



Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting Summary
Webinar/Teleconference
September 1, 2021

SC Members-Alternates Present

American Forest Resource Council (AFRC): Tom Partin; **Chelan County:** Mike Kaputa; **Colville Tribal Federal Corporation - Timber:** ABSENT; **Conservation Northwest (CNW):** Jen Syrowitz, Mike Liu; **The Nature Conservancy (TNC):** Lloyd McGee; **Okanogan Conservation District (OCD):** ABSENT; **Okanogan County:** Chris Branch; **Trout Unlimited:** Crystal Elliot; **Vaagen Bros. Lumber Co:** ABSENT; **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW):** ABSENT; **Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR):** Chuck Hersey, Derek Churchill; **The Wilderness Society (TWS):** Mike Anderson; **Yakama Nation:** Brandon Rogers

Other NCWFHC Members, Participants

Cascadia Conservation District (CCD): Patrick Haggerty, Ryan Williams; **Hampton Lumber:** Anjolene Price; **Lake Wenatchee Fire Adapted Community:** Jim Passage; **Methow Valley Citizens Council:** Sam Israel, Jasmine Minbashian; **Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB):** Ryan Nieymeyer, Alicia Meier, Sarah Walker (Facilitator); **US Forest Service--OWNF:** Peter Wier, Erick Walker, Paul Kelley, Andy Hart, Nate Standish, Sendi Kalcic, Darren Gooding, Michelle Caviness; **Staff to Senator Patty Murray:** Raquel Crowley, Yazzy Ibrahim; **Staff to Congressman Newhouse:** Rachel McClure; **Sustainable NW:** Pete Teigen

Welcome and Regular Business

Co-chair Branch opened the meeting at 1 pm. Participants introduced themselves. The facilitator walked participants through meeting objectives and preparatory materials. Corrections to the July SC meeting summary were shared in track change mode. Co-chair Branch shared he would be leaving the meeting at 2pm and Co-Chair Anderson would lead the remainder of the meeting.

Members approved the corrected summary July 7, 2021, SC meeting summary. The final summary will be posted online at: <https://www.ncwfhc.org/meetings/>

OWNF – People, Proposals, Projects

Deputy Forest Supervisor Erick Walker summarized hiring status updates, resource priorities for positions, and potential avenues for partner support.

Michelle Caviness is detailing as the WRRD Ranger till mid-December. Interviews start next week. Goal is to get new Ranger in before mid-December for overlap with Michelle. McClain Johnson hired as WRRD Fish Biologist. WRRD Silviculturist still working on details of contract not sure on the start date.

SO hired an Assistant Forest Engineer (non-FS agency background) and needs to fill the Forest Engineer position vacated by Jason Peterson, who retired. Gene Hull/MVRD is detailing to fill the SO Fish Biologist position vacated by Emily Johnson. Katherine Melengo currently on detail from regional Enterprise team; need another detail to backfill Gene. Hoping to hire SO Fish Biologist position in January. Darren Gooding coming back to SO from detail in next pay period. OWNF also in process of filling soils scientist and hydrologist positions.

CleElum Ranger position filled with Joe Roach coming from Malheur National Forest.

Next week OWNF meets with regional leadership team to discuss head-count cap/ staffing allocation. Will be able to share more about priorities after this process. ESA consultation support a likely need partners could help fill.

Forest Service Budget Process/Funding Updates

New state funding coming along for restoration- waiting on infrastructure bill to move forward federal programs. Additional money for funding for implementation in 10 year effort. Nothing on Joint Chiefs proposal. Working on finalizing FY2022 budget. The Senate passed the Infrastructure Bill and it went back to the House for vote; hopefully September 27th along with other CR bills.

UWPP

Timeline

WRRD staff is finishing LSR comments memo. Goal is to submit to LSR group within the next 3 weeks. Concurrently, working on the consultation schedule. Fire season has made it a challenge for staff time to work on biological assessments.

The expected timeline for a decision notice has shifted to winter. AFRC and others would like a firm Decision date given the anticipated LSR and consultation workload that remains. WRRD & SO will be meeting to assess the degree to which timeline has shifted, potential implications and report back.

Economics Subgroup/Sept. Sales Tour

There is an UWPP Economics subgroup and OWNF Field Tour opportunity September 22 from 10am-3pm to look at first UWPP sales areas, discuss how to apply lessons learned. Meet at WRRD station in Leavenworth. Contact: Anjolene Price.

Anjolene will distribute agenda, update calendar invite

Draft Monitoring Strategy v1

The UWPP Core Team/ Monitoring group held meeting in March to develop a collaborative monitoring strategy. The first draft has received WRRD input and review. Contact: Patrick Haggerty or Jen Watkins.

Next steps:

1. September 14th PWG Meeting: Monitoring Committee Detailed Sharing
2. Host Lake Wenatchee meeting
3. Plan October field tour
4. In November, meet with OWNF

Wildfires Updates; Post-fire Restoration Planning

Acres, Areas Affected

Active fires on 220,000 acres of OWNF lands. Molly Hansen lead on BAER. Erick shared-emailed BAER information. Recommendations will take a couple of weeks to develop. Twisp BAER work beginning soon; 25 mile Fire BAER work will start in a week or two once fire is more contained. BAER size limit of 500 acres; other considerations to meet BAER criteria. BAER work may be supplemented to help get assessments done in one term.

Suppression activity: Hand lines, dozer lines, spike camps. Any areas left in unnatural state are identified in a Suppression Repair Plan. This year's challenge: people needed to suppress fires are the same people needed to do suppression repair. Opportunities for salvage reforestation have not yet been addressed. Rapid Assessment Team will look at impacts to sale areas, planning areas. Balance between putting a fire out and recovering the landscape. With support of ID collaborative, success at Sandpoint and Priest Lake Fires across 3 ID forest zones; got salvage out within a year.

