

## SWCC Executive Committee

Meeting Notes

May 4, 2011

**Present:** Gary Burnett\*, Debbie Austin\*, Megan Birzell, Jim Burchfield, Mo Bookwalter\*, Scott Brennan\*, Amber Kamps\*, Cara Nelson  
(\*Indicates voting member.)

### **Introduction:**

The purpose of this meeting is to receive an update from Jim on the Monitoring Committee's progress and address questions and concerns that have been raised by members of both the Monitoring Committee and SWCC.

### **Jim's Progress Report:**

*Indicators:* The Monitoring Committee (hereafter, "the Committee") has developed monitoring indicators for all five working groups (fire/fuels, fish/aquatics, socioeconomic, wildlife, and vegetation). This information currently exists in several Excel spreadsheets that follow a common template tying each indicator back to FLRA and explaining how each indicator will be measured.

*2011 Monitoring Schedule:* The Committee is also prepared to do weeds, fuels and socioeconomic monitoring this summer. There has been some confusion within the Committee about whether fuels monitoring will be done and who will be responsible. Jim assured the Executive Committee that fuels will be monitored this year.

*Experimental Framework:* The Committee is currently working to identify an experimental framework that they would like to see incorporated into the prescription design recommendations of some CFLR projects. Applying an experimental framework to treatments will increase the opportunity to identify the effects of treatments on variables of interest, which will enable us to learn more about what works and what doesn't with respect to restoration in the SW Crown. The Committee will review a draft of their proposed experimental framework at the May 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*Project- versus landscape-level Monitoring:* The Committee is planning to do both project and landscape-scale monitoring. However, the Committee has not committed to monitor every aspect of every CFLR project. Fuels monitoring will be conducted for every CFLR project, but the details of who will do it and when it will happen have not been articulated.

### **Questions/Concerns:**

*Coordination with the Forest Service:* Several members have expressed a need for greater coordination between the Committee and the FS.

- The Committee needs more details about planned CFLR projects in order to understand the opportunities they have to engage in monitoring those projects

and to design recommended monitoring plans for those projects in which they choose to engage.

- The FS needs to better understand how monitoring questions and recommended plans were developed and to be engaged in the development of the Committee's recommended plans. They also need to know what role the Committee will play in monitoring the different CFLR projects.
- ACTION ITEMS:
  - **Debbie and Amber** will ensure that Tim and Rich (or a suitable staff member from each district) participate in all Committee meetings, beginning with the May 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - **Amber, Tim, and Rich** will identify to the Committee (especially Cory), on an ongoing basis, who on their districts needs to be involved in which aspects of monitoring and will provide direction to their staff to work with the Committee as needed.

*Communication within the Committee and between the Committee and the SWCC:*

Committee members have expressed concerns that the same conversation is repeated in numerous Committee meetings, thus stymieing progress. There is also concern that progress is not being adequately communicated to the SWCC.

- The Committee needs more clarity – both in conversation and in the meeting notes – about discussions that occur within the Committee, including decisions/agreements made, votes taken, action items identified and assigned, and next steps.
  - ACTION ITEMS:
    - **Jim** will articulate in writing the Committee's working definitions for the following terms by May 11<sup>th</sup>: template, narrative, framework, schematic.
    - **Jim** will ensure clearer articulation and communication of ideas through his current role as facilitator of the Committee's meetings, beginning with the May 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- The SWCC needs a more detailed understanding of the Committee's progress to date and plans moving forward.
  - ACTION ITEMS:
    - **Jim** will draft and circulate to the Committee and the SWCC a Monitoring Narrative by May 11<sup>th</sup> that identifies the monitoring indicators chosen, justifies those indicators by linking them to FLRA, and describes how each indicator will be measured. This Narrative will also describe the operations of the Committee and will articulate the short- and long-term approaches being taken.
    - **Jim** will draft and circulate to the Committee and the SWCC an Annual Work Plan by May 11<sup>th</sup> that identifies how FY 2010 monitoring money will be spent (detailed budget, including CFLR funds and match) and what will be accomplished with this money, as well as describes the "what, when, where, who, and cost" of

everything the Committee plans to accomplish in the next 12 months.

- **Jim** will provide the SWCC Executive Committee with a monitoring budget (including CFLR funds and match) for FY 2011 by June 2011.
- **Jim** will ensure, on an ongoing basis, that 3-4 members of the Committee participate in all SWCC meetings.
- The Committee needs more clarification regarding the flow of communication between the various committees and groups working on SWCC CFLR projects.
  - ACTION ITEM:
    - **Anne Carlson** will work with others on the Committee to develop a flow chart by May 19<sup>th</sup> that highlights communication pathways that need to be taken in order to ensure proper and timely information requests and exchanges among the various committees and groups working on SWCC CFLR projects.

*Ensuring that we are fulfilling the monitoring commitments we made in our CFLR proposal:* The SWCC Executive Committee reiterated the importance of addressing all the monitoring components that we committed to address in our CFLR proposal. Monitoring effects of treatments on soils and water quality was used as an example. This year, only weeds, fuels, and socioeconomic effects are being monitored, but all others will be monitored beginning in 2012.

- The Committee did not devote resources in FY 2010 beyond the three mentioned above because there was not enough money allocated in FY 2010 monitor everything. Further, CFLR projects for FY 2010 and 2011 were not developed using an experimental framework, which meant that there was little opportunity to infer landscape-level effects of treatments through monitoring.
- Soil/water and wildlife need to be a component of FY 2011 monitoring plans, particularly because we expect to receive full CFLR funding for FY 2011.
- ACTION ITEM:
  - **Jim** will lead the Committee to solidify monitoring plans and protocols for all resources identified, including soils/water and wildlife, by January 2012.
  - **Jim** will also ensure that the monitoring we conduct is consistent with FLRA, our proposal and our strategy.

*Setting Cory up for success:* Some members of the Committee have raised questions about Cory's role on the Committee.

- The Committee needs to revisit the Monitoring Coordinator position description and discuss, prior to Cory's arrival, what his role will be, who his supervisor will be, and what he will focus on in his first month of work.
- ACTION ITEM:

- **Jim** will add this topic of preparing for Cory's arrival and clarifying his role on the Committee to the agenda for the May 19<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting.

*Ensuring that fuels monitoring will happen this summer:* Reducing forest fuels and risk of wildfire is a major focus of FLRA and the CFLR Program. The SWCC is concerned by an apparent lack of a plan to conduct fuels monitoring this summer.

- **ACTION ITEMS:**
  - **Jim** will speak with Tim, Amber, and Rich by May 13<sup>th</sup> to determine what fuels reduction projects are slated for implementation this summer.
  - **Jim** will ensure that fuels monitoring protocols are consistent across the three districts and the Committee by May 20<sup>th</sup>. He will also ensure that all the fuels variables in which the Committee is interested will be measured this summer.