

March 1, 2023

Steering Committee Meeting Summary

Webinar/Teleconference

1:00-3:30 PM



Formal Approvals

Item	Action-Decision
Proposed March 1, 2023, SC Agenda	Approved with additions discussed. The final will be posted online at: https://www.ncwfhc.org/meetings/
Proposed January 4, 2023, SC Meeting Summary	Approved with additions discussed. The final will be posted online at: https://www.ncwfhc.org/meetings/
NCWFHC Participation in CFLRP Survey	Approved

Next Steps

Item	Follow-up
Distribute link to CWI Map with high risk firehatched boundaries	ASAP Sarah will get links from Kari and distribute https://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/cwi CWI Interactive Story Map
New OWNF Partnership Coordinator; point person for Chief's planned visit	Seth Kammer; email Victoria Wilkins until Seth gets his email address set up.
Participant list (tour and banquet) for the 10-year anniversary	Nicole Jordan and Lloyd McGee will flesh-out potential invitees, capacity counts for tour and anniversary dinner
Member roles, support for Chief's potential visit	Mike A. will follow-up with Nicole re: TWS resources to support event. Lloyd will lead on resources for tour vans/ lunch and coordinate with Nicole.
Final comments on Forest Restoration Strategy transmittal letter to OWNF	By c.o.b. on Friday, March 3, Members will provide any added last feedback on letter to Co-Chair Anderson
Finalize FRS letter transmittal	By c.o.b. Friday, May 10, Co-Chair Anderson/ Sarah will confirm SC approval and transmit to OWNF
Monitoring and Adaptive Management Work Group Charter development	Matt Danielson will Doodle Members for next meeting
Governance subgroup operating protocol updates; Scope of Work for SNW	Tiana Luke will coordinate with Sarah to distribute draft SOW with SNW for discussion at April 5 SC meeting
Resume in-person Steering Committee meetings, at least 2x per year	ASAP, Sarah will secure a venue for an in-person SC meeting on September 6 in Wenatchee
Reaffirm UCSRB support of NCWFHC, interest in fiscal sponsorship	Co-Chairs may ask new UCSRB Executive Director to join April SC mtg/ TBD
CFLRP survey participation, who will be interviewed, in-person or worksheet, ID 3-5 supplemental questions.	ASAP, Sarah will put supplemental survey questions into Survey and distribute to SC and convene follow-up to get Supplemental Qs, etc. to OWNF/ Kerry by March 14.
CFLRP survey distribution.	Kerry Kemp will continue to lead and coordinate with Sarah re: who will participate, preferred format and distribution of survey.

Welcome and Introductions

Co-Chair Branch opened the meeting and with the facilitator welcomed participants and walked through the agenda and preparatory materials.

Members approved both the January 4, 2023 SC meeting agenda with corrections and the December 7, 2022, SC meeting summary with corrections. The final agenda and summary with corrections will be posted online at: <https://www.ncwfhc.org/meetings/>

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest (OWNF) Updates

CFLRP Monitoring Proposal Update

Kerry Kemp gave an update on the CFLRP monitoring. There have been monthly meetings of the 5 different subgroups and a majority of the subgroups have started to coalesce around some priority questions that address interests of partners and staff. Approaches and capacity considerations are still being developed for the subgroups and questions, indicators, data reporting frequency, who is responsible are being populated [here](#).

- Wildlife
- Aquatic habitat and watershed conditions
- Social perceptions
- Fuels/vegetation
- Invasive and cultural plants

A meeting will be scheduled for early April with all 5 monitoring subcommittee participants to review the priority questions and timeline. A draft report will be completed by mid-April and feedback is welcomed from the Collaborative. Submission of the monitoring plan to Regional Office will be the end of April.

