



IDAHO LANDS RESOURCE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 5, 2014

Payette National Forest – Smoke Jumper Base, McCall, ID

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lisa Ailport, ID Chapter American Planning Association
(by conference call)

Patti Best, Utilities/Energy Efficiency

Juan Bonilla, Idaho Fire Chiefs Association

Randy Brooks, University of Idaho Extension Forestry

Gary Brown, Payette National Forest

Glen Burkhardt, DOI, Bureau of Land Management

Elaine Clegg, Association of Idaho Cities

Robert Cope, Idaho Association of Counties

Kirk David, Idaho Forest Owners Association

John DeGroot, Nez Perce Tribe

Margie Ewing-Costa, Region 1, USDA-FS, S&PF

Janet Funk, Idaho Tree Farm Committee

Frank Gariglio, USDA-NRCS

Ken Knoch, City Foresters/Idaho Parks & Recreation
Association

Mark Larson, ILRCC Chair, Idaho State Fire Marshal

Robyn Miller, ILRCC Vice-Chair, The Nature Conservancy

Robert Reggear, Idaho Nursery & Landscape Assoc.

Mike Wolcott, Idaho Chapter Assoc. of Consulting Foresters

AGENCY STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT:

Craig Foss, Chief, Bureau of Forestry Assistance, IDL

Gina Davis, Forest Health & Stewardship Prog. Mgr., IDL

Dave Stephenson, Urban Interface Program Mgr., IDL

Mary Fritz, Program Planning & Development, IDL

Karen Sjoquist, Forest Legacy Program, IDL

Suzie Jude, Forest Stewardship Program, IDL

Craig Glazier, National Fire Plan Coordinator, USFS/IDL

Tyre Holfeltz, Community Fire Program Mgr., IDL

Scott Corkill, Payette Lakes Area Supervisor, IDL

Janet Valle, Regions 1 & 4, USDA-FS, S&PF

Madeline David, Idaho Tree Farm (alternate)

Bill Willey, Valley County Commission

Stephanie Johnson, Cabin Creek Enterprises/Valley County

Lin Davis, Payette Forest Coalition/ Circle C Ranches

Wendy Green, Payette Forest Coalition/Adams SWCD

Becky Johnstone, Payette Forest Coalition/Idaho Recreation
Council Backcountry Recreation Club

Ron Hamilton, Payette Forest Coalition

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Following member and guest introductions, Ken Knoch and John DeGroot provided additional information about their role within, and their perspectives of the organizations they represent on the council.

WELCOME BY VALLEY COUNTY COMMISSION – *B. Willey*

County Commissioner Bill Willey welcomed the council to Valley County and commented that the county's 'voice' regarding fuels treatments is mostly through the contract with Cabin Creek Enterprises; the relationship works well.

LAST MEETING ACTION ITEMS– *K. Sjoquist, J. Valle, All*

Karen reported the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) subcommittee procedures have been finalized and were sent to council members in March. The seven FLP subcommittee members are: Kirk David, representing non-industrial private landowners; Rob Steinhorst, representing industrial forest landowners; Gregg Servheen, representing Idaho Fish & Game; David Gregory, representing IDL endowment forests; Regan Plumb, representing conservation organizations; and Frank Gariglio and Gordon Harnasch, members at large.

FLP Updates: IDL received one FY2016 application, which will go through state ranking process this year. Two conservation easements are currently in the appraisal process and will likely close this year (McArthur Lake Wildlife Corridor and Boundary Connections). FY2014 grant funding was received for the McArthur East project. FY 2015 national project ranking for the President's funding of Legacy projects was #2, Hall Mountain at \$2.7M, and #6, Clagstone Meadows at \$5.5M.

Janet Valle provided an update on work by the ILRCC subcommittee assigned to the Idaho Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (IWRAP). The subcommittee members have compiled information on the IWRAP goal, customers, purposes, potential data layers, etc. Further direction is needed from the Council about how the subcommittee is to proceed and capture member expectations for the portal. It's the general consensus of the Council that a portal is needed in Idaho.

Janet reported there is another group working on this idea-- Dr. Tim Frazier at the University of Idaho (UI) has done some work on a similar idea, along with some of his students. The UI project is focused on other hazard risks besides fire, including floods and earthquakes. Users identified include the general public and (a secure site for) planners. UI has the capability to house the portal, but would need funding for development and ongoing maintenance, i.e. updating data.

