

Pilot Joe – IDT Meeting Notes
April 28, 2011

Attendees: Armand Rebischke, Jen Smith, John Samuelson, Nate Goodwine, Stephanie Kelleher (notetaker), Luke Ruediger, Brett Holcomb, Craig Brown, Jason Reilly, John Gerritsma, Ed Reilly, Mike Derrig, Chris Jensen, and Josh Robeson.

Agenda:

- ✓ Proposal Units – commercial/non-commercial
- ✓ Roads
 - Alternatives
 - Table-Display effects, cost/benefits
- ✓ Schedule – next week
- ✓ Consultation

Proposal Units:

- Naming conventions: Commercial and non-commercial units will be revised by Nate to reflect specific prescriptions (Rx's).
- **UPDATES:**
 1. There was a field trip last Thursday, April 21st, BLM and a few public interested parties were present. The main topic of discussion was road construction, but logging system issues were also discussed.
 2. Loren Kellogg (OSU), a logging systems/roads expert will be coming down on Tuesday to participate in the internal field trip with Norm and Jerry.
 3. Internal Field Trip to review mark, Rx, and roads – meet in Ruch @ 9:00
 4. Public Field Trip on Thursday to review the mark, Rx, and roads – Meet @ entrance to Cantrall Buckley @ 9:00, RSVP to Stephanie if planning to attend.
- There are some fuels units that have been included that may not have all surveys complete. Wildlife (Jason) - Great Grey Owl surveys done, other Survey & Manage species? Jason will look into.
- Unit 27-1 (Group visited last week) – Craig and Chris J. visited today and collected data (created a profile) to analyze the feasibility of using “intermediate supports” for cable yarding to reduce the need for road construction, an idea presented by a private industry member during last week’s field trip. Data still needs to be inputted into computer and analyzed.
 1. ISSUE: In order to access unit, a road would need to be built on a full or partial bench; can we pull back to flatter ground by using the intermediate supports to mitigate impacts? Explore other mitigation measures.
 2. There are no roads in from private lands that could be alternate access.
- Possible mitigation measures:
 1. Road identified under previous China Keeler/China Chapman EA, crosses Chapman Creek – proposal to obliterate road to off-set impacts.
 - The adjacent landowner, Meriwether, has a valid existing right (reciprocal right-of-way) for this road. Last time BLM checked, they were not ok with releasing their

right. John S. will double-check. Note that 6 years ago when the decommissioning was proposed, Boise Cascade was the landowner.

2. Obliterate roads we construct following use, ridge roads propose less risk, but there are already high road densities in the area.
3. Re-contouring slope after use may cause a deficit sale (economics need to be considered)
4. Cost to put the road back can be more than building it.
5. Other methods that could be used are: Re-contour part of the road, or rip, seed, and barricade the road.
6. If the benefits you are getting from the mitigation measure are required to meet a finding of no significant impact, the action must be implemented with the timber sale decision.

Roads:

- All proposed roads are flagged on the ground.
- Direct effects of roads mainly a social concern, although there are some road density concerns as well. Otherwise, road building in the areas identified are not so much a resource concern.
- Ed suggested that we create/incorporate in the EA a table that identifies the resource concerns and issues (social, economic, etc.) related to building each road, identifies the pros/cons of the action, and any possible mitigation measures that could alleviate the impacts. The goal is to be able to present a comprehensive picture so the decision maker can make an informed decision.
- Economics change over time, sometimes it can cost more to decommission apart from the project timber sale.
- Botany (Armand) concern: proposed road in T38S, R4W, in Section 27 is prime *Fritillaria Gentneri* habitat, and has not been surveyed.
- Road in Unit 34-2, there is concern with the landing and impacting larger trees.
- Luke discussed that the collaborative group and the public at large has expressed disappointment and even anger over new road building. He explained that people feel skeptical of the effectiveness of the collaborative process and that public concerns and priorities expressed have not been heard. He specifically mentioned the March 8th public workshop, which identified selection criteria and the subsequent emails that allowed people to vote for which criteria were the highest priority. He stated the most common response was “stands with existing road access.” (A summary of these responses is located on the Pilot’s webpage). Luke expressed that the public is concerned that their voices have not been heard, that the BLM’s proposed action goes against the feedback given during the collaborative process. He also expressed concern regarding the project being used as a model for larger scale planning and the implications of road construction on that scale.
- John/Ed responded that the BLM **has not identified a proposed action** as of yet. They clarified that it is necessary during the planning process to identify all options and to analyze the impacts to make a meaningful and informed decision. The IDT has been developing multiple action alternatives, which is different than identifying a proposed action.
- Values on both sides of the spectrum exist regarding road construction and the BLM must address both sides under NEPA (i.e. an alternative that includes roads and one that does not).
- Industry is considered the public as well.
- BLM acknowledges the views of the community and the economic and ecological factors that exist.

- Treating as much of the landscape (identified as needing treatment) as possible is also a priority.
- This project, Pilot Joe, is not the only areas needing treatment in the 5,000 acres assessed for treatment. Unfortunately, limitations (required surveys) exist that keep us from being able to treat all the acreage needed this year. Future planning efforts will be made to treat these other areas.
- Drs. Franklin and Johnson still need to assess the road situation and provide their feedback.
- A lot of the landscape is not accessible without road building; if we do not address this, we cannot adequately complete a full landscape assessment, which is needed for current and future planning.

Schedule - Next week:

- Due to delays with development of action alternatives and other details, specialist reports due dates can be pushed back a little, but they still need to be completed by early June.
- Alternatives and Rxs, both silvicultural and fuels, need to be finalized. Nate is still waiting on feedback from Dr. Franklin.

Consultation:

- For Threatened & Endangered (T&E) under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the BLM must consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). A Biological Assessment was completed by the BLM that explains the actions and anticipated impacts to Botanical species. The FWS has given a letter of concurrence, but since there are a few areas that have not been surveyed, a new BA may be needed. The timeline for this is still unknown and may have impacts to project timeline. Armand is working with FWS on this. Areas not surveyed could be deferred from treatment until 2nd year surveys are completed.
- Wildlife consultation is in the works; Cindy Donegan with FWS has been actively involved in the process from the beginning.
- There is a meeting planned with FWS on Tuesday to review preliminary maximum proposed action, anything less would then be covered.
- There are two units, one in section 27 and one in section 26 that is considered unsurveyed suitable habitat (outside of owl circles, but considered to be suitable habitat). There are three ways to address these areas:
 1. Use a seasonal restriction during the breeding season, usually until July 31st
 2. Survey – 2 years needed (at least 6 visits/year) to identify absence. If no owls are found, continuous surveys must be conducted every year to verify absence.
 3. Ask for a Take (not interested in this option)
- These options will be discussed next week at the meeting. Jason will keep us updated.
- Need to determine the impacts seasonal restrictions may have on the timber sale