

MINUTES
MONTANA FOREST RESTORATION COMMITTEE
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

DNRC – Forestry Division Conference Room
2705 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804
October 20, 2009
2-5:00 pm

Members: Julia Altemus, Gordy Sanders, Bill Grasser, Brian Kahn (phone), Bob Harrington, Mary Mitsos.

Proxies: Scott Brennan, Dale Harris

Guests: Steve Kratville, Marci Anderson

Staff: Melissa Hayes

••Approve 8/18/09 MFRC SC Minutes••

Cannot pass the minutes without quorum. No comments/corrections were received regarding the minutes. Will review at the next meeting.

••Aug./Sept. Financial Report••

Cannot pass the financial report without a quorum. Steve looked it over and did not see anything that needed to be changed.

Our next SC meeting would be Nov. 17, which is also the Full meeting. If we switch the full meeting from 10-4, we can have an SC meeting from 9-10.

•• Forest Restoration Committee Updates••

••Lolo FRC

Melissa gave an update, since no one else from the meeting/Lolo was there. The meeting discussed the Marshall Woods Project Purpose & Need Statement (P&N). The Purpose & Need was circulated by the WWG, to members of the LRC who voted via Doodle poll. The result was 8 thumbs-up, 3 side-ways, and 1 thumbs-down, because more specificity was needed. As a result the FS added more detail to the P&N. The new document will be again circulated to the LRC for a vote. The LRC felt that when a decision or comments were needed between meetings and the group could not meet in person or via conference call Doodle polls were an effective way to vote and gather comments. There was also an in-depth discussion of monitoring with Jim Burchfield.

••Bitterroot FRC

There has not been a meeting, but may be one next week? The group went to the Butterfly project to assess the road access issue. About 8 people attended the field trip. The higher Rd. which would allow access had too much of a slope. The original road is too close to the creek, so there is an option for a middle road that is about 100 ft. from the creek and seems to be do-able. Adam agreed that it might work. It would do more damage to repair the existing road. The FS sent a

road trainee who was also in agreement with the group's assessment. Though the road was a sticky point of the project, the BR was in agreement on the other parts.

••Lincoln FRC

Amber should have received a letter and PR on the project.

•• Coordinator – Work Plan ••

Julia, Gordy, and Dale met with Marnie to alter some parts of her work plan. Marnie wants feedback from the SC whether there are other things that should be added to her work plan. If there are any thoughts, ideas, or feedback, send them to Dale or Gordy. It is important that the work plan is fairly specific so Marnie can be the most helpful to the group – so the feedback will be helpful in creating a good, thorough plan. Monitoring protocol – subgroups of members not on the EWG of the Lolo are working on monitoring.

•• Correspondence ••

••FLRA update

There was a joint meeting with 3 rangers yesterday and it appears there is about 6 months to put together a proposal, but will not happen until the FLRA RAC is put together. The SC talked about sending 2 letters – Mary needs to draft a letter and still has to talk with Dale. There are some calls for letters of support to fund FLRA. Marnie drafted a letter for us to look at. It discusses us as a group and support of full funding for implementation of the act. The letter should make sure to distinguish that the SC does not have FS members on it, so as not to confuse the MFRC with FS members to the SC without FS as members.

Send the letter out to the SC and it would be nice to have comments this week. Everyone should respond by Friday and then look at it to send by Monday. **Marnie** can receive all of the comments and take care of it by Monday.

••MFRC invitees

Julie King

Kevin Riordan

Bruce Fox

All 3 have expressed an interest in attending the meeting. Bruce responded that he would like to be at the meeting, but will not be able to attend.

•• Mixed Severity Sub-Committee Update ••

Sample presentations were given by BR, Lolo & Helena rangers who talked about patchiness and out of that meeting, there was discussion of having a presentation by wildlife biologists and disturbance ecologists to discuss patchiness in areas with a significant lodgepole component. The group also worked on an umbrella statement – developed by Brian and Pam – to frame the next principle. Mon., Nov. 2 is the next meeting. It is important in these discussions to expand the zone of agreement so that

we are dealing with areas outside of the WUI – and go beyond the projects/issues that have not been litigated for a while, like low elevation dry sites. This will be a chance for the group to push and stretch a bit on the zone of agreement. Also going to have to put roads on the table with caveats for which directions to go **Brian** will take all of the comments and put them into one form/set of statements to synthesize as well as specifically look at the comments from Len & Gordy on roads. There may be road standards that would apply to mixed severity that would not apply to other landscapes – but since we already have a standard for roads that we came to agreement on, we don't want to change it, as that might disenfranchise some members, so it may have to draft something specifically for mixed severity. At the next meeting, the group will hone in on something that could be possible and could be presented at the big meeting.

