

4FRI Collaborative Stakeholder Meeting Notes

**Wednesday, 28 July 2010- 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Hart Prairie Preserve, Flagstaff, AZ**

Dennis Bowker, Facilitator & Windy Greer, Note-taker

Present:

Ed Smith welcomed everyone to the regular monthly meeting of the 4FRI Collaborative at 9:00 am on July 28 at The Nature Conservancy's Hart Prairie Preserve near Flagstaff, AZ.

Approval of meeting notes from the June meeting:

Dennis Bowker asked if there were any comments or corrections of the notes from the last meeting. There were no modifications, and the notes were approved as written.

Forest Service Updates: Henry Provencio

- The FS will continue to schedule field trips of the area to view different scenarios as one means to better define actual desired future conditions.
- Desired Conditions Report Underway
- Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP): The 4FRI project was recommended for full funding of \$38 million over 10 years. The proposal was widely praised as the best written proposal. Thanks were extended to Courtney, Bill and the 4FRI team.
- 3 factors of proposal that were forefront:
 - Scale of project – largest in the nation
 - Collaborative nature
 - Clearly defined ecological need and the science backing the project
 - The project may have national significance
- Early funding (approximately \$2 million) for projects will be focused on getting road work NEPA requirements done for early road reports for repair and reconditioning.
- There is a significant effort underway to expand communication among the Forests. A recent meeting in Williams was positive and well-received. Additional meetings are ongoing.
- Owing to the Schultz fire and pending/changing sales, along with continued work with the collaborative group, the project list may change. The FS will continue conferencing with the group, and will share information as and when the list is adjusted.

Recap Field Trip (Ed Smith lead)

- Kudos were widely given to Diane for pushing this through, and to Windy for her support
- The trip was seen as productive and positive, and highlighted the need to consider various scales of size, time, and topical diversity in reviewing project areas. Discussions during the day also emphasized a need to define some terms and measurements to better align expectations and interpretations. These included:
 - A description of what is specifically meant by terms such as “canopy closure,” “canopy cover,” “openings,” “interspaces,” etc., and what means are used to measure them would be useful.
 - A description of desired outcomes for each site would be very useful, as would a more clearly defined direct connection between “post-treatment” expectations and “desired

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- future conditions” descriptions. (Defining “restoration of *what*, and *to what* it is being restored).
- It would be useful to have a discussion of what role fire should play in moving from post-treatment to long term desired future condition (DFC).
 - Aspen and meadow restoration site:
 - In a nutshell the proposal is to remove the conifer overstory in the aspen leaving only those conifers with old growth characteristics. The desire is to restore and protect old aspen stands. A majority of participants appeared in favor of this DC.
 - The role of fire in restoring aspen was discussed. The question was asked about the fire regime that characterized aspen. Should aspen be managed by mixed severity fire? Is succession to conifer overstory a "natural" occurrence that leads to mixed severity fire and rejuvenation of the aspen stand?
 - With regard to the meadow, the FS proposes removal of all post-settlement trees followed by fire in order to achieve a meadow ecosystem as the DFC. When asked, no one disapproved of this.
 - Dinner was a very productive addition in that it provided unstructured time to process information through conversation.
 - The questionnaire distributed at the field trip is important for documenting feedback and informing future steps. Feedback will help to guide the planning team.
 - Start thinking big- reflect diversity of systems and objectives. Combine needs of ecosystems and desires of stakeholders
 - Be ready as a group to articulate actual goals, objectives, and DFCs
 - Need outcomes description to guide monitoring & science needs, and good look at existing conditions to provide a baseline from which to measure progress.
 - Key comments:
 - Need more field trips
 - Need to see larger landscapes
 - Need to articulate difference between desired post treatment conditions and desired future conditions
 - There is no right answer; emphasis is on multiple or range of conditions not just *a single* condition that is desirable
 - Notebooks will be living, working documents that can be made available to anyone.
 - The group described some basic principles for a field examination method to design a focused field trip, and to help decide among multiple potential sites:
 - DFC= general agreement that everyone can strive toward
 - Start with FS NEPA usage of DFC, which a programmatic approach with necessary elements set forth
 - Identify existing condition and desired condition to enable characterizing progress from one to the other
 - Establish existing conditions now to form baseline for monitoring and assessment
 - Landscape Working group is tasked with defining DFCs as part of LSD and will be provided on Basecamp.
 - Post treatment conditions are a milestone to achieving DFC
 - Monitor group will address multiple scales
 - Capturing scale at given moment is important to monitoring goal.

- **Future Field Trips:** For each site (see appendix B for summary site selection and presentation ideas discussed):
 - outline local expected results, scaled spatially & temporally,
 - Determine types of projects the group would like to see
 - Sites representative of larger area to help visualize landscape scale
 - Sites tied to key issues that need to be resolved
 - Identify most contentious areas of discussion, identify areas of agreement and pair each with appropriate field sites to visit
 - Preplanning & preparations: send out descriptors in advance to inform discussions
 - Leave unstructured time at the end to process and discuss openly
 - Big maps to demonstrate DFC on large scale forest functions
 - 750,000 acres field tour would be informative, to put issues at scale, and to better understand relationships across scales (can Forest ERA set this up?)
 - sequential tour of sites treated 5yrs, 10yrs, 15 yrs apart to get an idea of potential changes on a timescale to visualize what might be seen with the immediate fires.
 - Consider also touring areas where landscape fire went through a treatment area.
 - Draft monitoring information would be useful to include with the tour.

Signing of charter: clarification was needed that individuals sign, not just a representative from each organization. Ed Smith made clear by reading the appropriate section of the charter.

- A side note of this discussion was a reminder of the group's agreed upon set of Agreement Techniques. If you miss a meeting, the group will still follow through with agreement process.
- At the time set for the annual review of the charter, any ongoing issues with the charter can then be addressed and the charter will be adjusted as necessary at that time.
- Charter document formatting; paragraph indentations, typos, spacing, etc., should be assessed before making the document public, in order to put forward a professional looking presentation. Input and suggestions from group should be forwarded to Ed Smith.

Progress on MOU: Summary: linked the use of the MOU as a vehicle to potential implications regarding the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). In order to continue moving forward on the document, the working group has divided the task in to two parts. One is to continue work on the content and substance of the document. The other is to investigate the best vehicle to carry it forward. To address the MOU considerations, we will have several Federal experts on FACA address the group at the August meeting. A set of key questions will be asked of the FACA experts, including:

1. What are the benefits of becoming an official FACA Committee?
2. What are the restrictions and drawbacks of becoming an official Committee?
3. What are the benefits and restrictions of *not* being an official Committee?
4. Where are the boundaries, and can you give examples of where they may have been exceeded?
5. Are there particular agreement structures more acceptable than others (MOU's, JPA's, etc.)?

Rep. Kirkpatrick's tour & forum: Letter of recognition from Harris Sherman suggesting support for 4FRI. USDA responding to stated needs for communication & coordination.

1. 4FRI to stay connected and needs to be ready to respond and expand conversations within 2-3 weeks. Harris Sherman point person designated from the Washington office.
2. Need assistance/expertise on large scale EIS development.
3. FS trying to develop filters (w/4FRI) for NEPA by early fall.

Industry support letter: read out loud (see Appendix A for final version). Questions were raised on the exact meaning of “appropriately scaled” and “community based”.

- Community Based- the more local the better but not explicit.
- Appropriately scaled- to be determined at the time for a given situation.
- Make business plural, i.e., ...*to be open to all* potential businesses...
- Amend the last sentence to state “...benefit to all communities within the **Four Forests Restoration Initiative area.**”

This resolution was approved by the group without reservation.

Update on recent fires: Paul Summerfelt (Flagstaff FD FMO) and Russ Copp (Coconino NF FMO)

Hardy fire: \$865K spent on this fire. The effort showed that fire can move fast, and decision structures need to spontaneously adjust to real time conditions.

Lessons:

1. Change in our forests is inevitable (fire, insects, weather, etc.).
2. Treatments worked where they were finished (slash piles were still on the ground in places), and large enough to be effective.
3. Treated area trees were nonetheless damaged, but expected to recover.
4. Residual damages (secondary events) from fire are often expensive and can have long term impact on a wide range of values including:

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|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| -Physical conditions | -Biological conditions |
| -Successional processes | -Aesthetic values |
| -Economics, including property values | -Public health |

Schultz fire: Repercussions from monsoons. FR 146 needs to be repaired; blew out before first flooding. 2-3 inches of straw were applied to slow erosion. Diversion canals have been dug to prevent flows from going to Doney Park. Seeding was not used after first BAER assessment but is to start after a second BAER assessment.

Reports from working groups:

Landscape strategy group: meeting with greater frequency due to sense of urgency to complete the strategy report. Outline developed of what should be included. They are outlining what is necessary to determine DFCs and a strategy to achieve them. The draft will be on Basecamp soon.

Modules for specific goals of utilization & economics, restoration, and fire are presently posted.

Jill presented a module and people were able to download and comment from Basecamp. The group is now working on narratives to describe each proposed action per element. They are conducting a preliminary analysis to characterize current conditions. Their next meeting was scheduled for 7/29. They

re struggling to meet the October deadline, and are trying to i.d. those tasks most likely to finish on time. There is concern over the ability to achieve all tasks in time.

The group is working with ERI and Forest ERA to update available data to help guide the analysis and narrative descriptions.

Science & monitoring group: A list of tasks and projects was to be finalized and out for comment by the week of August 2. They are also working to describe an adaptive mgmt framework, including a first cut of needs assessments, and an analysis of what scale those needs should be measured. The White Mountain Stewardship science and monitoring panel has done a brief overview of successes and failures.

An effectiveness monitoring framework, a potential model to be used by FS & 4FRI, (with WMS & GFFP monitoring framework referenced); will be available on Basecamp by early August.

Stakeholders' meetings of folks in specialized areas of expertise will occur on Aug 17 at the Red Rock Ranger District. There is an active attempt to mesh the science and monitoring group with the landscape strategy group.

Because there is such a great lot of work to be done, the Group has sent out a request for help from 4FRI members to complete the short term tasks. Presently, the FS is participating with the working groups.

Communications: Ethan wrote an Op-Ed piece that appeared in local papers. The GFFP placed an ad in local papers that was well received, and many considered it excellent. Bonnie presented a series of potential logos for 4FRI for comment from the group. The group strongly preferred one of the potential graphics (with suggestions for improvement), and asked her to work with the graphic artist to finalize it.

GCT, ERI and GFFP have all contributed to developing a logo for the 4FRI and a website. The Group is also working on a draft communications strategy to guide future work and initiatives.

Strategic plan: This working group is essentially a subset of the steering committee. They are working to develop a graphic depiction of the 4FRI Collaborative to help clarify roles and relationships among the various parts presently active.

Final Summary:

- Please submit questionnaire responses. Include ideas on DFCs and why.
- Field trip information for upcoming meetings.

Next meeting will be Aug. 25th with field trip August 26th in the White Mountains; Ed Smith and Molly Pitts are discussing the location.

Agenda items for next meeting:

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- Follow up on MOU
- CFLRP follow up
- FACA presentation (FS/OGC, GSA, Institute)
- Five year report from Multiparty monitoring board from White Mountains

- Extensive discussion on Landscape Strategy

- Stakeholder discussion on managing conflict of interest with industry representatives

APPENDIX A

Stakeholder Resolution in Support of Industry

The 4FRI Stakeholder Group is committed to promoting and supporting economically, ecologically and socially sustainable businesses and industries. However, the 4FRI Stakeholder Group is business/industry neutral. We believe it is in the best interest of the unfolding collaborative process to be open to all potential businesses, with a preference for solutions that are appropriately scaled and community based. This will ensure there is equal opportunity for all viable businesses/industries to compete for contracts in order to achieve an optimum solution for reducing the costs of treatment, utilization of all restoration by-products, and providing benefit to all communities within the 4FRI area.

APPENDIX B

Field Trip Guidelines

The group developed the following guidelines to help in recruiting, prioritizing, selecting and conducting field tours. They are intended to promote comparability among the many sites; clarity of expectations from visiting the sites; creation of learning opportunities from exportable lessons, and; to foster productive dialogue regarding 4FRI implementation.

For each site (or potential site), outline:

- Local expected results of actions undertaken

- Relationship of the site and expectations to larger scale issues

- What the assumptions and uncertainties were when undertaking the project

- What, if any, role might the project play in NEPA processes

- Pair sites of contention with sites of significant agreement on the same field trip

- Get information out to attendees early, to allow briefing time for participants

- When possible, and as appropriate, invite field operators to explain any limitations and/or needs they may have for the site in question.

- Maximize the opportunity for inference by selecting sites in representative areas

- Find sites that illustrate existing processes underway, and that touch on key 4FRI issues