

**SBEADMR Adaptive Management Group Meeting Notes
January 4, 2018**

The SBEADMR Adaptive Management Group (AMG) met at 1:00 PM on Thursday, January 4, 2018 in the Pioneer Room at Friendship Hall in Montrose. Present and representing the various “seats” on the AMG were:

<u>Designated Seat</u>	<u>Regular Member</u>	<u>Alternate Member</u>
Delta County	Robbie LeValley	Mark Roeber
Gunnison County	absent	TBD
Hinsdale County	Cindy Dozier	absent
Montrose County	John Waschbusch	absent
Ouray County	Ben Tisdell	absent
San Miguel County	Hilary Cooper	absent
Environmental/Conservation	Chris Jauhola	Enno Heuscher
Environmental/Conservation	Lexi Tuddenham	absent
Forestry Processor	Norm Birtcher	Molly Pitts
Forestry Logger	Mike Ganroth	Molly Pitts
Community at Large		
East Zone	absent	TBD
North Zone	Mary Chapman	TBD
West Zone	Nancy Fishing	Andy Goldman
Water Resources	absent	TBD
Recreational User Groups	Ralph Files	TBD
Wildlife and Fish	Craig Grother	Jamie Nogle
Education	TBD	TBD

Resource/Staff Present: Clay Speas and Carlyn Perovich, GMUG Nat’l Forest; Austin Shelby, Kelsy Lesniak, Sam Pankratz and Scott Johnson, Colorado State Forest Service; Chris Miller, PLP Coordinator and Susan Hansen, Facilitator

Guest: Roger Rash, Commissioner, Montrose County

Approval of 6/22/2017 AMG Meeting Notes: Susan Hansen, facilitator, noted in the draft notes posted on the PLP SBEADMR AMG website the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) had been incorrectly listed as a “seat” at the AMG table. The CSFS serves as a resource to the Forest Service and the SBEADMR project rather than as a voting member of the AMG. M/S/P Cooper/Dozier. Approve the draft notes of the 6/22/2017 AMG meeting as corrected. Approved unanimously.

Item No. 1: Update on Status of SBEADMR Implementation and Monitoring: Clay Speas

- **Status of Treatments:** Clay distributed information pertaining to the SBEADMR timber sales sold to date and the proposed timber sales program for 2018.
 - In 2017 sales sold to date represent 4,600 acres for treatment, 60,000 ccf of timber and 36 miles of temporary road construction

- The Little Cone (west zone) sale in 2017 was a partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service under the “Good Neighbor Authority” program
- The 2018 program calls for about 4,700 acres to be treated representing 71,500 ccf of timber
- The Forest Service is offering all of its sales during the first three quarters of the year and trying to avoid sales in the 4th quarter.
- To date not much has happened in terms of non-commercial treatment. Trying to initiate some stewardship work with the Wild Turkey Federation to work on non-commercial treatments in 2018
- Only one comment regarding the 2018 proposed treatment program was received during the public comment period. The comment was referred to the timber district to be addressed at the February annual SBEADMR meeting.
- 2019 and 2020 proposed treatment programs will be presented at the February annual SBEADMR meeting
- GMUG will be ramping up its annual timber sales targets for 2018-2020 to 85,000 ccf as the material in spruce beetle infested timber is deteriorating faster than anticipated
- From an agency perspective, the current focus is on timber volume and fuel reduction including prescribed burns

➤ **SBEADMR Monitoring and Science Studies**

- Clay reported on ongoing work with the SBEADMR AMG Monitoring Committee and Science Team to better define and clarify the relationship between the AMG and the Science Team. Discussions have revolved around how to best work together, better articulate monitoring interests and needs and how the work of the Science Team is integrated in the adaptive management approach and management decisions for SBEADMR projects.
- In 2018 a lot of monitoring efforts will focus on the treatments on High Mesa (west zone) where different types of prescriptions will be applied.
- Current science studies are aimed at addressing concerns for the impacts of a changing forest landscape and spruce beetle kill on Canadian Lynx habitat.
 - *Change detection study* – GMUG is collecting data based on photo interpretative work conducted 2 years ago to begin to document how the forest has changed as a result of spruce beetle kill
 - *Dense horizontal study* – GMUG has joined a study on the Rio Grande NF to learn how Canadian lynx are using the beetle kill landscape. There is a tight relationship between dense horizontal cover and quality lynx habitat. GMUG has placed 1,600 plots on GMUG side to add to the database. An additional 1,000 plots to be placed in 2018
 - *High quality lynx habitat study* – GMUG is working with two scientists, John Squires and Jake Ivan, who have been doing research with collared lynx on the Rio Grande NF for 3 years to help identify high quality lynx habitat.
- Members of the Science Team will be present at the February annual meeting to provide overviews of their studies, key findings to date and plans for continued work in 2018.

- **Temporary Road Construction:** In response to a question about the 36 miles of new temporary roads, Clay stated the intent is to limit the number of new roads that have to be constructed and then decommission them once a project is complete. It is the purchaser’s responsibility to decommission the roads. The process for determining the need for new roads involves a logging

engineer looking first at all existing roads around a treatment area before determining if and where new temporary roads would have to be constructed. The modelling for selecting priority treatment areas went out 1 mile from an existing road.

- ***Update on Little Cone Sale:*** San Miguel County Commissioner Hilary Cooper and Austin Shelby, Colorado State Forest Service, reported on the outcome of a county road use permitting issue that was discussed at the June AMG meeting. The Little Cone sale was a “good neighbor authority” project with the GMUG and CSFS. The project was delayed 2 months due to issues the contractor had with terms of the initial permit from San Miguel County. After further discussions and negotiations a revised permit was issued. Some factors contributing to the delay were concerns from landowners/neighbors, confusion on what County permits were required, and logger’s concern for restrictions placed on permit. The issues were ultimately resolved and the story provided important lessons learned for going forward with future projects:

- Upfront and early notification of projects and timeframe to the public and neighborhoods is critical
- Opportunity to turn the work into an educational process – let people know of good things that can come from a project and not just focus on what the problems or issues might be
- Importance of establishing and maintaining clear lines of communication with County commissioners, road and a bridge departments, visitor centers and/or other local groups that may be impacted by increased traffic, road closures, etc.
- Responsibility of AMG members to go back to respective communities and notify of them upcoming projects and potential impacts

The GMUG is working hard to align its road related work with its vegetation program. Clay cited the 2017 summer field trip to High Mesa as an example. Driving to the site there were County road crews working on the road. This was an example of aligning Schedule A road agreements (road agreements between a county and USFS for county to maintain a forest system road) with a timber program so that roads are prepped prior to a sale. The timber contractor is then responsible to bring the road back to that standard.

Item No. 2: Report from SBEADMR AMG Monitoring Committee – Chris Jauhola and Nancy Fishing

Chris Jauhola reported on the work of the Monitoring Committee that was appointed at the June AMG meeting. Monitoring Committee members include Mary Chapman, Nancy Fishing, Chris Jauhola, Tony Cheng and Clay Speas. She stated a goal of the Committee is to try and organize what areas should be/could be monitored in keeping with the goals and objectives of the SBEADMR FEIS. The information and findings can then be summarized and communicated to the general public in addition to internal groups.

a. SBEADMR AMG Monitoring Matrix: The primary focus of the Monitoring Committee has been to develop a matrix identifying those topic areas, monitoring indicators and a monitoring strategy for each area. Indicators were selected that could be regularly observed, monitored and affect or influence management decisions. The main areas identified are:

- Community understanding and engagement
- Socio-economic data and impacts

- Collaborative adaptive management process and outcomes
- Tracking science studies and monitoring efforts

Copies of the draft SBEADMR AMG Monitoring Matrix (attached) were distributed for the AMG's review and comment. Monitoring Committee members Chris Jauhola and Nancy Fishering walked the group through the matrix explaining each of the topic areas and the different columns, i.e. "strategy" column, "measurement methods" column and "comments" column for each topic area.

- **Proposed Summer Field Trip Adaptation:** In terms of "Community Understanding and Engagement", Chris Jauhola shared a suggestion to conduct only one annual field trip as opposed to one in each timber district as was scheduled in 2017. The Gunnison area trip was cancelled and there was concern about the low level of public attendance at the other two. Another concern was the lack of a written record of information presented and discussions held during the field trips. It had been suggested that possibly scheduling only 1 field trip a year would be more efficient in terms Forest Service staff time and for getting more people to attend only one trip and have conversations among diverse groups. Since an important intent of the field trips is to get public/stakeholders in the various zones aware of that something was going on in their area and provide an opportunity to look at and understand what the problem is and how it's being approached, it was suggested that the district rangers could organize a field trip on a smaller scale for their particular district. Conversely, it was noted that that the issues discussed in each of the two 2017 field trips were quite different so attendees only heard issues raised in one area and not another. Another suggestion was to have one larger AMG sponsored annual field trip bringing in the Science Team and FS management team members and then have ranger districts organize smaller trips as needed for local people who have expressed an interest or concern – with caution that such informal trips need to have a balanced representation of interests.
- **Socio-Economic Data/Impacts:** Nancy highlighted the socio-economic topics and objectives for monitoring a variety of economic indicators overtime in terms of assessing efficiencies as well as cost savings for both the Forest Service and the producers. In addition, such information is useful for counties and local economic development groups in understanding the viability of the industry in local communities.

Molly Pitt, Pitt Resource Consulting, LLC, mentioned a survey that was used with producers on the White Mountain Stewardship Contract in Arizona that was useful in gathering some of the information. She offered to provide a copy for the Monitoring Committee to consider.

b. Communication Plan: Clay prefaced his introduction of a preliminary draft Communication Plan (referenced in the Monitoring Matrix) by summarizing how the adaptive management process would play out each year. As delineated in Appendix E of the FEIS, in the spring of each year the Forest Leadership Team will conduct a management review of past treatments – to include input from the AMG and Science Team. The review will look at what's working, what's not working and what needs to be changed. Outcomes of the management review will be posted on the GMUG SBEADMR website. From that point on, recommended changes or adaptations will be applied to every treatment going forward.

Clay reviewed the main headings and key points of engagement listed in the draft communication plan noting that it was a work in progress. At this point the draft has been prepared by GMUG staff and speaks primarily to the Forest Service's role in communication. Additional review and input is needed to reflect communication steps/strategies for keeping the public informed and engaged throughout the multi-year program. The role of the Science Team, CSFS and AMG needs to be incorporated in the overall communication strategy.

c. Tracking Mechanism for Science Studies/Monitoring Efforts: Chris Jauhola spoke to the last area in the Monitoring Matrix which is the development of a mechanism to track the various monitoring efforts and science studies being conducted by the Science Team and/or by others in conjunction with the Science Team. The Science Team is refining a draft template to present at the February annual meeting.

In sum, it was noted that the draft monitoring matrix is a work in progress and is intended for internal use for the AMG to help organize the monitoring efforts of the various areas identified. 2017 being the first year of implementation, the Monitoring Committee has identified the "what" needs to be monitored and will continue to work on the "when", "how" and "who" in the coming months.

Item No. 3: Plan for Forest Service Annual SBEADMR Off-Season Meeting – Carlyn Perovich

Carlyn distributed copies of a draft agenda for the February 12, 2018 annual SBEADMR Off-Season Meeting to be held at the Holiday Express in Montrose. Discussion followed on the draft agenda and meeting format. The following suggestions were offered:

- Length of meeting: Shorten the formal meeting time to 4 hours from 12 to 4 pm
- Encourage briefer and less detailed presentations from Science Team. Presentations should focus on a summary of key points and findings; have available handouts with more methodology/scientific detail and/or links to full reports for those who are interested
- Having information on presentations sent out prior to the meeting would be helpful
- Provide networking opportunities from 11:00 am until noon and from 4:00 until 5:00 pm so people can interact with district staff and Science Team during those times to raise or follow up on more individual or detail questions
- Timber zone reports: Provide two rotations of concurrent timber zone breakout sessions rather than just a single presentation to the full audience; people can choose to attend 2 of the 3 presentation.
- In breakout sessions, people want to see maps, hear where the proposed treatments are, what are the key issues being addressed, what are potential conflict issues, i.e. watershed, wildlife, roads, etc.
- People will want to hear about the 2018 planned activities and the 2019 proposed treatment areas; going out further than two years is too vague for the general public
- Important to let people know how GMUG is going to communicate with communities well in advance of when activities are going to occur in their area; solicit names of groups/entities that should be included in communications
- Consider including a survey in packets to ask how people get their information, how do they prefer getting information

- Ask what issues/concerns public may have given the proposed treatment areas and potential conflicts with increased traffic on haul routes, road closures, trail realignment, community events, seasonal activities i.e. hunting, etc.
- Move brief update on AMG and its role in SBEADMR earlier on the agenda
- GMUG will be prepared to suggest site for a summer field trip

Item No. 4: Spring Creek/Taylor Creek EA – Clay Speas

Clay distributed copies of a Preliminary Proposed Action for the Taylor Park Environmental Assessment (EA) to introduce a new GMUG project that is proposed to follow a similar approach to SBEADMR. The proposal calls for active management of approximately 166, 000 acres of lodgepole pine stands in the Spring Creek/upper Taylor River (Gunnison Ranger District). The EA will be launched in spring (2018) with scoping and aim to be completed in 2019. The idea is to “roll over” the Science Team and the AMG concept to this project when it is ready.

Item No. 5: AMG Housekeeping Issues

- MOU: Final draft of the MOU was circulated for signatures. Once all signatories have been signed the fully executed copy will be posted on the PLP’s SBEADMR website
- Membership Vacancies: Vacancies for either regular or alternate seats on the AMG were reviewed
- Voting Protocol:
 - There was consensus that formal voting per the AMG Operations Manual only be required on formal recommendations to the GMUG; informal matters could be handled by “thumbs” up vote
 - Clarified that each seat at the table had an assigned number of votes; it didn’t matter if there were more individuals listed as “alternates” but there were only a set number of votes that could be cast by each seat when a vote was called;
- Member Bios
 - Members were reminded to submit a brief bio of their interest in serving on the AMG and their background/experience relative to the SBEADMR project.
 - Purpose is to share individual strengths and interests with one another. Chris will compile the bios and distribute to members for internal use only.
- AMG Quarterly Newsletter –
 - A quarterly AMG newsletter will be prepared quarterly (if there is news to report) to send out to the full SBEADMR mailing list (160) to keep the larger stakeholder group informed of current AMG activities and upcoming meetings/events
- AMG Communication Protocol
 - AMG receives complete meeting packet
 - Post meeting date and draft agenda on PLP SBEADMR website
 - Send notice that meeting notice and draft agenda has been posted to full list of 160
 - Send notice of annual FS SBEADMR meeting and field trip(s) to full list of 160
 - AMG meeting notes posted on PLP SBEADMR website
 - Monitoring Committee notes will be posted on PLP SBEADMR website
 - Draft documents will be posted on website but clearly marked “DRAFT”

Item No. 6: Opportunity for Public Comment - There were no public comments

After a round of closing remarks, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Notes compiled by Susan Hansen, Facilitator

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