

Crystal River Ranch News
62201 Meadow Way E, Greenwater, WA 98022
<http://CrystalRiverRanch.org>

Minutes for Special Board Meeting – February 7th, 2015

Steve Lewis called the meeting to order at 4:05pm.

Members present: Steve Lewis, Robert Copeland, Teresa Steel, Karl Goeres, Brian Miller, and Diane Thompson. Members Absent: Paul Cooke, Cindy Hieggelke, Jody Prusi, caretaker Jim McKinley.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Hancock harvest of trees in the CRR area planned for April, 2015. Wendy Scholl gave a presentation on the topic, identifying location of the harvest, extent, and steps that have been take to mitigate impact. Following is a summary of the presentation:

- Harvest Location - Both sides of FS 74 (Crystal River Ranch Road), beginning about 400 feet west of the bridge over the White River, extending to property borders which are near the west side of the fire station and entrance to CRR at Alpine Drive. The harvest area will include the area north of properties on Crystal River Ranch Road, properties bordering Hackamore and Birch, and will extend along the corridor between FS 74 and FS 75. A map that identifies the parcel which is to be harvested by HFM is attached.
- When – Start in April 2015 and expect to be finished in late May 2015.
- Harvest Type – Clear cut with seed tree areas, where 15 mature Douglas fir are spaced within each acre, including two or more snags per acre, intended to enhance wildlife habitat. Where possible, the Hancock Forest Management (HFM) will leave small clusters of existing trees in the 150 foot clear cut corridor which borders Crystal River Ranch and each side of Crystal River Ranch Road to lessen the visual impact of the clear cut. Examples of this are seen in some of the harvested areas along SR 410. The Channel Migration Zone (CMZ) that consists of 400 ft on either side of the White River will not be harvested.
- Why - The harvest is taking place on land which has been harvested in the past, re-planted for future harvest, and is a part of the renewable forest which makes up much of the White River valley. Crystal River Ranch originated in an area harvested for timber.
- Mitigation – The initial Hancock plan was for an extensive clear cut in the area surrounding CRR. Wendy Scholl has actively discussed the planned harvest with Sean Greif, the forester for HFM, aided by input from a respected professional forestry consultant, Joe Staley, as well as others in the community. Wendy’s significant effort has led to a modified plan from HFM, and reflects what is thought to be a significant, positive response from HFM to the concerns of CRR residents. These include:
 - A harvest plan which goes beyond Forest practice regulations required by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources.
 - A change in the harvest method from a uniform clear cut to add seed tree areas, where 15 mature Douglas fir are spaced within each acre, including two or more snags per acre, intended to enhance wildlife habitat.

- Where possible, HFM will leave small clusters of existing trees in the 150 foot clear cut corridor which borders Crystal River Ranch and each side of Crystal River Ranch Road. Examples of this are seen in some of the harvested areas along SR 410. Sean Greif said that where possible, similar clusters will be left to try to lessen the visual impact of the clear cut.
- Significant expansion of the channel migration zone (the outermost, potential border of the river) which borders the White River, compared to the original Hancock plan. In addition, a second zone adjacent to the CMZ, to enhance habitat (Riparian Management Zone) is present in the current plan. No harvest will occur in either of these zones.

CRR Board Position – The Board neither supports nor condones the practice of harvesting timber. However, the Board supports efforts to mitigate the negative impact from harvesting trees. Everyone agrees that forested land is visually superior to a clear cut, but it is also clear HFM has responded to concerns voiced by CRR residents with significant, positive changes in their harvest plan, to lessen the visual impact of the harvest. It is also true that the visual impact will become less each year, and that there are positive aspects to this harvest, including an improvement in habitat for our resident elk, a buffer against wild fire on the northern border of the community, and a safer Crystal River Ranch Road during the winter months.

The HFM plan will be reviewed at the March, 2015 meeting of the CRR Homeowners Association Board. All CRR residents are encouraged to attend, as always.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.