

**St Joe Workgroup Meeting
March 4, 2004
St. Maries Federal Building**

Work Group Members: Denise Best, Joe Epler, Dale Dimico, Bernie Lionberger, John Adams, Neil Smith, Dave Spicer, and George Currier.

Forest Service: Chuck Mark, Ervin Brooks, Kimberly Johnson, and Ken Gebhardt

7:04 Group Introductions: Ervin Brooks introduced the new District Ranger- Chuck Mark. Chuck is from the Lewis and Clark National Forest, where he was the Forest Ecologist. He is a silviculturist and also has a great deal of experience in Fire.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Kimberly Johnson indicated that the term Desired Future Condition has been changed to Desired Condition as suggested by Jodi Kramer.

Corrections to the notes from the last meeting: Priority Areas for Opportunities (should be WL, WP, and ponderosa pine)

Notes were adopted with the above changes.

Desired Condition Statement For Vegetation

Group continued work from the last meeting. Kimberly Johnson provided a handout that summarized issues/concerns identified for vegetation on the 19th of February, and also handouts of the Draft Forest Wide Goal (1C0 for Forest Health worksheet and also pages 28 and 29 from the Summary AMS before beginning the exercise.

Identification of Areas where there is a concern about a healthy forest.

Areas (possible definitions/direction from the workgroup)

1. Those areas that currently have insect and disease problems.
2. Those areas that are currently suitable timberlands with minimal management constraints.
3. Those areas that “in reality” can be treated when there is an insect and disease problem (e.g. areas that are not in RHCAs, unroaded, RNAs etc...).
4. Stands that if left untreated would run risk of catastrophic fire.

In Summary: Existing areas need to be evaluated and assessed to determine probability of successful treatment. Should focus on those areas that have the highest probability of successful treatment.

Other Ideas

- Reduction in fuel loads and ladder fuels
- Continuous removal of offsite pine.
- Grand fir and douglas fir should be replaced with early seral species where appropriate.
- Restoration of brush fields for wildlife and timber with fire and mechanical techniques.
- Prevent extreme fires that result in site degradation.
- Thinning practices would be completed according to the site characteristics.

Draft VEGETATION Desired Condition Statement:**Forest health will be maximized through timber harvest, thinning, prescribed fire and vegetation management**

(Vegetation management could include weed control, brush fields, and reestablishing early seral species).

There was a lot of overlap in many of the previous meetings statements and tonight and Chuck Mark will work on combining the like statements into one. A draft DC statement for vegetation based on the input provided at tonight's meeting and on February 19th (Handout) will be completed and will be sent out to the workgroup for review prior to the next meeting. It will also be available at the next meeting

NEXT the group worked on a Desired Condition Statement For Fire:

Draft Forest-Wide Goal for Fire – worksheet and pages 30 and 31 from the Summary AMS were given to workgroup members to review before working on this topic. Utilizing the Forest Wide Goal Worksheet and questions the group worked on the following:

Wildland Urban Interface

- Reduce fuel loads
- Homes should be equalized with timbered land.
- Promote partnerships with Federal/State/local for wildland urban interface projects.
- The Forest Service should play an instrumental role in promoting wildland urban interface projects.
- Develop fire management plan.

Wildland Fire Use Areas

- Develop a fire management plan.
- Let fires burn in 1910 brush fields and in alpine areas.
- Other locations (high elevation lodgepole stands) can burn.
- Let burn where timber harvest is not an option.
- Some areas may be too dangerous to let burn (e.g. Small RNA is Black Price Creek)

General Forest Areas

- Suppress all fire in timber producing areas.
- Develop a fire management plan.

Forest Areas with Mixed Ownership

- Suppress all fires.
- Develop a fire management plan.

Wrap-Up

Kimberly Johnson handed out a St. Joe Workgroup Meeting schedule for March-April. This was for the work group to consider as way to get through all the revision topics before the end of April.

Workgroup will consider April 22 as an additional meeting date.

*******Workgroup agreed to change the April 15 meeting to April 14*******

Homework (handout) passed out to workgroup for wildlife. Handout was the Forest-wide goal 1b for wildlife and pages 34 and 35 from the KIPZ – SUMMARY AMS for wildlife.

Next Meeting – March 18, 2004 (*******Meeting time: 6:00-9:00 pm*******)