

March 13th MWSG Meeting Notes (DRAFT)

Attendees:

Dave Bishop, USFS
Nick Cady, Cascadia Wildlands
Gordon Culbertson, Whitewater Forests
Shane Kamrath, USFS
Gary Jensen, UWSWCD
Chandra LeGue, Oregon Wild
Karl Morgenstern, EWEB
Jeanine Parisi, EWEB
Larry Six, MWC
Kirk Shimeall, CPRCD
Nancy Toth, EWEB
Paul Hoobyar, Facilitator

Identifying Potential Restoration Projects from 7 Thin Timber Sale Proceeds

The potential restoration projects that had been previously identified during earlier MWSG meetings were reviewed and discussed. Given the current budget and status of the USFS, many thought it unwise to leave the approximately \$111,000 from the 7 Thin Stewardship Contract unallocated for restoration projects indefinitely. Consequently, the group focused on four restoration projects that had previously been approved as either matching funds for larger state or federal grant applications, or as smaller, independent restoration projects.

- The **Deer Creek Large Wood Placement** project, which had been previously supported as a matching grant through the MWC, was approved for \$15,000, as a “stand alone” project should the larger grant not be accepted.
- The **Pure Water Partners Riparian Restoration**, which had been previously approved, is a project on private lands along the McKenzie River and approved for \$20,000.
- **The Finn Rock Culvert Removal** project, which is a project that the McKenzie River Trust is pursuing on its recently acquired lands in the Mid-McKenzie River reach, was approved for funding at \$10,000, with the caveat that the MRT will provide more information to the MWSG about the project. The MWSG retained the option of declining to fund this project after learning more about it. Should the MWSG decide not to support the Finn Rock project, the funds would then be re-directed to the South Fork McKenzie Phase I restoration project.
- **The South Fork McKenzie Enhancement** project was approved for the balance of the remaining funds (approximately \$66,000, depending on the final tally of available funds, and the determination of the Finn Rock Culvert Removal project).

Paul will draft a “Recommendation Memo” and circulate the DRAFT Memo for review and edits. The approved Memo will then be sent to Johan for submission to the MRRD.

Field Trip to 7 Thin Timber Sale

The group agreed to schedule a field trip to review the 7 Thin Timber sale at its next regularly scheduled meeting April 10th. This will allow the MWSG to learn more about the timber sale’s

design and intended goals, and how the sale actually was managed. A suggestion to stop at Deer Creek to see the results of the first phase of work done this past summer was also made. In addition, Jim Pena, the Regional Forester for the USFS is scheduled to visit the MRRD from 9:00 am-1:00 pm on June 2nd. His visit may include a field tour. If anyone is interested in meeting him, contact the USFS.

Update on the Retained Receipts agreement for private lands between the Willamette National Forest and Cascade Pacific RC & D.

Johan and Kirk have been working on a draft agreement between the WNF and CPRCD in order for retained receipts from Stewardship Contracts to be used for restoration projects on private lands. Such projects must provide benefits to the WNF. The basic process that Kirk and Johan are working to develop could follow a format such as:

1. After review of proposals, the MWSG agrees and supports a restoration project on private lands using retained receipts.
2. A technical review of the agreed-upon project proposal would then be completed by the USFS. If the proposal meets technical criteria:
3. The McKenzie River District Ranger would review that project, and if approved the project would be sent to:
4. The WNF Supervisor for review, and if approved, the project would then go to:
5. The Regional Office of the USFS for review, and if approved:
6. CPRCD would create a contract with the proponent for the project, and CPRCD would act as fiscal administrator.

Kirk is waiting for a response from the WNF on the latest iteration of the draft agreement in order for them to move forward with finalizing a draft of the agreement. A draft should be available for the MWSG to review at the April meeting.

Presentation/Update of the Regeneration Harvest Technique Review by the MWSG Subgroup

A subgroup of the MWSG (Chandra, Gordon and Karl) that reviewed the DEIS to help identify the effects and potential benefits of regeneration harvest techniques circulated an updated “Criteria Matrix” for four potential Stewardship Contracts on the Green Mountain Planning Area. Chandra shared information that the subgroup had gathered from reviewing the DEIS’ data and tables. The intent of the review is an outgrowth of previous discussions where the MWSG wanted to create a monitoring project for a timber sale that included regeneration harvest as a way to assess the impacts and benefits of regeneration harvesting on the forest landscape. The four timber sales under discussion and review are Hidden Lake, Ridge, IR, and Rock. All of these sales are in the GMPA.

