collaborative comments on the proposal

- Weeds were another concern in the group's design recommendations
  - Daniel Bertram said at a minimum treating along transportation corridors could be a step in the right direction for the group's goal of "no net increase of weeds"; the County currently sprays along county roads

- Ken Thacker did the weed spraying on private land in Hughes Ck and said the identified ladder fuels thinning areas are some of the weediest lands in the drainage and some precautionary measures should be taken
- Jake Kreilick said additional monitoring for weeds in treatment areas might be appropriate
- Vic Phillips said road maintenance is another item that might need additional project dollars
- Vic said the contract time length (3-5 yrs) sounded reasonable to him and the longer term might allow for a upside in the markets
- Chris Erca said he has managed several stewardship contracts as a BLM employee and in his experience bonding companies are not sure how to go about bonding a stewardship contract
- Chris commented that the 500 acres of ladder fuels reduction, considering some of the work on the south side of the creek has to be done with hand saws rather than equipment, might knock some local competitors out of the bidding. In designing the contract, you have to look at what is available locally.
- Bob Russell said the timeframe of 3 – 5 years should allow for that reality.
  - Karin Drnjevic said a lot of the contractors she works with are self-employed and not equipped or willing to deal with federal paperwork, workman's comp, etc

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- Bob said LCEDA's vision is to help rebuild the local capacity for wood industry in the community and the region by perhaps serving as a prime contractor.
- Vic said he had a manufacturing operation to run and he would have to consider if he wanted to dedicate his crews to thinning projects. He said the idea of LCEDA bidding on the larger project and subcontracting out might work.
- Bob said LCEDA wants to help build capacity but they don't intend to compete w/ private business
- Judy Martin said on the service contract side of things, the prime contractor must perform at least 50% of the work.

## Collaborative Conclusions on Proposal

- **The group agreed to move forward with the Salmon-Challis proposal.**
  - Weed treatment was a stated group priority and other funding mechanisms should be sought to make sure disturbance does not increase weed problem. Russ will check with Diane Schuldt to see if existing funding or RAC funding could be applied.
  - Megan Timoney added that weed treatment could be listed as an optional part of the bid package or clauses added in the contract to emphasize best management practices. The group will explore these options further.
  - As the lead of the multiparty monitoring effort, Jake pledged a commitment to working with the FS to monitor weeds in the work areas.
  - Cope added that the County is mandated by the State to control weeds, too, and additional recreation and traffic in the area are other reasons weeds may increase in addition to logging activities.

## Next Steps

- A half-day meeting will be scheduled either on either Jan 26 or Jan 27 depending

on Jake's availability. Because the meeting will focus on best value criteria and other contracting criteria, those considering contracting on the project should not be present at this meeting.

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group**  
**Hughes Ck Stewardship Contracting Subcommittee**  
**FINAL**

Tuesday, January 26, 2010

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Participants: Karin Djrnevic, Gina Knudson, Hadley Roberts, Ron Troy, Daniel Bertram, Bob Cope, Russ Bacon, Mike Smith, Lynn Bennett, Glenwood Brittain, Judy Martin, Doug Radin

**Key discussion items:**

- Subcontracting authority
- Evaluation Criteria
- Finalize items to be included in contract
- Mandatory and optional contract items
- Contract specifications

**Subcontracting authority:**

- November 17, 2009 Forest Service directive prompts agency to use “full and open competition” for stewardship contracts
  - “Other than full and open competition” prompted small business set-aside regulations for service contracts that required prime contractor to do at least 50% of work
  - This new directive allows everyone to come to the table, including NGO's
  - Contracts greater than \$550,000 require a formal subcontracting plan

**Evaluation criteria:**

- The group came to consensus on evaluation criteria with 2 items earmarked for more homework (Gina will consult with Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition stewardship contracting leads)
- Judy Martin, contracting lead, will take information and distribute draft to subcommittee members for review

**Mandatory vs. optional contract items:**

- The group came to consensus that treating weeds along the haul routes for the timber sale part and the transportation corridors for the thinning work should be included under mandatory items. The revenues from the timber sale are estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$10,000 and this can be applied toward this non-fuels work.
- Optional items include thinning unit #45 and a pilot weed treatment in prescribed burn areas to gauge the effectiveness of pre- and post-burn treatments

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- Diane Schuldt, SCNF wildlife biologist and weed specialist, will be consulted to determine units and specification for pilot weed project

**Technical Evaluation Team:**

- Cost will, of course, be considered, but is not included in the collaboratively designed evaluation criteria point system. Tech eval team makes the decision of whether cost is more important, as important, or less important than other factors.
- Contractors will not be told how many points each question in the RFP is worth.
- Judy said Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group members cannot be part of the technical evaluation team.

**Timeline:**

- We are still on track for having information to Judy by March 1.

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## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
Salmon Business and Innovation Center  
February 10, 2010  
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Final  
Meeting Summary**

[Indicates ACTION items]

***Participants:***

Ron Troy, Bob Schrenk, Rene Toman, Wayne Talmadge, Bob Russell, Bill Grasser, Hadley Roberts, John Goodman, Steve Adams, Jim Roscoe, Dylan Taylor, Gina Knudson, Michelle Tucker, Sean Bascom, Bob Cope, Karin Drnjevic, Russ Bacon, David Deschaine, Ken Rodgers, Diane Schuldt, Karen Dunlap, Mike Smith, Stacey Weems, Glenwood Brittain, Jim Tucker, Chris Erca, Scott Feldhausen, Cindy Haggas, Laura Wolf (Affiliations attached)

**Reminder: March 3 & 4, 2010 – Climate Change, Bioenergy and Sustaining Forests in Idaho and Montana Conference**

<http://www.uidaho.edu/cnr/forestsbioenergyconference>

Bob Russell is driving to Boise and is interested in carpooling. John Robison of Idaho Conservation League is slated to speak on a panel discussion on behalf of the Lemhi County forest restoration group.

Gina said Titcomb Foundation funding for the collaborative may be able to help with registration if someone requests.

**Information Repository at Salmon Valley Stewardship**

The LCFRG records are being organized and indexed in a file cabinet at SVS. These records belong to the whole group and anyone is welcome to inspect and duplicate the records. Gina hopes to be able to make the records available digitally in the future but that is realistically 18 - 24 months away.

## **Hughes Ck Multiparty Monitoring**

SVS intern Sean Bascom is focusing on the socioeconomic monitoring chapter of the Hughes Ck Multiparty Monitoring Plan. He has been calling contractors to determine how many days of work they and employees have put in on all of the various Hughes Ck items, from the private work on the Cerise stream section to the County's private lands fuels reduction work, aspen regeneration and the Ditch Ck bridge replacement. The monitoring information should help the group and the agencies communicate how much economic and social impact a project like Hughes Creek can have on a community.

When the Forest Service uses stewardship contracting, multiparty monitoring is a requirement.

## **Hughes Ck Stewardship Contracting**

Since the subcommittee met with the Forest Service contracting officials and others, Diane Schuldt of the Salmon-Challis has been able to review the suggested optional contract item of a pilot weed study relative to weed response to prescribed fire. She said she spent time in the field

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with Jake Kreilick last summer and at the time they determined some possible areas for such a study. The other optional contract item listed is thinning unit #45 and Mike Smith suggested leaving the thinning unit unnumbered.

The contract specifications are expected to be on contract officer Judy Martin's desk no later than March 1 with a 60-90 day turnaround anticipated before bids are solicited.

## **Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee**

The following proposals are being prepared in relation to the forestry collaborative:

- Salmon Valley Stewardship. Aspen inventory and monitoring on Breaks project and Upper North Fork. (approx \$5-10K); Hughes Ck multiparty monitoring (\$7.5-10K)
  - Lemhi County Economic Development Association. Removing conifers from at-risk aspen stands in Breaks project and elsewhere. (\$?)
- Lemhi County Wildland Urban Interface. Vegetation survey on private land in Hughes Creek area in partnership with Youth Employment Program (\$9K)
- Salmon-Challis NF. Hughes Ck weeds. (\$?)

## **Williams Ck Restoration Project**

Mike Smith, fuels specialist, said he and Jeff Huntzman toured the South Fork of Williams Creek project area and determined the timber component was not very enticing. They decided to streamline to a restoration project using primarily prescribed fire and some hazardous fuels reduction near the Hoffman private property for a total project size of approximately 3400 acres.

They are drafting a proposed action and expect to use a Forest Service enterprise team to do the NEPA analysis. Wayne Talmadge asked if contracting locally for the work had been considered. Russ Bacon explained that NorthWind, a company that has a presence in Salmon, did bid on the contract but was not successful.

The Forest expects to be able to use CE6, a categorical exclusion for wildlife enhancement.

Gina reminded the group that in their strategic plan the group outlined endorsement vs. full collaborative status for projects that were less likely to be controversial, such as the Breaks project that had no timber component and mostly prescribed burning treatments.

Karin Drjnevich asked if the burns would be timed to accommodate rancher Roy Hoffman. Gina said the 2008 field trip notes should reflect some strategies presented by the Nature Conservancy's Mark Davidson regarding grass banks, etc.

[Gina will forward meeting summary to Mike Smith and Karen Dunlap; C.Haggas would appreciate copy also]

Cope said the Forest might want the project to have an element of collaboration since there are potential grazing, wildland urban interface, and Idaho Roadless Area issues, not to mention local desire to utilize the wood if possible.

Michelle Tucker asked what the Forest had determined about aspen. Russ said inventories had been completed in the area.

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Bob Schrenk said the Elk Foundation looks at 3 sources of funding for wildlife enhancement projects like this one:

1. Appropriated \$ for Rx fire
2. \$ generated from timber value
3. Grants

He said the size and duration of the project was not typically big enough for RMEF interest who like landscape-level, long-term projects. He recommended the Forest Service not limit themselves unnecessarily with the NEPA document. He encouraged the agency to "set yourself up to be opportunistic".

Russ agreed, but explained that he has to be mindful of targets. In some cases a streamlined NEPA process is warranted.

[The SCNF will continue to keep the LCFRG informed, sharing a draft of the proposed action]

## Upper North Fork

**Background:** The Forest Plan classifies 4 management areas within the project area: Lost Trail Ski Area (1A), Dispersed recreation area with no timber harvest *planned* and minerals, vegetation management and grazing allowed (2A), aquatic habitat management with long-term timber outputs (regeneration and thinning) (3A-5A), and fish habitat, big game habitat needs (3A-4A) with an emphasis on winter range, vegetation management is allowed for enhancement of habitats.

Laura Wolf commented that Idaho Fish and Game would probably not consider the Upper North Fork project area to be as important for winter range as it is for summer range.

Bill Grasser asked what management area would be what they used to call the "timber base". Russ said that would be the 3A-5A area.

Russ said the plan dates from 1986 and the terms "restoration" and "hazardous fuels" may not even appear. Working with a 25-year-old plan creates a struggle for the public and the agency. There is some flexibility because when issues arise, the plan can be amended on a project basis. One foreseeable example is visual quality objectives.

Cope said it makes sense to him to use the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) as an overlay on the project area to help the group prioritize objectives.

**Previously analyzed projects in the area:**

- Gibbonsville EA.
  - o Signed 2003
  - o Decision appealed and rescinded by FS
  - o Revised and appealed again in 2004
  - o Settlement reached with Alliance for Wild Rockies, Ecology Center 2005

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- o Final project included ladder fuels treatment and Crone Gulch sale

David Deschaine said one lesson learned for the Forest regarding the settlement is the NEPA analysis linked too many activities, for example, timber units were tied to road reclamation activities. So when units were dropped, they were unable to do some of the linked activities.

**Project Boundary Issues**

- The President has recommended full funding (\$40 million) for Forest Landscape Restoration Act. Projects need to be 50,000+ to be eligible. Upper N.F is 41,000 approx now.
- Phase II Hughes Ck may be able to be included in analysis area.
- Dahlonge may also be included since some NEPA is already done.
  - Potential barriers are an extra watershed adds complexity for analysis; Salmon-Moose settlement specifies an old growth protocol that has not been done in Dahlonge and would be time consuming and costly.

**Forest Service Specialist Update**

**Water Quality/Fish (David Deschaine)**

- 11 sediment stations in project area: Dahlonge, Ditch, Hughes, Hull, Moose, Pierce, Sheep and Twin Creeks, and 3 stations on the North Fork
- This field season they will set up for modeling sediment, bank stability, and potential changes in water yield due to disturbance from project activities

**Soils (Stacey Weems)**

- The Student Conservation Association accompanied her to 3 sites last field season at Anderson, Twin Creek and the Johnson Creek areas
- Her work is essentially on hold until site specific info is developed.

**Timber (Glenwood Brittain)**

- Forest engineer accompanied him to Moose Ck Estates to help inform a logging systems plan on the hillside above MCE. He examined harvest potential, thinning and fuel break options.

**Wildlife (Cindy Haggas)**

- Conducted limited surveys on Northern goshawk (sensitive species on SCNF)
- Looked at aspen regeneration potential with timber shop and John Goodman near MCE
  - Assembled existing studies on lynx habitat near the Divide and elk security habitat gathered during the Lost Trail Pass/Gibbonsville Integrated Resource Analysis process
- Need to address impacts of project activities on TES wildlife and plant species



- Allan Mountain Research Natural Area was established to recognize subalpine larch and subalpine plant communities; RNAs have unique management prescription.

## **Weeds (Diane Schuldt)**

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- In the Krone Gulch area a patch of knapweed 1,300 acres in size has been inventoried
  - Otherwise not much has been inventoried in project area and because of expense of doing inventories, most will not be planned until site specific info is available
  - Forest did get approval to establish a new biocontrol agent in Hughes Ck area so they are setting up monitoring plots to test results
  - Weeds of concern are spotted knapweed, hound's tongue, cheatgrass, and a new super- competitor blue weed

## **Fuels (Mike Smith)**

- Forest engineer has looked at area above MCE regarding temporary roads
- All but about 3 old growth units have been inventoried

## **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Values**

- Fire prevention around rec site
- Aspen
- Whitebark Pine (sub-alpine larch)
- Climate change
- Noxious Weeds
- Old Growth
- Roadless
- Wildlife Habitat
  - Deer and Elk Summer Range
  - Wolverine, Fisher and Lynx
  - Owls (Other raptors)
- Wildlife Migration Corridor
- Wildlife collisions
- Support to the Local Economy
- Community Fire Protection
- Private Land Development (Increased WUI complexity)
- Forest Health
  - Dry Douglas Fir/Ponderosa Pine
  - Mixed Conifer/Lodgepole Pine

## **Values to protect**

- Community of Gibbonsville
- Hwy 93 corridor
- Royal Elk Ranch
- Moose Creek Estates
- Chief Joseph
- Lost Trail Ski Area

- Twin Creek Campground

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- Allan Lake Trailhead
- Continental Divide NST
- Divide Trail
- Twin Cr national historic trail
- Big Hole Battlefield
- Granite Mountain Lookout
- Cultural Resources
- Private land north of Gibbonsville

**Resource Conflicts**

- Visual quality vs temp road systems
- Roadless vs temporary road systems
- Road Systems and Weeds
- Disturbance and Weeds

**Potential Mechanical Treatment Areas**

- Area North and East of Moose Creek

THERE WAS UNANIMOUS CONSENSUS THAT THE IDAHO ROADLESS AREAS ADJACENT TO MOOSE CREEK ESTATES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR MECHANICAL TREATMENT.

- The group asked to see a full suite of options that might include hand work only, machinery that accesses by temporary road, or aerial logging.

**Next Steps**

- John Goodman and Cope expressed a need to share information with the residents of Gibbonsville, etc.
- [Gina will try to set up a meeting at the Gibbonsville Improvement Association the week of March 8 – 12]
- Another full group meeting should be held to focus on Moose Creek Estates/Idaho Roadless Area, wildlife concerns, fuels objectives, and visual resources.
- [Gina will poll group about a meeting the week of March 16- 19]

## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
Salmon Business and Innovation Center April 26,  
2010**

**9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Summary**

[Indicates ACTION items]

### ***Participants:***

Maggie Milligan, Bill McLaughlin, Daniel Bertram, Russ Bacon, David Deschaine, Jake Kreilick, Mike Christianson, Gina Knudson, Michelle Tucker, Wayne Talmadge, Mike Smith, Glenwood Brittain, John Robinson, Lynn Bennett, Bill Grasser, John Goodman, Laura Wolf, Cindy Haggas, Ken Rodgers, Jim Roscoe, Ron Troy, Steve Adams, Jerry Hamilton, Bob Cope, (Affiliations attached)

### **Members Update**

*Society of American Foresters Biomass and Climate Change Conference* – John Robinson and Bob Russell attended. Discussions on strategies for sustaining forests and the services people expect from them. The focus of this conference was on current collaborative efforts in the West. John presented the Hughes Creek project which was well received.

*Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition* – Gina Knudson attended in DC. RVCC focuses on policy issues that affect rural communities, public lands management, and the continuation of a natural resource-based economy in the West. USDA looking to connect Forest Service and Rural Development more directly. High Divide area which would include Upper North Fork is potentially a focus area for Secretary of Agriculture because of the successes community-based groups have had in moving projects forward.

*LANDFIRE* – Lynn Bennett and Ron Troy visited with Lynn Decker, head of Nature Conservancy Fire Learning Center. Discrepancy between local data and Landfire data is considerable for Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) in North Fork. [\[Lynn Bennett will follow up with Jim Smith, the Nature Conservancy's LANDFIRE project manager\]](#). LANDFIRE is a collaborative 5 year project with the USFS and DOI aimed at developing geospatial data for fire regime restoration, fire management and conservation planning, and hazardous fuels reduction. Refresh layers are now being reviewed for accuracy which Russ Bacon agrees is a high priority for the zone.

*West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment* – The Council of Western State Foresters and the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition are promoting for 2011 - A wildfire risk assessment to quantify the magnitude of the current wildland fire problem in the west and provide a baseline for quantifying mitigation activities and monitoring change over time. This program is slated to use LANDFIRE data. [\[Jake Kreilick is tied into this project and will find out more background on the use of LANDFIRE and potential pitfalls with accuracy\]](#).

### **Hughes Creek Update**

#### **Stewardship Contract**

No new stewardship contracting info per Russ Bacon. Judy Martin, USFS Contracting Officer, has not been available. Timeline slippage is possible. Russ has a backup plan with a Rocky Mtn

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### **LCFRG Meeting Minutes**

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Elk Foundation (RMEF) stewardship agreement to cover in absence of contract from Judy but he wants to hold until we can visit with Judy. Gina emphasized the importance of resolving this quickly and offered 3<sup>rd</sup> party communications if needed.

#### **Multiparty Monitoring**

SVS intern Sean Bascom is done with socioeconomic monitoring chapter of the Hughes Ck Multiparty Monitoring Plan. NFF funded WildWest for \$10k which will enable Jake to spend more time monitoring here this summer. Last year 4-5 people were trained to complete plots in old growth (OG). It is Jake's priority to complete more plots and photo points in commercial harvest units. Jake hopes to start mid-June by meeting with monitoring committee and start taking photos prior to treatment. RAC funded SVS request for \$10k for multiparty monitoring so Jake will have support on the Salmon side.

## **Implementation**

Prescribed burning took place in April. Approx. 350 acres were burned in unit 2a near Salzer Bar.

## **Williams Creek Restoration Project**

NEPA has been contracted by Ecosystem Management (NM) with field work completed this summer. Draft proposed action includes 3300 acres of restoration using primarily prescribed fire and some hazardous fuels reduction near private property. The Forest expects to be able to use CE6, a categorical exclusion for wildlife enhancement.

## **Jesse Creek Project**

RAC funded Lemhi County to contract archeological and vegetation surveys. The data collection is pre-NEPA.

## **Breaks Project**

Several objections were received. Payette NF is having problem with best management plans for domestic goats in big horn sheep occupied habitat. John Robinson explained that domestic goat grazing is not optimal in occupied habitat per Idaho Conservation League. Daniel Bertram wants to continue to work with ICL to find solution for using domestic goats for weeds. Payette work may lead to model based on the science they are applying to determine risk. Payette decision is anticipated for May 3, 2010.

Gina reminded the group that we had endorsed this project as a collaborative (vs. full collaborative status), and at the time of endorsement, ICL indicated their endorsement hinged on resolution of the bighorn sheep issue. Russ feels using the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) objection process prior to decision helped greatly by allowing for resolution with ICL.

Next step: Russ reviews the merits of objections and can move forward with a decision. Implementation would begin immediately with potential litigation. Burn window passed for this year due to early spring conditions, prescribed burning now slated for next spring. This season they could move ahead with aspen inventory and conifer removal funded by RAC, as well as pre treatment for OG and burning next spring.

## **UPPER NORTH FORK PROJECT**

NOAA Fisheries and USFWS have been invited to collaborative and have indicated that current work loads may reduce their participation to reviewing meeting summaries.

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**Nature Conservancy** – Lynn Decker - Director of Fire Learning Network was invited by Ron Troy to come to Salmon to offer guidance on TNC's resources and role in the collaborative process. TNC offers technical assistance (modeling, training) and limited funding for developing and sharing the collaborative goals (field trips, data verification). Gina felt the biggest take away message was to determine what our questions are before we turn to decision making - What is our shared vision?

## **SCNF Background Information for Upper North Fork Project Area**

Resource specialists provided information regarding project area and potential treatment options:

Insects and Disease – 2009 Field Season information from Region 4 based on a fixed wing inventory for Douglas Fir Beetle, Mtn Pine Beetle, Spruce Bud Worm. Inventory measures mortality rates, not infestation. New occurrence of doug fir beetle is declining as larger Douglas fir (PSME) have died out. Mtn pine beetle is expanding quickly since 2008 and following behind the fir beetle. Climate change most likely having an impact as insects can now overwinter and survive. Increased biomass due to fire exclusion also allows bugs to expand. Beetle epidemics

aren't historically uncommon in area but due to expansion of lodgepole (PICO), where PSME typically would occur, they are having greater impact. Mtn pine beetle prefers PICO but will turn to ponderosa pine (PIPO) once PICO depleted. Non historic patterns are causing drastic changes. Need to decide what we want the forest to look like, historic conditions not necessarily possible with altered patterns.

Fire History - Penny Morgan Fire Ecologist U of Idaho completed fire history on SCNF in 2008, including collection of tree scars in and around North Fork Project area. Some scars date back to 1600s. 1600-1800 average fire return interval (at least two trees) every 12 years. Dry springs and hot summers correlate with larger occurrence years. This study focused on drier sites and not much project specific data for wetter communities.

Hydrology - David Deschaine – Decreasing fuel loading can help make more water available to trees left on site - 15% Equivalent Clearcut Acre (ECA) implied by PACFish. Project area typically at 5%. What ECA would be considered appropriate by group? Decommissioning roads can also contribute to cumulative watershed health. 53 miles of road identified (classified and unclassified) for potential decommissioning. *[ECA map from Dave]*.

Fisheries - Identified two fish passage culverts for possible treatment. Gradient and drainage area don't preclude anadromous fish - some good opportunities for enhancing fisheries. *[Upper\_North\_Fork\_fish\_streams.pdf]*.

Wildlife – Laura Wolf reported that elk surveys have been completed by IDFG for spring. Upper North Fork Project area considered low density. West side (21) not surveyed. East side (21A) surveyed with low numbers. Even with reduced cow hunts offered numbers are lower. Calf (25.3%) and bull ratios (60%) below objective. Potential calving habitat could be improved. Elk security areas were determined in 1980s and 1990s before introduction of wolves and ATVs. Do these models need to be updated? 15 mountain goats were located in Upper North Fork. *[Elk Survey Data from Laura and Elk Security Area from Cindy]*.

Timber – Glenwood Brittain - Potential harvest units identified for 4,500 acres. Forest plan allows for up to 45% slope. Potential treatments skyline, tractor (2,4000 acres), helo; 12 miles of potential temporary roads for commercial sales. The 2006 Gibbonsville sale (400 acres) was

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never sold and could also be made available as part of this more comprehensive project. Russ estimates 6,000 acres available for some type of treatment (timber, rx fire, thinning, etc).

Fuels – Mike Smith - Fire regime is the actual fire return interval, FRCC is deviation from natural conditions. Possible fuel breaks include:

Lost Trail – Utilize fireline from 2000 to create a 300' fuel break west of ski area

Moose Creek – 150' fuel break around subdivision

Anderson Mountain Road – Coordinate with Wisdom Ranger District

Maintenance – important to preserve fuel breaks. Many ways to achieve fuel breaks, fire, mechanical, thinning.

Weeds – Daniel Bertram - Lemhi County Weed Manager, the county is building a weeds layer for known occurrence. Biocontrol for spotted knapweed – have been released throughout the county. Rush skeleton weed, yellow star thistle, hawkweed, dalmatian toadflax, sulfur cinquefoil near project area. Highway ROW is sprayed by county. Private Property Agreement proposed by County – 50% reduced rate for treatment with landowner contract for 4 years. If not maintained, landowner will be charged full rate.

Wildlife -Cindy Haggas - Lynx Analysis Unit – habitat (spruce-fir) is within project area. Current Lynx direction gives flexibility for management in these areas. 28 other species are within project area.

Roadless – John R.- Idaho Roadless Rule generally considered a good model, however most likely will receive national scrutiny due to adversity in other states like Colorado. Values at risk will be used to measure proposed actions in roadless. Referenced Yellow Pine project where commercial timber came out of a roadless area. New or temporary roads will be vulnerable. Jake Kreilck – the further from value at risk, more vulnerable due to roadless. Roadless might be a good sub-committee to address this issue. Access through private land helps reduce need for new roads. 2001 rule allows for fuel reduction. Our project may be the first test of the roadless rule. Idaho Roadless Committee has already contacted Russ to review project. John, John, Jake, Bill and Cope will form subcommittee and invite a representative from Idaho Roadless Committee.

### **Other Questions Still on the Table**

Including parts of the Gibbonsville Sale (2006) – Jake K. would like to visit with Michael Garrity, Alliance for Wild Rockies. Jake feels the data he has seen does seem to support WUI. Russ said the group's opposition last go-round was due mainly to: 1) old growth, 2) roadless and un-roaded, 3) distance of treatment area from community.

Jim Roscoe - would like to see more involvement from landowners adjacent to and within the project area. This could help to make the project more seamless and give landowners ownership in project objectives and treatments. He recommends a public meeting this summer in Gibbonsville area. [John Goodman will work with Gina on this]

Wayne Talmadge – what economic value does this project bring to the local community? Aesthetic, safety, WUI, property values, ingress/egress to private property.

Ron Troy – special status species need more focus.

John Robinson – what are opportunities for aspen and whitebark pine treatments? Some data available on aspen stands. This summer aspen inventories and risk assessment may be done.

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Whitebark pine – watershed assessment from early 90s indicates small communities. Seedbeds, replanting and fuel breaks. Whitebark pine authorities (Arno, Tombeck) have done studies in MT on using prescribed fire to site prep around stands. Pine beetle and blister rust are hitting whitebark. Lessons learned in Hughes Creek about finding stands and recording their presence/treatability.

Gina Knudson – Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) - requests by the Secretary of up to \$40,000,000 annually for fiscal years 2009 through 2019; up to 50 percent of the cost of carrying out and monitoring ecological restoration treatments on National Forest System land for each proposal selected; up to \$4 million annually for any one project; up to two projects per year in any one FS region; and, up to 10 projects per year nationally. Russ has been working with Harv Forsgren, Region 4 Forester, to determine if Hughes Creek can be included or if regional office will get RMEF stewardship to include all of Breaks, Hughes, Upper North fork (70k acres). Group would like clarification on deadlines for application.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR/index.shtml>

Ron Troy – What role does our process play in the SCNF forest plan revision? Russ feels it is so far out that right now it doesn't; however, once initiated, collaborative groups will have a huge input. More successful projects will be used as models and lessons learned.

Russ Bacon – Next step needs to be our shared vision, SCNF needs to set goals for field season. Restorative goals seem to be coming up as prominent strategy. Cope feels the strategy from

Hughes Creek remains the same with different tactics. Russ views two project areas: South – very similar to Hughes Creek; North – more tools available and variation for treatments, more restoration.

## **Next Steps**

Russ would like to begin scoping this fall. This summer, a purpose and need statement would have to be developed, and a proposed action drafted by the end of field season.

Gina will review previous meeting discussions and research shared vision statements from other groups to circulate a draft of that combined statement. The group agreed that initially discussions have focused on:

- Improving watershed function
- Reducing species competing with ponderosa pine, whitebark pine, aspen
- Socioeconomic sustainability
- Noxious weed treatment
- Maintain/enhance wildlife habitat connectivity along the Continental Divide
- Reduce wildfire threat around private property and communities

Meetings to be established:

- May, Roadless Subcommittee Conference Call
- May (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week), Full group conference call re: shared vision statement
- June (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week), Full group meeting, perhaps in conjunction with Idaho roadless committee (Cope will help coordinate exact date)
- July 15-16, Tentative dates for meeting/field trip

## **LCFRG Meeting Minutes**

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### **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group**

#### **Conference Call**

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

3:00 – 3:30 pm

Participants: Gina Knudson, Ken Rodgers, Bill McLaughlin, John Goodman, Jake Kreilick, Wayne Talmadge, Russ Bacon

#### **Upper North Fork Vision Statement**

The first item of discussion was the Upper North Fork vision statement. Members commenting via email include Dan Bertram, Lynn Bennett, and Bob Schrenk. Based on their comments and comments from the group on the call, the draft statement was revised to:

*“A century of fire exclusion in the Upper North Fork project area has resulted in ecological conditions that threaten the resilience of plant and wildlife species and natural functions. Native species are declining and the unnatural fuel accumulations increase the risk for extreme fire behavior which would destroy species habitat and important resources. Area residents, private property, and recreational and other assets have become increasingly susceptible to uncharacteristically large wildfire events. The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group envisions a suite of forest stewardship and*

*management projects that would allow fire to play a more natural role on the landscape where appropriate and create less hazardous fuel conditions within wildland-urban interface areas. The Group supports activities that enhance aquatic and elk and other wildlife habitat, and that address the decline of tree species such as ponderosa pine, aspen, and whitebark pine. Native plants, especially grasses, would benefit from addressing serious noxious weed encroachment. Creating a steady program of stewardship activities over multiple years will provide local contractors incentive to invest in equipment, infrastructure and a local workforce."*

The following information was removed and will serve as supporting information for more detailed documents:

"The Upper North Fork area stretches from the Salmon River Mountains to the West to the Continental Divide on the easternmost boundary, and north to south from Lost Trail Pass to the Hughes Creek drainage. The North Fork of the Salmon River and its tributaries are important rearing and spawning grounds for salmon and steelhead, and the diversity of bird and wildlife species that rely on this area for habitat and migration is impressive."

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Gina will post the statement to the Google Group site.

### **Scheduling**

**Week of June 1 – 4, TBD** – Need to hold a meeting/conference call to discuss endorsement of **Williams Restoration**. Dates were not discussed because Project Lead Mike Smith's schedule is not known at this time.

**June 7, 7 p.m. – Gibbonsville Improvement Association** meeting in Gibbonsville at the GIA Hall (white building). Introduce Upper North Fork project concepts and Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group opportunities for involvement to area residents. Russ may not be able to be there but other Forest Service personnel will help present.

**June 29, 9 a.m – 4 p.m. – Upper North Fork Roadless Subcommittee field tour** of Anderson Mountain Roadless Area. All collaborative members and others are welcome. Meet at Moose Creek Estates. More info to follow.

**June 28 or June 30 (TBD), 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. – Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group** full collaborative meeting. Doodle poll will be sent out to determine best day to meet.

**August 9 – 10, Idaho Roadless Committee to meet in Salmon.** More info to follow.

The call ended at 3:33 p.m.

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Field Trip  
Upper North Fork Anderson Mtn Roadless Area**



**DRAFT  
Summary**

**Participants:** Maggie Milligan, Bill McLaughlin, Russ Bacon, Jake Kreilick, Mike Christianson, Gina Knudson, Michelle Tucker, Glenwood Brittain, Lynn Bennett, John Goodman, Ken Rodgers, Jerry Hamilton, Bob Cope, Bob Russell, Karen Drnjevic, Matt Hall, Brynn Schroeder, Paul Werner, Doug Wasileski (Affiliations attached)

**Gibbonsville Improvement Association (GIA) Building Pre-Field Trip Summary**

***Roadless Subcommittee Update***

Our roadless subcommittee (John Goodman, John Robison, Jake Kreilick, Bill Grasser. and Cope) still plans to have Idaho Roadless Committee here August 7 but have not had confirmation. (Update as of July 20 – Idaho Roadless Committee will not be coming to Salmon on those dates).

***Introductions and Review of Anderson Mountain Roadless Area***

Russ Bacon - 2001 rule allows for fuel reduction. Our project may be the first test of the roadless rule. Focus on what we want to accomplish and then consider the how. Visuals are also very important in the HWY 93 corridor - Seamless boundaries as well as transition areas between treatments.

Jake Kreilick – Relayed concern from John Robison that temporary (any) roads are a concern for ICL– the further from community at risk, the more vulnerable due to roadless. Access through private land may help reduce need for new roads. All agreed it is important for John R. to attend meetings as the roadless issue is most likely to be our biggest hurdle.

Russ – Objectives for our project area: 1) Decrease fuel loading adjacent to private property. 2) Landscape restoration – aspen/ponderosa communities. 3) Reduce threat to at risk communities.

Traveled to Lost Trail Pass and from Highway 93 overlook observed ski area and site of possible fuel breaks adjacent to ski area. We noted that across the highway on the east side was not roadless. Discussions included the Frog Pond fire and locations of boundaries.

Traveled to Moose Creek site on west side of Highway and hiked to the creek. The 2-track road is the historic Fahey's cutoff road and because of its historical value and

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close proximity to riparian corridor would not be a suitable entry point for vehicles and equipment.

We headed to Moose Creek Estates and at the entry, Karin Drnjevic, Lemhi County WUI Coordinator presented MCE's John Goodman with the subdivision's Firewise designation plaque.

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**We went into the MCE subdivision and traveled to the southernmost area where private access could lead to an entry point. Ponderosa were rare, but impressive.**

**We enjoyed lunch on the deck of MCE owners Bob and Beth Wilson's house.**

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**We split into 2 groups. One headed up the mountain directly behind the Wilson's home (to the northeast). Group 1 immediately saw dense, snarly stands of lodgepole and douglas fir.**

**As Group 1 gained elevation, the stands became more open, as shown below.**

**The lodgepole and doug fir had been hit hard by beetle and ponderosa continued to be seen infrequently, often as individual trees.**

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**Group 1 discussed the possibility of treating lower area adjacent to the subdivision and using Rx fire for the more open mid-elevation slopes.**

### **Group 2**

This area was behind (east) the lower portion of Moose Creek estates. Ponderosa pine was present throughout the area with many age classes represented. Douglas fir prevalent creating ladder fuels. Old age class for both trees (30 dbh +). Fire scars and heavy fuel loading in drainage areas. The group consensus was that this area could be thinned to promote a healthy ponderosa stand and reduce fuel loading above private property. One aspen stand (.10 acres) was encountered with old decadent trees, shading by doug fir and no regeneration present.

**June 30 Meeting  
Sacajawea Learning Center  
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

**Participants: xxx**

### **Observations from June 29, 2010 Anderson Mountain Roadless Field Trip**

- Narrow corridor off private land east of Moose Creek Estates presents treatment opportunity

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- Want to schedule another field trip from top of Anderson Mountain Road
- Need to consider potential human-caused fire starts from Hwy 93

- Restoration activities for wildlife focused on migration corridors, cover, feed
  - o Lots of elk sign above Moose Ck Estates
- Restoration activities should favor white bark, aspen, ponderosa wherever possible (programmatic assessment for these species would be a good tool for the FS)
- How do we/should we take climate change into consideration?
  - Roadless issue needs to consider cost & feasibility of temp roads vs. no-road alternatives

#### What motivates us?

- Economics –
  - o Our jobs depend upon this work (job retention)
  - o Restoration jobs (job creation)
- Collaboration with others is rewarding
- Public/private entities working together
- Public relations opportunities
  - o Highway 93 is highly visible, good chance to interpret restoration work
  - o Town meetings – Gibbonsville Improvement Assoc. was a good start and generated good discussion and interest
- Large landscape effort, overall forest health
- Recreation opportunities
- Wildlife and fish enhancements
- NEPA can be streamlined, more efficient w/ collaborative input

#### Who else needs to be here?

- Montana agencies on the other side of Divide (Beaverhead/Deer Lodge)
- Idaho Dept of Transportation
- Lost Trail Ski Area
- 

#### What else do we need to know?

- Better understanding of roadless rules (our group has a wide disparity between those who know a lot about this and those who haven't participated in those discussions)
- Old growth surveys are completed, so we need to get data interpreted and out
- Lost Trail Ski Area
  - Let's create a good map with Designated Old Growth units and priority restoration areas (aspen, white bark, meadow openings, stream work, etc)

#### Next steps?

- We looked at the Hughes Creek Recommendation Memo
  - o Group agreed it was a good template

- o Gina will post the Hughes Ck Memo on the Google Group site and will also start a draft that applies to Upper North Fork
- o The group will then review and start thinking about the more detailed parts of the Upper North Fork memo
- Jake will get with roadless subcommittee and come up with a date for the next field trip to include another look at Lost Trail and the area on and below

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Hughes Ck Multiparty Monitoring Subcommittee**

Thursday, July 8, 2010

9:30 – 11:00 am

Participants: Gina Knudson, Hadley Roberts, Jake Kreilick

**Key discussion items:**

Wyatt and Jake put in 4 plots in the southernmost old growth units last summer. They did Brown's fuel transects and full stand exams with help of Andy Klimek.

