

Meeting Notes of the Southwestern Crown Collaborative

10:30am – 4:30pm, January 11, 2011

***Northern Rockies Regional Office Room 301-A

Present: Debbie Austin* (Lolo NF), Rich Kehr* (Flathead NF), Chris Bryant* (TNC), Craig Rawlings* (MCDC), John Manz (Seeley Lake), Angela Farr (USFS/DNRC), Mo Bookwalter* (NWC), Anne Dahl* (SEC), Tim Love* (Lolo NF), Jon Haufler* (EMRI), Keith Stockmann* (USFS R1), Megan Birzell* (TWS), Amber Kamps* (Helena NF), Ken Barber (CRC), Travis Belote* (TWS), Joe Kerkvliet* (TWS), Scott Brennan* (TWS), Sarah Canepa* (MCRI), Jim Burchfield* (UM), Dale Kerkvliet* (RMEF), Kevin Riordan* (Helena NF).

(* indicates a voting member. A quorum was present.)

Action Items:

- Megan will send Executive Committee and Co-Chair nominees out to the voting membership and ask for further nominations.
 - Chris will email information about BMP investments already done to Megan for inclusion in the Work Plan (due January 31st). He will separate Swan and Seeley investments.
 - Gary will amend the prioritization RFP to require inclusion of Legacy Lands in out-year prioritization process.
 - The District Rangers will develop a spreadsheet of FY 2012 projects by February 4th.
 - Megan will send the draft RFP for the prioritization contract to the full SWCC. Members will be given one week to review and provide comments. Per our conflict of interest statements, collaborative participants who may bid on the RFP may not edit or vote on the revision of the RFP.
 - Megan will provide a review draft of the Work Plan to the full SWCC by Friday, January 21st.
 - SWCC members will provide comments to the Work Plan to Megan by Thursday, January 27th.
- I. Review/approval of notes from December meeting
 - a. The notes from the December 7, 2010 meeting were approved unanimously.
 - II. Updates/New Information/Progress since last meeting
 - a. The federal government is operating under a continuing resolution (CR) set to expire on March 4, 2011. In the current CR, there is \$10 million appropriated for CFLRP. However, this appropriation is not yet available to the regional forests. The FS is waiting for Chief Tidwell to recover from his heart attack and return to work. When he returns, the disbursement of CFLR funds will be at his discretion. Approximately 30% of the current appropriation will be set aside for FS cost pools (overhead). If money is disbursed evenly, the SW Crown could expect roughly \$750,000 from the

CFLR Fund. There is still the possibility of the CFLR program receiving more funding in a 2011 federal budget or new CR.

- b. A new CFLR Coalition is being launched to ensure full funding for and the successful implementation of the CFLR program. The Coalition is being co-led by The Wilderness Society, The Nature Conservancy, the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition, and the Society of American Foresters. All non-governmental organizations participating in both funded and nominated CFLR projects will be invited to participate. This effort is distinct from the peer-learning services being provided by NFF and is also distinct from the SWCC. For more information, contact Scott Brennan.
- c. Debbie is meeting with the regional forester tomorrow (1/12) to determine how much money each Forest will receive for planning for the CFLR program.
- d. A project based in Bonner's Ferry, Idaho is submitting a proposal for CFLR funding in 2011. They submitted a proposal in 2010 that was not selected.
- e. R1 has hired a new Director of Renewable Resources: Eugene "Gene" DeGayner.
- f. There will be a partnership training tomorrow (1/12) for the FS & partners to understand how to enter into partnerships and how to get funded in those agreements. It will be held in Ovando.
- g. Travis, Joe, and Cara are submitting a proposal to NFF to monitor forest treatments. This funding would expand our monitoring capacity beyond CFLR funds. They need a letter of support from the Forest Supervisors. Travis will send a draft of the proposal to Debbie, Chip, and Kevin in the next couple of days.
- h. CRC is hosting a public meeting on January 25th to update the community on the CFLR program. It will be held at 7pm at The Barn in Seeley Lake.
- i. NWC is hosting a workshop for local contractors that will explain the federal bidding system and highlight contracting tips for contracts with government (federal and state) and non-government (i.e. RMEF, TNC) entities. This informal forum will be held on January 28th at the Condon Community Center.
 - i. Depending on how this goes, we may consider doing a similar workshop focused on the entire SW Crown. This could help ensure that CFLRP projects go to local contractors.

III. Discussion of Executive Committee and Co-chairs

- a. Concerning the Executive Committee, the SWCC Charter states that it "shall include and will be established and managed by the Co-Chairs. The Executive Committee will consist of 5 members of the full SWCC who have been nominated and approved, by consensus, by a quorum of the full Collaborative."
- b. Concerning the Co-Chairs, the SWCC Charter states, "One Co-Chair will be a FS employee and the other will not. The term of the Co-Chairs will be

two years, with alternating terms of each Co-Chair, typically running from October 1—September 30. Co-Chairs may seek re-election and will not be subject to mandatory term limits.”

- c. It was suggested that the Executive Committee should consist of one representative from each watershed in the Collaborative.
- d. The members present decided to submit nominations for both the Executive Committee and Co-Chairs and vote at the next SWCC meeting.
- e. Nominations:
 - i. Co-chairs: Scott Brennan, Debbie Austin
 - ii. Executive Committee: Rich Kehr, Amber Kamps, Gary Burnett, Anne Dahl, Jon Haufler
- f. ACTION ITEM: Megan will send these nominees out to the voting membership and ask for further nominations.

IV. Update on Legacy Lands ownership

- a. Chris Bryant provided all participants with the most current ownership map of the Legacy Lands.
- b. The final purchase (Phase 3) of Plum Creek land by TNC/TPL was completed in December.
- c. The first quarter of work toward the fiber supply agreement finished last quarter. The majority of the fiber came out of the Swan Valley using Seeley, Swan, and Missoula contractors.
- d. TNC and TPL could benefit from SWCC prioritizing the areas in which we want to work. If we find areas that we want to go for restoration purposes in years 6-10, we should let TNC & TPL know so they can remove any fiber from those areas before then.
- e. It will be important to coordinate our work in the out years with TNC and TPL.
 - i. We should be capturing the values of BMP work on FS land where TNC still owns the trees and using that as match.
 - ii. ACTION ITEM: Chris will email information about BMP investments already done to Megan for inclusion in the Work Plan (due January 31st). He will separate Swan and Seeley investments.
 - iii. ACTION ITEM: Gary will amend prioritization RFP to require inclusion of Legacy Lands in out-year prioritization process.

V. Report from CFLRP panel at RVCC conference in December

- a. RVCC held their annual policy meeting early December. At this meeting, NFF hosted a panel about CFLRP. Mo participated on the panel. The Deschutes & Jemez Mountains projects also participated in the panel.
- b. The main points from the meeting were:
 - i. It is hard to pin down match requirements when CFLR Fund money is a moving target. The possibility of banking extra matching funds for future years was discussed.

- a. Forest Service
 - i. Cost pools are taken out of the CFLR Fund. In the current CR, the amount is 30%. However, there is no direct correlation between the money going on the ground and the amount taken out as overhead. It is not clear whether cost pools will be taken out at the project level or at the full CFLR Fund level.
 - ii. FS coordinator position cost will come out of some combination of CFLR money, partnership money, and other FS appropriations.
 - iii. We should project these assumptions into the future because they likely won't change.
 - iv. KEY QUESTION: Does CFLR match need to count against the full Fund money awarded or just the money that goes on the ground?
 - b. University of Montana
 - i. Money will likely come through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and will have, at maximum, a 17.5% overhead cost rate.
 - ii. It is unlikely that any of the 17.5% would help cover UM employee's time working on the SWCC. Therefore, UM employee time could be considered as leverage and/or match, depending on the circumstances.
 - c. Blackfoot Challenge
 - i. The overhead rate varies from 1 – 10% but never exceeds 10%. It averages between 5-6%. The overhead rate depends on the nature of funding and how much money management is involved.
 - ii. Their overhead cost can be used to pay some staff time. It would be a minimal amount to do administration and manage contracts.
 - iii. The Challenge is also contributing in-kind as part of contracts. This counterbalances the amount they take out for overhead.
 - d. RMEF
 - i. Their stewardship agreements have a 15-18% overhead rate.
 - ii. Stewardship agreements have to be self-sufficient. They are not subsidized by membership dollars.
- X. Prioritization Committee Report
- a. TNC's work with the Montana Legacy Project should be coordinated with the work of the Prioritization Committee, and this should be reflected in the revised RFP.
 - b. The Committee met yesterday and discussed prioritization of FY 2011 and FY 2012 projects. We have a complete list of FY 2011 projects and are in the process of determining which projects would remain and which would drop off the list under various funding levels (70%, 50%, 25%). Currently, CFLR fund money is planned to be split equally among the three districts. Kevin highlighted that we shouldn't necessarily equally distribute money across three districts. We should pick the highest

priority areas and put the money there regardless of which district it falls in.

- c. One question that the Committee has raised is: if we don't get full funding in 2011, do we automatically move the rest of the projects to the 2012 priority list? It was suggested that those projects be re-evaluated for FY 2012 but not be automatically given high priority for 2012. Another question that was raised was whether projects should still be expected to conform to our outputs table if we do not receive full funding.
- d. The rangers will develop a spreadsheet of FY 2012 projects by February 4th. Many of these projects currently exist in name only, and there is significant opportunity for the SWCC and its partners to contribute to the design and implementation of these projects.
- e. The FS has a program of work that includes several large projects in SW Crown with work happening over multiple years. The Forests are currently requesting money to do more planning so that outputs are greater in future years. They are already starting to work on things that will be implemented in FY 2014 and 2015 and are trying to get additional planning money.
- f. The Lolo and Lincoln RCs have endorsed our approach and are working with us to make sure projects on the ground fit CFLRP criteria. RCs are serving as a backstop.
- g. Prioritization Contract RFP
 - i. Gary passed around a draft RFP for a "Baseline Monitoring and Analysis" contract. The draft was developed with input from the Prioritization Committee.
 - ii. The Challenge is planning to ask for verbal bids – not advertising extensively.
 - iii. The draft was brought to the full Collaborative for their review and approval. Given that the draft was not available for the full Collaborative to review before this meeting, they will be given one week to review and provide comments on the RFP. Per our conflict of interest statements, collaborative participants who may bid on the RFP may not edit or vote on the revision of the RFP.
 - iv. The amount available for this contract is between \$20,000 and \$25,000.

XI. Monitoring Committee Report

- a. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 13th, at 1pm at Lubrecht.
- b. Because there hasn't been a recent monitoring meeting, there isn't much to report. Cara and Jim are teaching two UM classes this spring that will help with the monitoring effort. Cara's class will focus on analyzing the quality of citizen monitors' work in order to answer the question of how much training citizen monitors need in order to work effectively. In the

longer-term, the Committee wants to incorporate community volunteers. SEC and NWC have volunteered to help get that going.

- c. Monitoring Coordinator Search Committee Update
 - i. A draft position description for a Monitoring Coordinator was sent to the full Collaborative prior to this meeting. The salary for this position will be around \$45,000, and the total cost will be around \$60,000, including benefits. It will most likely be the beginning of April before anyone is in the position. Jim would be the supervisor. The National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis has agreed to provide in-kind support for this position. This position will also have read-only access to FS databases. Anyone is welcome to participate in the Search Committee, they are welcome.
 - ii. VOTE: The position description was approved unanimously as written.
 - iii. The job will be posted on Monday, January 17th.
- d. Tomorrow, NFF will host a peer-learning call focusing on the monitoring efforts of the funded CFLR projects. Jim will represent the SWCC on this call and will emphasize the role UM is playing because we're fairly unique in that regard. Anyone from the SWCC is welcome to participate in the call.

XII. Update on Work Plan

- a. The Work Plan working group (Gary, Megan, Amber, Keith, Tim, Rich, and Joe) have developed a first draft of the Work Plan. They will provide a review draft to the full SWCC by Friday, January 21st. Comments to this plan must be sent to Megan by Thursday, January 27th. We will submit this final work plan to the Regional Forester by Monday, January 31st.
- b. It would be helpful to have a system for tracking leverage, as well as a list of what is acceptable as leverage. A reporting template was suggested in which we would track who is spending money in the SW Crown landscape in our five CFLR output categories.
- c. We need to footnote the work to indicate that we're assuming all the money we get goes on the ground without cost pools being removed.

XIII. Communications Committee Report

- a. Website: www.swcrown.org has been purchased as the permanent home for our collaborative. This site is not yet live. Jared White is working on building the website in coordination with the communications committee. We expect the new site to be operational by March.
- b. The communications committee is working with a graphic designer coming up with a logo to use on the website and other materials.
- c. Beyond a website, the Communications Committee is working to develop a broader communications plan for 2011.
- d. Potential opportunities:

