

December 1, 2021

DRAFT Steering Committee Meeting. Summary

Webinar/Teleconference

1:00-3:30 PM



Formal Approvals

| Item | Action-Decision |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Meeting Summary from October 2021 | Approved with corrections. The final will be posted online at: https://www.ncwfhc.org/meetings/ |

Next Steps

| Item | Follow-up |
|---|--|
| UWPP Decision-making | OWNF will proceed with consultation and decision-making on UWPP Alternative 2. SC and OWNF will collaborate on pathway to scope, initiate LSRA update via partner resources. |
| Lack of consensus on reanalysis of mid/upper Twisp Restoration Project area. | Sarah will add the item to the January SC meeting agenda for follow-up |
| Proceed with coordination of the 2022 SC retreat; ID funding pathway, appropriate venue, and timeline-scheduling. | Sarah will work with DNR, Co-Chairs on planning and Doodle to set dates with SC members. Nicole will help ID and secure a venue with sufficient space and inclusive or nearby lodging. |
| Proceed with finding a contractor for facilitation support of SC retreat; ID funding pathway, appropriate venue, and timeline-scheduling. | Chuck will continue to work with SNW, Sarah, Co-Chairs, Nicole on SC Retreat scope-venue. Sarah will Doodle for dates. A progress report-out will occur at January 2022 SC mtg. |
| The OWG completed an update to their charter and workplan. | Sarah will include the workplan and charter in the February Quarterly meeting packet for Approval-Decision |

Welcome and Regular Business

The facilitator welcomed participants. Co-chair Anderson opened the meeting at 1:00 pm and walked through the meeting agenda and preparatory materials. Corrections to the October Steering Committee (SC) meeting summary were shared for consideration.

Members approved the corrected October 6, 2021, SC meeting summary. The final summary will be posted online at: <https://www.ncwfhc.org/meetings/>

OWNF People, Process, Project Updates

Staffing Changes

Darren shared the following: Parrish Carbins is the new Acting Administrative Officer; Erick Walker has transitioned to his new position in Region 5; Jenna Sloan will be serving as our Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor, beginning January 3rd; Erica Taecker will be starting as Ranger for the WRRD on December 6; Keats Conley, acting Fish Biologist starts next pay period; Kerry Kemp, Area Ecologist starts January; Current acting Heritage Adam Russell.

Other-Infrastructure Act, Sec 40806 CE for Fuel Breaks:

CE for fuel breaks up to 1,000 feet in width, not more than 3,000 acres of treatments and located

primarily in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) or a public drinking water source area; if located outside these areas, must be in an area within Condition Class 2 or 3 in Fire Regime Group I, II, or III that contains very high wildfire hazard potential; or an insect or disease area designated by the Secretary concerned as of the date of enactment of this Act.

UWPP

Steering Committee members picked up discussion of Alternatives from the 11/19 PWG meeting. PWG participants had been unable to reach consensus on support for Alt 1 vs. Alt 2. vs. a new Alt largely because more information was needed re: the Late Successional Reserve Assessment (LSRA) update process and the viability of two approaches:

- A. Support OWNF decision making on Alternative 2 with the understanding that the OWNF will also initiate an LSRA update asap to set path for treatment of high-priority areas of Alternative 1 that remain in need of restoration
- B. Support OWNF initiating a “limited” LSRA update asap and modifying the existing EA and adjusting the BA so that WUI, stand-specific restoration needs of Alternative 1 restoration areas can be added to Alternative 2 and OWNF proceeding with decision-making on modified Alternative

SO staff provided details, nuances around treatment ‘pathways’ in Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 and shared uncertainties associated with the LSRA update (scope, timeline duration, RO engagement piece). It is infeasible for OWNF to concurrently advance two alternatives (i.e., Alternative 2 and development of a revised Alternative).

Discussion, Q&A: Ongoing feedback on UWPP from NCWFHC to OWNF has emphasized the need for a timely path forward. OWNF believes Alternative 2 presents the most straight-forward, certain, and expeditious way to move the project ahead. By proceeding with Alternative 2 restoration of key areas identified in Alternative 1 will be delayed given the need for LSRA update first, then consultation and (re)decision. The OWNF is willing to initiate internal discussion and begin to scope the LSRA update, including options to leverage the body of work from 2017-2018. Members agreed to recommend the OWNF proceed with decision-making on Alternative 2 if the OWNF also initiates a LSRA update, most likely via partner resources, contracted support.

The SC agreed by consensus to support OWNF decision-making on Alternative 2 contingent upon a commitment from the OWNF to undertake a revision to the LSRA and issuing an additional decision that would treat acres from Alternative 1 that need restoration.

Path Forward: The OWNF will initiate internal discussion regarding a LSRA update and return to the SC for discussion, including the potential for NCWFHC support. The SC will revisit the topic in January 2022.