We would like to do around 25 plots this summer.

What are the questions we want to answer for monitoring Hughes Creek old growth units?

- Does ladder fuel reduction and underburning make sense in improving Designated Old growth units?
  - o Measuring crown class (part of stand exam) is one way to do this
  - o Is habitat type (also part of stand exam) useful?
    - Hadley said he is in favor of this in terms of existing vegetation but NOT potential vegetation
- What is post-treatment mortality?
  - o Variable plots as part of stand exam will capture this
  - o Need to get in pre-treatment exam and then monitor 1-yr after
- Will we monitor wildlife?
  - o Needs to take place before about mid-July
  - o Work with Beth Waterbury and Cindy Haggas re: protocols for observations

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Field Trip  
Upper North Fork Anderson Mtn Roadless Area  
August 3, 2010  
8:30 a.m. – 4: 30 p.m.  
DRAFT  
Summary**

**Participants:** Bill McLaughlin, Russ Bacon, Jake Kreilick, Gina Knudson, John Goodman, Bob Cope, Paul Werner, Doug Wasileski, Jim Roscoe, Cindy Haggas, Laura Wolf, Lyle Powers, John Robison, Mike England (Affiliations attached)

**Moose Creek Estates Pre-Field Trip Briefing**

***Project Background***

The Upper North Fork project area encompasses the Hwy 93 corridor from Hughes Creek north to Lost Trail Pass and goes from ridge to ridge (both sides border the Montana state line) with the exception of Anderson and Dahlonga creeks in the eastern portion. The purpose of the project is to reduce hazardous fuels around Lost Trail Ski Area, Moose Creek Estates and along Hwy 93 and to complete forest restoration designed to enhance old growth, lynx and other wildlife habitat, whitebark pine and aspen. The purpose of the field trip was to assess the feasibility of doing fuel reduction and forest restoration inside the Anderson Mountain Roadless area including the possibility of building temporary roads.

### ***Accessing Anderson Mountain Roadless Area from the Anderson Mtn Road***

We followed Forest Service Road #81A to access the hike. From there we walked part way down a proposed temporary road (**Road #3** on field trip map) through some mature lodgepole pine and Douglas Fir. We ended up just above where some of us walked during our June 29<sup>th</sup> field trip (north side of Camp Creek) from the bottom at Moose Creek Estates. June 29 observations were that we could accomplish fuel reduction via Rx burning in that portion of the roadless area.

#### Observations:

- Scattered whitebark pine (mostly younger seedlings/saplings)
  - Lynx habitat improvement opportunity (need to create better forage for snowshoe hares by stimulating young trees and shrubs)
  - Below the ridge to the east is a Designated Old Growth (DOG) unit that didn't appear to have much old growth characteristic.
  - Non-IRA (Inventoried Roadless Area) piece of the project area directly north of the Anderson Mountain IRA that presents fuel reduction opportunities.

- A proposed road (Road #1 on field trip map) that comes off F.S. Road 81A to could access this part of the project area and there is also a possibility of constructing a road off Hwy 93. This proposal would need to be coordinated with the Idaho Dept. of Transportation.

After we walked back up to the ridge, we continued to traverse the ridge along proposed **Road #2**.

#### Observations:

- Some commercial opportunities (sawlogs, post and poles), but lodgepole mortality (Mountain pine beetle). Douglas Fir trees have been hit hard by spruce budworm resulting in many defoliated trees. Commercial opportunities will diminish significantly within the next couple of years.
- Desired future condition ecologically is to create a more diverse forest structure/composition with

mixed age classes. This could be accomplished through commercial and non-commercial thinning and/or RX burning.

- Several drier sites located on knobs or rocky outcroppings would likely have been more open stands (parklands) with natural fire frequency. These openings could be restored.

- Many of the alder shrubs were in poor condition.
- Treatment options discussed included thinning from below focusing on removing lodgepole pine (striving for a basal area of 80-100), burning some of the thick lodgepole stands to promote regeneration and non-commercial treatments (slashing, hand-piling and burning).

#### Discussions:

- What does Idaho's Roadless Rule allow in terms of temporary roads? There was general agreement that temporary roads in IRA's are allowed for the purpose of community fuel reduction (Community Protection Zones), but John and Jake both expressed that some environmental groups may question how this would be interpreted in the case of the Anderson Mountain Roadless Area/Upper North Fork Project. The sentiment expressed was that this project is going to be closely scrutinized on both a state and a national level and may be challenged by various regional and national groups depending on the location and extent of temporary roads. Cope said that the spirit of the Idaho rule was if the fuel reduction or restoration could be done

without a road fine, but if not, temporary roads could be used as a tool to get to the desired outcome.

- Much of the Anderson Mountain Roadless Area falls within the Lemhi County CWPP (Community Wildfire Protection Plan), but roadless area proponents may not have the same information our group has about fire history and fire behavior near the Moose Creek/Gibbonsville areas. John R. asked the group to evaluate what fuel reduction and forest restoration could be completed without roads for the sake of comparison.

After lunch, we continued down proposed **Road #2** until we came to another DOG that came off the ridge and descended towards Pierce Cr. This DOG did contain older Douglas fir as well as various age classes of lodgepole pine – many of which were dead or dying.

the contour line back to the north.

We came to the point where Road #2 would switchback and follow

Discussion points:

- Feasibility of doing work in the mid-slope area
- Relative cost/benefits of temporary roads vs treatment options w/out roads
  - Tradeoffs associated w/ more intensive fuel reduction treatments designed to alter fire behavior vs less intensive treatments emphasizing forest restoration opportunities.

Moving through the more southerly aspects of the IRA and we started transitioning from Lodgepole/Doug fir/Subalpine fir into Ponderosa pine/Doug fir community. We walked through beautiful old growth ponderosa pine and Douglas fir stands experiencing encroachment. We reached the flag line for proposed **temp road 2A** (approximately ¼ to ½ mile from the Moose Creek Estates). The southern end also contains a portion of non-IRA land where road construction wouldn't be as controversial and where there are numerous opportunities to enhance old growth Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir stands.

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Reaching Moose Creek Estates at the bottom, we debriefed agreed that three options are available:

- 1) Full implementation of temporary roads 1, 2, 2A & 3 within the Anderson Mountain Roadless Area.
- 2) Coming in from the lower end of Moose Creek Estates and following the proposed road (in red on the field trip map) through the non-IRA portion and into the IRA along a contour located about ½ mile above private land. Fuel reduction treatments would be concentrated between this temporary road and the Moose Creek Estates boundary as far north as Camp Creek.
- 3) Option 2- Plus. Second option would be incorporated along with fuel reduction and restoration treatments on top that could be accomplished without temporary roads.

Next Steps: Roadless subcommittee will schedule a conference call next week w/ intent of considering options and make some draft recommendations that we can present at our next full collaborative meeting in early September.

Early September mtg objective is to spend 1/2 day in the field looking at treatment areas around Lost Trail Ski Area and the rest of the day considering and hopefully forwarding our roadless recommendations to the FS and the Idaho Roadless Comm.

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LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2010

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
Lost Trail Ski Lodge**

## Meeting Summary

### *Participants:*

Maggie Milligan, Bill McLaughlin, Russ Bacon, Jake Kreilick, Michelle Tucker, Mike Smith, Glenwood Brittain, Lynn Bennett, Bill Grasser, John Goodman, Laura Wolf, Cindy Haggas, Jim Roscoe, Jerry Hamilton, Bob Cope, Scott Grasser, Judy Grasser, Jan Spencer, Karin Drnjevic, Paul Werner, Dyrk Krueger, Alan E. Howell, Dale Kerkvliet, Ruth Wooding

### UPPER NORTH FORK PROJECT

The group met to review the Recommendations for Consideration memo. When asked how much this recommendation memo helped the planning process Russ reported that it was very important especially in light of the upcoming Idaho Roadless Act (IRA) meeting here in Salmon. He reiterated that this project will be the first test of the rule.

The IRA group will be meeting here in Salmon on **September 28 and 29**. The IRA group is very interested in our collaborative according to Russ and Cope. Russ would like to have a copy of the DRAFT memo (at its current level of completion) to give to the group. Tuesday's meeting is at noon at the Sacajawea Center. Wednesday will be a field trip of the Upper North Fork Project area. Russ encouraged the group to have good representation at these meetings. Group members will coordinate with Gina and Michelle to make certain we are covered.

After the first half of the draft had been reviewed, the group agreed that the approach to the Hughes Creek Memo didn't necessarily fit the larger Upper North Fork Project. In order to refocus the scope of the collaborative's recommendations Russ briefly reviewed what the SCNF will be looking at in their proposed action:

- 1) Commercially treat 5000 acres in areas that have been previously treated and have existing roads. (Helicopter – 600 acres, Skyline – 1400 acres, Tractor 2400 acres).
- 2) Moose Creek Community Protection Zone (CPZ) – a half mile buffer around the CPZ, five miles of fuel break would be implemented. Only 1.2 miles of this is in the IRA. Temporary roads will be considered for completing this treatment.
- 3) Prescribed burning will be implemented throughout the project area
- 4) Decommissioned Roads – 53 miles have been identified for potential decommissioning.
- 5) Culvert replacement Deep Creek and Hammerean Creek for fish passage.
- 6) Shaded Fuel Breaks – identified for Anderson Mountain, Moose/Pierce Creek and Lost Trail

### Other Questions Still on the Table

The roadless subcommittee is still very interested in seeing other portions of the project area that we have not been to yet. A meeting was set for **Saturday, October 2, at 9am**. The group will meet at Lost Trail to visit these sites. The SCNF will make certain that they have staff present to help with the tour.

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Upon review of the purpose and need statement it was asked if the group should be addressing climate change more. Left open for consideration.

### Next Steps

- Michelle will send a completed draft to the group for review by Monday the 27<sup>th</sup>.



- The roadless subcommittee and any other interested parties will visit the other roadless portion of the project and report back to the group with their findings.

## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2011

### **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Hughes Ck Stewardship Contracting Subcommittee Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center**

Tuesday, January 4, 2011  
2 p.m – 3 p.m

Participants: Bob Russell (LCEDA), Tammy Stringham (LCEDA), Gina Knudson (SVS), Sean Bascom (SVS), Bob Cope (Lemhi Co.), Russ Bacon (SCNF)  
Phone-In Participants: Bob Schrenk (RMEF), Dale Kerkvliedt (RMEF), Mike Smith (SCNF), Trinity Bugger (CTNF), John Goodman (Moose Creek Estates)

#### **Key discussion items:**

- Status of Rocky Mtn Elk Foundation Agreement
- Hughes Creek Implementation Timeline

#### **RMEF Agreement:**

- Agreement signed and executed on or about Aug 23, 2010
  - \$350,000 initially applied to agreement that covers large North Zone area
  - \$160,000 year-end appropriations added to the agreement
  - Hughes Creek is a Supplemental Project Agreement (SPA) that runs through 2014
- Match requirement
  - If RMEF is showing less than 5% match on their financial plan, Region 4 is hesitant to proceed
  - Need to settle when timeline starts to demonstrate matching contributions
    - June 25, 2010 is letter of authority from Regional Forester
    - Aug 23, 2010 is date of executed agreement
    - Confusion over which date is used
      - Trinity and Russ will get back to the group on which date is to be used
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> party in-kind or cash contributions can be applied
    - Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group members and other volunteer time can be used to satisfy requirement
      - Russ will send digital copy of stewardship agreement to collaborative members so they can calculate contributions
      - Members should calculate contributions ASAP and get to Bob Schrenk (Gina will help follow up on this)
- Timing of implementation for commercial and non-commercial work
  - Commercial unit is infected with bark beetle so time is of the essence

- Pyramid is in the Ditch Ck area now and may not be interested in bidding if they move equipment and people out of the area
  - Pyramid is likely the nearest operator with capacity to process logs (not post & pole material)
  - What are options if Pyramid decides not to bid?
- There is time to request proposals for non-commercial work and possibly work with more than one contractor
  - Russ has forwarded the stewardship contracting subcommittee's best value criteria to RMEF
  - YEP has expressed interest and capacity
    - Private sector contractor could do part of the work to get the economic multiplier effect

**Summary:**

- The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group can demonstrate the power of a collaborative effort by assisting with RMEF's match requirement.
- The sooner we can resolve this issue, the sooner bids can be solicited from the community/region and on-the-ground results realized

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting**  
**Salmon Business and Innovation Center**  
**Wednesday, April 6, 2011**  
**3:00-5:00 pm**

**Draft Meeting Summary**

[Indicates ACTION items]

***Participants:***

Gina Knudson, Julie Hopkins, Bill Grasser, Mike Smith, Jerry Hamilton, Michelle Tucker, Bob Cope, John Goodman, Frank Guzman, Russ Bacon, Lynn Bennett, Ken Rodgers, Karin Djrnevic, [John Robison, Jake Kreilick called-in]

*Member Updates* – American Wildlands has shut its doors according to Jim Roscoe. Jim wants to stay active in our group, however. Gina mentioned she hopes we can find a way to keep Jim involved because he brought a valuable wildlife perspective to the Upper North Fork design.

*RMEF Contract Status* – Mike Smith – RMEF has bids and SCNF will review for the non-commercial units. RMEF will provide recommendation to USFS panel for selection. Panel will include Mike S., Maggie Milligan, Lemhi County and Economic Development. Gina expressed concern that Hughes Creek stewardship contracting committee recommendation to include collaborative on review panel were not being followed. SCNF officials invited collaborative to join review panel. Karin D. of Lemhi County WUI will fill that role.

Mike Smith (SCNF) will inform Karin of review panel meeting times/dates.

Commerical work will be bid later in the month. RMEF stewardship agreement is in place for 10- year period. Cope commented this would show guaranteed supply for fuels for schools project in the event bond passes this spring, even with the amount only coming from Hughes Ck.

Gina asked for a joint press release when bid is awarded. Agreed.

*Hughes Placer Mining Proposal* -- Julie Hopkins reported on the current proposal for placer mining on Hughes Creek. Test pits would be excavated upstream from Cerise stream restoration project, directly across from Humbug Road. One tagged steelhead recorded above ford. Four narrow trenches (2 feet wide) between Klop and Gallagher gulch (to bed rock or 10 feet). One trench open at a time; 30 gal/min siphoned from creek while washing. USFWS and NMFS have met w/SCNF on site. Individual from Montana recently purchased claim. John R. asked about the draft EA. Julie anticipates will be complete in two weeks. Comments due by May 2. ICL is tracking this project closely. John indicates that he is less comfortable with comment period prior to all specialist reports being completed. Draft BA is anticipated to have concurrence.

*HC Spring Burns*-- Spring burning will begin in Burn Unit 4, Old Growth 1-8. Tree well burning in the next couple weeks. Dan Bill of Salmon-Challis will be fire lead.

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LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2011

*Upper North Fork Project:* Ken Rodgers, IDT team lead, provided draft maps showing treatment methods and options. Wildlife winter range requirements in treatment areas and especially those next to private land/WUI require extra consideration and more complex mixture of prescriptions. In some cases, primary objective of fuel reduction contradicts thermal and cover goals. Rx fire will be considered in most of the area. Russ can't give dates on NOI. Gina asked about priority of project. Russ stated getting Hughes Ck contracts implemented has higher priority.

*Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership* - John G. and Michelle gave a brief report on the workshop they attended in Jan 2011 in Boise. IFRP is intended to provide support and information to collaboratives throughout the state. John R. gave background on IFRG: Society of American Foresters, The Nature Conservancy, and Idaho Conservation League seminar prompted groups to consolidate information and support collaboratives in Idaho. John G. was surprised by the # of groups active in Idaho, and level of organization.

### ***Memorandum of Understanding***

One of the take-home concepts from the IFRP conference was the need for a formal MOU with the Salmon-Challis. Gina explained that an MOU would clearly define roles and assist in understanding how we plan to do business. This could clarify open meeting rules and Federal Advisory Committee Act rules. Cope recommended identifying geographic region of work at Lemhi County. Jerry likes that the MOU offers opportunity to establish our group's standards and goals as well as mutual goals. All agreed that we have accomplished a lot under good faith and the MOU would only help sustain this relationship. Discussion that better communication is needed with the SCNF regarding contact person protocol, timeframes for communication and action, etc. MOU would assist in transitions of personnel.

**Michelle and John G. will work w/ Gina to revamp the Clearwater Collaborative MOU (attached) for group consideration.** Russ recommends that the MOU should include the formal communication process for our projects. Mike would like to see info on subcommittee outlined. Russ recommends having a dynamic contact document with specific roles, projects, responsibilities by name as an attachment because the formal MOU is cumbersome to change.

**Draft will be sent out for collaborative review by April 20.**

*Maintaining momentum of collaborative:* John G. would like to see the group stay active on projects rather than waiting for FS action. Russ warned the group that expectations for USFS should not be increased, due to funding and ongoing project commitments; pace is going to slow down. Gina said collaborative can be involved in Upper North Fork scoping meetings, getting members of the public involved and sharing experience about project design process. Frank said

the Salmon-Challis Weed EIS is starting again. Collaborative may be able to work with SCNF. Gina stated that weeds have been a major subject of concern for collaborative so should be a good fit. She said one of SVS' board members Dave Ellis has been attending meetings of the newly formed Central Idaho Grazing Network, and the collaborative's growing experience with multiparty monitoring might be useful to the network. She also mentioned that John Goodman has been taking the initiative on getting beetle deterrents into the hands of private land owners, and other collaborative members may want to assist with that effort.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

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LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2011

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Multi Part Monitoring  
Salmon Valley Stewardship Office**

Monday, June 13, 2011  
Conference Call 10:00

Participants: Gina Knudson, Michelle Tucker, Bill McLaughlin, Mike Smith, Maggie Milligan, John Goodman, Jake Kreilick

**Schedule for this Season** – Michelle and Jake updated the group on the objectives for this season. SVS will be hiring Brynn Schroeder and Matt Hall back as our summer interns. Field work will be primarily the last three weeks of July.

- Cerise property/stream restoration
- RMEF Units
- Aspen monitoring in Humbug
- Burn Units
- Weeds

**Cerise Stream Restoration Project** – Gina - keeping close eye on log structures particularly most upstream structure flooding pasture. Lowell Cerise put earthen berm near lower structure to avoid filling irrigation ditch and diverting water to downstream landowners. SVS committed to making certain someone is checking on the site regularly and taking a photo record. Sandbags are purchased and staged at Indian Creek in case of the need for response to changing conditions. Gina requested that anyone in the vicinity take a look and let SVS know what they see or take photos.

**RMEF Units** – Non-commercial due to start in two to three weeks. These units have baseline photo data. Commercial units will most likely not start until July. Michelle will work on getting a set of photo points for baseline prior to treatment. Need to check files for baseline photos Wyatt Hall and Jake took in 2009 of the non-commercial thinning units along the Hughes Ck Road.

**Burn Units** – Mike - Tree well burning is done in BU4 (OG 1-8 excepting 5) – 500 acres. Dan Bill has a set of photos from the entire project, Jake may contact him. Access to units is a hike but we can now drive to both the top and bottom of the units.

**Weeds** – Michelle will set up a weed training day with Diane Schuldt or Daniel Bertram for early July. Objectives will be to streamline data collection to data important to

collaborative priorities. Michelle has data from the county for both Hughes and Upper NF project areas.

## **Other**

Beth Waterbury at IDFG has wildlife monitoring planned in the N Fork area this summer and is interested in volunteer help. She plans to be more involved with the collaborative in the future. She is now Fish and Game's main point of contact for the collaborative.

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## **LCFRG Meeting Minutes**

Year: 2011

Forest Restoration Camp Out for early August might be an opportunity to let stakeholders participate in monitoring.

Jake has completed a report for last season's monitoring as well as a fact sheet.

The call adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

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## **LCFRG Meeting Minutes**

Year: 2011

**LEMHI FOREST RESTORATION GROUP  
Multi-Party Monitoring Subcommittee  
Hughes Creek Project Area  
062811**

### **Summary of weed monitoring goals for the 2011 season:**

The LCFRG has stated as a Tier 2 Priority that they desire "no net gain for invasive and noxious weeds" in the Hughes Creek project area. Specifically for 2011, with the initiation of treatment within the project area, particularly in the Diamond and RMEF harvest areas, the collaborative has stated a desire to monitor pre and post treatment for weed encroachment.

### **Objectives for the 2011 monitoring activities:**

1. Documentation of location, overall distribution, number, size and density of invasive plant infestations (obtained from Lemhi County Weed Extension and the SCNF). Verification of presence near treatment areas. Re-inventory on a rotational basis areas previously inventoried to maintain up to date inventory information.
2. Qualitative evaluation of immediate and short term impacts of treatment on target invasive plants and on non-target vegetation through the use of photo points and/or walk-through evaluations.
  - Monitoring will be conducted prior to and shortly after treatment (fuels reduction, fire, temp road construction, etc) whenever possible to determine any potential need for modifications to treatment strategies.
  - Observations will be documented using photo point and abbreviated qualitative monitoring record forms.

### 08 24 06 LC Collaborative Summary.doc

Ken Rodgers, the Salmon-Challis Natl Forest's Interdisciplinary Team Leader for Hughes Creek will work with his team to respond to information requests as feasible. Some of the data requests include:

- Weed survey results

### 10.10.06 LC Collaborative Summary.doc

Members agreed that they would continue to work on the Hughes Creek proposal as part of a phased approach to a broader watershed restoration goal. For the first Hughes Creek project, attending members agreed that stewardship contracting opportunities should be sought. One goal, however, was to extend restoration activities beyond thinning. Noxious weed treatment and native plant reintroduction to include aspen regeneration were offered as possibilities.

Other factors and/or concerns that should weigh in to project design include :

- Elements such as noxious weed treatment can be written into a burn plan

12\_09\_06 Collaborative Summary.doc

Laundry List - No net increase in weeds, target new species infestations in project area

Paul Werner stressed the importance of third-party monitoring to ensure that contracting requirements were fulfilled post-harvest. The residents also emphasized their concern about the invasiveness of noxious weeds in the Hughes Creek drainage and throughout the North Fork Ranger District.

The following are considered to be **Tier 2** priorities:

- Contain existing weeds and study different weed management techniques, such as pre-treating before a prescribed burn.

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LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2011

01\_29\_07 Collaborative Summary.doc

**Noxious Weeds/Insects**

The current proposed project does not offer enough in terms opportunities for noxious weed mitigation/removal. The group is interested in going 'above and beyond' what is normally done, and would like to pursue this further.

There might be Partnership dollars for weeds. Fish and Game has contributed to weed treatments in this area previously.

Action: Gina will set up a conference call to discuss opportunities around weeds for inclusion in the project.

05\_14\_08 LC Forest Summary.doc

The Lemhi County Weeds Department has contracted with Ken Thacker who has attended a couple of forestry collaborative meetings to spray noxious weeds on the lower Ditch Creek private lands. At last count 23 landowners were participating in the cost-share program. Salmon Valley Stewardship through the National Forest Foundation grant provided \$5,000 for the weed treatment.

**The Breaks.** This project would encompass about 13,000 acres along the River Road corridor in the North Fork district. The main goal of the project would be wildlife enhancement, specifically winter range for elk. The objective would be to use surface fire primarily and pre-commercial thinning secondarily to focus on conifer encroachment.

Potential challenges/issues of project:

- Noxious weeds will have to be addressed

09\_06\_08 Field Trip Summary.doc

**Multiparty monitoring plan.** Jake reported that he has a good outline for the plan. He still needs to meet with Diane Schuldt, FS biologist, and Daniel Bertram, Lemhi County weeds coordinator, to finalize weed monitoring protocol.

01\_22\_09 LCFRG Summary.doc

**Breaks I** (North Fork Ranger Station to Indianola Guard Station)

- ... address serious noxious weed problem

02\_24\_09 LC Forest Summary.doc

**Breaks Ecosystem Project**

The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group supports the following project elements:

- Aggressive noxious weed control, including analysis of new biocontrol tools

**Hughes Ck Stewardship Contracting**

- Since the subcommittee met with the Forest Service contracting officials and others, Diane Schuldt of the Salmon-Challis has been able to review the suggested optional contract item of a pilot weed study relative to weed response to prescribed fire. She said she spent time in the field with Jake Kreilick last summer and at the time they determined some possible areas for such a study. The other optional contract item listed is thinning unit #45 and Mike Smith suggested leaving the thinning unit unnumbered.

09\_09\_09 Field Trip Summary.doc

- Daniel Bertram, county weed superintendent, said each year his crew sprays weeds along the highway, starting at Lost Trail and working south. This year they made it to Moose Creek Estates. He views new infestations as his main priority, including rush skeleton, dalmation toadflax, hound's tongue and diffuse knapweed. He is very encouraged with biocontrol results for spotted knapweed. Disturbance, whether fire, logging, or just increased traffic, usually spurs weed growth so a proactive weed management plan is a must for any project. Daniel learned lessons from the cost share program initiated for landowners in the

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## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2011

Hughes Creek project area and is looking forward to working with landowners in Upper North Fork in an even more productive manner.

010810 Hughes SC Subcomm.doc

### **Details of Salmon-Moose timber "swap" in Hughes Creek**

#### **Collaborative comments on the proposal**

- Weeds were another concern in the group's design recommendations
  - Daniel Bertram said at a minimum treating along transportation corridors could be a step in the right direction for the group's goal of "no net increase of weeds"; the County currently sprays along county roads
- Ken Thacker did the weed spraying on private land in Hughes Ck and said the identified ladder fuels thinning areas are some of the weediest lands in the drainage and some precautionary measures should be taken
- Jake Kreilick said additional monitoring for weeds in treatment areas might be appropriate

#### **Collaborative Conclusions on Proposal**

- **The group agreed to move forward with the Salmon-Challis proposal.**
  - Weed treatment was a stated group priority and other funding mechanisms should be sought to make sure disturbance does not increase weed problem. Russ will check with Diane Schuldt to see if existing funding or RAC funding could be applied.
- Megan Timoney added that weed treatment could be listed as an optional part of the bid package or clauses added in the contract to emphasize best management practices. The group will explore these options further.
- As the lead of the multiparty monitoring effort, Jake pledged a commitment to working with the FS to monitor weeds in the work areas.
- Cope added that the County is mandated by the State to control weeds, too, and additional recreation and traffic in the area are other reasons weeds may increase in addition to logging activities.

01\_26\_10 Hughes SC subcomm.doc

### **Hughes Ck Stewardship Contracting Subcommittee**

- The group came to consensus that treating weeds along the haul routes for the timber sale part and the transportation corridors for the thinning work should be included under mandatory items. The revenues from the timber sale are estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$10,000 and this can be applied toward this non-fuels work.

02\_10\_10 LC Forest Summary Revised.10\_LCFRGmeeting.doc

#### **Upper North Fork**

##### **Weeds (Diane Schuldt)**

- In the Krone Gulch area a patch of knapweed 1,300 acres in size has been inventoried
  - Otherwise not much has been inventoried in project area and because of expense of doing inventories, most will not be planned until site specific info is available
  - Forest did get approval to establish a new biocontrol agent in Hughes Ck area so they are setting up monitoring plots to test results
- Weeds of concern are spotted knapweed, hound's tongue, cheatgrass, and a new super-competitor blue weed

04\_26\_10 LC Forest Summary Final.docx

Weeds – Daniel Bertram - Lemhi County Weed Manager, the county is building a weeds layer for known occurrence. Biocontrol for spotted knapweed – have been released throughout the county. Rush skeleton weed, yellow star thistle, hawkweed, dalmatian toadflax, sulfur cinquefoil near project area. Highway ROW is sprayed by

## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2011

county. Private Property Agreement proposed by County – 50% reduced rate for treatment with landowner contract for 4 years. If not maintained, landowner will be charged full rate.

05\_26\_10conference call summary.doc

### **Upper North Fork Vision Statement**

The first item of discussion was the Upper North Fork vision statement. Members commenting via email include Dan Bertram, Lynn Bennett, and Bob Schrenk. Based on their comments and comments from the group on the call, the draft statement was revised to:

*"A century of fire exclusion in the Upper North Fork project area has resulted in ecological conditions that threaten the resilience of plant and wildlife species and natural functions. Native species are declining and the unnatural fuel accumulations increase the risk for extreme fire behavior which would destroy species habitat and important resources. Area residents, private property, and recreational and other assets have become increasingly susceptible to uncharacteristically large wildfire events. The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group envisions a suite of forest stewardship and management projects that would allow fire to play a more natural role on the landscape where appropriate and create less hazardous fuel conditions within wildland-urban interface areas. The Group supports activities that enhance aquatic and elk and other wildlife habitat, and that address the decline of tree species such as ponderosa pine, aspen, and whitebark pine. Native plants, especially grasses, would benefit from addressing serious noxious weed encroachment. Creating a steady program of stewardship activities over multiple years will provide local contractors incentive to invest in equipment, infrastructure and a local workforce."*

01\_31\_11 Hughes SC subcomm.docx

### **Multi Part Monitoring**

What are the basic monitoring needs – Jake – for heavily harvested units, photo point, abbreviated or forest health trends; \$ will dictate intensity of monitoring; Jake would like more attention paid to weeds; what has been done by FS, more burn units, or aquatic

Cope – Bertram (CWMA) may be able to help with weeds

04\_06\_11 LC Forest Summary Draft.docx

*Maintaining momentum of collaborative:* John G. would like to see the group stay active on projects rather than waiting for FS action. Russ warned the group that expectations for USFS should not be increased, due to funding and ongoing project commitments; pace is going to slow down. Gina said collaborative can be involved in Upper North Fork scoping meetings, getting members of the public involved and sharing experience about project design process. Frank said the Salmon-Challis Weed EIS is starting again. Collaborative may be able to work with SCNF. Gina stated that weeds have been a major subject of concern for collaborative so should be a good fit. She said one of SVS' board members Dave Ellis has been attending meetings of the newly formed Central Idaho Grazing Network, and the collaborative's growing experience with multiparty monitoring might be useful to the network. She also mentioned that John Goodman has been taking the initiative on getting beetle deterrents into the hands of private land owners, and other collaborative members may want to assist with that effort.

06\_13\_11 Hughes Monitoring subcomm.docx

## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2011

**Schedule for this Season** – Michelle and Jake updated the group on the objectives for this season. SVS will be hiring Brynn Schroeder and Matt Hall back as our summer interns. Field work will be primarily the last three weeks of July.

- Cerise property/stream restoration
- RMEF Units
- Aspen monitoring in Humbug



- Burn Units
- Weeds
- **Weeds** – Michelle will set up a weed training day with Diane Schuldt or Daniel Bertram for early July. Objectives will be to streamline data collection to data important to collaborative priorities. Michelle has data from the county for both Hughes and Upper NF project areas.

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LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2012

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
Salmon-Challis National Forest Headquarters Conference Room  
Tuesday, February 7, 2012  
3:00-5:00 pm**

**Meeting Summary**

***Participants:***

Gina Knudson, Jerry Hamilton, Michelle Tucker, Hadley Roberts, John Goodman, Beth Waterbury, Jim Roscoe, Daniel Bertram, John Jakovac, Tammy Stringham, Gary Foli, Jim Tucker, Bruce Smith, Eric Pfeiffer, Jay Winfield, Jan Spencer, Kim Nelson, Larry Vogel, Cammie Sayer, Maggie Milligan, David Deschaine, Dan Garcia, Cindy Haggas, Frank Guzman, Rob Hoelscher, Ken Rodgers, Mike Smith, [John Robison, Bob Cope, Jake Kreilick teleconference]

***Member Introductions***

***Member Updates***

Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership (IFRP) Workshop and Biomass Conference – Maggie, John G. and Michelle attended in Boise. The morning session was informative concerning cold/moist forest restoration. Afternoon was more centered on the western Idaho forests and IFRP. John G, Tammy S. & Eric P. attended the next day's biomass conference. John felt it was a good review of what is happening around the world. Eric felt it was important to focus on collaboration.

An Oregon company Wisewood will be in Salmon this week to consider a biomass feasibility study for a PreK-8 school Thursday at 1 p.m. at the Salmon Valley Business Innovation Center board room. This company was referred to our community by Angela Farr, Region 1 & 4 State and Private Forestry contact.

Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition Annual Policy Meeting. Gina and Michelle will be attending the RVCC Annual Policy Meeting March 6 - 8 in Vancouver, Washington.

**Hughes Creek Project**

Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation (RMEF) Stewardship Agreement Status – Update on stewardship agreement and RMEF stepping out of the process nationwide. Tammy and others met with Senator Risch's office which resulted with a language fix for BLM agreements that limits liability. USFS liability language still unresolved. RMEF has agreed to finish up 225k left in the existing agreement in Hughes Ck for this season. RMEF has entire bid package ready for spring. All work will be service/hazardous fuel treatment.

Socio Economic Report – 2010 is done and 2011 draft is underway. Data will be available and sent out. Ecological monitoring report for 2011 will be completed and distributed soon.

**Upper North Fork Project**

SCNF presented information about where they are at in the Environment Impact Statement process.

- Entire project area has been divided into 15 large burn units.
- Three Forest Plan Amendments are being considered:
  1. Big Game Winter Range - Designated big game winter range is near forest plan threshold. Additional fuels treatments may lower the percent cover available. Two options a) Lower the threshold, b) re- assess boundary lines and adjust for current data that would serve to create a net increase in range.

2. Wildland fire for beneficial use – This would allow natural ignitions within a signed burn plan area to play natural role.

LCFRG Meeting Minutes

Year: 2012

3. Modification of Riparian Habitat Conservation Area (RHCA) buffers – In units where roads are closer than the defined buffers, this would allow the unit boundary to follow the road. Would modify 13.5 total acres to allow commercial harvest acres up to the road boundary but within the RHCA buffer. Sediment and harvest are site specific in each of the 8 units where this could occur.

*Wildlife Update from Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) Beth Waterbury*

Recent lynx siting on SCNF — on Jan 26 IDFG responded to a call that a lynx had been caught in a foothold bobcat trap. Staff determined the animal was not injured by trap. The animal appeared to be a lynx (foot size, tip of tail features, ear tufts) approximately 20 lb. IDFG decided to immediately release animal to prevent injury. IDFG collected hair and scat and sent to Rocky Mtn Research Station for analysis to confirm species and gender. DNA may also be able to determine relatedness to other rocky mountain populations. The animal was found in Salmon-Cobalt Ranger District outside of Upper North Fork and Hughes Ck project areas.

IDFG is also working with SCNF on forest carnivore stations/trail cameras in UNF area to update population data. A fisher has been found in Hughes Ck and wolverine in a couple other sites.

*Upper North Fork Questions from LCFRG*

Commissioner Jakovac asked for clarification on what roads are being considered for closing: Most would be entrance treatment for approximately 200'. Majority are roads that were left open from previous harvest that were never closed once project was complete. David D. explained the different impacts roads could have on watershed and weeds. Much discussion ensued regarding the type of road closures and their impacts on weeds, wildlife and sediment.

Action item: SCNF will provide map of proposed closed roads with road numbers.

Beth stated she was concerned about the issue of big game winter range “thermal cover” as addressed in the proposed project. The concept of thermal cover was a long-standing management tenet untested by research. Studies conducted in 1991-1995 at the Starkey Experimental Forest in northeast Oregon found that thermal cover failed to provide energetic benefits to elk during winter. More appropriate habitat attributes to manage for are forage quality/quantity (due to their positive effect on nutrition and animal performance) and structural attributes of habitat that mediate energy expenditures (i.e., security cover from human disturbance, snow intercept). She felt security cover data should be reassessed in the analysis in relation to the value of forage quality/quantity and its importance to deer and elk herd productivity. IDFG could provide information: Cindy clarified that the forest plan site specific amendment would help address current situation.

