

WALLOWA WHITMAN FOREST COLLABORATION
FULL GROUP ASSEMBLY March 5, 2013
La Grande Ranger District, La Grande Oregon
MEETING NOTES

In Attendance: Bill Gamble, Lindsay Warness, Willie Crippen, Mark Porter, Jenny Reinhardt, Gary Miller, Steve Hawkins, Brian Kelly, Marcus Kauffman, Mark Jacques, Bill White, Vince Naughton, Fred Warner, Mike Hayward, Bruce Dunn, John Williams, John Buckman, Dave Hannibal, Jeff Tomac, Steve Edwards, Nils Christoffersen, John Laurence, Adriene Holcomb, Kevin Keown, Ken Gebhardt, Kathleen Cathy, Trish Wallace, Raymond Ostpovich, Darlene Rochna, Ron Rochna, Emmitt Taylor – via conference call line.
Mark Scott

Introduction of Agenda – Nils Christoffersen

Three main items of discussion:

1. Lower Joseph Creek Watershed Project originated by Wallowa County Natural Resource Advisory Committee that started several years ago as part of the Wallowa Country collaborative process and has been brought forward to the Forest Collaborative as of last summer/fall.
 - a. Present recommendations from Project Sub-committee (primarily John Buckman and Lindsay Warness) of Wallowa-Whitman Forest Collaborative (WWFC) and Wallowa County Collaborative on transition from planning to implementation.
 - b. Review how pre-NEPA collaborative process fits into the formal NEPA process and how the transition occurs. Ways we can stay engaged to help shepherd these projects through to implementation. Then provide support for project implementation and contracting.
 - c. Ken Gebhardt. USFS WVRD, will discuss their plans and capacity needs to move forward this project.
 - d. Wallowa county would like to get full collaborative support through our consensus based process (for Lower Joseph Project), by the April or May meeting so we can pass this on to the Forest Service (FS) and FS personnel know they have the support of the collaborative behind it when they move forward with NEPA.
 - e. Identifying key issues that still need to be discussed, resolved, or information that need to be brought forward. This is really an important focus on today's discussion about LJCWA. LJCWA is nearing the end of its collaborative planning process.
2. Bill Gamble will discuss the East Face Project. This project is in its beginning phase and the WWNF would like the collaborative to be involved from the project start.
3. Outreach and Information sharing: We need to do what we can to ensure the general public and all interested stakeholders have access to information about the collaborative and our work, and the ability to participate if they support the mission, operating principles, etc. The following have been put up on a publicly available web site: all the meeting minutes; the operating principles of the collaborative that discuss the commitment we make as a collaborative, along with the missions and goals of the decision making process. Some stakeholders, particularly those concerned with roads, are anxious about the collaborative and would like more understanding of what we are doing and ways that they can engage.
4. Other news and information sharing.

OVERVIEW OF LOWER JOSEPH WATERSHED - PROJECT AREAS

Jenny provided an overview of the WWFC Sub-Committee on Lower Joseph Collaborative that met twice in Wallowa County. Present at the meetings were Lindsay Warness, John Buckman, Mike Shaw, Bruce Dunn, John Williams, Adriene Holcomb, Ken Gebhardt, Roy Garten, Rod Childers, Cynthia Warnock, Jenny Reinhardt.

The group looked at the watershed and suggested dividing the watershed up into project areas.

1. The southern project area is a really long finger. It lies from Joseph Creek south to where the forest boundary meets private land. Highway 3 would be the West boundary; the South boundary is the 4600 road (FS boundary); The East boundary would be where the 4605 road leaves the 4600 road north to the confluence of Chesnimus and Joseph Creek following Joseph Creek north; The North boundary would be from the confluence of Joseph Creek and Swamp Creek heading to the west to Hwy 3. This is the most southern project and has a high amount of range recommendations. Approximately 31,650 acres in size.
2. The middle project area is defined by the West boundary along Joseph Creek heading north to the FS and private land boundary; the Southern tip would be the confluence of Chesnimus and Joseph Creek along the 4600 road; the East boundary would be defined by the 4600 road heading north then leaving the 4600 road following the boundary of the Wallowa Valley Ranger District and HCNRA north to the FS boundary; the North boundary would be the FS boundary following private land to Joseph Creek. The area has the largest amount of silviculture and fuels recommendations. Approximately 38,130 acres in size.
3. The portion of the watershed falling in the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA) is separated as its own project area. This area is covered under the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and the Hells Canyon Comprehensive Management Plan. This project area is the farthest North and east portion of FS. The west boundary is defined from the 4600 road north on the boundary of HCNRA and the Wallowa Valley Ranger District; The Southern boundary would follow the 4600 road moving east to where the 4680 road takes off to the north; The east boundary would be the 4680 road/Cold Springs Ridge north to Downy Saddle moving north to Jim Creek Butte then continuing out the ridge line to Jenny Corral Gulch then on to Mount Wilson at the Oregon/Washington Boarder; the Northern boundary would be the FS – private land boundary from Mount Wilson to Horse Creek, continuing along the FS-private land boundary to the west boundary of the HCNRA. Approximately 28, 680 acres

