

February 11, 2015
Tenmile South Helena Forest Restoration Collaborative Committee
Meeting 4

Attending -

Collaborative Members: Mike Bishop, Angie Grove, Jordan Alexander, Doug Powell, Melissa Hayes (phone in), Joe Cohenour, Gary Marks, Leonard Wortman

Resources: Dave Callory (hydrologist, FS), Marshall Thompson (project coordinator, FS), Brad Langsather (temporary facilitator, city of Helena representative, resource), Cara Farr (soil scientist, FS), Michael O'Brien (BLM), John George (USDA)

Public guests: Steve & Janelle Balazs, Stan Frasier

Media: Tom Kuglin (Helena IR)

Notes – Next Meeting is March 11, 2015 beginning at 1:30. Location TBD.

Joe Cohenour will help Sarah distribute the presentation from George Wuerthner.

Hydrology & Soil Science Presentation, Dave Callory & Cara Farr

Questions:

Is logging and logging road creation an environmental impact wash in relation to the impacts of wildfire and the sedimentation risks with each?

- Not the same sedimentation risks. Forest Service timber sales contracts include road improvement stipulations using BMPs (best management practice) to identify potential risks based on the specific topography (adjacent to streams, road shape to allow drainage into buffer zone vs. streams). With the DNRC (State Dept of Natural Resources), every timber sale has and HRA (slash Hazard Reduction Agreement). They audit timber sales to collect data regarding usefulness of certain stipulations. A biennial report is done by the DNRC to report and collect peer reviews and other literature to review and evaluate effectiveness and success of stipulations.
- The Forest Service is being very selective in areas planned for mechanical treatment to avoid interaction of roads with streams. A fire is not selective.

What does it really mean to decommission a road?

There is a public process prior to decommissioning a road, including a period of public comment and at least one public hearing. All road uses are considered, including non-motorized, motorized, and other recreation uses.

The level of decommissioning a road depends on its location and the impact on the surrounding area. To decommission a road means to completely obliterate the road back to its natural contours, breaking up the compacted soil.

Review of Request for Qualifications for facilitator, plan for review of submissions by collaborative

Questions:

Under the Public Information section of the RFQ: "The consultant will be responsible to continue to build support for management in the Ten Mile and effectively communicate with all parties interested in associated restoration projects." Does this mean the consultant will support management, i.e. city manager/commission, Forest Service?

- Clarification: No, the facilitator is expected to build support for the *project* & collaborative recommendations among stakeholders, i.e. through public media such as media releases, Facebook, public meetings/workshops, etc. The word **management** should be changed to project or collaborative recommendations & comments. The RFQ has already been distributed and the legal ad was in the Helena IR on 2/6 & 2/8/2015.

In the Project Management & Reporting section, is there a specified budget for that position & meeting expenses? What kind of reporting is expected?

- It is written as a Request for Qualifications and not as a Request for Bid for the purpose of negotiating a contract. DNRC has agreed to pay for the facilitator; we do not have a specific budget. The facilitator will be expected to submit quarterly reports, which could be as simple as a one page write-up to describe the status of the collaborative, meeting notes & upcoming meetings scheduled, etc. The intention is to have the facilitator help keep all agencies apprised of activities in the area and collaborative status, recommendations and comments.

Discuss structure of collaborative, chair/co-chair, secretary, by-laws, charter

It was agreed that members would review the draft by-laws document and submit questions & comments to Sarah to compile for discussion at the next meeting. It was also agreed that members would begin to consider who, within the group, might be best to act as chair and or chair/co-chair. Sarah will distribute a draft charter document for comments, please submit any comments to her to compile and bring back for discussion at the March meeting.

Next steps:

Perhaps we can consider bringing someone from BC here to share experience? Brad mentioned they are about 5 years ahead of our area in terms of beetle-killed forests. Jordan will send Sarah contact information and will research getting copies or access to their reports and other presentations. Marshall is currently planning an evening presentation (expecting around 100) for April or May with a variety of experts in the field of wildfire, conservation, and forestry. He is working with Dr. Mark Finney, Bruce Simms (retired hydrologist), Jack Cohen (research scientist). The collaborative would love to set up a time to speak with the presenters before or after the event.

It was suggested that we make sure all collaborative meetings have some sort of public notice. Sarah said the meetings have been open to the public but not necessarily noticed officially because we were waiting to have the collaborative have full membership and structure (chair, by-laws, etc). It was agreed by the group to make the meetings more open by putting the meeting dates & times on the city website and city meeting calendar. ***(Sarah put the March meeting in those places 2/12.)*** Sarah will make sure media is included in the email reminder about future meetings.

Mike Bishop mentioned that at least one Helena resident was passionate and upset about potential treatment in Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs). Mike assured the resident that the group generally is against treatments within the IRAs, however, a consensus comment/recommendation from the collaborative has not been made to the Forest Service.

Next meeting will be at 1:30 March 11- location: TBD

Next agenda items:

- Discuss structure of collaborative, chair and/or co-chair, by-laws, charter
- Discuss current timeline for Forest Service project plans, requests for collaborative comments/recommendations & deadlines, future meeting structure
- Discuss public comments received and how they were categorized. Those categories will be put into the context of the project plan & timeline for collaborative comments/recommendations
- Discuss updated map & Forest Service project plan to put the January & February meeting topics into context for collaborative members and the public
- Discuss potential public awareness ideas, i.e. Facebook campaign, use of city website for documents, media, workshops/presentations, etc.
- Forest Service will try to have a wildlife biologist at the next meeting to discuss threatened & endangered species, biodiversity in the area, elk security/hiding cover.