Pend Oreille GA Workgroup Meeting Notes
April 28, 2004

Attendance: Forest Service: Dick Kramer and Jodi Kramer. Public: Don Helms, Tim Boden, Terry & Donna Capurso, Fields Cobb, John Finney, Jan Griffitts, Lanie Johnson, John Linch, Nancy Low, Jason Mavity, Dan & Lindsay McNall, Jason Palmer, Nicky Pleass, Liz Pryoer, Don Robson, Russ Stevens, Gerald & Sandi Sword, Loyal Amstutz, Barb Best, Mark Linscott, Per Mattsson, Alan McNall, Bill Phillips, Howard Simmons, Joe Witte, and Roger Brown.

Dick welcomed the group and went over the agenda for the evening. He also discussed the handouts that were available. The workgroup process evaluation form is to be completed by May 7th and turned in to Jodi Kramer. There will be a newsletter by the end of May going out to the entire mailing list for the revision effort. Dick talked a little bit about decision space and how there will be some of the comments that are outside our decision space but we will be sharing with the public which ones those are and why in the fall/winter of 2004. A thank you letter and copy of all the DC statements will be going out to all workgroup participants in the next couple of weeks and the DC statements will also be on the website.

The agenda included: everyone reviewing the draft DC statements for Vegetation and Timber Production and indicate on their individual sheets the ones that they agree on (A), disagree on (D) and the ones they don't necessarily agree with but can live with (C). These were collected at the end of the evening and the results are included below:

Vegetation Desired Condition Statements

GENERALLY AGREE and/or CAN LIVE WITH

"Draft" Forest-wide Goal 1c: Forest Health – Increase the amount of forests restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from fires, insects and diseases, and invasive species.

- Geologically derived nutrients and micronutrients (i.e. potassium deficient) situations need to be considered in planning or activities.

What is a healthy forest and what would it look like?

- Room for trees to grow (not so dense, can't get sunlight). Thinned/less dense/less trees & underbrush per acre. Less underbrush.
- Proper vegetation based upon soil conditions
- A mosaic of habitat.
- Less disease and/or disease-free.
- Diversity of native species depending on the specific site or area. Excessive costs and/or measures may reduce this diversity.
- Less noxious weeds. Introduction of weed species is often wind borne, by birds (minimal introduction by mechanical or horses).
- Curtail or reduce noxious weeds by:
    - Containment in area.
    - Weed free horse feed taken into the forests.
    - Spray roadsides using a targeted approach to maximize the spraying program result.
    - Target specific weeds and spray at optimum times to max the benefit.
- Less noxious weeds more fiddle ferns.
- Reduce human noxious weed seed introduction.
- Need diversity of age classes of species.
- Utilize mechanical, prescribed fire and other means to reduce crowding.
- Allow small clearcuts to address insect and disease and clean up the ground.
- Functionality, resilience, & redundancy. Redundancy means if you loose a species in an area, it exists in another area and can utilize the other area. Resilience means the ability to survive a disturbance, ie. wildfire

- Ecologically sustainable.
- More wildlife sustaining grasses (forest service mix).
- More access to forest/vegetation for viewing (walking & motorized)

Are there specific areas or conditions in your GA where you are concerned about a healthy forest?

- Entire Geographic Area is not being managed. Too many road closures (lack of access to manage) and this then reduces recreation.
- Entire forest where insect and disease have taken over, reduced huckleberries because of reduced clearcuts, less roads (more berries, more birds and animals). Bug infestation problems.
- On ponderosa pine sites where Douglas fir and white fir have taken over because of lack of fire (hot, dry). Remove dead or dying or infested trees.
- We need to harvest more timber, where an area is heavily impacted by invasive Douglas fir, grand fir, and insects and diseases.
- Where we have allowed Endangered Species Act, has great negatively impacted the forest.
- Too dense a forest limiting undergrowth, caused in some areas by fire suppression and/or in some areas by logging practices (both historic and present).
- Clearcut legacy/history has impacted the type of forest we have.
- Clearcuts can provide space for habitats and/or species (Clearcuts can be a beneficial tool).
- Ponderosa pine, white pine, white bark pine, and larch (mistletoe) are currently lacking due to harvesting, fire suppression, and/or disease (including blister rust). This is a negative.
- Noxious weeds for any reason are not desireable (other things can cause them, horses, winds, birds, etc.) and all need to be addressed.
- The predominance of more shade tolerant species compared to historic ranges of all species.
- Need to include hardwoods in the forest. Get back to historic diversity of stands.
- Tree form (a type of shrub) such as Pacific Yew should be maintained in the ecosystem to keep a variety of species.
- Need to take into account other lands (lower elevation private lands) and what happens there.
- Loss of soil productivity on some site due to past practices or possibility of large fire due to current conditions.
- Where are the future old growth and ancient stands going to come from? Need more forests in stages to get there (replacement planning).
- Mining conditions need to be addressed.
- Re-establish sub-alpine larch stands in the Selkirks.
- Develop blister rust resistant white pine (i.e. in the lightning creek drainage)
- Re-establish historic balance of the forest by removing “off site” ponderosa pine and emphasizing blister rust resistant white pine.
- Old growth white fir decline on the NE side of Lake Pend Oreille near Becker Draw needs to be addressed.
- Sundance Burn is a heavy brush area and needs to be addressed.

