

# NEWS RELEASE

## Four Forest Restoration Initiative

4FRI Stakeholder Group Website: [www.4fri.org](http://www.4fri.org)



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### **US Forest Service Selects Contractor to Implement Stewardship Contract** **Under the Four Forest Restoration Initiative**

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. – On Friday, May 18, the US Forest Service selected its contractor for the largest stewardship contract in the agency’s history. The contract will result in 300,000 acres of restoration-based thinning over 10 years, improving forest health, reducing the risk from wildfire to communities, creating jobs, and improving local economies.

This contract represents the culmination of many years of collaborative work between the Forest Service and more than 30 stakeholder organizations. It is the first large step of the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) – a 20-year plan to restore 2.4 million acres of ponderosa pine forest in northern Arizona endorsed by the Forest Service, conservationists, scientists, local governments, and industry leaders.

“This contract and the 4FRI effort were designed to meet northern Arizona’s ecological needs and the collaboratively developed vision of healthy, sustainable forests in the face of a changing climate,” said Marcus Selig, Co-Chair of the 4FRI Stakeholder Group. “Cost-effective implementation of that vision is dependent upon this contract, which is intended to build a wood products industry that can help offset treatment costs.”

Pioneer Forest Products was selected as the contractor to perform treatments on the Coconino, Kaibab, Apache-Sitgreaves and Tonto national forests in northern Arizona. Specifically, Pioneer Forest Products plans to build a plant near Winslow, Ariz., at which ponderosa pine timber will be converted into non-commodity, high value lumber, laminate wood panels, door and doorframe, window frames, furniture, cabinetry, and specialty components. They intend to use a portion of the slash from the forest operations and mill waste to fire the kiln used to dry the material. They intend to use the remainder to create bio-diesel fuel at a bio-diesel plant built as part of the overall operation. Pioneer Forest Products was selected from among four proposals by the Forest Service, in part, because it is an appropriately-scaled, community-based industry capable of removing small-diameter trees to help offset forest restoration treatment costs.

Treatments under this contract and other ongoing efforts in Arizona’s national forests are expected to produce a large enough wood supply to support existing industries in the White Mountains and build new industries supported by Pioneer Forest Products. Work under this contract is expected to create more than 500 jobs, performing on-the-ground treatments and hauling and processing wood removed from the forests.

The 4FRI is a collaborative effort to restore ecological resilience and function across northern Arizona's ponderosa pine forests, creating healthy ecosystems that support natural fire regimes, functioning populations of native plants and animals, healthy and productive watersheds, and forests that pose little threat of destructive wildfire to forest communities, all while supporting forest industries that strengthen local economies.

While the 4FRI Stakeholder Group as a whole continues to express support for the US Forest Service issuing a stewardship contract, each stakeholder represents an individual, organization or agency that may have a position independent of and/or different from the collaboratively developed 4FRI Stakeholder Group position on key issues. Stakeholders are free to express those positions and seek transparency regarding the information considered while developing a position or making a decision.

For additional information, visit the 4FRI Stakeholder Group website at [www.4fri.org](http://www.4fri.org).

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