

BMFP Full Group Meeting Minutes: October 25, 2007

Present: Tim Lillebo, George Meredith, Asante Riverwind, James Johnston, Maia Enzer, Alden Boetsch, Mike Billman, Ted Merrill, Dave Oak, Diane Browning, Glenn Johnston, Karen Coulter, Emily Platt, Mike Browning, King Williams, Dave Hannibal, Charlie O'Rorke, Brooks Smith, Bill Toop, Irene Jerome, Eric Wunz

Minutes from September 2007 meeting

Minutes from September 25, 2007 full group meeting were approved.

Dad's Creek Subcommittee Recommendations

A copy of the recommendations submitted by the Subcommittee to the Forest Service on November 6, 2007 is included at the end of the minutes.

Proposed timeline:

End of January 2008 – Forest Service will have an outline of their final proposed action. Group will be able to comments again at that time.

Middle of March 2008 – Forest Service resource reports and a draft EA should be finished and group will have opportunity to comment.

Fall 2008 – estimate of earliest point potential work would start

BMFP will help the Forest Service do outreach for a public open house on the Dad's Creek project. Open house will be November 15, 2007.

Lower Shirttail Creek project:

Mike Billman and Emily Platt are currently the chairs of the subcommittee working on this project.

No new work has been done on this project – most of the focus recently has been on Dad's Creek.

Good opportunity for members of full group to get involved with a subcommittee – project work will probably begin in Spring 2008. Contact Mike or Emily if you're interested in participating on the subcommittee.

Restoration principles

Discussion about the possibility of BMFP developing a set of restoration principles to help guide work. There are existing examples of other collaborative groups' restoration principle which could be helpful models.

Both support for and skepticism of idea of BMFP developing restoration principles expressed. Group decided to continue discussing the idea.

Potential goals for guidelines:

- Look at what others have done
- Use to improve understanding of each other (develop a common vocabulary)

- Make them field applicable
- Tier to individual projects
- Post existing info to website
- Form a subcommittee to work on them (at next full group meeting, or could form the group via email or phone as people review them on the website)

BMFP operations subcommittee report

BMFP Listserv

- The listserv will remain open and unmoderated
- At this time, discussion on the listserv will be kept to BMFP-specific projects and issues
- The listserv will be used to distribute BMFP-related information
- BMPF ground rules will be observed in interactions on the listserv
- Operations manual will be updated to clarify the role of the listserv

Ground rules for group interaction

Copy of existing language referenced during discussion of recent issues around communication and some group interaction included below:

1. From: Feb 21, 2007 full group meeting minutes

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

2. From: Sept 25, 2007 full group meeting minutes

Ground Rules Revisited

Personal attacks have taken place and emails have recently gone around that aren't respectful.

It was agreed that all partners will follow ground rules outside of meetings as well as inside meetings.

It was also agreed that if a partner has an issue with someone else, they should talk to them directly.

Addressing individuals

Decision made to move forward, and wipe slate clean. If ground rules are broken in the future then the Operations Group will address people individually take firm action. If BMFP members are having problems, please take concerns to a member of the Operations Group.

Suggestion also made to create a suggestion box so people could submit issues anonymously.

Discussion of sensitive issues

Possibility of adding moderated discussion(s) of sensitive issues. Idea: Identify list of sensitive issues the group would like to discuss, set up moderated discussions that people could sign up for to discuss the issues, share information.

Declaration of Commitment

BMFP members present comfortable with the Declaration of Commitment and many signed. Some slight changed/clarifications suggested.

Group will strive to maintain a diversity of stakeholders involved in the BMFP.

There will be another opportunity to sign the declaration at the next full group meeting.

BMFP staff position:

Draft of BMFP staff position job description was approved during the Operations Group meeting.

Job would be part-time. Salary would range between \$12,000 and \$15,000/year. Staff person would be responsible for meeting logistics, bookkeeping, finding and applying for grants.

The Operations Group will be responsible for interviewing and hiring potential candidates.

Technically, staff position would be paid through existing fiscal sponsor (GREAT) in short term, long term idea could be to build 501-C3 capacity through BMFP..

Group supports the idea of hiring a BMFP staff person.

Economic Forum

Mike Billman and the Economic Forum subcommittee will take the lead on planning the forum. Purpose of forum: to educate on costs of restoration and economic benefits that can come from products that come out of restoration projects. Forum will include basic information on stewardship contracts/contracting.

Forum will probably be held Spring 2008. Charlie O'Rorke, Dave Hannibal, Mike Browning and Glenn Johnston volunteered to help.

Please contact Mike Billman if you'd like to be involved in the planning.

Add'l announcements

The Forest Service has submitted a grant for a proposal to put a screen in on one of the diversions on Dad's Creek – are waiting to hear back.

The Forest Service's Crawford project is almost completed – if anyone would like to go see it, please contact Eric Wunz.

CWPP project: fuel break on Co. Road 18 information gathering process has just begun.

Next full group meeting January 24, 2008

**Blue Mountains Forest Partners
Dad's Creek Recommendations
October 25, 2007**

[The potential treatments we have from the Forest Service will be adjusted and revised according to data gathered along the way, including bird surveys, etc. Prescriptions and locations aren't set in stone. Specialists' reports will be complete mid-February so most specialist information will be available by then with the exception of the goshawk surveys and neotropical bird work. Question remains about presence of Columbia spotted frog.]

Commercial thinning, precommercial thinning and understory removal in northwest portion of project area are agreeable.

Riparian areas/ stream restoration

Group recommends looking at more opportunities to do stream and riparian restoration as part of this project. Goals would be to restore water quality (including temperature) and fish habitat. Growing big wood for later structure for streams and supporting or restoring hardwoods should also be considered.

More background/ discussion: Stream along Unit 188 has some good riparian hardwoods, but there are breaks where cattle trails lead to stream that have compromised riparian area/vegetation, so few riparian plants are present. There is also a skid trail leading to the creek. Potential to look at minimizing grazing impacts on the stream.

Convert to seral/ HRS/ regeneration units

Unit 70: Group recommends no treatment and Eric concurs.

More background/ discussion: unit 70 is relatively moist and wet.

Unit 78: Group recommends that FS incorporate pine-dominated/ drier areas of unit 78 for treatment. North and east sides (looking at map north and east, not north and east aspects) of 78 should be included for treatment.

More background/ discussion: borderline of warm dry and moist areas/ transition zone. Unit is at about 5,800 feet in elevation; mixed conifer old growth; lots of wildlife use. Conflict over protecting pileated habitat and creating habitat for whiteheaded woodpeckers was resolved by adhering to the prescription described above.

Unit 120: Group recommends that FS thin up to 15" with a preference for mistletoe removal. Preference to doug fir over grand fir. Consider prescribed fire.

More background/ discussion: west aspect seems more pine dominant. North aspect more mixed conifer/ doug fir dominant. Transition zone; active pileated use; steep slope. P pine

stumps – has reverted to doug fir. Area may be a good choice for the creation of more whiteheaded woodpecker habitat because of the historic pines in the stand.

Brown units in southern portion/ lower elevation HUR units

Group recommends that the FS implement these prescriptions/ treatments except where aspect and moisture make a site more naturally mixed conifer. Larch should be retained (understand FS already intends to retain larch). If a good whiteheaded potential site exists, it should be restored to whiteheaded habitat. Group recommends that work be done gradually instead of all at once; enough trees should be left for mortality along the way.

More background/ discussion: some big pockets of grand fir on n and nw slopes and in hollows or flat spots. Heavy pileated use, especially in unit 192; retain cover. Pileated habitat also found abundantly in ridge to the ne of the project area. Some high quality old growth buried in the center of this 192 unit with spindly stuff around it. N and nw units look like they are more naturally doug fir (like unit 220). Unit 264 looks like it has never been logged before and has very little pine in it. It was suggested this unit be dropped but that was consensed on; it's surrounded by clear cuts.

[HUR units are about 5% of the 19% of og multi-strata present in planning area. There is currently no og single strata. The FS proposal aims to defragment areas and leave og where possible while also creating a burn block. FS is trying to connect DOG with habitat to the northeast and treat the area that borders private land.] One view of this proposal is that brown units and pink units are the best habitat so this calls into question the de-fragmentation goal. Another view was to take risks here like Steve Zack encouraged us to do to restore bird habitat like for the whiteheaded woodpecker.

High elevation mixed conifer/ most northern units

Unit 62: Group recommends this unit be dropped.

More background/ discussion: steep slopes in draw, historically fire maintained savanna. Lots of ladder fuels.

Unit 64: Group recommends thinning grand fir thickets.

Unit 66: Group recommends pre-commercial thinning the top of the unit as it is relatively open already and implementing more intensive treatments as the stand transitions to higher densities lower down.

DOG and ROG

Group recommends treatments in the DOG to help restore these stands or keep them going longer. Recommended treatments include light thinning and ladder fuel reduction around large trees. Another example the group supported was taking an 18" grand fir next

to a large p pine to make the stand/ old growth more resilient. Group recommends a field trip be taken to sites in the DOG. Prescribed fire should be considered wherever possible.

More background/ discussion:

Unit 210: Good old growth character and diversity. This unit has great cover but it is at risk. There are some big scattered and clumped p pine and a few big doug fir and grand fir. Choked with medium size grand fir now. Spots in here where it would make sense to thin, spots where it would make sense to thin just around larger trees in the units.

Prescriptions could be varied within the unit. Where we can leave places unlogged, great BUT also place a treatment in here if at all possible because otherwise we're going to lose these big trees. This unit is a possibility for the creation of whiteheaded habitat.

Extent of prescribed fire

Group is supportive of prescribed fire and recommends more fires as detailed in the DOG section and other sections in this document. In addition, the group recommends prescribed fire as possible in the white areas on the map between treatment areas in the far west of the project area.

More background/ discussion: the group would like to continue to work with the Forest Service on burn plans as they are developed, particularly as it relates to the choice of spring or fall burns.

Soil compaction

Group recommends preventing impacts where possible instead of mitigating impacts. For example, logging could be done in winter or over slash or with lighter-on-the-land equipment.

More background/ discussion: soil compaction seems like more significant issue in the southern portion of the project area.

Timeline

October 26: Dad's creek comments compiled and delivered to FS (Emily and Alden)

January 17: FS final proposed action and completed scoping

End of January: BMFP final response to FS proposed action

Feb 29: FS completes specialist reports

March 14: BMFP comments on specialists' reports to FS

March 30: BMFP feedback on draft document to FS

Between now and the next meeting, the BMFP would like to help the FS do outreach on a public meeting and also participate in a stream restoration field trip. Group members would also be interested in a trip to unit 210 - Irene will follow up with Eric on potential field trips.