

Priest Workgroup in Priest Lake, ID

Meeting Notes

03/03/04

Attendees:

Forest Service – Kathy Murphy, Jodi Kramer, Allen Chrisman, Steve Anderson, Jill Cobb and Camilla Cary Note taker. Public – Mike Sudnickovich, Tom Holman, Larry Townsend, Steve Booth, Rich Benscoter, Paul Sieracki, Lucas Wingert, George Freibott, Roberta Ulrich, and Barry Rosenberg.

Kathy Murphy welcomed everyone and everyone introduced themselves.

Jodi Kramer – Watershed & Aquatics: Nominal Group Sensing

Jodi explained the process in reviewing the statements for the Watershed and Aquatic Species Desired Conditions that they had developed at their 2/18 workgroup meeting. Everyone was given green, yellow, and red dots to place one dot by each statement. A green dot meant you agreed with statement, a red dot meant you don't agree with the statement and a yellow dot meant that you did not necessarily agree or disagree but could live with the statement. Each person was to use only one dot per statement. It was re-iterated that this process is NOT a voting process. It's simply to see where the group agrees on desired conditions and where they don't agree so that the workgroup can compile some DC statements to give to the revision team.

Several statements were clarified for the group and some statements were added to with group approval.

The group then placed their dots on the Desired Condition statements for Watershed and Aquatic Species.

The next activity was to read the Fire Desired Condition statements (handout; notes from 1/21/04 workgroup meeting and notes compiled by Carolyn Upton). The group then added further statements for Fire Risk Desired Conditions and then followed the above process of placing a green, red or yellow dot on each statement.

Kathy Murphy handed out a meeting topic schedule (attached). The group decided to do advanced home prework on the next topic, Access & Recreation, Inventoried Roadless and Proposed Wilderness. Read pertinent AMS Chapter 3 Revision Topics sections and develop desired condition statements following "Steps to Desired Condition Discussion" handout. They will extend the March 17 meeting until 8:30 p.m. and decide at that time whether to go longer or use March 31 as a possible meeting date. To expedite the process, bullet statements on Desired Conditions can be e-mailed to Camilla Cary at the following: ccary@fs.fed.us These statements must be e-mailed no later than close of business 4:00 P.M. on March 12, 2004. Camilla will type these statements and have them ready for the next meeting.

Next meeting: March 17, 2004, at 6:00-8:30 P.M. at the PLRD Cookhouse.

Agenda: Brainstorming - Access & Recreation, Inventoried Roadless and Proposed Wilderness

The Desired Condition statements below are what the workgroup put green, red and yellow dots during the sensing session at the 3/3/04 meeting. After the meeting, the dots and

statements were categorized into the following categories: Agree, Split (Disagree and Agree), and Disagree and they are as follows:

Draft Priest GA Desired Condition Statements – Aquatic Species

GENERALLY AGREE

- Design roads to be compatible with beavers.
- All species manage towards historical carrying capacity for strong reproducing population (Statement added at 3/3/04)
- Broaden to include all aquatic life forms.
- Recognize the complexity of interactions of all animals in the watershed.
- Use precautionary principle when looking at non-native impacts
 - Concern with non-native impacts
- Don't introduce any new non-native species.
- Promote native species over the long-term and not the non-natives.
- Focus on what supported native species but if can support for non-native, do so.

GENERALLY ARE SPLIT (DISAGREE AND AGREE)

- Statement Forest Wide Goal "to maximize population of native species"...
- Can live with statement as is: "Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species and to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIZ) and focal species.
- Promote sockeye salmon population when it isn't detrimental to native species.
- Have "good" fish and healthy streams for sport fishing regardless of species.
- Difference of opinion on definition of restoration.
- Maintain all native life forms
 - Including amphibians, macroinvertebrates
- Manage for non-natives only where they are not detrimental.
- All streams, lakes and rivers should have fishable populations, with a few exceptions.

GENERALLY DISAGREE

None

Draft Priest GA Desired Condition Statements Watershed

GENERALLY AGREE

- Apply most progressive technology to improve water quality, while keeping socio-economic impact in mind
- Entire Priest River basin restored.
- Restore watershed resilience.
- Meet or exceed the Clean Water Act and State Standards.
- Emphasize restoration of streams with ESA concerns.
- Prioritize stream recovery for maximum benefit.
- Emphasize stream maintenance. Do within stream bed to enhance flow, water temperature, pools. (Removing or adding debris to restore stream added at 3/3/04 meeting)
- Explore options for reducing sediment from roads and culverts.
- Consider all aspects of road impacts; water flow, peak flows, concentration, subsurface water, invasive species, chemicals.
- Integrate with ESA.
- Manage timber sales to not affect watershed restoration.

GENERALLY ARE SPLIT (DISAGREE AND AGREE)

- Like draft forest-wide goal as is for GA desired condition: “Restore and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial uses.”
- Break the GA into three zones for discussion of prioritizing the watershed restoration:
 - Northern portion of District
 - Central portion of District
 - Southern portion of District
- Take care of worst drainage first (southern zone being the most not properly functioning, NPF)
 - depending on budget
- Emphasize decreasing road density because it is most long-term detrimental impact.
- Take all feasible steps to approximate pre-anthropogenic disturbance.
- Allow for changing patterns of lake and “feed” patterns. Changes of prey/predator relationship.
- Allow time for changes that have taken place over last 20 years to show effect on water quality.
- Emphasize fuel reduction.
- Focus on ESA.
- Develop long-term transportation plan that balances aquatics and people use with a focus on aquatics.
 - Evaluate cost/benefit of road closure
 - Ditto with focus on multiple use
 - Ditto with balance multiple use
 - Also consider aging population
- ~~Mitigate~~ (Use agents in moderation to control, added 3/3/04 meeting) invasive species (terrestrial and aquatic)
 - Chemical, biological
- Consider economic impact and effect on recreational community.
- (Watershed restoration, added 3/3/04 meeting) Should only be a primary focus if stream is not functioning (Not Properly Functioning).

