

Sandy Mush Forest Restoration Gathering Notes 25 January 2020

Notetaker: Emily Anderson

Tabling Partners

- Hemlock Restoration Initiative
- Buncombe County Soil & Water
- Evergreen Packaging
- Audubon NC
- Mountain True
- Wildwood Consulting
- Mountain Valleys RC&D
- NC State Extension
- Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy
- EcoForesters
- NC Forest Service
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Presentations

Presentations are located in the shared folder as well! Please only use presentations for personal learning and do not copy, share, or use them as your own material.

- Andy Tait of Ecoforesters
- Chris Sharpton of NC Forest Service
- Chris Henline of NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Coalition Meeting (third installment)

Introduction etc..

Nick Biemiller of Forest Stewards Guild

- What have we done so far?
 - Title, vision, and mission (find it [here](#))
 - Updates on the conceptual model can be found [here](#)
- Why are we here today?
 - To provide strategies to achieve goals and tackle threats
 - See an example of strategy/threat/target design chain below



Michelle of Circle Forward (Tracy's counterpart)

- Bio: Grew up in Southern Appalachians and is familiar with the common “Appalachian folk approach to issues” that is to “hunker down”.
- Zones of participation
 - Comfort, stretch, and panic zones
- Today's Goal:
 - Break into groups and learn new things and have novel conversations with new people
 - Come up with **strategies**:
 - What will we do as a Coalition to promote healthy forests in Sandy Mush?
 - What can the Coalition do to meet forestland owner needs?

Activity 1: Talk about strategies that have worked in the past

- Some things that were talked about in small groups were:
 - Putting land into conservation easements with SAHC
 - Cost-share programs like EQIP
 - Community events at Sandy Mush Community Center

Activity 2: Write strategies that you think will work in the Sandy Mush Community

- Some things that were written down were:
 - More outreach and education
 - The creation of a demonstration forest
 - Create incentives for people to be involved

Activity 3: Card-passing game and Coalition feedback

Note Card Exercise

Write your favorite idea on a card:

- That we can do together and no one can do alone
- Is something you think would work in Sandy Mush
- That you would actually like to work on

Ideas with a score of 25:

- Free management plans available to the community
- Increase the amount of resources and cost-sharing programs available for community members to utilize
- Demonstration/Class open to the community

Ideas with a score of 24:

- The creation of a demonstration forest
- Controlled burn demonstration
- Invasive control demonstration
- Group exotic invasive removal days
- Develop funding streams and partnerships for forest restoration activities

Ideas with a score of 23:

- Demonstration on any relevant topic
- Demo: invasive management, fire, logging
- Work parties and potlucks

Other ideas not yet mentioned:

- Tell the story of the land (score 22)
- Involve local schools in education events regarding land stewardship and pride in Sandy Mush (score 22)
- Host a learn-and-burn (score 22)
- Work parties focused on filling out cost-share applications (score 21)
- Remove trash as a part of being invasive to our community (score 19)
- Increased communication and collaboration between multiple stakeholders (score 17)

Unmentioned idea brought up by Bob Gale:

- Attempt to get funding from legislation to address non native invasives through letter writing party, calling your senator, etc

Next Steps

Nick Biemiller

- Beginning to go from planning phases to action
- Going to take info from today and past meetings to an **action plan**

- Create draft by mid **MARCH**
- You can sign up to be a part of the working group
- We will continue meeting regularly (yearly big event, smaller gatherings quarterly?)

Post-event feedback form and adjourn