Blue Mountains Forest Partners

Our Mission

"Blue Mountains Forest Partners is a diverse group of stakeholders who work together to create and implement a shared vision to improve the resilience and well-being of forests and communities in the Blue Mountains."

Operations Committee Meeting Agenda

Meeting Overview:

- **Date of Meeting:** **August 15, 2019**
- **Time:** **4:00 – 7:00 pm**
- **Location:** **John Day Airport Conference Room**
- **Facilitator:** **Mark Webb**
- **Minutes Scribe:** **Susan Jane Brown**

- **Call to Order: Introductions, changes to the agenda, agenda approval (all):** agenda moved approval, carried unanimously.

- **Approval of July 2018 Full Group minutes (all):** July minutes moved approval, carried unanimously.

- **Ops' update (SJB):** Ops received a finance update from the executive director, an update on the Shared Stewardship signing ceremony that he attended, a preview of the full group meeting, discussed a possible CE for roadside hazard tree removal with the USFS, and discussed work on the Ochoco NF regarding the 21" rule.

- **Wednesday field trip update (Mark):** field trip with Vicki Saab to visit some of the monitoring units for the Canyon Creek research salvage. The purpose of the research is to gather wildlife data and develop prescriptions for post-fire logging that are ecologically sensitive for wildlife. This is the fourth year of four years of data collection, and Vicki and her team will then publish papers documenting their findings. We will then use the information to develop post-fire zones of agreement. At the end of August, the area closure on the harvest units will be lifted.

- **Forest Service project updates (USFS):** Austin scoping is closed, high level of interest; Ragged Ruby and Cliff/Knox are moving forward. USFS is moving planners around to cover the need. Elk 16 aspen unit is high priority for fencing next year. Wild horse EA (jointly developed with the BLM) scoping closes tomorrow.

- **Osborne Panoramas presentation (John Marshall):** John has retaken a series of panoramic photos that were originally photographed in the 1930s and 1940s by Osborne. The change between the two sets of photos shows the effect of fire suppression on the landscape: there are many more trees on the landscape than in the past, which is dramatically affecting the ecology of forest ecosystems. Also noted that range conditions have improved since the original photos

were taken. The old photos did not have large patches of high severity fire, although high severity was present; there was a lot of mixed severity fire on the landscape in the past.

- **Wildlife Habitat ZOA discussion and potential approval (Trent):** we have been working on developing zones of agreement for wildlife; Trent provided an update on the work he has been doing; see presentation. The purpose of the zones is to recognize the habitat work we're already doing, review species and assure structure in treatment, and solidify the framework to reduce administrative objections. The wildlife ZOAs will use our upland zones of agreement forest types plus a few additional habitat types such as aspen and riparian. The ZOA take a coarse filter, meso-filter, and fine filter approach: the coarse filter looks at plant communities and seral stages, meso-filter looks at wildlife that need additional habitat features (snags, etc.), and the fine filter looks at rare species or those species that are habitat specialists. There are 160 species found on the forest Trent evaluated: 116 species are covered by the coarse filter, 40 species are meso-filter species requiring additional habitat features, and 2 species are fine-filter species (pacific marten and pileated woodpecker). Trent has also created a spreadsheet for meso-filter species that identifies the special habitat feature the species needs, which habitat type the species is found, and the management indicator species that is represented by the species.

  The current forest plan lists 10 woodpecker species and 2 mammals as management indicator species, and there are 5 "sensitive species" listed by the regional office – how do these species crosswalk with the 160 species addressed by the ZOA? Along with species listed under the ESA, these species are all captured by the filter approach.

  The next step in the ZOA process is to compare prescriptions and treatments we're implementing and compare that to James' monitoring work to determine whether we are leaving habitat needed by wildlife, and we will be working with the Forest Service to make sure they understand the work we're doing with the ZOA.

