

**Yaak GA Workgroup Meeting (Final Notes)**  
**2/25/04**

**Present**

Jerry Wandler  
Sue Janssen  
Peter Kitts  
Mary Campbell  
Pam Fuqua  
Christina Eisenburg  
Mike Michlig  
Dominick Schmidig  
Dario Scarabosio  
Wade Kidder  
Keith Haggerty  
Vince Godby  
Ron Brown

Randy Beacham  
Charles Leidigh  
Camille Leidigh  
Cassia Liedigh  
Cherith Leidigh  
Steve Garrett  
Linda Stehlik  
Dick Stehlik  
Rick Bass  
Sharon Sullivan  
Jeremy O'Day  
Scott Daily  
Kelly Needs

**Forest Service**

Mike Balboni  
Mark Natale  
Mike Giesey  
Tom Maffei

The meeting started at 1830.

1. Introductions.
2. Balboni reviewed the Mission Statement
3. Reviewed the 2-11-04 meeting notes. The notes were approved as written with no edits.
4. Reviewed Weed DFC: Made some changes to statement regarding notification of herbicide spray areas and public education about weeds. Keith Haggerty read a different version of the statement and there were numerous suggestions on additional changes in the wording. Decision was to get Keith's statement, add it to existing DFC statement and finalize it at the next meeting. In addition it was agreed that the phrase "all available treatments" would be replaced with "all biologically sound treatments".
5. Reviewed Access DFC: Made a minor change to include statement concerning public education about access issues.
6. Maffei gave a presentation concerning KNF timber and timber supply. (**Timber Production Revision Issue**)
  - A. There was a discussion of ASQ (Allowable Sale Quantity) from current Forest Plan. Point made that ASQ is not a target, it is an upper limit. There was a discussion of ASQ vs. Actual Sale Volume vs. mortality volume. Point made that Actual sell volume takes into account all the other resources that we

manage – some of the things we have talked about in past meetings. Also discussed the change in approach since the current Forest Plan was signed. In the past, most harvest was even-aged regeneration harvest (clear-cut, seed tree, shelter wood) and that has changed to mostly intermediate harvest (thinning, etc.) which results in less volume per acre treated.

- B. Discussion of small sales. There was a general concern for number of small sales to support workers in Yaak Valley.
- C. Charles Leidigh opened the subject of small timber sales. Peter Kitts brought up the subject of marketability. Steve Garrett brought up his concerns about timber mortality. Maffei discussed factors that limit timber harvesting, including grizzly cores and other environmental considerations. He also helped participants understand the complexity of forest management today, versus forest management before the passage of the National Forest Management Act in 1976. The old forest plan was based on intensive pre-commercial thinning followed by commercial thinning, conducted on an even-aged forest. Now the Forest Service is doing much more complex treatments that feature small diameter sales, with the goal of leaving the forest in better condition. Part of problem with fluctuations in number of small sales is lawsuits. Sales are planned but are delayed.
- D. Some partial solutions: Categorical Exclusion authority has been unavailable for a few years and is once again a tool that FS can use. Should mean more small sales.
- E. Three Rivers has active “Wednesday Sales” program.
- F. There was some discussion of area salvage sales (cut dead and dying in a given area) that FS used to do. Maffei made point that we cannot do those types of sales any more due to changes in law and regulations as to how timber is designated for cutting.
- G. Discussion of how sales are bid. Maffei stated that sales must be competitive bid if there are two or more persons interested in the timber sale. This means that the great majority of timber sales will be competitive bid. There is no guarantee that a resident of a give area would be the high bidder. Negotiated sales are few and far between, and then only if there are extra- ordinary circumstances. Competitive bid ensures that the gov./people receive highest value for products sold. Stewardship Contracts do give us some latitude in targeting the local area for workers, contractors, etc.
- H. Leidigh proposed that this workgroup include in the DFC statement a stipulation that the Forest Service limit competition on small sales to support local logging operators. Maffei explained the current criteria for assigning small timber sales and the need to avoid favoritism. Randy Beacham

expressed his desire that the Forest Service create a steady supply of small timber sales in this area. Balboni stressed that this is the only district with a Wednesday sales program and that small operators should take advantage of this program. Maffei stated that he is mandated to strike a balance between small and large sales and that by law 53% of sales must go to small businesses of 500 employees or less. Leidigh also proposed that the DFC include an emphasis to have more SSTS projects and stated that the District had not had any for several years.

- I. There was some discussion regarding the desire to address the dead/dying material in the forest and how it was felt that enough wasn't being done. Balboni expressed that the workgroup has discussed some of the other objectives the KNF is required to consider. These have been discussed at previous meetings and all combine to help determine where harvest activities are allowed and the conditions for vegetative treatments.
- J. Point made that approximately 60% of timber budget goes into planning sales with the remainder used for preparation costs. Most of the districts are looking at producing one large assessment per year (like Garver or West Troy projects). These are assessments of a large area (ex. Spar Assessment @ 70,000 acres). From these, a mix of large and small sales may result. In addition, we have a small sale program that looks at much smaller, site specific areas.

The next meeting was set for **March 3, 2004**. The group decided to finalize the Weed and Access DFC's, have a presentation on forest health, and begin discussion on DFC's for Timber Production and Vegetation.

The workgroup agreed to hold to the previously agreed to target date of **April 1<sup>st</sup>** to have all the workgroup information completed. Even if this means the workgroup doesn't get through all seven revision topics. Individuals and/or groups can still submit comments and suggestions to the planning team outside of the workgroup process.

The meeting adjourned at 2030.

/s/ Mark D. Natale/Christina Eisenburg