

National Forest Advisory Board Meeting

October 15, 2015

Mystic Ranger District

Members Present:

Chairman Dick Brown, Vice Chairman Bill Kohlbrand, Jennifer Hinkhouse, Lauris Tysdal, Linda Tokarczyk, Tony Leif, Danielle Wiebers, Mary Zimmerman, Lon Carrier, John Gomez, Craig Tieszen, Jeanne Whalen, David Brenneisen, Nancy Trautman, Bob Burns, David Hague, Wayne Bunge

Members Absent:

Mike Verchio, Susan Johnson, Jessica Crowder, Jeff Vonk, Keith Haiar, Alice Allen

Forest Service Representatives:

Rhonda O'Byrne, Scott Jacobson, Beth Doten, Julie Wheeler, Dave Mertz, Mark Vedder, Ruth Esperance, Scott Haas, Ralph Adam, Kerry Burns, Twila Morris

Others:

Approximately 10 members of the public were in attendance. Two Congressional Representatives were also in attendance; Kyle Holt (Noem – R, South Dakota), and Mark Haugen (Thune – R, South Dakota).

Introduction & Welcome:

Brown: Call the meeting to order, 1:00 p.m. Welcome everyone to the National Forest Advisory Board (NFAB) meeting, October 15, 2014. Thank you for coming indoors rather than staying outdoors on this nice day. Those who are at the table should be alternates or primary members of the Board.

Approve the Agenda:

Brown: Does anyone have any changes to the agenda? If there are no changes, can I have a motion to approve the agenda? Motion made by Craig Tieszen second by Lauris Tysdal. All in favor of the agenda as it is presented, say aye, opposed say no; the agenda is approved.

Approve the September Meeting Notes:

Brown: The draft meeting notes were sent out, corrections made, and then resent. Can I have a motion to approve the September meeting notes? Motion made by Mary Zimmerman second by Linda Tokarczyk. All in favor of the notes as presented, say aye, opposed say no; the September meeting notes are approved

Housekeeping:

O’Byrne: Thank you Mr. Chairman. For those of you who are not familiar with this office, there are restrooms out both side doors of this conference room. If we need to evacuate, go out the front and meet in the parking lot so that we can account for everyone. I was asked to give a little microphone 101...please leave the microphone on at all times, do not shut it off. Also, please hold it close when you speak. Thank you.

Meeting Protocols:

Brown: Welcome to our visitors today, members of the public, and staff and other guests. Please put your cell phone on vibrate or shut it off. If we have time for public input, it will be the last 15 minutes of the day. Those at the table should be voting members or substitutes. All alternates are welcome at the table. Part of the protocols is that because we have 16 areas of interest, and we want to make sure everyone has time to speak, direct your question to the Chairman. If there are follow-up questions, we’ll take those and then go to the next individual.

Bylaws

We have used bylaws thru many years of this organization, but we currently do not have approved bylaws. The bylaws have been approved by FACA and sent to each of you in an e-mail. We would like to go ahead and approve those bylaws today. Can I have a motion to approve the bylaws as presented? Motion made by Bob Burns, second by Jeannie Whalen. Is there any further discussion about the bylaws? If not, all in favor of approving the bylaws say aye, opposed say no; the bylaws are approved.

Next on the agenda is an item we’ve been talking about, which are membership and our Board Charter. I’ll turn this topic over to Scott (Jacobson).

Jacobson: Our current NFAB membership will expire on July 25th of 2015. With that, I would like to ask that all members fill out a new application. The applications will be sent to the Washington office for vetting and that will take a month or two. Once all of the applications are vetted, and approved, we’ll send the whole slate of members (old and new) in for approval. My hope is to get that in the first of the year because in the past it has taken several months to get the Charter re-approved. Each position needs to have three names, one recommended, and one substitute, and one additional name behind those. Anyone who knows of someone who may be interested in being on the Board and that we could submit for consideration, we need to do that. Right now we have eight positions vacant.

Tieszen: Some are term limited correct?

Jacobson: Term limits are six years and they can be extended; up to two years. If you’re up against the six years, we could request an extension. Bill (Kohlbrand) will be right at six years. As you know, we asked for and received an extension on several others the last time. If you need to know when you started on the Board we can tell you that. We will request a two year term for each of you, and if that takes you to seven years, and it is approved that is ok.

Burns: The bylaws that we just approved state that a one year extension can be done.

Jacobson: That has changed; it is now a two year.

Brown: We could modify the bylaws if needed, but we'll check into that. For each of you that represent one of the 16 areas of interest, it is important that you submit names for others in that area. Do communications go to you Scott?

Jacobson: Applications can come right to me, and then they all go thru Craig.

Brown: Do you want names in first or let's say if Dick Brown has people of interest, I just send you the applications?

Jacobson: Yes, that would be great. If you know of anyone who is interested, please share the application with them, and have them send it directly to me. I e-mailed everyone an application, and I can give you copies today.

Burns: Do you know which categories have vacancies?

Jacobson: Every category will need people nominated.

Brown: It would be helpful to have the list of categories.

Categories With Vacancies

- Developed outdoor recreation, off-highway vehicle use, or commercial recreation: Alternate vacant
- Energy and mineral development: Alternate vacant
- Nationally recognized sportsmen's group: Alternate vacant
- Archaeological, cultural and historical interests: Alternate vacant
- Regionally recognized environmental organization: Alternate vacant
- Dispersed recreation: Alternate vacant
- Tribal government elected or appointed official: Primary & Alternate vacant

Hot Topics

Legislative Updates - Federal

Brown: Our next topic is Legislative Updates; we have a representative from Senator Thune's office and Congresswoman Noem's office is here; no one from Senator Johnson's office. We'll start with Mark Haugen from Senator Thune's office.

