



# Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



**Day 1 – March 30 from 9 AM to 3:00 PM**

**9 AM Welcome (Elizabeth Burghard, Designated Federal Officer)**

**Introductions (Kyle Sullivan)**

**Attendees:** Elizabeth Burghard, BLM Medford District Manager and Designated Federal Officer(DFO); Kyle Sullivan, Host, RAC Coordinator and PAO Medford District; Megan Harper, Co-Host and PAO Coos Bay; Pat Johnston, Statewide SRS Title II Coordinator NW OR; Dennis Teitzel, Acting DM NW OR; Cheyne Rossbach, Asst Field Manager Swiftwater, Rec Program Lead and PAO Roseburg; Christina Beslin, Community Outreach Title II, Medford-Lakeview-Roseburg Title II Coordinator; Jen O’Leary PAO NW OR; Todd Forbes, DM Lakeview; Stephanie Messerle, Title II Coordinator, District Fish Biologist Coos Bay; Steve Lydick, DM Coos Bay, Jan Mathis, notetaker, Admin Coos Bay.

**RAC members:**

**Category 1:** Samara Phelps, Jack LeRoy

**Category 2:** Sue Martino, Ed Anderson, Ken McCall

**Category 3:** Mike Kennedy, Tasha Livingstone, Lily Morgan

**9:00 AM**

**Welcome / Introductions**

**Elizabeth Burghard, DFO**

Welcome to the first meeting of 2022 for the Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee (RAC).

Kyle Sullivan is the PAO for Medford, also our RAC coordinator and photographer extraordinaire. Thanks Kyle for everything you have done to bring us together.

New members have joined us today: Tasha Livingstone and Sue Martino who were recently appointed to the RAC. So glad you could join us.

Michael Kennedy has volunteered again to serve on the RAC and recently received a renewed appointment.

Welcome everyone, thank you for your service.

RAC membership update:

We do not currently have 15 members on the RAC, however we do have nine members, three members in each category, which is a quorum.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



Hopefully, we are waiting on completion of several more appointments, hopefully will have those before our May 2022. As we are situated right now, we need every member to attend in order to maintain our quorum and to manage any votes.

For this meeting, we will be giving some updates from last year and getting prepared for our meetings for 2022.

- We will be going over the charter for the RAC, which was updated in November 2021.
- Updates from each of the BLM districts on key projects and issues.
- Have a discussion with the group on what's important to you as a RAC member.
- Updates on 2021 funded Title II projects.
- In response to this group's request for more information on our recreation programs, we will have brief presentations from each of our districts related to recreation.

This year's program of work for the RAC will be similar to last year's program. Secure Rural Schools Title II funding was re-authorized this year, so we will be going through projects again this year.

- Currently, there's an announcement out on Grants.gov for projects.
- We don't know what our funding allocations will be yet.
- We will be doing some recreation fee evaluations for the Coos Bay District.
- Title II and recreation will be core focus areas for the RAC.

### RAC Meetings:

- Meetings are intended to be virtual through October 1, 2022.
- We are able to conduct in-person field trips, so we trying to work through how to post a meeting virtually, then host an in-person field trip for RAC members. Hopefully, we can get something pulled together for the May meeting.

### RAC Membership:

- We are seeking nominations for RAC members.
- Applications are due by April 4, 2022.
- All of our participants today, except Michael, Tasha, and Sue do have appointments that are expiring in 2022.
- If you have a term that is expiring and are willing to serve on the RAC, we welcome you to submit an application for reappointment.
- Also, if you have any colleagues or individuals that you know who would like to serve, let them know they can submit their application by April 4.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



Since we can't operate in an official capacity without a quorum, Elizabeth won't call the meeting to order, but we will go ahead and do some updates at this meeting. With just nine members, it's hard to get everything lined up logistically.

### **Bureau of Land Management Update      Elizabeth Burghard**

Another adjustment to our agenda, we were unable to align the schedule with Nada Culver, Deputy Director for Programs and Policies, and Barry Bushue, State Director for Oregon and Washington (OR/WA), so Elizabeth will share some updates on their behalf.

Barry Bushue thanks everyone for your participation and service to the RAC.

#### **Leadership updates:**

At the national level, Tracy Stone-Manning has been sworn in as the BLM Director. She has a wealth of experience bringing people together to solve challenges facing our nation's lands and waters. She's working on programs of work put in place on a national level.

Barry Bushue is our State Director for OR/WA.

All of our District Managers for western Oregon introduced themselves to the group this morning. Dennis Teitzel is acting DM for the NW OR District.

This past year, the BLM OR/WA has spent a lot of time focusing on wildfire recovery, particularly in western Oregon from the 2020 fires. A huge role of what we do in western Oregon in the management of O&C lands is related to our timber program. We did exceed our initial productions for the year in large part due to the salvage that came from those fires between removing hazard trees, making room for planting, recovery, and rehab of those areas.

We planned 12 National Public Lands Day events in Oregon and Washington this year. Even with COVID, we have active volunteers that are coming out to enjoy their public lands and serve in efforts related to public lands. Really appreciate those volunteers. Hope to have more Public Lands Day events this year, pandemic pending.

**Fun Fact:** We hosted an all-time record of 10 million visitors at BLM recreation sites and facilities in FY2021. As recreation has been a key interest to this group, it will certainly be a key program for us and really important effort in connecting with the American people.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



Timber harvest and overall management of forested lands in western Oregon. We manage about two and half million acres of BLM public lands in western Oregon. Vast majority of those are known as O&C lands and are managed by The Oregon and California Revested Lands Sustained Yield Management Act of 1937, the O&C Act. The Act mandates sustained yield timber production and directs the federal government to share timber receipts with the 18 western Oregon counties.

We will share a lot related to that program because it is a large part of what we do on BLM lands in addition to all of the other ways the public interfaces with their public lands.

