

Sublette County Forest Collaborative Meeting: May 17, 2017

Welcome and introductions

Members in attendance: Kim Bright, Mike Henn, Brook Lee, Jill Randall, Julie Kraft, Jennifer Lamb, Ben Wiese, Shad Cooper, Don Kranendonk, Terry Pollard, Mack Rawhouser, Dennis Dailey, Willis Day

Public: Jerry Johnson, Paul Hutta(?), Richard Thomas, Terry Fieseler, Dennis ?, Rusty Kaiser, Mark Randall, Kate Olsen, Paul Swenson...

Review interest statements, focus areas and priorities

Level of agreement on interest statements: voted 1 – 3; consensus
Top priorities from last meeting: weeds, Upper Hoback, Boulder, Big Sandy
Edited a letter to BTNF regarding aerial application of herbicides
Voting: 1 – 3; consensus

Review maps, including State and BLM data

Upper Hoback Basin

USFS identified potential project areas

Group discussion

Widening fire breaks would require buy-in from adjacent private landowners

How to work together to treat fuels at the landscape level in this area?

Fuel breaks have been piecemeal

Covenants have been changed to allow for cutting trees

Funding is the biggest issue; landowners aren't opposed

There is federal funding available

- Stevens Hazardous Fuels Grant (CAFA)
 - requires strong buy-in (>70%) from private side
 - <http://csfs.colostate.edu/media/sites/22/2016/05/Landowner-CommunityFinancialAssistancePrograms-rev042114web.pdf>
- Wildland Urban Interface Community and Rural Fire Assistance
 - 50/50 federal/private contribution, includes in-kind contribution
 - <http://www.firewise.org/usa-recognition-program/grants-and-funding/federal-government.aspx?sso=0>
- Bark beetle mitigation grant (Wyoming)

Suggest holding a local forum with property owners

Education is a critical step; learning to live with fire

If there's not public access to this area, how can we expect taxpayers to get on board with paying for treatments here?

Wildlife habitat – there's a mule deer migration corridor through here, transitional habitat

Important to include the recreationalists, hunters, taxpayers in this

Opportunity for recreational easement here?
Is this project area the best place to start? Mid-term project?
Suggestion to use Upper Hoback basin as the priority area boundary

Boulder

Issues with cheatgrass around the lake
Roads and trails need improvement; recreational area (hunting, fishing)
ATV trails causing erosion in steep areas

Big Sandy

Remote and rocky, but good recreation, some WUI
Access road is bad, parking is crowded
Single road access could be dangerous in a fire situation

Union Pass?

Have access issues been solved here?
Area falls largely outside of geographic scope of collaborative (goes into Teton and Fremont counties)
What does it mean that this area is in the farm bill?
3,000 acres where FS can do a CE
Consider this for future iterations of the collaborative

Discussion: economic feasibility. Where is there money available?

Habitat: aspen, sagebrush (partnership/conservation dollars)
WUI (partnership dollars)
Some trails and trailheads (backcountry dollars)
Stewardship: goods for services

National Forest Foundation grant

Something to consider for the future; requires project approval/permits to be in place
Competitive grant to provide federal funds to benefit national forests and grasslands by on-the-ground projects
1:1 match
Deadline June 26
Involves intensive record keeping
<https://www.nationalforests.org/grant-programs/map>

Breakout groups

- 1: Specific projects within priority areas
- 2: Objectives to be met (purpose and need)
- 3: Preferred methods to consider

Next meeting – June 21

- Spreadsheet with USFS priorities
- RI draft recommendations
- Create adaptive management plan
- HOA June 17 meeting update