Haugen: DC is out of session, back after the election to address the continuing resolution and the tax extenders resolution. The Senator has been back in the state a lot. A big issue for us is the Northern Long Eared Bat. The Senator sent a letter to the Secretary of the Marine Fishers Bill asking them to withdraw their bill on the Endangered Species Act. The proposal would expand end Endangered Species Act in several ways including listing any area, whether inhabited or not. The Senator sent a letter along with Kristi regarding the Northern Long Eared

Bat asking them to pull that back in its entirety, it would include 38 states, and they haven't looked at all of the available data. The Senator was in Rapid City yesterday; he spoke at Saint Thomas Moore High School, two weeks ago he was at other schools in the state. It's amazing how in tune some of the young folks are with what is going on. He met with the Young Professionals Group, as well as the Family Heritage Alliance and spoke at the Eagles Club. The Senator was at the Philip elevator last week, regarding the rail car shortage.

Brown: Thank you Mark. Are there any questions for Mark? If not, we'll go to Congresswoman Noem's Representative Kyle Holt next.

Holt: I don't have too much more than what Mark said, no movement on legislation for the next three weeks, waiting for them to get back in session in November or December. The Water and Energy budget was passed. They'll work on the continuing resolution when they get back. Any legislation that has not been signed will expire at the end of this session. Hopefully some of that will be reintroduced. Kristi was on the letter with the request for them to withdraw their request to list the Northern Long Eared Bat. Kristi was traveling the state and was at some of the same places as Senator Thune was.

Brown: Thank you Kyle. Are there any questions for Kyle? If not, we'll go to Jeannie Whalen for a report on the state and federal level for Wyoming.

Whalen: Last month I mentioned that Lummis introduced a bill called the Forest System Trails Stewardship Act. This bill is centered on the challenge to maintain trails in National Forests. At that time there were only two sponsors, this month there are now 23 co-sponsors. The Bill is HR-4886 if you would like to look up more details about it.

Brown: Thank you for your update Jeannie, are there any questions for Jeannie? If not we'll ask Senator Tieszen to speak next.

Tieszen: At a recent candidate forum I attended a couple of weeks ago, one candidate declared that he recently found out that there were beetles killing trees in the Black Hills. Luckily he is not an incumbent; but at least he has finally realized we have a mountain pine beetle problem. December is the Governor's budget address; we'll see what comes out of that and go from there.

Forest Service Hot Topics ~ Rhonda O'Byrne

O'Byrne: This is my last week as Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor; there will be another detailee, Ericka Luna from our Washington Office, in starting on Monday the 20th. We did select a new Deputy Forest Supervisor; Jerry Krueger; he currently works on the Bitterroot National Forest. Jerry's report date is December 14.

Brown: Any questions for Rhonda before we go to the regular agenda. One thing I would like to note is that the bylaws that were handed out today are different than what was e-mailed to everyone. The copy that was e-mailed to everyone is the correct copy, and does state there can be a two year extension request.

Regular Agenda

Rangeland Management

Joint Monitoring – SD Elk Management Plan ~ John Kanta, SDGF&P; Julie Wheeler, and Kerry Burns, Black Hills National Forest (BHNF).

Brown: Moving on to our next topic, I'll turn it back to Rhonda to introduce.

O'Byrne: Thank you Mr. Chairman. You may be noticing a pattern in our presentations. We've been talking about our rangeland management; we had grazing on the agenda for the field trip, and on the agenda again at the last meeting. The other component is the wildlife. The state manages the wildlife; the Forest Service (FS) manages the habitat. The FS recognizes the States authority to manage the wildlife. We invited the State of SD to talk about their plans for wildlife management. I'll turn it over to Tony to introduce his folks today.

Lief: We would like to start off with some discussion of elk management and the Elk Management Plan. Today we have three people here to speak; our Senior Big Game Biologist, Andy Linbloom; our Regional Supervisor, Mike Kintigh; and our Regional Manager John Kanta.

Linbloom: I appreciate the opportunity to talk about elk management; I have data on what we've gathered from the Game, Fish and Parks standpoint. Also forage data that we've gathered in conjunction with the FS; and how we'll incorporate that into management for the future.

[PowerPoint Presentation]

Discussion:

Brown: Andy, in your presentation you're talking about the South Dakota side only right?

Linbloom: That is a good point; we worked with Wyoming to do a cooperative report, but they were unable to fund the effort, so they are not included. We did fly onto the Wyoming side a little, but we did not have the funding to survey all of the Wyoming side. We are working with Wyoming again, so that when we do the survey in 2016, they will have the funds, and we'll have a better picture next time.

FORAGE

- USFS Forage Estimates
 - 466 million lbs. of forage to start with, SD and WY
 - At 50% utilization, 233 million lbs. available
 - USFS Forage Allocation
 - 127,000,000 lbs. allocated to livestock
 - 106,000,000 lbs. allocated to wildlife
 - 106,000,000 lbs. available on USFS
 - Both SD and WY
 - 86% of Black Hills USFS is in South Dakota
- **91,160,000 lbs.** available on USFS in South Dakota

Animal	Number	AUMs	Million lbs forage
livestock	23,000	128,000	127
deer	70,000	84,000	83
elk	4,500	25,000	25
Total		237,000	235

- AUM numbers for deer (.1) and elk (.462) are based upon full-year forage needs by adult animals.
- USFS Forest Plan acknowledges more wildlife forage available because of use distribution on private lands.
- Forest Plan estimates
 - 85% USFS
 - 15% private
- At 85% utilization, depending on deer densities, 6–7,000 elk are possible on Forest Plan allocated forage estimates

Other Lands Forage Estimates (mostly private land)

- 584 million lbs. forage within exterior boundaries of USFS lands
- 186 million lbs. forage after grazing and haying
- More than what's available for wildlife on all USFS lands
- Other public lands (BLM and SDGFP)
- Jasper burn area
- Pine beetles impact

Forage Calculations

- Total BHNF Acres – 1,253,120
- Total Forage 1996 Forest Plan
 - 466 million pounds
- 466,000,000 lbs./1,253,120 acres= 372 lbs./acre
 - Non-crystalline soils
 - Forage lbs./acre= $10^{(3.226-0.00936*(\text{basal area}))}$
 - 372 lbs./acre = $10^{(3.226-0.00936*(70\text{ft}^2/\text{acre}))}$
 - Crystalline soils
 - Forage lbs./acre = $0.8922 * e^{(7.84338-0.02353*(\text{basal area}))}$
 - 372 lbs./acre = $0.8922 * e^{(7.84338-0.02353*(77\text{ft}^2/\text{acre}))}$

Tysdal: Is that forage level of 372 pounds per acre just for wildlife or does that include livestock?

