

Community Workshop Notes

April 21, 2005

Heppner, Oregon



Meeting Facilitator: Susan Hayman
Meeting Recorder: Tami Paulsen
Meeting Participants: 17 participants signed in

Co-Convener: Terry Tallman, Morrow County Judge
Forest Service Official: Tom Mafera, Heppner District Ranger, Umatilla National Forest
Team Members: Trish Callaghan, Bob Mason, Bruce Countryman, Tami Paulsen, and Dave Schmitt.

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.
There were no questions

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

- Confusion on where certain activities, like noxious weed treatment or grazing would be allowed. Things are too compartmentalized. No hard lines around old-growth areas.

Questions and Answers

- Q.** What about management in between areas? How do you account for the unexpected?
- A.** Every acre should fall into one of the five categories. Adaptability to account for unexpected situations will be built into the Forest Plan.
- Q.** Some travel corridors could be in two categories so which criteria would apply? (For example: scenic byways and highway rights-of-way)
- A.** Overlap causing conflicting direction will be eliminated as we redraw lines. We may also designate management of areas, like highway corridors, that cross several categories with more general forest-wide direction for such areas.
- Q.** How are management categories related to desired conditions?
- A.** Desired conditions will be described specific to management categories and environmental conditions that exist in the forest.
- Q.** How are "communities' placements" affecting the development of these categories? Need ability to do needed work near communities.
- A.** Communities will be considered as we develop desired conditions and suitable use overlays such as wildland urban interface boundaries.
- Q.** Where do off-highway vehicles fit in?
- A.** This type of activity may be addressed by a suitable use map overlay that would be used during site-specific project planning.
- Q.** Where does time fit into this—society shifts?
- A.** The need for adaptive management is recognized in the 2005 Planning Rule. The ability to adjust activities as a result of monitoring through time is a key feature of the rule. Plans are expected to be amended over time as changes occur in society values, ecological conditions, and new science.

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.**

Flipchart Comments - Wild and Scenic Rivers

- State designation of the John Day River as "navigable" has no bearing on this because its not on national forest land.
- Important for Forest Service to articulate what changes would occur as a result of potential designation.

Flipchart Comments – Areas with Wilderness Potential

- Designating wilderness limits other uses.
- Designating wilderness will create fire problems.
- The Texas Butte area has a road through the middle of it — a lot of that area has been cleaned up to reduce fire hazard.
- Wilderness designation draws people to it and increases the risk of fire.
- It doesn't make sense to take a well-managed area (multi-use) and turn into wilderness.
- There is no benefit of designating wilderness. Areas don't need to be "fixed".

Questions and Answers - Wilderness Potential

- Q.** What consideration is given to private lands adjacent to wilderness regarding fire protection?
- A.** During the evaluation process, issues relative to neighboring private land will be considered.
- Q.** Does the Forest Service acquire land as part of their wilderness recommendation process?
- A.** Not specifically as part of the wilderness designation process. In some of the inventoried roadless areas that are in the current Forest Plans, private "inholdings" are shown. Since 1990, the national forests have acquired several of these parcels as part of a general lands acquisition program.

- Q.** What about private lands above wilderness—would that affect acquisition or disposal of lands?
A. In general, private lands that are surrounded by national forest (inholdings) are usually considered to be lands that are desirable for the national forests to acquire, since it makes management of the areas more cohesive.
- Q.** Is there room in this process to manage an area for a potential wilderness area in the future? Could an area be restored to have wilderness values?
A. Yes.
- Q.** How many wildernesses in a given area?
A. There are 61 wilderness areas in Oregon and Washington, 7 of these in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision area.

Overall Evaluation

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.	3.3
I understand the process for Wild and Scenic River Inventory, and ways I can contribute to it.	3.4
I understand the process used to inventory the areas with wilderness potential and ways I can contribute to it.	3.2
I was comfortable discussing public land issues with people I didn't know tonight.	4.4
I was comfortable discussing public land issues with people who held different viewpoints tonight.	4.2
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.	4.5
I receive useful information and meaningful opportunities to engage in forest plan revision through this collaborative process.	4.4

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?

- I think you did provide a good overview.
- Lots of information to convey to those not familiar with forest plans.
- I think you all created a very comfortable atmosphere.