

## **Hood River Stew Crew Meeting Notes**

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1-4 pm

Extension Office Library, Hood River

### **Present:**

Cindy Thieman, Hood River Watershed Group

Nate Ulrich, representing Hood River County

Casey Gatz, US Forest Service

Rick Ragan, Hood River SWCD and Watershed Group

Ann Dow

John Paul Anderson, High Cascade

Polly Wood, HRVRC

Russ Plaeger, Bark

Larry Martin, HRSWCD

Emily Jane Davis, OSU Extension and College of Forestry

**Notetaker:** Emily Jane Davis

### **Action items and summary important notes:**

- March 31, 1-4 pm is the next meeting date. Primary focus of meeting will be interviewing facilitator candidates.
- Next meeting after that is April 20, 1-4 pm.
- After the facilitator comes online, we will choose a regular meeting date.
- The Stew Crew received an OWEB grant from the Federal Forest Health Program that runs through June 30, 2017 and will fund a facilitator and some technical assistance. The group reviewed a RFP for the facilitator to be contracted with the HR SWCD, which Cindy will release on 2/16 or soon thereafter and proposals will be due 3/11. A subcommittee to review applications and interview the candidates was formed. Candidates selected to interview will interview one on one with the Stew Crew on March 31.
- The Stew Crew will focus on the Waucoma planning area for the next phase of its work. We anticipate obtaining some technical assistance to gather information to help us understand this area, as it is pre-NEPA and FS has not gathered much data. Casey Gatz will ask specialists why they prioritized Waucoma and report back to us.
- We will continue to work to identify our TA needs and then select the right service provider to meet them. EJ Davis will serve as a science liaison and connection to TA providers for now. We may form a committee in the future as needed. EJ will ask a representative from The Nature Conservancy to join the group for its next meeting to discuss a possible partnership.
- We will consider adding more structure to the group in the future, such as an operations committee, operations manual, and/or website. This will be explored with the new facilitator and as we see what our needs are in the future.

## **Grant proposal discussion**

Successful in getting an OWEB Federal Forest Health Collaborative grant that will provide for some facilitation and technical assistance funds.

EJ provided an overview of the grant program and the review of the proposals.

Cindy: we decided to try for monthly meetings, so we need to be aware of that and plan for that. First meeting in April with a new facilitator.

Cindy re-read objectives of grant application.

- designating a science liaison
- figuring out scope of issues for Waucoma planning area
- Develop GIS and collect other data for Waucoma
- host 2-3 science workshops or field trips
- agreement on restoration needs
- expanding collaborative zones of agreement

Cindy: we have had some zones of agreement in past. Now doing more of that with a facilitator helping that. Including discussing past projects agreements and how they can evolve.

Identify and invite scientists to share information

Gather relevant data that FS isn't collecting yet so we can help understand it.

Develop a science-based picture of conditions in the Waucoma area.

Maybe discuss and develop multiparty monitoring, even citizen based science monitoring, for the future

Request HRRD review of the monitoring parameters

Ann: FS or outside scientists?

Cindy: outside, but nothing is set here. It's what folks are interested in. We were envisioning more academic scientists.

Russ: my hunch is that the topic will determine it. The District has some excellent scientists but if we start talking about climate, we would need someone else.

## **RFP:**

Some comments came up about the Waucoma focus:

Russ: Waucoma bike backcountry area is in the nearby area—proposed area—we may want to add that to the list. Tom Kloster. Wy'East. Recreation interests are important.

→RFP was amended to add “recreation” to list of anticipated topics in Waucoma area.

Rick: the historical access. Huckleberry fields historically occupied that ridge. The berry fields are not as prolific as they used to be. There used to be mills up there. A lot of interesting history that we might try to capture.

Cindy reviewed the draft RFP for a facilitator with the group.

