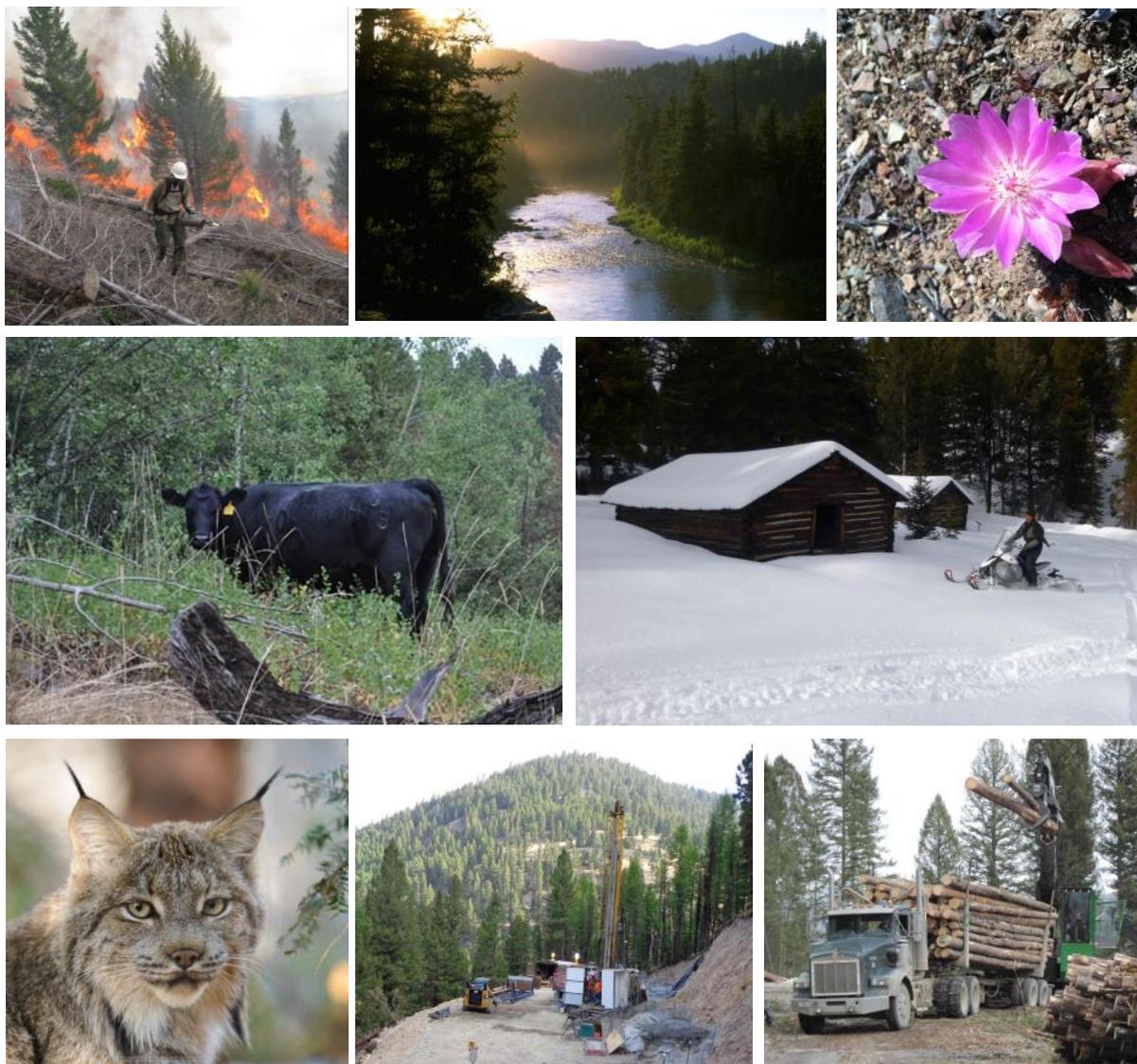


Public Envisioning

Situation Assessment and Workshop Report

Missoula Resource Management Plan
Bureau of Land Management



June 2016

Bureau of Land Management
Missoula Field Office
3255 Fort Missoula Road
Missoula, MT 59804-7204



This page intentionally left blank.

Public Envisioning: Situation Assessment and Workshop Report

For the:

Missoula Resource Management Plan

June 7th, 2016

Bureau of Land Management

Missoula Field Office

3255 Fort Missoula Road

Missoula, MT 59804-7204

For more information contact the RMP Team Leader at:

(406) 329-3914

blm_mt_missoularmp@blm.gov

Cover photos from left to right, top to bottom: prescribed fire, BLM; Blackfoot River, BLM; bitterroot flower, BLM; cow grazing, BLM; snowmobiling in Garnet Ghost Town, BLM; Canada lynx, photo by Eric Kilby; mining drill rig, BLM; logging operations, BLM.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	4
Executive Summary	1
How this Document is Organized	2
Background and Purpose	2
Part 1- Listening Sessions	3
<i>Situation Assessment Process</i>	3
<i>Situation Assessment Report</i>	4
<i>Project Area</i>	4
<i>Summary of Findings</i>	7
Stakeholder Listening Sessions	7
Plan Revision Elements Discussed by the Public.....	9
Recommendations	17
List of Participants.....	18
Part 2- Envisioning Public Workshops	20
<i>Background and Purpose</i>	20
<i>Workshop Process</i>	20
<i>Objectives</i>	20
<i>Agenda</i>	20
Welcome and Overview of Objectives.....	20
Community and BLM Introductions.....	21
Greeting Circle	21
Presentation.....	21
Questions & Answers.....	21
Feedback.....	21
<i>Notecards</i>	22
General themes: Public Lands, Relationships and Collaborations, Planning 2.0 and Envisioning	22
Maintain and Restore Ecological Sustainability and Fish and Wildlife Habitat.....	23
Access for Public Use and Resource Management	24
Recreation Opportunities	24
Range Management.....	25
Invasive Weeds	26
Forest Management.....	26
Mining.....	26
Land Acquisition.....	27
<i>What the BLM Heard the Public Say- Missoula</i>	28

Executive Summary

Our western Montana communities are rich with a passion for public lands. Decades of experience, and stories passed down through generations offer valuable perspectives for how our landscape is best managed. Envisioning created space for us to listen and learn from the public and build deeper connections amongst one another. We listened and learned with respect, without judgment, or attempt to delve into a debate about issues.

This report captures the perspectives we heard in individual listening sessions and workshops. It reflects the spiritual, cultural, recreational, and financial connections people have to public lands; and serves as an important reminder to government agencies to listen, and work with people before making decisions. We learned that past collaboration amongst communities, organizations, and agencies is a successful model to carry forward, and will undoubtedly be a vital component to the success of this planning process.

The breadth of sentiment and perspectives we heard for public lands suggests we should build upon the momentum gained from Envisioning. By listening and communicating frequently about the planning process, and ultimately the decisions to be made, we sincerely hope this plan will represent the collective vision public land users have for your lands. We hope that you continue to join us over the coming years on this planning journey.

Sincerely,



Joe Ashor
Field Manager
Missoula Field Office

How this Document is Organized

This document is organized into two sections; Part 1-Listening Sessions, and Part 2-Envisioning Public Workshops. Part 1 was initially published on April 5th, 2016, after being reviewed by individuals who participated in the listening sessions. It is included in this final version, in its original form, with only minor changes. Part 2 Envisioning Public Workshops captures workshop activities, discussions, and public input that occurred in all three locations.

Background and Purpose

The Missoula Bureau of Land Management is revising its 30-year-old Garnet Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Missoula Field Office to provide goals, objectives, and direction for approximately 156,000 acres of surface BLM-managed lands and approximately 268,000 acres of sub-surface BLM-managed minerals in western Montana.

The Missoula Field Office is pioneering a newly developed approach for this effort called “Public Envisioning.” Envisioning is a pre-scoping component of the BLM’s new Planning 2.0 initiative. Envisioning is intended to occur during the initial phases of the planning process along with preparation of the Analysis of the Management Situation. Envisioning sessions aim to create additional, earlier opportunities for public engagement in the planning process. There are three specific goals:

1. To create a more dynamic and efficient planning process.
2. To enhance opportunities for collaborative planning.
3. To plan across landscapes and at multiple scales.

The Missoula BLM requested assistance from Kearns & West Facilitators to help with Public Envisioning. Facilitators Mike Lunn and Diane Groves focused on fostering collaborative management strategies at the ground level. Staff from the Missoula BLM worked with the public to achieve these goals by encouraging relationships, building trust, and capturing a common voice for the land within the Situation Assessment.

Part 1- Listening Sessions

Situation Assessment Process

After initial consultation with Kearns & West Facilitators, it was recommended to conduct a Situation Assessment. This assessment is a process that has seen use in many situations to gain a more in-depth understanding of ecological and social issues, and opportunities for collaboration. It draws on published information, websites, and stakeholder discussions to inform the development of general recommendations and subsequent collaborative opportunities. These opportunities further define what was heard in the assessment, and normally respond to more site-specific conditions, public interests, or issues.

The specific purposes of the Situation Assessment are:

- Learn about the local situation.
- Meet involved parties and begin building relationships with them.
- Understand their perspectives of the situation.
- Hear about the issues with which they are concerned.
- To use the information to help develop some initial avenues for moving forward.

An initial participant list was developed by BLM staff and includes a broad and diverse spectrum of field office employees and public stakeholders. Individuals on the list were sent a letter on February 5th, 2016, with an invitation to participate in the Situation Assessment. Other people were added as word spread through individual networks. Many participants self-selected to attend a discussion based on this additional interest. Follow-up contact was made to help confirm interest.

The Situation Assessment Team including: Mike Lunn and Diane Groves (Kearns & West Facilitators), Maggie Ward (Missoula RMP Revision Team Leader), and Micah Helser (Missoula RMP Writer-Editor); conducted individual listening sessions from February 29-March 4, 2016. The team met face-to-face with approximately 50 individuals and organizations representing a wide range of perspectives and concerns. For those who were unable to meet in person, an offer was made to talk by telephone.

With each conversation, it was noted that everything said by participants is confidential; nothing would be quoted nor attributed to any individual in the report. The Situation Assessment Team did not take notes during discussions beyond simple items such as cited documents, contact information, or other similar small reminders. The team wanted to focus on actually listening and not trying to capture specific notes.

The Situation Assessment Team used a model called “listening with respect.” After initial introductions, the team listened to the perspectives and insights of participants without judging content. People were encouraged to speak from their own knowledge and perspectives about the situations or issues they felt were most important. Some general questions were usually asked to prompt discussion and clarify points that were being made. This approach helps foster a sense of trust, and provides a foundation for working together. Discussions were designed to create a shift in thinking within participants. In some instances helping them move beyond the current situation, to ideas for how the situation might be improved for all parties. Participants were provided opportunities to ask questions about the plan revision, the BLM approach, and how this information will feed into the larger revision process.

Situation Assessment Report

This report documents, in general terms, the issues and concerns that were identified during the situation assessment, and provides recommended next steps based on this information. The report is not meant to be a comprehensive statement of fact; rather, it represents the personal knowledge and opinions of the people with whom the team spoke. By necessity, this report condenses, summarizes, and perhaps simplifies a large body of complex and often conflicting information. In some cases, the report reflects information conflicts amongst various people or with published documents. It is not designed to ascertain the accuracy behind individual statements, but rather identify and document perceptions and opinions held by people. It very likely contains what some individuals view as errors or omissions, and clearly cannot capture all the feelings and beliefs heard during discussions. This report is a starting point for understanding conflicting views, identifying shared visions, and collaborative issue resolution. The BLM and Kearns & West Facilitators greatly appreciate the willingness of the people in the area, and beyond, to openly share their thoughts and ideas.

Project Area

The 156,575 surface acres managed within the Missoula Field Office are situated within Granite, Powell, and Missoula counties. These lands are generally described as five primary management blocks; these are: the Garnet/ Chamberlain Mountain area, Hoodoos, Lower Blackfoot River Corridor, Mineral Hill/ Marcum Mountain, and lands south of interstate-90 around Philipsburg, MT. See Figure 1. Missoula BLM "management blocks" for a map of these areas. These blocks are adjacent to a highly mixed landscape of diverse management and ownership. State, National Forest, and private lands are all mixed together. The predominant acreage is within the Lolo, Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Helena National Forests. Approximately 80% of BLM-managed lands are within the Blackfoot River Watershed.

The largest public land area administered by the Missoula Field Office is within the Garnet/Chamberlain mountain area. It is one of the most commonly used blocks, and has a number of differing recreation opportunities and uses. Garnet Ghost Town is a famous landmark and historical area that attracts over 10,000 visitors a year. A BLM-designated Back Country Byway bisects the Garnet range, and offers important summer and winter access. The Whales Creek Wilderness Study Area encompasses much of Chamberlain Mountain and a high-elevation forested landscape. There are many patented and unpatented mining claims, most with little current activity, but the potential remains high for future development. There are also many opportunities for exchanging private and public lands to block up ownership and make for a more manageable situation. There are approximately 80 miles of groomed snowmobile trails within the area.

The Hoodoo Mountain area to the southeast of Helmville consists of a mostly solid block of public land. There are a number of private in-holdings, some of which are landlocked with no approved road access. Most of these in-holdings are along the southern fringe of the area. This block is quite remote with only four-wheel drive access across the middle section. The Hoodoos Wilderness Study Area is located within this block and offers an important habitat and connectivity corridor for wildlife species.

