

**Joint NEWFC/CNF Bi-monthly Meeting Minutes – Minutes
November 17, 2009**

CNF Attending: Fred Way, Donald Gonzalez, Rodney Smoldon, Tom Pawley, Linda Fee, John Buehler, Jim McGowan

Attending board: Lloyd McGee (president), Tim Coleman (secretary); Jeff Juel, Claudia Michalke (executive director); Maurice Williamson, Dick Dunton, Russ Vaagen (vice president), Bob Playfair, Derrick Knowles, Steve West, Ron Gray, David Heflick (**a quorum was present**)

Absent Board Members: Mike Petersen, Phil Carew

Also attending: Phil Aune, Chuck Gades, Russ Larsen, Commissioner John Hanke, Sheila Stalp, Staci Hanlin

Agenda:

1. Lloyd's Time
2. Rodney's (forest supervisor's) Time
3. Forest Service budget
4. Proof of Concept Update
5. Spokane Forestry Forum
6. Disable Hunter
7. Stimulus
8. Hanlon Project
9. Summit-Pierre
10. Kettle Face
11. East Wedge
12. FY 09 Timber Output
13. Project Updates
14. Pend Oreille County timber sale
15. Brainstorm Session
16. Next Meeting & Agenda

Discussion

1. Lloyd's Time

We've accomplished three things: 1) the coalition met with Fred Way and Jean Lavell regarding Summit-Pierre and reached agreement re NEWFC letter of support, 2) participated in a meeting/workshop re the application of WEP model as it might relate to the Hanlon Project, 3) met on out the ground of the Malo-Eastlake Project to monitoring outcomes and determine opportunities for improving efficiencies and thinning prescriptions. In the East Wedge Project just 10% of the stand will be marked with the remainder to be determined during project implementation – that will save \$58K (over marking all units).

2. Rodney's time

The Forest Service needs to be more adaptive in the process of getting projects out. There is a lack of certainty as to what is going to happen about getting a new forest supervisor. There will be a list of candidates out by the end of November and that list will be trimmed down based on the interview process. This process will take place either December or early January. The Regional Forester will convene a committee from her office then select a list of finalists that is then sent to the Chief who will make the final decision. From receipt of names to chief's decision will take about 6-8 weeks.

3. Forest Service Budget

CNF budget is still down about \$1M. Expect the new budget will be out mid-December. Rumor is there might be an increase though it is expected budget will be similar to 2009.

4. Proof of Concept. Rep. McMorris Rodgers sent a letter to R6 Forester Mary Wanger asking her to support continued funding for the Colville similar to that during POC. Peter Williams will arrive by mid December to help craft a new contract. Expect to hear back from Rodney regarding outcomes of this process late December / January.

5. Eastern Washington Forest Forum

This forum is an ongoing process facilitated by Department of Natural Resources with participation from a broad set of stakeholders including forestry schools to discuss current issues regarding forest management across Washington. NEWFC and the Tapash (Wenatchee-Okanogan) Project were key topics of discussion. There seems to be some competition between Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee though the Colville has manufacturing infrastructure that O-WNF doesn't.

5. Roundtable

Congressional staff of Senator Cantwell and Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers created a roundtable of individuals from cattleman to wilderness advocates to discuss Colville National Forest management. There are about 18 roundtable participants representing all interest groups. From the larger (roundtable) group four teams (committees) were created that include members of the roundtable and other interested individuals to participate in committees addressing: 1) Range, 2) Recreation Access, 3) Mining, and 4) Highway 20 issues. There is no forestry committee though timber industry reps will play a role in these committees. Team timelines: 1) version 1 (each team) agreement by December 15, 2) version 2 by early January, 3) wrap up by March.

Q. Are PWAs being discussed by a particular group?

A. All 4 teams will discuss Potential Wilderness Areas.

6. Disable Hunter Program

There has been good response to this program. There were 133 hunters using these trails last year and 240 this year. Problems have occurred including non-authorized use, non-conforming hunting methods, still, only about 10% of responses complained of problems. There are to be additional replacement gates constructed by the Curlew Job Corps using funds raised by NEWFC. Claudia has been receiving disabled hunter surveys – many of them are priceless in their observation and content. There are potential enforcement problems that occur as additional motorized recreation trails are opened though the baseline (of illegal) use is difficult to quantify. This project was funded by the National Forest Foundation.

