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# **BIGHORN SHEEP: SUPPLEMENTAL ANALYSIS TO THE FOREST PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT - INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM MEETING**

*Payette National Forest Supervisor's Office Conference Room  
800 W. Lakeside, McCall, Idaho*

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**August 14, 2007**

## **ATTENDEES**

- Christine Bradbury, Clearwater/Nez Perce National Forests Tribal Liaison
- Denise Cobb, Payette Forest Public Affairs
- Vic Coggins, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
- Ana Egnew, Payette Forest biologist
- Craig Ely, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
- Bob Giles, Payette Forest Natural Resources Staff (morning session only)
- Pete Grinde, Payette Forest Range Specialist
- David Hensley, State of Idaho (by phone – morning session only)
- Keith Lawrence, Nez Perce Tribe
- Curt Mack, Nez Perce Tribe
- Susan Miller, Payette Forest Ecologist
- Chans O'Brien, Payette Forest GIS Analyst
- Suzanne Rainville, Payette Forest Supervisor
- Carl Scheeler, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla
- Pattie Soucek, Payette Forest Planner/ IDT Leader
- Ryan Sudbury, Nez Perce Tribe

## **PROCESS SUPPORT**

- Susan Hayman, Facilitator, North Country Resources, Inc.
- Nikole Pearson, Documentation, Peak Science Communications
- Roinda Plesner, Documentation, Peak Science Communications (afternoon session only)

## **MEETING OBJECTIVES**

1. Ensure that the Forest Service, cooperating agencies, and tribes share a common understanding about the history, purpose, and need for this analysis, and their respective roles in this process.
2. Ensure a common understanding, through data analysis and modeling, of the current situation with bighorn sheep on the Payette National Forest.
3. Familiarize meeting participants with the preliminary management options to address bighorn sheep in the Payette Forest Plan.
4. Identify project milestones and mutual expectations for next steps.

## DECISIONS AND OUTCOMES

### *Action Items*

What	Who	When
Provide Oregon survey data for bighorn sheep populations and herds	Vic Coggins	August 15
Define adaptability, suitability, and viability as well as the fundamental objectives of the team, and provide to team	Pattie Soucek and others from the Payette NF	August 24
Read WAFWA June 2007 paper (Tab 8 in Resource Binder)	All team members	August 30
A list of Payette NF decisions to date that will frame this analysis (refer to page 4 of this summary for context)	Pattie Soucek	August 30

**The next meeting is scheduled for August 30, 2007 from 8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.**

## OPENING

### *Welcome*

Pattie Soucek, Forest Planner for the Payette National Forest (NF), opened the meeting by welcoming all participants and asking team members to introduce themselves. She added that copies of several U.S. Forest Service (USFS) documents, including the *Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan* (USDA Forest Service 2003a), were available on the back table.

### *Introductory Remarks*

Suzanne Rainville, Payette Forest Supervisor, provided the following opening remarks:

- No agency has assembled an interdisciplinary team (ID team) of tribal interests and state agencies at this phase of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analysis before, so this team will have to learn together as it moves forward. If successful, this ID team could serve as a model for others.
- Many dynamics are represented here, but domestic sheep interests must not be forgotten.
- USFS staff have worked extensively on this issue and have been impressed with the level of interest and passion exhibited by tribes, states, and permittees. The role of the USFS is to consider the viewpoints of all interests and determine the proper balance in land use.
- Rainville expects that meeting objectives will be met by the end of the day; participants will engage in open and frank discussions, while listening to others; and participants will provide all data necessary for a well-informed decision to be made—she does not expect surprises in the middle of the process.
- Susan Hayman, North Country Resources, is an outside facilitator who will be assisting the team. Hayman has considerable recent experience facilitating bighorn sheep discussions, including facilitating the science panel discussion (USDA Forest Service 2006b) and the mountain sheep conference in U.C. Davis (CDFG 2007).
- Nikole Pearson, Peak Science Communications, will be taking notes and providing participants with meeting summaries to ensure consistency between meetings. Summaries will capture key points and action items.
- In order for members to add value, they must be committed to the process and remain until the end.

- For the tribal interests, this ID team is not a substitute for the formal consultation process.

### ***Meeting Overview***

Hayman reviewed the agenda, including the meeting objectives (Appendix 1), and provided the following ground rules:

1. Listen actively
2. Participate actively
3. Share discussion time
4. Be candid and courteous
5. Acknowledge the past and look forward
6. Silence electronic devices

### **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Soucek provided background information, a description of the purpose and need for the ID team, and anticipated project milestones.

