

RESTORING MONTANA'S FORESTS

A NEW APPROACH

[HOME](#) | [RESTORATION PRINCIPLES](#) | [IMPLEMENTATION](#) | [COMMITTEES PAGE](#) | [NEWS AND UPDATES](#) | [CONTACT US](#)

MFRC, Forest-level RC, and Forest Service Interface

The MFRC spent considerable time assessing what changes needed to take place in process and implementation issues affecting restoration projects. The following comprises their conclusions about the proposed scope of work of Restoration Committees. For Forest-level or local RCs to be successful in reducing appeals and litigation of restoration projects, RC-engaged stakeholders should be involved as early as possible in restoration planning stages to help shape the outcomes, impacts and benefits of all projects. Each RC will assess its capacities, in terms of expertise, time commitment of members, etc., and determine the most appropriate scope of its involvement, as well as the areas of emphasis for that involvement. Whenever possible, RCs will be involved in project prioritization and planning before the Forest Service begins the NEPA process for specific projects. Recognizing this will not always be feasible, the FRC will engage with the Forest Service before and during the development of proposed actions. Additionally, RCs will also be involved at the program level, in helping to set the priorities and direction of restoration programs.



As part of this process, the Forest Service and the local RC will discuss: place, issues in that place/watershed, management goals, priorities, desired conditions (derived from Forest Plan and adopted Restoration Principles) budget and funding sources, timing, and public concerns the agency is aware of. After careful review by the members of the RC, the RC will provide the Forest Service: suggestions for action at the level it feels appropriate, up to designing a full project proposal, delineate areas of agreement and disagreement, and a proposal for further public involvement and outreach, if applicable.

RCs will be involved during the NEPA process through on-going consultation via a pre-established check-in process between the NEPA writer and the RC and meetings with the Deciding Officer after public comment and before final decision.

When applicable, RCs will work with Forest Service to perform pre-project monitoring to establish baseline data, propose a desired monitoring plan and assess funding available and fund raising strategies/participation when needed.

RCs may want the opportunity to interface with project implementation through field visits, meetings with contractors, sale administrators and others.

Forest Service will communicate with RC in order to track progress towards the Forest Service's Integrated Restoration Strategy goals.

The RCs will retain the discretion to evaluate their own capacity to pick and choose projects from those submitted or brought to them, to get involved or not, and the depth of their involvement.

Recommended Scale:

We recommend that, after successful demonstration by the pilot Lolo/Bitterroot RCs, additional Restoration Committees will be formed to work at the local or forest level.

Operation by Consensus:

Restoration Implementation

Introduction

[Restoration Committees](#)

[Restoration Interface](#)

[Funding](#)

[Future Efforts](#)

A goal of the RC is to reduce the number of appeals and litigation for restoration projects conducted by the Forest Service. As such, each RC will operate on a consensus model to reach agreement on their level of approval for a given project or action.

In reviewing proposals from the Forest Service, the RC will provide a written statement articulating the level of support the Committee has for a project prior to the forest service signing the decision document.

It will be the responsibility of each member of the RC to communicate to the Committee and the Forest Service about agreements, disagreements and/or concerns which the member becomes aware of from outside groups or individuals.

Copyright © 2007 by Montana Forest Restoration Committee All rights reserved