



## IDAHO LANDS RESOURCE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Tuesday, June 21, 2016

IDL Staff Office, Sundance Conference Room, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lisa Ailport, Idaho Chapter American Planning Association

Patti Best, Utilities/Energy Efficiency

Glen Burkhardt, Bureau of Land Management - Fire

G. Kirk David, Idaho Forest Owners Association

Janet Funk, Idaho Tree Farm Committee

Frank Gariglio, USDA-NRCS

Jeff Handel, Nez Perce Tribe (Alt.)

Ken Knoch, ILRCC Vice-Chair, City Foresters/Idaho Parks & Recreation Association

Tim Maguire, Urban Forestry Collaborative Groups / Bioregional Planning

Robyn Miller, ILRCC Chair, Land Trust Organizations

Bob Reggear, Green Industry Organizations

Gregg Servheen, Idaho Fish & Game

John Roberts, Idaho Emergency Management Assoc.

Jim Tucker, National Forest System, Fire Management

Robert Cruz, Regions 1 & 4, USDA-FS, S&PF (for Janet Valle)

Mike Wolcott, Association of Consulting Foresters

### AGENCY STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT:

Craig Foss, Bureau Chief, Forestry Assistance, IDL

Mary Fritz, Stewardship Program Mgr., IDL

Tyre Holfeltz, Community Fire Program Mgr., IDL

Dave Stephenson, Urban Interface Program Mgr., IDL

Jennifer Russell, Project Coordinator, IDL

Suzie Jude, Forest Stewardship Program, IDL

Peg Polichio, Idaho Dept. of Lands (contractor)

Gordon Sanders, Idaho Forest Owners Association (Alt.)

Warren Merritt, Kootenai Fire & Rescue

### Welcome/Introductions

Robyn Miller welcomed everyone to the meeting and guests were introduced. Patti Best provided her personal and professional background and her interest in serving on the council.

### ILRCC Membership

Craig Foss provided background on the formation of the council and its operating procedures. The council operates under State & Private Forestry (S&PF) authorities and at the direction of the Idaho State Forester. "Healthy Forests for All Idahoans" is the council's theme and the council works across all ownerships.

Robyn Miller's term as chair will expire at the end of this year. Vice-Chair Ken Knoch will assume the chairmanship at the next meeting. This fall, IDL will solicit Vice-Chair nominees for the next two-year term. For council members whose terms expire at the end of this year, IDL will contact the group represented to solicit nominations for the next three-year term. Tyre asked about any new groups (i.e. American Planning Association – APA) under consideration for inclusion on the council. Craig explained the need to keep the size of the group manageable and is reluctant to increase its size. However, if there were a group opening or a member not participating regularly, another group might be considered as an alternate by the State Forester. Lisa noted that APA is represented on the council by her (as urban forestry representation), and provided information about the County Planning Directors sub-group under the Idaho APA. They are a dynamic group and may be interested in greater participation on the council. Craig emphasized the role of two-way communication by members both to the council and back to their represented groups.



### **National State and Private Forestry Update**

Craig provided an update on the most recent Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) meeting. Those attending included western FS regional foresters and S&PF directors. Deputy Chief Jim Hubbard emphasized that states should be moving toward cross-boundary efforts with S&PF programs. Items discussed:

- The Farm Bill Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) is intended to be a cross-boundary effort. If a state is willing to do work across a boundary, Hubbard is willing to fund the effort. Oregon, Utah, Washington and Montana have invested state funds within their PLAs for GNA projects. Unfortunately, there aren't many shelf-ready projects on national forest lands that have been through the NEPA process; states have identified NEPA completion as a critical need.
- GNA can address capacity on local projects to get work done on adjacent lands. There is also a GNA program for tribes specified under HFRA authorities.
- 'Fire borrowing' by the Forest Service has greatly affected their ability to treat lands; it's hoped this will be addressed soon through Congressional action.
- There's a push for urban forestry funding to be focused within 11 national 'mega regions', which do not include Idaho and many smaller states.
- S&PF programs should reach landowners on a measureable scale on all ownerships; the first come, first served model is not getting us there and, as a result, national S&PF funding process may change in future. Idaho's Big Bear project is a good example of cross boundary S&PF program delivery. Question: should everyone have a chance to participate and, if so, should the state fund this effort?
- There is a push for third party land trust organizations to also hold Forest Legacy conservation easements (CE) in addition to states. Land trust organizations have obtained national certification and liability insurance to accomplish this. In Idaho, there's not much conversation on this. Discussion followed about what happens if local government has a problem with the state holding the CE? Would they be more receptive if the CE were held by a third party? The Clagstone Meadows Legacy project garnered a lot of attention during this year's legislative session. IDL has always tried to be transparent and supportive of the Legacy program, so this was a learning experience.
- S&PF is in the process of creating performance measures that provide outcomes and not just outputs.

IDL's will work closely with S&PF to tell the good things we are doing. Discussion continued regarding outcomes versus outputs. Outputs are acres treated, planted, etc., while outcomes tell about conditions that result from outputs, such as improved water quality. How do you quantify the outcomes that take place over time? It was suggested that we look at our goals in terms of outcomes and then ask what outputs/treatments are needed to accomplish them.

### **Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) Update - Peg Polichio & Craig Foss**

Peg provided a brief overview of Idaho's efforts for Farm Bill and GNA since 2014. It was clarified that under GNA, the Forest Service retains all decision making on national forests. States come along side and can help with NEPA data collection and project implementation. Peg was contracted by IDL to help facilitate the GNA process. This past March, the Idaho legislature approved spending authority for IDL to use private and Federal money to get the initiative going. In May, the GNA master agreement was signed by the Idaho State Forester and Regional Foresters for (Idaho) Regions 1 & 4. The master agreement states how they will operate together. Leverage will be through state processes and



procedures. The Idaho GNA master agreement was approved by the Idaho Land Board in May. By June, all Idaho's national forests had expressed interest in working with the State of Idaho. Local supplemental project agreements (SPAs) will detail work on specific projects. SPAs have been completed on the Nez-Perce Clearwater NF, and are being developed on the Payette and Idaho Panhandle NFs. Start-up monies will help IDL with capacity; IDL will hire a Federal Lands Program Manager position to oversee IDL's efforts and work with sub-contractors. It's the intent for Idaho's GNA effort to become self-sustaining. It will allow for work on areas of highest need, which may not necessarily be the national forest. GNA staffing efforts at IDL have begun.

Questions/comments from council members:

- Peg clarified that Utah and Colorado have completed GNA restoration work but have not harvested timber.
- There's been a lot of good feedback from environmental groups and a willingness to suspend judgment in order to test the initiative.
- Some think GNA is an antidote against talk of federal lands takeover happening in other states. There will be those that oppose GNA, but there has been substantial effort to build a good foundation of support.
- Because of limited GNA funding, this will require the program be sustainable and limit it geographically due to IDL and NF internal capacity. Contract agreements are project specific.
- Craig explained IDL must have state funding authority through the Idaho Legislature in order to spend federal and private GNA funds; this includes hiring personnel.
- Peg thinks IDL processes may allow for higher (sale) value for timber, which may help keep program going and complete restoration work.
- Public perception regarding best management practices was discussed. IDL is required to implement best management practices and complete work according to NEPA and federal standards. These issues are being discussed. This is an iterative process between FS and IDL and calibration will take place.
- It's important that ILRCC keep informed of the GNA process; in future, ILRCC's role may change as it relates to GNA effort. More time is needed to understand the changes underway and provide input. It will be important to ILRCC for cross-boundary activities. ILRCC's role may include educating the general public as it relates to forest prescriptions and management.
- For focus groups to stay involved in the GNA dialogue, it may be better to do this through the Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership and cross-funding through efforts like the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP).

Lunch Break

#### **Forest Action Plan (FAP): What it is and how it was created**

Dave described the process for development of the initial state assessment and strategies, collectively called FAP. This took a lot of staff time in part due to the compressed timeline for completion and because it was new; very few knew what it was or how it would be used. At the last couple ILRCC meetings, Dave outlined a process for the 2020 revision intended to spread staff time out over a longer period, but it also limited ILRCC involvement and put much of the strategy work ahead of a revised geospatial analysis.