#### ***Background (documents provided in the resource binder in the order listed below)***

**Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Southwest Idaho Ecogroup Land and Resource Management Plans (USDA Forest Service 2003b)**—was developed after a large fire event in 1994 changed the landscape of the Payette NF and spurred an analysis of the current Forest Plan. Bighorn sheep populations were determined to be declining in the Ecogroup (Payette, Boise, and Sawtooth national forests), bighorn sheep were identified as a species of interest and a significant issue in the forest plan and analysis, and the USFS began to consider that areas of the Payette NF may not be suitable for grazing domestic sheep. The FEIS included a map of the areas of known risk for disease transmission to bighorn sheep.

**The Hells Canyon Initiative (Hells Canyon Bighorn Sheep Restoration Committee 1997a)**—is a state, federal, and private partnership to restore Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in the Hells Canyon area of Oregon, Idaho, and Washington. The initiative must be considered in the planning effort.

**Letter of Transmittal (Hells Canyon Bighorn Sheep Restoration Committee 1997b)**—was sent to the Idaho Woolgrowers Association; became the basis for the record of decision (ROD) by the USFS.

**Decision for Appeal of the Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Revision (USDA Forest Service 2005a)**—was received on the Payette NF portion of the ROD. Pages 10–15 of the appeal outline areas where the Forest Plan was lacking. In particular, the appeal stated the Forest Plan was not in compliance with the National Forest Management Act (NMFA) and may not be in compliance with the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA) Act. The appeal required the USFS to analyze bighorn sheep viability in the Payette NF and amend the FEIS accordingly. Errata #3 of the FEIS was not sufficient to address the noncompliance.

**Response Strategy for Bighorn Sheep Appeal Decision (USDA Forest Service 2005b)**—set a course for what needed to be done to comply with the instructions from the USFS Chief.

**Risk Analysis of Disease Transmission between Domestic Sheep and Bighorn Sheep on the Payette National Forest (USDA Forest Service 2006a)**—summarized the results of the risk analysis conducted by the Payette NF of the effects of disease transmission from domestic sheep grazed on the current allotments within the Payette NF to bighorn sheep populations occurring within and near the NF.

**Summary of the Science Panel Discussion (USDA Forest Service 2006b)**—was convened to clarify the science-based concerns regarding the risk analysis prepared by the Payette NF.

**Notice of Intent (FR 72:18197–18198)**—to prepare a supplement to the FEIS was published in the Federal Register in April 2007.

**A Process for Finding Management Solutions to the Incompatibility between Domestic and Bighorn Sheep (USDA Forest Service 2001)**—was designed to be used by biologists and range conservationists of the USFS; must be considered when developing the supplement to the FEIS.

**Respiratory Disease in Mountain Sheep: Knowledge Gaps and Future Research (CDFG 2007)**—was also recommended by the Chief for use in this analysis; this conference summary describes current research and knowledge gaps regarding respiratory disease in wild sheep.

**Recommendations for Domestic Sheep and Goat Management in Wild sheep Habitat (WAFWA 2007)**—was prepared by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Wild Sheep Working Group Initial Subcommittee and provides a foundation for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and USFS development of a more unified policy for management of this issue; also recommended by the USFS Chief for use in this analysis.

### *Purpose and Need*

The 2003 Forest Plan was appealed. The Regional Forester was instructed to do an analysis of bighorn sheep viability in the Payette NF commensurate with the concerns and questions discussed above, and amend the SW Idaho Ecogroup FEIS accordingly. Changes to the management direction of the Payette NF LRMP for MA#1 (Hells Canyon) and adjacent areas shall be evaluated, and adopted as necessary to ensure bighorn sheep viability. (USDA Forest Service 2005a, page 15, paragraph 3)

The Forest Service published a notice of intent to prepare a supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Southwest Idaho Ecogroup (SWIEG) Revised Land and Resource Management Plans and may amend the Payette Revised LRMP. This supplement is being conducted in order to comply with the Chief's appeals decision of March 9, 2005. It is intended to present additional information for the Payette National Forest portion of the SWIEG concerning: 1) the viability of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (bighorn sheep) at the planning unit scale; 2) compliance with the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Act (CNRA); 3) 36 CFR 292.48; 4) compliance with the National Forest Management Act (NFMA; and 5) 36 CFR 219.19. The amendment would add direction to the Payette Revised LRMP to address the viability concerns for bighorn sheep. (FR 72:18197-18198, Summary, page 1).

The SEIS analysis will not consider how disease transmission occurs, nor will it re-analyze other portions of the Forest Plan or the FEIS.

