Willamette National Forest
Transportation Stakeholder Team

Meeting One -- Meeting Notes
Thursday, 06 September, 2012 from 100 PM to 400 PM
Willamette National Forest Headquarters in Springfield, Oregon

Participants: Meg Mitchell (WNF), Matt Peterson (WNF), Dirk Shupe (WNF), Brian Wolfer (ODFW), Alan Henning (EPA), Jason Myers (Marion County Sheriff's Office), Will Tucker (Linn County Commissioner), Faye Stewart (Lane County Commissioner), Ginnie Grilley (Eugene District, BLM), Kim Titus (Salem District, BLM), Shari Flanders (City of Detroit), Greg Wagenblast (ODF), Pamela Wright (DEQ), Mischa Connine (NOAA Fisheries), Annie Birnie (NOAA Fisheries), Ben McKay (OSU), Julie Watson (Walker Consulting & OSU), Miriah Russo Kelly (Walker Consulting & OSU), and Gregg Walker (Walker Consulting & OSU).

Notes prepared by: Walker, Russo-Kelly, and Watson

Part One. The meeting began with a welcome from Meg Mitchell, Supervisor of the Willamette National Forest. Following the welcome and a brief review of the meeting agenda, participants introduced themselves and shared a "lesson learned" from their experiences related to collaborative work.

"Lessons learned" included:

- Expectations should be managed with information on the public's role, leeway, sideboards, etc.
- On water quality issues – your perspective is not necessarily the others perspective – we must have an open mind – listen to what they value
- We all have a stake in the task at hand – there is always common ground somewhere.
- Working with other people who see things differently is important.
- Transparency is key – the public expects to be involved and to tie in their ideas. The need to be transparent includes being seen as having a fair process.
- Collaboration in private and public sectors are different. The terms and process that are used in the private sector don't always dictate in the public arena
- A sense of urgency around solving the problem is not always necessary.
- It is important to have a big decision space so that collaboration has influence – open decision space means bringing everyone above you into the process so that the collaboration has a chance for success.
- Common sense is important – difficult solutions aren't always the right ones. Sometimes it's the simple solution.
- Being prepared and having information for people to use and think about are important.
- Be authentic. Let people see that you are a person and that you only have so much ability. Do not push the rules, but be real.
- You don't know everything or anything; respect the diversity of people and develop a shared understanding of the problem.
- Listening is key.
- When critical people are not there it sometimes means having to backtrack – having critical folks at the table is important.
- You have to go to where people are to get to them – you can't expect them to come to you.
- Involve all the stakeholders early on with authenticity.

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- All members are given respect so that communication flows. If everyone feels valued they are more likely to participate.
- Collaboration means recovery of species and it is key to get input from all interest groups in order to protect and recover populations.

Part Two

Meg Mitchell, Forest Supervisor, and Matt Peterson, Project Team leader, presented information to the Transportation Stakeholder Team regarding the roads analysis project and the current state of WNF roads.

Meg stated the following points:

- Although sideboards are important, this group is going to be pivotal in making recommendations. Achieving consensus on a particular idea or recommendation will carry a lot of weight. Recommendations need to be in place by 2015.
- The Public involvement process involves is two or three phases and will hopefully lead to recommendations for at least 80% of the roads on the WNF.
- The NW Forest Plan is a key sideboard. It should be followed -- it is preferable to work within its framework. .
- There will not be a lot of extra data collection.
- The WNF made most of the roads; there are not a lot of user created roads (in contrast to Eastern Oregon forests). There are not a lot of questions about when a road is a road. We know where the roads are, although we may not know all conditions or where the culverts are.
- This Transportation Stakeholder Team will provide guidance and counsel to the WNF as the Roads Analysis Project develops. The TST can provide input for the public process as well as the process that is used with this group.
- The TST can help determine what is most important. The TST will develop criteria for prioritizing the WNF road system. These criteria may reflect ecological, economic, or social values.
- The criteria will guide the development of recommendations. There is a sense of urgency here; some roads are going to start closing themselves.
- We need to ask critical questions such as “are we putting the right roads back,” and “are we addressing water concerns.”
- We need to deal with roads that we have. We may not want to close roads but nature is going to do it on its own.
- How can we structure our investment in roads? This is an issue for taxpayers, especially where recreation is important.
- Products and decisions will be made along the way.

Matt Peterson, ID Team leader, provided important foundational information on the current WNF roads situation. Copies of his PowerPoint slides were include in TST members’ packets.

IDT members had a number of questions for Meg and Matt:

Q: Are we deciding what roads will be open and what will be closed? A: Answer: We have a whole variety of options. It is not just an issue of closed or open – it is not that absolute.

Q: Can we get a copy of the national guidelines? A: Yes. We will get that to the group

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Q: Can we see maps of the areas that show road conditions, etc? A: Yes.

Q: Are you planning to change the stringency of the standards of the work done on the roads to save money? A: Don't limit roads because of funding limits; we may want to keep more roads open than we can afford. We want to think about what and where to invest in WNF roads.

Q: Is there a roads priority list? Are there priorities for roads? A: There is a general understanding of road priorities but that's really what we want to work on; how we should be focusing and investing our maintenance dollars. Trunk roads are usually the priority; collector and feeder roads are less priority. This group will help with how to prioritize road needs, such as avoiding blowouts and preventing damage.

Part Three. Matters of Procedure
Gregg Walker presented the "Progress Triangle" as a framework for discussing the Willamette National Forest roads situation. The Progress Triangle indicates that any decision situation includes three dimensions: Procedure, substance, and relationship.

The TST first discussed matters of procedure. Walker posed a series of questions to the group.
Q: Two more meetings scheduled – where do you want to meet?
The group decided to hold the second meeting elsewhere. Sweet Home, Oregon was proposed.

Q: We have tentatively scheduled afternoon meetings. Does that work for you?
The group determined that afternoon meetings were appropriate with a 100 PM start time in October and a 1230 start time in November to accommodate for standard time.

Q: How do you want to function as a team? The group will play important role as a consultative team. How do you prefer to work toward agreements and make decisions?
Group members noted the value of consensus but recognized that it can be difficult to achieve. They determined that:

- Consensus is good if we can reach that – let's hope for that.
- If we can't reach consensus in a reasonable amount of time, we can consider a polling process – levels of priority
- We should have sufficient discussion of the issues

This last question prompted a discussion of the TST's purpose. Members asked about what the group is supposed to be and do. Meg, Matt, and Gregg explained that the WNF is seeking your guidance on procedure, such as how to engage the public. What do you recommend in this area?

The WNF will also ask what kind of criteria the Forest Service should use to make decisions about what roads are most important to invest in.

The WNF Leadership Team can use the information they get from the TST to inform their work. TST members may find this information helpful as well. The TST represents a broad constituency. You might be able to access information from the public.

Walker noted as procedural actions:

- When we get to a topic and you think that we spent too much time on it…tell us to move on.

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- We are not going to talk about ground rules – you all know what makes meeting work well.
- Correspondence via email works for everyone.

Walker asked "What do we communicate about what happens in this room?" and "What are your concerns about communicating with this group?"

The group responded:

- We don't need to talk to anybody until there is something to talk about.
- It is about agreeing ahead of time what information we want to share and what we want to share. We can always go with you to your organization to talk about what we are working on.
- Transparency is important to this group – need to be open. What to do about media – direct to Matt?
- Matt or Meg should be the point person
- We need to come up with a few talking points so that we are staying on message
- Are there any FACA conditions we have to deal with? Not within the group.
- What if we announce that we are meeting and publish it – maybe people want to observe what we are doing.
- The media will go to Matt.

Other procedural concerns:
There was a question about Tribes. This involves a direct sovereign-to-sovereign discussion. Meg told the group that if you want to talk with us (Meg and Matt) one-on-one we should do that prior to the meetings and then bring it to the whole group if necessary. We can do individual consultations.

The issues of missing parties and missing meetings were raised. "What about the people who want to attend but were not able to come today?" If there are people from organizations that couldn't make it, they may join us next time. The WNF will provide a list of invitees.
"If we know that we are going to miss a meeting, should we send a proxy?" Send someone if you think doing so is appropriate; please share the meeting notes with them.

Part Four. Matters of Substance
The last part of the meeting was devotes to substance; identifying information needs.
Walker asked the group: What information needs exist? What information would you like and what information needs extend beyond the group into the broader community? What do we need to know as a team?

The TST members generated a list of information needs.

- A roads vocabulary
- More detailed information about the matrix Matt presented
- More information about the maps –do they represent what is there now or where we want to go? Are maps available of desired future conditions?
- What are the legal obligations (such as RS247)? We need information on legal obligations, road rules, and road policies.
- The TST should have a list of databases that will be used in consideration of this process, such as watershed data -- information about what relevant research has been done. The relevant databases are those that the Forest Service has created and/or uses.

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Provide information about the land management plan:

- List of all the roads on the landscape – sometimes they don't appear on the map
- What type of road – restored, closed etc.
- Are there roads that have not yet been identified – mapped – included
- A roads inventory – classifications
- What about a map? Some prefer a visual

Other desired roads information:

- Are temporary roads included in the system; should old timber roads be removed?
- What records are available for temporary roads?
- What roads are chronic problems? Are they important or not so much? Chronic are those that are high risk and risks vary by resource and water quality issues.
- A roads history
- Relevant watershed and LSR analyses -- There are a series of indicators that were used and they might help focus the group discussion
- Can we identify small community businesses that use the forest for their business – economic-social analysis?
- Recent historic failure – i.e. culvert failures vs. slide failures
- Big game emphasis areas elk habitat effectiveness model
- What causes the failures on the road?
- Middle fork road closure discussion – what has already been determined of what roads are already closed or will be closed
- What are the limitations for opening roads – potential limitations for fire access and opening for fire access?
- Maps with layers showing areas of more recent slides – access to the forest – where is the use and risk overlapping most – where are the biggest problem areas

Walker asked if there would be value learning about what other National Forests are doing and if there were any technical presentations the group would like to schedule for one of its meetings. Ideas included:

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- Stu Johnston of the Siuslaw NF has an innovative project
- Layered discussion about different GIS layers – visuals
- The Siuslaw NF is farthest along should look to them they are relevant
- A talk on stream and watershed conditions
- A talk on relevant maps

Parties wanted materials available via the WNF website or a "drop box" that the facilitation team will set up.

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