

Deschutes Provincial Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: October 21, 2016

Location: OSU Extension – Clover Conference Room, Prineville, OR and field visit to Skull Hollow, Crooked River National Grassland

Attendees:

Casey Kaiser (Prineville-Crook County Chamber of Commerce)	Garth Fuller
Ken Fahlgren	Carl Backstrom
Erik Fernandez	John Allen
Paul Anderson	Stacey Forson
Woody Starr	Carol Benkosky
Jerry Hubbard	Jeff Kitchens
Chris Johnson	Kristen McBride
Beth Peer	Lauren DuRocher

Following introductions, Kristen McBride presented on the **South Central Oregon Adaptation Partnership (SCOAP) and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment**.

The 2012 Planning Rule (to be used for Forest Plan Revision) requires that climate change be considered with an evaluation and consideration in planning. An effort is underway in several FS areas to complete adaptation assessments. South Central Oregon Adaptation Partnership (SCOAP) includes Deschutes NF, Ochoco NF, Crooked River NG, Fremont-Winema NF, and Crater Lake NP.

SCOAP is a Forest Service science-management collaboration with the goals of:

- Increasing climate change awareness;
- Assessing vulnerability of cultural and natural resources; and
- Developing science-based adaptation strategies and incorporating them into management of federal lands in south central Oregon

The effort is led by Dave Peterson and Jessica Halofsky from the Northwest Research Station. This process was kicked off in January 2015 with the start of vulnerability assessments. In March 2016 there was a public discussion/presentation and a multi-day workshop with partners to further the assessment. The final assessment is currently being reviewed and will eventually be released as a GTR publication. Vulnerability Assessment Summaries are available. Visit www.adaptationpartners.org/scoap for more information about the process.

Ochoco NF Update (Stacey) - Grassland Ecological Site Descriptions

The increase and threat from invasive plants such as medusa head has been a concern on the CRNG. A regional team came out to the Grassland to help with an effort/strategy to handle the invasive plant issue. This led to a partnership with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and University of Nevada to develop Ecological Site Descriptions. This includes a review of soils, vegetation, landform mapping, etc. It is a transition model that helps review management actions and the effects to be used as a foundation for future management actions.

BLM Update (Carol) - Sustainable Recreation – Ochoco/CR Grassland/BLM Lands

The area where the Forest, Grassland and BLM come together has a high growth potential that currently is dominated by dispersed recreation on a multiple use landscape. Subdivisions are increasing, particularly in triangle area created by Redmond/Sisters/Prineville/Bend. This has become many more “backyards” with varying expectations. What do people value this land for- open space or city services such as landfills? Now is an opportunity to start to plan and get ahead of future challenges.

Field Visit – Skull Hollow Campground and Trailhead

The area is a semi-developed/dispersed use that includes developed campground, some trails used for equestrian, hiking and mountain biking. The area also has popular target shooting spots. In general the Grassland also supports multiple uses of utilities/transmission, grazing, etc. There have been issues with illegal off-road vehicle use, particularly on side of Gray Butte. This past summer, special funding supported two field ranger/community ambassadors across the Ochoco/CRNG. One ranger spent a lot of time in this area resulted in improved relations.

This area has different issues than the Deschutes NF. The heavy, over capacity use is not here...yet? The BLM and Ochoco/Grassland Staff took a crack at these questions in a brainstorming session and looked at a rough strategy map. Longer shoulder seasons with lower use tends to bring people looking for more solitude/fewer crowds. Some of the questions that came up in brainstorming: how do people use these areas, what do we focus on, what are the similar issues across the landscape, what are the opportunities, where is use expanding and why, who is getting squeezed out and where do they go?

Some topics that came up during the discussion:

- Local use versus tourism use – can be a tension also between historic and newer uses (for example equestrian and mountain bike)
- Shared use – pros/cons to shared use areas/trails. Strategies to either separate use or make it be multiple use trails.
- Consideration of other values/resources such as wildlife need to be part of the the discussion. Better to bring forward at beginning so it can be incorporated in the planning.
- Scale: What scale can we be effective at and have engagement at? Can't be too small (trail by trail) or too large (not effective). Need to look at both big picture and project site specific planning.
- Overlapping efforts: Deschutes and Ochoco Collaboratives; this Deschutes PAC recreation sub-committee and coming Central Oregon Trail Collaborative. We need to consider how to be efficient and incorporate overlapping efforts to avoid duplication and over-extending the stakeholders.
- Community engagement: Community process and need to engage many different groups. Look for engagement among other groups such as Access Recreation.
- Visitor Center Use: Currently Crook Country Visitor Information Center is starting to look at and track types of uses it gets calls about, types of maps sold, etc. This may be one way to help look at changing trends or use in the area. Can use the visitor center to help direct people to best suited locations to concentrate some use and maybe not a general forest map.

- Thinking back to the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment approach from this morning- what does a recreation vulnerability assessment look like for future use?

Next Meeting

The next meetings will be in January and April, in addition to any subcommittee work. A doodle poll will be developed to set the next two meeting dates.