  Discussion followed. How has extensive grazing in the past affected wildlife presence and use? How has introduced elk affected the landscape? There are studies that look at this issue, although they are not specific to the Malheur. On Starkey, there is elk removal occurring now and they will be studying how that affects the presence of deer. The extensive historical grazing has changed the plant associations, particularly at the higher elevations. It is important to note that the management indicator species concept assumed that managing for those species alone sufficed for all wildlife needs, but that concept has been discredited by science developed since the 1990 forest plan. Does anything jump out that we have been doing that is inconsistent with what Trent is learning? No, not really, although it is known that we have a lack of large snags on the landscape.

- **Blue Ridge Fire update, Soda Bear accomplishments (Roy Walker):** Roy provided an update on Soda Bear project implementation. Started collaborating on the project in 2010 and decision was signed in 2012. Analyzed treatment on 20,605 acres. See attached factsheet. Concern about not implementing all of the analyzed acres, as well as the lack of prescribed fire. When the Canyon Creek fire encountered the treatments, about 80% of the acres burned at low severity, and 20% at moderate to high severity.

The Blue Ridge Fire was a natural wildfire that the Forest Service managed as a resource benefit fire, allowing it to burn under supervision. The fire burned within containment lines and within a number of parameters (keep off private lands, minimize damage to range improvements, etc.). Forest Service ignited the area inside the containment lines with the intention of consuming fuels, and put in transects before the prescribed burn to measure fuels post-fire: the results indicate that the fire had beneficial effects on fuel loading, and burned at low severity. Forest Service will be conducting monitoring for invasive weeds post-fire. Smoke from the fire didn't count against the smoke budget. How did the cost of the managed fire compare to a prescribed fire? It costs about $100-$200/acre for prescribed burns, but this fire cost about $1,000/acre – but there are reasons for this cost, including a lot of extra staffing, communications, preparation, and equipment. In the future, we can bring this cost down substantially, and it does not consider the cost of possible resource damage that could have occurred in a more severe wildfire in the future. The national fire suppression budget largely paid for the cost of the fire. Forest Service would like the community to support this managed wildfire approach.

- **Friday field trip: Half-day monitoring field trip to visit veg treatments on Starr Ridge.** We'll leave the SO at 8 am. We'll head south on Hwy 395 to the FS 196 road, and head east from there. We'll look at variety of different treatments and forest conditions, including untreated stands, stands burned by wildfire (Canyon Creek), thinned stands, stands that have had prescribed fire, and combinations of all of the above. Folks can decide which types of treatments best meet restoration objectives. Transportation will be provided. For folks coming from Seneca or Burns, they can meet us at the intersection of the 196 road and Hwy. 395. That intersection is about a tenth of a mile south of Starr Campground (folks can fall in behind us at the turnaround near the campground).

- **Adjourn**

Blue Mountains Forest Partners Vision, Guiding Principles, and Grounds Rules for Collaboration

Our Vision

The Blue Mountains Forest Partners represents a broad constituency of stakeholders interested in healthy forest ecosystems, economic vitality and quality of life in Grant County, Oregon. We provide the US Forest Service with proposals for management of National Forest lands, and we support the utilization of forest resources and related opportunities to strengthen local economies.

Guiding Principles

- *To promote forest restoration in Grant County, integrating ecological, economic and community needs that have been developed and/or prioritized through collaboration.*

- *To improve our ability to work collaboratively and participate actively in these issues, finding common ground for our work. Our process will be open, inclusive and encourage participation of diverse stakeholders; our meetings will provide a 'safe' space for discussion and sharing of ideas.*

- *To overcome gridlock in forest planning and implementation. The success of our work is tied to long-term sustainability of forests and communities.*

Ground Rules for Collaboration and Meeting Participation

Members and nonmembers alike are expected to abide by these ground rules

- *Respect each other in and outside of meetings.*
- *No backroom deals.*
- *Personal attacks will not be tolerated.*
- *The personal integrity and values of participants will be respected.*
- *Stereotyping will be avoided.*
- *Commitments will not be made lightly and will be kept—agreements will be honored.*
- *Disagreements will be regarded as "problems to be solved" rather than as "battles to be won."*
- *Participants are representative of a broad range of interests, each having concerns about the outcome of the issues at hand. All parties recognize the legitimacy of the interests and concerns of others, and expect that their interests will be represented as well.*
- *Participants commit to keeping their colleagues/constituents informed about the progress of these discussions*
- *Participants commit to stating interests, problems, and opportunities. Not positions.*
- *Participants will air problems, disagreements and critical information during meetings to avoid surprises.*

