



## 4FRI Stakeholder Group Meeting

### Minutes

Wednesday, September 23, 2020, 9 am – Noon

ZOOM Audio Meeting

<https://nau.zoom.us/j/92771192452> password: **341419**

#### ZOOM meeting protocols:

- **PLEASE ANNOUNCE YOURSELF IN CHAT BOX OR ON THE PHONE**
- Co-chairs will manage participant engagement
- No video please
- Keep speaker on MUTE
- Use chat box to communicate your questions or comments to the group.
- Please refrain from private messaging as it becomes part of the official transcript.

**In attendance:** Adam Cooley, Jay Smith, Jeremy Kruger, Eli Jensen, Paul Chapman, Jaelyn Belcher, Art Babbott, Brad Worsley, Rob Nelson, Melanie Colavito, Angela Day, Lesley Yen, Joe Miller, Shaula Hedwall, Caitlyn Suntherlin, Bob Seidler, Steve Rosenstock, Tabi Bolton, Chris Jenks, Greg Smith, Anne Mottek, Tanner Henry, Henry Provencio, Mark Nigrelli, Patrick Moore, Amy Waltz, Scott Buffon, John Hammil, Josh Peck, Dave Dorum, Eli Jensen, Heather Provencio, Chris Jones, Dale Dolchek, Josh Peck, John Godfrey, Neil Chapman, Bob Seidler, John Souther, Alicyn Gitlin, Chuck Smith, Randy Fuller, Rochelle Lacapa, Robbin Bundrock, P Hancock, Pascal Berlioux, Wendy Jo Haskins, Tracy Bazelman, Carol Covington taking minutes.

**Approve minutes from the August 26, 2020 Stakeholder Group meeting** — Cooley – Approved as presented.

**Review action items from the August 26, 2020 Stakeholder Group meeting** — Cooley

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. Complete and send thank you notes to ACC candidates	Jay Smith, Adam Cooley, Michele Ralston	Complete
2. Stakeholder Engagement Working Group – next step to convene a working group	Steve Rosenstock, Jay Smith, Joe Miller, Dave Dorum, Adam Cooley, Jeremy Kruger	Complete
3. Post Fire Modeling Study and Riparian PowerPoints to Basecamp	Carol Covington	Complete

**Call to the Public** – Cooley – none

**USFS Update** – Jeremy Kruger offered some updates:

- RFP – USFS anticipates an award during the first half of the USFS fiscal year, ending March 31, 2021. USFS is preparing for discussions with the offerors. The government makes the determination of which offers fall within the competitive range. He underscored the agency's work to address urgency while engaging in a careful and thorough review of proposals.
- *Wood for Life Program* - Henry Provencio reported on the program status hauling small diameter wood

to Navajo, Hopi and San Juan Paiute reservations for fuel. To date they have provided 650 cords of wood. National Forest Foundation and Tribal organizations are the primary support for this project. *Grant Proposal* -They are submitting an integrated readiness training program focused on road preparedness and pit development proposal to the National Guard for consideration. If selected the work would most likely take place in FY22. *Good Neighbor Authority* – The Forest Service and Department of Forestry and Fire Management are looking into entering into a Good Neighbor Authority Agreement, which would be the first one in Arizona. *Conservation Finance* –They are currently gathering information; however, results of the contract will dictate much of the direction of the strategy.

- Robin Bundrock – EIS review status response to comments is moving along well; FS is hoping to complete review by end of October.

**Cragin Watershed Protection Project/General Springs and other CWPP project updates** – Joe Miller, Linda Wadleigh, Joshua Peck. [Presentation](#). Josh Peck provided a presentation. He offered a brief planning history of the watershed protection project. He noted that upon approval in 2018, 64,000 acres of prescribed burning 37,000 acres of mechanical treatment was authorized along with of mechanical thinning. General Springs SPA project was selected first as protection for SRP infrastructure. At this time, bids to do the work far outpace the budget, thus, they are prioritizing. Cragin project fire treatment has covered 33,476 acres over two years. They have estimated that 75% of the treatment area has been treated with prescribed fire since 2010.

He asked for questions from attendees. Clarification was offered to indicate that some of the projects that were presented as treatment areas have been tentatively earmarked for the USFS RFP under review. Another question was whether the high intensity fire risk assessments of the area have been updated since the prescribed fires and managed burns have taken place? Josh Peck offered to look into this and get back with the information.

Concern was expressed that the mechanical treatment needs real biomass solutions. A question was floated as to whether focusing on prescribed burning is a sustainable strategy. Peck noted that multiple tools must be balanced. The mechanical treatments are unaffordable thus, prescribed burning is often a second choice, but affordable.

Brad Worsley objected to the notion that the cost of mechanical treatments is not affordable. The impacts of NOT removing biomass is ignoring the economic impact of fire suppression, wildfire impacts (destruction of property and loss of human life, impacts on utilities and insurance). He asserted that not putting the funding into mitigation up front is short sighted and indeed, not cost effective.

There was discussion about the need to utilize all of the tools in the toolbox to manage the forests, but debate continues about appropriate application and prioritization of these tools.

