

Southwestern Crown Collaborative

Meeting Notes

10am – 4pm, February 8, 2011

Lolo NF Supervisor's Office Conference Room

Present: Rob Ethridge, Debbie Austin*, Anne Dahl*, Sarah Canepa*, Keith Stockmann*, Craig Rawlings*, Gary Burnett*, Tim Love*, Amber Kamps*, Mo Bookwalter*, Marnie Criley, Ken Barber, Kevin Riordan*, Brad Gillespie, Scott Brennan*, Jim Burchfield*, Megan Birzell*, Gunnar Carnwath, Joe Kerkvliet

By Proxy (proxy is in parentheses): Rich Kehr* (Tim)

By Proxy when not present or on the phone: Scott Brennan (Megan), Sarah Canepa (Anne D.)

(*Indicates voting member.)

Action Items:

- Anyone interested in working with Mo to tackle the issues that were raised at the contractor workshop should contact her.
- **Megan** will amend the Charter and the November 2010 notes according to the recommendation of the SWCC and will send the amended versions to all SWCC participants.
- **Jim** will contact Gary to discuss moving resources from the Challenge to UM before a monitoring coordinator is hired.
- **Megan** will follow up with Amber and Keith about participating in the Search Committee.
- **Megan** will send the logo options and small icons to the full SWCC.
- **All SWCC participants** should provide feedback to Jared via email.
- **Megan** will send the draft communications plan to the full SWCC.
- **All SWCC** participants should provide feedback to Jared via email.
- Anyone who would like to see the project lists should email Megan and should keep in mind that these are all subject to funding and are in flux.
- **Brad** will send the Swan's FY 2010 project list to Megan with an implementation timetable included.
- **Jim** will contact FS GIS specialists to ensure that the monitoring data received by UM are compatible with the format of project data.
- The communications committee (**Megan** as lead) will do an initial filter of upcoming projects for media-worthiness and then work with the rangers to get more information on the narrowed list of projects in order to make final recommendations for a media focus.
- **The Executive Committee** will establish staggered terms for themselves.
- **Debbie** will circulate a white paper detailing the different contracting mechanisms and the sideboards for agreements.

- **Jim, Gary, and Amber** will draft a due diligence process for making contracting and agreements recommendations to the FS and will circulate at the next meeting.
- **Gary and Amber** will provide a summary of our existing agreements at the next meeting.
- **Gary and the prioritization committee** will identify an appropriate timeline for receiving bids and will develop a process for moving forward with the contract.

Votes & Recommendations:

1. To approve the notes as amended prior to today's meeting.
 - a. 13 thumbs up; approved unanimously.
2. To separate the full SWCC meeting into a shorter SWCC meeting and an executive committee meeting.
 - a. Thumbs up: 13; approved unanimously.
3. To amend charter according to recommendations of the full committee present today.
 - a. Thumbs up: 13; approved unanimously.
4. To amend notes to reflect that Sarah Richey was not a member and change the voting results from that meeting from 11 thumbs up to 10 thumbs up.
 - a. Thumbs up: 13; approved unanimously.
5. To approve the scope of work as written in the January 27th draft of the prioritization RFP.
 - a. Thumbs up: 14; approved unanimously. *(Note: One more voting member arrived between the 4th and 5th vote.)*
6. ELECTION RESULTS: Mo, Gary, and Amber were elected to serve on the Executive Committee. Scott and Debbie were elected to serve as co-chairs.
7. The SWCC recommends to the FS that they move money for the prioritization contract to the Blackfoot Challenge and allow them to administer the contract.
 - a. Gary, Marnie, Debbie, Tim, and Amber recused themselves from participating in this recommendation due to conflicts of interest.

I. Welcome/Introductions

- a. A quorum of 13 members is present out of 17 voting members.
- b. Review/approval of notes from the January 11th meeting
 - i. VOTE: To approve the notes as amended prior to today's meeting.
 1. 13 thumbs up; approve unanimously.

II. Updates/New Information/Progress since last meeting

- a. NWC hosted a workshop for contractors in Condon on January 28th. The purpose was to assist local contractors in learning about work available in the local area through various sources (federal and non-federal). There were 45 attendees. It went well and is something that could be replicated for the entire SW Crown area.
 - i. Key lessons and questions that came out of the workshop are:

1. Contractors want to know how CFLR work is going to be bid. Stewardship contracts? Grants and agreements?
 2. We need to ensure diverse array of contract size and structure for CFLR projects to appeal to a broad array of contractors.
 3. There's a disconnect between how the FS advertises contracts and how the contractors find out about work. Contractors need help wading through Fed Biz Opps website.
 4. We need a consistent definition for "best value" criteria.
 5. Contractors would like a greater assurance of the demand for work in the future. Without it, they are hesitant to make investments to meet that demand.
- ii. ACTION ITEM: Anyone interested in working with Mo to tackle the issues that were raised at the contractor workshop should contact her.
- b. The FS Regional Office is in the process of allocating planning money to Seeley Lake and Lincoln for CFLR. This money (\$690,000) will cover FY 2011 planning costs associated with CFLR projects that will be scheduled for implementation in FY 2012 – 2014. The District Rangers are currently putting together project work plans.
 - c. The national RAC held conference call yesterday. There was discussion about the role of the RAC, specifically whether they have a role to play beyond recommending new projects to the Secretary of Agriculture. Ultimately, they decided that, if the RAC wants to have a larger role, they need to ask the Secretary to amend their charter.
 - i. The RAC is getting ready to make selections for FY 11 proposals. They are expecting 35 new proposals, which speaks to the great interest in this program nationally.
 - d. The current CR will expire on March 4th, and the rumor is that it will be replaced by another short-term CR.
 - e. The Washington Office is sending out optional surveys to FY 2010-funded projects asking for more information about our work.
 - f. Debbie and Megan attended Cara's undergraduate restoration class two weeks ago. This semester, Cara's class will develop a monitoring plan to gauge the efficacy of using citizen science monitors in the CFLR monitoring program. Megan and Travis will mentor the students working on this project throughout the semester, and the best student in the group will have the opportunity to implement this plan as part of a paid internship this summer.
 1. Contact Cara if you have questions or would like more information.
 - g. The national CFLR Coalition is announcing its formation this week in an email to all non-federal participants in all 31 FY 2010 nominated

proposals. The Steering Committee consists of representatives from The Wilderness Society, Society of American Foresters, The Nature Conservancy, American Forests, National Association of State Foresters, and Sustainable Northwest. The purpose of the Coalition is to secure full funding for and ensure success of CFLR Program.

- i. Contact Scott if you would like to participate in the Coalition Steering Committee.
- h. Megan and Scott will be in DC next week meeting with Chief Tidwell as well as CFLR leaders.
 - i. Contact Scott and/or Megan if you would like them to raise any specific issues in their meetings next week.
- i. The Swan Valley's collaborative Forest Stewardship Committee has decided to participate in the SWCC by providing input on SWCC projects in the Swan and helping to ensure that projects in the Swan meet the intent of FLRA, the CFLR program, and our SWCC landscape strategy and CFLR proposal. They have developed a subcommittee to serve this role. The Subcommittee met for the first time on Monday. They made a concerted effort to reach out to the Swan View Coalition and the Friends of the Wild Swan.
 - i. This group is currently not planning to join the Montana Forest Restoration Committee.
- j. CRC hosted a community meeting in January updating everyone on forest issues. There was a good turnout and lots of discussion.

III. Review of SWCC meeting structure

- a. At the December meeting, Megan suggested the possibility of shortening the full SWCC meetings and assigning some tasks (that have thus far been discussed by the full committee) to the Executive Committee for a separate meeting. Shortening the full SWCC meetings could make it easier for more people to participate.
- b. In discussion about this idea, the group agreed that we need to be careful in deciding which issues should come to executive committee versus the full SWCC. The group also agreed that the executive committee should provide a report of what they did in their meeting to the full SWCC to ensure transparency. According to the SWCC Charter, the executive committee will still need to bring any votes to the full SWCC – they can't vote just by themselves.
- c. VOTE: To separate the full SWCC meeting into a shorter SWCC meeting and an executive committee meeting.
 - i. Thumbs up: 13; approved unanimously.

IV. Review of SWCC Charter

- a. Possible amendments
 - i. Suggested revisions sent around prior to today's meeting include:

1. Replace “administrative committee” with executive committee.
 2. Change language to reflect that the full committee will vote to elect the executive committee. The executive committee is not established by the co-chairs.
 3. Change “collaborative” to “SWCC” for consistency.
 4. Remove the “communications and media outreach” responsibility from the executive committee because the Communications Committee is handling this.
 5. Add an email voting mechanism to the charter to allow for voting between meetings.
- ii. In addition to the suggested revisions sent around prior to this meeting, the following revisions were made:
 1. Amend the fourth sentence of the first paragraph of the “Leadership Section” to reflect that Co-chairs do not establish the executive committee.
 2. Amend the email voting addition to give the Co-Chairs discretion in determining how long to allow people to respond to email votes.
 - iii. VOTE: To amend charter according to recommendations of the full committee present today.
 1. Thumbs up: 13; approved unanimously.
- b. Amend November 2010 notes
 - i. It was brought to the attention of the Co-Chairs that Sarah Richey was incorrectly recorded as a voting member in the November 2010 meeting notes. There was one vote at that meeting with a result of 11 thumbs up and two abstentions.
 - ii. VOTE: To amend notes to reflect that Sarah Richey was not a member and change the voting results from that meeting from 11 thumbs up to 10 thumbs up.
 1. Thumbs up: 13; approved unanimously.
 - c. ACTION ITEM: Megan will amend the Charter and the November 2010 notes according to the recommendation of the SWCC and will send the amended versions to all SWCC participants.

V. Lunch Break

- a. A quorum of 14 members (out of 17 voting members) was present after lunch.

VI. Monitoring Committee Report

- a. Search Committee Report
 - i. The Search Committee has 39 applicants as of the soft deadline of February 7th. They will conduct phone interviews with a subset of applicants at the end of February and in-person interviews with a

smaller subset of applicants in March. They hope to have a decision made by the end of March.

- ii. Tim has had to bow out of participation in the Search Committee (other participants are Cara, Travis, Megan, Gary, and Jon). The Committee would like another FS rep.
 - 1. Debbie agreed to look at the group of top applications after the Committee does a first evaluation.
 - 2. Amber and/or Keith may be able to participate.
 - iii. ACTION ITEMS:
 - 1. Jim will contact Gary to discuss moving resources from the Challenge to UM before an applicant is hired.
 - 2. Megan will follow up with Amber and Keith about participating in the Search Committee.
- b. National framework for monitoring
- i. Jim met with Rob Harper a few weeks ago. Rob is interested in developing a national framework for monitoring CFLR projects that would be separate from the annual reporting requirements. He and Jim discussed the balance that would need to be kept between making sure some conclusions can be drawn across the CFLR program nationally while allowing for each project's monitoring group to come up with creative solutions to local monitoring issues.
 - ii. There may be a national monitoring workshop bringing together all CFLR projects to talk about this possibility.
- c. Working Groups Progress
- i. The socioeconomics working group is grappling with three major issues:
 - 1. First, they are trying to figure out how to obtain information from contractors that will help us better understand their behavior and the economic impacts of the CFLR program. Some of the information they would like to collect may be proprietary, and the group is thinking through ways to build trust in order to get that information.
 - 2. They are also hoping to better understand the attitudes of residents regarding CFLR. One question that has been raised is whether to use EA comments as a proxy for doing actual surveys.
 - 3. Finally, the question has been raised of whether we are actually going to listen to and incorporate the results of socioeconomic monitoring into adaptive management or whether this exercise is purely educational. The larger groups comment was that we will likely figure this out as we go.

- ii. The monitoring committee feels strongly that data we collect must be scientifically defensible. This may mean hiring paid crews in some instances to ensure the quality of data collection.
 - 1. SEC and NWC are already doing citizen science, and the monitoring committee could work with them to figure out how to best incorporate their work into the citizen science monitoring component of CFLR.
- iii. There was substantial discussion at the monitoring meeting about the opportunities for monitoring fish and aquatic issues. One suggestion is to use PIBO (PACFISH/INFISH Biological Opinion), but there is concern that this method (and others) won't be able to tell us if the work we're doing is making a difference. This is a serious concern because we have committed to spending the largest portion of our budget on watershed restoration activities, and we need to know the effects of that work. Scientists don't all agree about which method is the right one. However, the fish/aquatics group isn't letting this stall them. They're still moving forward to suggest a robust monitoring program for fish/aquatics.

VII. Prioritization Committee Report

- a. Finalize the prioritization RFP
 - i. Gary presented a draft RFP for a baseline analysis of fuels mitigation and aquatic and forest restoration opportunities in the SW Crown at the last SWCC meeting. The draft was sent out to the full email list for comments. Comments were then incorporated, and a new draft was sent out for review on January 28th.
 - 1. Through the comment process, the issue of the need for an analysis of socioeconomic and biomass factors was raised. Through group discussion today, it was decided that this information can be incorporated later. It was also suggested that, to some extent, the biomass factors are already incorporated through the analysis of fire and fuels in the RFP. Further, the RCAT modeling tool will be incorporated later and will help us figure out fire costs that can then be factored into our prioritization.
 - ii. The scope of work in the RFP is not to develop our priorities for us but to provide additional analytical information that will aid us in setting our restoration priorities.
 - iii. An analysis of the Forest Plan Management Areas will be included in this work through the incorporation of the Integrated Restoration Protection Strategy.

