

North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative Outreach and Education Workgroup Charter, Version 2.0 December 4, 2013

The North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative (NCWFHC) has formed an Outreach and Education Workgroup to communicate to all stakeholders and the general public information about the Collaborative, its efforts and accomplishments. The Workgroup will also conduct targeted outreach and education to assist the NCWFHC in fulfilling its functions and achieving its goals.

Consistent with the NCWFHC decision-making process, the Outreach and Education Workgroup will make decisions by consensus. In the absence of consensus, diverging recommendations will be forwarded to the NCWFHC for decision-making.

The Workgroup will develop an annual or biennial workplan listing the actions or projects the Workgroup agrees to undertake. This workplan, and all recommendations of the Workgroup, will be approved by the full Collaborative group before any actions are taken.

Communication Protocol

The following communication protocols will ensure consistent messaging and assist the NCWFHC in building strong relationships by becoming a professional, responsive and trusted source of information. Workgroup members will develop and utilize NCWFHC-approved templates for news releases.

Workgroup Responsibilities:

- **Communication Products:**
 - Develop *Key Messages* related to the NCWFHC, to be approved by the NCWFHC, about which the Workgroup can draft and distribute communication products (e.g. blogs, news releases, web content) without prior content approval. Request review from any agency or organization specifically referenced in the product.
 - In cases where communication products are outside the scope of the approved *Key Messages*, but are based on consensus agreements of the NCWFHC, the Workgroup Chair will obtain approval by the Co-chairs of the NCWFHC before releasing the communication.
 - If communication products are outside the scope of *Key Messages* and not based on consensus agreements, it will be approved by the Steering Committee before distribution. The Steering Committee typically meets monthly and receives documents for approval at least one week prior to its meetings. For this reason, draft communications will require significant lead time, at least a month, for Steering Committee approval.
- Use Associated Press Stylebook in writing news releases.
- Provide guidance to NCWFHC members on media relations.
- Develop and pitch story ideas to media representatives.

- Help NCWFHC members prepare for interviews. In interviews, NCWFHC members are to communicate only about agreements which have full NCWFHC consensus, or communicate only from the perspective of their organization or agency. This distinction should be made clear to the interviewer.
- Plan and facilitate media field trips.
- Post all news releases to website (currently NCWFHC information is posted on the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB) website).
- Remain cognizant of NCWFHC-branded projects that should be highlighted to members of the collaborative, news media, stakeholders and the general public.
- Develop other outreach and education materials, or complete other tasks, as identified by the NCWFHC.

Spokespersons for NCWFHC

In order to maintain a consistent message, the NCWFHC will designate spokespersons to communicate with the media, as follows:

- One of the Co-Chairs of the NCWFHC will serve as the primary spokesperson.
- The Outreach and Education Workgroup Chair will serve as the contact on news releases, briefing papers and website pages.
- The facilitator will serve as a general spokesperson for the NCWFHC.
- In some circumstances, an expert may be identified as a spokesperson by the Outreach and Education Workgroup (e.g., a wildland fire expert to speak about restoration activities on a burned landscape or project area.)

If the press contacts a NCWFHC member, they are to communicate only about agreements which have full consensus, or communicate only from the perspective of their organization or agency. Members should always distinguish between official NCWFHC communications and communications from their agency's/organization's perspective. Press should then be directed to the Outreach and Education Workgroup Chair for further engagement, or to one of the spokespersons identified for the subject matter.

Website

The UCSRB website is available to post information, meeting agendas, summaries, and documents related to the NCWFHC, though the Collaborative may develop its own website in the future. The Outreach and Education Workgroup, with assistance from the facilitator, will maintain the website in a timely fashion so that it remains a credible and useful source of information on the NCWFHC.

Workgroup Responsibilities:

- Utilize an agreed-upon template for the website.
- Post fresh content to the website or designate a webmaster who will post the content within 2 weeks of document approval, finalization of consensus documents or milestones achieved.