Action item: IDFG will provide security cover data and recommendations.

Jake asked for clarification regarding the Big Game forest plan amendment: Ken explained two options 1) 25% w/ 70% cover – allow for a drop below 25% cover. 2) Re-draw winter range line. Could include additional acres that would allow to stay above 25%. Cindy feels re-draw would allow for more flexibility and better ecological sense by including winter range that is not currently considered.

Bob R. asked about alternative 2 without temporary roads: Helicopter logging increased by 700 acres in these units. Gina asked about horse logging. Eric stated that slope makes it less feasible. Helicopter units analyzed now while not economically feasible will keep them from being excluded completely. The majority of this area is in Anderson Mtn area.

Cope asked for clarification on removal of Lick Creek from commercial treatments: Units were carried over from previous project that was never initiated. Change in treatment was a direct response to scoping comment and Forest Service groundtruthing of existing conditions. Not commercially viable.

Cope asked how much is a Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) project: Entire project is HFRA which only requires one alternative plus no action alternative. Scoping and collaborative's recommendation memo indicated the need for an additional alternative.

Gina asked if confirmed lynx presence changed the analysis: Cindy said that SCNF is operating under Northern Rockies Lynx Management Plan of 2007. First project proposed in mapped lynx habitat since 2007. Adjacency to Bitterroot also requires coordination according to management plan.

Gina brought up proposed Bitterroot salvage project at Lost Trail. Does their project impact UNF and are they coordinating with SCNF? Maggie reported that one unit did overlap but does not conflict. Beth mentioned concerns for with lynx, wolverine, and boreal owls in the Bitterroot project. Most mitigation here would be satisfied by timing of activities. Gina recommended Beth contact Bitterroot also.

John R. asked about whitebark pine and aspen restoration: Eric stated that prescribed fire is generally assumed to have positive effect. Individual stands would be favored for retention. Programmatic design features are incorporated into both alternatives to accommodate aspen wherever encountered ie) removal of conifer within stand and 100' around stand. Both alternatives include these. Whitebark would favor retention and removal of competing species.

Jake asked if the treatments above and in Anderson Mountain roadless are warranted given they are in mixed conifer regime and potential lynx habitat: Eric reminded that one of the objectives for the project was to keep the highways safe particularly during larger fires. Cindy stated that the existing lodgepole stand conditions in these areas are mature and are not considered quality lynx habitat.

John R. asked that the analysis show how the project would promote lynx according to Squires guidelines.

Jake asked about meadow restoration and reported that it wasn't being met favorably in MT: Cindy reported that the meadows targeted for treatment are on south facing slopes and historically would not have conifers. Suppression has resulted in reduction of these natural openings. Meadow treatments are intended to hold big game higher, longer and create forage areas. Eric stated that the meadow margins could be treated in order to create a mosaic of vegetation including herbaceous and shrub layers.

Gina asked how the No Action Alternative is designed: Mike S. stated he is using historical data and modeling to assess the potential for large fires. Particularly, Pierce Ck terrain is similar to the Saddle Fire from last year and he is using Frog Pond data from 2003.

Jan stated that she felt the rehabilitation component of the forest plan is a flexible tool to use regarding visual impacts.

Larry reported that he is supplying design criteria to protect recreation infrastructure, and the work Jan is doing on visual impacts is important along the Continental Divide Trail segment.

Cammie has inventoried 50 sites that will need protection during treatment, but no major obstacles, mostly mining resources and not prehistoric.

A subcommittee was formed to plan for next full collaborative meeting, to establish strategy to achieve consensus when more than one alternative is being analyzed. John G., Jake, Gina and John R. will work on this and report back.

Remote partners suggested that while the distance communication was good, they preferred to be here in person for next meeting which is slated for early April.

### ***Other Business***

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### ***Memorandum of Understanding***

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The MOU is currently undergoing its second scrutiny by the Regional office. (Fire season sidelined the signing in 2011) Acting North Fork ranger Gary Foli is tasked with helping get this done and he expects to have done next week.

### ***Funding Assistance from Titcomb Foundation***

Titcomb foundation has granted SVS \$3,500 which can be used to assist members who travel to meetings and tours.

***Homework for Next Meeting (TBD Date and Time)***

Maggie said the SCNF timeline is for the Draft EIS released this May. [To prepare for the next collaborative meeting, All members should review scoping letters that have been distributed to the group.](#)

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Upper North Fork Operations Subcommittee  
Conference Call Summary**

Tuesday, Feb 14, 2012

4 p.m – 5 p.m

Participants: Gina Knudson (SVS), Bob Cope (Lemhi Co.), John Goodman (Moose Creek Estates), Jake Kreilick (Wild West Institute), John Robison (Idaho Conservation League)

**Purpose of Call:**

At the Feb. 7 LCFRG meeting where members heard an update from the Salmon-Challis National Forest regarding the analysis of Upper North Fork, members realized that the collaborative doesn't have a protocol in place for endorsing or achieving consensus when a range of alternatives exist. Hughes Creek was a very straightforward Preferred Alternative versus No Action project so this issue has not come up before. The group determined that a subcommittee should meet to discuss such a protocol before our next full LCFRG meeting, scheduled for early April.

**Key discussion items:**

- LCFRG Group Structure
  - Upper North Fork project elements that may require new consensus or decision making strategy

**LCFRG group structure and Wild West dissent:**

- Gina expressed concern that Jake's Feb 9 email to the LCFRG concerning Wild West's position on temp roads and commercial harvest in Anderson Mtn Roadless area is not consistent with the collaborative rules of engagement agreed upon in 2006.
- Jake explained that he needs to represent Wild West and the organization is very committed to the protection of roadless areas and temp roads within roadless is a deal breaker for Wild West
- Cope said Jake spent time on the ground, as did members of the Idaho Roadless Committee to make sure proposed treatments were consistent with Idaho Roadless Rule. Jake's colleagues who oppose did not take time to visit the site.
- Question: considering the agreed upon ground rules ask participants to commit to stating needs, problems, and opportunities, not positions – how do we move forward?
- Jake said if group felt his participation would taint the process, he would remove himself from the collaborative.

- John Goodman stated he hoped Wild West would stay on the collaborative.

### **Weighing in as a Collaborative on Upper North Fork Draft EIS:**

- What can collaborative do to address concerns that have been raised, most especially about roadless areas, to help Forest Service to find best balance?
  - John Robison said most participants won't know what they can support in terms of treatment options until we see a side-by-side comparison between Proposed Alternative w/ temp roads and the Alt w/ no temp roads
  - Because Roadless treatments are such a controversial issue, John R suggested we could look at the effectiveness of several treatments with respect to wildfire flame lengths, crown torching, and protection of structures in Moose Creek estates:
    - commercial thinning in the IRA with the temporary road
    - commercial thinning in the IRA without the temporary road
    - noncommercial thinning in the IRA
  - John G said property owners in the area are open to whatever will help move fire from crown to ground
  - We need to be able to express to Maggie Milligan and interdisciplinary team what kind of information we need to provide a recommendation, keeping in mind that FS is ultimate decision maker
  -
- Gina read excerpt from Blue Mtn Forest Partners Operations Manual regarding decision-making:
 

“If a time comes when the subgroup or full group is unable to reach consensus the following actions will be taken:

  - Areas of agreement and disagreement will be clearly recorded in writing
  - Majority and minority reports will be written to address the areas of disagreement. Each of these documents will include:
    - The name of the lead author and names of all who agree with the report
    - A description of their proposal and the rationale used to develop it
      - What group members in the majority and minority anticipate doing if their proposal is chosen by the USFS (i.e. defend it in public), or not chosen (i.e. file an objection, appeal, litigate, etc).”
- John R added that we need to understand what kind of decision space each participant has, i.e. we know non-starters for Wild West are temp roads and commercial activities in roadless ... does that mean they will appeal/litigate or simply not support if that alternative selected? How else can we accomplish the purpose and need?
- Cope explained that when he served on the Roadless Area Conservation National Advisory Committee (RACNAC), Todd Schulke of Center for Biological Diversity could not support one element of the committee's recommendation; CBD's dissenting opinion was noted but they did not appeal.

**Recommendations:**

- Adopt Blue Mountain decision-making language for LCFRG Group Structure update.
- Conversation with Maggie, others from SCNF about issues/areas where we need more information and commitment from Forest Service to get us info before our next collaborative meeting
- Proposed Thurs, April 5 meeting with Fri, April 13 as backup date

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Upper North Fork Operations Subcommittee  
Conference Call Summary**

Tuesday, Feb 27, 2012  
4 p.m – 5 p.m

Participants: Gina Knudson (SVS), Bob Cope (Lemhi Co.), Bob Russell (SVS), John Robison (Idaho Conservation League), Michelle Tucker (SVS)

**Purpose of Call:**

The subcommittee discussed how we were going to approach/prepare for the April 5 Upper North Fork Project meeting.

**Key discussion items:**

- Upper North Fork Project(UNFP) elements that may require new consensus or decision making strategy
- LCFRG Group Structure

**LCFRG group structure and Wild West dissent:**

- April 5 has been confirmed for our next full collaborative meeting - 9am-3pm.
- John R. drafted a green light, yellow light, red light approach to categorize areas of agreement and concern

**Green light (proposals everyone supports)** Thinning in dry site ponderosa  
pine Culvert replacements

**Yellow light (potentially significant issues; we need to make sure we address concerns)**

Timber harvest in IRA  
Intensity of vegetation treatments (openings)  
Elk security  
Core areas and corridors for critters  
Road decommissioning (gates vs. full obliteration)  
Public access issues  
Noxious weeds  
Effectiveness of fuel reduction efforts on homes

**Red light proposals (deal-breakers; have we really avoided these or is there a way to move these issues into the yellow-light arena)**

- Cope prefers a thumbs up, thumbs down, thumbs sideways approach. The national roadless committee experience emphasized that all members won't agree on every issue all the time – red light sounds like a veto

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- John R. suggested the group should return to the purpose and need statement of the project.
- Cope suggested that the group needs to remember that the project is landscape level and community protection oriented.
- In addition to roadless issues, other items of interest will be wildlife and roads. Would be nice if we could get an idea of how proposed treatments will actually change fire behavior.
- Gina wants to be able to give the SCNF a heads up on the type of information we are hoping to see at the April 5 meeting (example: what units on Anderson Mtn fall within ¼ mile of Moose Ck or other pvt property)
- Bob asked whether we were still endorsing our initial recommendation memo or whether we were re-opening all issues. Bob would like to start from the memo and move forward.
- John recommended drafting a letter before the April 5 meeting that highlights our memo consensus, points out any sensitive issues and makes recommendations on how to address these in the analysis.
- This draft letter would then be refined during the April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, formally adopted/endorsed by each member of the group as we did with our first Recommendation Memo and sent to the Forest Service for their consideration.
- John also recommended that the list of these sensitive issues could be forwarded to the Forest Service in advance of the April 5 meeting so Forest Service could be prepared to discuss them at the meeting.
- The group again discussed the need to adopt the example from Blue Mountain Forest Partners Operations Manual regarding decision-making. Bob recommending adopting a policy as soon as possible.

“If a time comes when the subgroup or full group is unable to reach consensus the following actions will be taken:

- Areas of agreement and disagreement will be clearly recorded in writing
- Majority and minority reports will be written to address the areas of disagreement. Each of these documents will include:
  - The name of the lead author and names of all who agree with the report
  - A description of their proposal and the rationale used to develop it
    - What group members in the majority and minority anticipate doing if their proposal is chosen by the USFS (i.e. defend it in public), or not chosen (i.e. file an objection, appeal, litigate, etc).”
- The group discussed the value of having LCFRG members present their concerns on project elements that have emerged as issues either before, during or after our Feb 7 meeting.
  - Roadless and especially temp road/commercial harvest concerns – Jake
  - Suite of concerns specific to forest type (dry, wet) – John R

- Security cover treatment – Beth W and Jim R
- County’s conversation about road closures and decommissionings – Cope

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- Recommendation memo from Oct 2010 can serve as starting point and bullet statements with analysis recommendations can be placed under appropriate items. This document will then accompany the cover letter referenced above.
- Gina said Maia Enzer of Sustainable Northwest has tentatively agreed to come to Salmon for the meeting and assist with facilitation.

### **Recommendations:**

- SVS will draft language amending group structure to include Blue Mtn language and circulate to entire group for confirmation. This will give group greater flexibility in April 5 meeting.
- SVS will circulate draft agenda that will include a) re-visit of purpose/need statement, b) group member presentations on specific topic areas, c) review of recommendation memo with more detail added to items of special interest, d) SCNF update, e) other agenda items??.
- The subcommittee will draft a letter to give to the SCNF and all members before the April 5 meeting to allow all parties to prepare, that revisits our recommendation memo and areas where clarification is needed/desired.
- The major issues in the draft letter will be forwarded to the Forest Service in advance of the April 5 meeting so the Forest Service can come prepared to discuss them
- The LCFRG will have a finalized letter to give to the SCNF as a result of the April 5 meeting.

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## LCFRG Meeting Minutes

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting**  
**Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center**  
**Thurs, April 5, 2012**  
**9:00 a.m.-3:00 pm**

### **Meeting Summary**

#### ***Participants:***

Gina Knudson, Jerry Hamilton, Michelle Tucker, Hadley Roberts, John Goodman, Beth Waterbury, Jim Roscoe, Tammy Stringham, Gary Foli, Jim Tucker, Eric Pfeiffer, Frank Guzman, Mike Smith, Jake Kreilick, Russ Bacon, Dave Melton, Lynn Bennett, Stefani Melvin, Karen Dunlap, Julie Hopkins, Bob Russell, Mike England, Maia Enzer

#### ***Brief History of LCFRG and Amended Group Structure***

Formed in 2006 w/ help of Sustainable Northwest and as a result of conversations regarding a proposed Gibbonsville project between Commissioner Cope and Jake Kreilick. Stated mission was straightforward:

*Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.*



Salmon Valley Stewardship name gets confused with stewardship contracting, but in reality SVS is not the LCFRG. In August 2006, SVS accepted task of coordinating the group and being willing to raise funds for group activities. SVS has other programs of work and Gina estimates she spends 10 hrs/ wk on forest collaborative activities. Jake has taken a lead role on multiparty monitoring, and SVS has backed him up on that with the hire of Michelle Tucker and the use of interns and volunteers.

Recent change from our original group structure adopted in August 2006 to one that uses the Blue Mountain Forest Partners decision-making model in March 2012 reflects the group being willing to tackle more complex collaborative projects. Maia observed that the Blue Mountain group originally modeled their group structure on the Lemhi County model, so this is a good example of collaboratives learning from each other.

### ***Upper North Fork Purpose & Need***

The group reviewed and validated the purpose and need as it appeared in the August 2011 scoping letter from the Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF):

*Existing forest stand structure and forest vegetation have created the potential for largescale, high-intensity wildfires that threaten human life, property, and natural resources. Quaking aspen stands provide substantial habitat value for wildlife and contribute to landscape habitat diversity. However, many historic aspen stands in Central Idaho have been lost, and many others are either regenerating poorly or are otherwise in decline. Likewise, whitebark pine is the first tree species in the Northwest to be listed as a candidate for the threatened and endangered species list because of a lethal combination of blister rust and mountain pine beetle. Historic logging practices and fire suppression have contributed to a decline in ponderosa pine, known to be more fire resilient. In essence, the rich biodiversity in the project area is at risk. This area contains the State Highway 93 transportation corridor and scenic byway, private lands, residences and a winter recreation ski facility classified by Lemhi County as wildland urban interface (WUI).*

*The purpose is to reduce hazardous natural fuels, restore plant communities and improve fish and wildlife habitat diversity while returning resilient conditions to this fire adapted landscape. This proposal is necessary to compliment other existing, on-going and planned fuels treatments surrounding "at-risk" communities within the*

*North Fork drainage, and to address forest health conditions that are reaching crucial stages towards non-desired change.*

*Lemhi County developed its CWPP to include localized mapping and definition of WUI areas and designated the North Fork area as high priority for hazard reduction treatment. The identified need for reducing hazardous fuel conditions together with the County's priority designation for this area are essential criteria allowing the use of authorities and expedited analysis under the HFRA. Private developments, such as Moose Creek Estates, have responded to these needs and have completed planning and hazard reduction treatments necessary to gain enrollment as a "Fire-Wise Community" in the State of Idaho.*

### ***Issue Expansion from Feb 7 LCFRG meeting***

#### **County Commissioners Clarification on Road Decommissioning**

- Commissioner Cope couldn't be present because he is in Boise for an Idaho Roadless Committee Meeting. Commissioner John Jakovac had attended Feb 7 meeting and was concerned about decommissioning road activity proposed. They have since met with SCNF and have reiterated their approach to the travel plan management which is: road obliteration may be acceptable when there are two or three roads that connect points A and B. To eliminate all access to a drainage makes the provision of emergency services virtually impossible, and also restricts management options. The County has indicated a preference in road closure instances for gating and/or humping over recontouring. Where recontouring is selected, attention to noxious weeds should be given priority.

## Forest Type Discussion

John Robison of Idaho Conservation League was scheduled to present about the current topic of forest restoration activities and how they might differ given different forest types, but John was unable to attend. Michelle said two presentations were given at the Jan 2012 Idaho Forest Partners workshop:

Mixed-Severity Fire Regime Forests of Idaho: Location, Ecology, Species, Influences (Russ Graham, USFS Rocky Mountain Research Station)

Fire Ecology and Risk Factors for Mixed Severity Forests of Idaho and How it is Different from Low Severity, Dry Forests and High Severity, Cold Forests (Penny Morgan, University of Idaho, College of Natural Resources)

Jake added that the Montana Forest Restoration Committee is also working on developing restoration principles that address various forest types. The MFRC says: *Ecological restoration in mixed conifer/mixed severity fire regimes may be more complicated than in low to mid-elevation ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, and western larch forests. At the same time, given the need for restoration, the ecological reality of human-caused, landscape-scale impacts, and the anticipated impacts arising from changes in climate, these complexities should not be avoided.*

Hughes Ck. represents the low to mid-elevation ponderosa pine and Douglas fir forest type and Upper North Fork has elements of mixed conifer/mixed severity. Future learning as a collaborative would be a good idea.

## Security Cover Treatment

Jim Roscoe and Beth Waterbury have been working on an appendix to our recommendation memo. Beth gave a PowerPoint presentation and made some of the following points:

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- Cover moderates weather, provides security from predators and humans
- Thermal cover does not provide survival or reproductive benefits to elk/deer
- Forest management guidelines developed from Starkey Experimental Forest:

Satisfactory cover	Conifers >40 ft with >70% crown closure
Marginal cover	Conifers >10 ft with >40% crown closure
Hiding cover	Hides 90% of an adult elk standing <200 feet
Forage areas	Non-satisfactory or marginal cover areas
Cover to forage ratio	40:60
Cover patches	30-60 acres minimum
Road density	<sup>2</sup> Miles of road per section (mile )

- If road density reaches 6 miles per section, habitat effectiveness is 100% compromised
- Among national forests, SCNF has comparatively low road densities.
- Where sub-standard cover conditions exist, design techniques could be employed such as:
  - Select and reserve densest patches of live trees 1-5 acres in size with 5-10 patches per treatment unit
  - Include areas of abundant large woody debris and/or dense shrub understory
  - Include adjoining small wet meadows, springs, seeps where available
  - Configure patches to link with riparian areas, old growth stands or other features that attract wildlife

Mike Smith and Eric Pfeifer expressed some concern that where hazardous fuels objectives are being pursued, some of the design techniques might limit effectiveness of treatments.

Beth and Jim are going to update the Security Cover appendix and we will distribute with final changes to memo for sign-on.

### Fisher Study

Beth also presented information from a fisher study conducted in North-Central Idaho (Landscape Level Habitat Selection by Fishers in North-Central Idaho [Joel Sauder, Id Dept of Fish and Game; Janet Rachlow, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Studies, University of Idaho]).

- Fisher have large home ranges: males about 40 km<sup>2</sup> and females about 15 km<sup>2</sup>
- They are carnivores that feed on porcupines, snowshoe hares, grouse, tree squirrels, small mammals
  - Fisher in our area are considered as part of the Northern Rockies population, the least studied population
- Habitat type is generally associated with:
  - complex vertical structure
  - mature forest
  - high canopy cover
  - abundant prey

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- Key study findings:
  - For microhabitat (rest sites, den sites, foraging locations), positive associations included:
    - Tree dbh
    - Density of cavities
    - Large Coarse Woody Debris (CWD)
    - Prey densities
    - Canopy cover
    - Frequency for tree brooms
  - The study did not find negative associations for microhabitat
  - For Intra-Home Range Selection, positive associations included:
    - Specific Forest Type
    - Coniferous Cover
    - Deciduous Cover
    - Shrub Cover
    - CWD
    - Tree DBH
  - For Intra-Home Range Selection, negative associations included open space
  - For landscape selection, positive associations included:
    - Habitat type
    - Canopy Closure
    - Diverse forest ages
  - For landscape Selection, negative associations included % open area
  - 5% increase in open area reduces probability of occupation by 38%
  - With  $\geq 25\%$  open area, probability of occupation by fisher essentially zero.
- Conclusions:
  - At the landscape level, fishers select home ranges that:

- Minimize the amount of non-forested habitat
- Maximize large patches of mature forest that are closely arranged.
- Management actions that influence these landscape characteristics can strongly affect occupancy of fisher at the landscape level

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#### Roadless area; temporary road/commercial harvest considerations

Jake explained that the Anderson Mountain Roadless Area presents some challenges for WildWest and for others in the environmental community. Protecting roadless areas has been paramount for WildWest since its inception, but they've recently engaged in restoration treatments in roadless area on the Lolo. He said the treatments proposed for the Allan Mountain and West Big Hole Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) are not problematic, especially given the Forest Service's modification of work proposed in Lick Creek.

Jake said he is proposing 3 approaches to Anderson Mountain with the mindset of what treatment options would best protect roadless characteristics while at the same time benefit WUI concerns. Topography and mixed forest type (split between lower areas and higher elevation forests) were considerations for the following approaches:

- Commercial Treatment w/ Temporary Roads

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- Commercial Treatment w/o Temporary Roads
- Non-commercial Treatment w/o Temporary Roads

Jake hopes to see commercial, or mechanical, treatments evaluated based on cost effectiveness (notably the cost of putting in and reclaiming temp road) and how effective the proposed treatments are in terms of modifying forest structure (opening up canopy) without changing character of roadless. He broke the area into 4 different zones:

- From Moose Creek Estates boundary to toe of slope – mechanical thinning up to 18" DBH
- ¼ mile – ½ mile, mix based on feasibility that could include mechanical
- ½ mile – ¾ mile, hand thinning and piling
- ¾ mile – 1 ½ mile, prescribed burning

Visuals are important, so effects of logging should not be visible.

Upper end is more focused on forest restoration than hazardous fuels so he wants that clearly delineated in EIS.

John Goodman said property owners are concerned about a fire coming from top down; they feel more comfortable about ability to halt fire if it starts down low. Property owners are concerned about property values.

Jake said not all of the groups who will be commenting on Upper North Fork have community interests at heart. Some groups focus on wildlife issues. John G. asked if those groups were concerned about losing wildlife habitat in the event of large fire. Jake explained that others hold the opinion that large, stand replacing fires have been part of the ecosystem for thousands of years. He said he personally is not advocating that Anderson Mtn ends up looking like the West Fork after the 2000 fires.

Russ said he understands that collaborative members want to see a discussion in the EIS that makes it clear whether treatments are for fuels reduction or forest restoration objectives.

#### Fire Behavior

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Mike Smith said the assumption that a fire is unlikely to start at the top end of Anderson and move downhill doesn't account for the erratic fire behavior witnessed throughout history on SCNF. It is a common scenario on the Salmon-Challis for a dry cold front to pass and cause fires to burn downhill. That was the case on the Frog Pond and Withington fires.

Mike used the 2011 Saddle Fire as a model because it presents many similarities as the Pierce Ck drainage, just south of Moose Ck Estates. The Saddle Fire, straddling the border of Id-Mt, was at 7,200' elevation and is situated similar to Pierce Ck. On Aug 23, 2011, the fire grew from 1,000 acres to 17,000 acres helped by winds moving from the southwest. The Saddle Fire and other incidents confirm that a road like the Anderson Mtn Road would not constitute an adequate fuel break. This past summer on both the Saddle and Salt Fires a ridge road similar to the Anderson Mountain Road was looked at as possible locations to stop the fires. In both cases in that fuel type, the road was not a sufficient fuel break and fire spread past the road. In a wildfire situation occurred below Anderson Mountain Road, significant improvement to the road would most likely happen if the plan was to stop fire at the road. That is a likely objective for a fire in that area that had potential to grow. This would be accomplished with dozers to widen/straighten the road and feller bunchers to remove trees. Mike said as a Division Supervisor, he personally would not commit fire fighter resources under typical Salmon-Challis (late summer) resources to an extended attack fire without improving that road system. Eric Pfeifer agreed that in a wildfire suppression situation, roads like the Anderson Mtn Road would most likely be widened significantly by dozers.

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Responding to questions about proposed treatment units 36-42, Mike clarified that the temporary roads on top are not within the roadless boundary.

#### *Outline of Next Steps/Timeline*

Maia created the following table for discussion. All dates are for estimation purposes ONLY:

Forest Service	Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group
North Fork Project	North Fork Project
<b>July 15, 2012</b> Draft EIS released and the 45-day comment period begins. Public meeting will take place.	Collaborative group reviews draft EIS together? Use new "declaration of support" process? Discuss how to deal with individual concurrent comments submitted? Group submits collective recommendation on preferred alternative or submit separate from each other? Collaborative group reviews Draft EIS together? Conducts Field tours? Convenes a Science Forum? Really targeted workshop, useful for internal audiences as well as external stakeholders. Look at our EIS comments for topics.
<b>September 1, 2012</b> Forest Service begins review of comments and preparing final EIS	
Final EIS is released to the public	Collaborative group reviews together?
30-day objection period begins	
Final decision is released	<b>Party</b>

Idea of science forum was very well received. Group discussed that other stakeholders should be invited, but our internal audience should be primary audience.

#### *Draft Cover Letter to SCNF & Expanded Recommendation Memo Exercise*

No changes were made to cover letter and the expanded recommendation memo is attached, with one version showing tracked changes, and the other in the final format that will be delivered to Forest Supervisor Frank Guzman.

Because not all members were present, the group agreed to email sign-on approval once the final version is circulated. SVS will file a copy of all emails for LCFRG record-keeping.

## ***Other Business***

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### ***Level of Commitment***

At Maia's suggestion, group members and agency partners indicated their commitment to the future of the forest collaborative. All present were unanimous in believing that working together as a collaborative will yield the most productive results for all. Jake said he remains committed to the Hughes Creek monitoring and Upper North Fork

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project but other family commitments may make it hard for him to stay involved at the level he has been maintaining. He committed to getting other members of the environmental community involved.

### ***Dates/Subjects for Next Meeting***

Doodle poll will be sent for primary date Thurs, May 10 and secondary date, Friday, May 11, 9 – 11 a.m.

Agenda items to include general LCFRG operations and strategic direction, Hughes Ck implementation and mining proposal update, and Jesse Ck.

Meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Monitoring Subcommittee Conference Call  
Monday May 1, 2012  
4:00 p.m.-5:00 pm**

### **Meeting Summary**

#### **Participants:**

John Goodman, Michelle Tucker, Beth Waterbury, Mike Smith, Jake Kreilick, Maggie Milligan, Matt Hall

#### **Agenda: Establish Priority for 2012 Multi Party Monitoring Season**

Salmon Valley Stewardship(SVS) has approximately four weeks to spend on multiparty monitoring this year from funding provided by the RAC. Matt Hall will be returning to SVS for his third season and SVS is very happy to have him back. Michelle reviewed the monitoring conducted to date and asked the group to consider:

- 1) Is it time to revisit any of the previous plots/assessment areas?
- 2) Do we want to move forward with some of the baseline data and analyze potential impacts?
- 3) What does the SCNF need help with or already have completed/ in the works so we are not doubling up on efforts?
- 4) Other ideas for monitoring needs?

**Old Growth: Hughes Creek (HC):** Old Growth hasn't had treatment yet beyond tree well burning conducted last spring. Jake reported that 10 trees were selected from this treatment and photo points established. He didn't feel follow up was needed yet for stand exams conducted in 2009 and 2010. Mike reported that broadcast burns will



implemented in these units over the next 3-5 years. A lot of the trees have probably been hit by beetles. The group did not feel a need to revisit old growth in Hughes Creek this year..

*Upper North Fork (UNF):* has a lot of old growth but no treatments are proposed specifically for this resource. Survey work was done by the SCNF (Andy Klimek) on these stands and is available. This was not considered a high priority until a proposed treatment schedule is known.

**Weeds:** *HC:* Baseline weed monitoring was conducted in RMEF units last year and a protocol designed for multiparty monitoring with the assistance of Diane Shultz and Daniel Bertram. Beth recommended asking Daniel or Diane for a recommendation on when to return to these transects in order to record potential changes. Jake wanted to see transects in the 2012 RMEF units established.

*UNF:* John updated the group on weeds in Perce Creek. Mike informed the group that the Upper North Fork will have a specialist report from Diane that will provide some baseline information. We don't know yet what order the units will be treated so it is difficult to target areas for baseline assessment. Michelle has the Lemhi County Weed Database for both project areas, which includes information from the SCNF. The group decided weed monitoring in UNF was not a high priority in light of the unknown treatment schedule and existing baseline data. We will revisit once treatments schedules are proposed.

**Harvest:** *HC:* Mike updated the group on the RMEF units to be treated (~ 550 acres of service work). Units 5a (April) and b (May) are both being prescribe burned this spring (~500 acres). Mike is doing monitoring in these units both pre and post burn. Maggie updated on commercial work in the West Fork of HC, part of Salzer Bar (433 acres). Jake felt it was important to take pre and post photo points in the new treatment units. This may not be possible due to the upcoming start on the contracts and SVS field crew not starting until May 15. SVS will work on this as soon as time allows.

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**Wildlife:** Michelle informed the group of Jim Roscoe's suggestion for wildlife transect monitoring. She will send Beth more details to determine if there are places in either project area that would be appropriate. Both project areas aren't slated for monitoring with the IDFG until 2014 funding cycle. Beth feels that a couple plots with multi species monitoring could be done with a citizen group. She could help us hold a training in June to teach basic wildlife monitoring and establish a protocol for our group in setting up a couple of plots within the treatment areas. Jake would like to see wildlife plots in 2-3 commercially logged units. Maggie offered to ask Cindy H. if the SCNF is conducting any studies in our areas or if there was anything she could use assistance on. The group agreed that carnivore monitoring in the UNF area is a priority. Beth could use assistance in funding extra bait stations as well as volunteers to help check these stations every three weeks Dec – Mar. SVS will work with Beth in targeting funding opportunities for more stations.

**Meadows:** *UNF:* Mike and Maggie recommended that photo points of the meadows proposed for treatment would be effective for recording potential treatment impacts and effectiveness.

**Whitebark:** *UNF:* Jake would like to see more monitoring of the Anderson Mountain and Lost Trail areas. Michelle informed the group of a monitoring protocol that has been established and that SVS has been working with Laura Lazarus of Forest Health and Dana Perkins on opportunities. Michelle recommended looking at the SCNF GIS layer and ground truthing some of these polygons in Anderson Mountain and Lost Trail with a few plots.

**Other:** *Lighthawk:* (Nonprofit fixed wing flights) is still very interested in working with us. SVS flew both project areas in 2010 to look at beetle kill and has a photo library from the flight. They would like to come back and help us look at whitebark or aspen again this fall. <http://www.lighthawk.org/>

**Data Management:** SVS would like to set up a website specifically for multiparty monitoring and provide a better system that makes data more accessible. Jake asked about using Google Documents. Data management is very time consuming and requires funding for both system set up and data entry.

*Monitoring Plan:* SVS has funding to have Jo Myers, a returning intern from 2009, update and finalize our monitoring plan as it is still in draft form. The group agreed that this would be a good idea.

**Summary of suggested 2012 priorities:**

1. Pre and post photo points of HC treatment areas
2. Wildlife training will be set up for June – Michelle will work with Beth on this
3. Establish wildlife plots in 2-3 commercial units in HC
4. Post monitoring of the prescribed fire units 5a and b
5. Inventory and assessment of whitebark pine in Anderson Mtn and Lost Trail areas
6. Weed inventories of new RMEF units in HC
7. Photo points of some of the meadows proposed for treatment in the UNF

**Other ongoing monitoring needing follow up in 2012**

1. Revisit aspen stands in HC originally monitored and treated in 2009
2. Hughes Creek Stream Restoration – Cerise meadows

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting  
Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center Thurs,  
April 5, 2012**

**9:00 a.m.-3:00 pm**

**Meeting Summary**

***Participants:***

Gina Knudson, Jerry Hamilton, Michelle Tucker, Hadley Roberts, John Goodman, Beth Waterbury, Jim Roscoe, Tammy Stringham, Gary Foli, Jim Tucker, Eric Pfeiffer, Frank Guzman, Mike Smith, Jake Kreilick, Russ Bacon, Dave Melton, Lynn Bennett, Stefani Melvin, Karen Dunlap, Julie Hopkins, Bob Russell, Mike England, Maia Enzer

***Brief History of LCFRG and Amended Group Structure***

Formed in 2006 w/ help of Sustainable Northwest and as a result of conversations regarding a proposed Gibbonsville project between Commissioner Cope and Jake Kreilick. Stated mission was straightforward:

*Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.*

Salmon Valley Stewardship name gets confused with stewardship contracting, but in reality SVS is not the LCFRG. In August 2006, SVS accepted task of coordinating the group and being willing to raise funds for group activities. SVS has other programs of work and Gina estimates she spends 10 hrs/ wk on forest collaborative activities. Jake has taken a lead role on multiparty monitoring, and SVS has backed him up on that with the hire of Michelle Tucker and the use of interns and volunteers.

Recent change from our original group structure adopted in August 2006 to one that uses the Blue Mountain Forest Partners decision-making model in March 2012 reflects the group being willing to tackle more complex collaborative projects. Maia observed that the Blue Mountain group originally modeled their group structure on the Lemhi County model, so this is a good example of collaboratives learning from each other.

***Upper North Fork Purpose & Need***



The group reviewed and validated the purpose and need as it appeared in the August 2011 scoping letter from the Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF):

*Existing forest stand structure and forest vegetation have created the potential for largescale, high-intensity wildfires that threaten human life, property, and natural resources. Quaking aspen stands provide substantial habitat value for wildlife and contribute to landscape habitat diversity. However, many historic aspen stands in Central Idaho have been lost, and many others are either regenerating poorly or are otherwise in decline. Likewise, whitebark pine is the first tree species in the Northwest to be listed as a candidate for the threatened and endangered species list because of a lethal combination of blister rust and mountain pine beetle. Historic logging practices and fire suppression have contributed to a decline in ponderosa pine, known to be more fire resilient. In essence, the rich biodiversity in the project area is at risk. This area contains the State Highway 93 transportation corridor and scenic byway, private lands, residences and a winter recreation ski facility classified by Lemhi County as wildland urban interface (WUI).*

*The purpose is to reduce hazardous natural fuels, restore plant communities and improve fish and wildlife habitat diversity while returning resilient conditions to this fire adapted landscape. This proposal is necessary to compliment other existing, on-going and planned fuels treatments surrounding "at-risk" communities*

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*within the North Fork drainage, and to address forest health conditions that are reaching crucial stages towards non-desired change.*

*Lemhi County developed its CWPP to include localized mapping and definition of WUI areas and designated the North Fork area as high priority for hazard reduction treatment. The identified need for reducing hazardous fuel conditions together with the County's priority designation for this area are essential criteria allowing the use of authorities and expedited analysis under the HFRA. Private developments, such as Moose Creek Estates, have responded to these needs and have completed planning and hazard reduction treatments necessary to gain enrollment as a "Fire-Wise Community" in the State of Idaho.*

### ***Issue Expansion from Feb 7 LCFRG Meeting***

#### **County Clarification on Road Decommissioning:**

Commissioner Cope couldn't be present because he is in Boise for an Idaho Roadless Committee Meeting. Commissioner John Jakovac had attended Feb 7 meeting and was concerned about decommissioning road activity proposed. They have since met with SCNF and have reiterated their approach to the travel plan management which is: road obliteration may be acceptable when there are two or three roads that connect points A and B. To eliminate all access to a drainage makes the provision of emergency services virtually impossible, and also restricts management options. The County has indicated a preference in road closure instances for gating and/or humping over recontouring. Where recontouring is selected, attention to noxious weeds should be given priority.