Once the project areas were agreed upon watershed recommendations were then intersected with the projects to identify what recommendations fell in which project boundary.

The middle area was identified as the initial project area to complete because:

- a. It has the least management constraints (east-side screens, HCNRA, wild and scenic rivers, etc.)
- b. It supported the highest amount of vegetation management and fuels treatment projects and a diverse mix of other resource recommendations.
- c. It hosts the Coyote Campground and is a high priority for wildfire risk reduction.

Projects proposed in this first priority area include:

- a. Vegetation treatment to promote a more resilient landscape through a reduction in stand density, promotion of early seral species, increasing the base height of crowns and associated fuel reduction. Projects would be designed to promote late old structure and large tree component, as well as increase forage, plant diversity and cattle distribution. Wildlife also recommended thinning of stands for increased forage and plant diversity. Vegetation project acres include the following: commercial thinning, ladder fuel reduction, whip felling, and pre-commercial thinning and prescribed burning. The majority of these vegetation acres are centralized from Table Mountain to the east end of the project boundary.
- b. Range recommendations approved through integration were: 2 miles of fence repair, .5 mile fence for water gap, 1 site treatment for water degradation improvement needs, 4 ponds, 2 spring rebuild.
- c. Several types of treatments over 32 miles of road-segments. This included maintenance, culvert replacement, spot rocking, drainage road surface improvement, etc. Many roads have one or two isolated sites to treat. Not all 32 miles will receive treatment; some roads may only have one or two culverts needing work. Work is only recommended where it maintains the road segment *in current road use status*. Some of these road recommendations have completed NEPA ready, others do not. Roads identified were recommended by the Riparian resource group for some type of stream protection, fish passage, or sediment reduction.

Question: Does develop recreational opportunities include doing improvements and maintenance of the campgrounds?

Coyote Campground is the only developed campsites in the watershed. Almost all the camping is dispersed. There is an area at Teepee pond which is heavily used, and received site development recommendation. That particular spot is located in the HCNRA project area.

Question: On the forestry items is moving the stand toward Historical Range of Variability the issue? Are you differentiating between warm dry, cool dry, cool moist in terms of treatments? Can this group get through recognizing treatment is needed in the different biophysical groups? Will we be loose consensus if we discuss cool moist sites?

There is 3 – 4 years of analytical work completed that includes: stand condition exams, range condition exams, riparian exams etc. and there are several hefty analytical chapters of this assessment one of which the forestry section divides it into those biophysical environments and divides the stand structure conditions as they currently exist against the historic range of variability. It discusses the current issues as they relate to wildfire risk, wildlife habitat, growth and productivity. Through that recommendations were designed by biophysical type such as warm dry, cool dry, cool moist, etc. The mapping also indicates the ground less than 35% slope and areas over 35% slope. All that detail exists in the analysis.

It was agreed that the limited areas of cool moist in the first project area will be looked at on a site by site basis. There is very little cool moist in this watershed, the majority of the watershed is warm dry and cool dry. (See Structural stage by biophysical group).

Comment – There is good agreement on the management and restoration of dry forest types for the most part but in real deep dark grand fir forest that is cool moist it may be difficult to find full consensus.

Response - There is very little cool moist, but those would be good areas to go and visit to consider current conditions, and potential prescriptions. If we plan such a field trip, we could also look at the treatments done in cool dry stands in Upper Joseph Creek. **

Nils - Are people comfortable with the initial cut we have given you? We recognize not everyone is fully up to speed on all the analysis that exists. We have been working on it in the Wallowa County collaborative for several years.

A tremendous amount of analysis has gone through each resource group, followed by integration, and now the joint sub committees for the NRAC and WWFC collaborative. They discussed breaking it into these three project areas and starting on this middle project area where there was a tremendous amount of agreement and a broad spectrum of work were it meets a goal of not only improving the watershed but creating a lot of contracting work opportunities for the local communities.

Question: What are our next steps? The next steps need to be articulated.

Nils – Developing the Purpose and Need for the middle 38,000 acres alone – or possibly the middle project area and the southern project area together.

Ken - We in the sub-committees talked about project area boundaries and approached them in what made sense on the ground. These project area boundaries will likely be re-defined a little bit more based on landscape, watershed boundaries, hydrological boundaries. The Forest Service may redefine these boundaries somewhat.

Nils – this takes us to the next steps. This is all pre-NEPA with the collaborative work. The landscape has legacy NEPA in some areas. The last full NEPA vegetation project that was done in the watershed was the Baldwin project completed around 2002. That is the most recent vegetation. Average NEPA is good for 10 years but it is really when something changes that would warrant needing to go back to that piece of ground such as policy changes, management indicator species change, T&E species list changes.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Middle project area identified as a place to start.

When we say local collaborative we are now referring to the Wallowa County and WWFC working group led by the local NRAC – designated as the lead on behalf of the WW Forest Collaborative. The FS has been at the table throughout collaboration fully involved in the input, the project proposals and development of all aspects of the Lower Joseph Watershed Assessment and Purpose and Need.

Purpose and Need developed by combined collaborative sub-committees.

The purpose and need represents the difference between the area's existing condition and its historic range of variability as described in the Lower Joseph Creek Watershed Assessment (2013) and desired condition based on WWNF Forest Plan (1990) management direction and the National Fire Plan (2005).

4 key points for the Purpose and Need in treating the middle project area.

1. There is a need to move forest structures, species composition, stand densities, and surface fuel loadings toward their historical range of variability (HRV). By moving these forest attributes toward HRV it will provide response to ecosystem needs for wildlife, forage, wildfire, insects and disease resistance, and public safety. Creating a more resilient and self-sustaining watershed. (recognize climate change)

Desired stand conditions include:

- a. ecologically appropriate species compositions and structures that promote resilient stand conditions resistant to insect and disease infestations and likely continued occurrence of wildfires.
 - b. create a more fire resilient landscape through reduction of ladder fuels, crown densities (overlapping of live tree crowns), and an increased distance of the canopy base height from the surface fuels providing proactive management for protection near and around cultural sites from all disturbances.
 - c. Reduce fuel loadings at known sites to minimize the impacts of wildfire by creating conditions that promote a low intensity short burning duration fire.
 - d. Promote health and vigor of residual stands and accelerate the development of large trees of early seral species and trees with old-growth physical characteristics consistent with forest management recommendations within the Lower Joseph Watershed Assessment.
 - e. Landscapes that reflect the HRV generally provide a mosaic of conditions for connectivity and dispersal need of wildlife species associated with different structural stages including a distribution of late and old forest structures across the landscape.
2. Improve water sources and fence development to address wildlife and domestic livestock distribution and maintain healthy conditions near stream riparian areas through alternative water sites and spring development.
 - Reduce noxious weeds
 - Develop additional springs in the area
 - Complete maintenance on stock ponds troughs and fences.
 - Provide a mosaic of conditions for connectivity and dispersal needs of wildlife species associated with different structural stages.
 - Riparian vegetation diversity
 3. Improve watershed conditions by reduced road-related impacts to wildlife, fish, soil and water sources providing for the transportation system necessary meet long-term management needs. Replacing culverts to cultivate fish passage and improve water quality
 - a. Road maintenance and upkeep
 - b. Road re-alignment to lessen impacts on riparian areas and reduce stream sediments
 4. Produce products that will benefit the local economies through the production of forage, timber, firewood and recreational opportunities to increase economic sustainability and support local businesses.
 - a. Projects will produce consecutive years of work in the work that will contribute to maintaining jobs and a stable workforce.

- b. Develop use of recreation sites that are safe, clean and well maintained.
- c. Provide firewood
- d. Dispersed camping
- e. Hunting, mushrooming and berry picking.

Question: What does develop additional springs mean? Does Wildlife use troughs or springs?

1. There is a need to pull the livestock away from riparian to prevent degradation of riparian area and provide an alternative water source.
2. Protection of undeveloped springs. The big issues are providing mid-slope water to help keep cattle out of the draw bottoms. Divert cattle using a pipe and a trough, and/or a fence around a spring.
3. Generally if a water source is improved or developed often the wildlife will begin using it. The size of ex-closures around the springs is important, if it is small enough the elk do not want to jump in

Question: Does the last line under Purpose and Need # 2 - riparian vegetation diversity include restoration, what is involved in this topic?

- a. This recommendation came out of both wildlife and riparian resource groups in Lower Joseph Watershed Assessment for maintaining and enhancing riparian areas through re-establishing hardwoods and brush component in riparian areas and improvement of aspen stands.

Question: Was wildfire suppression use of water sources considered?

- a. That is built into Wallowa Counties Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
- b. The primary suppression discussion in the write up was response time delays for initial attack resources and an increase in fire size. This is something that can and should be discussed during the project phases in NEPA development.

Comment: One recommendation that the forestry group presented was green tree fire would sales for utilization of ladder fuels particularly 7" and less trees that could potentially get hand piled and burned

Next Steps toward NEPA

Forest Service:

1. To wrap up the watershed assessment. The watershed assessment provides us a 36,000 foot look of the large project area is our number one priority.
2. FS will look at those specific opportunities we have identified. Identify those stands and characteristics, access, past NEPA, and get a better picture of the true opportunities we have out there. The Forest Service still have some data to gather. This will take the timber staff, fuels, and other staff getting out on the ground. There are still some data needs and we would like assistance from the local collaborative in helping us collect the remaining data needs.
3. Timber staff has looked at: the timber opportunities, past NEPA, access or lack of, line ground, helicopter logging options - those are the things we need to take a further look at.
4. A decision slated to be signed as a 2015 decision.

The next step for the collaborative is:

1. To give the FS the purpose and need
2. The FS can develop a scoping letter. The official start of NEPA is the scoping letter so there is still opportunity for continued engagement with the collaborative.
3. The collaborative can help refine the purpose and need and designing a proposed action. That would be a legitimate use of this group then once we initiate scoping then we are jumping into the NEPA world.
4. FS will work with the collaborative and get down to the refined look of potential acres.
5. One NEPA proposed action will be covering all four of the purpose and needs.

Key points for accomplishment by the Forest Service to share with the collaborative group:

- a. to have maps and data available of that middle project area at a more fine scale level to further familiarize the Collaborative
- b. Planning some field trips
- c. Additional field data collection by FS staff.

The WWFC wanted a project on the ground as quickly as possible. Can we bring it forward to a consensus of support for the Analysis and Recommendations and bring some formality to the collaborative? We need consensus based on the operations principles framework to support this through NEPA and out into implementation. We need the formal process of consensus to agree that we as a collaborative want to move forward with Lower Joseph.

We are looking for support regarding:

1. Is the combined collaborative sub-groups headed in the right direction?
2. Breaking the watershed into three areas and focusing on that initial middle project area first.
3. Finalizing and support of the four points of the Purpose and Needs that we presented today.
4. Finding additional data needs and making a plan with the FS on moving forward to gett the data collection.

We don't want to go away and find out this group had a different image of where to go and what to do first.

Everyone was OK with dividing Lower Joseph Creek into three projects. More detail of the middle project area and a sweep of projects with the multi-disciplinary recommendations for implementation will be brought to the next meeting.

Emmitt – there is a process for the Tribe to go through to endorse the projects and that will take some time. Emmitt will try to meet with Nils before the next meeting and attend the 27th meeting.

EASTSIDE STRATEGY

1. At the Umatilla Collaborative – Bill Aney (regional fuels specialist) is now the Eastside Restoration Coordinator and is looking for a 100,000 to 200,000 acre project for restoration. It's designed to restore resiliency as fast as we can. Bill Aney is aware that Lower Joseph Watershed Analysis is available. Bill Aney called it the Blue Mountain Restoration Initiative.

2. The collaborative group should keep the ball rolling.
3. Bill Aney has a lot of work ahead of him still needing to hire an Interdisciplinary Team. It may take some time.
4. There is a great deal of uncertainty in federal funding but it looks like the budget is already in the Region Office for the Eastside Strategy. Eastside strategy is an Initiative that has formed from the Malheur National Forest situation. It is trying to develop a strategy to greatly increase the pace of restoration where it's needed on and for National Forests. We are currently moving forward with the guarantee that the budget is there. I
5. It is designed to hire additional capacity to help move forward with restoration. Maintain our current program momentum but still stay in contact with Bill Aney.
6. Cautioned doing the whole watershed as one NEPA document with the northeast portion being Hells Canyon National recreation Area, Joseph Canyon, roadless areas, that would bring up concerns for some groups if we get into those other areas.

