



Columbia Gorge CWMA General Meeting

1:00-3:00 pm 10/31/17

OSU Extension Office

2990 Experiment Station Drive, Hood River 97031

Attendees:

Angie Kimpo, Portland Water Bureau	John Cowan, Oregon State Parks
Beth Meyers-Shenai, ODA	Keyna Bugner, Washington DNR
Carolyn Wright, Dept. of Natural Resources	Kris Schaedel, Hood River SWCD
Chris Aldassy, East Multnomah SWCD	Lucas Nipp, East Multnomah SWCD
Christina Mead- Mt Hood NF	Meg Sleeper, US-ACE
Elaine Beauvais, Portland Water Bureau	Sam Leininger, Clackamas SWCD
Emily Stevenson, Skamania County	Sarah Callaghan, BAER Team
Jeanette Burkhardt, Yakama Nation Fisheries	Sarah Woods, Friends of the Gorge
Jennifer DeShong, Gifford Pinchot NF	Vern holm- Western Invasives Network

Burn Area Emergency Response (BAER) Report

Sarah Callaghan was unable to be present, but called in to the meeting. She is a botanist for the BAER team for the Eagle Creek fire. BAER provides a framework for looking at fire response within the first year. It deals with the impacts of the fire itself, not the impact of the containment efforts. They look at human health and safety, property damage, buildings and structures, capital damage, water systems, cultural resources, natural resources including habitat for threatened or endangered species, and native plant communities where invasive plants are absent or in low density. Baer only provides for a response in the 1 year immediately following containment. The forest Service may do an interim request for further funds within high to moderate severity burn areas. Severity and intensity are 2 different measures: Severity is about the impact of the fire on soils, while intensity deals with the impact of the fire on vegetation.

The team is looking at what may or may not have been present in the burned area and what may move or expand in range due to the fire. They are unable to treat infestations known to be present prior to the fire. She received weed and endangered plant location information from ODA, East Multnomah SWCD, Skamania County, the Forest Service, and Hood River SWCD. She took the information and overlay them with the soil severity maps. A lot of the locations were inaccessible for surveys due to safety issues.

- Under BAER rules, treatments are warranted in high to moderate severity burn areas. They are not to spend BAER funds on existing infestations, but only on expanding or new infestations due to the fire.
- 55% of the fire was mapped as low severity or unburned, which is where most of the weed infestations were located in the Eagle Creek fire area. Low severity fires do not necessarily kill weed seeds, and they open the forest floor to infestation by removing ground cover.
- They looked at the following areas because of the vector potential: Wyeth Creek, Ruckel Ridge, Pacific Crest Trail, Eagle Creek Trail, Tanner Creek, the Gorge Trail, Oneonta Trail, Wahkeena, Larch Mountain, Multnomah Falls, Archer Mountain, and Roads 28, 20, and 2010. FS Rd. 777 intersecting the BPA right of way. Most of the areas checked out did not have high priority species.
- The upper reaches of Tanner and Eagle Creek both were severely burned, so they are a high priority for work. From the Eagle Creek Trailhead to 7 mile camp are also prioritized. There will be survey and monitoring on the Oneonta trail due to some endemic species. Wahkeena Creek and Larch Mountain will likely get some control. Work is also proposed on the 208, 20, and 2010 roads. Those roads had dozer lines put in and are adjacent to wilderness. They requested work on the forest rd. 777 and BPA right-of-way, and funds for seeding as well.
- Species of concern for BAER: knapweeds, English hawkweed, blackberry, garlic mustard, Japanese knotweed, Scotch broom, shiny geranium, false brome, tansy ragwort, ventenata grass. There is critical fish habitat within the burned area, and there is EDRR along those streams as well as blackberry and Scotch broom.
- No listed threatened or endangered plants occur in the burned area.
- One concern with the fire is that in higher reached that burned severe, weed seeds were likely killed. But the lower or unburned areas could harbor weed seeds, and now there is disturbed areas for those seeds to spread into.
- The BAER response is dependent on what happens this winter. They don't expect to do a lot of work over the first year because of difficulties with access. The steep terrain is a barrier and high winds make for very dangerous conditions.
- At John Yeon There were infestations of blackberry, and tansy ragwort at the trailhead, and the burn was severe. They were unable to survey more than 100 feet. BAER would like to do more survey work up there, but they were unable to do more now because of tree hazard. They also have rock movement and slides. John Cowan is worried about herb Robert in that area. Now that the initial assessment is done, the monitoring goes back now to the scenic area.
- Seeding in BPA right-of-way: There is a seeding proposal to prevent invasives by providing ground cover. It can also be used for erosion prevention. They have requested some level of seeding at the Eagle Creek and Tanner Creek Trailheads, as well as in the BPA right of way. There are infestations of garlic mustard and false brome which could otherwise take off. There will be a lot of coordination required in the BPA right of way, which has steep slopes and high severity, plus there is a lot of action on the road and with the BPA infrastructure maintenance.

- BPA ROW weeds include: Scotch broom, ivy, Canada thistle. They are reseeding about 11 acres in that area. They don't know how effective the seeding will be. On the south side of the BPA ROW has some quality, native plant vegetation.
- The seed mixes come from Moses Lake and include: *Elymus glaucus* (blue wildrye), *Bromus carinatus* (mountain brome), *Achillea millefolium* (yarrow), *lupinus* sp. (lupines). They may add *Deschampsia elongata* (slender hairgrass) or *Festuca idahoensis* (Idaho fescue). The seeding will occur when people can safely access the site, possibly next fall. Straw wasn't put down.
- Nothing is planned in the Bull Run management unit.
- Sarah suggested that the CWMA have a simple cheat sheet to hand to fire crews, volunteers, and others working in the area with weed species of concern. They come into contact with a lot of plants, and a little invasive plant knowledge would be helpful in an easy-access format.
- Robin Shoal also called in and is open to working with the CWMA as needed.
- The BAER report will be published soon. Sarah will make sure we have a copy of the report.

