

Community Workshop Notes

April 13, 2005

La Grande, Oregon



Meeting Facilitator: Susan Hayman
Meeting Recorder: Tami Paulsen, Kathy Campbell
Meeting Participants: 26 participants signed in

Co-Convenor: Colleen McLeod Union County Commissioner
Forest Service Official: Kurt Wiedenmann, La Grande District Ranger, Wallowa-Whitman NF
Team Members: Trish Callaghan, Bob Mason, Bruce Countryman, Tami Paulsen, Dave Schmitt, Dee McConnell, and Kathy Campbell

Handouts to Each Participant: Meeting Agenda, Worksheet for Management Categories, Worksheet for Areas with Wilderness Potential, Worksheet for Wild and Scenic Rivers, Management Categories & Subcategories, Inventory and Evaluation Process for Areas with Wilderness Potential, and Inventory and Evaluation Process for Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Display tables during the open house portion:

Table – Forest Planning Process:

Handouts: The Forest Plan Revision Team; Components of a Forest Plan; What a Plan Does and Does Not Do; The 2004 Planning Rule, How to Contact Us.

Table – Inventory of Areas with Wilderness Potential and Wild and Scenic Rivers

Handouts: About Areas with Wilderness Potential and About Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Table – Management Categories

Handouts: None

Table – Suitability

Handouts: None

Meeting Summary/Objectives:

This was Round Three in the Community Collaborative Workshop series. The beginning of the workshop was an open house format with displays for one-on-one discussions as people arrived. The purpose of the workshops was to summarize the Forest Service's 2005 Planning Rule, introduce Proposed Management Categories for use in the Revised Forest Plan to display management guidance, and to present updated inventories for both Areas with Wilderness Potential and potential Wild and Scenic Rivers.

The Wilderness and the Wild and Scenic River presentations were focused on the inventory phase of the process; no decisions or proposals were being made. This step was only to identify what areas and rivers QUALIFIED to be considered for designation. Time was provided for questions to clarify the inventory criteria and to gain additional information from the public on current uses and conditions of specific areas and rivers. Discussions on these topics were intended to provide the public with information so they could comment on whether they thought the areas and rivers met the criteria. The Revision Team asked that additional comments be sent in by June 30, 2005.

The 2005 Planning Rule:

Team Leader Dave Schmitt gave a PowerPoint presentation about the 2005 Planning Rule.

Q. New planning rule references focal species—how does that affect species covered by the Endangered Species Act?

A. The 2005 Planning Rule does not change our commitment to protect threatened and endangered species; we will continue to work to maintain habitat for listed species and to prevent future listings.

The focal species approach identifies habitat needs for various species and then manages to provide the needed habitat conditions. Bob Mason (Revision Team Biologist) is working with state wildlife

agencies, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service to identify the focal species of specific concern for the Blue Mountains national forests and to assure we meet our obligations under the Endangered Species Act.

Management Categories:

The Revisions Team's Vegetation Specialist, Bruce Countryman, presented a PowerPoint describing a preliminary set of Management Categories that may be used to display management guidelines on the three Blue Mountain national forests and asked the participants to comment on the concept and suggest additional categories and subcategories they would like to be used. **The team asked that additional comments be received by June 30, 2005.**

Flipchart Comments

- Concerned about Category 3 (All Restoration). Put extraction in one category only. Need more distinction between Category 3 and 4. If you plan to use extraction to restore, place it into Category 4.
- Like to see the lines drawn on a map and the definitions. Don't like the gray areas. Make distinction very clear.
- Build in corridors that are established for ATVs etc. as inclusions. Try to not have conflicts.

Questions and Answers

- Q.** Where is wetland habitat addressed? Rare or unique habitats should be identified as a subcategory. Can they be identified at the forest plan scale?
- A.** They could be included in Category 2 if a specific area is designated. More likely, management of wetlands would be addressed with forest-wide direction that would apply to all categories.
- Q.** What is the timeline for determining the final categories?
- A.** Late summer 2005.
- Q.** Where is off-highway use? Clarify where that type of use might occur.
- A.** Off-highway use would most likely occur in Categories 3 and 4.
- Q.** You need to consider areas for firewood to be available.
- A.** While identifying areas for firewood cutting is a site-specific decision and will not be addressed in the forest plan; we will identify areas that are suitable for harvest of wood products.
- Q.** Wouldn't grazing and lumber production be appropriate in some situations for restoration activities?
- A.** Category 3 offers flexibility—some activity

