

Next meeting: Next Meeting March 17, 2010, SCCD

**Joint NEWFC/CNF Bi-monthly Meeting Minutes – Minutes
January 21, 2010**

Forest Service attending: Fred Way, Tom Pawley, Linda Fee, Jim McGowan, Franklin Pembertim, Bill Shields, John Bueller, Craig Newman

Attending board: Lloyd McGee (president), Russ Vaagen (vice president), David Heflick, Ron Gray (treasurer), Tim Coleman (secretary); Mike Petersen, Dick Dunton, Maurice Williamson, Derrick Knowles, Claudia Michalke (administrator)

Others attending: Phil Aune, Chuck Gades, Russ Larsen, Commissioner John Hanke, Sheila Stalp, Jeff Pitts, Mollie Kirk

Agenda:

1. Lloyd's Time
2. Linda's Time
3. FLRA Project
4. Eastside Health Forum
5. Roundtable
6. Proof of Concept
7. Disabled Hunter Trails
8. South End Project
9. Stimulus funding
10. Project update
11. Tourism & Recreation

Discussion

1. Lloyd's Time

The Coalition is working on Hanlon Project in Pend Oreille County and we expect to give a high level of agreement for the project. Kalispel Tribe and others have been involved. Kettle Face project is up and running. Summit Pierre is wrapped up though we are still waiting on funding for some aspects of this project. Yesterday, there was an East-Wedge public meeting (27 attended). East-Wedge is being facilitated by the Stevens County Conservation District. The Coalition was informed Laura Jo West has been appointed as our new forest supervisor. Lloyd spoke with Regional Forester Mary Wagner about Supervisor West and was assured she is verse in community collaboration. The coalition looks forward to working with her.

2. Linda's Time

At the end of the month Linda will go back to being district ranger as will the rest of the "acting" crew. Laura Jo will report to the Forest in March 29. She has a lot of experience with community collaboration and has a background in recreation. There is new recreation staff coming on board as well. The new budget is in and it is \$900K short for implementation and about \$200K for restoration and \$100K for fuels treatment. Out year projects (Limestone, Deer, Jasper) are the lowest on the list and so planning is likely to be delayed.

Q. Aren't we supposed to have a stable budget as a Proof of Concept forest?

A. We are still a POC forest, but we're not getting as much money and we have staff put in place under the old budget and that creates constraints.

- Don Gonzales has left for BLM (Vale, Or). We expect to have a replacement for Don by May. Jim McGowan will be taking Don's position on a temporary basis.

Q. Is the job announcement out?

A. Yes – hope is to make a selection sometime in March

Q. Given the final budget, are there any adverse budget concerns about East-Wedge

A. There is a commitment to this project and there is approx. \$180K set aside – but there is uncertainty.

Q. When is the RAC going to meet?

A. Nominations are awaiting Secretary of Agriculture background checks. Colville RAC has not been re-chartered. We're anticipating this spring it will get re-chartered. There is \$250K in the RAC account.

3. FLRA project

Congress has appropriated \$10M for projects. Our hope is to gain approval for a Colville Forest project. The proposal has to come from a collaborative group and the Coalition would like to schedule a meeting to discuss this project. Lloyd projected a visual image of a potential project area. Linda suggested a couple alternatives be developed.

4. Spokane Eastside Forest Health Forum

Maurice gave an update of this event which took place in November. A broad spectrum of individuals attended from private, state, tribal and federal entities. One action item was for the state to send a letter to Congress about restoration needs. Primary benefits of this meeting are to improve relationships with the Forest Service and congressional appropriators.

5. Roundtable

There is another meeting of the roundtable 10-4 pm, tomorrow. The process has been constructive thus far especially in terms of opening dialogue between different groups.

6. Proof of Concept

The only barriers that have been busted (within Forest Service) would have been so regardless of POC. A significant benefit of POC was identifying ways to improve efficiency. Phil pointed out that Forest Service folks did a good job of testing POC and seeing what is possible. Linda pointed out that there is a transition document for the new forest supervisor to review. What was initially thought possible regarding budget and what is now apparently possible (given economic circumstances) has changed. We had been promised a stable budget average over 10 years. It is now anticipated that a stable, mixed budget will continue until 2012 after which Mary Wagner will determine if the program continues. The "model" forest identifier is a better to achieve budget we got in 2008.

7. Disable Hunter (DH) Trails

Jim McGowan gave an overview of project outcomes. There were 4 new routes added in 2009 to the 3 that already existed. Two hundred seventy nine hunters from across the state registered this year compared to 133 in '08. Economic return is estimated to be

approximately \$112,000. Disabled hunter success is similar to other hunters. A question asked was the DH experience interrupted by other hunters. By a 5-1 margin the answer was no. Grant dollars were used to buy extra replacement gates. Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation lands near Brewer Mountain will be adjacent one of the DH routes. Hunters have asked for hunting platforms to better see surrounding terrain. Ziggler Lumber has volunteered to supply lumber for those platforms.

Q. What do you advise regarding a presentation from NEWFC at the RMEF annual banquet?

A. Yes. Contact Sally McTimmonds about getting on the schedule.

Q. Were there any special interests railing against the program?

A. No

8. South End Project

John Bueller gave an update of this recreation project. The proposed action is about to be sent out to the public for comment and followed by further review. Commissioners and Tribes are being advised. Open roads are being analyzed. Project area includes Kalispel Creek to Newport to Ione and including connecting loops and connecting to existing county routes. Some people want everything to be open but specialists looked into this and there were property owners who were opposed to motorized recreational use and other potential routes were a concern because of fish & wildlife issues.

9. Stimulus funding

\$1.8M is available for timber stand improvement - \$328K for engineering work. The Forest Service is preparing plans of work and expect contractor RFPs out by the end of February.

Q. How long will RFPs take?

A. Smaller projects <\$500K those are easier and likely could be out by the end of February. If >\$500K, expect those to be out by May.

10. Projects update

a) Hanlon – John said he is “dangerously close” to signing a decision. There will be some different monitoring to look at wildlife issues. He is working with Kalispel Tribe to see if there may be some overlap with the Tribe and what they are doing and wildlife monitoring work needed for this project. There is some old modeling of clearcuts that is somewhat outdated and that is being looked at as well.

b) Kettle Face – There were 45 people who attended the public meeting to provide their input.

c) East Wedge – Claudia is really working hard to have foresters on staff February 15 and they will have until June 15 to wrap up fieldwork. Lloyd said it is important to have foresters coordinating with each other during stand exams. Lloyd suggested that a meeting of the Coalition, Bill and Fred is needed to discuss potential efficiency opportunities that could yield benefits.

Q. Has anybody asked the question about integrating transitory range, etc. – is there an opportunity for a disabled trail.

A. Yes, both were brought up and discussed and Fred's expectation these issues will be integrated.

Q. What is the process for hiring a forester?

A. Hiring goes through SCCD – if position is contracted that goes to the Forest Service. Every effort will be made to keep employment local, which is why we want to hire rather than contract positions. At least one supervisor will be on the hiring selection committee and the SCCD board will make the final decision.

d) Summit Pierre –

Q. Is it possible a portion of SP could be rolled into 2010?

A. CNF will try to prep and offer sales as quickly as possible but budget cuts do impact project preparation.

11. Tourism and Recreation

This project is to integrate recreation planning across the region. Craig handed out a one-page description of the project.

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-- Adjourned 3:25 PM