

**ALSEA STEWARDSHIP GROUP
MEETING NOTES
May 16, 2011 6:00 to 8:00 pm
Central Coast Ranger District – Waldport**

Attendees:

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Ross Holloway	Facilitator	Dan Segotta	USFS
Christy Cheyne	USFS	Mike Kennedy	Siletz Tribe
Elmer Ostling	AWC	Tom Davis	AWC
Colin Crook	USFS	Vicky Mugnai	USFS
Andy Kittel	AWC	Fran Recht	PSMFC
Chandra LeGue	Oregon Wild	Viva Worthington	USFS

Welcome and Introductions

Guests: Jim Trappe, Professor Emeritus, College of Forestry, OSU – international expert on truffles. Jean Buckner, CEO, Symbios LLC. Professor Trappe and Ms. Buckner are scheduled to provide a joint presentation about *Truffle Biology and Harvesting*.

Christy Cheyne, Acting Deputy District Ranger was also introduced. She reported to the CCRD on May 9 and is scheduled to work through mid-July.

Review Notes and Agenda

Notes of the April 18 meeting accepted as submitted.

Project/Agency Updates

Forest Service, Dan Segotta

For the benefit of tonight's speakers, Dan provided an overview of stewardship contracting. Dan will begin working on the outreach for Russ Volke's position (silviculture). Vacancy will be advertised internally and externally.

Forest Service, Viva Worthington

Viva will soon sign the East Alsea decision. Jerry Ingersoll, Forest Supervisor, will be signing the "no effect" decision at a later time.

Cascade Pacific RC&D, Ross Holloway for Jackie Nichols

CPRC&D is working on a new 5-year agreement between CPRC&D and the FS. The coming year's funded projects will fall under this new agreement. Project application materials continue to be updated (the current application was adapted from OWEB which emphasized fisheries projects). As Jackie continues to work on the new version, she welcomes input for improvements.

Hebo SG, Mike Kennedy

- The charter, meeting ground rules and boundary map were approved at the last meeting. The map encompasses Hebo RD in its entirety.
- Two watershed councils are developing projects.
- Hebo RD will have stewardship sales ready to go soon. Contracts will be put together by SO Contracting with assistance from Central Coast RD.

Truffle Biology and Harvesting, Presentation

Truffle Ecology, Professor Trappe

- Today, the commercial harvesting of mushrooms and fungi is theft-based.
- Fungi, if managed properly, can contribute to the array of sustainable special forest products.
- Various types were described by Professor Trappe: destructive fungi, wood rotting fungi, introduced fungi (particularly destructive), post-fire fungi, and mycorrhizal symbionts in forest and orchard environments.
- There are 2000 variations of fungi associated with Doug Fir.
- There are 400 to 500 truffle species in the NW; black truffles are especially valuable.
- The three most important commercial truffles in the NW: Oregon Black Truffle, Calapooia, and the Oregon White Truffle (which prefers to grow around the roots of young Doug Fir trees).
- Truffles are an excellent food source for wildlife, which spread the spores through scat. Northern flying squirrels, for example, feed on truffles (a major food source for them), and when on the ground, they serve as a food source for predators.
- Siuslaw NF is one of the few NW forests that produce truffles year-round.
- Improper harvesting; e.g., raking the soil, damages tree roots, causes damaging erosion, disturbs truffle habitat and reduces the market value of the truffle (primarily immature truffles are harvested that do not have the aroma characteristic of a mature truffle species, the primary property which adds to its culinary value). As such, dogs are being trained to detect only the mature truffles, leaving the immature truffles undisturbed.
- With the truffle market looking promising, truffle orchards have been established in Oregon. While they have not yet started to produce, orchards are doing well in Australia.

Symbios LLC, Jean Buckner

Symbios promotes the ethical and rational treatment of fungi. Symbios' goal is to create profit while improving and sustaining the environment. The company focus is three-pronged: Business, Scientific and Environmental. Symbios' broad target markets include the existing markets for gourmet foods, pharmacological raw materials markets, and the green economy markets for carbon sequestration and biomass/biofuels. The company is staffed with experts whose backgrounds include healthcare, energy and science.

Business limitations:

- There is a lack of U.S. policy to support green economy markets
- It is difficult to compete with timber products

- Specific to truffles:
 - Poor reputation of the Wild Oregon Truffle
 - Truffles and other edible forest products are unpredictable
 - Short shelf life
 - Immature marketing channels
 - No current FS commercial harvesting policy
 - Dependent on hunters and dogs
 - Cottage industry challenges

Business strengths:

- A political and business approach to diversify risk
- Strong international support for green economy markets
- Grant monies available
- Specific to truffles:
 - High demand and price
 - Cottage industry opportunities

These markets and products, in combination, generate multiple revenue streams from the same initial investment, diversify risk, and provide short-term revenue as long-term initiatives mature. The market enjoys moderate expense and revenue spikes associated with seasonal products.

Q&A Session Highlights

- The formal systematic mapping of optimal zones has not been done. There is no good information, for example, as to where truffles cannot be found.
- Five Rivers and the Alsea Basin are major sources for the commercial harvesting of truffles (there are 200 species in the Siuslaw zone – Symbios is interested in 3 species).
- Symbios’ goals: purchasing land is a possible consideration; the company is developing relationships with orchard owners and is interested in building a relationship with the FS.
- Discussion thread included concerns surrounding environmental impacts, enforcement, and the potential for civil action should there be a formalized effort towards establishing commercial harvesting of these products on Siuslaw NF land.

April 27 Roundtable Report (notes of the April 27 meeting provided)

Meeting Highlights:

- The annual Joint Stewardship Group Meeting will be moved from December to November to allow for personal schedules during the holiday season and to allow the multi-party monitoring contractor more time to get input into the draft report.
- Coast Range Stewardship Fund: discussion included fund size, inclusion of Hebo SG, revised timeline (copy provided at this meeting), and the improvements to the application process.
- Stewardship Reauthorization in 2013: The Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition is taking the lead in advocating for reauthorization.
- 10-year SSG Celebration: August 17 at Dave Eisler’s property. All four SG’s invited.

Announcements

Andy Kittel: Andy and Chandra attended the collaborative sensing meeting in Ashland, representing Siuslaw stewardship groups. The work on the Siuslaw is highly regarded, given the forest's generated receipts.

Tom Davis: AWC is in the early stages of collaborating with Lane County on a culvert replacement project.

Fran Recht: there was an interesting article in the Eugene Weekly about the controversy surrounding the Seneca Sawmill's biomass generator.

Future meeting dates and agenda items

June 20	6 – 8 pm	Alsea Public Library
		Agenda will include an update from Trish Wilson, BLM, summer field trip planning, summary of the May 16 Coast Range Climate Change workshop, and the new application materials through CPRC&D.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm