

Notes from SBEADMR Working Group Meeting

November 12, 2014

The third meeting of the SBEADMR Working Group was held on Thursday, November 12, 2014 in the Pioneer Room at the Montrose County Fairgrounds.

I. Follow Up on Questions Raised Regarding the Meaning of the Stated Goals of SBEADMR

A. Clarify the Meaning of Stated Goals

Forest Service (FS) Planner Sam Staley reported that the Q&A was being revised to address concerns that were raised at previous meeting regarding the discrepancy in definitions or meaning of goals from one document to another, i.e. NOI, 7/29/13 scoping letter, and Q&A document. The revised Q&A document will indicate the date of revision and will be available on the FS website prior to the next meeting. It was suggested that revisions be highlighted so that readers could go directly to new revisions as opposed to reading through the full document to find them.

B. Provide GIS Map as Visual Aid to Discussion on Goals/Objectives

As requested at the previous meeting, the Forest Service (FS) prepared a GIS map that showed the overlap between the tentatively suitable timber acres forest-wide and the opportunity areas identified for treatment in the Draft Alternative 3 WUI analysis areas as a visual aid for discussion. FS Planner Sam Staley explained the map legend and potential acres that could be impacted by the proposed action. After the initial presentation, members gathered around hard copies of the map to discuss its content and identify additional information/layers that might enhance the maps.

Each group reported out on questions the map generated for future discussion, additional information that would be helpful and suggestions for additional layers as follows:

- 1) Additional geographic/topographic information: plot towns, major roadways, water features, natural landmarks and potential sites for use of forest project, e.g. mills, power plant, etc.
- 2) Additional layers: updated vegetation layers; aerial survey data; wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors; big game winter concentration and calving areas; areas of existing dead or dying timber; design criteria for roads
- 3) Questions Generated:
 - Can any other entity/effort “trump” the proposed hazard tree removal areas, e.g. WAPA, fire regime, etc.?
 - How will trees other than spruce-fir that pose a hazard to a road be treated in the hazard tree treatment areas?
 - What is the buffer distance on either side of existing roads?
 - How much forest product will be come out of the WUI analysis area that would be marketable?

- What is the proximity of proposed treatment areas to the potential markets for the product, e.g. mills, in terms of feasibility of recovery?

Much discussion followed on the extent of additional layers that were suggested and at what point are the different layers the most beneficial – at this landscape scale or at the project specific scale? Given the multitude of layers requested member Phil Seligman offered to explore the possibility of creating a public interactive GIS site that could provide access to a repository of different map layers. Such an approach could eliminate duplicity of requests to the FS for map layers. If this is possible, a demonstration of the interactive site would be presented at a future working group meeting.

At the conclusion of this agenda item, the group agreed that the meaning of the public safety and recovery goals in the context of the proposed action was clear; a discussion on the goal of resiliency was scheduled for the next meeting.

II. Refine Project Objectives – discussion tabled

III. Follow Up on Working Group Expectations/Ground Rules

In the interest of time, it was agreed to table discussion of ground rules until the next meeting. Copies of the Code of Conduct developed by the Utah Forest Restoration Working Group will be distributed as an example of ground rules that might serve as a “starting point” for the discussion. All members were encouraged to bring other examples of ground rules to the next meeting.

In regard to establishing what constitutes membership in the working group, it was the consensus of those present that individuals who had attended one or more of the first three meetings should be considered a “member” in terms of having a “say” in any agreements that the group may reach or recommendations/suggestions that may be presented to the FS. It was also suggested that each individual/group represented be able to designate an alternate in the event they could not attend a meeting. Chris Miller will compile a list of those individuals who have attended the meetings to date and other individuals who just wish to be kept informed of the group’s efforts.

IV. Discuss Other Issues to be Presented to Working Group in Near Future

- 1) Focused Discussion on the Adaptive Management Approach to Proposed Treatments
- 2) Socio-Economic Issues
 - a. Norm Birtcher offered to put together a presentation on question of “What is Existing Industry’s Capacity to Help Implement Draft Alternatives #2, #3, and #4 including Best Management Practices in the Field?”

VI. Schedule Next Meeting

When: Thursday, December 11, 2014
 Where: Pioneer Room, Montrose County Fairgrounds
 Time: 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM (note change to morning meeting time)

Susan Hansen
 Facilitator