

Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee Agenda
Monday, Aug. 20 @ 6:30pm
Trinity Co. Off. Of Education Conference Room

Called to order at 6:35 pm by Jim French

1. Introductions – RAC, Forest Service, Project proponents

RAC members present: Jim French, Roger Jaegel, Arnold Whitridge, Pat Frost, Jerry Hawke, Tom Waltz, Irl Everest, Joseph Bower, Raymond Patton, Linda Wright, Donna Harmon; Susan Erwin.

Audience members included: John Lyons, Alan Hill, Sam Burrows, Randi Paris, Nick Goulette, Lisa Hoover, Nancy Curran, Robin Bryant, Sherry Preen, Carl Van Metter, Joe Croteau, Tina Lynsky, Mitch W, Cynthia Tarwater, Scott LaFein, Colleen O’Sullivan, and Alex Cousins. Donna Rupp, note taker.

2. Check of required quorum

Group A – Wright, Walz present (Not enough present, but can call Steve Hodge to make quorum if need to vote).

Group B – Whitridge, Hauke, Everest, Bower, Bonomini (quorum)

Group C – Patton, French, Jaegel, Frost (quorum)

Will call Steve if decision is made to vote. The proposals had a short turn-around this time and may need more time before voting at September 10 meeting.

3. RAC membership 2012 – re- up S. Erwin

Everybody (nearly) – terms expiring Oct. 31 2012. But you have to be re-appointed if RAC is reauthorized. Please mail AD755 form w/ original signature by Aug. 31 to cover membership through remainder of RAC extension (to 9/30/2012). Currently recruiting for new RAC members. Jim – It makes sense to re-up for current members because it takes so long to get authorized. Committee A is down to bare minimum right now.

4. Select 2012 Chairperson(s)

Jim willing to chair meeting tonight, but would like someone else to be chair. Pat Frost agreed to be chairman. September 10 is last time we have meeting scheduled in federal register. Takes 3 weeks to get in Register, so vote should be made at September 10 meeting.

5. Review 2012 SRS Title 2 allocation

The carryover available today is \$94,771 for a total of \$589,951.

6. Review available carryover for allocating- S. Erwin

Done (above).

7. Review timetable for submittal to Forest Supervisor – S. Erwin

A repeat of last year – authorization ends on September 30, 2013. If all recommended proposals are NEPA ready, should get approval by Forest Supervisor; once get recommendation, give proposal to forest supervisor. Funds can’t be spent until proposal is approved and FY13 budget is made available. Donna H: If decisions are made at the September 10 meeting, all revisions to proposals need to be received by S Erwin no later than September 20.

Susan E: A number of proposals did not have maps; will be working with everyone to make sure everything is included (e.g. maps, District Ranger Checklist)

8. Hear 3 minute presentations on 32 RAC proposals

a. Fuels presentations

1. Mitch and Nick on first three: Kellogg fuel breaks Units #3, #8 and #9.

Is District Ranger Support checklist available? Mitch has intention of signing it; this is part of larger fuels project. NEPA ready; WUI & ties into watershed center fuel break projects. Nick: continuation of Hayfork fuel break project; Continuing work with South Fork Management Unit. Clarification on the map - follow the numbers: #3 is hashed in; separate proposals on 8 & 9; List is prioritized in numerical order; with #3 being top priority, etc. There are willing landowners adjacent to fuel break. The type of fuel is brush and drops into timber. No mechanical operations allowed under the approved NEPA; all three are NEPA ready.

2. Nancy Curran next two proposals: Mad River Prescribed Fire Support and Beaver slide Mastication.

The Mad River prescribed fire work is part of Mad Ridge fuel break and part of Van Duzen. We have back log of work to do and it is a good opportunity for WRTC to get crews and train people to do work;

Jim: What success with private landowners? Nancy: They have benefited. We've had fires in the area and the fuel break works. People are starting to realize that they work; WRTC put in the breaks and focus on low complexity burns.

Treat activity fuel (from active timber sale) Propose 3 weeks of work – but project is scaleable; **Jim – Request brush disposal (BD) information on project from Nancy.** Discussion on BD and how it equals out.

Mastication Treatment-Beaver slide Timber Sale and Fuel Treatment Project
This project was litigated and the ruled in favor of the Forest Service. Joseph Bower mentioned there may be further appeals to a higher court. Contingency project approved last year, but was withdrawn at the end because of the litigation. Part of Beaver slide project, but not part of stewardship. Proposing to treat about 90 acres of pure Manzanita at very North and South ends of the area. **Map should read Road 501 (not 504).** Work done by watershed center.

Nancy – priority is the mastication work. Willing to go to \$64,000 and one week instead of 3 weeks.

