

**Meeting of the Board of
Ferry County Commissioners
Forest Plan Revision Public Input Meeting
Tuesday January 13th, 2017 1:00 PM**

**Location: Tri county Economic Development District 986 S Main St. Colville, WA 99114
Meeting Room**

Introduction of Attendees:

1. Amanda Rowton, Clerk of the Board, commissioners@co.ferry.wa.us
2. Mike Blankenship, FC Commissioner District 3, 6jment@gmail.com
3. Nathan Davis, FC Commissioner District 2, ndavis@co.ferry.wa.us
4. Jeff Koffel, TEDD, jkoffel@teddonline.com
5. Tiana Luke, Conservation NW/NEWFC, tluke@conservationnw.org
6. Maurice Williams, NEWFC
7. Steve Parker, Stevens County, sparker@co.stevens.wa.us
8. Steve Kiss, Pend Oreille County Commissioner, skis@pendoreille.org
9. Gloria Flora, NEWFC – SOS, oflora@s-o-solutions.org
10. Rodney Smoldon, USFS, rsmoldon@fs.fed.us
11. Dave Hedrick, Ferry County, ferryco.3@gmail.com
12. Gary Nielsen, TCMRA & SC PLAC, grnielsen@ultraplix.com
13. Scott Nielsen, Cattle Producers, rsnielsen@plixtel.com
14. Kurtis Vaagen, Vaagen Brothers, kvaagen@vaagenbros.com
15. Nancy Harshman, Back Country Horseman, nancyhars47@gmail.com
16. Dolly Watkins, Ferry County Back Country Horseman, dollyw@rcabletv.com
17. Dick Dunton, NEWFC, LRdunton@centurytv.net
18. Matt Scott, Vaagen/NEWFC, mscott@vaagenbros.com
19. Johnna Exner, Ferry county Commissioner District 1
20. Mike Peterson, NEWFC & Lands Council, mpeterson@landscouncil.org
21. Tim Coleman, NEWFC/KRCG, tcoleman@kettlerange.org
22. Karen Skoog, Pend Oreille Commissioner
23. Wes McCart, Stevens County Commissioner, wmccart@co.stevens.wa.us

Old Conversation Recap

The meeting was opened at 1:05 PM by Ferry County Commissioner Mike Blankenship.

Steve Parker asked if we could review our previous agreements. Production targets were discussed and Mr. Parker asked if everyone agreed on production targets. (No one disagreed) The primary interest is in forest health. He asked if we agree regarding the grazing allotments.

Scott Nielsen talked about disagreeing with the Forest Plan Revision options. He doesn't support any of the options regarding grazing.

Mike Peterson discussed the possibility of smaller groups to review stubble height.

Scott Nielsen said that his problem with the plan is that he feels that it is going to have an impact on the grazing allotments.

Rodney Smolden said that he doesn't think the new language will satisfy Scott Nielsen. He feels that it is still worded in a way that is not defined.

Mike Blankenship asked about how much flexibility & possible amendments to the Forest Plan Revision based on new science.

Rodney Smolden said the plan should be written as to utilize new science.

Maurice Williams discussed the science historic and current. He suggested using tools available to make meaningful decisions.

Rodney Smolden discussed the science synthesis offered to get this information distributed to the group.

Mike Blankenship asked for a Forest Plan update from Rodney Smolden.

Rodney Smolden said they would be finished reviewing it February 3rd. They will then take the month of February to make comments on the reviewed material. The target objection time is before July (hopefully) if they choose to not do a biological opinion.

Steve Parker asked where the pressure is coming from.

Rodney Smolden said he thinks it's a funding issue. Anticipating a new secretary and a new chief may impact when it gets completed.

Gary Nielsen said that it could be the reason to hurry and get this pushed through.

Mike Blankenship asked Gary Nielsen for an update on the Motorized Trail and Recreation.

Gary Nielsen said there was nothing new to report.

Mike Peterson proposed wilderness boundaries were never completed but it was discussed.

Mike Blankenship hopes this group doesn't die with the decision of the plan.

Wes McCart asked how we formalize the group to keep this group meeting.

Mike Blankenship asked for group input.

Gloria Flora said NEWFC is very interested & enthusiastic about continuing this group. It is an excellent growth opportunity.

Mike Peterson agreed with Gloria Flora. He thinks the tri county meeting is really important.

Dolly Watkins said that it is well worth our time to hear all aspects of forest use. Keeping trails open for everyone and she does not want more wilderness.

Nancy Harshman said she has concerns about wilderness with trails inside of the area. It reduces the economy.

