

# USDA Forest Service

## Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting

---

Holiday Inn Capitol, 550 C Street, SW, Washington, DC

**July 20-22, 2010**

## Contents

<b>Meeting Summary Day I (July 20, 2010)</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Opening Remarks & Arrangements for Public Comment .....	1
Overview of Agenda & Meeting Norms .....	1
Ethics Training .....	2
Recusals .....	2
Legal and Policy Context for Panel’s Work .....	2
Overview of the Federal Advisory Committee Act’s Rules & Regulations .....	3
Role of the Advisory Panel .....	3
Overview of Proposals, Pre-Meeting Scoring, and Approach for Developing Consensus Recommendation .....	4
Initial Proposal Sifting .....	6
Review of Remaining Proposals .....	7
Day I Closing Remarks .....	7
Day I Public Comment .....	7
<b>Meeting Summary Day II (July 21, 2010)</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Opening Remarks .....	8
Review of Remaining Proposals (continued) .....	8
On-Site Scoring and Prioritization Exercise .....	9
Closing Remarks .....	10
Public Comment .....	10
<b>Meeting Summary Day 3 (July 22, 2010)</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Opening Remarks .....	10
Under Secretary Harris Sherman .....	11
Consensus Building on Panel’s Recommendation .....	11
“Top Ten” Recommendation .....	13
Selection of Chairperson(s) Going Forward .....	13
Media Policy .....	13
Review of Proposal Process .....	14
Closing Remarks .....	14

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel’s Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

**Attachment A: Meeting Attendees .....15**

Panel Members Present..... 15

USDA Forest Service Staff ..... 15

Facilitation Team..... 15

Meeting Observers..... 15

Guest Speakers..... 15

**Attachments B through G .....16**

Please see separate files distributed with this summary:

- Attachment B: CFLRP Meeting Agenda, July 20-22, 2010
- Attachment C: Ethics Briefing
- Attachment D: Overview of Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009
- Attachment E: FACA Overview
- Attachment F: Written Public Comments
- Attachment G: Suggested Process Improvements

## Meeting Summary Day I (July 20, 2010)

### Opening Remarks & Arrangements for Public Comment

Tom Peterson, Director of Forest Management for the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (USFS), convened the inaugural meeting of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) Advisory Panel at 8:30 A.M. on July 20, 2010, at the Holiday Inn Capitol, Washington, DC. Mr. Peterson is the Designated Forest Official (DFO) for the CFLRP Advisory Panel, which has been chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Mr. Peterson thanked Panel members for being able to come together on relatively short notice, and explained that the timeframe for the meeting was driven by the need to obligate the \$10 million in currently-appropriated CFLRP funds this fiscal year. Mr. Peterson invited the Panel members introduced themselves; twelve of fifteen Panel members were present. Mr. Peterson then introduced and thanked USFS staff for their help organizing the meeting. He also introduced the facilitation team from SRA International, Inc. -- Facilitator Marci DuPraw and Note-taker, Mark Vogelgesang. (See Attachment A for list of attendees.)

Mr. Peterson described the role of committees convened under FACA, as well as his role as DFO of this particular FACA committee. As DFO, Mr. Peterson is responsible for calling the meeting, ensuring that it is open to the public, and creating the agenda. He is authorized to adjourn a meeting if he believes it to be in the public interest. Mr. Peterson noted that any member of the public who wishes to speak to the Panel during portions of the agenda set aside each day for public comment may sign up to do so at the registration table.

### Overview of Agenda & Meeting Norms

Facilitator Marci DuPraw welcomed the Panel to the meeting and said that she was looking forward to working with the Panel to develop a consensus recommendation for USDA / USFS as to which of the 31 CFLRP proposals submitted this fiscal year should be funded and how to allocate the \$10 million in CFLRP funds currently available among them. Ms. DuPraw reviewed the agenda for the next three days, and proposed a set of meeting norms to support the Panel's progress toward a consensus recommendation. She noted that various groups define "consensus" differently, and proposed defining it as 'everyone can live with what has been proposed' for the Panel's purposes. The Panel concurred with the proposed meeting norms, including that definition of consensus.

Sandy Henning of the USFS reviewed the content of Panel members' meeting materials packets. The packets contained a copy of the agenda, travel expense forms and per-diem information, the Panel's charter, the proposal summary table, a copy of the evaluation criteria, a list of key definitions, the meeting evaluation form, metro maps, an updated Panel contact list, and an initial scoring spreadsheet. Ms. Henning pointed out that all projects are posted on the USFS website at, <http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/cflr/regionalproposals.shtml>. Several Panel members requested hard

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

copies of the proposals, and these were provided to the members who asked for them. A CD containing all of the proposals was made for the Panel, and distributed to all members later on Day 1.

