

Assessment Report

Challenges to and Opportunities for
Collaboration on the Blue Mountains
Forest Plan Revision

July 2004

Prepared for:

All those with an Interest or Role in the
Effort to Revise the Blue Mountains Forest Plan

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I. About this Report

In 2003, the Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision Team (Team) was formed to begin the process of jointly updating the Forest Plans for the Malheur, Umatilla and Wallowa Whitman National Forests. The Team believes that collaboration with affected people, communities and governments is necessary if the Plan Revision is to be workable, broadly supported and sustainable over time. The Team therefore committed themselves to the formidable task of collaborating with others on a plan that covers 5.3 million acres, involves over 15 different counties and the cities and districts contained in each, and has an initial contacts list that includes thousands of people and organizations. By mid-2005 the Team expects to have a proposed plan for presentation to the Forest Supervisors that most people can accept and understand.

The Team approached the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (US Institute), for advice and guidance on collaborative processes. They decided to hire a neutral facilitator to assist with the design and implementation of a series of over 30 workshops to be conducted over coming year. The facilitation team was also asked to provide expertise regarding how the Plan Revision effort can employ collaborative practices. The Team and the US Institute were clear in their selection process that the expertise of the facilitators was to be available to both the Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision Team, and to participants in the Revision process.

The neutral facilitator chosen for this work is Martha Bean of Collaborative Focus, working in partnership with Lois Schwennesen of Schwennesen and Associates. Ms. Bean and Ms. Schwennesen are under contract with US Institute. They advise and assist the Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision Team and all participants involved in the process, and are under the direct supervision of the Institute.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report is an independent assessment of the opportunities and challenges facing a collaborative Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision process. It is based on information expressed during a series of interviews conducted during the spring and early summer of 2004 by the author. This assessment report also includes information gained from background research, informal interviews, and the experiences of the facilitators (Martha Bean and Lois Schwennesen). Some information is also incorporated from the ten initial community workshops sponsored by the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team and held in the Northwest in June and July, 2004.

The purpose of this report is to offer insights – and perhaps added clarity – as the Blue Mountain Forest Planning Team and interested people work together to build a solid plan to guide the future management of Blue Mountains National Forests.

Ms.Bean, author of this report, takes full and independent responsibility for the content.

SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

In the opinion of this assessor, the full range of concerns, ideas and kudos offered and observed thus far in the Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision Process fall into these five summary categories:

- **Expectations** about the Blue Mountains Forest Plan itself: What it will accomplish; how it will be done and other specific features of the plan.
- Observations regarding **trust**: Trust of the Forest Service as an organization; trust of individuals and organizations involved in the process; trust in a stable decision making environment.
- **Contrasting views** between groups and individuals: What they are (some are more obvious and expected than others); how these contrasts concern participants and where they are more (or less) pronounced than people may believe.
- Observations about **collaboration**: What it means to collaborate; how it can accomplish the task at hand, coupled with appropriate expectations regarding collaboration in this Planning process.
- Key **issues**: Those principle concerns that emerged consistently and sometimes passionately during interviews and in the workshops.

A WORD ABOUT NAMES

This report is has been prepared for all those with a role or an interest in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision. This means not only those directly participating as citizens, but also community groups and interest organizations. It also means other governmental entities: local, state and federal and sovereign Tribal Nations. This report has also been prepared for the Forest Service, including the members of the Blue Mountains Forest Planning Team.

In the text of this report, the following words are used to identify the wide variety of people, groups, organizations and governments with a role or interest in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision:

- The term '**people**' is the most inclusive term used in this report, and includes all those with an interest or role in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.
- The term '**participants**' is used to mean all individuals, groups, organizations and government entities participating in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision *with the exception* of the Blue Mountain Forest Plan Team.
- The word '**Team**' refers to the Blue Mountains Forest Planning Team.
- The term '**interviewees**' refers to those who were interviewed as a part of this report.
- '**Tribal Nations**' is used to refer to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon.
- The words '**workshop participants**' are used to refer to those who attended workshops held in the spring of 2004 on the Plan Revision.
- Occasionally, the words '**governments**', '**agencies**', '**groups**' or '**organizations**' is added to the terms above in order to be more specific.

II. Methods

This report is based on interviews with interested individuals, organization representatives, elected officials and Forest Service employees. Interviews were conducted in May and June 2004, and were largely done on the phone; most lasted approximately an hour although some were completed in less than an hour. A list of those interviewed, and those contacted for interviews, is found in Appendix 1. The interview guide (used as just that – a guide) is included as Appendix 2.

Interviewees were told the purpose of this independent assessment and the perspective and responsibilities of the assessor. They were offered information on confidentiality, and were told how the assessor expected the report could be used. Interviewees were told they could have copies of this report. They were also informed that while the assessor would seek to confirm and clarify facts and resolve grammatical and editorial mistakes, the content, observations and recommendations included in this report would not be subject to prior approval of any Forest Service or Institute employees. Some interviewees, as well as senior colleagues of the author read a draft of this report. The author made all final decisions

In addition to the interviews, this assessment report includes some observations from the first set of 10 community workshops on the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision process conducted throughout the Northwest in June and July of 2004. Each of these workshops was facilitated by Martha Bean, or by Lois Schwennesen. A more thorough

analysis of the workshop results is being conducted by the Blue Mountain Forest Planning Team.

The observations in this report are not a statistical analysis of the responses to the interview questions. This report is, instead, an interpretation of the content of the interviews by a neutral professional schooled and experienced in mediation, watershed management, and organizational development.

The author takes full and sole responsibility for the content of this report. It was independently produced and does not necessarily represent the views of any member of the co-conveners group, the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team, or those who were interviewed.

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III. Observations

Interestingly, interview comments overwhelmingly focused on themes this author would describe as related 'process' or 'people' issues. Interviewees had a wealth of ideas for how to make the process as collaborative as possible and what all participants people can do to support this. There was doubt expressed that this planning effort can actually *be* collaborative when there are so many different authorities, political pressures and new approaches to science in play. No blame is assigned for the possibility that collaboration may not work. People simply express a healthy skepticism that collaboration can be accomplished in such a complex decision environment, but are cautiously hopeful that it can be.

Interviewees were very interested in understanding what will actually constitute the Plan. Consequently, during the interviews, people were not ready to offer specific ideas regarding Forest management and Forest issues. First, they wanted to have a more complete sense of the content, focus and process for reaching the Proposed Plan Revision. In the opinion of this author, the workshops held in the spring of 2004 began to both provide more of this information, and then did begin to open doors for people to begin expressing specifics about their hopes for the management of the Blue Mountains.

This report focuses on the result of the interviews, with some insights gleaned from the workshops. Observations from the interviews fall into these five categories:

- A. Expectations
- B. Trust
- C. Contrasting Views
- D. Collaboration
- E. Specific Issues

For each category of observation, the **component** parts of that observation are described based on themes derived from the interviews and the public meetings. **Challenges and opportunities** associated with each component are noted. Lastly, **options and ideas** – some with a fair bit of detail – are offered for each of the five overall observations.

Here is how each part of this report can be reviewed and used:

The paragraphs titled '**components**' are the descriptive part of this report. These provide the overall perspective of this authors and observer. You can test these observations against your own sense of yourselves and your organizations, and use this list as a 'check point' for your continued understanding of your own work and your efforts to work effectively and collaboratively on the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.

For each observation there are statements in italics. These statements reflect – but do not directly quote – words people used when discussing this topic with this neutral assessor or in the ten workshops held as of the end of July 2004.

The **opportunities and challenges** are the analysis. The descriptions of challenges and opportunities highlight that which might hold you back and that which might spur you onward.

The **ideas and options** are a set of recommendations. They can serve as a jumping off point for brainstorming sessions, discussions and future planning. Specific suggestions for how participants and Team members can implement these ideas are offered. Colleagues and apparent competitors will benefit from discussing these ideas and options, peeling them apart, and putting their own stamp on them before moving on. These are meant to catalyze efforts and energy, not to be a definitive guide.

The author of this report serves as the facilitator for public workshops. She also works with both the Blue Mountains Forest Planning Team and participants to advise them about effective collaborative practices in support of the Forest Plan Revision process, and to implement these as well. It is her responsibility to continue to work with all participants, and with the Team, to use this report to continue to enhance dialog and productive work on the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.

