

Members Present

American Forest Resource Council (AFRC): Tom Partin; **Boise-Cascade:** Kevin Arneson; **Cascade Fisheries:** ABSENT; **Cascadia Conservation District (CCD):** Patrick Haggerty, Ryan Williams; **Chelan County:** Bob Bugert, Mike Kaputa; **Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (CDLT):** ABSENT; **Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition:** ABSENT; **Colville Tribal Federal Corporation - Timber:** Josh Anderson; **Conservation Northwest (CNW):** Mike Liu, Jenn Syrowitz; **Hampton Lumber:** Anjolene Price; **Lake Wenatchee Fire Adapted Community:** Jim Passage; **Methow Valley Citizen Council:** Sam Israel; **The Nature Conservancy (TNC):** Lloyd McGee; **Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCS):** ABSENT; **Okanogan Conservation District (OCD):** Mindy Untalan, Craig Nelson; **Okanogan County:** Chris Branch; **Trout Unlimited:** Crystal Elliot; **US Forest Service--OWNF:** Kristin Bail, Darren Goodding, Eireann Pederson, Sendi Kalcic, Bryan Mulligan, Guadalupe (Pete) Cadena, Meg Trebon, Paul Kelley, Andrew Hart, Jeff Rivera; **Vaagen Bros. Lumber Co:** ABSENT; **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW):** Lynda Hoffman; **Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR):** Chuck Hersey, Everitt Merritt; **WA Prescribed Fire Council:** ABSENT; **The Wilderness Society (TWS):** Mike Anderson; **Yakama Nation:** Brandon Rogers; **Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB):** Melody Kreimes, Ryan Niemeyer, Nicole Jordan, Greer Maier, Alicia Meier, Sarah Walker (Facilitator).

Other Meeting Participants

Blue Forest Conservation: Kim Quesnel, Tess Maurer, Nick Wobbrock; **Congressman Dan Newhouse's Staff:** Rachel McClure; **Colville Confederated Tribe:** Rebecca Hunt; **Ecotrust:** Mike Mertens; **Pacific Northwest National Laboratory:** Mark Wigmosta; **Pacific Northwest Research Station:** Tucker Furniss; **Senator Cantwell's Staff:** Rick Evans

Regular Business

Co-Chair Branch opened the meeting and participants introduced themselves. Sarah reviewed meeting discussion-flow guidance and objectives.

Members approved the February 3, 2021 Quarterly meeting summary. The final will be posted online at: <https://www.ncwfhc.org/meetings/>

OWNF Process & Project Updates

Supervisor's Update

Staffing and Administration

The OWNF is still working to fill Cle Elum District Ranger position. The SO is in the final applicant round for Timber Management for North Zone. The Forest Leadership Team is working to fill FSR position (timber program staff)

Programmatic Agreement for Heritage Pete Cadena

Pete Cadena will be leaving the OWNF in early August to serve as Program Manager on the Malheur Forest. The last PA update was 1957. OWNF initiated tribal consultation in 2017, continuing in 2020. Several changes have been made to address concerns. SEE PRESENTATION AND SUPPORTING .PDFs x2.

PA changes are more restrictive due to concerns raised by WA DAHP and tribes. Most projects fall under Appendix A, B, and E. Initial review allows Heritage Professional to determine if an activity or project is an “undertaking”; which Appendix applies to a project. Forest Partners will be interested in Appendix E.

Q: Will this make condition based NEPA proceed more quickly or will the condition-based approach require more inventory?

- ✓ Phasing is a great tool. Allows inventory to be strategically deferred to future years which allows focus on priority areas vs. 100% now. The OWNF can contract to conduct inventory; guidelines more stringent for who can perform the work. Data management is required under the PA as part of the consultation process.
- ✓ Partner help to assist with back-side data entry, QA/QC, heritage management needs would be beneficial. Ideal would be 1 winter temporary staff person assigned annually to Heritage PA database mgmt.

Sarah distributed Pete’s PowerPoint and supplemental .pdf files via email during the lunch break.

Joint Chiefs Proposal Update

The OWNF has been asked to put project proposals forward; however, funding discussions continue. Evaluating potential overlaps with CFLRP landscape. The goal is a good package that includes non-FS lands. Initial input received on 4/30. OWNF is working with DNR and partners to refine. Past projects have received \$1-2 million; asking for more this time.

Forest Restoration Strategy Refresh

Current Draft Proposal

Mike Liu walked the group through changes based on PWG, OWNF input between last draft and current version. Members discussed who could offer financial-technical assistance. TWS and CNW can contribute funding; TNC and YN may also be able to assist.

Members discussed proposed June timeline for initiation including: feasibility of coordinating with the Tapash/ South Zone on a short timeframe; OWNF staff participation needs-timing and coordination across funders to initiate the process; whether OWNF can review of 2 vs. 3 projects and overall staff time commitments. YN is interested in supporting integration of the Aquatics restoration component and adding detail. Further SC discussion about proposed partner time commitments and timelines is needed.

