**Summary Notes**

**Harney County Restoration Collaborative**

Tuesday October 2, 2018 11:00pm – 4:30pm

Banquet room of the Pine Room Restaurant, [543 W. Monroe, Burns, OR](https://maps.google.com/?q=543+W.+Monroe,+Burns,+OR&entry=gmail&source=g)

**Attendees**: Ben Cate, Jack Southworth, Kerry Kemp, Brenda Smith, Chris Rossel, Christy Cheyne, Roy Walker, Ron Simpson, Zach Koutnik, Calla Hagle, Mark Owens, Melissa Ward, Lori Bailey, Mel Hall, Ellen Hillborn, Nathan Poage, Pam Hardy, Marla Polenz, Jim Sproul, Billie Jo George

**Action Items:**

* Send announcement to committee for the interpretive trail: Kerry Kemp, Tim Boyce, Brenda Smith, Calla Hagle, Melissa Ward (chair) – *Ben Cate/Melissa Ward*
* Get an update from Matt C. on contracting specifics – *Ben Cate*
* Set up meeting with subcommittee trying to answer the question of how many acres we need to treat to increase the number of resilient/resistant acres, costs for PCT, etc… - *Ben Cate*
* Send out link to Lomakatsi website to group prior to next meeting – *Ben Cate*

**Communications Update / Review of Fact Sheet & Prescribed Fire Interpretive Trail Discussion – Marla Polenz (Communications Coordinator for HDP)**

Review of HCRC Fact Sheet:

Add state, tribe, local government to the list of partners…

FOCUS: Finding solutions to improve the health, sustainability, and resilience of Malheur Forest…

In the “Success” box:

Thriving economic, ecological, and social impacts for Harney County. Over 100K acres of forest restoration plus job and industry creation.

In the “Our Future” box:

To address the economic and social challenges we face we are committed to building healthy, resilient forests that create jobs and new industry in Harney County.

High Desert Museum interpretive prescribed fire trail discussion:

Would something similar to this help HCRC better communicate with the local community about the role of prescribed fire?

Calla commented on getting some cultural / tribal input into an interpretive sign if/when it occurs

I would encourage a field trip to idleyld to discuss this topic. Some ECRD staff specialists were already looking into reviving some of the old signs there.

Funding piece: how would this be maintained over time? Maintenance could be an issue.

Think about longevity of signs (metal etching option), etc…

In the campground, it is easier for this to be maintained by UFSF staff (they’re already doing routine maintenance)

Q: would high desert museum be willing to help? & In what ways?

Q: Who is the audience? School kids, passer-through travelers, locals who aren’t informed on prescribed fire. If the intent is for school, pass through, then this is probably good. But if it’s for non-informed locals, other strategies may be better for that purpose.

Perhaps it should encompass a larger purpose of HCRC (as compared to the HD Museum) including more about the economic & social benefits as well…

Comment about using some of the old existing trails in the larger forest (renovating them) and doing some signs on them instead of doing a trail at a campground

Idea of leaving some of the area untreated to compare a before/after treatment. You could also pull cores to compare growth acceleration after treatment for the more scientific community.

Committee is formed to investigate this potential project

Q: From Marla, regarding negative prescribed fire comments on social media… Do we engage, do we ignore, how should we handle? (Christy also mentioned a few other Harney County pages these types of discussions occur on)

A: General feeling from the group: do not engage directly to these types of online conversations

**Update on Smoke Management policy at the state level** - *Pam Hardy*

HCRC submitted a letter, they are currently reviewing the letters, and we haven’t heard anything back. We are basically waiting to hear back from them at this point.

**Review of HCRC’s Common Ground Principles** - *Pam Hardy*

This will be an ongoing agenda item for the next few meetings to make sure we are all headed in a similar direction.

We need to have a better talk about what we want to call our ‘common ground principles’ or ‘Zones of Agreement’ (ZOA’s)…

Brenda Smith: by updating our ZOA’s through our OWEB grant we will be eligible for future federal funding for restoration…

Question for the group: Prescribed fire common ground statement… was everyone fully on board with that? How do we say that there is agreement and move forward?

In the early times of establishing these ‘common ground’ there were a few statements where there was a minority opinion that was called out specifically: with the rest of the group supporting… (the “minority report” option)

Should we have a signatory page? Should individuals sign on? Or should it be the group?