- *Participants commit to search for opportunities and alternatives. The creativity of the group can often find the best solution.*

- *Participants agree to verify rumors at the meeting before accepting them as fact.*
- *Respect the facilitator and meeting agenda.*

Blue Mountains Forest Partners

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Sign-In Sheet: Full Group, 15 August 2019

Name	Organization	Email Address
Mark Webb	BMFP	–
Dave Hamilton	BMFP GFI	
Zach Williams	IA	
Nathan Poage	USFS NE Oregon Ecology Program	
Susan Jane Brown	WEC	ON FILE
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Ron Simpson	Malheur N.F.	
Chris Gorman	Malheur NF	
Colleen Malaney	MNF	
Amy Unthank	MNF	
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Kate Cueno	MNF	
Rich Fulton	MLC	
Dave Traylor	Citizen	
Dan Bishop	DR Johnson lumber co.	
Beth Parker	MNF	bethany.parker@usda.gov
Craig Trulock	MNF	

Name	Organization	Email Address
Roy Walker	Malheur N.F.	on file
Pam Hardy	WELC	on file
Trent Seager	SNW	"
John Bentley	WILD LIFE PILOT	JOHNBAT41654@GMAIL.COM
Ryan Falk	Malheur N.F	on File
Aaron Scott	OPB	"
Brandon Swanson	OPB	
King Williams	I A	

Soda Bear Project– By the Numbers as of 8/2019

Collaboration Started 2010 - Decision Signed 1/2012 - Analyzed 20,605 Acres

Treatment	Planned	Completed (as of 8/9/2019)
Commercial Harvest (acres) HTH and HSH	9,349	8,467
Commercial Volume (ccf) includes biomass	29,915	56,335
Non-Commercial Thin and Slash Treatments (acres)	10,889	2,122
Aspen Restoration Thinning (acres)	65	65
Underburning (acres)	14,174	0
Road Decommissioning (miles)	3	Not confirmed
Road Closure (miles)	8	Not confirmed

*Does not include acres treated within commercial sale units

Commercial Harvest

- 2 Timber Sales awarded
  - Cub, sold 1/2014, High Cascade, closed 11/2017, (6,004 ccf saw and 868 ccf Green bio)
  - Cub total stumpage received = $217,107.56 of which $147,821 went to Salvage sale fund, $49,285 went to the Treasury, $0 to KV, $7,147 went to BD deposits and $12,854 went to road maintenance deposits.
  - Fisk, sold 8/2012, Iron Triangle, closed 3/2015, (2,447 ccf saw and 584 ccf Green Bio)
  - Fisk total stumpage received = $139,331.75 of which $56,807 went to Salvage sale fund, $19,995 went to KV, $53,560 to the Treasury and $9,000 to BD and Road maintenance deposits.
- 2 Stewardship Task Orders awarded
  - Paw (Task Order #1), awarded 9/2013, Iron Triangle, Part of TO #1, (5,452 ccf saw and 1,735 ccf Green Bio), Stumpage received $206,522.00 all of which went to service work.
  - Sugar (Task Order #2), awarded 9/2014, Iron Triangle, Part of TO #2, (22,937 ccf saw and 16,308 ccf Green Bio), Stumpage received $42,698.00 all of which went to service work.
- 1 MCMB Stewardship Powell, Awarded 9/2012, included biomass (12' to a 3" top), Kriege Logging,
- Powell buyers included, DR Johnson – 7,538 ccf biomass, Malheur Lumber – 1,282 ccf pp saw logs, Boise Cascade 769 ccf fir saw logs. 63% return on logging costs. Final cost for treatments was $169,260, treated 485 acres at $430.86 per acre

Non-Commercial (PCT) Harvest and Slash treatments

- Primarily funded with CFLR.
- The Districts are looking at the rest of the planned PCT and slash treatments.