Expectations about OWNF involvement/ support/ timeline need to consider the following:

- ✓ LSR schedule: Waiting to get on their schedule.
- ✓ Monte and Darren are on details.
- ✓ OWNF SO Fish Biologist Emily is leaving her position. Acting staff that fill these positions will not have institutional knowledge, which will inevitably slow down the process.
- ✓ If Mt. Hull is being considered as part of FRS refresh proposal, CNW needs to coordinate directly with CNF and Tonasket RD staff.

Q: What proposal elements fall outside of a 'standard' FRS update? Develop metric cross-walk between DNR reporting on priority area accomplishments and OWNF reporting on flagship metrics; develop-include LSR working group definitions, other language to support ESA consultation with Services (i.e., USFWS, NMFS).

Q: What are the issues the refresh is intended to address that are not in the NWFP regulations? The intent is to help incorporate new information, DNR Landscape Evaluation data and bring aquaticity up to par with terrestrial. Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) landscape evaluations processes: bring focus to the real issues. A concern is things will become more conservative than under NWFP, Regional guidelines.

The Steering Committee will continue FRS proposal discussion at their June 2, 2021 meeting.

Next Steps:

1. By May 25 Sarah will connect with Mike Liu, Co-chairs to flesh out June SC topic
2. Mike Liu will add a step: contact WDFW

Blue Forest/Chelan County Forest Resiliency Bond

Members were reoriented to Chelan County's current efforts to use Forest Resiliency Bonding as a finance tool to enhance forest resilience. The concept has been applied in partnership with other high-capacity collaboratives to complement their vision. Kim Quetsnal and the Blue Forest team presented on FRB as a tool to affect change using a case study in fire-prone communities of Yuba, California. The implementation Funder is chosen by the FS; Blue Forest facilitates development of contracts and agreements to help with implementation.

Q: What is motivation for investors to participate? In the California example, how was biomass project moved forward ...were the project proponents included in the funding/loan provided?

- ✓ 2 investors were below market rate, 2 others motivated by PR, benefit of healthy forests for equipment. With landscape scale projects can secure their own funding in terms of biomass.

Q: How do you find cornerstone beneficiary or very invested partner in the community? If we can see some potential some cornerstone beneficiaries in our communities. How to get the ball rolling?

- ✓ UWPP has come up as a potential landscape.

Q: The OWNF does not have a lot of projects with NEPA completed. Will that be an obstacle? Is there a challenge if NEPA isn't done?

- ✓ Doesn't have to be completed but underway.

Members agreed to plan a special follow-up call, possibly outside of a SC meeting, at the June 2 mtg.

Next Steps:

3. Sarah will add follow-up discussion item to June SC agenda re: options, dates for a focused mtg. with Blue Forest, CCNRD.

4. Jim Passage will follow-up with Mike Kaputa, Jeff Rivera, Patrick Haggerty, Andy Hart, and Chuck Hersey regarding how FRB could help with the UWPP.

Snow2Flow

Overview

Decision support tool is available on UCSRB website: <https://s2f.ucsrb.org/>. Model is developed for the Okanogan, Wenatchee, Entiat, Methow subbasins. It could be made available beyond Upper Columbia depending on calibration of underlying DHVM. Large portions of DHVM are set up including Canadian portion, drainages in Puget Sounds, Snohomish, Skagit, Chehalis. Snow2Flow is intended to facilitate “gaming” of restoration activities to see how they could impact snowpack and stream flows, and support salmon recovery with targeted forest restoration. Any flow increase in some high-risk areas at key times would be critical and meaningful. This was a snapshot in time of 8-10% watershed treatment—presumes single treatment. *Would be beneficial to look at treatment over time.* Allows user interaction to define treatment areas; GIS allows integration with other layers to allocate treatments in different patches, topography, land use allocation, ecological objectives. Get a summary report of different treatments and the effect on water flows. Goal is final tool by summer; starting to beta-test.

Next Steps:

5. Participants will contact Melody Kreimes if you want to be involved with tool beta-testing.

Regional Aquatic Prioritization

Greer presented an overview of the region’s Prioritization effort. There are many ways to consider priorities for aquatic habitat health. Review the Prioritization framework and supporting materials at <https://www.ucsrb.org/science-resources/prioritization/>

Next Steps:

6. Participants will contact Greer Maier with any Prioritization framework or tool questions.

Projects Work Group Update

Twisp Restoration Project

Mike Liu provided a summary of progress to date: 2 deep dive meetings, internal PWG meetings focused on landscape Rx review including diameter size, spotted owl, late succession forest. DNR is coordinating a PWG “internal” technical field trip on May 25. Currently, a third capstone deep dive meeting with MVRD is planned. PWG deep dive summary is available from Mike. Currently, the OWG is not doing any ‘external’ community outreach on the Twisp Restoration Project.

