



**4FRI Stakeholder Group Meeting
Minutes**

Wednesday, March 24, 2021, 9 am – Noon
ZOOM Audio Meeting

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

MEETING WAS RECORDED

- 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: Anne Mottek, Amy Waltz, Eli Jensen, Mike Hannemann, Heather Provencio, Randy Walker, Travis Woolley, Brienne Petit, Joe Trudeau, