

SBEADMR Adaptive Management April 16, 2024

The SBEADMR Adaptive Management Group (AMG) convened a “hybrid in-person/MS TEAMS virtual meeting on Thursday, April 16, 2024. The in-person meeting was held at the GMUG Supervisor’s office in Delta. Present and representing the various “seats” on the AMG were:

<u>Designated Seat</u>	<u>Regular Member</u>	<u>Alternate Member</u>
Delta County	absent	absent
Gunnison County	Jonathan Hauck	TBD
Hinsdale County	Greg Levine	TBD
Montrose County	Justin Musser	absent
Ouray County	absent	absent
San Miguel County	absent	Starr Jamison
Environmental/Conservation	Enno Heuscher	Robin Nicholoff
Environmental/Conservation	absent	TBD
Forestry Processor	Aaron Shay	
Forestry Logger	absent	TBD
Community at Large		
East Zone	TBD	TBD
North Zone	Mary Chapman	TBD
West Zone	absent	Andy Goldman
Water Resources	absent	TBD
Recreational User Groups	Ralph Files	TBD
Wildlife and Fish	TBD	TBD
Education	TBD	TBD

Resource/Staff Present: GMUG Staff: Sean Ferrell, Michael Salazar, Luke Holguin, Carlyn Perovich; SBEADMR Science Team and CFRI Staff (MS TEAMS): Mike Battaglia, Jake Ivan, Brett Wolk, Tyler Beeton, Kevin Barrett, Jarod Dunn

Guests: Leigh Robertson, West Region Wildfire Council, David Knickodow, National Wild Turkey Federation; Courtney King, Taylor Park AMG; and Steve M???, National Forest Foundation

Item No. 1: Brief Presentations on Other Partnerships and Upcoming Projects on the GMUG

In response to the AMG’s expressed interest in learning about other collaborative partnerships on the GMUG, the following were invited to give brief overviews of their respective partnerships/alliances. The PowerPoint presentations will be posted on the CFRI SBEADMR website at: <https://cfri.colostate.edu/projects/sbeadmr/>.

- Grand Mesa Watershed Resiliency Partnership (GMWAP) – Michael Salazar, USFS staff
A partnership of the GMUG’s Grand Valley Ranger District, Delta and Mesa counties and the Colorado State Forest organized in the summer of 2022 to reduce the potential for catastrophic wildfire effects in critical watersheds on and adjacent to the Grand Mesa.
- South Uncompahgre Hazardous Fuels and Ecological Resiliency (SUHFER) Project – Luke Holguin, USFS staff
SUHFER is a landscape scale project proposal incorporating nearly a quarter million acres of the Uncompahgre Plateau on the Norwood and Ouray Ranger Districts. The project is intended to increase forest and watershed resilience in the face of multiple environmental stressors that are increasing as a result of climate change including prolonged drought, spread of insect and disease activity and higher risk of catastrophic wildfires.
- Upper Gunnison Shared Stewardship Council (UGSSC) – Jarod Dunn, CFRI Research Associate
The UGSSC is a diverse group of stakeholders, using a shared stewardship model, working to increase the pace and scale of projects that improve the health of ecosystems and the resilience of communities within the

Upper Gunnison River Watershed by leveraging resources across a variety of agencies and organizations. The UGSSC is currently working with Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) utilizing Potential Operational Delineations (PODs) and CFRI Risk Assessment and Decision Support (RADS) planning approaches to determine where and how to treat the landscapes.

The above referenced PowerPoint presentations are available on the CFRI SBEADMR website at:

<https://cfri.colostate.edu/projects/sbeadmr/>

Item No. 2: Report from the AMG Subgroup on the Value and Role of the AMG: Subgroup Members

A small group of the AMG membership** agreed to meet after the October AMG meeting to consider in more depth the comments received regarding the value and role of the AMG going forward as the SBEADMR program begins to wind down. AMG member Justin Musser reported on the subgroups' discussions and recommendations on whether to "reset" the AMG's course for the duration of the SBEADMR program and how the AMG might serve as a "bridge" to future collaboration. Based on comments received at the 9/21/23 special AMG meeting and discussion at the 10/23/23 fall AMG general membership meeting, the group determined there was value in "staying the course" with the AMG as is. It recommends continuing to support and assist the GMUG in the implementation of SBEADMR, recognizing there are challenges. Some of the key values and challenges articulated were:

Values of SBEADMR

- Opportunities for shared learning
- Diversity of membership provides different perspectives
- Independent, funded science team to advance collaborative learning
- A process and structure for stakeholder engagement throughout the implementation and monitoring of an adaptive management process
- Adaptive management has been successful – adaptations are being made to treatment prescriptions
- A collaborative learning space which allowed "peering into the USFS decision space in implementation."