Twisp Restoration Project

Steering Committee members picked up PWG discussion from 11/19 regarding opportunity to collaborate with MVRD, use existing data and DNR/NEWFIRE resources to reassess the Twisp restoration project landscape and develop a partner-led strategy to address remaining priority restoration needs that will be “left behind”/ unaddressed in new Twisp Restoration Project EA. The PWG was not able to reach consensus to support reanalysis of the Twisp Restoration Project area.

Discussion, Q&A: The MVRD confirmed the Regional Aquatics EA will be used to cover most of the aquatics work for the Twisp project but the new/smaller EA will not cover the entirety of original restoration package. The MVRD highlighted key differences between Programmatic consultation process (ARBO II) vs. Programmatic NEPA tools (regional Aquatics EA) and their role-relevance to implementation of terrestrial, aquatics restoration actions. Some SC members reiterated they have planned restoration work that will require a supplemental EA/ contracted NEPA to keep on track.

A motion was made and seconded to support reanalysis of the Twisp Restoration Project area and explore a partner-led strategy to help address any remaining needs.

A SC Member raised a Red card regarding near-term reassessment of the original project area. As an alternate to the Red card, the Member proposed the SC move forward only with discussion about additional analysis in Middle Twisp and new Cub Creek2 area to evaluate restoration needs. That proposal did not receive SC support.

The Co-Chairs moved to table the topic and asked the SC to reconvene to discuss reanalysis of the original project area, options for adding new areas, and what support is needed to address restoration needs.

Path Forward: The Co-Chairs will follow-up with the SC at the January 5, 2022, mtg.

Forest Restoration Strategy Refresh

In addition to OWNF staff point of contact change requests from Andy Hart, Susan Pritchard (fire ecologist) and Brian Maloney (Chelan County Hydrologist, also working on YN aquatics piece) were added to the Science Advisory Team; these recent changes not reflected in SC packet document. Brian Staab (RO hydrologist) may also be added. New timeline should better align terrestrial-aquatics pieces.

Discussion, Q&A: A suggestion had been made to host a Workshop before final report is released in June 2022, possibly in February-March. Participants expressed the desire to allow aquatics and terrestrial pieces to come together and discussed Workshop urgency, priority.

Path Forward: Members agreed to reconvene Workshop planning discussion in early 2022.

Steering Committee Retreat

Participating SC members were in unanimous support of a retreat, and all will plan to participate in person. DNR is exploring contracted facilitation support from Sustainable NW. With RO funds, the OWNF is also exploring a parallel workshop with Sustainable NW re: visioning for collaboration, efficiencies, improvement.

Path Forward: DNR will continue dialogue with SNW and gauge possible dates. Sarah will help coordinate among DNR, Sustainable Northwest, UCSRB, Co-Chairs to advance planning, logistics, etc.

OWG Workplan

The OWG co-chairs shared the updated Workplan and Charter. Updates were made to better align the group with the NCWFHC objectives and goals. The workplan includes targeted outreach, material creation and support activities.

Members agreed to move the updated Workplan and Charter to the full NCWFHC for approval in February, 2022.

Next steps: Sarah will include the OWG Workplan and Charter in the February 2, 2022, Quarterly meeting packet/ agenda for NCWFHC approval.

The next remote Steering Committee Meeting is planned for 1:00pm to 3:30pm on 1/5/22

The next Quarterly is planned for 02/02/2022. Hold: 10am to 4pm

Meeting Attendance

SC Members-Alternates

American Forest Resource Council (AFRC): Tom Partin; **Chelan County:** Bob Bugert, Mike Kaputa; **Conservation Northwest (CNW):** Mike Liu, Jen Syrowitz; **The Nature Conservancy (TNC):** Lloyd McGee; **Okanogan Conservation District (OCD):** Lorah Super; **Okanogan County:** Chris Branch; **Trout Unlimited:** Crystal Elliot; **Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR):** Chuck Hersey, **The Wilderness Society (TWS):** Mike Anderson; **Vaagen Bros.:** ABSENT; **Yakama Nation:** Brandon Rogers.

NCWFHC Members-Alternates

Cascadia Conservation District (CCD): Patrick Haggerty, Ryan Williams; **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW):** Amanda Barg, Carmen Andonaegui; **Hampton Lumber:** Anjolene Price; **Lake Wenatchee Fire Adapted Community:** Jim Passage; **Methow Valley Citizens Council:** Sam Israel, Jasmine Minbashian.

Ex Officio: US Forest Service—OWNF

Darren Goodding, Chris Furr, Pete Wier, Paul Kelley, Andrew Hart, Deb Kelly, Victoria Wilkins

Other Partners-Public

Blue Forest Conservation: Kim Quesnel, Tessa Maurer; **Chelan County:** Brian Maloney; **CNW:** Dave Werntz; **Congressman Dan Newhouse's Staff:** Rachel McClure; **Congresswoman Schrier's Staff:** Kelli Scott; **DNR:** Tom Franz; **RC&D:** Ryan Anderson; **Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB):** Sarah Walker (Facilitator), Melody Kreimes, Ryan Niemeyer, Nicole Jordan, Alicia Meier. **Public:** Susan Crampton.