

Priest Workgroup in Priest Lake, ID
Meeting Notes
12/03/03

Attendees:

Forest Service – Art Zack, Carolyn Upton, Jodi Kramer, Tim Layser, Gary Weber, Dale Schrempp, and Camilla Cary Note taker.

Public – Bob Savage, Margie Hall, Mitch Silver, Mike Sudnickovich, Ken Weimer, Tom Holman, Rich Benscoter, Lucas Wingert, Steve Booth, George Freibott and Twila and Wendell Little

Jodi welcomed everyone and went over the agenda

- Introductions
- Ground Rules
- Workgroup Tasks and Timelines
- Presentation by Art Zack on Vegetation & Fire Risk and Discussion by Workgroup
- How the workgroup operates and where do we go from here (i.e. next revision topics, meeting agenda etc.)?

Carolyn gave a brief outline of tasks and timelines

Handout: Tasks and timelines – Objectives, Tasks, and Timelines
There was a brief discussion on what was meant by a product.

Need to provide an example of another groups products for next meeting
Need to send URL for documents when available to e-mail addresses of group members

Art Zack presented powerpoint presentation on Vegetation and Fire Risk (due to time constraints, portions of the presentation were skipped)

The following are some of the numerous questions generated from the slideshow:

- Aren't shade tolerant trees still growing?
- What trees do well in drought?
- How do we apply this information to the Forest Plan and what we are going to do? How do we accomplish this?
- Regarding huckleberries and mushrooms, what is the difference between historic and current conditions? What habitat is the best? What about the acidic levels of the two?
- Are we in a cycling program? What do we have now and how did we change?

- Was the biggest disturbance blister rust?
- What was the reason we went to clear cutting?
- Was forest management practices over poor logging practices the reason things were done?
- How are we going to use this information in the Forest Plan?
- **Can we have printed copies of powerpoint presentation? Also, future presentations?**
- How can we know that there was a fire in 1542?
- Are we confident these were major fire episodes?
- Where is Sundance fire on the map?
- What do you (Art) recommend we do?
- What are the alternatives?
- What are your thoughts to best prevent catastrophic fire in the ecosystem?
- What are the Forest Service alternatives, ways of dealing with this?
- How are we going to reduce risks?
- **Doesn't the Forest Service have existing maps that depict certain fire hazard areas?**
- We need to know what is on the ground, what vegetation is there.
- We need to know what areas need to be protected from fire.
- Is there a fuels load plan for the forest?
- We need to know areas that need to be protected for economic; TES, homes from fire. We need to know where the fuel loading is especially next to private property. We need to know where to build breaks.
- We need to know present conditions in terms of moisture, wind, etc in order to make decisions.
- What about a fire escape plan for Priest Lake residents? Are escape routes clear from fuel loads?

- **Can a copy of the plan (fire escape) be given to the group?**
- We need to address more immediate issues. The Forest Service needs to help with info regarding moisture, fuel loads, for protection of our economic base. What can we do to help? What about TES? Are we going to create fuel breaks in these areas?
- Can gated roads be used for escape routes if needed? Are these roads passable?
- What kind of fuel breaks can we use?
- Can the natural process just happen in some areas?
- Why can't all the dead and dying trees just be removed?
- What % of fires are man caused? Natural causes?
- What about fuel reduction on leased lands? What must they do?

CONCERNS:

Highways 57 corridor as an escape route
 Economics
 Fuel loadings
 TES areas
 Don't remove species just because they aren't PP, larch or WP.
 Don't clearcut

Next meeting: December 17, 2003 at 6:00-8:00 P.M. at the Priest Lake Ranger Station Cookhouse

Agenda:

- Desired Condition presentation and discussion
- Round table discussion
- Topic: Fuel reduction/fire prevention
- Develop desired condition for Fire Risk and Vegetation short/long term
- Identify areas we want to protect

Needs:

- Maps of wildlife habitats that benefit from prescribed fire.
- Information on Lakeface Lamb project. Spacing of trees, what was cut. Also the work on Kalispell.
- Any data that shows what kind of breaks can be made to slow fire down
- Need information on areas that need to be protected and how to protect them. Need to know what's on the ground.
- Recreation Residence SUP.
- County fire information (Bonner County Fire Risk group)

Questions the Forest Service needs to follow-up on at the next meeting:

- Are there any defensible space requirements (for fire risk) on recreation residences under permit from the Forest Service? Should there be?
- What kind of fire breaks would be effective in the Priest Lake area to stop fires? 300 feet wide? 10 miles long? Would they be bare ground? Would they be thinned areas?