

**Mt. Emily Recreation Area (MERA)  
Joint Advisory Committee Meeting  
Riverside Park  
August 3, 2021**

**AGENDA**

- Convene **6:05 PM**
- **Attendance/ Introductions:** Forrest Warren, Scott Wilson, Jon Paustian, Katrina Gaines, Elaine La Rochelle, Mark Barber, Ian Caldwell, Sean Chambers, Bill Gamble, Chris Evans.
- **Public:** Sean Learner, Ed Mosiman
  
- **Public Comment** (10 Minutes): none
  
- **Minutes** of Last Meeting **May 4, 2021 Motion by Elaine to approve, Second by Scott. All in favor.**

**TOPICS**

- **MERA Closure-**  
Discussion about fire closure. County had a 10 day closure then open to allow non-motorized use. We pay ODF to patrol lands and ODF sets regulations. Rural fire departments should not be sending equipment out of town if it is so dangerous. Think it is good to have people on the ground to report fires. General feeling that we should keep open and follow ODF guidelines. Should still be allowed to use the roads. Discussion about archery range. Issue is the parking area has grass. OK to walk into archery range. Umatilla NF has closed the entire forest due to fire concerns and has seen increased use in other Forests. With thunder storms, could have a lightening strike and if people are hiking in the area they will see it sooner. What roads would be open with ODF standards? Road 201, 203, 208 and Mt Emily County Road. Need to consider ODF resources. Don't want to go back and forth. Some USFS trails are closed if they are covered in vegetation.

**Motion** by Elaine: County should follow ODF guidelines for fire restrictions on MERA. Second by Katrina. All in favor.

- **Forest Management Update-**
  - Red Apple Forest Improvement Project  
Put out to bid this summer and carry out project in winter. Harvest through the winter
  - Mainline Firebreak  
Completed in July. Slash burning set this fall/winter. Open to public for firewood salvage. There is some good firewood in some of the piles. Mark has been cleaning up some of the trails. Need to consider permits with terms and conditions. Ian: there is a state law that you must have permit to cut or haul firewood. [ORS 164.813](#). Might consider a commercial contractor to collect firewood.
  - 3120 Firebreak

Mastication in coming weeks, burn slash early winter

- **Cultural Update-** Programmatic Agreement. Making good progress with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Agreement with Tribe and SHPO allows trail maintenance work on existing trails. Will run new trails by the Tribe for approval. Will be finalized very soon. Similar to what the USFS and BLM does.
- **Projects Update-** New Trail Proposal by Ed Mosiman. Want to build trail with volunteers with excavator on an old road. Would make it a downhill only trail and build certain features. BMSTC is looking at hiring Mike Riley for 3-4 days to do the trail work. Proposed start date of April or May of 2022. Might need to use the county mini-excavator. Need to consider location of a planned ATV trail that connects roads in the Conley Creek area, which is part of the Blue Mt Habitat Agreement. Motion by Bill: to approve conceptual trail plan from red ledge road for flagging and review this fall. Second by Scott. All in favor.
- **Other Business-** Sean Learner. Concern about traffic on Owsley Canyon. Would like to have a new trailhead. Want to explore options to get an easement on private property and put in a parking area and trail to connect to Owsley. Would also have issues with ODF&W hunting agreement which is a 3-5 year lease. Would not want to mix hunting and hiking. Want to keep thinking about how to make Owsley Road safer.
- **Future Grants –** Need to consider priorities for future grants. State Parks has some different sources. Match can be difficult to get.
- Date of Next Meeting: **November 2 at 6PM**  
Meeting Schedule; First Tuesday of February, May, August, November
- Public Comment (10 minutes): none
- Adjourn **7:24 PM**