

AGENDA
MONTANA FOREST RESTORATION COMMITTEE
FULL GROUP MEETING

Lubrecht Forest
November 6, 2008
10:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Members: Mark Vander Meer, Mary Mitsos, Ellen Simpson, Tim Love, Chuck Roady, Paul Rumelhart, Julia Riber, Dale Harris, Gordy Sanders, Caroline Byrd, Dave Campbell (for Dave Bull), Orville Daniels, William Geer, Brian Kahn, Pam Gardiner

Guests: Rob Chaney, Steve Kratville, Amber Kamps, Hank Goetz, Tom Tidwell, Jim Paris

WELCOME

MINUTES FROM MAY 2008 MEETING

- Approved with noted revisions

FINANCIAL REPORT

- Approved with clarification that the new \$20,000 from the USFS has been added to the total budget.

UPDATE ON FOREST RESTORATION COMMITTEES

- **Lolo FRC**

The Committee is dealing with the question of whether they need Brian to continue to facilitate. Brian feels that the committee is working very well largely in part to the fact that Marnie is such a proactive chair and does much of the work that would or could fall on a facilitator. For this reason, Brian asked that the Committee evaluate whether he is needed.

The Committee is still working on projects through two subcommittee's using their project evaluation tool, which evaluates projects against each of the 13 principles both numerically and in narrative. There was also discussion about who the audience is, and the realities of how these ratings could be taken by USFS staff. The group clarified the use of the tool as a way to open communication lines and to continue on-going discussion.

The Committee also has an active OHV working group, which was created as a result of the OHV representatives on the Committee wondering how useful their participation was if the Committee was not going to deal with motorized recreation issues as part of restoration. The Committee decided that the OHV issue should be proactively addressed through projects that can

combine new or better routes for users while also decommissioning other roads in the area to meet restoration goals.

The other important issue that the Committee is dealing with is how to make the effort more sustainable and disperse the responsibility and work among more members through the creation of a Monitoring Committee and an Executive Committee.

Participation remains good among both members and the Forest Service. Each subcommittee is working through how they engage with the Forest Service and relationships are improving.

Auggie is slated to be implemented in 2009 and will be the first project for the LRC. Cedar Thom is still being debated as to whether it fits within the purview of the Restoration Committee, since it is framed primarily as a fuels reduction project.

Debbie has requested that the LRC look at the use of the evaluation tool about standardizing the rating system among all users. Hank shared that the initial intent of the tool was to help the working groups assess, among themselves, how they agreed or differed on each of the aspects of a project. It was not intended to force a project into fitting *each* of the principles.

The issue of the LRC Evaluation Tool will be added to the next meeting's agenda.

With the renewal of the County Payments, there will be opportunities for funding the efforts of the RC's with RAC funds.

- **Bitterroot FRC**

The Committee continues to meet regularly. There is a core group of 8 people, plus great representation from USFS. They had three field trips over the summer, and have identified a few small projects in the Willow Gird area on Butterfly Creek (~250 acres). At the last meeting, Cameron Naficy presented his prescription proposal, which Dave Campbell felt was pretty close to the USFS proposal.

They are discussing the possibility of implementing both Cameron's and the Forest Service's prescriptions on the site.

They also visited the Darby Lumber Lands and agreed that there is a lot of work that needs to be accomplished, however, there are very little funds available to accomplish the work, so funding will be an issue.

Ginny has agreed to extend her contract through June. The committee is unclear how they will proceed after that. She is hopeful about seeing two projects approved before she leaves.

The committee is also dealing with the replacement of Cameron after December, which they have deferred to the MFRC for assistance.

- **Helena FRC Lincoln WG**

Brian

The Committee has met once. Good representation, with a gap from Michael Garrity. Scott Brennan is participating and has experience with the LRC. There is also a rep from MWA. There was some concern about the lack of environmental representatives that are engaged in litigation.

Dale suggested that folks continue outreach to Michael and others to try and engage them. Dale and Mark offered to do it.

Amber had good remarks on the energy of the group since the initial meeting.

Next meeting is next week, where they will establish working ground rules, etc.

COMMENTS FROM TOM TIDWELL

Tom thanked everyone for their work so far and acknowledged the hard work real collaboration requires. He feels that the need for this effort are increasing, and encouraged the Committee to put effort into expanding further.

In response to concerns about the time it takes to get a project through the pipeline, Tom shared his conviction that these efforts will, once mature, truly begin to speed up the process.

In terms of budgets, he is committed to continuing to support the effort as long as the Committee continues to make progress.

2008 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report was approved by the MFRC. Default with pdf version, with option for print. Chelsea will look into printing through the state.

DRAFT MFRC CHARTER

Approved by consensus with direction for further work.

2009 BUDGET DISCUSSION

In August, the USFS committed an additional \$20,000 to the agreement. Since there is a large balance left in the Agreement, it has been extended by five years.

Budget will be finalized next week.

MFRC APPROVAL OF 2ND TERM CO-CHAIRS

Bob and Gordy were elected by consensus for another term.

OTHER

Possibilities for further discussion:

- Integrating Recreation
 - William will spearhead an effort to discuss the recreation issue.
 - Jim felt strongly that the MT FWP should be at the table-at least in the recreation discussion.
- Restoration of mixed conifer, beetle kill, etc.
 - Gordy & Mary will put together a working group on the issue and present at the next meeting.
 - This topic will require full group discussion and engagement.
 - Legislative proposals and work will come from the SC, not the full MFRC, should it decide to do so.
 - Amber Kamps is leading the agency effort on the beetle kill problem.
- Project evaluation sheet
 - Not appropriate for direction to come from the MFRC.

SCHEDULE NEXT FULL GROUP MEETING

May – doodle.

At Yellow Bay Biological Station?

Lunch:

Mark
Chuck (receipt)
Ellen
Paul
William (receipt)
Steve K.
Rob Chaney
Pam
Julia
Dave C.
Orville
Brian
Julia R.
Jim
Amber
Tom
Gordy
Caroline