

Lolo Restoration Committee

Meeting

December 5, 2007

Holiday Inn-Parkside

Present: Matt Arno, Julia Altemus, Len Broberg, Brian Kahn, Larry Jakub, Mark Vander Meer, Marnie Criley, Jeff Juel, Cameron Naficy, Bob Lamley, Larry Westcott, Scott Brennan, Larry Anderson, Beverly Dupree, John Manz, Eric Norris, Hank Goetz, Earl Reinsel

USFS: Debbie Austin, Tim Love, Garry Edson, Pam Gardiner

Guests: Tom DeLuca, Joe Kerkvliet, Lowell Whitney

RC decisions in bold type.

I. Introductions

II. Facilitated Discussion

- A. Discussion/Approval of MFRC principles and implementation guidelines
 - a. Brian discussed the importance of understanding and agreeing with the principles for now, with the understanding that should they become unworkable, the LRC could submit a proposed modification to the MFRC.
 - b. The Committee approved the principles as written.**
- B. Discussion/Adoption of Ground Rules (Code of Conduct)
 - a. Discussion of post-meeting contact/voting of absent members.
 - b. The Committee agreed that people who miss meetings will be given the opportunity to weigh in on decisions; Chelsea or Marnie will contact and share minutes to obtain vote.**
 - c. The Committee approved the Code of Conduct with the mentioned changes/clarifications.**
- C. Discussion/Adoption of Decision-making Process
 - a. Committee adopted the consensus process used by the MFRC.**
- D. How to deal with Media requests:
 - a. Agreed: Chair is authorized to speak on behalf of group, each member can respond on their own or organization's behalf in good faith. A small group will be convened to deal with media requests moving forward (at next meeting).**
- E. Role of Forest Service.
 - a. Agreed: The Lolo Restoration Committee is a private initiative, not convened or managed by the FS; they are interested in the process and are available as a technical resource, providing ideas, responding to questions, ideas, but will not participate in decision making of the Committee.**

- a. Adequacy of Group Composition: Discussion of potential of adding members, with suggestion by Marnie Criley of adding Cara Nelson, UM professor of Ecological Restoration.
- b. RC discussed alternative approaches to such academic and/or scientific expertise: Using such expertise as advisors, bringing them in as needed.
- c. No final decision.

F. Role of Scientists

- a. Tabled until next meeting.

G. How to handle observers/guests:

- a. **The Committee agreed to allow members to bring people as guests/observers, and to allow curious people to attend to sit in and listen. Guest/visitor ability to make comments at the end of the meeting discussed, but not resolved.**

III. Moving Forward-Project selection

A. Timelines:

- a. Draft decision on S. Fork Fish and Auggie by fall 2008
 - i. Projects would likely begin in one year
- b. Draft decision on Center Ridge in one year (b/c EIS is required)
 - i. Center Ridge would be closer to two years

B. Cameron Lichty (?) suggestion to consider another option: consider projects where NEPA has been completed but the work has not been done or some has and some hasn't

- a. Major limitation would be funding, which the committee could help bring funds to the table for.
- b. The FS has not looked at these projects yet as potential ones for Lolo RC.
- c. Discussion of this option: Len Broberg commenting that that anyone could step in and help find funds for already developed projects. The reason for pursuing this RC process of engagement early, leads to shared learning, and fewer appeals and litigation. The real pay off is to work through projects that might be controversial to find common ground.

- d. **Jeff Juel offered to research potential opportunities and report back at next meeting.**

C. Debbie also shared with the Committee that the FS will begin discussions in January on what projects they will put in the pipeline. The Committee could provide at least some areas they are interested in before the leadership team meeting January 16th.

- a. **Subcommittee approved to develop potential recommendations for Leadership Team: Len, Cameron, Marnie, Beverly, Scott, Larry.**

- b. **This group will report back to LRC at next meeting.**

D. Discussion of Criteria for Choosing Projects

- a. Discussion of alternative degrees of RC design/development engagement and post-NEPA project alternatives; discussion of language contained in Implementation Guidelines discussing timing, nature and degrees of RC

engagement, including monitoring, in any and/or all stages as the Committee chooses.

- b. Question asked: whether the projects selected by the Committee need to meet all 13 of the principles or can they pick and choose?
- c. Beverly proposed addition to draft selection criteria: What is the restorative component of each project?
- d. **Without precise wordsmithing, “sense of the group” approval of selection criteria as modified by Beverly’s addition.**

E. Discussion of Specific Projects

- a. Len sees value in getting something done sooner rather than later, if nothing else to get out and test principles on the ground. His vote is for the Auggie project, partially because of his familiarity with the project and the straight forwardness of restoring a plantation. Auggie is preferable to Fish Creek the latter is further along in public comment process and he is not convinced that an EA will be sufficient due to Bull Trout habitat. He proposed “cutting teeth” on Auggie and then taking on Center Ridge shortly after/concurrently.
- b. Marnie felt that Auggie was too simple, purely silvicultural restoration. Also, she already has faith that Tim will do a good job with this type of project, so there exists less need in some ways.
- c. Mark also liked Fish Creek, partially due to the challenge. Advantages: opportunity to change status of impaired watersheds, opportunity for impact and to leverage more money, stands are young so can be manipulated more easily, promote appropriate trends easier, good biodiversity to promote, fuels reduction is very small component.
- d. Scott responded that he shares some of the same concerns as Len, but also sees it as the responsibility of the Committee to see if they can succeed there. He challenged the committee to act as “hypothesis testers” and risk takers.
- e. John felt Fish Creek was too long term, a short term opportunity would build a better social structure.
- f. Discussion of potential of assessing project alternatives, including formation of working groups to assess potential parameters and expressed concerns, and to report back to RC at next meeting.
- g. **Agreement to form such groups for Fish, Auggie and Center Ridge.**

IV. Homework:

- A. **Groups form to develop proposal for each project to present to Committee at next meeting.**
 - a. **Auggie: Larry W., Larry A., Jeff**
 - b. **Center Ridge: Larry W., Scott, Hank,**
 - c. **S. Fork Fish Creek: Len, Matt, Mark, Bob, Cameron, Beverly,**
 - d. **From Scratch: Bev, Larry W., Cameron, Marnie, Len, Scott**
- B. Chelsea will send out these committees shortly so they can begin work.

V. Next Meeting:

- A. Doodle: Jan 2-15