

SWCC Prioritization Committee

September 30, 2011

Meeting Notes

Present: Tim Love, Jon Haufler, Rob Ethridge, Gary Burnett, Megan Birzell, Sandy Mack, Cory Davis, Travis Belote, Amber Kamps, Rich Kehr

- I. Updates/New Information
 - a. The Seeley District began two prescribed burns (Cave Creek and Dick Creek – both north of Ovando) yesterday.
 - b. The Seeley District awarded two contracts for Colt Summit road work this week. A press release to this effect was sent to media today. The District will host a field tour for potential contractors for the vegetative aspect of the project on October 17th.
 - c. The Seeley District expects to have a draft EA for the Horseshoe West project by the end of October.

- II. Approve notes
 - a. The notes of the last meeting were approved unanimously.

- III. Update on EMRI's progress including work with RDs and Workshop
 - a. EMRI is currently putting together an analysis of where various restoration treatments could occur to meet various selected restoration and fuels reduction objectives consistent with the Forest Plans that have been discussed with the Seeley and Lincoln Districts. They still need to meet with the aquatic biologists to make sure that aquatic priorities are accounted for.
 - b. EMRI still needs input from the Lincoln and Seeley Districts on the following:
 - i. Is it appropriate to have different fuel mitigation zones based on distance from buildings or major escape routes? If those zones are appropriate, what are the specific fuel mitigation objectives for each zone? Do they differ depending on ecological/habitat type/
 - ii. What are the desired conditions we are trying to achieve through restoration in each District?
 - iii. Is the goal of having 10% representation of historical conditions in the landscape by ecological site at the end of 10 years a realistic goal?
 1. The Forest Plans will dictate where we're able to implement treatments to work toward achieving the 10% landscape objective.
 - iv. ACTION ITEM: Sandy will work with the Districts to get the information that Jon needs.
 - v. Once they get that, ready to present results of their work spatially.
 - c. Swan District
 - i. EMRI has begun their historical analysis modeling. This should be completed in the next two weeks.
 - ii. EMRI has received info from the District on fish priorities, and this should enable them to conduct a comparable analysis of watersheds in the Swan with those in Seeley and Lincoln.

- iii. Once the historical analysis is completed, EMRI will meet with the District again to present their findings and talk about objectives consistent with the Forest Plan.
 - iv. ACTION ITEM: Jon and Rich will coordinate a meeting between EMRI and the Swan District.
 - d. EMRI expects to have all the work required for their contract done by the end of the calendar year. At that point, the Monitoring Committee can finalize the details of a long-term monitoring plan.
- IV. Update on FY 2011 projects and funds
 - a. Reporting of FY 2011 accomplishments will be finalized soon.
 - b. There is a possibility that we will have \$100,000 or more to carry over into FY 2012. We likely won't know until March whether that money will actually be available in FY 2012.
 - i. Most of the carryover funds were intended to be spent on prescribed fire treatments. However, there were very limited burn windows this spring and thus far this fall, and it has been difficult to implement these burns.
 - ii. We need to over-plan so that we have extra projects ready to go if other projects can't proceed for one reason or another.
 - c. We are expecting CRs for all of FY 2012 – no budget.
- V. FY 2012
 - a. The District Rangers have developed a first draft of CFLR projects for FY 2012 and shared these with the group.
 - i. Seeley total request: \$1,178,500 request – doesn't reflect product value yet. They expect to produce 8.5 – 9 million board feet in FY 2012.
 - ii. Swan total request: \$1,121,678; currently lacking \$100,000 in match. The list includes some burning that is happening this week (FY 2011). No forest product value is expected for FY 2012.
 - iii. Lincoln total request: a little over \$1,000,000. There are still lots of holes in this draft. No product value will be shown as match.
 - b. ACTION ITEM: Sandy will combine the three draft lists into the new CFLR project template for Prioritization Committee review.
- VI. Match issues
 - a. The agency has recently heard that money from timber sales can't count as match because the money generated through these sales wasn't reinvested in the landscape but instead was sent back to the General Treasury.
 - i. The agency should focus on accomplishing this type of work through stewardship contracts.
 - b. Questions and confusion about matching requirements affect all CFLR programs. This was addressed at the national monitoring workshop, but there were no action items resulting from it.
 - c. Another issue which has the potential to impact our reporting process is that match isn't reported until a project is over, which could be a few years after the project is started. However, accomplishments are often reported when contracts for the work are awarded. Thus, we may run into a situation where we

can't report match for a project in the same year as when the project is reported to be "accomplished."

- VII. Moving from "NEPA-ready" project selection to collaboratively developing projects
 - a. This is really a discussion about how we expand our prioritization work to non-NFS lands.
 - b. All the different prioritization efforts that are ongoing and that affect this region will be touched on at the Prioritization Workshop, but there won't be time for a discussion about how all of this could come together.
 - c. This topic will be re-visited at our next meeting because there wasn't sufficient time to devote to it today.

- VIII. Discussion about prioritization workshop Follow up meeting w/ the Monitoring Committee after we have prioritization results
 - a. Jon hopes to have time to touch on how prioritization will potentially help structure the long-term monitoring plan. The monitoring plan ought to reflect and be responsive to the objectives set through the prioritization.
 - b. Depending on how the Prioritization Workshop goes, it may make sense to have a combined meeting of the Prioritization and Monitoring Committees in the near future.

- IX. Next meeting – Friday, November 18th, 12pm, Seeley Lake Ranger District
 - a. Discuss how to roll out prioritization objectives to SWCC.
 - b. Discuss changes to CE authorities.
 - c. Discuss how we expand our prioritization work to non-NFS lands.