



# Pinchot Partners

F O R E S T C O L L A B O R A T I V E

**April 15, 2026 | 9:00 AM-11:30 AM**

St. Mary's Mission, Toledo, WA

**In attendance.** *Board Members:* John O'Brien, David Owen, Ashley Short, Bob Guenther, Fred Norman, Amy Boyd\*, Andrew Spaeth\*, Matt Comisky\*, *Staff:* Janene Ritchie; *General Membership:* Dalton Fry, Gina Owen\*, Christina Donehower\*, Jon-Paul Bowles\*, Michael Young\*, Deidre Hayward; *USFS:* Quentin Hall, Theresa Tanner, Nick Granum, Johanna Kovarik, Alexander Sherwin, Jessica Hudec\*, Dusty Vaughn\*, Jody Nickerson-Powell, Andrea Lyons\*; *Guests:* Ryan Ojerio\* (Washington Trails Association), Anna Nakae\* (National Forest Foundation).

**Today's Agenda.** MOTION to approve the amended agenda: Bob Guenther; Second: Ashley Short. CARRIED.

**Treasurer's Report, Ashley Short.** Checking balance: \$21,601.14; Savings balance: \$80,073.54; MOTION to approve Treasurer's Report: Fred Norman; Second: David Owen. CARRIED.

### **Action Items / Key Tasks**

- Ø Janene to connect Ryan Ojerio with Sheryl Hall and Amy Besunder-completed
- Ø Janene to connect Anna Nakae with Quentin re: funding - completed
- Ø Janene will share feedback on North Pack CE after discussing with Zone of Agreement committee - completed
- Ø Janene will draft a letter requesting logs from Iron Creek blowdown event on behalf of Bob - completed

### **Packwood Trails Project Update – Jon-Paul Bowles**

- Met with Kyung Koh-Willis recently and received go ahead to begin developing a proposal with Kacy Young for the first sections of trail near Packwood. Shared gratitude to Quentin, Theresa, and the Pinchot Partners for support. Will keep the collaborative up to date as proceeds and request input where necessary.
- Packwood Mountain Festival coming up on Saturday, May 2!

## **North Packwood Fuels CE Updates, Quentin Hall [slide deck](#)**

- Hope to have CE signed by June 15; need further feedback by April 30<sup>th</sup> or shortly thereafter (okay with waiting until committee can meet and discuss)
- Quentin's very thorough presentation revisited the early beginnings of the project through the many changes. Details are captured in the slide deck linked above.
- Major change was pivot from CE category 6, which was struck down in the courts in January, to 40806 of Public Law 117-58 (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act), a CE for the "establishment and maintenance of linear fuel breaks on Federal land."
  - This specific CE permits the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to bypass lengthy environmental impact statements for fire-prevention projects under the following conditions: 1). Size: Applies to linear fuel breaks up to 1,000 feet in width; 2). Location: They must be contiguous with, or incorporate, existing linear features (such as roads, powerlines, pipelines, or water infrastructure). 3). Designation: The area must be classified as a high wildfire hazard potential, an approved wildland-urban interface, or an area previously designated by the Secretary concerned as having an insect or disease problem
- Original treatments acres = 1,200; treatment acres now = 347 acres.
- Other changes due to CE category pivot include no more upland and wildlife treatments, as they are not covered under new CE category.
- Proposed commercial harvest action includes: Thinning intensity guided by NSO habitat type (40% retained canopy cover in dispersal; 50% retained canopy cover in foraging); Harvest between 7-29.9' DBH; ground based skidding, tethered, skyline cable yarding; target species are Douglas fir, retaining Western Red Cedar; in addition to existing .87 miles of temp road, construction of .86 miles of new temp roads, all of which will eventually decommissioned within 3 years.
  - Does NOT include: regen harvest; treatment in Northern Spotted Owl nesting habitat; treatment in stream protection buffers or wetlands; or hardwood harvest
- Proposed non-commercial harvest action includes: Cutting of any veg not sold; selective removal of veg and trees under 8" DBH; removing/trimming of ladder fuels; reduction of existing surface fuels anywhere in treatment area.
  - These actions will done using chainsaws or hand tools; will not occur in NSO nesting habitat; may be implemented as needed up to 15 years after signing of decision to maintain reduced fuel loading. Only 2 non-commercial entries permitted in same location within the 15 years.
- CE will use exception for "unusual circumstances" outlined in 2001 Record of Decision to forgo pre-disturbance surveys of Survey and Manage species. FS will coordinate with the Region.
- Anna Nakae to coordinate with Quentin on possibility of National Forest Foundation funding for non-commercial work near roads (supporting similar work on Willamette NF)

### ***Emergency vs. Expedited Consultation – Andrea Lyons***

- Emergency = to address fire/floods, etc. Full consultation resulting in a Biological Assessment occurs after emergency is under control. 14225 directs forests to use it.
- Expedited = results in a scaled back version of Biological Assessment (shorter document including only effects to species, no natural history, etc.) Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) encouraged to use it. The resulting Biological Opinion is also shorter.
- For North Pack CE: John Jakubowski completed the draft biological assessment earlier this week and submitted to FWS yesterday. If FWS can't meet the given deadline of 60 days (expectation is 30 days) it will shift to an emergency consultation.

### ***Forest Service Updates – Theresa Tanner and Johanna Kovarik***

- Northwest Forest Plan going back out for public engagement
- CVRD will host public meeting in partnership with Pinchot Parters, DNR, emergency response, etc. on June 11/12. Will confirm date and location.
- May 1 – open invite to coffee with Theresa at Mountain Goat, 8am

*Johanna:*

- Agency wide reorg in process; shouldn't effect timelines for North Pack CE.
- Little White Salmon EA split decision expected any day now.
- Spirit Lake record of decision also forthcoming.

### ***Operations Updates – Janene Ritchie***

- Cowlitz Tribal Foundaton grant due June 30<sup>th</sup>. If granted, this would be our 3<sup>rd</sup> year, and would need to take next cycle off.
- Fungi Fest – New logo honoring Allison Tinney in progress. Have used LTAC grant funds to contract 2 local coordinators, Jaime Linn and Ashley Van Winkle, to assist with tasks both leading up to and during the event.
- Taking a break from applying for National Forest Foundation Community Capacity Program funding to reevaluate approach
- August – joint field tour with South Gifford Pinchot Collaborative. More details to come.
- AFRC Meeting – productive and informative; connected with Lewis County Commissioner Scott Brummer.
- June meeting will consist of stress test of initial strategic planning pillars with Amy Besunder.

### ***Roundtable Updates***

- Ryan Ojerio – Washington Trails Association, after success training 50 folks on saw certs at Cispus Learning Center, is planning some brushing training events for volunteers in the Packwood area later this year, and are looking for

a low-elevation space to stage volunteers, tools, do debriefs, etc.. Janene will connect him with Sheryl Hall and Amy Besunder.

- Dalton Fry – Cispus/Yellowjacket Phase 4 kicked out to summer 2027. Working with Forest Service on salvage at Iron Creek Campground for use in Phase 5. This will also help get the campground opened earlier to the public.
- Bob Guenther - requests formal letter from Partners to FS requesting logs from Iron Creek campground for the state capitol. MOTION for Janene to draft letter on behalf of board: David Owen; second: Fred Norman; Bob Guenther abstains. CARRIED.

Notes taken by Janene Ritchie. Meeting adjourned at 11:00am.