

GREYS RIVER FOREST COLLABORATIVE
Group Charter
Draft 4

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1. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Lincoln County Public Land's Policy identifies forest health and sound stewardship of federal forestlands as critical to Lincoln County's future wellbeing. However, there are many problems that pose major impediments to sustaining forest values. These include, but are not limited to:

- Forest health and resiliency have been disrupted in Lincoln County's forests. Problems like uncharacteristic wildfire and insect epidemics may result in the loss of key ecological, wildlife and hydrologic components.
- Reduced timber harvest from federal forestlands has resulted in diminished forest industry infrastructure with unintended economic and social losses to rural communities. This limits the ability to carry out needed forest health related treatments on the landscape.
- Changing public values, lack of clear goals, court challenges and the inability to implement decisions have led to a lack of trust with federal land management policies and decisions.
- Federal forest funding has declined. Funding is not adequate or appropriately allocated to achieve land management objectives on federal lands. Adequate stable funding sources are necessary to achieve long-term management goals.

The Greys River Collaborative will meet over the next year to engage the public, government officials and the scientific community to collect information, review pertinent documents, discuss concerns and ideas and formulate recommendations to the Bridger Teton National Forest and the Star Valley Conservation District to address forest health, travel management and hydrological issues.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Grey's River Forest Collaborative is to provide the federal, state and private land managers with recommendations to assess and address forest health, travel management and hydrology issues on the Grey's River and neighboring districts. It will accomplish this through mutual education; transparency in process; fostering communication between constituents and governmental agencies; and identifying, evaluating, and recommending options that meet the needs of the many stakeholders involved.

3. PRODUCTS AND OUTCOMES

The Collaborative will develop near and long term strategies, recommendations and measurable actions that federal, state and private land managers can implement.

Recommendations will be submitted to the land managers who can accept, reject, or modify the recommendations. Recommendations shall also be shared with local governments, the Wyoming Legislature, and other interested parties and stakeholders.

4. GEOGRAPHIC AREA

This effort will be limited to developing recommendations pertaining to the Gryn's River and neighboring districts, and other public lands in Lincoln County.

5. FOREST COLLABORATIVE MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

The Forest Collaborative is representative of persons with interests in the condition of the Grey's River area of the BTNF in Lincoln County. Although it is recognized that Forest Collaborative members have multiple interests and may participate in discussions from various perspectives, the 16 Forest Collaborative members broadly represent the following organizations and interest groups:

- Local Government (2)
- Grazing (1)
- Hunting NGO (1)
- Wildlife and/or Fisheries NGO (1)
- Wyoming State Agencies (2)
- BLM (1)
- US Forest Service (2)
- Private/Timber Industry (2)
- Summer Motorized Recreation NGO (1)
- Winter Motorized Recreation NGO (1)
- Non-motorized Recreation NGO (1)
- Conservation NGOs (1)
- Public at large (1)
- BLM (1)

Forest Collaborative members will be expected to represent the interests of (1) themselves, (2) organizations that have authorized the Forest Collaborative member to represent them, or (3) groups of constituents from a similar stakeholder group with an interest in the Greys River Watershed. Ideas presented within Forest Collaborative discussions will not be assumed to be the official position of the organizations or groups represented unless specifically stated to be so. Forest Collaborative members have the responsibility to keep the organizations and interest groups they represent informed about the actions and outcomes of the Forest Collaborative's process.

Each organization and interest group is represented by one or more Forest Collaborative members. In the event that a Forest Collaborative member cannot attend a meeting, he/she may be represented by an alternate member of his/her choosing without concurrence of the Forest Collaborative. Alternate group members are encouraged to attend Forest Collaborative meetings along with the primary group members, but should be fully briefed by the primary group member before attending any meetings as the sole representative.

Collaborative members are voluntary and appointed by the Star Valley Conservation District (SVCD) Board of Supervisors. Term of membership on the Forest Collaborative will be through December 31, 2017. Reappointments will be made by the Conservation District. Participation on the Forest Collaborative by any group member will be at the discretion of the member's constituent organization or interest group.

