

Black Hills National Forest

Advisory Board Meeting

May 19, 2004

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS: Chairman Ed Yelick, Vice-Chairman John Teupel, Tom Blair, John Cooper, Aaron Everett, Bryce In The Woods, Ron Johnsen, Bob Kloss, Jim Margadant, Jeff Olsen, Bob Paulson, and Nels Smith.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Pat McElgunn and Jim Scherrer.

FOREST SERVICE: Mystic Ranger District Interpretive Services Specialist Amy Ballard, Forest Range Specialist Craig Beckner, Public Affairs Officer Frank Carroll, Executive Assistant Marcia Eisenbraun, Assistant Public Affairs Officer Gwen Ernst-Ulrich, Acting Forest Supervisor Brad Exton, Bearlodge District Ranger Steve Kozel, Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor Mesia Nyman, and Acting Northern Hills District Ranger DeWayne Thornburgh.

WELCOME extended to all in attendance by the Chair.

ROLL CALL was dispensed with.

MINUTES were approved without objection.

COMMENTS TO THE CHAIR:

- Blair: News in the week preceding this meeting focused on the cancellation of the heavy air-tanker contracts. Comments on the evening prior to the meeting indicated the decision to cancel would be revisited by Chief of the Forest Service Bosworth with a re-examination of safety and availability issues and Federal Aviation Association (FAA) certification of aircraft.
- Exton: The Forest is closely watching this subject and will let folks know what occurs.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA resulted in movement of Election of Officers segment to follow the Public Comments portion of the meeting.

HOUSKEEPING information provided by Carroll included credit to the Boxelder Job Corps Culinary Arts students for the treats.

SCHEDULING OF TOPICS FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Teupel reported on a meeting between Chairman Yelick, Carroll, and Vice-chair Teupel to discuss possible topics. He reported on a proposal by the Forest to dispense with the June meeting and shift the proposed agenda accordingly due to changes in the Phase II process. As the Access/Travel Management (A/TM) information will not yet be ready for presentation to the board in June, Teupel requested the Board conduct a field trip instead.

Paulson asked what purpose would be served by the field trip.

Teupel responded that a field trip would provide background information on Phase II (PII) and would be of general benefit to the Board to see what is happening on the ground.

Blair shared this would be a good opportunity to see post-fire areas and other areas of focus in PII.

Teupel stated it will take several meetings to discuss the A/TM issue and we also need to be ready to discuss PII when it is ready for presentation.

Olsen asked if there a reason only six months of topics were being offered.

Carroll provided clarification that this relates to a decision that will need to be made at the January meeting decision as to whether to continue with NFAB.

Kloss asked if a field tour could include heritage sites as well as fire areas.

Carroll responded that the Forest could put together a tour of the southern Black Hills that would include Craven Canyon, Jasper, and other possible sites.

Teupel asked if the Prairie Project area could be included in the tour schedule.

Paulson asked why such heavy emphasis is being placed on A/TM when other topics have been allocated to discussion at single meetings.

Carroll responded that A/TM is a very large portion of Forest Management and one the Forest believes we need the greatest assistance with.

Johnsen said many comments have been received from the general public on pine beetles, fire, and fuel, and he would have liked to see a proposal a year ago for management of these issues and where we would be today, but given the absence of that feel A/TM is important.

Exton stated that because the Forest has not previously had an A/TM Plan he believes this topic is critical to address.

Paulson encouraged the Board to set a plan for getting through as many topics as possible during the time available to this board.

Kloss questioned if all members had read the RCJ editorial of April 18, 2004.

Yelick said the expectation is that public input will be high on the A/TM issue and the Board provides yet another opportunity for the public to bring their views forward.

Teupel said the Board and Forest have no intention of placing less emphasis on other topics but feel this is one that this Board can best assist with at this particular time, allowing for Board input to the Forest and thereby movement of this subject off the "front burner."

Paulson respectfully suggested that the Board plan out through the end of the terms for the current Board members while leaving a couple of months open for other topic discussion in the middle of the remaining time.

Teupel said he didn't believe the Board has received any indication from the Forest that there is a desire to completely realign this committee. In contrast the hope is that many members will continue with another term.

Smith shared a sense of not moving positively forward on a particular subject since this Board serves an advisory role to provide advice and the Forest is still the decision maker. He believes

the Board can still provide advice that the Forest will accept and incorporate into decisions. He also recommended that the Board look seriously at building recommendations based on the expertise of the Board.

Yelick stated that renewal of the Board Charter is expected with limited adjustments to the existing Charter. The Board is allowed to make recommendations for meeting agendas; however, the Forest sets the agenda based on the matters where they believe assistance is needed.

