

Hood River Stewardship Collaborative Meeting

December 12, 2016

**DRAFT Facilitator’s Summary**

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*The following Facilitator’s Summary is intended to capture basic discussion, decisions and actions, as well as point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings.*

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>By When?</b>
Provide draft meeting summary to Stew Crew for edits	Emily	12/19
Call to discuss the OWEB grant application	Cindy, Tyson, EJ, Rick, & Emily	3:00 on 12/20
Connect with EJ to see if she will continue as point person for updating the Waucoma tracking spreadsheet	Cindy & Emily	Before 1/18 meeting
Meet to conduct resource GAP analysis	Resource Teams	Before 1/18 meeting

**Present for all or part of the meeting:** Jon Paul Anderson (High Cascade, Inc.), Tyson Bertone-Riggs (OR Department of Forestry), Emily Jane Davis (OSU Extension), Sam Doak (Resident), Kristen Dodd (ODF), Cathy Flick (retired US Forest Service), Casey Gatz (USFS), Keith Harding (HR Valley Resident Committee), Jay McLaughlin (MARS/HR County), Rick Ragan (HRSWCD), Cindy Thieman (HR Watershed Group)

**Facilitator & Notes:** Emily Plummer, DS Consulting

**Welcome and Introductions**

Facilitator, Emily Plummer, welcomed everyone to the Hood River Forest Collaborative (Stew Crew) meeting, noting that the purpose of the session is to reconnect with each other and plan next steps in the effort to develop meaningful recommendations for the Waucoma planning area.

The group reviewed and approved the August 31st Facilitator’s Summary. The final summary is posted on the Stew Crew website. Emily noted that thanks to Anne, Cindy, Tyson and Cathy, notes from the Red Hill and Waucoma field trips are also posted on the website.

**Updates**

**Next round of funding for facilitation & technical assistance** - Cindy shared that due to time limitations and difficulties in coordinating a sponsor, the Stew Crew did not apply for a National Forest Foundation grant that was due on December 12<sup>th</sup>. It was noted that this may be an opportunity to consider in the future with more lead time. The group noted that moving forward, it will be helpful to have a long term financial plan and coordinator to help respond to funding needs.

There is however, another round of Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board’s Forest Collaborative funding that is now open for proposals and due by January 23, 2017. The Stew Crew meets the requirements to apply for the funding and expressed interest in doing so (all 1s using the Five Fingers of Consensus). Cindy, Rick, Tyson, EJ, and Emily agreed to help prepare a grant proposal on behalf of the Stew Crew. The group felt that continuing the current efforts on the Waucoma planning area would be beneficial and agreed to convene the sub-group to further develop the ask.

- **ACTION:** Tyson will connect with OWEB to clarify the timing and requirements for the grant. Cindy, Rick, Tyson, EJ, and Emily will then work to prepare and submit a proposal to support the Stew Crew’s efforts. They will have a call to discuss the application at 3:00 on Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Federal Forest Restoration Program** - Tyson updated the group on the Federal Forest Restoration Program (PowerPoint link is provided on the Stew Crew website). He noted that the program was included in the Governor's budget, however, slightly reduced from the previous biennium. This funding is in part intended for the Oregon Department of Forestry to provide support to the forest collaboratives, technical assistance, and implementation of work on federal forest lands via the State/Federal Implementation Partnership. It also allows for opportunities under the Good Neighbor Authority, which was created as part of the 2014 Farm Bill and stipulates state agencies' work on federal lands for restoration efforts. EJ recommended that ODF work on ways to communicate out to the Collaboratives more information on how they can utilize the technical assistance providers through ODF. She also suggested that ODF articulate criteria required to access these resources. Tyson agreed and noted that ODF is working to better define the program and if other have input he would love to hear it.

**Wasco County Collaborative meeting** - Emily shared that Bill Noonan, Wasco County Collaboratives' facilitator, extended an offer for Stew Crew members to join the Wasco Collaborative for a conversation with USFS Forest Supervisor, Lisa Northrup, on January 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00. The conversation will focus around what can be expected under the new presidential administration. Phil Chang from Senator Merkley's office will also be there. Emily noted that she will pass more information along as it comes to her.

