

4FRI NEWS: The Four Forest Restoration Initiative's Quarterly Newsletter

October 2011



4FRI in the News

Recent coverage of 4FRI through local, regional and national media outlets has truly been phenomenal!

Marketplace – On June 23, American Public Media's Marketplace, which airs on NPR, featured members of the 4FRI Stakeholder Group and 4FRI Team Leader Henry Provencio discussing wildfire and the collaborative effort to address unhealthy forests. To listen, visit <http://marketplace.publicradio.org/display/web/2011/06/23/pm-environmentalists-timber-industry-team-up-to-fight-wildfires/>.

Science Friday – On Sept. 23, Wally Covington, Mary Lata, and Paul Summerfelt were guests on Science Friday, a weekly science talk show broadcast live over public radio stations nationwide as part of NPR's Talk of the Nation programming. The topic was Managing Forests to Manage Fires, and 4FRI was featured prominently. To listen, visit www.sciencefriday.com/program/archives/201109231.

Governing – In the September issue of Governing Magazine, which provides analysis on management, policy and politics, an article focused on collaborative forest restoration efforts, including 4FRI. To read the article, visit www.governing.com/topics/energy-env/logging-industry-conservationists-partner-restore-forests.html.

New York Times – In early October, the New York Times covered the Wallow Fire, the unhealthy state of Arizona's forests, and 4FRI in an article and video. To read, visit <http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/04/chopping-down-trees-to-save-forests/>. To view the video online, visit <http://video.nytimes.com/video/2011/10/01/science/100000001071584/the-forest-for-the-trees.html>.

These are just a few highlights of the outstanding coverage 4FRI is receiving locally, regionally and nationally.

Online Donations Now Being Accepted

The 4FRI stakeholder website – www.4FRI.org – will soon be accepting online donations. Donations will support a broad array of ecological restoration activities and ensure that long-term monitoring and oversight occurs before, during, and after 4FRI's implementation. Please visit the donations page of the 4FRI website and encourage others to do the same. The website will accept donations via PayPal and credit card.

Spreading the Word about 4FRI

The Forest Service has been conducting extensive outreach efforts to spread the word about 4FRI. These outreach efforts have been coordinated with the 4FRI Stakeholder Group's Communications Working Group and have often included participation by Stakeholder Group members.

Recent events have included the following:

- Educational booth at the Mountaineer Community Picnic in the Park (Sept. 17)
- Educational booth at Science in the Park as part of the Flagstaff Festival of Science (Sept. 24)
- Presentation to the Southwest Forest Service AMIGOS (Sept. 28)
- Presentation to Camp Verde Town Council (Oct. 5)
- Presentation to Tusayan Town Council (Oct. 5)
- Field tour with the National Association of Science Writers annual conference (Oct. 14)
- Community Coffee with Coconino County Supervisor Mandy Metzger (Sept. 12 and Oct. 17)

Upcoming outreach events include the following:

- Presentations at the 11th Biennial Conference for Research on the Colorado Plateau (Oct. 24 – 27)
- Presentation to Sedona City Council (Oct. 26)
- Presentation to joint Coconino County/Flagstaff City Council (Dec. 5)
- Presentation to Williams City Council (Dec. 8)

Additional outreach efforts are being scheduled. If you have suggestions for outreach activities or would like to participate in any planned outreach efforts, please contact Forest Service communications contact Jackie Banks at (928) 635-8314, jbanks@fs.fed.us, or Stakeholder Group communications contact Marcus Selig at (928) 774-7488, mseelig@grandcanyontrust.org.

Payments for Watershed Services

On October 6th and 7th Dr. Erik Nielsen and Wes Swaffar hosted a Forest Restoration and Payment for Watershed Services (PWS) Policy Workshop at Northern Arizona University. Workshop attendees shared information on existing PWS schemes, identified potential administrative instruments for PWS implementation, discussed challenges associated with PWS on Forest Service lands, and identified key principles for PWS implementation on Forest Service lands. Attendees included local, regional, and national Forest

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Service staff, university researchers, and industry, municipality, and NGO representatives.