Joe Miller thanked Josh Peck for a concise presentation. He suggested that there may be sources of funding that could fund mechanical treatments for an array of issues including air quality, watershed, property protection.

Paul Chapman interjected that another variable is pre-commercial thinning (PCT) which is another technique not well achieved by either mechanical or burning techniques.

Henry Provencio responded to Paul's message. Recently there was a fire in the watershed to the north adjacent to the project that was not managed for resource benefit, rather, it was full suppression. That fire burned something like 30 homes. There are many considerations that go into this such as weather, available fire resources, if the area marked or has the timber been sold, etc. It isn't always the best answer or the only answer, it's just one of the tools in the tool box.

**Final Environmental Impact Statement Update** – Waltz and Final EIS work group. [Presentation](#).

Amy Waltz reported on the 4FRI Rim Country FEIS Working Group. They identified four primary categories. They then reviewed the comments offered, identified which category they would fall into, and prioritized within categories. After analysis, the working group identified eight Key Issues. Thirty-one unique concerns were identified. The work consisted of systematic work on resolving each concern. Twenty-three have been fully resolved with the work group support. Three concerns were shifted to a new work group on collaborative implementation. Five are on-going, with collaborative work in progress and expected completions within 4 weeks. She reviewed some of the specifics as illustrative of the type of concerns and resolutions.

Jeremy Kruger extended thanks for all of the careful work done by the working group and the planning team. The contribution has been exceptional. Robin Bundrock, Patrick Moore, Mark Nigrelli, and Heather Provencio each reflected on the valuable work of the group and extended thanks. Henry Provencio asked how do we account for "Pattern"? Amy described some techniques being employed to describe patterns and interspace that are useful for implementation on the ground. Work on this continues in earnest. There was a question from John Godfrey asking whether the effect of climate change has been considered with respect to what trees to remove. Pascal Berlioux asked, about work being done regarding the Mexican Spotted Owl and risk of litigation by Center for Biodiversity. It was suggested that there is a need to incorporate the results of the MSO monitoring discussion into the work of 4FRI. Jeremy Kruger and Pascal Berlioux indicated their willingness to discuss the idea of preparing a presentation on the MSO work at a future Stakeholder Group meeting.

**CFLRP feedback** – Melanie Colavito provided an update on the feedback provided from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) committee. As far as she knows the Secretary of Agriculture has not made a final determination. Feedback from the committee included strengths and weaknesses outlined in a one-page letter. Jeremy Kruger added his observations, and agreed with her observations. He noted that one of the challenges is that the application did not allow for much text space which limited the amount of information that could be provided. Steve Rosenstock echoed some of the comments and indicated that the application was well crafted. Jay Smith offered: Senator McSally introduced a forest health bill last week, see it here: <https://www.mcsally.senate.gov/news/press-releases/mcsally-moves-to-prevent-catastrophic-wildfires-with-new-bill>

A concern was expressed that this bill is referring special treatment of CFLRP projects and if 4FRI is no longer a CFLRP project that it will cause some undesired effects. Melanie Colavito indicated that this provision may change.

**Location of October Stakeholder Group Meeting (Zoom vs. In Person)** - Jeremy Kruger indicated that the Forest Service cannot accommodate the Stakeholder Group meeting in October and USFS staff are not allowed to attend in person meetings at this time. The October meeting will be held via Zoom.

#### **Industry Updates – Cooley**

Adam Cooley, New Life and Good Earth Power, provided a brief update on routine activities. Lumber market is still very strong.

#### **Working Group Updates**

- Stakeholder Engagement WG – Rosenstock/Colavito – first working group meeting is set for next week.
- Final Environmental Impact Statement WG – No additional update.
- Industry/Biomass WG – No update.
- Communication WG – Joe Miller indicated that he is working with Tayloe Dubay and they hope to include a brief article about the ACC candidate participation in July.
- Multi-Party Monitoring Board WG – John Souther offered an update. They are updating the adaptive management plan. Revision and final edits are underway. Next meeting is this Friday. They submitted a proposal to regional office to fund multi party monitoring. This is a proposal to replace some of the funding

to replace CFLRP funding if that is lost. Drone based imagery collection is at a stand still for the time being. Spring monitoring is ongoing.

- Comprehensive Implementation WG – No update.

**Stakeholder Disclosures – All**

Pascal Berlioux expressed that he is hopeful that what we learn from one area of study can be applied to other areas of work.

Joe Miller is very interested in following up on the conversation about MSO with Berlioux as are Rosenstock and Waltz.

**11:45 Review Action Items**

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. Update on Mexican Spotted Owl habitat monitoring to 4FRI Stakeholder Group – future meeting	Berlioux, Kruger, Hedwall, Miller, Rosenstock, Schofer, Waltz	
2. Notify Stakeholder Group of change of venue (to Zoom) for October meeting.	Carol Covington	

**11:07 am - Adjournment**

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**2020 Meeting Schedule** – these dates are posted on the 4FRI website.

- Zoom - 10/28/2020, 11/18/2020, 2/24/2021, 3/24/2021, 5/26/2021, 6/23/2021
- Coconino NF Supervisor’s office - 1/27/2021, 4/28/2021, 7/28/2021

November meeting hot and cold chairs rotate:

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