Russ: thanks for putting this together. Should we have something about the kind of atmosphere and such they should create? Some of the essence of what is in the selection process criteria (b) –put some wording for that into the required services section. →RFP was amended to add description of atmosphere of respect and neutrality under required services.

Date of recommendations to FS: want to give enough time. And not knowing who the person would be and their workload, we don't want to not have them for the whole time.

Casey: data collection will take place in spring 2017-onward. April or June won't impact our process. The more time you have to figure it out will be good.

Russ: we might at the end of the process want one more field trip. And if it's a big snow year, we'd need the ability to go later.

→RFP was amended so date of final recommendations was moved to June (not April) 2017.

Russ: back to the eval criteria, item c—tell us your track record in helping people get to their goals. →RFP was amended so that an addition was made after item d on proposed package—asking them to describe previous experience with specific successes in helping groups achieve their desired outcomes.

Russ: I'd amend the selection process—d—criteria because we do prefer local but don't want to discourage good people from elsewhere applying.

→RFP was amended to make item d: Demonstrable familiarity with ecological, economic, and social aspects of forest management; then an item e was added to indicate that knowledge of the Mt. Hood NF and Hood River Valley area was preferred.

Logistics:

→RFP was amended to state “April 2016” instead of a hard date for contract start. To be determined.

Send out Tues Feb 16<sup>th</sup>.

Closing date: March 11<sup>th</sup>.

Distribution:

Distributed by HRWG listserv and a variety of other outlets were discussed.

EJ—College of Forestry, personal email list, PSU, UO

Nate--MARS-TNC listserv

Columbia Land Trust

Target Bill Noonan with a personal email

Mac's List

Selecting subcommittee to interview and select:

John Paul, Rick, Larry as possible, Casey to sit in but not be a decision maker, Cindy, EJ, Ann. Russ will help review and winnow candidates to interviewees. EJ will make a spreadsheet for systematic candidate review.

**Waucoma planning area:**

The Stew Crew's next "project" will be to collaborate pre-NEPA on the Waucoma planning area.

Casey provided a very broad overview of the area and how Waucoma was selected by the FS.

- The eastside of the Mt. Hood was broken into planning areas
- Two years ago or so, we went through and did an ID exercise where each resource went through and prioritized every planning area for treatment for their work.
- Waucoma was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest priority selected (Rocky the first)
- We have one ID team for both districts
- We overlap planning areas but different phases. Data collection every two years.

Rick: why are the boundaries what they are?

Casey: it depends on the forest. Other forests use watershed boundaries, but for some resources, ridgelines do not provide a good break. All these were done in a mapping exercise.

Ann: big issues you remember? Why is it high on your list?

Casey: I'm a planner so I didn't get stickers. We also tried to focus on areas where there was broad support—a diversity of resources identified it as one area. Based on people's on the ground experience out on the forest.

Russ: adjacent land?

Looks like Weyerhaeuser, some HR County

Wilderness area to the northwest

There are two different veg groups that we have data on. Showed tree species composition. Doug fir, western hemlock, hem-fir, mixed classes. Wasn't able to join the PAG layer at this moment.

This is a neat opportunity for the collaborative since it is a blank slate.

Fire history:

No large fires

Lots of fire starts

Lightning coming through on north side

Human caused starts along the trails

Rick: there are fire scars from the 60s—Skyhook

Land use allocations:

wood products, recreation, unroaded, roaded recreation, backcountry lake area

matrix, with riparian reserves and some administratively withdrawn areas.

Area becomes steeper as you move south

No listed streams

Green Point has anadromous fish downstream, but not within the planning area

There is a Farmers Irrigation District diversion on Green Point

Cindy: would be interesting to include Green Point holistically. If there is county land, having them at the table might be good. Les Perkins (FID manager & County Commissioner) is interested in participating .

Russ: I would be curious to hear why the specialists wanted this area at some point. That would help point us toward what we want to hear more about.

Casey: can tie in with folks and get more specifics why it was a priority. →Casey will ask FS specialists to explain why they choose Waucoma and report to us in March or April.