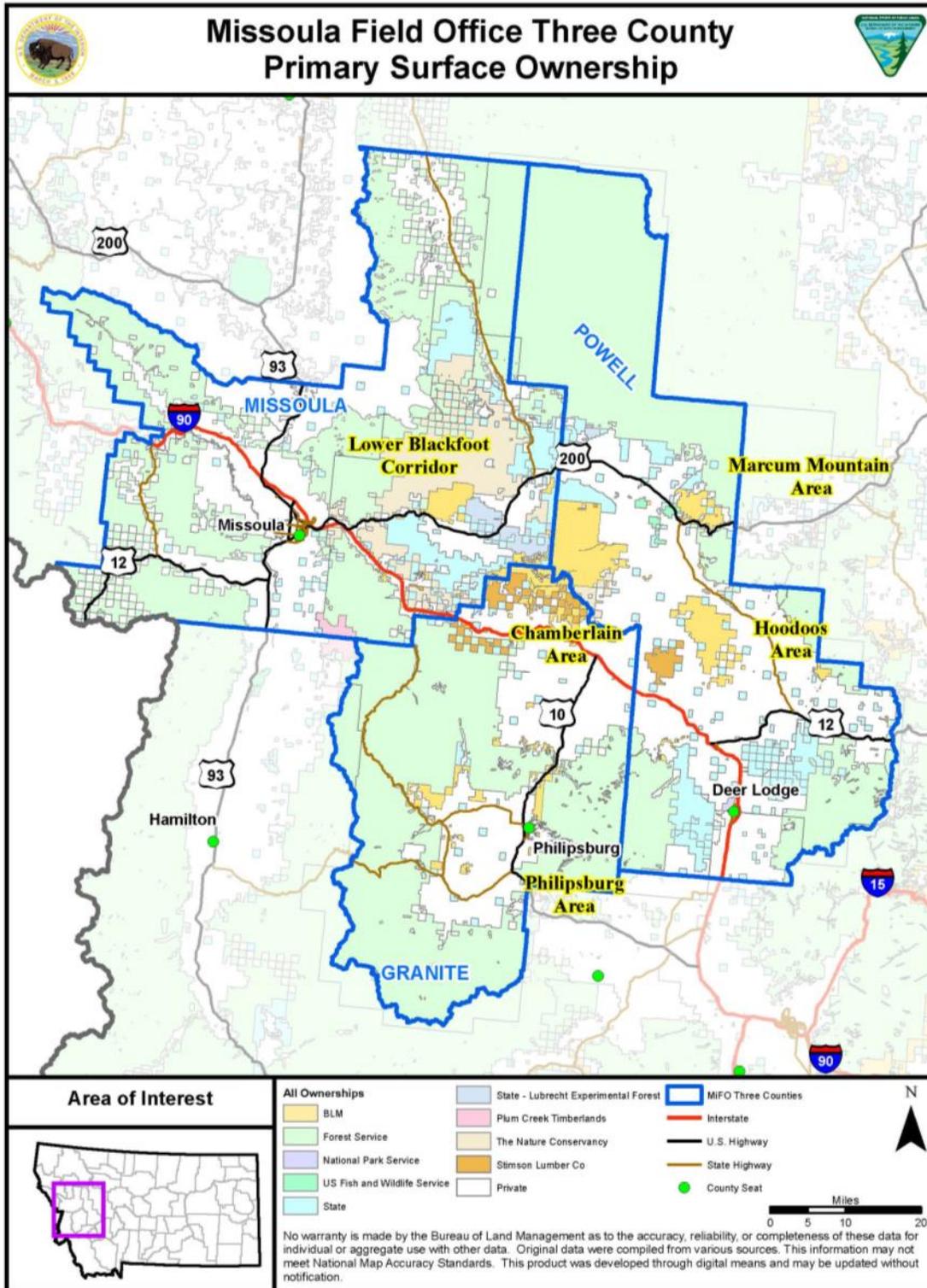
Another important block of land is located along the lower Blackfoot River north of Highway 200, and is contiguous with lands recently purchased from Plum Creek by The Nature Conservancy. This area is popular amongst river recreationists and hunters because of the close proximity to the population hub of Missoula. The local ranching communities of Potomac and Greenough are adjacent, and have historically used the area to provide for a rural way of life through grazing, timber harvest, and irrigation water.

The Mineral Hill section west of the town of Lincoln, and mostly north of Highway 200 has a long history of mineral development and timber harvest that has left a relatively high density of roads. This

area is very important for wildlife winter range, and special interest species including wolf and grizzly bear. Biologists and natural resource managers from government agencies and universities have long-valued this area for its research opportunities.

The southernmost public lands within the Missoula Field Office are near Philipsburg. BLM-managed lands are smaller, separated, and generally bordered by National Forest lands or private property. The small public landholdings in this area are nearly all managed for livestock grazing. Bull and cutthroat trout are present in some of the streams, raising the importance of quality riparian habitat. The small area of public lands north and east of Phillipsburg are used mostly by locals for ATV use, target shooting, and contains some historical mining evidence.

Figure 1. Missoula BLM "management blocks"



Summary of Findings

Stakeholder Listening Sessions

General Attitudes about Discussions

In general, people seemed very supportive to have the opportunity early in the revision process to be part of a discussion. Many appreciated the BLM for giving the opportunity to share their perspectives, values, and interests. For a number of people, early listening in the process was a refreshing change in agency behavior. Individuals very passionately describe public lands as those the BLM *manages* on behalf of the American people, rather than being *owned* by the Federal Government. Up-front listening to the public sends a good signal that this relationship is understood and respected by BLM.

A number of people discussed the importance for BLM to clearly explain the relationship and scope of the revised RMP to other planning activities such as: specific travel management planning that regulates access and travel on specific roads and trails, allotment management, or timber sales. There was concern that successful public engagement and realistic expectations for outcomes are dependent upon the understanding of sideboards, scope, and purpose for planning at the RMP level. There were questions about why the plan was being redone, and if there was something specific that happened that caused the old plan to no longer work.

Public Lands- Value and Existence

In general people placed a high value on having public lands, and on public lands managed for the people of the United States. One individual called public lands “necessary for the sanity of man,” while others observed an almost spiritual value while standing atop a mountain looking across a valley or broader landscape. Many people highlighted the importance of sharing experiences with their children and grandchildren. Many expressed a concern that their children and grandchildren will not have the same opportunities as they have had with public lands.

Many people highlighted the importance of these lands being managed by the Federal Government. Others noted that a discussion about whether public lands should be managed by the States is happening throughout Montana. Many people expressed concern with the “giving away” of public lands to private ownership.

The occupation at the Malheur National Wildlife Area in Oregon was a frequent topic of conversation. Generally people did not feel that such an event could occur in their area, while others felt those same feelings do exist amongst some segments of the local population. A few people acknowledged there is support locally for the reasons behind the occupation, but not the actions themselves. Concern was expressed by ranchers and others about the overreach of the Federal Government, and the fear that continued livestock use of public lands is threatened. A large number of people expressed concerns that some agencies have become arrogant and ineffective, and unwilling to engage in real participative dialogue on issues.

Importance of Outreach and Relationships

Many people described having a good relationship with the BLM in western Montana. Some of these relationships have existed for decades, and there is a positive feeling about new management and other BLM staff who are working in a respectful way with land users. It was seen as important to communicate frequently, and to be inclusive of all interests to maintain these healthy working relationships. Some individuals were initially concerned that with the presence of facilitators, the BLM perceived these relationships as potentially conflicted, and created a barrier between stakeholders and the agency.

Revision Process and BLM's Planning 2.0

People showed Interest and support for Planning 2.0 and the BLM's proposed changes to the planning process. Many people felt the explanation of the Public Envisioning process in the February 5th letter seemed to be a good path to follow. People in this area are largely comfortable with working together on problems up front. They support the BLM in their purpose of listening to their ideas prior to tossing out agency ideas in scoping. Several people expressed this was a very welcome change in agency approach. A few people expressed frustration for the slow pace of government planning and decision making, and stressed the importance of a well-managed and timely process.

Most people stressed their desire to be included in future processes, and the importance of continuous communication by the BLM. Several people voiced a desire for communication through email, while others asked for communication through the traditional postal service mail delivery. Several people appreciated the schedule modifications to the planning process, such as up-front listening, and sending out the preliminary alternatives to the public between scoping and release of the draft environmental impact statement. This was seen to reduce the period of time where there normally is little or no public outreach, otherwise referred to as the planning "black hole."

Plan Revision Elements Discussed by the Public

Maintain and Restore Ecological Sustainability

There were a number of people who spoke in general terms of sustainability and resiliency of ecological processes. They see a major role for restoring and maintaining healthy forest conditions on the landscape scale, and for broad management objectives that maintain the diversity of healthy forest and range conditions. Climate change was mentioned by a few in this regard, but it seems a few believe managing the land well over time is what's needed. Some people spoke about the importance of ecological resiliency to support bird and wildlife populations. They also felt soil health is important for achieving resiliency goals.

Access for Public Use and Resource Management

The many types and limitations regarding access management were widely discussed. Despite diverging opinions, it was commonly noted there is room for multiple uses. Many expressed the importance of protecting some pristine backcountry and wildlife habitat areas from excessive access and use.

User conflicts were a commonly discussed access issue. The changing modes and popularity of motorized and mechanized access brings new and different conflicts. Some people talked about past user access issues, for example, between horse users, hikers, and motorized operators. The growing popularity of mountain bikes has also increased conflicts with hikers and horse users. Mountain biking has evolved considerably due to updated bike designs. This new technology has led to increased season length, and has become not just an access method, but for many a type of extreme sport where speed and difficult terrain plays a big role. Similarly, the improved design and larger size of snowmobiles has also made more areas accessible, and for longer periods of use.

Horse and mule users have invested considerable time, effort, and ingenuity in reducing impacts to trails, campsites, streamside areas, and vegetation. Examples include: limiting the size of groups, reducing equipment weight, campsite protection, and how stock are cared for in backcountry areas. One well-known local packer and guide has been improving wilderness horse packing techniques for a half-century, and continues to share his knowledge in educating and training a diverse clientele. High scenic values, well-maintained trails, and “unspoiled” backcountry are important attributes to this group. Some users we spoke with are largely day riders, while others take extended pack trips into the backcountry and wilderness areas. One of their larger concerns on mixed-use trails is with mountain bikers. To a horse and rider, bicycles are very quiet in comparison to motorbikes and ATVs. A horse is easily spooked when a bike appears with little warning and a high rate of speed. It was noted, that while many hikers have learned to move off the trail on the downhill side as a string of horses and mules pass; many new users on bicycles may not be as familiar with good trail etiquette. Horses have a natural fear of predators from uphill, and may become skittish when bikers stand uphill.

Trail design and use were commonly discussed. Backcountry bike use was noted to have an adverse impact on trails by creating small trenches that do not drain well, and over time develop a V-shape. There was also positive feedback on new and innovative ways of designing multiple use trail systems. For instance, separate trails commenced from one location, and ultimately ended in the same destination; however, each trail restricted uses to avoid known conflict. While no one indicated these conflicts were insurmountable, there was acknowledgment to improve and continue education. The expansion of a biking and hiking trail system was seen as beneficial to local tourism in Philipsburg and other rural areas. Some people desire more bike trails in the urban-rural interface.

Snowmobile use is a highly popular method to access the many miles of well-groomed trails in the area. Particularly in the Garnets, there are conflicts between people who want to drive utility or Jeep type vehicles on roads that are groomed for snowmobiles. Some private landowners would like to see roads plowed to access their property by vehicle, but snowmobile users want to maintain these groomed trails for as long as the season will allow. It was explained by landowners that their property has no “right to access” that came with purchase.

It was noted that the modern snowmobile has the capability of going to more places than its predecessors, while reducing exhaust emissions and lowering noise levels. Some people saw the ability to go to more places as a positive thing, while others indicated this could lead to more wildlife encounters and stress during critical winter periods.

People expressed frustration with poor communication regarding changes to access. While this seemed to be aimed mainly at the Forest Service, people want to be involved with decisions that might modify access options. Several people talked about how arrogant government agencies could be when they lock gates on roads without discussion or warning. One example was given on a BLM four-wheel drive road that crosses a long section of public land. A gate was placed on one end, but the rest of the road from the other end was open all the way to that same gate. One could drive to the gate from either direction, but not go through it.

Some individuals acknowledged the importance of existing motorized and mechanical travel, and wanted to see these uses maintained. Others felt it was important to keep roadless areas such as Wilderness Study Areas free from this use, and concentrate this mode of travel to existing areas. Other people were concerned that the use of public lands is increasing, and without the expansion of roads, trails, and dispersed sites, resource integrity and opportunities for recreation will decline.

Provide for Recreation Opportunities at all Scales and Users, while Always Protecting Resources

Several people discussed the importance of managing public lands to provide a place for all users. They described the importance of caring for pristine and undeveloped areas for the long term. These areas are particularly important for wildlife species such as grizzly bear, wolf, fisher, lynx, and wolverine. Managing these habitat areas similarly to lands designated as wilderness is seen as most appropriate. There would be little or no motorized access or newly developed trails. Where roads already exist, the system will be carefully managed to minimize future resource damage through reduced motorized use and seasonal closures.

Trail systems in-and-around communities were commonly discussed. Some felt a robust system with varying levels of road access would enable people of all abilities to enjoy the beauty and diversity of the surrounding environment. Others expressed that simply the existence of lands with little human impact is important, even if access is difficult. Some felt between those two extremes is a general land area where more decision space would be available between protection and development. Additionally, several examples were discussed of long roadside trail stretches between communities. Many people felt these were brought about in large part through excellent partnership arrangements outside the efforts of the Federal Government. Some of these opportunities would require multiple managing agencies and landowners working together to maximize opportunities.

Hunting for deer, elk, grouse, and other game remains an important activity amongst a high portion of the local and regional population. Hunting has long been an important part of the western culture, and particularly so in this area. Hunting attracts not only locals, but people from across the United States which adds to the economy and employment opportunities for communities. As with other uses, it was seen as important to provide hunting opportunities for people of all abilities. This includes the older or physically impaired, along with people who seek backcountry exploration and enjoyment as part of their hunting experience.

Some people expressed concern over the care of individuals with limited abilities and the elderly. This population may have once been strong hikers or horse users, but no longer are physically capable of that type of access; and still want to enjoy all the area has to offer, and that many remember. Some of those people question why more area is not open to use by off-road vehicles such as utility vehicles. They see it as unfair that many areas are no longer available to them simply because of diminished physical capability.

Garnet Ghost Town remains a popular location for many local and international visitors. Many people expressed a desire to continue the current management of the area as available for winter and summer use. People talked about taking their families to the cabins at Garnet Ghost Town to enjoy the experience. Other people talked about how their out-of-town visitors were in awe of the opportunity to have this historic town exist on public lands.

River Uses

Floating, boating, and fishing activities on the Blackfoot River have increased greatly over the past several decades. This increase is both in the number of users and sections of river being used. The lower part of the river near Missoula has an extremely high number of users throughout the summer season nearly every day. This easily accessible and relatively gentle water where almost any raft, inner tube, or other floating platform can be used provides a non-challenging and relaxing social context for people to enjoy.

Some upper reaches of the river are less accessible. This stretch offers more challenging water conditions, and reduced user encounters with other people. Some individuals expressed concern that river managers need to maintain a variety of different floater experiences and environmental attributes. Many feel this would be best accomplished by working with the public and other agencies up front, and perhaps limiting the number of users on certain reaches with a permit system. Many individuals felt it important to make management decisions and plan for the future with a “ridge-top to ridge-top” approach.

Fishing for trout offers a broad spectrum of opportunities ranging from high quality sections of river for fly-fishing purists, similar to those portrayed in the movie “A River Runs Through It,” to places where children can learn to fish using spinning tackle or other simple methods. Again, during discussions people exhibited interest in maintaining opportunities for all users so long as the basic resource was being protected.

Range Management

The team visited with several people who have livestock operations, or who have an interest in livestock operations on public lands. Several lessees expressed concern that in the letter dated February 5, 2016, describing the revision process and Situation Assessment, that range management and forestry were not among the items listed. Compared to many BLM field offices, the grazing program is fairly small in the Missoula area. However, to the individual operators and many others, it is very important to the cultural and economic well-being and way of life. Lessees want to make sure their interests are known.

Several people expressed concerns about the health and condition of riparian areas along streams due to over or improper grazing. Riparian areas are widely seen as being important to good fish habitat, and it was also noted that a high percentage of all wildlife depends at some point in its life cycle on riparian and stream habitats. Some people stated that there are extremists on both ends of the grazing issue; those who want all livestock removed, and those who see it as their “right” to graze as they choose. But the broad majority locally is more in the middle, willing to work together with others to achieve good outcomes. Some highlighted the importance of an interdisciplinary approach by the BLM in looking at issues on the ground.

The BLM generally received support and appreciation in working with lessees and their issues. A few people commented that over the years there had been some “difficult” employees to work with, but it was more of an individual issue than a BLM one.

