

AFZH-PTM-R

MEMORANDUM OF RECORD

SUBJECT: Fort Lewis Sustainable Training Lands Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

1. The Sustainable Training Lands Advisory Group met on 6 February 2003 at 1000 at the Fort Lewis Golf Club. Mr. John Weller, Range Officer, chaired the meeting.

2. Attendees are shown on enclosure 1.

3. COL Conte, Director of Public Works, opened the meeting. Fort Lewis is highly respected and supported by DOD for the work it is doing with the Installation Sustainability Program (ISP). Dr. Mayberry from DoD is in full support on the sustainability program and has briefed the Congress. The Sustainable Training Lands portion of the IPS is one of the most critical components of the sustainability program. If we cannot solve our regional land management issues, then we cannot survive in the future. Dealing with encroachment around Fort Lewis is import to the future of the installation. There is no guarantee that if Fort Lewis went away that the land would not go to private ownership. We are currently researching the private land initiatives, but do not have a lot of guidance and do not have a process in place under current legislation. There are no funding resources to do any of this and the group will need to look for funding. Now is the time to get parcels identified and set criteria. COL Conte is happy with the framework setup so far, but the group needs to be aggressive and achieve results in the next couple of years.

4. Mr. John Weller gave a slide show presentation. A copy of the presentation will be attached to the email with these minutes. Each possible Advisory Group member will receive this information.

5. Mr. Weller stated Fort Lewis is in the business of military training and that is the reason we have the land. Our goal is to make that land last for the military training indefinitely.

a. 25 year goals: The training areas are in good condition to support training, and we want to spread out and make sure that land is healthy and can continue to sustain training.

b. 5 year plan:

(1) We need to agree on language and terms. Draft of terms for both military and non-military to achieve regional consensus on what high prairie and woodland looks like.

(2) Training Requirements. We need to define what it takes to support military training. This is a moving target since the Army is using Fort Lewis as a petri dish for testing new troop units. Many of us were raised on change and not afraid of new ideas. However, that makes this goal a real long shot, because the Army keeps changing what we do here and how we do it. Three years ago there were Mechanized and Light Infantry Brigades on post and we were working on how to support their needs, now they are gone. We have new equipment and units and the army is making it interesting as it develops itself each year. So, determining those training requirements is high adventure for us. We have detailed analysis of training requirements that is already obsolete. The hardest goal we will have here is the constant change of the Army and types of units supported on Fort Lewis.

(3) National Register of Historic Places and Traditional Cultural Places. We need to find what we have and evaluate it. We do not want to do anything to violate our charter.

(4) Private Lands Initiative. How do we get access to other lands that we do not train on but so no body builds a Harbor Point development on either? We need to identify the potential lands and rank the lands importance. We are not looking for a way to degrade our lands, but a few more arrows in quiver.

Q. Ms. Anne Thurston - Would it (land) be a trading card?

A. Mr. Weller - Yes.

(5) Use existing management plans to coordinate and implement a management program. We need an integrated oak woodland and prairie management program. We are looking at working towards an overall master plan for natural resource management, to include involvement of neighbors.

d. 25-year goal – Recover all listed and candidate species in South Puget Sound Region. If we can fix our landscapes so endangered species co-exist with military training, then we have won. We must also look at what other bordering lands can do in conjunction with this effort. We need to identify existing population of Federal and Stated listed and candidate species in the region and identify factors for their decline and stabilize the current population off the federal list. Then we need to determine the impact of those factors and what it means to augmentation of the existing population.

e. Future Issues – Five years will not have scratched the surface of what we are going to turn up. We have accomplished a lot of other things, which have become trophies but we are not at the end of this process. There are other teams in the process that need to be brought into this group.

f. Mr. Weller opened the floor for questions.

Q. Karla Reese– Why are no fisheries issues in the presentation?

A. John Weller - We just forgot to add them. We have not started to add those issues into the program at this time.

Q. Anne Thurston - How are you going to involve the community in this process?

A. John Weller - The first step in this process is to start with this group. We need to get external groups linked up with off post agencies and work with them. We are just starting – this is the beginning.

Q. Lee Burnett – Goals 1 and 2 are good, but we should have three. The third should be the acquisition of leased lands within the boundary of Fort Lewis. We need to acquire those leased lands or we may lose them. We could end up kissing the Rainier Training Area goodbye.

Q. Carl Ramsey - Is there a MCA project to do that?

A. Lee Burnett - There has been a MCA Project on books since the 1940s to acquire 8,000 acres. However, only 1800+ acres have been acquired since then.

A. John Weller- There is a long-term program to do that and it needs to be updated. A large problem went away with Weyerhauser Project. This is land that was deeded to Weyerhauser in exchange for DuPont Center Drive Interchange.

Q. Lee Burnett – DA and Congress has expressed that we must have multi-use of lands. They want us to look at commercial development and multi-use of all federal lands. Property on perimeter will be looked at for commercial use for future funding of base ops.

A. John Weller – Is that the sell the seed of corn initiate?

Q. Sherry Whitman – Within the Air Quality Team, one of our goals is to reduce air pollutants from training. Have you talked to the Corps Chemical Officer and G3 to be involved in this group to help with that?

A. John Weller – No, we have not talked to them about that side of things. We can try to make progress on that.

g. How you can help slide - What does your agency want to do to help us in this program? How can you get us more participation from the local communities and neighbors of Fort Lewis? We need to expand the core group by getting outside the installation participation, which includes be involved in monthly meeting.

h. Why you should help slide- We are going to produce a great army product, and we will get there sooner with other people helping us. Need to focus outside the installation boundary and get a regional consensus. We are looking to find expertise in the areas we were we are lacking.

6. Mr. Weller asked the group representatives to go to their table positions and answer any questions for those present.

7. The last slide listed the ISP Points of Contact and email addresses in case attendees need to contact them about any of these issues.