**Technical assistance:**

We have \$14k to spend on technical and information gathering as part of the OWEB grant. Given that--What would you like to know more about, and what would fill the gaps the best for us?

Casey: our existing stand conditions seem to be important to you, how you figure out what you want to look at. So stand exams.

Other groups have looked at fire regimes, fire histories, using Lidar.

Casey will ask Whitney what type of information she could use. This area has been historically entered. This is not untouched. Most of it has been modified. It would be interesting to see if we can get enough information for a first cut screen to see where need exists.

Russ: during Polallie Cooper meeting the other night, there was some conversation on the side about the need for using fire as a tool and having more flexibility in fire management. Could poke around in the fire side of things to look at creative opportunities to think about fire and other management activities. Put the area on a different trajectory.

Rick: this area does not have a fire regime like the east side. 90 inches of rain a year. Stand replacement fires. My gut feeling. If you put fire in there, it would kill everything.

Casey: not sure if Janeen or Leo have the flexibility to make that determination.

Cindy: Russ, how would you start investigating that?

Russ: not sure. I do know that Portland Water Bureau has Jim Agee from UW in and he did a study of the Bull Run. Could look at what he found and what is similar and dissimilar to that. Has anyone looked at fire in the Hatfield Wilderness?

Casey: Leo and Whitney and others may have answers to some of these questions.

Cindy: how do we handle the tribal interest in huckleberry fields? Historical data? Areas in mind?

Casey: we have the PAG layer that can tell us where huckleberry has been. Whitney says past treatments have been successful at allowing them to start producing. Canopies closed now here and not fruiting anymore. We have some historical data. The tribes have indicated that huckleberry enhancement is a key factor in what they are looking for in all of our past projects on this side.

Nate: I think it would be cool to think about ways to use our mapping money and put together a process that will help us beyond just this planning area, so that down the road, we can gain something and use something to work together in the future, not have to start over and rehash things we can come together around.

Russ: working together in this area could be a template.

Cindy: we could create a checklist, considerations, for future use.

Group agreement on desire to learn from Waucoma process, use it as a template, and gain future efficiencies.

Nate: we had written into the grant that we would form a restoration committee who would help liaise with the scientists and TA providers.

EJ will serve as the science liaison role for now and we can form a future committee as needed.

EJ presented information on the possible TA providers in the state for our future use (handout).

Russ: we want to have recommendations by June 2017. So, if we have a facilitator start in April, then we will have a field season. Any science assistance we might want would be improved by fieldwork this summer. So by late May, we need a science workplan with field access.

Stand conditions and fire regime.

Is there a more cost-effective way to get stand condition information that is not stand exams?

Or a subset of representative stand types?

It would be interesting to have a few different foresters' perspectives on stand conditions

EJ will ask Mark Stern from The Nature Conservancy to join our March or April meeting and discuss possible TA with us.

**Future organizational structure for the Stew Crew:**

EJ presented information on how other forest collaboratives are organized. Many of them have operations or other kinds of leadership committees. They also have operations manuals or other documents that guide their work. She suggested that the group consider these options in the future if they saw a need, and worked to find a model that suited their informal nature well. She offered to assist the group if/when they pursued this.

Rick: There is value in forming a committee. Like a board of directors. Operations committee. It would be a step of organization you have not done before.

Nate: I am iffy on it based on experience with other collaboratives. Needs to be clear what it is, what the relationship to others is, not a muddled middle layer.

Cindy: it might be challenging to get that level of availability. But there may be people who have more time in the future.

Ann: can help with workload.

Nate: can reflect the relationship with the facilitator.

Decision: to think about this in a few months depending on how it goes, what is needed, what facilitator wants.

The group will also talk about forming a website in the future as needed. Want to have a place where meeting notes, Powerpoint presentations, and documents can be stored and readily accessible to collab members.

Adjourned at 3:30 pm.