## Ethics Training

Jack Fisher of the USDA reviewed the ethics rules associated with being a member of a FACA committee, as well those associated with the "special government employee" (SGE) status of members of this Panel. Panel members must recuse themselves if they have a conflict of interest (COI) with a proposal (e.g., if they actively took part in writing a proposal or their organization would be expected to directly benefit financially if the proposal were funded). Panel members may not vote on, score, or participate in discussions of proposals for which they have a COI. Panel members received a handout containing highlights of Mr. Fisher's presentation (see Attachment C). After his presentation, the Panel asked clarifying questions about the COI rules. At the end of the ethics discussion, the Panel created a list of individuals who would have to recuse themselves from the discussion of specific proposals (see below). The Panel agreed that, when one of the proposals below was about to be discussed by the Panel, the recused individual would leave the room. The facilitator asked the whole group to share responsibility for implementing these agreements concerning recusals; however, she also designated a particular staff member to monitor this, to help the individuals involved remember to leave the room when necessary, and to call the recused individuals back into the room when the discussion of the proposal in question was over.

## Recusals

### Julia Altemus

Region 1 - Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative

### Phil Rigdon

Region 6 - Tapash Sustainable Forest Collaborative

### James Earl Kenamer

Region 8 - Ozark East Ecosystem Restoration Proposal

Region 8 - Shortleaf Pine-Bluestem Project

Region 8 - A Landscape Restoration of Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area

Region 8 -Accelerating Longleaf Pine Restoration in Northeast Florida

## Legal and Policy Context for Panel's Work

Tom Peterson gave an overview of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (P.L.111-11, H.R. 146) and in particular, Title IV of the Act, which established the CFLRP. The Omnibus Act relies on the best available science to restore landscapes, facilitate the reduction of wildfire costs, and help rural economies create jobs. To be eligible for funding from the CFLRP, the proposals must have a landscape strategy, identify treatments for a ten-year period, be comprised primarily of National Forest System lands, reduce risk of uncharacteristic wildfire, reduce hazardous fuels, and encourage old growth. In addition, the proposal must provide an analysis of the cost savings that would result.

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

Title IV of the Act states that: no more than \$4 million can be spent on one project in one year; the advisory Panel will provide a recommendation to the Secretary of Agriculture; no more than 10 projects may be funded per fiscal year; and no more than two projects per region may be funded per year. The Panel may be comprised of up to fifteen members with balanced technical viewpoints that are appointed to two-year terms by the Secretary of Agriculture. Additional information about the legal policy context may be found at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR/index.shtml>

## **Overview of the Federal Advisory Committee Act's Rules & Regulations**

George Vargas, Acting FOIA/PA Officer for the Forest Service, gave the Panel an overview of the role that a FACA committee plays. The purpose of a FACA committee is to make recommendations to the DFO. FACA meetings are supposed to be public; if private or semi-private Panel meetings are desired, that would have to be approved by the Secretary of Agriculture. The Panel must be chartered, and the charter must be reviewed every two years.

Panel membership must be fairly balanced in terms of points of view represented and functions to be performed. Nominations for the committee come from the field, and must be vetted by USDA's White House liaison. The current Administration does not wish to have registered lobbyists on FACA committees. Vetted nominees are approved by the Secretary.

A FACA committee must notify the public of their meetings with a notice in the Federal Register. Within 90 days of the meeting, minutes must be posted and made available to the public. The committee must report annually to the General Services Administration to show that the committee did convene and met their objectives. The USDA's White House Liaison will review the committee's work to ensure it is making progress. Once a committee's work has been accomplished or become obsolete, the committee is dissolved. For more information about FACA committees, please see the Code of Federal Regulations Title 41 Part 102 available at [www.gpo.gov/fdsys/](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/).

## **Role of the Advisory Panel**

Tom Peterson thanked George Vargas for help in putting together the Advisory Panel and fielding their questions. Mr. Peterson then offered additional details about the functions, responsibilities, and charge for this Advisory Panel. The Panel must hold an official meeting at least once yearly. A quorum must be present; a quorum is defined as a majority of the Panel members being present. In the unlikely event that a Panel member fails to attend three consecutive meetings, that individual would be removed and replaced, per a Federal Register announcement. If necessary, sub-committees can be created. Panel members are classified as SGEs and must abide by the rules governing SGEs. The role of the Advisory Panel is to evaluate, support, and recommend proposals for funding to the DFO. Panel members are to look at all of the projects on an equal basis and evaluate them on the following criteria: (1) strength of proposal and strategy; (2) strength of ecological restoration strategies; (3) strength of collaborative process; (4) likelihood of reduction in long-term wildfire management costs; (5) reduction of relative

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

restoration costs as a result of the use of woody biomass and small diameter trees; (6) level of non-federal funding leveraged in carrying out the proposal; and (7) benefits to local economy and job market.

Mr. Peterson advised the Panel that he needed to appoint an Interim Chairperson for this meeting, as a Chair is responsible for certifying the meeting minutes. The Chair is expected to serve as a liaison between the DFO, Panel, and facilitator. The person should be available for dialogue before, during, and after the meeting. The Chair can function as a "consultant" to the DFO, providing the DFO with agenda ideas and feedback. Mr. Peterson suggested that Brian Kahn serve as the Interim Chairperson for this particular Panel meeting, and that the Panel discuss at the end of this meeting how best to fill this position over the long run. Mr. Kahn agreed to serve if the Panel supported his appointment, and the Panel concurred. Thus, Mr. Kahn was formally appointed Interim Chair of the Panel for this meeting. The Panel broke for lunch at 12:30 and re-convened at 1:30.

### **Overview of Proposals, Pre-Meeting Scoring, and Approach for Developing Consensus Recommendation**

Sandy Henning provided an overview of the proposals under consideration. The USFS received a total of 31 proposals, including at least one from each of the forest service Regions. Proposals requested anywhere from \$0-\$2.6 million for fiscal year 2010. They reflected a wide range of non-USFS matching contributions, from \$0-\$104 million for this fiscal year.

Each Panel member was assigned to score a specific group of proposals in advance of the meeting; each group of proposals consisted of approximately 1/3 of the full set of proposals. Also, for each proposal, a specific Panel member was asked in advance to come prepared to provide a brief oral summary of the proposal for the benefit of the other Panel members. Panel members were encouraged to read and score all 31 proposals in advance of the meeting if they could.

Those Panel members who felt they had time to score additional proposals beyond the 10-11 assigned to each person were encouraged to do so; however, if they chose to do so, they were asked to score a complete additional "group" of proposals rather than a random number or selection of proposals. Proposals were scored with respect to the seven criteria mentioned above, using a scale from 0 to 5 (with 5 being the highest individual score and 35 being the highest overall score). USFS staff entered Panel members' pre-meeting scores into a spreadsheet, and these scores were used as input at the outset of on-site discussions.

Ms. DuPraw gave an overview of the approach she proposed to use in facilitating the Panel's efforts to develop a consensus recommendation. The approach consisted of the following primary steps, to be undertaken jointly by Panel members:

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

1. Undertake an initial "sift" of the proposals to determine: (a) whether any proposals should be eliminated at the outset because they did not meet the CFLRP criteria, or were clearly too weak relative to the other proposals; and (b) whether any proposals were clearly so strong that they would definitely be included in the set of up to 10 proposals recommended for funding this fiscal year, and thus did not need detailed discussion until later in the Panel's deliberations. The pre-meeting scores would be used as one form of input to this discussion, but not necessarily the deciding factor; no proposal would be eliminated per (a) above nor set aside per (b) above unless the Panel chose to do so by consensus.
2. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the remaining "middle" group of proposals one-by-one. The discussion of each proposal would begin with a brief oral summary of the proposal by a Panel member who had been assigned to prepare this summary in advance of the meeting. The amount of time allotted for discussion of each proposal would depend on the number of proposals the group chose to retain for consideration after Step 1 above; the remainder of the afternoon of Day I and virtually all of Day II would be devoted to these discussions. (Discussion time per proposal averaged about 20 minutes per proposal for this stage of the meeting.)
3. At the end of Day II, engage in an on-site group scoring and prioritization exercise, reflecting the group's discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal retained for consideration after Step 1 above. This exercise would generate a prioritized list of all proposals remaining "on the table." The Panel could recommend funding up to 10 proposals, but did not need to recommend 10. Moreover, the Panel would not be limited to recommending only proposals from the top-ranked 10 proposals; rather, the Panel would have a chance to step back and reflect on the numerical results that emerged from this exercise, and make any adjustments that the Panel members might choose to do by consensus (based on their judgment, as long as such changes were consistent with CFLRP and consistent with the legal and ethical guidelines presented earlier in the day).
4. On Day III, develop the Panel's consensus recommendation about which of the proposals to recommend for funding, and how to allocate the \$10 million available across those proposals. Meeting support staff would be prepared to sort the spreadsheet in various ways, to support the Panel's deliberations (e.g., to show how far the funding would stretch if they fully funded the top-ranked proposals in descending rank order; etc.).