- iv. Amber reported that the FS is working with the Regional Office to draw out SW Crown data from IRPS. The prioritization RFP will enhance this with more detailed information at a finer scale.
- v. VOTE: To approve the scope of work as written in the January 27th draft of the prioritization RFP.
 - 1. Thumbs up: 14; approved unanimously.

VIII. Communications Committee Report

- a. The committee is still working up the website and is also working to finalize a logo for the SWCC and six small icons that will be used to guide people through our website. A copy of the draft logo options and six small icons was passed around for everyone to see.
 - i. The website will include an interactive map of projects. It was suggested that we should display the projects in list format in addition to the map.
- b. The committee has also drafted a communications plan to cover the next six months. All input is appreciated.
 - i. There are a few earned media opportunities this month:
 - 1. The impending release of the President's FY 2012 budget
 - 2. Highlighting all the upcoming projects that will hit the ground once the snow melts.
- c. The committee would like help identifying the projects that will make good media opportunities.
- d. ACTION ITEMS:
 - i. Megan will send the logo options and small icons to the full SWCC.
 - ii. All SWCC participants should provide feedback to Jared via email.
 - iii. Megan will send the draft communications plan to the full SWCC.
 - iv. All SWCC participants should provide feedback to Jared via email.
 - v. Anyone who would like to see the project lists should email Megan and should keep in mind that these are all subject to funding and are in flux.
 - vi. Brad will send the Swan's FY 2010 project list to Megan with an implementation timetable included.
 - vii. Jim will contact FS GIS specialists to ensure that the monitoring data received by UM are compatible with the format of project data.
 - viii. The communications committee (Megan as lead) will do an initial filter of upcoming projects for media-worthiness and then work with the rangers to get more information on the narrowed list of projects in order to make final recommendations for a media focus.

IX. Executive Committee and Co-Chairs

- a. The nominations for co-chair are Debbie and Scott.

- b. The nominations for executive committee are Amber, Gary, Jim, Jon, Megan, Mo, and Rich.
- c. Ballots were passed out, and 14 valid ballots were returned.
- d. ELECTION RESULTS: Scott and Debbie were unanimously elected to serve as co-chairs.
- e. *Post-meeting note: Because we used secret ballots, and because three invalid ballots were returned by members who had not, at the time, signed the conflict of interest statement, the results of the Executive Committee election are invalid. We will hold another vote via email to elect the Executive Committee.*

X. FS Contracting Mechanisms

- a. The FS has multiple mechanisms for getting work done, including several types of agreements, several types of contracts, and force accounts (doing the work internally). The question was raised of whether the SWCC wants to set any criteria in order to make recommendations to the FS about which mechanisms to use in certain situations (i.e. agreement or contract? If contract, which kind?)
- b. The SWCC agreed that we would like to have the various contracting mechanisms explained to us. We also expressed a commitment to ensuring that we use a transparent process that allows for equal opportunity. The group suggested developing a due diligence process for making recommendations about contracting and agreements options to the FS. We can then refer to this process when the need arises.
- c. Concerning the prioritization RFP discussed earlier, there are a few options for how to run that contract: 1) The FS can directly enter an agreement with a contractor of their choice, 2) The FS can directly ask for bids to complete this work, or 3) The FS can use their existing agreement with the Blackfoot Challenge and let the Challenge collect bids and administer the contract.
 - i. Gary stated that the Challenge has no opinion or recommendation but did say that, if the contract is run through their organization, they will use a full RFP process and accept bids from all interested contractors.
 - ii. The consensus of the SWCC is to recommend to the FS that they move the money for this contract to the Blackfoot Challenge and allow them to administer it.
 - 1. Gary, Debbie, Tim, and Amber recused themselves from participating in this recommendation due to conflicts of interest.
- d. ACTION ITEMS:
 - i. Debbie will circulate a white paper detailing the different contracting mechanisms and the sideboards for agreements.

- ii. Jim, Gary, and Amber will draft a due diligence process for making contracting and agreements recommendations to the FS and will circulate at the next meeting.
- iii. Gary and Amber will provide a summary of our existing agreements at the next meeting.
- iv. Gary and the prioritization committee will identify an appropriate timeline for receiving bids and will develop a process for moving forward with the contract.

XI. **Next meetings:** March 15, April 12, May 17, June 7, July 12, August 9