



4FRI Stakeholder Group Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 22, 2015, 9AM – 12:30PM
Coconino National Forest Supervisor's Office
1824 S. Thompson St., Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Teleconference line: (712) 775-7031, code: 439290611#

Attendees: Travis Woolley, Neil Chapman, Sibyl Smith, Greg Smith, Billy Masters, Rebecca Davidson, Ron Klawitter, Joe Miller, Tom Mackin, Tom Osen, Steve Horner, Buck Swaney, Tiffany Woods, Chris Stephan, Bryce Esch, Alicyn Gitlin, Steve Rosenstock, Patti Turpin, Anne Mottek, Annette Fredette, Amy Waltz, Andi Rogers, Keith Pajkos, Dick Fleishman, Brienne Pettit, Mark Nigrelli, Neil Bosworth, Tom Sidler, Scott Harger, Mary Lata

On the phone: Sue Sitko, Tommie Martin, Paul Summerfelt, Claire Mendelsohn, Pam Baltimore, Todd Schulke

9:00 Introductions

Sue Sitko and Pascal Berlioux, current co-chairs, were unable to attend this meeting. Travis Woolley and Neil Chapman from The Nature Conservancy will act as meeting leads.

9:05 Approve minutes from March 25th SHG meeting — No objections; minutes approved

9:10 Review action items from March 25th SHG meeting — Sitko

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. Draft end of objection process press release	Sitko/Berlioux	Agenda item for today's meeting
2. Notify Pascal Berlioux or Bruce Greco if interested in participating on Bridge Monitoring Program discussion	All	Complete
3. Post announcement to BASECAMP inviting stakeholders to join the SC Call on 4/7/15 to continue the discussion on the second EIS boundary	Mitchell/Co-Chairs	Complete
4. Develop a more finalized retreat agenda at the 4/7/15 SC Call	Vosick/Sitko/Berlioux/Swaney	Complete
5. Post BASECAMP Opt-in notice for SHG		After Objection Process

9:15 Call to the Public – No comments

9:20 Announcements – All

- Sue Sitko and Pascal Berlioux are Co-Chairs effective 4/1/15
- 4FRI Delegation currently in Washington D.C. (4/20-4/22)

9:30 USFS Update – Fleishman

Operations are starting now that the ground conditions are improving and drying out. The Task Order (TO) Update now includes when the Forest Service (FS) will be offering timber sales across the area and previously completed timber sales. Disclaimer: The update does not include all timber sales dating back to 2010. It includes August 2014 to present, August 2014 being the initial date that the SHG requested the FS to provide monthly TO updates.

An additional 5,000 acres of prescribed burning is taking place this month. Northern Arizona Forest Fund (NAFF) is funding a prescribed burn on upper Beaver Creek that is being implemented today if conditions allow.

Mackin (Question): The GEP update did not include operations on Elk or Clark, yet treatments are taking place in the area, what projects can be taken into account for the current activity? The area being treated is included in the active Howard timber sale, just north of Lake Mary Meadows.

9:45 Second EIS Boundary (to inform SHG so they can provide input) – Sitke/Forest Supervisors

The FS provided detailed reasoning for the rationale behind the draft second EIS boundary, including a list of other restoration projects that are happening across the landscape that influenced their decision. These other projects include:

National Forest	Inside Draft Boundary	Outside Draft Boundary	Re-analyzed Inside Boundary
<i>Coconino</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clint’s Well 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC Cragin • Upper Beaver Creek
<i>Apache-Sitgreaves</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larson • Upper Rocky Arroyo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escudilla East • Black River • Heber Allotment • Sundown • Timber Mesa Vernon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rim Lakes • Little Springs • Show Low South • Los Burros • RC Rx Burn • Timber Mesa Vernon • Gentry • Nagel
<i>Tonto</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payson • Cherry • Pine-Strawberry • Verde • Marsh Creek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamberlain • Christopher Hunter • Myrtle • Lion • Verde

The other restoration projects inside the draft second EIS will not be re-analyzed because the existing NEPA is comprehensive. Many of the restoration projects on the Tonto that are outside of the 4FRI boundary are outside of the ponderosa vegetation type.

The presentation and maps that were provided by the FS to aid this discussion are available on BASECAMP.

Waltz (Question): What is the NEPA status for these projects? There is a mix, everything on the Tonto is signed and the projects that are not signed include Larson, Escudilla East, Black River, Heber Allotment, and Upper Rocky Arroyo.

Woolley (question): What does the re-analysis process entail? A review of projects that are within the boundary that already have NEPA to determine if they have addition restoration needs, not limited to vegetation restoration.

The original CFLRP proposal that was submitted for 4FRI stated that the goal of the 4FRI is to achieve ecological restoration across approximately 2.4 million acres of contiguous ponderosa pine forest on national forest system lands in northern Arizona. The FS has listened to and considered recommendations to add pinyon juniper (PJ) types to the second EIS project area, however, adding extensive PJ would add to the complexity of the analysis and increase the time needed for the analysis and completion of the second EIS. Restoration of the PJ type is an important component of the FS restoration program and some of the projects outside of 4FRI are targeted at treating this vegetation type.

