

**Eastern Washington Cascades and Yakima
Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC)
Meeting Notes
5-3-2006**

Attendees: Scott King, June Helbig, Bill Ford, Dale Neuman, Annelise Lesmeister, Steve Buck, Lee Carlson, Ron Simon, Walt Smith, Vic Power (representing Pat Christianson), Albert Roberts, Liz Tanke, Saundie McPhee, Dick Rieman, Susan Crampton, Jen Watkins, Jessica Gonzales, Barry Donahue, Gus Bekker, and Jim Boynton.

Visitors: Lanny Armbruster, Manson Parks Director, and Dan Wood from Entiat.

Forest Service personnel: Margaret Hartzell, Forest Plan Revision Team Leader, Phil Jahns, Forest Plan Revision Recreation & Vegetation Leader, Rick Acosta Forest Plan Revision Public Affairs Leader, Karin Whitehall, District Ranger, Entiat Ranger District, Debbie Kelly, and Robin DeMario.

Facilitators: Susan Hayman from Boise, Idaho, and Paul Hart, Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests.

Information Sharing

Paul Hart

PAC members introduced themselves. Vic Power, representing Pat Christianson (and also Pat's brother), shared information about himself and how Pat is doing. Pat is in the Central Washington Hospital. Vic worked for the Forest Service early in his career, he was a teacher, a school superintendent, and is a consultant now; the last couple of years he has been busy building a house with his daughter in Hawaii and also living in Omak. Visitors introduced themselves.

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Paul Hart & Susan Hayman, Facilitators

Paul Hart – Welcoming comments. Questions have been brought up about the PAC voting process-- Who gets to vote on things if we come to a voting process? The group has agreed to try a consensus approach with this process. The objective is to reach some common grounds on these issues. When the PAC does vote, under the charter and federal regulations, a chartered approved member of the committee is recognized as a voting member. Jim Boynton needs to know the rationale behind all opinions.

Jim Boynton – I think back to the time when we first brought this topic to the PAC's attention and the concerns that members had about this process. I appreciate your contribution, your participation, and your superb work. You have exceeded my expectations with how we could bring contributions to the Forest Plan Revision process. I will use what you have pulled together.

Susan Hayman – I am a private practice mediator/facilitator from Boise, Idaho. Review of agenda and distribution of some handouts.

Handouts: #1 PAC Collaborative PRODUCT Agreements, #2 PAC Collaborative PROCESS Agreements, #3 PAC Vegetation Sub Group meeting notes, and #4 PAC Recreation Sub Group meeting notes.

Objectives for today:

- ◆ Review and refine vegetation and recreation desired condition statements
- ◆ Create an understanding about what suitability criteria are for, and how they are used
- ◆ Identify preliminary suitability criteria for various recreation uses and vegetation treatments within a given management theme.

Ground Rules

1. Listen openly and actively
2. Withhold judgment until the other person's view is understood
3. Ask questions for understanding before responding
4. Give everyone equal opportunity to speak
5. Focus on concerns and interests rather than positions
6. Examine future improvements rather than dwelling on the past
7. Emphasize the situation rather than the people
8. Value disagreement and constructive argument
9. Look for ways to achieve mutual gain
10. Regard one another's views as legitimate and deserving respect
11. Respect meeting timeframes
12. Silence all electronic devices

Agenda:

9:00	Opening, welcome, introductions	1:00	Suitability Criteria Development, Facilitated exercise
9:30	Vegetation Desired Conditions subgroup report		
10:30	Break	2:15	Break
10:45	Recreation Desired Conditions subgroup report	2:30	Observer's/Visitor's Comment Period
11:30	Observer's /Visitor's Comment Period	2:45	Summary
11:45	Lunch	3:15	Closing remarks
12:30	Suitability Criteria Presentation, Q&A	3:30	Adjourn

Subgroup Reports

Vegetation Subgroup Report:

Handout #5: Vegetation Sub-group Agreements

Albert Roberts: We're just analyzing "white" areas of the map outside special allocation areas like wilderness.

Liz Tanke: Review of desired conditions statement. There were some statements that we eliminated or incorporated in an alternate way. We also came up with "loose ends". We came up with a lot of desired conditions that we thought would apply forest-wide; they would be the guiding desired conditions for all areas.

Albert Roberts: Management themes, we took the four different classes in the matrix and expanded them a little and changed them to the six listed on page 5 of the handout (1. Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) roaded, 2. Roaded dry forest and not WUI, 3. Roaded mesic forest, roaded cold moist forest, and roaded cold dry forest not WUI, 4. Unroaded [everything except dry forest] not WUI, 5. Unroaded WUI, and 6. Unroaded, dry forest, not WUI).

Walt Smith: Did you come up with any priorities?

Liz Tanke: That is a later step. Our sub-group worked really well together.

Margaret Hartzell: One of your management themes is unroaded and WUI, when you talk about vegetative treatments in that sort of area, are you anticipating that roads would not be built?

Albert Roberts: It is named as such because of the proximity to WUI area; yes, it is not roaded but it is an urban interface.

Liz Tanke: It is a desired condition, with a lighter management touch.

Susan Hayman: Take a few minutes to look at the handouts, especially look at the desired conditions. Read through the materials; make notes next to the items that you have questions about. Put a green dot next to an item on each flipchart that you would like to have further clarification or discussion.

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SEE ATTACHMENT A (which contains vegetation sub-group desired condition statements.)

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Recreation Subgroup Report:

Handout: #6 General, Forest-Wide Desired Conditions

Barry Donahue: Once we figured out what a desired condition was we were able to make some headway. We largely adopted the four management areas that the Forest Service had developed and then added a couple more. We originally made our notes on these areas (the things you see under themes #1, #2, #4 and #5) but we need your feedback on this. We also need direction from PAC members on the ski area issue.

Dale Neuman: Management Theme #5/E fits more of a park-like atmosphere than general forest conditions. The theme of #5 is non-motorized, so a number of items listed under this theme should be removed from this category. In Management Theme #6, Winter Recreation, we subdivided this category into subcategories; layers upon layers.

Susan Crampton: The issue about why winter is more difficult to categorize needs to be stated at some time.

Jen Watkins: Does theme #6 cover the complexity of what is occurring on the ground?

Dale Nueman: We came from a general approach rather than a specific approach for the additional themes.

June Helbig: Number 6 was envisioned as an overlay that encompasses themes #1 through #5 related to winter only (snow cover).

Gus Bekker: We could address winter recreation in each of the five categories that we had, but we decided to do it in an overlay labeled #6.

Susan Crampton: Some of the natural resources in the forest that complement things are not as much a part of these themes (fish, wildlife, environmental issues, etc.).

Dale Neuman: We did talk about wildlife and winter range.

Barry Donahue: We did try to focus on recreation, but we did discuss these other things.

June Helbig: This could be an issue under suitability.

Lee Carlson: There was discussion, for example in area #1 which is unroaded, to allow snowmobiles in the unroaded area during the winter. We talked about specialized use in specific areas during specific times of the year.

Jessica Gonzales: The Forest has not done a total inventory of snowmobile trails and winter recreation. There are user disturbance issues, conflicts with private landowners adjacent to national forest lands, etc.

Dale Neuman: Snowmobiles have the flexibility to go almost anywhere over the snow, they do not need a trail or a road to recreate. In 2009, the national forest will be closed to motorized access unless posted as open on a forest travel map.

Dick Rieman: There is need for a monitoring program to know how much snowmobile use is occurring in certain areas. As a desired condition we do need some kind of a monitoring program that keeps track of density of users in an area.

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SEE ATTACHMENT B (which contains recreation sub-group desired condition statements.)

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Recreation sub-group Thoughts:

1. We need a clearer definition of what backcountry and front country areas are; what they are, where they are, etc., so people can picture them (map/description?).
2. Identify if you can't get there, what it is and why, but try to get there.
3. Look at including destinations as an objective in the desired conditions. What the users are looking at, in terms of what they want in those areas (as referenced in Vladimir Steblina's presentation.)
4. Need to address PAC full group materials, incorporate them or add "meat to bone" or "noodles to the broth" concept.
5. Where do hunting and fishing opportunities/experiences fit in with the desired condition?

Suitability Criteria

(Margaret Hartzell and Phil Jahns)

Handout #7: DRAFT working glossary.

Handout#8: List of web sites.

Margaret Hartzell: Suitability criteria refer to whether a particular activity is a good fit for a specified part of the forest. Criteria is just a standard upon which a decision or judgment is made. Are there any fundamental suitability criteria that apply forest wide? Yes, see below (also see *Handout #9 Fundamental Criteria*).

Fundamental Criteria

The responsible official shall not identify lands within the plan area as suitable for a certain use or uses if any of the following circumstances apply:

1. Law, regulation, Executive order, or Forest Service directive system prohibit that use,
2. The use would result in substantial and permanent impairment of the productivity of the land or renewable resources, or
3. The use is incompatible with the desire conditions for the relevant portion of the plan area.

Barry Donahue: You have done a good job in describing #1 of the Fundamental Criteria. We are spinning our wheels on understanding the ramifications of #2. We need to know more about #2.

Margaret Hartzell: Riparian areas are a good example of number 2.

Phil Jahns: Number 1 is very specific. In the realm of vegetation, as an example, the Wilderness Act removes wilderness from consideration for timber harvest. A lot of #2 has been worked out as well. An example would be the National Forest Management Act which limits timber harvest where we can't be assured of revegetation. Riparian reserves are another example. You need to think about desired conditions in #3. Take a look at the kind of forest uses that might go on. Keep in mind that uses are linked together to a degree (prescribed fire leads to smoke impacts, etc.), and that conflicts can occur.

Scott King: Is there any consideration given to percent of success, understanding that a few things are not right even though most things are? If you were going to do a timber sale, there are a few acres that you don't want to interfere with.

Phil Jahns: Things in the forest plan are more general in scope, not fine scale; things have to be confirmed at a project level.

Margaret Hartzell: Generally suitable for an activity to occur, with an understanding that not every single acre in the forest is suitable for that activity to occur.

