



Meeting Notes

February 21, 2019, 1:00-3:30 P.M.

Rock Creek Hegewald Center, Stevenson, WA

Participants:

Jacob Anderson, Klickitat County
Jon Paul Anderson, High Cascade, Inc.
Erin Black, S. Zone Planner, Mt. Adams Ranger District
Nicole Budine, Cascade Forest Conservancy
Gary Collins, Backcountry Horsemen of Washington
Kari Fagerness, Skamania County Economic Development Council
Sharon Frazey, Mt. Adams Resource Stewards
Jeremy Grose, SDS Lumber
Tom Lannen, Skamania County Commissioner
Rick Larson, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Tom Linde, Gifford Pinchot Accountability Group
Jeffrey Mocniak, Melchemy/Community Member
John Moody, Community Member
Dean Myerson, Friends of Mt. Adams
Lisa Naas Cook, SGPC Coordinator
Jon Nakae, Silviculturist, Mt. Adams Ranger District
Emily Platt, District Ranger, Mt. Adams Ranger District
Emily Stevenson, Skamania County Noxious Weed Control Program
Troy Stump, High Cascade, Inc.
Sean Tran, WA Department Natural Resources
Jim White, Underwood Conservation District

Welcome and Introductions:

What do you think of when you hear "I accept:"?

Sharon: I accept your offer

Jeffrey: willingness to agree

Nicole: open

Emily: differences

Dean: consensus

John M.: responsibility

Jim: snow

Erin: I can't control everything

Tom Lannen: my mind tells my body things I can't do

Jon N.: I agree to

Sean Tran: other perspectives

Troy: differences, perspectives

Jon Paul: paypal

Gary: cash

Kari: the things I cannot change

Tom Linde: having no control

Jacob: to consent

Emily S.: openness

Rick: diversity of the group, and stimulating conversations

Lisa: allow

OSU Professor and international water rights mediator, Aaron Wolf, said: “Consensus is not everyone agreeing . . . it is no one objecting.”

How does our understanding of acceptance relate to Zones of Agreement work? Does your response change when asked: What makes this proposal *acceptable* to you? vs. What would make you *agree* to this proposal? Does the range of management actions change when we use Zones of Acceptance vs. Zones of Agreement?

Keep this idea in mind for discussion later on regen harvest and treatments in older stands

Ranger Report and Retained Receipts Update (*Emily Platt*)

This year only \$50k provided for N & S Zones due to change in timber markets. Can choose to divide differently. In the near term, markets expected to stay stable. That’s all that is left over after funding stewardship plans that are already in the works. Some smaller projects that were partially funded will be put off until next year. Projects were affected by furlough.

There is not much in reserve of the Retained Receipts pot. Most of it has already been obligated. Pressure not to have buffer, not to keep money in reserve accounts. Will not allocate money to region or forest if there is a lot of money on the books—may decide to move stewardship money to other forests if money isn’t used.

Given reduced funding, FS will not bring any projects to the table this year. Deadline for proposals is March 1st. Reminder that we designed the collaborative facilitation proposal to be scalable.

Questions:

- How much is FS allowed to take out for salary costs? Using RR for salaries is new in 2019—may only be used to prepare and administer a contract/agreement, not for program management costs and training. Not to exceed 15% of the overall project cost.
- GNA question regarding discussion last month: If there is a need to increase FS capacity, is the FS doing anything about it? No, because there is no funding. And FS is not building internal capacity. They are trying to fulfill needs by using partnerships (e.g. shared stewardship model).

January Meeting Notes - Approved as written.

Letter of Support for WA Forest Health Investments

Request for group approval to sign letter of support for continued funding for two state programs: Building Forest Partnerships (aka Collaborative Capacity)—funds meeting facilitation, field trips, committee work, etc.; and All Lands Restoration (aka Cross-Boundary)—funds planning and implementation of forest health projects. One concern that All Lands program promotes GNA projects. Lisa explained that GNA is one tool that may be used under that grant, but not required. Grant covers a range of planning and implementation activities. Some might need to run letter by member organizations.

Decision: Most in favor of signing on under SGPC. Jon Paul will not and Rick Larson needs to check in with RMEF. Lisa will add names of those in support today, and all are welcome to sign on individually and share with their networks.

Subcommittee Updates:

- Draft SGPC Monitoring Plan (Sharon Frazey): Held committee meeting today. Looked at context and structure of Monitoring Plan. Will revise with feedback and provide to larger group in March. Temp Roads protocol will be incorporated into plan.
- Meeting to discuss Recreation Site Analysis results: March 7th, 1-3 P.M. Robin Rose and Sue Ripp will share preliminary results. This is phase one of the GPNF Sustainable Recreation Strategy effort.

Environmental Analysis and Decision Making (EADM) Update and Collaborative Forest Planning Efficiency Recommendations (Erin and Lisa)

Based on input from SGPC in October and North and South zones, plan to tackle something small this year. Put something larger into budget for 2020—possibly NEPA project to cover plantation thinning (looking at sideboards). Project EA's would then focus on site specific issues. Forest leadership team would still need to weigh in on site specific projects. Currently, they are vetting different ideas to make sure process would be more efficient. Looking at national templates and specialist report templates.

There is a GNA project on the North Zone that DNR will manage from start to finish. FS will identify how it is building capacity.

Middle Wind EA Update: Mostly plantation thinning with some regeneration harvest proposed. Right now, they are reviewing comments and are looking at choices before Draft Decision. There will be a challenge period, and hope to have the Final Decision in June or July.

