

Northern Blues Forest Collaborative - Minutes

Meeting Date: April 23, 2020

Location: online

Approved: May 27, 2020

In Attendance:

NBFC Members and Guests: Paul Anderes (Union County Commissioner), Mike Billman (ODF), Nils Christoffersen (WR), Alyssa Cudmore (MBMW), Brian Dill (U. of Illinois), Pam Hardy (WELC), Kerry Kemp (TNC), Rob Klavins (OW), Marisa Meyer (USFWS), Katy Nesbitt (Wallowa County NRAC), Darlene Rochna, Susan Roberts (Wallowa County Commissioner)

Forest Service: Bill Gamble, Lucas Glick, Brian Goff, Bob Hassmiller, Nathan Poage

Staff: Jeff Costello (Facilitator)

Action Items:

- Steering Committee to connect with Rob re: details of discomfort with model inputs
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Minutes Key

- Meeting minutes do not represent collaborative agreements, unless they specifically say so. They are meant to record three basic things only: 1) the issue discussed, 2) the major points or questions raised in the conversation, and 3) the resolution, if there was one. Unless specifically stated, resolutions are only the resolutions of the people present at the meeting.
 - Common Abbreviations:
 - Q: Question
 - A: Answer
 - Cmt: Comment
 - Tx: Treatment
 - Rx Fire: Prescribed Fire
 - FS: Forest Service
 - Highlighted Items are typically those that require follow-up. (Usually suggestions for future agendas)
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Meeting Notes

Preliminaries:

- Introductions
- Agenda Review.
Call for additions? none proposed.
- Approval of last Month's Minutes:
 - Forgot to mention that Carrie Spradlin was there.
 - BIC update: "non-profits" is narrower than intended. Should be "stakeholders"Otherwise approved

Announcements:

- Upcoming 2020 Meetings:
05/27-28, 06/24-25, 07/22-23, 08/26-27, 09/23-24, 10/21-22, 12/2-3
- The Sustainable Northwest Conference for PNW Forest Collaboratives in Hood River has been POSTPONED.
New date to be determined. Probably FALL, 2020
 - In replace of the conference, Sustainable Northwest will be doing a Webinar Series:
First webinar: NEPA 101 for collaboratives (Susan Jane Brown & Pam Hardy)
May 15th, 10am
Register: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUpe2gqTkuH9T1g63HZvamZBdHi6iuckTa>
- NBFC Website Launching Soon
This will house notes & meeting announcements as well as basic information about who we are.
- OR Wild has posted a blog about the RO's proposed update to the 21" Rule [link](#)
- BIC Update
 - April 28 is meeting happening. Will be meeting every month going forward. By Zoom if need be.
 - Will be setting out sub-committees this month & considering who should be invited.
 - Covid may slow it down, but trying not to lose momentum.

Q: Are you planning to reach out, or should we reach out to you?
A: Either way works. We're trying to be inclusive.
People are welcome to be on more than one.
We're trying to make sure they're not all at the same time.

Forest Service Updates

- Most employees are teleworking.
A few field folks are out.
- Going to be offering free personal use firewood until June 1.
Commercial firewood is continuing as usual.
- Timber sales are going on.
- Mushrooms gathering
 - personal: 1 gallon allowed in OR, 5 in WA
 - commercial: will not be issuing permits this year. Primarily no commercial camping permits.
- Upper Touche
signed by the end of this week
- Powell Flat – Pomeroy is ongoing.
- Heppner continuing
- Ellis – continuing.
- Lots of discussion about how to manage fire season.
How do you work on the fire line with physical distancing?

Whitman District

- Tree planting is being held up.

- Patrick DEA is almost out
It's mostly warm dry, veg fuels tx's.
Some road closures for elk security
- Baker City Watershed
Trying to understand fire regimes & potential tx areas.
- Powder Belly Mining EIS is ongoing.
- June Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (wetlands) training will be occurring.
Will include information about best practices for range & spring developments
- Little Dean riparian monitoring with GHCC
would like to walk those areas with the collaborative

Cmt: Please let OR Wild know about this.
- Cmt: The env. community is concerned about what's been considered "essential."
Timber sales, but not recreation?

