Bankhead National Forest Liaison Panel (BNFLP)
December 2nd Meeting Summary (approved January 8th)
Bank Building – Double Springs, AL
www.ces.ncsu.edu/NRLI/bankhead.html

Liaison Panel Members:

Myra Ball, *Multiple Use*
Charles Borden, *Recreational/Environmental*
Ron Eakes, *Alabama Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries Division*
Randy Feltman, *Logger and Sawmill*
Gene Gold, *Echota Cherokee*
Quinton Humphries, *Winston Co. Commission*
Vince Meleski, *Wild Alabama*
Bill Snoddy, *Treasure Forest Landowner*
Jeff Still, *Recreational*
Faron Weeks, *Warrior Mountain Cultural and Historical Society*
Johnny Warren, *Resident / Hunter*

USFS Personnel:
John Creed, *Bankhead District*
Glen Gaines, *District Ranger*

Facilitators:
Mary Lou Addor, *Natural Resources Leadership Institute*
Steve Smutko, *Natural Resources Leadership Institute*

Interested People/ Other Attendees:

Bobby Ayers
Sheron Ball
Peggy Cobb
Rory Fraser
Bobbie Gillespie
Stewart Horn
Dennis Jackson
Ted Kusma
Richard Linholm

Frazier Martin
Jim Pattison
Sue Sparks
Wallace Tidwell
Joe Tankersley
Tri-Country Citizen
Sheila Uptain
Ben Vail
Pat Vail
Gary White
Athel Willite

December 2, 2003 Meeting Agenda 6:00 – 9:30 pm.	December 2th Handouts Provided
6:30pm Intros, Meeting Objectives/Agenda, Ground Rules October 14th Meeting Summary 6:45pm Monitoring & Evaluation Presentation 7:00pm Work Groups Break Out Session 8:00pm Break 8:30pm Monitoring Group Reports 9:00pm Expand Outreach 9:15 Next Steps Dates/Location	• October 14, 2003 Meeting Summary • Bankhead Liaison Panel Contact List • Bankhead Forest Health and Restoration Initiative – Project Status • Monitoring and Evaluation Working Groups

- USFS affirmed plans to move forward in establishing five monitoring work groups.

- Next Liaison Panel and Monitoring Work Group meeting will be Thursday, January 8th from 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm in Moulton, Alabama. Meeting Location is the Moulton Recreation Center, in the H. A. Alexander Park at 13550 West Court Street, Moulton, Alabama 35650. Telephone number is 256- 974-9333. This facility is located within a city park and is adjacent to several baseball fields. It is less than a mile west of downtown on Court Street (also considered county road # 460). Coming into Moulton from the south on highway #33, turn left at the 3rd red light. Go approximately ½ mile to the H. A. Alexander Park. The Rec. Center is a large brick building inside of the park facility.

  From Birmingham. take I –65 North and exit #310 near Cullman. Turn left onto highway 157, and travel west until you approach Moulton. (Hwy 157 will bring you in on a bypass). Turn left (approximately to the west) just before you get to the Moulton Walmart and go approximately 1 – 1 ½ miles to downtown. You should see the Courthouse on the left.   Stay on this same road (this is Court Street) to get to the Rec. Center from downtown.

- The January 8th meeting will focus on monitoring work group organization and planning.

I. WELCOMING REMARKS

A. Welcome & Intros

1. Welcome: Mary Lou Addor (Natural Resources Leadership Institute), and Steve Smutko (Natural Resources Leadership Institute), introduced themselves, welcomed the Liaison Panel, the Monitoring Work Groups, and other guests present. Liaison Panel members then introduced themselves.

B. Meeting Objectives

The meeting objectives were to:

1. Become familiar with the definitions of monitoring; the purpose of monitoring as it pertains to the Bankhead Forest Health and Restoration Initiative; and considerations of the monitoring process.

2. Become familiar with monitoring fundamentals and types of monitoring.

3. Begin to articulate a monitoring plan for each work group.

4. Become aware of upcoming forest health activities during presentation from the US Forest Service.

C. Fundamental Ground Rules:
(Mary Lou paraphrased ground rules for clarity and conciseness. Please review).

1. One speaker at a time.
2. Express one's own views unless requested to speak for others.
3. No personal attacks or issue statements blaming others for specific actions or outcomes.
4. Limit extended comments and questions - provide time for others to engage and contribute.
5. Keep to agenda, time limits, and accomplishing meeting objectives.
6. Expect, respect, and try to accept different interests, perspectives, and opinions.

7. Limit sidebar conversations.
8. Engage actively – share information and concerns, ask questions, offers proposals, and ideas, allow discussion and reflection before decision-making.
9. Decision- rule: can live with decision and support implementation.
10. Present one's thinking/reasons behind not being able to live with a decision, offer an alternative proposal to work with the interests of others and yours. One may also choose not to consent on a decision, but simply to abstain without offering dissent.
11. Attend meetings for the time set aside to meet and remain to hear the full discussions – not only to inform one's own judgments when decision making occurs but to allow others to become informed from your insights and perspectives.
12. Absence equivalent to abstaining.

D. October 14 Meeting Summary

1. Approved without corrections.

2. Suggestion: add NRLI website link to access online meeting summaries and other educational materials.

II. MONITORING FUNDAMENTALS

  A. Monitoring Definition, Purpose, and Considerations.

    1) Definition: watch; observe; check; keep track or control of.
    2) Purpose of monitoring: learn from observations; adjust actions accordingly; repeat if necessary until desired results achieved.
    3) Considerations:
      a) deal with overlaps from other monitoring groups

    b) share interactions
    c) include all relevant information
    d) use various mechanisms to monitor
    e) representation often determines questions and goals (who is not here that should be given the recommendations identified earlier).

4). Establish core membership to working groups and allow others to join in: what procedural rules do you need? How do temporary members stay abreast of the learning curve? How does the group learn from those who are not there? How do the ones not there learn from the group and contribute to ongoing collaborative learning? Can someone sheppard new members? Who? How? (January meeting)

5) Provide examples of monitoring work groups.(January meeting)

6) Determine how the work groups will communicate within the group and between the groups. (January meeting)

7) Immediate monitoring needs - scoping and prep for January site specific treatment areas. Suggestion: working groups are encouraged to use current USFS standards and site specifications to assist with overall monitoring plan. Use the USFS checklist in tandem with each working group's respective concerns. **A common understanding of the current baseline conditions should be shared/established amongst all members.** (January meeting)

B. Fundamentals of Monitoring

1) Determine Monitoring Objectives:
Example: Assess impacts on recreation areas

2) Determine Indicators for Achieving Objectives:
Example: visual "detractors such as slash and stumps.

3) Determine Thresholds:
Example: number of visual detractors per mile of trail (what is the limit of tolerance).

4) Determine Monitoring Protocols:
Example: Counts in Summer: Counts in Winter.

5) Evaluation of Monitoring Plan (also provide progress reports during the determined periods of time before the final evaluation is articulated).
- How effective are the objectives, indicators, and protocols.
- Is the monitoring plan scientifically valid?
- Is it achievable?

B: Types of Monitoring

1) Inventory Monitoring: How have conditions changed?

2) Implementation monitoring: Did we do what we said we would do?

3) Effectiveness Monitoring: Did we achieve our goals?

III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE BANKHEAD FOREST HEALTH AND RESTORATION INITIATIVE

U.S. Forest Service District Ranger Glen Gaines provided a presentation in October on the current status of the Forest Health and Restoration Initiative. A formal decision approving Alternative 5 from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement was made and the Record of Decision (ROD) filed.

Following publication of the ROD, and the allowable appeal period with no appeals filed, the decision stands. The Liaison Panel and other members of the public will be invited to provide periodic input regarding implementation of the initiative.

1. Current Situation
- 79,000 acres typed as Loblolly Pine
- 10-year Southern Pine Beetle epidemic resulted in 18,000 acres of pine killed
- Standing and downed dead trees resulting in heavy fuel buildups, trails blocked, public safety concerns, reduced visual quality.

2) Need for Action
- Restore native upland hardwood forests
- Restore native fire dependent pine and oak woodlands
- Provide forest communities and habitats uncommon on other lands in the Southern Cumberland Plateau
- Improve the short-term forest health (reduce Southern Pine Beetle risks)

3) Issues on the Bankhead:

- Establishment of Fire-Dependent Woodlands
- Use of Artificial Pine Regeneration
- Impacts to Recreation and Cultural Values
- Annosum Root Rot and Littleleaf Disease
- Distribution of Early Successional Habitat
- Migratory and Invasive Species and Threatened and Endangered Species
- Use of Commercial Timber Sales
- Thinning - a First Step in Restoration
- Soil and Water Resources
- Old-Growth Forest Communities

4) Response to Current Situation- 5-year Priority Work
- Commercially thin 9,452 acres of overstocked loblolly pine
- Restoration of 6,860 acres of southern pine beetle impacted areas (shortleaf and longleaf planting, site preparation w/ fire and mechanical, hardwood natural regeneration)

5) Response to Situation – Long-Term Proposal for Forest Health and Restoration on Bankhead: Alternative 5
- Area 1 – Emphasis on native upland hardwood restoration
- Area 2 – Emphasis on native fire-dependent shortleaf pine and oak woodland restoration
- Area 3 – Emphasis on native fire-dependent longleaf pine and oak woodland restoration

6) Expected Results
- Short-term – reduced risk to Southern Pine Beetle infestation in remaining loblolly pine
- Long-term - healthier/sustainable watersheds, forests and habitats by:
  -Increasing acres of native upland hardwood forests
  -Increasing acres and distribution of native fire-dependent pine and oak woodlands

IV. RESULTS FROM MONITORING WORK GROUPS (ATTACHED)

V. EXPAND OUTREACH

Discussion occurred on how to expand outreach to the Bankhead Community and the public at large using the media and other resources. Mary Lou will incorporate this information into a proposed media and public outreach plan for subgroup to work with and refine to meet the respective needs of the USFS and community it serves. This will not replace any current outreach efforts – instead idea is to build on the current outreach efforts, making sure the community is more aware of the Bankhead Forest Health and Restoration Initiative, and impact the community can have in working with this project and discussions that may come up. Suggestions thus far:
- Articles in local papers: USFS has collection of current articles
- Libraries: MLA will out place book at local libraries.
- Schools: provide presentations to youth groups, during school programs, existing groups (Flint Creek Watershed)
- Local Access Channel
- Website in towns Newsletters

VI: NEXT STEPS (several meetings)

1) **Continue to Organize the Monitoring and Evaluation Work Groups.**
2) **Discuss Liaison Panel Role and Responsibilities – what are next steps?**
3) **Suggestion on formats to cover upcoming topics:**
   - Road maintenance / access
   - Property rights / watching over the implementation of the Forest Health and Restoration Initiative to safeguard private property rights over the long run;
   - Sustainable development / economic development;
   - Addressing expanded horseback riding needs; and
   - Managing invasive exotic species
   - Expand/maintain community outreach and public involvement plan. Monitor and evaluate also.
4) **Develop a glossary of acceptable terms (technical, scientific, and process terms). Encourage sub-committee of this –post.**
5) **Training of Facilitative or Co-Facilitative Leadership.**