

FOREST PLAN WORKGROUP MEETING

BULL GEOGRAPHIC AREA

10/28/03

Workgroup Participants:

Matt Franke
Toni Franke
Jim Hammons
Jim Welch
Dorothy Welch
Bud Thomas
Wade Kidder
Steve Bowen
Martin Riedlinger
Auto Lakso
Cindy Betlach
Linda Stehlik
Gene R. Rogers
Maynard Rogers
Jerry Wandler
Brady Marken
Larry Bowman
Tom Jones
Randy Beacham
Cesar Hernandez
Hannah Hernandez
Cal Ryder
Tom Perlic
Ken Stevens
Steve Garrett

Forest Service Representatives:

Mike Balboni, Three Rivers District Ranger
Jack Zearfoss, Forest Plan Transportation Specialist
Kathy Mohar, District Planning Staff
Mark Natale, District Resources Staff
Joni Gilbert, District Wildlife Biologist

Following introductions, the agenda and goals set at the last meeting were reviewed.

Mike Balboni reiterated that the district was willing to provide a facilitator and notetaker, but that the intent is to eventually turn meeting operations over to the workgroup.

Participant Goals

Participants offered their individual goals or vision for forest management:

- Protect IRAs, looking for ways to find agreement
- Reduce interference by outside groups
- Increase motorized use
- Contain management costs
- Develop a fire management plan for wilderness areas

- Develop a consistent management policy for snowmobiling in the Scotchman Peaks Proposed Wilderness Area between KNF and IPNF
- Identify management policies that can be changed
- Implement preferences for management voiced by the majority of attendees at first Troy public meeting
- Protect IRAs, important wildlife core habitats, and corridors
- Provide access and recreation to improve the local economy
- Allow salvaging of dead and dying trees
- Increase logging and jobs
- Strive for a balance of uses—sustainable logging such as the Yaak Stewardship project, and maintain the current opportunities for both motorized and unmotorized access

Grizzly Bear Management

Joni Gilbert, District Wildlife Biologist gave a presentation on grizzly bear management and analysis on the KNF, including core areas, total motorized route densities, and open motorized route densities that affect public access.

Meeting Discussion Topics:

Q-Can IRAs be changed? A-No, but FP can affect how they are managed.

Core and IRAs are not necessarily the same. There is overlap.

Protection of IRAs can serve a dual purpose of providing for wildlife security areas.

Grizzly bear mortality figures are an issue.

Q-What can be done to ensure that motorized access is increased as desired by attendees of the first Troy public meeting.. A-Start by identifying areas that are most important to people.

Q-Is the Forest Plan going to include site-specific decisions? A-To some extent, ie management goals, etc. for certain areas, but decisions for each road.

Q-How long is grizzly bear core area in place? A-For the purpose of this workgroup, should assume 10 years.

Discussed decommission costs of recent projects. A decommissioned road is one is that is not longer needed and is no longer managed as a road. There are other roads that are placed in long-term storage, but remain a part of the road system.

Q-Do costs include weed treatment? A-No, but the district does treat weeds on roads being decommissioned.

Laws Affecting Forest Management

See Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS), available on forest website or by CD or hard copy.

Q-Status of Grizzly Bear Amendment? A-Waiting for the USFWS Biological Opinion before making a decision. Optimistically will be a couple of months. Lynx Amendment DEIS is scheduled to be released in December or January, with a public comment period.

Q-What if workgroups on the IPNF and KNF come up with divergent strategies? A-The Forest Plan revision process is being done jointly, but the decisions will be separately.

Workgroup Products

After some discussion the group agreed to come to the next meeting prepared to discuss specific desires for access in Bear Management Units (BMUs) 9 (Callahan area) and 3 (Keeler area). The Three Rivers R. D. will provide 8 1/2 X 11 BMU maps showing core areas and restricted vs. open roads outside core, labeling main roads. They will be available at the Front Desk November 10. The district will have some larger work maps for the next meeting. These will include adjacent core areas.

Also at the next meeting, the group will discuss whether to develop Desired Future Condition statements for all seven Forest Plan Revision topics.

Meetings

Mike Balboni noted the following meeting dates:

- Kootenai meeting to discuss regulatory authorities. November 3 at 6:30 p.m. in Libby at the Ponderosa Room.
- Grizzly Bear Citizens Involvement Group. November 10 at the Venture Inn. The workgroup agreed to have current participants (Martin Riedlinger, Randy Beacham) report back to the workgroup on items of interest.

Next Bull GA Workgroup Meeting: November 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Troy Ranger Station. Group agreed to retain Mike Balboni as the facilitator with Tom Perlic as notetaker. Group will review the last meeting notes for any corrections before posting on the website.

S/Kathy Mohar