A. EXPECTATIONS

Virtually every person interviewed, and many people in the meetings, expressed an interest in understanding the plan itself and the plan Revision process. Some have ideas of what to expect of this Forest Plan Revision; some of these expectations are not correct.

By describing the expectations that people have – now, in July 2004 – for the planning process, it may be possible to address or at least stay attentive to these concerns as the Forest Plan Revision progresses.

A1: SCOPE OF THE PLAN

- *Just what will this plan cover? Are there things that are already in place in the Blue Mountains that aren't up for discussion? If you can't do it all, how will you focus your work?*

Any planning process is – at best – somewhat intangible, and difficult to see how it can affect individuals, groups or organizations. At worst a planning processes can be confused and muddled, with no clear outcome and no clear mechanism for people to be meaningfully involved.

The Forest Plan Revision process is somewhat arcane and not as straightforward or intuitive as – for instance – a county land use planning process. The difference between this *programmatic* plan and the more familiar models of *site specific* or *project specific* plans can be hard to convey, and harder to grasp. Interviewees and meeting participants are anxious to know how this plan Revision will (or will not) affect the specific places they are concerned about, the specific activities they like to engage in and the specific resources and

ecosystems of importance to them. When told that the plan will provide guidance – but not specifics – some people wonder whether or not to engage in this planning process.

The fact that the Blue Mountains Revision will cover three forests (the Malheur, the Wallowa-Whitman and the Umatilla) and a small portion of a fourth (the Ochoco) is encouraging for some. Those who are encouraged see opportunities for increased consistency between the forests. Others are concerned that unique characteristics and features of each Forest may get lost in a joint planning process.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To invite people into the early stages of a programmatic planning process, and to keep them interested and meaningfully involved throughout.
- To make it worthwhile for affected and interested people, organizations and staff to expend time, energy and resources in this early stage of the process.

A2: RULE CHANGES

- *How do I really know what to expect? Things change in Washington D.C. and it affects us here!*

Many active people in the Blue Mountains area are aware of the pending rule change regarding the Forest Plan Revision process, which would (if enacted as currently drafted) change the mechanism for environmental review and for appeals. Also, in mid-July the Administration issued for comment a new rule for roadless areas. There is a great deal of interest (and some consternation) regarding how these pending rules might affect a collaborative process for the

Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision. Similarly, various national efforts (e.g., the Off-Highway Vehicle Plan and the National Fire Plan) are understood to have (or to eventually have) implications for the Blue Mountains. Many participants are unclear what these might be. This reality is (understandably) unsettling to many.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To track the various rule makings and planning processes currently underway and could affect the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.
- To illuminate circumstances when 'chains of command' outside this collaborative process may have the authority to make (or un-make) decisions at the Forest level.

A3: DECISION MAKING

- *Who makes the final decisions? Are there any organizations, governments or individuals who have more authority here than the Forest Supervisors?*

As of the end of July, most interviewees, staff, and meeting participants expressed some degree of optimism that it will be possible to collaborate on a proposed plan that captures many of the ideas and interests of those who choose to engage in the process. Participants want to know that the Forest Supervisors will honor such a collaborative plan, and / or will fully explain when they find they must diverge from the proposed collaborative plan. The participation of the Forest Supervisors to date in the public workshops has bolstered this hope and expectation. However, participants are not confident that some other group with higher (and perhaps unknown or currently unexercised) authority might circumnavigate a collaborative plan.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To parse out, understand and effectively describe the network of decisions that will build the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.
- To critique this network of decisions, identifying effective and meaningful decision making roles and contributions for all those participating in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.
- To clearly identify decisions which are under the control of the Team, which are the purview of participants, and which are the sole control of Forest Supervisors.
- To keep the Forest Supervisors actively involved which lends both reality and credibility to the assertion that this is a shared decision making process.
- To work to encourage participation in the Plan Revision process even within this complex decision environment,
- To watch for signs of 'burn out' (fatigue, frustration) within the Team as they work to implement shared decision making in a complex decision environment; address these issues and tend to the Team if this occurs.
- To have participants experience the authenticity and importance of their collaborative role in decision making and Forest Planning.

A4: TWO PARTS TO THE PROCESS / TIMELINE

- *I don't quite get this 'two part' process. How is what we do between now and 2005 going to affect what happens between*

2005 and 2007? This doesn't seem concrete enough to me right now – and too far in the future. Can you shorten the timeline?

During the spring and early summer of 2004, the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team provided information in workshops, mailings, and other venues about the Forest Plan Revision process. This included a basic timeline, information about tasks and products associated with each milestone. The first part of the Plan Revision process will last through early-to-mid 2005, and is characterized by collaboration. It eventually will fold into a second part, where the proposed plan goes through a more formal review process. This review will include additional structured opportunities for comment, critique and change.

For many, this two-part process seems long and cumbersome (although Forest Service staff note the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision process is scheduled to be significantly faster than the most recent Forest Planning process, which took a decade). Some are concerned that a proposed plan – even if it is largely acceptable to all interested parties and participants -- could become vulnerable to arbitrary change in a non-collaborative setting during the lengthy second stage.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To keep participants interested and engaged through a (relatively) lengthy two-stage planning process.
- To foresee and convey what will occur and what might be decided and/or changed during the second part of the planning process.

A5: SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

- *What data are you going to use? How will you use it? Who collected it? Is it 'sound science?'*

People are curious about how scientific and technical information will be used. Some are supportive of the decision to use existing resources, others are skeptical. Virtually everyone cites the importance of using 'sound science' or 'best available science'; however, it is clear that this means different things to different people.

This planning process involves the use of existing scientific reports, existing maps, and existing data. Little – if any – new data will be collected, although existing data may be compiled in new ways. This is not yet – as of this writing – well understood or supported by those participating in the process.

Several agencies and organizations – in addition to the Forest Service – have technical, scientific and anecdotal information that they believe will be useful to the planning process. The Forest Service has expressed interest in this information; the challenge will be to find ways to meaningfully integrate a wide variety of information types, formats and scales into the planning process.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To understand and articulate the different roles and uses of scientific information, technical information and management decisions.

- To clarify, illuminate and fully discuss situations where 'science' appears to be in conflict.
- To recognize when conflicts over technical information may be a surrogate for conflicting values or visions, and address these first.

Additional Ideas and Options Regarding EXPECTATIONS

- I. **Consistency**. Messages about the proposed plan and the process to get there must be consistent.
 - **Participants** can listen closely to messages they receive from the Team. When they believe they've heard inconsistencies they can bring these up with Team members.
 - **Team members** can use non-Team members to cross-check and critique messages for consistency and fairness. They can welcome comments and critiques from participants.

- II. **Explain Change**. When there is a change in the process, or scope, or a change in objectives, authorities, or timeline, Forest Service staff should explain these changes immediately, simply and clearly, and with complete candor. If the change is due to things beyond the control of the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team, it is not necessary (and may be counter productive) for team members to assume responsibility. Expressing empathy and sympathy for the frustration of the change is in order; excessive apologies

are not. The team can and should take unabashed responsibility for changes initiated by the team, changes which are the result of new information, and changes due to joint analysis and critique with participants.

- **Participants** can be attentive to changes, knowing that change is likely and may have complex origins. Participants can seek to understand change, but vigorously challenge change if necessary. Participants can refrain from deciding in advance that any particular change is the result of 'back room deals' or disingenuous federal workers.
 - **Team members** can remember that it is exceptionally hard for people to see 'inside the bureaucracy'; the workings of government can seem arcane and opaque. As such, Team members can seek to cross-check messages about change with people not directly involved in the process. Team members should not hesitate to call on Forest Service managers and Supervisors to explain change when the change is controversial, particularly complex or has arisen from regional or national policy.
- III. **Clear Decision Making**. True collaborative decision making is difficult to do. It requires transparency, clarity about who has what authority, and the availability of meaningful mechanisms for people to affect the planning process.

- **Participants** can be a part of the venues that are offered to them by the Blue Mountains Forest Planning Team, and can suggest other mechanisms and venues as well. Participants can ask questions about decision making and 'chains of command' and who has authority regarding various issues. If the information is not understandable or satisfactory, participants should challenge and seek more information, and perhaps provide alternatives.
- **Team members** can be absolutely clear about how they will use information, advice and commentary. They can communicate this to those participating in the process, and can explain how input both affects and creates each collaborative decision. Where a decision is not made (or cannot be made) collaboratively because of existing laws or edicts, the Team can make this clear. Team members can be open to hearing challenges and ideas about decision making, and genuinely considering these as the process moves forward.