National CFLRP Survey

A request for the collaborative's participation in the national CFLRP survey to answer questions on the dynamics, perceived outcomes of collaborative work, disruptions that affect collaborative performance and durability. A standardized list of questions makes up the survey that occurs every 2-3 years. The survey will be administered by Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes in March and conclude in May. To set the context of the survey responses SWERI would like to interview a targeted group of collaborative and forest leaders. The collaborative can identify 3-5 supplemental questions to add to the end of the survey. The survey will go out to a list of USFS staff and an identified group of collaborative members to be determined. Results will be summarized and shared late summer or early fall (August/September) with recommendations to improve collaborative communication. A finalized report to include in the annual monitoring report will be completed in December.

Q: Is there a reason the survey wouldn't go to the full collaborative?

A: We can decide who the survey goes out to. The target is members who participate regularly.

Central Washington Initiative

Kari Grover-Weir shared from the National Priority landscapes workshop held in early February messaging from the Chief of the Forest Service is the wildfire crisis strategy work is the most important work for the agency right now. There was an addition of 10 priority landscapes for a total of 21 in the west that will be the focus of the wildfire crisis strategy. There was an emergency declaration provision in section 40807 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law which authorizes the FS to accelerate planning, consultation, contracting, hiring, and implementation of fuels and forest health treatments in the high risk fireheds. Emergency declaration, NEPA tools include:

- Emergency situation determination
- Emergency response tool
- Alternative arrangements tool
- Western fireshed emergency action determination in high risk fireheds

The full FY2023 budget has not been received by the OWNF but expecting a total of \$35 million. The CWI Planning Team is on track to be staffed and fully onboard around June. Summer seasonal and permanent Fire hiring is in process. A complete Fuels crew is not expected this year but the FS is working to accomplish this for FY2024.

A number of projects are in contracts and agreements:

- Fuel reductions 20,000 acres
- 11 aquatic restoration projects
- 4 contract NEPA efforts (Coopers Ridge, Lower Lake in Cle Elum, Midnight, South Fork Tieton in Naches)
- Survey contracts for cultural, botany, stand exams

The next steps will shift gears into long-term strategy and engagement with tribal, partner and public engagement. In January engagement began with tribes and will continue regular coordination in 2023. Initial Fire Chiefs engagements were also in January and district/fireshed specific meetings focusing on cross-boundary work are planned for March-April. Staff is also working on updating plans based on external engagement and the CWI dashboard to track implementation.

The CWI categories of work will include:

- Landscape restoration: reduce wildfire risk through forest health and resilience treatments.
- Targeted fuel breaks: protect communities by impeding spread of fire in strategic locations.
- Maintenance: of past treatments and burned areas.

Q: What are the 6 high risk firesheds in our forest?

A: Twisp, Chiwaukum, Wenatchee, Leavenworth, Cle Elum and American River.

Q: Who is going to do the NEPA for Chumstick to LP? Is that figured out yet? Will it be an A to Z, contract NEPA or an OWNF NEPA team?

A: Chumstick would not be an industry A-Z.

Q: What are the specifics of the scoping process for Midnight?

A: The scoping plans for Midnight are still in development. The District hopes to have the scoping letter out by late March, which will be accompanied by a news release/social media to spread the word.

Q: What are the 4 areas where contract NEPA will be used? Do you know who the contractors will be?

A: Coopers Ridge, Lower Lake on the Cle Elum, Midnight, South Fork Tieton on the Naches. There is a blank purchase agreement by BPA for NEPA contractors.

Q: When will public engagement occur in Twisp?

A: Midnight and Twisp restoration scoping for late March. Scoping and engagement for CWI will be around specific projects once they are in the implementation.

Q: What is the status of 5-year plan management tool or spreadsheet that can be shared with the collaborative to align work and resources? CWI dashboard roll out?

A: In progress, having challenges in how to show fully completed projects in the current database and how it matches other databases national reporting and regional reporting without conflicts.