Panel members accepted the proposed approach, but asked for clarification as to how to factor into on-site meeting discussions the proposals' funding requests beyond this fiscal year. Mr. Peterson responded that the CFLRP cannot guarantee funding from one year to the next. It is USFS' intent that the projects will be funded each of the 10 years, but this cannot be guaranteed as annual budget appropriations may vary from year-to-year, as well as management priorities within the Agency. Therefore, the Panel was directed to base their recommendation on the funding requested for the

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

current fiscal year, FY10, and address future funding issues as they arise. The Panel highlighted the importance of sustaining funding over the full 10-year timeframe for selected proposals, due to the effort required to prepare these proposals and the time it will take to bring landscape level restoration projects to fruition. They noted that if this does not prove to be possible, there is likely to be a major drop off in the number of proposals submitted. The Panel provided a consensus recommendation to the USFS on related points to include in the Agency's notification of proposals selected for funding this fiscal year. These points were as follows:

- We support your proposal and will do our best to sustain funding for the full 10-year period. We have no control over the amount Congress will appropriate beyond FY10.
- Thus, you should realize it is possible that there would be no or partial funding beyond FY10.
- At the end of FY10, we will seek a progress report and update or confirmation of FY11 requests.

### **Initial Proposal Sifting**

Panel members undertook the initial "sifting" exercise described in Step 1 above. They chose not to deem any proposals so much stronger than all others that it was clear at the outset that they would definitely be in the group recommended for funding. However, the Panel decided by consensus to eliminate any proposals that received an average pre-meeting score of 17 or less (out of the possible 35). Panel members also chose to consider eliminating additional proposals – specifically, those that had received an average pre-meeting score below 19. Because this discussion would involve several proposals from Region 8, Mr. Kennamer stepped out of the room for this portion of the discussion per the Panel's recusal guidelines. The Panel discussed each remaining proposal with an average score of less than 19. During this discussion, a typographical error was discovered that had artificially lowered the score of one proposal below 19; the error was corrected, and the Panel took a fifteen minute break to allow the USFS staff to double check for additional errors. (No other errors were found.) The Panel proceeded to remove from consideration all proposals with an average score less than 19. Nine proposals were eliminated at this stage because the Panel determined by consensus that they were weaker proposals relative to the CFLRP criteria than those left "on the table."

The Panel then reflected on whether there were any proposals remaining "on the table" that did not meet all eligibility criteria, even though aspects of them were compelling. They screened the remaining 22 proposals against the seven over-arching CFLRP evaluation criteria referenced above, as well as four more specific elements required in all proposals. The latter four included: (1) a landscape area of at least 50,000 acres; (2) establishment of no additional permanent roads; (3) multiple parties involved in proposal implementation, representing diverse interests; and (4) likely reduction of long-term wildfire management costs. At different points during this eligibility discussion, Panel members Phil Rigdon, James Earl Kennamer, and Julia Altemus had to step out of the room, per the Panel's recusal guidelines. This discussion generated a list of proposal-specific questions to which the Panel sought answers to help determine eligibility. Ms. Henning agreed to contact the relevant Region to obtain clarification for the

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

Panel. No additional proposals were eliminated at this stage, pending the answers to these questions. Panel members decided to proceed with discussing the strengths and weaknesses of all remaining 22 proposals.

### **Review of Remaining Proposals**

The Panel embarked upon the agreed-upon discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the remaining proposals for the remainder of the Day I afternoon and most of Day II. For each proposal, a particular Panel member who had prepared in advance would give a brief verbal summary of the proposal to refresh Panel members' memories and anchor the discussion. Then the full group would offer insights about strengths and weaknesses of the proposal, the highlights of which were recorded on flip charts and posted on the wall by meeting support staff. Overall, the Panel spent an average of about 20-25 minutes discussing each proposal. The Panel discussed the first 3 of the remaining 22 proposals during the afternoon of Day I.

### **Day I Closing Remarks**

Before the period for public comment, Mr. Peterson thanked the Panel for a successful first day, and their patience in working through the procedural details. He promised to help his staff obtain the answers to the proposal-specific questions they had posed. The Panel decided that they would start a half hour early the following day (at 8:00 am) to ensure they had enough time to discuss the remaining proposals.