Tom Osen, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (A-S) Supervisor, notes that the FS has developed what they term The Bridge Projects. These projects are intended to bridge-the-gap between the first and second EIS to ensure that restoration projects can continue to feed into the existing industry in the White Mountains. They are specific to the A-S. Some of the projects are for full restoration and others provide opportunities for further analysis of soils, channels, aquatics, roads, etc. When discussing the rationale for the second EIS boundary, Osen points out that the Apache side is not included because of the complexity of the landscape changes and because of the Wallow fire. The projects outside of the boundary can better address these complexities and will have more resources to address other restoration needs. Concerning PJ, Novo Power may be able to economically treat this vegetation type, but the infrastructure is not available throughout the whole state. Also, restoration efforts and analysis of PJ are currently being done by the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD).

Neil Bosworth from the Tonto National Forest is in agreement with Tom Osen and adds that there are currently NEPA projects covering most of the Payson district. The projects that are currently being done or have been done on the Tonto may have applied different treatment types, but they are/were still aimed at restoration.

Rosenstock (Question): Do you know, approximately, how many acres of PJ are being treated in the projects that fall outside of the second EIS? Heber Allotment and Sundown, plus part of Timber Mesa Vernon are all projects that include PJ treatments, while Tom does not have an exact number he believes the total number is around 20,000 acres. Rosenstock wants the group to consider taking advantage of the opportunity to obtain a better understanding of the technical and ecological issues that would allow us to build a social license to begin doing more PJ work down the road, even if it is limited to a small analysis area.

Mackin (Question): Is there any update on outreach being done to communicate with the tribal governments that share borders with the 4FRI boundary? The FS has had ongoing discussions with the tribal governments, but these discussions have not reached an organizational level that would allow them to address the issue of restoration. Osen wants to know what the protocol would be for those discussions, would they be initiated by the FS or the collaborative?

Initial outreach was done by the collaborative back in 2009/2010, but there has not been a follow-up.

Action Item: Organize Outreach to Tribal Governments.

Mackin (Question): Has there been any limitations or restriction on the project pertaining to the reintroduction of the Mexican Grey Wolf? This is something that will continuously be analyzed as we move forward with the process.

As announced on behalf of Pascal, the NRWG unanimously supports the second EIS boundary. The same information that was covered in this meeting was discussed at the NRWG meeting and they understood and accepted the rationale. The announcement is available on BASECAMP.

The collaborative is in agreement with the boundary proposed by the USFS. The key issue of Payson was resolved and there is a general sense of agreement pertaining to the PJ issue, with the caveat that the limited amount of PJ included in this 2nd EIS, as well as other distinct PJ projects, could be used as learning opportunities by the collaborative in preparation for future projects. A written explanation was requested to provide a statement of support with various points raised as reminders as we move forward.

Action Item: Draft basic narrative to help public understand reasoning behind the second EIS boundary. Reviewed at next Steering Committee call.

11:00 Stakeholder Disclosures – All

- The Center for Biological Diversity has been approached by members of the media to provide comments on the final Record of Decision (ROD). Schulke has communicated with the Arizona Daily Sun and Arizona Republic.
- The Sierra Club has also been approached by members of the press and asked if the objection process reduced their chances of litigating. However, they were unable to respond to the question because they were not provided with a copy of the final ROD and were not notified that it was going to be signed.
- Tommie Martin made comments to the press that mechanical thinning operations should now begin on a larger scale and notes that treatments should be at a rate of 30,000 acres/year, yet operations for the last three years are below that standard.

11:15 Resolution Update – Fredette/Sitko/Berlioux

- Status of Final ROD, next steps – Fredette

During the objection process the FS was able to resolve the issues raised by Wild Earth Guardians, which led to the organization withdrawing their objections. The resolutions reached include:

1. Gradual implementation and extended monitoring of combined treatments in Mexican Spotted Owl (MSO) packs.
2. Added discussions of other scientific sources regarding historical forest structure and fire regimes, incorporating MSO responses to fire.
3. Defining and highlighting how heterogeneity is being promoted.

The FS was also able to reach some agreement with the other objectors and the revisions are as follows:

1. Convene a working group to design a study to evaluate the impacts of vegetation treatments on MSO and their habitats on a broad scale.
2. Added grazing indicators to monitoring and design features to protect aspen and added discussion of the effects of grazing.
3. Made corrections to a table/narrative that clarifies that changes were not made to the desired conditions.
4. Added to the number of acres of less intensive treatment in goshawk habitat. The FS also agreed to use both ground-based and remote sensing of monitoring canopy cover in these acres.
5. Included 2750 acres of wildlife corridor in the less intensive treatment area.

All of the resolution agreement documents with Wild Earth Guardians and response letters were mailed out and posted on the FS website last Monday. The final ROD was signed on Friday, 4/17, and it is currently at the printers; everything will be published on the FS website after the completion of the printing process.

Sierra Club remarks on the final documents: Some of the dialogue during the resolution meetings was omitted or changed and a list of errors were sent to the FS. The FS has not yet responded to their comments and now the final ROD is signed. Notification that the final ROD was going to be signed was not given and Alicyn Gitlin recommends that in the future the FS inform objectors of such events to help improve the process.