Viability will not be examined on the Ecogroup scale; it will be addressed at a forest level as it relates to habitat and as required by NFMA. Members of the team asked for a list of decisions made by the Payette NF thus far that will frame the current direction of the group. **(Soucek will provide this information to the group).**

### *Anticipated Project Milestones and Timeline*

The USFS would like to publish a draft supplement to the FEIS by mid-October 2007 and a final supplement with a record of decision (ROD) by May 2008. Deadlines will depend on progress of the ID team. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed. It is recognized that Payette NF staff will coordinate with the regional and national staff as issues emerge. At this time, it is unknown if members will interface directly with the regional or national office.

## **PARTICIPANT ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS**

Rainville opened the discussion with an update on the memorandums of understanding (MOU) to establish cooperating agency status that will be sent to the States of Oregon and Idaho and the Nez Perce and Umatilla Tribes (the Shoshone-Bannock and Shoshone-Paiute Tribes have not requested cooperating agency status). The MOU will outline the following duties of the USFS: prepare the supplemental EIS and the ROD; provide the opportunity for state agencies or tribes to review and comment on data analysis, range of alternatives, and economic analysis; consider and incorporate any documents provided by the ID team; provide everyone the opportunity to develop adaptive management strategies; and review elements that may need to be included in an amendment to the Forest Plan. Ultimately, Rainville will make the final decision after the team has provided all available information and their recommendations.

The state agencies and tribes will assist the Forest Service by: Providing management plans and/or population objectives, as well as State and Tribal policy direction, regarding bighorn sheep management; providing biological expertise; providing treaty information; reviewing written documents and providing comments in a timely manner (deadlines will be set and must be met); developing adaptive management strategies; helping to address the responses to comments; and reviewing the final supplemental EIS and the Forest Plan amendment recommendations. All work conducted as part of the ID team will be in addition to formal comments that each group can provide.

The final product will be a supplemental analysis to the EIS and, likely, an amendment to the Forest Plan. Draft Forest Plan language should be included with the preferred alternative in the draft supplemental analysis to the EIS.

The team expressed the desire to try to reach consensus on a recommended preferred alternative (management option). In the event the team cannot reach consensus on recommendations, areas of agreement and disagreement will be noted. Rainville will ultimately choose the preferred alternative. Members of the team retain the right to submit comments on behalf of their agencies/tribes during the formal public comment period.

Formal consultation with the tribes will occur as requested by each tribe. A process for consulting with the Shoshone–Bannock, Shoshone–Paiute, and Nez Perce tribes exists; a process for consulting with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla will be developed. The tribes will also be given the opportunity to review the draft document before it is released for public comment. No tribe will be denied access to the ID team or pre-decisional consultation.

After Rainville's explanation of the roles and responsibilities, the following issues were discussed:

- The role of cooperating agencies: State agency representatives typically participate as specialists and are expected to comment mainly within their area of expertise. Although there is no expectation of a technical report, cooperative agencies can produce one if desired.
- The USFS is seeking pre-decisional input from the states and tribes to support development of a decision related to bighorn and domestic sheep management on the Payette NF.
- This issue is important to all in the room and many will be sacrificing work on other issues in order to be involved in the SEIS development. It is acknowledged that the USFS is not required to incorporate the advice of any ID team member. The USFS assured everyone that they will continue to reach out to any "minority view" to understand these concerns. If the ID team reaches consensus on a management recommendation, and the USFS makes a decision contrary to that recommendation, the USFS will provide a rationale for their decision in the ROD.
- The ID team may not reach consensus; their role is to provide Rainville with all of the information necessary for her to make a decision, especially since this issue may be litigated.
- The entire record of this ID team becomes part of the administrative record and becomes subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). All members will be able to review the draft meeting documentation prior to finalization.
- Team members need to have a clear understanding of the basic issues and questions in order to make a recommendation. The group needs to understand the basis for and direction of the SEIS evaluation to better support the USFS efforts.
- Since issues typically drive the alternatives, members of the ID team asked how the preliminary alternatives (management options) were developed. Hayman suggested that perhaps a short outline of the issues was needed.
- The group agreed that participation of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) is important; a representative from the IDFG will accompany David Hensley, Governor's Office of the State of Idaho, to the August 30 meeting.

## CURRENT SITUATION

### *Data and Modeling Review*

Chans O'Brien, GIS analyst for the Payette NF, presented bighorn sheep modeling data. Habitat model parameters were originally developed by the Hells Canyon Restoration Committee (HCRC). The parameters used by the Payette NF differed slightly from the HCRC model: the escape terrain component was identical, but the horizontal visibility component used LandFire vegetation as a base and cover types up to 30% instead of 40% were included. LandFire is an interagency project with the most current vegetation dataset available. O'Brien will provide the exact criteria to anyone who is interested. These data have been extrapolated and modeled for the entire state of Idaho as well.