Aspen Restoration Thinning

- All conifer removal completed, mix of hinging and fencing for protection measured mostly completed, being monitored.

Underburning

- None as of 7/16/2019

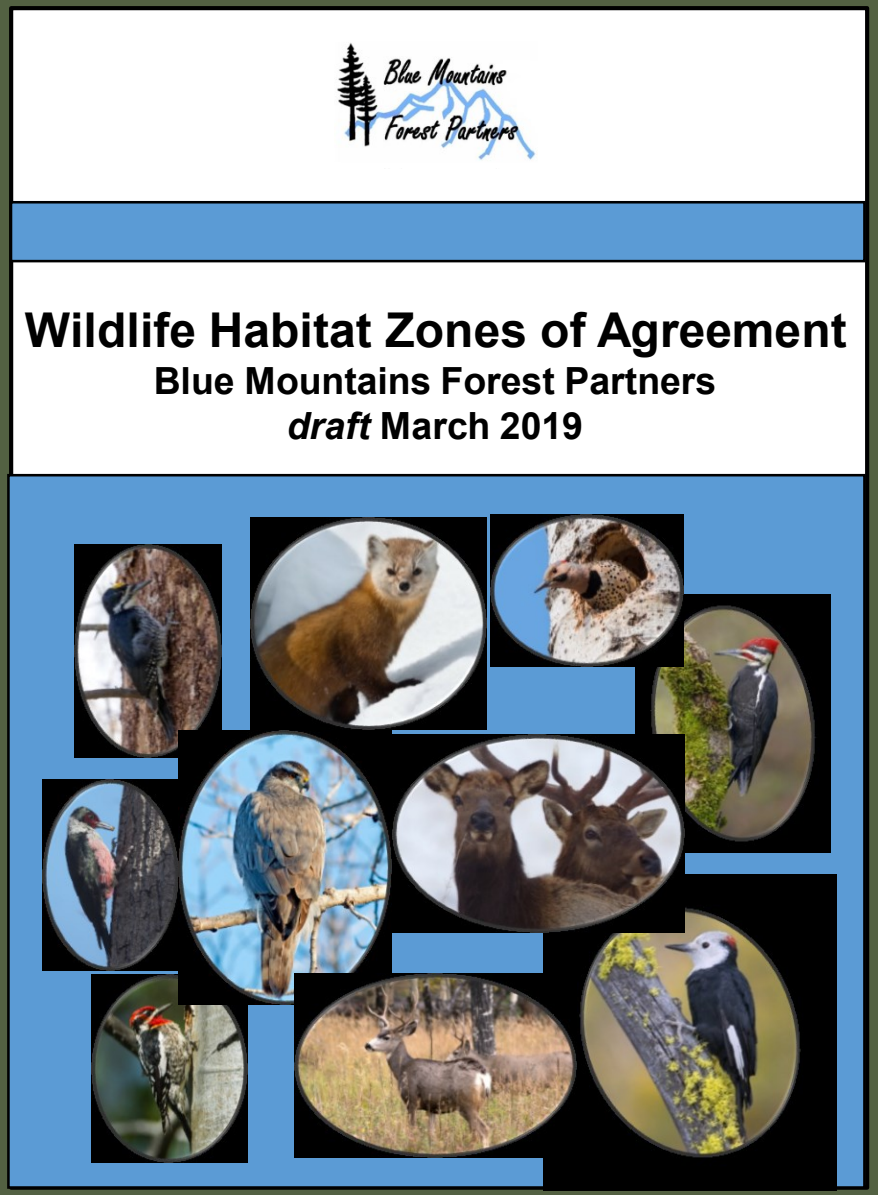
Wildfire

- Portion of the Soda Bear Project (Sugar) was impacted by the Canyon Creek Fire in 2015
- 1,318 acres of the portion impacted by the Canyon Creek Fire were found to have had beneficial effects
- The fuel treatment effects report determined the Soda Bear treatments worked as planned, to reduce fire intensity, when the Canyon Creek fire burned into them. 80% of the treated stands had low severity and the other 20% had moderate to high severity

