

Draft Meeting Minutes
 Oregon Central Coast Forest Collaborative
 Roads ZOA Subcommittee Meeting
 3/25/22 9-10am
 Zoom

Attendees:

NAME	ORGANIZATION	NAME	ORGANIZATION
Brad Pfeifer	Hampton Lumber	Fran Recht	Landwoner
Paul Englemeyer	Audubon	Jordan Latter	
Jim Fairchild	Audubon	Kailey Kornhauser	OCCFC Coodinator

Minutes: by Kailey Kornhauser

I. Overview of ZOA Process:

- This is the first roads ZOA subcommittee meeting. This group will continue to meet to work through priority road topics and form ZOA drafts for review by the full OCCFC.
- At an upcoming meeting we will be joined by NFS IDT members who can provide a high-level overview of the NFS project to guide our ZOA discussion.
- We will be hiring a subcontractor to do reviews of relevant science literature and identify potential speakers for science panels.

II. Discussion on Road Topics

- There are existing analyses that could help the work of this subcommittee. A Waldport watershed analysis on Cape Creek could be of use.
- On the Indian Creek project there were legacy roads and old roads not up to current standards. There are challenges IDing all existing road infrastructure.
 - o It will be important to ID areas that are contributing to poor water quality
- We should also consider how effective the road removal process has been, are there places where roads were decommissioned but more work is needed?
- A topic of interests are the standards for when new roads are built.
- We will discuss commitment to funding road maintenance or decommissioning based on maintenance classes.
- We will discuss recreation opportunities to transition roads into recreation routes (ex. Drift Creek). This allows for road decommissioning while preserving the road prism incase future access is needed.
- A high priority for this group is to reduce the impact of roads. If trail systems were created they would need to be analyzed for reduced ecological impact.
- This group should consider roads as vectors for invasive species distribution and human caused fire.

- We should also consider road access for fire-fighting and striking the balance between public access and fire access.
- Considerations for wildlife such as beaver may impact our agreements on culverts.
- We should also consider fish habitat and water quality.
- The group will consider long-term road plans as well as project specific ZOA.
- It will be helpful to understand how road funding is allocated through a standard timber sale vs. a stewardship sale. We do not need to organize our ZOA by these structures but may consider organizing our ZOA by road conditions or road types (main haul lines, secondary haul lines, etc.)

III. Current Conditions

- We do not know where all roads are on the landscape.
- Many roads were constructed prior to DOGAMI regulations.
- Legacy roads exist on unstable slopes.
- The current process for road lay outs in timber sales does not take into consideration some of the details that could result in better road conditions. More flexibility in this process could increase road quality.

IV. Desired future conditions:

- GIS map layers of all roads including decommissioned roads.
- LiDAR identification of roads.
- Decommissioning of roads that cause issues for the ecosystem.
- Consideration of climate change in road design.
- More connection between office planning and ground truthing before road plans go into a timber contract.

V. Next Steps

- We will continue our discussion of important topics and desired future conditions on 4/8 at 10am.
- We will begin to plan science talks on allowable sediment loads and other topics.

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4/8/22
Zoom

I. Current Conditions

- We reviewed example ZOA and made additional notes on current conditions. Kailey will draft a current conditions statement based on this discussion.

II. Desired Future Conditions

- We reviewed example ZOA and made additional notes on desired future conditions. Kailey will draft a desired future conditions statement based on this discussion.

III. ZOA Topic Organization

- We discussed the categories and topics that were included on our original brainstorm document.
- The group determined that more input from the FS was needed before moving forward with the topic organization.

*All three of the above discussions were captured on these [jamboards](#).