#### **Forest Type Discussion:**

John Robison of Idaho Conservation League was scheduled to present about the current topic of forest restoration activities and how they might differ given different forest types, but John was unable to attend. Michelle explained presentations given at the Jan 2012 Idaho Forest Partners workshop for mixed severity forests:

Mixed-Severity Fire Regime Forests of Idaho: Location, Ecology, Species, Influences (Russ Graham, USFS Rocky Mountain Research Station)

Fire Ecology and Risk Factors for Mixed Severity Forests of Idaho and How it is Different from Low Severity, Dry Forests and High Severity, Cold Forests (Penny Morgan, University of Idaho, College of Natural Resources)

The current theory for mixed severity is that they cannot be approached the same as the dry Douglas fir/ponderosa we have been working in. Treatments need to consider a patch or mosaic approach that allows for varying canopy layers.

Jake added that the Montana Forest Restoration Committee is also working on developing restoration principles that address various forest types. The MFRC says: *Ecological restoration in mixed conifer/mixed severity fire regimes may be more complicated than in low to mid-elevation ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, and western larch forests. At the same time, given the need for restoration, the ecological reality of human-caused, landscape-scale impacts, and the anticipated impacts arising from changes in climate, these complexities should not be avoided.*

Hughes Ck. represents the low to mid-elevation ponderosa pine and Douglas fir forest type and Upper North Fork has elements of mixed conifer/mixed severity. Future learning as a collaborative would be a good idea.

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### Security Cover Treatment

Jim Roscoe and Beth Waterbury have been working on an appendix to our recommendation memo for wildlife. Beth gave a PowerPoint presentation and made some of the following points:

- Cover moderates weather, provides security from predators and humans
- Thermal cover does not provide survival or reproductive benefits to elk/deer
- Forest management guidelines developed from Starkey Experimental Forest:

Satisfactory cover	Conifers >40 ft with >70% crown closure
Marginal cover	Conifers >10 ft with >40% crown closure
Hiding cover	Hides 90% of an adult elk standing <200 feet
Forage areas	Non-satisfactory or marginal cover areas
Cover to forage ratio	40:60
Cover patches	30-60 acres minimum

)

Road density	Miles of road per section (mile <sup>2</sup> )
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- If road density reaches 6 miles per section, habitat effectiveness is 100% compromised
- Among national forests, SCNF has comparatively low road densities.
- Where sub-standard cover conditions exist, design techniques could be employed such as:
  - Select and reserve densest patches of live trees 1-5 acres in size with 5-10 patches per treatment unit
  - Include areas of abundant large woody debris and/or dense shrub understory
  - Include adjoining small wet meadows, springs, seeps where available
  - Configure patches to link with riparian areas, old growth stands or other features that attract wildlife

Mike Smith and Eric Pfeifer expressed some concern that where hazardous fuels objectives are being pursued, some of the design techniques might limit effectiveness of treatments. Beth and Jim are going to update the Security Cover appendix and we will distribute with final changes to memo for sign-on.

### Fisher Study

Beth also presented information from a fisher study conducted in North-Central Idaho (Landscape Level Habitat Selection by Fishers in North-Central Idaho [Joel Sauder, Id Dept of Fish and Game; Janet Rachlow, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Studies, University of Idaho]):

- Fisher have large home ranges: males about 40 km<sup>2</sup> and females about 15 km<sup>2</sup>
  - They are carnivores that feed on porcupines, snowshoe hare, grouse, tree squirrels, small mammals
  - Fisher in our area are considered as part of the Northern Rockies population, the least studied population
- Habitat type is generally associated with:
  - complex vertical structure
  - mature forest
  - high canopy cover
  - abundant prey

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*Key fisher study findings:*

- For microhabitat (rest sites, den sites, foraging locations), positive associations included:
  - Tree dbh
  - Density of cavities
  - Large Coarse Woody Debris (CWD)
  - Prey densities
  - Canopy cover
  - Frequency for tree brooms
- The study did not find negative associations for microhabitat
- For Intra-Home Range Selection, positive associations included:
  - Specific Forest Type
  - Coniferous Cover
  - Deciduous Cover
  - Shrub Cover
  - CWD
  - Tree DBH
- For Intra-Home Range Selection, negative associations included open space
- For landscape selection, positive associations included:
  - Habitat type
  - Canopy Closure
  - Diverse forest ages
- For landscape Selection, negative associations included % open area
- 5% increase in open area reduces probability of occupation by 38%
- With ≥25% open area, probability of occupation by fisher essentially zero.

*Conclusions:*

- At the landscape level, fishers select home ranges that:
  - Minimize the amount of non-forested habitat
  - Maximize large patches of mature forest that are closely arranged.
- Management actions that influence these landscape characteristics can strongly affect occupancy of fisher at the landscape level

**Roadless area; temporary road/commercial harvest considerations**

Jake explained that the Anderson Mountain Roadless Area presents some challenges for WildWest and for others in the environmental community. Protecting roadless areas has been paramount for WildWest since its inception, but they've recently engaged in restoration treatments in roadless area on the Lolo. He said the treatments proposed for the Allan Mountain and West Big Hole Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) are not problematic, especially given the Forest Service's modification of work proposed in Lick Creek.

Jake said he is proposing 3 approaches to Anderson Mountain with the mindset of what treatment options would best protect roadless characteristics while at the same time benefit WUI concerns. Topography and mixed forest type (split between lower areas and higher elevation forests) were considerations for the following approaches:

- Commercial Treatment w/ Temporary Roads
- Commercial Treatment w/o Temporary Roads
- Non-commercial Treatment w/o Temporary Roads

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Jake hopes to see commercial, or mechanical, treatments evaluated based on cost effectiveness (notably the cost of putting in and reclaiming temp road) and how effective the proposed treatments are in terms of modifying forest structure (opening up canopy) without changing character of roadless. He broke the area into 4 different zones:

- From Moose Creek Estates boundary to toe of slope – mechanical thinning up to 18" DBH
- ¼ mile – ½ mile, mix based on feasibility that could include mechanical
- ½ mile – ¾ mile, hand thinning and piling
- ¾ mile – 1 ½ mile, prescribed burning

Visuals are important, so effects of logging should not be visible.

Upper end is more focused on forest restoration than hazardous fuels so he wants that clearly delineated in EIS.

John Goodman said property owners are concerned about a fire coming from top down; they feel more comfortable about ability to halt fire if it starts down low. Property owners are concerned about property values.

Jake said not all of the groups who will be commenting on Upper North Fork have community interests at heart. Some groups focus on wildlife issues. John G. asked if those groups were concerned about losing wildlife habitat in the event of large fire. Jake explained that others hold the opinion that large, stand replacing fires have been part of the ecosystem for thousands of years. He said he personally is not advocating that Anderson Mtn ends up looking like the West Fork after the 2000 fires.

Russ said he understands that collaborative members want to see a discussion in the EIS that makes it clear whether treatments are for fuels reduction or forest restoration objectives.

## Fire Behavior

Mike Smith said the assumption that a fire is unlikely to start at the top end of Anderson and move downhill doesn't account for the erratic fire behavior witnessed throughout history on SCNF. It is a common scenario on the Salmon-Challis for a dry cold front to pass and cause fires to burn downhill. That was the case on the Frog Pond and Withington fires.

Mike used the 2011 Saddle Fire as a model because it presents many similarities as the Pierce Ck drainage, just south of Moose Ck Estates. The Saddle Fire, straddling the border of Id-Mt, was at 7,200' elevation and is situated similar to Pierce Ck. On Aug 23, 2011, the fire grew from 1,000 acres to 17,000 acres helped by winds moving from the southwest. The Saddle Fire and other incidents confirm that a road like the Anderson Mtn Road would not constitute an adequate fuel break. This past summer on both the Saddle and Salt Fires a ridge road similar to the Anderson Mountain Road was looked at as possible locations to stop the fires. In both cases in that fuel type, the road was not a sufficient fuel break and fire spread past the road. If a wildfire situation occurred below Anderson Mountain Road, significant improvement to the road would most likely happen if the plan was to stop fire at the road. That is a likely objective for a fire in that area that had potential to grow. This would be accomplished with dozers to widen/straighten the road and feller bunchers to remove trees. Mike said as a Division Supervisor, he personally would not commit fire fighter resources under typical Salmon-Challis (late summer) resources to an extended attack fire without

improving that road system. Eric Pfeifer agreed that in a wildfire suppression situation, roads like the Anderson Mtn Road would most likely be widened significantly by dozers.

Responding to questions about proposed treatment units 36-42, Mike clarified that the temporary roads on top are not within the roadless boundary.

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***Outline of Next Steps/Timeline***

Maia created the following table for discussion. All dates are for estimation purposes ONLY:

Forest Service	Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group
North Fork Project	
<b>July 15, 2012</b> Draft EIS released and the 45-day comment period begins. Public meeting will take place.	Collaborative group reviews draft EIS together? Use new “declaration of support” process? Discuss how to deal with individual concurrent comments submitted?
<b>September 1, 2012</b> Forest Service begins review of comments and preparing final EIS	Group submits collective recommendation on preferred alternative or submit separate from each other? Collaborative group reviews Draft EIS together? Conducts Field tours? Convenes a Science Forum? Really targeted workshop, useful for internal audiences as well as external stakeholders. Look at our EIS comments for topics.
Final EIS is released to the public	Collaborative group reviews together?
30-day objection period begins	
Final decision is released	<b>Party</b>

Idea of science forum was very well received. Group discussed that other stakeholders should be invited, but our internal audience should be primary audience.

***Draft Cover Letter to SCNF & Expanded Recommendation Memo Exercise***

No changes were made to cover letter and the expanded recommendation memo is attached, with one version showing tracked changes, and the other in the final format that will be delivered to Forest Supervisor Frank Guzman.

Because not all members were present, the group agreed to email sign-on approval once the final version is circulated. SVS will file a copy of all emails for LCFRG record-keeping.

***Other Business***

**Level of Commitment**

At Maia’s suggestion, group members and agency partners indicated their commitment to the future of the forest collaborative. All present were unanimous in believing that working together as a collaborative will yield the most productive results for all. Jake said he remains committed to the Hughes Creek monitoring and Upper North Fork project but other family commitments may make it hard for him to stay involved at the level he has been maintaining. He committed to getting other members of the environmental community involved.

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***Dates/Subjects for Next Meeting***

Doodle poll will be sent for primary date Thurs, May 10 and secondary date, Friday, May 11, 9 – 11 a.m. Agenda items to include general LCFRG operations and strategic direction, Hughes Ck implementation and mining proposal update, and Jesse Ck.

Meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.

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**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group  
Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center**

Thursday, May 10, 2012

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Participants: Gina Knudson, Beth Waterbury, Bob Russell, Mike Smith, Tammy Stringham, , Russ Bacon, John Goodman, Patti Orth; Call-in: Jake Kreilick, John Robison

Introductions: Patti Orth is a student at Colorado State University working on her Ph.D. The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group is one of her case studies in examining how working collaboratively is affecting decision-making within the Forest Service. Patti will be interviewing members of the collaborative and the Salmon-Challis while she is here.

**The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Fire Learning Network (FLN)**

Gina recommends the LCFRG ask to join the Nature Conservancy's Fire Learning Network. She has spoken with Lynn Decker, TNC director of FLN and she provided instances where TNC is not the lead organization for a learning network site. Nick Goulet, director of the Watershed Research and Training Center in Hayfork, CA talked to Gina at the Rural voices for Conservation Coalition Annual Policy Meeting about their positive experience with FLN. The program offers peer learning and planning support and some financial assistance.

Jake has had some experience with the program and he felt it was positive. Locally TNC does not have time or resources for more involvement in our Collaborative. Their focus is on the Lemhi/Pahsimero fish recovery.

Beth reviewed literature and felt there was good potential to learn from other areas and would be a way to network with others.

Centennial Valley in MT is working on sage grouse and other issues as a fire learning site. Gina spoke with Jim Roscoe in April about his feelings about FLN. Jim reported the Centennial Valley group doesn't work in the same a collaborative manner as LCFRG does, so there would be differences in the way we operate.

Gina gave examples of ways the network could help. In 2010, Lynn Decker visited Salmon and suggested we use the World Café format to further our Upper North Fork discussion. Network members also have tremendous experience with multiparty monitoring. Prescribed fire is an important component of TNC's commitment to large scale restoration and through the FLN they

train community members (and agency personnel) in fire qualifications. This opens up interesting opportunities for the LCFRG.

**The group agreed to move forward with becoming a Fire Learning Network. Gina will contact Lynn Decker.**

### **Hughes Creek Implementation and Monitoring Update**

Mike Smith reported on prescribed fire. This spring 5b west of Granite mountain is complete (+/- 100 acres). About half the large piles have also been burned. The rest will be allowed to sit for a year. This fall he would like to burn skyline units from 2011 RMEF work.

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Service contracts for this year were awarded to Bighorn Outfitters, Miller Creek and North West. All three worked in Hughes last year. Bighorn is 100% local. The other two companies have committed to using local help. Brushbull used the Missoula job service last year and they've been encouraged to use Salmon job service this year.

John G. had discussions with NW and the problem of finding qualified local workers. There is a need to train local workforce for this kind of work. Possibility of job training programs through Dept of Labor. Gina said Watershed Research and Training Center and Framing Our Community in Elk City, ID both work with Dept of Labor to provide training for forest restoration work. Bob said this was not RMEF's primary concern and with LCEDA playing a bigger role, this is more likely to receive attention.

The three contracts RMEF awarded will cover 519 acres. This is the last round of non commercial handwork, barring new funding of some sort. Bids were low enough that we were able to distribute another 75 acres among the three companies.

West Saltzar Stewardship Contract will be implemented this year.

Gina asked about best value criteria and effectiveness. Having cost did make a difference and seemed helpful. Gina also asked for feedback on what didn't work. Tammy hopes to continue to use the RMEF model.

Russ asked about using TNC-FLN assistance for matching funds for stewardship agreement. Gina is not certain if it is federally derived. **Will follow up.**

Update on Cerise pasture and flooding. Hughes Ck is coming out of its bank at the most upstream log structure again this year. Michelle had asked Lowell about bioengineering and stabilization last fall and Lowell had moved equipment and did not think it was necessary. Last year the creek flooded the pasture from May-July. Both Bob, Michelle, and John G. have looked at it this year and they feel the high water period will not be as lengthy as 2011. The Cerises primary concern last year was worry about downstream neighbors and this year that is not such a worry.

Beth asked about the fuels reduction work upstream at the West Fork on private land. Karin Drnjevic of Lemhi County Wildland Urban Interface was not in attendance but the group believes this work is being conducted through the county's grant program. The concern is that the fuels reduction work on private land in Hughes Ck has on occasion been aggressive in riparian areas.

**Best management practices should be shared with Lemhi County WUI and their contractors/landowners.**

Bob asked about the Lemhi Gold group. Gina gave update on her meeting with Brian Brewer this week. He was confused about what was being asked of him for the hazardous fuel removal on



the property. Brewer told Gina that the company has given him the go ahead to do what needs to be done for fuels reduction. This would be very important to have the stream habitat conversation with the County before this is done since Ditch Ck runs through the property.

Brewer explained to Gina that work being done right now is exploratory and the permitting process to move into production mode is a lengthy process. He is willing to give a short presentation to the Collaborative if people are interested. John R. spoke with Joe Kircher about

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the project and the Collaborative in Boise. Russ has met with Brewer also. All agreed it would be good to have a presentation at the next meeting if possible.

Draft socioeconomic report is complete but is missing commercial harvest figures. Laura V. of RMEF is sending this information to Michelle.

Hughes Multiparty Monitoring Committee had a meeting on April 30 and set up a plan for the summer. No stand exams, and more photo points. Mi- June wildlife training. Michelle and Beth are working on.

### **Jesse Creek**

The Salmon-Challis N.F. issued a project initiation letter in March re: Salmon's municipal watershed.

The group has not made a determination on what level of involvement to have. We have options ranging from endorsement to full collaboration.

Jesse Ck is one of the first areas the LCFRG discussed but it has always has problems of access and feasibility. SCNF staff have something needs to be initiated. Project boundary is a .5 mile buffer around the HUC 6 and includes only the National Forest lands. Purpose: Mitigate stand replacement wildfire that threatens the watershed. Majority of project is in Roadless Backcountry Restoration. Project area is 17,470 acres with approx. 16,000 in Roadless. Entire project area is in the WUI. SCNF would like to work with the Collaborative to develop the proposed action.

Beth asked about the fire potential. Mike anticipates that this fire would burn similar to Saddle. John G. asked about stand condition and what Roadless would allow. Quite a bit of beetle damage. Commercial is a tool under Backcountry Restoration.

Russ said the SCNF doesn't have any proposal; they are asking for our assistance in developing a proposal. The SCNF has a historic agreement with the City of Salmon (attached) and getting City involvement will be very important.

No comprehensive analysis has been done for the watershed. SCNF wants to do this. Bob asked the status of the veg inventory work from the RAC that LCEDA was awarded. This is moving forward this summer we hope. Veg survey will include stand exams and Browns transect. Flexibility to make the assesment more intense as needed.

Gina asked the group what level of involvement the Collaborative wanted. Bob felt the social and economic issues are very important. John G., Beth, Jake, John R.all agreed.

Gina asked for a feel for the work load from the members and our ability to engage. Bob felt the up front project planning will be more intensive than post-EIS. Russ is concerned about agency capacity as well, but the SCNF wants to start making progress on the project.

Tammy asked about counting time spent on project as match from the onset of the program. Russ thinks we should be able to. Gina asked about the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration program (CFLRP). Russ reported on Integrated Restoration and Resource (IRR) funding and



current request for support. Region 4 is a pilot for this program and a proposal has been submitted for Upper North Fork requesting \$500k and 700k over the next two years. \$ are for implementation and maintenance. The CFLRP would be a mixed bag according to Russ but he is

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more willing to move forward now we are closer to a decision in Upper North Fork. Application is a team effort. Economic and scheduling are the hardest components of the application. Match requirement from inside the agency is big. This has created an unintended pull of resources from other forests in the region. We know what the application looks like, we can start anticipating an application process.

### **Summary**

Fire Learning – yes Jesse Creek

– yes CFLRP - yes

A scheduling poll will be sent to all members to find out availability for 1) Field trip in Hughes (wildlife) tentatively scheduled for June 14 or morning of 22<sup>nd</sup>) and 2) Jesse Ck field trip tentatively scheduled for June 21. Mike emphasized the importance of involving the City and looking at the water treatment plants.

The meeting adjourned at 11 a.m.

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## **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group (LCFRG) Meeting**

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### **Sacajawea Center**

**Monday, June 10, 2013**

#### **Participants:**

Alaina Pomeroy, Amy Taylor, Beth Waterbury, Bill Baer, Celeste Bingham, Chuck Kempner, Chuck Mark, Clifford Keene, Dan Garcia, Dave Melton, Dave Swanson, Fritz Cluff, Gary Power, Gina Knudson, Hadley B. Roberts, Jerry Hamilton, Jerry Myers, Jim Tucker, Jody Brostrom, John Goodman, Karin Drnjevic, Lynn Bennett, Maggie Milligan, Marcela Hendrix, Matt Hall, Melissa Sartor, Michelle Tucker, Mike Smith, Russ Bacon, Scott Feldhausen, Sharon Jones, Doug Leyve, Cindy Hagass, Jim Edgrin, Penny Morgan, Sherry Elrod

#### **Wildlife Workshop:**

April 4th Wildlife Workshop Linking the Landscape was well received and thank you to Beth and Michelle who worked hard to pull this together.

#### **Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) Update:**

Supervisor Chuck Mark updated the group on the status of RAC; 2012 awards have not been obligated to awardees. The Forest Service left it up to the Governors to choose where sequestration cuts for Secure Rural Schools programs should happen. Governor Otter asked the Forest Service Chief to utilize Title II funds – those affecting RAC – and leave Title I and III funds (county payments for roads and schools) intact. There is still uncertainty about whether any of the

2012 RAC projects will receive funding. \$151,000 carry-over/previously allocated that was not spent. The Forest may move continuing youth projects forward first with this carry-over. Projects on SCNF and Sawtooth NF for youth crews come to about \$110,000. RAC members in audience suggested the remaining funds (+/- \$40,000) could be used for some of the RAC's regular projects like the county's firewood program and river outhouses for steelhead fishermen.

The RAC is currently dissolved and the Forest is advertising for new prospective members. Don't know how much the RAC will have or amount they can spend. Most members had to re-apply for membership and haven't heard anything back. Hadley Roberts is retiring from the RAC.

An earlier RAC project – the Jesse Creek vegetation survey -- is underway. The contractor is Bob Lewis of Jackson, MT. Expected to be completed by September 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Rural Business Opportunity Grant:**

Salmon Valley Stewardship (SVS) received a grant for 3 science workshops, 3 entrepreneurial (contractor) workshops and a look at the economic benefits of restoration in the Upper Salmon River Basin. Need to decide on the topic for the third science workshop. Could be peers or experts, etc. to grow areas of understanding in the collaborative group.

The contractor workshops were well attended. Next one up is the hazardous fuels training workshop. This could be a 1-2 day workshop in September. Craig Glanzer of Idaho Dept of Lands/Forest Service expressed interest in helping. Fire season may limit availability and SVS will adjust accordingly.

## Hughes Creek:

West Salzer Timber Sale: 613 acres. This is a stewardship contract sale with a noncommercial component - Pre-bid meeting a week from today at 11am at the North Fork Ranger District. This sale was originally 1,000 acres and has been reduced to 613 because of the Mustang Fire. This work is being done outside of the agreement with LCEDA but is using the same best value criteria from the stewardship agreements used in Hughes Creek the past two years.

Ditch Creek Private Timber Removal: 650 acres. Private work and land owned by Lemhi Gold, previously Meridian Mining. John Goodman updated the group on the activities he is managing. They are not working with any grant programs but operation is still coming out ahead financially. John said the project is helping 5 families in Salmon, 4 families from Darby, 1 from Hamilton. Timber is going to Pyramid (Seeley Lake, MT) and will take 1.5 years. He reports that 75% of trees taken out are dead and they are removing some large ponderosa pine that were impacted by mountain pine beetle. Rich Quinn of state forestry is doing inspections for tonnage left and stream setbacks. FS said they would share a prescription with John that would complement other work being done in the project area.

John reports it is still difficult to find local people with skill to do work. Could use fallers and skidder operators. Couldn't find any trucks in Salmon to haul. Need to pull 4 loads out a day to haul to Seeley Lake. As West Salzer, moves forward John is hoping for some economies of scale.

## Mushroom Hunting in Mustang Fire Area:

Jim Tucker talked to law enforcement John Perry who said it is very quiet out there. May be an increase in commercial buyers with warmer weather.

## Stanley Fire Collaborative:

Gina was invited to attend this group's first meeting. FS starting a dialogue with local businesses, residents, and the mayor, many of whom are really still worried about the Halstead fire. Two other meetings since then. The Stanley mayor invited two people from Canada to talk about prescribed fire in lodgepole. The group's priority concern is wildfire. The consensus from our people who have attended meetings is that the group could benefit from an experienced facilitator, and a defined purpose and scope. SVS has invited the group to this spring's meetings and workshops but they have not attended. Lynn Bennett said Matt Jolly of the Fire Science Lab in Missoula published literature indicating red lodgepole pine will not burn. The Canadians have a much different experience and say it will burn.

## Upper North Fork:

Background: Gina provided a summary of our most recent activity: In April of 2012 the group decided to send a memo to the Forest Supervisor to ask for an update and why the project had not met anticipated timelines. With the large fire season and staff transition we did not pursue this.

Status: Russ provided an update of the project: On track with a Draft EIS this summer and a Decision this fall. Turnover in key specialists and team leaders as well as forest priorities have delayed project. Have been using an Enterprise Team to augment /help the specialists. They are expensive but they are getting it done. Comment period in the middle of summer is admittedly not ideal, but provides a great opportunity for the collaborative to assist with public involvement by holding an open house, etc. Looking for advice from the regional office on NEPA elements. Russ

emphasized that the SCNF does not want to alter the proposed project that was designed by collaboration and agreements with our group. They are just making certain they are using the right decision tools to complete the project. The SCNF received implementation dollars from the region for the next two years.

Gina asked if LCFRG can do anything to move the project forward.

Russ feels this is a risk management conversation with the regional office not a policy questions. Chuck responded that the forest will be more prepared this fire season and not let a busy fire season interrupt the work commitments as it has in the past.

Gary Power reminded the group that Hughes Creek was the first without litigation in a long time. The trust and agreements made with the LCFRG are important to maintain to keep projects moving forward in light of the amount of time people are volunteers and committing.

Gina asked about LCFRG engagement in comment period. Is it better to hear from individuals or the group as a whole? If it is a group endorsement it needs to clarify fully where the group is in agreement. If individual groups want to comment additionally on aspects that are important to them they should be certain to maintain their agreements to the LCFRG.

#### Senator Risch's Office Update:

Amy Taylor, Regional director for Sen. Risch's Idaho Falls office, said the senator supports Stewardship Contracting reauthorization. The Senator has a forestry degree from U of I and is very supportive of collaboration. He would like to see less spent on fire suppression and more on treatments and projects. He agrees with Rep. Simpson in his disappointment at seeing hazardous fuels budgets reduced.

#### Stewardship Contract:

The SCNF has signed master stewardship agreement with Lemhi County Economic Development Association (LCEDA) for all of Lemhi County for 10 years. Fire liability clause included.

Williams Restoration Project: 72 acres. Mike reported that this project will be under the stewardship agreement and the Supplemental Project Agreement (SPA) is nearly complete with LCEDA.

#### Lemhi County:

Karin is working on getting youth involved in FireWise, limbing up trees near Elk Bend. She reported that the fire teams on the Mustang were happy with the work completed on private property in Hughes Creek.

#### Multiparty Monitoring Subcommittee:

There will not be a big workload in the field this year for multiparty monitoring as most of the work in Hughes Creek is accounted for and the Upper North Fork proposal is not complete. Michelle and Jake discussed the Monitoring Subcommittee needs and solicited input from the SCNF specialists on pending projects. The Subcommittee also asked the FS if there are any areas that they may need help with monitoring. West Salzer and aspen stands in Mustang Fire will be looked at this year.

Michelle is not inspecting contracts for LCEDA this year and asked that the group help SVS continue to track the socioeconomic reporting needs. This includes how many companies bid and

work on projects as well as the makeup of their workforce by zip code and earnings. Michelle would like to see the contracts with LCEDA include this required reporting since it is considered a factor in the evaluation criteria.

#### **Donnelly Gulch Sagebrush Planting:**

SCNF and Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) did a joint aerial seeding of sagebrush and identified areas for hand planting. 40 volunteers including SVS volunteers, collaborative members, and youth involved. Planted 1,500 starts. This was a great way to step out of the box to think about garnering greater community support. IDFG secured funds from Mule Deer initiative program. Greg Painter, IDFG, will monitor.

## Field Trip of Mustang Fire Area:

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### Stop 1: Indian Peak - Lunch and Discussion



From the vantage point of Indian Peak the group looked at the size and scope of the fire area including the large fire runs that occurred and are commonly occur on the forest in recent history. One burning period on the Mustang Fire included an 8 mile, 23,000 acre run.



## Stop 2: Salzar Bar Overlook on West Fork Road



At the Salzar Bar overlook the group saw the effects slope and adjacent fuels have on fire activity. This area was part of the West Salzar Timber Sale. The question was posed that if the downslope area had been treated, would the severity have been as great?



### Stop 3: Junction of Upper Ransack Loop/Ditch Creek Road



At the intersection of the Ditch Creek Road and the Upper Ransack Loop (unofficially known as the loggers camp) John Goodman explained the private timber operation that is occurring and some of the challenges he faces in accomplishing the project.

### Stop 4: Granite Mountain Lookout





The Field trip concluded with a look at the mixed conifer forests above the dry timber sites and how they may be impacted by a large moving fire such as the Mustang. The group discussed the need to address patch size and treatments in lodgepole stands that would be effective in protecting areas such as Gibbonsville and Lost Trail Ski Hill in a fast moving fire typical of the North Fork District.

## Change is the New Constant Workshop

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Tuesday, June 11, 2013

Participants: Alaina Pomeroy, Beth Waterbury, Bill Baer, Bill Gaines, Christine Droske, Chuck Kempner, Chuck Mark, Clifford Keene, Dan Garcia, Dave Swanson, Doug Leyva, Gary Power, Gina Knudson, Hadley B. Roberts, Jerry Hamilton, Jim Edgrin, Jim Tucker, Jody Brostrom, John Goodman, Karin Drnjevic, Leslie Mayo, Lynn Bennett, Maggie Milligan, Melissa Sartor, Michelle Tucker, Mike Smith, Penny Morgan, Rachel Layman, Richi Harrod, Ron Troy, Russ Bacon, Scott Feldhausen

### Workshop Goals

1. To provide a shared learning experience regarding forest restoration principles for members of the Collaborative and federal partners from the SCNF and BLM.
2. To learn from current research on mixed conifer restoration and management with a focus on disturbances, wildlife and strategies to proceed in the face of a changing climate.
3. To provide a venue for dialogue between scientists and practitioners, relating the research back to core questions expressed by the Collaborative, and developing a plan to move forward.

### Background

The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group (LCRFG) and partners have successfully collaborated on a dry forest project in Hughes Creek on the North Fork District of the Salmon Challis National Forest. This project is in its fourth year of implementation and was part of the Mustang Fire last year. The Collaborative has invested a great deal of time in this project during planning and in multi-party monitoring both pre and post treatment. Most recently, they have expressed interest in post fire effectiveness assessments in treatment areas; fire severity impacts on the ground; and what to expect in the upcoming fire seasons in light of changing forest conditions.

Members of the Collaborative have requested opportunities to learn more about forest restoration strategies in mixed conifer forests such as the stands that exist in the Upper North Fork and Jesse Creek project areas. These are primarily lodgepole, subalpine forests with Douglas fir and ponderosa pine at lower elevations. Whitebark pine exists at the higher elevations and is especially prevalent near the Lost Trail Ski Resort and Continental Divide that borders the Upper North Fork project to the north. Patch size, landscape scale restoration strategies and wildlife connectivity have been areas of concern.

The Upper North Fork and Jesse Creek projects are both still in the planning stage. The Collaborative issued a Recommendation Memo to the SCNF for the Upper North Fork project in 2010 with an update in 2012. The Draft EIS, originally slated for release in spring 2011, is still pending. The Jesse Creek project is in the first stages of collaboration with one field trip in the fall of 2012. The delay in NEPA on the Upper North Fork project has proven to be troublesome for members of the Collaborative. The extended planning time is starting to impact the momentum of

other collaborative activities. Expediting NEPA and supporting a more effective approach to resource analysis are priority concerns for collaborative members.

## Presenters

**Penny Morgan Ph.D.** is a professor in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Idaho. She directs the University's Wildland Fire Program. She earned her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees from Utah State University and holds a doctorate from the University of Idaho. Her current research focuses on some of the broad challenges facing people in the West including: changing climate influence on fire occurrence and severity; bark beetles' effect on crown fire and burn severity; vegetation recovery following large fires, and post-fire management effect on weeds and other vegetation. Penny is committed to helping people understand and use science in natural resources management in Idaho and the western U.S.

**Bill Gaines, Ph.D.** is a Wildlife Ecologist and Director of the Washington Conservation Science Institute. He recently retired after 27-years with the US Forest Service. Bill is currently an adjunct faculty member in the Biology Department at Central Washington University, and sits on the Graduate Faculty in the Geography Department at Central Washington University. He has conducted a number of research projects on the effects of forest restoration treatments on wildlife and was a team leader for the development of the Forest Restoration Strategy being implemented in the eastern Cascades.

**Richy Harrod, Ph.D.** is currently the Deputy Fire Staff Officer for the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. He earned his doctorate in Ecosystem Science at the University Of Washington, College Of Forest Resources. Richy has conducted extensive research on the effects of restoration treatments on plants and forests and was a team leader for the development of the Forest Restoration Strategy being implemented in the eastern Cascades.

Copies of the presentations may be requested from SVS.

## LCFRG Follow Up to Field Trip and Workshop

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The group had mixed reactions to the Okanogan-Wenatchee Forest Restoration Strategy. Concerns included lack of skills, involved scientists, assessment and reference data, and capacity to implement the same type of process on the SCNF. Some participants were also concerned about the ability to model landscape scale processes and whether this would open the group up to litigation. Most participants liked the process to the degree that it could: increase transparency, mediate internal and external disputes over different resource values, and help move past single-species management, help increase planning times and improve NEPA efficiencies. The Forest Service probably doesn't have the capacity to undertake planning and assessment at scale but they tentatively could partner with LCFRG to try to recruit and secure additional capacity for a landscape scale assessment. They would do this in parallel to continuing to work on the projects that are already underway. The Fire Modeling Institute (Greg Dillon) out of Missoula could be a good potential partner.

The group had a lengthy discussion about NEPA challenges. Gina is going to share a report that the Blue Mountains Forest Partners completed to assess NEPA barriers and identify recommendations. The group is interested in convening to review this report and talk about local barriers and potential solutions (growing local skills to help complete portions of the NEPA data collection, etc.).

Many ideas, questions and opinions were shared by members of LCFRG and FS staff in this open discussion. Items considered are summarized here:

- Examples of fuels reductions projects in a municipal watershed? -Ashland, OR, Bozeman, MT, Sandpoint, ID (Penny Morgan suggested contacting, Peter Robichaud of RMRS).
- If you remove a lot of trees with the snow melt faster? Penny: No. With a dense forest a lot of the snow is captured in the crowns so it melts faster, thus there is increased snow retention in clear cuts. Kelly Elder (Rocky Mtn. Research Station who runs the Frazier Experimental Forest, based in Ft. Collins).
- Jesse Creek is a 17,000 acre watershed - Landscape modeling important because what happens on the other side of the ridge influences Jesse Creek itself. What authority do you treat it under? Boundaries for HFRA = 1.5 miles from a community at risk. If you can only treat 1.5 miles outside the city how do you get to the scale needed to address the municipal watershed? Mark Finney of Rocky Mtn. Research Station has done work about the location of fuel treatments.
- Moving to landscape scale is challenging. The amount of complexity in a document is hard. Resistance from the public? Are smaller projects less likely to be challenged? How do you address cumulative effects in a small project?
- Single-species management is a challenge, these efforts have a lot of force behind them.
- Collaborative started in 2006, 10 years under their belt but only one project. One project doesn't get rid of 30 years of mistrust.
- Entire group missed the Idaho Conservation League, WildWest Institute and the County Commissioners. SVS works hard to keep partners engaged but resources are getting smaller and we are very remote.
- One approach to consider for Jesse Creek using Okanogan Model: "West of the ridge or municipal watershed". Let's work on them both at once. Use a tool or a landscape level analysis to think about where to go to reduce the risk to the municipal watershed while also whittling away at Jesse Creek. Maybe we prioritize watersheds 15,000 acres at a time. Fire Modeling Institute – branch of the fire sciences lab out of Missoula. Costs money but they start analyzing it. Have been working in the Blue Mountains. Greg Dillon who is at the Fire Lab and is interested in mixed conifer and landscape scale dynamics. Might have resources to bring to the table.
- Does the SCNF really have the capacity to do all of these different projects at once: Jesse Creek, Upper N. Fork, etc? Increase available trained work force and fire qualifications by working with partners like the Nature Conservancy. Usually more implementation means more \$. Trigger for more resources is getting more shelf-ready NEPA done.
- NEPA efficiencies: Enterprise teams and contracts might free up some specialists' time to work on priorities (speaks to the volume of work). A NEPA document in 12 months is really moving fast. Difficult because the agency is so reactive, scales up to meet a need and then there is another problem. Getting specialists involved in the collaborative process up front. Challenge in Upper N. Fork is competing priorities on the forest. The longer a project sits mean that new issues might come up. FS is resistant to contracting NEPA. How does Upper N. Fork become a priority without becoming a problem? NEXT STEP: distribute the BMFP paper and then have a NEPA discussion.