### **2020 FAP Revision: Discuss a different process for completing and ILRCC involvement**

Tim Maguire reminded the council about a proposed project submitted to ILRCC earlier this year for Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) grant competition. If funded, the project will look at the true economic impact of LSR and Western Fire Manager (WFM) grants—in ecosystem benefits and value to communities and landowners—and use this to inform future grant proposals and increase the pace, scale, and efficacy of forest restoration around the state. The project would be even better if based on the new 2020 FAP data analysis. A process is currently underway to identify State and Private Forestry performance (outcome) measures nationally. Our project would try to fill some of the data gaps in that process and address additional questions. What stories do we want to tell about Idaho's projects? What is their true economic value? Are we meeting the FAP goals? Should we focus our efforts to areas that are being underserved? Are we going in the right direction or just throwing money in different directions and hoping for the best? Tim proposed rolling into his project completion of a new geospatial assessment of forest resources, and updating the strategies based on the assessment, economic analysis and visits with key groups within each of the Priority Landscape Areas (PLAs). The result would be an economic analysis and a finished 2020 full FAP revision. His hope is that ILRCC will serve as the oversight committee much the same as one that oversaw the initial FAP development.

#### Questions/comments from council members:

- Data will direct where work will be done and be used to ground-truth project proposals.
- Project submission will be September 2016 for 2017 LSR project. If funded, the project will start in 2017.
- It was suggested Tim consider adding National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) activities like EQIP thinning, plantings, etc. The proposal could also open up and allow for more broad data collection from other sources.
- There will be as a product outcome a way to collect this data so IDL isn't chasing it down in the future; a dashboard will be used in conjunction with an IDL-created geospatial tool to record project information/outcomes.
- How wide a net should it cast for information? It will need to be limited so that others can take it on and maintain it over time.
- Consistent nomenclature will be needed to populate stakeholder data in future; this will be part of the criteria developed with this project.
- This proposal will be in line with the national outcomes currently being developed. A key story will be included as part of the project's product. Dataset selections depend upon the goals chosen for outcomes.
- What role does the council want to play in this effort? There's a need to be involved in initial discussions. For example, there may be a great outcome but no data for it.
- Tim noted he is working on a similar economic model in the South Platte near Denver.
- Will conservation easements be a layer in analysis? Benefits are associated with this layer. Discussion followed regarding weighting economic values of property depending upon who lives or recreates there (or not) and temporal or seasonal factors. Feedback will be needed from ILRCC members as to the veracity of certain data.
- If this project proposal isn't funded, further discussion will be necessary about options to complete the 2020 FAP. No other states have submitted an LSR to write a FAP, but Dave will make inquiries as to how best to write the proposal.
- Will 2020 FAP be an interactive online tool? Something like Miradi may be worth considering to get it online to those that want it and will use it as a decision support tool.



- Will values be re-evaluated yearly? There's a need to keep it fluid. Resource assessment will necessitate a cut-off date. To make it a living tool, have a tool to drag-in datasets, etc. This will need to be considered in the proposal.
- Discussion followed about whether the first FAP should have prioritized PLAs. Do these boundaries need further refinement moving forward? Should prioritization by issue be a better way to identify PLAs? What will be the impacts of changing PLA boundaries? Have projects completed in the current PLAs changed their priority landscape status?
- Frank explained how NRCS currently uses PLA layers in their fuel breaks project ranking process. Homeland Security All Hazard Management Plans integrate FAP data to define low, medium and high ranking areas. FAP is based on a dynamic process but changing it too much may make it challenging for some to use.

There is support by council members to move the project proposal forward.

### **Fire Working Group Formation**

Jim Tucker reported on the Cohesive Strategy (CS) meeting that took place following last February's ILRCC meeting, during which it was decided an Idaho Fire Response Committee would form to take on the CS tenet of "safe and effective wildfire response." The Fire Response formulation group met in late spring and drafted a briefing paper showing the direction they're heading; they plan to reconvene this fall with a charter. Jim foresees that when an issue involving safe and effective wildfire response requires input from ILRCC, the working group will meet with ILRCC to discuss and solicit feedback. Tyre noted that while ILRCC is advisory, the Fire Response Committee will implement recommendations. The Fire Response Committee will function as a third-party facilitator and discussion group to create solutions and bridge the communication between various fire operational groups in Idaho. The group will facilitate consistent joint messaging around prevention and mitigation. ILRCC will advise on the other two CS tenets—fire-adapted communities and resilient landscapes—and assist with Region 4 Above-Base project rankings. Tyre and Jim will continue to provide information to ILRCC about the Fire Response Committee progress and efforts.