Under that, the BLM has two resource management plans (RMP) which sets the course of action for management moving forward. These plans were completed in 2016 and we are mandated to completed evaluations of those plans at five-year intervals. We worked on our first evaluation report for the Western Oregon RMP in 2021 and completed it in 2022. The evaluation is the process of reviewing land use plans, monitoring reports, determining whether the plan and the decisions and our analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), whether the plan is being implemented appropriately.

Under our initial plan evaluation, we looked at any changes in ownership, land tenure, land use allocation, acreages, summarized the reports of our programs, completed planned maintenance, effects of the 2020 fires in context of that plan.

At the broadest level, the plan objectives are being met (or likely to be met), so we will not be doing any revisions to the western Oregon RMP at this time. You can see the report on our ePlanning site which is where we host all of the projects we are evaluating under the NEPA.

### **What is coming our direction:**

The word of the day at our headquarters office is Infrastructure. That is coming from the November approval and passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. This law will help the BLM to address major issues including wildland fire.

One of the key aspects of this law is it increased our firefighter salaries to a minimum of \$15 per hour. We have already taken steps to increase salaries, but the law helps us make it permanent. Provides funding for fuels treatments. Increasing partnerships with communities and tribes. Provides opportunities to modernize our radio infrastructure and improve our technologies for wildfire detection and monitoring.

The law authorizes us to work on measures to streamline some of our reviews for hazardous fuels reduction projects, those that are in large measure do not have a significant adverse effect on the environment.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



Funding for restoration projects: allow us to increase the implementation of native vegetation restoration projects, mitigation of hazards, improvement of recreation sites, address invasive species, and implement landscape scale restoration efforts.

We are currently working to identify projects across the Bureau that would qualify for infrastructure funding. It's an exciting time and something we are working on a national scale.

We recognize the tremendous impact the 2020 fires have had on western Oregon. We recognize that the risk is not going away, so we are very focused on how we can align our programs to address recovery from those events, provide for safe response to wildfire, and overall reduction of risk from wildfire in the future. So, you will hear some themes related to that from our district updates today.

*Q. Any updates on Travel Management for recreational trails in Southern Oregon?*

A. We have a commitment in the Western Oregon RMP to initiate travel management planning across all of our units within five years and it has been five years. We have been working on pulling together resources in terms of prioritizing our areas. Don't have a solid answer, it's been a challenge with all of the various demands we have had on our personnel and vacancies throughout western Oregon. Hopefully, this FY we will have more clarity on where we are going and when.

Comment: There are a number of volunteers who would like to participate in travel management. When you consider travel management, we would like to go at a fairly slow pace in our area so we don't outpace the volunteers who would like to participate. (Jack LeRoy)

*Q. Does infrastructure include bridges?*

A. Yes

Comment: Ken McCall offered to help with travel management since he worked for the Forest Service as the lead for travel management on the Siuslaw National Forest. It's incredibly steep and brushy, but there are plenty of opportunities for conversion of roads and trails.

### **RAC Chair update:**

Dean Finnerty was chair for the RAC, however his appointment has lapsed, so currently there is no chair. This group decided to defer the vote for chair to the May meeting.

**Question for RAC members:** How would you like to participate in our virtual meetings, what days and hours are good for you? Also, are you willing to travel for field trips? The goal will be to travel around western Oregon to see Title II projects. Please let Kyle know what will work for you.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



**Feedback:** RAC members expressed the convenience and ease of attending the meetings via Zoom and they expressed an interest for in-person field trips.

Elizabeth has not officially started the meeting yet. One of the RAC members had to leave the meeting and will be unable to attend tomorrow, so we don't have a quorum. Does the group want to continue with report outs and the public comment period today?

### Membership poll:

Category 1: Jack LeRoy, recommended to continue to share information and include a round robin.

Category 2: Sue Martino, recommended to defer; Ed Anderson, recommended to defer; Ken McCall, recommended to do what we can and share information.

Category 3: Mike Kennedy, recommended sharing information; Lily Morgan, can adapt.

### **Update on the plan for today's meeting:**

We will continue with our meeting with modification to the agenda:

- We will proceed with the district updates.
- To defer the charter review to the May meeting. Members can go in and review the charter on the Western Oregon RAC webpage on their own.
- Hold a facilitated discussion on what's important to our RAC members.
- Have more discussion between RAC members on the important issues in your category.
- We will proceed with the public comment period.
- We will share the recording with the RAC members so the items covered today can be evaluated for future business.

### **District Manager Updates**

#### **NW OR District (Dennis Teitzel)**

- Hult Dam and Reservoir: Popular recreational area along Lake Creek. Forty acres of wetlands provides habitat for a rich diversity of wildlife, fish, and plant species as well as a wide variety of recreational opportunities, ie. fishing, camping, hiking, horseback riding, with historical significance of the mill, the dam and other artifacts in the area. The dam is 74 years old with a lifespan of a well-built earthen dam lasting between 50 to 100 years. Has been told that the dam is not a well-built earthen dam. The U.S. Corps of Engineers performed a risk assessment of the dam in 2017 and found two main hazards: overtopping especially along the spillway, should we have a large flood, snow, and rain event; and ground movement earthquakes could compromise the dam's structure. Due to safety



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



concerns, we are analyzing options for removal of the original dam. This is classified as a high hazard dam and there are residences that would be affected should the dam fail. An EIS is underway by the field office to analyze the alternatives for post-original dam removal including constructing a new dam, a no dam alternative as part of that analyze a variety of recreational uses, historical interpretations, habitat protections, hydrological functions, and community safety mitigations. Throughout the planning process we are committed to public safety, will continue to monitor and maintain the dam until we are able to take permanent action. A public meeting is scheduled in early May.

- **Nestucca Back Country Byway:** Located in the Tillamook Field Office, this byway takes travelers along a slow, leisurely route that winds through Oregon's Coast Range. The byway runs along the Nestucca River. Whether you are traveling by car, motorcycle, or bicycle, visitors can find riverside picnic tables or camping at any of four BLM campgrounds. In the Fall 2011, the BLM completed the replacement of four large culverts, some of which were enlarged to facilitate flood water flows and fish passage, paving a portion of the Nestucca gravel road, and installation of traffic and information signs. This work was part of a larger multi-year effort spanning 41 miles of BLM managed roads in Tillamook and Yamhill counties.
- **Fire Recovery:** Continue to work in recovery efforts on lands impacted from the 2020 Labor Day fires. In the Cascades Field Office, an estimated 38,612 acres of BLM-managed lands in various land use allocations were affected by the Beachy Creek fire including portions of the Table Rock Wilderness and Molalla River Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The fire also burned through two campgrounds and several day use areas. An additional 12,597 acres of BLM-managed land were affected by the Riverside fire located outside Estacada and surrounding communities. Ongoing activities include assisting communities, energy corridor access roads for timber and recreation, and public recreation sites destroyed in the fires. Cascades and Mary's Peak Field Office teams worked together to meet the demands of the recovery effort. Salvage efforts to date have yielded 51 MMBF for about \$14.3 million and that counted for recovery to O&C Counties with another 50 MMBF planned for this fiscal year. In the Upper Willamette Field Office, the Holiday Farm fire burned 173,393 acres which included 18,545 acres of BLM-managed lands. In the 16 months since the fire, the field office has completed emergency stabilization and rehabilitation of roads and recreation sites along the McKenzie River as well as removing hazard trees that threaten neighborhoods, residences, and roadways to ensure safe access to public lands. The field office has had multiple timber salvage sales, this work has generated 76.5 MMBF and returned \$14.5 million to the O&C Counties while creating local jobs. The field office continues to plan for an ambitious reforestation effort in the burned area that will be ongoing for the next five to 10 years.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



- We will be adding a wing to our facility, so in Fall 2023, the BLM, Forest Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) will be together as an interagency office, one-stop shop.
- Heavily impacted by the 2020 fires, the Archie Creek fire was a little over 100K acres with approximately 40K acres on BLM lands. A big part of our focus has been on fire recovery.
- To date: We have planted about 10K acres which will be an ongoing effort for the next couple of years; approximately 90 miles of roadside hazard tree treatments as well as impacted recreation areas; for hazard trees and treatment in the harvest land base, we have sold approximately 118 MMBF; working on riparian restoration; rehabilitation of recreation sites; cleared North Umpqua trail as well as Susan Creek Falls trail and a couple of other trail segments. We lost a lot of bridges, so there's a fair amount of work for infrastructure through the entire fire area as well as hazmat mitigation.
- Partners Cooperators who are helping us with the work: NW Youth Corps and Phoenix School; South Coast Business Partnership; ODOT and utility companies; adjacent property owners (both industrial and non-industrial); tribal representatives; watershed councils; state and county entities,
- In the past year, we resurfaced 29 miles of roadway of the Cow Creek Backcountry Byway, and expanded a parking lot in a day use area popular for recreational gold panning.

### Lakeview (Todd Forbes)

- Klamath River Dam removal: This would be the largest dam removal in U.S. history, there are four dams being proposed for removal in Oregon and California. One of those, the J.C. Boyle Dam, has infrastructure located in the Lakeview District. There's a series of concrete canals that lead to the penstocks down to the turbine at the river's edge. Working with the Klamath River Renewal Corporation to make sure the area is restored to retain the important values after the infrastructure is dismantled: wildlife, fisheries, recreation.
- Energy projects:
  - Swan Lake pumped storage project will include 32.8 miles of new transmission line as well as some of the water reservoirs and pipelines would be situated on BLM land.
  - There are also some solar and wind testing and additional transmission lines being proposed for the vicinity. Some of these projects will have a BLM component. We anticipate that there will be some solar facilities situated on BLM land.
- O&C Timber: Large emphasis on forest restoration and timber production primarily focused on Ponderosa Pine and White Fir. Completed an assessment on around 9K acres and this year, we should get about 4.5 MMBF.

### Medford (Elizabeth Burghard)





## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



- Integrated Vegetative Management Environmental Assessment (EA): Really excited to share the decision was issued on March 2, 2022 on this multi-year planning effort. This EA is an alternative that applies to appropriate land bases throughout the Medford District and supports creating hazardous fuel reduction opportunities, thinning and prescribed fire, one of our three strategies in the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy which is a three-part process to address wildland fire risk and respond to wildland fire nationwide. We will be creating safe and effective wildland fire response, it also recognizes and provides opportunities to restore fire and disturbance-resilient lands and fire-resistant forested stands. The concepts include how our lands respond after a wildfire, how quickly are we able to recover from a lands perspective, how resistant are our stands to catastrophic wildland fire. Finally, we recognize that we are in a situation where we are lacking habitat for special status species, primarily the spotted owl, but also unique and native plant communities, of which we have an abundant diversity on district.
- The decision allows us to do commercial level thinning and group selection harvest on up to 17K acres over the next 10 years which was recognized by both the BLM and FWS as needed to restore habitat within our late successional reserves. These are specifically habitat-driven projects that we will be able to implement, both habitat development and protection in 80 percent of our land base that comprises the reserves outside our harvest land base. It also allows projects that would include a variety of small diameter thinning, individual tree selection harvest, pile burning, understory burning, broadcast burning, pruning, thinning of shrubs. We have a lot of noncommercial material that creates and exacerbates our wildland fire risk. This decision will allow us to do future planning. The decision, in and of itself, doesn't authorize any individual project. It is programmatic and creates the sideboards for how we would proceed on a broad scale for projects and is the next step down from the Western Oregon RMP planning.

*Q. Does this EA cover the entire Medford District which is huge, or is it a more directed towards a blanket approach across the landscape that looks more specifically younger stands and vegetation types, or more concentrated around the wildland urban interface?*

*A. It covers a significant subset of the Medford District and allows for roughly up to 20K acres total of treatment out of the million acres that we manage. This includes different types of treatment, such as burning and various types of thinning. Areas that are excluded are the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument, some of the special designations that would not be readily conducive to this type of treatment, it does cover a broad swath to allow for our next level of analysis to occur throughout the reserves. It allows for hazardous fuels reduction, small diameter thinning, etc. within the harvest land base, as far as any*

commercial size treatments, those weren't evaluated, because the harvest land base is a different purpose and need as far as our reserves.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



- Anderson Butte Target Shooting Area Restriction: Recreational conflicts related to target shooting are becoming a growing issue across the BLM. The area that has become a significant concern in our district is Anderson Butte located just west of Medford in an area that is densely populated with a lot of residences and other non-shooting recreational uses. The shooting area has high elevation sites with no backstops so they are shooting out into the distance and the bullets can travel up to a mile. To address this issue, we have been looking at alternatives for five years, actively doing some additional education in the area, working with the county, and the Jackson County Sheriff's department has helped with managing the issue. We will be implementing a two-year recreational target shooting restriction of this area starting this spring. It's a pretty small area and includes 11 sites that covers 50 acres in a 10K acre block of public land. We will take an educational approach to those who are using the area. This will give us some time to address the concerns and come up with some alternatives to address this conflict. Hopefully, this will improve the safety, reduce impacts to residents and recreators.
- Table Rocks Land Acquisition: The BLM was able to purchase 843 acres from The Nature Conservancy around lower Table Rocks, thanks to a grant of funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. We will be working on management plans for that area. The lands included are within the boundary of an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC) and in an area has been under tremendous local recreational pressure. This will give us an opportunity to expand and provide resources for the public.
- Cascade Siskiyou National Monument Resource Management Plan: We plan to initiate work on the revision of the management plan this year. The monument was established in 2000 and expanded in 2017. Based on that expansion as well as the changes over time, including the designation of the Soda Mountain Wilderness in 2009, Wild and Scenic River additions thanks to the Dingell Act, and the changing landscape related to fire and fuels management in southwest Oregon, we recognized a need to do a revision to that plan. That will start with a notice of intent in the near future.

### **Coos Bay (Steve Lydick)**

- Sudden Oak Death (SOD) Treatments: In 2022, we will be treating about 75 acres over seven sites. Since SOD was first discovered, over 1600 acres of BLM land has been treated in Curry County. The treatment includes gathering all infected material, as well as potential host plants (primarily Tanoak) within a 300-600 foot buffer. It is then cut and burned to eradicate the fungal pathogen that causes SOD. We have been operating under an agreement with ODF, which is good until 2023, to help us quickly identify infected areas.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



We complete treatments across all ownerships rather than have everyone take care of their own piece of the landscape. We use a holistic approach which has proven to be very effective through the *Good Neighbor Authority*.

- There were some new infestations found in Port Orford this past year. It's not on BLM land, however we are keeping an eye since it does represent an expansion to new areas. It's too far to have been naturally established in that area, it's most likely from people transporting forest products.
- Late Successional Reserves and Riparian Reserve Restoration Management EA: This is our programmatic assessment to look at our restoration activities for our LSR and RR that is in process. We are looking at the suite of actions that would be designed to foster the development of LSR or appropriate RR characteristics using commercial timber harvest as a tool. The total project area is district-wide, but selective. On the whole, there are 120K acres that we are assessing, however we would be looking at treating 2K acres per year as the target. This will provide a lot of flexibility, go to the places that would have the greatest benefit for treatment. Some of our sideboards include looking at younger, previously treated stands, the vast majority are 30 to 60 years old. (cut-off at 80 yrs old). Plan to have the EA public comment period in November 2022. We are looking at a process of ensuring that we have appropriate opportunity for the public to engage on not just on the programmatic level, but on the determination of NEPA adequacy (DNA) that we will be producing for each timber sale. We have heard the public that they want to have the opportunity to engage on a timber sale by timber sale basis. The first timber sale project planned to come out of this EA would be August of 2023.
- Wasson and Franklin Wild and Scenic Comprehensive River Management Plan: We have been working jointly with the Siuslaw National Forest on this plan. It was designated in the 2019 Dingell Act, it is just shy of 19 miles long, a little of 4.2 miles is BLM, 14.6 miles is Forest Service. The purpose is to provide management direction in protecting and enhancing river values. We released a draft EA in January 2022 for public comment and received eight sets of comments. The final EA release is planned for August 2022. Our emphasis has been on the development of the appropriate management boundary for the river segment as well as looking at the land use in the area, visitor capacity, developing a monitoring plan and any other management practices that would be appropriate, and ensuring we maintain tribal access for traditional uses.
- Loon Lake Recreational Site Repairs: The site was damaged in the 2019 snowstorm. A number of trees came down and damaged the water treatment plant, restroom, and maintenance shop. To date, we have installed a new restroom; installed the building that for the water treatment facility with a more modern system; and repaired the maintenance shop. Planning to reopen this summer with Memorial Day as a target, but if that doesn't happen, it will be NLT the weekend before Fourth of July.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



**Break for lunch.**

**Reconvene at 12:30 pm**

For tomorrow's meeting, we will reconvene at 10:30 a.m. and cover the following topics:

- Project updates: Title II Project Implementation Highlights.
- Cover some business from last year.

We will defer the following topics until the May meeting:

- Overview of the Secure Rural Schools Title II Process for 2022.
- Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) Overview and RAC Role in Fee Proposals.

Kyle will send out an updated agenda to the group. Thank you for your patience with our change in plans.

