

Clearwater Basin Collaborative Working Group Meeting

Idaho Fish & Game Offices
Clearwater Regional Offices
Lewiston, Idaho

NOTES

October 26, 2011

Attendees: Don Ebert, Jonathan Oppenheimer, Orville Daniels, Joyce Dearstyne, Greg Danly, Ron Aldrich, Brad Brooks, Heather Leach, Larry Jakub, Dave Cadwallader, Holly Endersby, Leo Crane, Scott Stouder, Alex Irby, Dale Harris, Skip Brandt, Bill Higgins, Randy Doman

Liaisons: Rick Brazell (US Forest Service), Elayne Murphy (US Forest Service), Mitch Silvers (US Senator Mike Crapo's Office), Mike Hanna (US Senator Risch's Office), Kelli Rosellini (Coordinator), Joe Hudson (US Forest Service), Mike Ward (US Forest Service), Tera King (Clearwater RC&D), Will Whelan (The Nature Conservancy)

Visitors: Sandra Pinel (University of Idaho), Olleke Rappe Daniels (Citizen), Cindy Lane (US Forest Service), Lois Hill, Jared Bladestrom (University of Idaho), Susan Shaw (US Forest Service)

Previous Meeting Minutes and Action Items Review

Notes approved with minor changes. The changes will be forwarded to the Coordinator via email.

Action Items

The Operating Protocols have a number of attachments that still need to be completed. We also need a process for determining the staggered terms.

Action Item: *Kelli will send out attachments to protocols A, B, C, D and an updated contact list. Respond as requested.*

Forest Health

We haven't met since the last meeting. Going to Missoula Nov 3rd to meet with Regional Offices to help better understand the tools they have available to contribute to the Landscape Assessment.

November 17th will be another important meeting for the MOU discussions. The entire CBC group is encouraged to attend as it will really be an opportunity to collaborate with the FS. The meeting will start at 9:00 am. There will be video conferencing available. There were approximately 20 projects submitted initially. We will focus around priority issues, and there are some criteria that will assist with the selection. Collaborating under the MOU is a lesson for CBC and it is granted that the CFLRA Projects will be in the selection pool. Where this may be a Landscape Health Subcommittee process, if people want to be involved they should try to attend these meetings.

Comments:

- If there is a strong interest in the projects, I agree, you should attend the meetings. We are going to make recommendations to the full Working Group, but the most important selection criteria will be discussed at this level: roads, old growth, restoration, aquatics, fire risk, fuels, and more. This also brings up the important issue of capacity for the group.
- We did get a mail that distributed the prospective projects and if you cannot attend the meeting, you should review the projects and submit your comments to the group for consideration.
- On this particular subject, distribute emails to the entire Working Group.
- There is a lot of work to be completed by Fish & Game in order for them to participate in this process. There is a Forest Service representative available for F&G to refer to.
- The important thing to understand about this meeting is that this will not be a meeting to debate the merits of a particular project; it will be an opportunity to say "over the next 18 months we will dig into the details and issues of these projects." It's more about "what kind of projects does CBC want to collaborate on?" It will be more focused on selecting "types" of projects.
- Perhaps not mentioned about selecting projects – by our choosing our projects, if they are appealed in the future it becomes more natural for us to step up and participate in the process of appeals. This is occurring on other Forests where Collaborations are resisting lawsuits. This is a very powerful, informative process. It puts us in a position to support projects should they be appealed or litigated in the future.
- There are some strategic times where the CBC can weigh in on a larger number of projects prior to recording a decision that might allow CBC to play a positive role should there be an appeal.

- The importance of our group making decisions as to which projects we want to support and move forward. If we don't support projects that the FS brings forward, it begs the question as to whether they go forward or not.
- I like the idea that we all agree that "something" might need to be done in an area and we collaborate together on exactly "what" needs to be done. Also, on the Levels of Support that CBC has behind projects is of importance as well. We need to know when the group is very supportive of a project and the times when there may be members that cannot wave the flag of support for a project, but they will not appeal it. If you don't choose a project, it doesn't mean the FS won't be doing projects, they have a long list of work to be done.
- There is a document for distribution that will help everyone remember the Levels of Support.

The group did go on a field trip with the Forest Service to the Clear Creek area to review proposed CFLRA Projects. We will be compiling a paper with pictures and descriptions from the trip.

The letter that was circulated to the group previously for support of the Stewardship Contracting Renewal. There was movement to allow this tool to expire, and there is support for continuing the Contracting. Some within the group have already signed onto the letter, others have pointed out that the 25% is not addressed in the letter of support.

Comments:

- This is an issue we approved in concept and took back to Washington DC last year. We did not form consensus as a group as to what to do.

Action Item: Bill Higgins will initiate a discussion regarding stewardship contracting to facilitate an understanding about what is within the agency's authority and what takes congressional action.

Rural Economies

We did have a meeting that discussed the Community Trust Proposal and we would like to propose this for the next meeting for discussion. We were unable to reach consensus on the content.

A bill has been introduced to the Senate by Risch and Crapo. Senator Reid, Murkowski (Natural Resources Committee) and the Bill has broad, bi-partisan support. It's referred to as the 5x5 – 5 year reduction. Checks for FY 11 will be distributed and right now at the end of 2012 Counties would need to face massive layoffs in roads and other. The catch in the Senate Bill is that they have not identified any offsets for this Bill.

