

Colville National Forest
Plan Revision Update to Air Force
March 15, 2016

Attending

Todd Foster and other members of the Air Force Survival School

Forest Service:

Amy Dillon, Forest Plan Revision Team Lead, Rick Hall, Air Force Liaison, Eric McQuay, West Zone recreation program manager and Forest Plan Revision Recreation Lead, Gayne Sears, District Ranger, Kent Contreras, District Fire Management Officer, and Marcy Rumelhart (notes).

This was the annual spring special use permit operations meeting with the Air Force and was held at the Newport Ranger Station in Newport, WA. An update on forest plan revision was on the agenda and that discussion began shortly after 1:00.

Amy gave a brief overview of plan revision history; current project status and next steps. She reviewed the range of alternatives and the differences between them related to recommended wilderness, and road management. The 90-day comment period began on February 19th and will end on July 5th. She discussed items that may be of primary interest to the Air Force including changes that could affect road use, and proposed road density restrictions. Also of interest could be the riparian management areas, which would have more sideboards as to what can be cut in those areas. The biggest change would be regarding road use which would mean more coordination with the districts at the project level. Alternative R would have the greatest impact on the Air Force permit. She discussed some of the reasons why this planning effort has taken so long, mainly due to the planning rules changing over the years.

Question topics included:

- Since the winter range management area would no longer be in the new plan, how would that be dealt with?
 - Amy said the forest is working with Washington State Dept. of Wildlife on a habitat map for big game. When that is done we would use it to overlay other management areas to help us manage habitat. That is something that would be incorporated at the project level. The current winter range management direction includes open road density direction related to closing roads. How that will be handled in the new plan is not lined out yet.
- Is the Parker Lake closure (a hunting closure designated by the state, not a FS closure) identified in the new plan?
 - No, not a FS designation.
- What happens to management area 3 in the new plan?
 - Eric stated that the management area 3 is not included in the new plan, but there is a scenic overlay to deal with major routes. The issues are still there and there will still be some site specific needs to address.

Todd stated they will need to carefully scrutinize the new plan especially in regards to core areas. The current forest plan has a statement about considering the Air Force permit and we'd like to try to have something in the new plan as well.

Amy stated there is currently no verbiage in the draft plan that speaks to the Air Force permit. Will need to meet with Todd again to continue this conversation and get to the specifics about critical Air Force areas.

Todd - we'd like to be involved to make sure we have some level of protection for years to come. His preference at this time is Alternative P.

Amy discussed public comments received so far, ranging from wanting much more recommended wilderness to wanting no recommended wilderness. Other issues are concern about closing roads and access to the forest changing.

Todd – there is a certain percent of ground that meets the Air Force requirements for the survival school, which is basically if we can park trucks, there is water and if there is dead timber. If those three requirements are met, we're good. If there's a way to keep a certain portion of cached dead timber then we don't see a problem at all. We understand the need to do some logging and have some management schemes.

Rick – this is normally handled on a project-by-project basis, and he has maps of core areas in the files.

Amy will look into the original wording from the current plan and add that to new plan. She gave them a CD and business card with website addresses.

Rick will schedule a follow-up meeting with Amy & Todd to get into the specifics of the permit and how Air Force use might be affected by the proposed plan.

This portion of the meeting ended at about 1:30.

USAF- 336th TRG Annual Operating Plan

Spring 2016

Date: Mar. 15th, 2016

Time: 1000

Location: Newport Sullivan Lake Ranger District – Newport Office

Purpose: The annual plan meeting is an agency requirement covered under the Military Training Special Use Permit. The annual meeting addresses permit requirements and establishes schedules, due dates and details concerning implementation of the proposed operations.

MEETING AGENDA

Air Force Summer Operation Plan

1. 22nd. (Field Training)

2. 66th. (Instructor Training)

3. TRSS (Roads) – Covered with Eric Decker on 02/16/2016

4. Forest Service Fire Activities for 2016
 - Burning – Blue Ruby and Misery
 - Special Projects

5. Timber Sales
 - Power (Bartlett)

- Renshaw (Muddy)
- Timber Mountain (Ruby)
- Limestone (out of the training area)
- Boulder Mountain (Tacoma)

6. Range