



# Pinchot Partners

WORKING ON COMMON GROUND

**October 18, 2023 9:00 AM-11:30 AM**

Location: St Mary's Mission, Toledo, WA and via Zoom\*

## **In attendance:**

*Board Members:* Ashley Short, Anjolene Ngari, John O'Brien, Matt Comisky, Sharon Hanna\*, Bob Guenther, John Squires, Fred Norman *Staff:* Janene Ritchie, Constance Mears.

*Forest Service:* Theresa Tanner CV Ranger, Josh Chapman

*Guests and Visitors:* Anna Baklund\*, Lewis Trails; Sheryl Hall, GP Trash Force; Christina Donehower, CIT\*, Brook Squires.

## **Business Meeting:**

**MOTION:** was made to approve today's agenda. 1st: Ashley Short; 2nd Anjolene Ngari - MOTION CARRIED.

Addendum: Possibility of Field Tour in November in addition to the regular Nov Board meeting.

**MOTION:** to approve the July minutes and the August Joint Collaborative meeting minutes. 1st: Ashley Short; 2nd: John Squires - MOTION CARRIED.

**Treasurer's Report, Ashely Short:** Current balance of **\$9,474.27** in the checking account. Credit Card balance is \$193.78. There are issues with Key Bank not letting us pay the credit card online. Janene will contact Key Bank to resolve.

**MOTION:** made to accept the Treasurer's report. 1st: Bob Guenther; 2nd: John Squires - MOTION CARRIED.

## **ACTION ITEMS:**

**Janene** will contact Key Bank to address Credit Card issues.

● In progress:

**Janene** will contact Chase Buffington regarding possible future collaboration.

● In progress:

**Janene** will notify the Board of the field trip **Nov. 8** at Iron Creek Campground to discuss fuel suppression, staff and community safety, and salvage challenges.

✓ Completed

Janene will forward information to the Board about the BDO Summit in Centrailia on Oct. 26.

✓ Completed

## **Programming Meeting:**

### **Cispus Center Tour, John O'Brien:**

Chase Buffington gave a tour of the facility and history.

Highlights: Facility was built in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps. It is in the process of being updated. The gym and dining facility have been restored. The bunkhouses and dorms still need work. Chase is looking for a fiscal partnership. Pinchot Partners has similar interests: views on restoration and youth education. The primary focus is on 5th graders from throughout the states of Washington, Idaho and Oregon. The organization is funded by grants and has 35 employees.

Other opportunities for engagement:

- A Tree Ring Timeline Round has been offered to Cispus.

- Invite students to a field tour once a year.

- Engage Laurie Thompson at ESD 113 and local STEM groups to collaborate on teaching.

- Provide curriculum and lessons to them directly.

Janene: Will contact Chase Buffington regarding possible future collaborations.

### **Forest Service update, Theresa Tanner:**

#### **Environmental Analysis: Yellowjacket**

Yellowjacket EA: Interdisciplinary Teams are meeting twice a week. All surveys have been completed.

Recap of challenges: Since the Yellowjacket project began, the FS has hired three people key to executing this EA: a new ranger, new silviculturist, and new NEPA lead.

Theresa's review of the Draft EA identified clarity issues. The document has been edited for more clear, concise language. The second page addresses what changes were made to the original document. A public notice of a 30-day comment period is expected to be released Oct. 31, 2023 to allow comments through Thanksgiving.

Expected timeline is for the draft decision to be published in March or April, 2024 which initiates a final objection period. The FS will host a virtual public meeting in mid-November.

#### **Hiring and positions:**

The FS will publish a NEPA lead announcement again soon, this time offering a second option for location besides Randle. Hiring is still a big challenge. Of the 47 positions available in Randle, 23 are vacant. Recruiting as well as retention is tough. Good projects are being delayed. A hiring window will open at the end of October for numerous positions, both permanent and seasonal.

**Housing:** Renting out the Packwood bunkhouse has worked out well. Trailer space is now available for seasonal workers. The FS is still working on an EA for a new bunk house. We continue to look at housing with the funds we have. Sarah Rockey has assisted with moving dirt.

#### **Fire:**

FS proposes to meet **Nov. 8** at Iron Creek Campground to discuss fuel suppression, staff and community safety, and salvage challenges. 2023 had an early and active fire season. Before the dry-lightning event during the summer, there were already 21 incidents of fire on the north zone. 43 different incidents of dry lightning. Cowlitz Complex had 54

separate incidents. The FS is having conversations with fuels planner David O'Neil regarding the Skate Creek area. The FS is planning to hire 10 permanent fire crew, supplemented by seasonal crews as needed. A lot of roads were cleared to access the Cowlitz Complex fires. Of 11 positions available in engineering, only 3 are filled.

**Forest-wide update, Josh Chapman:**

The Gifford Pinchot NF awarded 38 mill bf last year from a 36 mbf target. This year's target is 47 mbf, but the FS is not likely to hit that. Mid-30s is a more realistic estimate. Next year's target is estimated at 52 mbf. Recruitment continues to be a challenge. The FS has increased recruitment at colleges and universities.

EA - Phase 3 with the Cispus

Russ Creek is finished with more than 1000 acres of habitat enhancement, weeds treatment, and 5 miles in-stream enhancement. 35K acres of vegetation management.

National Fisheries Service does not agree with riparian buffer limits. The FS is having ongoing conversations with them to come to agreement.

**Tree Round Timeline Project, Bob Guenther:**

22 rounds are complete. Constance is working with Bob to create the placard that will show historical events and will include a QR code that will direct people to the Pinchot Partners' website. Estimated budget is \$2000.

FS has approved use of the FS logo, but would like to review the final copy, particularly as it relates to the local tribes.

Bob and Denny Larson will contact the Superintendents of all the schools in Lewis County.

Other suggested sites: Hampton Lumber, Cispus Learning Center, the FS office in Randle, Packwood Museum or Library, DNR offices, and Kalama School District.

**Operations update, Janene Ritchie:**

Janene reviewed the flurry of activities and events during summer 2023, including Pete Krabbe's unexpected death which required new Board elections; the 3-day Leave No Trace event, a logging site field trip with Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp-Perez, a Joint Collaborative meeting with north and south GP collaboratives; and the 20th-Anniversary event in Packwood.

Janene received approval from the Board to reschedule the December Board meeting to Wednesday, Dec. 13, so it is not as close to the holiday.

Her upcoming focus is on taxes and end-of-year reporting.

The FS contract is in place, a part of which includes creating jobs' workshops for locals in 2024, timed around FS hiring events. The goal is to provide local people help and resources for applying to FS jobs.

Anjolene requested we schedule time during the next executive session to revisit compensation and reimbursement for Janene, saying the Board could set more clear expectations.

**Other business:**

Bob Guenther announced a BDO Zone Summit on Oct. 26 at Centralia College. Ecostrat Company has a 60k grant to do a feasibility study of this area. Matt Comisky is on the review committee. Janene will forward information to the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 am.

Notes prepared by Constance Mears

Minutes prepared by Sharon Hanna