

## **BITTERROOT RESTORATION COMMITTEE (BRC)**

November 9, 2009

### **Session Summary**

#### **SESSION OBJECTIVES**

1. Catch up with each other.
2. Discuss the Butterfly field trip and review the latest information on the Butterfly Creek project access issues.
3. Continue discussion on the Darby Lumber Lands and where possible, other possible projects.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Bill Grasser	Wayne Hedman	Mike Jeffords	Gary Milner
Paul Moore	Ron Porter	Steve Powell	Adam Rissien
Kirk Thompson			
Virginia Tribe - Facilitator			

#### **TECHNICAL ADVISORS/OBSERVERS**

Dave Campbell	Julie King	Dan Ritter	Ed Snook
Ruth Wooding	Zach, Jake and Sherry (Bitterroot Forest engineers and Silviculturist; apologies that I don't have last names)		

#### **COMPLETED AGENDA ITEMS**

##### **Approving the September Meeting Summary**

Bitterroot Restoration Committee members approved the September 21 meeting summary without revisions or additions.

##### **Updates...Catching up**

##### **Committee Co-Chair Report**

- Bill Grasser attended the MFRC meeting and reported on the access issues related to the Butterfly project.
- Adam Rissien reported that the Lolo Restoration Committee had a checklist used for thinking about finding for their projects and would send it to BRC members. He also raised a discussion question about the term "restoration" versus Forest health – what is it we are trying to do? Dave Campbell supplied the following Forest Service restoration site: <http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/index.shtml> and site containing guidelines for submitting proposals (note the 50,000 acre criteria) <http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR/submittingproposals.shtml>

### **Updates cont.**

- Bill Grasser attended the Extension Service “mini college” session that involved Dr. Peter Kolb, Montana State University and his recent publications concerning Forest management and beetles. Bill was quite impressed with the presentation. The following web site contains the testimony of Peter Kolb regarding Bark Beetles before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power Hearing on Mountain Pine Beetle: Strategies For Protecting The West, June 16, 2009 - <http://westinstenv.org/ffsci/2009/07/01/testimony-of-dr-peter-kolb-on-mountain-pine-beetle/> . After discussion, Committee members decided that they would like to have presentations on climate change and bark beetle spread and how beetle damage might effect selection of restoration projects.
- Wayne reported that the Resource Advisory Council (RAC) is continuing its exploration about biomass. He asked that Committee members find one article on biomass (google, library, etc.) and read it to add to our information and knowledge about the topic – and use those articles for Committee discussion. Dave Campbell has provided the Committee with the following Fire Science e-mail address that contains information on biomass that might be useful to the group - <http://www.firescience.gov/Digest/FSdigest6.pdf>.
- It appears that there won't be any new members at the table at this time. The group hopes that Cameron will return to the Committee when his Fulbright is completed in April.

### **Committee Projects**

#### **Butterfly Creek**

- After limited discussion with Forest Service engineers about the Butterfly Creek project access issue, Committee members affirmed their agreement to look at access as a new phase of the project and where useful, continue to explore and discuss access options as new data is available.
- Committee members also agreed to explore the possibility of expanding the Butterfly project to include the adjacent mistletoe infested area and/or the lower Butterfly Creek road and riparian area.

#### **Darby Lumber Lands**

- Steve and Paul will work with Forest Service personnel to draft a Committee letter in support of Regional funding for Darby Lumber Lands projects.
- Legacy road funds might be available for planning for the Darby Lands. Those funds total approximately 90 million dollars.

### **Darby Lumber Lands cont.**

- Based on the Committees initial framework for the Darby Lands, Ed Snook suggested that the Committee identify those areas that should be managed with a conservation emphasis and those that should be considered for active management. The general management concept for the area should address quality in terms of roads; response to beetle infestation; bull trout and important riparian areas; maintenance of green stands; recreation; and education.
- Ed also suggested that the vegetation regeneration map could be used as a tool to overlay on roads, watershed, and fish habitat – and help the Committee arrive at a more specific Darby Lands project area. He will bring the overlays to the Committee’s December 14 meeting.
- Mike reported on the progress that off-road recreation organizations have made on inventorying roads in the Darby Lands. Mike will bring the inventory information on Sections 1, 2, 5 and 11 to the December meeting. The Committee also tentatively agreed that Sections 1, 2, and 3 might offer a specific project that could be showcased.
- Discussion among Committee members included the possible use of a “decision tree” or criteria for classifying roads and their management.
- The Committee will attempt to define a project area for the Darby Lands at their December meeting.

### **Other Possible Project Areas**

- In addition to exploratory discussion regarding expansion of the Butterfly area, and a fairly large Darby Lands project, Committee members identified the following as possible project areas:
  - Committee response/comments on the West Fork project as it moves through the NEPA process
  - “3 Saddle” area discussed by the Forest Silviculturist
  - Review and comments on other projects going through the NEPA process
- First steps would include identifying restoration/Forest Health objectives for project areas.

### **Where do we go from here?**

- Exploring the transition to a new facilitator
- Affirming/setting the calendar for 2010
- Agenda items for the January meeting