DECISION made to have a field review on June 9; meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center west parking lot. Carroll will arrange for transportation for Board and Forest representatives. Public attendees will be responsible for their own transportation. The July through September meeting dates and topics will be decided at the June meeting. Those dates will then be published in the Federal Register and distributed to local media. The July topic will be A/TM.

Teupel questioned how outside testimony on the A/TM topic will be handled.

Carroll and Exton agreed that outside testimony will be acceptable only if notification is received to allow the testimony to be identified on the agenda.

Blair indicated that as the Board gets further into A/TM the public could be notified through media channels that if more than five minutes of testimony time is needed they need to work through the Forest Public Affairs office to schedule time on the agenda.

Smith asked if testimony could be linked to Board Member sponsorship.

Yelick answered in the affirmative and stated the presenter would then go through the sponsor to the PAO and the Chair to ascertain testimony time.

Johnsen asked if it would be possible to assess a cut-off date for outside testimony requests to be added to the agenda.

Yelick stated that one-week in advance of the July meeting would seem to be a reasonable timeframe and Board members should make those recommendations for outside speakers to the PAO/Chair. He also stated that a request for outside testimony will not automatically be placed on the agenda and that the Chair and PAO will look at time availability and "balancing" the testimony.

Smith felt the expertise of the Board members to make recommendations based on information they independently gather from outside specialists/experts should also be considered.

Teupel summarized that the protocol will be that requests for outside presentations will be submitted to the Forest PAO no less than a week in advance of the meeting. The *Public Comment* portion of the meeting could be extended to 30 minutes to allow for individual three-minute presentations.

OPINION: Teupel reminded those present that service on this Board is designed to be non-partisan and we should continue to remain neutral on issues involving this Board. He believes the Board and the Forest are better served by Board members refraining from aligning with any political interest.

Smith agreed with the need to remain neutral.

Johnsen said he agreed with Teupel from the sense this is an appointed Board and that neutrality should be retained for the cohesive productivity of this group.

HOT TOPICS: Carroll distributed copies of the FY2003 State of the Forest publication to those present.

Paulson asked if the Forest has noticed any impact in reduced firefighter numbers.

Exton assured those present that the Forest is staffing to levels comparable to FY03 and are filling fire positions that have been vacant for a period of time.

INVASIVE SPECIES: Moderator Craig Beckner introduced Jack Butler, Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS); Ron Moehring, South Dakota State University Agriculture and Biological Sciences Extension Service; and Scott Guffey, Pennington County Weed and Pest Specialist. Individual presentations by these gentlemen follow.

Jack Butler: RMRS covers 13 states with 13 research units within those states. The Rapid City Station staffing of 10 scientists previously has been reduced to three scientists – Research Wildlife Biologist Dan Uresk, Wildlife Biologist Mark Rumble, and Botanist Jack Butler. The website for the local Station is www.fs.fed.us/rm/rapidcity.

1. Definition: WEEDS - Originally thought to be plants out of space evolved to noxious weed/invasive/exotic/alien/plants out of place.
2. Characteristics: High reproductive/seed production; Efficient Dispersal; Rapid Growth; Lack of Population Control.
3. Weeds of the Black Hills: Quick list includes Canada thistle; leafy spurge; dalmatian toadflax; spotted knapweed; musk thistle; St Johnswort (Klamath weed); and houndstongue.
4. Other Weeds: smooth brome; cheatgrass (downy brome); Japanese brome; Kentucky Bluegrass; yellow sweet clover have same impacts as other more commonly identified weeds.
5. How are they spread? Wind and water; Hay for horses and livestock; Equipment (logging/construction); Off-Road vehicles; Livestock and wildlife.
6. Integrated Weed Management: Prevention; Evaluation of Impact; Control; Long-term monitoring.
 - a. Prevention:
 - i. Fire enhanced spread of invasive species via roads and stream corridors (slide of Jasper Fire area). Studies of a variety of areas identified and consolidated into one study tool for targeting high priority areas for treatment/monitoring.
 - ii. Slide of Canada thistle in Jasper Fire Area and how spread is influenced by water run-off.
 - b. Impacts:
 - i. Displaces native species
 - ii. Reduces carrying capacity
 - iii. Reduces habitat for wildlife
 - iv. Alters fire regimes
 - v. Modifies nutrient cycles
 - c. Control/Management:

- i. Chemical – herbicide
 - ii. Biological – go back to origination site
 - iii. Other (grazing, mowing, etc.)
7. Slide identifying weed density over time and the economic/ecological threshold and the goal to get the density down below the economic/ecological threshold.
 8. Slide looking at flea beetles for bio-treatment for areas of leafy spurge (Montana). Data slide followed with numerical graphing showing the increase of beetles and the related decrease in leafy spurge. Followed with before/after slide of one site in Montana. Looking at slides like this it becomes evident that by removing the invasive species does not “fix” the problem. The remaining species are the hardy native species but the sensitive species have been eradicated. Slide indicated removal of leafy spurge replaced by Canada thistle, Kentucky bluegrass, etc. Long-term monitoring is required to determine benefits, impacts etc. of treatment and whether the treatment creates additional concerns.