Roads ZOA Subcommittee Meeting
6/3/22

Participants: Chuck Fisher, James Pettett, Paul Engelmeyer, Donni Vogel, Heidi Leib, Jim Fairchild, Jordan Latter, Kacey Largent, Mycah Scoggins, Paul Lulay, Paul Burns, Robert Sanders

1. Meeting overview:

- During this meeting FS specialists went through a document the subcommittee sent them that included draft current and desired future conditions as well as topics for ZOA. Specialists provided feedback and ask the collaborative members follow-up questions. The group did not make it through the full list of topics and will meet again to continue the discussion.

2. Topics

- Current conditions:
 - o The FS noted that roads are in pretty good shape in most places.
- Overall transportation system impacts: what types of overall transportation impacts is the committee interested in?
 - o Aquatic, wildlife, public access
 - o Paul example: bad actors on dispersed camping with fire risk, invasive species etc.
 - Q: Members of the public have been cleaning up spots, could FS put funds towards this type of thing?
 - Q: Is garbage or wrong use of roads considered as impacts?
 - Garbage may be along transportation system but may be a law enforcement issues.
 - The FS does look at areas where dispersed roads are having impacts, they recommend closing some that are having impacts.
 - o Q: In the past has the FS reviewed whether road decommissioning has been successful?
 - The FS noted that there is not a lot of funding for these reviews, but that externally funded projects have monitoring.
 - For recent decommissioning there is no monitoring program but they do take a look at them regularly, what they are seeing is that it's very successful and doesn't seem to be an open question so they haven't invested much into that anymore.

- Storage roads might be more of an issue than truly decommissioned roads.
 - Cmt: There has been huge success with reduced impact from roads since NWFP.
- The current process for road layout in timber sales could be more flexible:
 - Question for committee from FS: are temporary roads an issue? Lower impact systems have to get closer to the ridges than old temporary roads.
 - Committee cmt: Timber is a different size than what previous roads were built for and now roads can be smaller and in different locations. That said, each operator is going to have a different opinion or approach to temp. road locations and timing, usually due to rain windows and wildlife restrictions, some current contracts only allow for 2-3 months. Surfacing would allow for much longer operating windows
 - Make that timing statement clear on the ZOA, this is something the FS is aware of so we could support that effort to create that flexibility
 - Cmt: degree of decommissioning would be important to consider as well, they have had to rebuild roads they have decommissioned so being more strategic about this would be helpful. Closing but not fully decommission certain roads could be a potential solution.
 - Difference between closed, stored, and decommissioned roads: decommissioned road is a treatment could be barrier or could be full recontouring applied to road we are never going to use again, stored or closed is used interchangeably these are barricaded to prevent motorized vehicle access, and make the road stable.
 - If timber could store roads rather than decommissioned it would make it more cost friendly to reopen if further treatment is needed. Treatments for either can be really similar.
 - The IDT is thinking about which roads to store vs decommission for NFS.
 - There had been a push to decommission roads to reduce road mileage
 - Cmt: Hampton has some road easement to get to their own private land etc.
 - Congress requires reasonable access to parcels through FS land
- Identifying road location:
 - The FS noted that some roads are misidentified but we know where they are.
- Road density:
 - The FS doesn't use road density in the forest plan but road density is pretty low in the project area.
 - The intention is to reduce road density.
 - NMFS has recommendations for road density.

- NMFS has ratings for mile of road per square mile in watershed, did watershed analysis for each watershed and looked at level of road in each of those (only open roads considered not legacy)
 - Last couple of projects they have walked the legacy roads using LiDAR to identify and then consider the risk for sliding and slumping, and which ones need to be reopened, look at conditions such as destabilization when considering reopening a road
- Question: how does the road network and connectivity fit into this discussion?
 - Decommissioning a road within a stand can cause short term negative impact on some species and habitat that would be considered a trade-off for achieving long term positive impacts
 - The FS looked at certain areas in Deadwood and created strategy for handling those stands and treating them one time then getting out of the area
 - On NFS discussions they have been talking about that approach in areas where roads are precarious on steeper slopes
 - It would be great to have collaborative discussion on connectivity more with the FS than has happened in the past. Sounds like both sides are talking about it and it would be good to talk about connecting certain polygons in the project area
 - Cmt: all specialists looking at the same roads with different lenses and giving recommendation they all agree on
 - Roads are prioritized based on needs and impacts.
- Next steps:
 - The FS Specialists will return to a follow-up committee meeting to continue this discussion and give project specific presentations.