Wild and Scenic Rivers and Areas with Wilderness Potential:

Trish Callaghan, Recreation Specialist for the Revision Team, made two presentations: one on the requirements and process for inventory and review of Wild and Scenic Rivers and one on the process for updating the inventory of Areas with Wilderness Potential. Participants were given time to ask questions about the criteria process used and to review maps and identify rivers and areas that should be added or removed from the inventories. **The team asked that additional comments be received by June 30, 2005.**

Questions and Answers - Wild and Scenic Rivers

- Q.** What is the difference between a stream and a river?
- A.** Nothing as far as the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is concerned; it looks at both.
- Q.** Does that include historical—bringing it back to an earlier state?
- A.** The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act might constrain certain restoration activities that would be considered during the suitability stage to protect the values for which the river was designated.
- Q.** What are the differences between the brown/orange and yellow on the maps?
- A.** Brown/orange are study rivers which the forests were directed to "study" after the current forest plans were established in 1990; Yellow are those identified in the 2005 inventory of all perennial streams on the three national forests done as part of this forest plan revision process.
- Q.** What harvest activities can occur along the river corridor?
- A.** Timber harvest may be a recommended or allowed treatment to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the river was designated.
- Q.** What are outstandingly remarkable values?
- A.** Definition of Outstandingly Remarkable Values includes scenic, recreation, cultural, water quality, fish or wildlife habitat or populations that have rare, unique, or exemplary values when compared to other resources in the area/region/nation.
- Q.** Why aren't the streams named on the maps?
- A.** That is an oversight that we will fix. Some of them are named on the maps, but appear under the colored lines and are difficult to read.

Questions and Answers - Areas with Wilderness Potential

- Q.** Appears like a lot of acres are being added – Off highway vehicles (OHV) use some of these areas.
A. OHV use is not part of inventory process. That use will be considered during the evaluation process as we will look at the current uses that are occurring.
- Q.** Newer Forest Service maps don't show numbered roads.
A. Some roads with lower maintenance levels now exist within roadless areas. Some roads have been closed. We are excluding from the inventory areas that have roads maintained for use by standard passenger car vehicles.
- Q.** What does social and economics have to do with wilderness?
A. Some people have a social desire to have wilderness experience and there are some economic values to local communities associated with use of the wilderness areas.
- Q.** Could these roads be considered trails?
A. Maybe, it depends on how much use and the maintenance level. Some roads that have very low levels of use may be considered trail by some people.
- Comment** Happy to see areas that are recovering are being considered.
- Q.** Are you also going to have areas with timber harvest potential?
A. For areas not recommended for wilderness, some other management direction will be applied. That direction may allow timber harvest. The forest plan will identify areas that are suitable for timber production.
- Q.** Regarding whether the criteria was applied fairly, I believe you used a flawed premise of roadless – they are not roadless. In 1960 roads went through some of these areas. Roads are still there, just not on the maps. Be sure it is looked at during evaluation. Most of these roads have Forest Service numbers. Use road survey information. The quality of roads being used as criteria is too high.
A. We did use our most current roads inventory information to produce the maps that the units used to work on this inventory update. If you know of specific areas where there are roads, we would appreciate your pointing them out to us. For this inventory, we are only concerned with roads that are maintained for use by standard passenger car vehicles. That criteria is specified for us in our agency directives.

Overall Evaluation

Group Critique of the Meeting:

What worked well-

- Clear presentations/understandable
- Good facilitation

What could be improved-

- Talk more about the community and how they need and use the national forests – differing values
- Need room numbers in building
- Need labels on maps

Comments from the Critique Forms:

Participants answered the following questions on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

	Average
I understand what management categories are and how they will be used in the Forest Plan.	4.1
I understand the process for Wild and Scenic River Inventory, and ways I can contribute to it.	3.8
I understand the process used to inventory the areas with wilderness potential and ways I can contribute to it.	3.6
I was comfortable discussing public land issues with people I didn't know tonight.	4.1
I was comfortable discussing public land issues with people who held different viewpoints tonight.	3.6
The workshop format was appropriate for what we needed to do tonight	4.1
I am comfortable using maps to enhance my understanding of the discussion topics tonight.	3.6
I receive useful information and meaningful opportunities to engage in forest plan revision through this collaborative process.	4.3

Participants were also asked:

Is there anything in particular that you liked or didn't like about the workshop?

Is there anything that you would like to know more about?

Do you have any other comments about the workshop?

- Address: 1) Recreation more and 2) Harvest timber
- No new wilderness