We had a conversation that the Group made a previous decision to support the reauthorization of SRS. The House Bill would require a certain number of acres to be harvested. There is a lot of discussion that includes language that we will have management on the lands to offset the revenue. As those two

Bills begin to merge and work together, there could be a real change in the Senate Bill. With them in recess at this time, there is not much more to report.

We know some are uncomfortable with that potential legislation. But we would like to remind everyone that we did come to consensus that we would make the Counties whole. If it's a huge change to the future, we do need to address.

Action Item: Rural Economies Subcommittee will present the Community Forest Trust Initiative as a discussion topic at the November working group meeting.

National Guard Youth Challenge School

We need to extend our start date about 6 months out due to some internal structuring. The State of Idaho did not support this as a State sponsored school. Being private, with private funding, the need now is \$300,000. The youth would be required to contribute work to the forests and there will be a positive impact to the forest and the area. We would encourage you and your groups to contribute monetarily to this group. It is an opportunity to contribute to an economic development project. The contact for this group is Col. Tim Kelly, (208) 272-4202 or 208-794-5883, with the National Guard in Boise. Email timothy.kelly@us.army.mil.

Action Item: Groups who want to support the Youth Challenge project in Pierce need to contact Colonel Tim Kelly in Boise.

Other news

We will be recognized nationally (Idaho Department of Labor) for our work with the National Forests in this area. They will be using us as a model for other Youth Corps Projects in the country.

We have met with the President of LCSC in Provo, and that project is moving forward.

Recreation

We have several meetings coming up. There is a potential equestrian loop on public land, the Dworshak Loop that would go through private land. The Corps of Engineers will be finalizing their ATV discussions on the project.

On November 7th, we will be traveling to Missoula to speak with the Region about Minimum Tools Analysis.

On November 14th we will be meeting with Potlatch Corporation and begin discussions on the North/South Route. This will happen in Moscow. There has been tremendous support for the North/South Route from communities. We are also continuing our proposal to Idaho Parks and Recreation for Phase I of III of the North/South Route.

In November we have also requested that the Outfitters and Guides present to the group their ideas on stabilizing the industry due to elk herd decline.

Action Item: Recreation Subcommittee requested time at the November working group meeting to present outfitter and guide concerns and ideas.

Action Item: Randy will provide information regarding the new equestrian trail to Holly for the Recreation Subcommittee

Land Allocation

We are still working through the proposals from last spring, with wilderness being the largest proposal. There has been a lack of meetings due to hunting season being in full swing.

Wilderness Report and Discussion

Two handouts: maps of the Selway Additions and Meadow Creek, along with a description of East Meadow Creek from the Idaho Roadless Rule.

[Insert the Overview and Discussion]

The division of East and West Meadow Creek has largely been for political purposes. There has been a lot of discussion in the Land Allocation Subcommittee and West Meadow Creek was eventually recommended as a Special Management Area and East Meadow Creek would be recommended for Wilderness. We discussed the fire potential in the area after the Slims Fire which highlighted concerns in the area with its proximity to Elk City.

The key issues for East Meadow Creek for discussion today are the main concerns with designation. It was not formally recommended in the Forest Plan or the Idaho Roadless Rule; however, it was allocated to the Primitive Theme in the Idaho Roadless Rule which effectively means no roads or timber harvest. There could be fuel reduction, if next to Community Protection Zones. There are no active mining claims in the area. There is a road to Indian Lookout Hill and that would be cherry-stemmed in and kept open. There would be language to protect that road and the boundary set off from the road enabling the FS to continue use of the road. Running Creek Road is the road highlighted to the east.

The group discussed the details of the map and specific areas that were maybe highlighted incorrectly.

Last month, we voted on two items and we were attempting to create a snapshot of where we were as a group. 20 people voted affirmatively for support of the concept of more wilderness in the basin. Then, when asked to support specific areas, there were 13 affirmative where 9 were yes and 4 were sideways.

Last month, we began with Cayuse Creek and we shared what our specific concerns were regarding the area. The comments were in two categories were specific to Cayuse and others were concerns with Wilderness in general.

1. You cannot be supportive of more wilderness unless County Governments get some specific compensation.
2. IDF&G has concerns about their access to areas that may be designated as wilderness.
3. Trail Maintenance in wilderness areas.
4. Public Access in general
5. Wilderness Management Plans and CBC's ability to remain involved enough to influence how those Management Plans are drawn.

We did not vote on Cayuse Creek last month and people agreed to being individually noted as to their concerns to enable the Subcommittee to address.

East Meadow Creek – can we support this as a proposed Wilderness area?

