

Participants:

James Kelly, USFS	Melanie Slayton, Thorne Bay
Norman Cohen, TNC	Jim Gould, City of Thorne Bay
Keith Rush, TNC	Michael Kampnich, TNC
Bill Thomason, Wood Cuts	Bob Claus, SEACC
Elaine Price, City of Coffman Cove	Carolyn Thomason, Wood Cuts
Earnie Eads, Thorne Bay, Thuja Plicata	Kyle Moselle, ADF&G
Clarence Clark, AK Div. of Forestry	Wayne Benner, City of Thorne Bay
Ray Slayton, Thorne Bay	Ryan Munes, Thorne Bay
Harvey McDonald, City of Thorne Bay	Jason Anderson, USFS Thorne Bay
Cass Klee, Thorne Bay/South Haven Guest House	
Karen Hardigg, The Wilderness Society	

Agenda Items:

- Sharing and discussing the purpose of the Big Thorne Stewardship Area
- Collaborate on “End Result” management actions for the area
- Establish ground rules for effective and open collaboration
- Identify, clarify and prioritize opportunities for forest management and restoration in the Big Thorne Stewardship Area
- Define and clarify roles and responsibilities of individuals, organizations, and agencies involved

District Ranger Jason Anderson (Jay) welcomed the group and provided an overview of the workshop process, including his vision of collaboration roles, workshop agreements, and a working statement of purpose.

Collaboration Roles:

Technical Experts – help to identify consequences

Facilitators – manage the process and help transform group dynamics

Conveners – Pull the group together, co-lead in the development of “purpose”

Stakeholders – show up and participate

Recorder – capture decisions and rationale

Decision Maker – identify criteria, space, and sideboards

Interests not Present – stay aware and keep group informed

Workshop Agreements:

The participants of the Big Thorne workshops agree to:

1. Be clear about the purpose of the group, of each meeting, and of each recommendation.
2. Listen carefully to others. We function best when we understand one another's views and values.
3. Avoid changing or hiding our interests only to reach agreement or avoid conflict.
4. Present our interests, not our positions.
5. Honor the ground rules by observing them and reviewing them at specific intervals.
6. Speak our mind freely but be brief and to the point so that others can speak.

Purpose: The purpose of the Big Thorne Stewardship Area Workshops is to identify and prioritize on-the-ground projects that will support local economic and ecological objectives. Workshop participants will collaborate to define shared priorities for the Stewardship area (specific actions and types of projects); identify presently missing information and opportunities for future consideration by the agency; and provide feedback to the Forest Service regarding priority projects to be integrated for future funding. A final report from the group will be drafted and approved by the final workshop, to be presented to the Forest Service to assist in the development of future budget and/or Stewardship project proposals.

Jay noted an error on the handout: The NEPA cleared list is inaccurate; there should be two separate lists: one with NEPA cleared and one with projects not yet cleared.

What does stewardship mean?

Stewardship area – is a designation that the Agency uses to indicate that a collaborative approach and Stewardship Authorities are intended and/or desired for the given area.

Stewardship authorities are fairly new, and require an open, transparent dialogue – also allows us to keep money (receipts) local.

Once a stewardship contract is awarded, any retained receipts (typically from Timber) could be retained and used locally, to award stewardship additional

projects (additional service contracts) for continued implementation of approved projects.

The underlying intent of the stewardship process is to see more jobs on the island, and to include “best value contracting.” An example of best value contracting might be giving a preference to POW businesses, or businesses within 50 miles, etc.

Ranger’s Interests:

- Doesn’t want to revisit decisions that have already been made
- Don’t try to do CE for things that require environmental impact statements or vice versa
- Doesn’t want to categorically lump or split actions into analysis or contracts; instead, choose an appropriate method (if planning and implementation) as needed

Ranger’s Goals (Desired Outcomes of the Workshops):

1. Prioritize list of projects that are ready for implementation (but which may not have funds)
2. Identify important projects (or types of projects) that the agency has missed
3. Define the types of projects that could be integrated at implementation, to better serve the local private sector workforce (economy)
 - a. Example (complex): Local industry operators may desire the integration of traditional large timber sales with planned restoration actions (YG habitat treatments – like tree thinning- and red-pipe remediation).
 - b. Example (less complex): Local industry operators may desire the integration of traditional road storage/maintenance contracts with trail enhancement projects and/or a small timber / salvages sales (small sales and/or biomass operations).
 - i. Discussing the amounts and nature of the types of actions in examples a and b can assist agency officials in crafting contracts and defining selection criteria which better target the local workforce and local economic and ecological objectives.

