CFLRP Peer Learning Session
March 15, 2011
Implementation Issues

Due to technical problems, a recast of the March 15th peer learning session is not available. We apologize for this because the presentations and discussion were excellent. The following is a short summary of the topics discussed on the session.

Presenters:
- Hal Gibbs, Colorado Front Range
- Phil Chang, Deschutes Skyline
- Scott Brennan, Debbie Austin, Joe Kerkvliet, Amber Kamps, and Gary Burnett, Southwestern Crown

The major topics presenters addressed include:

- Describe key objectives of the project
- What strategies/mechanisms are you using or do you plan to use to implement the project to achieve the objectives (timber sales, stewardship contracts/agreements, other)?
- How is your project assessing or measuring local benefit?
- How are decisions about implementation made? Who is involved? (organizational structure)
- Describe how NEPA is managed in terms of implementation of on-the-ground treatments.
- What kind of support do you need (answer from whatever perspective you wish)?

The slides from each presentation are attached.
PowerPoint Presentation #1

Colorado Front Range Landscape Restoration Initiative Implementation
Colorado Front Range
Landscape Restoration
Initiative Implementation

Arapahoe and Roosevelt National Forests
and Pike and San Isabel National Forests
Objectives

- Establish **mosaic** of forest density, size and age
- Substantially decrease **density** of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir in lower montane, favoring ponderosa pine.
- Remove ladder **fuels** and reduce continuous tree canopy.
- Increase use and effectiveness of **prescribed fire**.
- Increase meadows, patchiness and herbaceous **understory**.
- Protect and enhance **old growth** conditions within hrv; Reduce opportunity for establishment and spread of **invasive plants**; Decommission, realign and/or restore **roads** and trails as appropriate; Strategically place treatments to maximize **size and effectiveness** on the landscape.
Strategies/mechanisms to implement projects

- **Primary contract mechanism-**
  - Front Range 10-year Long-term Stewardship Contract
- **Secondary contract mechanism-**
  - BLM IDIQ contract
  - Service Contracts
- Prescribed fire
- Force Account Fuels crews
How measuring local benefits?

- Front Range LTSC awarded to Colorado company
- Currently only using tools available on web-site TREAT
- Multiparty Monitoring group will be developing economic monitoring process
How are decisions about implementation made? Who participates?

- Front Range Roundtable is collaborative group
  - 2006 RT identified 1.5 million acres needing restoration (lower montane) or community protection treatments

- CFLR proposal based upon areas in need of restoration treatment
  - 2010 to 2012 treatment selected by FS (prep constraints)
  - 2013+- RT currently discussing
How is NEPA managed in terms of implementation?

- NEPA complete through 2015 at maximum funding levels
- NEPA 75% complete through 2019 at maximum funding levels
What kind of support do you need?

- Funding uncertainty creating difficulties - must prepare task orders/contracts for potential maximum funding
- Tracking of matching funding - adds new layer of workplans
- Personnel funding and management - no CFLR funding so charging to appropriate funds for TO preparation - accounting adjustments; conflicts with other programs (other partnerships; bark beetles)
- Simplification of reporting - needs to be derived from current databases
PowerPoint Presentation #2

Deschutes Skyline CFLR Project Implementation
Deschutes Skyline CFLR Project

Photo Credit: Aerial Images for Deschutes Land Trust
• Move forest back towards a resilient condition within HRV.
• Reduce risk of high intensity fire in WUI, drinking watersheds and proposed Skyline Community Forest.
• Support watershed restoration and reintroduction of anadromous fish.
• Preserve scenic quality for recreationists.
• Provide restoration jobs and wood fiber for small diameter enterprises
## Planned Treatments for 2010-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinning with biomass removal</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-commercial Thinning w/ associated fuels treatment</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Fuels Reduction:</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed Burning:</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Passage Enhancements</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stream Channel Restoration</td>
<td>2 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetland Enhancement/Establishment</td>
<td>55 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riparian Thinning</td>
<td>100 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Decommissioning/Closure</td>
<td>150 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invasive Plant Treatments</td>
<td>6,600 acres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implementation Challenges:
High Densities of Small Trees, Community/WUI, Short Term Resource Impacts
Implementation Choices
Role of Stewardship Contracting
Stewardship Increases Utilization
Multiparty Monitoring
Stewardship Challenges

Support Needed in These Areas

• Cancellation Ceiling / Up Front Costs
• Contractor Capitalization Costs
• Increasing Agency Staff Familiarity
• Need for Fuels and Timber Coordination
Questions
PowerPoint Presentation #3

Southwestern Crown of the Continent CFLR Project Implementation
Implementing CFLR Projects in the Southwestern Crown of the Continent

Scott Brennan (TWS), Debbie Austin (USFS), Mo Bookwalter (NWC), Gary Burnett (BC), Amber Kamps (USFS)
Location
Goals

• Restore forest and aquatic ecosystem function
• Improve landscape-level biodiversity, resiliency, and adaptability
• Enhance recreational experiences
• Reduce risks for those living in the wildland-urban interface (WUI)
• Bolster local, rural economies
Objectives

• Within the WUI:
  – Reduce the risk of wildfire by removing fuels, especially small-diameter trees, while maintaining forest structure to protect ecosystem components
Objectives

• **Outside the WUI:**
  – restore forest structure processes and resiliency
  – promote diversity
  – establish a mosaic pattern consistent with the mixed-severity fire regime where appropriate
  – maximize retention of large trees
  – reintroduce low-severity and low-intensity fire where appropriate
  – remove unnecessary roads
Objectives

• Maintain or restore forest roads to protect water quality
  – Employ Best Management Practices (BMPs) techniques to reduce or prevent sedimentation into lakes and streams
  – Maintain access for fire management and suppression, recreation, and other administrative needs

• Evaluate and adjust future desired conditions relative to the sustainability of forests under predicted climate change
Objectives

• Improve watershed health by reestablishing natural stream channels and riparian environments, removing barriers to fish migration, and replacing inadequate culverts and bridges;

• In vegetative treatments, where appropriate, maximize the productive use of forest products.
Key Outputs

- 73,000 acres treated for fuels and vegetative restoration, with 50% commercial removal
- 81,600 acres of weed treatment
- 3 fish barriers installed to prevent non-natives from moving upstream
- 3000 acres of lakes restored with removal of non-native fish species
Key Outputs

• 937 miles of stream restored
• 9500 wildlife security acres restored
• 650 miles of road BMP work and maintenance
• 400 miles of road storage or decommissioning
• 149 stream crossing structure upgrades
• 280 miles trail improvements
• 6 trailhead improvements
• 33 campsites rehabilitated and restored
• 40 acres placer mine reclamation
• 50 miles of trail decommissioning
Mechanisms for Implementation

- Contracts
- Agreements
- Force accounts
Assessing Local Benefit

- Change in community attitudes about fire as a forest management tool
- Costs of road decommissioning and remediation to inform prioritization
- Effects of fuel treatments on NFS land on private landowner fire-wise actions

*Photo courtesy US Fish and Wildlife Service*
Assessing Local Benefit

- Community preferences about restoration
- Changes/benefits to local contractors
- Fire management cost reduction due to fuel treatments
Community Outreach

- **Contractor Workshops**
  - Facilitate planning and investment
  - Provide training and access to resources on SWCC contracting
  - Solicit contractors’ knowledge on restoration and fuel projects
  - Educate contractors on the importance of making the economic case for SWCC to improve funding prospects
  - Workshop scheduled for April 2011 in Seeley Lake, MT.
Deciding How to Implement Projects

• Prioritization Committee is developing list of priority areas for treatment within the landscape

• FY 2010 and 2011
  – Chose “NEPA-ready” projects that are consistent with FLRA and the goals of the SWCC.

• FY 2012 and beyond
  – Projects are being developed collaboratively and will be consistent with our goals and objectives.
  – Progress toward output goals will be assessed annually.
  – Treatments will be adapted according to the results of our monitoring program.
Who is Involved?

- SWCC Members and Participants
- Partner Groups
  - Swan Forest Stewardship Committee
  - Lolo Restoration Committee
  - Lincoln Restoration Committee
The Helena National Forest (HNF) is proposing the Stonewall Vegetation Project. A watershed analysis was completed by the Forest Service (FS) for the Stonewall vegetation project area. This project is proposed to be brought forward to the FS by the Lincolns Working Group (LWG) of the Montana (209C) and the third area is a product of the watershed analysis. This analysis covers the proposed actions associated with these areas are consistent with the KOF Forest Plan, particularly 8,448 acres adjacent to the community of Lincoln. The analysis will be done post-stakeholder.

Purpose and Need
The purpose and need for the project includes:
- Improve the aesthetics of vegetation structure and species along the edge of the landscape that is diverse, resilient, and sustainable to wildlife and humans.
- Restore fire behavior to achieve community protection while preventing conditions that favor the establishment of fuels as a natural presence on the landscape.
- Enhance & restore apex, western larch, and ponderosa pine species and habitats.
- Utilize economic value of trees with economic returns.
- Integrate restoration with socioeconomic considerations.

The Proposed Action
The proposed action includes using both commercial and prescribed fire treatments to achieve the desired condition. These actions would include vegetation harvest, prescribed fire, precommercial thinning, and prescribed burning. The proposed actions are further described in the Proposed Treatment Table. In addition, specific site-by-site information can be found on our website or by request.

The proposed action also includes using prescribed fire and tree cutting in two residues areas (Bear Marshall, Inagan Composite District). Please see a summary map on our website.

Approximately five miles of road would be built then harvested immediately following track removal. Commerical harvest and road construction would not occur in the two residues areas.

Implementing the proposed actions could include the use of hand tools, brush beaters, and cable logging equipment.

Post-treatment activities would include underburning, silt preparation, burning, track removal, hand logging, and tree planting and monitoring of natural regeneration.

In all the areas proposed, the opening may result in 40 acres due to the amount of timbered area by the herbicides and the resulting need for regeneration.