- I've had the question in my mind about these proposals (Meadow Creek and Selway Additions) and I had thought they would be added/incorporated into the Management Plan and existing Wilderness of the Selway-Bitterroot Additions.
- There have been conversations that indicate perhaps they should be independent to attract more management dollars for the area.
- Particularly with larger areas, there may be an advantage to writing it ourselves and if there are things we want in E Meadow Creek it would be easier to have it on its own in order to specify our needs.
- This gets back to the underlying question of wilderness in general. It's not clear to me where we are going with this. If we have a vote, is this a vote on these issues for sure? I don't feel comfortable yet pouring concrete around particular areas. I drop back and think that we as a group need to have a general discussion about wilderness period. Lay out what our concerns are. Over the last month, in dealing with the Land Exchange, I heard a lot of individuals that I put in the 100% pro wilderness category that have said the FS can't manage what they have – they support wilderness as is, but we have enough. Until there is a change in the FS ability to manage the wilderness – I've heard from at least 4 individuals that they would like the whole forest in wilderness but now they say no because it's not managed. We need to have the discussion of pros and cons in general. I'm in the position now that even my other two Commissioners

actually supported wilderness and they are no longer in support of doing any more wilderness. Until we can get our arms around where we are going, I can't guarantee we can support more.

- *Do you think we've not talked enough about wilderness?* No, we haven't. We've moved in to drawing lines on the map without a general discussion.
- I'd like to speak to trail maintenance – I'm a wilderness advocate, always have been and always will be. I do have concerns with trail maintenance. We are actively working towards that end. As long as I breathe I'll address that issue. I'm not very good at politics, but in a nutshell we are asking for having a little faith. I'm not disappointed with the FS in trail maintenance; it's the lack of dollars that allow them to do that. We're trying to find creative ways around a lack of funding that has significantly decreased over the last 20 years. We're talking about E Meadow Creek and most people think its wilderness already. If we're going to have wilderness come out of this Collaborative, this is the easiest one. But, back to the support of wilderness due to lack of trail maintenance – I still support wilderness. We are actively working on turning this whole trail maintenance thing around. I'll give you my word that won't stop.
- It's my intention to work towards specific language, with any recommended wilderness, which requires trail maintenance. That's the only guarantee that we can give the public that they will continue access to their areas. That is my goal. That specific language will be in there – access will be guaranteed.
- Outfitters used to be in support of wilderness, but over time they [trails] have deteriorated for so long that we cannot support it. Maybe after the next meeting we can put a presentation together that will help the outfitters communicate their issues. Access is their biggest issue.
- Has a template been set to add ground to wilderness (existing) and has that ever happened in Congress before and how did that take place? *It's happened a lot. It's been done, but the Eagle Cap Wilderness in Oregon – it happens quite a bit.*
- We are working on language that is so binding that trail maintenance would *have to* be a priority. That's not in the Selway-Bitterroot organic language. It would be better off to have it as a separate issue.
- I share reservations about access. If there is something you expect out of this, then you need to be sure that it's included in the language itself. I have to also repeat that I don't think the trail maintenance issue is singular to Wilderness. I've been on my mule for 20 days out of the last month, in wilderness and backcountry and where I've ridden I've had a heck of time getting around due to trail maintenance. It's a priority issue – where we direct the FS to work. We need to enable the FS to have funding to maintain these trails.

- Are the trails in wilderness significantly different than in the roaded front? Is there something about the wilderness designation that precludes trail maintenance? If not, then I see that perhaps wilderness could contribute to trail maintenance. Otherwise, if you have a group like CBC knocking on the door saying, “we need trail maintenance.”
- Early on, a long time ago in Orofino, we had a great presentation to the Community about Wilderness. We had opportunities to talk about the broad scheme and then we went to the Committee’s from that point on. Perhaps we should have come back and talked about it overall again.
- I really appreciate that the Outfitters are here.
- The real value of CBC is when we delve into the specifics. When we try to solve those problems. If people are opposed, in theory, to wilderness, then I don’t really see a path forward. Where we are going to be effective in solving problems is getting down to the details. We can represent the majority.
- There are three of us here that are in a tight spot. My #1 job is to represent my constituents. As much as I would like to be “comfortable” with trusting, I still have to represent my constituency. If I can’t sell them, and can’t get their support, then I cannot vote with my thumb up. Most can call their boss and get an okay, but it’s not the same for me. We have to get to a point that we get to a comfort that we can take language to people and go public and say, “this is the new wilderness” zone we’re going into.
- If we look at the past, in reading the language in the Frank Church on trails, it’s not happening. We’re not going to do Federal Budgeting with a Wilderness Act. It was written in their specifically. In the Roadless Rule, there are 5 designations – Wildland Recreation, Primitive, Special Significance, (and two others). Are we opening up that we will take one and move it in the other direction? We said we were going to abide by the Roadless Rule? If we open this up, does that mean we’re going to move things the other way as well? Additionally, the Frank Church Wilderness Bill said that Meadow Creek was released from future Wilderness consideration.
- The Idaho Roadless Rule did not make any recommendations for wilderness. The Wildland Theme is generally close to wilderness. But, we did not recommend wilderness. Generally, we are consistent with the rule, but you are right, it was not part of the 1987 Forest Plan and yes, there was Frank Church language that said it shouldn’t be considered.

We are going to ask whether you would support this area to be included in the discussions of developing wilderness. It’s not a final decision on any of these areas, but in order to move forward with developing legislation we need to tell them to either look at an area or not. That’s the question. It’s important to

capture the specific issues about an area such as Meadow Creek, but we'd like to suggest that we refer to the area in general.

