

N. Blues Forest Collaborative *Minutes*

Meeting Date: June 24, 2020

Location: online

Approved: July 22, 2020

In Attendance:

NBFC Members and Guests: Paul Anderes (Union County Commissioner), Mike Billman (ODF), Nils Christoffersen (WR), Alyssa Cudmore (WR), Brian Dill (U. of Illinois), Pam Hardy (WELC), Kerry Kemp (TNC), Kelly Makela (WR), Katy Nesbitt (Wallowa County NRAC), Laura Platt (PSU), Darlene Rochna, Eric Wunz

Forest Service: Bill Gamble, Brian Goff, Amber Mahoney (Ingoglia), Jamie Ratliff, Eric Watrud

Staff: Jeff Costello (Facilitator)

Key Decisions:

- Operating Principles adopted with a small amendment
- St'g Comm to decide how to respond to OR Wild & GHCC
Others invited to offer additional thoughts

Open Questions:

- Should we have a protocol for anonymous participation?
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Minutes Key

- Meeting minutes do not represent collaborative agreements, unless they specifically say so. They are meant to record three basic things only: 1) the issue discussed, 2) the major points or questions raised in the conversation, and 3) the resolution, if there was one. Unless specifically stated, resolutions are only the resolutions of the people present at the meeting.
 - Common Abbreviations:
 - Q: Question
 - A: Answer
 - Cmt: Comment
 - Tx: Treatment
 - Rx Fire: Prescribed Fire
 - Highlighted Items are typically those that require follow-up.
(Usually suggestions for future agendas)
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Meeting Notes

Preliminaries:

- Introductions
 - there is one person on the line that has not identified themselves.
 - We do not have a protocol for anonymous participation, but it feels weird
- We have decided not to record the meetings based on concerns that were expressed back when we started taking notes. Specifically, people expressed that meetings should encourage a free flow of ideas, and that verbatim recording could stifle that. People need to feel free to try on ideas, and change their

mind if needed. Also, we feel that recording would require the permission of all present, and that permission hasn't been given.

- Agenda Review
 - we will add a discussion to the end re: the OR Wild/GHCC withdrawal
 - no other changes
- Upcoming 2020 Meetings:
06/25, 07/22-23, 08/26-27, 09/23-24, 10/21-22, 12/2-3
- PNW Forest Collaboratives SNW Workshop Webinar Series (July Webinars):
 - Collaborative Administrative & Judicial Review Opportunities
aka: How collaboratives can participate at the court if their projects are litigated
Presenter: Susan Jane Brown. For prep work, see SJ's paper on the topic [here](#).¹
July 9, 2020 (10-11:30am):
 - Historical Range of Variability – Uses & Various Approaches
Presenter: Nathan Poage
This is just a more general version of the presentation we saw in May.
July 17, 2020 (10-11:30am):

REGISTRATION REQUIRED (Use the following link):

<http://www.sustainablenorthwest.org/blog/posts/2020-pacific-northwest-forest-collaboratives-workshop>

- BIC Update – Paul Anderes is not present
Links to current information:
 - <https://eocounties.org/sub-committees/blues-intergovernmental-council>
 - <https://www.pdx.edu/npcc/blues-intergovernmental-council-meeting-materials>They are currently welcoming participants in the subcommittees.
- CFLRP FACA Committee met this morning. Report:
We are the “highest-ranked” project in R6.
But not all proposals have been ranked across the country.
It was noted at the meeting that OR Wild & GHCC withdrew yesterday
Nonetheless, we got strong marks on most fronts

Weaknesses:
 - would like to have seen a larger footprint for impact
 - could be stronger core monitoring metrics
 - would like better partner organization commitments
 - budget totals were more than \$40 million
Q: There is a rumor that the extensions will eat up most of the new project money.
A: Yes that's true.

Q: What happens next? Do we just get funded? Do they ask more questions?
A: There will likely be more questions about our weaknesses.
- Approval of last month's minutes:
Approved. No changes proposed.

¹ https://www.nationalforests.org/assets/files/Admin_Legal-Review-Opportunities-for-Collabs_SJ-Brown-and-ERI-2015.pdf

FS Updates

Umatilla NF: Eric Watrud

- We are still working despite Covid.
Those who can, are teleworking.
Field work is limited and careful, but happening.
People stay in “modules” – working with the same people every day.
~ 2/3's of campgrounds are open.
- There has been a LOT of effort put into preparation for fire in Covid times.
The SW is already trying out some of these, and we will benefit from their early experience.