UWPP Update

No major changes to the project timeline. Currently waiting on LSR document. Minor OOWNF edits on preliminary draft EA back to the contractor to finalize. Monitoring component will be included in the project plan. Workshop held to discuss monitoring; smaller group met to submit document for OOWNF review. Forest is reviewing. Feedback will be incorporated into document goes out to group, NCWFHC.

Timeframe for final EA? Outstanding pieces: LSR working group (get back this week – review takes 2 weeks). Level 1 consultation with services in July. Objection period in July and August. Final decision expected in September 2021.

UWPP Outreach Video was scheduled for 2020 with a field trip but instead a virtual field trip was held last fall with collaborative interviews. Audience was conference attendees. Initially a 20-minute video. North 40 production is working on a slimmed down 7-minute video geared toward the public. Focus on distributing the video once the slimmed down version is ready.

Chumstick-to-LP

The OWNF Supervisor acknowledged receipt of Collaborative Engagement Framework and project-level draft Chumstick-to-LP Agreement. Supports advancing this approach to think through how we want to work together on larger landscape projects. Refinement needed. Good to define how different partners will engage, allow for check ins on how well we are doing and areas to improve. Guiding framework is scalable.

Regarding the RFI: Nick Standish and Anjolene have been communicating; economics subgroup questions are being incorporated. May have to reevaluate if Industry interest is not there; project collaboration agreement touchpoints, commitments may change.

Need to apply a two-pronged approach: 1) continue to develop-advance RFI and 2) engage SO and WRRD Planning Staff to review draft Agreement and start to develop landscape-level proposal. Participants discussed if and when to apply Framework-Agreement to other 5-year plan projects:

- ✓ Mad Roaring Mills—yes, please
- ✓ Mid-Upper Methow—not immediately; NCWFHC input desired in late summer, early fall.
- ✓ Potential third project—Nason Creek

Members agreed to use June SC mtg. to define steps, who to advance review of draft Chumstick-to-LP Agreement with OWNF planning staff.

Members agreed to discuss desired level of formality for documenting OWNF-NCWFHC engagement on a project; ties to overarching draft Framework, Process for all projects.

Next Steps:

7. Sarah will add MRM Agreement, OWNF-NCWFHC documentation process to June SC agenda.

Outreach Work Group Update

Recent Efforts

The OWG met mid-April to discuss Twisp and different outreach needs. No current OWG support needed; awaiting guidance from PWG-SC. Public engagement with field trips, outreach is important to help with community concerns about Twisp project. Figure out “external” public messaging strategy over upcoming few months. Okanogan Conservation District, MVCC, other ‘northern’ Members lead.

The OWNF is working on messaging on mechanical thinning and restoration. Contact Victoria Wilkins, OWNF/PAO to learn more. Some OWG participants suggested hosting Trainings and workshops on conditional NEPA for Collaborative members. Training from professionals about all aspects of NEPA, processes is available online. Members may explore <https://www.shipleysgroup.com/virtual-training>

Reorient to OWG Charter

Participants reviewed 'internal/PWG' vs. 'external/Community' messaging, types of "field trips", other Charter information. Participants discussed Twisp outreach activities and OWG support needs, perceived competing efforts.

- ✓ DNR is coordinating internal PWG member field trip for technical review on 3/25
- ✓ SC, PWG set direction for OWG for larger Community public "field trips", engagement
- ✓ Current Twisp focus is internal PWG discussion and PWG/NCWFHC/MVRD alignment
- ✓ After PWG Deep Dive mtg. III, focus will shift to External messaging.
- ✓ Like NCWFHC, OWG works by consensus so OWG discussion-agreement needed to initiate a Charter update.

Next Steps

8. OWG to discuss whether to initiate a Charter update.

Partner Round Table

HB 1168 update

Passed unanimously. Legislature has provided full funding amount \$125 million. CEs will be used in select cases-criteria only; not an excuse to circumvent process. Not as much of a concern as was originally for CNW.

Letter to Congress in Support of Funding

SC is finalizing letter to federal legislators to provide additional funding to FS for Federal lands mgmt. With new administration, potential to change in how federal agencies are funded. Long-term decline of FS capacity. CFLRP Senator Merkley focus is on funding areas.

Other Updates

Patrick Haggerty: DNR 1784 priority health and wildfire response private land treatment in Chelan County: Peshastin

Anjolene Price Update: UWPP Core Team and the next meeting for the economic subgroup will include lessons learned discussion. Wait until July or August for this when OWNF is less busy and can participate.

Co-Chair Anderson Adjourned the Meeting at 2:58pm

**The Next Remote NCWFHC Steering Committee Meeting is Scheduled for Wednesday, June 2, 2021,
from 1:00pm to 3:30pm**

The next Quarterly Meeting is Scheduled for Wednesday, August 4, 2021. Hold: 10am to 4pm