- I'm not sure that doing that vote will do us much good. There are people in the room that cannot vote for any type of wilderness because of the issue as a whole.
- I kind of agree in different senses – we should have general discussions. One thing I would like to address is trail maintenance/access which is what everyone talks about when they ideologically oppose wilderness. I would like to argue that wilderness will result in better trails and better access and that's because it's focused. When you think about trails, and wilderness, you have to think about what's going to happen in Washington DC when that allocation of money is brought forward. There are ways to have wilderness and good trail maintenance.
- If I understand correctly, there are a series of concerns that people have raised about wilderness in general. We can talk about the general hurdles first, or we could say “consolidate the progress made in the Subcommittee and say we've looked at these areas and we are now ready to talk about the general areas and for these particular areas the maps are there .” Are we approving a general series of maps and then discussing whether wilderness itself is the issue?
- We are asking, “The Land Allocation Subcommittee has recommended E Meadow Creek for wilderness, does the CBC agree?” And what are the specific issues associated with it? One of the reasons we're at the table is that the Clearwater Basin has tremendous ecological value at a local, statewide and national scale. Some of these landscapes are unique in the nation and the world. That's why we are here. When we agreed to the Protocols, we agreed to work towards other goals at the table. If there was a significant understanding at the beginning, then I sincerely apologize, but I believe it's been clear that our groups are working towards wilderness. There is no guessing about that. We understand that there are political realities out there. What brings some of these groups to the table is permanent land protection. While we would really like to see wilderness for some of these landscapes, some of these areas will be managed similar to wilderness.

Vote: Can the CBC support Meadow Creek (East) part of a package that ultimately becomes considered for wilderness: 12 up, 5 down, 2 sideways

Down:

- The next chunks are an up for me; there isn't a question there for me or my constituents. Until I vet this with my other Commissioners and with some open meetings to discuss this potential change in title to this land. It's a matter of representing these people. I think it's important that if we move on with the controversial areas of wilderness, we have to be proactive in the communities and get public support. Down the road, I'd like to see a poll taken in the Clearwater Region about thoughts and concerns with wilderness. I'd like to see us address

those concerns. I realize not 100% will ever agree, but I'd like to hear my constituents and hear their concerns.

- We have expressed our concerns so many times. But, we need a guarantee from the FS that those trails would be kept open and maintained. Otherwise, we need to be able to use chainsaws for a short period to open them or be compensated to do that. We don't have the time to do this with a cross-cut saw. That's a big difference. If it's non-wilderness, we can do it.
- Last week it became clear to me that the support of SRS was contingent upon a "fuzzy feeling." And when the potential was there to talk about a cut or giving land to the State for management. My concern is that everyone supports making the Counties whole until it becomes uncomfortable for them. We're giving to the wilderness discussions, and we want to know if that is going to be vice versa. We heard that there wasn't support for SRS unless it was a check.
- I don't naturally and inherently support wilderness. I use the outdoors and enjoy them. My position is not that the right thing to do is make more wilderness. It doesn't mean there's just one right thing to do. Any support I would give for wilderness would mean that I'm doing something I don't think is right. I don't want to say I need a trade, but I need you do to something perhaps you don't think is right. That's where I'm coming from. I voted thumbs up that I believe we can get to wilderness. That explains my position. Specifically, for Meadow Creek – important points are the promises that were made in the past and weren't kept. Times change, people die and things get altered. There needs to be specific discussion and documentation regarding roads, how far they extend, keeping them open, etc. I believe we can preserve fish and wildlife without the designation of wilderness. If we order the FS to perform trail maintenance in the wilderness, I guarantee it will be at the expense of non-wilderness. I think that wilderness is not a multiple use environment. I think it's for a small group of individuals.
- I voted no for the same reasons I voted no in august. I have no issues with the proposals other than I don't feel that interests are being developed together. I don't object to the areas. In the future you can count on my yes vote, and we I get to the place where I have the ammunition to argue that it's a good deal I will fight like hell for it. I'm being asked the same question and I have the same response and I feel like I'm not being heard. I'm not being unreasonable and I'm not being difficult, but I do have to see that you are hearing and acknowledging what we are saying.

Responses:

- My comments would be the same if I was a County Commissioner, because what you're saying is that you need to see the whole package. In being practical, I couldn't vote up for some of the things you want either – because I don't see the whole package.

We can take a couple of approaches – an NRA would allow us to deal with Meadow Creek and be very restrictive and yet allow us to manage the area. Another approach is to call it Wilderness and have some exceptions to it. Which is the best? That's up for discussion.

I also want to address wilderness. Why it is important that we have some areas are just plain wilderness? Some organizations want that, without exception, and as a practical matter we have to be cognizant and aware of that. If we all get something out of this deal, then we need to understand that is what they want. When you look at the wilderness act it accomplishes a lot of things, but the one thing that cannot be done without wilderness: when you go to a wilderness, it's not just a physical journey, it's a mental journey. When you go beyond the sign, it means something. It is completely different than any other place. You need to keep in mind, that a certain group of people that is very important.

- This is very personal. If nobody says yes and we continue to wait for “what we want” and we may never get there. I support a 280 mile ATV trail, which my entire group does not support. I felt it was important to explain to my group why it is important to motorized groups. If we are going to be a collaboration, then we need to step out of our comfort zone and support others viewpoints. I don't feel that you are really advocating for my cause.
- I feel the same, and often.
- I hear what you're saying and you're comparing this to the Forest Trust and we haven't even talked about it here.