Process, Tools to Analyze Impacts to Project Areas

Derek provided an overview of NEWFIRE (NE Washington FIRE) --tool for looking at how fire did or can change the landscape. Can use to create post-fire prescription that integrates landscape and stand level

needs. The challenge is that wildfires burn through Project areas before any work can be finished. No time to recover from the fire and look for ways to rapidly respond, as this is occurring yearly. Goal is to move post-fire debates beyond classic strategies.

Participants agreed on the importance of using NEWFIRE as feasible (coarse, landscape scale model) and BAER (rapid on-the-ground assessment) in complimentary manner to look at post-fire landscape restoration, prescription needs. Could be used to help look at Cedar Creek, Cub Creek, Twisp areas to assess where the fire did good work but more is needed. Where did the fire overshoot that will need planting? Must consider soil impacts, green and dead tree removal, active fuel reduction. Where do you accept transition to non-forest veg type?

Background on NEWFIRE: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4R_KmaGGul

The RAT will work with DNR to explore incorporating NEWFIRE tool, ways to quickly identify what to do, including potential for GNA opportunities. Cascadia Conservation District may have funding available for restoration work.

Participants noted the role of carbon sequestration and incorporating this into the tool. The value of fire-killed trees won't be retained beyond a year on the marginal sized trees so timely response is critical. Tools can help provide a basis for community support of post fire restoration projects.

In 2018 SC adopted post-fire disturbance, restoration principles (emailed previously) that should still resonate with conservation members.

Agree on Any Next Steps:

- *NEWFIRE in-depth discussion at September 14th PWG mtg.*

Remaining Twisp Project Elements

Participants asked about rumors of fuel break construction during suppression, how to confirm?

Forest Restoration Strategy Refresh

CNW developed a final SOW and contract with Bill Gaines for FRS refresh work. First meeting delayed about a month due to trying to time with new Ecologist's arrival. Team started to meet without because Ecologist not able to participate until January. Planning fall field trips. Outcomes: incorporate new science around the moisture stress modeling, multistore stands in warming climate change. NEWFIRE approach findings and recommendations. Second meeting 9/1 - connection between aquatic and terrestrial. A suggestion was made to look at an economic component.

Aquatics scope of work is moving at different pace than terrestrial. Need integrated approach. Aquatics SOW emailed this morning. Outputs of aquatics will advance the FRS. Members expressed the need for more coordination and communication with SC moving forward on FRS refresh work. CCNRD/ SC would like to see Terrestrial SOW and be looped in to track what is going on.

Overall Goals: Review of relative successes and lessons learned from FRS since science has progressed. Highlight new information. Identify shared metrics DNR-OWNF can use; define common language to support dialogue with LSR work group. Need to confirm deliverables and logical next steps.

Agree on Any Next Steps/Follow Up:

- *Sarah will distribute updated version 3.0 final version*
- *Mike will send Sarah Terrestrial SOW/ contract to share with SC*
- *Mike Liu will check in and update Mike Kaputa*
- *Sarah will add topic to October SC meeting agenda*

NCWFHC-OWNF Collaborative Framework, Agreements

Current Working Draft Framework: 8/24 WFCN Presentation

Lloyd highlighted shared learning, presentation to Washington Forest Collaboratives Network.

Mad-Roaring-Mills Agreement –simple, essentially done. Chumstick-to-LP: CFLRP may change touchpoints. Approach (A-Z yes or no will alter Agreement). Planning already done to hit the ground running. Identified to be done in GNA. FS will coordinate with Collaborative to look at priorities, might need to adjust due to areas impacted by fires this year. Matching components with Tribes and Counties. Other funding may come in from State/ DNR

Chumstick-to-LP RFI

Nate Standish shared that RFI results back – strengths and concerns with some solid bids. Next steps Andy, Erick, Pete, Michelle to meet and discuss a plan to move forward on it

Process for Tracking Project Framework, Agreements

Participants discussed storing Working Draft Framework, draft Agreements on NCWFHC website for members to access. Sarah offered to help track Framework-level changes (i.e., addition of pre-monitoring touchpoint)

Roundtable

October LightHawk Flight

Co-Chairs planning a fly-over with Congressman Newhouse and staff to Senator Murray flight to view Okanogan County wildfires and restoration needs. Currently scheduled for October 14.

Other

Jen Syrowitz and Patrick Haggerty: exploring possible grant funding source <https://co-co.org/get-involved/grants/aim-grant/>. Focus on simple project, implementation with landowners. Grant can be administration heavy. Could be beneficial for UWPP. Patrick and Jen to follow-up. Funding award date January 2022.

Tom Partin: Hampton the highest bidder on Mission Sale. Possible they will get in there this winter with starting roads.

South End Naches: Quartz timber sales will know by 10 am tomorrow (Stewardship Sale) roadwork, thinning projects, goods for services basis.

Latino Community Fund representative intends to participate in upcoming meetings.

Conservation NW working with summer intern. White Paper hope to share with Collaborative soon.

Agree on Any Next Steps/Follow Up:

- *Patrick and Jen to report back on AIM grant*
- *Sarah to follow up with Mike Liu on intern white paper*

Co-Chair Anderson adjourned the meeting at 3:19 pm.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2021, from 1:00pm-3:30pm

The next NCWFHC Quarterly meeting is scheduled for November 3, 2021, from 10:00am-4:00pm