### **Day I Public Comment**

The period for public comment opened at 5:00pm. While two individuals had signed up to make comments, only one of them was present at this time. Alan Unger made a five-minute presentation to the Panel on behalf of the Deschutes Skyline Landscape proposal. He said that the Deschutes Skyline proposal would restore forests in an area that hosts a great deal of recreation activity. He noted that, being just two and a half hours from the Willamette Valley, this region is a popular destination for hikers, hunters, and stream fishermen. He said that, in addition to being a popular recreation destination, this area's two watersheds support over 80,000 people; he noted that a healthy watershed is critical to the city of Bend, OR, as well as to maintaining salmon and sockeye species. He reported that the Deschutes proposal is made up of thirty-one collaborators, one of which is a timber company that has invested \$40 million to take on small diameter trees; this investment is especially important given the region's 15% unemployment rate. Mr. Unger explained that the area currently has an overgrowth of underbrush that increases the risk of wildfire. He thanked the Panel for considering this proposal, and assured the Panel that the collaborators see it as realistic and beneficial. The meeting was dismissed at 5:16 pm.

## Meeting Summary Day II (July 21, 2010)

### Opening Remarks

The second day of the CFLRP Advisory Panel deliberations began at 8:00 am. Tom Peterson welcomed everyone back to the meeting, and turned the floor over to Facilitator Marci DuPraw. Ms. DuPraw reviewed the day's agenda, invited Panel reflections or questions, and asked if they wanted to make any changes based on Day I public comment. The following points were discussed:

- The Panel affirmed their interest in adhering to the general timeline set out at the beginning of the meeting, and noted that there were a number of topics they would like to discuss if they were able to reach consensus on their recommendation before the end of Day III.
- The Panel asked if any answers had been received yet in response to the proposal-specific questions they had posed on Day I. Ms. Henning responded that the questions had been sent out on Day I and she had received confirmation that most of the recipients had read the questions, but she had not yet received responses.
- The Panel asked for clarification of the definition of "matching funds." Ms. Henning explained that matching funds include partnership funds as well as in-kind services. A 50% match must be met, but it can be provided by sources other than the USFS Regions. More discussion of matching funds can be found at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR/questions/answers/all.shtml>.

### Review of Remaining Proposals (continued)

Preceding the discussion of Southwest Crown of the Continent, Julia Altemus recused herself from the discussion. The Panel discussed the strengths and weaknesses of four proposals before taking a 20 minute break at 9:30. The Panel resumed their discussion at 9:50 am, and discussed five more proposals before taking an hour-long lunch break at 12:05pm.

During the course of the morning, several Panel members indicated that their organizations were involved in developing certain proposals under discussion, but that the circumstances were such that they did not believe the requirement to recuse was triggered; in these cases, the relevant Panel member stayed in the room, but chose not to participate in the discussion. This applied to:

- Ray Vaughan in the case of the "Accelerating Longleaf Pine Restoration in Northeast Florida" proposal and the "Mississippi Longleaf Pine" proposal;
- Maia Enzer in the case of the "Lakeview Federal Stewardship Unit" proposal and the "Malheur" proposal; and
- Paige Lewis in the case of the "Colorado Front Range" proposal.

James Earl Kennamer recused himself and stepped out of the room during discussion of the Mississippi Longleaf Pine proposal.

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

Upon returning from the lunch break at 1:15 pm, Ms. DuPraw provided an overview of the afternoon's agenda. A question of clarification was sought concerning the application of the recusal guidelines to the on-site prioritization exercise planned for later in the afternoon. USFS staff confirmed that recused Panel members would not be able to "vote for" proposals regarding which they had conflicts of interest. Also at this time, Ms. Henning shared the answers to the proposal-specific questions of clarification the Panel had raised to date. Prior to Ms. Henning reading the email response to a question about the Tapash Sustainable Forest Collaborative proposal, Phil Rigdon recused himself and stepped out of the room. The other clarifications did not trigger further recusals.

The Panel reviewed strengths and weaknesses of the remaining proposals during the course of the afternoon. During this time, two Panel members indicated that their organizations were involved in developing certain proposals under discussion, but that the circumstances were such that they did not believe the requirement to recuse was triggered. In these cases, as in the morning, the relevant Panel member stayed in the room, but chose not to participate in the discussion. This applied to:

- Todd Schulke in the case of the "Signal Peak" proposal; and
- Karen Hardigg in the case of the "Mill Creek-Council Mountain" proposal.

James Earl Kenamer recused himself from the discussion and stepped out of the room during the discussion of the "Land Between the Lakes" proposal.

Mr. Peterson asked how the Panel would like to handle proposal-specific letters of recommendation and written public comments. It was determined that: (a) the written public comments would be made available to the Panel during the meeting and would be attached to the meeting summary, but would not be an essential part of the deliberations; and (b) Letters of recommendation would not be circulated to Panel members because proposal authors had been discouraged from submitting these, and it would disadvantage those proposal authors who had complied with this request if the letters that were submitted were considered. The same applied to proposal appendices.

