Restoring and Managing Mixed Conifer Forests in the Pacific Northwest

Workshop Agenda • April 15-16, 2013

The overarching goals of this meeting include:

1) Provide an opportunity for multi-way communication and dialogue between practitioners and scientists;
2) Learn from others and share experiences from the ground;
3) Review and discuss the available science on mixed conifer and implications for forest management;
4) Identify challenges and information gaps that still remain; and
5) Identify and discuss strategies and tools to move forward.

Monday, April 15

9:00 – 11am Registration

11:00 am **Welcome and introductions** *(Location: Columbia Room)*
Alaina Pomeroy, Sustainable Northwest
Jamie Barbour, PNW Research Station, US Forest Service

11:15 am **Background information, overview and a review of perspectives from the field** *(Location: Columbia Room)*
This opening panel will frame the meeting and set the context for discussions over the next two days. Researchers will help get everyone on the same page by providing a definition and introduction to the mixed conifer forest types. In 'lightning' round style, diverse meeting participants will provide their perspectives on some of the biggest challenges and questions facing managers and collaborative groups.

Panelists:

- Tom Spies, Research Forester, PNW Research Station, US Forest Service
- John Bailey, Associate Professor, College of Forestry, Oregon State University
- Susan Jane Brown, Staff Attorney, Western Environmental Law Center
- Lindsay Warness, Forest Policy Analyst, Boise Cascade
- Pete Caligiuri, Forest Ecologist, The Nature Conservancy

Moderator: Alaina Pomeroy, Sustainable Northwest

12:15 pm Update on the eastside science synthesis report "*The Ecology and Management of Moist Mixed Conifer Forests in Eastern Oregon and Washington; A Synthesis of the Relevant Science and Implications for Future Management*" *(Location: Columbia Room)*

This synthesis of scientific literature and recent findings is intended to provide forest managers with a concise but comprehensive overview of our current understanding. This report focuses on the "moist mixed conifer" forest types in the interior Pacific Northwest of eastern Oregon and Washington. It covers a relatively large land area (almost 10 million acres) and there is considerable uncertainty about some of the ecological relationships and what the appropriate management strategies should be. Forest Service land managers have not treated much of this forest type in recent years because of limited scientific knowledge, lack of up-to-date management guidelines, and lack of consensus among stakeholders. For this effort, a team of experts consisting of scientists from USDA Forest Service R&D and academia is reviewing the relevant literature, compiling a bibliography, and synthesizing the state of knowledge on moist mixed conifer forests, their condition and management options.

Speakers: Tom Spies, Research Forester, PNW Research Station, US Forest Service

Moderator: Janean Creighton, Oregon State University, College of Forestry

1:30 pm Lunch *(Location: Shoreline Room)*

2:15 pm Perspectives from the field: The evolution of the North Eastern Washington Forestry Coalition's management and restoration of mixed conifer on the Colville NF *(Location: Columbia Room)*

The goal of this panel is to talk about the history and evolution of the North Eastern Washington Forestry Coalition's work to promote restoration and management of mixed conifer on the Colville National Forest. NEWFC has made significant progress on projects in the 'active management area'. Panelists will describe their efforts to create guidelines for mixed conifer and mesic forests. They will discuss how they brought the best science to the table to develop recommendations, what those recommendations were, and how the Forest Service implements these guidelines to build the greatest level of support for their projects. Additional topics include: What is the role of science and of compromise within the collaborative group? How does the evolution of the available science and the social context impact their work together?

Panelists:

- Lloyd McGee, Eastern WA Forests Program Manager, The Nature Conservancy
- David Heflick, Conservation Associate, Conservation Northwest
- Derek Churchill, Forest Ecologist, University of Washington
- Scott Brogan, Silviculturist, Colville National Forest, US Forest Service

Moderator: Alaina Pomeroy, Sustainable Northwest

3:30 pm Break *(Snacks will be served in the break out rooms)*

3:45 pm Break-out group discussion

Each participant has been assigned a break-out group. It is listed on the back of your name tag.

Facilitators:

Group 1: Emily Jane Davis, Ecosystem Workforce Program *(Location: Columbia Room 1)*

Group 2: Patrick Shannon, Sustainable Northwest *(Location: Columbia Room 2)*

Group 3: Melanie Parker, Northwest Connections *(Location: Shoreline Room 1)*

Group 4: Marnie Criley, Watershed Consulting, LLC *(Location: Shoreline Room 2)*

Each group will discuss the following topics:

- What challenges and/or questions do groups in the PNW region face?
- What seem to be the areas of scientific consensus and agreement?
- What are the research or information gaps that remain?
- What strategies are groups in the PNW region using to address these challenges and build agreement around management of mixed conifer?

5:00 pm Workshop adjourns

6:00 - 8pm **Mixed conifer poster session and networking reception** *(Location: Riverview Room; Hearty appetizers)*
Scientists and academics share their research results and get input and feedback from practitioners. Presenters are challenged to create posters that speak to a practitioner audience.

Join us for a fun and educational poster session!

Tuesday, April 16

7:30 am **Breakfast** *(Location: Shoreline Room)*

8:30 am **Re-cap of the previous day and agenda review** *(Location: Columbia Room)*
Facilitators report out from the previous days break-out sessions and highlight one key 'take-away' or question to pose to the group. Quick review of the agenda for the day.

Moderator: Alaina Pomeroy, Sustainable Northwest

9:00 am **Perspectives from the Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative, Montana: Strategies to identify zones of agreement in mixed severity, mixed conifer forests** *(Location: Columbia Room)*
The lionshare of the Southwest Crown is made up of mixed severity, mixed conifer forests and our panelists are deeply involved in different collaborative efforts in that landscape. They will discuss the Montana Forest Restoration Committee's development of principles for work in mixed severity fire regimes, how they have put these principles in action and where they want to go in the future. They will also describe the challenges they face with mixed severity and mixed conifer restoration and management, especially regarding threatened and endangered species, and fire. Finally, they will provide strategies for making progress in the face of uncertain science including experimental approaches to project design.

Panelists:

- Marnie Criley, Watershed Consulting, LLC, and Steering Committee Member, Montana Forest Restoration Committee
- Melanie Parker, Executive Director, Northwest Connections, and Co-chair of the Southwestern Crown Collaborative
- Travis Belote, Research Ecologist, The Wilderness Society

Moderator: Jim Johnson, Oregon State University

10:00 am **Mixed conifer and disturbances: fire, insects and disease, climate change** *(Location: Columbia Room)*
Panelists will discuss historic range of variability, potential vegetation of a site, how that changes with and without disturbance, and how we think about fire intensity and severity in mixed conifer stands. They will review the use of the "zones of agreement" concept, differences in mixed conifer dry and moist, and developing treatment objectives.

Panelists:

- Bill Aney, Acting Eastside Strategy Coordinator, PNW Region, USDA Forest Service: *How does wildland fire affect our management of the landscape and how can we use it as a tool?*
- Garrett Meigs, PhD Candidate in the College of Forestry, Oregon State University: *Insect/landscape fire interactions*
- James Dickinson, Forester, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest: *Climate change effects*

Moderator: Tom DeMeo, Pacific Northwest Region, US Forest Service

11:00 am **Economics and the management and restoration of mixed conifer forests** *(Location: Columbia Room)*
Facilitators will present the different economic and social questions, values, and impacts that have been raised surrounding mixed conifer management and then facilitate a group discussion about this issue and ways to better monitor social and economic impacts.