6. ROLE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee will contribute input on the formation and direction of the Forest Collaborative, as well as provide support and feedback to the Ruckelshaus Institute. Ruckelshaus Institute and the Star Valley Conservation District may convene the steering committee as needed to provide guidance on a particular issue. The Steering Committee will consist of 7 individuals selected by the BOCC and the SVCD, who represent different interests, and who are Lincoln County residents. The membership of the Steering Committee will be as follows:

- Local Government (2)
- Grazing (1)
- USFS (1)
- Wildlife/NGO (1)
- Recreation (1)
- Private/Timber Industry (1)

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FOREST COLLABORATIVE

a) Conduct of Forest Collaborative Members

Forest Collaborative members will engage in open communication at the meetings. This means disclosing interests, needs, actions, and issues in a timely manner and committing to the purpose of the Forest Collaborative. The primary responsibility of the Forest Collaborative is to balance the interests related to the Grey's River and neighboring USFS districts in providing advice and recommendations to the Bridger-Teton National Forest and other public land managers. Forest Collaborative members will endeavor to act in good faith to develop recommendations that are satisfactory to all Forest Collaborative members. Forest Collaborative members will ensure

that an integrated approach is taken in formulating recommendations by meeting together as needed to assure strong communication and collaboration among Forest Collaborative members.

b) Keeping Constituents Informed

Forest Collaborative members will engage in active communication with their constituents about actions and outcomes of the Forest Collaborative. Active communication can include written, verbal, and electronic means of communicating. Members will have meeting summaries available to them for keeping constituents informed.

c) Representing Constituents

In developing recommendations, Forest Collaborative members will consider the interests of other group members as well as their own particular interest group when reviewing issues and recommendations. Forest Collaborative members will invite proposals from their constituents to present to the Forest Collaborative and will provide proposals from the Forest Collaborative to their constituents for feedback and input.

d) Attending Meetings

Each Forest Collaborative member is expected to attend and fully participate in each meeting, which includes being present for substantially all of the meeting. Forest Collaborative members shall read appropriate materials and arrive prepared to work. Materials presented for discussion should be distributed at least one week in advance of the meeting or longer, as is practical. If the primary Member cannot attend, the alternate member for that interest will attend. If neither member can attend, then the interest group will not be able to contribute to the creation of agreements and the interest's vote will be forfeited without recourse.

e) Understanding and Abiding by the Charter

Forest Collaborative members are expected to read, fully understand, and conduct themselves in accordance with the requirements of this charter.

f) Legal Context

The process, meetings and communications related to this collaborative process is subject to Wyoming open meetings act, administrative act, public records act - that includes e-calendars, emails.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACILITATORS

The Forest Collaborative will be facilitated by faculty and staff of the Ruckelshaus Institute at the University of Wyoming. The roles and responsibilities of the Facilitators include:

- Facilitating meetings in a manner consistent with interest-based negotiations and this charter;
- Keeping meeting attendance records of all Forest Collaborative members;
- Helping the Forest Collaborative stay on task and on process;
- Protecting Forest Collaborative members and their ideas from attack while ensuring that provocative issues are not avoided, but are discussed in a candid and respectful manner;
- Helping Forest Collaborative members to concisely describe their interests;
- Helping Forest Collaborative members find innovative and workable solutions;
- Helping Forest Collaborative members reach consensus;
- Providing for equitable participation by all Forest Collaborative members;
- Working, both at and between meetings, with Forest Collaborative members to assist in the free exchange of ideas between the Members and to resolve any impasses that may arise;
- Periodically surveying Forest Collaborative members to assess fairness, meaningfulness and efficiency of the process;
- Maintaining a list of significant topics on which the Forest Collaborative has reached consensus or have failed to reach consensus.
- Hosting a website for information.