COLLABORATION AND NEPA

1. Lindsay passed out a flow chart on how the collaborative fits into the project process. The Payette use this flow chart to understand where they fit in during NEPA. We are in the pre-project design on the Lower Joseph project. We want to make you aware that it is out there and we are allowed to modify and/or use it. Does this interest anyone?
2. Some type of NEPA training, information sharing would be helpful for everyone.
3. A presentation of how the collaborative can effectively integrate with the NEPA process would be helpful.

EAST FACE PROJECT

Bill Gamble presented the La Grande Ranger districts project with the Interdisciplinary Team to introduce them to the collaborative.

1. The East Face is starting at ground zero for information.
2. Location of project - east side of Elkhorn Mountains from Ladd Canyon south to Anthony Lakes, there are opportunities to discuss the boundaries. The Anthony Lakes Highway is the south boundary and includes the ski area.
3. It includes two counties Baker and Union.
4. It interfaces with the Elk Horn wildlife area with ODF&W, BLM, and private lands.
5. It supports the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy. We want to do what makes sense on the ground and have the elements to support that cohesive strategy
6. It's well roaded particularly on the face.
7. Proposal will be in context of some landscape goals and objectives.

Current forest plan defines the area as:

1. primarily management area as a management area (MA) 1 or Timber allocation
2. scattered throughout is designated old-growth areas
3. Contains (MA) 6 - back country designation, that is meant to emphasize more recreational pursuits tied with more primitive backpacking, hiking, and some motorized recreation as well.
4. There is also MA 3 winter and summer range for big game.
5. There is an Administrative site of the Anthony Lakes Ski resort.

The largest management area is MA 1 timber allocation covering approximately 80 % of the project.

There are three different wildland urban interfaces:

1. Beaver Creek Municipal Watershed secondary for La Grande's water for domestic purposes
2. The Anthony Lakes Urban Interface
3. The Rock Creek Boulder urban interface

There is potential for an increase of WUI as Baker and Union county finishes their updates of their Community Wildland Fire Protection Plan

Type of NEPA document is yet to be determined: (HFRA) Healthy Forest Restoration Act project is a possibility.

Disturbance history –

- a. There were large fires in 1910 and in the 1960's were Anthony and Tanner Gulch burns and several little fires in comparison. Fire is a major disturbance player here. Fire has been a major agent of change. The old fires were determined through photo interpretation. Some of the fires were not all stand replacement in this area.
- b. Past Harvest and roads system that supported the harvest and recreational opportunities. Approximately 32% has seen some level of past harvest as intermediate type treatments and regeneration type treatments. About 1/3 was regeneration and 2/3 was intermediate treatments. The last active timber sale in this area was in the 1990's.

Forest Types –

There are three Primary forest types indicative of elevation, aspect, and soils.

- a. Cool Moist – 42% area
Range of variability – old forests are under-represented, and early seral with an abundance of mid-seral stage forests. Broad look there could be opportunities to develop later seral conditions and/or development of early seral conditions that might compliment the need for forage enhancement and browse.
- b. Cold forests - higher elevation 36% of area
Range of variability – Old forest multi stratum is in the middle of what we would expect, with a deficiency in the old forest single stratum, and stand initiation. There is an abundance of understory re-initiation. This is likely the fires that have developed over time.
- c. Dry Upland – 22% Lower elevation, westerly and southerly aspects
Range of variability – Old forest multi-stratum is within the range. Old forest single stratum is severely lacking which appears very typical of our current landscapes. Fire served as an agent of stability by maintaining these stands. Opportunities exist in the understory re-initiation as well as the stem exclusion stand structure phase.

Other Information about East Face:

1. The project falls into two different watersheds: Wolf Creek Powder River watershed and the North Powder River watershed with everything draining into the Powder River.
2. Bull trout are present in some areas of the project.
3. Wildlife history is tied to unwanted impacts from Elk on pastures. The wildlife area adjacent to the project was established to help maintain the elk closer to the base of the mountain away from agriculture lands and the freeway. There are opportunities to work with ODF&W to enhance

conditions for the elk on the national forest lands. The forest land is the transitional area between summer and winter range. The high elevation ridge line is another consideration for carnivores such as; wolverines, pine martens, etc.

