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TRIBAL FIRE AND FORESTRY ROUNDTABLE WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2006

MEETING NOTES

(Submitted July 12, 2006 by Resource Innovations – <http://www.ri.uoregon.edu>)

Overview

Representatives of five tribes and state and federal agencies met on June 28th in North Bend at the Mill Casino to learn about new resources for fire management and discuss opportunities related to forest stewardship and biomass utilization. The Coquille Tribe hosted the meeting and Resource Innovations facilitated the meeting and provided speakers. Objectives of the meeting included presenting the Tribal Wildfire Resource Guide and discussing opportunities and challenges related to:

- Fire planning and fuels management
- Stewardship contracting
- Restoration
- Biomass utilization
- Community Wildfire Protection Plans and Tribal Wildfire Prevention Plans

PowerPoint presentations and resources presented during the meeting are available on-line at: <http://ri.uoregon.edu/programs/CCE/tribalrountable.html>.

I. Summary of Recommendations/Next Steps

1. Convene a semi-annual meeting of the five-westside Oregon tribes to continue discussion, problem solving, and identifying opportunities related to forest health and fire protection.

- *Justification:*
 - Participants at the meeting seemed to agree that a regular meeting of westside Oregon tribes and agencies (state and federal) would provide greater opportunities for shared learning, as well as opportunities to work together in identifying strategies to address forestry and fire-related issues.
- *Participation:*
 - Gain higher level agency participation (agency line officers, district rangers, etc.)
 - Ensure that local ODF/CFPA representatives attend
- *Resources Needed:*
 - Host tribe/agency for semi-annual meeting; meeting facilitator; speakers to address more in-depth issues (e.g., ways to implement biomass projects, not just what it is.)
- *Lead:*
 - Kathy will correspond with tribal representatives at the meeting to discuss interest/timing of a follow-up meeting in early 2007.

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2. Provide a comprehensive list of biomass facilities and contacts in Oregon and the US.

- *Justification:*
 - Participants indicated that this would be a useful resource in helping to identify local biomass opportunities.
- *Participation:*
 - All tribes expressed interest
- *Resources Needed:*
 - List of state and national resources
- *Lead:*
 - Bill will check in with the Oregon Department of Forestry biomass utilization working group to see if a list of biomass facilities has been developed in Oregon, or what the timeline for its development is. Resource Innovations will distribute it to the list once it is available.

3. Increase tribal participation and input into the Fire Planning Analysis program.

- *Justification:*
 - Tribes had very limited involvement in the first phase of FPA, which was focused on initial attack. As planning is underway for Phase II, tribes have a significant opportunity to be represented on the planning teams, submit GIS areas of interest, and ensure that tribal values are considered.
- *Participation:*
 - Tribes should designate representatives for FPA planning teams
 - Agencies should notify tribes when there is an opportunity to provide input
- *Resources Needed:*
 - Increased recognition and action by FPA leadership to involve tribes
- *Lead:*
 - Charley Martin will help identify opportunities for tribes to be involved at the unit level for the fire management plans. Tribes should coordinate with federal agency representatives to identify opportunities.

4. Increase training opportunities for BLM, Forest Service, and other agencies to learn about consultation and working with tribes on fire and forestry management issues.

- *Justification:*
 - Participants agreed that training must occur at all staff levels within the agencies.
- *Participation:*
 - Agencies need to commit time for all levels of staff to participate in training.
- *Resources Needed:*
 - Training curriculum
- *Lead:*
 - Gary Harris is working on trainings at the regional level. Roseanne Lestenkof is working on training sessions for the Willamette National Forest.

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II. Key Discussion Points

Fire Planning Analysis

- Communicate need for consultation and agreements to FPA leadership
- Identify opportunities for tribes to provide input in Phase 2. Tribal representatives could be included on the core planning team for the Fire Planning Units (FPUs) through fire planning teams at unit level. Identify places to influence plans, including environmental assessments, ID teams, comments during scoping.
- Create a template or protocols for tribes to engage in FPA
- There is shared responsibility to keep communication going. Links are often lost in communication chain; tribes and federal agencies need to keep following up.
- Tribes should submit a GIS layer of areas of interest to the federal agencies.

Stewardship

- Clarify how consultation occurs when a stewardship project goes into effect
- Provide input to agencies on where stewardship occurs
- Increase communication between tribes and agencies in regards to stewardship

Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA)

- Get TFPA projects in Region 6 and at the local level!
- Clarify the process for submitting proposals
- Look to existing BLM/FS programs of work
- Make agencies aware of tribal areas of interest and landscape objectives
- Clarify mechanisms to communicate tribal needs to local, state, regional, national offices.

Cultural Resource Management

- Strengthen notification for protection of cultural resources
- Identify and develop cultural resource management strategies in collaboration with the BLM and Forest Service. Use stewardship contracting and/or TFPA as tools. (Collaborative burning plans, huckleberry management plans, etc.)
- Get involved with the Western OR BLM Management Plan Revision.

Biomass Utilization

- Questions/issues for future discussion:
 - What's the potential for Western Oregon tribes?
 - What is sustainable supply?
 - Delve into the complexity and viability of systems for smaller tribes.
 - Monetize the benefit of production tax credits
- Biomass Energy Resource Center (BERC) - <http://www.biomasscenter.org/>
- Fuels for Schools program - <http://www.fuelsforschools.org/>

III. General Notes and Flip Chart Notes

Participant Interests/Expectations

Learning

- How can stewardship meet the needs of tribes
- Learn about resources and the guide
- Learn how the tribe can benefit from opportunities
- Learn how assistance agreements come together to facilitate these opportunities?
- Learn more about tribal issues, desires, and needs
- Preparing for future forest land management
- Learn how the resource guide can facilitate implementation
- Learn about consultation

Opportunities for moving forward

- Finding new opportunities to integrate tribes into federal planning processes
- Not one shoe fits all – identify opportunities/strategies for small tribes

Partnerships and Networking

- Renew old relationships; build new ones
- Establish new relationships
- Continue to provide federal links and partnerships
- Build stronger relationships between the state and tribes
- Potential management planning for future forests

Biomass, Stewardship Contracting, Cultural Resources

- Dive into new issues and opportunities for cultural resource management, traditional burning, and biomass utilization.
- Learn about stewardship contracting; cultural resources
- Biomass opportunities; Ideas on biomass for the Southwest Oregon PAC
- Learn about utilization on steep slope and stewardship contracting
- Stewardship contracting and cultural resource management
- Historical vegetation – restoration and fire mitigation
- Can federal agencies instill traditional practices in fire management

Tribal Wildfire Resource Guide

A partnership between the Intertribal Timber Council, Resource Innovations at the University of Oregon, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs resulted in the development of the *Tribal Wildfire Resource Guide*, a resource on community fire planning, fire, forest, and natural resource policy, economic development, and grants. The Guide provides information to help public forestry and

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land management agencies better understand the role of consultation with tribes and the opportunities for cross-jurisdictional planning, and gain a greater understanding of tribal affairs, culture, and traditions. The Tribal Wildfire Resource Guide will be available on an interactive CD and in hard-copy form in June 2006. A full draft of the guide is available at <http://ri.uoregon.edu/programs/CCE/tribalwildfireguide.html>.

Fire Planning Analysis

- The group discussed the need for more involvement from tribes in the Fire Planning Analysis program, particularly as phase II gears up.
- Charley pointed out that the first phase was focused on initial response to fire and there was a significant time crunch to get plan done. Tribal interests related to ancestral grounds in relation to state/federal lands were not taken into account in the initial analysis. As phase II gets underway, tribal values must be considered, particularly as it relates to resource allocation.
- Need to identify number of acres of ancestral acres affected by initial attack.
- This group could play a role in identifying how representation of tribes in the FPA process occurs.
- Recognition of tribes in the fire planning units is critical, particularly for smaller tribes
- Tribal members expressed frustration with how communication around FPA has occurred (or not occurred.) The Siletz signed an agreement to be a part of the FPA process, but were never notified of meetings. Identifying the gaps in what happened between the signing of the agreement and actual meetings is important. Examine the prior agreements process. (Figure out why consultation was not sustained/why tribes were left out of Phase 1 of FPA)
- One suggestion, on a scale broader than FPA, is for tribes to attend the annual program review held by the BLM and Forest Service. This will provide more opportunities to learn about proposed federal activities, beyond just notification.
- The opportunities for tribes to provide input into the 2nd phase of FPA need to be clarified.

Stewardship Contracting

Marcus Kauffman provided an overview of stewardship contracting authorities, as well as case studies from the Siuslaw and Maidu Stewardship Contracting efforts. Questions and comments are highlighted below.

- There was a questions as to how consultation occurs in stewardship. In the case of Alsea, the Forest sent a letter informing the (Siletz) tribe of the upcoming meetings to discuss stewardship.
- Marcus clarified that under the authority, agencies/communities can engage in 10 year contracts. While the authority was passed through 2013, if a contract is signed that year, it's duration will still be 10 years.
- There was a question related to the Maidu efforts. Since the Maidu are not a federally recognized tribe, does that affect the contract process at all?

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Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA)

Gary Harris provided an overview of the legislative history and legislative intent of TFPA, how it applies to tribes, and an update of where TFPA is being explored and/or implemented. Notes from this overview include the following:

- Tribal language was included in Senate version for the Healthy Forests Restoration act, but not the House version. Tribal language was dropped in final version.
- In 2003, over 30,000 acres of tribal lands burned in the California fires and 10 lives were lost.
- TFPA was initiated to create a process through which federal agencies can reduce hazardous fuels that affect tribal lands. This also applies to insects, diseases, invasive species. It provides tribes with an opportunity to approach federal agencies about hazardous fuels reduction and restoration needs on adjacent lands.
- TFPA authorizes that the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior can enter into agreement to carry out projects to protect Indian forest and range lands.
- TFPA recognizes that it is appropriate for tribes to approach federal land management agencies and take a role in land management on adjacent lands.
- Currently, there are no projects using TFPA, though there are a number of proposed projects under review in Region 6 and across the nation.
- There is a four-year Congressional review/oversight process that will take place in 2008.

Questions/Discussion

- There were several questions related to how TFPA projects should be proposed. Gary suggested that keeping proposals at a local level (area manager, district ranger) is important in terms of creating local relationships and buy-in. Forests/Districts will coordinate with the regional office.
- What are opportunities related to tribal or local workforce? TFPA's intent is to reduce the hazard and enhance forest health. TFPA does provide opportunities for tribal workforce to contract the work – this is very much related to best value.
- There were questions about how TFPA relates to CWPPs. There is no specific language in TFPA related to CWPPs.
- Mescalero Apache Tribe about ready to sign onto a TFPA project.

Cultural Resource Management

Charley Martin presented slides on federal burning practices, as well as examples of huckleberry management plans. Discussion points are highlighted below.

- Opportunities for this group: create/review burn plans and environmental documents—point out sites that need restoration from historic perspective. Provide federal agencies with advice on characteristics that should be included in crafting burn plans, as well as Fire Management Plans.

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- Burn plans do not go through environmental assessment – a better opportunity to comment would be in NEPA documents for the area.
- Request for more federal agencies to be proactive in bringing tribes to the table. So many reports and notices come across tribal desks, there should be an extra effort from federal agencies on issues that may be of significant importance to the tribes.
- Tribes can be proactive in contacting line officers to find out what Environmental Assessments are going to be done within specific geographic area. (A resource might be the BLM Medford Messenger – a quarterly publication that includes this type of information.)
- Create a bank of information that agencies can refer to when putting Environmental Assessments together to help them consider consultation and other tribal issues.
- A screen could be developed to help agencies identify whether or not work may be in a tribe's ancestral area.
- Training on culturally and biologically sensitive areas for line officers and other agency staff.

Biomass

Cal Mukumoto provided an overview of biomass utilization, examples of types of utilization (energy, value-added, etc.), various scales, and also presented on the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs biomass utilization efforts. Cal focused on the collaboration between the tribe and agencies in putting together a Memorandum of Understanding related to the facility and supply that would be used. Bill Almquist presented on thermal applications of biomass, including the fuels for school program and other examples of smaller-scale applications for biomass..

- Questions about efficient transportation processing/handling small diameter
- Harney County Hospital was cited as an example of a smaller-scale facility.

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Wrap-Up/Evaluation

Each participant discussed what he or she liked about the meeting, and what he or she would change or follow-up on for a subsequent meeting.

Like	Change/Follow-up
Hearing tribal perspectives on the limitations of stewardship contracting	Address communication issues
Open forum/format	TFPA; BLM planning process
Flow of ideas	Building system/template for landscape and site level cultural resource management projects
Learned a lot	Local ODF person (CFPA)
Resource Guide	Having agency line officers
People coming to North Bend	Northwest Forest Plan lessons learned
Open communication	Biomass presentation – next time challenges, ways to implement
Tribal perspectives/concerns	Comprehensive list of biomass facilities and contacts in Oregon and the US (ODF group?)
Coquille Tribe hosting!	Tribes on ODF biomass group?
Diversity of group	Meeting in 1 year to measure progress
Lunch/facilities	How to invite more local leadership
Discussion	More interests from tribes
Solutions/problem solving	Future meeting of coastal tribes
Diversity	Communication
Communication	More northern BLM
Coquille Tribe	FPA meeting invite
Southwest BLM/FS	Too cold!
Willamette FS – model for relationships	More FS leadership
Meeting everyone	Training – all levels (Willamette will move forward)
Agency participation	Semi-annual meeting with 5 tribes
Participation from 5 of 9 Oregon tribes	Carry on relationships with tribes
Coalition of Western Tribes	Group rate at the hotel
TFPA	CFPA/district/Counties
Way to focus	FMP issues, tie everyone in