South Gifford Pinchot Collaborative
Operations Manual

I. Overview

The South Gifford Pinchot Collaborative (SGPC) Operations Manual outlines the process for its diverse membership to work together. This document was developed by the Collaborative and the members have agreed to honor and adhere to its principles. This is a "living document" that will change as the group evolves and additional needs and opportunities are presented. This document was created on 2/20/14 and amended on 3/19/15, 3/16/17, and 7/28/20.

II. Introduction & Background

The SGPC formed in December 2011 through combining the former Mt. Adams District Collaborative and Lewis River Collaborative. Our intent is to develop solutions to natural resource issues facing the area with a common vision to move beyond controversy towards management of our public lands that supports both restoration of our forestlands and revitalization of rural communities. See Appendix for map of area covered by SGPC scope of work.

The SGPC has over 40 members with a diversity of backgrounds including conservationists, community members concerned about GPNF, local government agency personnel, former US Forest Service (USFS) employees, the forest products industry, and the outdoor recreation community.

III. Mission & Guiding Principles

Mission Statement

The SGPC's mission is to collectively improve development, facilitation, and implementation of projects that enhance economic vitality, forest ecosystems, outdoor recreation, and public safety on the south end of Gifford Pinchot National Forest and surrounding communities.

Guiding Principles

a. Projects will focus on ecological, economic, and social objectives
b. Every effort will be made to ensure participation of diverse stakeholders; the process will encourage participation and be open and inclusive
c. Our primary focus is on public lands

Priorities

a. Plantation stands and natural stands on the east-side that have missed a fire cycle
b. Watershed-scale restoration
c. Road management for multiple-use access
d. Biomass utilization, value-added wood products
e. Developing zones of agreement (ZOA) for improved efficiency and expedited decision-making
f. Develop monitoring projects for checks and balances on USFS and other projects
g. Incorporating local recreation interests

IV.   Organizational Structure

SGPC will actively seek to involve representatives of diverse perspectives, needs, and expertise. This includes:

a. Federal and state agency representation (USFS, USFWS, WDNR, WDFW)
b. Community nonprofit organizations
c. County Commissioner representation
d. Economic development
e. Contractors
f. Forest products representatives
g. Environmental/conservation groups
h. Other elected officials or their representatives
i. Community members
j. Adjacent landowners
k. Native American tribes
l. PNW scientists
m. Recreation interests
n. Outdoor sports organizations
o. Academic research institutions
p. Students (e.g., local high-school, university)

Roles

A. Full Group

The full group consists of voting members and non-voting members of the Collaborative. Their responsibilities include participation in meetings and committees, overall collaborative decision-making (voting members), and defining strategic priorities. Voting members participate in Collaborative meetings regularly and are well informed of discussion topics. Non-voting members attend meetings periodically but are welcome to participate fully without voting.

B. Project Subcommittees

The project subcommittees (e.g., ZOA, Recreation) will focus on projects approved by the full group and will provide updates of progress regularly. Project subcommittees will strive to have members participate whom represent a wide diversity of opinions on a given issue.

C. Voting Members

a. Sign the Declaration of Commitment annually at Annual Meeting
b. Agree to operate under guidelines outlined in this Operations Manual
c. Participate actively to vote:
d. Individuals and organizations are considered voting members in a given meeting if they have attended two of the three preceding meetings and are knowledgeable of the subject voted upon. A designated proxy may be provided for the voting member.
e. Organizations have one vote; designated organizational member or the proxy must be knowledgeable of issue to vote and the organization represented at two of the three preceding meetings.
f. Electronic voting is acceptable.
g. Remote attendance via video or tele–conferencing is considered acceptable attendance.
h. Be well informed of group's activities
i. Provide input from each individual's constituency
j. Provide ideas or initiatives
k. Provide technical resources

    l. Work towards common ground

    m. Make decisions

    n. Communicate with each other regularly

    o. Don't opt out silently (i.e. openly voice concerns)

    p. Provide local knowledge

D. US Forest Service

a. Serve as non-voting members
b. Committed to collaborative process and maintain active engagement at meetings, project planning, etc.
c. Offer resource information
d. Share historical data
e. Share experience working with local contractors
f. Share technical resources and expertise
g. Can raise issues, participate in discussions and make recommendations

E. Guests

a. Listen
b. Share experience or expertise
c. Participate respectfully and appropriately
d. Make effort to be informed of groups' previous actions/stance
e. Identify themselves and their interest in collaboration
f. Non-voting role

F. Collaborative Coordinator

a. Organizes and facilitates monthly meetings (arrange date, time, location, agenda, guest presenters)
b. Organizes sub-committee meetings; attends when needed; monitors sub-committees progress
c. Monitors project schedules and timelines; keeps group on schedule with annual Work Plan
d. Ensures participants adhere to ground rules
e. Ensures opportunity for Collaborative members to participate fully
f. Operates under the advice and consent of full Collaborative and/or Steering Committee
g. Acts as liaison between various SGPC stakeholders, other collaborative groups, USFS, media, and other public or private interest groups
h. Responsible for organizing field trips
i. Prepares press releases
j. Responsible for maintaining and building membership and expanding diversity of membership when needed
k. Tracks voting and non-voting membership status
l. Acts as official Collaborative contact; prepares and responds to official correspondence
m. Assists SGPC to increase capacity by identifying and initiating contact with probable grant sources, partners and other resources
n. Responsible for developing and submitting grant proposals; completes all grant reports required by funders
o. Serves as non-voting member; remains neutral; applies Operations Manual policies to meeting activities
p. Responsible for maintaining the SGPC email lists and website. This task can be completed by the Administrative Assistant as needed and as funding allows.