Ron Moehring: South Dakota State University: South Dakota has a state-managed program for weed-free hay certification. The cheapest weed to control is the one we don't have. Brochure of saltcedar distributed. This species is the most recently identified invasive species identified by the State of South Dakota. Mapped essentially on every stream in west river and have identified spread state-wide.

1. Breakdown of individual weed species statewide and within the Black Hills. Fall River, Custer, Pennington, Lawrence and Meade used for the Black Hills portion of the slide.
2. Slide identifying acres managed, acres infested, annual budget and required budget. BKF 1.5 mil managed, 82,000 infested, \$140,000, \$780,000.
3. Slides of individual invasive species
4. Statewide Weed Cost
5. BKF Weed Cost
6. Other Hills Weeds
7. Weed cost for other Hills weeds – Economic loss is substantial and loss to wildlife is yet to be fully realized. Dense monocultures change fire regimes. Increase erosion and loss of flora/fauna.

Frank Carroll distributed copies of South Dakota/Nebraska Weed Identification Guide, prepared by Black Hills Resource Conservation and Development of South Dakota. Signs identifying the requirement for weed-free feed within South Dakota are placed along highways leading into the State. Treatments to reduce various invasive species identified. Using only one source to treat is not necessarily efficient due in large part to the timeframe for effective treatment being longer than the timeframe for spread (i.e. you can knock a house down with a hammer, but is it the most efficient method?)

SCOTT GUFFY, Pennington County Weed and Pest, Supervisor: Provided information on the make-up of the Pennington County Weed Board

1. State declared noxious weeds:
 - a. Field bindweed
 - b. Canada thistle
 - c. Leafy spurge
 - d. Perennial sow thistle
 - e. Hoary cress
 - f. Russian knapweed

- g. Purple loosestrife
2. Pennington County declared Invasive Species
 - a. Spotted knapweed
 - b. Dalmatian toadflax
 - c. Common tansy
 - d. Houndstounge
 - e. Saltcedar
 - f. Mountain pine beetle
3. Noxious weeds defined as a biological wildfire. Over 17 million acres infested on public lands with an estimated spread rate of 5,600 acres daily. No beneficial uses known for noxious weeds.
4. Pennington County perspective: The Good/The Bad/The Ugly –
 - a. The GOOD: Best for agencies - local, state and federal to work together toward weed management/control. Hill City/Deerfield area highlighted. Cooperative effort for mapping weed infested areas as well as treatment of private lands. Education increasing through multi-agency effort of sign postings. Boxelder Creek Spotted Knapweed Project also highlighted. Grant opportunities provided by FS increase potential for treatment of private and public lands. Jasper Fire four-year agreements signed with Pennington and Custer Counties to assist with treatment efforts within the fire boundary. Treatment focused on Six-Mile Road and Gillette Canyon Road within Pennington County. Biological control provided through agreement with FS to fund a biological aide. Flea beetles utilized within the county to treat leafy spurge in the Sitting Bull Cave area. Slide highlighted affects of this treatment method. Indications that flea beetles are moving out. Agreement with FS to assist with through KV treatments. Certified Weed-Free Hay Requirement signs will be posted in general vicinity of FS entry sign areas. Local Leadership is outstanding!!
 - b. The BAD: Noxious weeds are bad. Estimated 82,000 acres infested. Forest Noxious Weed EA targets 6,000 acres to be controlled annually and this is just maintenance without controlling. Funding is an issue due to no line item budget for noxious weed management. Funding process can result in spotty treatments. QUESTION: Nels Smith: What happened to Carlson-Foley Act, which was targeted specifically toward invasive species treatment? (*Information provided by Craig Beckner for inclusion with these notes is attached to the end of this document.*). Lack of funding for BAER team requests. Bureaucracy!!!! National Invasive Weed Awareness Week held in Iowa during the last week in February and focuses on pushing to get the information to the leadership on the need for funding and the need to reduce administrative costs so that more funding gets to the problem. Soil disturbance by dozers in fire suppression increases spread. Log decks in leafy spruce increases the spread when the logs are transported to the mills.
 - c. Solutions: Increased funding. Budget line item for noxious weeds. Fund BAER team requests for noxious weed management. Continue KV funding for noxious weed management. Less money for administrative fees, more on the ground. Increase target acres to be managed in EA. Inventory and Pre-treat timber sales. Educate timber sale contractors and Forest timber sale administrators. Educate public and politicians.
5. Brochure: *Wanted – Considered Harmful and Dangerous: Noxious Weeds Deerfield/Hill City Weed Management Team*

