



**Meeting Notes**  
**May 20, 2021, 1:00-3:00 P.M.**  
**Zoom Remote Meeting**

**Participants:**

1. Jon Paul Anderson, High Cascade, Inc.
2. Erin Black, MARD District Ranger, USFS
3. Lucy Brookham, Cascade Forest Conservancy
4. Carson Coates, Office of Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler
5. Bengt Coffin, MARD Hydrologist, USFS
6. Gary Collins, Backcountry Horsemen of Washington
7. Mary Ann Duncan-Cole, Wind River Trust
8. Conner England, MARD Wildlife, Botany, Invasives Program, USFS
9. Sharon Frazey, Mt. Adams Resource Stewards
10. Jeremy Grose, SDS Lumber
11. Tom Lannen, Skamania County Commissioner
12. Rick Larson, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
13. Matt Little, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
14. Ryan Ojerio, Washington Trails Association
15. Dave Olson, MARD Restoration and Stewardship Staff Officer, USFS
16. Josh Petit, SGPC Coordinator
17. Whitney Reynier, Klickitat County Program Coordinator
18. Sean Roome, Cascade Forest Conservancy
19. Emily Stevenson, Skamania County Noxious Weed Control Program
20. Sean Tran, GNA Restoration Specialist, WA DNR
21. Jim White, Underwood Conservation District
22. David Wickwire, MARD Recreation Program Manager, USFS
23. Sue Wright, Community Member

**Welcome & Introductions**

**Meeting Purpose:** This meeting featured: (a) a presentation by Bengt Coffin (USFS), (b) a discussion of retained receipts funds prioritization, (c) USFS Ranger Updates, and (d) SGPC Monthly News & Member Catch-up.

**March and April Meeting Notes:** Approved as written.

**Guest Speaker: Aquatic restoration project along Forest Road 43 in Stabler (Bengt Coffin, USFS).**

- Lower Trout Creek Restoration and realignment of road 4300
- Project Summary:
  - To benefit Lower Columbia River steelhead
    - Restoring river access to floodplain
    - Removing a road from the Riparian Reserve
    - Restoring riparian forest
    - Improving instream habitats and river function on approximately one-half mile of Trout Creek
- Proposed actions are in development
  - Decommission/Rehab 0.8 miles of Rd 4300
  - Upgrade existing Rd 4300-417 and culverts
  - Build new segment of road from Rd 43 to Rd 43-417
  - Remove road prism and reconnect floodplains/side channels on Trout Creek
  - Construct large wood complexes in Trout Creek
  - Daylight and re-meander stream in the nursery
  - Plant forest vegetation on decommissioned road and on nursery fields
- Why is project needed?
  - Road precludes movement of stream; for decades protecting waterline under road with intake upstream
  - Have been managing road and removing hazard trees - these trees are important large wood for stream
  - Currently the straight channel creates flow like a fire hose and this high energy is affecting fish habitat
  - Would like to allow access to floodplain, side channels; and increase amount of fish habitat and refuge
  - With changing climate, project is important because if allow flows to move onto floodplain, will infiltrate, store water longer, meter out longer over the year
  - Currently there is no spawning gravel or refugia because there is nothing to dissipate energy
- Why here?
  - Lower Columbia River steelhead are native to the Wind River and Trout Creek, and are listed as 'threatened'
  - In the Lower Columbia River Recovery Plan, Wind River steelhead are one of two runs that are expected to "anchor" recovery
  - Recovery of steelhead in the Wind is being done without using hatcheries. Habitat improvement is critical to restoring robust runs
- Wind River is a focus watershed
  - Trout Creek was identified as the highest priority sub-watershed in Wind River for Aquatic Restoration

- Focusing on lower gradient habitats in Trout Creek
- Essential restoration completed in sub-watershed
  - Removed Hemlock, Martha Creek dams
  - Improved 13 Crossings
  - Restored 5 miles instream habitat
  - Decommissioned and close-stabilized 12 miles of road
- Last 5 years restoration completed in system directly below this area
- Adult Steelhead response to removal of Hemlock Dam
  - Hemlock Dam removed in 2009
  - Adult Steelhead response over last several years low everywhere in region due to ocean conditions
  - After dam removal, numbers are going up substantially (data from state of WA)
  - As proportion of spawners on the Wind River has gone down, proportion of spawners on Trout Creek has gone up
  - Need to provide more habitat and better habitat!
- Scoping letter coming out in next few weeks
- Still refining proposal
- Environmental analysis out in Fall

#### Q & A / Discussion:

- Culverts along Rd 4300-417 will be upgraded
- Elk use the field
- What is state of watershed upstream? Is stream constrained by road on upper end?
  - Stream is just coming out of the canyon at upper end of restoration work
- Is it LSR?
  - Forested area to the north and east is. The RNA is there as well.
- What are objectives for the field?
  - No long-term plan for the field. Have used as fire camp, helicopter landing site.
  - If not using very often, see advantage in planting trees. Can cut trees if needed later.
  - Continue conversation. May need for seed stock project in future.
  - Uses: roads, plantation study, canopy crane (Neon), researchers.
- Any changes to PCT bridge?
  - Considering parking sites. Want to provide access.
  - Work wouldn't be too close to PCT. Could consider reroute of trail if PCT Association wanted it.
- Possibility of bundling rec project in NEPA? May be opportunity for outreach of restoration work with Whistle Punk Trail.
- Timeline:
  - Could get started a year from this summer, but need funding.
  - Could complete restoration in one season with good coordination

**Discussion: A review of survey results and discussion related to retained receipts broader prioritization for use in FY 2022 (Josh Petit, SGPC).**