Action: Erin to share final efficiency proposals at annual meeting and collaborative to approve recommendations.

Upper Wind Planning: Regeneration Harvest and Treatments in Older Stands (Erin and Jon)

Overview of planning process to date:

- Jessica Hudec completed a Wind River Landscape Assessment that integrates collaborative values from May 2017 workshop in Trout Lake with IDT's identification of important structures and flows in the watershed. These were used to identify Desired Conditions. Collaborative created economics desired condition at Jan. 2018 meeting.
- Seeking input from the collaborative now to prepare for getting surveys completed this summer.

Background from Jon:

- There is more matrix land in this project area, and therefore more opportunity to do regeneration harvest.
- National forests do have a management objective to produce timber in a sustainable way. Regeneration harvest is an option to create greater yield than thinning alone.
- Upper watershed – 5,000 acres of plantations. Matrix land, Trapper Cr, Indian Heaven, and LSR.
- Older Stands in Matrix (displayed on map): 80-100 years; 100-120; 120-200; > 200. Can do regen harvest in older stands on matrix land. Question to group is where would this be acceptable?
- FS has completed regen harvests in Swift (200 acre), and Middle Wind (50 acre) in plantations. Critical Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) Habitat in most of area except Indian Heaven. At Upper Wind Field Trip in August 2018, Vince Harke talked about critical NSO habitat. His preference was to not do anything in suitable habitat (nesting). Other categories of habitat: marginally suitable (roosting, foraging) and dispersal.

- From 1902 through 1930, there were a series of fires they grouped together and called the Yacolt Burn. There were some regen cuts in the 20s. No logging from the 30s until the 50s. Boundaries of the project area are Old Man Pass to Falls Creek Falls.

Discussion Questions: Considering the three parts of SGPC's mission and corresponding values in Wind River Landscape Assessment (Economic/Ecological/Recreation & Human Interaction):

- What would you be excited about seeing in the Upper Wind proposed action?
- What do you want to accomplish/achieve?
- What types of treatments and stands? Sideboards?
- What are your concerns?

Flipchart notes summarized below (content may overlap—categories used as a guide only):

Economic

- Produce timber at higher than current levels
- Broader assessment of economic uses on the forest; consider diversified local economic opportunities
- Increase educational opportunities; engage local students in national forest management (e.g., forestry, wildlife, etc.)
- Share success stories with the public

Recreation & Human Interaction

- Maximize huckleberry through early-seral habitat creation
- Viewshed creation along roads
- Keep roads maintained
- Dispersed camping areas should be protected or replace and/or improved. We are losing too many of these areas when roads are closed. Consider leaving 50-100 yds of road at its start open as a dispersed camping area.

Ecological/Forest Health

Regen Harvest

- Buffer 50 yds away from any open public roads to minimize disturbance to wildlife (specifically, forage and nesting for birds). Alternate view: don't like buffers on roads because of economic implications for logging operation.
- Reduce edge effects for wildlife: revisit Jerry's explanation from Aug. field trip
 - To create an early-seral patch near an older stand that's 80 acres, patch should be at least 80 acres to minimize the edge effect. This is in context of trying to produce more functional habitat on a large scale.
- Provide landscape-scale connectivity; intact "wildlife corridors" between wilderness areas
- Support habitat for insects/pollinators
- Consider drought-tolerant species (e.g., not just silver fir); consider future and warming climate
- Implement ecological forestry concepts from Jerry Franklin

Sideboard Discussion: One idea from Aug. field trip posed to the group: Are there any circumstances under which you could accept a combined plantation/older stand "block" approach using regen in a strategic way to increase patch size of early seral habitat? Discussion moved from this specific question to include concerns about treatments in older stands overall.

Approach to Treatments in Older Stands

- Start with landscape-level plan and identify ecological need for treatments at large scale
- Consider site-specific conditions, not one-size-fits-all approach (e.g., soil type, slope, drainage, proximity to wildlife corridors, accessibility)
- Need to consider mycelial networks, and microorganisms in older stands

Possible Sideboards

- **Thinning in Older Stands** might be a possibility in both LSR and Matrix (needs to be site-specific)
- **Regeneration Harvest**
 - Should be on the flattest land available (if on steep slope, elk would never use it)
 - 50 yards from open roads
 - Isolated older stand surrounded by plantations? Still serves a purpose, e.g., refuge, seed bank, sequesters carbon, recreation value, etc. Based on site-specific information, might be sideboard to discuss with subcommittee.
 - Avoid regeneration in older/mature stands (80+); concern about current species status and future projections; over 80 starts to impact spotted owls

Note: Jon shared that Old Growth is defined as 180 TO 220 years of age or older. However, definition depends on forest structure, not just age. NW Forest Plan does allow regen harvest in older stands in Matrix. Key is to make sure the watershed does not fall below 15% Late Successional and Old Growth. 80 years is default age for threshold for Late Successional.

Next Steps:

- Zones of Agreement subcommittee to follow-up on possible sideboards above and discuss how regeneration or other treatments (beyond plantation thinning) may be developed into new ZOA doc.
- FS will be flexible as they move forward with surveys and continue to work with us on our ideas. Jon has identified stands, but they can change as FS hears our input and completes surveys.

Annual Meeting: March 21, 9:00 A.M.-3:30 P.M. at Skamania Lodge, happy-hour to follow. Please let Lisa know if you plan on attending.

Save the Dates: [PNW Forest Collaboratives Workshop](#), Hood River, April 11-12
Retained Receipt Project Review Meeting: April 18, 1-4 P.M.