Group Discussion:

Mike – What if new information comes to the group that makes people want to revisit a decision in order to come up with a better solution?

Jay – I have a legal responsibility to consider new information and to consider whether or not it makes a real difference to the previously made decision.

Jim – If we identify purposes and needs as we assess possible projects, it would facilitate the NEPA process down the line.

Harvey -- asked about concerns for projects that might be missed.

Bob – Regarding lumping and splitting: Would like to see way to show how stewardship projects mitigate outcomes of timber sale.

Jay – What are your metrics?

Bob/Jay – What are the integrated environmental effects and cumulative effects of all the various projects the agency is contemplating?

Bob – Is concerned that lots of timber would be cut and not a lot of stewardship projects would happen.

Elain - Coffman Cove community opinion is that recreation projects are just as important as restoration projects. We haven't gotten a lot of recreation projects in the last 10 years. Elain thinks recreation has more sustained economic and lifestyle benefits to the community.

Clarence Clark - Is interested in long-term, year-long jobs with a living wage to support a family, versus short-term jobs. Once you create a trail or cabins, people can use those things year after year.

Bottom line – create more long-term, stable economic opportunities

Harvey – Wants to confirm that jay is asking for community input on how to prioritize projects.

Harvey thinks the future of the island is recreation.

Elain – Wants to clarify by going into stewardship projects, we potentially take money away from communities; if secure rural schools (SRS) happens, then timber receipts are a big factor.

Jay – We should know what the trade offs are before making decisions.

Action Item: Contact Sue Alexander and have her present to the group on relationship between SRS funding allocations and timber receipts.

Mike – Thinks that recreation and restoration go hand in hand. For example, red pipes that aren't passing fish. Fishing is a big recreation opportunity. With regard to economic development, restoring lost fish habitat ranks up there pretty high.

Jay – Tourism in Alaska tends to be consumptive. Recreation and restoration are both important, and we're here to try to get priorities assigned.

Kyle -- Groups like this one can drill down into nuances of these issues to help Jay understand how the public ranks things such as aquatic restoration. What recreation opportunities rank highest? What types of opportunities? The terms "recreation" and "restoration" can be too broad for a decision maker.

Karen – has 3 goals for workshops:

1. Find common ground on benefits to ecology, health and community well-being, economic opportunities, jobs, and community sustainability.
2. Most everyone gets something they want, but no one gets everything they want
3. When Big Thorne timber sale comes out, a package of opportunities are offered and funded concurrently

Jay recap: Sounds like you would like to see some of that outcome deliberately target that transition work.

Elain – Would also like to see outcomes quantified in all areas, not just jobs. What do dollars really get allocated to, and what are the specific results those dollars buy? What are the metrics we are basing our decisions on.

Jay recap: Sounds like you want a statement of sideboards on what this process really means. Want to know that if the group prioritizes to get something done, that it has a metric behind it. For example – red pipes. If the same pot of money pays for red pipes as for road maintenance, then want to know those things

before making a decision. Also want to understand what creates new jobs versus moving jobs around.

Kyle – If can't give an ecological metric, (e.g. number of fish or deer produced) then how can people make a fully informed decision? He thinks these types of meetings can produce expectations that are ultimately unmet by the end process.

Jay – Acknowledges that an absence of information can be debilitating. However, an absence of information is not a good reason to not make a decision. It's important to use the best information that's available and be clear about the tradeoffs being made (e.g. we can measure how many miles of stream are improved or how many acres are treated to improve forage). The objective is not necessarily to move dollars around. Instead, if we are going to cut some timber, he would like to be able to create new jobs from timber receipts for these types of projects.

Bill - It seems like everything is justified on job creation these days. Will we be paying attention to whether a project helps build jobs for people who are already here? Will that be a consideration in prioritizing projects? Lots of folks here are unemployed. Are we going to retrain and retool local folks to get these jobs? Bottom line: If jobs are created, hopes they will really be local jobs.

Jay -- Reminds that this is a new way of doing business, and that it requires a lot more time and energy to implement for the agency. Jay thinks best Stewardship and value contracting tools are his best shot for supporting local jobs because he can take community feedback to the contracting officer

Harvey – Regarding the red pipe example. Hopes that we'll consider how much stream is made available versus how it impacts roads.

Jay -- These issues can have lots of elements involved. Technical experts can help us understand all the various potential outcomes.

Norman – Would the Kake/Petersburg process be a good model to follow? They are looking at the capacity of existing local businesses to deliver projects as an element to help direct them in choosing projects. Match projects to existing people and businesses.

Jay – Doesn't want to craft a list of projects that local folks/businesses are not in a position to bid on.