RECOMMENDATION: Get Forest-wide Noxious Weed EA to Board Members (*Sent hard copy in the week following the meeting.*)

CRAIG BECKNER, Weed Management Coordinator, Black Hills National Forest. North American Weed Management Conference is scheduled for September 21-23. Contact Craig Beckner for more information on this conference.

1. Forest looks at a three-pronged approach for treatment/control of invasive species.
 - a. Identify/Treat:
 - i. Acres of Weeds – numbers previously offered through other presentations
 - ii. Weeds of Concern – species previously offered through other presentations
 - iii. Map showing known weed locations within the Black Hills NF showing full species view and another slide showing infestations without Canada thistle.
 - iv. Planned for 2004 is 200 acres of Bio Control – Using a sweep and release process to assist with moving bugs into other areas.
 - v. Treated weeds and acres planned.
 - vi. Working with contractors to treat weeds – locations identified on slide.
 - vii. Crews identified in spray process.
 - viii. Cut and treat saltcedar in hopes of eradication before it becomes widespread.
 - ix. County agreements, volunteers, and weed management areas are other ways we can accomplish weed management.
 - b. Inventory and Monitoring:
 - i. Are very important with 52,000 acres planned for 2004.
 - c. Education:
 - a. Front-desk opportunities
 - b. Personal visits to schools
 - c. Dakota Digital Network (Amy Ballard) has reached 1,000 students statewide in two years.
2. Treatments:
 - a. 200 acres of bio control

(Hard copy of Craig's Powerpoint presentation included with these notes).

Q&A: Is treatment focused during a specific period of year for most effective treatment result? Spraying doesn't affect the life or effectiveness of the bugs.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

In The Woods: Does the FS ever look at utilizing these plants for another use (i.e. pellets, etc.)?

Jack Butler: Leafy spurge has some grazing benefits for sheep, but grazing doesn't work well toward control.

Ron Moehring: Native controls that may be found in the originating site of the species cannot necessarily be introduced in our areas because of their wide-spread attack on the plant "family" that may result in negative affects to commercial crops. Economical damage outweighs any economical benefits.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None offered.

ELECTION OF CHAIR and VICE-CHAIR: These positions are identified within the Charter to be elected/re-elected annually. Ed Yelick has made the decision to not seek re-election to the post of Chair due to other commitments he wishes to pursue. His involvement with the Board will continue. New Chair/Vice-Chair will take office at the June meeting.

Nominations for Chair were as follows: John Teupel – nomination by Smith with a second by Cooper.

Tom Blair – nomination by Cooper with a second by Olsen.

Motion nominations cease by Smith with a second by Margadant. Passed.

Election by secret ballot – Tally – Teupel – 5 votes **Blair – 7 votes**

Nominations for Vice Chair were as follows: Kloss – nomination by Margadant with a second by Blair.

Johnsen – nomination by Smith with a second by Everett.

Motion nominations cease by Blair with a second by Smith. Passed.

Comments offered by those nominating certain individuals to the offices of Chair/Vice-Chair as to why they made their nominations based on the expertise they believe the individual brings to this Advisory Board.

Election by secret ballot – Tally – **Kloss – 7 votes** Johnsen – 5 votes

COMMENTS: Margadant requested the Board make a joint statement of THANKS to Yelick and Teupel for their service as Chair and Vice-Chair during the past year.

Coop: In response to a previous request for information on the economic impacts of hunting and fishing in South Dakota, Cooper provided hard copy information to attendees and stated the information is also available on the SD GF&P website.

Teupel: Reiterate the next meeting will begin at 8:30 at the Civic Center west parking area.

Smith: Good focus today on noxious weeds and need to recognize native species for their own sake at the risk of introduced species (i.e. alfalfa, crested wheat-grass). Believe we should concentrate on invasive noxious weeds rather than non-native species as a whole.

Olsen: Conservation Seed Program Chair for SD Chapter of NWTf offering forage sudan grass for selected plot introduction.

CHAIR MOVED TO ADJOURN.