Susan Crampton: In what form would it be useful for sub-groups to put together suitability information?

Margaret Hartzell: The team is already using the spreadsheet that has about 912 cells in it. You can make your own version of that spreadsheet. We would like the rationale behind why an activity is/isn't or should/shouldn't be occurring in the landscape.

Phil Jahns: Recreation examples are very slim. Under #1 the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would be an example. I don't have an example, right now, for #2, but #3 it is wide open. Another important concept to keep in mind is that if we call land suitable for something that doesn't mean that that action will be allowed there...it's not a commitment.

Susan Crampton: Is suitability criteria a new phrase?

Margaret Hartzell: It is something that the sub-groups came up with. It is a description of a task that the sub-groups and the ID team are working on.

Phil Jahns: In the last rounds of planning, suitability was applied to timber and livestock use, it is now being applied more broadly.

Saundie McPhee: When looking at the huge spreadsheet, it is unclear what some of the items mean. What is management area 2? What is the difference between limitations in area 2 and area 3?

Margaret Hartzell: Timing limitations are usually about wildlife and habitat concerns. At certain times of the year motorized use may be limited in certain areas. These are still in draft form.

Phil Jahns: Use the data table as an example.

Liz Tanke: We were more holistic in both the recreation and vegetation sub-groups, using broader goals, so it might be that one activity is OK in one area, but require more exact considerations in other areas.

Phil Jahns: We need to have more details in those considerations. Please list them.

Bin List:

1. Glossary of terms
2. The Forest Service needs to attend county planning commission meetings regarding critical planning for developments, fire risk, etc.
 - a. District Ranger Mark Morris will attend a county planning commission meeting.
3. Winter use management theme→motorized/non-motorized, snowmobiles, skiing, front country, backcountry.
 - a. The recreation sub-group will work on this and get back to the PAC.
4. Heli-skiing topic.
 - a. The recreation sub-group will work on this and get back to the PAC.
5. “Common to management themes...” separate?
 - a. The recreation sub-group will work on this and get back to the PAC.
6. Monitoring/inventory of recreation use.
 - a. Needs to be addressed in desired condition (adaptive management link).
 - b. Search for information from Washington State Parks--have discussion in sub-groups about why snowmobile information (use/numbers) is needed.
7. Opportunities for volunteers regarding trail maintenance and liability issues.
 - a. Memorandums of Understanding are already being used with user groups, more groups need to know about this. The Forest Service needs to promote more volunteer use.
8. Need to know more about #2 on Margaret Hartzell’s handout (Fundamental criteria--The use would result in substantial and permanent impairment of the productivity of the land or renewable resources); tap into information from Phil Jahns and Linda Fee in the sub-groups. The terms “substantial” and “permanent” are sometimes debated.

Action Items: (Include sub-group assignments)

1. Provide any suggested language for economic or other desired conditions—the right vocabulary—provide guidance to sub-group.
 - a. This assignment is to the PAC. Paul Hart will work with Rick Acosta to accomplish this. If there are any suggestions, please send them to Paul Hart at phart@fs.fed.us or hardcopy mail to 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee, WA 98801.
2. Distribute Vladimir Steblina’s presentation to the sub-group.
 - a. Rick Acosta will do this.
3. Send Draft Glossary electronically to PAC members
 - a. Margaret Hartzell will do this.
4. PAC members will send questions about glossary terms to Paul Hart.
5. If you have concerns for the vegetation sub-group or desired conditions for the sub-group, send them to Paul Hart for distribution.

Guiding principle:

- ◆ Identify areas of disagreement, especially in the recreation sub-group. It would be useful to identify the areas of disagreement.

Common Ground:

1. Desired condition statements that didn't have dots under vegetation
2. Nature of changes vegetation sub-group needs to make
3. Notion of "pre-approved treatment criteria"
4. Forest wide desired condition statements for recreation, unless as noted.

Closing Remarks . . . Next Meeting Dates

The next PAC vegetation sub-group meeting will be held on May 18 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Methow Valley Conference room located in the Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests Headquarters office, 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee.

The next PAC recreation sub-group meeting will be held on May 19 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Methow Valley Conference room located in the Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests Headquarters office, 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee.

MAY 23, 2006 PAC Meeting:

1. Management themes—how do the vegetation sub-group and recreation sub-group reconcile?
2. Wrap up decision criteria—recreation and vegetation sub-groups.
3. Suitability report

JUNE 7, 2006 PAC Meeting and JUNE 21, 2006 PAC Meeting:

These two meetings will be held only if needed. The dates were set to help set calendars and to allow publishing of Federal Register notices. Both meetings would be held in the Forest Headquarters conference room.

Paul Hart: We are making progress. You folks have been working very well as an interdisciplinary team. Call me if you need help with anything. When defining backcountry come up with things that we can communicate with the public.

Jim Boynton: It is valuable for me to be here and hear the discussion that PAC members have. The dialogue is invaluable. You have done much, much more work than I ever dreamed that we would call upon you to do. You are doing a superb job! Thank you also, Rick Acosta and Susan Hayman, Planning team members, Deb Kelly, Paul Hart, and Robin DeMario.

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