

Welcome –Tracy Hollingshead

Introductions – See sign up sheet

Recap of last meeting – Martha

- Basic project
- Idea of collaboration
- Review last meeting
 - Historic overview- wildlife perspective
 - Existing vegetation conditions
 - Grazing history, current allotments
 - Vegetative Response to fire

Tonight's meeting Goals

- Input from specialists
- Input from residents

All powerpoint presentations can be found on Rainey Creek web site.

Targhee Revised Forest Plan –Deb Flowers

- Standards and Guides
- Subsection Direction
- Management Prescriptions
 - 2.7 Elk and Deer Winter Range – Goals/Standards and Guidelines
 - 4.1 Developed Recreation Site – Goals/Standards and Guidelines
 - 4.3 Dispersed Camping Mgt – Goals/Standards and Guidelines
- Additional Management Direction
 - Idaho Roadless Areas
 - Most Restrictive to Least Restrictive
 - Backcountry/ Restoration encompasses most of project (delineated on map)
 - Guidelines associated with Backcountry/Restoration
 - Lynx Habitat
 - Identified on map (outside of project area)
 - Explanation of Snowshoe Hare/Lynx Habitat
- Opportunity for questions
 - One question regarding lynx habitat – does that mean that there are Lynx there?

Wildlife Information for the Swan Valley Winter Range Restoration – Dave Ovard

- Project Direction and Constraints for Elk and Deer Winter Range (2.7a)
- Wildlife focus
 - Forest Hawks and Owls
 - Limited use of project area by these species
 - Could increase with more open area/higher herbaceous cover and therefore small mammals
 - Forest Carnivores
 - Use of area year round
 - Increased small mammal population likely to attract carnivores
 - Occasional sighting of Grizzly Bear, could increase in the next ten years
 - Treatments increasing diversity of biological components attract carnivores
 - Migratory Birds
 - Creating diverse vegetation community will attract a diverse mix of songbirds
 - Diversity = resiliency
 - Game Animals
 - Some grouse, treatment likely to have neutral effect to grouse/fowl
 - Big Game – Winter fawn survival may improve with increased herbaceous forage
- Recent Past
 - Map display of increased Juniper from 1950s to now
 - Photo examples of Juniper and Mohogany
 - From afar depicting lack of diversity
 - Close in depicting lack of ground cover
 - Photo example of post burn in Darby Canyon
 - Photo example of Rx burn in Bear Trap Unit
 - Photo example of herbaceous response
 - Photo example of Aspen Stand in Rainey Creek
- Conclude
 - Habitat improvement is needed

Soils – Kara Geen

- Forest Plan Direction
 - Goals -Guidelines
 - Fine Organic Matter
 - Woody Residue
 - Explanation of Ecological Unit
 - Unit 1106 Complex/Non Homogenous unit
 - SW aspects – thin fuel load, rocky soils, more productive soils at toe of slope supporting increased numbers of Juniper

- N aspects supporting conifer stands
 - Field assessments completed to verify conditions match the E/U description
 - Modeling can be done to assess potential impacts of treatments
 - Inputs described
 - Defaults described
 - Output comparison for undisturbed forest vs. with wildfire, mechanical thinning, creation of access roads
 - Question from participants regarding support of project, Ph level , thinning specifics in model

Hydrology – Louis Wasniewski

- Explanation of Upper/Lower Rainey Creek Watersheds
 - Lower RC WS 16K FS lands
 - Snow dominated system
- Relevant Direction
 - Standards and Guides
 - Stream Function/Water Quality
 - Limitations for Disturbance
 - 30% Disturbance Guideline
 - Spring Canyon Disturbance equates to 11.2% disturbed acres
 - 18.8% room for additional disturbance(approx. 3000 acres)
 - Subsection Direction
 - Management Prescriptions
 - AIZ Protection
 - 2.83 provides direction for buffering certain characteristics of AIZ features
- Water Quality Act, Idaho Water Quality Standards
- Idaho DEQ Guidance
 - Established Water Quality Standards
- Rainey Creek is listed as Impaired for
 - E-Coli
 - Combined Biota/Habitat assessment
- Best Practices
 - AIZ buffering
 - Avoid neg effects of hazmat
 - Maintain disturbance maximums
 - Projects designed to improve water conditions
 - R.C. Trail Improvement – reroute ATV trail out of drainage
 - Upper R.C. Trailhead improvement
- Questions from participants regarding source of E-Coli, water sampling questions

Fisheries – Lee Mabey

- Introduction
- Example of Exclosure in Rainey Creek – browse conditions
- History of projects since 2000
 - Improvements, diversions, etc.
- 1999 Yellowstone Cutthroat and Sculpin
- 2009 Brown Trout in addition to 1999 species
 - Brown Trout feed on Cutthroat
- Life History Patterns
 - Resident Fish live solely in Rainey Creek
 - Fluvial Fish – migrate from S.Fork into drainages like Rainey Creek to spawn
 - Patterns driven by food needs, flow regimes,
 - Natives are resistant to replacement by non-natives with help from fluvial populations
 - Characteristics of Cutthroat
 - Characteristics of Rainbow
 - Characteristics of Brown Trout
- Impacts – Recreation
 - Decrease in woody vegetation in high rec. use areas
 - ATV use off trail
- Possible Treatment Impacts
 - Could increase rec. impacts with removal of Juniper in valley bottom
 - Potential for nutrient release
 - Methods for decreasing or avoiding impacts
 - Leave riparian buffer
 - Leave mosaic
 - Leave junipers to act as a screen for rec. overuse
- Participant questions
 - What is being done now to keep rec. users from damaging streambed
 - What are the numbers associated with spawners in R.C.

Smoke Concerns – Deb Flowers

- Concerns about Smoke
- Regulations, Montana/Idaho Airshed Group
- Smoke emissions compared (prescribed vs. wildfire)
- Rx. – Planning and mitigations for reducing smoke impacts
- Wildfire – impacts from last year's large fire occurrence
- Smoke Dispersion- coordination with NWS for outlook
- How can we best communicate a planned or unplanned fire?
 - Post office local bulletin board
- Questions from participants
 - Clarify the benefit of having some emissions controls with a prescribed burn vs. wildfire

Recreation – Greg Hanson

- Winter travel map depicts regulations regarding recreation
- Main Recreation Uses
 - Antler hunting, trail use, fishing, hunting, etc.
- Trail system – depicted on map
- Dispersed camping, barriers
- Interpretive signage

Participant questions – regarding rules for antler hunting

Wrap Up/Summary – Martha Williamson

- Opportunities for field trip to look at the project site
- Tuesday May 21st show of hands voted as preferred date for field trip. Meet at Legion Hall at 9:00 on May 21. Plan 9-2 for the field trip.

Participant questions

- Will the restoration project increase the problem with Elk moving into the valley for wintering
 - Response from F&G (Shane Roberts) - Hard snow years will create problems no matter what but on easier years the treatments will improve the opportunity for wintering elk to remain higher and out of the valley.
- Why this project area?
 - Response –Tracy – The past history of feeding elk in the drainage
 - Lack of shrub component (Dave Ovard). Very little Bitterbrush
- In the last meeting a suggestion made was to cut Juniper for commercial use
 - Response – Yes, definitely an option to consider even though access will limit
- Tracy – looking for input from participants
 - What would they like to see during the field trip?
- Participant – Is Sequestration affecting the F.S.
 - Tracy – Budget Info
- Participant – Where is the closest home / private? Is there opportunity for residents to get information regarding Firewise?
- What is the timeline for the project?
 - The very earliest to begin prep would be next summer (2014)

Flat Iron – Tracy mention of Flat Iron Decision and opportunity for questions and information share. Maps available and personnel available for answering questions.