**Facilitated discussion:**

**What is important to you as a RAC member? Megan Harper**

Three questions we wanted your feedback on:

- 1) What's important to you as a RAC member?
- 2) What topics or issues would you like to learn more about?
- 3) What topics or do you want to provide input on?

Your feedback will help us plan meetings in the future and provide updates that are meaningful to you and bring project for your recommendation.

Jack LeRoy:

- 1) Applied to be a RAC member because I wanted to have more of an influence on the outcomes on our forest management as it pertains to recreational trails, make an impact on my category which is recreation.
- 2) The updates at the meeting today are very good and gives me an awareness on what everyone is working on at the districts. For items such as travel management, if I want more details, I have the opportunity to ask for that.
- 3) Would like to provide input on recreational trails, multi-use trails, and motorized trails. I have a huge background in forest management and have been involved with non-profit groups for 25 years, so I do have an interest and enjoy providing input on forest management as well.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



Dino Ventti:

- 1) In the recreation category, also and I'm here to promote public access especially around recreation trails, primarily mountain bike, but multi-use. Any trail development on public lands is a good opportunity to create an environment that educates the public on the sensitivities with public lands. That is how I became interested and more informed.
- 2) Would like to learn more about sensitivities around managing public lands, especially the BLM and the priorities the land managers have in managing timber to preservation and restoration. Find the topics very interesting and believe in a holistic balanced approach.
- 3) Feel strongly believe that recreation, especially trail development, should be looked at as a management tool. I've articulated to the RAC in the past the benefit of investing in trail development and how it can help flush out illegal activities, such as illegal dumping and unauthorized use of public land that may cause damage. Best way to do that is to get a robust responsible group of people out there who can become the eyes and ears on public lands that they have become attached to. We are a passionate group and take our opportunity to develop these public assets very seriously, look at it as a privilege, and honor the stewardship that is required for long term management.

Ken McCall:

Echo a lot of what Jack and Dino said. As a native Oregonian, it's important to be involved and a great opportunity to continue being part of the activities I've done recreating on public lands in Oregon. Welcomes the opportunity to weigh in on some great projects.

Being really involved in recreational opportunities across public lands. In terms of trails, the concept of environmental education and dispersed recreational community is key. It can be as simple as teaching mountain bikers that if the weather is wet and the trails will be damaged, maybe bike another day or use a different track as well as other topics. Someone touched on it earlier about how much demand has increased for recreation activities across public lands.

Ed Anderson:

Agree with everything that has been said so far. One of the initial reasons I became a member is to promote and watch out for the interests of rockhounds around the state, however, I have found the scope of issues across BLM, Forest Service, FWS is broad and very interesting. There are people who have expressed concern to me about illegal trash, drug growers, etc. so I'm interested in restoration and mitigation of areas for rock hounding.

Mike Kennedy:

Main reason is to learn what is going on and the Confederated Tribe of Siletz Indians has an interest in what goes on throughout western Oregon. I manage a small department with foresters,



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



fisheries biologists, wildlife biologists, and frequently work with other agencies and entities in western Oregon. This is also an opportunity to find out what's happening and where we may be able to collaborate on projects. I'm a forester by trade and have an interest in forestry, but amazed at the restoration work that's going on and the number of people who step in to do the work. Always a pleasure to hear more about that.

Sue Martino:

Interested in educational issues, I have a background in science, am active in the community and the state. Our area has a lot of public areas, Loon Lake, Dunes National Recreation Area, Dean Creek Elk Viewing area, historic Hinsdale Garden. Interested in what's going on in forestry, the use of our public lands, keeping them in good condition, mitigating diseases that occur in our forest lands, and restoration of resource damage.

Tasha Livingston:

What is important to me is very student focused, because I'm training the next generation of natural resource professionals. My perspective is how do we stay relevant and present the information in a way that's accessible to students and innovative. I'm in the information gathering stage right now. Would like to know more about what's happening on the ground right now, management techniques, work with the laws and policies that are in-place. New technologies, how do we bring all of the tools and equipment to students, will even be teaching a class in forestry using virtual reality this fall.

Elizabeth: Would like to thank everyone for your feedback. This will be very helpful in structuring our agendas this year. Thank you Megan for facilitating the discussion.

### Feedback summary:

- Travel management planning.
- Recreation trails, multi-use trails, motorized trails: impacts of forest management on recreational development.
- Public access – recreational access.
- Trail development – part of overall management scheme.
- Promote user involvement in recreation – economic, education, health improvements.
- Sensitivities/multiple challenges around forest management.
- Weigh in on BLM projects.
- Dispersed recreation opportunities.
- Environmental education on responsible public use of public lands, importance of resources, multiple use.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



- Meeting public demand for recreation and use of public lands; population growth leads to new uses, how to manage.
- Scope of issues across BLM broad and interesting.
- Rock hounding – restoration and mitigation of areas.
- Illegal activities on public lands – trash, drug grows.
- Tribal interest in all BLM activities in western Oregon.
- Learn and share information with constituents.
- Forestry.
- Use of public lands – mitigate/restoration of resource damage.
- Training next generation of natural resource professionals.
- How does BLM natural resources stay relevant?
- New technologies.

Some of the common themes: Access, recreation, how to tackle management and potential damage from overuse.

Megan will share this list with everyone.

Question for the RAC members: How can we share information with you that you can share with constituents as well as sharing information between each other.

### **Project updates: Status of Funded 2021 Title II projects**

**Pat Johnston**

Pat introduced the team of Secure Rural Schools coordinators who do this work as collateral duty: Stephanie Messerle, Christina Beslin, and Megan Harper. Really appreciate the work they do.

To take a higher look at the process we go through to get Title II agreements out the door and the spreadsheet. The title of the spreadsheet is 2020 and 2021 Projects because we had two rounds of projects last year, one in December 2020 and another round in May 2021.