OCCFC Roads Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

07/28/2022

Meeting Attendees	
Jim Fairchild	Audubon Society of Corvallis
Paul Lullay	Hampton Lumber
Chuck Fisher	USFS
Fran Recht	Pacific States Fisheries Program

- 11:10 – 11:25 – project updates
 - Fran reported that the Mid-coast Watershed Council and partners received a focused investment partnership for work in the Yaquina and Alsea estuaries to support the restoration of tidal wetlands.
 - Jim reported that some of the landscape level projects, such as Indian Creek and Deadwood, have road decommissioning projects. These projects may be competing with forest-wide projects, leading to competition for funding. Chuck responded that these projects are often tied to timber projects where the USFS can use money from the timber projects to fund projects nearby. If there is no funding mechanism for decommissioning remote roads that are not tied to a timber project, those might be funded by stewardship sales receipts. Chuck noted that any threatened or endangered species would be a higher priority than these projects. Paul noted that whether the funding is obtained as a result

of a requirement to decommission roads during a timber sale or later through the stewardship funds, it is essentially drawing from the same funds.

- Fran reported that funding for restoration projects remains strong.
- 11:25 – 11:55 – Discussion of the Roads ZOA Document
 - Road maintenance
 - We discussed the road density target level's relationship to the cost of maintaining forest roads systems. Chuck noted that targets for road density are not in the forest plan, but the objective is to reduce road density. Roads may be closed to avoid maintenance costs, may be reopened later.
 - Climate change will increase maintenance costs. Culverts must be upgraded to avoid beaver problems. Concentrate efforts on roads adjacent to unstable slopes and streams. Look at enlarging culverts and providing longer term stability. USFS designs culverts for 100-year flood events, climate change may alter those flooding patterns but the data are not yet available.
 - The document should include an analysis of prioritization of projects based on impacts.
 - Need to Look at Overall Transportation Systems Impacts
 - The USFS tends to concentrate its analysis on impacts to aquatic habitats. Rewilding and defragmenting are concerns. Connectivity should be added to that analysis.

- Another impact to consider is that some of the funding for roads decommissioning comes from timber sales and the existing roads systems need to be sufficient such that they are available when needed to access future timber harvest sites that would generate additional funding for projects on forestlands and that would support the economy. We should be careful not to remove roads that will later need to be replaced for this purpose. The USFS is considering this when planning with an evaluation of timber harvesting, with additional consideration of the timelines implicated in the policies against harvesting trees that are over 80 years old. They will try to identify areas where roads can be removed and those where roads should remain. This issue should be included in the portion of the document pertaining to desired future conditions.
- Current Process for Road Layout in Timber Sales
 - At the point that timber sales are being planned, it is too late to engage with the process. This should be done during the phase where the EA is being developed. By the time the EA is finished, the roads used for timber sales has already been decided.
 - It is important to leave room for flexibility when the plans are being formulated.
- We Don't Know Where the Roads Are
 - The USFS concedes the roads maps are incomplete. There is an ongoing project to generate accurate maps for roads within the forest lands.
 - Proper classification and identification of roads is really important.

- Hydrologists and engineers are finding and evaluating roads during the NEPA process. LiDAR shows legacy roads.
- The roads need to be identified before the timber harvests are in progress.
- Road Density Too High/Roads Constructed Before NMFS Document
 - Road density is not a target for the USFS projects. The DOGAMI document is not the relevant guiding document in this case, rather it is the NMFS document.
 - When a road is stored it is not considered to be a reduction in road density. The road is still on the landscape.
- 11:55 – 12:00 – Discussion of next steps, wrap up meeting.
 - We will submit a list of terms pertaining to forest we would like to have defined and clarified.
 - We will schedule a meeting for mid-August to continue going through the Roads ZOA document.

Roads ZOA Subcommittee Meeting
11/4/22

Participants: Paul Lulay, Jim Fairchild, Jordan Latter, Fran Recht, Paul Engelmeyer, Chuck Fisher, Mycah Scoggins, Robert Sanders, and Chris Mays

Definitions

Since the past group meeting, more information about definitions of road types (e.g. closed, stored, decommissioned, legacy, abandoned) was requested.

- Chuck provided several transportation system management reports which are now posted in the OneDrive Roads ZOA folder.
- The USFS uses LIDAR to identify road-like features and then goes out to ground proof, especially in the case of abandoned and legacy roads. They investigate if roads are close to headwaters or in steeply sloped areas. LIDAR information can be found via a link to DOGAMI via the N Fork Smith project website.

Funding For Road Work

There is interest in having EAs identify the funding strategies that will be used to carry out road work.

- The most consistent funding sources for on-forest road work are KV funds from commercial timber sales and embedded activities in stewardship timber sales. They also can compete nationally for Great American Outdoors Fund for large projects. Appropriated funds have gone down. Other ownerships do help pay for shared road segments. For example, counties sometimes pay through grants and agreements process.
 - Fran suggested trying to access NOAA resiliency funding by arguing impacts on coho.
 - Chris shared how the Siuslaw Watershed Council partnered with the USFS to access Wild Salmon Center funding for road work on Man Creek Road.
- The USFS prioritizes road work for funding when road issues impact priority habitat.

Issues of Concern Brought Forth

- Road density
 - The Regional Office has a team doing an analysis of the value of “unroaded areas” greater than 1000 acres. This analysis hasn’t been included in any EAs on the Siuslaw NF. Cmt: The USFS has an inventory of roadless areas and they do not create new roads in those areas. This is at the 10,000-acre level. A 2014 report that set a road reduction target was mentioned (source?)
 - Q: Would it be possible to look at the less than 1000 level isolated units to enter a last time then button up?
 - One member advised thinking hard about forest management actions before completely pulling out capital investments in the form of roads. Different levels of closure are possible and best road density varies by location. Access for wildfire needs are a concern.

- Habitat Fragmentation: Do road fragments create habitat fragmentation?
 - Would it be helpful for the OCCFC to put on paper “new” priorities like fragmentation that aren’t currently in policy? This could help with the NWFP revision. Need peer-reviewed science/research to support arguments.
- Impacts on aquatic species, especially fry, from sedimentation from roads that “aren’t working properly”
- Vegetation management along roads: will herbicides be used?
 - Need a Botanist to join this discussion. The ARBO II consultation document is a resource. Is that in the project file on the USFS website?

Next steps on Zones of Agreements:

The group will meet on its own during the next monthly meeting in order to start to draft ZOA statements. Some starting ideas mentioned during this meeting were:

- Common goal of reducing sediment problems for aquatic concerns – the means to do this could be decommissioning or fixing roads.
 - Suggestion: remove stream-adjacent roads with sub-bullets about complexity.
 - If able to relocate main traffic routes away from legacy riparian areas, that is better for operators and good for species.
 - Make a statement about headwall cutting related roads
- Identify strategic locations
- Focus on roads that “aren’t working” rather than making a blanket statement
- Look for possible zone of agreement about prioritization process for road removal
 - The process starts with Travel Management directive. The EAs, the hydrologist, fish biologist, wildlife biologist and roads specialist discuss. The discussions starts at water and works its way up the hill.
 - Request the standard operating procedure from hydrologist.
- Think about zones of agreement related to techniques for closure
- Consider criteria for opportunities to rewild areas through decommissioning.

Next meeting will be Monday, December 5th via Zoom starting at 11:30am.