What particular areas are you concerned about weed infestation and/or invasion? What are the priority areas or situations, and why?

- Reduce noxious weed seed with prescribed fire.
- Limit funds – Increase weed funds by reducing road closure/obliteration.
- More biologic control on noxious weeds.
- Need to include planting programs for wild game use (should include non-native grasses and clovers, etc.)
- Boulder Creek/Grouse Mountain (Let grazing back in to reduce weeds).
- Tree farm in Grouse Creek (seed orchard).
- Nearby recreational trails, roads, and areas.
- Research Natural Areas
- Need co-op agreement between private and Forest Service lands adjacent to one another.
- When graveling roads make sure using weed free seed for rehabilitation.
- In some winter range areas.

- Scotchbroom along the Hope face.
- Orange hawkweed along the trail to Fault Lake.
- Tarweed (MTF) section 21 & 22 Wrenco Loop
- Grouse Creek (increased weeds/road bldg)

What particular areas or situations are you concerned about insect and disease infestation and/or invasion? What are the priority areas or situations and why?

- Manage forest by thinning and diseased tree removal. Mechanical thinning will help.
- West Nile Virus in wetlands could be a problem.
- Consider insects & disease impacts of wilderness areas before any further designation of wilderness areas.
- All areas need to maintain open access to control insects/disease and other management programs execution.
- Use information from forest users to help maintain forests. Users can spot trouble spots and should be urged and utilized in the forest management program.
- Lakeside - due to exposure & easy to spread territory
- Wildlife and winter range - need healthy forage to maintain wildlife.
- Trailheads need targeted management programs to minimize spread of noxious weeds.
- Increase awareness and education on this subject so forest users can help control spread.
- Target specific trees that should be managed
- Birch, aspen, hemlock, white bark pine.
- Forest fires (not suppression) could help control insects and disease.
- The Nosebag creek fire up the Lightning creek drainage is prone to insect infestation.
- Root rot where shade tolerant true fir and Douglas fir dominate.
- Beetle infestation areas.

GENERALLY ARE SPLIT (Disagree and Agree)

"Draft" Forest-wide Goal 1c: Forest Health – Increase the amount of forests restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from fires, insects and diseases, and invasive species.

- Long-term management plans should consider the currently identified results of global warming as well as the future potential effects of global warming. Record high temperature as well as other noted changes in the last decade demonstrate the potential for new adverse development from global warming during the time period of this plan.

Are there specific areas or conditions in your GA where you are concerned about a healthy forest?

- Over commercialization of huckleberry picking is impacting vegetation.
- Plant blister-rust resistant white pine and then don't harvest them.

What particular areas are you concerned about weed infestation and/or invasion? What are the priority areas or situations, and why?

- Non-native grasses, clovers, etc. are noxious weeds and should not be used.

GENERALLY DISAGREE

What is a healthy forest and what would it look like?

- More Orchids.

Are there specific areas or conditions in your GA where you are concerned about a healthy forest?

- Invasive non-native noxious weeds due to ATV or other motorized vehicles.
- Caribou recovery areas need to be addressed.

Timber Production Desired Condition Statements

GENERALLY AGREE

What do you see as appropriate objectives for timber harvest on NFS lands?

- Utilize timber harvest to reduce fire danger, fuel buildup, insect/disease problems or root rot to remove the stand and then replant to allow for future harvest.
- Utilize clearcuts to allow huckleberry growth and grazing for elk.