Norman – How can we judge which projects accomplish more than others? Is there some background information available to help understand the landscape needs, so that we can give feedback on the potential choices?

Jay – Our list does not represent anything that is prioritized, just things we are contemplating. Prioritization could come from the ability to compete for funding and the color of that funding, which trickles down from the Washington Office. Public feedback on priorities would facilitate the internal FS competition for project dollars.

Elain – How can we prioritize without knowing the costs of the various projects? She likes to employ a cost/benefit approach to potentially drive choices. Money is a big factor in her choices; what is the biggest bang for the buck? Is there data to direct us in this way?

Jay – The Forest Service model examines a mixture of the economic and social benefits of a project, as well as how much it costs. There are so many variables involved in decision making process. It's definitely not as simple as the typical business model. However, there is much data available and will be provided to the group for the next workshop.

Karen – In addition to price considerations, she would like to look at local work force capacity and their ability to implement projects, so that local opportunities are created.

Jay – (to Karen) In this collaborative process, would like us to say as a group: here are the criteria we want to use in picking, and here are the options we like best and the reasons why.

Clarence – Sees a problem with these types of meetings: A lot of people put in a lot of energy and effort in them. Thinks there is a concern – will we really see anything come out of this effort? Or will the Forest Service prioritize other projects that aren't on our list through some kind of internal process? Will this process really be different than all the rest? He is not confident that Jay can actually make a difference as a Decision Maker.

Jay – Agrees that he can't guarantee anything, but he also believes that it is better to try than do nothing. The stewardship authority might allow us to implement more of this stuff. Thinks knowing what is most important is still useful information.

Clarence – Bottom line: Will outcomes match with what collaborative group comes up with?

Frank – Our budgetary process has already identified next year's projects. So this new list can't be implemented until 2013 at the earliest.

Kyle – So this collaborative group works together through the workshop process and creates a list of priorities; then the Forest Service has to make official decisions on the landscape based on input from the resource team. And each resource specialist is advocating for their resource. Who advocates for the collaborative group? (Jay does) Can you give any assurances that the list of priorities from this group would actually get on the list of projects that happen.

Jay – No, it won't replace the agency's budget process. But projects that have a collaborative process behind them compete better and are more likely to get funded with the limited appropriations available. But there is no assurance...

Elain – I have faith in the project this time because of my recent visit to DC. Jay Jensen says he supports this 100% and that he will support it on a local level. He designated a staff member to follow through and makes sure it happens, and Lisa Murkowski assured me that if they don't follow through, then she will react next year with budget cuts.

Review of Maps: Several Maps of the Stewardship Area were available to review. These included XXX and will be posted to the web in the near future.

Red Pipe Layer: A lot of remaining upstream investigations on the list, which leaves gaps in the criteria for considering which ones are most important. This upstream data work, won't really create jobs, because it will almost certainly be a Forest Service person looking at the ground to finish those investigations.

Is there a logical way to prioritize without sufficient information?
Does upstream assessment need to be 100% complete to start a project?
What are the criteria to establish value?

Elain – How did we get 268 red pipes in the first place? Are these valid pipes that need to be replaced or is this just a response to the change in the specs from 18 to 24?

Jim – The science is that you make a culvert that passes all levels of fish; that's what is best for the environment. We didn't used to know that.

Kyle – There is a state statute that requires a free migration of fish, but we know a lot more about what a fish needs to pass a structure now. About 18-20 years ago we had the first modeling software to address this issue of passage-ability. So we have new tools and know more about what a fish needs now.

Next steps:

Request is made for a website to be set-up in order to have public access to all of this information.

Norm (from TNC) might be able to create a page for Big Thorne on the existing www.staneycreek.org website.

Frank – We could set up an email account for group communication with the agency. Similar to what is used for public scoping comments on projects.

****There is Interest in a clearinghouse for the information and a way to communicate information back and forth among the group.**

Jay recap: Hearing that it would be helpful to present more concrete data on what was presented on the maps before proceeding with small group exercises.

Next meeting date – June 2nd (4 weeks) 5:30 – 8pm, Thorne Bay District Office

Frank – How much detail is desired and on what elements?

Norm -- suggests that resource specialists make recommendations. and then have an expert come to talk about it. Pick two or three of these topics and treat in depth.

Jay -- Target Pre-commercial Thinning opportunities, red pipes, and roads.
Elain will bring a map of possible recreation projects. We'll collect as much

contextual information as we can and have resource specialists available at the next meeting. Jay may present the information as a PowerPoint.

