



Pinchot Partners

FOREST COLLABORATIVE

May 20, 2026 | 9:00 AM-11:00 AM
St. Mary's Mission, Toledo, WA | Virtual

In attendance. *Staff: Janene Ritchie, Peter Sandifer*; Board: Amy Boyd, Matt Comisky*, Anjolene Ngari, Bill Little, Fred Norman, Ashley Short, Andrew Spaeth*, Brook Squires, John Squires; USFS: Theresa Tanner; DFW: Deidre Hayward; Cowlitz Indian Tribe: Christina Donehower*, Dalton Fry; DNR: Ben Hagedorn*; GP Trash Force: Sheryl Hall*; White Pass Scenic Byway: Lenee Langdon**

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed with no substantive changes. Motion made and seconded to approve the agenda.

MOTION to approve Meeting Notes: Ashley Short; Second: Fred Norman. CARRIED.

Approval of April Meeting Notes

Janene reported that nearly all action items from the April meeting have been completed.

MOTION to approve Meeting Notes: Ashley Short; Second: John Squires. CARRIED.

Action Items

- August joint field tour : Wednesday, August 19, 11am-3pm. Meet at Sunset Falls Day Use lot.

Treasurer's Report

Checking Account: \$24,444.55; Savings Account: \$80,304.21. Savings account generates approximately \$230 per month in interest.

MOTION to approve Treasurer's Report: Bill Little; Second: Amy Boyd. CARRIED.

USFS District Update: Theresa Tanner, District Ranger

Timber Program Overview

- The Gifford Pinchot National Forest has received significantly increased timber volume targets compared to previous years.
- The forest currently administers approximately 46 active timber sales, among the highest active sale workloads in the region.
- The North Zone alone currently has:
 - 18 active timber sales
 - 7 active stewardship/KV projects
 - 7 recently closed sales still requiring restoration and follow-up work
- Existing project inventory is sufficient to meet future volume targets through FY30.
- Staffing shortages remain a significant challenge, particularly:

- Hydrologist
- Fisheries Biologist
- Engineer

NEPA and Policy Changes

Theresa discussed continuing federal direction emphasizing:

- Use of Categorical Exclusions (CEs) whenever possible.
- Avoidance of Environmental Assessments (EAs) unless absolutely necessary.
- One-year completion deadlines for EAs.
- Increased use of expedited consultation processes.
- Continued uncertainty as policies evolve and legal challenges proceed.

Skate Johnson Watershed Work

Current implementation includes:

- Ongoing plantation thinning efforts.
- Approximately 3,600 acres authorized for thinning and related fuels treatments.
- Identification of roughly 4,000 acres to account for expected acreage reductions due to operational constraints and resource protections.
- Continued consultation with tribes, SHPO, and regulatory agencies.

North Packwood Project

Key updates:

- Original project area approximately 1,634 acres.
- Due to loss of the previously anticipated categorical exclusion authority, treatment area has been reduced to approximately 347 acres.
- Project remains focused on fuels reduction and community wildfire resilience.
- Decision expected by mid-June.
- Goal is to proceed to contracting and implementation beginning in FY27.

West Packwood Project

- Early project development underway.
- Project area approximately 5,000 acres.
- Roughly 1,100 acres expected to be addressed through separate plantation thinning authorities.
- Remaining work will focus largely on stands older than 80 years.
- Planning expected to begin this summer.

South Packwood Planning

- Identified as the most challenging future treatment area.
- Project area includes late-successional reserve habitat and older forest conditions.
- Future treatments will focus on fuels reduction and forest health objectives rather than timber outputs.

Long-Term Landscape Strategy

The district continues to develop a broader Packwood-area landscape approach by:

- Building on previous restoration projects.
- Revisiting previously treated areas.
- Identifying remaining resource concerns.
- Evaluating future opportunities under available categorical exclusions.

Agency Priorities

Theresa highlighted current Forest Service priorities:

1. Safety
2. Wildfire preparedness and response
3. Active forest management
4. Mineral and energy development
5. Disaster recovery
6. Recreation access and infrastructure
7. Organizational efficiency and deregulation
8. Partnerships and cooperative federalism

Collaborative and Administrative Updates

August Field Tour

- East Fork Lewis River watershed tour with South Gifford Collaborative to highlight first units in Forestwide Plantation Thin & PCL EA.

Strategic Planning Process

- Strategic planning meetings continue approximately every other week.
- June's meeting will focus heavily on reviewing and testing draft strategic pillars. Board participation is encouraged due to the importance of the discussion.

Request from Bob to gauge interest on potential hydrogen presentation in July

- The board discussed that while interesting, these and similar biomass efforts fall outside of the scope of Pinchot Partners mission. Board declines invitation for presentations at this time and encourages Bob to share info with the group about where these presentations may be happening elsewhere.

Roundtable Updates

WDFW

- Significant budget reductions (\$14.4million) affecting agency programs.
- 2 stewardship positions have been eliminated.
- Additional staffing transitions are occurring within DFW

Cowlitz Indian Tribe

- Live-streamed monitoring of a beaver family prior to relocation.
- Potential future opportunities for collaborative field tours focused on aquatic restoration and fisheries habitat projects.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05am

Minutes prepared by Peter Sandifer.