The workshop included productive discussions and explored possible avenues for supporting 4FRI through PWS funding. The 4FRI Fiscal Committee is excited about the potential use of this tool and plans to continue pursuing PWS options for 4FRI. Over the next several months, the Fiscal Committee will be working with the Forest Service and industry to identify the most effective means for implementing such a system.

4FRI Hopes for CEQ Pilot Project

This past June, the Forest Service and the 4FRI Stakeholder Group submitted a joint proposal to the White House Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ's) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Pilot Program (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/nepa/nepa-pilot-project>). The Pilot Program is designed to examine Federal agency projects that demonstrate a more efficient approach to NEPA implementation. By working with selected pilot projects, CEQ hopes to identify tools and practices that can modernize and reinvigorate Federal agency implementation of NEPA through innovation, public engagement, and transparency.

Although 4FRI has not yet been selected as a pilot project, Stakeholders have learned that the 4FRI proposal is being viewed very favorably in CEQ's selection process. The Forest Service and Stakeholder Group are excited about the possibility of being selected as a pilot project and are hopeful that a positive decision is forthcoming. If selected, 4FRI will have the opportunity to serve as a national model for collaborative NEPA planning at the landscape scale.

Forest Service 4FRI Team Update

In January 2011, the first phase of 4FRI began its NEPA process with the development of a draft Proposed Action (PA) and the publication of a Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS). From January to August 2011, the Forest Service 4FRI Team worked with the public and Stakeholder Group to fully develop and finalize the PA. As a result, the final PA – which can be viewed online (http://4fri.org/pdfs/documents/foundational/4FRI-Refined-PA-8_16_11.pdf) – was made available for a 14-day public comment period on August 19th. In addition to other

restoration activities, the PA calls for mechanically cutting trees and conducting prescribed burns on 389,993 acres and conducting only prescribed burns on 205,278 acres. Forty-one comments, including comments from the 4FRI Stakeholder Group were received in response to the PA (http://4fri.org/pdfs/documents/NEPA/4FRI-Stakeholder-Comments-Refined-PA-9_2_11.pdf).

Since the close of the PA's comment period, the Forest Service 4FRI Team has been presenting recommendations on issues and alternatives to the four National Forest supervisors. Upon forest supervisor approval, issues and alternatives for analysis in the EIS will be forwarded to the Forest Service Southwestern Region Office for review. Once the issues and alternatives are approved, the Forest Service will be able to update the NEPA timeline. At this time, a draft EIS is expected to be available for comment no later than March 2012. A final EIS and record of decision are expected in the late summer to fall of 2012.

Upcoming Meetings

The public is welcome and encouraged to participate in the 4FRI Stakeholder Group. If you are interested, consider attending one of our monthly **4FRI Stakeholder Meetings**. Upcoming 4FRI Stakeholder Meetings include:

- **Nov. 2 – 9am-2pm** : Coconino NF Supervisor's Office, 1824 S. Thompson Rd., Flagstaff, AZ
- **Dec. 7 – 9am-2pm**: Arizona Game & Fish Department, 2878 E. White Mountain Blvd., Pinetop, AZ

For information on meetings for stakeholder working groups, visit [4FRI.org](http://4fri.org) or contact the working group chairs:

- **Steering Committee**: Ed Smith (esmith@tnc.org), Diane Vosick (diane.vosick@nau.edu)
- **Communications**: Marcus Selig (mselig@grandcanyontrust.org)
- **Science & Monitoring**: Dave Huffman (david.huffman@nau.edu), Ed Smith (esmith@tnc.org), Matt Williamson (mwilliamson@grandcanyontrust.org)
- **Landscape Strategy**: Taylor McKinnon (tmckinnon@biologicaldiversity.org), Amy Waltz (amy.waltz@nau.edu)
- **Economics & Utilization**: Marcus Selig (mselig@grandcanyontrust.org), Diane Vosick (diane.vosick@nau.edu)
- **Fiscal**: Marcus Selig (mselig@grandcanyontrust.org)

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