

SWCC Prioritization Committee
Meeting Notes
5/16/2011

Present: Rich Kehr*, Jon Haufler*, Amber Kamps*, Rob Ethridge*, Megan Birzell*
(*Indicates voting member.)

- 1) Baseline analysis contract
 - a. Jon and Amber are not aware of any progress.
 - i. ACTION ITEM: Megan/Gary will bring this up at tomorrow's SWCC meeting.
 - b. EMRI is planning to meet with the Lincoln and Seeley Districts this month to discuss their analysis of the Blackfoot Valley and develop desired future conditions to meet Forest Plan direction that the Prioritization Committee will review and submit to the SWCC for approval.
 - i. Jon sought approval from the Prioritization Committee to use a process to develop desired future conditions based on Forest Plan direction at the District level for native ecosystem diversity, small watersheds, fuels/fire management, etc. These desired future conditions will be our guidelines for use in developing our 10-year program of work for CFLR. EMRI foresees 3 categories of objectives:
 1. Fuels
 - a. For specific stand treatments, what is it we're really trying to do? Have we defined this clearly enough? Should it be the same everywhere? If not, how do we stratify it?
 - b. Fire management is a subset of the fuels category and addresses: How do we get fire back on the landscape and treat appropriate areas so that, through fire behavior models, we know what we need to do in order to get fire to behave the way it should "naturally"? Climate change complicates this.
 2. Terrestrial Restoration
 - a. How much, and where, do we want to restore native ecosystem diversity?
 - b. Wildlife species are examined in the context of native ecosystem diversity.
 3. Aquatics, specifically looking at fish values and disruption from roads
 - a. Which small watersheds do we need to restore? Which ones do we need to maintain? Which ones are so far gone that it is not cost-effective to do restoration there?
 - ii. Amber noted that the process Jon identified is very similar to the NFMA analysis that the Lincoln District does pre-NEPA for areas within the District. This process is subject to land management direction in the applicable Forest Plans. Jon's process would essentially extend a NFMA analysis across the entire SW Crown (starting with the Blackfoot

because that work is mostly done). It would explain why we are proposing to do work in certain places.

- iii. RECOMMENDATION: The Prioritization Committee endorsed Jon's approach for meeting with the Lincoln and Seeley Districts.
- iv. ACTION ITEM: Amber and Rich will send Jon their current Forest Plans with amendments.

2) Review status of FY 2011

- a. Funding levels have not been announced for individual CFLR projects, however, we expect to receive full or close to full funding.
- b. There was discussion about how much leeway the Rangers have to add and subtract projects to the FY 2011 list in order to make the numbers work. The group agreed that they should feel empowered to change their projects as needed, but they need to keep the Prioritization Committee informed of the changes, and they need to ensure that all projects are consistent with FLRA, the CFLR field guide, and the SWCC's CFLR proposal.
- c. There was discussion about how to account for monitoring costs in the project spreadsheets. The group agreed that it needs to be consistent among the three districts. The easiest way to do this is to have a single line item that of "Contribution to Monitoring" that is 10% of the total CFLR funds received.
- d. Rich and Amber reported that right now they feel very confident about their ability to meet the matching requirements thanks to both federal appropriations and non-federal partnership dollars and in-kind work.
 - i. Legacy Land acquisition money cannot be used as match.

3) Coordinating Monitoring and Prioritization

- a. There was extensive discussion of the need for coordination between the Prioritization and Monitoring Committees. Projects need to be designed in a way that maximizes learning while also accomplishing the goals set out in FLRA, the CFLR Field Guide, and the SWCC's CFLR proposal.
 - i. This discussion will help determine our 10-year program strategy. In other words, we'll have our project needs and concepts already identified, as well as our objectives to achieve that condition, and this discussion will then focus on how we approach projects over 10 years in order to achieve our objectives, consistent with the existing Forest Plans, while simultaneously maximizing learning (monitoring).
 - ii. This will require input from both managers and monitors and, likely, a compromise between the two extremes of 1) every project developed with a rigid experimental design, and 2) every project driven solely by management objectives and monitored as well as can be.
- b. In order to have this discussion, both subcommittees need a clear understanding of the objectives of our 10-year program of work. The Prioritization Committee is currently in the process of developing these objectives. Ideally, we will have a first draft of these objectives in September.
- c. Given this "roadmap" of coordination between the two subcommittees and the need for the Prioritization Committee to develop objectives before the Monitoring Committee can meaningfully engage, there was discussion about what should be the focus of the Monitoring Committee in the meantime. One

suggestion was to focus on fleshing out indicators and methods to measure them for all variables of interest.

4) Next Meetings: June 2nd (subject to change), July 7th, August 4th