

*FINAL*  
**St Joe Workgroup Meeting**  
**February 19, 2004**

**Work Group Members:** John Walters, Joe Epler, Dale Dimico, Wes Case, Mel Lane, George Currier, Roger Martinson (first meeting), Neil Smith, Dave Spicer, and Del Rust.

**Forest Service:** Jodi Kramer, Kimberly Johnson, and Ken Gebhardt

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Kim Johnson indicated that a better definition of old growth was included in the minutes. After review of the notes the group decided:

- Still need clarification on “**Old Growth minimum criteria** is at least 10 trees per acre equal to or greater than 21" in diameter, and 150 years old, plus a minimum stand basal area of either 120 or 80 square feet per acre. (**Is it 120 or 80 square feet per acre and why 120 or 80?**) – Ken Gebhardt will contact Art Zack.

*According to Art Zack, the “either 120 or 80 square feet per acre” is the range for basal area of common old growth habitat types on the Forest. Basal area is a result of soil productivity and existing conditions within particular old growth habitat types on the forest, thus he present a range rather than a single number.*

- Del Rust and John Walters would like hard copies of everything sent out to the workgroup rather than over the internet.

**Desired Condition (DC) Statements**

Three handouts were given to the group:

- 1) On yellow paper “*Steps to follow to Identify Desired Conditions for Timber Production, Vegetation, and Fire Risk*”, which are the first three topics the group is working on. This is a tool developed by the Forest Plan Revision Team to help workgroups develop Desired Condition Statements.
- 2) A copy of the “Timber Production DC Statement” put together by the group last week.
- 3) Rough draft of Timber Production, Vegetation, and Fire Risk DC statements from the CDA GA Workgroup.

The St. Joe Workgroup reviewed the handouts

Using the Yellow Worksheet – as a guideline the workgroup started though the questions on the worksheet to see if there was anything they wanted to add to the DC statement they have.

Additional issues discussed:

1. Need a way to minimize areas set aside for RNA’s, RHCA’s, IRAs, and other non-timber production lands. Need to get these lands back into timber base.
2. Insure that lands remain in multiple-use status.
3. Need to encourage FS to modify InFish. Response: Very likely that InFish Standards and Guidelines will not change dramatically because these standards are based on the best scientific data available. Workgroup member indicated that the FS took a very conservative approach when they adopted InFish standards. Workgroup member indicated the Idaho Department of Lands or the STATE standards were working well to protect streams. He referenced a State of Idaho audit.
4. There was a reference to Multiple-Use Sustainable Yield Act. Need to insure the FS complies with this Act.

The following was suggested: “**While protecting beneficial uses, minimize land in stream buffers, IRA’s to maximize available timber and multiple use opportunities.**”

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### **NEW - DRAFT DC STATEMENT – TIMBER PRODUCTION**

Workgroup members continued to work on drafting the draft DC statement for Timber Production and modified as indicated below by adding some bullet statements and modifying existing bullet statements under the lead statement:

#### **Create a reliable and realistic timber production program to improve and maintain local economies and forest health.**

- *While protecting beneficial uses, minimize land in stream buffers, IRA's to maximize available timber and multiple use opportunities (new statement February 19).*
- *Manage the forest profitably in a proactive manner to prevent disease, fire, insects, and other disasters and respond aggressively when encountered. Ensure that the process is a timely, legal, and profitable process. (Redrafted statement February 19).*
- *Capture mortality areas before if has lost marketability (2 years) (new statement February 19).*

#### **Priority Areas or Opportunities:**

- Restore fire resistant species in ecosystems (western larch, white pine, and pondersosa pine).
- Urban interface.
- Improve and maintain fish and wildlife habitat and populations.

**Question:** Does the FS analyze the “No Action” alternative for proposed projects? Kimberly Johnson indicated that the FS analyzes the “No Action” alternative for all proposed projects when conducting effects analysis (ie...EA's and EIS's)

Kimberly will provide Healthy Forest Initiative packets to Del Rust, John Walters, Joe, Epler, Roger Martinson, and Wes Case.

### **DRAFT DC STATEMENT - VEGETATION**

Workgroup began identifying issues and concerns to include in a desired condition for vegetation:

#### **Issues/Concerns - Vegetation**

- Stop new invasions of noxious and invasive weeds.
- Reclaim infested areas.
- Weed free environment.
  - Encourage hay exchange stations.
- Better signing and enforcement for weed free hay.
- Proactive planting (ie...red stem *Cyanothix*) and manipulation (ie..burning, fuels reduction) of native vegetation to benefit wildlife habitat.
- Manage timber stand density to prevent overcrowding which leads to insects, disease, and fire problems.
- Insure that FS coordinates with adjacent landowners and agencies to control and/or reduce insects, disease, noxious weeds, etc...
- Control noxious weeds, insects and disease etc...prior to entering special designated areas (ie.wilderness, RNA's).
- Promote biological weed control when possible without excluding other methods.

#### **Next Meeting – March 4, 2004 – The group will finish Desired Condition statements for vegetation and start on the Fire DC.**

The workgroup would like to have a presentation by the Forest Wildlife Biologist at a future meeting. Jodi Kramer will also find out if an urban interface specialist is available for a future meeting.

Jodi also indicated the workgroup can set their DC statements aside as they do them and as they tackle other revision topics, they can revisit the statements.

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**Update: Jodi Kramer indicated that the workgroups now have until the end of April to complete DC statements.**