LaGrande Ranger District

- Sheep Creek: Developing alternatives
Level 1 Reg Agency meeting last week went well. (USFWS)
It's going to be a lift to bring them along on riparian tx's.
- Five Points wildlands WUI interface
Using Farm Bill CE
Trying to figure out how to do effective collaboration on this.
perhaps small sub-sets of folks on field trips
- Aquatic Restoration
Several contracts will be going out this year.
RAT Team (Rapid Assessment) will be consulting on some "Stage Zero" projects.
- Re: Covid
People are doing well emotionally, but folks with kids are having a hard time.
It's just not as efficient.

Update on yesterday's Science SC meeting

- Purpose of meeting:
To pull out important take-aways from the meeting
To determine points of agreement/divergence
Ways that this might influence our work going forward.
- Key Takeaways:
 - there is a desire from this group to see EAs rather than CEs done in the future.
 - there are questions about how departure analysis is conducted, esp as related to HRV
Nathan offered to lead that discussion
 - didn't identify any lacking data sources re: ecological resilience
 - could use a layer that talks about snags
 - could use a layer for recreational attributes
 - could use a layer looking at carbon sequestration
- There are varying levels of discomfort with model inputs

- FS Cmt: we would like collaborative members to get these details understood so that we all have a common understanding, and so that we all know we're working from the same facts.
- FS Cmt: If you want to influence the process you need some context & understanding. If you want us to do something other than our original vision we need to know
 - the level of support among stakeholders
 - clear reasons for other perspectives

Operating Principles

- This is about setting out our intentions in working together
Three key questions
 - Why Are You (and Your Organization) at the "Collaborative Table"?
 - What Has Kept You Coming Back?
 - What Will Keep You at The Table, in the Future?

Part One: Small group exercise

- Three small break-out groups that will not be recorded.
Will create responses to very short 1-word & simple phrase responses.
Those will go into word clouds
15 minutes per question
- Results: See attached word clouds at the end of these meeting notes.
NOTE: The first cloud was not complete, due to several groups not being able to upload their responses (we hit the limit, before they were uploaded). The major additions to that first cloud are "forest health", "civility", "direct proactive input", "common ground", and "collective vision".

Part Two: Discussion of Proposed new Operating Principles in light of Part One

- Looked at both the old WW & Umatilla Mission stmts.
Compared them to the present proposed statement.
 - - not really collaborative any more
- Are we only hosting civil conversations?
- *Why Are You (and Your Organization) at the "Collaborative Table"?*
- Understanding among a diverse group of stakeholders
 - Suggestions: perhaps we should ask:
Where are we falling short ... What are the barriers?
 - we aren't diverse
 - we're not confronting disagreements in a constructive fashion
 - CFLRP brought a LOT of folks together that aren't coming to the collaborative meetings.
Why not? Why aren't they coming?
Frustration ... the group is not making progress on issues. "high-centered"
 - Suggestion: We should ask people to come back after we get the process done.
 - Barriers to environmental group involvement:
 - limited time & resources
 - FS is doing a lot of things like CEs that aren't taking into account collaborative agreements
 - Env. needs are not being met. OR Wild is not all about veg projects

