**Harney County Wildfire Collaborative Meeting Summary**

**May 1, 2018**

**Meeting Objectives:** *Provide an opportunity for partner updates and action reports since the last meeting; updates/discussion on PEIS’s; Pueblo Mountains EA; Pueblo Mountains Subcommittee; Communication Plan; Pilot Project #2.*

**Attendance:** Dustin Johnson-OSU, Autumn Larkins-ODFW, Chad Karges-USFWS, Doug Toomey, Leland O’Driscoll- U of OR, Jacob Gear, Angela Sitz-FWS, Bruce Taylor-IWJV, Dan Nichols-landowner, Mike Fox-Lone Pine RFPA, Rod Hoagland-Andrews/Fields RFPA, Chad Boyd- USDA-ARS, Jay Kerby-TNC, Rhonda Karges, Toby White, Rick Knox, Chad Rott, Casey O’Connor, Shane Theall, Jeff Rose-BLM, Facilitator – Byrant Kuechle – Langdon Group, Brenda Smith – High Desert Partnership.

**Action Items:**

* *RevRe*Invite Zola with NRCS to June 21 (now July 19) Field Tour (Bryant).
* Subcommittee (Shane, Jeff, ONDA) will update on camera funding.
* Update on potential cameras in Nevada, looking into to the Pueblos (Shane)
* Draft Pueblo Mts. Fuels Reduction EA to review in June (Rhonda)
* Look into if there will be a state office review (Rhonda/ Jeff).
* Draft document: Pueblos – documenting the process and recommendations for group review (Jay, Autumn will schedule meetings).
* Webpage update to put HC Wildfire Initiative with the other initiatives (Melissa).

**BLM Programmatic EIS’s**

Update: There are 2 groups: Fuel Breaks (Boise), Restoration (Reno) and Fuel Breaks is farther along. Brian Thift is project lead and he is currently compiling 2 boxes of comments. There will be another series of public meetings after scoping. Brian would like to listen to what is happening with collaborative at a future meeting. Timeline is for a draft document in December but may need to be adjusted.

**Early Detection Camera Update (powerpoint presentation)**

Funding for the cameras is that UO working with U Washington and U Nevada Reno. There is a network of cameras – Oregon, Nevada, Idaho, California. Cameras are IP-based/digital, HD/4K, distributed, resilient hardware, hardened emergency and public access. Can see fire immediately after fire is called in. Alert Wildfire: on demand time lapse, integrated lightning map, amazon web service, fire map (SDSC), smart power system, works on laptop and mobile, smoke detection. Over 50 installed in 2017, over 30 scheduled for 2018, including a Steens Mountain camera this summer. Beaty’s Butte camera is shared funding with ONDA. ONDA owns parcel of land. $70k budget, includes own power and people time. Equipment is $30k. 10-15% of build-out cost per tower, per year to operate. Private land/funding so no NEPA is required. Potential to piggy back additional data at sites – wind speed, trending RH’s. There is high success rate (95%), low failure rate. If one goes down they do not all go down however the goal to have several lines of redundancy. Visibility can be an issue for detecting fire. $5,500-$,8500 per manned lookout in wages – Could pay one lookout to watch multiple cameras at different locations? Has heat sensing AI technology been looked into? Will be looked into. Field of view 30-40 degrees. Beaty’s Butte letter sent to OR-WA BLM, no response yet. BLM determining if it makes sense. Funding: joint project. NEXT STEP: Determine funding, avoiding federal funding would move faster, however it is likely and NEPA becomes a reality. Jeff: If we figure out funding we could have active camera in 12 months for 2019 fire season.

**DRAFT Pueblo Mountains Fuels Reduction EA**

Issues statement in development, predicting impacts of fire and the effects. Could not come up with economic issues statement. Social aspects will be evaluated. Could not come up with solid issues statement for wildlife, no long-term effect. Could not come up with biological soils issues statement. BLM has a directive to make NEPA more direct and smaller, working with that. In June plan to have draft document for group review, fires may impact that. Q. Dan: Is it risky for BLM to exclude areas? A. Rhonda spoke with attorneys. They like issue based NEPA because they are concise. If issues are brought forward in public comment they can say it was considered but did not find issues associated because…. And this becomes an attachment. Sage Grouse is analyzed (no other wildlife) it is a special species. There was concern there could be quantifiable soils issues. Suggestion to error on the side of over-informing in a pilot project. Rhonda will have draft in June where we can review the issues BLM identified, determine if anything was missed as a collaborative prior to public comment period. Q. Will there be state office review? A. Jeff/Rhonda will look into. This is a district decision; state office is interested because of the nature of the project.

**Pueblo Mountains Subcommittee**

First Participants – Jay, Bruce, Autumn, Casey, Rick, Rod, Stacy Fenton, Angela. The6/16/16 subcommittee notes include a mission and timeline. Jay thinks documenting the process is important and doesn’t imagine this will be that difficult. Other areas are interested in this. He has received calls from Nevada and Idaho about what went on, how we got from point A and B? He thinks this will probably be a 4-5-page document. The purpose would be to provide background if there was a group who wanted to do a project like the Pueblos – how did we do this? There are about 6 or 7 steps. Bruce: worthwhile to go back and review if we are done here or if we can move along. There were a few things small that could be done. There are dual purposes, 1. Check the boxes we want to check 2. Story for the world. Close the loop and are there other things we can achieve in this area? Value in reviewing. If we miss something, we need to know. Mike Fox/ Gary Miller – to see if it really works is to see if it burns or not after a lightning strike. Ranchers who are members for RFPAs all over the place but trying to stop conflagrations. How to enlist our rancher partners to clean up the landscape of fine fuels and start getting it ready to bring it back to perennial grasses? Rod – had a couple of strikes last year that were damaging. There is a lot of random chance involved. If the strike is on the wrong side of the road. There are a lot of things we are not in control. Casey- I don’t think we are waiting to see if there is a lightening strike it is more about establishing a fuel break before a lightning strike. The document should Include recommendations or considerations for future activities. Prioritization of future activities can help BLM direct funding.

**Communication Plan Update**

Website status: [harneywildfire.org](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=http%3a%2f%2fharneywildfire.org&c=E,1,juhn64XQCsPKyfifEY5VJMFjyJprC-Xe78WfIvjtShFur5DdI_kGGO-X55b8vci5TixJHxNeY5peIwsFdEnCRvDfp-NSR5vzlDTfzGtfrIPk&typo=1)Communications Plan next steps*.* Request: Need to put initiative on the webpage. Melissa – reaching out to other organization and getting them on their radar. We should consider having a powerpoint developed for collaborative partners to use if they are asked to present on the initiative.

**Pilot Project #2 –*Bryant Kuechle and BLM***

Review objectives and set some criteria we are looking for at the last meeting. When the two potential sites were compared, Bartlett fit more criteria than Riley. Bartlett is higher fire risk, more c/d, more than one land owner, higher potential for prevention and restoration, non WSA, higher economic, social and economic benefits. Some concern about tribal interest on Stinking water ridge. Greater opportunity for larger scale project and partnership with other agencies. Next Field trip will be to the Bartlett area.

**Next Meeting: June 21 Thursday (Postponed to July 19).**