

Meeting Notes

Harney County Restoration Collaborative

Tuesday May 24, 2016 – 5:30 pm

Harney Co. Community Center, Burns, OR

Attendance: Travis Swaim, Lori Bailey, Melissa Ward, Josh Giles, Scott Frost, Steve Beverlin – USFS; Roy Swenke, retired USFS; Linda Fine, Louis Smith, Melodi Molt, Jim Campbell -HC citizens; Kerry Kemp, TNC; Tony Hauth –timber contractor, Jeff Mabin – Malheur Lumber Co., King Williams – Iron Triangle, Larry Blasing – timber industry retired; Jack Southworth – HCRC facilitator; Jon Reponen – BLM; Tyson Griggs –ODF; Brenda Smith-HDP

- Review Old Growth Consensus Statement (Draft 3 written by Josh Giles and Jim Campbell) Regarding Old-Growth – The revised statement **after the discussion** is as follows:

Our goal is:

Resilient old-growth stands

- *An extent of old-growth stands and structure that move towards achieving historic conditions and distribution over time*
- *An extent of replacement old-growth stands that achieves historic distribution over time.*

To achieve this goal, we will recommend:

The harvest of some large trees if:

- *Removal will decrease shading of aspen and other riparian hardwoods by encroaching conifers.*
- *Removal will improve the retention and survivability of older trees (i.e. old growth ponderosa pine) and to transition toward a more fire resilient landscape.*
- *Improves the health and vigor of the surrounding stand.*

Discussion on the statement:

- The point I continue to make is that we cannot reach “historic” ever again.
- The new forest plan is going toward desired conditions and the goal describes desired conditions.
- The desired condition is set by the collaborative at that point of time when we arrive at that.
- Desired condition is almost as nebulous as historic condition – need to change older to legacy trees and this is from Franklin and Johnson. Legacy trees are providing the remnant stock, not sure I want to go down that road. I can agree to keeping legacy trees.
- **Q.** What is an older tree? **A.** – when we are talking about the larger trees they are about 150 years, 21-23 inches DBH and they can live to 350 years.
- As a whole we are moving toward a historic range of variability. Old and older are misnomers they are usually middle aged trees. 45-50 inch trees are the old trees there are very few of these trees left.

- That was the point of the legacy trees – and that concept makes sense to be from Franklin & Johnson. It is just not the big trees.
- We are thinking too small and we need to be thinking about a bunch of trees that creates the “old structure” on the forest. We could change that to desired condition.
- Hard to quantify the unquantifiable – if there is flexibility to adapt to each project that will be the best we can do.
- I would like to see legacy trees in the statement over old-growth or other description.
- I would rather support the desired conditions over the historic conditions because there is ability to harvest.
- I hate to see the whole forest burn up because we are not caring for it and could be because I can't really work on the words. Promote logging to keep everything from burning up.
- I liked the specificity, but I realize each project will require different discussions. I am Ok with shifting to desired conditions – but the Historic Range of Variation gives us some framework / basis for information about what we are trying to achieve, without that I worry that we can go in a different direction. It gives us a basis for what we are trying to achieve. If we change to desired, we must be explicit in each project of what desired condition should be.
- As long as we have explicit parameters of how we will deal with each project – if there were some set criteria per project then that would help on the forest service level.
- I am Ok with desired conditions, traditionally we use Historic Range of Variation for coming to the collaborative and then we could
- I am against moving to desired conditions
- It is moving toward Historic Range of Variation and we will never move “to it” only toward it. I would rather keep it moving toward historic conditions, it is more than about just the ponderosa pine but other species that are old growth also. I don't know if you can ever come up with desired conditions for all the areas out there. Will let legacy trees pass.
- I am fine with desired – we will never truly achieve Historic Range of Variation, it is a shot in time and can learn from it because it shows us what a healthy forest looked like. We seem to be going back and forth between general and specific.
- Desired is a good way to go as long as you start with Historic Range of Variation and if climate change is real then desired will be easier and we may desire something different.
- Jim – consensus statement

There is a lot of support for using “desired conditions” over Historic Range of Variation and it may not be politically correct. Q. Roy can you live with “desired conditions”? A. I can.