It was recommended that during the revision process the interdisciplinary team should have strong skills and knowledge in range management. The teachings of Alan Savory were recommended as a carefully planned grazing management approach to main the health of range and riparian areas. These people believe that livestock can be managed to help restore rangeland or forested areas by improving plant composition, foliar cover, and ground cover. This is largely accomplished through careful adjustments to the timing, intensity, and duration of grazing practices based on an understanding of plant phenology. Others felt the RMP revision is a perfect opportunity to conduct a comprehensive landscape-level analysis on the impacts of grazing and how plant communities have shifted from pre-grazing conditions. The

same individuals communicated the importance of factoring the decline of aspen tree stands into the grazing management analysis.

A variety of people commented on the importance of maintaining ranching and livestock operations as part of the cultural, historic, and economic values within this area of Montana. Some noted how traditional ranching attracts tourism and overnight hospitality opportunities on ranches. Since these visitors are coming to experience a scenic and ecologically functioning landscape, this acts as an incentive for land owners to be good stewards of the land. They associated ranching with large open spaces and Western culture. Several people made the distinction between ranching and farming communities; whereas ranching fosters a sense of people working together, and farming can be done more independently.

One lessee felt endangered species regulations concerning bull trout were important, and willing to comply with stipulations on grazing Federal lands. However, under one circumstance when these rules required livestock to be moved off the grazing allotment earlier than expected, the only other location available was private land on the same stretch of stream. The location was closer to sensitive bull trout habitat which they felt had a higher impact. They felt frustrated with the BLM and other agencies for not coordinating management decisions for the common good of the species.

Invasive Weeds

Invasive and noxious weeds are viewed by essentially all participants as a major problem, and one that requires high levels of cooperative work. The identification and locations of invasive weeds, and their subsequent containment was a topic of little division of importance. Knapweed and perennial pepper weed, also known as white top, were the most commonly addressed invasive species; people are highly concerned about their presence and potential to be very damaging to native vegetation, riparian areas, and wildlife habitat. There are a number of other invasive species, and with all of them there is strong support for aggressive cooperative suppression. If a “common enemy” can bring people together, invasive weeds could do it in western Montana.

Forest Management

Forest management is one of the most changed resource uses within public and private lands in the Missoula area. Logging was an important part of the founding history of Missoula. Lumber was necessary for building towns and homes; and a variety of forest products were needed for mining, railroad ties, and fuel. As recently as the 1960s and early 70s, Missoula was largely a mill town. The air was so laden with smoke during winter inversions that an almost toxic environment was created for many residents. Teepee burners were used to dispose of sawmill waste creating constant plumes of smoke; and the Hoerner-Waldorf Pulp Mill, constructed in the middle 1950s, added to the poor air quality and bad odor associated with these operations. Dramatic improvements in technology and loss of large-scale milling operations over the years have provided a very different environment for the Missoula Valley of today.

Many millions of board feet were harvested annually for decades from the mountainous private and National Forest lands surrounding Missoula. Over the years, large blocks of private land were held and operated by such companies as Plum Creek, Champion International, and others. Vast stands of virgin timber provided most of the production. As with many other Intermountain forest areas, site productivity was generally moderate or low compared with productive west coast or Southern US timber stands. The nearby Bitterroot National Forest became the focus for major reconsideration of timber management practices in the 1970s when the Bolle Report was issued by a group of University of Montana scientists. The report criticized timber management from an ecological and economic viewpoint, and forever changed commercial forest management in the area and across the National Forest System.

Today, a small number of sawmills still exist and all face a difficult and uncertain future. It was pointed out when talking to some operators, that while the volume available from BLM-managed lands is not large, every offering is important. It was noted that the BLM has a good history of working to provide a diverse mix of commercial timber sales, stewardship operations, and forest health treatments. Operators said the BLM is typically effective and efficient in producing timber volume, compared to the Forest Service, which seems to be stifled by National Environmental Policy Act procedures. They pointed out the planning on some Forest Service timber projects may take up to eight or nine years to complete, and by the end have been so compromised for fear of litigation, there is little worthwhile production available.

Economic fluctuations in timber and forest products are another difficulty currently facing the local timber industry. Some sales that were purchased several years ago when lumber and timber products had a much higher value, now cannot economically be operated by the contract termination date. This may cause some operators to go out of business, and others to struggle and try to complete the contracts at a financial loss. Loss of additional logging and milling capacity presents a broad-scale conundrum. Forest restoration and the reduction of threats from wildland fire will continue to require timber harvest and removal. Without an economically viable forest products industry; timber harvest, removal, or nearly any stand modifications could quickly become infeasible or inefficient.

Some individuals within the forestry and lumber community felt it important to differentiate between small, family-owned sawmills against much larger corporate-owned mills. They feel that family-run mills are more vested in the community and are better stewards of the land, while corporations are only focused on profit and not a long-term sustainable resource.

It was pointed out that collaboration and working together to achieve multiple objectives is the only hope that sawmills have for maintaining their operations. The days of relying solely on commercial timber sales are past. Successful mills often focus on niche markets and not just traditional products. Timber companies recognize the importance of being a valued community member; some are making major investments in the well-being of both their community and their employees through such actions as improved wages and benefit packages, and participating with other groups in efforts to improve community well-being. Education and communication about sustainable forest uses and management at all levels of community and government was also cited as an important activity.

Many individuals with varying interests were concerned with a lack of active forest management. These people were concerned that forests not exposed to fire, thinning, or harvest for many years were no longer healthy; and are susceptible to disease, fire, and bug infestation. Some felt it could be the BLM's position to act as a broker between government agencies, private landowners, and forest product outlets. They could orchestrate projects which result in multiple benefits, such as fuels reduction, big game habitat enhancement, and create economic opportunities to the local community. One rancher felt that forests were over-grown to such a state that spring developments were no longer producing at past rates. When a fire burned the area above the spring, it increased the flow of water to past levels. Others felt that by allowing forests to be disturbed by only natural processes, it provided the most benefit to wildlife and ecosystem health.

Mining

Mining is one of the oldest activities in the vicinity, and according to some, the reason many Caucasians began coming to the area as early as 1860. Gold, in both placer and lode claims, along with other minerals such as copper, lead, and zinc, were present in various locations. The General Mining Act of 1872 provided the clear legal basis for acquiring and protecting mining claims on public land. This law remains very important to people who have claims or want to prospect. It was noted that for people who

have claims in the Missoula Field Office area, this law provides them the legal assurances they need in order to continue exercising this right.

Other people are very concerned the law provides too much latitude to operators, and that over the years there has been considerable degradation in some areas from mineral exploitation. There remain several potentially large-scale operations in the Blackfoot drainage that people fear would be very damaging to recreation, watershed, and land health values.

Many inholdings of private land have resulted from the location of mining claims, some of these create access issues, as there may be only small areas of public land between the claims. These may be essentially unmanageable by the BLM, and are often seen as land trading opportunities for blocking up ownership. They also create conflicts between people who own the claims and the general public seeking access to the public lands. Concern was expressed by one miner that road management decisions can be very frustrating when roads get closed with little or no explanation or discussion, or when agency decisions cause the public to use private lands due to closed public roads.

Land Acquisition

The BLM has an ongoing program of land ownership consolidation. Prior to 2002, the program primarily consisted of land exchanges with private individuals, large corporate owners, and non-profit organizations. Since 2002 the program has shifted from these exchanges to acquisitions focusing on the purchase of former Plum Creek Timberlands property by The Nature Conservancy. The purchase and disposition of the former Plum Creek lands by The Nature Conservancy and the Blackfoot Challenge has occurred in three large scale projects: the Blackfoot Community Project (89,000 acres), the Montana Legacy Project (310,000 acres), and the Clearwater-Blackfoot Project (117,000 acres). To date, the BLM has acquired 12,400 acres of Blackfoot Community Project lands, 3,302 acres of Montana Legacy Project lands, and is working with The Nature Conservancy to acquire Clearwater-Blackfoot Project parcels.

Whenever the land acquisition program for BLM was discussed, there seemed to be strong support for public or other conservation management that would preserve the character of the landscape within the Blackfoot River drainage and other areas of the Missoula Field office. There also was encouragement to block up ownership by targeted exchanges that would resolve some of the access issues for both private landowners and the public land users. In the experience of the situation assessment team, this is very different than frequently held attitudes in other areas across the Western United States. While there is often support for lands to be maintained by the BLM and Forest Service, there is often strong opposition to Federal lands management and the acquisition of additional Federal lands. This feeling is at the heart of the efforts to have public lands and National Forest turned over to State management. This support for conservation management seems to be rooted in the collaborative work that has been ongoing in the Blackfoot Valley for several decades, and the strong relationships that have been fostered within the public and with the BLM.

Large Scale Landscape Planning: Connectivity, Collaboration, Cooperation

A number of people talked about the resource management plan revision, and the importance of large-scale landscape planning in an area like the Missoula and Blackfoot Watersheds. An important consideration was the ability of the BLM to integrate the elements of its public lands within a much larger framework of diverse ownerships. It is important not only to plan at that level, but to clearly explain how long-term guidance affects specific areas of land and activities. Clarity and simplicity, similar to that contained in the existing Garnet Resource Management Plan, was suggested by a few as a good model. That plan has served past conservation and project development well.

Some people suggested that the BLM should focus on contiguous land ownerships that are being managed for similar purposes. Connectivity across large landscapes is seen as critically important by many. Particularly so for large carnivores and special interest species including: wolverine, Canada lynx, and fisher. To some, the identification of special habitats for protection that may be uncommon within the much larger area was important. Wetlands and aspen stands were two such special habitats. Some of these important connectivity areas include the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to the south, and the “Crown of the Continent” Ecosystem which spans the area roughly from Yellowstone, along the continental divide, and up to Glacier National Park and Canada’s Waterton Lakes National Park. According to several people, it isn’t enough to simply look at the land area, but a similar connection must be made to the people across that land area in order to be successful.

The region has developed a robust effort of strong collaborative working groups, including the Blackfoot Challenge, the Southwestern Crown Collaborative, the Clark Fork Coalition, and others. These groups maintain strong local volunteer presence, and include large non-governmental organizations and government agencies. Most people stressed their belief that collaboration is the key in achieving a multiple-use balance in natural resources. Because there is such a strong history of collaboration already in place, it is important to tap the richness of work already done as it is relevant to BLM-managed lands.

Communication with all parties and groups is a major theme heard multiple times. Solving problems by consensus has been important for the larger collaborative working groups mentioned above. The Nature Conservancy, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Audubon, Sierra Club, and other non-governmental organizations are major players along with industrial and business partners.

A small number of people were concerned that a collaborative process might be used. These people fear individuals would be excluded who have a deep interest in the area, but do not have the time and resources to be a part of an ongoing collaborative. There was also a concern that using a collaborative process would result in decisions made by a small group without the true representation of all local and national interests. Some people stated that they have concerns group agreements may be reached on the basis on compromise, and not truly in the best interest of the resources or people.

Rural Way of Life and Rural Lifestyle

In describing what people seek from this area, a distinction was made by some between a “rural lifestyle,” and a “rural way of life.” It was explained, a rural lifestyle is what some city people seek where there are very high scenic values and recreation opportunities such as golf courses. To others, the rural way of life includes working to care for the land, appreciating neighbors and working together, and understanding the values presented by both protected landscapes and working landscapes. People talked about the importance of maintaining livestock operations which provide connections to the culture and history of the area. They also feel livestock help to maintain large areas of open green space and contribute to small town local economies. It isn’t just about observing special places, or recreating; it’s about working together to foster continuity in the culture, conditions, and economy that makes the area special.

Recommendations

There are two primary recommendations by the Situation Assessment consultants:

1. The first is to provide feedback opportunities to interested publics after they have had a chance to review the Situation Assessment. This would involve three separate meetings, 2-4 hours each, at locations that could optimize attendance by the public and partner agencies. One location would be in the Missoula area, one in Phillipsburg, and one in the Greenough area such as Lubrecht Experimental Forest. These would tentatively be scheduled during the week of April 11-15. An overview of the Situation Assessment would be provided at the meeting, followed by a listening session where attendees could provide their thoughts on the process and findings, along with their recommendations for moving forward in a collaborative manner.
2. Second would be to hold a one-day workshop with members of the revision interdisciplinary team to ensure they have the opportunity to fully understand the findings of the Situation Assessment. Additionally, they would focus on the importance of building and maintaining strong working relationships within their group, partners, and counterparts in the public and agencies.

List of Participants

- Dan Schilz- Back Country Horsemen
- Mack Long- Bob Marshall Wilderness Outfitters
- Connie Long- Bob Marshall Wilderness Outfitters
- Denny Iverson- Grazing Lessee
- Chris Bryant- The Nature Conservancy
- George Hirschenberger- Blackfoot Challenge
- Peter Nelson- Defenders of Wildlife
- Erin Edge- Defenders of Wildlife
- Kylie Paul- Defenders of Wildlife
- Rose Leach- Five Valleys Audubon Society
- Jim Brown- Five Valleys Audubon Society
- Andrea Stierle- Five Valleys Audubon Society
- Amy Cilimburg- Five Valleys Audubon Society
- Kit Fischer- Hellgate Hunters and Anglers
- Dave Morgan- Missoula Snowgoers Snowmobile Association
- Don Philips- Missoula Snowgoers Snowmobile Association
- Zach Porter- Montana Wilderness Association
- Jon Martin- Paws Up Ranch
- Riley Egan- Paws Up Ranch
- Kyle Kelly- Paws Up Ranch
- Lee Kelly- Paws Up Ranch
- Gordy Sanders- Pyramid Mountain Lumber
- Owen Retzlaff- Pyramid Mountain Lumber
- Tom Toman- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Claudia Narcisco- Sierra Club
- Nick Jose- Sun Mountain Lumber
- Jordan Reeves- The Wilderness Society
- Josh Osher- Western Watersheds Project
- Jerry O'Connell- Blackfoot River Keepers
- Ken Kronsperger- Seeley/Swan ATV Club
- David Sharbono- Seeley/Swan ATV Club
- Ralph Smith- Mining Claimant

- Jody Wills- Bonita/Clinton/Potomac Grazing Association
- Charles Johnson- Grazing Lessee
- Barbara Clark- Grazing Lessee
- Larry Clark- Grazing Lessee
- Neil Clark- Grazing Lessee
- Don Pettit- Sunny Slope Grazing Association
- Bill Gabriel- Citizen
- Anne Nelson- Potomac Landowner
- Kurt Luoma- Rock Creek Rancher
- Rich Lane- Willis Enterprises
- Steve Immenschuh- Flint Creek Trails Association
- Ed Brumsvold- Flint Creek Trails Association
- Smoke Elser- Wilderness Outfitter
- Jean Belangie-Nye- Trails Advocate/ Western Montana Resource Advisory Council Member
- Dan Harper- Back Country Horsemen
- Ken Brown- Back Country Horsemen
- Mike Chandler- Back Country Horsemen

Part 2- Envisioning Public Workshops

Background and Purpose

The Situation Assessment is organized into two sections to show the distinction between the two-step Public Envisioning process. Part 1 Listening Sessions was an attempt to capture what we heard from individual candid sessions we had with participants. Part 2 Public Workshops were designed to: communicate what we heard during step 1; to facilitate further opportunities for the public to share what's important when it comes to managing public lands; and to facilitate opportunities for people to hear other perspectives.

Workshop Process

Three workshops were held in the surrounding area:

- April 12th at Lubrecht Forest in Greenough
- April 13th in Philipsburg
- April 14th in Missoula

The agenda of each workshop was intended to be the same (see agenda section below). Participants were welcome to attend as many sessions as desired; however, involvement in only one was necessary to offer feedback on the Situation Assessment. Due to time constraints, the “greeting circle” portion of the Missoula workshop was omitted.

Objectives

1. Share about the BLM's proposed planning process, Planning 2.0, and how we are applying the principles to the Missoula RMP revision.
2. Share what we have learned thus far in the listening sessions (Situation Assessment, SA).
3. Continue listening to people about how they would like to see the BLM manage public lands in the Missoula Field Office.
4. Provide opportunities for people to engage with each other and begin to understand each other's viewpoints and concerns.

Agenda

Welcome and Overview of Objectives

Opening remarks and an overview of workshop objectives were presented by:

- Joe Ashor, Missoula Field Office Manager (Lubrecht).
- Jon Raby, Associate State Director (Philipsburg).
- Rick Hotaling, Western Montana District Manager (Missoula).

Joe also discussed the importance he places on listening to the public; not only himself, but also for his staff and interdisciplinary team to both listen and build relationships with the people they serve.

Community and BLM Introductions

After brief facilitator introductions, each person in the large circle was asked to introduce themselves by answering three questions:

- “Introduce yourself; what is your relationship with public lands?”
- “What are your expectations for this meeting?”
- “How do you feel about being here?”

Greeting Circle

In order to better meet objective 4, people had the opportunity in small groups to greet and be greeted by the diverse participants at the meeting. Due to time constraints at the Missoula workshop, this activity was not conducted.

Presentation

Maggie Ward and Micah Helser from the Missoula RMP revision team presented a thirty-minute presentation summarizing findings from the listening sessions, and a brief overview of the RMP revision process. It was anticipated there would be individuals who were joining the envisioning process for the first time; for that reason an overview of planning 2.0, and how the Missoula RMP revision is adopting the proposed planning process was presented. The intention was to summarize general and specific themes from the Situation Assessment in order to provide context for the question and answer session to follow.

Questions & Answers

This section provided the opportunity for people to ask clarifying questions, or to seek better understanding of the information from the Presentation.

Feedback

The final activity broke participants out into smaller groups. Efforts were made to ensure a diverse representation of both public and BLM staff in each group. The public was asked to answer three questions. All three were discussed in groups, with the last question regarding additional considerations recorded on a notecard. This feedback is transcribed in the following section. The three questions were:

- “How do you feel about what you heard from the presentation?”
- “What is your own perspective?”
- “What needs to be added or considered by the BLM for the Situation Assessment and presentation?”

In closing, BLM participants answered the question “how do you feel about what you heard from the public, and what did you learn that will help the BLM be successful in the revision process?” The responses were shared in each group. They were not recorded at the Lubrecht or Philipsburg workshops, but were captured on notecards Missoula, and included in the last section of this document.

Notecards

We attempted to transcribe comments from the notecards as best as possible. Where comments were not entirely decipherable, we attempted to capture the intent of the statement with minimal alteration. Comments are organized by major theme and workshop location.

General themes: Public Lands, Relationships and Collaborations, Planning 2.0 and Envisioning

Lubrecht

- The afternoon was well spent and hospitable – not a lot of nuts and bolts – or meat – but made all feel comfortable enough to express one’s views.
- There may still be too much “bureaucracy in what is ascertained” – I. E. Climate change, wildlife/grazing issues, water – there is room for all – need to listen to long time people on the ground – don’t just “observe” and think you know the reasons for how things are on the ground.
- We need to keep communicating – and honor each other so we don’t have Nevada, Oregon, or other areas where BLM has turned a deaf ear.
- It’s very important to keep the communication open to the public and maybe involve the schools in on this to get the kids perspective.
- The broad historical history of the land – Tribal, Lewis and Clark, settlers and developers. How has the landscape developed has implications for predicting and growth.
- Good, keep flexible, more input from general public.
- Use science and not propaganda when making decisions.
- The presentation was good.
- Add Federal ownership with state control and management!
- Involve kids.

Philipsburg

- There needs to be more interactions with all agencies to work together. Written agreements, local contracts. Cooperative help from all agencies.
- Meeting standards set by Federal agencies sometimes seem impossible.
- Fraud and waste on projects; we want to know how the BLM is handling these issues.
- How does this BLM relate to the forest service lands? They should be working together.
- Discuss four-wheel roads developing on BLM lands.
- Very impressed with including the public and the BLM’s planning activities.
- We enjoy the beauty of the landscape and want things to stay that way – thanks.
- Thanks for listening.

Missoula

- Public safety.

- I didn't see any approach or mention of presently nonexistent or even imagined uses that could soon happen. Bring to mind small personal flying machines and etc. How do we design a plan to accommodate such?
- Separate the wildlife habitat management section out of the recreation section.
- The assessment of Missoula Field Office area in context with the surrounding public/state lands – take a landscape-scale look.
- There needs to be more education on the use of public lands so it is not abused. This would include youth – to get them outside, away from computers and electronic games.
- There needs to be education for users to learn how to interact with different user groups and wildlife.
- Data is missing – baseline information is essential to good decision-making for example GIS data, suitability and capability of the landscape and etc. What does BLM already have? What needs to be collected still? When will it happen? These are questions we would like to have answered.

Maintain and Restore Ecological Sustainability and Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Lubrecht

- The impact of climate change to the ecological system and is i.e., mosquitoes in April at Lubrecht.
- Situation Assessment failed to address climate change and demographics. I had an opportunity to read it last week. My own perspectives did not agree with all perspectives.
- Consider climate change.

Missoula

- Manage in harmony with the management direction on adjacent public lands. For example, Quigg West WSA is recommended wilderness and is immediately adjacent to BDNF and Lolo National Forests recommended wilderness.
- BLM lands, especially in the Garnets, protect Missoula's municipal water supply (Clark Fork River and Blackfoot River which feed local aquifers).
- Would it be possible to ban "huckleberry rakes?"
- There is a need for caps on pipes and vent screens on vault toilets to protect wildlife.
- Climate change effect on the resource values.
- Manage to protect and enhance wildlife habitats, especially riparian habitats. Wildlife diversity and ecosystem health are very important and definitely important components of ecological sustainability. I would like to see an emphasis on nongame species, especially state designated species of concern that have traditionally been ignored in planning processes. Much of this BLM land supports a high diversity of birds and bats. There is a lot of potential to develop wildlife viewing opportunities, such as birding "trails" in some areas. I hunt upland game birds and big game and wish to see habitats that support those species managed a little better than they have been.
- Please also consider rare plants and native plant communities during planning.
- Use the best science available to help manage wildlife. Especially consider cumulative effects of the different activities. It will be a challenge, but do your best to balance recreation and other uses with the needs of wildlife, so we don't "love the place to death."

Access for Public Use and Resource Management

Lubrecht

- Under general land management, roads and trails are there any? How to survive four years; passion and persistence.
- Trails are not roads so motorized trails should be just that. Roads should not be inventoried as motorized trails.
- Access for walk-in people is unlimited. Access for elderly and handicapped is scant at best.

Philipsburg

- Need to address this issue of shared land with the public when gates are locked by the BLM or other/forest service. – When access was available last year – public land.
- Road maintenance.
- Public awareness of public BLM areas in their communities needs to be better advertised.
- Better access to public lands – remove locks.