Jim: If we followed our traditional funding split we would have about \$244,000 for fuels, but this year's requests total \$759k.

Tom: Will not vote for mastication, because just get a brush field if you can't burn it or retreat in 5-10 years.

Nancy: Have found it to be effective if follow up mastication after 5 years w/ more mastication and then do understory burn.

3. Alex Cousins: McKenzie Fuels Reduction; 31 acres near where trail construction and oak release; increased use of trail since work, but quite a bit of brush in area; 150 ft. on either side of trail. 5 mile loop; can do less if get less \$; part of old Oregon fire. Part of community protection plan, in WUI and is NEPA ready.

4. Mitch W: Mud Springs Fuel Break

NEPA ready; the shaded fuel break is getting brushed in – but Kellogg is our priority.

Discussion on what was done in the area in the past. Past work included mastication, dozer and hand work.

Clarification needed – is it supposed to be Unit 1 or 21?

5. Alex Cousins: Trinity County Chipping

The work is within WUI to do chipping adjacent to forest land; will focus on Burnt Ranch with the "All Lands" initiative; work with local people; not getting EQIP money on it. Hard to quantify the work – would have numbers after work complete, because it depends on private property owners wanting the work done; would claim acres based on what was cleared; in past have done about 80 sites – working with seniors, etc.; California Fire Safe Council funded it in the past; no ground disturbing activity – similar to NEPA for fund transfer; Susan – not sure if that applies. Need to work with Ranger on the NEPA side.

6. Randi Paris: Tule Creek Thin Project

250 acres of thinning in plantations; doing some other plantation treatments that were funded in 2009 and 2010 and watershed center doing work now; hybrid project; treat heavy concentrations of fuels with some mastication units in this project; Could be scaled back – created Phase I and Phase II plans (provided Phase 1 & 2 options);

Tom: Was there a pre-commercial thin? No, NEPA was completed in 2007 and covers about 6200 acres; there was some release for growth, but not all had Pre Commercial Thin. Hand thin ? No will do burns based on need, esp. along roads; mix of plantation Douglas Fir and Pine; not commercial size yet even though 30 yrs old; Pat – cost Phase I and II? Could break it up and scale to size if need. Would mastication be able to be pulled out of one or the other? Randi - It is scalable;

Jim: Proposals are going to have to be scaled, because of limited amount of funds.

Joseph: Maybe we need to put more in fuels because of the fires.

b. Roads presentations

Cynthia Tarwater: Legacy Roads and Salt Creek Decommissioning proposals

Legacy roads upgrades would tag onto existing project. Have a match of \$; Already completed 42 miles and there is 100 miles remaining; can't work on remainder of roads with current funds; All level 2 roads and open to public; a lot are very brushy. Been working with OHV commission to brush roads; FS doesn't like brushing, but needs to brush them to get in and do work. This is the priority proposal.

Salt Creek Decommissioning Proposal – discussion over relationship of these roads to the proposed timber sale, if it is feasible to work on this project and how it ties into the Westside project. Perceived overlaps in roads between the Westside Watershed Project and the Salt Project may present questions about whether the NEPA was completed or not for a subset of roads in this proposal. Overlap needs to be worked out.

Cynthia: If there is any question about conflict between the road work & possible timber sale, we can just scratch off Salt Creek proposal. Decommissioning is easier to find funding for than road upgrade work.

c. Other presentations

1. Trail Resource Protection, Maintenance, and Enhancement – no rep and no discussion.

2. Nick G.: Indian Valley Summer Camp. Can reduce funding request; half of request would fund 1 yr. generously; 13k would work. Camp plus trail and fuels related work to introduce them to work in woods.

3. Fir Cove/Bailey Canyon Water Supply - no rep. Discussion: Tom – Isn't this maintenance on infrastructure? Jim – This isn't the kind of work that we've done in the past. Donna: this work is allowable under the RAC authority-for public good.

4. Lusetta Nelson: Bluebird wildlife enhancement. The site is a 5 acre historic hydraulic mine site; project would restore native habitat especially for Western Pond Turtle; sub-soils in poor shape and invasive species taken hold. Need revegetation; NEPA is done and some previous work has been done at the site. The ponds have been excavated, but still work to be done in Phase II. Project would work with RCD to mow yellow star thistle. Can negotiate down to 3 acres instead of five. If we burn in fall, we'll need to then mow for next two years. Considerable discussion about the methods that work for controlling star thistle.

5. Bowerman barn stabilization – no rep. Discussion: They got 2011 RAC money – 25k. Found out that additional stabilization work that had to be done before restoration work could begin. Work could be done incrementally; Tina – NEPA is being completed this year for meadow so

the FS can pasture the mules there, but this is really two separate projects. The long term goal is to start doing some programs and re-instate apple orchard.

Pat: note that the spreadsheet says \$80K but proposal is for \$50k.

6. Lisa Hoover: 2013 Treatment of Noxious Weed Priority Sites

Treat category A or B sites that are less than 2 acres; are satellites – not continuous. Most could be contained in 2-5 yrs; going to be working on diffuse knapweed in S. Fork; if continually stay on them can eradicate them. Strategic plan working with WRTC. Focused on areas around Burnt Ranch – areas that are getting smaller; if drop to 15 sites would need about \$11k; Hand treatment. NEPA ready. Thistles and diffuse knapweed – about 7 different species.

7. Lisa Hoover: Beaver slide Project Noxious Weed Treatment 2013

Idea is to deal with weeds where equipment comes in to implement Beaver Slide Timber Harvest; focused on landings that are dominated by yellow star thistle; equipment is a big vector. TCRC would do the work. Goal is to reduce spread of starthistle outside of project area, not control starthistle on landings.

Donna H.: Would be helpful if Six Rivers can get back to us with priority on all of these weed projects; Jim: Need to have that discussion by September 10 so we don't decide for you.

Tom: If timber sale is done, will this be covered in that process? Seems that it should be in contract.

8. Nick G. Next three items: Hayfork Community Wetlands Enhancement 2013; Basin Trails; and Hidden Valley Trail

Priority: 2. Wetlands – RAC funded 10K last yr. USFWS grant and School district is building wetland curriculum; money from RAC would fund implementation of at least 2 wetland sites; NEPA will be done by USFWS and that is their share of the project – but it is not done yet; have funding to stop head cutting of streams; working with County on work now; USFS would be cooperating agency on the NEPA.

Priority: 1. Basin Trails – could cut \$ in half for 30 miles of trail for 1 year; have been supported by RAC for several years; if less funds, would do fewer miles. This provides great job opportunity for local youth.

Priority: 3. Hidden Valley Trail – long standing aspiration – link between Hyampom and Forest Glen along South Fork Trinity River with missing pieces of trail. National Park Service is going to grant staff to help with technical aspects of the trail; asking RAC to work on public lands parts of trails. Will take many years to get easements and complete; this would be for maintenance only; Hidden Valley could be grouped with Youth crews trail work.

9. Scott LaFein: Ascend Wilderness Experience Stewardship Project 2013

Funding for the last 5 years; we could go to \$13,400 for one year. Just wrapped up this year's program.

10. Horse Ridge NRT (6E08) Northwest Youth Crew – No rep. Is Northwest Youth Crew going to be used in coordination with other proposals here?

11. Mad River Ranger District OHV Water Bar Mitigations – No rep. Discussion: Need further information from Mad River Ranger District before September 10th.

12. Joe Croteau: Opening Trail Maintenance on the PCT Plus Feeder Trails 2013;

This is the center of next section 250 mile stretch that our unit does log-out and ID areas for PCT to brush out; \$ requested reflects a 5 yr. timeline; Can we do a multi-year project even though RAC expires in one year?

Jim – Seems to answer itself: only one year available. So should scale request to 1 year.

Tom – If we're not going to be around, I like the idea that PCT will be maintained multiple years.
Donna H – Will check if it is okay to make this request.

13. Alan Hill: Shasta-Trinity Trails Project 2013; same as what has been done in past – resupply camps; summary sheet shows accomplishments from May – Aug 20. Want to open up trails so access is available when fires occurs. This is a one year request; fuel is expensive to haul stock; appreciate past work.

14. Alex Cousins: Weaverville Basin Trails, Trinity Alps Wilderness Trails 2013; would be willing to work with BCH to coordinate the work on the East Weaver Lake Trail: Top priority is Weaver Basin Trail maintenance and then the East Weaver Lake Trail, which would be a great, near-town access to the Wilderness for horses; Would like to work with ST Trails on this project; discussion on working on FS trails; Funding for crew needed to work with ST horsemen; \$6k for WBT maintenance and rest for Wilderness; need to prioritize after discussion with Mike McFadin & Alan Hill; **Alex and Alan need to meet with Mike McFadin and strategize for best proposal.**

15. Mad River and Lower Trinity YCC
Mad River Was funded last year. Some are filling in on the engine; every year they go to fire school; Willow Creek Fire safe people appreciate the work that gets done.

16. AmeriCorps WSP – no rep. Jim – challenge is that it is hard to fund what we've supported in the past, let alone add something new.