IV. Using Science and Technical Information Effectively.

Scientific inquiry or analysis varies depending upon the objectives. For instance, the question '*Where is the very best lynx habitat*' will yield a particular answer. This answer will be different – perhaps radically so – from the response to this question: '*Are there any places where lynx survive or even thrive in proximity to moderate human activity?*' The outcome of the scientific inquiry depends a great deal on what is asked of the science.

Also, the role that science plays in management choices must be distinguished from the management choices themselves – a difficult task. For instance, a decision to manage for a particular kind of fire control will then be followed by technical information on how best to do this. A decision to manage for a different kind of fire control will yield different technical information. It is not that one is more 'scientific' than the other – it is that the objectives are different.

- **Participants** can offer information and scientific information, attempting to understand and work with the scale, format and emphasis constraints that are described by Team members. Where participants believe that crucial technical or scientific information is being misunderstood or applied, they should bring this to attention of the Team and others if necessary. Prior to asking for additional studies or information, participants should ask 'would new or different information actually change my opinion on management?'
- **Team members** can solicit and utilize a wide variety of existing technical information, including information from non-traditional sources. Team members can avoid 'dueling science' by using a variety of techniques to exchange, discuss and utilize information. These techniques can include workshops, information symposia, expert panels or joint fact finding.

B. TRUST

For a wide variety of reasons, some participants have trouble trusting the Forest Service – sometimes because of a specific decision or action or event; sometimes because of a general mistrust of government or large organizations. This creates barriers. Conversely, Forest Service employees can have difficulty believing they will encounter cordiality – or even civility – where there has been past conflict. This also creates barriers. Neighbors and those with contrasting views sometimes believe their opinions don't matter, won't be respected or will be met with hostility. People fear if they express an opinion, they will be labeled or judged, making it difficult to function in a tightly-knit community. This creates barriers.

Barriers originating from a lack of trust are frequently the most difficult to overcome. These barriers can be overcome with consistent, fair behavior from all who are involved, and the accumulation of successful small leaps of faith over time. Even so, it is not necessary to have complete trust among all in order to have a successful collaborative process. If the steps to be taken and the desired outcome are clear, if protections are well understood and agreed to in advance, people come to trust the process itself – if not the individual people and organizations involved.

B1: FOREST SERVICE HISTORY

- *I'm just not sure the Forest Service can pull this off. I can think of a few examples where we had good, honest dialog and even got something done. These were mostly dependent on individual people in the Forest Service, people I could respect and who were straightforward even if I disagreed with them. But I can think*

of several times when I wasn't heard, or if I was heard, I can't see how. Or the plan or project never happened and we never understood why. It just sat on the shelf – or went a totally different direction!

- *I like and trust the Team, but I don't trust the leadership in _____ [fill in the blank with 'the Region' or 'Washington D.C.'].*

The italicized notes above illustrate the two paths for building or damaging trust. Most commonly, trust of the Forest Service hinges the interactions people have with individuals within the Service. People also base their trust on how various processes, rules, plans and permit are executed. Occasionally, distrust occurs simply because someone – on principle – just cannot or will not trust the Forest Service. It may not be possible to overcome this barrier – only to work with it by establishing fair, consistent and transparent processes.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To build relationships by fulfilling commitments, treating each other fairly and with respect.
- To build a Forest Plan that both addresses the mandates of the Forest Service and meets as many of the needs and interests of participants as possible.
- To overcome past histories and prejudices; to avoid creating new barriers to trust.
- To work with the reality that in some situations, and with some people, trust may never be established.

B2: COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL HISTORIES

- *You know, those folks never listen. They have their own particular agenda, and you can't move them. They don't have the real interests of _____ [fill in the blank with 'me', 'the forest', 'the community', 'the sustainability of the forest'] at heart.*

Historical events in the community (some long past), and the memory of past injustices greatly influence the trust people have for each other when natural resource issues are being discussed and decided. Community history affects how people perceive the interests, motivations, truthfulness and even the intelligence of their fellows.

The Forest Service is in the position of needing to balance interests among participants, all in keeping with federal requirements and mandates. Because of this necessity to be 'in the middle', the Forest Service is frequently in the position of being the locus of engagement for those who do not trust each other. People can avoid engaging each other by engaging the Forest Service; this often happens unconsciously.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To have the Forest Service and participants illuminate and understand the effect of past events on this Plan.
- If possible, to acknowledge, resolve if possible and productively move forward despite past events.
- To avoid becoming so enmeshed with past conflicts, histories and trust issues that it is impossible to make progress on the Plan.
- To jointly create an atmosphere that encourages learning from the past, but is not anchored by it.

Additional Ideas and Options Regarding TRUST

- I. **Give it time.** Overcoming barriers to trust simply takes time. Trust cannot be forced. People can suspend judgment, but they cannot be told to trust. Trust occurs when people follow up on promises, are truthful in their communications, have difficult but respectful conversations, and are clearly committed to hearing the interests of each other. AND when others are willing to recognize that this is occurring – trust building is a reciprocal endeavor.
 - ***Participants*** can continue to critique and be cautious even as they expect the best of the Forest Service. Participants can be open with team members when they believe something has occurred that damages trust. Participants can resist the temptation to pre-judge the sincerity of the Forest Service Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team to conduct a collaborative effort to form the proposed plan.
 - ***Team members*** can listen thoughtfully and with a genuine interest in learning from those who have had trust breached in the past. Team members can continually ask what can be done to mend that trust. When appropriate, Team members can implement that change. When not, Team members can openly explain why not.

- II. **Value dissent, listen and learn from it.** If lack of trust originates with a sense that one has not been heard, it is crucial

that all practice both listening and speaking so all CAN be heard. It is impossible to do this unless both the listener and the speaker value dissent, are thoughtful and passionate about their perspective, and genuinely believe there will be better outcomes if a variety of perspectives are expressed and understood.

- **Participants** can think through and be strategic about how best to offer their dissenting opinion in order to be heard. Participants can actively seek to speak with others with whom they know they disagree, opting to listen and discuss rather than lay down positions that state “this is how it must be.”
- **Team members** can demonstrate through their actions that they value dissent, and help model this for others. Team members can use a variety of mechanisms to encourage dissent and productive discussion within a conflicted situation. For instance, Team members can cross-check with participants by asking if, in fact, they believe their dissenting opinion was heard, considered, and incorporated if possible. Team members can emphasize the importance of hearing all views in order to strengthen the Plan. Team members can use the four workshops to differentiate interests (in the form of visions and desired conditions) before solidifying positions about management functions.

III. **Take care but don't muzzle.** Trust requires people to be respectful of one another in their speech and interactions – to

take care that personal affronts (either real or perceived) do not get in the way of the work to be done. Those speaking must take care; those listening must also educate others as to what kinds of interactions and speech are offensive. Every person and every culture has different norms; careful observation and candor regarding these can aid discussion and avert deadlock. Even so, it is imperative that people not ‘muzzle’ themselves; holding back important information or perspectives can damage trust as well.

- **Participants** can be passionate advocates while taking care not to slight others. They can avoid characterizing the motivations of others. When participants hear passionate advocacy from an apparent ‘opponent’, they can decide in advance to ‘be a duck’ by keeping an ‘oiled back’ so potential insults slide off. If a participant feels truly slighted or sees disrespectful conduct, they can take this up with the speaker in a manner that encourages dialog and problem solving.
- **Team members** can be professional and forceful in presenting Forest Service perspectives; ideas and information, while taking care not to slight others. Like their participant colleagues, Team members can avoid characterizing the motivations of others. And when Team members hear passionate advocacy, they can decide in advance to ‘be a duck’ by keeping an ‘oiled back’ so potential insults slide off. If a Team member feels truly slighted or sees disrespectful conduct, they can bring this up with the

facilitator or the Team Director and decide how to handle this.

A NOTE ABOUT 'HONOR'

The Blue Mountains Forest Planning Team is using this acronym to as they interact with those interested and involved in the planning process. The **honor** acronym helps people honor the opinions and perspectives of those they work with through these steps:

- **Hear** what people have to say.
- **Orient** yourself and the discussion by asking clarifying questions.
- **Notice** if you got it right – if not, ask more clarifying questions
- **Offer** information, advice, direction, assistance, ideas and options.
- **Respect** and learn from the person by asking questions about how they respond to what you have offered. And then **hear** what your colleague has to say (thus beginning the process again until all are on 'the same page').

These steps are iterative. Often, people must go through these more than once to fully understand and engage each other in productive, spirited and on-point dialog.

C. CONTRASTING VIEWS

To date, many contrasting views and apparent dichotomies have been (and will be) expressed regarding the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision. Information about contrasting views arose during the interviews; more specifics came up during the spring workshops sponsored by the Team in 2004. A few of the specific views are mentioned in section E of this report; there are many more; this author expects these to become more closely defined and sharply debated as the Plan progresses.

This section focuses on the context interviewees used to describe the reality of contrasting views. Most interviewees understood that contrasting views are the norm – not the exception – in any broad based planning effort. Even so, people noted that they can be intimidated, frustrated or even angered by this.

C1: URBAN – RURAL; LOCAL – REGIONAL – NATIONAL

- *These are our forests. We live and work and play here. We should have the final say.*
- *These are national forests. Everyone has the right to benefit from them and has an interest in them.*

A heated debate is currently going on at the national level regarding local versus national control of federal lands. Interviews demonstrated that participants in the Blue Mountains process know that their work on the Blue Mountains Plan Revision will likely to mirror the national debate. The lightning rod is this question: ‘whose forest is this?’ Is the Forest primarily for the benefit of local and regional communities? Or is the Forest a truly *national* forest, with all the implications that word

suggests? Many in the local communities feel that they incur the costs of managing the Forests as a ‘national’ resource, without reaping benefits. Conversely, those who are concerned about increasing the degree of local control over national lands fear that the loss of national resources to fleeting, local needs.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To demonstrate that even as an intense national debate on this topic is taking place, it may be possible to construct a plan for the Blue Mountains that largely meets the needs of all: participants, agencies, governments, interest groups and local communities.
- To focus on the desired condition of the Forest, rather than ‘whose Forest is this’ or ‘who is most important’.

C2: WHO IS AN ENVIRONMENTALIST?

- *I consider myself a conservationist – pretty darn close to a true environmentalist. It’s these preservationists I can’t abide by.*
- *There is a lot of new information on how to manage forests so they remain productive and promote ecosystem integrity and biodiversity. A lot of people just close their ears and just don’t want to hear it, and those of us who care about it are labeled ‘environmentalists’ or ‘preservationists’ as if that was an insult.*

The label ‘environmentalist’ is an odd one. During the interviews, it was clear that those who think others *define* them as environmentalists don’t always want the label, or what they *think* that label implies to others. These people say ‘I’m an environmentalist, yes, but...’ and then they offer proof of their commitment to economic health for local communities or family connections to

resource-based industries. And those who think others would not ordinarily describe them as ‘environmentalists’ are often quick to point how they value healthy forests, or scenic beauty, or diverse wildlife.

The point is that ‘environmentalist’ as a label is nearly useless today. It is often used as imprecise shorthand for what people *believe* are the management preferences of others.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To establish a common identity within – or beyond -- the label ‘environmentalist’. This identity can acknowledge and recognize shared values and interests for a sustainable economy, society and environment.
- To keep from using or understanding the word ‘environmentalist’ as a surrogate for a particular point of view. This can also be said for other labels, such as ‘preservationist’, ‘conservationist’ or even ‘rancher’ or ‘logger’.

C3: SHARING ‘DISSENTING’ VIEWS

- *I don’t feel safe saying what I really think. There are too many people here who disagree with me, and I know a lot of them. There could be repercussions if I tell people what I really think.*
- *People always know what I think. I’m not shy about it. I don’t think anybody is around here. We all say what we think.*

The interviews demonstrated that while many people consider themselves open and able to speak their minds, others do not. Often those who readily offer their opinions – and hearing those of others – are not aware that others do not have the same ease. This is *not*

particular to any specific point of view regarding Forest management – there are outspoken people and reserved people on all sides of the issues.

Contrasting views – and therefore dissent – are the norm in complicated, place-based planning processes. Spirited dissent is to be encouraged and eventually expected, and put to use. This can only happen if all participating create an atmosphere of where dissent is respected and the ensuing discussion are even (eventually) enjoyable. An atmosphere where people engage each other by genuinely exploring the features of a particular problem or idea is sometimes referred to as a ‘safe’ environment for discourse.

The Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team can take responsibility for this – perhaps even the lion’s share of the responsibility. But as has been noted other places in this report, it is the responsibility of the whole community to be respectful of one another while simultaneously being strong advocates for their own interests and ideas.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To encourage and create a culture that encourages productive, lively dialog on difficult subjects.
- To avoid having open dialog undermined by anger or mischaracterization of ideas and comments.
- To spend so much time explaining views that there is little or no time for resolution and getting to the desired outcome.
- To encourage and create a culture of encouraging productive, lively dialog on difficult subjects.

Additional Ideas and Options Regarding CONTRASTING VIEWS

Given the reality of sharply contrasting views (and it is a common reality in complex planning processes), there is a joint objective both the Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision Team and participants can aspire to. It is to foster and explore (rather than avoid) contrasting views, with the expectation that better results can emerge from careful thought, rigorous dissent, open discussion and open minds.

Here are some additional ideas for how this can be accomplished:

- I. **A range of venues.** The Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team has already begun to address the challenges of accommodating and using contrasting views by offering a wide variety of venues for meetings getting comments to the Team and helping all participants engage each other. These venues include workshops, web-based comments, radio talk-shows with call in options, surveys associated with project newsletters, and the wide publication of contact information and invitations to call Team members. Team members have also been available for meetings.
 - ***Participants*** can find the particular venue that works for them, without expecting it will be the only venue. Participants can try to be sympathetic to the logistical and organizations challenges of providing multiple venues, and offer ideas and remedies whenever possible.
 - ***Team members*** can seek to constantly improve each venue while at the same time making the

gathering of information as efficient as possible.

- II. **Be strategic; concentrate on what is important.** Fully disclosing and discussing every nuance of each contrasting view can swallow up time that could be used for working directly on the end product. All people involved in the plan Revision process are encouraged to let less important things go, and concentrate with passion and openness on those issues that are most important. People can help this prioritization occur by suggesting which issues appear to be priorities for discussion and resolution. These suggestions need not be pulled from the air; they can and should be based on workshop results, input from participants and the expertise of the Team.
 - ***Participants*** can monitor the time they spend on each issue, being respectful of others' need to offer ideas and being strategic about whether or not any particular issue is genuinely worth the level of effort they are providing.
 - ***Team members*** can probe and suggest approaches for participants to 'hone in' on what is most important them, and order the process accordingly. Team members can be respectful and direct when explaining which issues and ideas are not or cannot be part of the plan Revision process, and why this choice has been made.
- III. **Find creative and robust solutions through productive conflict.** Avoiding tough conversations merely postpones tough discussions and decisions. It can have a devastating effect on

collaborative processes by destabilizing agreements at the end of the process. Engaging in difficult discussions early can help identify solutions that were not imagined by participants, and which will withstand challenges.

- **Participants** can be ready, willing and able to engage the Forest Service – and each other – in productive, spirited discussion about key issues. Participants can decide in advance that they will seek creative options and solutions, knowing that wholesale shifts in the opinions of their ‘opponents’ is unlikely.
- **Team members** can welcome and encourage the tough conversations and creative solutions. Team members can listen closely for common ground and ideas, and both note and explore these as they arise.

D. COLLABORATION

The word 'collaboration' has a great deal of cachet these days and gets much airtime. However, for each group, what constitutes real collaboration is different.

This was evident during the interviews, with many questions and concerns expressed about how the Forest Service expects to actually implement a collaborative process in this complex decision making environment. There was also a smattering of ideas for how to effectively collaborate; where these were specific they are repeated here.

D1: EXAMPLES OF WHAT WORKS AND WHY

- *We know how to collaborate. Let me give you some examples!*

During the interviews, most participants were asked about or volunteered information on planning processes that worked well. Some of the examples directly involved the Forest Service, others did not. It is very clear that some communities have experience and success with spirited, productive discussion and decision making on land-based decisions. Other communities don't have – or don't yet have – this capacity. Examples cited most often included projects initiated by Wallowa Resources, the Northwest Power Planning Council sub-basin planning effort, and various projects in Union County.

When describing what works, the behavior and attitude of specific individuals was most often cited as the primary reason for success. In other words, in the most successful collaborative processes, there

was some person (or persons) who championed, implemented, or modeled collaboration and inspired others to do so as well. Several people said that successful collaborative processes they have observed or participated in emerged from sponsoring organizations or agencies that clearly supported and had a culture that encouraged openness, clarity and a willingness to have real dialog about crucial issues. Lastly, interviewees noted that successful collaborative processes 'go the extra mile' to make it clear to participants how their input participants is being considered and used.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To use the experiences, wisdom and models from other successful collaborative efforts to feed and shape the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision process.
- To engage those who have productively collaborated in the past and to engage them in a way that acknowledges and uses their previous work and capacity.
- To work toward equal access and treatment for all, even while facilitating involvement by those who have a past history of successful collaboration on land-based decisions and the capacity to be very involved and effectively involved.

D2: TRIBAL NATIONS

- *When will the tribal nations get involved? Can they change everything right at the end?*

In late July, interviews were conducted with persons associated with two of the three Tribal Nations (Umatilla and Warm Springs). Interest was expressed in the process, coupled with a strong desire for the Tribal Nations to be treated on a government-to-government basis

regarding this planning process. What this would actually look like and entail has not yet been explored. However, as of this writing, the Blue Mountains Forest Planning Team has meetings scheduled with the interested Tribal Nations to work with them directly on how they wish to be kept informed and / or brought into the process. Interest was also expressed in making sure that other participants understand that Tribal Nations are sovereign and land and resource based treaty rights, and that both of these facts require a different kind of engagement between the Forest Service and Tribal Nations. One of those interviewed noted that while the Tribe is likely to be very interested in the Plan, they may choose to become involved later in the planning process, when there is a proposed plan. Lastly, a caution was offered for the Team and for participants in the process to remember that each Tribal Nation is distinct; one cannot usually generalize from one to the other.

Some participants who are not members of Tribal Nations are very interested in how and when the Tribal Nations will become engaged in the planning process. There is concern about this as well – concern that Tribal Nations may be able to exercise authority near to the end of the process, perhaps then unseating agreements made or plans formed. There is also some degree of misunderstanding regarding the rights of the Tribes as sovereign Nations, and as treaty tribes.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To invite involvement of the Tribal Nations throughout the process.
- To encourage Tribal Nation involvement in a manner that respects sovereignty and treaty rights.
- To engage Tribal Nations in a manner that is transparent to and understood by other participants. .

D3: ROLE OF CO-CONVENERS

- *I don't understand the role of the Co-conveners. It seems to me they could be biased. It's not clear to me they REALLY take care to involve and invite all their constituents – especially those they don't agree with.*
- *I like the idea of the Co-conveners – I think it helps for the Forest Service to have an additional sounding board as they do their collaboration. But I'm concerned that different Co-conveners have different interests and abilities for involving their constituencies.*

The Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team asked county elected officials to serve as Co-conveners, assisting with public outreach, design and critique of processes and products, and interpreting public comment. Most of those interviewed were neutral about this concept. Some are enthusiastic and see benefits to the Co-convenor process; others are less pleased, believing that the Co-conveners – though elected officials – may not be interested in including and encouraging all voices, or may simply not have the ability to include and encourage all voices. Those who are concerned that regional and national interests be addressed are particularly concerned about the Co-convenor role.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To use the Co-convenor group to genuinely broaden the responsibility for and engagement in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision process.

- To assure that co-conveners are both willing and able to encourage broad commentary and involvement from all those interested in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.

D4: INVOLVEMENT / COLLABORATION / CONSENSUS

- *Isn't this more like public involvement rather than collaboration? Are you going to seek consensus?*
- *How do I know this collaboration is real, and not just a public information effort dressed up like collaboration?*

In recent years, it has become relatively common for natural resource agencies to collaborate with members of the public and interested groups when engaging in a planning process or designing a project. The words 'collaborative' or 'consensus' or 'consensus-seeking' or 'public information' or 'public involvement' or 'consultation' are used, sometimes interchangeably, without all parties being aware of the differences. Through the interview process, this author learned that people involved in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision to date are savvy, and know to ask for clarification regarding which *kind* of process is actually being used here.

The Plan Revision process is described as a collaborative effort, where consensus is desirable but not required. Most – but not all – those interviewed expressed relief that this would not be a 'consensus' process. This is because 'consensus' was understood to mean all have to absolutely agree on a course of action, and that this would both be unreasonable and far too time consuming. On the other hand, several interviewees signaled a warning that if this planning process becomes – functionally – a public information project rather

than a collaborative effort, there will be heartily criticized by participants.

Challenges and Opportunities

- To be clear which parts of the process are primarily informative, which decisions are to be shared, and where solutions can be built collaboratively.
- To use the terms public involvement, collaboration and consensus consistently.
- To periodically evaluate process with participants to assure that complacency or complications do not prevent collaborative over time.

D5: NOMENCLATURE: THE WORDS USED

- *I want a sustainable, healthy forest.*
- *We need to be aware of biodiversity.*
- *We need use an ecosystem management approach.*
- *I believe in multiple use. What happened to multiple use?*
- *The landscape management approach is the best.*
- *Stewardship: that's what it is all about.*
- *Conservation and preservation: they are two different things.*
- *Wise use, not abuse.*

All of the statements above were mentioned during the interviews, some with great frequency. It is easy for people to agree with 'mom and apple pie' statements like the ones listed above, and many collaborative processes begin by having participants do just that. Difficulties – even conflict – arise when people begin to realize that these words can mean very different things to different people. And while agreement on overall goals and perspectives is crucial, it is equally crucial for participants to actively and honestly engage each

other in what these words mean to them in order to build a common language and understanding. Ideas for how to foster this dialog are included in previous sections, in particular sections on building trust (Section B) and on hearing contrasting views (Section C).

It is the opinion of the author that most of those interviewed were well aware that these words and phrases have different meanings to different people, and are used as shorthand to either avoid discussion or state a position. However, it also appears that participants are interested in getting to the 'root' meanings of these phrases, but somewhat concerned about the time it will take to do so, and the conflicts that may arise.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To find common ground by jointly defining and using words that have meanings understood by all participants and the Team. This is most likely to occur during the vision / desired condition work early in the process.
- To hold and sponsor the discussions that allow people to say to each other what they mean by common phrases, and what this implies for Forest management and planning.
- To avoid the misunderstandings that can arise when words and phrases become jargon, or mere platitudes with alternate meanings.

D6: NOTIFICATION

- *I didn't hear about this meeting through any kind of formal notification.*
- *I don't answer the phone or have a message machine.*

- *I don't use e-mail.*
- *My e-mail filter eats a lot of things I'd like to look at.*
- *I can't readily connect to the internet, so I can't check the website.*
- *Please fax me all the information.*
- *Please mail me all the information.*
- *I learned about this meeting / effort by being contacted by a friend / colleague.*

Throughout the interviews and the first set of community workshops, a common criticism of the process so far was lack of notification. The Team sent out newsletters inviting people to stay in touch and check for meeting dates. They also sent press releases to local and regional papers; few of these were published and many people were not aware of the workshops. At each workshop, the majority of people learned of the event from word-of-mouth or through an interest group they belong to where some one in leadership both heard about the workshop and choose to pass the message along.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To use the myriad of communication mechanisms effectively and efficiently.
- To be creative and directed with notification.
- To find the right mechanism(s) for getting information out, and stick to this so there can be consistent expectations for how notification will be received.
- To recognize that notification is almost always imperfect. To use mistakes to learn how to better provide information the next time, but not get discouraged when problems occur.
- To keep the project website updated and engaging.

- To ask for help notifying people – help from networked organizations, Co-conveners, newspaper editors, program managers at radio stations, etc.

D7: EXPECTATIONS BASED ON THE FIRST SET OF WORKSHOPS

- *You folks have done a great job at this first set of meetings.*
- *I want some facts and ideas I can really sink my teeth into. This workshop was rudimentary; we already knew all this.*

The first set of workshops received – on the whole – excellent reviews from participants. People generally felt both engaged and consulted; this sets the stage for interest and involvement at the next round of community workshops later in 2004. Critical comments included the length of the introductory information (although many appreciated this, as it was new to them), the lack of coffee, and a workshop design that didn't engage people in a lot of cross-discussion and yield a set of vision statements right away. With these critiques in mind, the 'bar' has been rather high for productive, informative and genial public workshops. Each successive round of workshops should match or exceed the quality of the first.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To maintain the same level of quality and substantive engagement, even as information becomes more specific and options are expanded, defined and then narrowed.
- To productively engage those with a variety of abilities and backgrounds.
- To cross-check designs for workshops and engagement with others not directly involved in order to assure that

workshop designs are on-point and relevant to the issues and milestones for the Plan at that particular time.

D8: COORDINATION WITH OTHER PLANS / INITIATIVES

- *There are so many other efforts – project level, planning level and policy level – going on right now. How will the team use / integrate all of these?*

Many of the participants in the first set of workshops had participated in the wide variety of natural resource or place-based processes and plans in the Blue Mountains region over the last decade. In each workshop, some people (and sometimes most people) had participated in some sort of vision exercise for some other purpose; many had been involved with the Northwest Power Planning Council's efforts for sub-basin planning, others had been involved in local planning efforts, still others have been involved in various state program plans (e.g., with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife). Several active individuals have been involved in 'grass-roots' watershed protection or project programs, notably those in Union and Wallowa counties. The challenge for people working on parallel plans is to have the time, resources and ability to offer information to the Forest Service in a manner and format that is helpful. There is a great interest in hearing from the Forest Service how they will incorporate each of these parallel plans and programs into the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision process. The suggestions for how to do this are nearly identical to those for Section D1, on successful collaboration.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To use existing information and expertise generated through numerous parallel plans, programs and projects.

- To be clear, succinct and transparent about how complementary plans and processes will (or will not) inform the plan Revision.

They can actively seek solutions that they – and their fellows – can support, even if these are not exactly the solutions they originally had in mind.

Additional Ideas and Options Regarding COLLABORATION

I. **Listen**. The most effective way to collaborate is counter intuitive. It is to first listen – rather than talk. Listen and then listen again. Only after listening can a group begin the spirited and probing dialog necessary to support a collaborative effort. Collaboration is always more effective and efficient if listening is the starting point.

- ***Participants*** can listen, knowing it is an effective tool for collaboration.
- ***Team members*** can listen, knowing it is an effective tool for collaboration.

II. **Know the ‘radical center’ is a hard place to be**. For many people it is easier to fight than to do the hard work required to find common ground. It is easier still to stonewall, thus avoiding the heavy lifting required to think through an issue – layer by layer and piece by piece until it is thoroughly vetted and understood by all. It is difficult to find and even expand joint benefits and common ground – so difficult it can be ‘radically different’ to have the strength and balance to remain in the center.

- ***Participants*** can understand and accept that the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision is unlikely to include everything that they wish to see in the plan.

- ***Team members*** can assist participants in reaching the ‘radical center’ by encouraging and providing technical support to new ideas. Team members can be open to and supportive of solutions they may not considered.

III. **Don’t expect or promise consensus; do expect and promise an understandable decision and an open process**.

The Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team has been clear to date that they will not seek complete consensus on the whole of the plan Revision. Instead, they expect to work collaboratively to form a proposed plan that has substantial agreement from participants, and can be effectively supported in future stages of the plan Revision process. This clarity of outcome should continue.

- ***Participants*** can be vigilant about encouraging the Forest Service to explain process steps. Participants can seek joint agreement and understanding when possible, and can be strategic and thoughtful about which issues they will continue to fight for.
- ***Team members*** can work openly with participants to find the best options and choices that work for most participants. Team members can expect the facilitator to help the group decide when it is time to formulate a plan or option, when it is time to accept a continuing

disagreement, and when it is time to close in on creating a product.

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E. ISSUES

Throughout the first set of workshops, people often brought up specific issues that are of interest to them. This assessment will not go through those issues in detail – they are captured in the 1000+ comments from the workshops.

Below is a synopsis of four principle issues that were frequently mentioned, and some of the opportunities and challenges associated with each.

E1: SUSTAINABLE FORESTS

- *This forest used to _____ [fill in the blank with: have more wildlife, have higher quality better recreational opportunities, support more people, support more local economies, grow better timber, have fewer fires....].*
- *A sustainable forest means managing things pretty differently than we did ten and twenty years ago – and different than we do now.*
- *We need a sustainable forest: economically, ecologically and socially.*
- *Minerals are a resource we all use and need, too.*
- *Wildlife habitat is an important part of sustainability.*
- *What about all these special designated categories? How do they figure into sustainability?*

Most people who have lived in the region for any length of time have a memory – or have the stories and history – of the Blue Mountains as a place for timber production. This has clearly changed. Some would

like the region to return to timber production as a primary economic activity, feeling the obstacles are artificial and could or should be readily overcome. Others believe the economics of timber production in the Blues simply don't pencil out anymore and are unlikely to in the future, regardless of Forest Service policies and plans. Others see the forest as a place that harbors a wide variety of benefits, including timber and all manner of other features as well. All agree the forest should be healthy and 'sustainable' – although the interests and meanings behind this assertion are different.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To jointly define the term 'sustainable forest', and use this definition as a catalyst building a common understanding of how to address forest – related issues in the plan.
- To then use this dialog on 'sustainable forests' to create criteria to guide choices for the Plan Revision.

E2: RECREATION / ACCESS / QUALITY

- *The conflicts between my recreational activity and those of others are pretty intense sometimes. There may be some incompatibilities.*
- *What about in-holdings?*

Interviewees cited their experience that recreation of all kinds is of growing economic importance and interest throughout the Blue Mountains. Although virtually everyone sees and experiences the expansion of recreation, not all are pleased with this change and some desire a return to era where active resource extraction, conservation and stewardship are the primary economic drivers. Many believe that funds to support recreation are diminished now that there

is less resource extraction occurring. Others are concerned about conflicts between users. Some of these conflicts have escalated; some are based on fundamental values regarding the 'right' way to use the Forest. Roads and other issues of accessibility and exclusivity will play a central role in any dialog on recreation.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To use the Forest Plan Revision process as a vehicle for increasing and improving dialog – and ultimately, solutions – between recreationists of all types.
- To find common ground where opinions are strong, and may be based on fundamental differences regarding forest use.

E3: FIRE MANAGEMENT

- *We should have let the fires burn – now we're paying for it.*
- *We need to aggressively manage for fires, and protect resources and homes.*

The last 15 years have brought a new intensity – and a new awareness – to the challenges of fire management in the Blue Mountains. People know there are a variety of methods for managing a forest for fire control, but not all have the same understanding of what these methods are or when they are employed. Safety, the protection of resources, the 'mimicking' of 'natural' fire scenarios are all issues that were raised in the interviews and during the public workshops.

Challenges and Opportunities

- To use the Forest Plan Revision process as a mechanism for even more education and dialog about fire management, perhaps using the Fire Plan as jumping off point.
- To constructively work on an issue with intense emotion and sometimes conflicting facts.

E4: GRAZING / RANGE

- *We run cattle in this sub-basin and have for years – the plan needs to allow for this is the future.*
- *Noxious weeds are a huge issue – how will the plan deal with these?*

Grazing is also a historic activity in the Blue Mountains, with changing economics over the last several decades. Those who hold grazing permits for the Blue Mountains are highly motivated to stay involved in helping determine the future of grazing, and are very interested in how various plans might affect this. Others are concerned about the impacts of grazing – on wildlife habitat, water quality, soil health and potential conflicts with recreationists.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- To create early and specific opportunities to discuss the issue of grazing thoroughly and with free opportunity for dissent.
- To discuss grazing in the context of the complete Forest Plan.

- To adequately and clearly convey aspects of the grazing issue that will not be addressed in the context of this plan: e.g., whether or not there should be grazing permits at all.

Additional Ideas and Options Regarding ISSUES

I. **Tie back to clarity about what the plan will and will not cover.** Many of the detailed issues brought up at the workshops and in the interviews will not be covered by the Forest Plan Revision. While this may initially be a disappointment, it will add clarity and credibility to the process.

- ***Participants*** can hear and be willing to except the scope of the plan Revision. Participants can seek other decision making forums for issues that are of interest to them, but will not be covered by the plan Revision.
- ***Team members*** can be scrupulously clear and direct about the scope of the Plan.

II. **If possible, engage those who dissent with each other; if they come up with options appropriate to the scale and intent of the plan, use them.** As has been noted several times in this report, the proposed plan will be more robust if people actively engage each other (and not just the Forest Service) about their differences over key issues and their common interests.

- ***Participants*** can seek opportunities to speak directly with one another, especially those with whom they

believe have views that contrast with their own.

- ***Team members*** can encourage and participate in this dialog. Team members can actively learn from the excellent examples of the successful dialog and dissent offered by several groups in the Blue Mountains region.

