

**Blue Mountains Forest Partners
Full Group Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 17, 2008**

Our Mission: Enhance forest ecosystem health, economic opportunities and public safety in Grant County through collaboration.

Time: 4:00pm – 7pm

Place: The Federal Building in John Day – FS Juniper Room

Present: Doug Gochmour, Jeff Fields, Alden Boetsch, Roy Walker, Scott MacDonald, Charlie O’Rorke, Wayne Elliott, Brooks Smith, Dan Bishop, Ted Fariolli, King Williams, Dave Traylor, Diane Browning, Curt Qual, Teresa Roth, Elaine Kohrman, Heidi Bigler Cole, Art Andrews, Ryan Falk, Dan Hubbard, George Meredith, Asante Riverwind, Karen Coulter, Mike Billman, Emily Platt, Tim Lillebo, Mark Webb

I. Previous meeting minutes

Meeting minutes from May BMFP full group meeting were approved by the group.

II. Damon Subcommittee Update

Decisions:

- Recommendations from Damon Subgroup to the Forest Service reviewed and edited slightly by full group. Full group consensus reached on the following project agreements:

Aspen Site Agreements

- We agreed to treat aspen stands in the project area even if we can’t afford to fence it all; agreed we will need to fence some portion of the aspen that will be treated.
- We agreed that fencing should be prioritized for aspen stands that are isolates or genetically important or facing heavy grazing pressures.
- We agreed that we want a monitoring and maintenance commitment from the permittees in regards to fencing.
- We agreed that some aspen stands will be heavily thinned but that leaving large pines and doing lighter thins within/ around aspen stands would be ok as well.
- We agreed to consider using post and pole fences in appropriate areas where materials are readily available.

Eric’s Stand/ Dry Pine Site Agreements

- Everyone really liked the stand and would like to see the prescription (in terms of basal area) repeated in our project with the addition of taking out ladder fuels around larger trees. Basal area is 90-100 with some parts a little lower.
- We want to see the varied age classes of trees supported in the Damon prescriptions.
- We want to see more clumping and variability rather than even spacing. The clumps should not be uniform either.
- Ensure down wood on site after treatment.

- Consider raking around larger trees to protect from fire.
- For a dry pine site, this stand looks great with the adjustments described above.

Group noted that this is what we like for this particular stand condition and site. The Forest Service is expected to extrapolate for other dry pine sites with different conditions.

Mixed Conifer Site Agreements

- Strategically place treatment areas with fire in mind.
- Agreed to basal area prescriptions of 60-100 for treated areas (excluding the leave patches).
- Agreed to variable spacing – skips, gaps, clumps.
- Agreed to larger leave patches and leaving about ½ of the 5,000 acres of mixed conifer stands in the project area that are currently in a similar condition. Some leave patches would be left entirely alone, and others would be treated to a minimum basal area of 140-180.

Group noted that these recommendations reflect the type of site we visited which was dominated by small trees, had a basal area estimated at 220, had beetle presence, and had been impacted by fire exclusion, past logging and a lack of pre-commercial thinning.

Stream Site Agreements

- Reconnect spring (up road from site we stopped at) with creek.
- Support deciduous trees where appropriate and fence grazing out where appropriate; agreed there was no need to fence this particular stream from cattle though there are likely to be other sites in the project area that will need fencing or management.
- Add wood to the creek.
- Consider off-stream watering for cattle.

Designated Old Growth Site Agreements

- Use a patchy, clumpy, gappy thinning-from-below prescription.
- Mature and old growth trees and trees with these characteristics will be protected.
- Do a sample marking with ribbon where we would mark the leave trees; we agreed that before we do the sample marking, we will have the Forest Service share the historic basal area figures with us if possible and Tim will bring a prescription from Central Oregon (Glaze project) that was done in a similar area.

III. Dad's Creek Subcommittee Update

Decisions:

- The full group did not come to consensus on what to recommend to the Forest Service on .9 miles of proposed temporary road in one of the units of the Dad's Creek project.
 - Two proposals were put before the group for consideration. One was to build the .9 miles of temporary road down slope from where it was originally proposed (explanation of location change below), and the other was to not build the temporary road mid-slope and offered some

alternative actions for achieving fire resiliency, and economic and ecological objectives.

- After being unable to reach consensus on this issue, the full group voted on each of the proposals. Neither proposal secured the ¾ majority support needed to go forward.
- The Forest Service recognized that the full group couldn't come to consensus on this issue and will consider this when putting the final Dad's Creek project EA together.

Discussion summary:

- BMFP participants who went on the July 16 field trip to visit the area where .9 miles of temporary road had been proposed shared assessments and information with the full group. Points discussed included:
 - Road originally proposed as a ridgetop road, however, actual boundary of the roadless area does not follow ridgetop, so if the temporary road were built, it would have to be moved downslope.
 - Potential economic value of material accessible from the proposed temporary road.
 - Ecological implications of building a temporary road next to a roadless area.
- Full group participants discussed the issue further. Points of discussion included:
 - Risk of wildfire and potential implications of different management actions.
 - The potential economic value of material that could be accessed from the proposed temporary road.
 - Proximity of the proposed temporary road to a roadless area and implications.

IV. Tracking Group Agreements

Decisions:

- Group agrees to try to develop a document that lists out existing areas of common ground and the details of issues where the full group has developed 'zones of agreement'. (Purpose: keep group from 're-inventing the wheel' with each new project).
- The document would be updated as new areas of common ground are reached.
- Alden and Emily volunteer to pull together a draft document using past meeting and field trip minutes. Draft will be used as a starting point and will be modified, edited and finalized by full group.

V. Operations Group Update

- The Operations Group interviewed candidates for the local BMFP coordinator position.
- Group anticipates decision soon, depending on results of interview follow up.

VI. Next full group meeting: Thursday, August 21, 2008, 4:00 – 7:00. Please note that the next full group meeting is next month. The group decided not to wait until September

to hold the next meeting in order to get full group input on upcoming Damon project decisions.