The FS formally apologized to the Sierra Club and notes that the organization should have received a resolution letter. While the overall process was a success, they recognize that there were some missteps and hope that any feedback will lead to future improvements in the process. They also appreciate the objections made by the Sierra Club because there is a stronger relationship between grazing and restoration that the FEIS originally mentioned.

Overall, most of the involved parties were pleased with the level of participation and collaboration that took place during the objection process. While there is always room for improvement, everyone worked together and the end result was a success.

- Outreach by SHG/press release – ~~Sitko/Berlioux~~

Sue Sitko drafted a press release, on behalf of the collaborative, stating their support of the final EIS. The statement was not posted on BASECAMP, but copies were handed out during the meeting for review and revisions.

Members of the group recommended that the statement be shortened and, instead of it being a press release, changed the title to a statement of support. As the final ROD has already been signed this will no longer be considered breaking news. Four paragraphs from the original draft document were selected, the group decided that the revised document would be posted to BASECAMP and that there would be a 24 hour period for stakeholders to provide additional recommendations. After the 24 hour period the statement would be formatted and the final version would be posted to BASECAMP before COB on Friday, 4/24/15.

Action Item: Post revised press release on BASECAMP, 24 hour to make recommendations. Formalized release will be on Friday, 4/24.

11:30 Annual Assessment Survey – Swaney

Only 10 stakeholders have completed the self-assessment survey as of this meeting. Please complete the survey before the annual retreat to help provide a better assessment of the collaborative which will then be presented at the May advance.

Action Item: Repost Link on BASECAMP

11:40 May SHG Advance (Retreat) – Sitke/Swaney

Next month the SHG will not have their customary monthly meeting, instead a day and a half advance (retreat) has been scheduled to take place at TNC Hart Prairie on May 27th and 28th. The draft agenda was presented to the SHG for review to ensure that the event provides an opportunity to properly address all of the successes and issues of the collaborative, aimed at improving the process during the second EIS. *The agenda is an abbreviated version of the May Advance document presented and discussed at the 3/25/15 SHG meeting.*

Buck will not be acting as a facilitator during the advance, instead Southwest Decision Resources will be taking on this role to allow Buck to provide feedback as a collaborator. Also, the FS will lead a presentation and discussion on the first day of the retreat. However, they too will be viewed as collaborators during the event.

Standard meeting procedures will be completed in the first 60 minutes of the retreat at the Coconino National Forest Supervisor's Office. Departure to Hart Prairie will follow this brief meeting.

The Workshop Goals:

1. Celebrate 4FRI accomplishments
2. 4FRI Collaboration – reflect, refine, and reboot the 4FRI to be more efficient
3. Identify lessons learned from the 1st EIS and recommendations for the 2nd EIS
4. Determine how our mission and goals should change as the 4FRI moves eastward and matures
5. Meetings and 4FRI management – Design sustainable and efficient operations

While the agenda is well structured, there is still a 1 hour period on the second day that is listed as TBD, this will allow stakeholder's to address any topics that were not already covered.

Stakeholder Recommendations for Agenda:

1. Include outreach to Tribal Governments under communications strategies
2. Update "Integration of NRWG and 4FRI" to include FWPP
3. Add Coffee & Breakfast to the agenda for day 2

Hart Prairie is situated at an elevation of 8,400 ft; attendees will need to dress accordingly. Wireless internet and cell phone coverage will be available. If you have any question concerning the preserve, please contact Neil, otherwise a logistics meeting is scheduled for Monday, April, 27th and more information will be made available to those who plan to be present.

Over-night accommodations: There is a limited number of cabins; cabins will be provided to those who RSVP in advance and are traveling from out of town. There will be plenty of space to accommodate

those who plan to camp in tents. Everyone who plans to stay overnight will need to bring their own sleeping bags.

A brief discussion was also had concerning food. Stakeholders all agreed that they would prefer to have the event catered and to pay out of pocket for the expense.

Action Item: Repost RSVP Advance Announcement on BASECAMP.

Action items: Send agenda recommendations to co-chairs and Swaney.

12:00 Working Group Updates

- Multi-Party Monitoring Board – Esch

The MPMB is finalizing their budget and protocols for summer field work. There are four working groups, inside the main working group, focused on ground plots, bird surveys, remote sensing, and socio-economic. Each group is working on their contracts and agreements to accomplish their designated field work. A more comprehensive overview will be given at the next SHG meeting.

- Utilization and Industry Working Group – currently inactive
- Communications Working Group – currently inactive

12:10 Action Items and Adjourn

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. Coordinate outreach to Tribal Governments. Add to next SC agenda	SC members	
2. Draft narrative to help public understand reasoning behind second EIS boundary	SC members	
3. Draft SHG position statement on second EIS boundary	SC members	
4. Post revised press release on BASECAMP, 24 hr review period, formalized release on 4/24/15	Sitko/All/Woods	Complete
5. Repost RSVP announcement for 4FRI May Advance on BASECAMP	Woods	Complete
6. Send Advance agenda recommendations to Co-Chairs and Buck	All	Complete