- Don't see the reciprocity. People who have said "OR Wild doesn't belong"
- Districts that aren't here aren't carrying out the principles we've agreed to
- Some environmental groups are skeptical of collaboration generally because they feel that
 - Collaboration shouldn't be a substitute for NEPA (Farm Bill)
 - Don't agree that forests are unhealthy, or that logging is the only solution.
 - some groups have been co-opted by other interests
- Why be here?
 - Aspiration. A better way forward.
- What's really our niche as a collaborative?
 - it's not Wilderness ... don't need a collaborative for that.
 - it's about the active mgmt parts of the Forest.
- Nils' barriers/concerns
 - collaborative was generating broad-spectrum *mutual* values and the optimism that's generated from finding that.
 - we've lost common ground, lost the ability to move forward
 - need to get re-aligned.
 - Our time needs to be more than just respectful dialogue.
 - We also need constructive progress.
- Ideal: *productive* relationships ... rather than just relationships
- Suggestion: Acknowledge some common shared values that we all support even if they're not the focus for our work (unless there's some clear & present risk to our work.)
 - EG: We all value Wilderness. so that it's clear that this isn't active mgmt for the entire NF.
 - natural processes should be recognized ... disturbance adapted landscapes.
- WR is a part of large restoration work efforts.

There's not controversy around that.

We need some sort of agreement on what's important.
- We've had some good accomplishments
 - East Face: the decision was deeply influenced by the conversations.
 - Glass was a good project.
 - Thomas Creek was a good project.
- Cmt: seems that many env. concerns stem from what's happening outside of this room

EG: The Farm Bill CEs.

Resp: A lot of the public can't realistically participate in collaboratives.

That's not democratically appropriate.
- What is the productive space for a collaborative?

It's not the "winner-take-all" kinds of problems

IT's the places where creative solutions can create better than average outcomes.

Where these kinds of solutions exist, we can leverage resources to get things done.
- Suggestion: Think about a more integrated approach to how projects are implemented.

Like the strategic planning on the Umatilla ... make it clear what all the benefits are.

Would be good to look at the larger suite of values

Adjourn: 2:50

Question #1: Which word(s) best describe why you (and your organization) are at this "Collaborative Table"?



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Add to the above Word Cloud: "Forest Health", "Civility", "Direct Proactive Input", "Common Ground", and "Collective Vision"

🔔 When poll is active, respond at PollEv.com/jeffcostello087

📱 Text **JEFFCOSTELLO087** to **22333** once to join

Question #2: Which word(s) best describe why you have chosen to keep coming back?

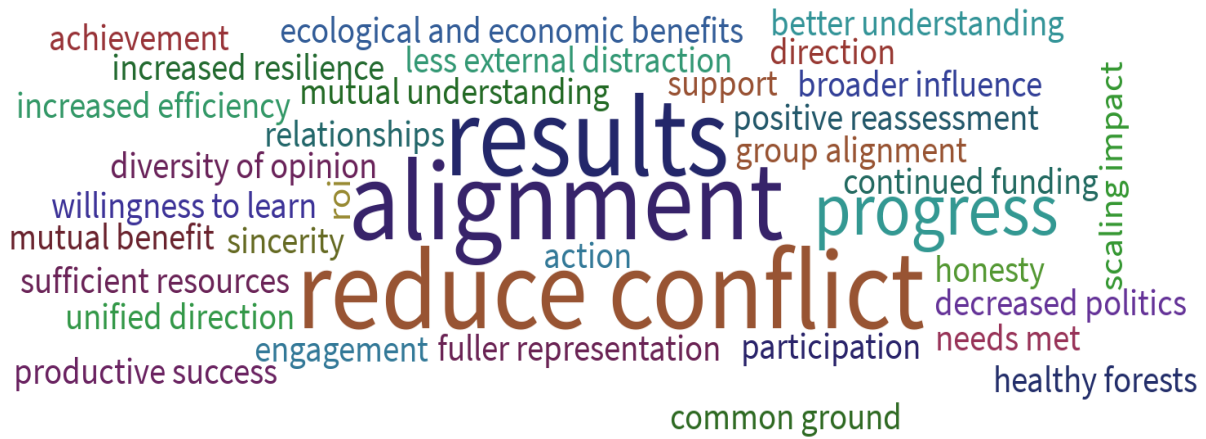


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Question #3: Which word(s) best describe what will keep you at the table, in the future?



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