Linbloom: This is total forage available, not just for wildlife, but livestock also; that is an important point.

Brown: Tony do you have other observations, or Mike or anyone – or should we go to questions.

Tysdal: I'm in the middle of this whole thing and I have several questions. Where did you get the authority to buy elk? Did you come to the FS to get a permit to run the animals on the forest and on the grasslands around the hills? Do you force the elk out on the prairies?

Linbloom: Your question about the authority to buy elk; we do not buy elk. We move them around, but we don't buy them. We started transplanting elk, they are a native species, they were extirpated in the late 1800s, brought back in the 1900s; all State agencies reintroduce animals. They came to wind cave in the late 1800s. We didn't purchase any of them, but we did move them around.

Tysdal: I understood that elk were bought in Jackson Hole. It used to be an honor when you saw an elk; before there were so many of them, now you see 1,000 at a time if you're not careful. Do the Game, Fish and Parks have to go thru the same rules and regulations as a private individual to run the herd of elk? If we are in a drought and you run this herd, do we as cowboys get cut or does the herd get cut?

Brown: Would any of the Game, Fish and Parks folks like to respond to that?

Whalen: I have another question regarding depredation. In Wyoming the Game and Fish gives the landowners a variety of elk panels etc. to help mitigate the elk depredation. What do you do in South Dakota?

Linbloom: South Dakota does have a depredation program, a pretty good one too. We also give landowners panels, we have permanent hay yards, food plots - where we pay for crops being left for elk, and we also have some scare tactics to scare elk out of areas.

Kanta: One of the best parts of our program is that we do purchase material for landowners. Elk are hard on barbwire fences; they drag their hind legs over them and pull the wire right off. We purchase cable, and fencing material to help with fencing, we assist with a lot of other things as well.

Burns: On the forage issue, is there a difference between elk, deer, and cows in regards to the amount of forage?

Linbloom: There are differences; elk forage consumption is a lot similar to livestock. It varies by season and a lot of other factors as well. Deer browse more. We do need to consider the browse resource as forage resources.

Hague: In terms of the game depredation is there a possibility to give landowners a permit to harvest an elk, which they could then sell as a big game opportunity on their property. This would allow them to recover some of their costs.

Linbloom: We offer landowners tags, they are eligible more than the individual elk hunter.

Kanta: It's landowner's preference; the first half of the tags are set aside for those landowners to draw from, then the second half is for the public to draw licenses from.

Lief: In SD there is a statutory prohibition to transfer a license from one person to another. In the past when bills have been brought forward to change that, it cuts against the grain of fair and equitable use of the resources. When these bills are introduced, the majority of citizens have voiced opposition to them.

Brenneisen: Have you looked at all at the forage increase due to the mountain pine beetle (MPB)? How long will that forage be available? Those areas are regenerating to pine almost immediately.

Linbloom: No, we haven't even begun to study that. That is why we tried to be ultra conservative with our estimations about forage. There might not be additional forage, but no, we do not have an estimate for that. No one has a good grasp on that.

Tieszen: I have been part of lively discussions regarding allocating licenses to landowners. It is a reasonable argument, but it gets an equally forceful argument on the other side as well. All those efforts have been defeated to this point.

Brown: With that, Mike will you come up front? Then we'll take observations from Forest Services folks.

Kintigh: I do not have a PowerPoint presentation, just a summary of meetings that have taken place. I would like to talk about joint monitoring and what that means.

Joint Monitoring means, jointly working together with the FS to monitor what affects wildlife have on habitat.

We had a meeting on January 30, Julie and Kerry were both there, and we've had a series of summer field trips. The field trips were intended to educate both sides about the difficulties we both face. The Game and Fish had questions about how wildlife was monitored, and we had questions for the Forest Service.

Several questions were addressed. How did the FS come up with the forage production estimates? That is important for constructing the elk management plan. We encountered large herds of elk in one area; what impacts are they having on the browse components, woody components. So the idea spawned at that point in time to come up with monitoring on these large herds of elk. Our first question is where are the herds are located. Where will the monitoring be done? What should we be monitoring for? Justin McConkey has been very good to work with; Justin has a good working knowledge of what was in the Jasper area. The other question is how we would do the monitoring. It would be beneficial to know what the Game & Fish Elk Management Plan says. We are going to start setting up some meetings, and determine what we will be doing. Also working on the Northern Hills with Tom Smith; looked at a couple of areas that had not been grazed in eight years, and it was in poor shape. We used pellet counts to tell us how much wildlife use follows livestock grazing.

Kerry Burns: Regarding the Elk Management Plan, the Forest Service has had a Memorandum of Understanding with the Game, Fish & Parks since 1985. This MOU lines out that the state is responsible for the wildlife and the Forest Service is responsible for the habitat. This has been a good process that they've used, involving the Forest Services in their discussions. We involve the GF&P in our activities also. This is their plan, but they are involving us; ultimately, the decision on elk management we defer to the states. That is the picture as I see it between the states and the feds working together.

To answer a question that was asked earlier, does the GF&P need approval to release elk or bighorn sheep or other animals on the Forest? The MOU lists only certain situations that say they need FS approval. These special circumstances are only if they are going to introduce foreign species or any species native to us, but not established in the BH, any endangered species, or a species that would affect an endangered species. If it doesn't fall into one of those categories, we defer to the GF&P for the decision.

Wheeler: Just a little follow-up on what Kerry was saying. Our priority is with livestock permittees, that's where we have authority to do something if we have concerns. The permittees are the first ones we'll be talking to, so that is why it is key that we continue to work with the state on the management of elk.