Challenges

- Loss/attrition of membership and staff in a multi-year project
- How to encourage greater public engagement and awareness
- How to "distill", without diluting, the more technical scientific learnings and findings so that they are "digestible" for the general public
- Ability to "tie it all together" – show how the need and purpose of a project, the science, and the work on the ground connects to and furthers a greater overarching community vision/goal, e.g. watershed protection

Opportunities for the AMG to be a "bridge" to a Next Generation of Collaboration on the Forest

- Document and share lessons learned from the PLP model, the SBEADMR and Taylor Park AMGs
- Invest in opportunities for shared learning on "topic-based" issues e.g. interactions between fire, water and climate, climate forward forest management practices
- Publicly celebrate accomplishments and successes
- Emphasize the importance of an effective public outreach effort

*** Subgroup members were: Mary Chapman, Nancy Fishing, Ralph Files, Justin Musser, Mason Osgood and Aaron Shay; CFRI staff Dr. Tony Cheng and Tyler Beeton assisted with discussions.*

Item No. 3: Review Updated AMG Adaptive Management Implementation Report and Proposed AMG Recommendations for Adaptation: Carlyn Perovich, Forest Ecologist and AMG Subgroup

As requested by the AMG membership and specified in the SBEADMR roles/timeline documents, the AMG Subgroup met with the Science Team and GMUG staff following the February annual stakeholder meeting. The purpose of said meeting was to review in detail the findings and interpretations of various monitoring activities

and to draft proposed AMG recommendations for adaptations to treatment design and/or implementation to present to the full AMG membership in April.

The AMG began its review by first considering the two recommendations proposed by the Subgroup for specific SBEADMR Goals or Decision Triggers as highlighted in the AMG monitoring matrix.

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg. 10): Document that treatments are being implemented as planned; identify relevant improvements to procedures or exemplary practices to benefit future treatments (*Annual IDT Treatment Review, Appendix D, FEIS*)

Proposed AMG Recommendation: In regard to the standards for “burn piles” AMG recommends moving forward with the updated version of the SP-4 as noted in “Discussion” below, and the GMUG continue to reuse landing sites as much as possible.

Discussion: For burn piles, on the summer field trip there was discussion about how to modify SP-4 to meet the intent of the design feature, while allowing for a pile to have one dimension longer than 50’. After the summer field trip and consideration of AMG comments, GMUG staff proposed that the SP-4 be revised to include the text in italics:

“... The size of each pile’s footprint shall not exceed 50’ in any dimension *unless approved by the Forest Service representative.*”)

AMG recommendation approved unanimously by a show of no “nay” votes.

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg. 11) : Continue the public participation and collaborative learning that occurred during the planning phase, encourage and support the continuation of collaborative workgroup efforts throughout the implementation (*FEIS Appendix E Public Engagement in Adaptive Implementation, Goal p. 2*)

AMG Recommendation: Recommend that the AMG continues in its current form. Consider hosting “topic-area” focused collaborative learning symposia to serve as a “bridge” to future collaboration on the GMUG.

Discussion: Refer to notes in Item No. 2 above for comments on this recommendation.

AMG recommendation approved unanimously by a show of no “nay” votes.

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg.4): More locations from which firefighters can safely and effectively manage fires. (*Public Safety goal #1, ROD, p.41*)

AMG Recommendation: Recommend that the GMUG use SBEADMR PTAs to create strategic fuel breaks, where appropriate, along POD lines to harden control features for safe and effective response. Those lines should be prioritized in areas adjacent to High Value Risk Areas (HVRAs).

Discussion: This recommendation was considered as an example of a “bridge” between SBEADMR projects and HVRAs, e.g. critical watershed areas.

AMG recommendation approved unanimously by a show of no “nay” votes.

The above AMG recommendations will be submitted to the GMUG FLT meeting for its consideration in May or early June. AMG members will be advised of the date and time of the FLT meeting to have representation at the meeting.

Item No 4: Feedback on the Annual SBEADMR/Taylor Park Stakeholders Meeting

The Annual Stakeholder meeting was held on Thursday, February 15 , 2024 at the Pavilion in Montrose . There 87 attendees. Distribution of attendees was: Forest Service staff: 50%; SBEADMR and Taylor Park AMG members: 25%; Other federal and state agencies: 25%.

Comments/Suggestions for Future Meetings

- Recognize that much of the annual meeting with its emphasis on reports from the Science Team is designed for an audience who desires the higher level of technical, science-based research & findings
- Provide a “wrap up” summary at the end of the day to show how everything ties together; this might help connect the dots for the general public to see how the science ties into their broader community vision/goals
- Each AMG might consider a “public outreach” subcommittee to help “distill the information” for general public consumption – increase public engagement
- Poster breakout session: At the start of each breakout session, have the timber representative introduce him/herself and give more of a formal introduction before participants wander off to look at posters/engage in side conversations.
- Plan is to continue switching alternate years between Gunnison and Montrose for the annual meeting
- Plan to continue with the hybrid in-person/virtual meeting

Item No. 5: Consider Options for Annual Summer Field Trip – Carlyn Perovich

The 2024 summer field trip will be on the Norwood Ranger District sometime between July 22nd and August 9th depending on the Science Team’s availability and academic schedule. The possible sites are:

- Lone Carver Timber Sale – an active operation
- East Beaver Timber Sale – pre-implementation site
- Turkey Plot – a non-commercial treatment, prescribed burn

Carlyn will work with the District Ranger and Science Team to select sites and dates for the field trip. Notices will be sent out by the first of July.

Non-Agenda Items

- Biochar Pilot Project on Gunnison Ranger District: Renewable Resource Officer Sean Ferrell announced that the GMUG would be participating in a pilot biochar project on the Gunnison Ranger District during the last two weeks in June. The GMUG is looking at the pilot project as a possible treatment for helping revegetation on abandoned mine sites. The GMUG plans to offer some tours of the project. GMUG Soil Specialist Gene Rone will be the tour guide. Once tour dates have been confirmed an invitation will be sent out to AMG members.

Public Comments: There were no public comments

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 PM

Notes compiled by: Susan Hansen, Meeting Facilitator