Scott Nielsen agrees with the need of formalization of this meeting.

Mike Blankenship said that we could continue the way it is for a while but if we agree to formalize Mike Blankenship is willing to do what it takes.

Gloria Flora said that sustainable NW could provide insight.

Mike Blankenship asked if we had a consensus to formalize.

(There was no objection)

Maurice Williams asked to what degree we would formalize.

Mike Blankenship said it's up to the group but that we are heading in the right direction. He asked the group for feedback.

Jeff Koffel asked what the goal of the group is.

Mike Blankenship said Community Forest Plan Revision group is what he has been calling it.

Wes McCart mentioned the many plans from the forest to review. There is a lot of material discussed.

Mike Blankenship discussed our focus on making legislative changes. He said what is important to the community is why we are here. Strong groups with all interests represented. Structure needs to be established. There will be crossover in interest groups.

Scott Nielsen said he thinks we should be working at the project level. He doesn't like part of the Leclerc Creek project.

New Conversation Topic: Leclerc Grazing

Karen Skoog said coordination has been done with Forest Service and Commission. The alternatives didn't meet the need of the producers. The Forest Service worked with the producer to amend the agreement on the allotments. There hadn't been a NEPA done on the allotment after completing due diligence now just waiting.

Mike Peterson asked are you talking about acreage.

Karen Skoog said acreage is what we are concerned with based on a net acreage reduction.

Scott Nielsen asked if the decision had been made to remove the cows.

Rodney Smolden said the changes were made on an alternative. A new alternative is vacating the allotment and moving the cows to a new allotment. There is a large amount of money for Leclerc Creek.

Nancy Harshman asked about the Gypsy Meadows Camp area.

Steve Kiss said it is not reducing but reconfiguring the camping and parking areas in the Gypsy Meadows Camp.

Scott Nielsen said my issue was the possibility of moving the permittee off the acreage then back on to the acreage. It is not clear why and he wants an explanation.

Karen Skoog discussed the regular behavior of the cows on the allotment.

Scott Nielsen said Leclerc Creek is an active allotment. There are other people who want allotments. We haven't been doing vacant allotments and now they are bending the rules to fix this situation. Why are they moving the cows?

Mike Peterson said the Forest Service projection west branch a need to remove a crib dam. In this case in order to grow more trees large enough where the animals don't eat them down.

Karen Skoog discussed temperature and trees. She wanted to know if there was going to be a project.

Rodney Smolden said the checkerboard ownership has created operational challenges in this situation.

Matt Scott asked if this is a project we could come to solutions collaboratively.

Scott Nielsen said it is a really good example of BOCC support for a solution with the allotment permittee.

Mike Blankenship discussed a subset of the group that would focus on grazing.

Forest Service Accountability

Rodney Smolden has a presentation for the group regarding the vegetation management schedule. He discussed the projects that his people are working on. Each project takes 4-5 years. Suggestion this group can have the best impact on the current projects that are being worked on. The greatest value is planning around the action. How do we get the condition of the forest from how it is to how we want the desired outcome to be?

Steve Parker discussed the Limestone Silver public meeting.

Rodney Smolden discussed road map collaboration. He said he would share it with the group. It was funded by the National Forest Foundation. If a collaborative group can agree on the action to take then the rest should be easy.

Matt Scott discussed timber mountain has spent \$200,000 dollars on a project.

Gloria Flora said once you get in an area there is so much more you can do other than vegetation management.

Rodney Smolden said he put in a request to use retained receipts funding on trails.

Maurice Williams discussed the changing staff of the Forest Service and how this group over time could be effective in impact. How do we approach to help with that decision make any process on where the retained receipts are spent?

Rodney Smolden said retained receipts are the left over money once the timber project is complete and all costs are covered. Resource Advisory Council is already intact and has impact on spending money.

Wes McCart asked how it works if SRS ends soon.

Rodney Smolden asked us not to evolve the retained receipts to a program like SRS.

Mike Peterson discussed the good neighbor authority projects that congress passed. It's possible to get some of that money. He also said that Mary Verner was appointed Regional Director of State Department of Natural Resources.

Gloria Flora said that Mary Verner would be a friend to any collaborative efforts.

Rodney Smolden Do we as an organization write an objection? He also discussed how James Pena did reviews teleconferencing historically.

Next Meeting scheduled for February 10th, 2017 1:00 PM- 5:00 PM

BOARD OF FERRY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FERRY COUNTY, WASHINGTON

CHAIRMAN, Nathan Davis

VICE CHAIRMAN, Mike Blankenship

MEMBER, Johnna Exner

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Board, Amanda Rowton