In addition to the Ruckelshaus Institute, Richard Stem will aid the Forest Collaborative in his role as Senior Advisor to the Coalition of Local Governments. His responsibilities include:

- Providing management advice/ guidance regarding procedures, polices, and protocol.
- Assisting with connections, actions, and interpretations of the appropriate persons within legislative and administrative levels, including Congressional, Regional Offices, Washington DC offices, and Department levels.
- Providing technical expertise on laws, regulations, processes, and tools available to the Forest Collaborative.

9. DECISION PROCESS

The Forest Collaborative will operate using consensus building approaches with all members represented at the meeting. Consensus is the decision rule that allows collaborative problem solving to work. It is a way for more than two people to build consensus and possibly reach agreement. Consensus prevents domination by the

majority, allows building of trust and the sharing of information, especially under conditions of conflict. Consensus does not mean that everyone will be equally happy with the decision, but all do accept that the decision is the best that can be made at the time with the people involved.

Consensus requires sharing information, which leads to mutual education, which provides the basis for crafting workable and acceptable alternatives. Consensus promotes joint thinking of a diverse group and leads to creative solutions. Also, because parties participate in the deliberation, they understand the reasoning behind the recommendations and are willing to support them.

In making decisions, each Forest Collaborative member will indicate his/her concurrence on a specific proposal using a five-point scale. The scale allows Forest Collaborative members to clearly communicate their intentions, assess the degree of agreement that exists, and register their dissatisfaction without holding up the rest of the Forest Collaborative. The five-point scale is as follows:

1. Endorsement –Member likes it.
2. Endorsement with Minor Point of Contention – Basically, member likes it.
3. Agreement with Minor Reservations – Member can live with it.
4. Stand aside with major reservations – Formal disagreement, but will not block the proposal/provision
5. Block – Member will not support the proposal.

Indecision – If members cannot make a decision without more information the member must specify what information is needed, and re-vote once that information has been obtained. When necessary, the Ruckelshaus Institute the information using will use a joint-fact finding process with a diverse sub-group of the Collaborative. Based on the input from the diverse members of the sub-group the Ruckelshaus Institute will find speakers who can address subjects and/or find documentation that provides clarification, which will be made available to the Collaborative participants and to the public on the website. Facilitators will measure and record the Forest Collaborative’s consensus on a given proposal by open polling of the members present. The levels of consensus are:

- Consensus - All Forest Collaborative members present rate the proposal as a 1, 2 or 3.
- Consensus with Major Reservations – All Forest Collaborative members present rate the proposal as a 1, 2 or 3, except at least one Forest Collaborative member rates it as a 4.
- No Consensus - Any Forest Collaborative member present rates the proposal as a 5.

Any Forest Collaborative member that rates a significant proposal (i.e., a proposal that involves significant discussion and has the support or qualified support of a

majority of Forest Collaborative members) as a 5 is required to specify their dissent in a written statement for inclusion in the final written report. Dissenters who share the same basic concerns can use a single dissention statement. Dissenters will also identify themselves by name and organization on their dissention statements. Any Forest Collaborative member that rates a proposal as a 4 can specify their reservation in a written statement for inclusion in the final written report if the member so chooses.

10. FINAL REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ruckelshaus Institute will draft a final report of Forest Collaborative recommendations to be submitted to the Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF) and Star Valley Conservation District. The report will contain a detailed description of Forest Collaborative recommendations. Final recommendations submitted to the BTNF and the Conservation District will include only the consensus recommendations with votes of 3 and above. Each recommendation will be provided a score that reflects the level of consensus of the Forest Collaborative members present. In cases where a member rated a particular proposal as a 4, their reservation statement will be included with the recommendation. The report will also contain the significant proposals that did not gain the consensus of the Forest Collaborative. These proposals will be listed separately from the Forest Collaborative recommendations and will be labeled as such. Forest Collaborative member dissention statements will be included with these proposals.

