

**Grant County Collaborative
DRAFT Meeting Minutes for February 21, 2007
4-7pm at the Senior Center in John Day**

In attendance: Eric Wunz, Irene Jerome, Mike Billman, Tim Lillibo, Curt Qual, Asante Riverwind, Karen Steer, Diane Browning, Bryan and Dee Nelson, E. Toop, Scott Turo, Eva Harris, Walt Gentis, Jeff Maben, Art Andrews, Roy Walker, Greg Jackson, Kirk Ausland, Emily Plat, Mat Carter Glen Johnston, Mark Webb, George Meredith, Mike Browning, Dave Traylor, James Johnston, Ted Merrill, Tad Houpt, Steve Dahl, Brooks Smith, Alan Hahn, Art Andrews, Charlie Ororke, Boyd Britton

I. Welcome and Old Business

Boyd Britton, County Commissioner, and Karen Steer, welcomed everyone. After introductions, Karen reviewed last meeting's minutes.

A handout of the *Dad's Creek 'Roadmap'*, or project process, was given to the group. Revisions were made based on last meeting's discussion. Participants were asked to review this final draft and let Karen know if any more modifications needed to be made. [Contact Karen if you would like a copy of this document]

A two-page *description of the Dad's Creek project*, including an overview of the collaborative group, was also handed out. This document is meant as an outreach tool, to explain to the public who we are, what we are doing, and how to get involved. The group was asked to review the document for inaccuracies and send suggested changes to Karen. [Contact Karen if you would like a copy of this document]

The *Operations manual* was briefly referred to for new members needing orientation to the mission, goals, decisionmaking structure and functions of the Grant County Collaborative. It was pointed out that this manual needs to be updated to include the role of the project planning subcommittee. Action: This will be done before the next meeting.

II. Dad's Creek Memo

The purpose of the Dad's Creek memo is to provide recommendations to the Forest Service on the group's desired purpose and need, goals, issues to consider, and information needs associated with this project. This memo was developed by the project planning subcommittee with feedback from the full group. James Johnston has been the lead on memo development and revisions. Since last January's meeting, the subcommittee met via phone conference (Feb 16th) and then again on Feb 21 before the full group meeting.

The subcommittee presented their final draft to the group, recommending with full consensus that the full group approve the memo. Full group discussion included:

- This memo reflects an iterative process and is very much a flexible work-in-progress. Once the Forest Service has a chance to begin the project process and present more information on the scale, scope, and possible activities in the project area, the group will be able to provide more feedback and recommendations.
- Utilization of stewardship contracts – The memo currently reads that stewardship contracting authorities will be used for this project. Given that this might mean that timber receipts will not be generated to the county, it was decided that we do not require stewardship contracting to be used, but that we look at the range of options and make a decision later, once we have more information, on how to structure this project.
Action: Curt agreed to check with the Forest Service on the ability to change the distribution of receipts.
- Sideboards: There was some concern that there is not enough guidance to the Forest Service related to sideboards and zones of agreement (that is, what is and is not acceptable to members of the collaborative group in terms of activities and treatments). The group agreed to address these specific issues during the next stages of the process, and it was recognized that there should be a willingness to be flexible.
- Project funding: There has been concern over the project being ‘cost effective’. Some group members felt that the project should pay for itself while others felt that a range of funding options and opportunities should be made available. Within the project, some areas might involve commercial thinning and therefore generate dollars, while other areas might need outside funding investment, for example in steep sloped areas or for stream restoration, or grants to purchase light touch equipment for contractors. It was agreed that the wording currently in the memo is acceptable for now, and that further discussion would happen on this topic.
- The Forest Service felt the memo would meet the needs for the Forest Service to then put out a PIL.

With the changes suggested, a vote was put to the group to give the memo to the Forest Service asking them to initiate the Dad’s Creek Project.

The group agreed by full consensus to send the memo to the Forest Service.

The Forest Service agreed to begin the project process and develop a Project Initiation Letter to share with the group. They will begin to develop their purpose and needs for the project, as well as what activities might occur. Information will be made available before the next full group meeting.

III. Small Group Break-out Discussions

To allow for in-depth discussion on some of the critical issues that have emerged during our meetings, the group divided into three discussion subgroups. The goal was not to arrive at consensus about these issues, or to develop one definition around them, but rather to gain a better sense of the various perspectives around these issues. This will help us in future discussions and decisionmaking. A list was generated of some of the issues that merited exploration:

- Project funding – How should projects be funded? What are opportunities, benefits and costs to seeking outside funding through appropriations or grants to implement restoration projects? What does cost effective mean? Why not have projects pay for themselves?
- Building a common vocabulary – Several terms have different meanings to different people. What does: restoration, ecosystem, historic range of variability, and impact mean to people?
- Communication – How do we want to communicate between meetings? How do we want to use email as a form of communication between meetings?

Each group decided that it was better to tackle the ‘building a common vocabulary’ issues in the field, so focused on the other two discussion items. After smaller-group discussions, they reported back salient themes to the larger group. These included:

Funding:

- Look at the long term; an investment now will benefit communities financially and ecologically down the road.
- Use every avenue we can to get healthy forests
- Should use best value methods for restoration.
- Should consider whether grants would displace taxable revenue that would put money back into the community for community services.
- Leary of grants – it’s not the role of the forest service or collaborative group to do this
- Other groups have successfully gotten grants

Communications:

- Email is fine for some communication, but should be factual and based on specifics of moving the project forward; be frank, civil and concise.
- There should be parameters put on e-mail communications. We need to follow the groundrules listed in the operations manual similar to how we communicate during meetings (no personal attacks, verify rumors first, no positioning, etc)
- If there is a disagreement or confusion over what someone said, the person should talk directly with the relevant parties to clarify the issues without involving the entire group.
- Those without e-mail are left out of the loop.
- The subcommittee emails work fine; the full group communication via email does not work as well

Note, most of the small group discussions were not captured in these meeting minutes.

IV. Development of Subcommittees

The group discussed the need to develop other subcommittees to begin tackling other needs of the collaborative. Two were set up:

1. ***Fundraising Subcommittee*** – Volunteers included Karen Steer, Emily Platt, George Meredith, and possibly Mike Browning.

Please contact Karen if you are interested in joining this group.

Karen will set up a time for this subcommittee to meet and begin developing a workplan.

2. ***Project Planning Subcommittee*** for the second project – Volunteers included Karen Steer, Asante Riverwind, Mike Browning, Mat Carter, Walt Gentis, Glen Johnston, Eric Wunz, James Johnston, Mike Billman, Tim Lillibo, Bryan Nelson, and Tad Houpt. This group is tasked with exploring the next project and bringing several options for the full group to consider and decide upon.

V. Wrap-up and Next steps

The next meeting is TENTATIVELY scheduled for April 5th and will include a field trip to Dad's Creek (somewhat dependent on weather and road conditions).

Homework for the next meeting:

- Think about the pros and cons of this group becoming a nonprofit organization. Send comments to Karen or Diane.
- Group name – send thoughts on what we should name our collaborative to Karen or Diane.
- Karen will investigate opportunities for developing a list-serve or website for the group in order to facilitate information sharing and to ensure that everyone is included in mailing lists.

Curt Qual announced that the Forest Service is holding a Stewardship Contracting workshop on April 4th for anyone interested.

The group adjourned at 7:15 for Social Hour at the Outpost.