4. There are pockets of hardwood habitats in the area as well to promote species diversity.

There is some relevant guidance to move us forward with the project:

1. Forest Plan – both existing and revised because this project could realistically straddle both plans. We will follow our existing plan but it would be wise to keep an eye on the revised plan and design a project that will support the new plan as well.
2. Recently *The Terrestrial Restoration Conservation Strategy* has been released Forest Service publication that actually identifies the North Powder River as one of the priority watersheds and in particular it terms of hardwood, riparian restoration type work, and open ponderosa type pine woodlands for example. Those type of habitat features are to be viewed as priority for restoration in that area.
3. The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy with the variety of different ownerships. This addresses the level of Wildland Urban Interface areas along with two Community Wildfire Protection Plans.
4. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has the Oregon Conservation Strategy it identifies within this area again the riparian habitats as well as the ponderosa pine. They call them strategy habitats.

Social and Economic considerations:

1. Contributions to local and regional employment and economy through work and commodity outputs will be key things.
2. Visuals will be a consideration since it is a back drop for the valley and high recreation use in the area.
3. Anthony Lakes recreation area is in the project area. They will have a high level of interest in what is being done. We can coordinate with them and build on some of the work that has been done up there.
4. Again back country recreation opportunities a portion is within the project area.
5. Diverse ownership. Integration with landowners will be critical as well as public and firefighter safety.

Preliminary Opportunities:

1. Outputs for local communities
2. Reducing fire risk to adjacent to WUI
3. Landscape fuel treatments to enhance for future options of managing fire. Having less severe fire effects to create a more resilient condition. Strategically place fuels treatment for more protection options.
4. Post and pole fire wood gathering both private and commercial use.
5. Application of forest management activities at scales and intensities consistent with moving this area towards the historical range of variability in terms of patch size, structure, and composition.
6. Young stand management move them in a desired trajectory.
7. Management of White Bark Pine.
8. Enhancement of big game forage and browse
9. Promote and restore hardwood habitat and diversity.

10. Improvement of Public safety and promote recreational opportunities. Continuing some of the fuels reduction in and around Anthony Lakes and access routes.

Opportunities include:

1. Utilizing the collaborative group and local knowledge of the area can help build on the information for the project. It's a good time to share this and provide input on what are the opportunities out there.
2. involvement in data collection, field surveys,
3. Development of purpose and need, and really important as a conduit for the community to get their voice heard on this project.

La Grande City concerns:

1. They are congressionally designated municipal watersheds. They have a long history and La Grande has a high level of interest in maintaining this as a municipal watershed given the concern over the aquifer dropping. They would rather have gravity work with them and they could reduce the pumping cost of wells.
2. The city wants to invest in this for the long term of future needs.
3. We used the 43 road as a place to strategically develop wildfire protection to protect the watershed. The proposed boundary is still under discussion as far as what makes the most sense on the ground. This is the infancy stage of the project.
4. There is concurrent effort to restore fish passage for Beaver Creek.

FS timeline:

1. looking for implementation in 2017 with a decision in 2015 or 2016.
2. We have some efficiency by resource folks providing information to others as they are in the field. A lot of field work to do.
3. There are several other projects going concurrently with this.

Concerns regarding amount of cool moist:

1. It will provide a lot of challenges.
2. Types of project are not decided yet – this will determine concerns.
3. Some real challenges and a lot of questions on what kind of projects we would be collaborating on. Bill did a good job of describing the area.
4. The percentage of the cool moist and cold forests acres would be challenging to work through.

Comments:

1. The Anthony burn is approx. 53 years old and there is some much needed treatment that needs to be done in those old fire areas. This area is really a lightning prone area.
2. If we are going to pursue what we are here for we should navigate through this and a key focus needs to be healthy forest. A healthy forest is key under any condition and what we see today is likely not fitting the healthy forest conditions. We need to keep that in mind and we can work through this concern and come to a joint decision.

3. There is new science out geared to skips and gaps that Franklin and Johnson have come out with and this could be an approach.
4. I look forward to looking at cool moist and when we get out there and see the stands we often find we have more agreement once we are on site than we do sitting in the meeting room.

There were 5 projects on the south end.

1. The Little Dean project fell outside the group – it is being worked on currently - the recommendation was to keep the collaborative group informed of the progress.
2. We understood East Face and Patrick were the two main ones of interest.
3. We the forest provided Bill Gamble the East Face project because of proximity to his staff and Union County, the Wallowa district would work on Lower Joseph and at some point bring forward Patrick as the other project with the idea that there would be one on each district or under each staff for the forest.
4. The La Grande team could work on East Face while the Whitman district finished up Little Dean.