Although the LandFire database included the year 2000 fires, it did not include the Burgdorf Fire and did not appear to have anything incorporated from fires after the year 2000. Recent fires will change bighorn sheep habitat; however, updating vegetation data is very expensive and data are always changing. The USFS believes the current model is very accurate: 92% of all of telemetry data and observation data fell within the modeled bighorn sheep habitat.

Telemetry data were obtained by the IDFG, in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife from 1997 to 2006. Data from 2007 have not been incorporated into the GIS analysis since the number of points collected this year are not expected to affect the calculated home ranges. Currently, the data incorporate approximately 55,000 points from over 425 collared bighorn sheep; believed to be the most robust set of data for bighorn sheep in the nation. Data collected for each point include the date, time, frequency, herd designation, animal number, location, UTME and UTMN coordinates, visual confirmation of the points, date of visual confirmation, group number, number of ewes, number of lambs, and number of rams (including their classifications). Approximately 80% of the telemetry points have been visually confirmed.

O'Brien displayed a map of herd data for the following herds: Asotin, Big Canyon, Black Butte, Imnaha, Lostine, McGraw, Minam, Mountain View, Muir, Myers, Quartz, Redbird, Sheep Divide, Sheep Mountain, and Wenaha. ID team members received maps of data for each individual herd. A map displayed on the wall illustrated the entire Hells Canyon metapopulation.

Vic Coggins offered to provide population information for the bighorn herds in Oregon, and will make this available to the Payette NF for ID team use in the next day or two.

The incidental locations of bighorn sheep seen in the Salmon River drainage were displayed, as was the habitat occupied by bighorn sheep based on regular winter population surveys by the Idaho department of Fish and Game. Less is known about the summer habitat use by bighorn sheep in the Salmon River than is known in Hells Canyon. A collaborative research project will be initiated this fall which is anticipated to provide more information about lambing and summer habitat use by bighorn sheep.

A few visual observation points for the Salmon River herds were displayed, but Salmon River data points are substantially less than those from Hells Canyon, due to its intensive telemetry program.

Herd movements have been analyzed and interesting patterns have been observed: herd movements are influenced by habitat and terrain. Northern herds migrate up and down the canyon walls since no high country exists and the top of the canyon is covered with heavy forests. Herds in the southern part of the canyon exhibit greater migratory patterns. For all herds, young rams range further than older rams and ewes; rams are also always searching for ewes (this behavior is not "rut-dependent"). Some herds did not stay where released and some groups have broken off from larger herds to join other groups. Given continuous habitat, bighorn sheep will expand and new herds could form if the populations were healthy.

O'Brien showed the progressive telemetry points for four individual bighorn sheep to illustrate their range and variability of movement. The first individual was a ram that was part of the original McGraw herd release. As different datapoints were selected, the ram's movements could be seen. Within the first two years, this ram spent the summer months in the Smith Mountain Allotment and then travelled west to a bighorn sheep herd in Oregon. During his four years of life in this area, his overall range was 60 km east-west and 70 km north-south.

The second individual was another ram from the same release survived for 8 months before being shot on the Smith Mountain Allotment. During those 8 months, he ranged up to 68 km north–south.

The movements of the third individual, a Quartz Creek ewe, revealed that she spent most of her time in a tight location along the river, but did make exploratory movements into the Seven Devils and domestic sheep grazing allotments. This ewe ranged 30 km north–south.

The fourth individual was a Meyers Creek ewe, who spent most of her time near Pittsburg Landing, but traveled with her lamb out of Hells Canyon and across the Salmon River in June 2004. She continued east until she was 30 km outside the Payette NF boundary. She was eventually killed on Highway 95 when presumably returning to Hells Canyon.

Home ranges were developed using the individual datapoints. Home-range modeling was based on the same tools used by the U.C. Davis study. O'Brien displayed a volume contour map; the closer the lines, the more points that fell within the contour. A member of the ID team asked if the same dataset could be used to apply the various scientific standards of distance protection. O'Brien replied that the model could be used as a buffering model.

The home-range model uses a fixed kernel analysis; therefore, the lines become broader with the fewer number of points. Only 30 to 50 points have been collected for some of the animals, which is a small sample size.

O'Brien displayed a graphic of the home range for all rams that migrated within the Smith Mountain Allotment. The exterior boundary had a very wide range, which displayed the enormous potential for interactions between rams that move within the allotment and members of the Hells Canyon metapopulation. The range was much smaller for ewes that migrate into the Smith Mountain Allotment.

According to recommendations from Tim Schommer, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and agency bighorn sheep expert, the geographic population range model was modified according to natural terrain breaks, settled herd patterns, and to discount mapping errors and non-normative movements.