- Benefits of the landscape perspective and in the large footprint model. Seems like a great approach for wildlife because is not a proponent of single-species management. Going big is a good thing, however, there are limitations to that approach. You could identify wildlife connectivity, etc. That is only one piece of the pie. You can't model the natural world.
- Fires continuing to be large, getting warmer, species like aspen, whitebark, etc. will need some extra attention.
- There is growing agreement on mixed-severity forest, whether it's patchy-gappy, heterogeneity, landscape-scale etc. "You've got to start somewhere". What are our "Big Stickies"?
- Collaborative formed based on three main premises: community wildfire protection, economic benefit to the local community and improving ecological conditions.
- Training in communications, etc. around Jesse Creek. Huge part of what this is about. What happens if it burns – No Action Alternative. PR for Jesse Creek is going to be critical from a social standpoint. Lack of communication between disciplines.
- Current landscape is HOMOGENOUS, historic landscape was HETEROGENOUS, need to increase VARIABILITY for greater RESILIENCE.
- How big is patch size? What scale are we comfortable with?
- Build relationship with Rocky Mountain Research Station. Next meeting? Group agreed that they would meet when next workshop is scheduled.

## **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group (LCFRG)**

### **Hughes Creek West Salzer Stewardship Contract Update**

### **Conference Call**

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

LCFRG Participants: Dani Mazzotta, John Robison, Jake Kreilick, Gary Powers, Beth Waterbury, Tammy Stringham, Jerry Hamilton, Karin Drnjevic, Doug Wasilenski, Michelle Tucker

Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF) Participants: Russ Bacon, Maggie Seaburg, Lynn Bennett

#### **SCNF BACKGROUND AND UPDATE:**

Russ briefly reviewed documentation provided to the group prior to the conference call (attached) regarding the West Salzer Stewardship Contract in Hughes Creek. The project was slated for treatment in fall 2012 but was delayed by the Mustang Fire in 2012. Approximately 350 acres of the original 1000 acres slated for treatment were impacted by the fire to varying degree. These areas also have beetle kill. The SCNF dropped these burned units (13, 45-50) under the assumption that they would not be desirable to potential bidders for the commercial harvest. Two companies attended the pre bid meeting, however by the end of the solicitation period no bids had been received. The SCNF made the decision to extend the bid period and solicited input from potential bidders.

In conclusion, the SCNF decided to add the dropped 350 acres back into the solicitation as they were informed that this was the only way to make the sale viable to potential bidders. Adding the 350 acres back into the project would result in a changed condition relative to the original NEPA. The SCNF intends to document that these changes would not alter the desired end results or change the effects of the overall prescription for the Hughes Creek project. However, they felt it was important to solicit the Collaborative's input and keep the group apprised of these changes and decisions.

Maggie relayed that the SCNF had re-marked the 350 acres and developed a new prescription to address the changes to the stand post fire. Of the 350 acres impacted by the Mustang Fire, approximately 20% remained unburned, the SCNF will utilize the old prescription originally designated in the Hughes Creek EA in these areas. 45% of the 350 acres experienced mod-high severity "crispy black"; the treatment in these areas will be based on diameter and leave tree specifications. In these areas, the lower DBH range has been increased as most of the smaller diameter trees are too damaged. This will result in a general increase in the average diameter harvested due to the loss of the smaller trees, but does not allow for an increase in the upper limit for DBH harvested. 35% of the 350 acres is considered transitional between "crispy black" and unburned. Here crown and bowl scorch will be considered in prescription specifications. Russ stated that the new prescription would not result in a marked increase in volume removed. Maggie equated the changes to the treatments in Ditch Creek – in the 350 changed acres, approximately 4 ccs/per acre; Ditch Creek prescription was 6-7 ccs/acre. Post-harvest service work would not be included in the 350 acres.

John R. stated he was concerned about the overall perspective of large legacy trees being removed. He wants to be certain the outcome is consistent with the overall project goals for Hughes Creek as old growth retention was an important driver for the original project. John also asked about design features to protect soils and any

remediation that was recommended under BAER. He asked that vegetative screens be left wherever possible to preserve wildlife security standards.

The SCNF responded that the prescription will leave 2-3 large trees per acre of the largest trees present. The average diameter in these units is closer 14 DBH, with trees over 25 DBH being uncommon, if nonexistent. Russ reminded the group that the crispy black area was approximately a total of 150-175 acres within the larger 330,000 acres Mustang Fire which burned mosaic in this area. The project area is not considered at risk for hydrophobic soils and is considered to be in a more stable soil regime per the original NEPA assessment. Skyline harvest of whole trees with processing at landings should mitigate for soil disturbance on steeper slopes.

Jake reminded the group that the 25-30 DBH trees are the future OG for the project area. He inquired about the downed woody standard and reiterated John R's concerns. He also expressed concerns about the private logging that occurred north of unit 45 and the standards applied there. He felt the private activities did not adequately address forestry standards particularly for riparian, and may increase the negative impacts to the overall project area. He asked if anyone from the Collaborative had seen the project area and if any monitoring data had been completed.

Russ reported that the smaller diameter that had been dropped from the prescription, as well as the hand thinning that would not be conducted on the 350 acres would result in more material available for cover and downed material recruitment.

Michelle reported that SVS and the multiparty monitoring crew have pre fire photos for all of the units in West Salzer. The SVS crew is slated to conduct post fire (potentially post fire-pre treatment) of these units on July 22.

Beth expressed concern that the proposed activity would reduce cover as this is a designated elk security area as well as identified fisher habitat with recent recordings of occupation in unit 45. Impacts from the private logging that was conducted last year adjacent to unit 45 may mean that vulnerability to wildlife would be increased. Beth stated that she understood the scale of this proposal at 350 acres was small, but asked that mitigation for wildlife and forest health concerns be applied wherever possible.

Gary conveyed that timber harvest has become microscopic and that it is important to maintain a big picture, landscape perspective as well. He emphasized that this proposal was a chance to learn and use adaptive management without falling behind on project goals. He felt it is very important to maintain economic incentive or no work will be done at all. He thanked the SCNF for soliciting the Collaborative's input.

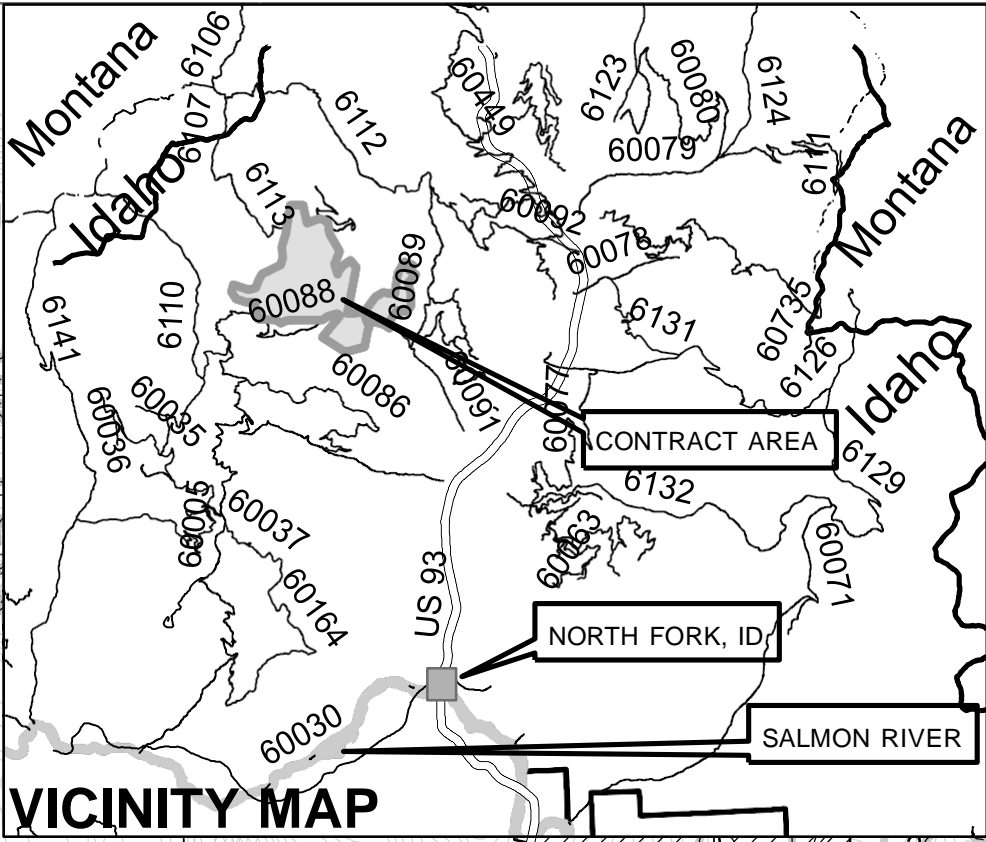
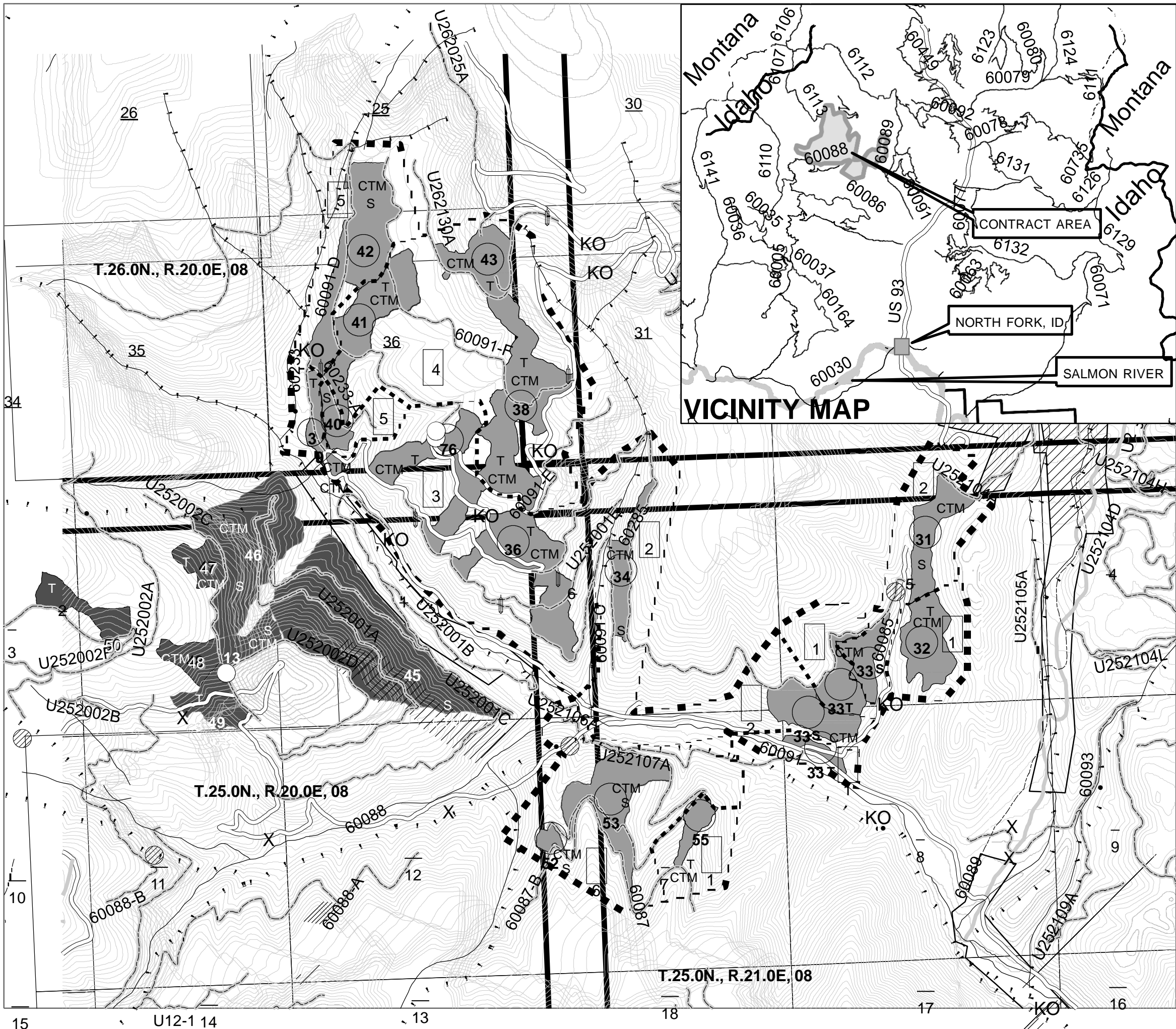
Tammy expressed the need to keep work moving on the ground and continuing to build local capacity as well as support the small infrastructure we have available.

Russ relayed that if this project is not completed under this contract, the opportunity will be lost to implement.

Michelle asked Russ if he needed anything formal from the group to move forward. He does not and just wants to keep everyone informed. Michelle asked Russ to relay any changes or progress that she may convey to the Collaborative as the SCNF moves forward. SVS will make certain that monitoring will be completed.

<Attachments>





West Salzer Stewardship Contract Area Map  
Timber Removal, Page 1 of 1

Stewardship Name: West Salzer  
National Forest: Salmon-Challis  
Ranger District: North Fork

Sale Area Boundary, BT.1

Payment Unit Boundary, BT.1

Unit Boundary, CT.3, KT-CT.3.0.1#

Primary Haul Route, KT-FT.1.2#

Existing Transportation System Road, KT-FT.1.2#

60128-A Road Number, KT-FT.3.1#

T.25.0N. Township/Range Description, BT.1, AT

36 Section Number, BT.1, AT

Streamcourse Protection, III.44 Stream Coarse Protection

Remove/Install Earthen Barriers, KT-FT.3.1#

CTM Cut Tree Mark, K-CT.3.5.7#

T / S Tractor OR Skyline Specified, BT.1 and GT.4.2

① Cutting Unit Number, BT.1, K-CT.3.5.7#, KT-CT.3.0.1#

1 Payment Unit Number, BT.1

X Prohibited, KT-FT.1.2#

KO Keep Road Open, BT.1

Gate, BT.1, KT-FT.3.1#

Contour (40')

Private Land

ADD-IN ACRES; Unit Boundary, CT.3, KT-CT.3.0.1#

Unit Number	Harvest Method	ACRES	Type of Slash Disposal (KT-GT.7#)
31	Skyline	29	1) {Clean System Roads}
32	Tractor	35	3) {Yard Limbs and Tops}
33S	Skyline	40	4) {Lopping Damaged Residual and Tops and Limbs}
33T	Tractor	28	5) {Fell Damaged Residual}
34	Skyline	21	6) {Scatter Logging Slash allowed to stay in units}
36	Tractor	69	7) {Landing Cleanup}
38	Tractor	83	
39	Tractor	16	
40	Skyline	11	
41		2	
	Tractor	5	
42	Skyline	69	
43	Tractor	31	
52	Skyline	5	
53	Skyline	52	
55	Tractor	12	
76	Tractor	51	
13	Skyline	17	
45	Skyline	166	
46	Skyline	89	
47	Tractor	16	
48	Tractor	17	
49	Skyline	24	
50	Tractor	23	

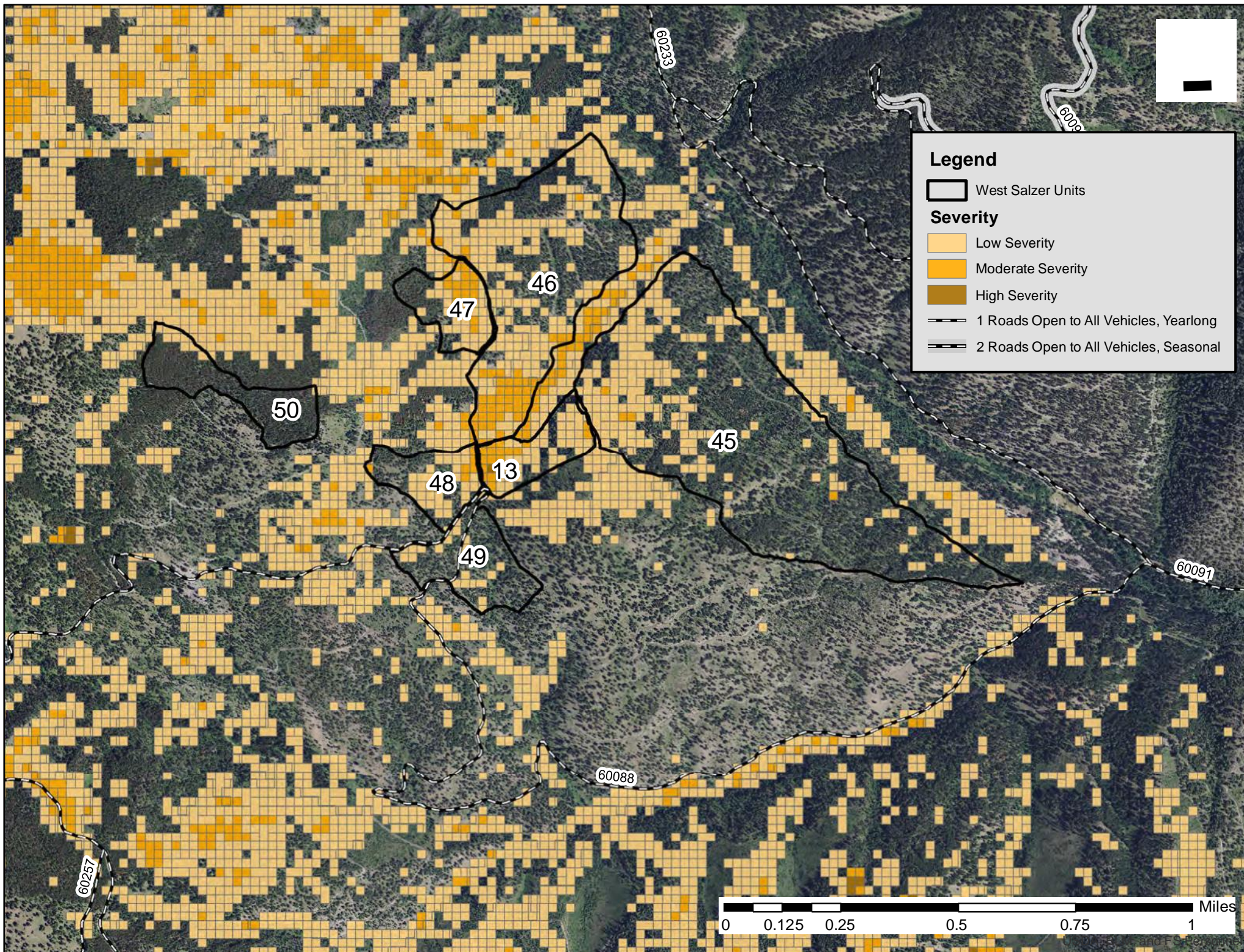
Notes:

- 1) Cutting Unit Boundaries are Marked with two Horizontal Orange Paint Bands.
- 2) Cut trees are marked with Blue Paint.
- 3) Map Contour interval is 40 feet.
- 4) Contract Area Boundary for Timber Removal covers approximately 1,942 acres.
- 5) Roads 60085, 60088 & 60091 shall be kept open, BT.1.

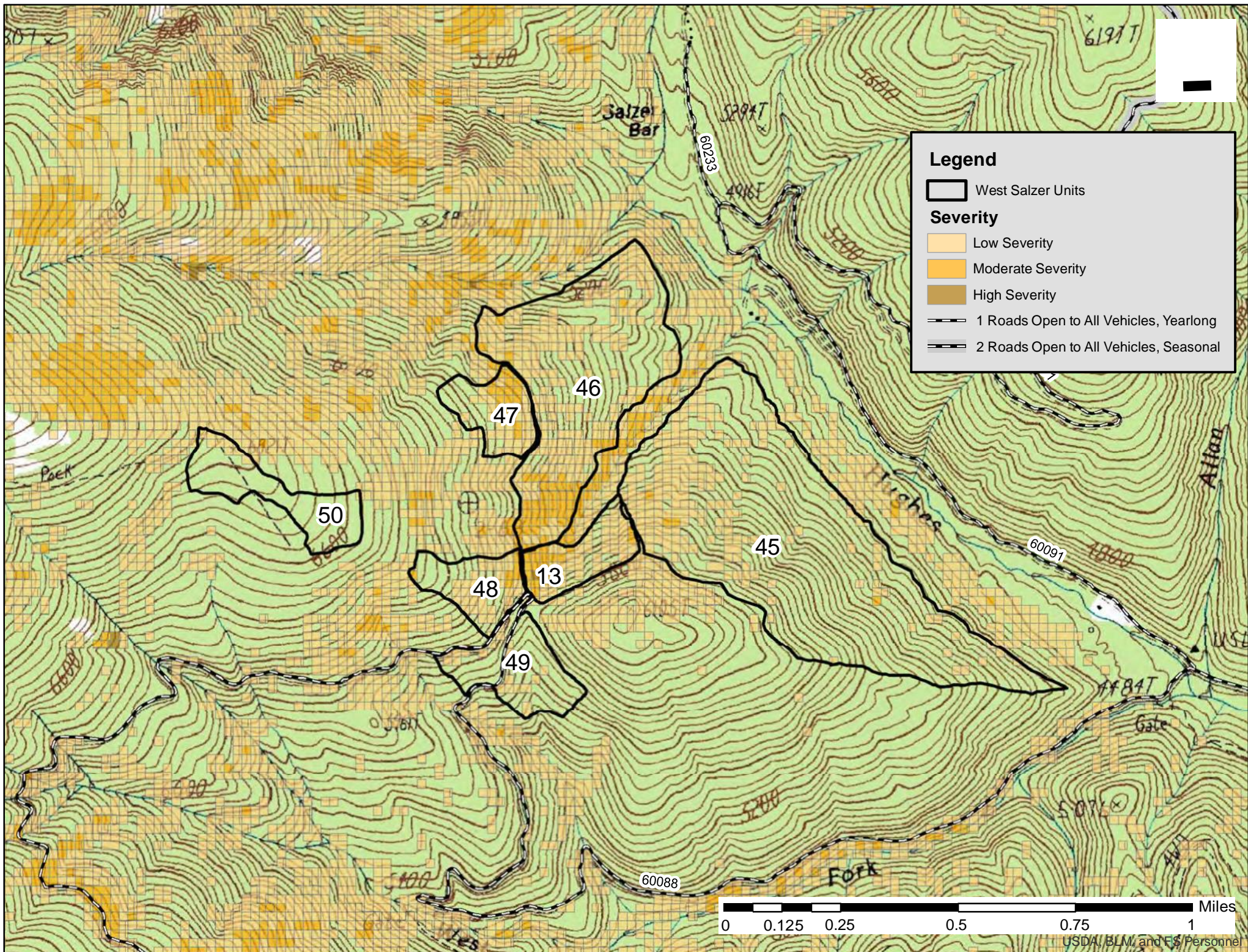
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Map Prepared By: Glenwood A Brittain Date: July 17th 2013











July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013

West Salzer Stewardship Contract – Hughes Creek EA  
Change Summary provided by the Salmon Challis NF

The following is background information on the changes to the West Salzer project over the last year as well as the justification for the amendments to the Silvicultural Prescription in portions of West Salzer Commercial Timber Sale Units which were burnt during the Mustang Fire.

In the late fall of 2012 after the Mustang Fire burned through approximately 350 acres of the already prepped West Salzer Stewardship project we made a decision to drop those units, assuming that not only would they require a lot of re-work but that no purchaser would be interested in them. We re-packaged the stewardship project with the remaining 650 acres and advertised it in the spring of 2013. Towards the end of the bid period the only interested purchasers indicated to us that they would only be interested in bidding on the stewardship project if we were to add back in those 350 acres that we dropped. We extended the bid period and decided to add back in the 350 acres.

In order to treat the acres which are largely burnt with patches of green and some “transitional patches” where there are a mix of burnt and un-burnt trees with the over-arching presence of both Mountain Pine Beetle, Western Pine Beetle and Douglas Fir Beetle we will be adapting the prescriptions in these units in order to have the healthiest residual stand possible.

The new prescription will be used to mark and cruise the portion of the West Salzer Stewardship project that was affected by the mustang fire. Because of burn mosaic an adaptive marking guide will need to be implemented to account for varying levels of mortality, bole scorch, and crown scorch.

The marking guidelines for ponderosa pine will be based on bole scorch and crown scorch. Thresholds for each of the fire damages to trees will be set and any tree that exceeds those thresholds will be marked for cutting. If the trees are unburned then the original prescription to thin from below to 80 SDI will be applied.

The marking guidelines for Douglas-fir will be based on bole scorch, crown scorch, DBH, and whether or not the tree has been attacked by Douglas-fir beetle. Thresholds for bole scorch and crown scorch will be on a sliding scale based on DBH because there is a documented correlation between diameter and bark thickness. If there are signs of Douglas-fir beetle activity the scorch thresholds will be lower. If the trees are unburned then the original prescription to thin from below to 80 SDI will be applied. Large Douglas-fir trees are very susceptible to Douglas-fir beetle after fire. Because of this susceptibility some large trees will need to be cut. However, more trees in the medium size classes will be left.

Snag guidelines from the Hughes Creek decision will be maintained. This will result in 2-3 of the larger snags per acre being retained.

## Marking guidelines for West Salzer

These marking guidelines are based on Crown Scorch, Bole Scorch, and Douglas-fir beetle activity (DFB) in combination with DBH. All of the following criteria should be considered when determining cut/leave designation. Each tree should be evaluated for % **crown scorch**, **Cambium Kill Rating CKR**, and presence or absence of DFB to make cut or leave decision.

Cambium Kill Rating CKR

CKR -Bark char codes and description of bark appearance (adapted from Ryan 1982a)		
Code	Bark Char	Bark Appearance
1	Unburned	Not burned
2	Light	Evidence of light scorching; can still identify species based on bark characteristics; bark is not completely blackened; edges of bark plates charred
3	Moderate	Bark is uniformly black except possibly some inner fissures; bark characteristics still discernible
4	Deep	Bark has been burned into, but not necessarily to the wood; outer characteristics are lost

### Mark to cut if:

Douglas-Fir					
Unattacked by DFB			Attacked DFB		
DBH	CKR/% Crown scorch		DBH	CKR/% Crown scorch	
≤12	≥2/≥30% or <2/≥60%		≤12	≥2/≥30% or <2/≥60%	
12 - 15	≥2/≥40% or <2/≥65%		12 - 15	≥2/≥5% or <2/≥3%	
15 - 20	≥2/≥50% or <2/≥75%		15 - 20	≥0/≥10%	
20 - 25	≥2/≥60% or <2/≥85%		20 - 25	any signs of attack	
25 - 30	≥2/≥70% or <2/≥100%		25 - 30	any signs of attack	

Ponderosa Pine	
Crown Scorch is over 60% and CKR is ≥3	

**Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group Meeting Salmon  
Valley Business and Innovation Center Board Room  
Wednesday, October 23, 2013  
1:00 – 2:00 pm**

**Draft Meeting Summary**

***Participants:***

Gina Knudson, Jerry Hamilton, Hadley Roberts, John Jakovac, Gary Power, Bob Russell, Lynn Bennett [Alaina Pomeroy via conference call]

***Regional Forester Visit***

Background: Regional Forester Nora Rasure had intended to come to the Salmon-Challis on October 23 and a meeting with the LCFRG had been on her agenda. Although the visit was cancelled, LCFRG members wanted to take the opportunity to discuss what information should be conveyed to Nora when she does re-schedule.

**Discussion:**

- How do economic factors/community well-being issues factor into Forest Service decisions?
- Seems to be a lack of understanding among FS staff regarding stewardship contracts/agreements.
- What is Nora's vision of using stewardship contracting in this area?
- LCFRG needs to know who can make what decisions. Not understanding this upfront has caused confusion and frustration. What are the lines of authority, especially but not exclusively when contracting is involved?
- Having a designated partnership coordinator on the SCNF might be helpful to the LCFRG and our various partners, including the County.
- Hughes Ck is an excellent example of what LCFRG is trying to do and would give Nora a visual on what we have accomplished to date.
- We also need to tell her about our interest and involvement in Upper North Fork and Salmon Municipal Watershed projects.
- Observation that the cost of doing nothing will outweigh costs of implementing projects.
- Idea of developing a LCFRG strategic plan was introduced. We have not had a planning session since March 2008. Identifying boundaries and agreeing upon priorities would give LCFRG a unified message for Regional Forester. Or in the words of one member, "To eat an elephant, you have to take one bite at a time – let's make sure we get the prime cuts first!"
- Make sure Supervisor Chuck Mark remains in the loop on LCFRG planning/discussions.

**Action item: Gina will check in with rest of LCFRG to make sure they are on board with working on a strategic plan. If yes, set date.**

### *Next workshop topic*

Background: Salmon Valley Stewardship and Sustainable Northwest have funds remaining in their USDA Rural Development Rural Business Opportunity Grant to put on one more workshop designed to increase shared agreement among LCFRG members. At our June meeting/workshop, members said they would like to hear from the “environmentalist” perspective regarding why some forest projects are bullseyes for litigation and appeals versus those that garner a broad base of support.

Discussion: Gina, Alaina, and Michelle Tucker have been drafting a possible workshop agenda that includes guest speaker Susan Jane Brown of the Western Environmental Law Center. Brown is an environmental attorney who has successfully appealed many Forest Service projects, but currently is a member of the Blue Mountain Forest Partners collaborative in Eastern Oregon. Last year, Brown gave a workshop about the National Environmental Policy Act to Central Idaho Rangeland Network ranchers and local agency staff. She was also one of the author’s of the Blue Mtn. Forest Partners memo outlining barriers to NEPA efficiencies in eastern Oregon.

If the LCFRG agrees that Brown would be a suitable guest speaker, Alaina will try to get her scheduled.

- Members thought a NEPA workshop could be beneficial to LCFRG.
- Important to note that a different judge reviews cases in this area, so understanding red flags in the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit court would be important.
- The better we understand perspective from potential naysayers, the better we’ll be at responding to concerns upfront.
- Workshop should be scheduled in conjunction with a field trip so members and attendees have “windshield time,” – time to socialize, accomplish something together, get to know one another better.
- Possibly invite the Region 4 appeals coordinator?
- Panel members or participants from Idaho Conservation League, Wild West Institute, other conservation groups will be very important.

Action item: Alaina will contact Susan Jane Brown about availability/willingness to come to workshop and get back with the group.



PINCHOT  
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# Programmatic Monitoring of Stewardship Contracts

2013 National Virtual Meeting

Brian Kittler

202-797-6585

[bkittler@pinchot.org](mailto:bkittler@pinchot.org)

# Introduction

# Agenda

## **Session 1 - National Level Update - 12:30 – 1:20 PM EST**

- Perspectives from the BLM and Forest Service on Stewardship Contracting authority
- Stewardship Contracting in the context of broader agency management and restoration strategies
- 2013 Programmatic Monitoring Survey Results
- Facilitated discussion: question & answer

## **Session 2 - Regional Perspectives - 1:20 – 2:45 PM EST**

- Regional distinctions and trends, obstacles, opportunities, and innovations
- Case studies of stewardship contracts and agreements
- Facilitated discussion: identifying strategies for implementing recommendations, replicating successes, and overcoming barriers



# National Meeting Participants

Federal agency personnel	Non-agency personnel (conservation, forestry, local government, academia, and economic development interests)
BLM National Stewardship Coordinator	Representative from the Nature Conservancy
USFS National Stewardship Coordinator	Consultant for Sierra Nevada Conservancy
USFS Timber Contracting Officer, USFS R5	Flathead Economic Policy Center
USFS Region 6 Stewardship Contracting Coordinator	Watershed Research and Training Center
USFS District Ranger, Region 6	Lemhi County, Idaho - Forest Restoration Working Group
USFS Region 3 Stewardship Contracting Coordinator	Pinchot Institute for Conservation (3)
USFS Region 5 Stewardship Contracting Coordinator	Michigan State University researcher
USFS Grants and Agreements Specialist	Cascade Pacific RC&D
Several USFS staff from the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas (3)	Sustainable Northwest (2)
USDA State Energy Coordinator, California	Clackamas Stewardship Partners
USFS Timber Contracting Officer, USFS R3	West 65 inc.
USFS Timber program manager, R5	Stewardship Works-Consultant
USFS Washington Office, Forest Management Staff (3)	SNF Stewardship Groups (facilitator of collaborative groups)
	Colorado State University researcher
	Consultant working with a CFLR project
	National Forest Foundation
	Idaho Department of Lands
	Placer County California

# Overview of the Monitoring Program

- The 10 year authorization required the USFS and BLM to report annually on the role of communities. And specifically ID:
  - (1) the predominant problems in engaging communities in stewardship contracts and suggestions for improvement
  - (2) Successes for engaging communities in stewardship contracting
  - (3) Major perceived benefits of stewardship contracts to communities
- We've held 35 regional meetings since 2006. Ground truth survey data collected, exploring projects in depth, learning about how stewardship contracting works.
- Monitoring team
  - Brian Kittler, Pinchot Institute for Conservation
  - Maureen McDonough, Michigan State University
  - Carol Daly, Flathead Economic Policy Center
  - Carla Harper, West 65 inc.
  - Michelle Medley-Daniel, Watershed Research and Training Center

# Session 1 - National Level Update

# Context for Stewardship Contracting

- USFS lists it as a main way to *“increase the pace and scale of restoration and improve both the ecological health of our forests and the economic health of forest-dependent communities.”*  
Implementing 215 projects per year on average in last three years.
- BLM forestry budget decreasing dealing with very low value material (P/J woodlands) for the most part.
- Stewardship Contracting viewed as integral to CFLRP.
- Steady increase in the number of projects and their scope (at least in terms of acres).
- Challenges and opportunities for this tool—a bundle of authorities—and the stewardship philosophy.



# National Perspectives on Stewardship Contracting

Megan Roessing  
National Stewardship  
Contracting Coordinator,  
National Forest System-Forest  
Management, Washington  
Office.

[mroessing@fs.fed.us](mailto:mroessing@fs.fed.us)

202-205-0847

Wade Salverson (BLM)  
Washington Office,  
Division of Forest, Range,  
Riparian, and Plant  
Conservation

[wsalvers@blm.gov](mailto:wsalvers@blm.gov)

202-912-7247

# Forest Service Perspective



- Status update on the stewardship contracting authority
- Recent developments in Stewardship Contracting
- Vision for future use of Stewardship Contracting





# Forest Service Perspective



- FY 13 Stewardship Contracting Accomplishments
  - 195 stewardship contracts and agreements awarded, treating over 171,000 acres
  - Over 36,000 acres of forest vegetation improved, 865,000 tons of biomass made available for energy production, 69,000 acres of WUI hazardous fuels treated, and 72,000 acres of terrestrial wildlife habitat enhanced through stewardship contracts and agreements.
  - 27% of the timber volume sold from the national forests was sold through stewardship contracting.