UWPP Consultation Update

Andy Hart gave an update on the UWPP. Consultation with USFWS is moving forward but there has been confirmation using passive acoustic [monitoring](#) of a “floater” Northern Spotted Owl within the project area. Kristin Bail will be meeting with USFWS to discuss this issue.

Q: What is the timeline for signing the decision since there were no objections. When do we check the box on process being complete?

A: Might just have to live with the disagreement. Not sure on the timeline. Can't sign until it goes through ESA process.

New OWNF Partnership Coordinator

Victoria Wilkins introduced Seth Kammer the new CWI Partnership Coordinator. Seth will be the main point of contact with the FS on the upcoming Chief Randy Moore's visit and for field trips. Until he gets his email set up contact him through Victoria.

Coordination for Upcoming Chief's Visit

Chief Randy Moore is scheduled to visit the OWNF on May 23, 2023 for a tour of the CWI and to participate in the NCWFHC 10 year anniversary

Input on 10-year Anniversary Event

Planning Update

Lloyd McGee and Nicole Jordan have started planning for the May 23 anniversary event by scoping potential locations in Leavenworth and Plain. The two locations that would work include:

- Enzian Inn – Leavenworth (does not have a government per diem rate so a block of rooms at another hotel in Leavenworth would be coordinated that honor government rates)
- Mountain Springs Lodge Resort - Plain

Both facilities have a capacity for a group space for 75-100 people. The development of two lists (tour and banquet) of participants will need to be made. There may have to be a cap on the participants but need to make sure there is fair representation of the collaborative and federal staffers, state legislators, county commissioners, etc. Once a list is developed this will allow the SC to determine any restrictions or limitations for collaborative members (2-3 per organization?). The day would include a tour (possibly 4 stops), lunch, presentations and an evening social. TWS will be providing \$5,000 to help cover expenses while UCSRB has some funding to cover meeting location costs. Lloyd will continue to reach out to Kristin Bail, Erica Taecker and Seth Kammer on coordination of the event.

Forest Restoration Strategy

Co-Chair Anderson asked that final comments on the Forest Restoration Strategy transmittal letter to OWNF be returned to him by 3/3. A finalized transmittal will be submitted to the OWNF by 3/10.

Follow-up on FRS Recommendations, Transmittal Framing

The Governance Committee is working on reaffirming the collaborative's interest in the restoration strategy to help guide the work of the FS and updating the bylaws and protocols with these commitments. Additional discussion of three recommendations of the FRS not included in the transmittal included the formation of a science team, aquatics integration, and other training workshop.

Formation of a Science Team could bridge how the collaborative and FS work together to receive questions or concerns about projects. Some SC members see a benefit in having a Science Team that follows a set protocol to resolve problems or concerns. Likewise, some concerns for such a team were noted and include:

- Who would make up the team?
- Are they neutral?
- Who will pay for it?
- How would the team interact with FS and Collaborative?

Aquatics integration for the development of watershed scale restoration plans. Does it need to be on a watershed scale?

Other training workshops for development of restoration projects are being planned by Bill Gaines for the FS in the Spring and the collaborative in the fall after the LSRA update has taken place. TWS may be able to help with funding of the workshop.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management

Matt Danielson provided an update to the SC on the first meetings to determine what the monitoring workgroup would look like. The type of monitoring was discussed as well as purpose and goals. The next meeting will identify where the collaborative lift is around monitoring and define what that looks like (What type of monitoring and what level). The first task is to develop a charter for the workgroup. TWS has funding to help to support the multi-party monitoring process.

Governance Subgroup

Brandon Rogers gave a general update on the work that has taken place over the last couple of months with the new SC meeting format. Work continues on the operating protocols and governance documents that will be passed off to Sustainable Northwest for review and analysis after the next subgroup meeting and will be ready in draft form by the April 5 SC meeting. The opportunity for a visioning process for the NCWFHC would line up with this review process to answer the questions:

- Why do we have the collaborative?
- Do we want to be in the collaborative?