Observations of the geographic population ranges included overlap between herds and metapopulation connectivity. The Imnaha herd is currently the largest, but numbers are declining. The Asotin herd, which is the furthest north and least connected to the other herds, has no apparent pneumonia issues.

Since quantitative data do not exist for the Salmon River habitat, geographic population ranges were made based on recommendations of IDFG biologists. O'Brien displayed a map of the Salmon River area assumed to be occupied by bighorn sheep.

The following issues were discussed:

- Modifying the model based on habitat and collection errors was reasonable, but more discussion should be had concerning the removal of outlying points which were removed based on non-normative behavior. The purpose of this analysis is to determine the potential for contact between bighorn and domestic sheep and extraterritorial movements of young rams cannot be ignored.
- The entire team should review and discuss changes made to the model to understand and endorse the modifications made to the original HCRC model.
- Failed transplants were not included in the modeling. However, some of the non-normative movements could have followed transplants. Although not every herd displays unusual movement after being transplanted, those that do typically fall into normal patterns within a year. The data could be modified to exclude all or part of the movement data for the first year following the transplant. However, the team needs to decide how much data it wants to examine and how much work it is willing to redo.
- Overlap exists between the Hells Canyon metapopulation, adding to the risk of contact between an infected bighorn sheep and other healthy herds.
- Most experts agree that domestic and bighorn sheep are very social, and contact usually is physical, nose-to-nose contact.
- Exploring ways of adding or incorporating the habitat effects of recent fires into the habitat model would be helpful.

## PRELIMINARY BIGHORN SHEEP MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

### *Overview*

Soucek provided an overview of the seven broad management alternatives presented in the 2005 FEIS. Included within these alternatives were suitability determinations and management guidance for domestic sheep and bighorn sheep. Three of the seven alternatives included an area that was not suited for domestic sheep grazing; sheep allotments currently exist in a portion of that area. For other alternatives, the entire Payette NF was considered suitable for domestic sheep grazing. Under the selected Alternative 7 (which is the basis for the Forest Plan), sheep allotments would be converted to cattle allotments or removed from domestic grazing when/if current sheep grazing permittees no longer wanted the permits. These original alternatives cannot be removed from the FEIS and must still be considered in the supplemental analysis currently underway.

She also presented an overview of the six recently developed "preliminary management options" for FEIS Alternative 7 that she would like the ID Team to review and consider. These management options identify areas suited for domestic sheep grazing based on bighorn sheep habitat, lambing areas, known occurrences or current occupancy, and travel corridors, as well as potential barriers to bighorn sheep movement:

**Option 7a**—removes areas from domestic sheep grazing that were identified as high and very high risk by the Risk Assessment expert panel.

**Option 7b**—removes areas from domestic sheep grazing that were identified as high and very high risk by the Risk Assessment expert panel, as well as all of the Curren Hill Allotment.

**Option 7c**—removes the HCNRA from domestic sheep grazing.

**Option 7d**—removes domestic sheep grazing out to the modeled 100% bighorn sheep geographic range parameters on the west side and utilizes the IDFG delineation on the east side.

**Option 7e**—removes the entire Payette NF from suitability for domestic sheep grazing.

**Option 7f**—removes domestic sheep grazing from within modeled and mapped ranges of individual rams or within 13.5 km of known locations (i.e. consistent with current BLM management guidelines for domestic/bighorn sheep).

Note: The BLM is undergoing its own planning process and has listed the Partridge Creek and Marshall Mountain Allotment as high-risk allotments. These allotments are adjacent to or partially surrounded by active domestic sheep allotments on the Payette NF.

The following issues were discussed:

- Adaptability language needs to be considered as part of the forest plan direction. In Hells Canyon, the population goal is 2000 bighorn sheep. There are currently about 850 bighorns in the canyon. While the Forest Service has somewhat of an idea how the 850 bighorn sheep utilize the habitat, it is unknown how increased herd sizes will use the current habitat. If herds use additional habitat, the adaptability language would allow that habitat to be declared as unsuitable for domestic sheep grazing. In the Salmon River area, the Forest Service does not know the extent of the bighorn population and does not have a good understanding of their use patterns due to the absence of telemetry data. There are some visual observation points available, and a telemetry study for the Salmon River area is expected to begin this fall. The adaptability language would need to be able to work with new information as it becomes available in the Salmon River.
- The current bighorn sheep population is highly diminished, making many of the options developed by the USFS inappropriate to consider further. It might be better to have two options, one that excludes domestic sheep and another that doesn't.
- The USFS has to look at an entire range of options based on the best science available. A balance between all uses must be examined before determining what truly is suitable and what isn't.
- ID Team members should come to the August 30 meeting prepared to discuss the different options presented as well as additional options.