Discussion focused on a number of issues, including the trade-offs that are involved for SCs that have more “embedded services” in the sale, versus those contracts that provide more retained receipts. When a sale includes embedded services as part of the timber harvest contract, those services, such as culvert replacements, can be expedited during the sale by local contractors with less impact on the forest, and often at less expense. With retained receipt contracts, more funding is available for use on a broader array of restoration projects, but the work done may not be from local contractors, and it may take longer to accomplish, since a separate contract will need to be created for such work and the work crew is not already on the site as is the case

during harvest. Retained receipt projects may not be as cost-effective, as well, since contractors will have the added expense of traveling to the site specifically for the restoration work rather than a crew already being on-site during the timber sale. However, the MWSG would have more discretion for recommending a wider array of restoration projects in the McKenzie Watershed with retained receipts.

Discussion also focused on the benefits of recommending a timber sale that does not include regeneration harvesting in tandem with a sale that does include regeneration harvesting. This is in part due to the differing levels of support that members of the MWSG have for including regeneration harvesting as part of Stewardship Contracts, and in part to provide more data for monitoring timber sales that include, and don't include, regeneration harvest methods. Rock was identified as a potential timber sale that does not include regeneration harvest.

The other advantage discussed for including the Rock sale is that the other three timber sales include larger acreage, whereas the Rock sale is smaller in size, which may be more attractive to the USFS and the MWSG for monitoring purposes. Rock also includes embedded work, as opposed to the other projects, which include more retained receipts.

The group also discussed the types of monitoring of timber sales that include regeneration harvesting. Such monitoring could include impacts to invasive species proliferation after harvest, for instance, or the impacts to wildlife migration and use patterns after harvest. Karl volunteered to have EWEB look at developing a DRAFT monitoring plan that would include the variables that the MWSG would like to see in a monitoring plan, and include initial cost estimates for the plan. EWEB would also work with the WNF and the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest to determine which of the monitoring variables the USFS may already intend to do as part of its on-going monitoring program to avoid duplication and maximize efficiencies.

The group focused on Ridge and Rock as the candidate timber sales for further discussion and review. Participants noted that according to the DEIS, Ridge includes approximately 36 acres of proposed regeneration harvesting, although the actual amount of acreage subject to regeneration harvesting in Ridge needs to be confirmed by the USFS. Given the DEIS figure, the small amount of acreage for regeneration harvesting lends itself to developing a monitoring plan that may be economically acceptable to a potential funder, such as EWEB. Discussion also noted the need to include some kind of "control" site as part of the monitoring plan to better assess impacts and benefits from regeneration harvesting.

GMPA Road Fund Update

The McKenzie River District is investing monies in rock crushing at the MRRD Green Mountain rock quarry in order to provide a local source for rock. This would have a direct benefit to lowering costs in road reconstruction and road maintenance in the GMPA, which could result in lower cost sales and more retained receipts. This may affect the costs, and planning, for which of the candidate timber sales in the GMPA move forward as SCs, since the cost of road improvements, which has been an impediment for consideration as potential SCs with some sale, may be funded outside of the timber sale.

Facilitation Funding

A small amount of USFS funds has been identified that can be used to extend the facilitation contract for Watershed Initiatives, LLC. The group agreed to ask Johan to follow up on making those funds available to the MWSG for that purpose.

Next Steps

Paul will draft a Recommendation Memo for allocating the 7 Thin funds and circulate it to the MWSG for review/edits. The group agreed that the Draft Memo reviews will be returned to Paul by Friday, March 17th. Paul will incorporate suggested edits, and then forward the Memo to Johan, who will send it to the MRRD for review and approval.

Karl will begin developing a DRAFT monitoring plan to assess the impacts and benefits of regen harvesting, using the Ridge sale as a template. Karl will provide an update at the April meeting.

Next Meeting: April 10th.