The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security (BHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have involvement on the portal subcommittee through Susan Cleverley's participation. There was a concern by members about the use of Land Fire data and the need to ground-truth, if it is included in the portal data layers. Tyre reported on the development of the Texas and Colorado portals; they had different contractor groups developing the portal in each state. Would this portal idea fit for Western Competitive Grants (WCG)? Nevada submitted a FY2014 WCG application to develop a forestry and fire website portal. The project ranked 26 out of 63 but was not funded. Tyre reported the Western Fire Managers will allocate funds for the next two grant cycles for this type of project. Costs for portal in Texas was \$550K and in Colorado \$120K. It's important to consider maintenance costs in the future and to develop partnerships that link County Fire Working Groups, U of I, and the All Hazards Mitigation Group.

Follow-up Item: Council members will read IWRAP proposals and provide feedback to subcommittee (Susan Cleverley or Janet Valle) on or before July 7th.

FOREST ACTION PLAN (FAP) UPDATE – *D. Stephenson, C. Foss*

Dave provided a conceptual mock-up of the Idaho Forest Action Plan Report Card for discussion. ILRCC suggestions for improving this document are:

- Move the numerical measures provided in the table on page 7 to an appendix and replace with a narrative summary page; consider using trend lines to provide an easy to understand visual of progress on key measures
- The map on page 9 is a nice graphic, though the project specific information and funding amounts are better placed in an appendix. Instead, use the map to summarize/highlight key outcomes and accomplishments, perhaps organized by PLA, that have resulted from these projects. An option is to present the projects in a similar format as provided for the CFLRP project handout from the field tour,

which presented the key objectives, potential cost, planned acres, and percent of objective completed or as percent of risk treated (acres treated).

- The one-page highlights of selected projects should remain in the report card—be sure to discuss purpose of efforts and outcomes

Regarding update of FAP, no full revision will be done at this time (first 5-year interval), but rather an update that includes the National Trends measures. Benefits of the urban forests should also be better represented in the 5-year update.

Looking ahead to the required 10-year full revision, FAP stakeholder outreach could have been better in 2010, but doing so in one- or two-year period for the 10-year revision will be challenging as it takes a great deal of staff time. Instead, IDL proposes to meet with key groups within a couple of PLAs each year, between now and 2020, to inform strategies for the 10-year revision. It was suggested that additional discussion is needed about the benefits and strategies of FAP rather than just the risks. The geospatial analysis of threats and benefits will be evaluated again for the 10-year revision, which may or may not alter PLA bounds. Consider prioritizing PLAs or strategies within PLAs during the 10-year update. In addition to attending County Wildfire Working Group and various coalition meetings, participate at Association of Idaho Cities and other ILRCC representative conferences/workshops. Regarding stakeholder meetings for the 10-year FAP revision, provide Council members a list of questions that will be presented to these groups within the PLAs and look at prioritizations within FAP.

Morning Break

PAYETTE FOREST COALITION DISCUSSION – *R. Miller, Coalition members*

Craig provided background on the recent Farm Bill and the role of the State, collaborative groups, and the National Forests to identify proposed treatment areas where future projects on National Forest System (NFS) lands would address insect, disease, and fire risks. It is intended that this process will be used as a tool to get on-the-ground work done quickly with a streamlined National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process through Categorical Exclusion (CE), for projects up to 3,000 acres.

Robyn explained the all-lands approach by Idaho's nine collaborative groups as detailed in the *Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership, Collaborative Forest Restoration in Idaho Executive Summary*.

Members of the Payette Forest Coalition (PFC) provided information on their efforts and how they might work with ILRCC. Member Wendy Green is excited about prospect of working with ILRCC members and the groups ILRCC represents. The PFC has been active for 10 years and is actively seeking new members. Their primary goals are 1) improve wildlife and fish habitat, 2) watershed health and sub-watersheds, 3) enhance road and recreation infrastructure, 4) economic responsibility, and 5) reduce catastrophic wildfire and forest restoration. More information on the PFC is available at www.spatialinterest.com. The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) requires bringing in outside groups in order to leverage CFLRP funds.

Ron Hamilton emphasized the importance of including others within the collaborative that have different backgrounds and ideas. Environmental groups have pulled back from direct involvement with PFC due to limited time and resource commitments. Identifying and educating members and partners is an ongoing challenge and focus for PFC. The PFC's take-home message for the upcoming Washington Office 5-year review

will be successful collaboration on restoration projects and their ability to reach consensus among various interest groups.

Robyn provided background about the original omnibus funding to start collaborative groups beginning in 2009. Separate from that funding, is the CFLR program, which provides funding for active on-the-ground restoration of NFS lands.