Trails and Maintenance, Carol Hennessey (US Forest Service)

ARRA Update

- 2.1 Million ARRA funds initially allocated to trails, primarily on the Clearwater NF.
- Of the 2.1M, \$700,000 went to deferred maintenance contracts and \$1.3 million to service partnership agreements
- In FY11, a little over \$100,000 was paid to contracts (approx 9 locally based contractors); and about \$200,000 (or 1/3 of the allocation) is left to invoice on the contracts prior to 2015.

- Of the \$1.3 million to partnerships; approx \$700,000 was paid in FY10 and 11; about \$630,000 is left to invoice on the agreements prior to 2015.

Joint Forest Trails Program

- Being managed in 3 zones, 6 ranger districts---North Zone has about 27% of the trail miles, Central Zone about 38% and South Zone about 35%----does not include T roads (T roads are roads that will become trails after travel planning because large vehicle use will be prohibited on these).
- workload is about 5400 miles of trail without T roads and will be about 8000 miles after travel planning when t roads are included as trails; annual target for maintenance is about 940 miles on each Forest

Money won't fix everything, but in the trails world, it fixes almost everything. Whether it's from Congress or commitments from private parties, it provides access. The \$2.1 million caused a lot of problems to be cured – and some of you have seen that. We scrambled, but we committed the trails to that. All contracts were local and we put money into annual maintenance. We are putting money back into the economy. We put about \$200,000 into those contractors through 2014. Out of the partnerships, we have spent about \$700,000 and we have about \$630,000 left before 2014. You'll see a lot more trails opened up.

The Joint Forest Program will be finished up by 2014 (the ARRA Program). Right here, it has been great. To put \$2.1 million into our trail system is something I thought I'd never see in my career.

We have \$1.5 million in our Trails Program and it's the largest in the region. It exceeds any other forest by about \$200,000. Our target workload is about 2,000 miles of trails. When you add T-Trails you'll be up to about 8,000 miles of trails to be maintained. That can only be accomplished with Partners and Volunteers.

I would like to address Wilderness. Trails are funded through TML. Wilderness funding is sparse and the chance it would be used on trails for these two forests would be slim. Be careful in how you mandate trail maintenance. Everyone needs to understand the tradeoffs.

The costs associated with maintaining trails in wilderness versus front area are roughly the same. It's the logistics that determine your costs. A mile in Kelly Creek is going to be the same as a mile in the Selway-Bitterroot because of your pack string costs, hauling your equipment, etc. Brushing is different than cutting 6"-1' logs.

In 2011, we committed about \$283,000 to partnerships and partners matched that about \$187,000 . So, for every dollar we put in, our partners put in \$3.

How many jobs were created in the last two years for trail maintenance? You can get that information from a national database. Our partners report that. We have about 9 contractors who employ approximately 3-9 people and they work full-time. We wrote clauses into the contracts that we requested they buy their groceries and gas locally. The Outfitters are getting better and better with bidding on contracts and they are being awarded more and more.

I still wonder about discretionary funds and how they are distributed. We know we want trail maintenance done, and how do we ensure that's done without Legislation and without harming some other program? We don't want to damage some other program. Sometimes it comes down to lobbying. The Nez Perce National Historic Trail is a Congressional Line Item. When that money comes down, it goes out to that specific trail. You could go through a process like that, but it takes a strong lobby each and every budget year. Eventually, those Champions fall away and those Line Items fall away. Work, like you are already, with the Forest Service.

I think that one of the benefits of the ARRA has been the resulting partnerships and relationships that have been formed. Even after that money goes away, the Governor those relationships will continue.

The Clearwater/Nez Perce have had a larger trail budget because they have a lot of trails they have to maintain. We've gotten extra money for extra vegetation.

Have you done anything to promote the open trails? Not enough. *A lot of people don't go places because they don't think they are open. Through this process, do we set ourselves up for failure or success because of this blip of money that will go away in the future and we can no longer maintain those trails?* I get asked that a lot. Deferred maintenance helped us open things that have been closed for 20 years. Even if we backslide a little, we are still ahead. We're focusing our Annual Maintenance Contracts to keep those trails open. We made a giant step and that picked up about 20 years of deferred maintenance.

Maybe we should be working more directly with you on what could be accomplished? Perhaps we should have a program? We're trying to get people aware about the open trails. I think it would be a great idea to promote what's been open in cooperation with trying to keep it that way. *History would dictate that the area would require a lot of trail maintenance.*

I wanted to express appreciation for allowing the Outfitters to help with the projects. It's been a great thing for us too. Thank you.

Robo Elk, Cindy Lane (US Forest Service)

Current Status

The Record of Decision was signed by Rick Brazell on April 18, 2011, with a modified version of Alternative 2 being selected. Friends of the Clearwater appealed the decision, which was later resolved through an informal resolution meeting between the appellant and the Forest Supervisor. The Robo Elk project is currently in the process of implementation.

