



**Federal Forest Advisory Committee:
Ad Hoc Implementation Work Group**

**April 4, 2013
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

DRAFT NOTES

9:00 Welcome & Introductions, Agenda Review

9:10 State Legislative and Federal Update

Brett Brownscombe

- Governor's Recommended Budget: update

Governor's budget moving forward with \$5.4 million dollar ask for forest health issues. \$4 million would be allocated for the recommendations developed by the FFAC-IWG for funding a collaborative capacity grant, science and technical work, a state project manager position and the advancement of a new business model starting around the Malheur National Forest. The funding proposed is lottery-backed bonds which come with legal rules and regulations that would to some extent frame budget objectives and implementation.

The remaining \$1.4 million component will be applied to the recommendations from the O&C panel to advance watershed restoration work, potentially including efforts to develop an "all lands" plan that addresses harvest and revenue issues as well as provides a model riparian buffer zone. Some potential opportunities include the identification of private land ripe for conservation and restoration work as well as the development of a land exchange program to provide uplift opportunities to improve forest conditions. State can help guide efforts to prevent checkerboard treatments and help leverage funding to achieve restoration goals.

Currently the Governor's package is moving forward as part of the Oregon Business Department budget and has been before the Joint Ways and Means Committee once in March and will be heard again the week of April 8th.

SB257 presentation to the Rural Community and Economic Development Subcommittee resulted in a request from the co-chairs to bring together a work group to explore potential funding delivery mechanisms available to implement forest work on federal land. The USFS budgets are likely not increasing and any funding sources identified will need to be viable long-term. The bill will move forward with an amendment or budget note in the coming weeks and we'll send out any updated language to the FFAC-IWG list serve when it becomes available. The FFAC-IWG is likely to be involved with this discussion.





- Metrics for measuring success of collaborative outcomes: draft list

A draft of performance metrics was discussed and feedback requested. This is a discussion draft around the forest health investment document and metrics for measuring success of collaborative efforts

Document needs editing for clarity to categorize performance measures by social, economic, environmental and administrative efficiency outcomes. Trying to develop realistic expectations to show progress over the biennium. AFRC staff has met with Brett and provided valuable comments (AFRC had their annual meeting on 4/4 and could not be in attendance). Brett and Chad will continue to work with ODF, USFS (with Nathan Poage who is helping to coordinate data access and utilization) and OFRI to understand where performance measure data will come from.

10:10 USFS: Appeals Process and Blues Project

Ric Rine, Jackie Andrew, USFS R6

- Pre-decisional Rule - Revised 218 regulation: overview of changes, discussion

In 2003, HFRA passed and set up a predecisional objection process for projects (for fuel reduction). In March 2013, the final rule was changed from a postdecisional appeal process to a predecisional objection process for EA's and EIS's. The intent is to provide more opportunity for collaboration and engagement with the Forest Service during the NEPA process.

See Chad Davis's summary below (Attachment A)

See also USFS Talking Point document for more information:

http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5414735.pdf

Tracy Beck and Bill Aney

- Blues project

The Blues Project model is developing through USFS with support from the state to increase the scale and organizational structure for restoration work to ensure steady supply for mill infrastructure and fire risk reduction for ecological values. To add capacity, the USFS is currently recruiting 5-7 new workers for an interdisciplinary (ID) NEPA planning team as well as an eastside restoration coordinator position. Bill Aney is the interim coordinator until the selection process is finalized. Forest Service staff expects to continue working closely with collaboratives to develop the strategic framework.

See Eastside Restoration Strategy Update 2, Briefing Paper (Attachment B)

10:40 Oregon Board of Forestry, Federal Forests Subcommittee

Nils Christoffersen, Oregon Board of Forestry (by phone)





- Status and expected timeline

The subcommittee has met twice so far. The meetings have focused on clarifying the set of principles for the subcommittee as well as a briefing on the Governor's budget. At the next meeting, the Board will plan its July tour in NE Oregon of federal lands. As of now there is no sunset date for the committee, there is a strong interest in coordinating regularly with the FFAC-IWG to help set priorities going forward.

