



TAPASH STRATEGIC PLAN

Revised April 2017

WHO IS TAPASH

Tapash is a collaborative partnership comprised of five major landowners including the Yakama Nation, The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Washington State Department of Natural Resources, with a focus on a geographic landscape of nearly 3 million acres from Blewett Pass to Mount Adams in eastern Washington. In 2007, these partners convened and signed an MOU, recognizing the shared common goals of maintaining resilient working forest lands. The Tapash members believe that by working together we can achieve more significant and durable outcomes than by working individually. *Tapash* is a Sahaptin (Yakama) word meaning “pine tree”.

CURRENT Situation

We are losing our ability to maintain working, functioning, resilient forest lands for a number of reasons:

- Catastrophic losses from insects/disease/wildland fire;
- Political conflicts and legal challenges;
- Land conversion;
- Growing uncertainty from climate changes, infrastructure loss, loss of skilled labor, poor markets, market substitutes and invasive species;
- There is a lack of industry and forest economy infrastructure in our region which results in lowered economic viability of restoration projects.

TAPASH MISSION

To improve the ecosystem health and natural functions of the landscape through active restoration projects backed by best science, community input, and adaptive management.

TAPASH VISION

We seek resilient (dry) forest ecosystems managed across ownership boundaries in central Washington to achieve healthy fish and wildlife populations, minimize the effects of catastrophic fire, retain cultural values, provide desirable forested areas for present and future generations, and support development of a sustainable restoration economy.



PURPOSE OF THE COLLABORATIVE

Our purpose is to facilitate the implementation of forest and ecological restoration projects across the Tapash landscape while maintaining or enhancing a forest restoration local economy. We do this by building capacity to enable forest restoration projects to move forward, tackling administrative and political challenges that impede restoration projects, and providing a roundtable for innovative ideas about how to achieve conservation results.

TAPASH FULL MEMBERSHIP

We recognize that in addition to the 5 signatories to the MOU, there is a highly diverse variety of stakeholders, such as user groups, project level working groups, other landowners, other agencies, politicians and policy makers. We seek to engage them at the project level. This wider audience can be defined as the Tapash “full membership”.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND AGREEMENTS

- The 5 MOU signatories have decision makers at the table.
- For reporting purposes, the Tapash fiscal year will hereafter follow the schedule of Washington State and TNC (July 1st – June 30th).
- We prioritize cross-boundary forest restoration activities at the landscape level. Cross-boundary, seamless management is emphasized, but not exclusive if a project can be done within a single ownership property. Tapash may endorse single ownership projects at the request of the landowner.
- We engage in cooperative negotiations to reduce checkerboard ownership patterns that result in land consolidation. We believe that forestland can be managed more easily and more cost effectively if it is owned in contiguous tracts.
- We use the best science and traditional knowledge to support timely, effective decision-making.
- We strive to be proactive in finding ways to develop/support local economies through restoration projects. We believe that a forest economy infrastructure and skilled workforce complements active forest restoration.
- We believe that active management is a tool for improving ecosystem health and natural functions.
- We seek immediate restoration opportunities in areas with low ecological risk and high ecological benefit – particularly in intermingled, checkerboard ownership. We also recognize the need for full discussion and analysis in areas with high ecological risk.
- We build and maintain strong working relationships to encourage local community support for Tapash projects. We believe that education is a critical component in building relationships, internally (within the 5 member organizations) as well as externally.
- We follow adaptive management principles.
- We recognize and honor treaty rights.
- Priority is given to projects that are most effective at meeting all the above criteria.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

EXECUTIVE TEAM

TEAM MEMBERS

This team will be composed of one representative from each of the five Tapash signatory agencies/organizations. Additional representation may be present, but for decision-making, we strive for consensus of the signatories. Each member also has appointed an alternate.

Agency/Organization	Primary	Job Title	Alternate	Job Title
WA Department of Fish & Wildlife	Scott McCorquodale	Regional Wildlife Program Manager	Ross Huffman	Region 3 Lands Operations Manager
WA Department of Natural Resources	Larry Leach	Southeast Region Assistant Manager	Joe Smith	Forest Operations Manager
The Nature Conservancy	James Schroeder	Director, Forest Conservation and Partnerships	Reese Lolley	Director, Forest Restoration and Fire
US Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest	Jason Kuiken	Deputy Forest Supervisor	Mike Williams	Forest Supervisor
Yakama Nation	Steve Andringa	Administrative Forester	Phil Rigdon	Deputy Director of Natural Resources

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Chair:** The Executive Team appoints a Chair and a Vice-Chair as a revolving, annual commitment. These positions are filled each year in June. The Vice Chair becomes the Chair and the team nominates and appoints the next Vice Chair.

FY 2017 Jason Kuiken Chair, Larry Leach Vice-Chair

FY 2018 Larry Leach Chair, Steve Andringa Vice-Chair

FY 2019 Steve Andringa Chair, Scott McCorquodale Vice-Chair
- The Chair will speak for and sign documents on behalf of Tapash at large. This includes signing of position statements or letters of support as examples. Whenever necessary, the Chair may step away from this duty and the Vice Chair will take this role.
- Additionally, the Chair will review agendas and the general direction of the Executive Team to ensure the group is on track with its stated focus, provide overall guidance to the membership, set goals and tasks and seek their further recommendations, communicate with membership regarding projects, plans, or studies, approve projects, assign resources, and help set priorities.
- Set/manage the budget; approve expenses drawing from the Tapash Fund (a donor advised fund with the Yakima Valley Community Foundation); seek funding for the Coordinator and other project or administrative expenses as approved by the team; evaluate risk analysis/opportunities.
- Set goals/objectives for the Coordinator, in coordination with TNC's operational requirements as fiscal sponsor.

- Establish structure of Executive Team governance (i.e. Chair, rotation of Chair, etc.). Assist in getting funding, political leverage, and policy input.
- Develop and review Executive Team handover documents as necessary.
- Stay abreast of and in-line with other related plans and activities, interrelating with other groups as necessary.
- The chair will set up a monthly check-in with the Tapash Coordinator 1 ½ to 2 weeks prior to the Tapash Executive Conference call to draft the agenda

DECISION PROCESS

- As an Executive Team, all decisions are made by consensus.
- We define consensus as striving for unqualified agreement where an Executive Team member may have reservations but “can live with it” and will support the group decision when away from the table.
- Decisions occur by proposal, discussion, and an active check for Executive Team concurrence/consensus.
- Each Executive Team member shall have a designated alternate with voting privileges when he/she is absent.
- Decisions are documented by the Coordinator.

COMMUNICATION

The Executive Team will observe and commit to the following meeting schedule:

- Monthly conference call – 4th Wednesday from 3:30 – 4:30 pm.
- One all-day business meeting in April. The purpose of the spring meeting is to update the Strategic Plan (if needed) and prepare the annual operating plan for the upcoming fiscal year (July 1st -June 30th).
- An annual field trip in May or June to highlight specific projects, locations, or issues. The field trip may be open to the full Tapash membership.
- An overnight retreat (from noon Day 1 to noon Day 2) in January.
- The Executive Team will increase communication, interaction, and engagement with the broader Tapash membership by inviting working group team leaders and/or District Rangers to participate in part of the Executive Team monthly conference calls, business meetings, field trips, or Executive retreats.

COORDINATOR

The Coordinator position facilitates meetings between the Executive Team, communicates within project level working groups, and the Tapash full membership. Currently funding for the position is shared amongst the 5 agencies/organizations. The position reports to the Executive Team who assigns tasks and direction and validates/approves the Coordinator’s annual performance objectives. The coordinator position is officially housed with The Nature Conservancy and must meet all of TNC’s human resources requirements.

Typical responsibilities include:

- Logistics, meeting facilitation, field trip organization (Executive Team and Working Groups).
- Maintain contact lists.



- Track goals, accomplishments, and barriers of all working groups. Provide information between project working groups and subgroups, and provide support for Tapash priority projects.
- Coordinates with working group leader to develop an annual work-plan for each project, tracks and reports outcomes.
- Track on-the-ground project accomplishments and market these via 2-pager at year's end.
- Operationally manage and provide budget updates.