Afternoon Break

### **Partnerships and Projects**

Gregg Servheen provided information about Idaho Fish & Game's (IF&G) partnerships and projects to demonstrate pathways to identifying opportunities and promoting greater leverage with partners.

- At a high level, IF&G has master agreements in place with The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, and Wood River Land Trust. These are broad agreements allowing for collaboration with long-term partners IF&G wants to be involved with. The agreements define a framework for working together, but do not obligate the parties to any actions.
- IF&G has large scale restoration agreements in place that are project specific for juniper removal, aspen restoration, prescribed burning, shrub steppe restoration and travel management. Restoration agreements allow transfer of IF&G funds to partner agencies as one contributor in a larger project, outlining what IF&G is in support of, and what funds are being used for.
- IF&G has a long-standing agreement in place with NRCS for 4 staff persons currently housed within NRCS field office to implement the Farm Bill program that benefit IF&G's mission. This allows IF&G to use their expertise to match landowner funding on landscape scale projects like



State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) for upland game birds and mule deer habitat restoration.

- IF&G staff participates on the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) state committee to help prioritize projects and work cooperatively to complement partner projects.
- They also have many other cooperative agreements with other agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private landowners that further their mission in terms of habitat restoration.

Questions/comments from council members:

- Projects with multiple partners are now the norm.
- IF&G receives dedicated funding allocated to each state from national taxes on guns and ammunition, administered by the Fish & Wildlife Service.
- IF&G attempts to leverage limited funds with partners; all project work is habitat driven. Landowners can work directly on technical parameters with IF&G or go through NRCS.

There are considerable beneficial impacts from the partnership work IF&G does. Gregg suggests a more integrated approach when planning projects with prospective partners, i.e. collaborating and integrating each group's goals to develop project ideas that include logging timber, stream restoration, fire mitigation, etc. Gregg suggested ILRCC should be in contact with or attend various (types of) group meetings or conferences—interested parties will then seek you out and opportunities will reveal themselves.

Because of the upcoming FAP revision, is it time for ILRCC to do some type of alternate conference or workshop? Should ILRCC identify groups to point landowners to technical assistance and financial assistance? To what level should members make themselves available to do community outreach?

There's a need for a landowner catalog of in-state contacts and project resources. Capacity is needed to plug landowners into other known resources. Should ILRCC create a 'Craig's List' for landowners or alternately provide for more cross-training of field staff at IDL, NRCS, IF&G and others about facilitating appropriate contacts for landowners?

The idea of a pilot project to fund a facilitator to coordinate project work was suggested. Many landowners can't afford to do project work even with NRCS financial assistance. Bundling programs in this instance is a step in the right direction.

**Follow-up Item:** Additional discussion about facilitator pilot project will be on agenda for next meeting.

Discussion followed on the Clearwater Complex fire. NRCS emergency funding was made available to help with restoration; however not many landowners signed up to conduct practices. This might be due to the short application sign-up period, required matching funds, or landowners too traumatized to deal with the fire impacts. The NRCS is discussing extending the application deadline, or extending funding for multiple years. Another challenge for fire rehabilitation was getting seed and growing seedlings for 65,000 acres of planting.

### **LSR and WFM Projects**

Jen Russell reported Chris Schnepf, UI Extension, has proposed a multi-state LSR project idea for seed tree selection and distribution in the face of climate change. Planting represents a substantial



investment by landowners. NRCS guidelines preclude this happening right now. But the process needs to be started to bring knowledge together and facilitate modernization of seed transfer.