As a RAC member, in the Charter and SRS legislation that guides this program, part of your role is to monitor projects that have been approved. The BLM takes does quite a bit of heavy lifting in bringing these documents to you to review, but it is your responsibility to look at what is going on and ask any questions. Since you are in a public role as a RAC member, people may even call you to to ask you questions, and in regard to that, we try to keep you as up-to-date as possible.

The RAC recommended 138 projects for funding and approved by Elizabeth Burghard, DFO.

The BLM has two ways to provide funding and move money from the federal government to outside the federal government: Through assistance agreements or contracting. The vast majority of our work is done through assistance agreements.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



*Q. Are the individual projects listed anywhere?*

A. We have a secure transfer site where Pat uploaded all of the applications from the binders that the RAC members received last year. After this call, Kyle and Pat can send Tasha a link to that secure website, so she can go through to look at the projects.

Out of the 138 projects, 115 have been moved in assistance agreements. We started distributing the funds last year in April and will finish the last few projects this month.

When a project applicant has been successful in being awarded a grant, they will be working with two primary people:

- 1) Grant Management Officer takes care of the accounting, the money, the details about the money, executing legal documents, agreements, and conflict of interest forms.
- 2) Program Officer makes sure the projects are implemented in the way they were designed, if there was an EA required or 404 permit needed.

Between the Grant Management Officer and the Program Officer, we get everything to the grant recipient. We want to make sure that we are responsible with funds we are entrusted with for SRS.

*Q. Does it ever reach a point where there are too many project submissions, do you vet them out to reduce the number?*

A. Once an application is made, we are required by law vet that application 100 percent. There is a team that does an internal review of every one of those applications. The only time you won't see an application is because they did not meet the requirements for SRS.

### **Action item:**

- Megan will provide a set of binders from last years projects to Tasha and Sue.

### **2:30 PM Public Comment Period**

- No comments from the public.

Reminder: As RAC members, you have an opportunity to reach out to your constituents to share the agenda and encourage them to make comments during the public comment period.

Thank you to everyone for your participation, your presentations and sharing your thoughts.

- The meeting tomorrow will start at 10:30 a.m. and wrap up at noon.
- Planning a Medford field trip on May 13 to look at Table Rocks, Anderson Butte and some of the forest health issues on the district.





## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



- Kyle offered to put together an administrative RAC meeting to talk about travel and other administrative issues.

We are open to suggestions for locations for field trips.

Perhaps we could consider doing virtual field trips, use a re-recorded video with some virtual interaction.

- Jack LeRoy offered up drone and video editing time, if needed.
- Tasha has experience with video editing also.

Thank you to Kyle for all his work behind the scenes to make this meeting happen. See everyone tomorrow at 10:30 am.

**3:00 PM      Adjourn**

### **Day 2 - March 31, 2022**

In Attendance: Elizabeth Burghard, DFO; Kyle Sullivan, host; Megan Harper, co-host; Pat Johnston, Title II coordinator; Christina Beslin, Stephanie Messerle; Steve Lydick; Todd Forbes; Cheyne Rossbach; Jen O'Leary; Michael Korn; Jeff McEnroe, Fish Biologist Roseburg; Brian Amstutz, Outdoor Recreation Planner, NW OR; Traci Meredith, Outdoor Recreation Planner, NW OR; Dave Ballenger, State Recreation Lead; Jan Mathis, notetaker.

RAC members:

Category 1: Jack LeRoy, Dino Venti

Category 2: Ed Anderson, Ken McCall, Sue Martino

Category 3: Lily Morgan, Mike Kennedy, Tasha Livingstone

**10:30 AM      Welcome / Call to Order                      Elizabeth Burghard, DFO**

Introductions of new attendees today:

Jen O'Leary, PAO and RAC coordinator for the NW OR District.

Pat Johnston, Statewide SRS coordinator as collateral duty, and partnership coordinator and organizes projects on the NW OR District for SRS.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



Brian Amstutz, Outdoor Recreation Planner for the NW OR District.

Traci Meredith, Outdoor Recreation planner, NW OR District.

Jeff McEnroe, Fish Biologist for Roseburg District.

### **Project updates: Title II Project Implementation Highlights Pat Johnston**

#### **NW OR District Fish habitat restoration (Pat Johnston)**

- Finn Rock Reach Flood Restoration on the McKenzie River:

This project was to restore ecological processes that create and maintain complex, diverse, and resilient habitat for native species for the Upper Willamette chinook salmon, rainbow trout, pacific lamprey and other species through floodplain reconnection and habitat restoration on approx. 8500 acres.

Overall project cost nearly \$3 million. There were eight partners involved in this project with additional private donations.

The SRS program through the RAC's recommendation contributed 100K to the project.

Phase 1 of the project has been completed which involved excavation and movement of 115K cubic yards of floodplain fill material from cut zones of the lower project area and using it to fill portions of the gravel mining pond in the upper project area. Over 1500 pieces of wood were placed throughout the new surface area and created a roughen channel wetland complex that benefits native fish.

- Goose Creek Large Wood Debris is another project that was funded through SRS.

We had several projects for the reestablishment of native species, two of them that were highlighted were:

- Oak Basin Restoration: Doing restoration around some of the open meadows, so that we aren't losing those meadows for endangered species.
- Willamette Valley Native Plant Materials: Important to have native seeds to put back in. We have been doing weed abatement in some of these habitats and are now collecting seeds.

Quite often, when we work with partners, we look at projects very large scale and develop a long term picture on how we want restoration to look. This requires a lot of forethought and in this case we are thinking about the entire Willamette Valley, how do we restore both prairie and oak habitat that currently exists on less than one percent of their original area. SRS through our partnerships has been essential to our success in moving forward.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



### **Roseburg District (Jeff McEnroe)**

- Rock Creek Post-Fire Restoration Project:

Rock Creek is a 62,600 acre watershed which is a major tributary to the North Umpqua River. The BLM owns about 41 percent of the watershed, the rest is private industrial timber with a few landowners at the lower end. Rock Creek is home to a diverse number of native fish in the Umpqua Basin including spring chinook salmon, summer and winter steelhead, coho salmon, coastal cutthroat trout, as well as pacific lamprey, yellow-legged frogs and western pearlshell mussels. These are all bureau sensitive species.

