



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.”

Full Group Meeting Minutes

Meeting Overview:

- **Date of Meeting:** April 16, 2020
- **Time:** 4:00 – 7:00 pm
- **Location:** Via Zoom video conferencing
- **Facilitator:** Susan Jane Brown
- **Minutes Scribe:** Susan Jane Brown

- **Call to Order: Introductions, changes to the agenda, agenda approval (all):** Dave moves approval of the agenda, Pam seconds, approved unanimously.
- **Approval of October 2019 Full Group minutes (all):** Susan Jane moves approval of the October 2019 minutes, Dave seconds, approved unanimously.
- **Ops’ update (Pam):** ops met to discuss BMFP’s finances, which remain solid. We plan to support James’ work through next year, as well as Trent’s wildlife zone of agreement work. Ops discussed applying for the payment protection funding due to COVID.
- **Board Elections update (SJ):** Susan Jane Brown, Rick Minster, and Zach Williams reelected in March election.
- **Changes to BMFP’s meeting schedule and field trip season: discussion (30 minutes, Mark & others):** ops discussed changing up our meeting schedule. Because the work on the Malheur is slowing and there is less federal funding for this work, we are proposing to meet as a full group every other month, ops will meet monthly, and continue holding 1 full day field trip a month (alternating between new projects and old ones). Our emphasis would also be on implementation and monitoring/adaptive management of existing projects.

SNW is undertaking some work on adaptive management on the Fre-Win, including a rapid response to see how well the prescription is being implemented on the ground and tracked through the NEPA analysis; James’ veg and fuels monitoring then tracks how well the prescriptions were implemented.

- **Potential revision to the 21-inch standard, Eastside Screens (Emily Platt (FS team lead) and others):** Forest Service RO is analyzing a forest plan amendment for the 6 eastern Oregon national forests that focuses on the 21” standard in the Eastside Screens. The IDT has two wildlife biologist, silviculturist, economist, and others. The regional forester will be the



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decisionmaker for the project. There will be 1 NEPA document and 1 decision. Working in an integrated fashion with all of the forest supervisors and the PNW Research Station, which is preparing a science review for the project. The USFS wants an amendment that is politically, scientifically, and economically durable. Will be hosting a science forum in the second week of May, as well as technical workshops to answer questions and work with stakeholders to shape alternatives. Amendment will use the 2012 planning rule for the amendment.

Discussion followed. Will you use local data? Yes. Concern about a single NEPA document and a single decision, which may be too general to represent local conditions. How will that play into the amendment? Yes, there is a lot of variation on the landscape, and the alternatives and analysis hope to address needed variation. Will the analysis reflect trade-offs between retaining large structure vs. retaining the appropriate mix of species? We don't have the analysis yet, but we expect to discuss the differences in effects from the various alternatives. How will this amendment consider the effects of wildfire on the landscape? We feel like we can develop a new approach that will both protect late and old structure but also respect fire's role in the landscape. Will you look at industry capacity to take larger diameter trees? Yes, and we will take a look at mill capacity. Will the amendment apply to old projects? No, the amendment will only apply to new projects.

Timeline: hope to release NEPA document this summer with a decision by the end of calendar year 2020 or early 2021.

Forest Service project work and other updates (BMRD, PCRD, and other staff): Prairie City: Cliff/Knox EIS expected this summer, and Upper Bear is expected to go out for scoping this summer as well; Blue Mountain RD: Camp Lick consultation is back, and hope to have a signed decision by the end of April; Ragged Ruby is undergoing consultation now; developing alternatives for Austin; developing proposed action for Bark, with scoping this fall/winter; developing the proposed action for the Laycock Creek CE and hope to present to BMFP and the county court soon (in May?). Presale crews are out working. USFS has additional funding for veg management from the RO, and hopes to take advantage of additional stimulus funds should they come.

Laycock Creek CE is a priority, and USFS feels like they're in a good place with scoping. Expect that this project will look different than other landscape treatments (i.e. heavily treated). Usually BMFP provides input prior to scoping, and this is a little different: we would like to defer to the community and firewise planners, but also offer our input. Community appreciates the help from BMFP; how else can BMFP assist? We can offer our ideas and different views, science expertise, and experience. USFS is looking at using GNA to implement.

What about the aspen fence for Elk 16? USFS has some CFLRP funding to fence the aspen stand, and has secured materials for the project as well as inmate labor to build the fence. Hope to implement this spring, and hopefully before the cows are turned out.

CFLRP funding update: we receive \$4 million/year. About half is going to veg treatments, \$600,000 to aspen and aquatic restoration, \$250,000 for monitoring, some for marten monitoring, and 25% for staff overhead. Match funds are coming from hazardous fuels that will



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go to veg projects. What about reapplying? USFS is evaluating new projects now that the FACA committee is stood-up, but haven't heard about when we can get in the queue for reapplying.

How does the USFS feel about fighting fire this summer? Is the agency ready? How will the pandemic affect suppression? USFS has starting hiring seasonal crew for suppression, and is considering putting protocols in place to deal with social distancing requirements. USFS is trying to get all of their field work done despite social distancing, but this is challenging. Reduced staff are triaging work plans to address reduced capacity.

- **2020 scope of work: update and revise the Upland Forest Restoration ZOA, develop a Wildfire and Prescribed Fire ZOA, etc. (James Johnston):** James is working to integrate all of our zones of agreement into a single comprehensive integrated ZOA. ZOAs will also include wildfire management and post-fire logging pieces, which will be new. Trent's wildlife zones of agreement will be another companion piece that can be integrated when it is complete.

James is also providing science support to the Team 21 group to support the 21" rule amendment, including information about growth patterns by species, successional dynamics, simulation of logging and/or fire to achieve objectives, potential alternatives. Can you model water use as part of this work? Yes, shade tolerant species use up a lot of water, so removing some of these trees may result in increased water availability, but more research on this question is warranted.

Discussion followed. How would the integrated ZOA interface with the forest plan? Right now there is no relationship between the plan and the ZOAs: the ZOAs simply represent the position of BMFP, and the USFS still retains decisionmaking authority. When the USFS talks to the Blues Intergovernmental Council about "zones of agreement," are they the same thing as BMFP's ZOAs? No, they are separate. There is no plan to revise the current LRMP (beyond the amendment process discussed today).

- **Other business?**
- **Adjourn**



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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.*



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