

North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative Frequently Asked Questions, Draft Version 2.2 June 2014

Background: The North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative strives to advance forest health through transparent actions that improve forest resiliency, preserve fish and wildlife habitat, protect natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, promote utilization of natural resources, and support local economies in Chelan and Okanogan Counties.

Participants first held meetings on June 13-14, 2013 with more than 40 representatives of timber industry, conservationists, and local, state, federal and tribal government working to increase the pace and footprint of restoration on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. **What is the North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative (NCWFHC)?** It is a diverse group of stakeholders - timber industry, conservationists, and local, state, federal and tribal governments - working collaboratively to restore the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest (OWNF) in Chelan and Okanogan Counties. The NCWFHC is using a consensus-based approach to reach agreement on landscape-scale restoration projects that meet the ecologic, social and economic interests of stakeholders, and accelerate restoration on the OOWNF.
2. **Who are the members?** As of June 2014: American Forest Resource Council, Boise-Cascade, Cascadia Conservation District, Chelan County, Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition, Colville Confederated Tribes, Colville Tribal Sort Yard, Conservation Northwest, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Nature Conservancy, Okanogan Conservation District, Trout Unlimited, US Forest Service – OOWNF, Vaagen Bros. Lumber Co, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Natural Resources, Washington State Prescribed Fire Council, Wilderness Society, Yakama Nation.
3. **Why do we need to restore the OOWNF?** There is an urgent need to restore the OOWNF. Numerous USFS studies have shown current conditions on the 4-million-acre OOWNF facilitate the spread of uncharacteristically severe fires, insect infestations, disease epidemics, habitat loss and hydrologic events that cause massive erosion. Currently, the OOWNF restores approximately 1% of its land per year. Through its Forest Restoration Strategy, the OOWNF aims to double its restoration footprint over the next ten years.
4. **How will the collaborative help restore healthy forests?** The NCWFHC could play a role in project planning support, (purpose and need, project goals, alternative actions); leveraging resources (securing financial resources for project planning and implementation, advocating support for restoration, locating resources for monitoring and analyses); communicating and building support (local/regional/national advocacy, partnership networking, building local support for projects); policy, legislation and regulations (identifying and breaking down barriers to effective policy and legislation); and tracking progress and monitoring (identifying issues raised during project planning and implementation).

- 5. How is the Collaborative structured?** The NCWFHC’s decision-making body is called the “collaborative group.” It meets quarterly and operates in a transparent and inclusive atmosphere, with all meetings open to the public. Its role is to seek solutions for forest restoration challenges that address all stakeholder interests, develop consensus on proposed restoration activities, and provide direction to workgroups and staff.
- 6. Where is the collaborative focusing its efforts?** Most of its focus is on landscape-level restoration on the OWNF within Chelan and Okanogan Counties. It will also utilize an all-lands approach on a smaller scale for individual projects that cross-jurisdictional boundaries. The collaborative will coordinate and work with key private and public landowners, and related agencies to achieve effective project implementation and economies of scale.
- 7. What role will the OWNF Restoration Strategy play?** The collaborative supports the Forest Restoration Strategy because it: 1) Takes a landscape-scale approach to restoration in all forest types; 2) Incorporates considerations for aquatic organisms, wildlife habitat, road impacts and climate change; 3) Uses new research-grade tools such as aerial photography and computer models to evaluate whole landscapes, integrate multiple natural resource concerns, and compares current conditions with past/future conditions; 4) Prioritizes the best places to target for critical treatment, given land managers can’t treat all areas.
- 8. How can I learn more?** Background information can be found at: <http://www.ucsrb.org/library/documents-and-resources/> or by contacting:
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