Wildlife Habitat ZOA: draft

Blue Mountains Forest Partners | John Day, Oregon | 15 August 2019

Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement



Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement

Wildlife-centric approach

A wildlife lens to look at the Forest

1. Recognize the habitat work we are already doing
2. Review species and assure structure in treatment
3. Solidify the framework to decrease objections

Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement

Moist mixed conifer

Dry mixed conifer

Dry pine

Xeric

Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement

1. Riparian
2. Aspen/Deciduous
3. Meadows
4. Post-fire
5. Special habitat types

Forest Restoration Context

1. HRV restores the forest types to a place of resistance and resilience.

2. HRV allows ecosystem functions and processes that were present across time to continue to occur.

3. Future desired conditions (future range of variability) would allow those processes and functions to continue to occur under changes in climate and disturbances.

4. Assume that forest restoration will meet the needs of most terrestrial wildlife that occurred historically because the processes and associated functions (especially structure) will be present.

5. However, some wildlife species occur now that were not necessarily present in the past and may be a FS priority or socially important.

Forest Restoration Context

6. Not all of the MNF and CFLRP lands will have active restoration on them, (e.g., IRAs, wilderness) let alone be restored to HRV.

7. Additionally, some areas go untreated within restoration projects.

8. Past management has changed forest structure and function decreasing options for restoration (change stand trajectory for HRV in the future).

9. Spatially and temporally, stands and vegetation types will shift across time from disturbances (fire, drought, insects, disease).

Given that context and what BMFP has agreed upon:

- What wildlife species (and their habitat) should be considered when restoring the Forest to HRV and future range of forest conditions?

- What structures (e.g., snags) should be included in prescriptions to assure they are present as stands are treated to HRV and FRV?

- What are the spatial patterns of trees at the stand-scale needed to meet the habitat needs of wildlife?

- What are the spatial patterns of treated, untreated, unmanaged, burned, and seral stages across the MNF?






160 species

terrestrial vertebrate species



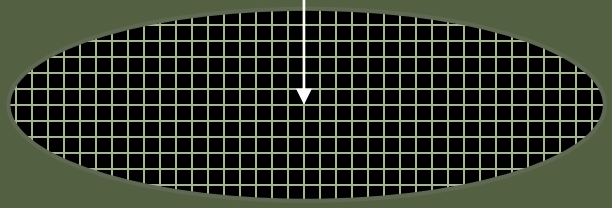


160 species within forest types

Conceptual Framework for the Filter Approach:

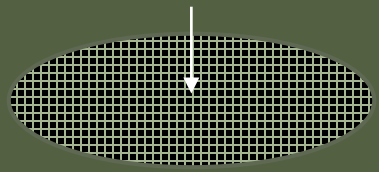
Coarse filter:

All wildlife species



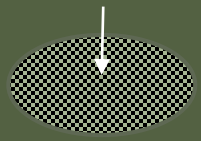
Meso filter:

Wildlife species needing specific habitat elements



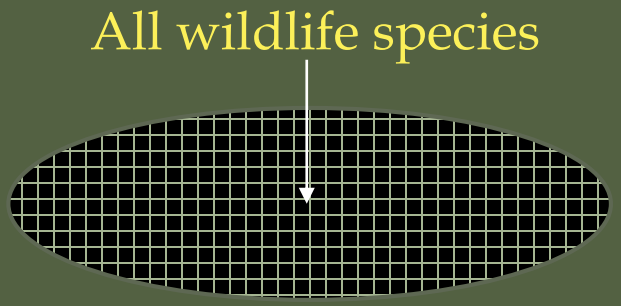
Fine filter:

Rare wildlife species and habitat specialists



Conceptual Framework for the Filter Approach:

Coarse filter:

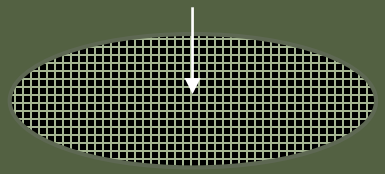


- Plant communities
- Seral stages
    - *Example*: bobcat, western wood pewee
    - 116 species (out of the 160)

Conceptual Framework for the Filter Approach:

Meso filter:

Wildlife species needing specific habitat elements

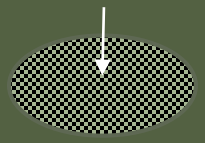


- Structural elements
  - *Example*: woodpeckers, deer, elk
  - 40 species (out of the 160)

Conceptual Framework for the Filter Approach:

Rare wildlife species and habitat specialists

Fine filter:



- Habitat elements for selected species

- *Example*: Pacific marten, pileated woodpecker
- 2 species (out of the 160)

Conceptual Framework for the Filter Approach:

1. Coarse

Species of low concern likely to be accommodated in planning areas with current active restoration (silvicultural treatments), prescribed and managed fire, untreated areas, and reserve areas.







Conceptual Framework for the Filter Approach:

2. Meso

Species that need some type of structural component in addition to the vegetative conditions provided through active restoration (silvicultural treatments), prescribed and managed fire, untreated areas, and reserve areas.

a. Primary excavators (woodpeckers)
b. Secondary cavity users (bats, birds, small mammals)
c. Raptors (with structure needs)
d. Socially important species (mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk)




Conceptual Framework for the Filter Approach:

3. Fine

Species that need careful planning of habitat area, patch size, arrangement and connectivity across a planning area.

a. Pacific marten (gradient across MMC, DMC, and Dry Pine)
b. Pileated woodpecker (consider separating nesting from foraging; using different needs in MMC vs DMC).
c. Federally listed species
d. Potential future species: wolverine, fisher

BMFP is proposing to use a Filter Approach

What does this mean for our suggestions to the FS?

How can we set up the ZOA to fit into or at least tier back to the Malheur Forest Plan (1990)?

And the terrestrial species and habitats required within?

Management Indicator species (MIS)

2 mammals plus 10 woodpecker species

1. Rocky Mountain elk
2. Pacific marten
3. three-toed woodpecker
4. Lewis' woodpecker
5. red-naped sapsucker*
6. Williamson's sapsucker
7. downy woodpecker
8. hairy woodpecker
9. white-headed woodpecker
10. black-backed woodpecker
11. northern flicker
12. pileated woodpecker

**replaced the yellow-bellied and red-breasted sapsucker after species division*

Management Indicator species (MIS)

2 mammals plus 10 woodpecker species

1. Rock
2. Pacif dpecker
3. three dpecker
4. Lewi
5. red-r er
6. Willi
7. dow

**replaced the yellow-bellied and red-breasted sapsucker after species division*

Regional Forester's Special Status Species
(USDA FS, 2019)

Malheur NF detected species
(within forest types that BMFP collaborates)

1. bald eagle
2. gray wolf
3. Townsend's big-eared bat
4. Lewis's woodpecker
5. white-headed woodpecker

Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement

1. Filter Approach

2. MIS (1990 Plan)

3. Regional Forester's Special Status

4. Federally Listed Species (T&E)

Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement

1. Filter Approach

    - MIS (1990 Plan)
    - Regional Forester's Special Status
    - Federally Listed Species (T&E)

Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement

1. Xeric Pine
2. Dry Pine
3. Dry Mixed Conifer
4. Moist Mixed Conifer
5. Riparian
6. Aspen/Deciduous
7. Meadows
8. Post-fire
9. Special habitat types

Management Indicator species (MIS)

1. Rocky Mountain elk
2. Pacific marten
3. three-toed woodpecker
4. Lewis' woodpecker
5. red-naped sapsucker
6. Williamson's sapsucker
7. downy woodpecker
8. hairy woodpecker
9. white-headed woodpecker
10. black-backed woodpecker
11. northern flicker
12. pileated woodpecker