III. **Use the scientific expertise of the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team and others.** A great deal of expertise and ability to explain forest interactions exists on the Forest Plan Revision Team, and elsewhere both inside and outside of the Forest Service. Direct, interesting and accessible information provided by these people can help foster dialog and increase understanding.

- ***Participants*** can be open to learning about many new scientific and technical improvements and innovations regarding forest, range, water and wildlife science. Participants can be open and direct when they don't understand a particular piece of information, or when they have different information.
- ***Team members*** can make the effort to convey scientific and technical information in a manner that is both relevant and understandable. Team members can seek the expertise and information of other individuals and organizations outside the Forest Service. Team members can honor anecdotal information offered by participants, perhaps using it as illustrative rather than directive.

Appendix 1: Interviewees*

NAME	AFFILIATION
Roger Averbeck	Nordic skiing interests
Margaret Bailey	USFS Emigrant Creek District Ranger
Joani Bosworth	USFS Umatilla National Forest
Craig Burley	NW Forestry Association
Charles Chase	Eastern Oregon Mining Association
Steve Courtney	John Day RAC; Timber interests
Terry Drever-Gee	John Day RAC; minerals interests
Linda Driskell	The Keystone Project
Bruce Dunn	RY Timber
Monte Fujishin	USFS Pomeroy District Ranger

NAME	AFFILIATION
Rick George	Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla
Steve Grasty	Harney County Commissioner
Mike Hayward	Wallowa County Commissioner
Hulette Johnson	Umatilla Co. Economic Development
Shirley Muse	John Day RAC; environmental interests
Jeff Oveson	Grande Ronde Model Watershed
Clay Penhollow	Conf. Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation.
Dave Schmidt	USFS Blue Mountains Team Leader
Howard Smith	Blue Mountain Snowmobile Club
Phil Shepherd	Nature Conservancy

* This list of twenty people represents those with whom a full conversation occurred and numerous perspectives were offered. The names of every interviewee are not included here; some chose to have their names kept off this list. Conversations varied greatly in length, from 45 minutes to more than two hours. This list represents approximately 80% of those contacted for interviews. Names of those participating in short, informal conversations (of which there were many) are not included here, though these provided additional insights for this report. Every attempt has been made to use the proper spelling of peoples' names and affiliations. Where this has not occurred, apologies are respectfully offered.

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

ASSESSMENT PROCESS / ABOUT YOU

Explain purpose of assessment; how it will be used. Who is Martha Bean, why she is doing this. Explain that no promises are implied by these questions (e.g., that we WILL incorporate all ideas for 'a fair process' or that I WILL contact everyone who is suggested for interviews) but that their answers will be taken very seriously, and will inform how the process evolves and is executed.

- 1) *Do you have any questions about this assessment?*
- 2) *Please tell me about your interest and involvement in the Blue Mountains.*
- 3) *Please tell me about / your organization / your agency / your business / your job.*

GOAL SETTING: SEEING SUCCESS

Describe importance of visualizing / articulating what it is we WANT in order to effectively get to that point.

- 1) *How would you 'fill in the blanks' here: "It is essential that the following issues are addressed as a proposed plan is developed: ____, ____, and ____."*
- 2) *Have you participated in USFS planning processes before? What was particularly successful/not successful about that process?*

COMPONENTS OF THE PROCESS

Describe the concept of Co-conveners for those not familiar with the current structure; describe role and relationship of Co-conveners to USFS Forest Planning Team. Describe milestones and time line; how general information will be distributed / available. Describe public meeting 'rounds', what will be done / accomplished at each and the role of Co-conveners in reviewing / interpreting input from meetings. Explain how comments / issues that emerge through other channels (e.g., e-mail, news articles, comment letters, etc.) will be used / incorporated. Explain relationship of this process to NEPA; how decisions are made (and who makes them) both pre-and-post NEPA. Explain why this process was chosen and what it is intended to do.

- 1) *(For those who are not Co-conveners): Can you see yourself interacting / engaging in this process? Why or why not? (Esp. try to get at longevity of process; importance of first year; what early involvement means for next steps with NEPA.) For Co-conveners, explore more about internal organization and decision making;*

- 2) *The Forest Service describes this process as a collaborative process to help the larger community reach substantial effective agreement on a proposed plan for the Blue Mountains by early spring of next year. What does it mean to you when we say 'collaborate'? What does it mean to you when we say 'substantial effective agreement'? What if 'substantial effective agreement' is not reached? What will you and your organization do?*

Fairness

- 1) *How will you know whether you and others have been treated fairly? E.g., what specific things need to be incorporated into the process in order for you to know that it is being conducted in a fair manner?*
- 2) *What tangible things can Forest Service do to support a fair process?*
- 3) *What at tangible things can others – can you -- do to support a fair process?*
- 4) *In a complex process such as this, there are inevitably 'bumps in the road'. What 'bumps in the road' do you see ahead? Why? How would you suggest we both anticipate these bumps, and how shall we handle them if in fact they emerge?*

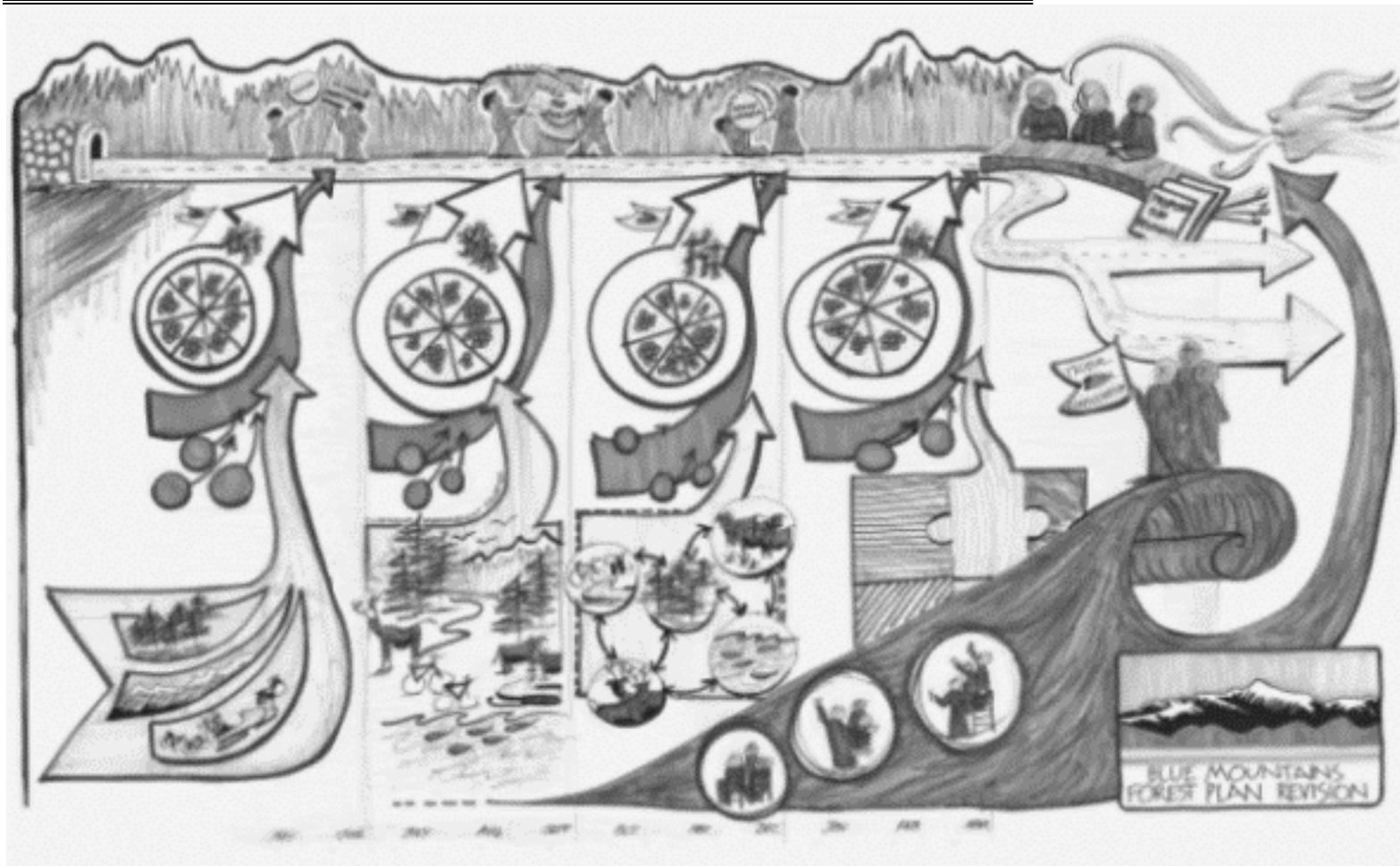
Technical Information

- 1) *What technical information do you think needs to be brought to the discussions?*
- 2) *What individuals or organization(s) do you trust to provide this information?*
- 3) *How do you like to receive technical information? What are the best ways for technical information be made relevant to the goal of achieving 'substantial effective agreement'? (e.g., joint white papers, presentations, field trips, graphics, panels?).*

Who Participates and How they Participate / Decision making

- 1) *Who is essential to the success of any Forest Planning process? Why? Can you tell me how I can reach this person?*
- 2) *Please describe your role in your organization, and how your organization makes decisions. Can you describe for me how the USFS can stay in touch with your and your organization regarding whether or not you are 'on board' with emerging directions for the Forest Plan?*

Appendix 3: Process Chart



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Appendix 4: Summary Charts of Observations

Note: The following pages were used as summary presentation materials on the content of this Assessment Report.

A: EXPECTATIONS

CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY	COMPONENT	CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY
Engage early so scope can be understood	A1: SCOPE OF THE PLAN	Keep people interested during early stage
Track and communicate authorities; changes	A2: RULE CHANGES	Keep collaborating in changing environment
Identify real places for shared decisions	A3: DECISION MAKING	Illuminate, work with complex decision env.
Explain two-part process; show connections	A4: TWO PARTS TO THE PROCESS	Keep the interest, motivation to stay involved
Share, be creative with science and tech info	A5: SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION	Use joint work to avoid dueling science

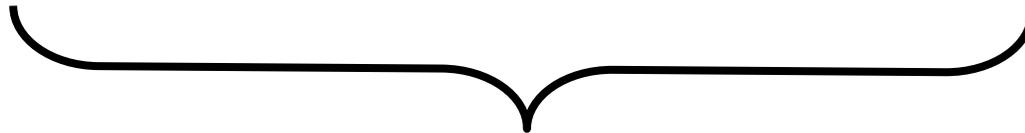


PARTICIPANTS	ADD'L IDEAS AND OPTIONS	TEAM
Listen; ask; bring up inconsistencies	I: CONSISTENCY	Practice and critique communications
Be attentive; expect the best	II: EXPLAIN CHANGE	Make change as transparent as possible
Probe about decision processes; contribute	III: CLEAR DECISION MAKING	Demonstrate where, how decisions shared
Offer ideas and information; be open to use	IV: SCI AND TECH INFO	Implement joint work; be respectful of; creative with info from beyond 'usual' sources

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B: TRUST

CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY	COMPONENT	CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY
Conduct process in manner that builds trust	B1: FOREST SERVICE HISTORY	Overcome past histories, challenges
Understand and illuminate lessons and causes of past break downs in trust	B2: COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL HISTORIES	Avoid becoming enmeshed yet again



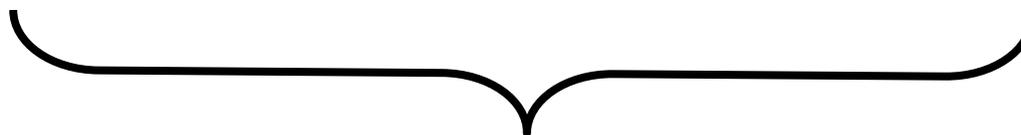
PARTICIPANTS	ADD'L IDEAS AND OPTIONS	TEAM
Have initial benefit of doubt for USFS, others	I: TRUST TAKES TIME	Be patient, trustworthy, candid
Listen, speak with, learn from 'opponents'	III. VALUE AND LEARN FROM DISSENT	Demonstrate value of dissent through actions
Refrain from slights; 'be a duck'; explain	IV. TAKE CARE BUT DON'T MUZZLE	Refrain from slights; 'be a duck'; explain

Also: think about 'H.O.N.O.R.'

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C: CONTRASTING VIEWS

CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY	COMPONENT	CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY
Joint work possible under difficult conditions	C1: URBAN-RURAL; LOCAL-REG-NAT'L	Focus on joint desired condition; not 'whose'
Define, expand, adopt joint identity	C2: WHO IS AN ENVIRONMENTALIST	Stay aware of labels that create enmity
Foster lively and productive debate, dialog	C3: SHARING DISSENT	Can be time sink; generate frustration, anger

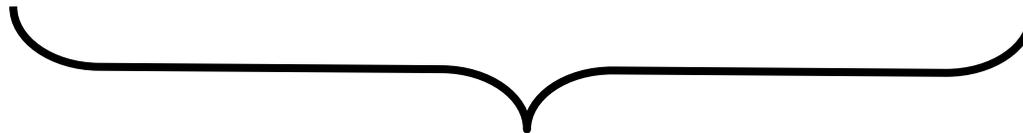


PARTICIPANTS	ADD'L IDEAS AND OPTIONS	TEAM
Find best venue for involvement	I: A RANGE OF VENUES	Keep improving efficiency, efficacy
Do advance and strategic thinking re: what is most important	II: BE STRATEGIC; WHAT'S IMPORTANT	Use, understand, critique and coalesce priorities from participants
Be willing to actively, passionately engage with respect and open mind and	III. CONTRAST & CONFLICT = CREATIVITY	Welcome, encourage tough conversations; listen closely

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D. COLLABORATION

CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY	COMPONENT	CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY
Use experience, data, lessons of other efforts	D1: GOOD LOCAL EXAMPLES EXIST	Work toward equal access even for those without past experience; logistics
Continue to invite, meet with Tribal Nations	D2: TRIBAL NATIONS	Communicate rights, roles of Tribes to others
Broaden assistance, understanding	D3: ROLE OF CO-CONVENERS	Work to assure equal access and capacity
Define these words jointly; use consistently	D4: INVOLVEMENT/ COLLABORATION / CONSENSUS	Periodically evaluate to assure collaboration is really occurring
Conduct joint learning re: definition of words	D5: NOMENCLATURE	Be aware of potential for jargon; short-hand
Know not all methods work for all people	D6: NOTIFICATION	Try to choose best methods; still be efficient
Good foundation set by first workshops	D7: EXPECTATIONS FOR WORKSHOPS	Keep same level of quality, productivity
Wealth of existing information and expertise	D8: COORDINATION WITH OTHER PLANS	Include, incorporate information

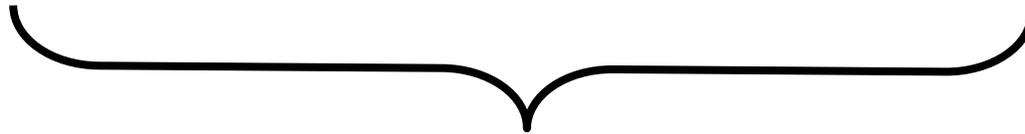


PARTICIPANTS	ADD'L IDEAS AND OPTIONS	TEAM
Listen	I: LISTEN LISTEN LISTEN	Listen
Help with the heavy lifting	II: FIND THE RADICAL CENTER	Encourage; acknowledge this is hard
Seek consensus, be strategic about when to move on	III. OPEN AND UNDERSTANDABLE PROCESS – BUT NOT CONSENSUS PER SE	Work with, encourage options and ideas

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E: ISSUES

CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY	COMPONENT	CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY
Define sustainability; use as basis for identity	E1: SUSTAINABLE FORESTS	Articulate and understand different meanings
Improve dialog among varied users	E2: RECREATION: ACCESS, QUALITY AND SUPPORT	Opinions are strong, some based on deeply held values
More dialog and joint learning re: fire	E3: FIRE	Issue is intensely personal; emotional
Discuss within context of plan	E4: GRAZING / RANGE	Past animosities



PARTICIPANTS	ADD'L IDEAS AND OPTIONS	TEAM
Find, accept the right forum	I: CLARITY RE: WHAT PLAN WILL COVER	Clear and direct about scope of plan
Listen to; speak with those you disagree with	II. DISSENTERS ENGAGE	Encourage, participate in dialog
Be open to leaning new things; contribute	III. USE VARIED EXPERTISE	Relevant and understandable tech info

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