### **On-Site Scoring and Prioritization Exercise**

Ms. DuPraw provided a more detailed orientation to the on-site scoring and prioritization process that she proposed to use to begin to help the Panel close in on its recommendation. Each Panel member would receive ten "sticky notes," numbered one to ten. The Panel would have about 30 minutes to get up and roam around the room, reviewing the flip charts on which the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal had been recorded. Each Panel member would then pick the 10 proposals that the member felt were strongest with respect to the CFLRP criteria, and put one of his or her sticky notes on the flip chart associated with each of those 10 proposals. The proposal that the Panel member thought was best would receive a score of ten, while the person's "second best" would be assigned the sticky with the number nine on it, and so on until they ran out of sticky notes. Individual members could not assign more than one sticky note to any given proposal. Panel members who had to recuse themselves from the discussion of certain proposals could not "vote for" any proposal regarding which they had recused themselves; these members would get a correspondingly smaller number of sticky notes to distribute,

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

with the sticky notes that were withdrawn from circulation being that member's smaller-numbered ones. Staff would mark the sets of sticky notes with Panel members' initials to provide transparency with respect to compliance with the recusal guidelines.

The Panel engaged in a discussion about how to fine-tune the proposed process, and whether there were any additional criteria they might jointly agree to consider when prioritizing proposals. Specifically, some Panel members proposed that geographic and / or ecosystem diversity be added as a supplemental consideration for this scoring and prioritization step. Other Panel members suggested that total, 10-year funding should be considered. The Panel did not reach a consensus to add either of these variables as criteria for consideration. However, the Panel did reach consensus on one modification to the scoring procedure in the interest of avoiding either privileging or penalizing proposals for which certain Panel members had to recuse themselves. They agreed that staff would add up the value of the sticky notes assigned to each proposal and divide the resulting sum by the total number of Panel members that could have voted on that proposal.

Panel members then took about a half-hour to select their "top 10" proposals. While members took a break, USFS staff tabulated the results and entered them into the spreadsheet. The Panel then briefly reviewed and discussed the results. The Panel requested that the results be e-mailed to them for further review and reflection in the evening. Additionally, the Panel requested that a map that shows where each proposal is located be brought in as a point of reference for the next day's meeting. Mr. Peterson said that both requests would be granted.

### **Closing Remarks**

Mr. Peterson stated that he felt good about the Panel's progress thus far and was looking forward to the Panel reaching their consensus recommendation the following day.

### **Public Comment**

Skip Brandt, Commissioner of Idaho County, Idaho, spoke on behalf of the Selway Middle Fork Clearwater proposal. Mr. Brandt explained that the collaboration involved in the Clearwater proposal was born out of necessity, and that collaborators have a history of working well together. He noted that 85% of the land in Idaho County is public land, and not taxable. He said that utilizing this resource is of utmost benefit to the community and will bring much needed jobs to the area. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm by the DFO.

## **Meeting Summary Day 3 (July 22, 2010)**

### **Opening Remarks**

Tom Peterson opened the meeting at 8:30 am, saying that he was looking forward to the outcome of the day's proceedings. He noted that USFS staff had, as requested, brought in a map of the U.S.,

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

showing the location of each National Forest. Mr. Peterson also told the Panel that USDA Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment, Harris Sherman, would be stopping by the meeting to speak to the Panel. Additionally, Mr. Peterson reminded everyone in the room about the prescribed safety plan.

Ms. DuPraw welcomed the Panel back for the third and final day. She noted that this day would be a challenging day, but expressed confidence that the Panel would be able to work out a consensus recommendation. Ms. DuPraw reminded the Panel of the recusal rules, invited Panel reflections on the proceedings, and asked if they wanted to make any changes based on Day II's public comment. Some Panel members expressed concern at the speed of the process, from initial review of the proposals through the Day II prioritization exercise. Many Panel members wished that they were able to read all of the proposals before coming to the meeting. Mr. Peterson remarked that he understood their discomfort, and will work to make the process more spread out next year so as to allow the Panel more time to review the proposals.

### **Under Secretary Harris Sherman**

USDA Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment, Harris Sherman, stopped by to meet the Panel and share his thoughts on forest restoration. After Panel introductions, Under Secretary Sherman thanked the Panel for their hard work throughout the process. Under Secretary Sherman stated that the USFS is focusing more on landscape-scale projects, not "random acts of conservation." He said that this program is aimed at jumpstarting landscape-scale efforts and is looking forward to this Advisory Panel's recommendation as to where the USFS can get its "greatest bang for its buck." He noted that there are 160 million acres of forested land in the US; of that, 60 million acres are in good shape, but the other 100 million need some help. Because it will be costly to restore 100 million acres, the USFS is looking to partnerships with local communities to leverage USFS resources and maximize results. In the future, the Under Secretary hopes to have a discussion with the Panel about how to make the program stronger. The Panel thanked the Under Secretary for coming and indicated that they would like to meet with him next time they are in town for a meeting.

### **Consensus Building on Panel's Recommendation**

Ms. DuPraw reviewed the sideboards for the Panel's recommendation. Specifically, no more than two proposals from any one Region may be selected; at most, the Panel may recommend allocation of up to \$10 million; and the Panel can recommend funding up to ten proposals. USFS staff displayed the spreadsheet with the results of Day II's scoring and prioritization exercise, with the top 10 proposals highlighted. A member of the Panel asked that the highlighting be removed to avoid influencing the Panel's final decision. The Panel agreed and the highlighting was removed.

Members of the Panel spent some time deliberating on how to handle situations where a Panel member who felt they had to refrain from discussion of a particular proposal because their organization had had some involvement with it nevertheless felt that the Panel's discussion of the proposal reflected some

USDA Forest Service  
Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program  
Advisory Panel's Inaugural Meeting: July 20-22, 2010

misunderstanding or mischaracterization. The Panel also had chosen to refrain from introducing into Panel deliberations supplementary information from their personal familiarity with proposals. Therefore, there had been some occasions during deliberations when some Panel members felt conflicted about whether or how to speak up to clarify a perceived misunderstanding. The facilitator proposed that an individual in that situation could be asked to caucus with the Chair to discuss the situation; the Chair could then decide whether to bring the information into the Panel discussion or not. The Panel agreed to try this.

A number of Panel members suggested removing from further consideration the three proposals that did not receive any points in the Day II prioritization process. The Panel agreed and removed the three proposals that did not receive any prioritization points. It was again confirmed that the Panel would look only at FY10 funding when considering the proposals and would not take into consideration the requests from the nine other fiscal years. The Panel then took a 15-minute break.

Upon reconvening, the Panel focused on reducing the number of proposals under consideration from any one Region to no more than two, based on the Omnibus Act. Multiple Region 6 proposals remained under consideration. The Panel discussed each of the Region 6 proposals. Phil Rigdon recused himself from the discussion of the Tapash Sustainable Forest Collaborative. The Panel then voted on the Region 6 proposals, using a similar prioritization process as they had on Day II. In this instance, the Panel received only two Post-It notes and was asked to choose their top two Region 6 proposals. Phil Rigdon recused himself from the voting process.

As a result of the vote, there was a three way tie. Mr. Rigdon was brought back into the room for a procedural discussion about breaking the tie. Consensus was formed by the Panel that they would revote, again receiving two Post-It notes. Mr. Rigdon again recused himself from the vote. After the tie breaking vote, the Deschutes Skyline and Tapash Sustainable Forest Collaborative proposals came out as the top two Region 6 proposals. The Panel took a 20 minute break and reconvened at 11:30 am.

Upon returning from the break, Ms. DuPraw informed the Panel that total requested funds for the thirteen remaining proposals in FY10 came to \$10.3 million. Of the remaining thirteen proposals, three were from Region 3. The Panel discussed the three Region 3 proposals in the same way that they had discussed the five Region 6 proposals. Panel members received two Post-It notes to vote on the two proposals from Region 3 they thought were the best. The Panel chose the 4 Forest Restoration Initiative and Southwest Jemez Mountains as the top two proposals from Region 3.

Ms. DuPraw turned the Panel's attention to the remaining twelve proposals. She suggested that the Panel think about the two proposals with the lowest ranks of the twelve, and ask themselves whether there was any reason to consider moving either of these up into the top ten. The Panel members discussed the "bottom two," and reviewed the associated flip chart from the day before, but were unable to find a reason to move either of them into the top ten.

## **“Top Ten” Recommendation**

The top ten proposals are listed below in alphabetical order.

- 4 Forest Restoration Initiative
- Accelerating Longleaf Pine Restoration in NE FL
- Colorado Front Range
- Deschutes Skyline
- Longleaf Pine
- Selway-Middle Fork Clearwater project
- Southwest Crown of the Continent
- Southwest Jemez Mountains
- Tapash Sustainable Forest
- Uncompahgre Plateau

The Panel's recommendation is to fully fund the FY10 requests of the above 10 proposals. Mr. Peterson thanked the Panel for their recommendation, and said that he hopes to send his official recommendation to the Chief within 7-10 days of the meeting. The proposal authors will most likely receive formal notification as to whether or not their respective proposals have been funded for FY10 in August.

The Panel took a one-hour lunch break at 12:30 pm. Ms. DuPraw encouraged them to use the opportunity to reflect upon process improvements for next year. She indicated that there would be time to elicit these suggestions in the afternoon.

