

**LINCOLN RESTORATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
March 12, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.**

Location: Lambkins Restaurant, Lincoln, Montana

Attendance: Amber Kamps, KD Feedback, Bill Cyr, Sharon Scott, Jim Paris, Scott Brennan, Becky Garland, John Baucus, Paul Roos

Absent: Brent Anderson, Phil Henault, John Goroach, Dan Rundell, Brian Kahn, Dwight Crawford, Al Christopherson, Gary Burnett, Ken Pearson.

The February meeting notes were approved.

Introductions were made.

Scott Brennan distributed maps of the proposed area and discussed them with the group. He explained that the Wilderness Society went through a series of filters and steps to look for good restoration material. The first map was of the whole district to show previous harvest and depicted the project area in a regional context.

A second map is just of the project area as presented by Google Earth. The Wilderness Society conferenced with Tom Deluka, Bill Wilmer and Amber's team to create the up-to-date version. Fire and fuels priorities areas were identified for fire and fuels reduction work and are in purple. Prior harvest data = size class for Helena. The layers from the Wilderness Society will be used in the future. There was more discussion of Scott and Amber's maps.

Amber likewise presented a map created by the Forest Service depicting coniferous habitats in the general area. Ponderosa pine as a habitat type is pretty rare on the Lincoln RD and is something we want to keep present as a major component because it has a special function. Size class - aqua color is the 0-5 inch class does include past harvest areas and natural openings particularly in higher elevations. The pink and orange color is larger size class of trees 10 inch and larger.

Amber asked the group what they want to do in that area as far as restoration. What areas do you want to focus on to bring forward soils, wildlife habitat components so we can get all the layers put on a map and get the information to Scott so he can put all the layers together with the GIS tool he has.

Project parameters - The Lincoln Gulch Project has evolved into a named project in a general area north and west of the Lincoln Town site in the vicinity of the Lincoln Springs Subdivision. The Lincoln Gulch Site was chosen because of the Restoration potential of the area as set forth in the principals of the HRC. Having gotten to this point it is now necessary to define the scope of the restoration effort.

As such, Amber has prepared comments on the following and will be pleased to respond to specific ancillary questions.

Ponderosa pine restoration techniques and potential;

< Overall forest health incorporating Ponderosa pine restoration as well as developing localized areas of Douglas fir or Lodgepole pine dominant stands;

< Watershed restoration technique and potential;

< Wildland Urban Interface fuel load reduction technique and potential; and

< Any combination of the above including but not limited to restoration of aspen regeneration/enhancement; Whitebark pine restoration; noxious weed program potential and/or range enhancement potential;

Wildland Urban interface is certainly a component we should focus on. You can see where P-pine is present and immediately shifts into lodgepole and other species diversity heavy to lodgepole and doug fir, subalpine fir and spruce. Mountain pine beetle is rampant in that area. Amber asked if the group wanted to work on Forest Health as well.

Scott gave Mr. Baucus the background to the restoration committee explaining that projects don't necessarily have to be revenue generating but the sense of this group is that there have been times in the past when revenue generation piece lead to controversy in the past, so stated in principles book principles nine and ten touch on that question on page 4. The primary goal is socio-economic well being more viewed in broader context, not just revenue generating.

Amber asked what principles the group wanted to focus on, so she can go back to her staff to gather data.

Make sure that as you think about what you want to focus on also think about what scale do you want to focus on? From an environmental analysis aspect, we need go through NEPA, and it would be good to go through the watershed. If that is the case, it could grow in size and could be more opportunities. Think of fire and fuels and wildland urban interface in terms of landscape. If private land is surrounded by forest land we would just treat the forest land and leave private alone. KD suggested that the group wants a healthy forest so all avenues should be considered when doing a project where possible.

Amber explained that a NEPA project has to be project and site specific. The group needs to look at economy and what it costs to do NEPA documents for each site, or do a wider scale NEPA process to get more bang for your buck. Amber can get the money to do the NEPA regardless of size of project at this point. An EWAS is done for multiple watersheds.

Amber would bring back to the group what the treatments would look like when an area is identified. Amber explained different options that may be used in different component stands. She would provide that information to the group.

Scott explained what they did in Seeley and how they came to the different approaches. What made it work for wilderness society was looking at the principles.

Scott - less re-establish fire principle close to structures in urban interface. His recommendation is that 80% of what we propose is consistent with the principles but may be fuels reduction around subdivisions. Scott is trying to look at pitfalls, as long as we call it what it is, then we should be okay. The nice part of fuels reduction is you can't do P-pine restoration without fuels reduction as well.

Paul has documents from Mike Garrity and will send them to KD who will send them out to everyone to review. This group will want to work really hard at trying to understand other person's point of view.

Amber is hearing that this group is looking at all of the above. Now we just need to identify an area within this area.

KD suggested looking at this in phases, maybe phase 1 would be fuels reduction in Lincoln Gulch, phase 2, phase 3, riparian etc. lay out the project in phases that may have several phases with different orientation for each.

Scott would like for the next meeting menu a list of options by principle where can we do the principles and have them mapped.

KD was disappointed by the attendance of this meeting in that there were so few attendees and said he would make some calls for the next meeting. The next meeting there will be massive information given and let everybody know what was discussed, and provide information and to come prepared at next meeting to get something done. New maps of P-pine old growth, riparian/aspen, a map of past fires, a map of insect infestation, map of riparian/fish habitat, can be sent to everybody.

Amber will be looking at restoration for anything that fits the principles for opportunities. Amber prefers to bring both watersheds, Beaver Creek and Lincoln Gulch because the group asked for everything under the sun; it will take her longer to get that information from her specialists and biologists. Maybe the group should prioritize the principles first to bring information in for next month. Amber will do what she can in a month and will bring the information she has to the next meeting. Amber suggest a longer meeting time, 3 hour time frame instead of 2 for next meeting and that the next meeting be at the Lincoln District for the next meeting.

The next meeting will be April 9th, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 at the Lincoln Ranger District.

11:00 Adjourn