- Rank order broad categories (i.e., NOT specific project ideas) of objectives to help USFS streamline retained receipts
- Results of top 5 choices
  - First Choice – Precommercial thinning (PCT), other, road work, improve fish habitat, trail work, reducing sediment, youth crew work
  - Second Choice – Road work, PCT, invasive species, rec site enforcement, reduce sediment, trail work, youth crew, improve fish habitat
  - Total votes per category in top 5
    - PCT – 12 votes
    - Road work – 11
    - Invasives – 8
    - Youth crew – 8
    - Terrestrial habitat – 7
    - Fish habitat – 7
    - Sediment – 5
    - Rec site – 5
    - Wildfire mitigation – most common in other

Q & A / Discussion:

- Do all of the categories even qualify for use of RRs?
  - Rec site enforcement?
  - Trash clean-up?
- Dave O.: RR generated from stewardship sales
  - Improve restoration work
  - Be very clear about what is used for
  - Narrow down to a manageable number (5-7) to write proposals for and what specific areas.
- Josh: Results in North and South zones were similar
- Comment from Dave W.: Title II seems like more appropriate place to fund Rec site enforcement and Trash clean-up
- Comment to change to rec site *mitigation* (rather than enforcement)
- Comment: As we move to selecting individual projects, maybe we could prioritize, meet multiple goals. Use weighted scoring metrics.

Next Steps:

- Discuss with Pinchot Partners Coordinator to synthesize results
- Meet with USFS staff to discuss findings
- Perhaps another survey to refine/clarify categories and approve top categories
- Stay tuned!

**Update: USFS Ranger Updates (Erin Black, USFS)**

- Blake Murphy is the new Silviculturist
- Hiring Sale Administrator, Harvest Inspector
- Jesse Bonsack – Fire Management Officer is leaving
- Seasonals are arriving for rec, timber, natural resources positions
- Thank you Bengt for your presentation. Expect scoping letter in June.
- Upper Wind – response to comments coming soon
- Roadside salvage for Big Hollow – work with USFWS for owl habitat
- Little White – surveys under way
- Timber Sale Activity – road work prior to cut
- Big Hollow fire closure on 64 road – new gate on order. As soon as have dealt with hazards, will open.
- Recreation - expect a busy summer

**Lewis River Corridor parking permit system update (David Wickwire, USFS)**

- Site has been virtually unmanageable
  - Parking on both sides of road, preventing emergency vehicles access
  - Jumping off falls, lots of injuries, and even deaths
  - Last summer had to move trails crew to developed rec to manage this site
  - No trail work done last summer
- Parking Permit Required for 14-mile stretch
  - 6 parking areas on rec.gov
  - Multnomah Falls went to this system too
  - 70 spots available per day
  - Improve sanitation, garbage
  - Permits required June 15-Sept 15

**Q & A / Discussion:**

- Q: Census area is remote – put up sign boards?
  - Signs will be posted as far away as Cougar, and Lower Falls
- Q: What type of enforcement will there be?
  - Will be ticketing as we have done the last couple of years
- Q: Towing? What is cost of ticket?
  - \$50, will post sign with local towing company's name
  - Expecting people to do things to get around this
  - Doing a lot of planning on this site for future
- The program started this morning. A lot of permits sold already.
- Q: Other parking along trail near area?
  - Will look into
- Can provide Administrative Pass – if can't do WTA maintenance work outside of permit window
- Comment: Area has recently blown up. To get the word out: use social media.
  - PAO has been on Facebook. And has reached out to waterfall sites.

- #1 priority is to get word out
- Comment on signage: start on outskirts of Woodland
- Comment on Main River trail: never have seen a FS representative acting as presence
  - Developed Rec sites are heavily staffed on weekends
- Q: Has anything changed at campgrounds?
  - 100% reservation
  - Horse camp is still first-come first-served
- Dispersed sites around Horse Camp
  - Zone of no dispersed sites
  - Few sites along Crab Creek – could put into long term plan
- Parking permits required 7 days a week, during entire period
  - If warm summer day, they will be there no matter day of week
  - Will monitor days for long term plan
- Ryan: Usually there is a lengthy public engagement process. Surprised of the extent of it. What is requirement for public involvement?
  - Erin: This is an experiment for this summer. Felt sense of urgency.
  - This is meant as short term solution
  - Difficult to have public meetings, solicit input during COVID
- Yosemite, Glacier, Dog Mountain, and Multnomah Falls – similar situation and implementing similar programs. Think will see these kinds of things in more places.
- Permitting process offers predictability – can be helpful
  - Ryan - Idea for georeferenced map to help find parking area and where zone begins and ends
- WTA - Hesitant to sign off for support
  - This is not a closure area – just parking prohibition – there is still access to area
- Suggestion to post on All Trails app
- Idea for WTA to team up with Gifford Pinchot Trash Force and other non-profits – spread out and do early season trail work, trash pickup, invasive removal
- Public can go in and use site outside of season, but won't have access to facilities or services
- Process: Go onto rec.gov and pick the site you want to park at
  - Need parking permit AND day use pass – NW Forest Pass or day use fee
  - Have to print out pass ahead of time! – only on rec.gov and no cell coverage at site

**Update: SGPC Monthly News & Next Meeting Info (Josh Petit, SGPC)**

- Sustainable Rec strategy
  - OHV/ATV use on Forest – Collaborative involved in effort
- Next month's ZOA Subcommittee meeting – will be held before Collaborative mtg
- Next meeting will be held over Zoom
- Targeting July meeting for first in-person
  - Hegewald Center is booking up
  - Maybe meet outside somewhere; stay tuned on this