

# Community Workshop Notes

## June 29, 2004

### Burns, Oregon



**Meeting Facilitator:** Lois Schwennesen  
**Meeting Recorder:** Kathy Campbell  
**Meeting Participants:** 9 participants signed in

**Co-Convenors:** Steve Grasty, Harney County Judge

**Forest Service Officials:** Margaret Bailey, Emigrant Creek District Ranger, Roger Williams, Malheur National Forest Supervisor, Bill Supulski, Malheur National Forest Planner

**Team Members:** Dave Schmitt, Elaine Kohrman, Trish Callaghan, Bob Gecy, Bob Mason, Bruce Countryman, Tami Paulsen, Dee McConnell, and Kathy Campbell

**Meeting Summary/Objectives:** The team and the co-conveners held a series of community workshops to introduce the forest plan revision process to the public and invite them to help define a vision and desired condition for the Blue Mountains. The beginning of the session was held in an open house format with each team specialist providing a display and discussion on the Current Management Situation and a sign-up sheet to have a copy of the Current Management Situation Report mailed to anyone interested when it is ready. Team Leader Dave Schmitt gave a PowerPoint presentation about the process, followed by a short question and answer session. The second half of the workshop consisted of the neutral facilitator leading the participants through an exercise to identify what participants “want their forests for” to create a vision and desired conditions for the Blue Mountains national forests.

#### **Question & Answer Sessions:**

- Q:** How do you get additional ideas into the vision exercise? For example: Need to understand cultural goals and western culture, some are 8<sup>th</sup> generation here.
- A:** *Information used to create the vision will be collected at the community workshops as well as through U.S. mail, by phone, and through our website. We track all comments and consider them in drafting the vision and desired conditions.*
- Q:** Is the vision going to be the same across the three forests?
- A:** *We plan to have one vision that addresses the entire Blue Mountains. We are also planning to have specific visions for each geographic area, depending on the information provided by the public; it is likely the geographic areas will be mostly the same as the greater Blue Mountains vision, but there may be a few site specific differences.*
- Q:** Do you think this vision will be similar to what is in the current Forest Plans?
- A:** *It will depend on the input we get and how we incorporate other analysis efforts. It will certainly look a lot different because it will be in a different format, using the sustainability framework.*
- Q:** Will this revision “wipe out” or replace current decision? Will the revision make site-specific decisions?
- A:** *The Forest Plans will not make site-specific decisions. Any current decisions will remain unless they go through another site specific analysis process and are changed by the local line officer.*
- Q:** What about the Ochoco National Forest? Forest Plan Amendment #14 allows integrated noxious weed treatment – will this revision change that? At what point do we make sure that this amendment is incorporated, hopefully across the Blues?
- A:** *The revision effort will only change the part of the Ochoco Forest Plan that applies to the Snow Mountain area that is now managed by the Malheur National Forest. We will address noxious weeds in our revised plan and if any part of Amendment #14 is appropriate for use we can incorporate it into the Proposed Action for the revised Forest Plans. The Forest Plans, however, will not make site-specific decisions. There is also a regional effort that is working on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to cover treatment of noxious weeds. That should be done before we complete the revision effort and we will need to bring that into the revised plan also.*
- Q:** Will each participant be put on a mailing list and be provided data and information?
- A:** *Yes. Everyone who signed the attendance sheet will be put on our mailing list and receive future notices and information that we send out.*

**Q:** Can we get a hard copy of documents to each county?

**A:** Yes. We will look at ways to have documents available at county offices.

**Q:** What role will the Forest Service Regional Office play? Is the Regional Forester the decision-maker?

**A:** Under the current regulations, the Regional Forester is the responsible official who will make the final decision on the revised plan. For decisions of this nature (those directly affecting the forest), the Regional Forester depends heavily on their input. The three Forest Supervisors will work very closely with the revision team and be a part of every aspect of the process. The three Forest Supervisors will be attending workshops as time allows and are available then. The Revision Team is sharing the outcomes of the Community Workshops with them and will keep them informed throughout the process.

**Questions/Issues/Concerns shared by people at display tables during the open house portion:**

**Handouts:** The Forest Plan Revision Team; Components of a Forest Plan; What a Plan Does and Does Not Do; Workshop Schedule; Thumbnails of PowerPoint Presentation;

**Table - Social and Economics /Criteria and Indicators:**

**Handouts:** Draft Criteria and Indicators

- ♦ The forest is my sanctuary; I go there for renewal and peace of mind.
- ♦ I think about the forest as going to the woods, it is just a 15-minute drive away.
- ♦ We need a different way to describe social and economic conditions and relationships of the forest to communities.

