



## Notes Sublette County Forest Collaborative December 15, 2020

### Participants:

#### Collaborative members:

Joel Bousman – Sublette County Commissioner  
Mike Henn – Conservation District  
Julie Kraft – Weed and Pest  
Jennifer Lamb – The Nature Conservancy  
Barry Tye – State Forestry Division  
Troy Fieseler – WGFD  
Kim Bright – Grazing Interests  
Rob Hoelscher – District Ranger, USFS Pinedale District  
Shad Cooper – Sublette County Fire  
Larry Dennis – Private Sector: Logging

#### Other:

Rich Stem - Consultant  
Bob Budd - WWNRT  
Joe Budd – Governor Gordon’s Office  
Jessica Western - Facilitator

9:00 am Welcome and Introductions– Commissioner Joel Bousman

Commissioner Bousman opened the meeting and mentioned the following issues for the group to consider:

- Upper Green vegetation treatments and Union Pass road rehabilitation.
- Create longer term strategy than 5 years for contractors, to motivate investments and create some jobs.

9:15 Review the Collaborative’s work so far – see Sublette County Forest Collaborative Report 2017.

- 3-year joint chiefs is wrapping up.
- Hoback and Skyline projects done.
- The collaborative needs motorized and non-motorized recreation representatives.
- In this iteration of the Collaborative the BTNF wants to take advantage of funds in the Great American Outdoors Act to address a backlog of recreation projects.

9:30 Review Charter

- Add a complete list of members, with a breakdown of e.g. USFS members and others.
- Change the Schedule and Duration section.
- There were concerns that the phrasing “No Consensus” indicates there was no agreement at all, which can appear misleading if only one member disagreed.
- Change the language of decision process to “method for testing for consensus”.



10:30 Break

10:45 BTNF Vegetation Plan – Rob Hoelscher (Start generating ideas for collaborative work to tackle in 2021, incl. Bridger Wilderness blow-down).

- Rob Hoelscher, District Ranger for the BTNF Pinedale District and temporarily for the Big Piney District presented the Forests 5-year plan on a map.
- He will invite Bryan Goldberg to join at the next meeting so the collaborative can work together to review the plan in related to a number of GIS layers e.g., migration corridors, sage grouse, and others. This will also provide the collaborative with a more precise understanding of what projects are planned where and at what stage the projects are.

The Collaborative then discussed issues that they would like the group to consider:

- The blowdown between Fremont Lake and Big Sandy can be tackled either through a larger EA or a CE that would take less time but not cover as many acres. First the levels of access and damage need to be checked.
- Other USFS activities under way re. blowdown:
  - Trout Unlimited is interested in removing rootwads.
  - USFS is working on aerial reconnaissance with research station of the blowdown.
  - USFS working to clear out cattle trails, has some funds for this.
  - USFS has requested funds to clear wilderness trails.
  - USFS would like Collaborative to provide recommendations regarding what and where to do work in the blowdown.
  - Rich Stem added that the Washington Office may have funds for blowdown work and Mike Henn shared a map showing the blowdown.
- Julie Kraft with Weed and Pest shared that follow through work is being done regarding cheatgrass treatments and other habitat work. Additionally:
  - There are Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) projects in the works in Big Sandy and the East Rim.
  - Upper Green/Union Pass GNA signed and is in appraisal contracting phase now.
- Shad Cooper with Sublette County Fire said the County wants to work through State Forestry to do more GNA work although the state budget deficit makes things uncertain. Also wants to get a Firewise position. The County needs to update its Community Wildfire Protection Plan and would like involvement of the Collaborative on that. Is also working on public education regarding WUI in Upper Green and Temple Creek subdivision.
- Larry Dennis is working on the Rim and would like to get more dead timber out of the forest, and would like the community to consider getting a e.g., a pellet factory.
- Julie Kraft emphasized that every project involves invasives. Treatments are taking place in the Roosevelt Fire. Cheatgrass treatments are well funded through the Joint Chiefs and she is looking at funds for Monument and Skyline.
- The group discussed the concerns regarding access for multiple reasons into the blowdown area, including recreation.
- Joel Bousman discussed the use Great American Outdoors Act funding to design work on the Upper Green, \$ 75 K has been received for that. Will seek additional funds to design improvements on the Union Pass road and eventually find funds for actual improvements e.g. reshaping road, gravel and culverts.



- Troy Fieseler, WGFD, raised the East Rim, Upper Green and Big Sandy as areas of focus, wants to address cheatgrass in migration corridors and noxious weed management generally.

### 11:30 Determine dates for next meetings.

The group agreed to meet January 12 from 9 to noon, and January 25 9 to noon. Jessica will send a doodle poll for additional meetings.

Topics to address at the next meeting:

- Monument trailhead relocation information.
- Inclusion of Bryan Goldberg to look at USFS 5-year plan maps.
- Discuss the recommendations that were not addressed in this meeting from the 2017 Recommendations.
- Discuss how to create a longer-term strategy for the Upper Green/Union Pass in order to raise business investment.

### 11:45 Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

### 12:00 Adjourn