Russ noted that the Wasco County Collaborative is interested in exploring ways to collaborate with other collaboratives to identify constraints to meeting group objectives as a result of direction from the Mt. Hood Forest Plan. He shared that a sub-group is currently working on a smoke management plan as part of this effort. Russ will keep the Stew Crew apprised of the effort.

**USFS project dates for public involvement** – Casey reported on upcoming opportunities for public comment on USFS projects:

- Pollalie Cooper: The public comment period was February 2016, however, Casey was uncertain when the objection period would begin. Members of the public can only file objections if they provided comments during the comment period.
- Crystal Clear Restoration: Pre-scoping was in October 2016, however, no members of the public attended. A 30-day scoping period is planned for January 2017. This will be followed by a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) in March/April 2017 and a 30-day comment period. The final EA and draft decision is expected out by October 2017.
- Rocky Project: The Rocky project is a few months behind the Crystal Clear Restoration project schedule.
- Middle Fork Irrigation District Dam Improvements: The MF Irrigation District is working on a draft EA for improving downstream fish passage, providing colder water, and improving safety at the dam on Laurence Lake. They conducted scoping during summer 2016.
- Dog River Pipeline: This project is designed to replace the wooden pipe that takes water from Dog River to the City of The Dalles. They are currently contracting for a hydro and fisheries flow analysis and expect to be complete by summer 2017. The draft EA will follow in winter 2017.

### **Field Trip Take-Aways**

The group reported out on key take-aways from the Red Hill and Waucoma field trips, as well as the Wasco County Fire workshop. They shared ideas and lessons learned that they considered important as the group works towards Zones of Agreement/recommendations for the Waucoma planning area.

- The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs are interested in exploring huckleberry enhancement opportunities in the Waucoma area.
  - Huckleberry enhancement should occur where plants are already established and tribal knowledge could be used to identify these locations.
- The Stew Crew should look for opportunities to move towards the USFS' Minimum Roads System.

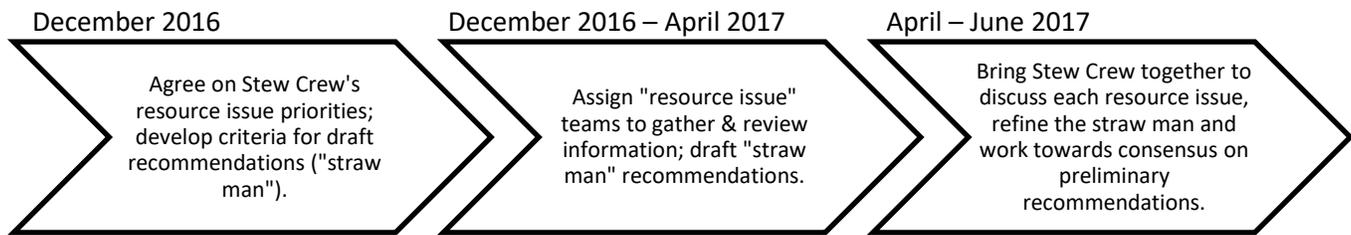
- Consider creating a self-sustaining road system.
- Evaluate the road system from a long-term perspective.
- Consider lighter slash on road abandonment in order to benefit wildlife.
  - Slash was heavy on Red Hill to provide erosion control and discourage OHV use.
- It is challenging to maintain dead, standing wood, so consider protecting what is already there.
  - J. Johnston was critical of the USFS' historic snag model; he thought that the model overestimated historic snag presence.
    - Is there a different model to use?
  - Not all snags are created equal, size matters!
  - Look at snag creation 2-3 years post implementation to see what is present; windfall and shock will add to the snag habitat.
  - For snag creation, be specific in the recommendations, contractors are implementing the directions that they are provided from USFS.
- Thinning at Red Hill reduced the understory and helped the over-story grow.
  - Slash piles are still a challenge and impact soils negatively.
    - Consider chipping, burning, and slashing instead of just slashing.
- J. Johnston thought that if you want big trees, you need to manage the land to create big trees. This means that heavy thinning is necessary around future large trees.
  - He also noted that Waucoma was a homogenous, even-aged forest.
- If forest resiliency is the long-term goal, a lot of species diversity will help achieve it.
- Use timber harvest to create heterogeneity and multi-layered structure (vertically and horizontally).
- Bio-geochemical changes are a result of burning forests.
  - Consider the use of broadcast or planned burns.
- The forests in the Pacific Northwest are densely stocked and need more fire on the landscape.
  - High severity fire in some areas is beneficial, specifically for wildlife.
  - Pre-treatment with thinning, followed by prescribed burns can help provide the system benefit from fire without the risk of large high intensity fires.
- Work on the “big picture” objectives for the USFS recommendations instead of “sweating the small stuff” and getting stuck in the weeds.

