

Attendees: Keith Rush, Mike McKimens, Marla Dillman, Mike Sheets, Delilah Brigham, Ryan Munes, Kyle Moselle, Jim Baichtal, Harvey McDonald, Steve Brockman, Ray Slayton, Carolyn Thomason, Bob Claus, Angela Colman, Nick Reynolds, Jason Anderson, Sherri Cessnun, Austin Williams (via telephone)

Attendees reviewed workshop agenda, agreements and purposes;

Desired Outcome of Workshops:

1. Prioritize the List of Existing project / opportunities in the project area,
2. Identify missed opportunities and projects the FS should work on next
3. Define the projects (or types of projects) that should be integrated at implementation for better economic and ecological benefit

Ranger Anderson provided a quick review notes from last meeting, asking for any comments? None received

Next Steps for Workshop #2: Define as a group the logical assemblies of opportunities (specific projects or types of projects) – loosely referred to as Sectors

Ranger Anderson suggested that based on the discussions of workshop #1 and the list of opportunities presently available to the FS, for implementation on the near future, the logical grouping or Sectors that the Big Thorne Group could work on, are Aquatic Habitat, Terrestrial Habitat, Recreation, Access, Subsistence, Economics, and Vegetation Management.

Keith Rush suggested sticking with Aquatic, Terrestrial, Recreation and Access , and that Subsistence and Economics were logical sub-sets of these 4.

Ray Slayton suggested that given the stewardship areas importance to rural communities and subsistence users, keeping Subsistence as a separate Sector was important.

Bob Clause suggested that Subsistence was in important social issue, and supported keeping it as its own sector.

The group then agreed to focus on the following 5 Sectors (Recreation, Aquatic Habitat, Terrestrial Habitat, Access and Subsistence, agreeing that Economics was a common thread among them all since one of the desired outcomes of the workshops, and a premise for the collaborative process was based on the Workshop purpose of meeting ecological needs and economic opportunities within the Stewardship Area:

Given the smaller size of the group, there was consensus to discuss each sector among the entire group, rather than break into smaller focus groups for each sector.

Discussion of Recreation Opportunities:

What projects or types of projects are most important?

Is there anything missing from the current list (provided in the Opportunities Document)?

Ranger Anderson suggested that generally speaking, under Stewardship Authorities, Recreation Enhancements (e.g. construction) are not always possible. Not to suggest they are impossible, just more challenging to build into Stewardship Agreements / Contracts vs. other types of land management objectives and despite that challenge, were obviously important opportunities to rank and discuss.

With that, the group reviewed the list of Recreation Opportunities provided and held a general discussion about each of them, seeking to define “What projects or types of projects are most important?” and “Is there anything missing from the current list?”

Prior to brainstorming, Forest Service Recreation Planner Tory Houser offered the following update on the projects provided / listed in the Big Thorne Stewardship Area Implementation Opportunities document:

1. **Improve Honker**
The POW Resource Advisory Council recommended Title II funding for this project. There is enough for a shelter and some for trail work to be implemented. Plan is to contract with the local work force to implement. There may be a trail bridge available via donation from the city of Thorne Bay.
2. **3017-3018 Boy Scout**
ATV Trail, 17 miles total, also received RAC funding. Will have a 50” width size limit for Off Highway Vehicles, and crosses a few Class 2 streams (which will require permitting and coordination from ADF&G). Overall plan is to develop a loop trail for OHV users to access several popular recreation and subsistence destinations in the area.
3. **Large scale improvement to Boy Scout Area**
Sandy Beach Road Multi-purpose Trail. This has been analyzed and is awaiting implementation dollars. The project will include a separate multi-purpose trail parallel to the beach road, including some single-unit RV pullouts.
4. **Shelter at Luck Lake near Eagle Creek.**
Coffman Cove has expressed an interest in this project, which proposed to create a day-use shelter at the Luck Lake Day use area. This project received RAC funds for the placement of an outhouse. There is also discussion ongoing (and a Federal Highways Recreation Improvement Project submission) to develop a boat launch at the day use area, and a recreation cabin across the lake from the day use area.
5. **Balls Lake Trail**
Project is planned to finish a partially completed day-use trail development around the lake. Has not been funded, but is still an internal priority to compete for funds and complete this project
6. **Cabin near Sal Creek**
Working to complete an Environmental Assessment for this project. Hoping to have site prep done this year and pursue cabin development in 2012 through a Young Growth, Round Log Cabin building course offered to POW residents.