Council question: What is the sustainable yield for National Forest System lands, will it be greater at the beginning and reduced over time, where are current harvests in relation to sustained yield, what is ILRCC's role, and how to support the various collaborative efforts of NFS lands? Margie suggested, sustained yield will depend upon the current landscape and not the volumes documented in many of the Forest Plans, because they are outdated. Robyn shared there is consensus that management needs to happen, but no consensus as to how much or where management on NFS needs to happen. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has hired a forest ecologist to do an analysis of restoration needed for forest health conditions on ~300,000 acres statewide. There is a significant amount of treatment needed, including thinning, cutting, fire, let grow, etc. This information will be shared state-wide with collaborative groups.

Mary reported on positive outcomes from ILRCC and IDL working with various collaborative groups in developing the Western Competitive grant project in Valley County and in Boundary County.

It was discussed that many counties and collaborative groups have difficulties with facilitation management of meetings for development of multi-partner projects. It was suggested that future project proposals should include funding for a facilitator as part of the grant application to ensure meaningful participation by stakeholders. Mark suggested BHS could be a source of funds to support facilitators for a region. Frank shared information about the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, which can support Legacy and other regional projects.

Lunch Break/Tour of Smokejumper Base

PROJECT TYPES TO PURSUE FOR 2015 COMPETITIVE GRANTS – *M. Larson, R. Miller*

Robyn reported there has been a recent reduction in the number of applications states can submit annually for Western Competitive Grants from 4 to 3 per state, including multi-state projects. Is there a better way to get to the project proposals, to be more strategic and targeted? Mike commented that he felt past processes of IDL staff providing direct guidance to local groups who partnered for project development went well. Mary reviews past proposals that were not submitted or funded, annually.

It's key to have established and organized working groups to submit good grant applications. If promoted through a webinar, information should be included about the type of projects that could be good proposals. A best practices tool kit was suggested, containing basic guidelines and an education tool for potential applicants. It was suggested that the map from the FAP report card would be good information to share as part of a tool kit. A traveling road show may be helpful to target specific PLAs and groups. The Treasure Valley green infrastructure project idea was discussed in terms of costs to develop the project idea and that counties may need financial assistance or incentive to cover the expense of grant writing.

A suggested project is juniper biomass utilization to reduce encroachment with sage grouse habitat and WUI issues in southern Idaho. There are many partners already involved with this effort.

Consider looking at the PLAs that have not had a funded Western Competitive grant.

Members interested in creating a subcommittee to assist Mary in planning efforts to develop good projects are: Glen Burkhardt (chair), Robyn Miller, Patti Best, Gregg Servheen (volunteered by Robyn), Margie Ewing-Costa, and Juan Bonillo.

FOREST LEGACY PROJECT (FLP) PROPOSALS FOR 2016 – *K Sjoquist, Land Trust Representative*

Karen and Robyn provided background on the Selkirk-Kootenai Valley FLP application. Discussion followed about where the FLP should focus efforts in the future. Karen posed the question of continuing to concentrate efforts in the same landscape as the majority of funded projects are in Boundary & Bonner County, or focus on different landscapes. Frank and Kirk prefer a consistent process is applied annually for the subcommittee to review and rank projects. The standard state review and ranking process may be altered this year because only one project is proposed and two projects are in the process of closing. A limiting factor is the amount of time Karen has as part-time staff overseeing the Legacy projects. Does the Coalition of Land Trusts have any ideas?

Afternoon Break / Presentation – A special thank-you to Robert Cope for his service to the Idaho Fire Plan Working Group and ILRCC on behalf of the Idaho Association of Counties. Cope was a founding member of both groups.

RURAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATIONS IN IDAHO – *C. Glazier, M. Larson*

Craig Glazier provided background on the history and success of Idaho's Rangeland Fire Protection Associations. Over 170 ranchers are currently trained for initial attack on wildfires.

MEETING FEEDBACK, WRAP UP, NEXT MEETING – **Mark Larson, All**

Review IWRAP documents and report back to Susan Cleverley or Janet Valle by July 7th.

Chair Mark Larson's term will expire at the end of the year and Robyn will be appointed the new chair. Members can nominate themselves or others for the Vice-Chair. Email nominations to Craig F and include what the member values in serving on ILRCC. Mark will remain an ILRCC member.

The next ILRCC meeting will be in conjunction with the Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership (IFRP) meeting February 18-19, 2015, to be held at the Riverside Hotel in Boise. The Summer 2015 meeting will be held in June in either Twin Falls, to view juniper landscape/issues, or the Moscow/Lewiston vicinity to view the UI highlights (biomass utilization nursery, research), WCG Big Bear project area and/or view tribal projects. There will be no Fall 2014 meeting.

Adjourned at 3:30 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Suzie Jude

List of follow-up items:

Review IWRAP documents and report back to Susan or Janet Valle by July 7th.

Submit ILRCC Vice-Chair nominations to Craig Foss.