Other considerations were:

- a. East Face is moving forward more quickly and has a front seat over Patrick with the capacity of the Whitman unit committed to Little Dean. FS is working on load balance of work for staff.
- b. Proximity for folks to get out on the ground.
- c. Mix of issues involved as far as WUI, variety, restoration – the cool moist was never an issue that was discussed.
- d. It was a discussion in the Operations Group
- e. East Face straddles Union County and Mark and Bill work together county wise and it made more sense for this to be La Grande's project
- f. This project above the others meets the need for the cohesive strategy and because of that there are opportunities to advance some funding with the amount of WUI involved.

Discussion:

1. There are some reservations about East Face perhaps is it just a need for more information.
2. Concerns about East Face, but that doesn't mean it is not an option. It may be a tough road with amount of moist forests. Concerns were voiced up front regarding this with the collaborative group.
3. There are problems in the cool moist and cold forests as well as the dry forests. We need to face the issues of all the forest and see what we come up with. Let's put it on the table and see where it falls.
4. In June we all agreed we need to challenge ourselves and get to the bigger issue of moving to healthier forests and communities. At some point we need to wrestle with these issues.
5. There is a lot of focus and information coming out on cool moist. Dave Powell just put out a paper on the cool moist and the science synthesis coming up. This seems like a good time to look at cool moist forests and perhaps we can get our questions answered at the same time. It's called: *Active Management of Moist Forests in the Blue Mountains: Silvicultural Considerations* Initial Version: JANUARY 2013
6. Some of the collaborative members are representing a group of people that feel a similar way and we need to respect that in this process and try to work through it.

7. The proximity to private lands is appealing from a WUI and an opportunity to look across the boundary. As far as outputs we really don't know until we see what is out there.
8. A couple other concerns are: It has WUI and a big elk concern in the area that will definitely influence how that will be approached. In terms of habitat connectivity (we got some data from Washington State University) this area connects the Elkhorn and the Wallowa Mountains, so there are concerns of maintaining habitat. Wolverines are also in this area.

This overview today was the broad scale view of the project area. We still need the detail ground level information and there is a lot we still do not know. There is a science synthesis going to come out. There are opportunities to learn things about forest management. It is one of those more contentious forest types and yet at the same time we don't know what opportunities exist out there right now. Once we know what the synthesis provides perhaps we may have 3 or 4 management options and we can test them on the ground and try to learn something from this activity as well. I understand where the concerns are with the forest types and it makes me curious about what we as a collaborative can learn in moving forward. Today is not the final decision.

This is good discussion but in the interest of time the Operations Group will keep working through this.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND INFORMATION SHARING TO THE PUBLIC

1. We did hear from one group that is concerned since meetings are in the middle of the day and middle of the work week, that it precluded a whole group of folks from participating. It is a concern of all the government representation in the collaborative group.
2. Web site is available with Operating Principles that discuss the decision making process amongst the group. Summaries of all the past decisions and presentation materials are also on the site.
3. There are approximately 80 people on the email list for notification of meetings and notes.
4. We are looking for feedback on other options as a group to make sure information is getting out and opportunities to facilitate participation of others that may have an interest in these issues and the collaborative.

Group discussion:

1. We have gone through a process of learning about each other and agreement on a process including behavioral awareness of being in the meetings over several months. When new entities want to join the group what is their role in the decision making process. Do we have to re-open things or do we continue on a path we are on? The need to make our information and deliberations available is not in question, that should be done, but we need to maintain progress and group dynamics.
2. Do we re-open all the work that has been done already? If we open the door during the last phase of a decision a new organization/member decides they want to participate how we as a collaborative deal with that?
3. The Operations Principles identifies there is a need to attend 2 of the last 4 meetings before participating in the decision making.
4. I don't have a concern about a different opinion on an issue, as long as they do not want to move this organization on a different focus completely. We've already agreed that the issue of roads is assigned to each County's TMP committees. We don't want to be side-tracked by a focus on roads.