# BLM Perspective







# BLM Stewardship

- FY 2013
  - 17 new contracts
  - 7.5 MMBF sawtimber
  - 9,190 tons of biomass including fuelwood
  - \$2 million paid for completed services
  - Additional \$1.1 million offset by products
  - Trends



# BLM Stewardship

- Continuing existing contracts and agreements
- Strategy for future
  - The power of the Stewardship Contracting Tool
  - Contract planning should integrate markets and contractor capacity into very first step
  - Importance of forest product markets



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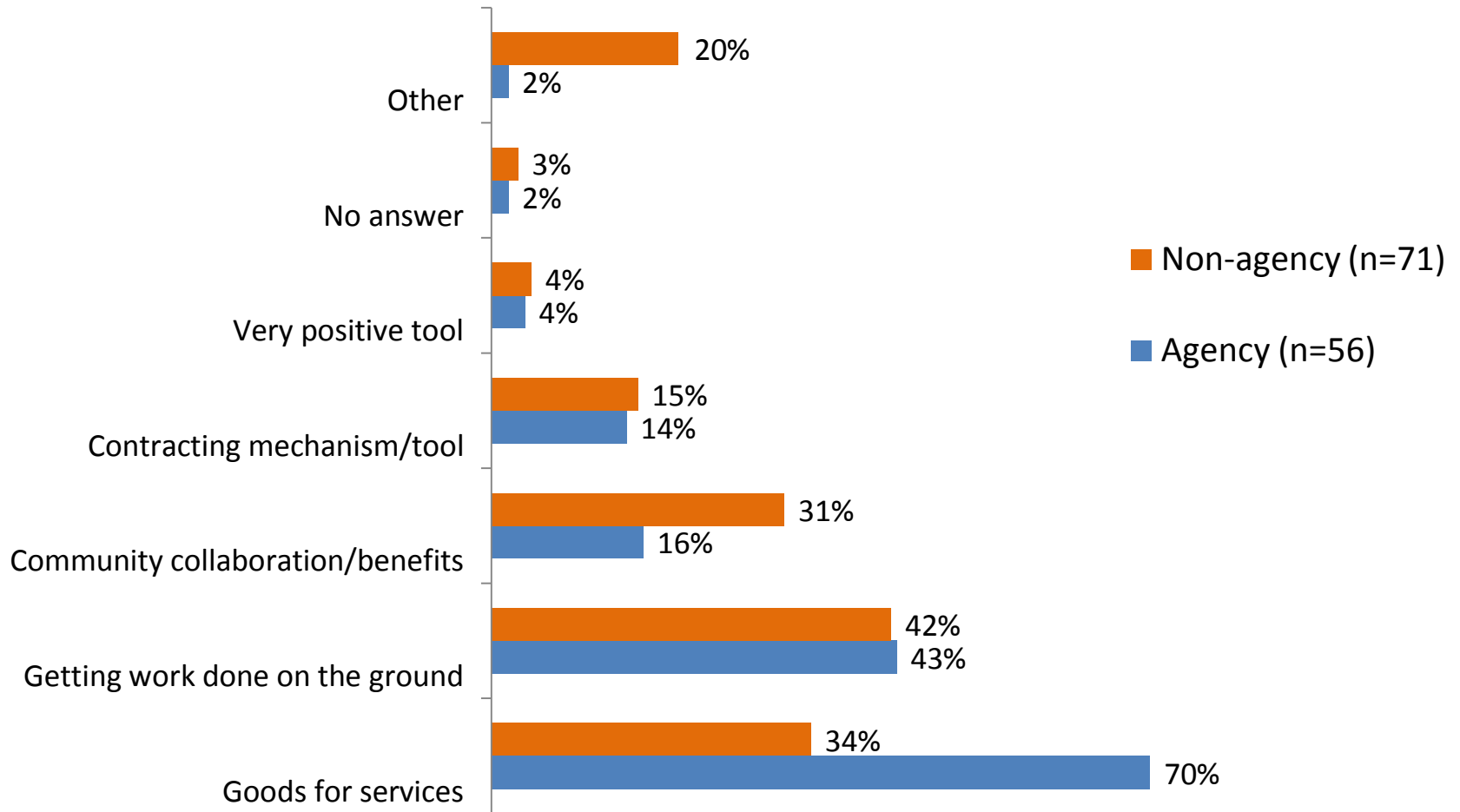
# FY-2013 Programmatic Monitoring Survey Results

# Methods

- OMB approved telephone survey of the agency contact and two others.
- 25% of all active USFS and BLM stewardship contacts or agreements in 2010, 2011, and 2012.
- Graphs in this presentation focus on USFS Survey Results only.

	<b>USFS Projects</b> <b>(n=156 participants)</b>		<b>BLM Projects</b> <b>(n=67 participants)</b>	
Agency	66	42%	27	40%
Community	31	20%	13	19%
Contractor	28	18%	20	30%
Other	31	20%	7	10%

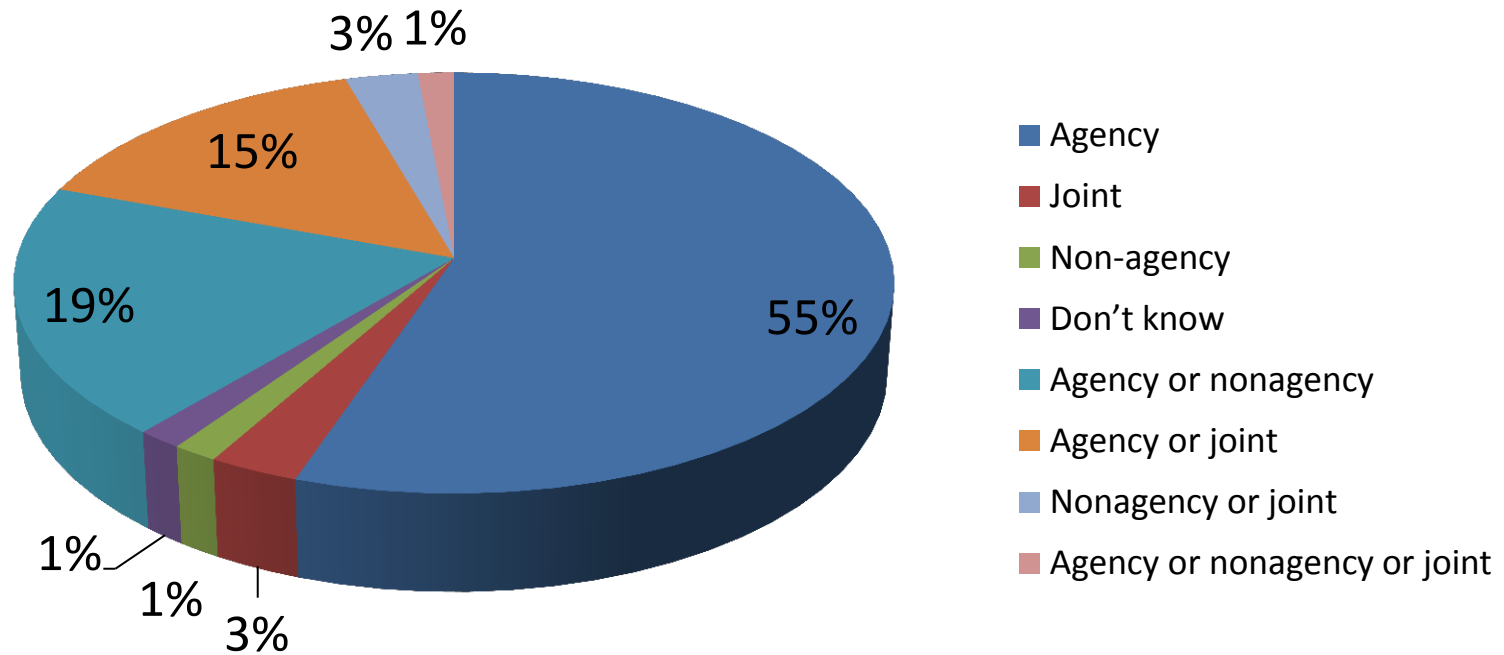
# Definition of Stewardship Contracting



Same top three responses as last year (and the last several years)....even more so for the agency (60% in 2012)

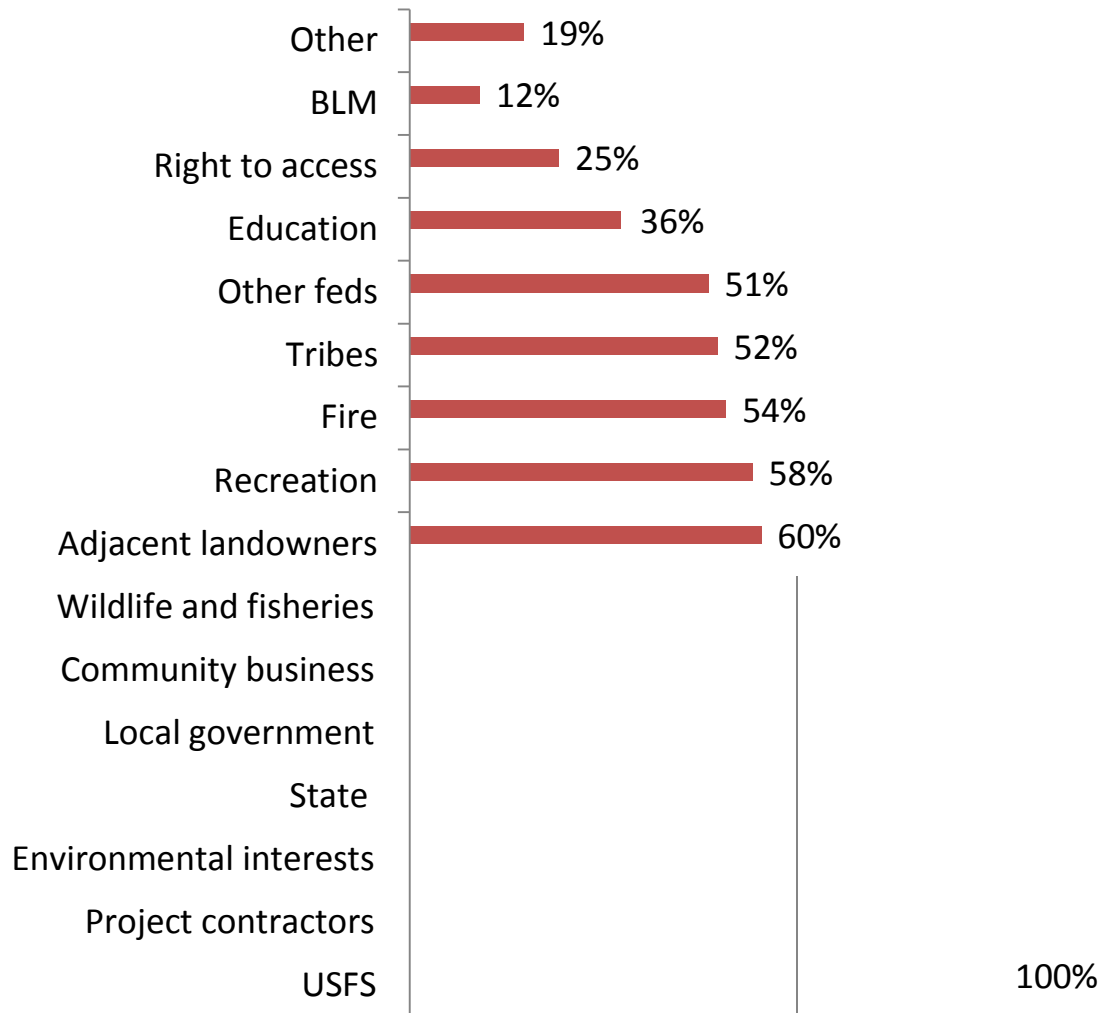
# Who Initiated the Project?

(n=67 projects)



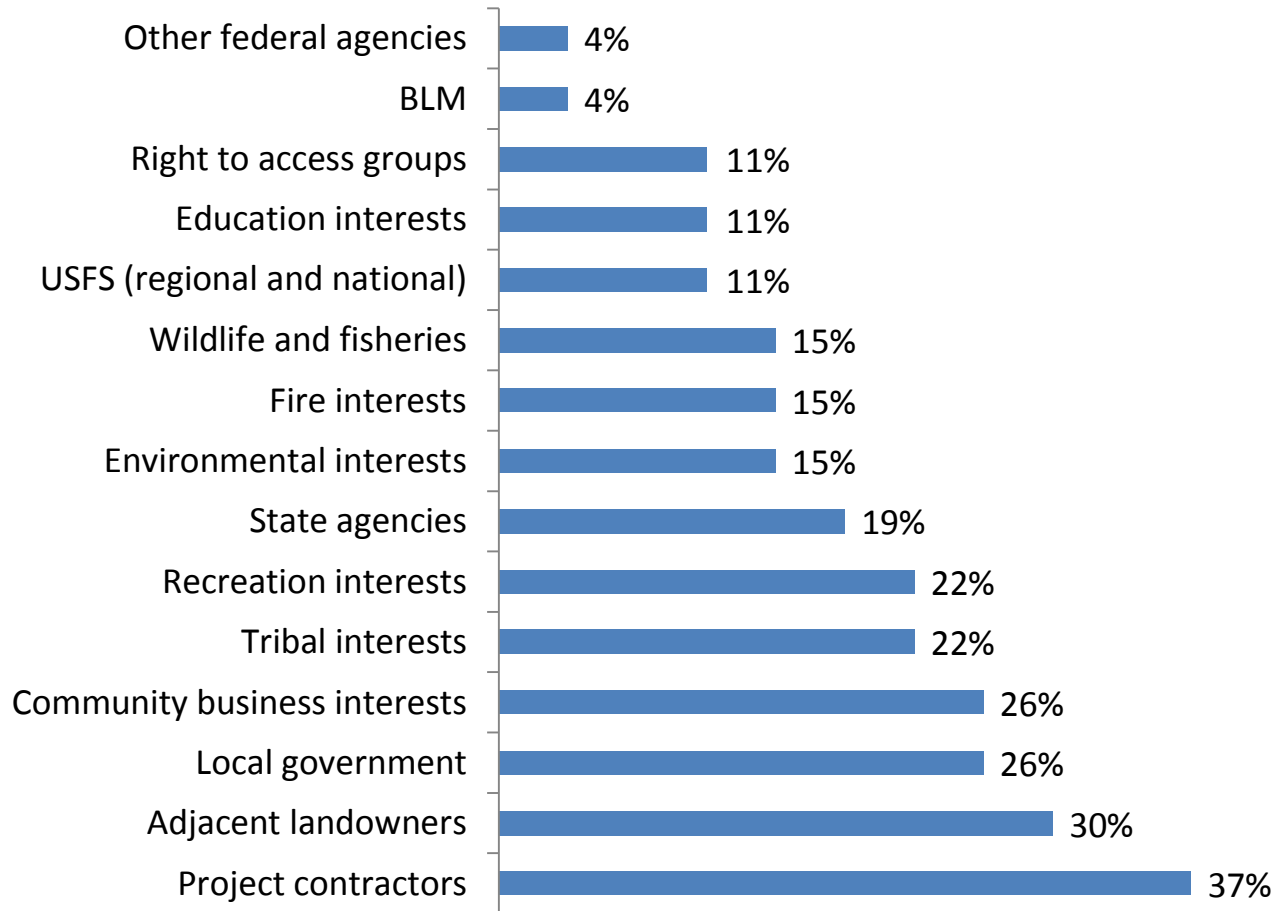
Some minor changes but basically similar to last year. The agency is the driving force. Even more so for the BLM who initiated 78% of projects in the last 3 years.

# Who Was Involved? (n=67 projects)



For the most part there is a diversity of interests that get involved in these projects in one way or another. It could be scoping NEPA, implementing the project, etc.

# Who is Missing? (n=67 projects)





# Who is Missing? (continued)

In 40% of USFS projects people felt that entities were missing from being involved in the project.

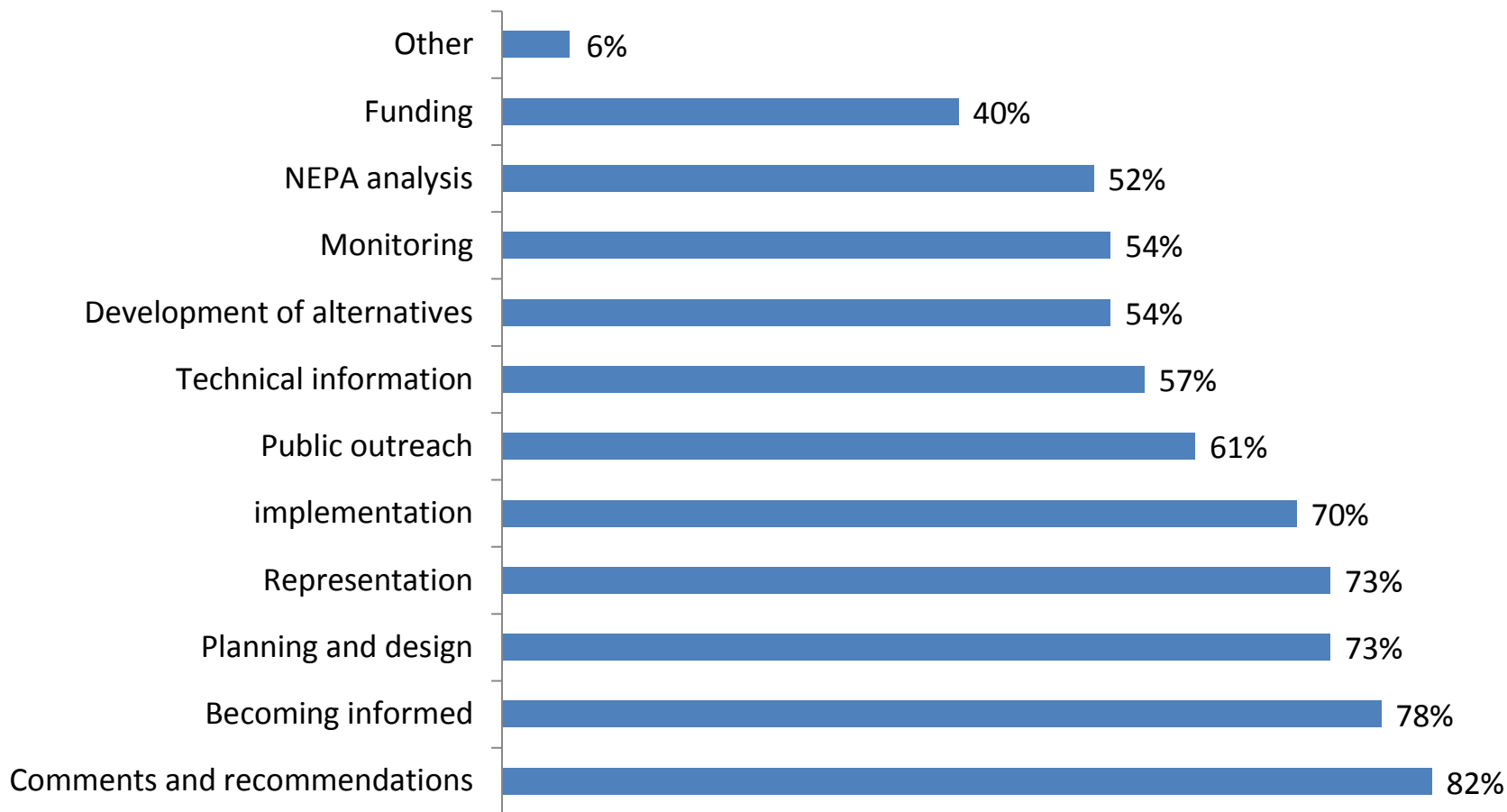
33% of BLM projects felt someone was missing. Community Business Interests were #1 missing entity for BLM.

Notable different responses from past years data:

- In 2012 local governments were thought to be missing from 45% of projects (26% this year).
- Project contractors was the 6<sup>th</sup> most often cited missing party in 2012, and this year it was the number one response. Some reasons, competition with oil and gas, downturn in forest product markets.
- Environmental interests has decreased as well, while recreation and tribal interests have gone up...as have a number of the less often cited groups.

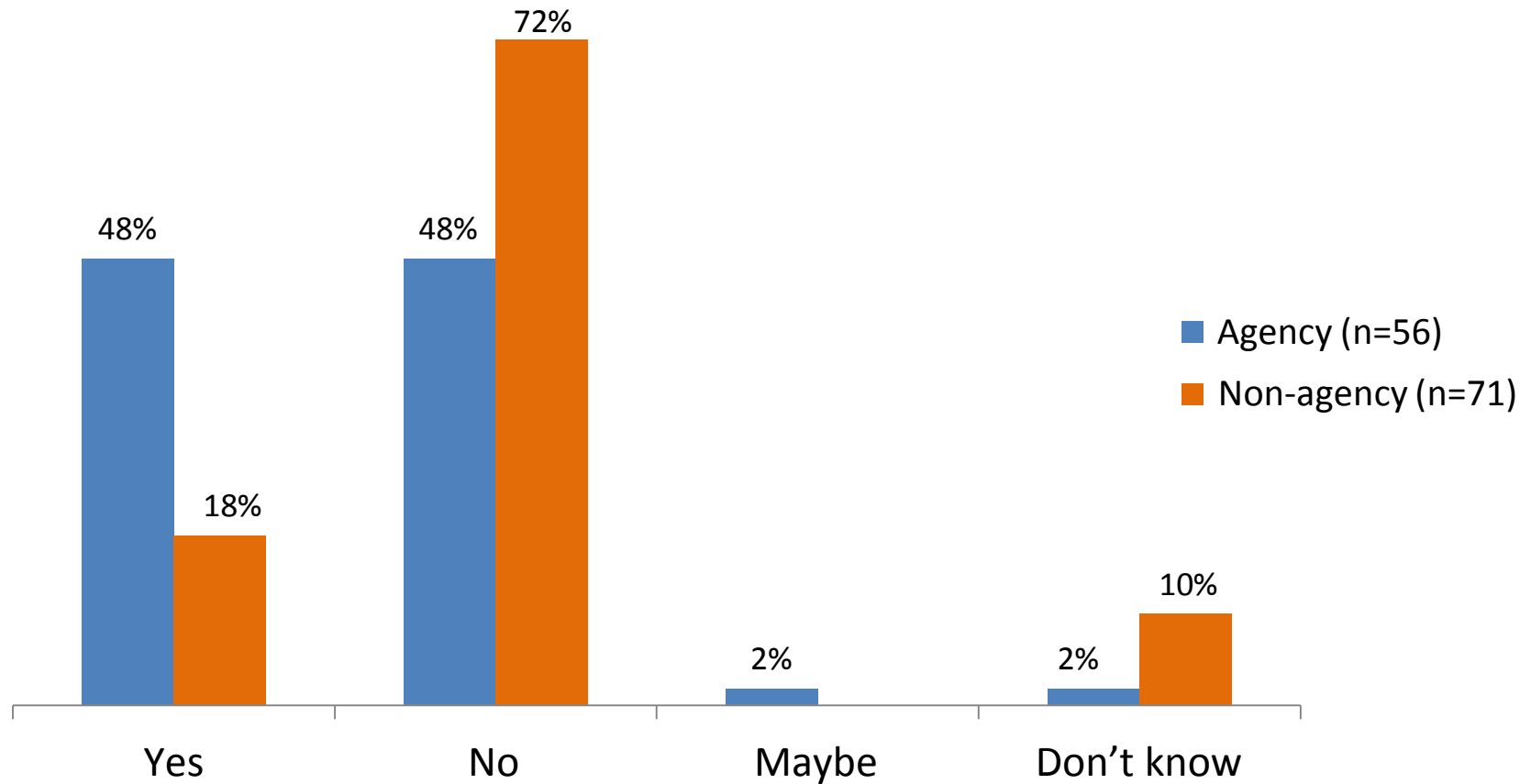
# Role of the Local Community

(n=67 projects)

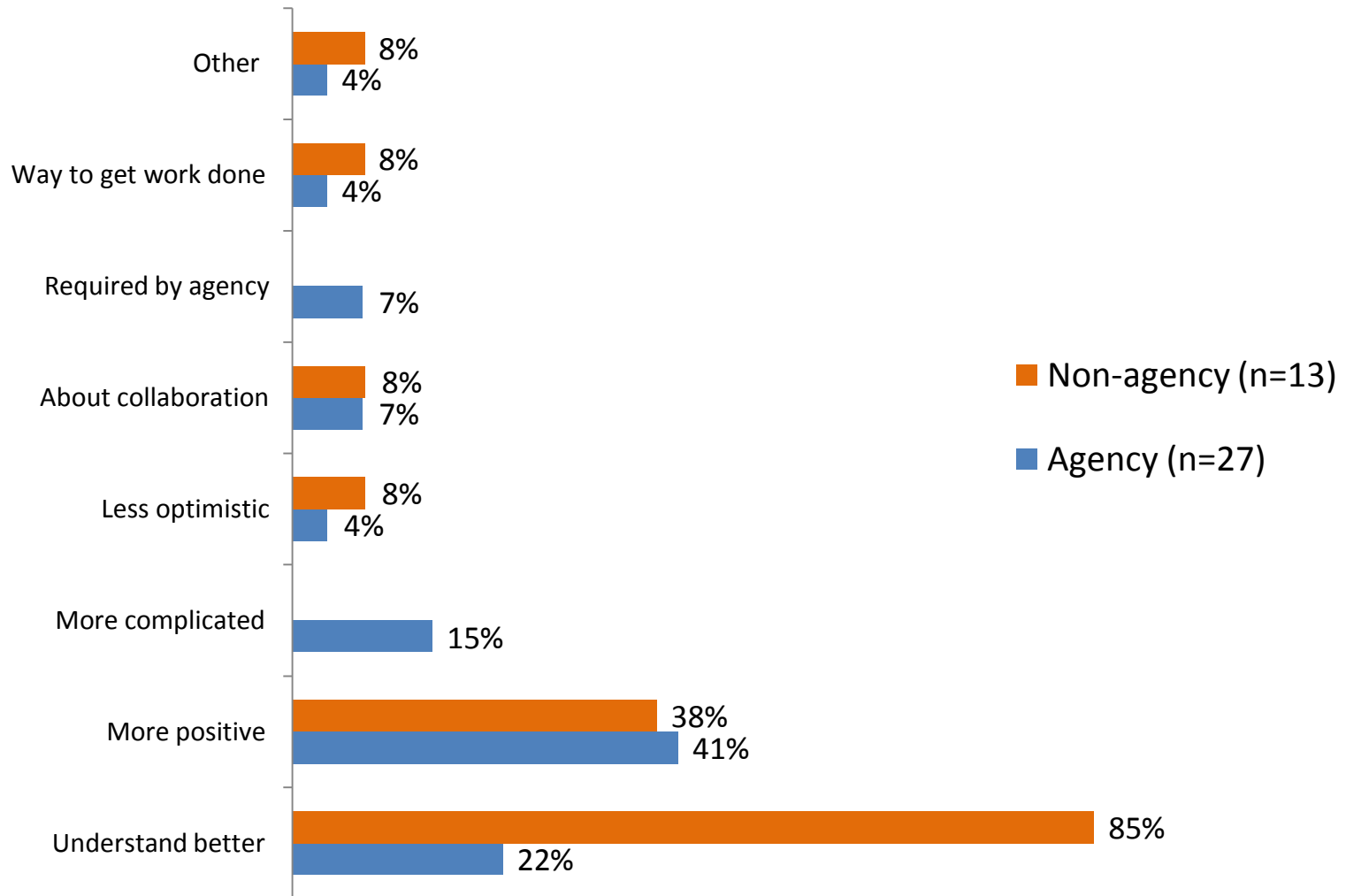


Non-agency funding has decreased steadily over the last 4 years.

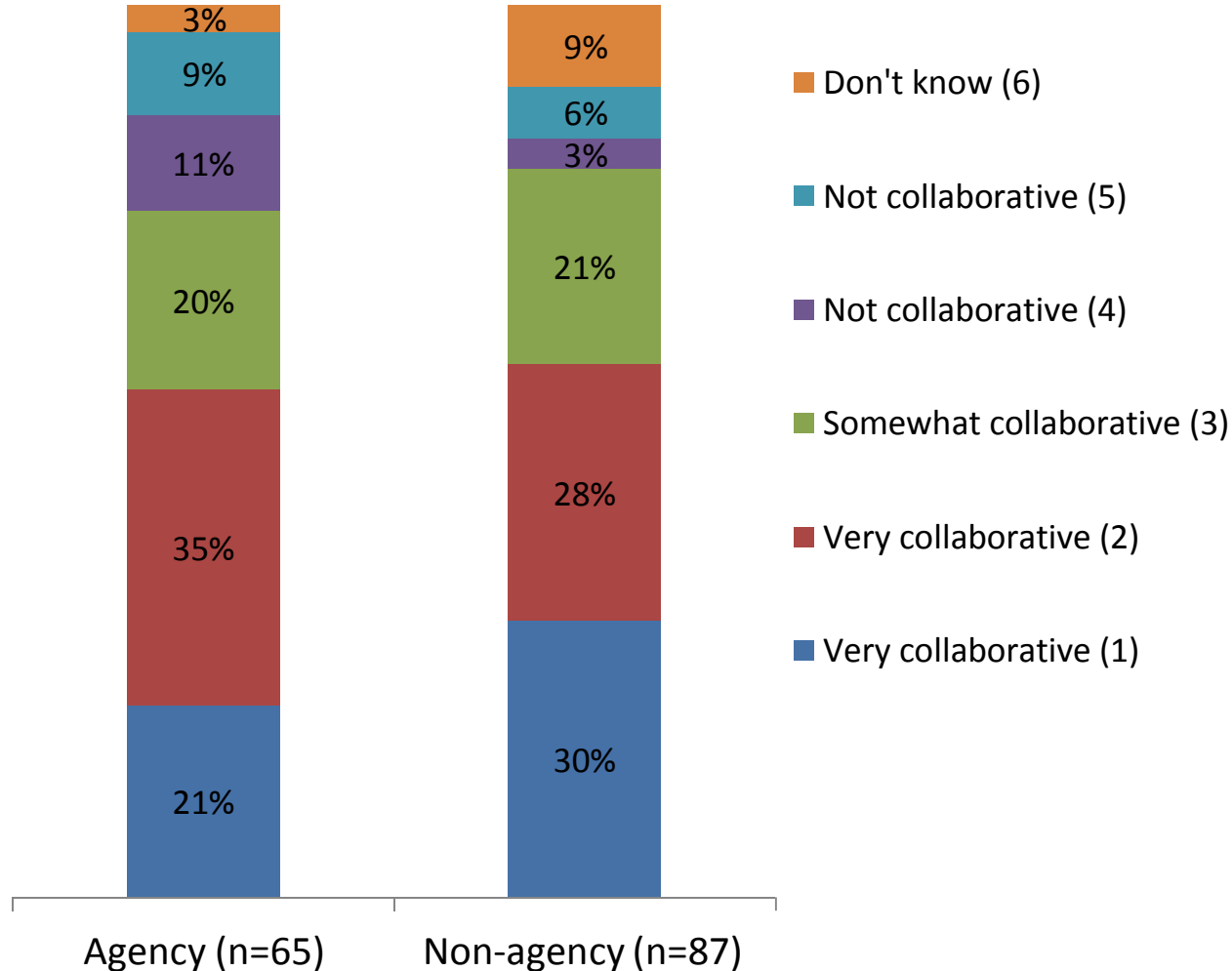
# Did Your View of Stewardship Contracting Change?



# How Did Your View of Change?



# How Collaborative is the Project?

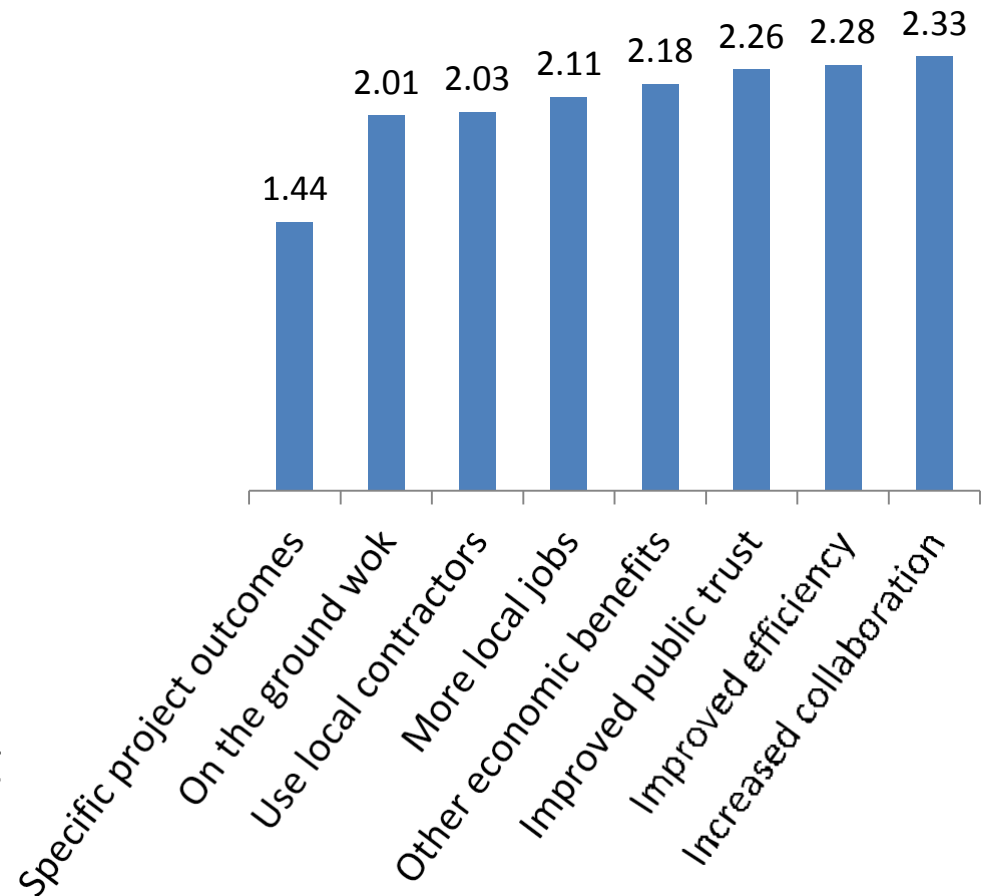


# Lessons Learned

- 111 people had lessons learned; 37 agency and 74 non-agency.
- Top responses
  - agency (22%) “Start collaboration early”
  - Non-agency (11%) “be inclusive”

# Importance of Local Benefits?

- Respondents (n=156) were asked to rank (1, very high – 6, very low) the importance of various local benefits provided by stewardship contracting.
- The bar chart shows the mean of this ranking. Specific project outcomes and on the ground work are again number 1 and 2. and use of local contractors, and more local jobs are strong again as well.



# Important Specific Outcomes

## **USFS Projects** (n=67 projects)

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Habitat improvement	48%
Restoration	48%
Fuels/fire reduction	46%
Thinning	31%
Road reconstruction/maintenance/closure	24%
Timber/salvage	18%
Forest/rangeland health	15%
Forest products/wood to local mill	15%
Economic benefits/\$ for community	13%
Provide local work	10%

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## **BLM Projects** (n=24)

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Fuels/ fire reduction	71%
Forest/range Health	67%
Thinning	42%
Restoration	33%
Habitat improvement	21%
Forest products/wood to local mill	17%
Management	17%

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# Questions/discussion Points - Session 1

- Of the 865,000 tons of biomass "made available" for energy production, how much was actually removed from the forests vs. burned or masticated?
- With the 27% of timber volume coming through stewardship contracts, how were payments-to-counties handled?
- Can you use stewardship contracting for salvage logging projects on the NFS? If so, has this happened in FY13? Would revenues go to Salvage Fund?
- Is there a record of how folks are providing preference for local contractors via best value criteria?
- A slide showed the comment that stewardship contracting is viewed as integral to the CFLRP. We would like to know by whom? The Forest Service?
- In R3 the biomass was the non-saw volume removed and destined for thermal energy generation.
- Does the Forest Service Washington Office or Regional Offices provide guidance to define "best value contracting" criteria?
- Do the agencies have national aggregate data on retained receipts?  
Could it be that the "who is missing" chart shows continued loss of local infrastructure and contractors moving on to other work?

# Session 2 - Regional Perspectives

# Trends in the Southeast

## (USFS Region 8)

- USFS staff are getting better at evaluating pros and cons of tool use.
- CFLRP driving landscape management, SC helping reach targets.
- Non-profits are engaging wider and deeper with communities.
- Wildlife habitat remains a significant focus.



# Trends in the Southeast

- Expanded use of Master Agreements with high-capacity non-profits (TNC) and state wildlife agencies (AR and GA), following a trend established with NWTF.
- The NWTF approach involves implementing IRSCs and IRTCs through a series of Master Participating and Challenge Cost-Share Agreements. Tiered from these Master Agreements are Supplemental Project Agreements (SPA) allowing additional work across a broader landscape.
- With this approach trusted relationships and tangible accomplishments have flourished.