- Need option to do large scale clearcuts where necessary.
- Don't clearcut just for huckleberries.
- Support local economies by having timber harvests.
- Allow natural vistas along recreational and travel zones
- For fuel reduction, allow mechanical harvest-but be selective on how it is done, ie. Clearcuts may be too extreme of a process.
- When doing timber harvest, use good reforestation practices- planting trees, etc. Need to protect productivity of the site.
- Helicopter logging is less evasive so use more often.
- Need more timber cruising to identify locations of disease and infestations, and remove them.
- Increase roads and access to better provide timber management tools, in existing roaded areas and in unroaded areas.
- Use timber harvest to increase forest health.
- Use timber harvest in a manner compatible with habitat restoration and forest health.
- In Wildland Urban Interface, use timber harvest to reduce fuels.
- Find additional markets for small wood and woody debris.
- Modify timber harvest practices to address nutrient limitations by limiting removal of biomass on potassium limited sites.
- Harvest after forest fires while merchantable timber remains.
- Need to have federal timber sales to slow down private harvesting.
- Long-term health of ecosystems impacts long-term economic viability.
- Mature, diseased, and infected trees.
- Use timber harvest to meet sustainability for whole forest.
- Use timber harvest to meet objective for big game management.
- Harvest timber for recreational opportunities.

What are the economic issues regarding timber production for this GA?

- Economic benefits back to schools, related jobs. Re-establish harvest for school funding if other funding sources are reduced.
- Recreation brings money to an area (ie. off road vehicles, and all other users), not just timber production.
- Utilize timber sales revenues to restore forest health without closing additional roads.
- Use more stewardship programs
- All appeal fees should be paid by appellants, therefore reducing appeals and allowing timber management to occur.
- Jobs and timber products are in high demand at this time.
- Timber production will help maintain healthy forests, which will maintain/increase tourism, which will provide for more jobs (economic sustainability). Sustainability to minimize job loss, utilize smaller timber for useful production, ultimately to create new jobs

What conditions do you think might be used to define high priority areas for timber harvest: What conditions might be used to define areas of low priority for timber harvest?

<u>High Priority</u>

- Diseased and insect infested areas.
- Mature, diseased, and infected trees.
- Salvage burned timber.
- Salvage timber that has been wind damaged, snow damaged, ice or other causes.
- Forests that are real dense.
- Protection of urban interface/other structures.
- Protection of recreational areas, Research Natural Areas, municipal watersheds and other areas that require special management.
- Access – must keep open to use.
- Fire Risk

- Need to consider mill changes to smaller diameter logs, so harvest the larger size now before mills change.
- Maintain diverse size classes within old growth.

Low Priority

- Already well-managed areas. Areas where healthy diverse forests already exist.
- Wilderness.
- Areas that are not economically feasible to log because of steepness, rock, etc., Topography
- Wetlands
- Aesthetics
- Old growth, high erosion areas.

GENERALLY ARE SPLIT (Disagree and Agree)

What are the economic issues regarding timber production for this GA?

- Base Forest Service budget on economic returns (ie. timber harvest, recreation, etc).

What conditions do you think might be used to define high priority areas for timber harvest: What conditions might be used to define areas of low priority for timber harvest?

High Priority

- Increase the percentage of old growth to approximately 20%.

Low Priority

- In wildlife and fisheries habitat.

GENERALLY DISAGREE

What do you see as appropriate objectives for timber harvest on NFS lands?

- Only use true restoration purposes, not harvest purposes, and then only use with caution.

There were a lot of questions and discussion at the end of the meeting and they are as follows:

- One gentleman was upset about the process, how beneficial all of this work that the workgroup has put together will be, and not being able to make decisions at this level in changing laws.
- Suggestion to focus on trying to get more people together to be informed about what we're doing. Positive comment that what they learned in the beginning of the workgroup process through the specialist's presentations was very valuable and it's too bad people that came later in the process didn't have this opportunity.
- Suggestion to look into organizing a coalition, like the Colville NF has, for the revision effort. This would need to come from the public organizing such an effort, because through FACA the Forest Service is not allowed to do that.

There was discussion about field trips this summer/early fall and everyone was in favor of these. Some suggestions for field trip topics were: 1) watershed, timber and fisheries problem areas; 2) Fire areas, and 3) Areas that have been recovered, healthy forests that show current management and how it is working. The revision team will be working with the district rangers on getting field trips set up across the IPNF and a schedule will be well distributed through our website, newsletter, posters in the communities, newspapers, radio etc.

Dick thanked everyone again for coming and encouraged everyone to continue to visit the KIPZ website: www.fs.fed.us/kipz, come to the field trips and call if you want to know what's happening. See you in the fall!