Appeal Resolution Points

1. Drop the tractor yarding and mechanical fuel treatments in Units 35, 37, 106, 110, 113, and 121;
2. Monitor the effectiveness of mitigation and design criteria in meeting Regional soil standards in Units 34, 36, 102, and at least one other unit;
3. Drop the 150-ft wide fuel treatments along 55 miles of road;
4. Drop the 50-ft wide fuel treatments along the Elk Creek Falls Trails (approx. 3 miles);
5. Complete watershed restoration activities concurrently or prior to timber harvest, by subdivision. This would not include restoration of those roads or skid trails need to complete harvest or fuel treatment activities; and
6. Include the retention of 50 percent of the current forested overstory canopy in landslide prone areas.

Alternative to be Implemented

Watershed Improvements

- Decommission 38.5 miles of existing roads.
- Place 3.5 miles of existing roads into intermittent storage.
- Amend Appendix K of the Forest Plan

Vegetation Treatments

- Harvest timber on 1,550 acres (110 acres dropped due to appeal resolution).
- Construct 8.0 miles of permanent road, construct 5.5 miles of temporary roads, and reconstruct 9.0 miles of existing roads.
- Treat fuel loadings w/o timber harvest on 3,710 acres (710 acres dropped due to appeal resolution).

- Remove brush and ladder fuels along 25 miles of trails (fuel treatments along roads and Elk Cr. Falls dropped due to appeal resolution).

Recreation Activities

- Designate and reduce the footprint of 25 existing dispersed campsites and decommission and rehabilitate five existing sites along Elk Creek.
- Develop and designate two campgrounds.
- Install a vault toilet adjacent to kiosk south of Elk River.
- Develop and designate four miles of motorized trail and 1.7 miles of non-motorized trail.
- Develop a trail crossing on an old railroad grade south of Elk River.

In the Appeal Resolution Point, we dropped tractor logging – Unit 35 was 86 acres of commercial thin. When we got out there, and began doing the recon, the volume was too low for it to be a viable commercial thin. Having the additional information, it wasn't difficult to give up.

There were 4 units dropped from fuels treatments – they asked for more units to be dropped and in the process of negotiations they were able to add some units back in by doing other things such as monitor effectiveness of mitigation. Three units were added back in.

There was no volume to go to the mill on the 55 miles of road – they were ignition based. It wasn't a huge issue and they could get it through another mechanism.

They also dropped the fuel treatment (3 miles of trail) along the Elk Creek Falls which would affect the visuals of the area.

We are going to have 2 timber sales: 1 Stewardship Project, 1 Traditional Timber Sale. How it was structured for.

They also wanted more canopy left in landslide prone areas. 50% is probably what we should be leaving.

Briefly, the process starts with the Activity Proposed and there are 30 days of Comment Period. After the Comment Period, we make final adjustments and we issue a decision. There is then a 45 day Appeal Period after that Decision is published. In order to Appeal, you must have submitted comments during the initial 30 day period. After the Appeal Period is initiated, we then have 15 days to contact them for an informal disposition meeting. That meeting is open to the public. During that same 15 day period, the Agency is required to go through the Appeal and show how they responded. This is then transmitted to the Regional Office. If they are able to negotiate and come up with a satisfactory to the

FS and the Appellants and they can drop all or part of their Appeal. You cannot negotiate something new that hasn't been analyzed. If there is new information, you cannot negotiate that. If they cannot negotiate all or parts of the Appeal, the Regional Office assembles an Appeals Panel (NEPA Specialist, Public Affairs Specialist and a Line Officer) and they go through your Appeal with a fine tooth comb. If they can uphold their decision and all the appeal points, their recommendations will respond to the Appellant and announce if they will uphold that decision. There is no longer an Intervener Status – it used to be that when you had an appeal someone who did not appeal it could come in and take a position and say I'm with Fs or otherwise, and is now open to the public. The 215 Code of Federal Regulations determined that. In the Public Meeting we are determining whether the Public can comment or not. We are currently asking the Region for clarification.

Is the Appeal panel makeup a legal guideline? Could a CBC member be a part? No, it's all internal and is not appropriate for an outsider to be on the Appeals Panel. In CFR, you look at what if it goes to a lawsuit? Someone who has not appealed a decision cannot then come forward and sue – you have no standing. If you haven't commented, you have no standing to appeal.

Comments:

- *How many BF and when can we expect a sale?* Almost 18MBF. The first contract, a conventional timber sale, is the Q1 of 2013. The Stewardship Sale will be Q3 of 2013.

We've only had 4 appeals [this year] on the Clearwater Nez Perce, and two we resolved and two we forwarded and were upheld. We've done a great job on our NEPA. When a document goes forward and they do not uphold us, there can be a ripple effect and it can push other things back. It's another reason to consider negotiation.

- *Is there some conversation we can have that keeps the CBC included in the appeal negotiation process?* One suggestion is to visit the website and keep in touch with when the Public Meeting is. Keep your comments on record, because you have to have comments on record to have standing for appeal. If you are in support, it's a different position because you're not appealing.
- This needs to be part of our governance in Legislation.
- Whenever I think of commercial thin, I think it's an old harvest unit. We have a silviculturist go out and say it needs to be thinned in order to grow. Now we have someone to saying there are issues with soils due to logging – and what really happened? It seems to me that our arguments are weak and it seems that perhaps someone didn't do their job if they cannot defend the project.

Continuation of Wilderness Discussions

Sideways:

- I still think that the Roadless Issue (opening it up) is a problem and that we might be violating the Rule.

