



**Draft Minutes FOR A MEETING OF THE
ASHLAND FOREST LANDS COMMISSION
Tuesday, July 10th, 2012
5:30PM to 7:30PM
Siskiyou Room, Community Development Building
51 Winburn Way**

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

II. INTRODUCTIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to accept minutes as submitted, motioned by Williams, seconded by Berge.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

IV. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None

V. BUSINESS

A. Trails/Recreation Update

Karns made a visit to the trail sign manufacturer to finalize the production of the signs. City will pay for the first round of signs and Karns talked with Rob Cain (AWTA) about them helping pay for the next round of signs. Karns mentioned the Forest Service scoping letter regarding the trails plan being due July 27th. Karns will send it out to the group. Chapman asked when the NEPA would be completed and no one knew the answer. McFarland said the Bandersnatch Trail was in good shape and he made an assessment with the equestrians (on a horse) to help get an idea what is needed. There are a couple branches that force horses to the outer edge of the trail, breaking the outer edge of the trail. The trees that need to be trimmed are generally small, but there is a snag that should come down for safety near the trail.

B. City Winburn Property Marking and Cruise, PERC grant

Trees were marked following the Winburn Management Plan (2007) in some of the Winburn units. The City contracted a cruise and logging feasibility study of the marked areas. In order to use the PERC grant funds from The Nature Conservancy, we'll have to consult with the Forest Service and then Fish and Wildlife Service to assess any impacts to the Northern Spotted Owl. The USFS biologist will determine what sort of consultation is required of the City due to the federal funding and use of federal lands outside Winburn for the logging operations. Historically there were three owl nest sites around the Winburn Parcel, but recently there have not been active sites near the Winburn property. Barred owls may be playing a role in moving spotted owls away from historic habitat, but it's a complicated subject to figure out. City work is

not tied to work in the AFR project, but since there may be an adjacent operation going on, the City would approach the contractor to see if the City work could be accomplished—depending on the consultation with the Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife. Main would like to bring the Winburn project to the commission within the next couple meetings. There will be AFR commercial thinning beginning tomorrow that will close off the main 2060 road near Horn Gap and the 400 road. The process for getting a contractor on board for helicopter thinning at Winburn would be to get a contract passed by the City Council to use the existing contractor under the PERC grant funding. Without PERC, the project wouldn't be happening. The log market is not so good right now, and would not cover the costs of the project without the PERC funds. The habitat at Winburn is being managed for owl dispersal habitat. The best habitat is in units 3, 6 and 7 which are not being scheduled for thinning right now. The forest health issues are being addressed as outlined in the plans for Winburn. There are no adjacent stands being marked for AFR. There was some adjacent non-commercial thinning years ago, but none scheduled in AFR at the current time.

C. AFR Project Update

D. On Thursday the City is hosting a tour of AFR project for prospective helicopter thinning project bidders. There will be road work going on along the 2060 road and the 400 road up to Skyline Mine. Main pointed out that roads are an issue for land managers because they can cause problems, but also allow access for management, fire fighting, and rescue operations. Management typically involves road improvements, which in this case, is happening in the places where roads are being used for hauling and access. Work this summer has included over 100 workers on the hill on many days doing cutting and piling. Tree marking started today in Block 6. All work has to be spent by September of 2013. There has to be a lot of work done this summer due to the timeframes involved. Helicopter will spend a lot of money quickly. City sent the project RFP out to operators across many states to get interest for the AFR work. There may be challenges getting an operator due to the challenges of helicopter businesses in the current economy. The federal stimulus dollars were a unique opportunity that we won't see again. There is an active effort to look at potential funding sources for the balance of acres. The recent public meeting for AFR wasn't well attended. Main stressed that although there has been work done, the fire danger situation is still significant in the watershed and possibly affecting parts of town as well. We're much better than we were, but still there's an issue of maintenance over time—one of the assumptions that is made when writing prescriptions for treatments. There's a balance between creating new treatments and being able to maintain them over time. The competition between landscapes in the region for money is an issue that we face currently and will likely increase in the future. The point of how much canopy closure is left after treatments is important in affects for fuels management and maintenance costs.

E. Watershed Outreach Plan Review

Chambers brought up the need to prioritize the work done on City forestlands as an example for AFR and for the community and wider audiences. The commission could pick one thing to do for outreach and focus on that in order to bring the City lands history to the forefront. McFarland suggested a brochure that gets distributed in various publications by the City. Main suggested an article on the Forest Lands Commission about its history, possibly being the 20th anniversary of the commission this year. Betlejewski suggested illustrating how much money the City has saved by the commission doing professional work. Williams read off the list that Chris Iverson and commission came up with including a brochure, tours, power point, school integration, and implement a stewardship program (work parties, education, volunteers, etc..) Williams as a member of the School Board has proposed integrating watershed education into the schools by asking the district to set up a committee to study this opportunity. There's a chance to get this in right now due to the adoption of the Common Core Standards at the State level. Parks has established a youth service program this summer. Williams suggested maps for the public, including trails and the existing watershed map as a poster for sale. The trails process needs to include the new trails which aren't yet sanctioned by the Forest Service or they'd be out of date quickly. AWTA and Parks have been posting one page maps on websites or handing them out as a temporary one page map. There's always a challenge on maps as to how much detail is available. Sometimes there are agreements not to show trails on a map—written or verbal. Seffinger would like to see outreach feature the idea that work is ongoing and needs continual involvement. The Bandersnatch Trail construction was a good example of public outreach and stewardship being successful. Main would like to see an increased involvement of Ashland's art community. That perspective can be really valuable. Seffinger had the idea of a coloring book showing changes in the forest. A lot of this already exists. Some may be addressed by the budding effort to integrate watershed education into the schools.

F. Ashland Forest Plan Revision

Betlejewski talked with the Parks commission and the Forest Plan update. He's also talked with McFarland and the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. Need to include the Oredson Todd woods and the infrastructure there and in Siskiyou Mt Park. Use GIS, Google Earth, reconvene the original authors of the Plan. Frank would like a schedule laid out for the completion of the plan to include a draft by April 1, 2013 and then a final draft by August 1st. Frank suggested that members of the commission take on various tasks to make this come to fruition. This item will be placed first on the list at next month's meeting.

G. Update Commission 3-Year Goals

No action taken.

VI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

none

VIII. REVIEW AND SET COMMISSION CALENDAR / NEXT MEETING

A. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: July 10th, 2012

IX. ADJOURN: 7:30 PM

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Public Works Office at 488-5587 (TTY phone number 1 800 735 2900). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).