High Desert Partnership could serve in the role as catching people up to speed about operating principles, etc… so that we’re not bogged down reviewing those documents every meeting.

It needs to be inclusive and if its too rigid it could scare off public so we need to find that balance of being open and inclusive while having a document that is rigid enough to be meaningful and be used for future funding.

Q: Is the signature page public or internal?

A: Everything is public in a collaborative

Almost all of the collaborative groups start out with pure consensus (which is ‘I can live with it’) but a lot of them eventually run into road blocks where all but 1 in the group agrees in which case they form a ‘minority report’. However, the minority is required to author that report. It is not enough just to say you don’t agree, you have to describe exactly why and what you don’t agree with in a document.

**Pam’s Summary of the discussion about ZOA’s / common ground principles:**

Hearing lots of support for signatures but with a lot of caveats.

We like the accountability, the snapshot in time of who supported, but…

Minority Report seems to be a common way for getting the voice of the people who disagree.

Meeting minutes can serve as documentation of who agreed/disagreed.

Clarity: there is a clear way for people coming into the collaborative of how we operate, what they are signing up for. What’s happened in the past & what the vision for the future is…

**Total number of acres treated with Commercial and non-Commercial thinning on the ECRD in the last ten years (table).**

**Also: Ideas and constraints for better matching HCRC prescriptions with contract specifications to ensure what we are intending in the collaborative is being implemented on the ground** – *Cam Cornell*

We are having issues with leaving too much white fir on the forest due to contracting constraints. The contract requirements don’t have the flexibility to result in the outcomes we were hoping for and the vision we had for how it should look (intent). Are our prescriptions coming out on the ground?

Limitations: funding (it’s tied to specific location)

We are missing key people that can inform this conversation for this meeting – may be better to address this with those folks in the room as well (Dave Hannibal, Zach Williams, Matt Cawlfield, etc.)

Q: Where are the funds coming from?

A: listed of a lot of different funding sources through USFS – projects are funded as funding becomes available through a variety of sources.

Q: What about Stewardship Contracts?

A: The money generated from timber receipts through stewardship projects gets put back into service work (Pre-Commercial Thinning)

*Example*: Lets say the timber is worth $1.3 million – the road maintenance is $300K to improve the road to get the timber out of the forest. That leaves $1 million and that goes to do service work. Could be a mix of hand piling, PCT, culvert replacements, aspen restoration, etc…

Certain pots of money can be used for projects but cannot be used for salary and so you can get into a situation where you have project money but no one to administer the project.

There is some opportunity to potentially make some changes to how contracts are worded to add more flexibility.

There was guidance from higher up in FS to investigate how to address the contract specific problem Dave Hannibal brought up at last meeting. (new position created to address this?)

Q: What is the cost to treat (PCT)

A: It varies so much based on density, slope, accessibility, etc. that it’s hard to put a solid number on it. It could be somewhere in the ballpark of $275/acre but highly subject to change.

Nearly all of the accelerated restoration project analyzed for skyline was dropped for a variety of issues (heritage, wildlife, etc…)

Mark O: makes the case for getting the numbers on how much we need to treat to catch up and talks about the odd couple (Pam & Mark): we can lobby for your needs if we know what those needs are.

Can you give us a sense of how much on the emigrant creek district we have treated? I understand we’re getting to the harder, more expensive to treatment areas. 50%, 75%, 90%?

Would it be helpful to know how many acres we have NEPA ready so we know what we have ready to go vs. what we have done?

Ben, Cam, Lori, Mark, Matt, Kerry – set up meeting about the number of acres we need to be treating each year to make headway on increasing the number of acres that are fire resilient / resistant, etc… are we moving the needle?

“**If the HCRC is really successful, what will the southern Malheur National Forest look like in 20 years and what will it produce ecologically, economically and socially?”**  - *Jack Southworth*

* Seeking presentations from different people in this group to answer this question.
* Speakers must provide pictures of what they want and limit their presentation to 15 minutes.
* Several people volunteered for presentations early next year (didn’t get a list of names???)

**Question to ponder for the group:**

If we can’t get to a place where we have the resilient / ideal forest we have for the future (our vision), how do we get to a point that we are happy with what we have?

**Date of next meeting is November 6, 2018**

Agenda Items for next meeting:

-         Ongoing work on Common Ground document

-         Lomakatsi presentation on Ashland Forest Stewardship project and Stewardship Agreement in the Fremont-Winema

4:00               Adjourn