5. All meetings are open to the public. We have the operation principles that provide guidance on how disagreements are handled. You must be a regular contributor to the process in order to gain status in participating in consensus decision making process. One party cannot demand that we move in a completely different direction. They can suggest it but we do not have to do that. We have already laid out what we are working on and there is already a group that has been here participating and responding to those ideas.
6. The collaborative is always about trying to bring together the 80 to 90% of the people in the middle that agree to work together and be constructive in making things happen. That being said we cannot isolate ourselves and shut the doors. The collaborative's strength is in the broadest possible mix of stakeholders working together to find constructive solutions that meet our core mission – "to improve the social, economic, and ecological resiliency of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest". Securing more participation from private citizens and private sector interests is positive. We should do outreach and explore how much interest in participating exists and how we can facilitate it.
7. Could we have meetings in the evenings or on the weekends. We could but we would inevitably lose some current members. We need to think creatively about solutions that would increase participation – accommodation current members and new members.
8. This is good discussion and there is no easy solution.
9. Whoever joins the collaborative should understand the Operating Principles. Keeping it open and public is necessary while being clear about the Operating Principles and about consensus until we open the Operating Principles up for the yearly review or bi-yearly review.
10. All the participants so far are committed to develop a plan, to partner through implementation and establish a strong track record of success within these collaborative(s) to generate project plans and see them through to make sure things get implemented on the ground.
11. We as a collaborative have already agreed not to work on issues of travel management at this time and it is not in our brief to do that.
12. If anyone is willing to commit to the Operating Principles is welcome to participate.

Solutions and Options:

1. It would be good to conduct a public meeting, maybe one meeting a quarter to update what progress is being made within the collaborative. Similar to a public information meeting to share; this is where we are at with our projects, opportunities to attend the meetings or find the person of choice that regularly attends to bring information or write an email in and set aside times for public comments. It doesn't have to be formal, even going through the NRAC and have a member of NRAC communicate concerns forward.
2. The collaborative are set up in each Baker and Wallowa counties this could be an avenue for the public to come to us and voice any issues with the collaborative. Counties should encourages their citizens to attend locally at least. Individuals can come to Baker NRAC, Travel Mgmt, County Court so there are avenues to touch basis with us on concerns. If I hear of any concerns then I would bring it to this group that we need a vehicle to include other people.
3. There is no NRAC in Union county but the basic idea that the information public meetings need to be county oriented makes sense. This collaborative could act as a substitute for the NRAC since it is held in Union county but again the meeting is during the weekday and business hours. There are two parts to it:
 - i. Opening the door for participation

- ii. Being accessible for input and information sharing. How do we make available what is transpiring here at the meetings?
- iii. We could engage more technology
4. Let's look at organizing other public information sharing and the Operations Group will look at what we have and let's leave this on the table for further discussion.

What are the other collaborative doing to address this – for instance the Umatilla or Malheur?

Malheur puts it out in the newspaper, radio and outreach. We make it known and have our own Operating Principles and rules and we make them aware of it. We invite them to the table and move through it. The Malheur does meet from 4 to 7 p m so those that want to show up after work do have the option. Participation ranges for 20 to 60 people.

BIOMASS – MARCUS KAUFFMAN

Marcus Kauffman ODF Biomass Coordinator out of Roseburg providing information on the Comprehensive Wildfire Strategy (CWS).

There are three goals within our demonstration project:

1. Fire resilient landscapes
2. Fire adapted communities
3. Effective fire response

In NE Oregon we are trying to combine comprehensive fuels reduction planning and utilize the power of biomass markets to accomplish more. Recent investments we made in biomass are:

1. 60,000 dollars for feasibility funding for new projects: we got 7 projects back
2. We recently made awards to Grant county for 20,000
3. City of Enterprise for 9,000 dollars
4. Pine Eagle School district for 10,000 dollars
5. Integrated Biomass in Wallowa County for 18,000 dollars

What CWS is about:

1. It is an investment in a pipeline of projects that create small sources of demands for biomass.
2. It is investing in feasibility studies with these folks that have uses for biomass. Those contracts are going through administration and we will put that money out. The Oregon Dept. of Energy and Forest Service also put out about 165,000 dollars. There is a project Umatilla County, Wallowa County, Grant County, Harney County, and two in Deschutes County.
3. Those actual projects and the dollar volume with them will be announced in a couple of weeks.
4. It is a start in investment toward a small biomass economy in NE Oregon.
5. CWS is working on deals with projects on the ground to work more efficiently to remove biomass to capture that value. It is interested in partnering up with some of the projects the group is thinking about of one that is closer to implementation where we can have a collaborative process around biomass utilization. Nothing has been settled on so there is opportunity to partner with CWS and landowners.
6. There could be additional funds but we do not know when or how much. The funds we have now are because Oregon is well positioned and are national leaders.