Roundtable Discussion: What Can the CWMA do to Support Fire Recovery efforts?

Bonneville Park Rangers developed a map of trails which are still open to the public. They will share it with us.

- Vern: Provide education for visitors at trailheads or visitors centers about invasive plants and about the fire.
 - Beth has been talking to Play. Clean. Go. She was at the NAISMA conference. **The boot brushes are getting a lot of attention, and are a successful way to get the word out.** Someone in Nebraska put together a mobile boot brush station to show off at shows.
 - Sarah suggested adding more Boot Brush Stations to trailheads of trails that go into the burned areas, as well as upkeep on the boot brushes already in place. Also, instead of new Boot Brush Stations, **we could use wire to attach hoof picks to signs at trailheads with signage asking people to brush their boots. It could be a quick, cheap and easy way to get the word out.**
 - Sam suggested we **update the signage on the stations to include the fire.** We could use the PCG boot brush and campaign with the slogan: **Don't Unleash a Wildfire of Weeds.**
 - John: They have a booth at the Women's Forum. They are educating folks about the fire and why they can't go in to it. The big priority is to open Crown Point to visitors, as it is the #1 destination in the State of Oregon. They must do tree assessment along the old highway before they can open it. A lot of trees (at least 700) are coming out along the highway roadside. The volume of rock and trees that must come out is tremendous: The highway won't open until at least March. The staff required at each of the highway exits and trailheads in the gorge to prevent hikers and curious Portlanders from entering hazardous areas are costing \$75,000 a day. **They would like to have information to give those visitors with wording about how the fire is beneficial, and to include weed information. It should include info about restoration, restricted entry, and how they can help- Do Not Plant Anything.** Talking points for volunteers and staff would be good, too.

- Emily suggested inviting those interpretive folks to the Stop the Invasion Training. PNW-IPC also offers similar trainings and more could be offered. They would also like to have a map of the open trails to give folks.
 - Sara: Other trailheads outside of the burn area will have more usage, so they should be updated as well.
 - The perimeter is set pretty far out around the fire, because the conditions are VERY dangerous! 2800 people have tried to get in to the burn area since the closure, about 200 a day.
 - Interagency Recreation Strategy Team: is developing messaging around recreating with respect. They are also trying to put together an interactive map that lets people know if parking lots are full. They have met only once since the fire.
 - It would be good to have a fire-wise presentation at the STI.
 - The ISEP will be fire-centric. If folks know of good speakers, send ideas to Sarah.
 - Decision: The CWMA will develop signage, get boot brushes, and develop an outreach packet to give to the outreach folks posted at trailheads and visitor centers. They will develop a unified message to share with the entire CWMA. Materials will include messaging about why it's important to prevent and manage weeds after a fire. They will work to place new boot brushes at trailheads and to maintain brushes already at trailheads. The Forest Service may already be working on parts of this.
- Provide on-the-ground support to organizations working to control weeds within the fire, and to prevention and control in neighboring areas which will see a dramatic increase in visitors due to the fire
 - Friends of the Gorge started an online opportunity for people to donate money. They raised \$46,000 which was donated to search and rescue. They also have 1600 people signed up to help with restoration. They are communicating with the volunteers, and they may attempt to redirect them to other projects, if needed. Direct volunteers to the FOG website: <https://gorgefriends.org/news-events/events/2017-09-07/eagle-creek-fire-stewardship.html>
 - FOG has also created The Gorge Resiliency Initiative: The initiative is to steward the land across the gorge. They may be able to contribute money to the Forest Service and other partners for restoration work, helping with contractors, or working on perimeter lands. They hope to have a 1 year position to work on all stewardship projects in the gorge. There is a partners group meeting tomorrow night to talk about trail restoration, at the Cascade Locks Pavilion.
 - A large portion of the burned area is wilderness, which is not eligible for restoration.
 - Emily has a meeting in December with Jake Marty, a vegetation manager from BPA.
 - For funding after BAER funds run out, look to weed board grants from ODA. Friends of the Gorge or other partners could be very competitive in looking for weed management funds within and near the fire. ODA also has a new grant for agencies working on behalf of counties on weed issues.

- **Decision:** The CWMA will support the work of groups like Friends of the Gorge. They will look for gaps in management and see how they can help to fill those gaps. They will reach out to BPA about cleaning their equipment, and develop a BMP for heavy equipment.
- Develop a coordinated map of weed locations for the entire gorge using locations from partner organizations.
 - Sarah Callaghan might have the best information on locations.
 - Much of The fire was in EMSWCD and Chris has been working with Robin Shoal from BAER. Christine can look into getting the burn severity layers and adding them to the weed location information.
 - EDDMaps West, iMapInvasives, and iNaturalist also have weed locations for the area.
 - **Decision:** The CWMA will work to develop a coordinated map of weed locations and efforts throughout the gorge, including within the burn area.

Other Items

All

- Contact Emily for boat ramp stencils
- If you think of fire-related speakers for ISEP, contact Sarah
 - The author of the BAER report could be a good option.
- If you have an idea of a good venue in Hood River for STI, contact Sarah
 - Rockford Grange
 - Master Gardeners Church
 - The College

Next General Meeting

1-3 pm, January 30th 2018

Hood River Extension Service

2990 Experiment Station Drive

Hood River, OR 97031