Other ideas for LSR:

- What about Wood River and Lemhi Pahsimeroi areas? Wood River Collaborative just organized and Robyn will be in communication with them.
- An assessment like Treasure Valley in other communities? Moving along in Pocatello and Idaho Falls areas.
- There is a new Trout Unlimited chapter in Lemhi County.
- New community member who wants to seed plants in riparian areas for the benefit of bees.
- Other ideas could include conifer encroachment. IF&G works within this community and is a good partner.
- National Forest Foundation has funding to bring in a facilitator to develop a collaborative group.
- Project proposals will be received more favorably if landscape-scale and have collaborative partnerships.
- The maximum LSR award per state is \$700K which is equal to 2-1/3 projects if each is for \$300K. Note, however, that there is only funding for about 14 projects in the West.
- It may be a case where communities are in need of serious mentorship.
- Recreational trail for healthy people and healthy communities.
- Municipal watershed restoration.

Additional project ideas should be emailed to Jen Russell [jrussell@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:jrussell@idl.idaho.gov) .

Tyre Holfeltz reports he's spent a great deal of time on the road so far this year. There is much more interest in WFM grants in south Idaho. Most of his contacts are at the county level, but he's open to working with anyone at the community level. There are 3 WFM grant proposals so far, but there's room for 2 more proposals. Submission deadline is August 20<sup>th</sup> so Tyre will need applications by the end of July.

Tyre's network includes fire plan working groups, the Idaho Emergency Managers Association, and the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security (now known as the Idaho Office of Emergency Management). Regarding inclusion of National Forest fire management officers in the grant application distribution list, the network for grant applications is not well developed at this time but it's getting there. Blaine County, Pheasants Forever, and Boundary County have applied for WFM grants. Additional applications should be emailed to Tyre [tholfeltz@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:tholfeltz@idl.idaho.gov) .

### **Field Trip Overview**

Karen provided information on the field day visit to the Clagstone Meadows Legacy project. She noted the map location of the McArthur Lake East project set to close later this year in Boundary County.

### **Meeting Feedback, Wrap Up, Next Meeting**

If there are nominations for Vice-Chair, please send them to Craig Foss. Janet Funk nominated Bob Reggear; Bob is willing to serve. Craig noted that we are trying to rotate the chair and vice-chair positions between Fire, Stewardship and Urban Forestry representatives. Mark Larson (Fire) was the first chair, followed by Robyn (Stewardship) and Ken (Urban Forestry). Bob represents Green Industry



Groups—an urban forestry representation. Ideally, we’d like a Fire person to serve as vice-chair, or a Stewardship representative.

This fall, IDL will solicit Vice-Chair nominees for the next two-year term. Council members are encouraged to submit nominations for Council Vice-Chair. For council members whose terms expire at the end of this year, IDL will contact the group represented to solicit nominations for the next three-year term.

Gordon Sanders provided an opinion paper for member consideration. He prepared this following the last ILRCC meeting and Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership conference in February 2016, and it’s meant to facilitate further discussion.

Glen reported on a Resilient Landscape (RL) proposal through the Department of the Interior that includes Craig Mountain and the Joseph Plains. This is a 3-year, \$700,000 proposal. Other partners include the Nez Perce Tribe, Emergency Management, and IDL. RL funding has been proposed and under consideration. However, if not approved, they may consider paring project down to apply for a Western Fire Manager grant without federal partners involved. The proposal includes a fire management plan, ingress/egress, shaded fuel breaks and weed control depending upon what NEPA will allow. Jeff Handel reports that NEPA is almost complete, but the challenge will be getting funding for implementation. Also, Mary suggested an LSR Grant as another avenue of potential funding.

Janet Funk requested more information on IDL activities to help her inform other forest landowners (the interest she represents on ILRCC). For IDL new releases, members can contact Suzie Jude to be put on IDL’s news release email list. If members want to share information about their represented group, please bring information to the meeting to share with others.

The next meeting will align with the Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership (IFRP). The meeting date for ILRCC will be February 28, 2017, and will be held at the Boise Riverside Hotel. The annual IFRP workshop is scheduled for March 1 & 2, 2017, also at the Boise Riverside.

Craig thanked everyone for attending the meeting today.

Meeting adjourned 4:55 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Suzie Jude

List of follow-up items:

Additional discussion about facilitator pilot project will be on agenda for next meeting.