# Voices from the Southeast

“Look at stewardship as a tool, not a program.” (*USFS*)

“Our limiting factors in growing stewardship are field capacity (internal) and ability to locate necessary match (internal & external).” (*NWTF*)

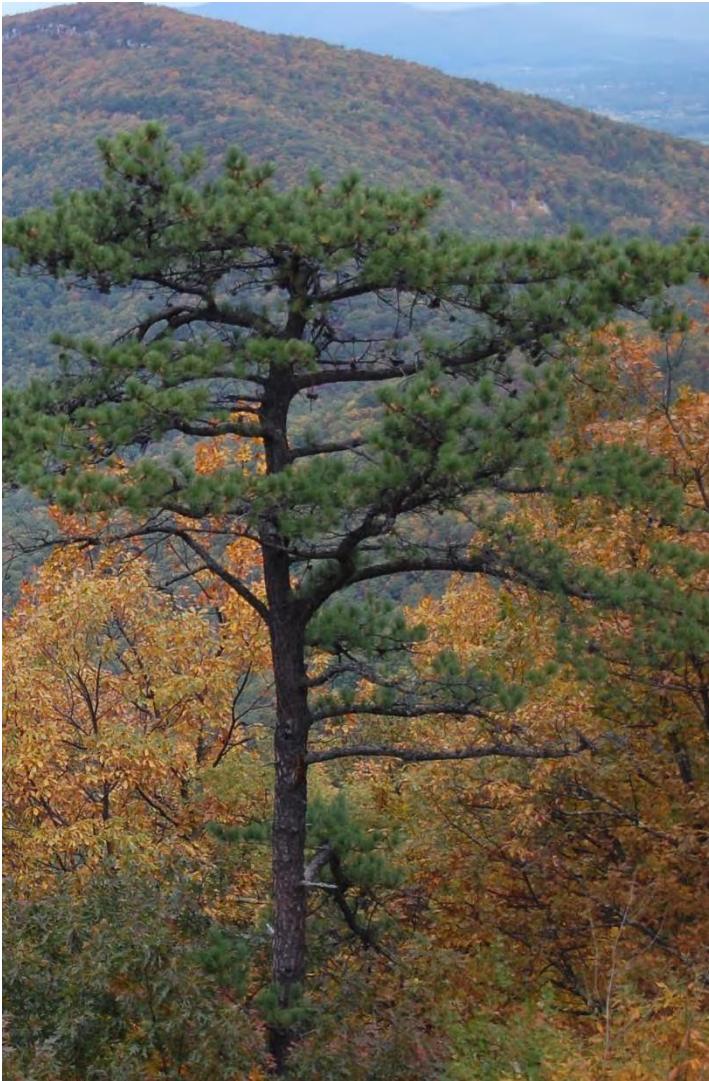
“We see a need for more training using webinar style approach.” (*All*)

“Local agency folks are excellent to work with; great partners. However, they are often hamstrung by those above them caught up in rules and regulations.” (*County Official*)

“As NWTF biologists, working with the local community has been a beautiful process. They are coming out with their own equipment to reconnect with their heritage, this land and its restoration.” (*NWTF*)



# Recommendations from the Southeast



- Evaluate and promote the economic benefits of SC, as well as the fiscal impact this tool has for the agency.
- Remove or reduce the administrative constraints (e.g. requiring marking with DxP, Regional Forester approval), which have limited the effective use of stewardship end results contracting to benefit the Forests and forest-dependent communities.
- Increase the training and technical assistance opportunities and resources available to agency staff and other stakeholders (including contractors) to encourage and enable them to make the most effective and productive use of stewardship authorities.

# Trends in the Northeast (USFS Region 9)



- Increasing acceptance and use of stewardship contracts and agreements.
- Community involvement usually at NEPA stage; limited stakeholder involvement in project planning and monitoring.
- Agreements with wildlife and conservation groups continue to be used effectively.
- Growing contractor interest in stewardship projects.
- Tribes and Tribal businesses active participants in contracting.

# Voices from the Northeast

“It’s a source of funding for work that benefits resources that I care about.” (*USFS*)

“It’s not really that bad. If there’s a way to keep coming out with more timber sales, I’m all for it.” (*contractor*)

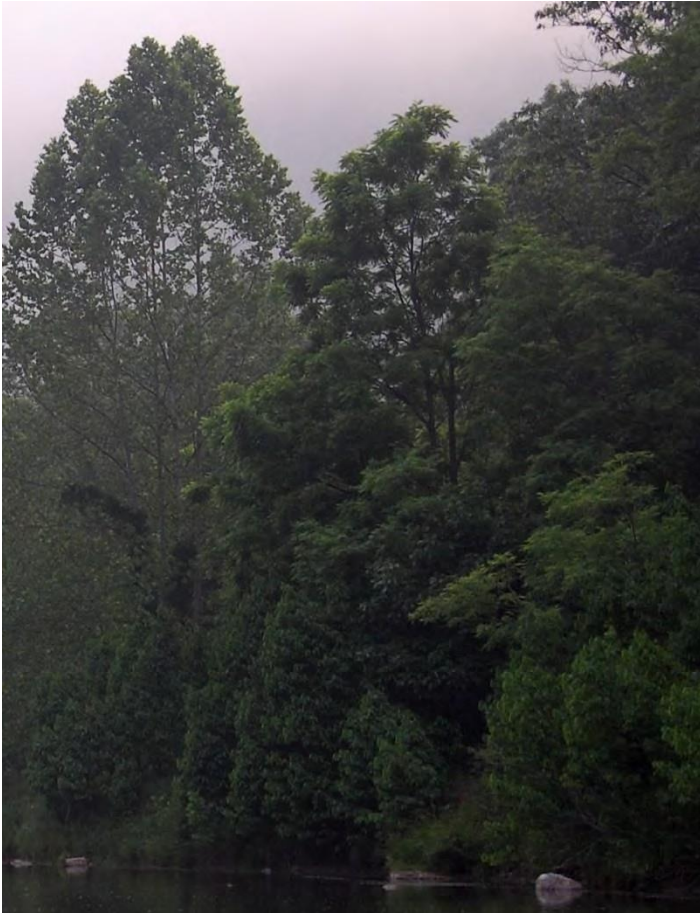
“One thing is that right now we have to get regional forester approval, and that never really made sense to me – we don’t get that approval for either regular timber or service projects. Why couldn’t the authority for stewardship projects be delegated locally?” (*USFS*)

“I don’t know that there was any benefit from it being a stewardship project. We would have gotten the work done regardless.” (*USFS*)

“We have had seven stewardship contracts. Stewardship contracting has been good for our company from a competitive standpoint, and it may help us procure timber a little bit better. We’re encouraged to buy products locally, and when we’re bidding, we’re going out of our way to buy local. Using the local work force and purchasing local materials from local businesses – that’s part of the best value selection.” (*contractor*)



# Recommendations from the Northeast

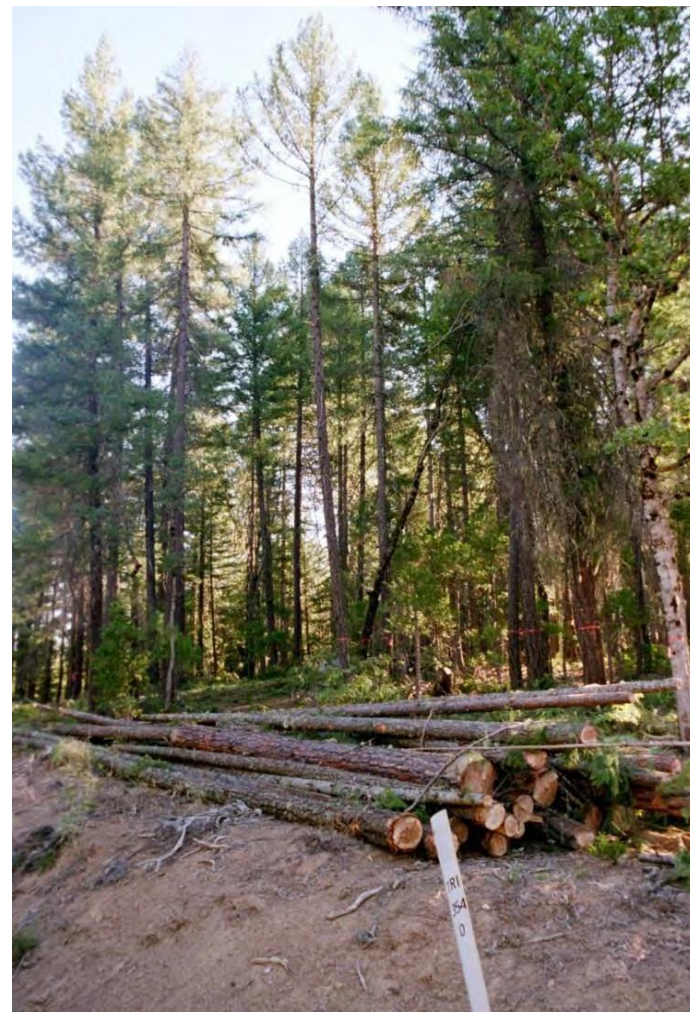


- Explore ways to accomplish more recreation-related projects.
- Resolve inconsistencies resulting from stewardship contracts incorporating both timber sale and service contract elements.
- Delegate stewardship contracting approval authority to Forest Supervisors.
- Increase substantially the training and technical assistance available to field staff, contractors, and communities.

# Trends in the Pacific West

## (USFS Regions 5,6,10)

- Stewardship is playing an important role in landscape restoration initiatives and collaborative management of public lands.
- Community and agency capacity are critical.
- The use of Stewardship Agreements has brought in a significant amount of funding to restore public lands.
- Some contractors are uncomfortable with stewardship contracts.



# Voices from the Pacific West

“Stewardship is a win-win situation. It involves collaboration from the public and private individuals. The outcome is consensus that leads to implementation and jobs.” (*federal agency*)

“For science-based collaboration you need to be present, engaged, actively listening, honest, and hearing others’ interests.” (*conservation organization*)

“I define collaboration as involvement throughout the project from design and proposal, to the NEPA process and then packaging into contracts.” (*community member*)

“Stewardship authority has been a very effective tool for accomplishing resource management projects. Traditional contracting would have taken more time, cost more money and we wouldn’t have gotten as much done.” (*federal agency*)



# Recommendations from the Pacific West



- Provide opportunities for networking and cross pollination between people working on landscape restoration initiatives.
- Invest in agency staff that collaborate, support collaborative processes by participating openly.
- Engage with high capacity organizations and efforts to develop Stewardship Agreements (where feasible) bringing additional funds to restoration. Consider ecosystem services models that use stewardship authorities.
- Study/communicate the economic benefits of stewardship contracting, and assist contractors in understanding contracting processes.

# Trends in the Southwest

## (USFS Regions 2,3,4)

- Cost/acre is coming down but at “cost” of small to mid-sized contractors.
- The tradeoff. Small to mid-size companies vs. increase scale to reduce costs and favor large, e.g. Good Earth.
- Majority of wood removed needs biomass market.
- Popularity of SC rising as managers find ways to generate some receipts for use in completing back listed work not covered by appropriations or KV, etc.
- BLM and USFS outside of large project areas focused on community defined and scaled projects driven by advanced collaboration, e.g. Henry Mountain in UT and Pagosa Springs in CO.



# Voices from the Southwest

“Stewardship is a good tool but it does not replace a regular sale program. We are still dealing with a Spruce Beetle epidemic. We have a lot of good local support for gathering economic value from this wood.” (*USFS*)

“If one company is able to remove everything desired by the community prescription, the costs go down significantly.” (*contractor*)

“We are a family operation, don’t have the capital or people to compete with international companies; only choice is to sub, if you are lucky.” (*contractor*)

“We started small with existing contractors. Our product is primarily biomass but firewood is the only market.” (*BLM*)



# Recommendations from the Southwest



- Continue to encourage and invest in landscape-scale restoration, but balance the movement toward larger contracts with efforts to maintain a diversity of projects and opportunities for small businesses.
- Make the “best value” selection process more transparent.
- Explore ways to involve contractors in planning and design while avoiding conflicts of interest.
- Avoid (if possible) requiring companies to bond each project and use one bond for the duration of a stewardship project.

# Trends in the Northern Rockies

## (USFS Regions 1,2,4)

- Smaller scale projects.
- Primarily Hazardous fuels reduction in the WUI.
- Also forest stand and habitat improvement and/or restoration.
- Narrowing of community involvement.
- Less enthusiasm for agreements.





# Voices from the Northern Rockies

## (USFS Projects)

“I really like the being able to use any kind of economic value derived from the project to do more work on the ground. It stays right there. It doesn’t get any better than that.” (*USFS*)

“I feel very strongly about the very secretive type of contracting used by the agency. ...We and other contractors don’t like that – not being able to see the content of a successful proposal and the pricing – so you can’t really learn ...what’s wanted. But we believe stewardship contracting is a great thing.” (*contractor*)

“There is a need for better tracking of how excess receipts are used. I have a concern over that.” (*contractor*)

“We’re a small forest with a small budget, and it makes it hard to put projects together when you can barely find the money. That said, I can do more acres and have a better outcome when I can do it.” (*USFS*)

“Collaboration is working great now. We’re onto our second collaboration project here [since they] initiated a broadly-based collaborative group. It’s making things work the way I think the people who wrote the NEPA laws intended it to work.” (*USFS*)

# Voices from the Northern Rockies

## (BLM Projects)

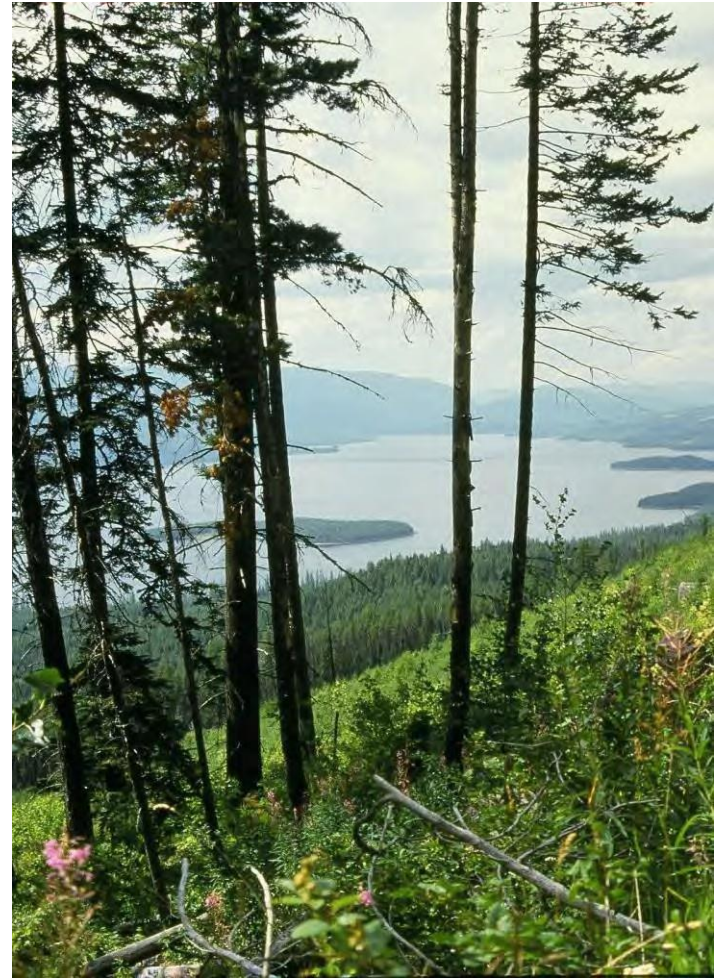
“It’s one of the few tools we have to accomplish biomass utilization for non-marketable material.” (*BLM*)

“I have had an opportunity throughout the work that I’ve done to work with a lot of government entities over the years, and this was one of the most pleasant and professional experiences that I’ve had. It’s such an impressive group of people and they [BLM] are just straight-up people.” (*community member*)

“Basically by doing the project through stewardship contracting, the BLM saved money. The service items accomplished through the contract were things we otherwise would have had to budget for and do in-house. Instead, because the product that was removed paid for the project in its entirety, we were able to spend those funds in another area that we wouldn’t otherwise been able to treat. From an economic standpoint, stewardship contracting is becoming more important to us.” (*BLM*)

# Recommendations from the Northern Rockies

- Give greater flexibility to field staff in using all of the stewardship contracting authorities.
- Allow use of retained receipts for multi-party monitoring when appropriate.
- Eliminate requirement for RO approval of stewardship contracting projects.
- Explore ways to accomplish more recreation-related projects.
- Increase training and technical assistance resources and opportunities.
- Include sawlog volume in SBA set-aside calculations.



# **Lemhi Forest Restoration Group**

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## **Public Lands Building Office**

December 11, 2013

Pinchot Institute Webinar –Stewardship Contracting National Meeting Summary

### **Participants:**

Gary Power - SVS Gina

Knudson – SVS

Michelle Tucker – SVS

John Jakovac – Lemhi County

Karen Drnjevic – Lemhi County

Maggie Seaberg – SCNF, North Fork District

Jim Tucker – SCNF

Christine Droske - SCNF, North Fork District

Doug Leyva, SCNF

Lynn Bennett, SCNF

Mike Smith – SCNF

Liz Townley – SCNF, Acting NF District Ranger

### **Slides Presented Are Attached:**

**Lemhi Forest Collaborative  
LCEDA Office**

Thursday, March 6, 2014  
10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Participants**

Jerry Hamilton, LCFRG	Christine Droske, SCNF
Gina Knudson, Salmon Valley Stewardship (SVS)	Jim Tucker, SCNF
Mike Smith, SCNF	Tom Shultz, SCNF
Michelle Tucker, SVS	Councilman Ken Hill, City of Salmon
Karin Djrnevic, Lemhi County	Jim Roscoe, High Divide Consulting
Commissioner John Jakovac, Lemhi County	Gary Power, LCFRG and SVS
Harry Shannafelt, City of Salmon	Chuck Mark, SCNF
Mayor Leo Marshall, City of Salmon	Tammy Stringham, Lemhi County Economic Development Assoc.
Councilman Fred Waidley, City of Salmon	Jonathan Oppenheimer, Idaho Conservation League (call in)
Melissa Sartor, SCNF	
Doug Leyva, SCNF	Judy Martin, IDAWY FS (call in)

**Farm Bill Categorical Exclusion**

Gina reviewed the Idaho Forest Restoration Partners (IFRP) annual meeting in Boise Feb 19 & 20. Gary Power, Bob Russell, Chuck Mark, Michelle Tucker and Gina attended this year. Forest Service Chief Tidwell, all of Idaho's congressional delegation and staff, and Regional Forester Nora Rasure were in attendance for at least part of the meetings. It was a very productive two days.

One very important item learned at the meeting was the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) Farm Bill amendment that outlines a categorical exclusion for treating insects and disease on national forest land requires collaborative support and input. The group watched a video from the Payette Coalition explaining this need for treatment area designations. More information and the video can be found at <http://idahoforestpartners.org/OpenForum.html>.

The 2014 Farm Bill amendments offer another source of restoration funding for collaborative restoration of national forests. Governors in each state will submit potential treatment areas to the Secretary of Agriculture in April 2014. Recommendations to the Idaho Department of Lands from each Idaho Forest are due by March 7. These proposed priority areas must be recommended with the support of collaborative working groups such as the Lemhi Forest Collaborative.

The goal of the meeting was to recommend priority areas to the Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF) for insect and disease treatment under which the new Categorical Exclusion (CE) authority might be used. These areas are simply broad designations on a map. No specific treatments are proposed, nor are considerations for risk or feasibility required. The identification of these priority areas simply makes them eligible for the use of this tool. Updates to these areas may be made in the future, however, that process has not been defined at this point. Jonathan emphasized the need to consider capacity to

implement new projects. A CE does still require analysis. The Chief stressed to be strategic and not overreach.

Jim Tucker clarified that other areas on the forest (such as Stanley) are identifying their own priorities. This is not a competitive process between districts or forests. Jonathan reminded that while this amendment provides for the authorization of funding, no funding has been appropriated. Gary felt the use of a CE may help minimize planning time to leave more funding for implementation. Jim Roscoe asked about the urgency of getting a project in – does it tie into future goals or projects? Each CE used is only eligible to treat up to 3,000 acres, therefore these would be smaller projects that might enhance existing or proposed projects.

Laura Lowery from Forest Health and Protection provided the most recent National Insect and Disease and Risk maps. The group reviewed these as well as a map of the Salmon River Interface and the proposed Jesse Creek project area provided by Mike Smith. The group also discussed the location of the Wildland Interface Boundaries near Salmon as well as Communities at Risk.

Leo emphasized that the City continues to be worried about the risk of fire in the watershed. Mike Smith updated the group that the municipal watershed project (Jesse Creek) is not fully funded or a high priority for the SCNF until other projects are completed. The Jesse Creek project is approximately 17,000 acres and includes Jesse, Turner, Pollard and Chipps Creeks. The Lemhi Forest Collaborative has held two field trips in this area, the most recent in 2012. Stand exams and vegetation sampling are nearly complete with 720 plots done, and about 40 left.

Chuck would like to see these requests come from the collaborative and not be separate from the SCNF request. The Sawtooth Group is also planning to submit a proposal.

Michelle read comments received from John Robison's via email:

*I also applaud folks for taking the lead on this CE opportunity. I don't think I will be able to make the call next week, but did want to offer some ideas.*

*First, I would be interested to know what the County fire district and Forest Service fire/forest health folks think the top threats and opportunities are. I do have some concerns about taking on the Jesse Creek drainage as this is a somewhat complex project area, with the past roadless issue, etc. The CE is really most appropriate for relatively simple projects with few or no outstanding issues. If our hope is to have a "significant impact" on fuels within a watershed, then by definition, a CE may not be the most appropriate tool. Is there any work that would complement other priority areas or any unfinished business around Hughes Creek?*

*That said, there may still be some work within the Jesse Creek drainage that fits the CE requirements, particularly if it is strategic and can fit well within a larger context. Using this project to break up a continuous fuel load in the municipal watershed could make sense if done in the right way and in the right location. I just would need to know more about the proposal and what other options are out there before endorsing the recommendation.*

Gina clarified that some of the Interface is in fact roadless with varying designations. Jim T. emphasized that historic fire maps show that fires tend to move from general forest areas on the back side of the ridge toward the front of the range. Treating smaller areas on the upper slope of the ridge may go a long way to provide a fuel break or buffer from prevailing fire patterns.

Mike S. wanted to be certain the intent was not to break up the original Jesse Creek project area just to meet this designation. The group agreed the intent is not to chunk up a project to get around NEPA. Gary stated that if the main fire risk comes from the back side of the ridge, a CE may be a chance to get

the low hanging fruit. With the Ridge Road in place it could be a chance to reduce impacts and use it strategically for smaller treatments that enhance the Jesse Creek Project. Treatment in roadless may need temp roads, no way with timber values and lack of infrastructure without at least some temporary roads.

Harry stated that the City is more worried about silt and loss of vegetation due to fire rather than risk to the treatment plant itself.

Jonathan mentioned that the existing HFRA language is designed to address projects like the originally proposed Jesse Creek project. Jonathan cautioned that the proposals need to consider insect and disease more than fire risk. Chuck expressed that 3,000 acres doesn't address the bigger forest health, this tool is to help achieve smaller goals.

Mike S. said the Salmon Interface project is intended to identify similar areas and could include a fuel break on the west side to the ridge road. Jerry reminded the group of the need to address mistletoe and density management. Jim T. relayed that during the Salt Fire the teams used changes in fuel type to assist in suppression and it was effective. Doug expressed tree spacing is very important to resiliency especially with insects and disease. Jonathan reminded the group that the roadless rule allows for temp road in backcountry for fuels reduction. If working off ridge road, the bigger question is if this appropriate for a CE. He doesn't have a problem designating a treatment in roadless if it is the correct use of authority and the decision tool.

After many comments, Gina summarized what she was hearing from the group: The 17,000 Jesse Creek project is still a priority for the Collaborative and should stay on the books under HFRA authority. In the meantime, the group would like to see some smaller projects along the upper 1/3 of the west side of the Ridge Road, and due north and south of the Jesse Creek project area, to strategically locate fuel breaks, improve tree spacing, reduce spotting potential over the ridge, and promote healthier stands. The group agreed to break the proposed area north at the Moose Creek drainage and south at Williams Lake. SVS will help determine what 6th level Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUC6) as required by the amendment. The vote was full consensus in agreement of this proposed boundary. SVS will assist the SCNF in getting the proposal done tomorrow.

### **Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR)**

Gina reviewed the CFLR program that provides money to the Forest Service for collaboratively developed, large landscape scale projects. This pot of funding has received \$40 million a year since it began in a few years ago. Region 4 did not want to be a pilot project when this program first began. Now four Idaho forests, two in Region 4 are being funded. Russ Bacon set up an agreement with SVS to help begin the CFLR application which is extensive. SVS has created an outline, polled many other partners and gathered information for the application. The Lemhi Collaborative and the SCNF need to designate the broader boundary for this application. SVS will send out a poll to see when the group can hold a meeting to discuss this.

### **Hazardous Fuels Class – March 20**

This is the last of a series of three contractor workshops to assist in forest restoration skills. The course description is attached.



# HAZARDOUS FUELS

## A FOREST RESTORATION WORKSHOP

Featuring

Mark Vander Meer and Marnie Criley

From Watershed Consulting of Missoula

Field Demonstrations by

Bighorn Outfitters

This training is intended to address hazardous fuels reduction techniques, including what kind of treatment is appropriate in riparian areas and the fine art of building burn piles.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20 - FREE TO ATTEND

9:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

MEET AT NORTH FORK FIRE STATION AT 9:00 AM,  
FINISH OUT IN THE FIELD AT 3:00 PM

No lunch provided -please pack one!

To register, contact Salmon Valley Stewardship  
at 208.756.1686 or visit our website:

[www.salmonvalley.org](http://www.salmonvalley.org)



This workshop was made possible by the USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grant--Restoration Means Jobs in Central Idaho



# Lemhi Forest Restoration Group

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## Public Lands Building Office

Thursday, April 3, 2014

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Meeting Summary

### Participants:

Rob Mason – Wilderness Society

Jerry Hamilton – Private Citizen

Gary Power - SVS

Gina Knudson – SVS

Michelle Tucker – SVS

John Goodman – Moose Creek Estates

Bob Russell – Private Citizen

John Jakovac – Lemhi County

Bret Standsberry – IDFG

Karen Drnjevic – Lemhi County

Bob Cope – Lemhi county

Fritz Cluff – SCNF

Tom Schultz – SCNF, North Fork District

Maggie Seaberg – SCNF, North Fork District

Kathy Seaberg – SCNF

Jim Tucker – SCNF

Chuck Mark – SCNF

Ken Gebhardt - SCNF, North Fork District

Melissa Sartor – SCNF

Christine Droske - SCNF, North Fork District

**Introductions:** Gina introduced and welcomed two first-time attendees:

**Rob Mason** joined The Wilderness Society in September 2013 as the Central Idaho Representative and works on land protection efforts with communities and local stakeholders in the state. Prior to joining The Wilderness Society, Rob worked as wilderness manager for the Sierra National Forest and as executive director of the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation.

**Ken Gebhardt** and his family moved to Salmon to become the North Fork District Ranger from the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest in northeast Oregon. He served five years as the Wallowa Valley District Ranger and Acting Forest Natural Resources Staff Officer. Prior to his arrival on the Wallowa-Whitman in 2008, Ken served as the Forest Fisheries Biologist on the Superior National Forest in Minnesota.

**Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP):** Much of this discussion was based on a projected map of Lemhi County and the surrounding area. Some of the conversation regarding this mapping exercise was not captured in the notes.

Gina gave an intro to CFLRP and need to define area of work. The purpose of the CFLRP is to encourage collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes. She provided examples of other CFLRP groups and their project areas from Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) and Northeast Washington State.

A proposal for a CFLRP project must be at least 50,000 acres and based on a landscape restoration strategy. Projects should ensure that they align with a restoration strategy to improve wildfire

behavior and management costs, restore natural ecosystem and watershed functions, and facilitate appropriate utilization of woody biomass and small-diameter wood.

The group plotted existing and proposed projects on a map of Lemhi County. Much discussion ensued about the appropriate size and location of project boundaries. The consensus was that Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 6's were an appropriate unit to delineate smaller project areas and priorities from. The entirety of Lemhi County was endorsed by members with consideration for priority HUCs. Reasons for considering the entire County were aligned with the desire to expand the collaborative's ability to reach other area partners and promote complementary projects in the Lemhi Valley. It was generally agreed that linking to other existing and in-progress resources such as watershed condition framework can help identify priority areas within the greater landscape project area.

The group consensus was that the larger landscape is more strategic and will help to leverage other partners' projects and funding to get things done, using Lemhi County as a starting point for a CFLRP application. Once the comment period for the Draft EIS for the Upper North Fork Project is done, SVS will solicit partner input for inclusion into the landscape project such as WUI boundaries, wildlife habitat, fire histories etc. The SCNF will assist in collecting all GIS data and consolidating this on a map.

#### **Upper North Fork:**

Comments on the Draft EIS are due by May 5. Public Meetings will be an open house forum:

- April 9 in Salmon, Innovation Center 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- April 10 in Gibbonsville, GIA Building 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

It is important that collaborative members attend these meetings if possible and be prepared to discuss the activities and volunteer time they have spent on this project proposal. Individual collaborative members will meet in the upcoming weeks to review the DEIS for consistency with the group recommendation memo. A doodle poll will be sent out to set this date.

[Based on response from the scheduling poll, the review meeting was established for Thursday, April 17 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center.]

# **Lemhi Forest Restoration Group**

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## **Salmon Valley Business Innovation Center**

Thursday, April 17, 2014

10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

## **Upper North Fork Draft EIS (DEIS) Review**

### **Participants**

Hadley Roberts – Private Citizen

Jim Tucker - SCNF

Jerry Hamilton – Private Citizen

John Jakovac – Lemhi County

Gary Power - SVS

Beth Waterbury – IDFG

Gina Knudson – SVS

Karen Drnjevic – Lemhi County

Michelle Tucker – SVS

Bob Cope – Lemhi county

John Goodman – Moose Creek Estates

Lynn Bennett - SCNF

Bob Russell – Private Citizen

Douglas Basford – Private Citizen

Tammy Stringham – LCEDA

Alan Howell – LCEDA

John Robison - ICL

Jim Roscoe – High Divide Consulting

### **Up Front**

April 25, 2014            Task Force Assignments Due

May 1, 2014             Comments to Task Force Findings Due

May 5, 2014            USFS Close of Comment Period for DEIS

### **Meeting Summary**

DEIS public meetings in Salmon and Gibbonsville were well attended. Jim T. thanked those who presented and attended from the Collaborative. Gina reviewed information provided by LFRG at the meetings.

Gina outlined objective of today's meeting: to use the recommendation and clarification memos as a basis to review the DEIS and determine if the group feels our recommendations have been well represented. Gina solicited comments from group.

John G. reported that many of the comments at the Gibbonsville meeting focused on the closing of a Hammerean Loop road in the 2<sup>nd</sup> alternative. This locally popular road has perpetual problems with sliding according to the SCNF. Gina reported that David Deschaine (SCNF) explained in the Salmon meeting that this road is a maintenance problem and wildlife security issue. Jim T. expressed that it was obvious the community feels this road is important. Beth doesn't recall this road closure being

a recommendation from IDFG. Jerry also reminded the group that the road may be valuable for fire suppression.

Michelle asked how many had time to review the DEIS. None in the room besides Gina and Jim T. raised their hands. Beth has only had time to skim. John R. has only skimmed also. He did report that he appreciated the consideration for two alternatives.

Gina asked if the group felt 45 days was long enough to review the DEIS. Beth did not realize review time was negotiable and was anticipating a 90 day review period. Gary commented that the quick turnaround could help get contracts on the ground sooner. Cope feels that the group has had five years to provide input. ***In summary, the group agreed to request a two week extension but be prepared to meet the existing deadline in the interim.***

Gina stated that she has reviewed at least 2/3 of the DEIS and did feel there are some surprises, including helicopter logging in both alternatives. Michelle stated that she was also surprised by this in light of recent information that helicopter logging is no longer economically viable. Her concern was that the areas targeted for helicopter logging would never be treated. Jim T. relayed a conversation that he and former North Fork Ranger Russ Bacon had while driving through the area of Pierce Creek. Russ stated that he wanted to designate some units as helicopter logging in case the timber market ever supported this option. John G. feels the timber above Moose Creek has little value now and it is important to have the fuels reduced sooner, rather than waiting for helicopter logging to become viable. Jim T. pointed out that Hughes Creek is a good example of what we can anticipate for the timber market. Michelle asked again if this meant that these areas would not be treated at all. Bob R. clarified that these are most likely areas where temporary roads are not an option due to slope. Cope feels the county would rather see treatment if other alternatives are possible, however, if the only option is helicopter he would prefer to leave in. ***The group agreed that they would like clarification on the areas designated for helicopter logging under the preferred alternative. Larger maps will be required. Would these units be a candidate for any other type of treatment, and if not, why?***

Jim R. has had time to review summaries and some mitigation features. He was disappointed that more consideration wasn't given to wildlife recommendations he and Beth provided in response to a meeting with the SCNF in 2012. Gina reported a concern for elk security was raised at the April 9 Salmon public meeting. Beth wants time to process the mitigation measures, but she feels that the input provided by the collaborative for carnivores and owls was disregarded. Michelle asked if there is any indication that input from the collaborative regarding wildlife was incorporated or even cited. Beth pointed out that local or natural heritage records were not cited. Jim R. feels a blanket prescription, without consideration for specific habitat and connectivity concerns is being presented in the DEIS. Beth noted brief review of the draft showed a unit with a surface fuel loading reduction to 70% that did not sufficiently address forest carnivores. Michelle expressed that she feels it is very important to utilize local specialist knowledge. Hadley also did not see any previous local work cited. Beth would like to see new spatial modeling and tools used. Her example was that one goshawk record on Upper north Fork was cited. However, spatial modeling, not presented in the DEIS, shows much more available habitat. She feels the analysis could have been simplified or more transparent if modeling exercises were conducted. Jim R. commented that the forest plan standard for winter range was not going to be used, however, they don't provide a justification or discussion for this project specific amendment. Is this precedent setting? If so, they should disclose

this. ***The consensus was that the SCNF has not shown a strong rational for wildlife decisions and has not incorporated the comments solicited and received from Jim R. and Beth.***

Gina asked what our comments at this time mean to the SCNF at this point in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. John R. explained that many Idaho forests are using the new Objection Process for HFRA projects. We are currently in the “comment” period. Ideally comments can be submitted as group or individual to SCNF and those comments would be reflected in a Final EIS. The new objection process includes a draft decision, giving a chance to review and comment before any signed decision. John R. would characterize it as a chance for refinement and a chance to bring any remaining concerns to the USFS in a less adversarial way than the regular appeals process. It is intended to solve problems ahead of litigation. ***Jim T. will track with Carol Krieger to define the objection process (Already received and attached).***

John R. reminded the group that if we feel there is an issue of concern, we should also offer a solution. He is concerned that in order to maximize effectiveness of restoration, we all need to lobby for funding in areas that may not pay for themselves. Cope reminded the group that Hughes Creek had a lot of above base funding and we should continue to support this process.

Many of the group expressed difficulty in using the electronic copy of the DEIS. Jim T. arranged for ***25 copies of the DEIS to be printed as well as larger maps and made available at SVS and the Public Lands Building.***

With limited timeframes, Michelle asked the group to consider splitting up the DEIS into areas of concern and assigned “task forces” to review. ***The group agreed to the following assignments:***

- Roads and Roadless – ICL and Lemhi County (Cope and John J.)
- Economics (Local Workforce Benefit, Recreation, Restoration Budgeting) – Michelle, Tammy, Gary
- Wildlife – Jim R., Beth, Hadley
- Helicopter Logging and Treatment Option Concerns – John G., Jerry

Each task force will provide a basic review and notes to the collaborative group email by ***April 25.*** All members are encouraged to review these notes and make comments electronically by ***May 1.*** SVS will consolidate these comments into a recommendation letter and provide it to the SCNF by ***May 5,*** unless we are granted an extension. If the extension is granted, the group will adjust timeframes to provide for additional review.