Cass – Thinks that we didn't really provide sufficient information. It would be helpful to know sub watersheds. We need know to know economic and ecological objectives, and each area might have a different set of those.

Jim – If we come up with a list of undesired conditions, then we could try to bring them around to desired conditions.

Kyle – The goal seems to be to prioritize ops or actions. It might be better to start with a broader subject like recreation or restoration, and then start to identify what we do and don't know as a group. That would give direction to specialists on what data to provide. He thinks it would be better to stick with interests and values of group to drive process versus simply basing decisions on Forest Service data.

Request -- Please bring specialists so we can get questions answered.

Request -- Staney call to action document seemed to be a really useful document – easy to digest. If you could bring something similar to the group, it would be helpful.

Bill – What mechanism do we have to remind the group that we have some unrepresented interests?

Jay is aware of who the unrepresented interests are, and is willing to keep those folks in the loop as much as he can. He believes we need to represent them as if they're here.

Jay will try to list out who the unrepresented parties are, and then the group can discuss how to deal with that issue.

Time line: Jay plans to hold 3-4 workshop meetings in a fairly short time frame, and anticipates completing this collaborative process sometime in July.

Communication:

Notes will go out to the group from this meeting.

There will be an opportunity to add items to the list of proposed projects in the next meeting.

Post meeting addendum by Jay – 5/17/2011

Next Steps:

A brief discussion of next steps occurred at the first workshop, from which the need for more information was expressed by participants. This request was made in order that the public can more meaningfully evaluate currently planned projects for prioritization. Based on the content of that discussion and a review of these notes; the Forest Service will prepare for the 2nd workshop as follows:

- Agency resource specialists (Technical Experts) will participate in the next workshop to discuss / present projects details, and other information relevant to the desired outcomes above.
 - This will include the following information, if available or applicable.
 - Cost / Price per unit
 - FTE's created / sustained per unit
 - Ecological output per (benefit) unit
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- A document is being prepared to better display the maps and data presented during the first workshop. This document will be posted to the Staneycreek.org website when it is done, and before the next workshop.
- The project list handed out at the first meeting will be corrected and improved, by separating out 1) projects ready for implementation (have signed decisions) and 2) those which still need analyses, designs or further planning. This may be part of the document described above and will also be available on the web, once complete.
- FS Economist Sue Alaxender will call into the next workshop to discuss the implications of retained receipts (a stewardship contracting authority) on Secure Rural Schools Act collections / distributions (as requested by Elaine Price)
- Jay has listed below a group of known “Interests not at the table” and will present a draft letter to the group that outlines the effort to include those interests as if they were present.
- Workshop participants will review and refine, as needed, the workshop purpose and agreements
- Workshop participants will attempt to prioritize those projects which are ready for implementation. We'll use small group exercises to focus on key interest areas, and have each group report out on their recommendations. This will be the bulk of the meeting.

- We'll wrap up the 2nd workshop by brainstorming specific projects and /or types of projects that have not been identified or planned, in order to assist the agency in positioning its workforce for future budget requests, grant-seeking and/or planning and design work (as funded).

Interests Not at the Table: Various organizations and/or business sector participants that have expressed interest in this area, and /or the types of projects being implemented / planned were not present at the first workshop. The following list identifies types of groups, and/or specific members of groups that represent logically interested parties that were not present. This list is not all-inclusive:

POW Rec/Tourism organizations and/or operators: commercial lodge owners, outfitter and guide services, eco-tourism operators, POW chamber of commerce reps, etc.

POW and SE AK Wood products industry operators: Alaska Forest Association, Viking Lumber, Papac Alaska, small mill owners (Goose Creek Industrial Subdivision, Port St. Nick and other POW communities); Pre-commercial and Commercial Thinning business operators; commercial firewood and biomass operators, music wood producers.

POW and SE AK Road Construction Business Owners / Workers: Southeast Road Builders, Ketchikan Ready-mix, Dick Trojan.

POW Tribal Organizations: Organized Village of Kasaan, Klawock Cooperative Association, Wrangell Cooperative Association, Craig Community Association, Hydaburg Cooperative Association

Commercial Fishing Industry reps: Fisherman, seafood processors, mariculture industry, seafood production and marketing reps.

POW and SE AK Environmental Organizations: Green Peace, Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, Tongass Conservation Society, Sitka Conservation Society, Alaska Wilderness League, Alaska Rainforest Coalition, Cascadia Wildlands Project

Efforts will be made through this process to identify the interests of these missing groups / organizations in an effort to daylight their interests through this collaborative process, for consideration and understanding by the participants. This should inform and improve recommendations to the agency. The intent is to treat these missing groups and their respective interests, "as if" they were present.