7. **Reconstruction of Control Lake dock**
Not discusse
8. **Extension of Gravelly Creek Trail**
Working to improve the day-use / fishing access trail along the lower Thorne River, making it ADA accessible – stopping at approximately the Crab Apple Tree hole.
9. **Boat Launch Ratz harbor**
Has been contemplated for years – agency still has it identified as an opportunity for saltwater access on East POW.
10. **Viewing Platform**
Not discussed
11. **3 sided shelter at Boy Scout Lake**
3-sided shelter, like a cabin with one wall missing, is proposed for Boy Scout Lake, to facilitate recreation use in the area, and replace an old Boy Scout cabin that once
12. **ATV tail loops**
FS is still looking at several loop trail opportunities in the Stewardship Area. Some of these are geographically challenging, if not impossible. Others are just very expensive. Looking for community partnerships to improve on OHV trail opportunities on POW, generally, with several good options listed in Big Thorne Area.

The following is the list of Recreation Opportunities captured during the group discussion. Items in **Bold** were those that represented the most deliberate criteria in response to the two questions asked, and all items are very good information for the agency to consider as it works within the Stewardship Area.

- Place “No Shooting” signs at the Proposed Sal Beaches Cabin (east side of POW)
- Consider a Campground at Luck Lake
- Look into ADF&G Sport Fish Grants for the proposed launch at Ratz Harbor
- **Focus on New Additions vs. enhancements to existing, to increase Rec/tourism capacity and overall economic benefit**
- Consider new developments with alternative materials if possible – try to move away from expensive gravel and step-and-run trails where possible. Things like the trail mats that allow grass to grown through, thus hardening the trail for resource protection, without building a large lumber-based facility
- **Consider those projects that have the most measurable (greatest) economic capacity generator – biggest impact for the dollar spent**

- **Need to look at niche opportunities that are not presently available, or are presently under-represented.** Example offered was Winter Sports. Lots of opportunities to provide more Winter Sports related / winter access opportunities for snow machines, skiers, etc. This would complement existing recreation capacity on POW
- **Consider Projects that span and/or compliment multiple Sectors. Strong agreement around this concept.** Example is that access projects benefit recreation and subsistence, and may have additional ecological benefits by improving (hardening or defining) already used / impaces access points.
- **Consider improvements to existing dispersed recreation sites.** Attendees recognized the many island residents like the smaller, more dispersed sites that are presently undeveloped (or minimally developed by users) and that improvements to these sites may take visitor pressure off the more developed sites, while increasing use at the presently undeveloped dispersed sites. Simple improvements like fire rings and tables, at places like Pebbly Beach and other dispersed day-use sites along the Beach Road.
- Suggested Cautions:
 - Be cautious about over-developing the current FS capacity to maintain sites and/or destinations. Sanitation issues are prevalent at undeveloped sites now, and increased development / use will necessitate increased agency expense to manage that use.
 - Be careful about over-developing estuaries. These are already popular locations on POW for many developments, and some of the proposed recreation improvements are on or close to estuaries. Agency needs to carefully consider impacts to more use in these ecologically important areas.
- **Consider the proximity of developments to compliment each other for the off-island visitor.** POW is a large island, with many opportunities which simply cannot be experienced in a short period of time. Having recreation destinations close enough to facilitate short trips/visits would be desirable.
- **Improve sanitation at existing popular sites – especially dispersed sites.** Numerous comments were provided on the conditions at places like Luck Lake, Pebbly Beach and Sarkar and Horseshoe Hole (outside Stewardship Area) – where there are no restroom or trash facilities at present.

