

Southwestern Crown Collaborative
Meeting Notes
September 13, 2011

Present: Amber Kamps* (with proxies from Gary Burnett*, Dale Kerkvliet*, Debbie Austin*), Scott Brennan* (with proxies from Megan Birzell*, Anne Carlson*, Travis Belote*, Craig Rawlings*, Joe Kerkvliet*), Anne Dahl*, Mo Bookwalter*, Sandy Mack*, Cory Davis*, Gary Burnett*, Debbie Austin*, Jim Burchfield*, Keith Stockman*, Ken Barber*, Rich Kehr*, Rob Ethridge*, Sarah Canepa*, LaWen Hollingsworth
**Indicates voting member.*

Action Items:

- **Cory** will send an agenda for the Prioritization Workshop to the SWCC this week.
- **Sandy** will work with Shannon Connolly to highlight the Horseshoe West project.
- **Amber** will send her aspen restoration article to Anne in order to be posted on the SWCC website.
- **Everyone** will forward all highlights of SWCC projects to Jared and Megan.
- **Mo** will draft some suggestions about how to inform local contractors of upcoming work and will share it with the District Rangers for feedback.
- **The Monitoring Committee** will provide a report on how the 2010 monitoring funds were spent and highlight the jobs created.
- **Scott** will work with Megan and Jared to schedule another Communications Committee meeting in the next week to develop realistic goals (given limited capacity) for the Committee and to develop an annual communications plan that will be reviewed with the restoration committees.
- **Everyone** will collect photos and good quotes and share them with Jared because he is the keeper of the website.
- **Megan** will send out an email call for photos.
- **Jim** will make sure that the Fire Sciences staff is at our October 6th meeting.
- **Sandy** will ask the Lolo Restoration Committee to invite the SWCC to their meeting addressing how a project goes from a ROD to being implemented on the ground.
- **Scott and Megan** will convene a meeting of the non-agency SWCC partners to discuss a strategy for increasing resources available to them.

- I. Welcome/Introductions
 - a. A quorum is present.
- II. Approve notes from August 24th meeting
 - a. The notes were approved unanimously.
 - b. All agreed that the meeting and field tour in Seeley Lake were very useful.

III. Updates/New Information

- a. The FS's ability to implement CFLR work in FY 2012 is contingent upon the agency receiving the budget authorities to expend CFLR funds. This is, in turn, contingent upon the terms and conditions of any CR that is passed.
- b. In the House version of the not-yet-passed FY 2012 budget, the CFLR fund is slated to receive \$30 million. This is the first year that the House has included a line item for CFLR in their budget, and the amount is a \$5 million increase over what was enacted in FY 2011.
 - i. All of the original 10 CFLR funded programs are still being funded. There is the potential for additional programs to receive funding in FY 2012 and future years (up to 10 additional programs each year).
 - ii. In FY 2012, the full "ask" of all 10 original CFLR programs is less than the \$40 million cap for the CFLR fund. Theoretically, that extra money could allow additional programs to be funded.
- c. Senator Tester visited the Auggie Creek Restoration/Fuels project earlier this month. Several SWCC members attended.
- d. On September 29th, the City of Missoula is celebrating five years of the Open Space bond. There will be a public open house to explain where the money is being spent and the critical their partners play.

IV. Action Items from Last Meeting

- a. Megan sent a request for nominations to the Exec Committee to replace Mo.
- b. Ongoing - Megan, Gary, and Anne will continue to keep the SWCC informed of all SW Crown-related field trips that the local restoration committees host.
- c. Ongoing - Megan shared recent SW Crown project support letters from the Lolo Restoration Committee with the SWCC via email. She will continue to do so, and Gary will share the same for the Lincoln Restoration Committee.
- d. The Prioritization Workshop will be held on Thursday, October 6th from 12 – 4pm at the Lolo SO.
 - i. ACTION ITEM: Cory will send an agenda to the SWCC this week.
- e. Sandy and Rich are working to craft brief one-page descriptions – including photos – that highlight one CFLR project per district.
 - i. ACTION ITEM: Sandy will work with Shannon Connolly to highlight the Horseshoe West project.
 - ii. In a recent article submitted to the Seeley-Swan Pathfinder, Anne highlighted a dozen CFLR projects taking place in the Swan area
 - iii. Boyd Hartwig has developed a template that could be helpful in gathering the essential information about each CFLR project.

- iv. Amber wrote about aspen restoration for the Lincoln paper. Her next article will focus on how the Lincoln District used CFLR funds to implement forest restoration.
 - 1. ACTION ITEM: Amber will send her article to Anne in order to be posted on the SWCC website.
- v. ACTION ITEM: Everyone will forward all highlights of SWCC projects to Jared and Megan.
- f. Jared White is available to help the Communications Committee develop an annual report which is required to WO. It isn't accessible for a general audience so we will translate it into an easy to read format.

V. Update on FY11 projects

a. Swan Lake District

- i. The Swan Lake District expects to be successful in implementing all their CFLR projects on their FY 2011 project spreadsheet. Various activities include: cleaning up former Plum Creek landing sites, verbenone and carbaryl treatments, a 50-acre timber sale, restoration of 2 bridge abutments, wetland restoration at a homestead, Legacy Lands weeds work, and three trail rehabilitation projects. (Condon WUI work is being bumped to FY 2012.)
- ii. Most work is being done through contracts and (due to lateness of obligated funds) force account.
- iii. They were fairly close to their 50% match requirement. Aquatic species work and fire history work was done as match, and the District is on track to spend all the FY 2011 CFLR funds.
- iv. Jim Burchfield wants to know what the economic impact is. Keith Stockmann is working on quantifying it in terms of with and without match. Impact areas are currently defined as counties. If we have data that says number of jobs created we need to report this up. We can report this November 15th. You can look at this in several different ways in terms of counting force account or new separate jobs. This is a good topic to get into more depth at another time.

b. Seeley Lake District

- i. The Seeley Lake District now has an aquatic invasives check station and is conducting a baseline study for aquatics.
- ii. Most of the FY 2011 CFLR funds have been obligated, and the rest will be obligated by the end of the week.

c. Lincoln District

- i. The Lincoln District has increased its partnership opportunities.
 - 1. Through an expanded partnership with the Ponderosa Snow Warriors, they have achieved their District weed target.

- 2. BMP road maintenance work is being implemented through a partnership with five “call when needed” local contractors.
- ii. The District was able to hire five trail crew personnel, which has increased the FS presence on the ground and allowed them to accomplish more trail work.
- iii. The District sold three timber sales in FY 2011 that included roadside hazard tree removal along corridors of major roads.
- iv. Fuels reduction and ponderosa pine restoration around the Lincoln Ranger Station was accomplished.
- v. All FY 2011 funds have been completely obligated.
- d. ACTION ITEM: Mo will draft some suggestions about how to inform local contractors of upcoming work and will share it with the District Rangers for feedback.

VI. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Executive Committee
 - i. Mo is stepping down from the Executive Committee. Anne Dahl has been nominated to replace her.
 - 1. VOTE: The SWCC voted unanimously to appoint Anne Dahl to the SWCC Executive Committee.
 - a. Anne recused herself and left the room during the vote.
 - ii. The group agreed that we should add some language to the SWCC Charter that ensures that Executive Committee membership is reflective of a geographic cross section of the SW Crown.
- b. Prioritization Committee
 - i. The Committee has not met since the last SWCC meeting and has no report.
 - ii. The Committee will meet on September 30th.
- c. Monitoring Committee
 - i. Update on agreements for FY11 monitoring work
 - 1. Things are going smoothly, and the UM agreements are being signed today.
 - ii. Report on after action discussion of FY11 funding process
 - 1. We will improve and clarify how the Monitoring Committee interacts with the Executive Committee and the full SWCC. There are concerns about how it played out, and in the future we need more communication between the two subcommittees.
 - 2. Our evaluation process wasn't communicated well, including the thought process used by RO personnel. We can improve, and we need to set up sufficient time.

3. The Monitoring Committee is tasked with looking at what was planned with FY11 funding that will be done with 2012 funding. They may look for some proposals that will be key to the long term monitoring plan.
 4. We need to decide whether to continue funding in FY 2012 those proposals that were funded in FY 2011.
- iii. The Committee is working on a proposed timeline for the FY 2012 funding process and on developing a long-term monitoring plan.
 1. These documents will be available for review in January 2012.
 2. Decisions need to be made in January about what we want to monitor with 2012 funding.
 - iv. The Committee has considered the Executive Committee's suggestions as follows:
 1. More time is needed, and the Monitoring Committee will accomplish this with their proposed timeline.
 2. They don't think it will be necessary to have a pre-proposal process given their plan for moving forward, and they don't think there will be enough time for it.
 3. Only those proposals that are fully supported will be moved forward.
 4. They should be able to spend FY 2012 money in actual FY 2012 with the help of the timeline we have developed. However, if there is winter/spring work, this could be more difficult to get done in FY 2012 due to the possibility that FY 2012 CFLR funds may not be allocated until March or April 2012.
 5. When the Committee receives FY 2012 CFLR monitoring funds, they need to be advertising for field positions in March if they want crews in June or July.
 - v. We could tighten a few things up with the timeline in terms of amount of review. For example, if there is no RFP, this could remove a full month or more from the process.
 - vi. ACTION ITEM: The Monitoring Committee will provide a report on how the 2010 monitoring funds were spent and highlight the jobs created.
 - vii. There may be a good opportunity to hold a public meeting this winter once the long-term monitoring plan is finalized.
- d. Communications Committee
 - i. The Communications Committee has met once since the August 24th meeting. They are currently working on developing fall news stories highlighting CFLR projects but are struggling with limited capacity.
 - ii. Ideas for news stories include:

1. Partnership with the Ponderosa Snow Warriors
2. Aquatic invasive species work in the Seeley-Swan
3. Engaging students in CFLR monitoring
- iii. The Committee hasn't yet made a decision on whether to engage in the Forest Products Week.
- iv. Jim Burchfield volunteered to lend his voice in support of collaboration, the SWCC, and CFLR.
- v. ACTION ITEMS:
 1. Scott will work with Megan and Jared to schedule another Communications Committee meeting in the next week to develop realistic goals (given limited capacity) for the Committee and to develop an annual communications plan that will be reviewed with the restoration committees.
 2. Everyone will collect photos and good quotes and share them with Jared because he is the keeper of the website.
 3. Megan will send out an email call for photos.

VII. Potential application of FS Fire Modeling Institute and UM National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis

- a. LaWen Hollingsworth explained that the overall objective of the FS Fire Modeling Institute is to be the bridge between science and management. The Institute was created to teach the field how to use the science. LaWen provided a handout on Fire Behavior Analysis, explaining multiple scales. Predicting fire behavior can help with the planning process because it can inform fire behavior and spread, which can be used in incident management, fire behavior in critical habitat, and can inform how WUI fits in the picture. Through research that has been done at the Fire Sciences Laboratory, 20-40% of the landscape needs to be treated in order to mimic historic fire conditions. Existing conditions can be compared to implementation of proposed treatments and show differences in expected results in fire behavior.
- b. There is opportunity for the SWCC to partner with the Fire Sciences Laboratory and the National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis. This is a resource of which we should be taking advantage.
- c. Every CFLR program across the country is going to use R-CAT analysis, which entails comparing the existing condition with one or two treatment possibilities.
- d. The Prioritization Workshop will include a discussion of fire modeling as part of the agenda.
- e. We should ensure that this is tied in with EMRI's analysis, which has yet to be completed.
- f. ACTION ITEM: Jim Burchfield will make sure that the Fire Sciences staff is at our October 6th meeting.

- VIII. Collaborative Participation in Projects after the Record of Decision
 - a. The Executive Committee recommends that everyone attend/participate in a meeting that will discuss how a project moves from a ROD to being implemented on this ground. This meeting is being coordinated by the Lolo Restoration Committee. After that meeting, the SWCC can revisit this issue to determine whether and how we should engage in projects after a ROD is signed.
 - b. ACTION ITEM: Sandy will ask the Lolo Restoration Committee to invite the SWCC to this meeting.

- IX. Capacity to Collaborate
 - a. Collaboration requires tremendous resources from both the agency and non-agency partners.
 - b. The amount of time to participate in meetings is an increase in workload for everyone, and the FS continues to struggle to get funded for the planning that is necessary before implementation and monitoring can occur.
 - c. ACTION ITEM: Scott and Megan will convene a meeting of the non-agency SWCC partners to discuss a strategy for increasing resources available to them.

- X. Next Meetings: October 11, November 8, December 13