11:10 Collaborative Subcommittee - discussion

Nathan Poage, Oregon Solutions

- USFS databases alignment (PALS, FACTS, TIM)

Nathan shared a draft table and chart from the Malheur NF to demonstrate the type of performance measures data that can be pulled from the databases. He will be providing an update based on feedback from the meeting on 5/9. Please contact Nathan with any questions: poagesblackinc@gmail.com

11:25 Oregon Forest Biomass Strategy and Implementation

Matt Krumenauer, Oregon Department of Energy

- Status of state incentive programs and partnerships

The Biomass Working Group stems from the same legislation that set the framework for the original Federal Forest Advisory Committee in 2005 and has served as a sharing and networking group since. In 2011, renewable energy opportunities were being reevaluated at the state level for the state energy plan and the group developed a consensus based strategy together over 6-8 months. Comments and feedback were also solicited through a wide outreach process which included over 100 entities. See link to strategy below for more information:

http://www.oregon.gov/energy/RENEW/Biomass/Pages/forest_biomass_working_group.aspx#2012_Strategy_Development

11:45 Updates for consideration including

- April 15-16 USFS Mixed Conifer Science Symposium & April 17-18 CFLRP Learning Network Meeting – *Dylan Kruse, Sustainable Next*
- FFAC IWG Meetings: May 9 and June 20
- Board of Forestry: July 25 in LaGrande





Attendance:

Brett Brownscombe, Governor's Natural Resources Office
Dylan Kruse, Sustainable Northwest
Matt Krumenauer, Oregon Department of Energy
Tracy Beck, USFS Region 6
Bill Aney, USFS Blues Project
Russ Hoeflich, The Nature Conservancy
Bill Renwick, Harney County Restoration Collaborative
Ric Rine, USFS Region 6
Mark Stern, The Nature Conservancy
Kevin Birch, Oregon Department of Forestry
Paul Barnum, Oregon Forest Resources Institute
Amanda Rich, The Nature Conservancy
Julia Babcock, Oregon Solutions
Nathan Poage, Oregon Solutions
Pete Dalke, Oregon Solutions

By Phone:

Gil Riddell, AOC
Jackie Andrew, USFS Region 6
Stan Petrowski, South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership
Susan Jane Brown, Western Environmental Law Center
Patrick Shannon, Sustainable Northwest
Elaine Eisenbraun, Umatilla Forest Collaborative Group & N Fork John Day Watershed Council
Curt Qual, USFS Malheur National Forest
Becky Rine, USFS Region 6
Phil Chang, Deschutes Forest Partners and Ochoco Forest Collaborative
Melanie Knapp, U of Oregon graduate student, Oregon Solutions intern
George McKinley, SW Oregon Forest Collaborative
Nils Christoffersen, Oregon Board of Forestry and Wallowa Resources



Attachment A

SUMMARY – Project-Level Predecisional Administrative Review Process

The **Project-Level Predecisional Administrative Review Process** (36 CFR 218) replaces the post-decisional review process (as described in the Appeals Reform Act) on many Forest Service land management actions.

Congress included a rider in the 2012 Appropriations bill that required the Agency to undergo rulemaking to adopt Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) authorities as its primary administrative review process. The final rule establishes *the sole process by which the public may file objections for activities documented with a Record of Decision or Decision Notice*. Note that projects documented with a Decision Memo under a Categorical Exclusion are not subject to this new rule and remain subject to the appeal process in 36 CFR 215.

In summary, the rule extends the HFRA administrative review authorities to all activities implementing a land and resource management plan following a Record of Decision or Decision Notice. It *requires any entity to have submitted specific written comments during any designated opportunity for comment to be eligible to submit Objections*. Objections must be based on and reference previously submitted comments.

The objection period begins after the Forest Service has issued a final environmental impact statement (EIS) or environmental assessment (EA) and a draft Decision. Any responses and/or resolutions of Objections are required before the Agency issues a Final Decision. Some minor differences in timeframes are detailed below between HFRA and non-HFRA forest management projects.

HFRA Projects

- Specific Written Public Comments
 - Received during scoping or other designated opportunity for comment; no timeline specified
- Timeframe for Objections
 - 30 days for objection to be filed following draft Decision
 - 30 days for Reviewing Officer to respond (written)

Non-HFRA Forest Management Projects

- Specific Written Public Comments
 - Received after Legal Notice of the Opportunity to Comment and other designated opportunity for comment
 - 30 days for projects with EA
 - 45 days for projects requiring EIS
- Timeframe for Objections
 - 45 days for objection to be filed following draft Decision
 - 45 days for Reviewing Officer to respond (written); allows for 30 day extension by the Reviewing Officer if needed.

Judicial Review

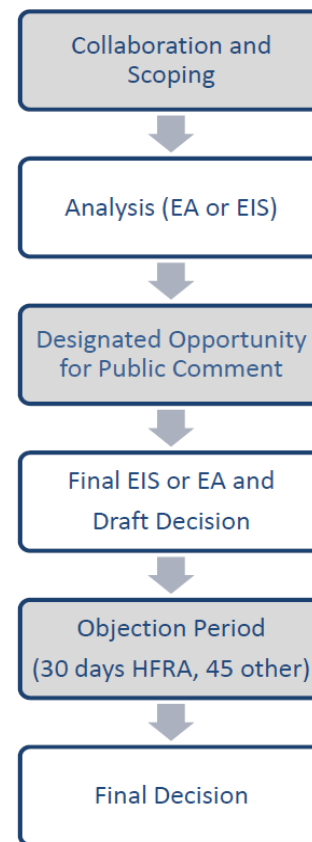
If an entity wants to file a judicial review of any project covered under this new rule, *the plaintiff will have to have exhausted the administrative review process*.

Only applicable to the Forest Service

Because rulemaking was specific to the USDA by Congressional language, this expedited administrative review process *does not apply to forest management on the O&C Lands by the BLM*.

Drafted by: Chad Davis, Oregon Department of Forestry
Date: 3/29/2013

Figure 1: Project Planning Process





Attachment B



Pacific Northwest Region

BRIEFING PAPER

Eastside Restoration Strategy Update 2

2 April 2013

Ecological restoration is the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed. Society for Ecological Restoration, and FSH 1909.12 draft planning rule

Background: This is the second briefing paper regarding the accelerated eastside restoration effort. The focus is to try doing some things differently, aimed at substantially increasing the amount of forest restoration that we are able to do with active management (thinning, prescribed burning, in-stream restoration, etc.). We want to build on, not replace, the good work that is already underway on these four National Forests in cooperation with their respective public collaborative groups.

What will be different? We envision 1) a dedicated project planning team of very experienced natural resource specialists, 2) engaged in early and frequent engagement with collaboratives, 3) working at a large geographic scale, and 4) with direct, deliberate connections to, and counsel from, the forest science community. We also envision using innovative tools to implement projects, with the entire range of contracting authorities at our disposal.

Current Status:

- 1) Planning team: The outreach for the planning team members has been distributed, and we are collecting responses. The current outreach period ends on 17 April.
- 2.) Collaboration and communications:
 - a) I have met with the Wallowa-Whitman and Umatilla collaboratives, and with several members of the Blue Mountains Forest Partners (BMFP). I am scheduled to meet with the Ochoco Collaborative in April, and hope to do the same with BMFP and Harney County collaboratives. I have met with the FLTs on three forests, and am scheduled for the Ochoco this month. There will also be good opportunities to interact with the collaboratives at two workshops being held in Hood River this month.
 - b) I also participated in a conference call with members of all the collaboratives in the Blue Mountains, exploring opportunities to create a collaborative coalition. I have enlisted the help of Maia Enzer, FS Partnership and Collaboration Specialist to reach out to these collaboratives and explore larger-scale collaborative models.





- c) Worked with Regional Office public affairs and partnerships group to develop a communications strategy with FAQs.
- 3.) Identify a project of appropriate scale and value
 - a. Exploring different models of larger-scale planning. The joint TNC/FS product to prioritize ecological restoration needs across the 4 National Forests is scheduled for completion in June.
 - b. Developing maps of ongoing planning efforts in the Blues, and another of plant association groups across all four forests. This should help inform the choices that the collaboratives and the team will need to make regarding restoration needs.

Summary: The eastside restoration strategy maintains an obvious high level of support and interest. A larger-scale collaborative can help identify the best ways to increase the pace and scale of restoration, but this will take time to develop. In the meantime, staffing the interdisciplinary team, developing a budget and communication strategy, collecting current condition information about the Blue Mountains landscape, and continuing discussion with Forest staffs and collaboratives is time well spent.

Contact Point:

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