- If and when the Forest Plan has been amended, each individual domestic sheep allotment will undergo a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis to address bighorn sheep issues within the allotment consistent with the amended Forest Plan. One of the options could be conversion to cattle allotments, depending on the suitability of the habitat.
- Unsuitability parameters need to be defined.

### ***Preliminary Effects***

Based on the preliminary options, Susan Miller, Payette NF, conducted an analysis of the effects of the proposed options. Miller has been examining telemetry data, geographic population ranges, and summer and winter range habitats to determine how many acres of suitable range for domestic sheep would remain within bighorn sheep habitat for each of the six proposed options. As long as contact is possible, risk remains. According to the data, a nearly linear relationship exists between risk and suitable acreage.

The following issues were discussed:

- The impression that the six options are different is misleading, as the impact to the bighorn sheep population from contact with domestic sheep has not been altered by any of the options except the one which eliminates all domestic sheep grazing. The real interest should be population effects or impacts, because reducing the potential for contact might reduce the risk of disease transmission, but does not reduce population impacts from a disease outbreak. Thinking otherwise is a false assumption.
- An adaptive management strategy needs to be developed as well. The USFS, through the SEIS and Forest Plan amendment, has the primary responsibility to implement the adaptive management approach. The strategy will likely involve commitments from the Cooperators to implement over time.
- A draft economic analysis based on the six options presented was included in the packet (Peterson 2007). The economic analysis included economic impacts to Weiser, Riggings, and Wilder. Only negative impacts resulting from removing domestic sheep grazing were included in the analysis. Some team members felt that the economic analysis could be strengthened by including positive economic impacts from increasing bighorn sheep populations. The cost of managing the allotments may also be missing from the analysis.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

#### ***Discussion:***

- Adaptive management is typically defined as learning from the results and adapting the management based on those results. Initially today, adaptive management appeared to be used as a way to postpone decisions that would eliminate all contact between domestic sheep and bighorn sheep. Then, adaptive management was used as a way to continue domestic sheep grazing by shooting bighorn sheep that wandered into grazing allotments. Rainville responded that NEPA requires the USFS to go through the entire process, put out a draft, and let the public have the opportunity to comment. All options have to be considered and documented. The issue is not how to simply define adaptive management, but how to apply an adaptive management approach to ensure long-term bighorn sheep viability.
- Members of the team should use their expertise to describe the best adaptive management techniques that would minimize the risk for each option.
- Perhaps the team should assess if it is possible to maintain separation between bighorn and domestic sheep on any allotment.
- How can the process be completed while considering suitability, viability, and the HCNRA?
- The discussion is not about individual allotments, but about what area of the Payette NF is suited for domestic sheep grazing.
- If certain habitat is determined to be essential for a particular herd, it will be considered unsuitable for domestic sheep grazing. Therefore, it is important to know how much bighorn sheep habitat is needed and how many bighorn sheep are being supported. Is bighorn sheep habitat considered unsuitable when domestic sheep are present?

***BIN***

See Appendix 2 for a list of items included in the BIN. Many of the BIN items are highlighted above in team discussions.

### ***Next Steps***

Several issues were identified as needing to be addressed before the August 30 meeting:

1. Define adaptability and how it will be applied in this situation
2. Define the fundamental objective of management: is it to maintain some level of domestic sheep grazing or to provide a situation where bighorn sheep can recover their populations?
3. Define suitability (suitable for domestic sheep grazing or not)
4. Define separation (hold off until other issues are dealt with; this topic is somewhat addressed in the WAFWA document)
5. Define viability
6. Define alternatives and the NEPA process (deferred to a later discussion)

See the list of action items for responsible parties and deadlines.

### **CLOSING**

Rainville provided several closing remarks and asked the team to carefully consider the NEPA process. This issue is likely to be litigated, so following the process is important. The full range of options will have to be considered, regardless of individual preference. Rainville asked that everyone keep the information disclosed during these meetings confidential. Soucek will preside throughout the entire process, even if Rainville is unable to attend.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 P.M. The next meeting is scheduled for August 30, 2007, and will start at 8:30 A.M. and adjourn at 3:00 P.M.

### **HANDOUTS**

1. Agenda
2. "Current Situation: Bighorn sheep data and modeling." PowerPoint slides from Payette National Forest dated August 8, 2007. 16 slides.
3. "Herd Telemetry and Habitat." ArcInfo maps from Chans O'Brien. 15 maps.
4. "Herd Geographic Population Range." ArcInfo maps from Chans O'Brien. 10 maps.
5. "Alternatives." ArcInfo maps from Chans O'Brien. 8 maps.

