

Forsythe II Multiparty Monitoring Group Field Trip
 Forsythe Canyon Trailhead
 October 28, 2017

Attendees

Name	Affiliation or Organization
Kat Morici	Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI)
Susan Wagner	Magnolia Forest Group (MFG)
Yvonne Short	MFG
Teagan Blakely	MFG
Alex Markevich	MFG
Wes Isenhardt	
Al Nelson	
Diana Nelson	
Gregory Pais	MFG
Suzanne MacCaulay	MFG
Betina Mattesen	
Jim Cowart	MFG
Mark Foreman	
Hannah Brenkert-Smith	CU
Jody Jahn	CU
Stefan Reinhold	Boulder County Parks and Open Space
Kevin Zimlinghaus	USFS
Sylvia Clark	USFS
Jim Disinger	BCWW
Heather Bergman	Peak Facilitation
Avery Russell	MFG
Marin Chambers	CFRI
Larry Rogstad	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Tony Cheng	CFRI
Brett Wolk	CFRI

Agenda

The purpose of this first field trip is to develop a shared understanding of:

- a) How the USFS uses the information from the analysis and decision, including design criteria, for unit layout on the ground.
- b) The local knowledge, concerns, and desires that the multiparty monitoring group (MMG) has regarding design layout.
- c) How MMG input may be incorporated into design layout.

We will visit units 40, 41, and 46 to review management activities in ponderosa pine, mixed conifer and meadow vegetation types. These

units were selected based upon feedback that was acquired at the September 20th Multiparty Monitoring Group kick off meeting.

Tentative field trip schedule:

- 0900: Meet at Forsythe Canyon Trailhead, Forest Service Road 359 and county road 68, (Google directions: <https://goo.gl/maps/V4ft5vtvh7n>). Introductions, discuss field trip agenda, load into vehicles.
- 0915: Depart for units on FS 359.1 road. High clearance vehicles strongly recommended. Please plan to carpool to project sites; space in CFRI and USFS vehicles will be available.
- 0945: Arrive at Unit 46. Discuss possibilities for process and structure of multiparty monitoring group, with a focus of how input from MMG may be incorporated into design layout.
- 1015: Walk though Unit 46 and 41 to discuss Ponderosa pine mixed conifer treatment (unit 46) and meadow/shrubland restoration (unit 41) using manual treatment methods.
- 1130: Depart for Unit 40
- 1145: Arrive at Unit 40. Walk through Unit 40 to discuss Douglas-fir mixed conifer treatment using manual treatment methods
- 1245: Depart for Forsythe Trailhead
- 1300: Arrive at Forsythe Trailhead. End of field trip.

Meeting Notes

Handouts: meeting agenda, map

Tony Cheng (CFRI): Forsyth II is part of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). CFRI has been involved in monitoring ecological, economic, and social outcomes of other CFLRP projects on the Pike and Arapaho National Forests. The September 20 meeting was the first part of the Multiparty Monitoring process. At the meeting, we discussed the fact that the first round of treatments is operating on a compressed timeline, and the need to involve collaborative group input into the design and layout of treatments. This field trip is a result of the first meeting. We still need to address what Multiparty Monitoring is and how it will be organized, so we will set up a timeline and schedule of events to answer these questions.

Introduce Heather Bergman, whom has been brought on as a professional facilitator. Heather has worked with other collaborative groups in the area, including the Front Range CFLRP group.

Heather Bergman (facilitator): This process will be constructive and civil, and bring clarity. Today's focus is to learn how the USFS goes from an Environmental Assessment (EA) to a contract. Questions that do not relate to the focus should be written down and saved for the next meeting. Everyone should have an email with a doodle poll for acceptable meeting dates, please fill it out so we can schedule the

next meeting. Ideally we will have the meeting before Thanksgiving. The email also has attachments that outline collaborative group discussion protocols, an example of another collaborative group's protocols, and a goals and roles table specific to the Forsyth II project.

Attendee Question: When will the USFS take input for units? Is that happening today? What about other units?

Heather Bergman (facilitator): You can give feedback to the USFS today, but do not expect them to remember every comment, also keep written notes. At the next meeting, we will decide as a group on the process to provide input to the USFS.

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Today we are visiting mixed conifer units, but we can have another field trip to visit lodgepole.

Attendee Comment: The group needs to be able to give input for all units, not just units by vegetation type.

Attendee Comment: The group is not yet organized, does not have consensus, and does not want to obstruct this process.

Brett Wolk (CFRI): Kat Morici (CFRI) is taking notes; tell her if you want something to be documented.

Marin Chambers (CFRI): Also try to bring things up to the whole group, limit side conversations.

Attendee Question: Is site-specific information going to be presented for the units today?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): We will talk about the design criteria and marking plan.