GENERALLY DISAGREE

None

Draft Priest GA Desired Condition Statements Fire

GENERALLY AGREE

Community Evacuation Routes: The Forest Plan management decisions should consider fuels reduction and fire management in areas potentially used for community evacuation.

Consider the Highway 57 corridor a priority for fuels reduction activities on the Priest Lake District. Other areas to consider in fuels reduction planning, pertaining to potential access routes, include:

- Metaline Falls plus continuing to Bonners Ferry
 - FS 308 Road to LeClerc Creek
 - Bear Paw
 - Eastside
 - Squaw Valley
- Consider the issue of alternative escape routes for local communities in travel management planning for projects on the Priest Lake District (any activities that address the maintenance, construction or decommissioning of roads).

The Forest Service should consider allowing a let-burn policy in the Salmo-Priest Wilderness when appropriate conditions are present. **(as long as the fire is confined within the WFU fire plan;** added at the 3/3/04).

The Forest Service should educate private landholders and leaseholders on fire risks and help minimize fire risks where appropriate.

Recreation Residences (under permit with the Forest Service) management standards and guidelines should identify leaseholder fire risk issues.

~~Review of the~~ Consider community economic ~~impacts—statement before the Forest Plan decision is made~~ when prioritizing fuel reduction projects added 3/3/04 meeting)

Educational information – fire information, use of website to make information available.

Look at larger ecosystem for fire planning... Colville, British Columbia, and Priest.

Need a Wildland Fire Use Plan to be developed.

Focus fuel reduction around individual home to reduce risk of fire

GENERALLY ARE SPLIT (DISAGREE AND AGREE)

The desired condition is to restore more lands to fire adaptable conditions and maintain the forest in a healthy condition that:

- 1) Reduces the risk of fires and resultant disease and insect infestation and
- 2) Affords multiple use for watershed, plant and wildlife, economic and recreational benefits.

The value of multiple use, economic benefits to the local community and safe evacuation of residents and recreational users are all considerations in the Forest Plan decisions and project decisions.

Urban Interface: Reduce fire risk in the Wildland Urban Interface by reducing hazardous fuels and managing vegetation structure and density that minimizes risks of supporting catastrophic wildfires. Priority areas for urban interface fire risk reduction is described by the area from the Coolin Cutoff intersection (Dickensheet Junction) north through Lamb Creek past Nordman to the end of the County Road, ~~east to~~ **(generally Reeder Bay area;** added 3/3/04 meeting) and south to Coolin.

Economics: Fire management decisions need to consider and address the importance of protecting the economic base in the Priest Lake Geographic Area. The economic base includes the urban areas and the resorts. Community activities of importance (for protection from fire) include collecting of special forest products, hiking, camping, rock climbing, biking, cross-country skiing, motorized vehicles, snow-shoeing, hunting, fishing, dog-sledding, firewood cutting). Fuels reduction activities should try to achieve an economic benefit to the local economy.

Forest Health: Support a range of vegetation structure, composition and density that minimizes the risk of catastrophic wildfires. Use vegetation and fire management activities to protect, retain and/or restore major watershed. Values to be protected include recreational activities, fisheries, special forest products. Priority watersheds for such activities are:

- Granite
- Kalispell
- Lamb
- Upper Priest

Timber Harvest Revision Topic: A short-term timber harvest objective is to have fuel reduction that achieves an economic benefit and value to the community. A long term timber harvest objective is to have manage species for fire adaptability and historical conditions where appropriate.

Recognize that fire, insects and disease are long-term successional processes that should be allowed to occur except in the WUI as defined by ½ mile, (HFRI) from designated communities. (Nordman, Coolin, Lamb Creek)

Community evacuation route: Any road closed by ESA should remain closed.

County plans use the Healthy Forest Restoration Act for WUI.

GENERALLY DISAGREE

Community Participation and Support: The Forest Service will participate in the Bonner County Fire Mitigation Planning efforts and other appropriate multi-jurisdictional fire planning efforts throughout the life of the Forest Plan.

MEETING TOPIC SCHEDULE

(Handout at 3/3/04 meeting)

Revision Topics:

- Fire Risk
- Watershed & Aquatic Species
- Timber Production
- Vegetation
- Wildlife
- Access & Recreation
- Inventoried Roadless Area and Proposed Wilderness

Meeting Dates:

March 3

- Watershed and Aquatics – nominal group sensing
- Fire – finish brainstorming and nominal group sensing

March 17 6-8:30 p.m.

- **Advance Home prework** - Access & Recreation, Inventoried Roadless and Proposed Wilderness (read pertinent AMS Chapter 3 Revision Topics sections and develop desired condition statements following “Steps to Desired Condition Discussion” handout.
- Brainstorming - Access & Recreation, Inventoried Roadless and Proposed Wilderness

March 31 - Possible meeting date to be determined at March 17th meeting

April 7

- **Advance Home prework** – Timber, Vegetation, Wildlife (read pertinent AMS Chapter 3 Revision Topics sections and develop desired condition statements following “Steps to Desired Condition Discussion” handout.
- Nominal group sensing - Access & Recreation, Inventoried Roadless and Proposed Wilderness
- Brainstorming - Timber, Vegetation, Wildlife

April 21

- Nominal group sensing - Timber, Vegetation, Wildlife
- Last review of previous revision topic sensings