### **CITED MATERIALS (Resource Binder)**

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). 2007. Respiratory Disease in Mountain Sheep: Knowledge Gaps and Future Research. CDFG, Rancho Cordova, California.

Hells Canyon Bighorn Sheep Restoration Committee. 1997a. The Hells Canyon Initiative Restoration of Bighorn Sheep to Hells Canyon. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Foundation for North American Wild Sheep. Available at Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Lewiston, Idaho.

Hells Canyon Bighorn Sheep Restoration Committee. 1997b. Letter to Idaho Woolgrowers Association, dated January 16, 1997. Available from Idaho Woolgrowers Association, Boise, Idaho.

Peterson, Steven. 2007. The Economic Impacts of Updated Alternative Range Management Scenarios for Sheep Allotments on the Payette National Forest. Economic Modeling Specialists Incorporated, Boise, Idaho.

USDA Forest Service. 2001. A Process for Finding Management Solutions to the Incompatibility Between Domestic and Bighorn Sheep. Schommer, T.J. and M. Woolever, editors. USDA Forest Service, Washington Office, Washington, D.C.

- USDA Forest Service. 2003a. Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. USDA Forest Service, Payette National Forest, Supervisor's Office, McCall, Idaho.
- USDA Forest Service. 2003b. Final Environmental Impact Statement Southwest Idaho Ecogroup Land and Resource Management Plans. FEIS Volumes I and II. USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region, Ogden, Utah.
- USDA Forest Service. 2005a. Decision for Appeal of the Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Revision. USDA Forest Service, Washington Office, Washington, D.C.
- USDA Forest Service. 2005b. Response Strategy for Bighorn Sheep Appeal Decision. In: Decision for Appeal of the Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Revision. USDA Forest Service, Washington Office, Washington, D.C.
- USDA Forest Service. 2006a. Risk Analysis of Disease Transmission Between Domestic Sheep and Bighorn Sheep on the Payette National Forest. USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region and Payette National Forest, McCall, Idaho.
- USDA Forest Service. 2006b. Summary of the Science Panel Discussion. Available from the USDA Forest Service, Payette National Forest, McCall, Idaho.
- Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA). 2007. Recommendations for Domestic Sheep and Goat Management in Wild Sheep Habitat. WAFWA, Wild Sheep Working Group Initial Subcommittee.

## APPENDIX 1—AGENDA

### Bighorn Sheep: Supplemental Analysis to the Forest Plan Environmental Impact Statement

#### Interdisciplinary Team Meeting

Tuesday, August 14, 2007 ♦ 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Payette National Forest Supervisor's Office Conference Room

800 W. Lakeside, McCall, Idaho

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#### Meeting Objectives:

- 1) Ensure that the Forest Service, cooperating agencies and tribes share a common understanding about the history, purpose and need for this analysis, and their respective roles in this process.
- 2) Ensure a common understanding, through data analysis and modeling, of the current situation with bighorn sheep and domestic sheep on the Payette National Forest.
- 3) Familiarize meeting participants with the preliminary management options to address bighorn sheep in the Payette Forest Plan.
- 4) Identify project milestones and mutual expectations for next steps.

#### Agenda

Time	Topic	Process / Product
9:45 a.m.	Refreshments available in meeting room	
10:00 a.m.	Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and introductions – Pattie Soucek, Payette Forest Planner</li> <li>• Opening remarks – Suzanne Rainville, Payette Forest Supervisor</li> <li>• Meeting overview – Susan Hayman, Facilitator</li> </ul>	Information
10:20 a.m.	Project Overview – Pattie Soucek <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did we get here?</li> <li>• Purpose and need</li> <li>• Anticipated project milestones/timeline</li> </ul>	Information, Q&A
10:45 a.m.	Participant roles and expectations – Suzanne Rainville	
11:15 a.m.	Current Situation – Chans O'Brien <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data and modeling review</li> <li>• Salmon River study</li> </ul>	Information, discussion
12:30 p.m.	LUNCH (brought in)	Break

Time	Topic	Process / Product
1:00 p.m.	Preliminary Management Options – Pattie Soucek <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overview</li><li>• Preliminary effects -- Susan Miller</li><li>• Adaptability language</li><li>• August 30 assignment</li></ul>	Information, discussion <i>Product: August 30 assignment</i>
2:00 p.m.	Next steps, August 30 agenda review – Susan Hayman	Information, discussion
2:45 p.m.	Closing remarks – Suzanne Rainville	Information
3:00 p.m.	Adjourn	