Vedder: My name is Mark Vedder; I work in Range on the Mystic Ranger District. I'm currently filling in as the Forest Range Staff. I would like to say that we have a good working relationship with Mike, John, and Andy. We appreciate your help working with these issues. We haven't always had time to work on these issues together. Mike has given us open access to himself and others. Justin McConkey is the Range Staff Officer in Newcastle, and he is our point man for this project; because that is where the elk have been showing up. I just want to emphasize that we enjoy working with you folks and we appreciate the opportunity.

Brown: Are there any questions by members of the Board?

Gomez: The presentation was good; the foraging concept is new to me. If I understand this correctly, the livestock are consuming more than 50% of available forage. If that is true, if you decrease the livestock, would you increase the number of elk on the Forest?

Vedder: The split covers the term permits on the forest right now. We have 24,000 AUMs in grazing permits on the Forest; not all are stocked out, so the split on the forage the permittees are covered and the wildlife is covered.

Wheeler: The allocation that Andy started with was 50% of the total; so the first 50% was not allocated for any grazing, the second 50% is allocated for grazing.

Brown: Any other questions?

O'Byrne: Thank you Mike, Andy and everyone. We've talked a lot in the last couple of months about rangeland management. Everyone is aware of the MPB but not so many are aware of the range management and what the GF&P has going on with the elk management issue. If there is anything else that you would like any other topics you would like presented to the Board, be sure to let us know; we'll be happy to make arrangements to cover the issues you are interested in.

Brown: Thank you Rhonda and thank you presenters.

Forest Health

MPB Priority Areas/FY 15 Work on Forest ~ Greg Josten, Bill Kohlbrand, Jennifer Hinkhouse.

Brown: That was a great session on rangeland management. Next on the agenda is Forest Health with a discussion on mountain pine beetle priority areas for FY 15.

O'Byrne: Last month Dave Thom talked about the all lands focus on mountain pine beetle. Greg Josten, the new State Forester for the State of South Dakota, will continue the Forest Health/mountain pine beetle discussion. Representation from the state of Wyoming will present as well.

Josten: In 2014, the legislature allocated \$1.95 million and appointed the State of South Dakota to develop an approach to deal with mountain pine beetle. As a part of the process, we, with help from the mountain pine beetle working group, set up a number of priority areas. The first \$350,000 of that funding went to Custer State Park which left \$1.6 million for the all lands approach, including both private and Federal lands. An agreement was signed with the Forest Service around Oct. 1 for working on mountain pine beetle activity on Federal lands. We worked with the Forest Supervisor and each District Ranger to identify priority areas. Northern Hills has two priority areas, Carbonate and Strawberry, with some private lands intermixed. There are three more priority areas that include Bald Hills, Calumet and Custer. We also identified secondary priority areas. The secondary areas will be looked at if there is funding left and time available. There is some flexibility with the secondary priority areas as well. If there are other areas that we need to look at, we can begin negotiation on those areas. On Aug. 15, we sent out letters to all the private land owners, who had through Sept. 15, to sign up and give permission for marking and treatment in those areas. We are trying to accomplish an all hands all lands approach in the Carbonate area and working to do either cut or chunk or removals. What method to use in each area will be decided case by case. If it's not accessible, they will do cut and chunk, but this isn't as effective as removal. In the Strawberry area, we are working within 100 feet of National Forest/private land boundaries. We are covering 100 percent of the Calumet area doing both cut and chunk and removal if it is feasible. In the Custer area, we are cutting and chunking within 300 feet of private lands that sign up for the program and also working within 300 feet of Custer State Park. A big portion of the Custer area is part of the Vestal timber sale and we won't be working in this area while this is an active timber sale. We are only working in areas where they have finished the sale to see if there are additional trees affected by mountain pine beetle. There are additional areas in the Custer area as well. 690 landowners have signed-up for over 27,000 acres and from those acres; there are 22,000 acres within the priority areas. Landowners have also signed up for about 14,000 acres in the Carbonate area. As of Friday, crews had marked over 6,600 acres of land. Custer State Park has completed 21,000 acres of marking. They began at Sylvan Lake. The greatest concentrations are along the boundary adjacent to Forest Service system land. We are doing some workshops around the Black Hills. There will be one this coming Saturday at Bluebell lodge and it will mostly be outside and hands on. We have seen a significant drop from landowners coming to the workshops and we think we are reaching a saturation point with the workshops. More program information is available on the website beatthebeetles.com. Aerial photography was acquired on Sept. 27 and the photography should be ready for review within the next couple of weeks to get an analysis for the year.

Brenneisen: You mentioned there is a possibility that there may be some removals in addition to cut chunk.

Josten: Depends on what we find. The likelihood is pretty high of there are big pockets of trees. We are willing to subsidize those trees as it's a benefit to the public to get those trees out.

Tysdal: Can you explain the boundary lines and why there is a certain distance they work away from them?

Josten: It's what the Forest would allow us to do. Because of what has been accomplished in the mountain pine beetle plan, it looked like there were going to be confusion in coordinating areas to crews. To simplify, we went 100 feet beyond private lands onto Forest Service land.

Hague: Are you doing anything in the Rochford area?

Josten: At this time that is not a priority area. We are trying to target areas where we think we will do the most good. With the mountain pine beetle working group, we had some really large areas identified. We started chiseling away at those to identify the priority areas. We are making a commitment to help these landowners and we don't want to make commitments that we can't live up to. These areas are probably larger than we can service. Only 50-60% of landowners have signed up in the past and we wanted to line out larger areas than we were able to service because we knew not everyone was going to sign-up.

Zimmerman: Where are you in the equation with the \$1.6 million that remains with the State Park and the number of requests that remain?

Josten: We are confident that we will be able to service everybody that has signed-up and we are confident that we can survey and provide funding. Whether or not we can go beyond that depends on how many infested trees there are. If there are not a lot of infested trees, we can go onto other areas.

