

## **Collaborative Agreements Talking Points**

**March, 2007**

### **Colville National Forest Plan Revision Collaboration Round Up**

From March 2006 to March 2007, the public and the Forest Service worked collaboratively on questions about how to revise the Forest Plan for the Colville National Forest. The results of that work came together on March 1, 2007 in a meeting called “the Round Up.” The four public collaboration groups presented their group’s thoughts and the Forest Service identified areas of agreement common to all four groups. Below is a synopsis of those agreement points.

The Forest Service heard that:

- 1) **Four main management areas:** In addition to Special Areas already designated, the collaborators propose four distinct management areas and these are
  - a) Recommended Wilderness Areas,
  - b) Inventoried Roadless Areas,
  - c) Restoration Management Areas,
  - d) and Responsible Management Areas.

Collaborators used the Forest Service 2007 potential wilderness areas (PWA) to delineate the Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRA) and the Recommended Wilderness Areas. The collaborators used the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition “Blueprint” to delineate and describe the Responsible Management Area and the Restoration Management Area. Following is more information on the four management areas.

- i) **Recommended Wilderness Area:** The Salmo Priest Adjacent potential wilderness area is the only IRA to receive broad support for recommendation as proposed wilderness. One group did not recommend any IRAs for wilderness and one group recommended most of the IRAs for wilderness.
- ii) **Inventoried Roadless Areas:** These areas have the least latitude for managing timber; fire is used in a restorative manner, and recreation remains status quo in most areas. If recreational motorized use is currently allowed in an Inventoried Roadless Area, it would continue to be allowed but would not expand into parts of the IRA where non-motorized use only is allowed.
  - (a) **Wilderness qualities in all IRA’s should continue to be preserved.** While not explicitly stated by all groups, this likely means that IRA’s, including the 2007 potential wilderness areas identified by the Forest Service or the current Inventoried Roadless Areas identified in the 2001 Roadless Rule final environmental impact statement, would be managed as described in the 2001 Roadless Rule. It was repeated numerous times in each group that the option for wilderness needed to be preserved for all IRA’s, with the exception of Lost Creek IRA.

- (b) **Lost Creek IRA is the exception.** Of the proposed IRA's, the collaborators considered Lost Creek to have the least wilderness characteristics. It is considered by many of the collaborators as the most suitable location for rustic motorized routes as a substitute for taking motorized routes out of other places.
    - (c) **Inventoried Roadless Areas and existing motorized use.** In the Jackknife, Owl Mountain, South Huckleberry, and Twin Sisters IRA's there was agreement in three of the groups that existing motorized trail use would continue in these IRA's. However, it was clear that the groups wanted to pursue the option of swapping motorized trails out of these IRA's and were against any expansion of motorized recreation in these IRA's. One group could not reach agreement on continuing existing motorized use in these IRA's. They agreed to disagree on that topic. Where no motorized trails exist in the IRA, there is broad agreement that these areas would continue to be non-motorized.
  - iii) **Responsible management areas have the most latitude to manage resources for timber, urban interface wildfire, and recreation.** The location of these areas was mainly determined by the proximity to roads and road density.
  - iv) **Restoration management areas have a priority of restoring the area to a more natural state,** using timber management, fire management, and recreation management as tools for restoration.
- 2) **There is broad support for a Military Training Area.** The U.S. Air Force operates a training school on the National Forest under a special use permit. Some current management direction for specific areas of the Forest affects the Air Force training operations. The collaborators expressed support for changing the management direction to help support the Air Force operations in those areas. The Forest Service agrees with the need to resolve the issues and is going to work separately with the Air Force and outside the forest plan revision process to come to a resolution.
- 3) **Activities found suitable or not suitable for a management area.** The collaborators filled in a suitability matrix identifying which activities are suitable in a management area. There was broad agreement between the groups with the exception of activities suitable for IRAs and the Restoration Management Area. For example, the groups did not have a common view of whether or not motorized winter recreation and pest management in IRA's was suitable. In the Restoration Management Area the use of wildland fire as a restoration tool was a point of disagreement.
- 4) **Kettle Crest:** All groups identified the lands along the Kettle Crest as a special area and expressed support for retaining those features and qualities that make it special.

Due to this universal concern for how the area is managed, the Forest Supervisor believes a special management area designation of less than 100,000 acres would be appropriate. The Forest Service will develop a proposal for this area.

- 5) **The groups also had a few specific spots on the Forest they felt warranted special consideration.** These include but may not be limited to the following list:
- i) **Quartzite Cliffs:** Located to the northeast of Chewelah and visible from town, this is a rock formation that attracts public interest. The collaborators are interested in developing access to the area without detracting from the scenic qualities.
  - ii) **Trails that link:** The group recommended creating trails which would allow extended riding or hiking and link together special areas and communities. For example, establish a trail network that could recreate the “Gentleman’s Ride” of 30 years ago from Chewelah Peak to Newport and link to the Jay Gould Ridge area. Another example is the snowmobile trail in place now from Usk to Nordman in the winter. Another trail recommended was the Chewelah Peak to Calispel Peak trail, which is in need of restoration.
  - iii) **Year-round trails:** Develop new hiking trails at lower elevations close to the town of Colville. The groups suggested using the Dominion area (a 2-3,000 acre area without roads) in the shadow of Dominion Mountain between the South and Middle Fork of Mill Creek, to carry out this proposal.