Wallowa-Whitman NF:

- Active operations are occurring on the East Face project
- Training field staff/interns in monitoring efforts.
- Five Points Sale – WUI project
working on developing a “story map” to improve collaboration.
Trying to figure out how to do small field trips.
- FLT has been discussing 2021 Program of Work priorities.
This year hasn't fallen as far behind as feared.
- Sheep Creek & Morgan Nesbitt are being planned.
- Livestock turnout is currently happening.
- Many PCT, fencing, and aquatic restoration contracts are getting started right now.
- Fish habitat & floating conditions are not aligned.
A canoe over-turned and got stuck under some CWD that was placed for fish.
- The FS asked by an Idaho group to present about the Sheep Creek project.

Oregon Dept. of Forestry

- ODF just sold its first local sale recently called “Sparta GNA.”
Went to Woodgrain, who purchased some of the local Boise Cascade plants.
- Four Corners will be next ~ mid-July. Near Heppner.
Probably going to be popular in the post & pole market ... poles for hops.

Operating Principles

- Remaining Questions:
 - Q: What does it mean that we are consensus seeking?
I thought we were moving to a focus on mutual understanding.
A: Yes, we are moving to a focus on mutual understanding,
but if we want to create a consensus document, we need to have a protocol for that.
 - What does full spectrum mean? Do we need a definitions section?
It's full spectrum of membership. Our effectiveness is based on our credibility. If we approve something without all the key players, it's not going to carry any weight. This just makes that clear. So this needs to be interpreted in good faith, given the context at the time. This is not a statute for which there is liability if violated.

- One amendment: Tom Montoya requested clarification on which objections hearings we would like to be invited to. Only those for projects on which we provided input. Amendment to be made.
- People/Organizations formally signing on with the above amendment.
 - Wallowa Resources
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - Wallowa County
 - Oregon Dept. of Forestry
 - Darlene Rochna
 - Western Environmental Law Center
- Should the FS sign on?
They are the ones we're advising, but they aren't a voting member
So no. They won't sign on.
- Procedure:
We will have a formal paper-signing ceremony when we're able to meet again in person. In the meantime, sign-ons will simply be recorded in the minutes.

The OR Wild – GHCC decision to leave - Debrief

- They have offered to speak to the entire collaborative next month.
- How would they like to engage if not via the collaborative?
- We want to keep an open door & open table if they change their mind.
- There is a "radical center" with a diversity of perspectives.
This will give a chance for those voices to be better heard & documented.
- There remain two environmental advocacy groups on the collaborative.
The statement to the contrary in the letter felt like a personal attack.
- They sent the emails/letter to the Steering Committee
 - Regional Forester
 - Senators' offices
 - Governor's office
- Perhaps their mission has been changing a bit, and maybe their new goals are not well aligned with collaboration.
- The letters had lots of representations of situations where I felt, "Was I not there for that?"
That's just not how I recall it.
- Should we respond in writing?
 - these letters are circulating widely.

Should we invite them to speak at the July meeting?

- - OR Wild's concerns were broad
- GHCC was more focused on the RO process
- perhaps we should hear from them separately.
- don't want to spend much more time on this as a large group
- would we offer this time on the agenda to anyone else?

- What's the objective in having them back?
It feels a lot like a break up.
What does the group need, in order to feel closure, and create an amicable change in status so that we can continue to work together productively in the future?
- What's their intent in coming back to the group that they just withdrew from?
Let's assume positive intent. Maybe we can better understand their issues.
- They put a lot of effort into drafting the letters.
- Darilyn acknowledged that they didn't give us a chance to participate in their decision.
- We should be prepared if we do meet with them.
Really know what's in their letters, and think about how to respond.

Should we do a written response?

- Let's not allow this to be a big scene
- "That groups are arguing is not news." Most people in the community don't know what the collaborative is, or what the impact of them leaving is.

Looking ahead

- Come tomorrow for Laura's presentation on her research into historical fire return interval in Moist Mixed Conifer

Adjourn: 12:20