Q. Is there any environmental effects monitoring of disabled hunter routes?

A. Monitoring has taken place to maintain trail accessibility.

7. Stimulus Bill

Projects list is anticipated to be out by February. The weather this fall will greatly impact how quickly project preparation is completed and service contracts are issued. There are efforts underway to increase capacity to speed up contract issuance.

Discussion about contracting: A key element in helping potential contractors understand the ropes is teaching the necessary skill set across the state's rural communities. A training session will be held in Colville that will teach contractors how to qualify and bid on FS contracts.

8. Hanlon TS Update

This is a very complicated project that includes grizzly bear, caribou and bull trout issues. Probably couldn't pick a more challenging area for a project. NEWFC has been actively engaged. Comment period closed on Friday. Eric Trimble is the new TMA in the Newport RD and helped expedite this project. Lloyd noted that the Coalition is very satisfied where we are at this time working with the Service. The Coalition will provide a level of support letter to the Forest Service once we get the watershed analysis from Jennifer.

9. Summit-Pierre Project

There was an objection filed in October from Tri-County Motorized Recreation Association which was resolved and the project is going forward. TCMRA was concerned about road closures, that motorized recreation was losing previously permitted access and that those concerns were being ignored. The Coalition will be participating in the "islands of no-cut" that will be laid out the summer of 2010.

10. Kettle Face Project

Collaboration will take place from January to May and hope to have final reports out in May and decision will be out in August.

11. East Wedge

Claudia handed out an "East Wedge Progress Report." Project area encompasses 43,000 acres of the Colville National Forest. Stevens County Conservation District is facilitating contracts to carry for the project. There are three phases of this project. It is important to note the Forest Service has not abdicated any of their decision-making authority for this project.

12. FY Timber output

There was 43.6 million board feet sold in 2009. CNF was originally forecast to get out 30 million board feet. Don thanked the coalition for helping improve efficiencies including improvement in total unit cost to \$61/thousand board ft, a savings of 25%.

13. Project Updates

Don handed out copies of past, current and future projects. Hanlon will likely be broken into two units and because of bear issues all units will be by winter harvest except for a couple units near the lake.

14. Pend Oreille County

Commissioner Hanke notified the group that Pend Oreille County will be selling timber in 2010. Early workup of the project is underway and volume estimates will be made public as soon as possible.

15. Brainstorm Session

Subject: anything that might improve efficiencies of the timber program.

- weight scale sales for small material, where sorting in the field, and lessen cruise standards
- measure weight scale comparatively to cruised scale
- lessen standard for cruise if potential for multiple bidder
- marking guides designed to overlay structurally similar stands within project planning area rather than by individual units
- simplify Rx & give more discretion to Sales Administrator
- consider AFRC notes about efficiency guidelines re sort/sale
- evaluate DNR to see what efficiencies to see what might apply to national forest
- larger projects unless smaller is easier contracts
- more volume/acre
- compare Malo-East to Vulcan esp. Rx
- use one silv. to write prescriptions (multiply silvs. can cause problems)
- do a summary of Rx w/bullet pt. – hierarchical (for multiple marking guides)
- review FSH/FSM & question why
- Get WEP model firmed up to speed collaborative & possibly output

16. Next Meeting January 19, 2010

Draft agenda for the January meeting:

1. Lloyd's time
2. Rodney's time
3. Roundtable
4. Disabled Hunter Report
5. Stimulus Bill Update
6. East Wedge Update
7. Kettle Face Update
8. South End Project
9. Hanlon Update
10. Projects Update
11. START
12. Forest Plan Review
13. Proof of Concept Update
14. Brainstorm topics progress/results
15. Spokane Eastside Forest Forum follow-up meeting
16. Next meeting

-- Adjourned 3:40 PM