G. Steering Committee

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to assess possible actions and direction of the Collaborative to expedite the SGPC decision-making process. The Committee will review possible projects and proposals and

make recommendations to the larger Collaborative. The full Collaborative will make decisions based on Steering Committee recommendations. However, the Committee will have the ability to make decisions concerning financial, personnel, and logistical decisions.

The committee is comprised of four to six members of the Collaborative with diverse interests. The majority of Steering Committee members need to respond for a valid vote. Specific on-going responsibilities include:

a. Working with Coordinator regularly to set the Collaborative's direction and discussions.
b. Working with Coordinator to review meeting agendas.
c. Facilitating hiring and periodic review of the Coordinator
d. Reviewing grant proposals.
e. Acting as proxy for Coordinator. Monthly meetings could proceed under Steering Committee if the Coordinator is unable to attend.

V.   Communication

Discussion Guidelines

- Listen actively.
- Be curious: suspend judgment and consider others' perspectives and ideas. Keep an open mind.
- Be present and engaged: silence phone.
- Focus on finding solutions: concentrate on interests, not positions.
- Be civil. OK to critique ideas, not individuals.
- Stay on topic and follow the agenda.
- Respect time limits.
- Accept ambiguity at times.
- Add a little humor when appropriate.

Meeting Planning and Coordination

- Meetings will generally be scheduled the third Thursday of each month from 1:00-3:30 pm.
- Meetings will be announced via email and available on the SGPC website.
- Meeting agendas will be sent approximately one week prior to the meeting to allow for group input and suggestions.
- A standard meeting agenda will be established.

Record Keeping

- Meeting notes will be taken at each meeting and shared with members via the list serve.
- Meeting notes from the prior meeting will be reviewed at the beginning of the next meeting and any issues (i.e., edits, clarifications) or errors will be discussed and approved.
- Meetings may be electronically recorded (i.e., audio, video).

Internal Communications Protocol

- One email list will be used for all ongoing communication for voting and non-voting members.
- A website will be maintained for storing and sharing all information. The web address is www.southgpc.org

External Communications Protocol

Information about the Collaborative will be made available to external stakeholders via the website and other venues as appropriate. All efforts will be taken to ensure that the group's work remains transparent to external audiences. Non-members will have access to all information and the ability to share thoughts and feedback with the group.

VI. Decision-making

- A modified version of Robert's Rules will be used in decision-making.

- **Setting a motion**: a motion can be made by a voting member who has obtained the floor. The motion will be seconded by a voting member and the Coordinator will re-state the motion. Discussion will follow. Meeting participants will be asked to indicate their support by show of hand or verbal confirmation.

- **Amending a motion**: a voting member states the potential amendment; the Coordinator re-iterates the amendment. The amendment is voted on. If there is agreement to the amendment, the original motion with the amendment is stated by the Coordinator and voted on.

- **Definition of quorum** in order to vote on a project or proposal, two thirds of voting members must be present to create a quorum. Voting members may participate via video, tele-conference or electronically.

- The goal of South Gifford Pinchot Collaborative is to reach consensus. If consensus is not reached, SGPC will make decisions by modified consensus. Modified consensus is defined as decisions that all parties can support, or at a minimum, agree to live with.

- If the voting members are unable to reach consensus, detailed areas of agreement and disagreement will be synthesized in writing via a *Summary of Positions* document. In such cases, these summary documents can include details regarding different members' (i.e., organizations, individuals) outstanding concerns and interests, and a breakdown of positions (i.e., number opposed versus in-support).

- Each voting member has the ability to disagree with elements of decisions as they are being developed but must offer a constructive alternative that seeks to meet the needs of all participants. We will continue to use constructive input to get consensus that all can live with.

- The following represents this process and potential member positions. To be involved in making decisions, their organization needs to demonstrate they are actively engaged by attending two meetings in the preceding three months where subcommittee meetings also count toward meeting this eligibility criteria.

  I have nothing more to add, so:

    o I agree with the decision and will… support the decision in public
    o I disagree with the decision and will …support the decision in public
    o I disagree with the decision and will… not support the decision in public
    o I don't know and will…
    o I am willing to …

  If an organization / individual is not able to support the decision in public, then we will ask:

    o What will it take to gain your support?
    o What can we expect from you in public?
    o Is there a way to modify the proposal to gain consensus?
    o Will you actively work against the decision or acquiesce to the decision of the group?

Figure 1. Mt. Adams Ranger District, the geographic area under the scope of SGPC work.