

BITTERROOT RESTORATION COMMITTEE (BRC)

January 19, 2010

Session Summary

SESSION OBJECTIVES

1. Update the group on biomass.
2. Take next steps on the Darby Lumber Lands.
3. Begin work on potential a 3 Saddle potential project.
4. Transition to Marcia Hogan as the new facilitator.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Bill Grasser	Chris Clancy	Wayne Hedman
Mike Jeffords	Gary Milner	Paul Moore
Ron Porter	Steve Powell	Adam Rissien
Kirk Thompson		
Virginia Tribe/Facilitator	Marcia Hogan/New Facilitator	

TECHNICAL ADVISORS/OBSERVERS

Julia Altemus	Dave Campbell	Marnie Criley
Cole Mayn	Chuck Oliver	Ed Snook
Dan Thompson	Amy Veirs	Ruth Wooding

COMPLETED AGENDA ITEMS

Approving the Summary of the January 2010 Meeting

BRC members approved the November 9 summary without revision.

Updating the Committee

Committee Facilitation

Marcia Hogan was introduced as the new Committee facilitator. She will replace Virginia Tribe who is retiring – and will come on board after the February meeting.

Committee Co-Chairs' Reports

Bill Grasser and Adam Rissien didn't have specifics to report other than MFRC's current attention to the Smurfit-Stone closure.

Update from the MFRC Coordinator

Marnie Criley reported that the Montana Forest Restoration Committee (MFRC) has a revised website that will include all information from MFRC as well as from the individual Forest Restoration Committees. She is also working on a media strategy/communication plan that will help guide Committees in their work with media. As part of her job as MFRC Coordinator, Marnie is also working on a set of monitoring protocols for Committee projects.

Other News from MFRC Members

Julia Altermus talked about current efforts to address the closing of the Smurfit-Stone plant and what the community might be doing to bring the plant back in some capacity. She explained that MFRC is planning to sponsor a “round table” discussion that would identify problems, look at possible solutions, try to set goals and lay out a timeline. She will update the Committee on their progress online and at the February meeting.

News related to Biomass

Wayne Hedman reminded Committee members to read the Fire Science Lab article on biomass. He had delivered copies to the Supervisor’s Office for distribution to the Committee – but they were not immediately located. They will be distributed at the February meeting. Wayne also asked the group to think about biomass and possibilities with the Smurfit-Stone plant and how their closure was affecting many different components of the timber industry – including the possible permanent loss of infrastructure. A “bio-regional” approach with sustainable logging was briefly discussed as a possible future with the industry.

Project work - Darby Lumber Lands

- Ed Snook reported that there had not been much forward movement by the Forest Service in terms of analysis and that they were somewhat stalled until funding decisions were made. He reminded the group that the Lidar flight would occur this spring and again explained that according to the current Forest Plan, the Darby Lands would be considered for timber management. He also explained that the Committee could make any recommendations regarding the Darby Lands – even if those recommendation might require amendments to the Forest Plan.
- Mike Jeffords and Dan Thompson explained the survey done by the off-road vehicle organization – including the areas covered; the process used; conditions of some areas; and recommendations their group would make from the perspective of motorized recreation use. They also identified specific miles of road where they had no interest in motorized recreation.

- After discussion regarding the survey, Committee members reminded the facilitator that they had agreed in December that:
 - They wanted to look at a section(s) that is not in good shape as well as an area(s) in better condition so they will have diverse issues to address and resolve as a group and that sections 1, 2, and 3 would meet those parameters;
 - In response to a suggestion from the Forest Service, they would develop a recommended “decision tree” and/or criteria for classifying roads and their management.
- The Committee had differing opinions about starting a project on the Darby lands before the Forest Service had moved forward with their analysis. They also discussed the possibility of addressing the roads where there was not interest in motorized recreation and using them first to be analyzed against their suggested “decision tree” in terms what to do with those roads. At the end of the discussion, the Committee agreed to start to develop a decision tree/criteria at the February meeting. The Committee will also revisit/revise where appropriate, its 2008 Collaborative Framework for the Darby lands and begin to think about considerations on a management area scheme.
- Adam also reminded the group that the Forest Service has a process for determining what should happen to roads and while quite extensive, it might be useful in starting to think about the Committee’s criteria.
- Ed Snook agreed to send the Committee any available data/paper the Darby lands and will have data on Sections 1, 2 and 3 available at the February meeting.

Project Work – Potential 3-Saddle Area Project

Although the Forest Service was prepared to present information on the-Saddle area, discussion on the Darby lands took most of the time and they were asked to present at the February meeting so there is time for adequate discussion.

Project Work – Butterfly Project

The Forest Service reported that there had been no movement on the Butterfly analysis.

Where do we go from here?

Committee members agreed to bring their calendars to the February meeting so meeting dates can be set through the year.