- Legacy or old – I have a big problem with older it is completely undefinable. Legacy doesn't limit age.
- In the second sub-bullet change “older” to “legacy” tree - Franklin and Johnson have descriptions of phenological characteristics of a legacy tree.
- Q. What if we changed to “old growth structure”
- I have individual old growth trees that have survived harvest or stand replacing events



- There are a lot of white fir out there that are large but not old. We may want to take some of the large but not old trees out of areas. I think the bottom bullets bring to all the larger trees.
- Late and old structure – this is an old growth stand there is going to be a mix of trees in these stands. Or if we have a surplus multi-strata and might cut out trees.

Preview of Dove Environmental Assessment – Presentation by Lori Bailey and Melissa Ward, USFS.

Interactive Map is available at the following link:

<http://usfs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicInformation/index.html?appid=569e14db6441430b85eb337fe991539a>

Purpose and need of the project is to improve vegetation health, resilience and resistance to insect and disease.

The difference between an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is they are more involved than an EA.

We will have some monitoring going on to see a response in the riparian area.

Q. Are you removing enough trees that will allow shrubs to prosper and if the shrubs don't respond? A. That is the purpose of and what the monitoring will address.

Q. How many category 1 streams in this project? A. There are a lot.

Q. Category 4 is an intermittent stream and can you leave slash in the riparian area? This will create a barrier to livestock. A. Yes we can leave slash.

Looking at about \$6 million dollars for the restoration there is probably not \$6 million dollars. This is in the CFLR area and we get about 4 million in CFLR money each year for this money

There are 11 burn blocks in the 38K prescribed burn areas and this will get burned over 5 to 10 years and we take wildlife and allotments into consideration.

Reasons for closing roads:

- Mitigate for reduction in cover for wildlife
- They may be causing resource damage – storm proof it but may need in the future/ putting them in storage
- Decommissioned roads are roads that go away
- In today's harvest we don't need as many roads for the equipment used
- No funds for maintenance of roads
- 1.7 million acres total forest, 500,000 wilderness. I buffered them ¼ mile and we can access 900,000 acres with existing roads in the forest. We can reopen roads if they are closed.
- Every road has a reason for being closed. We do have forest plan standards to close roads.
- Every road is analyzed for everyone's needs. It took us at least 2 weeks.
- We have enough annual funding to maintain 200 miles
- And we are trying to complete the travel management plan after the forest plan revision.

- Are we cutting large trees in Dove? No old trees are being cut because we are deficient in old forest single structure and within the range for multi structure stand. And by not harvesting bigger trees the human's needs are not met in here. If we propose to cut a big tree we will be sued and we will lose in court.
- Some of the trees that are fir are large trees of little value – it will remove the ladder. As far as putting people to work, in Dove we wouldn't get much of a chance to get people to work. There isn't a lot of large trees. We wouldn't get a whole lot more units. 18 million board feet over 40,000 acres – commercial timber not the restoration. This area was heavily harvested historically.

Questions on Dove?

- Q. The county has access to 250K can we put in our own log processing plant? A. Sure we have all the biomass you want. With 250K you won't even get your blueprints for that mill, it is very expensive. How do you get the money? And where does this money come from?
- We put a 10-year forest stewardship plan and hired Iron Triangle – we advertised over 6 months and couldn't get anyone hired, we don't have a work force in Burns.
- Q. Where these old growth trees are- if it gets burned it reverts back to general forest? A. Then it becomes replacement old growth and do whatever you can do.
- Biomass - You can't haul the stuff out of here it is too far away. Trucks have to come into John Day empty – truckers don't like that.
- Great overview of the project – I haven't been out there yet.
 - Nice to see the EA overview – appreciate having things explained and we need communication and trying to be transparent.
 - Congratulate Lori and Melissa on the presentation and I like getting feedback and thanks for showing up.
 - I really enjoy these meetings, a lot of hard work.
 - I do have one concern – there is not environmental groups represented. Sometimes changes occur gradually but it isn't noticed. Our remoteness is a problem for environmental groups.
 - I am still upset with the road policy.
 - Advertise with Blue Mtn Eagle for HCRC meetings.
 - I have told people to come and they need to step up to the plate. Good things will happen with Dove
 - We used to have a mill and the community thrived
 - Next Meeting – Field tour on Tuesday June 28. Agenda to be determined.