For the presentation on patchiness, there are scientists in Boise who are well-respected by all sides and focus on patchiness. **Mary** will get their names to Gordy and Julia, so they can contact them for the meeting.

•• NEPA Timeline Sub-Committee Update ••

Julia, Jake, Chris, and Marnie met in Aug. to review the possible solutions that Chris came up with – on monitoring, science, use of ID teams, etc. Len came back with some concerns and gave a thumbs-down – so the group is at the beginning and trying to get a new meeting date set. It's going slow, but plugging along.

•• Fundraising Sub-Committee ••

No meeting for past 3 months. Try to recruit more members to be involved on this sub-committee at the Full meeting. Wildlands CPR is trying to get a budget line item for restoration and the subcommittee is going to try to work with them.

Tom Vilsack gave a presentation to SES and USDA on the top 4 priorities for the Dept.

- *Rural Wealth

- *Export of Biotechnology

- *Children – in terms of nutrition & lifestyle

- *Implementing FS vision across all landscapes with water as the metric for focus and measurement.

•• Finalize Fall MFRC Agenda ••

The SC meeting will be held 9-10 am at Lubrecht.

The Full meeting will start @ 10 am at Lubrecht.

Paula is not able to be at the meeting, so we can take the communications committee update off the agenda. Steve will not be at the meeting either.

Patchiness presentation – Steve Arno is willing to present. Len is working on a wildlife biologist. Other options are Les Marcum or Stan Pletcher as well as the names that Mary will provide.

How do we craft a principle?

We need to figure out how to craft a principle – biomass, climate change/connectivity are all upcoming issues. **Mary** will work on a process for crafting a new principle and will send out to the SC for comments.

Are we balanced? Or do people believe we are?

Move this discussion into the closing remarks – and would not have to be a specific item. **Melissa** will gather a list of the MFRC members (including the 3 just added) and their affiliations – and the list can be included in the packet.

Cal also shorten up the time for the committee reports by giving people 5 points to touch on in their update.

There should also be opportunities for informal interactions – to let people catch-up and keep them engaged.

Pass along other thoughts on the agenda. **Julia** will fix it up and send it out – with a deadline for comments so that it can go to the full group.

•• MFRC membership ••

Jason Toddhunter from MT. Logging Assoc. Since Julia is not longer representing the contract loggers, we don't really have a logging interest represented. Jason does lobbying for MLA. How do we invite him? Look at the by-laws and if we don't have to go through the full committee, invite him the way we invited Jake. Invite him to the Full mtg.?

•• MFRC Stationery, Envelopes, External Hard Drive ••

Spend a "reasonable amount" on stationery. Marnie found a refurbished computer for \$600 – cap the laptop purchase at \$2,000. We can spend less than \$5,000 without committee approval. The State would have to get approval for a laptop, but the purchase of an external hard drive would be ok.

Need to clarify the computer issue with Marci. There may be a way to get the computer and have the State reimbursed, but the Agreement would have to be amended. Marci and Steve will work on the Amendment. We already got a thumbs-up from the SC – before we found out we could not purchase the computer, so go ahead and get it if we can. As long as we are amending the Agreement, might want to evaluate any other issues that could be amended at the same time.

Set-up a PO Box and get envelopes with a return address.

•• Other ••

Last month Julia & Bob went to Libby for the Kootenai Stakeholders meeting and got a glimpse of another functioning collaborative. During the meeting, the Lincoln Co. Commissioner made a comment in passing that there should be a party – but that could be a good idea. Might be a good time for a collaborative group meeting – a

Forest Collaboration in the N. Rockies Summit. It could be held in Libby? If we are serious about getting it together (maybe around June?) it should be a SC agenda item. Mary has also been talking with Martin Nie about place-based legislation and there was talk of a workshop/summit, so there may be some overlap in the two.

It would be a great way for the different collaborative to network, pass along ideas and lessons learned, etc.

Steve would be willing to help work on the organization of the Summit.

•• Next Meeting ••

Tues., Nov. 17

9-10 am

Lubrecht

(prior to the Full MFRC meeting).