Hinkhouse: The Wyoming 2013 legislature gave us around \$2 million that they appropriated thru the Department of Agriculture and Wildland Association Trust. Money went to State Forestry this year and it was a competitive process that was open to the entire state of Wyoming. We started this year with some remaining funds and some new funds. For Crook and Weston counties, we started with \$1.8 million. There was \$2 million that was allocated or appropriated. \$1 million is not available at this point.

Tysdal: – Who decides funding?

Hinkhouse: Part of it is decided by the governor, part of it is decided by the forester. If there had been a busy fire season, the state forester wouldn't have been so lenient with the money. There will be a request to the governor to free up that million.

PowerPoint: Wyoming Mountain Pine Beetle, 2014 ~ Bill Kohlbrand

Regional Strategic Goals

- Reduce mountain pine beetle populations to endemic levels
- Create and maintain healthy resilient forests
- Ensure viability of forest products infrastructure
- Public safety

Northeast Wyoming Pine Beetle Response

Partners and Roles

- WY State Forestry Division
- Timber Industry
- Crook and Weston County Weed and Pest
- Weston County Conservation District
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Weston County Fire Protection District
- UW Extension
- Black Hills National Forest
- Bureau of Land Management
- Crook and Weston County Commissioners
- Newcastle Tree Board
- Crook County Homeland Security

4 Key Elements

- Detection
- Develop Healthy Forests
- Reduce the Beetle Population
- Educate the Public
- Across all Ownerships

Detection

- Aerial Photo Study
- Forest Health Flight
- Walk the Ground!
- Train cutters and spotters

Develop Healthy Forests

- Long Term Solution
- Timber Harvest
- Salvage and Sanitation
- Non Commercial Thinning

Reduce Beetle Population

- SHORT TERM/ EMERGENCY ACTIONS
- Sanitation and Salvage
- Direct Control
 - Hand
 - Cut and Chunk
 - Cut and Peel
 - Cut and burn

Direct Control

- **Mechanical**
 - CTL Processer
 - Pile and burn
 - Machine Peel
 - Chip
 - ????

Educate the Public

- Landowner Assists
- Forest Health Workshops
- News releases, PSA's, Newspaper Inserts
- School programs

Tokarczyk: At the meeting in Sept., the good neighbor authority was brought up. There are a couple of states that have that tool to have a little more flexibility. Is this something that the Forest would be able to speak to?

O'Byrne: Previous to the farm bill, Colorado and Utah had authority for the good neighbor. If the state was doing a sale on private and there was adjacent Forest Service land, the state could work in that area. They would then give the receipts back to the Forest Service. With the farm bill that was supposed to be on all Forest Service lands. It probably won't be until 2015 and until they get more information. The Forest Service is working on implementation and how to use it.

O'Byrne: We heard from Dave Thom, the states (South Dakota and Wyoming), and as the National Forest Advisory Board, we'd like to ask you what are priorities? What should they be in FY 2016/2017? It takes about two years from when a timber sale is laid out to when it is sold. We will be asking you in January to setup priority areas in FY 2016.

Kohlbrand: What I am wondering as you get these projects done, is it five years or less than that?

O'Byrne: If the project goes thru EIS, then it will be five years.

Kohlbrand: Will it ever be sped up?

O'Byrne: You would hope so. A lot of times they change specifications on how to do surveys and they may change some of those standards. Sometimes we have to go through a process to see if anything is new or if there isn't a lot of change, and if the NEPA is still sufficient. Most of the time it's best to start from square one to be successful.

Brenneisen: With the mountain pine beetle response project, one of the big promises is that the Forest would be able to react quicker and when you identified a priority area, you'd be able to respond quicker. A lot of the program coming out will be in pine beetle response areas. Are you seeing that it is quicker than a conventional project?

O'Byrne: In 2016/17/18, it's very much going to be the mountain pine beetle response projects. Right now, are we able to function quicker? Probably not - we are in a big learning curve. The implementers have to learn how it is different and how is it the same. From this point on, we will be getting quicker. We still need to do surveys in some areas and we will spend 2015 doing those.

Whalen: One of the things this board is tasked to do is advise. Can we get the schedule for the mountain pine beetle response projects? As you heard, Wyoming does have the money. We are waiting on District Rangers. I'd like this board to tell the Forest Service, Rangers and Supervisor to have a schedule. I think the District Rangers should have an idea of where the crews should go and I think it should come from the top.

Brown: Any other comments? Let's keep going.

Motorized Trail System ~ Ralph Adam

O'Byrne: Our motorized trail system has been a topic for many years. Ralph Adam and Scott Haas will give a review on what has been accomplished to date and where and how permits are sold.

PowerPoint: Motorized Trails System

Agenda

- Travel Management Decision
- Key Points of Decision
- Motorized Trail System
- Funding Sources
- Motorized Trail Permit Sales
- Summarize
- Adjustments?

Travel Management Decision

- Effective Date: December 1, 2010
- Brought Forest in Compliance with 2005 Travel Management Rule
- Closed the Forest to cross-country travel unless designated open

Key Points of Decision

- Effective Date: December 1, 2010
- 3,900 Miles of roads and Trail designated for motorized use
- Protects water quality
- Improves conservation of cultural resources
- Routes available people with disabilities
- Maintains non-motorized walk-in areas
- Allows motorized elk retrieval within 300 ft. of roads in designated areas
- Allows dispersed camping with 300 ft. of roads in designated areas
- Routes for various groups (single track-rock crawlers etc.)