→ **ACTION:** This list will be added to the Waucoma information tracking Google Sheet. Cindy and Emily will connect with EJ to see if she is willing to continue as the point person for updating the spreadsheet (see below for description of the Waucoma Google Sheet).

### **Working towards Zones of Agreement/Recommendations**

Emily reminded that the Stew Crew that their preliminary recommendations for the Waucoma area will need to be provided to the USFS by June 2017 according to the OWEB grant requirements. As such, the Stew Crew will need to develop the recommendations over the next five months in order to finalize and submit them by June. Emily continued that in order to support the Stew Crew's effort, she met with Cindy to draft a path forward and would like to get input from the Stew Crew on the suggested next steps.

Emily and Cindy suggested that the Stew Crew start by prioritizing the resource issues to develop recommendations for, then break into teams to help develop “straw men”, or draft, recommendations that they will bring back to the larger group for input. The teams will be responsible for identifying the information gaps that need to be filled in order to develop meaningful and informed recommendations, and helping gather the information necessary, either through literature, technical assistance, or expert lectures. The goal is to have the teams do the leg-work for productive and efficient Stew Crew meetings that will focus on finalizing the recommendations. Emily noted that additional coordination and planning will be necessary to determine when the draft recommendations are brought to the full group.



**The group agreed to move forward with the suggested process, noting that the teams will be temporarily convened in order to draft the recommendations.** They reviewed the resource issues that they had previously identified as priority and lumped them into three categories for the teams to focus recommendations:

1. Socio-economic, cultural patterns of use, recreation, and roads [this resource group is linked to hydrology]  
**Team members:** Cathy, Rick R., Russ, EJ
2. Forest resiliency/health, fire, soils, and climate change [this resource group is linked to hydrology]  
**Team members:** Tyson, Kristen, Cindy, Jon Paul, Jay, Keith
3. Hydrology (water quality and quantity), fish and wildlife habitat [this resource group is linked to road and forest resiliency/health]  
**Team members:** Cathy, Rick R., Hugh, Rick L.

Casey agreed to be a USFS liaison to all of the groups in order to provide technical support when possible. He will help coordinate resource experts to join the teams for their conversations.

Additionally, EJ put together an information tracking spreadsheet that the Stew Crew can use to help share information between meetings. The spreadsheet is available on Google Sheets and a link will be sent out to the group. Other resources that the teams have to pull from include the **Zones of Agreement worksheet, meeting summaries, maps/documents, and GIS data** (available in January/February). All of these materials are or will be posted on the Stew Crew's website.

The Stew Crew brainstormed sideboards/guidance for the Resource Teams to consider while developing draft recommendations:

- The Stew Crew does not have to be the Interdisciplinary team (IDT) for the USFS, we do not need to have all of the answers; instead, we need to articulate, clearly, the interests and desired future conditions.
- Focus on desired future conditions, instead of explicit direction for implementation.
- Identify potential social values; what value or meaning does this resource have for communities?
- Identify additional information needed and possible experts to bring in.
- Highlight any obstacles to what we would like to see.

→ **ACTION:** The Resource Teams will convene prior to the January Stew Crew meeting and conduct a GAP analysis that assesses the available information, needed information, and how to fill those gaps. They will aim to have draft products ready for the February meeting.

### **Next Steps**

The Stew Crew will seek continued funding for facilitation and technical assistance support, the sub-group assigned will start drafting a proposal to submit in late January. The resource teams will convene sometime before the January meeting to conduct a GAP analysis and begin work on drafting preliminary recommendations. The next Stew Crew meeting will be on Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-5:00 at the OSU Extension room.