

**Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee Forest Plan Revision Public Information & Scoping Meeting
August 2, 2011
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Newport High School Auditorium, 1400 West Fifth Street, Newport, WA**

Meeting Purpose and Overview

The USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) hosted public information and scoping meeting for the Colville and Okanogan National Forest Plan in Newport, Washington on August 2, 2011. The meeting provided a combination of formats, including open house, presentation, question and response, and group comments.

The meeting served two purposes: to provide the public an opportunity to learn about the Forest Service's proposals for long-term management of the Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests, and to provide information on how the public can comment on the proposals, how their comments will be used, and to learn about future opportunities for their involvement.

Meeting Agenda

Deborah Kelly, Plan Revision Public Affairs Specialist, welcomed everyone and explained the meeting objectives, agenda, and meeting conduct. Travis Fletcher, Acting Newport/Sullivan Lake District Ranger, talked briefly about the Forest Plan Revision process, the value of public participation in the process, and Forest Service expectations for the meeting. Travis introduced the rest of the Forest Service's Forest Plan Revision team (Team).

Presentation

Margaret Hartzell, Team leader, presented the key concepts of the Proposed Actions. She also explained that the comment period was extended an additional 30 days until September 28. Since this meeting was held in Newport, Margaret focused on the specific proposals related to the Colville National Forest. She provided a general overview; a process timeline; and *new* and *continued* goals of the Proposed Actions for the following categories:

- Aquatics and riparian systems
- Plants
- Vegetation
- Wildlife habitat
- Access
- Livestock grazing
- Recreation
- Renewable forest products

- Scenery
- Preliminary Wilderness recommendations

Margaret also explained the “tools” the plan uses, as well as how comments are being gathered and used in the process. Please see Attachment 2 for the presentation slides.

Margaret also explained the difference between the Plan Revision project and Travel Management.

Questions & Answers (Q&A)

The following is a synopsis of questions (Q) / comments (C) and corresponding responses (R) from the meeting. Note: similar questions / concerns were combined for summarization purposes.

Q: Salmo Priest is 3% of what Forest?

R: The currently designated Salmo Priest wilderness on the Colville National Forest is 43,348 acre. The Colville Forest is proposing to add an additional 101,000 additional acres in total, and 13,500 acres of that would be adjacent to the Salmo Priest Wilderness.

Q: How much additional wilderness acres for the Okanogan-Wenatchee?

R: The Okanogan-Wenatchee is proposing an additional 125,800 acres all of which are adjacent to currently designated wilderness.

Q: The annual harvest for the Colville is shown as 25 – 35 MMBF. Is there a reason for this spread, and what is it based on?

R: 1. Timing of the NEPA process and budgets can result in the variation 25-25 mmbf. Those figures are based on past sold volume.

Q: Why does the estimated annual harvest range reduced from past levels? Does it have anything to do with what it could produce?

R: That estimate reflects a reduction in Forest Service budget trends, and changes that were put in place with the Eastside Screens, such as the Inland Fisheries guidance for stream and riparian and fisheries habitat protection. No, it doesn't have anything to do with what it could produce, however we would still need to stay within our long term sustained yield capacity (LTSYC).

Q: 1. Regarding sustained yield, 25% of what is capable? 2. Why this amount when the environmental groups support 80 MMBF? 3. You are losing 50 MMBF to insects, why not capture the loss? 4. You are growing more than you are cutting so it's not an old growth issue.

R: 1. I'm not sure I understand your question, but it would be within LTSYC.

2. Our current estimate is based on budgets.
3. I'm not sure of volume figure you referenced, but bug kill decays rapidly and is not suitable for saw and requires NEPA to harvest.
4. Stocking levels are increasing, but old structure is insufficient.

Q: If you have more employees, could the Forest cut more volume?

R: Yes, up to the determined long term sustained yield capacity level—which will be identified in the next phase of this project with the development of the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS).

Q: Adding wilderness would not affect timber volume – is that really correct?

R: *It is based on the suitability of the land for harvest.*

Q: Can livestock graze in wilderness?

R: *Yes, all existing permits are grandfathered in.*

Q: What prevents motorized access into backcountry?

A: *There are two proposed management areas; backcountry and backcountry motorized. Backcountry motorized would have designated motorized trails systems.*

C: Regarding the timber target, the 25-35 MMBF should be around 40 to 45 MMBF to reflect what was sold.

Q: Are you going to identify suitability for timber harvest?

R: *It is tied to the 1982 planning rule and will be identified in the DEIS.*

Q: Why doesn't the current plan incorporate public comments to increase timber harvest/more intensive management?

R: *The proposed action reflects lands available for harvest.*

Q: Are the wilderness areas going to keep expanding? Will it be managed to provide wildlife habitat as well as provide timber output? Wilderness will overgrow and no longer provide wildlife habitat.

A: *The national criteria for wilderness for National Forest System Lands are strict and many areas of Colville don't meet the criteria. Wilderness or potential wilderness areas would not be managed for timber output. Those areas and others will continue to provide wildlife habitat.*

C: I would like to see the Forest Service maintain 100-year old trees; not become a fiber producer. I would suggest not following the market to sell as much as possible.

Q: The Forest Plan provides basic guides for allowable types of travel/use. Does plan include guidance for multiple use for the same piece of ground?

R: *The proposed action identifies what types of activities would be appropriate for each proposed management area, including whether an area is appropriate for motorized recreation*

uses or various types of management activities, such as timber harvest, road building or use of prescribed fire.

Q: What can retained receipts be used for?

R: It depends on the type of activity or program the generated the receipt, there are a variety. Some examples of what funds could be used for include road maintenance following harvest, or replanting.

Q: What are the rules now for vegetation management?

R: That guidance is outlined in the current forest plan.

Q: Why did wilderness have a target of 9%?

A: *There was no target to meet; came from analysis.*

Q: There is rampant OHV use/abuse. What is planned to stop illegal use?

A: *The Forest has a Motor Vehicle Use map, which is the tool used to inform the public what the designated road and trail system is and where motorized use is allowed. Education is one way to help the public understand where use is appropriate. The Forest Service works closely with user groups on information and education efforts, and enforcement, and coordinating on travel management projects to improve the system.*

Q: Is the planning team coordinating with any elected officials?

A: *We are working with local elected representatives, including county commissioners and state and federal representatives, adjacent agencies (wildlife refuge, tribes, state, etc.).*

Closing

Laura Jo West, Colville Forest Supervisor, noted that the formal presentation and question-answer session had ended, and that Forest Service staff would be available for further discussion and to answer any remaining questions.

Margaret and Laura Jo thanked everyone for their participation in the process, noting that their input will be helpful in developing plans in the future. They also encouraged everyone to submit written comments.

The open house reconvened for another 30 minutes. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Attachement 1 provides a list of Forest Service Staff, and Attachment 2 provides a sample of the PowerPoint presentation.

Attachment 1: List of Forest Service Staff

Forest Service Staff

Name	Forest	City, State
Holly Aikens	Colville National Forest	Colville, WA
Amy Dillon	Colville National Forest	Newport, WA
Travis Fletcher	Colville National Forest	Colville, WA
Margaret Hartzell	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Debbie Kelly	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Mark Loewen	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Wenatchee, WA
Craig Newman	Colville National Forest	Colville, WA
Karen Soenke	Colville National Forest	Newport, WA
Lisa Therrell	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Leavenworth, WA
Eric Trimble	Colville National Forest	Newport, WA
Kevin Walton	Colville National Forest	Newport, WA
Laura Jo West	Colville National Forest	Colville, WA

Attachment 2: Flip Chart Notes

WELCOME!

COLVILLE AND OKANOGAN-WENATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST PLAN REVISION

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SCOPING MEETING

August 2, 2011

Newport, Washington

NEWZ Plan Revision

Agenda

- 5:00 p.m. Open House
- 5:30 p.m. Welcome and Meeting Overview
- 5:40 p.m. Informational Presentation
Questions and Responses
- 6:20 p.m. Return to Open House
- 7:00 p.m. Adjourn

NEWZ Plan Revision

Meeting Principles

- Listen actively
- Participate actively
- Discuss concerns in a constructive and civil manner
- Share question and response time
- Please hold applause
- Turn off/mute electronic devices
- Let the facilitators or Forest Service Staff know if you need help finding something, or someone to talk with you.
- The FS will genuinely try to answer, as specifically as possible, any questions about the proposed actions and how they may affect your interest(s) on the Colville or Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests.

NEWZ Plan Revision

Informational Presentation

Margaret Hartzell,
Forest Plan Revision Team Leader

NEWZ Plan Revision

Why you should be involved

- Forest Plan Revision – Proposed Action public involvement
- June 30 to September 28, 2011

"Sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forest and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations."
- Forest Service Mission

NEWZ Plan Revision

What Plans Do...

- Describes desired
 - Habitat for wildlife, aquatic species, and plants
 - Vegetation (trees, shrubs, range lands)
- Identifies areas suited for kinds of travel
 - on foot, motorized, or mechanized
- Recommend wilderness, determine eligibility of wild and scenic rivers
- Provide sideboards for projects
 - standards and guidelines

NEWZ Plan Revision

Attachment 2: Flip Chart Notes

Plan Revision – the basics

- Managing expectations
- Bring current plan up-to-date as required by NFMA
- Cannot make changes to laws, regulations, the directives, policy



Umbrella
Operating framework for Forest

NEWZ Plan Revision

Time Line

- This summer – Proposed Action
- Summer 2012 – DEIS
- Summer 2013 – FEIS
- Fall 2013 – revised forest plan



NEWZ Plan Revision

Proposed Action

- Aquatics and Riparian Systems
 - ▣ New – Key watersheds
 - ▣ Continuing – good water quality, riparian buffers, healthy riparian ecosystems



NEWZ Plan Revision

Proposed Action

- Plants
 - ▣ Continue – preventing introduction and spread of invasive plants
 - ▣ Using native plants
 - ▣ Protecting unique habitats, rare plants, ESA species
 - ▣ Have healthy ecosystems



NEWZ Plan Revision

Proposed Action

- Vegetation
 - ▣ New – role of disturbance in ecosystem; data on composition, structure, and spatial patterns
 - ▣ Continue – focus on ecosystem restoration and forest health, managing wildfire risks, contributing habitat



NEWZ Plan Revision

Proposed Action

- Wildlife Habitat
 - ▣ New – science to better describe habitat condition; ESA species
 - ▣ Continue – high quality habitat, connectivity, and contributing to recovery of ESA species



NEWZ Plan Revision

Attachment 2: Flip Chart Notes

Proposed Action

- Access – roads and trails, docks and bridges
 - ▣ Continue – safe, affordable, environmentally sound system of roads and trails
 - ▣ Continue – range of recreational trails
 - NOTE on the Travel Management process



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Proposed Action

- Livestock Grazing
 - ▣ Continue – range lands in good condition.



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Proposed Action

- Recreation
 - ▣ New – additional data on recreation trends and use specific to Forest
 - ▣ Continue – offer quality, nature-based recreation in outdoor setting



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Proposed Action

- Renewable Forest Products
 - ▣ Special forest products, merchantable wood products
 - ▣ Continue – provide firewood, saw timber, biomass, wood fiber
 - ▣ 25 to 35 mmbf and 10,000 acres per year on average



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Proposed Action

- Scenery
 - ▣ New – system that emphasizes actively managing to enhance and maintain
 - ▣ Continue – provide beautiful scenery



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Proposed Action

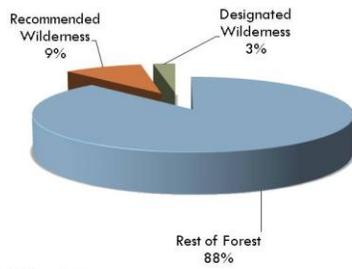
- Preliminary Wilderness Recommendation
 - ▣ Continue – Salmo-Priest Wilderness – 29,000 acres
 - ▣ New – preliminary recommendation of 101,000 acres.
 - About 9% of Forest
 - Not final decision, existing uses can continue until Congress acts
 - Did not recommend areas with motorized trails, mining operations, WUI with dry Forest, tools needed, not high quality



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Attachment 2: Flip Chart Notes

Proposed Action



Percent of total Forest acres

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Proposed Action

- Tool the plan uses - Management Areas
 - Consistent with neighbors
 - Habitats move
 - New congressionally created trail – Pacific Northwest National Scenic



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Commenting

- Today – gather information, ask questions
- Tomorrow - Send us comments specific to the proposed action, on-target, thoughtful
- Use comments to build options (alternatives) for plan



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How to Comment

- **Send comments to:**
Forest Plan Revision
Okanogan Valley Office
1 240 Second Avenue South
Okanogan, WA 98840
- **Email:** r6_ewzplanrevision@fs.fed.us
- **Website:** www.fs.usda.gov/goto/okawen/plan-revision

Comments are most helpful if received by September 28, 2011.

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