

**Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee Forest Plan Revision Public Information & Scoping Meeting
August 13, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Magnuson Park, Mountaineers Program Center, Sand Point Way N.E., Seattle, WA**

Meeting Purpose and Overview

The USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) hosted a public information and scoping meeting for the Colville and Okanogan National Forest Plan in Seattle, Washington on August 13, 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. Becki Heath, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Supervisor, talked briefly about the Forest Plan Revision process, the value of public participation in the process, and Forest Service expectations for the meeting. Becki 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 Seattle, Margaret focused on the specific proposals related to the Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests. 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: Why wasn't 13-Mile/Kettle Crest on the Colville recommended for wilderness?

R: We took a hard look at that area. It has potential, but there are trade-offs. We're concerned about dry forest and the spread of fire to the Colville Reservation and the town of Republic. There is an active prescribed fire program for old growth ponderosa pine in that area that is more appropriate outside of wilderness, especially given information from our fire modeling.

Q: For wilderness areas not included in this proposal, how can we get them considered?

R: Give the areas and your reasoning in your written comments and we will consider them.

Q: Why are there no areas proposed for wilderness in the Sawtooth Inventoried Roadless Area?

R: These areas are adjacent to the Sawtooth wilderness and have a large motorized trail system, and high use with mountain bikes and horses. This is also a popular area for backpacking with motorcycles. It is one of the few high alpine areas with motorized trails. We wanted to preserve this access.

Q: Why is mining not part of your stated planning principles, but it was used as part of your analysis for wilderness recommendations?

R: Mining is one of the multiple uses the Forest Service manages for. It promotes jobs and local economies. We looked at Hi/Low/Moderate mineral potential maps for the forest and then did not recommend high potential areas. Liberty Bell and the Salmo Priest area were two of these. We didn't want to preclude future mining use.

Q: What studies did you use to consider habitat connectivity, endangered species, and wilderness?

R: We have a document with citations, which is being prepared for publication and posting to our webpage. We focused on connectivity, especially for species that require a large acreage of unmodified habitat.

Q: How can you ensure proper management of areas that were formerly late successional reserves (LSRs)?

R: The NW Forest Plan allocated areas to just LSR or matrix. However, we're now contending with climate change, barred owls, and uncharacteristically severe fire. We couldn't maintain that habitat with strict boundaries. The new approach is more dynamic. We will be developing new habitat and working to move much of our potential habitat toward older forest conditions.

Q: What is the connection between active management and LSRs?

R: We are cultivating a type of habitat across the forest that is suitable for spotted owls and other old forest species.

Q: Can you implement this new Plan, or is that outside your authority? Is there another political process?

R: We have the authority to revise the plan and make a decision to implement it. The Regional Forester makes that decision.

Q: How will the plan work with the new 2012 planning rule?

R: The planning rule is a set of instructions for how to do the plan writing/revision process. Current plans were written under the 1982 planning rule. This plan started, and will finish, under the 1982 rule. However, as proposed, our new plan can meet the intent of the new planning rule. We don't anticipate conflicts.

Q: How do you determine riparian buffers and widths?

R: They are determined for us. We currently have different strategies for different areas and types of fish. This new plan will combine those into a single Aquatic Riparian Conservation Strategy and will adopt the most protective of the three levels of buffers, which is 300 feet. The original background on buffers was developed with the Interior Columbia Basin assessment, so that's why I say they're determined for us.

Q: What about "quiet" as a resource, and not just scenery?

R: This is part of the wilderness process, but doesn't figure strongly into the management approach elsewhere. Roadless areas without motorized trails, and especially areas where winter motorized use is limited, tend to provide this resource.

Q: How did you consider motorized backcountry areas and winter use?

R: The "backcountry motorized" management areas refer to summer use. We don't propose changing existing winter use. Research Natural Areas and wilderness areas do not allow any motorized use, including winter use.

Q: How does Travel Management (TM) relate to Forest Plan Revision? How does TM address winter use?

R: TM will finish before the new Plan is finalized, and the teams share information as both projects move forward. TM does not address winter use.

Q: I am a river kayaker. There is a lack of day use sites on rivers. How can my community provide place-based information on possible sites and on our use of non-system trails?

R: Please make written comments about your desire for more day use sites. Non-system trails can cause damage and adversely affect wildlife and rivers. We don't propose eliminating all of them, but we propose a goal of closing many over the life of the Plan.

Closing

Becki 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 Becki 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 12:00 p.m.

Attachment 1: List of Forest Service Staff

Forest Service Staff		
Name	Forest	City, State
Rod Clausnitzer	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Margaret Hartzell	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Becki Heath	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Wenatchee, WA
Debbie Kelly	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Clint Kyhl	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Wenatchee, WA
Rachel Lipsky	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Wenatchee, WA
Mark Loewen	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Wenatchee, WA
Andrea Lyons	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Wenatchee, WA
Tom Shuhda	Colville	Colville, WA
Lisa Therrell	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Leavenworth, WA
Roland Giller	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Wenatchee, WA

Attachment 2: Flip Chart Notes

WELCOME!

COLVILLE AND OKANOGAN-WENATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST PLAN REVISION

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SCOPING MEETING

August 13, 2011

Seattle, Washington

NEWZ Plan Revision

Agenda

- 10:00 a.m. Open House
- 10:30 a.m. Welcome and Meeting Overview
- 10:45 a.m. Informational Presentation
Questions and Responses
- 11:30 a.m. Return to Open House
- 12:00 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



NEWZ Plan Revision

Proposed Action

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



NEWZ Plan Revision

Proposed Action

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



NEWZ Plan Revision

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



NEWZ Plan Revision

Proposed Action

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



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Proposed Action

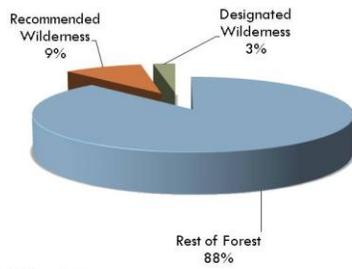
- Preliminary Wilderness Recommendation
 - ▣ Continue – Salmo-Priest Wilderness – 29,000 acres
 - ▣ New – preliminary recommendation of 101,000 acres.
 - About 9% of Forest
 - Not final decision, existing uses can continue until Congress acts
 - Did not recommend areas with motorized trails, mining operations,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



NEWZ Plan Revision

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
1240 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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