As with many streams in western Oregon, Rock Creek was treated badly in the past, cleaned of all of its wood, bulldozed, cleaned of riparian plants over and over again.

In 2019, we planned a large restoration project in Rock Creek and researched the best restoration method for this type of large powerful stream. By 2020 we had raised about \$300K for the implementation and decided to use the natural channel developed by the Forest Service Enterprise team, we had the preliminary design for Phase 1 of a multi-phase project and planned to begin work in summer of 2021.

Then in the summer of 2020, the Archie Creek Fire hit the North Umpqua watershed. It was one of many catastrophic wildfires that happened that year.

After that event, we got together with partners and planned to maximize the scope and scale of the restoration work, the goal was to capture post-fire substrate and large wood in safe locations away from roads, bridges, and facilities, and expand the 1.2 mile to five reaches totaling five miles. After a long winter of NEPA, permitting, and design, we started the project in July 2021.

### **Klamath Falls Field Office (Todd Forbes)**

- Had a week with NW Youth Corps who did a lot of work at the Wood River Wetlands: Improved a boat ramp site for safer access, created a viewing area, weeded along roads to reduce fire hazard, brushed along paved trails, painted some of the restroom facilities and moved 15 loads of downed branches from one of the roadways to the wetlands for habitat.
- A project that we have been working on off and on is removal of invasive annual grasses. We try to do this when we do restoration work. Last fall, we did about 1K acres of aerial spraying for invasive grasses and plan to do another 1K acres this fall.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



### Medford District (Christina Beslin)

- Awarded 41 projects across Jackson and Josephine Counties. Provided an update on two partner projects and one BLM project.

- Illegal Dumping project:

This project was awarded \$250K. 131 abandoned vehicles have been identified and logged for removal. Two emergency vehicles have been removed. (not ambulances or fire trucks) These are vehicles that need to be removed within 24 hours due to environmental damage they may cause or a public safety issue. One was in a creek, and one was in the middle of the road. Nine have been removed from Jackson County and 16 from Josephine County with the remaining 83 in progress.

30 trash sites have been identified, six clean-ups have been done.

BLM employees had a clean-up at Spencer Creek, removed 15 years, two refrigerators, two couches, 18 tires, etc.

The clean-ups are done using a combination of volunteer groups, BLM staff and contractors. Some of the hazmat and vehicle removals are done by contractors. We have some public volunteer clean-up days scheduled in the near future.

- Mountain of the Rogue trail system:

This project was submitted by a partner organization, the International Mountain Bicycling Association. They were awarded \$49K to work on improving drainage and enhance the flow for riding on the trail system. This was a great example of a partner organization and BLM recreation staff working side-by-side.

- Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council:

They were awarded \$238K for three projects. These projects are not implemented yet, the work should begin in the next few weeks. The delay was due to biological windows, and it took some time to get the funding to them.

West Fork Evans Creek Tributary:

They will be putting in large wood along a couple of miles of stream to provide structure and habitat for ESA-listed coho and other salmonoids. The designs have been completed, the permits are ready, and the contractor will be harvesting the wood in the next few weeks. In addition to Title II, there are other project partners are Lone Rock Resources, BLM, OWEB, Wild Salmon Center, and NOAA funding.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



### Cheney Creek Large Wood Project:

They will be putting large wood in the stream. They have an off-road vehicle issue in this area as well as a lot of illegal dumping. They will be working with BLM to place large boulders on terraces that will prevent people from driving down to the stream area to dump garbage on public lands. Will work with the BLM to remove trash from the sites before the instream work begins. Also working with our botanists because there are two English ivy sites and one location with some vinca that they will address while they are doing the restoration.

### Watts Toppin Fish Passage:

This project is located in the Williams Creek area. They will be creating a roughen channel upstream from where a concrete dam is located providing fish passage and irrigation diversions for senior water rights. They are working in coordination with BLM biologists, and hydrologists, local water users, BLM, OWEB, and American Rivers. This is a great collaborative project because it's not only BLM land, but all the effected neighbors and stakeholders within this stream area.

### Coos Bay District (Stephanie Messerle)

Coos Bay had 33 projects which were funded in the two rounds of Title II last year. We'll be highlighting four to give you an idea of the diversity of the projects across the different counties.

- Wasson Creek Blackberry Removal located in Douglas County:

This project was submitted by Smith River Watershed Council was awarded \$38K. This project has been going on for a few years now and will continue to go on for the next few years. The work is removing blackberries and invasive species in a riparian area along Wasson Creek which is a lower tributary on the Smith River just outside of Reedsport. This is a really important tributary for fish habitat in the Smith River Watershed. The project is located downstream of the recently designated Wild and Scenic River portion of the Wasson Creek as well as the Devils Staircase Wilderness area. The Smith River Watershed Council and partners were able to remove blackberries across about 18 acres this past year, mechanically and treating with herbicide. They then went in and planted a variety of species, conifers, douglas fir, spruce, cedar as well as some shrubs to get a good species diversity reestablished which is important to improve bank stability, increase shade, future wood for habitat.

### Coos Watershed Association River Monitoring located in Coos County:

Awarded \$25K in Title II which helped bridge a gap in funding they did not receive due to COVID impacts with OWEB. The funding was used across six different monitoring shed within the Coos Watershed where they are gathering hydrologic data. These are ongoing data collection sites and the funding allowed them to do some upgrades, repairs, maintenance and



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



purchase new equipment, so they can continue to run these sites. The data is real time, live, on-line, updated every 15 minutes and available to the public, watershed councils, and other agencies to use.