Available for Motorized Use

- ROD designated roads & trails: 3,900 miles
- In 2014:
 - 634 miles of motorized trails
 - 500 miles of roads open to all vehicles
 - 2,587 miles open to highway legal vehicles only

Available for Motorized Use

- Here's the breakdown for 2014 (with Partial 2015):

Travel Designation	Northern Hills	Mystic	Bearlodge	Hell Canyon	Outside FS bdy	Total*	2013 MVUM Miles	2014 MVUM Miles**	2015 MVUM Miles	2014 to 2105 Compare
HLO	646.4	782.4	37.8	1107.4	13.4	2587.4	2631.2	2587.4	2587.4	0
ROTA	109.3	119.9	229.7	27.5	13.5	499.9	478.1	499.9	499.9	0
TOTA	58.7	64.1	1.6	26.1	0	150.5	150.4	150.5	150.6	+0.1
62"	120.1	150.2	0	75.3	0	345.6	293.7	345.6	346.3	+0.7
50"	0	0	68.8	0	0	68.8	68.6	68.8	71.0	+2.2
Motorcycle	14	55.6	0	0	0	69.6	62.5	69.6	82.9	+13.3
Total Miles/District	948.5	1172.2	337.9	1236.3						

HLO = Highway Legal Only
ROTA = Roads Open to All
TOTA = Trails Open to All
MVUM = Motor Vehicle Use Map

Motorized Trail Mileage 2011-2015

Year	Miles in ROD	Miles on MVUM	Change from Previous Yr.	Percentage Miles Open
2011	707	467	--	66%
2012	707	547	+80	77%
2013	707	575	+28	81%
2014	707	634.5	+59	90%
2015	707	650.8	+16.3	92%

Funding Sources:

- Grants
- Appropriated Dollars
- Trust \$ (KV)
- Permit Fees

Funding Sources (South Dakota):

Year	Permit Fees	Grants	Appropriated \$	Trust (KV)	Total
2011	\$164,908	\$358,840	\$151,855	\$180,017	\$855,620
2012	\$219,933	\$225,021	\$162,841	\$120,861	\$728,656
2013	\$227,525	\$187,059	\$144,000	\$79,754	\$638,338
2014	\$230,000 (est.)	\$140,515	\$130,000	\$3,000	\$503,515 (est.)
2015	\$235,000 (est.)	\$39,000	\$125,000	--	\$399,000 (est.)
Total	\$1,077,366	\$950,435	\$713,696	\$383,632	\$3,125,129

Grants

Grant Type	Grant Amount	Items Procured
RTP (2010)	\$358,840	OHV Cattleguards Stream Xing Improvements Gravel
RTP (2011)	\$225,021	OHV Trail Counters Stream Xing Improvements OHV/Road Cattleguards
RTP (2012)	\$187,059	Trail Crew Materials, Equipment, Supplies
RTP (2013)	\$140,515	Trail Crew OHV Bridge Stream Xing Improvements
RTP (2014)	\$39,000	Trail Rehab Toilet at Black Fox Campground

Appropriated Funds

Year	Amount Expended	Used for
2011	\$151,855	Labor, Patrols, Maint. and improvements
2012	\$162,841	Labor, Maint., Improvements
2013	\$144,000	Labor, Maint., Improvements

KV Funds

Fund Type	Amount Expended	Used for
2011	\$180,017	Patrols, signing, closures
2012	\$120,861	Patrols, signing, closures
2013	\$79,754	Patrols, signing, closures
2014	\$3,000	Patrols, closures

Motorized Permit Sales - 2011

Permit Type	Number Sold	Fees Collected	Fees Projected	% of Projected Goal
7-Day-\$20	1,541	\$30,820	\$10,000	300%
Annual-\$25	6,270	\$156,750	\$250,000	63%
Commercial-\$125	21	\$2,500	\$60,000	4%
TOTAL	7,832	\$190,070	\$320,000	71%

Motorized Permit Sales – 2012

Permit Type	Number Sold	Fees Collected	Fees Projected	% of Projected Goal
7-Day-\$20	1,975	\$39,500	\$10,000	395%
Annual-\$25	7,806	\$195,150	\$375,000	52%
Commercial-\$125	27	\$3,375	\$60,000	6%
TOTAL	9,808	\$238,025	\$445,000	61%

Motorized Permit Sales – 2013

Permit Type	Number Sold	Fees Collected	Fees Projected	% of Projected Goal
7-Day-\$20	2,451	\$49,020	\$10,000	490%
Annual-\$25	8,666	\$216,650	\$450,000	48%
Commercial-\$125	53	\$6,625	\$60,000	11%
TOTAL	11,170	\$272,295	\$520,000	64%

Motorized Permit Sales - 2011-2014 Motorized Trail Permit Sales

Year	Permit Type	Number Sold	FS %	Online %	Local Vendors
2011	7-Day-\$20	1,541	46%	36%	18%
2011	Annual-\$25	6,270	72%	18%	10%
2012	7-Day-\$20	1,975	31%	36%	33%
2012	Annual-\$25	7,806	60%	22%	18%
2013	7-Day-\$20	2,451	26% (est.)	44%	30% (est.)

2013	Annual-\$25	8,666	61% (est.)	21%	18% (est.)
2014	7-Day-\$20				
2014	Annual-\$25				

Funding Sources (South Dakota):

Year	Permit Fees	Grants	Appropriated \$	Trust (KV)	Total
2011	\$164,908	\$358,840	\$151,855	\$180,017	\$855,620
2012	\$219,933	\$225,021	\$162,841	\$120,861	\$728,656
2013	\$227,525	\$187,059	\$144,000	\$79,754	\$638,338
2014	\$230,000 (est.)	\$140,515	\$130,000	\$3,000	\$503,515 (est.)
2015	\$235,000 (est.)	\$39,000	\$125,000	--	\$399,000 (est.)
Total	\$1,077,366	\$950,435	\$713,696	\$383,632	\$3,125,129

Collections/Expenditures Trail Permit Account(South Dakota):

Year	Amount Planned	Expenditures	% Personnel	% Fleet	% Other	Balance
FY 2010	0	0	0	0	0	\$40,000
FY 2011	\$11,221	\$11,562.87	21%	71%	0%	\$193,345.06
FY 2012	\$142,000	\$96,000.05	38%	8%	54%	\$317,278.01
FY 2013	\$194,804	\$164,359.02	54%	9%	37%	\$380,443.86
FY 2014	\$262,106	TBD	40%	7%	53%	TBD
FY 2015	\$213,600	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Budget Allocation for Trail Permit Account for FY2015

