

**Montana DNRC Forested Trust Lands HCP  
Annual Update for 2012 Implementation of the DNRC HCP to USFWS  
4/18/2013  
DNRC Southwestern Land Office Conference Room  
Meeting Notes**

**Present:**

Tim Bodurtha	USFWS
Ross Baty	DNRC
Gary Frank	DNRC
Sonya Germann	DNRC
Amy Helena	DNRC
Mike O'Herron	DNRC

The meeting notes for this meeting as well as the annual update will be given to the USFWS and will be made available to the public.

**Annual Monitoring Commitments for Aquatics**

DNRC walked through each of the annual reporting requirements for the Aquatics conservation strategies in the Annual Update document.

Implementation has been very successful the first year.

DNRC is ahead of the implementation schedule for addressing fish passage: 70% of the fish passage sites in need of corrective actions were addressed, when the requirement is for 1/6 or 17% per year. DNRC will provide a description of these projects by AAU and/or bull trout core area in the 5-year report.

DNRC briefed USFWS on Road activities included in timber sale contracts sold from ITP issuance –April 2013. They included:

**18.7 miles** of permanent road construction

**8.2 miles** of temporary road construction

**5.2 miles** of road reclamation

**0 miles** of road abandonment

**11.8 miles** of road reconstruction

**79.5 miles** BMP Upgrades

**74.4 miles** BMP maintenance

BMP audit results: Statewide audits found DNRC sites had a 99% rate of proper BMP application. All of these sites are within the HCP project area, but all were also harvested prior to ITP issuance.

Internal BMP audits were conducted by DNRC on 10 timber sale projects during the year 2012. Nine of the 10 sites occurred within the HCP project area. In addition, all 10 sites audited were harvested prior to ITP issuance. The results of the 9 internal audits conducted within the HCP project area found that BMP properly applied on 98% of the practices rated.

### **Implementation Tools & Training**

DNRC updated USFWS on the training section of the Annual Update document and the various training tools and checklists for HCP Implementation, such as the Implementation Manuals, DNRC website and the spreadsheets DNRC uses to keep track of days used for salvage by Administrative Unit. These tools are effective and will continue to be utilized by the DNRC for tracking and training.

### **Transition Lands Strategy**

A summary of the annual reporting requirement for Transition Lands in the Annual Update was given. Improvements will continue to ensure the DNRC Real Estate Management Bureau and the Forest Management Bureau are in frequent communication about potential land disposals. In turn, the HCP Coordinator will promptly transfer this information to the USFWS.

### **Grizzly Bear Annual Monitoring Commitments**

DNRC discussed each of the annual reporting requirements in the Grizzly Bear table found in the Annual Update.

HCP contract language and a “Working in Grizzly Bear Habitat” brochure were developed and approved by USFWS during this reporting period. Both of these action items will carry through the duration of the HCP.

### **Recovery Zone Road closure monitoring**

Road closure monitoring spreadsheets (the field forms used by practitioners checking closures) were reviewed and approved by USFWS. DNRC will continue to use this method to track road closures.

### **Stillwater Transportation Plan**

DNRC will continue to use the reporting format in the annual update for subsequent annual updates and the 5-year monitoring report.

### **Scattered Lands In Recovery Zones**

DNRC completed the expedited checking and reduction of open roads in Libby and Plains Units parcels.

DNRC methods used to calculate road amounts at the administrative level to compare with HCP baseline. This information is gathered using GIS and then summarized in a spreadsheet. This will continue to be the tracking method used in the future.

### **Grizzly Bear Summary**

Implementation has been very successful the first year. Copious training and communication between Bureau, Land Office, and Unit staff were the reasons implementation went well.

Checking over 316 closures was ambitious, but the engagement of Field personnel was key to that success. Stillwater and Swan Unit staff worked diligently to closely monitor and document adherence to the Transportation Plans.

### **Canada Lynx**

DNRC discussed each of the annual reporting requirements in the Canada Lynx table found in the Annual Update.

## **Lynx Annual Monitoring Commitments and Lynx Habitat**

DNRC compared today's map with HCP Baseline Map and tables.

### **Canada Lynx Summary**

Current tracking techniques for habitat in Lynx Management Areas are effective and manageable and will continue to be used.

In the Coal Creek State Forest, re-vegetation has been excellent after the large scale stand-replacement burns of the 2001 Moose Fire. Many of the burned stands have already grown into the "suitable" lynx habitat category.

### **HCP Biodiversity field reviews**

DNRC and USFWS reviewed the Butcher Stewart HCP Biodiversity Field Review. The current review form and narrative are adequate and will continue to be used for future field reviews. Only one field review was conducted this reporting period. This took place on the only HCP timber sale that was completed during the reporting period.

### **Changed Circumstances**

There were no changed circumstances during this reporting period.

### **Ongoing partnerships and contributions**

Examples of partnerships that took place during this reporting period include:

- Cooperating with John Squires' lynx research at Stillwater (bunkhouse)
- Swan Lake bull trout group
- MFWP wildlife officer funding

As mentioned, these are just examples. DNRC has many ongoing partnerships with other agencies and entities, which may take place in the form of contributions, research, or other in-kind services.

### **Adjusting for New Research**

Neither agency discovered new scientific publications or research that would lead to modifications in HCP commitments or management actions at this time.

### **Compliance with ITP**

Based on the updates at the annual meeting, the results reported in the draft 2012 annual report and continued communication with the USFWS, no departures from the HCP commitments were discovered or observed in 2012. Consequently, it was ascertained by the USFWS and DNRC that the DNRC is in compliance with the Incidental Take Permit associated with the DNRC HCP.