

Spotted Dog January 19, 2017

John Hollenback, Jason Swant, Louis Smith, Liz Smith, Pat Hansen, Neil Horne, John Beck, Jodi Pauley,
FWP Present: Mike Thompson, Jason Parke, Brady Shortman, Julie Golla

John Hollenback called meeting to order. We did introductions. Pat said she interview Don Davis about the Spotted Dog to gather some more history.

We had a presentation from Jason Parke, FWP Forester. He is the first forester that has ever been hired for FWP. He said in 2011 the Legislature mandated FWP to do some forest management plans and also how much they can harvest on FWP lands. 2013 they came up with that they could harvest about 900 log load trucks per year for the next 50 years. He said there are about 36 WMA's that have harvestable timber on them. He said all WMAs will have forest management plans including Spotted Dog. He said there are about 8000 acres of manageable timber on the Spotted Dog. He said 60 percent of the forest on Spotted Dog is in the pole sized class or similar. 30 percent is either seedling/sapling size or not stocked. 74 percent of the forest has less than 25 percent canopy cover. He said some of the things to be considered is wildlife habitat, ecological land forms, etc. He said as trees start to grow, selective thinning and other projects to enhance that forest habitat will happen eventually. He said tree planting could be an options to restore conifer cover where inadequate seed trees were retained and re-generation may be slow to re-establish. He said of course weeds is a big management issue and looking at conifer expansion into some of the grasslands. Aspen tree management will need to be considered as well especially with conifer encroachment. He said there are other things to consider such as forest cover and how it affects snow cover, stream temperatures, stability, sediment filtration and woody debris. In the future for forest management, roads have to be considered and fire access. He said there also needs to be the identity of cooperation between our neighbors as well.

John said we would like some recommendations from Jason Parke to help with the management of the forest on the Spotted Dog. John Beck asked about the projects on the other WMA's and would they be applicable to the Spotted Dog. Jason said yes to a point, they are doing some conifer encroachment removal in aspen stands, beetle kill removal, etc. so yes there could be some cross over between WMA management plans. John asked Mike how do we get some of these things down on paper. Mike said we rely on recommendations from Jason to begin with. Jason felt it would have to be fairly general as right now it is difficult to make prescriptions as we don't have a lot to work with when we look at forest management. Liz said we need to be flexible on our plan as we know things are going to change going down the road.

Julie said over the holidays they worked on the landowner packets and condensed it and worked on the landowner list and will be contacting them shortly. Julie said we are also working on elk numbers as well.

There was discussion on members who have not been attending, they decided to send out an email to the members who have not attended to see if they would like to keep attending. They decided not to really ask any new members so that we can keep moving forward with the management plan. They still need to get a vice chairman. John Beck asked about the land exchange with Cross Canyon. Mike said we

got some mixed comments from the public, etc. So FWP is backing off until we have done some more mapping and research. He said the comments were about a 1/3 that supported it, 1/3 against and 1/3 that asked for modifications. He said the other issue right now is they are working with the DNRC on a land swap so that created some issues. He said Cross Canyon may opt out as well in the whole deal. Neil said he would really like to see the land swap move forward.

John Hollenback said there is a new director of FWP and he visited with Mike and felt she would support the decisions that are made by this group.

Next meeting will be February 16, 2017 at 6:30 pm at the Elks Club in Deer Lodge