

# N. Blues Forest Collaborative – Meeting Minutes

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*Meeting Date: May 27, 2020*

*Location: online*

*Approved: June 24, 2020*

## In Attendance:

NBFC Members and Guests: Paul Anderes (Union County Commissioner), Mike Billman (ODF), Brian Dill (U. of Illinois), Julia Freeborn (WR), Pam Hardy (WELC), Kerry Kemp (TNC), Katy Nesbitt (Wallowa County NRAC), Darlene Rochna, Rex Storm (AOL)

Forest Service: Aaron Gagnon, Brandon Houck, Susan Piper, Katie Richardson

Staff: Jeff Costello (Facilitator)

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## Action Items:

- Jeff to send Doodle re: Subcommittee to finalize Operating Principles
  - Jeff to draft letter to the FS with our thoughts on the Umatilla 5-Year Planning Process.
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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
  - Highlighted Items are typically those that require follow-up. (Usually suggestions for future agendas)
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## Meeting Notes

## Preliminaries:

- Introductions  
Three of the four District Rangers from the Umatilla NF were present – Yay! Welcome, to the new rangers!
- Agenda Review:
  - Key Items today:
    - \* Review Written Synopsis of NBFC’s Feedback on UMF Landscape Restoration Prioritization Process
    - \* Debrief RO’s Technical Workshops for Eastside Screens/21” Rule Revision
    - \* Latest Version of Draft Revised Operating Principles (Discussion & Possible Vote to Adopt)
  - Additions? No additions.

- Announcements:
  - Upcoming meetings:  
06/24-25, 07/22-23, 08/26-27, 09/23-24, 10/21-22, 12/2-3  
NOTE: The October & December meetings are outside our normal time.
  - Laura Platt is looking for an additional research team member.  
If you know anyone interested, contact Kerry Kemp.
  - SNW is pulling together a statewide network of collaboratives in Oregon.  
Key Objective: Shared Learning Opportunities
- Approval of Minutes:  
April 22 Minutes approved with small changes re: capacity of remote sensing  
April 23 Minutes approved with no changes.
- NBFC website will be up and running in summer  
it will have links to all sorts of great resources.

### Debrief of UNF 5-Year Plan Recommendations

- The recreational layer was most strongly advocated for by Oregon Wild. Union County is also interested in this topic. There might be additional information they would like to see in there over and above this brief summary. The FS should work with those parties re: their specific concerns about a recreation layer.
- Re: EA v. CE. Is this appropriate here?  
There remains concern public input, so yes.
- Katie Richardson has offered to put the use of CEs on the agenda.  
There is support in the collaborative for such a conversation.
- Pam & SJ recently did a talk on NEPA 101 for Sustainable Northwest  
Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sm3Pum\\_KKmg&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sm3Pum_KKmg&feature=youtu.be)
- Logistics: How to present our conclusions to the FS.  
Jeff to write a letter with the summary, include Minutes as an attachment.  
Jeff to sign on behalf of the NBFC.

### Debrief RO 21" Rule Public Involvement Workshops

- Tomorrow we will discuss HRV & its role in this process.
- The 21" Rule was a political compromise that was expected to last only 18 months.  
It looks primarily at structure, but not species composition.  
It does allow removal of some trees >21" where LOS is above HRV.
- Cmt: concern about lack of species composition.  
Widespread agreement.
- The Technical workshop was like drinking from a fire hose.  
Lacked an opportunity for dialogue.
- Trust/Flexibility tension.
- Oregon Wild & GHCC seem to have dropped out of this month's meeting because they don't think we should be discussing this issue. There is lack of clarity among the members in attendance about why this is the wrong forum for that.

- Should we provide a forum for DellaSala/Hanson/Law?  
(since we're inviting Paul Hessburg & Nathan Poage tomorrow)
- Cmt: When we started this collaborative, it was about informing the FS.  
That seems to be what we're doing by considering the RO 21" process ...
- We began the process of finding a time for Paul Hessburg to talk with us about HRV analysis prior to the discussion of the Screens. This is opportunistic to dove tail these two currents in modern debate.
- It's not right to just show up to the presentations that support your perspective. It makes it hard to want to hear from "their" scientists if they're not willing to engage the full range of science.
- It's unfair to dismiss the FS Science Synthesis as just "FS Science".  
It cited over 400 papers, few of which were done by the FS.
- Both GHCC and OR Wild have said there are better ways to address this than through the collaborative.  
We don't know what that would be. There has been no formal commitment by the collaborative to the FS about what we will do on this. So far, we're just getting educated about the science.
- Q: Outside the three public meetings, what are the mechanisms the public will have?  
Written comments during formal Scoping and on the DEIS.  
Not aware of others.
- Many of the organizations here are planning to comment individually.  
By speaking together, we have a more informed, perhaps more persuasive voice.
- Cmt: David Powell's white papers have been very helpful, especially the historical background.  
Especially valuable was the paper, Eastside Screens Perspective.
  - Link to Powell's papers:  
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/umatilla/maps-pubs/?cid=stelprdb5326230>  
Paper mentioned is #53
- Jeff will ask GHCC & OR Wild whether they have suggestions about a better forum for discussing this.

### Operating Principles

- Darilyn Parry Brown, ED of GHCC, has asked us to add in certain language about substance.  
This is 180 degrees opposite of what Brian recommended. Brian requested removal of language that might imply agreement on substantive issues such as what constitutes restoration or forest health as it implies a Zone of Agreement that this collaborative has not yet achieved. But there are several people present that would like to see such language included.
- Quorum: Should we have specific quorum rules?  
Concern that some participants use strategic absence as a way to delay.  
There are other systems. EG: You show up, and you get to vote.  
Concern: It's not always realistic to get a "full spectrum" of representation.
- It's always been 2 out of the last 4 meetings to maintain membership.
  - If we go to this, we may need to define what it means to attend.  
If someone just shows up for the FS updates, and nothing else, does it count as attendance?  
That does not comport with trust building principles earlier in the document.
  - Q: What about organizational members?  
A: Organizations only get one vote per issue, no matter how many of them attend.  
All participants from organizations that might be a delegate should sign the Ops principles.  
All delegates should have the capacity to fully represent the organization and vote.

- We should re-affirm as a group every year.
- New people, who are intending to be members, should sign as they arrive (ie: they shouldn't have to wait until the annual re-affirmation)
- Concerns from Darilyn:  
She would like to see something more like the following principles in the WW collaborative:
  - Participants in the Wallowa-Whitman Forest Collaborative agree that their collaborative efforts should:
    - a. Recognize the legitimacy of the interests and concerns of others, and expect that their interests will be represented as well.
    - b. Participants agree to collaborate in good faith.
    - c. **Work on tangible, implementable projects in the short-term while also building information and engaging in deliberative dialogue on other issues which appear to have more potential for conflict.**
    - d. **Focus on projects within the National Forest:**
      - i. **with the highest restoration need,**
      - ii. **which can provide long-term benefits**
  - This is what was trying to be said in the "Practicality" Value, but with less substantive language (per the request from Brian) EG: we may not agree on what the "highest restoration need" is, or what a long-term benefit is, so we tried to express the same principle without assuming any agreement on what constitutes "restoration".
- Additional discussion occurred re: wordsmithing, results of which are recorded in Version 10 of the Operating Principles.
- We believe we are very close to complete.  
There is no perfect document as anyone of bad faith can game any system we set up.
- There will be a subcommittee meeting the first week of June.  
Jeff to send a Doodle Poll.  
Their goal is to produce a draft document for ratification at the following full group.

Adjourn: 3:30