Most Wanted Weeds located in Curry County:

Curry, Soil, and Water Conservation District was awarded just shy of \$54K to go out to monitor and treat sites with invasive species, gorse primarily, however they are also looking for other invasive species as well. They are working with the BLM to identify high priority sites that are sensitive or unique habitat to remove the gorse and also outlier sites. This is an ongoing project and they have already done a lot of work.

Northwest Youth Corps – Coos County:

NW Youth Corps was awarded a little over \$50K. They have about 10 weeks of crew work planned this summer in Coos, Curry, and Douglas County. The work includes campground maintenance, trail maintenance, habitat restoration. This is a wonderful opportunity to employ youth, they are getting experience in natural resource management, and it also helps the BLM get work done on the ground.

**Note to RAC members:** If you see a project that you are interested in getting an update on, please let Kyle know and he will the information for you.

Ken McCall would like to see some wildlife restoration projects for forage under younger stands.

### **Implementation of rec fees on NW Oregon District**

**Brian Amstutz, Traci Meredith**

This will be a review of the implementation steps we've taken for the recreation business plan which was approved by the RAC in June 2021.

- The NW OR District now has 21 fee locations which includes 14 sites where we are updating the existing fee rates and seven sites where we are implementing brand new fees.
- The District now administers 10 day use areas, 14 campgrounds and eight group facilities.
- We will begin implementing the fees tomorrow and looking forward to realizing some of the programmatic improvements that will result from this plan's execution.

Some of fee collection logistics and equipment is outdated, the self-pay iron rangers tubes are difficult maintain, service, and protect. One of our biggest tasks over the last few months has been to completely populate and update our fee sites on Recreation.gov which is the one-stop shop for all federal recreation opportunities. This is how most of our visitors are finding our recreation sites on their computer, tablet, or phone, so it's a big convenience for our visitors and as well for



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



us if that information gathering, site reservations, and fee payments can be done with a tap of a button. As much as possible and where possible, we are leaning as much as possible into Recreation.gov

This comes with the caveat that Recreation.gov doesn't cover all the sites, so we are experimenting with other off-grid e-commerce solutions.

- One is a remote off-grid kiosk which allows for electronic fee payments in areas that doesn't have phone service or power. We are testing this out this summer at our Shotgun Day Use area.
- At other sites tied in with Recreation.gov capabilities, we are implementing scan and pay. This allows for phone-based fee payments by scanning a QR code which registers their fee payments.

It's important to make it clear for visitors to know when they are entering a fee area and what those fees are, so we are re-designing and procuring new fee signs.

There are few sites that were effected by the 2020 fires and are currently being restored. We will be reopening some of those sites this spring. Although new fees were approved for these sites, we won't apply new rec fees until all the amenities and recreational opportunities are fully restored.

### **Topic for May RAC meeting: Recreation fees on Coos Bay District Megan Harper**

The Coos Bay District would like to provide a preview of our fee proposals for Edson Creek and Sixes River campgrounds that we plan to bring to the RAC for recommendation. These two campgrounds are located close together along the Sixes River between Port Orford and Bandon on the southern Oregon coast.

The recreation staff has done an analysis and a business plan to look at increasing fees. The current fees have been in place since 2004, not only have costs gone up since then, but we would also like to make some improvements to the infrastructure. Currently, fees at both campgrounds are \$8 a night and proposing to raise that to \$16. Both areas also have day use areas and proposing to raise the fees from \$4 per vehicle to \$6.

There is much more detail in the business plan about the proposal, the rationale, some of the analysis. Coos Bay has a total of four fee area out of 17 recreation sites, these are two of the four site that we are analyzing for fee increases.

If we are able to hold a RAC meeting in May, in about a week, we'll send out a link to the business plan to RAC members with points-of-contact in case you have any questions. We'll plan at the May meeting to spend some time with the recreation planners to go over the proposals, time for questions, and hopefully provide us with a recommendation.



## Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee Meeting Notes March 30-31, 2022



**Staying connected with the BLM:** Kyle shared in the chat a few of the ways you can stay connected with the BLM, we have our website, social media. He asked the social media lead to put the owl photo up on Flickr. There are a lot of incredible photos on our Flickr page, also twitter, facebook and instagram. Flickr is a great place to find photos to use for powerpoints and presentations, you can even download them and print them out for your wall.

Elizabeth:

Thanks to the presenters from NW OR District, really appreciate the update, and to Dave Ballenger for attending to hear feedback from the RAC.

Shared the agenda for the May meeting scheduled for May 12-13. We are working to put together a field trip to the Medford District.

The proposed schedule:

- May 12, a virtual meeting Thursday morning May 12, share updates from BLM, review the Coos Bay fee proposal, go through some SRS Title II updates, have the public comment period, and adjourn the Zoom portion of the meeting at noon so people can travel to Medford.
- May 13, Field trip in Medford, we would meet at 9 a.m. and go to Table Rocks to look at several projects on the ground, have lunch on-site at Upper Table Rocks, then at noon depart for Anderson Butte to visit some Title II projects in that vicinity: trail construction, hazardous fuels reduction, forest restoration and resiliency work, then go to the Anderson Butte Target Shooting site where we are implementing a two-year closure.

We will need to get our membership flushed out and then work with you on the logistics for the May meeting. Kyle will be sending out emails for feedback so we can plan for your availability.

Kyle will be hosting an evening admin session about the travel process to answer your questions for reimbursements and lodging.

Summary:

- Recreation business plan for consideration.
- Kyle will work on an admin session for travel.
- Ethics training for the new members.
- Review the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.

We will be working with a similar process as last year, we will get the SRS proposals to you 30 days in advance so you can review with a tentative meeting in August.

**12:00 PM     Adjourn**





**Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee  
Meeting Notes  
March 30-31, 2022**



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