Discussion of Aquatic Habitat Opportunities:

FS Hydrologist Angela Coleman discussed some of the opportunities presented previously and identified several of the key treatments and types of treatments for Aquatic Habitat management, as follows:

- Removing culverts from roads which block fish passage (referred to as Red pipes)
- Closing or Storing Roads to improve water quality and increase hydrologic connectivity
- In-stream habitat enhancement or restoration action to increase or improve channel complexity and diversity for resident and anadromous fish species
- Riparian thinning – to increase large trees near creeks for future recruitment of large woody debris in streams
- Landslide treatments to stabilize and restore areas affected by landslides
- Wetlands restoration – re-claiming impacted wetlands, typically where old roads encroach on known wetlands

Some of these actions raised questions from the group – specifically;

Do all landslides need to be treated?

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Angela responded, No, not all landslides need to be treated. It depends largely on their production of “Fines” (sediment) into the stream – as well as other sediment deposition concerns (too much larger material is also bad) – and it depends on the streams ability to process the landslide within the normal range of stream function.

The group then discussed several pros and cons to each type of project opportunity, which was enhanced by technical feedback from Fisheries Biologists Kyle Moselle (AK Dept. of Fish and Game), Delilah Brigham and Tom Cady (USFS) and Hydrologist Angela Coleman.

Several important concepts were discussed under this Sector, and included the following:

There is a special pot of appropriated funding for replacing red pipes. This is a small amount of money and replacements can cost on average \$ 150,000.00. This is important on roads that are going to stay open for public access. Removal is much cheaper and is incidental to Road Storage Costs (for which figures were provided in a handout at the meeting)

How do we measure the effectiveness of fixing red pipes? Concerns about the loss of species diversity, the value of protecting aquatic habitat and restoring degraded habitat were all considered relevant to the consideration of red pipes.

Kyle Moselle offered that ADF&G Habitat Division has equipment for monitoring blasting efforts, when choosing this cost-effective method of removing red pipes. The group learned that there is a high rate of success using explosives for this work, that contracting for blasting is cost effective, and that it will be important to consider future risk factors v cost benefits of blasting vs. heavy equipment use to remove red pipes (on roads to be stored).

The group learned that open roads are expensive to maintain and that maintenance dollars do not typically cover the cost of fixing red pipes on open roads.

Not all of the dialogue in this discussion was captured, but group discussions about Aquatic Habitat lead to the following recommendations. Items in **Bold** represent potential selection criteria for future projects:

- Focus on up-stream assessments for remaining Red Pipes in the project area
- For landslides, consider the stream systems’ ability to process the landslide debris, and the potential success of treatment, before proposing any treatment.
- For red pipes, target those which may be stranded by previous partial road storage actions. These are pipes which may no longer be accessible by heavy equipment because of a removed bridge or other barrier.
 - For these pipes, consider blasting stranded pipes vs. re-opening a road to remove by equipment (less short term effect).

- **Consider the overall cost : benefit ratio of each red pipe proposed for treatment**
- **Consider both the upstream and down-stream risk of leaving in a low-priority stranded pipe**
- **Continue looking for enhancement opportunities** – actions which may open up new habitat to fish populations (e.g. fish passes over barrier falls or partial barriers, like Hatchery Creek and Big Lake fish passes, etc.)
- **Focus opportunities on restoring impacted systems**
 - **Focus on effectiveness of both fixing degraded in-stream conditions and accessing existing habitat**
- As suggested by Kyle Moselle: Target red pipes and in-stream work with overall effectiveness in mind using the following ordered criteria:
 1. **Increase and Enhance Diversity and Distribution (by considering Stream Order (size of stream), Miles of Upstream Habitat and # of species present)**
 2. **Then focus on Protection of Existing Habitat**
 3. **Finally looking at Restoring Degraded Habitat**

Next Workshop:

Thorne Bay, Thursday, June 16, 2011, 5:30, PM