In-person Steering Committee Meetings

Lorah Super shared that when revisiting the SC rules it stated meetings had to be in-person prior to COVID restrictions. She posed the question How do we move forward knowing that there are efficiencies with remote meetings? The SC discussed having 2 in-person meetings for 2023 starting with the September 6 SC meeting. Sarah will look for venues in Wenatchee to provide enough time for SC members to put on their schedules. Alternates are welcome to join the in-person meeting but only one person per organization may speak.

Overview: DNR Building Forest Partnerships Grant

Sarah reviewed the history of DNR funding received through UCSRB for facilitation and support of the NCWFHC. SC approves UCSRB applying for funds on behalf of NCWFHC. In 2018, DNR provided \$25,000. Subsequently DNR provided \$40,000 in the first biennium (2019-2021) and \$50,000 in the second biennium (2021-2023). In 2022 TWS contributed funds for outreach support, materials and website design for a total of \$12,510. The current UCSRB SOW shows 2021-2023 funds for staff time to coordinate-facilitate and support OWG, SC and NCWFHC Quarterly meetings and events. This involves time from Nicole and Alicia. Developing an overall NCWFHC workplan with tasks, funding sources, etc. would help with transparency among partners.

The DNR BFP application should be out at end of March, due May. DNR to confirm details soon. Re: Governance subgroup questions about UCSRB use of funds, desire to be fiscal sponsor for DNR BFP funds for the 2023-2025 biennium, and level of support—contact Executive Director Amanda Ward about how she sees the role of the UCSRB over the next 2 years (stay the same or shift).

- ✓ Mike A. will reach out to Amanda to discuss potential time on April SC agenda

SC Decision Requests

Approval NCWFHC Participation in CFLRP Survey

Co-Chair Anderson asked the SC if they would like to participate in the CFLRP survey. The SC agreed on the importance to participate in the survey process. Sarah will send out a survey for input on to whom the survey should go, group interviews (in-person or remote), and the addition of any supplemental questions.

Wrap-up and Adjourn

Co-Chair Branch adjourned the Steering Committee meeting at 3:36pm.

The next NCWFHC Quarterly meeting is planned for 10:00am to 4:00pm on 05/03/2023

The next remote Steering Committee Meeting is planned for 1:00pm to 3:30pm on 04/05/2023

Meeting Attendance:

SC Members-Alternates Present

American Forest Resource Council (AFRC): Tom Partin; **Chelan County:** Mike Kaputa; **Conservation Northwest (CNW):** Matt Danielson; **Hampton Lumber:** ABSENT; **The Nature Conservancy (TNC):** Lloyd McGee; **Okanogan Conservation District (OCD):** Lorah Super; **Okanogan County:** Chris Branch; **Trout Unlimited:** Lisa Foster, Crystal Elliot; **Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR):** Chuck Hersey; **The Wilderness Society (TWS):** Mike Anderson, Tiana Luke; **Yakama Nation:** Brandon Rogers.

NCWFHC Members-Entity Participants

Cascade Fisheries: ABSENT; **Cascadia Conservation District (CCD):** Ryan Williams; **C6 Forest to Farm:** Tom McCoy; **Lake Wenatchee Fire Adapted Community:** Jim Passage, David Walker; **Methow Valley Citizen Council:** Jasmine Minbashian; **Vaagen Bros. Lumber Co:** ABSENT; **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW):** Amanda Barg.

Ex-Officio Participants

OWNF: Andy Hart, Kerry Kemp, Kari Grover-Weir, Victoria Wilkins, Seth Kammer, Chris Furr; **Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB):** Nicole Jordan, Ryan Niemeyer, Alicia Meier, Sarah Walker (Facilitator).

Other Attendees

Blue Forest Resiliency: Kim Quesnel Seipp, **Congresswoman Schrier staff:** Ruby Gaston; **Libby Creek Resident:** Julie Hentrichto; Richard Bailey, Jim Bond, Jim Beck