## **Selection of Chairperson(s) Going Forward**

Mr. Peterson asked the Panel to decide whether they would like to keep Mr. Kahn as Chair going forward, or if they would like to elect another person or persons. Consensus was formed that the Panel would elect Co-chairs. Mr. Kahn supported this decision and observed that it would alleviate the burden placed on the chairperson. A number of Panel members said that they would like the selected Co-chairs to have diverse interests and genders. Dr. Melissa Savage was nominated as the Co-chair, along with Mr. Kahn. The Panel affirmed their selection by consensus, and Mr. Peterson officially appointed them Co-Chairs.

## **Media Policy**

The discussion turned to how the Panel would like to address inquiries from the media. The Panel agreed that the Co-chairs and/ or DFO would field media inquiries addressed to the Panel. Agency-level inquiries would go through Mr. Peterson and would be handled by USDA communications staff. The Panel broke for a 10 minute recess and reconvened at 3:10 pm.

## Review of Proposal Process

Panel members had a number of ideas as to how the proposal process may be improved for the next year. Those voiced during this meeting can be found in Attachment G. Mr. Peterson encouraged the Panel to send any additional suggestions to him so they may be considered in preparing for the Panel's next meeting. A number of Panel members expressed the desire for more scientists to be at the meetings to discuss the impact of specific restoration activities on an ecosystem; Mr. Peterson stated that he will work with the Panel to find an appropriate solution. Mr. Peterson and the Co-chairs will work together to organize the next meeting.

## Closing Remarks

Ms. DuPraw thanked the Panel for their hard work and patience over the past three days. She encouraged the Panel members to fill out the meeting evaluation forms so that the process can be strengthened for future rounds. She noted that the facilitation team will produce a summary of the meeting proceedings, which will be posted to the USFS website within 90 days of the meeting.

The Panel indicated that they think it is important for USFS to provide proposal authors feedback. This year, however, Panel members recommended conveying general themes with respect to strengths and weaknesses, rather than proposal-specific feedback. They expressed the hope that in future years, proposal-specific feedback could be provided.

Mr. Peterson expressed appreciation for two individuals who were not able to come to the meeting. Rita Brown organized the travel logistics for each of the Panel members, and her work helped bring everyone together on short notice. Bill Timko, Deputy Director for Forest Management, played a key role in planning the meeting, and will be very interested to hear the Panel's recommendation. Mr. Peterson thanked the Panel for their dedication in making this process a success and for sharing their knowledge with the group. He credited the talent amassed in the room for the Panel's strong performance. He thanked the Panel again for taking a week out of their schedules and convening in Washington and wished them safe travels on the way home. The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 pm.

## **Attachment A: Meeting Attendees**

### **Panel Members Present**

Ms. Julia Altemus  
Ms. Maia J. Enzer  
Ms. Karen Hardigg  
Mr. Brian Kahn, Esq. (Interim Panel Chair)  
Mr. James Earl Kennamer  
Ms. Paige Lewis  
Mr. Tom Peterson (Designated Federal Official)  
Dr. Brent Racher  
Mr. Philip Rigdon  
Dr. Melissa Savage  
Mr. Todd Schulke  
Mr. Gary Severson  
Mr. Ray Vaughan, Esq.

### **USDA Forest Service Staff**

Ms. Lauren Lesch  
Ms. Sandy Henning  
Ms. Danelle Harrison

### **Facilitation Team**

Ms. Marci DuPraw, Facilitator  
Mr. Mark Vogelgesang, Note Taker

### **Meeting Observers**

Mr. Henry Bastian  
Mr. Eric Berg  
Mr. Skip Brandt  
Mr. Rick Brazell  
Ms. Cecilia Clavet  
Mr. Keith Clu  
Mr. Frank Fay  
Mr. Rich Frara  
Mr. Dale Harris  
Ms. Anne Lew  
Ms. Bethany Lumbert  
Ms. Robyn Miller  
Lara Polansky  
Mr. Mitch Silvers  
Mr. Alan Unger

### **Guest Speakers**

Mr. Jack Fisher, Esq. (USDA Office of Ethics)  
Mr. George Vargas (USDA Forest Service Acting FOIA/PA Officer)  
Mr. Sherman Harris, USDA Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment

## **Attachments B through G**

**Please see separate files distributed with this summary:**

- Attachment B: CFLRP Meeting Agenda, July 20-22, 2010
- Attachment C: Ethics Briefing
- Attachment D: Overview of Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009
- Attachment E: FACA Overview
- Attachment F: Written Public Comments
- Attachment G: Suggested Process Improvements