**Table - Recreation & Access:**

**Handouts:** Inventoried Roadless Areas & Wilderness

- ♦ Silver Creek roadless area needs to be on the map.
- ♦ Utey Butte wildlife emphasis area needs work.
- ♦ WSR and IRA for Malheur River; questions about the size of the upstream area.

**Table - Hydrology/Watersheds:**

- ♦ Some of the 303d-listed streams appear not to be mapped correctly.
- ♦ There are few true “perennial” streams on the south part of the Malheur N.F.
- ♦ Existing grazing standards are too general; how will they be modified?” can they be modified for
- ♦ Local site conditions under the new forest plan?

**Table - Vegetation Management:**

- ♦ Will we still use HRV?
- ♦ Habitat effectiveness model for elk is not working and there are too many definitions of cover.
- ♦ Will we still use the Habitat Effectiveness Index model?
- ♦ Will we still use the management area concept?
- ♦ Will we still have designated old growth areas?
- ♦ Will we still use the eastside screens and will we re-evaluate them?
- ♦ The timber emphasis management area is not really managed for timber once all the standards (existing plus amendments) are overlaid.
- ♦ Need flexibility in management (silvicultural prescriptions) for different site potentials.
- ♦ Need more watershed “wall to wall” plans coordinated across different ownerships.
- ♦ Need more juniper management.

**Table - Biological Sciences:**

- ♦ The Forest Service needs to develop a proactive management strategy for juniper. Currently, they are doing very little forcing the adjacent private landowners to shoulder the entire burden.
- ♦ There needs to be better cooperation with adjacent landowners—develop watershed management plans that ignore land ownership boundaries.
- ♦ Overall watershed health is very important.
- ♦ The Forest Service needs to provide for economic sustainability

**Vision Exercise: These were comments made during the open discussion time.**

This portion of the exercise evolved into another Question and Answer session and is covered above.

### **Group Critique of the meeting:**

#### **What worked well and what we learned -**

- ◆ We all know each other very well and attend meetings on different issues
- ◆ Came to defend out place
- ◆ Things are hung up in the system
- ◆ Won't accomplish anything if you don't try
- ◆ People are experience, haven't given up
- ◆ Hope of affecting change for the best
- ◆ Concern too much to articulate vision for 15 years in one night
- ◆ Need more informal gatherings and discussion from other formats and places in communities
- ◆ People are more issue-oriented not vision-oriented

#### **What could be changed -**

- ◆ Forest Supervisors need to carry input/message to upper levels that local decision need not be changed at upper levels
- ◆ Difficult to incorporate the western culture into the planning process
- ◆ Include seniors and disable people into this process
- ◆ Need more advertising: Tag teams and radio talk shows, mailing list
- ◆ Better communication besides internet and email for rural sites
- ◆ People need to see results
- ◆ Why bother because of lawsuits and other processes
- ◆ Get copies of table information, especially the displays boards about "systems approach" to the county for dissemination

### **Comments from the Critique Forms:**

Workshop participants answered the following eight questions on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree):

I understand what a Forest Plan is, and the revision process that was described to me tonight. **(3.50)**

I plan to attend most or all of the Blue Mountains Community Collaborative Workshops in my area. **(4.2)**

It is important that the public is involved at this early stage of Forest Plan revision. **(4.33)**

The workshop format made it comfortable to discuss public land issues with people I don't know. **(3.33)**

The workshop format made it comfortable to discuss public land issues with people who hold different viewpoints. **(3.5)**

I am comfortable contributing to discussions in a large group setting (15 people or more). **(2.67)**

I am comfortable contributing to discussions in a small group setting (6 to 8 people). **(3.17)**

I am comfortable using maps to enhance the group discussions about concerns regarding the area. **(4.0)**

They were also asked:

#### **Is there anything in particular that you liked or didn't like about the workshop?**

- ◆ You forgot the Ochoco
- ◆ Because of limited pre-information, I was not prepared

#### **Was the information presented helpful to you? Is there anything that you would like to know more about?**

- ◆ Yes

#### **Any other comments about the workshop?**

- ◆ Regarding whether the workshop format was comfortable to discuss issues - "so far still in the vision thing"