July 14th Field Checking Working Group First Meeting!

**AGENDA:**

-intros: sharing about the field checking work each of us is doing, what our programs look like, where we work, etc.

-discuss/establish goals of this working group

-brainstorm resources we can develop/provide to others

-who else might we want to bring in?

-establish meeting frequency, bottomliners, etc.

**Attendance/Intros:**

* Paula Hood (she/her) w/ Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project
  + BMBP has been working in the Blue Mountains and eastern cascades since 1991.
  + Currently working on a bunch of timber sales across the east and also challenging the move to remove the 20 inch scenes in the east
  + BMBP hosted basecamps all summer where they do tons of monitoring and training of new field checking volunteers!
* Cheryl Bruner (she/her) w/ Williams Community Forest Project
  + Monitoring BLM lands over the years
  + Hiring a forest monitor, based off Bark’s job description!
  + Currently working on opposing the Pipe Fork timber sale, a Josephine county sale in the watershed
* Serena Barton (she/her) w/ Deer Creek Association (right over the hill from Cheryl)
  + Focusing mostly on their watershed
  + Have been doing field checking since the late 90’s, and have done deep and complex field checking work since then.
  + Used to have a good relationship with BLM in the 90’s, and documented ONRC
  + Adopted recommendations based on Orville Camp’s work
  + Don’t currently have an official field checking program but want to develop one!
  + Upcoming priority: Late Mongers timbersale coming down the pike soon.
* Michael Krochta (he/him) w/ Bark
  + Working in federal forests in Mount Hood National forest
  + Have a very robust field checking team, host basecamps, trainings, etc
  + The Mt Hood National Forest has gotten a reprieve from their timber targets for the next few years because of the fires and likely the Crystal Clear Timber Sale environmentalist victory
  + Working with NEST currently on the zigzag timber sale, right off Hwy 26
  + Interested in hearing about how people running these programs make data that is found on the ground useful in the NEPA work and beyond, how things are all organized and remain relevant over the long term.
* Dave Barta (he/him) w/ Cascadia Wildlands
  + Cascadia Wildlands focused on BLM & FS & state lands, bird-dogging all of the timber sales that slip between the cracks of other orgs’ jurisdictions.
  + Cascadia is currently without a grassroots organizer so needs that roll filled for field checking training
  + Cascadia’s volunteers are self-organizing a trip to Big Weekly Elk, west of Roseburg down by Myrtle point timber sale sometime in August
  + Getting all of the field data organized and put to use is difficult and complicated.
  + Cascadia often uses field checking as a gateway into getting more involved in the forest defense community, becuase its the most fun thing you can do! Yet, figuring out how to make all of the data from the field useful is a lot of work!
  + Would love to explore ways to incentivize folks to make their data useful, and not just forget about it when they get back from the woods.
* Sam Krop (she/her), coalitions coordinator with PNW Forest Climate Alliance
  + Started the field team with Cascadia Wildlands, & then Center for Responsible Forestry to focus on Washington DNR (state) lands
  + Interested in bridge building between orgs doing this work, resource sharing and storytelling.
* Laurie Kerr (Great Old Broads for Wilderness)
  + Just spent a couple days doing field checking training in Central Oregon with the Willamette Broadband
  + They are learning how to do field checking and trying to do some training for their southwest Washington group so that they are able to help contribute to the Center for Responsible Forestry’s efforts in southwestern Washington
* Misha (they/them) w/ Bark
  + Interested in how folks process and organize data over the long-term
  + Curious to hear about people’s experiences on non-federal lands

**Goals of Working Group:**

* Trainings
* Resource sharing around best practices for making field data meaningful
* Post-fire logging monitoring
* Mutual support! Sharing information about priority timber sales, recruiting support for field work, commenting, etc. Having this be a “dispatch hub” for getting folks on the ground in places that need to be checked out
  + Perhaps can bring priority timber sales to each meeting, share big issues, take-aways, learnings and requests for help
* Doing better coordinating with the legal teams who are already
* Helping organizations who don't have the legal resources figure out how to have effectiveness outside of just going out and seeing stuff and not makign it meaningful
* Offer trainings to others in field checking, NEPA comment writing, etc.
* Highlighting selected, targeted glamour shots of what’s at stake or post-logging/before-after photos, as a tool for the public and our electeds to get a better idea of what is being targeted for logging and what has already happened
* Lessons/better systems for engaging communities in the protest process, teaching folks how to submit administrative protests!
* Would like to cross-compare administrative comments, especially those that use a lot of field data in them, and those that deal with new and emerging issues
* Sharing trainings upcoming and on the calendar!
* Invite others to join in the woods with you!

**Questions:**

* How do folks deal with safety protocol and liability?
* How do folks make the data in the field meaningful?
* How do you incentivize folks to submit field data in agencies & to our orgs?
* How are folks managing with the new RMP in BLM with the death of survey and manage?
* If you don’t have a lawyer on hand, how do you engage with the agencies with teeth?

**Protocols to Discuss/Cross-Compare**

* Safety
* Process for turning field data into useful stuff
* Comment writing that includes field data, sample comment comparison
* Engaging with survey & manage species, ID’ing special plants
* Using Avenza & tech tools for field work & mapping

**Resources to add to google drive:**

* Field checking training recordings
* Field checklists
* Comment writing templates
* Protocols for field visits/identifying stand characteristics
* Liability forms
* Safety protocol
* Maps

**Working Group Logistics:**

* Meet once a month
* Next meeting: discuss how we get the stuff we need from agencies & how do we make the data useful
* Following meetings: dig into mapping how to & comment writing

**Action Items:**

* Paula will start populating the field checking google drive folder
* Everyone will add their resources to the folder!
* Everyone come prepared for next meeting with thoughts on how you find timber sale maps, and how we make our field data useful in comments & beyond!

**Resources:**

**Field Checking Google Drive folder:** <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vJWNz2ZTasCUBK7QwqKT2oOpUpag2aU3?usp=sharing>

**How to Find FS & BLM Maps Tutorial:**

https://vimeo.com/407365509

**Bark’s most recent virtual trainings: Groundtruthing 101:** https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=285910613093767&ref=watch\_permalink  and

**Bark’s Groundtruthing 201:** https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=141484047931269&ref=watch\_permalink

**Center for Responsible Forestry field training:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG0ctFuHSsY

**Willamette National Forest Map of Proposed Roadside Logging:**