11. GROUND RULES FOR INTERACTION

In order to have the most efficient and effective process possible, Forest Collaborative members will follow these basic ground rules:

Discussion Ground Rules During the Meetings

- Raise hand to be recognized by the Facilitator.
- Speak one at a time in meetings as recognized by the Facilitator. Everyone will participate, but none will dominate.
- Be concise and stick to the topics on the meeting agenda. Honor a two-minute time limit for statements and responses unless the Facilitator allows more time.
- Speak only on one topic per entry (no laundry lists).
- Speak to the whole group when talking.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Avoid off-topic questions.
- Treat each other, the organizations represented on the Forest Collaborative, and the Forest Collaborative itself with respect at all times.

- When communicating with the media, Forest Collaborative members will treat each other, the organizations represented in the Forest Collaborative, and the Forest Collaborative itself with respect.
- Refrain from interrupting.
- Monitor your own participation – everyone should participate, but none should dominate.
- Adhere to the agenda and time schedule with diligence.
- Put cell phones on “vibrate” and leave the room when a call is received.
- Be prepared to start on time.
- Recognize that everyone’s interests are important.
- Avoid repetitiveness (i.e., one-track-mind behavior).
- Agree that it is okay to disagree, and disagree without being disagreeable.
- Avoid “cheap shots” and/or sarcasm.
- Refrain from hostility and antagonism.
- Leave personal agendas and “baggage” at the door; put personal differences aside in the interest of a successful Forest Collaborative.
- Focus on the problem, not the person.
- Celebrate success.

Process Ground Rules Throughout the Stakeholder Process

- Adhere to the charter.
- Review information and stay informed.
- Work as team players and share all relevant information. Ask if you do not understand.
- Encourage free thinking. Offer mutually beneficial solutions.
- Encourage candid, frank discussions. Be honest and tactful. Avoid surprises.
- Openly express any disagreement or concern with all other Forest Collaborative members. Focus on the problem, not the person.
- Actively strive to see the other points of view.
- Follow through on commitments.
- Share information discussed in the meeting with the organizations/ constituents represented and bring back to the Forest Collaborative the opinions and actions of your constituencies as appropriate.
- Communicate the requirements of this charter with the organizations you represent to minimize the possibility of actions contrary to the charter.
- Commit to issues in which you have an interest.
- Support and actively engage in the Forest Collaboratives’ decision process.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT GROUP MEETINGS

All Forest Collaborative meetings are open to observation by the public. Members of the public attending the meetings may comment during the specified time at each Forest Collaborative meeting. Public comment periods will be specified in advance. Speakers will have time limits set by the Facilitators to allow as much participation as possible within the allotted time. The Forest Collaborative will not normally attempt to respond to public or media comments or questions at the meeting in which they were made. The Facilitators have the right to deny the floor to public speakers who are simply repeating previously delivered messages or who are unruly.

Final summaries of Forest Collaborative meetings will be available to the public upon request and will also be available on the Ruckelshaus Institute's website.

13. WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Forest Collaborative members are free to speak with the media. When speaking to the media, members must make it clear they are representing themselves and not the Forest Collaborative at-large. If the Forest Collaborative member feels uncomfortable speaking with the media, they may refer the media spokesperson to Brenda Ashworth, Star Valley Conservation District.

Meeting notes will be generated by the Ruckelshaus Institute after each meeting, summarizing the discussion and any decisions made. These can be used as talking points and may be helpful in communicating with the media, as well as constituents.

14. SCHEDULE AND DURATION

The Forest Collaborative will meet every other month at locations determined by the group. The intent of the Forest Collaborative is to provide advice and recommendations to the Conservation District, the BTNF and to other private and public land managers. Duration of the Forest Collaborative is scheduled for one year. If additional time is needed this can be considered by the Conservation District and Forest Collaborative members.

15. AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER

Changes to the charter can be made at any meeting of the Forest Collaborative by consensus.