

Management Prescriptions and Integrated Management

TTC Work Group Call, February 15, 2023 – Summary

Participants

- Mike Cooney
- Jeff Hermanns
- Michael Kamprich
- Andrew Thoms
- Austin Williams

Challenges

Contrasting Perspectives. This work group’s deliberations manifested the contrast between: a) those TTC members who prefer to prioritize restoration, recreation and resiliency, with a commitment to return areas that are especially valuable for fish, wildlife, climate, watershed improvement, and subsistence to old growth conditions – and where harvest occurs to utilize selective harvest techniques and limited small openings, and b) other members who want to retain a stronger focus on timber production with options for larger scale sales, the use of clear cuts as a management tool, and the potential for exports (although no one advocated “going back to the pulp mill days).

The work group acknowledged that these contrasting perspectives have been at play for a while, and that there have been attempts to bridge / reconcile / blend them through “integrated resource management” and “co-intent”. There are mixed results in how con-intent has been implemented - that should serve as lessons to help inform future approaches (good projects in some places, and poor results in others – e.g., two-acre openings that increased costs, were inadequate to support deer needs, and sometimes resulted in significant blow-down). However, many of the Forest Service staff who developed and have attempted to implement those approaches are gone – so there is concern that new staff are “recreating the wheel” to some extent. It was noted that there is an increasing amount of information available about outcomes from different restoration techniques.

Suggestions

The suggestions that emerged from the group reflected a diversity of options among the members, with varying degrees of concurrence. Please note that these suggestions **do not represent agreement or consensus among the call participants**. They are a compilation of ideas that were discussed – from differing perspectives.

1. **Consider developing a set of principles emphasizing values from SASSfm that would guide early-stage planning for managing young growth** in ways that support multiple benefits and needs (e.g., suitable habitat for deer and other wildlife, timber supply, healthy streams, cultural uses, access for berry picking and other uses that are important to local communities, etc.). One member proposed the following as a possible starting point for discussions about principles:
 - a) commercial logging would occur in conjunction with a multifaceted forest management approach that insures a healthy, resilient and sustainable natural environment.
 - b) Projects incorporating commercial timber harvest should prioritize local mills and processing and local markets wherever possible, and not rely on export.
 - c) Manage young growth stands for multiple benefits where the value of the timber is inadequate to support the project. Such projects nonetheless are important and deserving of investments in restoration.
2. **Enable a variety of prescriptions** developed with local input and knowledge about the project area, accounting for community needs and interests, as well as the long-term health of the landscape – rather than mandating prescriptions in the abstract. (Some in the group favored allowing for clearcuts up to 40 acres, others favored smaller openings).
3. **Recognize that restoration cannot be applied on every acre.** Figure out where to do “rational forestry” and where co-intent can work.
4. **Focus on community collaborations, consultation with Tribal Nations, and partnerships** to develop projects with broad public support and to add capacity to get projects done.
5. **Do not allow the push for returning young growth to old growth conditions to foreclose opportunities** for some commercial harvest in the future.
6. **Identify short- and long-term opportunities for investments** that reflect the diverse opportunities and needs in the region.
7. **Enhance management for cedar** (e.g., re-planting, cultural use wood, arts and cultural businesses, thinning for cedar, selective harvest)