Selway Additions

Start with the East Map. This would help to clean up the areas originally designated. Without getting into specifics, they are higher elevation areas with important wildlife habitats. There are a lot of moose in the area. These areas are almost identical to what the 1987 Forest Plan called for. There is only one classification, regardless of what the map looks like it is all proposed (green areas) wilderness. They aren't Special Management Areas.

If the Land Exchange is completed, would it affect any of these designations? We don't think so. Most of it has been logged over. There might be some sense in changing some boundaries in the future, just for ease of management.

On the West Map, each area shown are recommended wilderness by the Land Allocation Subcommittee. There are a lot of wetland areas.

Would Road 358 disappear after designation? We haven't really addressed that. We aren't sure if that should be cherry stemmed or not. The road that goes to Elk Summit would be maintained (the 111 Road). Those are details that we can look at.

The Proposed Wilderness, are they just the ones listed under Wild Land Recreation Themes? Yes.

This would just be managed under the current Management Plan? We aren't going to ask for special language? No, these would be added to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness area and would work off of existing trails, etc.

Do you or FS know the existing snowmobile use up there? Yes, they legally go up to the edge of the wilderness. There is some issue with some going into the wilderness areas and there are some problems with that – and perhaps this designation could help alleviate some of that problem. The road to the Elk Summit Trailhead was never intended by the Subcommittee's Recommendation to be closed and as far as we know would be cherry stemmed in – so that wouldn't affect the ability to reach the area. Snowmobile itself is not permitted in the wilderness area, but could be using the road.

I'd like to know how many people we are affecting. We did ask the snowmobile groups to come to a Recreation Subcommittee meeting and they are pretty clear on where they went. There have been concerns in other areas – and this area was endorsed by the CBC representative for PLAY.

We should ask the question to the Missoula and Montana folks.

There are a lot of comments that did come in when Public Comments came in for the Travel Plan and they do use the area quite a bit.

Vote: Is there support for the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness additions being included as part of a legislative package?

15 up, 2 sideways, 2 down

- Concern regarding snowmobile use in the Selway-Bitterroot
- Same as other issues
- Roads need to be kept open in final language
- Ditto, emphasize and you can see why it wasn't wilderness originally. They excluded roads, made snowmobile use available, etc. There are people that use the areas.

I know that timber sales were active in the area and were most likely the reason for exclusion, as snowmobiles were not in use during that time.

CFLRP Updates

Its official, Mike Ward is still our Coordinator (for the Forest Service) for this position!

We are working on the Annual Report, and that is due in the Regional Office November 7th.

We are still awaiting the FY12 Budget, and have approximated \$3.2 million. We will come to CBC to ensure the consistency of expenditures. We have 19 different budget line items. We have the opportunity to continue trail work as restoration and can go forward and the people that developed the program confirmed that.

We did have carry over authority, but then they said no. We were told to be very careful as if we do not retain that ability, we would have to come up with the difference.

The other 20% has been going to overhead – Washington money.

Action Item: The group is reminded that scoping comments are very helpful and are encouraged to provide input

Clear Creek Project

You've already signed onto this project, and this will be your test-case for the MOU. We've been involved in the project and we'd like to continue our partnership.

We will be posting a Notice in the Federal Register in December; you will have 45 days to get your Scoping Comments in.

When will work begin? That started last year. People were on the ground last year. Clear Creek, optimally, we will start in the fall of 2014. That is hoping there are no appeals or litigation. We had a field trip yesterday. We have people working on a 57,000 acre project. We're trying to arrive at "Desired Conditions." We had some really good discussions in the woods.

Comments:

- It reinforced for me, that CBC should spend some time in the woods! We should actually look in the woods and discuss what we're looking at. From a Landscape Health Subcommittee, this was getting down to the nitty-gritty; what are your concerns? Would you cut this tree? Kicking the dirt. The analogy here, when we left the main gravel road, we did not drive by an opening that you could see into. There wasn't even a 7 year old plantation – what we saw was a very continuous timber. These are the most productive timber in the area. What do we want Forest Management to be? What do we want to cut out there? How do we get back to young, seral forest? To say we're going to get it all out of old growth is not very practical. There will have to be some balance with younger forests. Now we're talking about managing the country that we're driving through all the time.
- When we're doing our problem solving, we should deal with specifics instead of the 30,000 foot level. It was a good day in the woods and it was great to see that there was some old growth out there. We are still crunching numbers. Early on, the breakdown of the desired future condition by Vegetative Response Unit (VRU) was looked at by age class ranges by habitat. Early on, we identified the early stand age, the mid-range and the late or old growth. Based on some habitat type recommendations we really want to have a balance of age-classes that looks a bit different. The group decided that that was a good direction. We've learned that those numbers need to be refined by ground truthing. Old growth is a flashpoint, and that shouldn't come as a surprise. I pointed out yesterday that the CFLRP has sideboards, and when we put in our proposal we agreed that we would live within those sideboards regarding large-tree retention. The Forest Plan commits to a 10% minimum, and we don't have "way" more than we should. Let's be sensitive around the old growth, and where we regenerate the old growth forests to create early seral habitat we would create a lot of attention. We don't want our first headline to be "CBC cuts old growth under the guise of restoration." We really don't want that. We also saw a lot of areas that had intermediate timber. There are a lot of things that go into our decision to be focused and strategic. Having the on the ground experience was very beneficial.