Speaker: Cassandra Moseley, Director, Ecosystem Workforce Program, University of Oregon

12:00 pm **Lunch** *(Location: Shoreline Room)*

1:00 pm **Strategies to take a landscape-scale approach in mixed conifer** *(Location: Columbia Room)*
Panelists will describe current efforts to take a landscape-scale approach for mixed conifer management and restoration. They will provide perspectives on the following: Why is this approach a good one in terms of our current understanding of mixed conifer science? What are the implications for increasing the pace and scale of restoration? How can other forests/areas begin to use these approaches?

Panelists:

- James Dickinson, Forester, Okanogan-Wenatchee NF and PNW Research Lab, US Forest Service: *Okanogan-Wenatchee Landscape Restoration Strategy*
- Joshua Halofsky, Ecologist, Washington State Department of Natural Resources: *Taking the landscape perspective: The Integrated Landscape Assessment Project*
- Tom DeMeo, Regional Ecologist, Pacific Northwest Region, US Forest Service: *Assessment of forest vegetation restoration needs in the Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region*
- Ryan Haugo, Ecologist, The Nature Conservancy: *Forest vegetation restoration needs across Washington and Oregon*

Moderator: Jamie Barbour, PNW Research Station, US Forest Service

2:00 pm **Break** *(Snacks will be served in the break-out rooms.)*

2:15 pm **Break-out group discussion**
The larger group will break into four smaller groups based on the national forest and/or collaborative group that is most relevant for their work/community.

Group 1: Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee *(Location: Columbia Room 1)*
Facilitator: Melanie Parker, Northwest Connections

Group 2: Gifford Pinchot and Mt. Hood *(Location: Columbia Room 2)*
Facilitator: Marnie Criley, Watershed Consulting, LLC

Group 3: Wallowa-Whitman, Umatilla and Malheur *(Location: Shoreline Room 1)*
Facilitator: Patrick Shannon, Sustainable Northwest

Group 4: Fremont-Winema, Deschutes and Ochoco *(Location: Shoreline Room 2)*
Facilitator: Emily Jane Davis, Ecosystem Workforce Program

Each group will discuss the following topics:
- What seem to be the areas of scientific consensus and agreement?
- What are the research or information gaps that remain?
- What are the important 'take-aways' from the meeting and next steps at home?

3:30 pm **Closing panel: Strategies to move forward and proceed with uncertain science** *(Location: Columbia Room)*
Panelist presentations will focus on the following: 1) strategies to move forward and proceed with uncertain or 'dueling' science, 2) how to best utilize science in the collaborative process, and 3) how to increase 'multi-way' communication between scientists and practitioners and collaborative group members.

Panelists:
- Rob Mangold, Acting Station Director, PNW Research Station, US Forest Service
- John Laurence, Forest Supervisor, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, US Forest Service

Moderator: Rick Brown, Defenders of Wildlife, Retired

4:30 pm **Wrap-up and next steps**
Discuss next steps

5:00 pm **Adjourn**
See everyone soon!

About the Northwest Fire Science Consortium:

The Northwest Fire Science Consortium is a multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional network consisting of federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, universities, and private landowners within Washington and Oregon. We are part of a national network of Consortia established by the Joint Fire Science Program to accelerate the awareness, understanding and adoption of wildland fire science. The NWFSC can help you get connected with managers, practitioners, scientists, and local communities and collaboratives working on fire issues on forest and range lands in the Northwest.

The goals of the NWFSC are:

- Improve access to wildland fire science for federal, tribal, state, local, and private stakeholders in Oregon and Washington.
- Facilitate communication, knowledge exchange, and learning between fire science searchers and fire science users.
- Promote opportunities for collaboration and participatory research.

For more information:

Visit the Northwest Fire Science Consortium website: www.nwfirescience.org

Contact: Janean Creighton, janean.creighton@oregonstate.edu

This workshop was brought to you by the Northwest Fire Science Consortium

Steering Committee Members:

Ecosystem Workforce Program, University of Oregon

US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station

US Forest Service Regional Office

National Forest System Ecology Program

Oregon State University

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