# Objection Process (36 CFR 218) For HFRA Projects

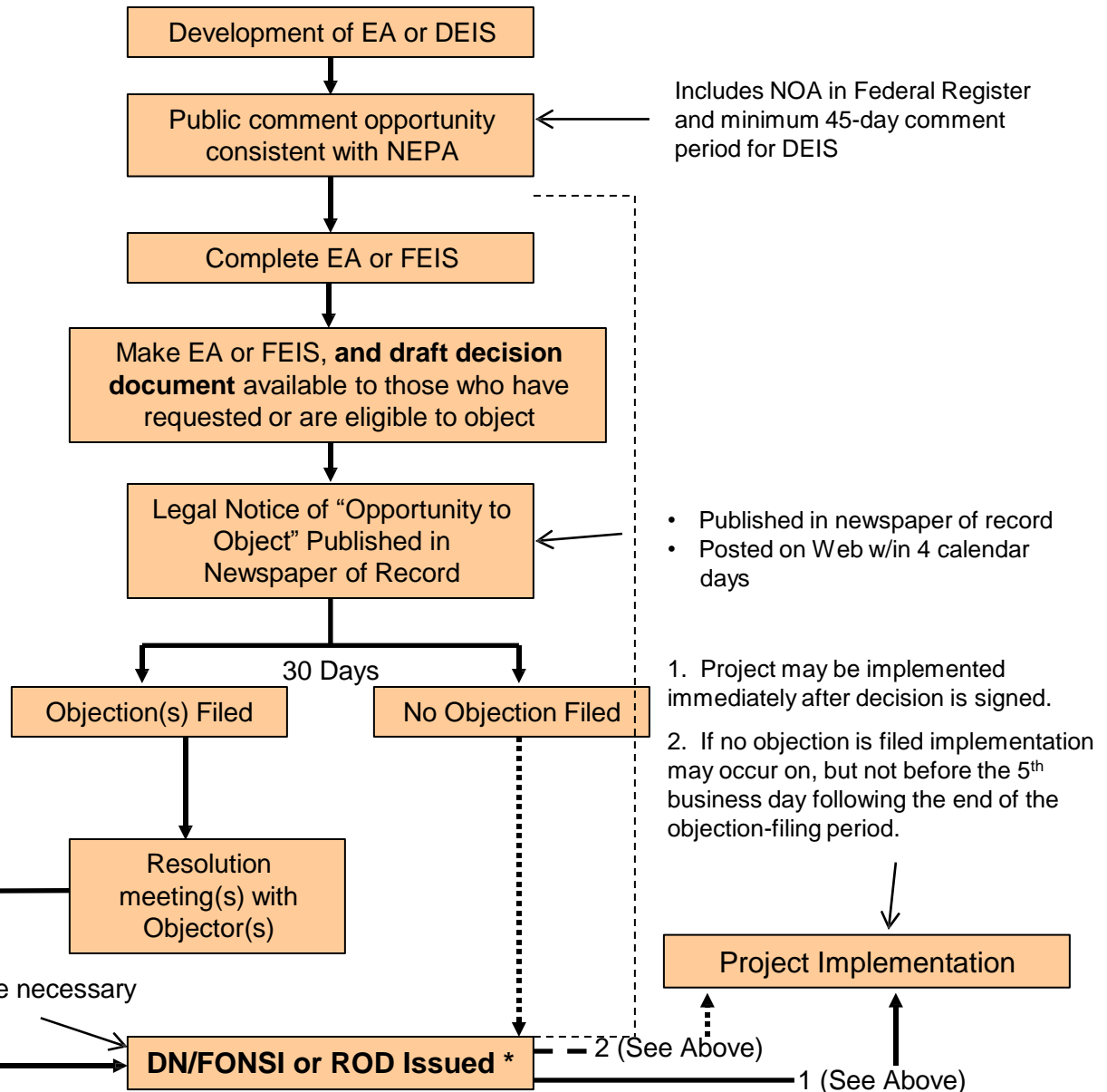
Objectors must have provided specific written comments.

Issues raised in objection must be based on previous comments unless they are based on new information that arose after the opportunity to comment.

Response must be written – Need not be point to point response.

Decision can be signed as soon as written objection response is made

LFRG 041714 Notes



# Lemhi Forest Restoration Group

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## Public Lands Building

Tuesday, July 8, 2014

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Meeting Summary

### Participants:

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Jerry Hamilton – Private Citizen	Maggie Seaberg – SCNF
Gina Knudson – SVS	Chuck Mark – SCNF
Michelle Tucker – SVS	Ken Gebhardt - SCNF
John Goodman – Moose Creek Estates	Christine Droske - SCNF
Karen Drnjevic – Lemhi County	John Roscoe – High Divide Consulting
Lynn Bennett --SCNF	Kristin Nesbit - SVS
Doug Leyva - SCNF	Hadley Roberts – Private Citizen
Tammy Stringham - LCEDA	Call-in Participants
Ken Rogers – SCNF	Dani Mazotta – Id Conservation League
Bob Cope – Lemhi County	John Robison - ICL
	Rob Mason – Wilderness Society

### Upper North Fork DEIS Update

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Chuck, Ken G. and Maggie will brief Regional Forester Nora Rasure Friday, 7/11 on the preferred alternative (alternative 1). The draft record of decision is underway to support that decision. Chuck stated that they will be focusing their meeting on the comments received and what has been done to address these concerns.

Maggie provided an estimated timeline:

- July 11 - Brief Regional Forester
- Week of July 14 - Final EIS in Federal Register
- Week of July 21 – Pre decisional objection period begins (if unresolved objections, 30 days objective resolution period, ending ~ Aug 30)
- Implementation can begin 5 days after the object period has ended. The SCNF doesn't anticipate any contracts before the new fiscal year and will spend the winter working on contracts for spring implementation.

### Wildlife

Ken G. informed the group that the SCNF held a productive meeting with ID Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) regarding carnivores, riparian and other wildlife concerns. He feels it was a successful meeting. Jim R. asked for more information regarding these discussions, particularly security cover for big game.

- Maggie explained elk security was emphasized in the IDFG meeting. The Pierce Creek trail change to non-motorized use will benefit the security buffer area.
- Commercial thinning treatments will have a less uniform spacing than that used in Hughes Creek and provide for clumps and openings while still meeting the silvicultural prescriptions. Clumps and openings will be left where they don't pose a threat to fuel loading and provide retention of healthiest tree(s). These areas will range from less than one to five acres. These leave trees should also help in retention of a seed source as replanting is not part of the project design.
- Jim R. asked for clarification on linear downed feet as he felt it was a minimal standard. Doug explained that this was a forest plan criteria and addressed production goals for prescribed fire. Christine explained that all burning was intended to be mosaic wherever possible. Jim would like to see monitoring from a wildlife perspective to address adaptive management relative to the results of the prescribed burning that includes adjacency, timing and can meet multiple objectives rather than just fuel loading. Doug explained that is part of the intent of having separate units and allows for modification for each unit as they progress to make certain that objectives for all resources are addressed. Jim felt it important to clearly state this in the EIS.
- Ken G. reminded the group that the purpose and need stated for this project is fuels reduction, there may be short term negative impacts from a fuels stand point for overall improvements for habitat. John R. added that wildlife habitat is an underlying goal of the project as an integrated approach to lead the forest environment to a healthier state.
- Maggie explained that some comments addressed concerns that all roads would have a shaded fuel break treatment on both sides of the road. This is not the case. Shaded fuel breaks are strategically placed to protect key assets such as Lost Trail.
- John R. asked that wildlife corridors in key areas be retained wherever possible. John recommends that this is explicitly stated in final and describe how they will be maintained and/or protected. If this project is challenged the weakest link in recent projects have been lynx.
- Jim R. asked if integrated design features in Appendix A could be referenced with each unit.

### **Treatment Options and Priorities**

John G. asked whether helicopter logging had been reduced in the preferred alternative and if that meant these areas would not be treated due to economics. Maggie said this has not been changed. The SCNF wanted to retain this option in steep or inaccessible areas (without roads) should the economy allow. These units are not restricted to helicopter logging per se and could be hand worked or burned.

Ken G. explained that the SCNF has a team addressing out-year plans and priorities for the Upper North Fork project. WUI and recent treatments will be priorities for implementation. The collaborative will have a chance to participate on the criteria and priority list. Ken would like to provide a draft plan with SCNF specialists and then invite collaborative and interested members of the community for input.



John G. would like Moose Creek Estates to be addressed as a priority in light of the work they have already put into the private land. Michelle feels Lost Trail also falls into this category as they have been doing hazardous tree and fuel treatments.

Michelle asked that stewardship contracting be considered in prioritization process and use of local work force. Gina reminded that we followed up with an implementation memo with Hughes Creek. The implementation memo addressed items such as contracting, monitoring, and public relations.

Jerry asked about use of available alternative logging systems. Ken explained that these systems are not limited by the EIS as long as they are able to meet prescription. This includes other options such as horse logging.

Jerry asked about re-entry for the treated areas. Doug and Maggie confirmed that the EIS doesn't cover any follow-up treatments for commercial harvest, only for prescribed burning. Jerry would like these to be identified as to when they would be recommended for re-treatment.

Gina asked whether the use of clumping and opening was a formal strategy for the SCNF. Ken explained this is an approach to mixed carnivores and ponderosa pine in many areas. Jim R. recommended contacting Dillon BLM where strategy has been used successfully for some time. He recommended this be cited in the assessment.

### **Other Upper North Fork Discussion**

Gina asked what other type of comments were received and whether they were substantive. Maggie explained that many of the comments were similar, particularly for wildlife. An overwhelming number of comments were received about the Hammerean Loop. No other comments that were markedly different from the comments received from Collaborative members.

Gina remarked that when this group started in 2006, a strong relationship did not exist between the IDFG and SCNF. The group agreed that this is expressly improved.

Michelle asked about preparing local contractors over the winter for upcoming work and if stewardship contracts are on the docket. Maggie recommended that post-fire season/fall would be a good time to discuss based on priority list. Ken G. stated that even if we have a big fire season he is committed to keeping work going on the home front.

Cope stated that this project seems to fit well with the Western Regional Cohesive Strategy. It would be a project they would be interested in and he suggested the Forest share information with the regional coordinator. Chuck agreed.

### **Jesse Creek Vegetation Survey**

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Doug updated the group on the Jesse Creek Vegetation Survey. A total of 804 plots were originally in the contract, and 170 were dropped as too hazardous to access. All but 44 are complete, the contractor is working this week. Doug feels this is quality work. The contractor is Bob Lewis of Jackson, Montana, and he hired two people out of Hamilton/Missoula area. The contractor has been surprised by how inaccessible the area is. Data from the survey will give information regarding species distribution, number, snags per acre, fuel loading, and tree and canopy base height. Will also help determine where high fire risk areas are and mortality due to insect and disease. Jesse Creek has ranked out primarily in the Douglas fir habitat types.

### **Other**

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Gina asked about Farm Bill project – the Jesse Creek insect and disease project proposed to the Governor. The Forest has not had an update. Cope thinks it is still unfunded. Region 1 may have tried to issue decision using the categorical exclusion and may have been challenged. Lynn has heard that implementation dollars would come from above base and associated competitive criteria. Cope feels we will rank well.

Michelle informed the group that RAC funded multiparty monitoring for \$7,000. The original application was for \$15,000, but many projects went unfunded.

Gina updated the group on a restoration economy tracking project SVS is completing. It was hard to track USFS dollars spent on contracts. If any partners are interested SVS has a template now that will help standardize project funding data collection. The final Hughes Creek Socio Economic Report is available on the SVS website. The Fact Sheet is being developed. Cope said the new Forest Planning Rule emphasizes socioeconomic considerations and it is good that we are ahead of the game.

Maggie updated the group on two small salvage projects -- Cougar Phelan and Deep Creek, each under 250 acres, near roads. Both sales will be advertised as small commercial sale. Maggie will send advertisement electronically to SVS.

Hadley asked for clarification for the process for a forest plan amendment. Maggie and Ken R. explained that if it is site specific, an amendment can be done under a NEPA assessment such as the Upper North Fork EIS. If anything your project is proposing doesn't meet the forest plan, you state it in the NEPA assessment and disclose effects. If the amendment is permanent or forest-wide, there is a separate process.

**NEXT MEETING:** Will be scheduled after objection period. TBD.

**Lemhi Forest Restoration Group (LFRG) Meeting**  
**Idaho Fish and Game Conference Room**  
**Thursday, October 17, 2014**

**Participants:**

*Beth Waterbury (ID Dept of Fish & Game),  
Jessie Shallow (IDFG)  
Kim Murphy (Natl Marine Fisheries)  
Dani Mazotta (Id Conservation League)  
Bob Russell, LFRG  
Ken Gebhardt (Salmon-Challis N.F)  
Bill Baer (Bureau of Land Management)  
Gary Power, LFRG  
Gina Knudson (Salmon Valley Stewardship)  
Hadley Roberts, LFRG  
Jerry Hamilton, LFRG  
John Goodman (Moose Ck Estates)*

*Bob Cope (Lemhi County)  
Karin Drnjevic (Lemhi County)  
Lynn Bennett, (SCNF)  
Michelle Tucker (SVS)  
Doug Leyva (SCNF)  
Tyre Holfetz (ID Dept of Lands)  
Rob Mason (Wilderness Society)  
Jim Roscoe (High Divide Consulting)  
Jim Tucker (SCNF)*

**Action Items in RED:**

*Cope stated he would like to more strongly align our group with the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy. He recommends making this a standing agenda item and to forward an agenda to Katie Lighthall in Bend Oregon before meetings.*

*The Forest Service gave an update on upcoming harvest activities: Ankle Deep commercial firewood sale and Sagewood commercial personal use sale each under 250 acres. State highway dept. will be doing work from Lost Trail within easement and/or 30 feet from center line. Topped, limbed and chipped. Jeff Eagle at state highway dept. is point-of-contact. State highway contacted SCNF as a courtesy. Group suggested any firewood potential from this work should be considered for county firewood program for residents in need.*

**Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP)**

*Last spring, group came to consensus that we would like to prepare for a CFLR when/if the next funding is available. We agreed that Lemhi County would be our boundary. Forest Service GIS shop will be responsible for making initial map of existing restoration projects. Forest Service representatives confirmed that they should have capacity to accomplish this task.*

**Salmon Municipal Watershed Project**

*The Forest Service has invited Missoula Fire Lab personnel to a Salmon Municipal Watershed field trip on Oct 23 to review the Ridge Road, outside and adjacent to the Jesse Creek project. Those interested in attending can meet at Supervisors Office at 9am. The project that was submitted to the Governor's Office under the Farm Bill insect/disease streamlined environmental*

analysis program was approved by Gov's Office. While the Farm Bill did give authority for projects, additional funding was not part of legislation that was passed. The Forest Service can use existing budgets for these projects.

## Upper North Fork

*Upper North Fork Update and Next Steps:* No objections were received for the project proposal. Ken explained that they anticipate a signed record of decision once the fisheries services provide a biological opinion (BO). Some terms and conditions required by the service may need further discussion. Kim informed the group that a draft BO has been submitted for review.

Gina expressed the need for the group to re-engage during implementation as we had done in Hughes Creek. She reminded the group of the implementation memo for Hughes Creek which provided guidance for collaborative work on public relations, provide input on stewardship contracting, and conduct multiparty monitoring. *Will circulate Hughes memo as an example.*

Ken provided a draft implementation plan for input and feedback. District and forest staff consolidated plans to implement all project features. This plan provides a draft treatment schedule from 2015 – 2017 and summarizes the decision factors behind scheduling. Priorities are WUI, existing projects and fire scars. Strategic about future treatments under this three year plan.

Gina asked about contracting vehicles for 2015. She encouraged the Forest Service to consider using **stewardship contracting** where appropriate particularly considering material utilization and local economic development. She recommended we utilize a stewardship contracting subcommittee again for this project. LCEDA still has an agreement in place however Region 4 has been resistant to using stewardship agreements. Regional specialists are due to visit to open this discussion. *The group requested time to meet with contracting specialists when/if they come to Salmon.* The group agreed it is important to keep this contracting mechanism available to assist in local use of workforce. Doug suggested that local contractors should work to get on Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) register. However, it is unknown when this register opens to new companies again. In the past, few local companies have had capacity to contract via IDIQ. Bonding for small companies is also an issue. *Bob R., John G., Doug, and Karin agreed to work on stewardship contracting subcommittee.*

**Multi-party monitoring:** Michelle felt the draft implementation plan was very helpful in planning for multi-party monitoring. Beth asked if the forest would be inventorying aspen stands and whether the aspen working group could assist on inventory. Doug explained that the 2013 infrared maps (NAIP) did not pick up all aspen but was fairly accurate on larger stands. Gina noted that for Hughes Ck monitoring Jake Kreilick of Wild West Institute invested a lot of his time and acquired grants to help with monitoring activities. SVS has received some funding from the Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee (CIRAC). Dani stated she feels monitoring helps to support future endeavors and tells a strong story. *Dani is willing to visit with ICL about support.* Cope stated monitoring was important for adaptive management and this is going to become increasingly important. Pre- and post –treatment data will be important for telling the story. Rob asked about resource area monitoring in particular wildlife component. Jerry would like to monitor the silvicultural prescriptive process. He put in plots after Clear Creek Fire and will share with group.

Beth feels wildlife effectiveness monitoring is important but IDFG is limited by staffing capacity. There is not a lot of information for the project area. Jim R. reminded the group that monitoring could be a moving target in terms of climate. Need to be aware that information for climatic conditions is important. Cope echoes the need to factor in external influences and identify what impacts are beyond the scope of the project. Cope and Michelle also feel socioeconomic

*monitoring is very important. John G., Hadley, Rob M., Jim R., Dani, Jerry H., and Beth would like to participate in monitoring subcommittee.*

### **LRFG Website Demonstration**

*The website for multiparty monitoring in Hughes Creek is ready to launch. CIRAC funded this project to enable Salmon Valley Stewardship to share monitoring data more easily and make it available to all partners. The site was developed in cooperation with the US Geological Service and meets security requirements for the Forest Service.*

### **Other Business**

*Tyre updated the group on the Nature Conservancy (TNC) fire adapted communities pilot programs. The upcoming national roll out will mean other areas can participate in program. Cope explained involvement in Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) are important to participate in these programs. Lemhi County updated CWPP to prioritize three areas that align with Cohesive Strategy. More information can be found at [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org)*

*Idaho Forest Restoration Partners next meeting is set for Feb 18 and 19, 2015 in Boise.*

### **Next Meeting**

*The group agreed to set up quarterly meetings in the future. Next meeting on week of Jan 20. SVS will send out scheduling poll to pick best day.*



## Field Trip to Upper North Fork Proposed Temporary Road Site 10-17-14

*Attendees: Dani Mazotta, Gary Power, Jerry Hamilton, Gina Knudson, Ken Gebhardt, Jim Tucker, Lynn Bennett*



**Figure 1 LFRG members visited the location above Moose Ck Estates where a temporary road will be constructed.**

# Lemhi Forest Restoration Group (LFRG)

## *Meeting Summary*

*Wednesday, January 21, 2015*

*9 am – 12 pm*

*Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Salmon Region Conference Room*

*Our Mission: Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools*

### **Action items emphasized in underline.**

#### ***Participants:***

Beth Waterbury – Idaho Dept Fish & Game (IDFG)

Kim Murphy – National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

Bob Russell – Citizen

Ken Gebhardt – Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF)

Gary Power – Salmon Valley Stewardship (SVS) board

Gina Knudson – SVS Staff

Jerry Hamilton – Citizen

Karin Drnjevic – Lemhi County

Lynn Bennett – SCNF

Michelle Tucker – SVS Staff

Doug Leyva – SCNF

Tyre Holfeltz – Id Dept of Lands (IDL)

Jim Roscoe – High Divide Consulting

Louise Bruce – High Divide Consulting

Riley Rhoades – SCNF

Suzy Avey – SVS Staff

John Jakovac – Lemhi County Commissioner

Mike Smith – SCNF

Bob Cope – Citizen, Retired Lemhi Co. Commissioner

Christine Droske -- SCNF

### ***Large Landscape Approach - in the style of Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP)***

Gina briefed the group on last spring's LFRG meeting when we discussed CFLRP. The program was intended to encourage collaborative groups to bring projects to larger scale. Multi-year funds granted for these projects cannot be used for planning, but are used for implementation and monitoring. The first two program rounds were in 2010 and 2012. The Forest Service has significant resource commitment to these large, multi-year projects, so the likelihood of a new round of funding being announced in near future is slim.

That being said, landscape scale projects proposed collaboratively seem to be the new way of doing business. By going through process of completing a CFLRP application, we are preparing our group for future funding, which may be CFLRP or other competitive funding.

The CFLRP requires defined landscape scale project boundaries that are collaboratively designed. Last spring the LFRG committed to a project area boundary that would encompass Lemhi County.

Ken is very supportive of the landscape approach, but reminded the group that if selected as a CFLRP, that project impacts the entire forest and can pull resources from other forest priorities. The group agreed that these are important considerations.

Ken is excited about mapping resource issues and conditions on the SCNF, and using the map to identify where there are overlapping priorities to target future projects. This information can help guide the forest 5 year plan. Christine presented a map to demonstrate how the landscape map can be used.

GIS data goes back into the 90s on SCNF. Ken is proposing a forest wide map for previous 20 years that includes information such as the national watershed condition framework (WCF) as well as national terrestrial data available. Ken anticipates that overlapping polygons/areas will represent resource components and provide direction for treatment and establish priorities. Doesn't preclude small project where an area needs help.

Cope feels this is a great step and will have good support from landowners. Sage grouse is very important in this process. He cautions not to tie into condition class too much. WCF does answer some good questions but wants to take to a broader scale. Cope feels we need general overarching goals. John J. agreed this map could help prioritize and define specific goals. Gary thinks birthdates for previous treatments are very important to re-assess if needs are being met. Items considered for landscape map include WCF, historic range of variability,

Governor's priority insect/disease layer, community wildfire protection plan, fire history, as well as planned, present and past projects.

Michelle mentioned that similar landscape mapping exercises are being conducted by other partners such as Office of Species Conservation and Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Project. Jim R. pointed out



that most Land Use Plans revisions and Resource Management Plans (RMPs) are large mapping exercises. All of these efforts could contribute to or benefit from a comprehensive map.

Jim R. voiced concern for forest staff capacity and bottle necks are limiting what we can do. With landscape scale how do collaboratives come into play? Gina agreed that collaboratives can create work but can also help address other capacity issues if strategically approached. Tyre recommended state support such as Idaho Forest Restoration Partner (IFRP) participation. State may be able to pull in larger groups to help.

Kim mentioned that with increased scale agencies don't always have the capacity to monitor and meet the needs of endangered species consultation monitoring. Collaboratives have opportunity to support monitoring workload. Much of the monitoring required by consultation could be supplemented by assistant or programmatic support up front with umbrella monitoring that complements all. Consultation monitoring requirements drive project planning. Current approach and limited staff capacity are causing federal land management agencies to fall behind on requirements. Could the collaborative convene federal land management agencies and regulators and help find a streamlined approach that still met priority monitoring objectives?

Tyre thinks we each have a niche that we can specialize with our partners such as key species indicators for treatment. Research is out there, but how do you narrow the scope to make it manageable? Doug pointed out that it is important to determine the metric to look at the issues and find agreement up front for what will be credible and useable data. Beth feels that monitoring for wildlife standards are not always obtainable. A lot of non-game data is lacking but need to consider standards and protocols. Tyre pointed out the importance of defining that process up front to make certain process is sound, repeatable and defensible from the beginning. Kim stated that getting information out to public to garner more support for actions may foster adaptive management strategy. Trust and credibility is important to share on a broader scale.

Jerry emphasized the need to follow the prescriptive process for past treatment. The complications of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) have lessened the chances that this routine maintenance happens. John J. agrees monitoring objectives need to be streamlined. Tyre suggested that modeling may reduce work load and in particular field time. Michelle agreed but wants ground truthing. Jim R. emphasized that local perspectives need to be addressed that modeling doesn't always speak to. Validating on the ground is very important. Jim feels this comes into strategic planning discussion as we consider more responsibility in limited funding and capacity.

### ***LFRG Strategic Plan***

Existing LFRG strategic plan was completed in 2008 and intended to provide strategy for 3-5 yrs. Do we need to re-visit? Gina can find assistance to go through a revision or update of strategic plan. Does it feel worthwhile, does the group want that?

John J. feels the plan is still a good representation of our group. He doesn't want to lose focus on our core issues stated in the mission. He feels we are able to meet the goals established with existing capacity. Including a larger Lemhi County Landscape is enough of a challenge for the group at this time.

Gary summarized Rob Mason's recommendations for strategic planning. Rob encouraged the group to expand our influence into other areas such as:

- Greater sage-grouse: How can the most-intact and highest density sage-grouse habitat area be permanently protected in a way that makes sense for ranchers and Lemhi County?
- Cattle grazing: How can we ensure that cattle grazing on public lands will continue into the indefinite future as an important aspect of the economy, heritage and culture of Lemhi County in the face of potential uncertainty from sage-grouse, invasive weeds, and other destabilizing challenges?
- Wildfire Prevention & Suppression (includes Restoration): How do we ensure appropriate wildfire management in order to preserve the native ecosystem?
- Economies: How do we maintain/enhance existing natural resources-based economic opportunities and diversify into new ones?
- Ecological values: How do we best protect and enhance the value of anadromous fisheries, wildlife habitat, and wildlife connectivity corridors into the future, especially in the face of climate change?
- Backcountry/Wildland values: How do we protect the unspoiled and wild places critical to the long-term health of the area and many of the resources that we value?

"The Wilderness Society would like to propose that the LFRG expand the scope of its mission and vision to address all public land natural resource issues within Lemhi County, including but not limited to the issues listed above, using a collaborative-based approach to resolving land management issues."

Gary noted the existing strategic plan does not represent some issues where we have found agreement (such as wildlife), but he feels the overall core values have remained constant. Gary felt Rob was asking the group to really broaden our scope. He feels we have done a phenomenal job in our area of focus.

Bob noted that we have evolved enough to say who we need in the room at a minimum, do we have these folks and what are our transition strategies?

John J. said there are already several groups working on sage grouse issues, and we should be careful not to duplicate these efforts.

Jim R. emphasized that we need to remind ourselves of the issues we are considering, what are our partner constraints. For example, he asked where is the forest biologist? If we tried to expand as Rob suggests, would we exceed capacity of our existing structure? Jim R. emphasized that with the inclusion of all of Lemhi County we are already taking on an expansion.

Beth feels what Rob is suggesting would stretch our capacity. She thinks it is a good idea to continue to focus on forest and interface with other lands and habitats. Beth recommended that changes to the strategic plan should be minimal revisions and not take too much energy.

Lynn pointed out that when we started we had limited resources and knew we had to be focused and tied to accomplishment. We used a coarse filter approach and focused on structure and process to find agreement.

Gina reminded of the group decision on the Breaks project as an example when we provided support of a project but we decided not to fully engage because the project did not fit with all our filters.

In conclusion, the group agreed that our strategic plan is representative of the group's values and committed resources. Gina asked all members to look closely at the strategic plan and send in recommended edits. These edits will be available by the next meeting in April 14 for consideration and approval by the group.

### ***Upper North Fork Project (UNF Project)***

Ken G. updated the group on the UNF project. The draft 5 year plan presented at our last meeting has not changed much. The 1<sup>st</sup> sale will be Stateline. The forest is considering using a stewardship contract for this sale. 2<sup>nd</sup> sale being considered in UNF is skyline work. Ken reported this might not be a good fit for the use of the stewardship agreement. Recent discussions with Lemhi County Economic Development Association (LCEDA) indicate they don't feel they are prepared for a large project such as Stateline so the stewardship agreement will not be used for this initial work.

Gina reminded the group that Hughes Creek used both a stewardship agreement and contract. Michelle asked how West Salzar went as it was a stewardship contract and if lessons learned will help move this forward. The forest feels that their contracting office is better equipped to approach Stateline after their experiences on West Salzar. Doug reported that West Salzar had more timber value so Stateline may cost more.

John J. asked if stewardship agreements versus contracts were preferred. Doug and Ken emphasized that all tools would be considered. Ken and Chuck Mark, SCNF Supervisor, are considering an entire suite of options for the UNF Project that will allow the forest to meet collaborative agreements and treatment goals.

The forest has held a couple of meetings with LCEDA and forest contracting. LCEDA and the forest are looking for small sale opportunities. State Line will include the use of 1.2 miles of temporary roads. Retained receipts from the timber sale will be needed to complete other project objectives and restore the road. The forest won't know until contract is bid and awarded if there will be any receipts to retain on the project.

Mike S. pointed out the in the LCEDA meetings they learned they don't have to have a service contract in timber sale in same NEPA assessment area. The Stewardship Agreement with LCEDA is for the entire North Zone. This enables other sales in the North Zone to contribute to the retained receipt value. This must be considered when writing the Supplement Project Agreement (SPA).

Michelle reminded the forest that we had used best value criteria for Hughes Creek and asked that the forest review the socio economic report for lessons learned through this process. She also asked if the forest would continue to use the criteria developed with LFRG and the forest. She emphasized the need

of the forest to place a requirement in the contracts to help track socio-economic value that summarizes use of local labor and resource. Cope emphasized the need for this documentation. Gina pointed out that Forest contracting officers should require a summary of how the contractor met best value criteria so socioeconomic monitoring can be accomplished as efficiently as possible. Michelle asked if a collaborative member could serve on the selection committee on Upper North Fork like Karin did for Hughes Creek. Mike recommended we convene our Contracting Subcommittee to answer many of these questions.

The issue of match under the stewardship agreement was raised by LCEDA at the recent meetings. All agree that the organization doesn't have to put match up front, but it needs to be provided over the life of the agreement. Regional forester has discretion to reduce to 5 % from 20% but this has not been done. The group acknowledged how hard the SCNF has worked to meet local economic goals of collaborative, persevering on a very steep learning curve.

Gina updated the group on the potential creation of a statewide stewardship agreement to implement these agreements across the entire state. Id Dept of Lands is taking the lead, but entity would be a new non-profit organization. May help solve the issue of capacity of smaller groups like LCEDA, and industry has shown interest providing cash and in-kind match. This aligns with the Western push for better management and state input for public lands. Montana is already using a similar model

Doug relayed that the Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) register for timber will expire in next year. Ken realizes it is a challenge to go through the process but he feels it is worth the effort. He encourages the group to work with LCEDA and FS contracting officer Judy Martin to offer training. Small Business Administration may have resources available. This may be released as early as spring 2016.

### ***Multiparty Monitoring***

Cope participates in the Western Region Cohesive Fire Strategy committee and reported that adaptive management is being heavily discussed. He asked if we have recently outlined our desired future conditions for Upper North Fork. Michelle reported that most of the monitoring we have done to date was to establish baseline and effectiveness of treatment. Cope agreed that monitoring is impossible without a baseline.

Michelle reported that the last monitoring plan we had was designed by Jake Kreilick (Wild West Institute) for Hughes Creek.

Beth asked about monitoring funding and grant funding. She understands that most funders want to see on the ground work and are not as supportive of monitoring. Michelle reported that the loss of Secure Rural Schools funding (delivered locally through Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee) was going to be hard on monitoring efforts because they have provided a significant portion of our work to date. Beth asked what we could expect from the forest for help in monitoring and what realistic options are. She recommended we laser in on key issues due to funding and capacity constraints. Cope feels it is important to assess what data has already been collected. Beth said we might need to focus on vegetative treatments as they are what we can manage as a collaborative and tie to our mission. Jim R. stated it was important to pair down to priorities and ensure we maintain credibility. Michelle reminded

the group of the Rapid Assessment process being used in Montana. Michelle will send out an invite for a Multiparty Monitoring Subcommittee meeting in the next couple weeks.

### ***Calendar***

Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership, Boise, Feb 18-19, 2015. Travel assistance is available.

Next possible meeting dates for LFRG: April 14, 15, 21, 28-30

# Lemhi Forest Restoration Group (LFRG)

## Meeting Summary

*Wednesday April 16, 2015*

*10 am – 11 am*

*SVS Office/Conference Call*

*Our Mission: Enhance forest health and economic opportunities in Lemhi County through collaborative engagement of restoration projects and Wildland Urban Interface/community protection using stewardship contracting and other tools.*

### *Participants:*

Beth Waterbury – Idaho Dept Fish & Game

Kim Murphy – National Marine Fisheries Service

Ken Gebhardt – Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF)

Gary Power – Salmon Valley Stewardship (SVS) board

Gina Knudson – SVS Staff

Jerry Hamilton – Citizen

Lynn Bennett – SCNF

Michelle Tucker – SVS Staff

Dani Mazotta – Idaho Conservation League

Jim Tucker – SCNF

Hadley Roberts - Citizen

Toni Ruth – Back Country Horsemen and Anglers

Louise Wagenknecht – Citizen

### *Upper North Fork Project Implementation Memo:*

Gina asked for comments on the draft Implementation Memo sent out to LFRG members through email.

Ken stated that he had reviewed the memo and wanted to make clear that there are going to be times when the SCNF needs to rely on the trust built with the Collaborative as they are very busy and may not be able to share information in a timely manner.

Michelle feels that the communication has greatly improved over the past few years and the Collaborative is asking to be considered not only in the public notification process but also in order to assist the SCNF in public outreach for Collaborative projects.

Gina emphasized that the Collaborative isn't asking to micromanage the SCNF.

Gina called for any objections to the Implementation Memo. None received. SVS will send out an electronic copy for member signature.

### *Update on Farm Bill*

Ken updated the group on the SCNF plans for the use of the categorical exclusion under the Farm Bill:

The South Zone Farm Bill Project will be the Forest's 2015 priority, Big Hills Project on Challis/Yankee Fork. A project initiation letter is underway.

The Forest Priority for 2016 will be the North Zone Farm Bill Project Ken would like to solicit LFRG assistance in drafting the proposed action and purpose and need. Right now they anticipate that firefighter safety and municipal watershed protection will be a priority. A project initiation letter will be out this fall and a decision is planned for 2016. Implementation will occur after 2016..

Gina offered to send our notes from the 3/6/14 LFRG meeting where we discussed the Farm Bill and assisted the SCNF in identifying the proposed project areas for members who were not in attendance.

Ken clarified that from here out, to avoid confusion; the North Zone Farm Bill Project is different than the Jesse Creek Project. The proposed North Zone Farm Bill Project is being proposed for an area west of the Ridge Road. Gina reminded the group of the antiquated City of Salmon/SCNF agreement for the Municipal Watershed. This will need to be addressed before moving forward on the Municipal Watershed Project.

### *Multiparty Monitoring (MPM)*

Michelle reminded the group that team assignments are due back Friday. She has heard back from most groups. Once this information is received she will consolidate and schedule a meeting for the Sub Committee.

Toni asked if there is an updated implementation schedule.

Ken will get one together for the group.

Michelle offered that Ken provided this in the last MPM meeting and it is in the notes. She will re-send this to Toni and Dani to use until Ken has a new version available.

### *Joint Chiefs Project*

Gina explained that SVS has reached out to Mark Olson with NRCS to discuss ways the LFRG could assist the NRCS in the upcoming Joint Chiefs Project. Mark's schedule is very busy but will let the group know as soon as a date is set.

Lynn told the group a public meeting has been tentatively scheduled for May 4 in Gibbonsville.

Gina asked that LFRG be include in the notification of the meetings.

### *H.R. 2 – Secure Rural Schools*

This bill passed the senate and it is anticipated that RAC funding will be reauthorized for two years once it goes to the House.

### *Next Meeting – To be determined*

## NRCS - Upper North Fork – Joint Chiefs Project

May 11, 2015

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### Attendees:

Lynn Bennett, Salmon-Challis National Forest

Melissa Sartor (SCNF)

Doug Leyva (SCNF)

Michelle Tucker, Salmon Valley Stewardship

Gina Knudson (SVS)

Mark Olson, Natural Resource Conservation Service

Tammy Stringham, Lemhi County Economic Development Association

Karin Drnjevic, Lemhi County Wildland Urban Interface

## Joint Chiefs Award for Upper North Fork – NRCS Implementation Plan

Mark explained that NRCS's original proposal was for \$240K with \$40K to be spent in Year 1, and \$100K each in Years 2 & 3. Instead, it appears the funding will all need to be obligated this year.

Although the Salmon office of NRCS doesn't typically deal with forestry concerns, they are very familiar with working with private landowners on agriculture issues. The process will be very similar.

- Funds can be spent on private lands fuels reduction. Private land must be within the North Fork watershed.
- Advertisement soliciting applications from landowners will be posted for 30 days starting Thursday, May 14, in the Salmon Recorder-Herald and Idaho Falls Post Register.
- Applications will be ranked. SCNF has worked with Mark to identify National Forest lands in the area that have had recent vegetation management or are slated to through Upper North Fork. Lynn displayed the map they had created. **Mark invited collaborative members to offer other ranking criteria.**
- Ranking process will take place at the end of June.
- Landowners will work directly with contractors. NRCS has a specified price for each type of work (thinning, slash pile disposal, etc). Landowners will be paid this amount for work completed, regardless of whether the contractor price is more or less than the specified rate. Pay rates do take into account more specialized work, such as tree removal services close to homes or other structures. Fee structure is consistent throughout the Northwest.
- From the time of award, landowners must commence work on their property within one year, but the work can be completed over a time period not to exceed 10 years. Mark expects most of the work will be completed in a shorter time period, i.e. 2-3 years.
- Technical assistance for silvicultural prescriptions, best management practices, etc. will be available to landowners from Northern Idaho NRCS forestry specialists. Possibility that



Idaho Dept of Lands foresters may also help.

- Federal funding and project is ground disturbing so National Environmental Policy Act is triggered. Mark expects to be able to process most of the work under a Categorical Exclusion.

### **How can collaborative help?**

- Help spread the word and recruit landowner participation!
- If there is desire to be part of the ranking process or suggest ranking criteria, contact Mark Olson.
- Several people in town took the contract inspection workshop put on by the SCNF and SVS last year. Inspectors can't be paid from NRCS funds, but landowners may want to pay out of their own pocket to assure quality work.
- Mark's experience is that some landowners don't have a written contract with the people performing work. Group could provide templates (Northern Idaho has many examples).
- Forest Service plans to identify example units to demonstrate desired outcomes.
- Collaborative could host a 1-day workshop to provide info for landowners, and follow the info session with a job fair where contractors could have booths offering their services.