Meso filter species (41)

List of Meso Filter terrestrial wildlife species (minus MIS and RO species)

1. American kestrel
2. Ash-throated flycatcher
3. Barred owl
4. Big brown bat
5. Brown creeper
6. Bushy-tailed woodrat
7. California myotis
8. Flammulated owl
9. Great gray owl
10. Little brown myotis
11. Long-eared myotis
12. Long-legged myotis
13. Long-toed salamander
14. Mountain bluebird
15. Mule deer
16. Northern flying squirrel
17. Northern goshawk
18. Northern pygmy-owl
19. Northern saw-whet owl
20. Olive-sided flycatcher
21. Pygmy nuthatch
22. Red-breasted nuthatch
23. Southern red-backed vole
24. Tree swallow
25. Vaux's swift
26. Violet-green swallow
27. Western bluebird
28. Western screech-owl
29. White-breasted nuthatch

	Meso Filter Species	Structure Requirement	Management Link (MIS, ESA, RO spp.)	Forest Type	Literature Cited
5.	Brown creeper	peeling or loose bark on large tree (16-24" dbh) foraging: 12" dbh live trees	**MIS:** Pileated woodpecker (nesting habitat): closed canopy mature forest; black-backed woodpecker **Nesting:** dead/dying large tree (16-24" dbh) **Foraging**: bark gleaning on >12" dbh live trees; post-fire unlogged	DMC, MMC, Post-fire	Wiggins 2005; Poulin et al. 2013; Sallabanks et al. 2006; Cahall and Hayes 2009
6.	Bushy-tailed woodrat	snag cavity, downed log, mistletoe	• 10 MIS woodpeckers, marten • mistletoe not addressed • downed logs not addressed outside of marten habitat (plan standards?)		Lehmkuhl et al. 2006 (and citations within)
7.	Flammulated owl	Cavity, open mature Ponderosa pine (>20" dbh) with other conifers	**MIS**: white-headed woodpecker; with flicker and pileated cavities **Placement**: old, open stands of ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir (>20" dbh); open, mature forest with low shrub cover	DP, DMC	Linkhart and McCallum 2013; Hayward and Verner 1994
8.	Great gray owl	Nesting platform: • stick nest (raptor/corvid) • broken topped snag/tree • mistletoe clump Located <1000' to meadows Meadow systems with prey base	• **Management link:** Northern goshawk (nests <1000' from meadows) • **MIS:** elk (meadows, transition zones/openings with habitat for small mammals/prey)	DP, DMC, Lodgepole, MMC	Bryan and Forsman 1987; Bull and Duncan 1993; Bull and Henjum 1990;

Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement

1. American kestrel
   Structure: cavity (>11" dbh) in open
   Veg Types: XP, DP, DMC, Riparian, Aspen, Post-fire
   MIS: flicker preferred, woodpecker cavities near foraging areas

2. Ash-throated flycatcher
   Structure: cavity or bark peeling in open
   Veg Types: XP, Riparian
   MIS: woodpecker species in appropriate habitat or natural cavities

3. Barred owl
   Structure: cavity, broken top tree (>20" dbh), raptor nest
   Veg Types: MMC, Riparian with closed canopy, mature forest
   MIS: pileated

4. Mule deer

Structure: forage openings, hiding cover, thermal cover, distance from human disturbance

Veg Types: XP, DP, DMC, MMC, Riparian, Aspen, Meadow transition, Post-fire

MIS:

Elk: forage/disturbance
spring forage, fall/winter shrubs, distance from human disturbance

White-headed Woodpecker: forage/cover
openings interspaced with cover

Wildlife Habitat Zones of Agreement

1. Review of structural needs for 28 species
2. Includes citations that can be used by FS and partners
3. Cross walk with those being met by MIS and RO species
4. Completion of first stage
5. Next steps:
    - Compare to prescriptions, treatments occurring on the landscape
    - Compare to James Johnston's FVF data on CFLRP
    - Conversations with the MNF and RO biologists


Questions?