

Roundtable Wildlife Team Meeting
November 13, 2012

Attendees: Felix Quesada, Gali Beh, Janelle Valladares, Lynne Deibel, Rick Truex, Claudia Regan, Casey Cooley, Jonas Feinstein, Paula Fornwalt, Steve Germaine(*), Jenny Briggs, Hal Gibbs, Mike Welker

1. Purpose:

- a. Lynne: This meeting is a kickoff for the wildlife monitoring team (round 2). Need to put concentrated effort on this; Lynne and Rick have agreed to be co-leads of the team with Gali as facilitator. The group will discuss where we've been, where we're at, and where we're going. This meeting will be less formal as usual; we don't want to discount work that has been done in the past, but explore different ways of doing things. Talk about member roles, who will be on core team for this project and who will serve in a complementary way, key considerations, goals, timelines, benchmarks, deliverables, assignments, calendar, and final due date, as well as a discussion about "what is monitoring"?
- b. Rick: We can build from what's done to date, but don't be confined by it. Intent to explore a variety of different ways to monitor with regard to cost and resources. We need to get to a common understanding and determine what we are trying to monitor over time.

2. Background (Hal):

- a. The legislation that was passed related to CFLR says we should form a multi-party monitoring group to aid in monitoring the effects of the CFLR project. In the fall of 2010, entered into agreement with CFRI to aid in developing a monitoring plan and spent 6-7 months developing plan (completed May 2011). The Roundtable is the collaborative group for this effort and the CFLR proposal was built upon restoration areas in the 2006 Roundtable document in lower montane areas that the Roundtable reached conceded needed to be restored and serve community wildfire protection purposes. The monitoring group was composed of Roundtable members when it started; the real focus was ecological forest vegetation monitoring. There was also a social and economic group that formed near the end of the effort, but not much progress was made during that 1st effort. Developed desired conditions and monitoring protocols to determine whether moving toward those conditions. Brought in external experts to aid and interviewed; Roundtable involvement motivated focus. A group was set up to conduct wildlife monitoring (3-4 individuals) to develop a plan. The group made a good effort at doing that, however, when the group got back together the question was raised: "will this provide us answers whether we're achieving a desired condition or not"? That brings us to the present and where we were this last summer with Craig Hansen. We should see if there are better monitoring protocols or species that could be used. A lot of the wildlife monitoring became tied to the standard stand exam. Updated information was put into the plan this year, but the understory group did not receive the same level of effort as the others.
 - i. Wildlife use monitoring that has been done (Jenny) – It was not a full effort following the species table development. While the Roundtable group was deliberating what to monitor and how, there was a focus on trees, fuels, and some understory. There was a call for grant proposals from USFWS encouraging cooperatives that looked at different resource impacts on wildlife communities. It loosely followed some of the recommendations from Craig's plan and would be a funding source

outside of CFLR. Collecting data with first approach would help refine the bigger group's approach. Wildlife use and understory monitoring methods would be added to CSE stand exam plots; the components could be integrated together. Craig had experience with a multiple species monitoring; always been open to idea that it might be the best approach or scale to monitor these species and guilds. It can provide pre- and post-treatment data on treated vs. untreated areas. Still working on pulling together 2 year data set. Working on another grant proposal to expand study; this may expand further with more methods. Trying to further wildlife monitoring.

- b. Treatment areas and map: 31,600 acres over 10 year period. Just finishing 2012 annual report. Accomplished over 8,000 acres in the first 2 years, which is slightly above what we had anticipated. The treatments are primarily focused on ponderosa pine; where lodgepole makes up more than 25% of treatment area, the Forest Service tries to pay with other funding sources.
3. Discussion:
- a. What is monitoring?
 - i. (Gali) Roundtable definitions: Effort by science and monitoring team to bridge gaps between Roundtable and other collaborative groups (watershed and NFRMPBWG), wanted to make sure all had common understanding of terms we were using.
 - ii. (Gali) Roundtable definition of monitoring: The collection of information over time, generally on a sample basis by measuring change in an indicator or variable, to determine the effects of resource management treatments in the long term.
 1. Don't feel tied to the Roundtable definitions
 - iii. (Rick) Think about what monitoring is with respect to CFLR; repeated sampling over time isn't explicitly stated in Roundtable definitions. Determine what we're looking for in advance, build a design, and incorporate same locations over time. Effectiveness and response monitoring definitions match as closely to wildlife monitoring of these definitions. Don't spend money because we feel like we need to. Identify things that make sense for LS Team and Roundtable, and think about ways to get at those questions at that level of rigor. Think about populations; don't default to habitat, but need to take pulse of the population itself. People will blend status and trend and cause and effect research; be very clear where to go with this. Does CFLR need us to make strong inference about population status and trend or if trying to set up programs that tease out cause and effect? Cause and effect with wildlife is very difficult because there are too many variables. Identify ways populations may respond, and can be most informative to CFLR at the end of 10 years. When talk about monitoring populations, there are a whole gamut of techniques that can be used. Could use thorough discussion on metrics for wildlife; it hasn't been refined and it a critical aspect. Once have metrics, can move on to scales.
 - iv. (Lynne) Going to start discussing steps soon.
 - v. (Jenny) The national team wanted to leave room for collaboratives to interpret wildlife component for each place. The lack of guidance in national guidance was not necessarily the bottom line.
 - vi. (Casey) Is the goal to look at multiple scales or project level scale? Is the desire to meet both scales from FS? That question has to be answered. New planning rule may have an impact on the monitoring

effort. Intent to look at treatment level and some landscape level scale. The landscape level scale is more challenging from all standpoints, but could identify species that could be monitored across Front Range and identify species for treatment level. Might *want to define at what landscape scale we're trying to monitor* at (watershed, whole Front Range?).

- vii. (Steve) Different structural elements and identify species, community, or group. For each group or species tried to identify keyhole vulnerability that would be key driver of population trend. Identify metrics that were measurable and most informative.
- viii. Could this group look at these documents that show what other people have done? *Find other forms of wildlife monitoring plans*
- b. Goals, deliverables, and timing
 - i. Don't let previous team constrain this team; think from blank slate while considering what has been done and what can be leveraged.
 - ii. Landscape restoration team hoping for more guidance in 3 areas:
 - 1. Given limited funds, if have to prioritize species in monitoring plan, which species should be done first? How many species represent habitats for others? Is there a smaller number that can be focused on first that will indicate that other species are doing well?
 - 2. Not clear that species will increase or decrease after treatment, looking for recommendations of what can be expected after treatment.
 - 3. Recommendations on how to best monitor those species (best data collection methods, what kind of funding should the team be prepared for, scale of monitoring, advice on how to monitor)
 - iii. Do we want to take a broad approach or management indicator species?
 - iv. Recommend ideal monitoring approach or focus on what is most practical with moderate budget? Look at cost-benefit kind of process; explore in reasonable timeline to get to endpoint. Recognition of what else is going on with other partners that could provide benefits at relatively low cost (integrative bird monitoring). May have to tweak it to answer project-scale question.
 - v. Prioritizing species can be challenging because we impart an opinion about which species is more important to an ecosystem than another. Explore metrics of population status and response rather than just agree on population trends.
 - vi. Big-game population models are weak, not suitable for this.
 - vii. Small mammals has potential of impacting at project level scale very easily. Land bird and small mammals is what people should be focusing on. Big game don't differentiate, so hard to tease out any indicators.
 - viii. Plan can allow multiple things to be cycled in based on the biology of the species; this would provide an option not to prioritize, but provide a plan that will allow for separate species to be monitoring on different years.
 - ix. Decide which species specifically we should monitor.
 - x. Politically and economically important species

- xi. *Make list of criteria by which to decide which species to monitor – rate each species by criteria.* (cost is related to design, but include framework for how to craft a list)
- xii. Is there anything missing from the list that isn't already done? Vet with other people outside of this group; Steve might be a good person to look at the list of species. Flammulated owls down on the Pike. Liba from CSU would probably be interested in looking over the list of species as well. Visit with members of faculty at universities. Include someone with aquatic expertise to look at list and if there is a need, invite them to consult. *Create a list of people that the species list should be shown to.*
- xiii. Starting point for discussion with species were identified that would represent groups of species; his chart includes "WHY"; "ponderosa pine species"
- xiv. Document how choose species for plans
- xv. See what may be missing and get back into making recommendations that will eliminate some species
- xvi. Develop rationale for what makes sense to monitor and needs to be done before list is changed or engaging consultants. Consultants may have input into rationale.
- xvii. Create list of questions that will be used to engage experts
- xviii. Apply trends to wildlife species and determine how habitat affects species. Veg trends will drive wildlife response.
- xix. Desired condition – expected trends and timescale; as time permits
- xx. Declines versus increases will have an impact on sampling and design
- xxi. Feasibility to monitor, importance of change, sensitive endangers etc.
- c. Timeline: Implement by 2013 field season (6 months) Roundtable meeting May 30
 - i. Revise/finalize goals and deliverables on November 30 meeting (Rick)
 - ii. Go back to proposal, pull out what we said we were going to do, what was going to go happen, pull out trends from veg in 1-2 page document. Provide to those that we're asking about species on November 30 meeting (Hal)
 - iii. Put together schedule (Gali)
 - iv. Team meeting in December – finalize goals and deliverables, list of criteria, list of experts to review list of species, literature review
 - v. Interview questions for experts and divvying up literature review (December)
 - vi. March 8 – Quarterly Roundtable meeting
 - vii. April – meeting to decide if any more species need to be added to list
 - viii. May – Apply framework to list of species
 - ix. June – Define desired future conditions for species and recommend monitoring methods and estimate costs and population metrics that we expect to increase or decrease
- d. Core team meetings: Core team meetings once a month for a longer duration from 9:30-3:30. Sign up for action items for work plan
- e. Advisor doesn't have to attend meetings; may ask advisor to be more involved if needed; Paula (parallel understory group), Steve, Jenny,
- f. Co-Leads responsible for content and quality of work
- g. Core team: Lynne (co-lead), Rick (co-lead), Claudia (for now?), Casey, Jonas, Hal, Felix, Janelle (GIS mapping), Mike

- h. Gali will develop a plan and let the group know when the plan is not being followed; Gali will send out Doodle to determine date for December, as well as potentially future meetings.