Category	Budgeted Amount
Sales/Administration	\$13,800
SO Operations (trail dozer w/operator, Visitor Center Seasonals, Program Management)	\$44,000
MVUM/Motorized Trail Permits (Printing)	\$17,500
Allocations to Districts (HC-18%, MY- 47.8%, NH-34.2%)	\$138,300
TOTAL	\$213,600

From Fee Plan approved in September 2010:

Category	Allocated Percentage
FDAS Assessment	5%
Forest/district indirect admin Costs	15%
Law enforcement	25%
Direct Annual Maintenance, education, implementation	25%
Annual Equipment, Material, Signs	20%
Annual Reserve	10%

Trail Maintenance Costs

Work Type	Description	Cost/Mile
Annual Maintenance	Logging, brushing, snagging, and light tread maintenance	\$350-\$700/mile
Heavy Maintenance	Clearing brush 10' wide, repairing drainage problems, removing ruts, installing rolling dips, maintain tread width to 7' width	\$1,000/mile
New Construction	Construct new trail to standard	\$3,000-\$10,000/mile

Brief Summary from 2010-2014

- Permit sales have not yet achieved the numbers projected in 2010 though trending upward
- 92% of the motorized trail miles in ROD are open in 2015
- Tremendous support to system from grants though trending downward
- Appropriated \$ support though trending downward
- >90% Compliance Rate of Trail Users Checked
- Trail system completed 4th year – trail permit fund, costs becoming more clear

Should adjustments be made?

- Examples
 - Rider Permit Requirements
 - i.e. Youth rider <14 on small machine with parent guardian does not require permit
 - Adjust fees
 - Increase # of Vendors
 - Adjust trail system to budget
 - Stay the course

Motorized Trail Fee Adjustment

- Steps required prior to a change in fee
 - Step 1. Provide Public Notice and Request for Comments
 - Step 2. Present findings and results of public notice and comments to the Forest's RRAC
 - Step 3. Submit to Region 2 Fee Board and Regional Forester for Approval, include comments and recommendations from the Forest's RRAC
 - Step 4. Prepare/Implement for the next year's fee cycle
- Timeline for Completion of Fee Change Steps
 - Step 1. Provide Public Notice and Request for Comments MARCH/APRIL
 - Step 2. Present findings and results of public notice and comments to the Forest's RRAC MAY/JUNE
 - Step 3. Submit to Region 2 Fee Board and Regional Forester for Approval, include comments and recommendations from the Forest's RRAC JULY

- Step 4. Prepare/Implement for the next year's fee cycle SEPTEMBER
- Step 5. Implement on January 1

Leif: In October, the hills have received substantial moisture. Have you been able to see what impact that has had on trails and what additional work needs to be done?

Adam: I'm not aware of any real problems.

Haas: Most of the issues revolve around storm Atlas from last year. 90 percent of trail problems have to deal with water and drainage.

Gomez: Last year we had a committee. One thing I was thinking would be useful – could you have a suggestion box? It would be helpful for this committee.

Adam: Placed at the offices?

Tysdal: Where do the fees go that are collected – the fine fees?

Haas: We try to get people to buy the permits and the fees go back to the Forest instead of going to the general fund. There was over 90 percent compliance on system.

Bob Burns: I had a contract to close down user created trails in the Ricco area. I'm doing a job for the Forest Service in Nemo. I went back to this area and I was impressed with the compliance I saw. The compliance was surprising. I had the feeling going from Nemo to Piedmont that I should have a permit on my truck, is that true?

Haas: Yes, you do need a sticker for the Piedmont fire trail.

Brenneisen: You said that your goal is to visit the trails 1 to every three years. Using your numbers, that will run \$120,000-\$150,000 a year. It doesn't appear that is happening and when will that start? Whose job is that? Is it in-house? Is there a way if someone see problems, they can demand that those problems be remedied?

Adam: Engineering and each district manages their areas. We have noticed that when we do it in-house, it's on the lower end, it doesn't have the administration costs, and doesn't take as much coordination.

Haas: We accomplished the minimal standard. We got 400 miles out of the 1000 mile system done.

Adam: How can you fund that? We know that not all of the trails are at that high cost for maintenance. We have a lot of work to do on the maintenance.

Hague: Your users are giving feedback and the users are clearing trail. You simply don't go out on those trails without a chain saw. There is more component to this than from just these guys who visit every three years.

Brown: What are the mandatory requirements and time table to go through the fee process review? Should this group have a working group that will do this for us on an annual basis or should the supervisor suggest if this should be re-examined?

O'Byrne: Are you asking if there is some policy for us that a fee has to be reviewed or do we just look at it?

Brown: Do you have to do this every 2 years?

Haas: If we looked at changes, it would still have to go through the same process.

Adam: Do we want to just make all permits annual? If so, that would still have to go thru the process.

Tieszen: I was worried about compliance. I'm quite encouraged and it seems that we have received a good compliance rate. Our user groups are on board and they are out on their own clearing trail. I find that to be encouraging. I see that the numbers aren't adding up but I'm reluctant to mess with a system when people are complying. If we double the fee, what happens to compliance? This is one area that is food for thought. As for the non-compliant people that you catch on the trail, instead of letting them buy a regular priced permit on the trail, I'd be supportive of doubling the cost of the permit. I think people that take the chances can pay a little more if they do get caught. I'm reassured on the compliance.

Hague: Are we going to set up another sub-committee?

O'Byrne: I haven't been given that information from Craig, but I think he talked about re-visiting the fee.

Hague: In terms of the sales and getting dealerships involved, why is it so complicated? If they come up short on permits, they pay for the shortage. It also benefits the company to sell permits and gets customers in the door.

Brown: Maybe the committee needs to be resurrected.

Tieszen: How many dealerships in the Black Hills area?

Hague: ½ dozen

Brown: The last agenda item is the committee meeting on the recreation group.

