

# NOTES FROM BUSS TEAM MEETING



**Date of meeting:** Thursday, June 23, 2011, 1– 4 pm

**Location:** The Nature Conservancy, 2424 Spruce St., Boulder, CO 80302

**Roundtable contact:** Gali Beh, c/o Beh Management Consulting, Inc., 1107 12<sup>th</sup> St., Boulder CO 80302, 303-499-1576, [gali@behconsulting.com](mailto:gali@behconsulting.com)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Chelsea Gunsalus who took notes for these minutes. Thank you also to the Nature Conservancy for hosting us in their facility.

## ATTENDEES

At the Front Range Roundtable Quarterly meeting in Boulder, Colorado on June 23, 2011, 13 members and guests participated. If you attended the meeting but your name is not recorded in the list below, please send an email to Gali Beh at [gali@behconsulting.com](mailto:gali@behconsulting.com).

Full Name	Organization
Gali Beh	Beh Management Consulting, Inc.
Jeanna Childers	US Forest Service-Region 2
Rich Edwards	Colorado State Forest Service
Susan Ford	US Forest Service-Region 2
Cesar Gellido	Coal Creek Community
Hal Gibbs	US Forest Service, ARP
Faye Griffin	Jefferson County
Chelsea Gunsalus	US Forest Service, ARP
Brett Haberstick	Sunshine Fire Protection District
Craig Jones	Colorado State Forest Service
Elisha Kirby	Arapaho Roosevelt NF
Don Moore	American Planning Association
Dan Predovich	Critical MAS
John Ring	Bureau of Land Management
Bret Roller	Conifer Biomass
Carl Spaulding	Colorado Timber Industry Association
John Tighe	Park County
Wade Yates	Jefferson County

## RT Background:

### Review of Roundtable vision and progress against 2010 goals

- The Roundtable (RT) formed in 2004 after Hayman Fire in 2002; RT mission: “Serve as focal point for diverse stakeholder input into efforts to reduce wildland fire risks and improve forest health through sustained fuels treatment along the Colorado Front Range.”
- Began with just government agencies and then asked TWS and TNC to join.

- The scope included as many stakeholder groups into the discussion as possible. The RT has four voting days a year.
- The vision was agreed on in 2006: 1.5 million acres require treatments to accomplish mission. The acreage overlaps with Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership, half of the counties of the NFRMPBWG, and the CWWPWG. The RT should ensure the working teams have a member from each of the groups it works with.
- Roundtable Organization: Partner with three Front Range groups, contains five working teams; four are Roundtable focused and one is CFLRP focused.
- When the group got through the strategic planning process, lands were organized and prioritized by the level of importance and difficulty. Four working teams were set up. One of the 2010 priorities was to redefine the group's purpose, which was accomplished: stay focused on lower montaine. Other accomplished priorities include: clarifying with FRFTP, NFRMPBWG, and CWWPWG and memberships were expanded.
- 2010 priorities that were not accomplished were: Acknowledge or celebrate progress and the incorporation of a nonprofit group. The fiscal agent for the RT is the Arapaho-Roosevelt Forest Foundation. 2011 goals will be set today.
- Treatments can slow severity of fire spread; proven at Bald Mountain treatment area.
- Broad perspective on values at risk
- All of the working teams' 2010 goals are either completed or in progress:
  - Executive team led successful creation of CFLR proposal and added more to the RT structure. Considering long term policy.
  - IMT recreated 2006 map and overlaid with NFRMPB and CWWPWG group. It also sent out RFI to communities and has selected communities
  - Outreach team created all communications needed for events held. Outreach reviewed progress against initiatives. There were 44 steps to the initiatives and the team checked if done, if we are happy with the results. They inform each other about outreach opportunities. D.C. trip, field trip to Fourmile fire site.
  - Biomass team wrote letters for grants and helped develop biomass utilization across Front Range. Update progress by county
  - SM team is now closed because all members joined CFLRP monitoring team. They worked on +50 definitions and evaluated the progress of forest treatments in 2006 mapped priority areas. The group will figure out how CFLRP monitoring should work. Monitoring treatments, monitoring CFLRP implementation.
  - The initiatives from 2006 were broken down into 10 initiatives. The progress on these initiatives is under review. More work on #4 "Increase appropriate application of prescribed fire and wildland fire use as a management tool" and #5 "Increase utilization of woody biomass for facility heating." Try to increase biomass utilization in the 4 (of the 10 RT counties) that have no bio-heating or bio-use facilities. Those using them are happy. Limiting growth of fire risk in WUI needs to be addressed also.
  - 180 members, 80 agencies
- Fire season of 2002 sparked the need for a collaborative effort, such as the Roundtable. It included the Front Range Implementing Agencies: USFS, BLM, RMNP, USFWS, & CSFS. Partnerships broadened in 2004 to TNC and TWS
- In 2006 the Roundtable vision document was created.
- The RT selected the lower montane where fire risk mitigation = ecological restoration because the historical range of variability were understood and conditions at high risk for ignition and fire spread.

- Land base spans Larimer to El Paso Counties – share Grand and Park Counties with CBBC
- Successes:
  - Woodland Park, CFLRP, Stewardship Contract, new funding from FS and ARRA, biomass utilization improvement, and the approval of 75 Front Range CWPPs.

Talking Points:

Volume board feet of wood per year. Large decrease in timber industry, but still need to remove biomass.

Colorado needs a lot of mechanical treatments, few opportunities for prescribed burning  
Values at risk – estimated value of biomass in forest \$5 million/year. Paid through timber sales/contracts.

Supply of biomass by county – Jefferson County shows biomass availability bone dry tons per year per county.

Bibliography of available supply studies done by BUSS team.

Recommendations from RT in 2006 on Biomass Utilization – biomass heating was selected. Added co-firing and low megawatt utilization. Proposed legislations (explore for new public bldgs on Front Range)

Knowledge of slash sites

Map of biomass processing facilities

Talking points agreed to last year that will be revisited today. If corrections, additions or deletions need to be made, speak about it today.

Status of biomass utilization – discuss additions, deletions or corrections

Non-commercial material going into something other than..... or include uses other than energy consumption.

Write down proposed talking point and share w/ group. Ask clarifying ?s, others propose changes or explain disagreement (timed), red yellow & green paddles used. Fate of talking point – consensus (no red), table and look into further (some red, some green, some yellow), discard (mostly red)

Add facts to talking points as BUSS team

Proposed Talking Points:

1. Exemptions made for loads on for biomass to be trucked at higher loads on federal highways to match state limits
  - a. 80,000 lbs for federal
  - b. 96,000 lbs for state w/ more axels, 88,000 w/ just 1 axel
  - c. Bill at Congress dealing with issue – fight between railroad and trucking industry b/c railroad currently alternative.
  - d. All states that border Canada can compete with Canadian shipments
  - e. Standards set based on safety; vehicles better structured and fed highways built to stronger standard than state highways.
  - f. Is it not affordable to transport more than 100 miles w/ more than \$200/mile
  - g. Group can throw voice to delegates
  - h. Heading of transportation and discuss issues w/in category
  - i. Extra 16,000 lbs is pure payload
  - j. Is it truly a barrier?
    - i. Vote – no reds, accept

2. Growing awareness of the increased risk to wildfire has promoted forest mitigation efforts but not the concurrent utilization of the resulting biomass
  - a. Utilization was left out when money began to come in to treat acres
  - b. Underfunding of utilization – cutting is easy, how to deal w/ issues that come with it is the challenge;
  - c. Put minds and money into where needs to be, use economics, where put \$ to achieve goal.
  - d. Cross-benefit analysis to determine whether worth cost (consider air quality, FF contingency forces, etc.) life cycle analysis of fuel, be worth it to pay extra to have it hauled
  - e. Consider what should happen – who takes responsibility
  - f. Should be part of definition of restoration project  
Landowners and land mgrs should be required to ask contractors to include in their bid the cost of getting the wood to the road the extra cost to get the wood to the road should be subsidized by the contract
  - g. Pick best cost for environment
  - h. Requiring CSFS, USFS to look at costs to pile and burn or have hauled off to add into contract price
  - i. If roadside fuel break, ask contractor how much more to get it to the road.
    - i. Vote: No red, accept

3. Slash utilization w/ more bio-heating – 50% of cost is transportation from stump to end user. Take small mills to mountain communities. Demand issues. Looking at how waste is used (fertilizer, fuel or furniture). Equip. biggest bottleneck – pellet stoves cause high ash content, pellet stoves go out during electrical shortages, pellet stoves need electricity for hopper and auger. Create better stoves that don't need anything but battery power. Develop stove that can deal w/ ash more efficiently

- a. Commercial pellet stoves that can take lower quality ash
- b. Businesses looking at bringing commercial pellets versus home heating pellets. Looking at getting commercial pellet stoves for large bldg.
- c. Pellet companies in CO are producing home heating pellets, can't use slash
- d. Heating with biomass slash
- e. Need for investment into technology for utilization for slash
- f. Lack of infrastructure for pellet stoves
- g. # of customers increasing for alternative products instead of propane
  - i. Vote: BUSS team more conversation

How deal with slash? Can be used in compost

Slash is challenging to deal with. If find use for slash, how transport it?

4. Sustainability issue (reemphasize) – In order for industry to be encouraged, there has to be guarantee supply 20 years+
  - a. Attract good contractors w/ stable supply
  - b. Current Long-term stewardship contract – 80% of wood going out of state, not supplying many local businesses
  - c. 20 year general supply; certain amount of acreage or timber offered
  - d. West Range required to find home for what has been done
  - e. Users are trying to get product b/c all put up to contract
  - f. Not tied to 1 contractor
  - g. Do better job of planning in future - no mechanism yet; incorporate sustainable supply for at least 20 yrs – across all lands.

- h. USFS – NEPA, tied in w/ forest plan, only guarantee is in a contract. Stewardship considered monopoly now.
      - i. Interested in biomass utilization or supporting local users?
      - j. Local contractors go out of business due to lack of work
        - i. Vote: BUSS team reassess, talk about long-term supply issues
- 5. Government requires any building built w/ government \$ has to meet standard for materials. Have to meet certain criteria for materials and energy efficiency. At least look at utilization of biomass (bio-heating).
  - a. Change current talking point
  - b. With state government, one small change could be made in law to make it a requirement for consideration
  - c. Not necessarily requirement, but up for consideration
  - d. Can't take away local control; make cost effective for constituents
  - e. Bioheating can utilize other fuel
  - f. Check box, was it considered yes or no.
  - g. Consideration may turn into requirement
    - i. Vote: To BUSS team for further discussion
- 6. Product considered waste, by-product and free. Although not of high value, doesn't come at no \$. Everything is free until you touch it.
  - a. New entrepreneurs need to understand this
  - b. Should there be gov't subsidies to address this?
  - c. \$400-\$2000/acre but contracts are what are taking care of forestry
  - d. Timber resources rarely pay for the personnel
  - e. Technology close for small scale distributed Woody biomass – can get cheap natural gas in CO, so no incentive for people to switch to alternative fuel types
  - f. Put facts to this talking point – talk about ranges of costs; \$20/ton, not going to touch a ton of biomass within a certain range, higher than \$20/ton.
  - g. Range could be anywhere from \$24-\$65/ton
  - h. Subsidy on the stump – timber industry looking at \$30-\$40/ton, go to bigger trees, goes to saw timber which pays price to get tree to town and chips by-product used for biomass. Total economics
  - i. Biomass for energy will only come out of the woods on the back of a strong forest mgmt program utilizing under higher value lumber and wood products. Context: forest mgmt is not going to be affordable w/o solid timber program
    - i. Everything would shut down w/o high value timber
  - j. Focus context – Forest mgmt is not going to be affordable w/o solid timber program. Biomass for energy will only come up the back of a strong forest mgmt program, using higher valued lumber and wood products.
  - k. Biomass utilization must be based on total economic feasibility while not at the elimination of other uses.
  - l. Cost issues category (transportation issues under) All costs from severing tree from stump to delivery to processor to end user needs to be understood or delineated in talking points paper. (getting tree from stump to road, loading/hauling)
    - i. Vote: yellow – BUSS team
- 7. Biomass utilization is more than just bioenergy; there are other traditional wood products industries that should be maintained (landscaping products)
  - a. Energy will likely be a significant portion of biomass cut but not in near future

- b. Combined heat and energy is most likely to be bigger use of biomass than other types of energy – more efficient use of wood; wood is so expensive, has to be high value use.
  - c. New composite bldg materials may still be created
  - d. 3-5 MW solutions appropriate
  - e. Technology in the future will allow combined heat and power
    - i. CHP projects – courthouse, schools, etc. place to utilize both
  - f. Co-firing – offset of air quality if other goals for pollutants. Cleans up emissions of coal. Knocked out 20% of coal emissions in the past. Running new tests now
  - g. Using biomass for heating is already being used and efficient.
    - i. Vote: 2 yellows – go to RT
8. Timber industry in CO no longer self sustaining. Biomass is by-product, not main product. For forest management tools and resources, not wood producers
- a. Have to start paying more \$ for stumpage when building new homes. Remove as on-going statement
  - b. Industry provides means to get resources.
  - c. No one paid to cut trees in CO – if independent timber industry, wouldn't have to invest
  - d. FS changed method – went from timber sales to service contracts
  - e. 3 yrs ago majority of timber was coming off private land,
  - f. It's both a service and product industry now.
  - g. Wood value used to pay for whole contract, today wood value usually only pays for portion of work
  - h. Went from mostly timber sales to mostly service contracts on Front Range
    - i. Vote: BUSS team work on no reds. Replace sentence
    - ii. Use CSFS Assessment
9. Biomass – it just makes sense, people like it and it doesn't cost as much as the alternative.