17. Alex Cousins: Summer Field Camp at YFR; Increase in funding request is due to inflation and increased costs of camp. Children are getting plenty of exposure to public lands. Donna H: **Need outcomes added to meet requirement of the law; trail maintenance or something.**

9. Discuss strategy for consideration

J French – Recommend that we have time to digest it and meet again.

R Jaegel – Don't feel prepared to vote tonight.

Discussion on Fuels:

Tom – almost \$750k in fuels projects will not generate one board foot of timber. We wanted to generate revenue, but none of these have; not feeling like going to vote for any fuels or roads.

Jim French: Have not pushed it enough, but the NEPA has been an issue.

Arnold: Seems like some of the FS lands in our county are brush-covered and can't generate a board foot. If we reduce brush, it will help trees.

Joseph: There was a timber sale on the Mad Ridge fuel break.

Tom: What I'm saying that there is opportunity for these projects to be self-sustaining.

Roger: Concerned about doing hand-piling on ground that could be mechanical; we're piling and then not burning for several years; need to look at costs and reduce fuel for first year.

Joseph – There are still plenty of piles in E. Fork that are just sitting there after several years.

Roger – We need to address the piles that are fire risks.

Discussion on Roads:

Cynthia – I'm pulling the Salt Creek road project.

Joseph - Need more money for fuels. Cut it to \$50,000?

Arnold – It seems a little severe to chop roads down to \$50,000.

JH – We could negotiate.

Pat – A general thought is that projects that support future stewardship of these federal lands is important. For example The Legacy Roads project provides access a set of constituents who will then

support our RAC's goals projects like Ascend, Indian Valley and Summer Camp are all creating new land stewards; our resources will be better served if we help kids get out there to experience and understand the resources around them.

Raymond – Maybe we could put a \$ figure we can shoot for so we come back next time (on the 10th).

Discussion on non-Roads/non-Fuels

Jim: Looking for consensus on some of the non-roads/fuels on what should happen: see spreadsheet for funding recommendations.

Bluebird wildlife project: Carl - not comfortable with Bluebird mowing of Star thistle; discussion with Lusetta on effectiveness.

Jim: We'll keep it alive and request that Lusetta come back with some options on costs.

Bowerman Barn: Irl – It is the oldest standing barn in Trinity County would like to see it stand; Need to come back with some options that are way less money; but it may or may not float.

Noxious weeds – again need to coordinate the proposals and work with youth crews.

WRTC: Arnold wants to keep some \$ for the wetlands project; not completely scratch it yet.

AWE: Support for \$13,400.

Shasta Trails – leave at \$33,000 but may come back at \$24,000; need to talk to Alex and FS

Note: Need to have at least \$100,000 in contingency proposals that are NEPA ready for any carry-over that is available.

Chipping – Tom supportive of it.

Suggestion that RAC should fund at least one proposal from Six Rivers, one from Mad River, then one from each Shasta Trinity District; after choosing those, create priority list.

Pat – Would like to consider the historical split of funds, but this time roads would receive the 17% share, then the remainder goes to the other two.

Suggest that several people meet before meeting and then go through ideas; do it from 3-5pm the same date. Donna H - it has to be an open meeting and no voting.

Donna Harmon - **We over looked the one proposal that was added: invasive weeds for Six Rivers; Jim – they need to have discussion and coordinate proposals on invasive weeds.**

10. Give input to project proponents

Input was given during presentations and discussion on the strategy to use when considering proposals.

11. Consider funding recommendations, or postpone until Sept 10

Postponed until September meeting. Will hold a “sub-committee” meeting with focus on Fuels from 3-5 pm, prior to the 6:30 pm meeting.

12. Consider need for Sept. 10 RAC Meeting date

Next meeting scheduled for September 10. The meeting agenda needs to request a vote for the next chair person.

13. Adjourn 9:40 pm

Action Items:

1. Re: Mad River Prescribed Fire Proposal: ***Jim – Request brush disposal information on project from Nancy.***
2. Re: Mud Springs fuel break proposal: ***Clarification needed – is it Unit 1 or 21?***
3. Re: Noxious/invasive weeds proposals for Six Rivers: ***Jim – they need to have discussion and coordinate proposals on invasive weeds, then come back with prioritized list.***
4. Re: Opening Trail Maintenance for PCT: Can the committee fund a five year request?
Donna H – Will check if it is okay to make this request.
5. Re: Trails work in Alps: ***Alex and Alan need to meet with Mike McFadin and strategize for best proposal.***
6. Re: Weaverville Summer Camp: ***needs to revise proposal to include the accomplishments D Rupp/A Cousins***
7. Re: Next Meeting (September 10):
 - a. ***Committee needs to designate at least \$100,000 in contingency proposals that are NEPA ready for any carry-over funding.***
 - b. ***Agenda needs to contain item to vote for next chair person.***