Missoula

- Wilderness study areas and other road-less areas which do not have developed recreation opportunities like trails should remain trail-less.
- Emphasize road decommissioning to reduce road densities.
- Existing roads provide valuable access points for geological/mineral data. Please keep them open.
- Private landowners need continued access through public corridors.
- Aircraft and airstrips are or could be the third leg of the BLM transportation along with roads and trails. Airstrips are internal trailheads providing dispersion of recreational opportunities. BLM and the recreational aviation foundation have a memorandum of understanding in place for maintenance of airstrips.
- Public access provisions need to include the consideration and ability to provide a process to approve the creation of public airstrips for recreational purposes, providing opportunities for public camping, hiking, fishing, hunting and other recreational activities.
- Preserve landing strips and look for opportunities for new ones.
- Avoid building new roads, as the road density is already high in a lot of areas. Decrease the road density when possible, especially by removing old logging roads that are causing resource damage. Try and maintain any small pockets of roadless areas you have, even if a couple of sections, for wildlife security and to also give people the chance for a short hike or hunt off-roads and trails.

Recreation Opportunities

Lubrecht

- Would like the recreation people to get together and come up with a grand plan.

- More camping in areas where people are trying to recreate, there is just not currently enough. If people can't camp the communities lose economically, because people will not come back in the future.

Philipsburg

- There needs to be better ways to get information to the public about snowshoe trails, bike trails, horse trails, riding trails on land and the new land purchased by the BLM. The BLM needs to be thinking about land purchases to help with the connectivity of trails issue.
- What is the BLM's plan to provide for public recreation?
- Improvement of their lands and to foster public participation in recreation use?

Missoula

- Seek opportunities to turn roads to trails or rails to trails for a non-motorized recreation.
- Multiuse trails for hiking, horses, bike.
- Access maintain for existing mountain bike trail and opportunities for expansion.
- There needs to be an educational component dealing with trail etiquette.
- There needs to be trail access opportunities.
- Dispersed recreational use.
- Lewis and Clark corridor or trail? Does it cross BLM lands?
- Have you discussed commercial recreation opportunities? Will you allow it or not?
- Identify potential future users and uses.
- Look for trail funding.
- Include non-motorized winter recreation in your planning, in particular cross-country skiing. I treasured the chance to ski into Garnet years ago, and hope to do it again someday. I like the groomed trail system at Lubrecht, but especially appreciate "backcountry" skiing ungroomed trails. Given the trends for snow, skiing on BLM lands in the Garnets may become more important for recreation. Lubrecht's ski season is getting shorter over time. To this end, limiting areas where snowmobiles can go off-road is very helpful for accommodating skiers.
- Consider developing some "easy" mountain bike trails on existing roads and trails. The one I would like to see is the old railroad bed that runs through the Blackfoot River corridor. We often park at Corrick's Bend FAS and bicycle to the mouth of Belmont Creek on this old bed. We also have bicycled from Whittaker Bridge to the mouth of Gold Creek, though that stretch has very sharp rocks and would benefit from a layer of pea gravel. Installing bridges on this old RR bed over Belmont and Gold Creeks would provide a wonderful rail to trail opportunity there. This trail would not have to be paved or otherwise fancied up. I realize you might not be getting this specific in the plan, but it would be great if you could include some kind of verbiage in the RMP to allow this type of trail development, should the funding and opportunity come available someday to do this.

Range Management

Lubrecht

- Grazing leases can be very beneficial.

- The grazing folks have immediate concerns; what near term answers can be provided?
- I thought the cattle grazing part, lifestyle, forest attraction, ignored that beef consumption is increasing.
- Cows are no longer the same size as the 1200 lb. cows of days gone by. The revised permitted AUM needs to reflect the size of livestock today.
- Ranchers are the only user groups that pay a fee to use the land AND they also make improvements to the land (weed control, water developments that wildlife also uses and etc).
- There is a big difference between a good grazer and a poor grazer/good recreator and poor recreator and the BLM needs to manage/control accordingly and employ people who KNOW the difference.

Philipsburg

- I think most things were covered well in the Situation Assessment. I would like to stress again how important grazing is to us and how thankful we are for the public land we use for that purpose.

Invasive Weeds

Philipsburg

- How can we get land owners to spray noxious weeds on parallel land?
- Weed control.
- Need to spray to control weeds.

Forest Management

Lubrecht

- Water quantity/flow is a part of the large picture, and vegetation management will be very important.

Philipsburg

- There's a burning issue; slash burning piles – pollution.
- Manage timber harvest in a proactive way.
- I think timber harvest is important. Access is very important and better signing for these areas to help people know where the BLM is.

Mining

Philipsburg

- I am a lifelong MT resident and have lived in P-Burg for 40 years. Raised a family here. My wife was born in Philipsburg. I think the BLM lands in Granite County should be managed with an eye towards mineral development. Also, both motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities should be a secondary goal.

Missoula

- Mineral exploration is the most immediate aspect of the “mining assessment.”

- Mineral resources, which are not currently recognized, may be needed in the future. Exploration access should be maintained.
- Mineral rights that are currently in limbo should become available for mineral entry in the event of any land exchange.

Land Acquisition

Philipsburg

- Funds available and land acquisition for future of this area.

Missoula

- Look at potential future land acquisitions and how they are likely to be managed.
- Acquisitions – look into the future for planning. How will new acquisitions be incorporated not just later and after the fact in an amendment or site-specific projects?

Missoula

- Religious freedom – cultural resource management. Enforcement of treaty rights.
- Protection of sites (historic and prehistoric).
- Tribal use of the area: gathering, hunting, fishing and etc. “Preservation of place.”

What the BLM Heard the Public Say- Missoula

- The details are missing what is the BLM going to do? (We need to explain better).
- Where's the data? When will the BLM share the data?
- Confusion over what the goals are for all of this – envisioning and planning in general.
- Forward thinking on how future acquisitions will be managed.
- Data is important how we plan for the future uses that are unknown like motorized craft that is battery-operated.
- Water and soil water is an important resource for the Missoula Valley.
- How are we going to manage Quigg?
- How are new lands going to be incorporated into the plan – more communication when acquiring lands and how they are going to be managed now and in the future.
- Education starting in elementary schools.
- Learning the importance of climate change on the public lands.
- Wildlife should be more than just lumped in with recreation there is more intrinsic value to wildlife.
- There is a need for education – to cross pollinate user groups so that they know others needs and interests – trail etiquette for horses and bicycle users.
- Consider climate change in future management.
- Trails budget. Wilderness study areas. Railroad grade trail. Missoula water coming from the Garnet's.
- Decommissioning roads.
- Data not being good enough to make good decisions.
- Take a future look at what lands BLM should acquire.
- Envisioning meeting is confusing – worried that BLM is confused too. Anticipate future recreational needs.
- Consider aviation access in the RMP.
- Need Pipes and Toilets and Mining stakes.
- What is public lands? Federal, State, parks, etc. are all public lands.
- Make sure we address covers to toilets and mining claim pipes.
- Address aviation access in trail section.
- Consider other types of air access besides field ways. Talk to WO on BLM policy/MOU on air access issues.
- Address the 'not open to entry' lands.
- Include fly – in landing/road open/close your areas.
- I heard that the public would like us to look and listen to their needs today but look to the future and the needs of those that will come after us. Plan for the future missing and aviation component.
- Difference between mining and mining exploration.

- Use science-based management.
- Treaty rights and the cultures of Native Americans.
- Backcountry recreation and access issues.
- Tribal treaty rights. Cultural values.
- Science-based management is critical – we need to manage for miss-information.
- Backcountry skiing is important and needs to be emphasized.
- There are over-crowded areas.
- Mineral exploration and mining – exploration is different. We don't know what future generations will need; so we need to know what minerals are out there. Mining – need to add mineral exploration and understand how that relates to future needs road access provides valuable geological information.
- Airstrips in remote areas provide public safety.
- Science-based management especially for wildlife, fish, weeds and forestry. Keep science-based management in the plan.
- Add cross country skiing.
- More access and quiet recreation opportunities.