

LINCOLN RESTORATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 9, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Location: Lincoln District Headquarters, USFS, Lincoln, Montana

Attendance: Joe Kerkuliet, Linda Brander, Amber Kamps, Bill Cyr, Jim Paris, Scott Brennan, Becky Garland, John Goroch, Paul Roos, Brent Anderson, Brian Kahn, Ken Pearson, Dwight Crawford, Tom DeLuca, Al Christopherson, Debbie Cuyle (Note taker)

Notes from March meeting approved.

Brian summarized the group's origins as part of the Montana Forest Restoration Committee and its efforts to have citizen generated, restoration-driven projects, to enable restoration work to get done on the ground. The Forest Service is not a formal member of restoration committee, which is a private initiative, but is an important informational resource, and an informal and essential partner, since it is the agency which implements the actual work to be done.

Scott summarized some efforts of the Lolo Restoration Committee to illustrate how the process is moving forward there. Some projects have been approved by the group, with larger scale projects in the pipeline.

Amber reviewed the Ponderosa Pine Map which showed where ponderosa pine is located throughout the (Lincoln Gulch?) area. She focused her presentation on vegetation treatment opportunities and fisheries issues for this meeting. As she gets more restoration opportunity information from her staff, she will report on it to the group. A table with a list of project opportunities was provided, and corresponded to a map to facilitate the group's understanding the locations.

Amber also discussed prescribed fire potential in the Black and Bull Mountain areas and along the Lone Point corridor. She indicated that this landscape is to a point where we don't know how much longer we can suppress these fires anymore. Any large scale fire also has the potential to jeopardize the Lincoln Springs Subdivision.

There was discussion as to whether this area was suitable/appropriate for a restoration project under the MFRC principles, as well as the appropriate timing of the group's considering projects beyond the Lincoln Gulch project boundaries agreed to at an earlier meeting.

Paul suggested the group continue to focus on the same areas as couple meetings ago and keep our eyes open regarding larger focus. Find a project to build credibility and trust with a smaller project then the group can work on larger scale projects next. Focus on small projects but keep eyes on the bigger picture. Tom noted that the Seeley Lake Group focused on dry mountain forest types for their first restoration projects. In large part most of the interested parties agree that restoration of Ponderosa pine/Douglas fir stands are good projects. The restoration options there are desirable because there is less scientific dispute and more public support.

The importance of starting with a project that was doable, and building trust and larger scale was discussed.

Jim Paris identified an area to start with in the Lincoln Gulch/Lone Point sections with the possibilities of fire, vegetation, etc. some work is being done in the gulch by Lewis & Clark County, so this group should concentrate our efforts to build on what the County and the community has already done to protect this heavily populated area and historical sites.

Gary supported moving forward on the Lincoln Gulch area, as did Al.

Becky indicated interest in knowing of broader opportunities for restoration work.

Brian pointed to the Lolo RC's history of starting work on a project while "carrying water on both shoulders" by having an additional pipeline of other potential projects for assessment.

The sense of the group was to maintain focus, and move forward on Lincoln Gulch, while being open to considering others.

Culvert and creek rehab possibilities were discussed.

For the next meeting the Forest Service was asked to prepare a map to show specifically the Lincoln Gulch project area identified by the group at an earlier meeting. The group will then focus initial projects in that project area.

A working group of Scott, Amber, Al, Brent, Jim, Becky, and Dwight will have a conference call within 3 weeks then go for a Lincoln Gulch field visit to discuss issues and come up with a consensus and plan to bring back to the full group at the next meeting.

Reminders:

1. Paul and KD will write and send out a letter of invitation to leaders of appeals groups within the next couple of days.
2. Ryan Alsym was invited to make this meeting but had scheduling conflicts but will try and make the next meeting.
3. Hart Batis is doing some mining and restoration of old mining claims and will be available for anyone interested in viewing and discussing what he is doing.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00.

Next meeting will be Thursday, May 14th at 9:00.