Recreation Facility Working Group Update ~ Scott Haas, Dick Brown, Linda Tokarczyk, Lon Carrier, Alice Allen

Brown: I would like to have Scott Haas give us some background on where we are on the system, and a timetable.

Haas: We had a good meeting this morning with the Working Group; we seem to all be on the same page and making good progress.

There was a nationwide Recreation Facility Analysis done in 2005. They went thru and analyzed the recreation facilities on each Forest and developed a program of work. Before it was determined that another nationwide process was going to be done, Craig thought we should undertake this on our Forest; and we did start this process before the nationwide process was developed.

How does the region fit in? The Region is facilitating this and taking it down to the Forest level. The Region is using an enterprise team that sells themselves as a business similar to a consultant. The region is helping us get some of the enterprise team's time. As for the Black Hills involvement, 10 people will look at the info we have and look at the sustainability; then we'll give them a rating. We'll bring it back to the Working Group to re-analyze, then take it back and have the enterprise team help us develop a program of work. We would like to get this developed by January or February. The goal is to have a five year program of work by the end of FY 15.

Brown: The Working Group has been visiting some of the 110 sites that we'll be looking at in the analysis. We decided to do this so that when we get to the point of recommendations, the Working Group will have some familiarity with the areas.

Tokarczyk: Scott covered it well. There is a lot of data, the first couple of meetings were hard, but this has evolved since we formed as a Group. We have a good idea of where we are going and what is expected. Having Scott explain the criteria and protocols for the facilities has cleared a lot of it up for me.

Carrier: I missed the meeting this morning, but will get up to speed with the Group members.

Brown: Any questions about what we are doing at this point? Scott's help has been super.

Tieszen: Mr. Chairman, may I have permission to go back to the motorized trail topic?

I would like to make a motion. The motion is to request the Forest Supervisor to consider studying the feasibility of selling permits thru dealers in anticipation of this Board considering trail permit fees in the future, so that we'll have all of the information we need.

Hague: I second that motion.

Tieszen: Just for clarification, I would like to request that the Forest Supervisor consider, what the expense, with administrative costs as they are, what additional cost we might have to have dealers sell permits. Reach out to the dealers and see how enthusiastic they would be in participating in this. We've seen sales flatten out, and it seems that this would help with an increase in sales, and it would mesh nicely with the business of the dealer. So I would like the Forest Supervisor to explore that option and find out what the pros and cons of that action would be.

Whalen: I would like a clarification of what a "dealer" is.

Haugen: Dealers of UTVs, ATVs, dirt bikes, etc.; any of the providers of the vehicles that are used on the trails. Wyoming has hundreds of places you can buy permits, and they sell thousands a year, so it must be working.

Tokarczyk: From the chart that we saw Ralph show, the other funding sources are going down, so we have to look at ways to make up for the downward trend, and I think this would be a good way to do that.

Brown: All those in favor of the motion as made by Senator Tieszen, say aye; opposed say no. The motion is carried. Thank you Scott for your work with the Recreation Facility Analysis Working Group.

Public Comments

Brown: Is there anyone in the audience that would like to say anything?

Bob Burns: I would like to bring forth a comment from a member of the public. He is the Chairman of the Meade BLM RAC. This gentleman expressed frustration with Forest Service in getting permission to volunteer to do work on the trails. He thought there would be opportunities to help maintain trails, and maybe build trails. He hoped that there are ways that volunteers could help, but all he's gotten are road blocks in some or the other.

Brown: Thank you Bob, that is one way to get those comments on to the record, he could send a letter into the Forest Supervisor as well. Thank you.

Is there anything else for the good of the order?

Jacobson: I would just like to remind you that if you didn't do an application earlier, but would be willing to fill it out right now, I would appreciate it.

Brown: Thank you, anything else; thank you Rhonda for your work with the Board.

ADJOURN

Brown: Are there any more comments? If not, could I have a motion to adjourn; motion made by Craig Tieszen and seconded by John Gomez. The motion passed unanimously.

The Meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m. Next Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19.

NOTE:

The following attachment was submitted and added after the meeting took place.

November 3, 2014

Dear Black Hills National Forest Board and Presenters,

I apologize for not being prepared to ask the right questions at the October meeting concerning grazing. All presenters did an excellent job, thanks to them for the effort.

I found myself wanting to defend the permittee and feeling that the permittees and private land owners were being left out or being walked on by all forms of recreation. We have heard that recreation is in and Agriculture is out, yet we are told that the Black Hills National Forest is a multiple use forest. I will bet the Native Americans would have approved of that novel concept.

The question was, is there enough room on the National Forest for an increase in the elk population? There were more elk a few years ago, and less now, what is the right number? Julie Wheeler explained the monitoring, to the committee. Elk and beef cows eat virtually the same plants but only the beef cows are truly regulated. The problem is that if we have a grass shortage, only the permittee has to answer for it. I do think the elk numbers should be permitted by the Forest Service and that numbers be regulated by the State Game & Fish.

Elk have been in the Hills, from before the white man came, to the present. Their numbers were way down until about 1980. Around 1980 two truckloads of elk were given or sold to Wind Cave. One load made it to Wind Cave National Park, the other load upset in Custer State Park. Original Black Hills elk were much bigger in size. (Source Earl Hamilton, archeologist: Elk Mountain District)

My point is that if these elk in the Black Hills were introduced, should they be permitted by the Forest Service? If they are not permitted, then so much for multiple use in the future.

Private lands within National Forest boundaries should be a concern. If elk are increased to the point that permittees are affected how do we keep those elk off the private land? Do we just run over the private land and use it, similar to snowmobiling? In the snowmobiling area of the Black Hill's most open spaces or draw bottoms are private lands. Snowmobiling is not much fun in the heavy timbered areas. Maybe there are some tradeoffs in multiple use that should be pursued.

The Black Hills National Forest, as any ranch, has certain inherent obligations to their neighbors and users.

Sincerely,



Lauris Tysdal