## APPENDIX 2—TRANSCRIBED FLIPCHART NOTES

**Ground Rules**

- 1) Listen actively
- 2) Participate actively
- 3) Share discussion time
- 4) Be candid and courteous
- 5) Acknowledge the past and look forward
- 6) Silence electronic devices

1

**This Analysis is Not**

- A study on disease transmission
  - Assumption t/o revision
  - No one contradicted this during 7 years of process
- Re-analysis of the plan and the EIS
  - Very focused

2

**What is It?**

- Study on BHS viability on the Payette NF (habitat well distributed)
- Review of legal compliance (NFMA, HCNRA)
- Review of risk for contact
- Supplement to the forest plan EIS resulting in an amendment to the plan

3

**Analysis**

- 1) Viability for bighorns
- 2) Evaluating Payette for areas of suitability/ non-suitability for domestic sheep.

4

**Participant Roles and Expectations**  
**Key discussions pts**

1. MOUs/cooperating agreements in process in Washington D.C. expect direction to come to Payette through Regional office
  - a. States of Idaho and Oregon
  - b. Umatilla and Nez Perce tribes requested coop agency

5

**FS Responsibility**

- Prep of documents quality and content
- Provide opportunity for review and comment
- Data Review
- Alternatives
- Environmental effects
- Amendment Languages
- Consider and incorporate any documents coop agencies provide FS
- Provide opportunity to help develop adaptability language

6

<b>State and Tribal Responsibilities</b>
1) Active participation
2) Data Expertise and Authorities responsibilities
3) Treaty rights information
4) Critical review and comment in a timely manner (any and all docs)
5) Mgt./Separation strategies
6) Help to address responses to comments (after contacted content analysis)
7) Also opportunity to provide formal comment
8) Work to develop consensus on preferred alternative for SEIS
7

<b>Products</b>
1) Supplement to EIS
a. Incl. FP mgt direction for preferred
2) Amendment to Forest Plan
8

<b>Tribal Consultation</b>
1) Wings and Roots - Shoshone-Paiute
2) Shoshone-Bannock Process
3) Nez Perce – informal w/staff and formal w/ council
4) Umatilla work w/ Pattie on Process
5) Timing; Depends on Tribe
6) Also consult on draft documents before they are made public
9

<b>Additional Discussion of Roles and Responsibilities</b>
1) Important that states and Tribes bring their respective authorities and responsibilities to process and to inform proposals for management.
2) Strive, genuinely, for consensus, FS will make decisions in absence of consensus, with rationale
3) All perspectives will be represented in recommendations
10

<b>Comments/Questions</b>
1) Recommendations what we're making recommendations on.
2) Issues
a. BHS viability
b. Compliance
c. Not making decisions on allotments
d. Programmatic
3) Can we proactively maintain separation and between domestics and BHS
4) Develop "adaptability" language that could be applied to any or all options
11

<b>Questions to Answer</b>
• How much bighorn habitat do we need?
• How many BHS sheep are we trying to support
• Define Viability
• Definition of Adaptability and how it will be used
• Define Fundamental objective:
o To maintain some level of sheep grazing
o To restore bighorn sheep
• Define suitability
• Can we proactively maintain separation and between domestics and BHS
• Develop "adaptability" language that could be applied to any or all options
12

BIN	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Risk assessment/Viability-fit together</li> <li>2) BHS mgt goals for forest instead of statewide (there is a goal for HCO)</li> <li>3) What is IDT interested in making recommendations on? (issues?)</li> <li>4) Opportunity to update veg data/model to reflect fire info? Supplementing?</li> <li>5) Update cycle for data (e.g. 2007 Telem pts.)</li> <li>6) Ability to apply WAFWA criteria to model</li> </ol>	13

BIN	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7) Question of not including outliers in adjusted fixed kernel analysis. Is it appropriate to exclude them for out purposes (Analysis of home range)</li> <li>8) IDT discussion of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of home range</li> <li>• Habitat/veg-changing the model (meeting NFMA requirements)</li> </ul> </li> <li>9) Compare first year movements to “after they are settled” movements</li> <li>10) Definition of contact- what are we using</li> <li>11) Parameters for “bright line” of non-suitability</li> <li>12) Incorporating benefits of outfitter/guides and hunting into economic analysis</li> <li>13) Incorporating cost of administering grazing permits into economic analysis</li> </ol>	14

What	Who	When
<b>Oregon survey data for BHS population/herds</b> <b>Provide to PNF</b>	<b>Vic</b>	<b>8/15</b>
<b>Define Adaptability</b> <b>Fundamental obj.</b> <b>Suitability</b> <b>Viability</b>	<b>Pattie, et. al FS</b>	<b>8/24</b>
<b>IDT commit to read WAFWA</b>	<b>All IDT</b>	<b>8/30</b>