

Northern Spotted Owl Implementation Team (NSOIT)
Meeting Minutes
June 24, 2011

Attending: Bridget Moran, Shawn Cantrell, David Whipple, Kevin Godbout

Absent: Bettina von Hagen

Others: Cindy Mitchell, Paula Swedeen, Bob Meier

Staff: Andy Hayes, Lauren Burnes

Call to Order

Bridget - Reviewed draft agenda

- a) at Bridget's request added topic of Bob Meier's proposal re: RCO appraisal process

Member Introductions

- Bridget - lack of progress over last few months; cited lack of staff support and legislative session
- Introduced Andy Hayes and Lauren Burnes as staff newly dedicated to the project
 - David offered appreciation for DNR efforts to add staff power to assist NSOIT

Proposal from Bob Meier

- RCO is reviewing their appraisal process, "go entirely with federal yellow book standards or no?"
 - Bob requested for the RCO process to be changed to be more like RHOSP in appraising land for its full "unencumbered" value
 - not just strictly buy conservation lands (e.g. old growth) but also adjacent supporting lands
 - has an appointment with Bill Robinson to get his perspective; extended an invitation to NSOIT to attend
 - Bob is trying to set up a process: where someone can get full value for timber; "fee ownership is the best thing for conservation"
- Request:
 - (1) Would NSOIT support the RCO appraisal process change?
 - (2) Could DNR develop an RFP for NSO and murrelet habitat conservation under RHOSP despite DNR not having funding from Leg? (We need to demonstrate the need so to gain funding)
- Questions/Comments
 - **Shawn:** getting support from Bill Robinson would go a long way for conservation groups
 - Concern: Would section 6 funding/federal funding be complicated by 2 appraisal methods?
 - **Bob:** Could be different parts for different grants. Problem with Sec 6 \$ - when state dollars are used for the match, they can only use the yellow book match
 - **Paula:** are you open to flexibility in evaluation process? may help state evaluate conservation benefits across projects
 - **Cindy:** (relative to proposed pilot project) asked about the status of the Section 6 grant?
 - **Bob:** judgment was made that – starting with younger stands – the "benefits were not immediate enough"
 - **David:** expressed that it's important that habitat types are identified on the ground. The role of the technical team is to define/help define strategic contributions on the ground

for NSO; once the geographic locations are identified, then we can figure out the mechanisms for the ground

- **Bridget:** regarding encouraging DNR to develop an RFP, no capital \$ for RHOSP
 - The NSOIT will discuss and get back to Bob
 - Lauren will go with Bob to RCO and also study appraisal process/RCO report

Work Plan & Charter

Endorse a Voluntary Incentives program for landowners to achieve conservation goals

- **Paula:** It's really important not to lose what HB 2541 can help us accomplish
- **Bridget:** NW Environmental Forum happened last week – can we test a marketplace and enact a transaction to pay for ecosystem services?
 - The driver was really water, but we're open to bundling services
 - (1) Snohomish and (2) Nisqually were two locations identified
 - Could think about bundling services besides water
 - Good mix of people and drive to do a project in Nisqually
- **Kevin:** Nisqually is the right place to do it, lots of drivers in place; will be hard, but likely to produce something. Find some foundation money?
- **Paula:** we need to think about broader ideas; e.g., broadening WWRP?
 - The leg. report due for HB 2541 is a good vehicle for broad recommendations
- **Kevin:** may need a status update to Board re: encumbered trust land transfer program (HB 1484, 2009) funded this year by legislature
- **Paula:** will go to Madison Conference and ask about ecosystem service markets; will report back to group
- **Bridget:** ask group to send info to DNR re: updates and staff will compile and share with the group (need updates by July 15 for the August 9 FPB meeting)

Landowner outreach

- Not ripe – we should wait until we have something to share before we do outreach
- Cindy expressed interest in being involved in this piece when the time is right

Promote Barred Owl control experiments and research

- Talk directly to Robin Bound (or Joe Buchanan) of USFWS for an update on the DEIS

Pilot/Flagship Projects

- **Bridget:** can we get more of an explanation of pilot/flagship?
- **Shawn:** will coordinate with Bob to send update to work plan on pilot project/Section 6; he will talk to Joanna Stellini @ FWS
- **Paula:** Entiat is still a possibility; idea of Board pilot rule was to promote habitat creation
 - Idea to see if prescriptions can be written that allow thinning for conservation
 - Application for Conservation Innovation Grant failed; EQIP as another possible source, but needs help getting it done (Lauren to help?)
 - Longview Fiber (Chris Lipton) still open to participating
 - Paula to connect Lauren and Andy with Chris Lipton to follow up re: opportunities; market conditions
 - **Bridget:** staff to track grants, organize a team for Longview, apply for grants
 - **Kevin:** will check back with Brookfield; hemlock chip prices are pretty good/is there a different break-even point from previous?
 - DNR/DFW need to participate in ID team
 - Board language is specific about process and ID team membership (additional Board language necessary?)

- Idea for ID Team to develop some programmatic guidance that then can be applied more efficiently across programs
- Currently, we're constrained by rule language because FPB ID'd Longview as a location, we may need a rule change
- **Paula:** Would DFW help with ID team?
 - **David:** Hard to say, staff is really stretched; will look into staff capacity for ID team participation
- **Kevin:** Are there SEPA rulemaking issues?

Technical Team

- **Question: what about environmental economists on the tech team?**
- **Paula:** Is a one-day workshop enough? If the federal monitoring team has not run the model in ways that will answer our questions, then would they be able to conduct more modeling runs?
- **Shawn:** court order states that final recovery plan has to be released next Friday (July 1)
 - Asked Ken Berg about the detail of modeling - He thought it could help the team with its work; If there are specific questions and modeling runs, then Ken will give the information to the modeling team
- **Bridget:** modeling probably not as precise as we need, but we could do additional analysis
 - How do we marry the biology with economics? Why have the bios speak with the economists? How can they help the conversation?
- **Kevin:** need to have the economists on the tech team with the biologists; we need more than just where to put the \$, it needs to be driven by a ranking system. We have these places, so what now? Economists can tell us, "if you did it this way, is there a stacking of benefits?" (**Example:** does a certain spot have less susceptibility to fires?)
- **Cindy:** When Bettina goes out to make a purchase, these are the things she thinks about
- **Kevin:** Do we need to revisit the tech team list? The real modeling will be complete by fall when critical habitat is determined. We will need a liaison to the group working on the modeling effort. Won't be this summer.
- **Bridget:** If we had the tech team formed already, we could then have the tech team briefed by Brian Woodbridge.
- **Paula:** Our questions are different than those answered by critical habitat designations
- **Bridget:** Lets scrub the list with comments on possible tech team membership
 - Lauren and Andy will email an updated list of the tech team asking for feedback
- **Bob:** if landowners aren't integrally involved, it won't work
- **Bridget:** Next Step – get a meeting with Brian Woodbridge and Tech Folks, if not soon enough
- **Kevin:** If we don't get together again before the next FP Board meeting, we should set up a conference call before FPB meeting to go over packet contents