Attendee Comment: There is a requirement for input from the Multiparty Monitoring group, but there is no requirement for consensus.

Heather Bergman (facilitator): Load up, time to go to the first site.

Field trip stop #1- boundary between unit 46 and 41

handouts: prescription, marking plan, visualizing Basal Area (BA) diagrams

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): This unit will be treated manually. Orange and black flagging notes leave trees (this unit is leave tree marked, which means a flag has been put on all trees that will be left, and all unmarked trees will be cut). White and

blue flagging denotes the boundary between unit 46 and 41. The design criteria are put into a crosswalk by USFS specialists. One of the design criteria is for flammulated owl habitat, so all trees over 12" diameter at breast height (DBH) will be left in units 40, 41, 46, and 74. (See addendum- Forestry Terms)

Attendee Question: Where can we find information/maps for special areas (like flammulated owl habitat)?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): USFS has GIS layers, but they may not be publically accessible. People could use the information to capture raptors.

Larry Rogstad (CO State Parks and Wildlife): Can survey for owls by playing recordings at night

Sylvia Clark (USFS): The current wildlife biologist Bev Baker is retiring in several days. Dale Oberlag from the Canyon Lakes Ranger District will take over as forest Service Wildlife Biologist on this project.

Attendee Question: If old growth juniper is present on a site, how many will be left after treatment?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): 1-3 juniper trees per acre will be left.

Attendee Question: What is the goal BA?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Average 30-60 ft²/acre for PIPO/Mixed Conifer veg type units.

Attendee Question: What kind of restoration is planned?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Lower montane ponderosa pine restoration.

Attendee Question: The decision allows for up to 50% of the ponderosa pine BA to be cut, is this for restoration or for fire prevention? And why are you going as low as 30 ft²/acre BA?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): It is for both restoration and fuel reduction. Going to 30 ft²/acre BA will reduce the number of thinning entries needed in order to reintroduce fire. When reintroducing prescribed fire, a lot of dead standing trees may be created in dense stands, and we are planning to use fire to manage the forest in the future.

Attendee Question: Who pays for windthrow clean-up?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Fires can take care of down material. However, we want to retain up to 5 pieces/acre of large wood in these treatments, which may actually be a bit high for this area.

Things come up in the layout phase that adjust boundaries from the EA. As an example, this unit went from 12 acres to 4 acres because of Denver Water's planned expansion of Gross Reservoir.

Attendee Question: Does this prescription allow for lopping and scattering slash up to 18" high?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Burn piles need to be a minimum 6'x6'x6', and will be burned before the broadcast burn

Attendee Question: What is the maximum pile size? Concerned about soil sterilization.

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Need to check design criteria to answer that. Per the design criteria, we will consult with the Fuels Specialist for maximum pile size and pile separation requirements as regulated by the Colorado Air Pollution Control Division.

Attendee Comment: A previous iteration of the project did not follow the written slash pile plan. The crew doing the work only spoke Spanish, and did not understand the USFS plan. There needs to be good communication to convey the plan to the people who implement it.

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): We are looking for 90% compliance, not 100%. (Forest Service) Contract administrators check compliance.

Attendee Question: What is the target BA for Douglas-fir?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): In the mixed conifer vegetation type, looking for all species combined to total 50-100 ft²/acre BA.

Attendee Question: What is your timeline for dealing with the slash piles? And have wildlife considerations been taken into account?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Piles require at least one year to cure before they can be burned. After that, they are burned as soon as we can get to it. Yes, wildlife is considered in this plan (Design criteria, Decision Notice page, states there should be 2 piles/acre remaining for wildlife. There is additional design criteria specific to wildlife in the Decision Notice.)

Brett Wolk (CFRI): Monitoring tutorial

There are 2 ways to measure BA: 1) Fixed area plot, where all trees in the plot are measured; and 2) Variable radius plot, using a forestry prism to determine which

trees are “in.” To get a representative sample of an area, we need to measure multiple plots. Each plot will be different—some plots have many trees, some plots have no trees. The average of all plots will give the condition across the entire unit. The target BA given for a unit is not the target for each plot, but for the average of all plots in that unit.

Sylvia Clark (USFS): These treatments are designed to create healthier and more diverse forest stands across the landscape.

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): In the meadow treatment, all trees less than 12” DBH will be cut to restore the meadow. 1-3 juniper per acre will be retained.

Attendee Question: How is the meadow edge determined?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): The meadow edge was initially identified by the spatial designation in our GSI database. When we layout the boundary, we adjust the boundary line to coincide with adjacent units.

Attendee Question: Are all dead trees over 12” going to be left?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Yes, also there is a requirement for 5 snags/acre.

Attendee Question: What vegetation will come back after the prescribed burn?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Grasses, forbs, herbaceous material. Some dormant seeds depend on fire to sprout, but mostly what is here will come back.

Attendee Question: How did the USFS decide on a BA of 30 ft²/acre for this unit?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): This unit is currently 60 ft²/acre BA, and we can’t reduce BA more than 50%, so we want to take it to 30 BA. The cap on BA reduction used to be higher, but it was reduced in response to public concerns.

Attendee Question: Is the cap at 50% reduction in BA limiting for forest health? Are people’s personal opinions influencing the capacity to restore the forest?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Yes, but we are still moving in the right direction by reducing stand densities and promoting forest stand structure where possible.

Larry Rogstad (CO State Parks and Wildlife): Reintroducing fire is good for wildlife and good for reducing fire hazard.

Attendee Question: What about the pine marten?

Larry Rogstad (CO State Parks and Wildlife): This unit is not pine marten habitat, they like dense forests

Attendee Question: What is the difference between these fires and the California fires

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): The California fires were very intense, which can sterilize soils. Periodic prescribed burning under mild conditions can prevent very intense fires.

Attendee Question: Are you retaining any trees under 12" DBH?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): In the meadow treatment, no. In other units, yes. Small trees are the future forest. Having a 12" diameter limit in these units can make it difficult to reduce BA to the desired level while still retaining healthy small trees, since the larger trees comprise most of the BA.

Field trip stop #2- unit 40, Douglas-fir/mixed conifer forest

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): The other side of the road was treated during the Gross Project in 2014. It used a different slash treatment, lopping and scattering instead of the piles that will be used in unit 40. This unit is also leave tree marked. There is dwarf mistletoe on the pine that we are trying to reduce, so sometimes Douglas-fir is preferred as a leave tree. The objectives of the treatment are restoration, fuel reduction, and forest health. This area includes dispersed campsites, so we plan to buffer around the sites.

Attendee Question: What is being done to protect water quality, with Gross reservoir nearby?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Manual treatment units will use existing roads, and water bars will be improved (water bars divert water off of roads to reduce erosion). For mechanically treated units, enough material will be left on the ground to control erosion, promote nutrient cycling, but not so much to prevent herbaceous plants from coming back or increase the fuel load too much. This is laid out in the EA and decision.

Attendee Question: How are you handling knolls?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Knolls are described in the design criteria, refers to a viewpoint. Mostly, it is an issue with mechanical equipment. We can bring equipment up to the slope break (check Design Criteria), and not further.

Attendee Question: How do we give input into what a knoll is to the USFS?

Brett Wolk (CFRI): Avenza PDF maps is one option, it is easy to drop pins on the map to mark locations, and does not require cell service to use. It can be

downloaded on any smartphone or tablet. During the upcoming meeting, we can discuss this option and pick a platform and central contact for spatial input.

Heather Bergman (facilitator): This is a good place for public input, since we can't do a field trip to every unit.

Forsythe trailhead parking lot- field trip wrap-up

Attendee Question: How can the group access monitoring equipment?

Brett Wolk (CFRI): Depends what/how the group chooses to monitor, there are many decisions to be about what the group wants.

Attendee Question: What is the most productive way to give feedback?

Heather Bergman (facilitator): We will decide this at our upcoming meeting. Please fill out the doodle poll in the email, we have lots to talk about.

Brett Wolk (CFRI): CFRI's role is to monitor.

Attendee Question: Can CFRI get ArcView for the group?

Heather Bergman (facilitator): Next meeting, we will determine how to compile and organize input. The USFS will not be able to incorporate input on every tree in the units. Also think about what things we want to monitor, like piles and wildlife (ungulates and/or birds), etc. Read through the emailed documents before next meeting.

Brett Wolk (CFRI): Think about what questions you want to answer. Don't delve into specific methods yet. Also include a timeframe for monitoring, what questions can be answered immediate post-treatment vs 10 years down the road.

Heather Bergman (facilitator): Next meeting, the #1 priority is figuring out how to provide input to the USFS. If there is time, we can discuss what the group wants to monitor.

Attendee Question: For this round of the project, will work begin on all areas simultaneously? Can we access these areas while the work is going on?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): There will probably be 1 or 2 contractors working at once. Not safe to access sites while work is going on.

Attendee Comment: We don't have much time to talk about procedure, since there is only about 1 month to give input.

Attendee Comment: But we need a process to determine how to get information to the USFS.

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): We are still working on some units, looking to post information of a website for the group. Working to gather information on special features, such as bird nests, springs, etc.) for future discussions.

Attendee Question: Are the USFS project units numbered?

Kevin Zimlinghaus (USFS): Not on the ground yet, Avenza PDF maps could help.

Attendee Question: Who is fielding questions?

Heather Bergman (facilitator): You can send specific monitoring/layout questions to me as a way to “park” that information. I will not do anything with it at this point.