The age ranges and targets we identified early on are important – what we’ve identified is important. We need to be consistent.

- I thought there were some very good discussions out there. It was very consistent. We’re committed to outcomes on the landscape. It should flow because of that. I’m committed to the balancing of those age classes – I think that is where we will continue to focus on that. They are challenging habitats out there. Perhaps we can design several different outcomes for different areas. There will be continued challenges, but that is the strength of a collaborative.
- We also had a lot of discussion between what we would do for CFLRP and what would we do for Forest Planning? Would they be different? We had to keep asking, “Are you talking about CFLRP or in general?”
- We want to make sure we get it right out of the chute. We have a targeted December Scoping, and if it slips to January so that we can get it right, than I am okay with that.

Action Item: If individuals cannot attend, they are encouraged to review prework and provide comments to Greg Danley and/or Bill Higgins before the meeting.

Action Item: For more information regarding the projects, contact Cindy Lane.

Action Item: Kelli will send out MOU and levels of support documents prior to the meeting.

Consolidation of Nez Perce/Clearwater National Forests

We missed the last meeting due to organizational challenges and a Leadership Meeting. We now have an Organization Chart for both Forests. There will be 17 occupied positions that will be eliminated, and there are roughly 17 in fire as well. Because of our budgets, these people won’t have a job. We are meeting with representatives to help place these people. It saves time and energy for government and for these people. We can offer them jobs elsewhere. We are trying to place local instead of moving people across the nation. We have to perform Civil Rights analysis. We’re shooting to have our package ready somewhere around November/December. We hope to finalize somewhere in March. Roughly 50% of our Recreation Budget is lost.

Steering Committee Report

Letter to Senator Crapo

This is a rough draft being circulated today. Please use track changes and send in your comments. Attached to this will be specific issue papers cited in every instance of this letter. It will be in a notebook and be delivered to the Senator.

The issue papers will be coordinated. They cannot be written by one individual and there will be emails requesting assistance in writing those papers. These papers will go back to Washington DC in December.

Action Item: Kelli will send out an electronic version of the draft letter to Senator Crapo. Working group members should send comments regarding the letter to Kelli by November 4. Olleke will send out an e-mail with issues and will coordinate the development of issue papers to attach to the letter. Please respond in a timely manner.

Washington DC interest

Several members indicated their interest in traveling back to Washington DC in December. Those still considering should send an email to the Coordinator of their interest.

Action Item: Dale will send out the purpose and a tentative itinerary for the December Washington D.C. trip by Friday. Let Kelli know if you are interested in making the trip. The Steering Committee will send a letter to the Idaho delegation requesting attendance by regional staff.

November Working Group Meeting

November 16th is our best date for the meeting.

National Forest Foundation Conference, Colorado

Our Coordinator participated in a three-day conference in Colorado with other Collaborative efforts across the nation. The conference was productive and it became clear that CBC has a very positive collaboration in process.

Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership

There will be two core themes this year: Day 1 – collaboration efforts and focusing on mixed severity fire regime forests; and, Day 2 – value and market analysis of forest products.

January 31/February 1st – they are still working on funding. It will be in the same location

Decisions and Action Items

Public Comment

Round Robin

Meeting concluded

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Decisions and Action Items

October 26, 2011 - Clearwater Basin Collaborative Working Group

DECISIONS

- Question: Is there support for East Meadow Creek being included as part of a legislative package? 12 thumbs up. 2 “live with.” 5 thumbs down.
- Question: Is there support for the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness additions being included as part of a legislative package? 15 thumbs up. 2 “live with.” 2 thumbs down.

ACTIONS

- All working group members are encouraged to attend the Nov. 17 Landscape Health meeting where projects will be selected for collaboration. If individuals cannot attend, they are encouraged to review prework and provide comments to Greg Danley and/or Bill Higgins before the meeting. For more information regarding the projects, contact Cindy Lane. Kelli will send out MOU and levels of support documents prior to the meeting.
- Kelli will send out attachments to protocols A, B, C, D and an updated contact list. Respond as requested.
- Bill Higgins will initiate a discussion regarding stewardship contracting to facilitate an understanding about what is within the agency’s authority and what takes congressional action.
- Rural Economies Subcommittee will present the Community Forest Trust Initiative as a discussion topic at the November working group meeting.
- Groups who want to support the Youth Challenge project in Pierce need to contact Colonel Tim Kelly in Boise. Contact information will be in the notes.
- Recreation Subcommittee requested time at the November working group meeting to present outfitter and guide concerns and ideas.
- Randy will provide information regarding the new equestrian trail to Holly for the Recreation Subcommittee
- Mike Ward requested scoping comments in response to the Clear Creek proposal.
- Kelli will send out an electronic version of the draft letter to Senator Crapo. Working group members should send comments regarding the letter to Kelli by November 4. Olleke will send out an e-mail with issues and will coordinate the development of issue papers to attach to the letter. Please respond in a timely manner.

- Dale will send out the purpose and a tentative itinerary for the December Washington D.C. trip by Friday. Let Kelli know if you are interested in making the trip. The Steering Committee will send a letter to the Idaho delegation requesting attendance by regional staff.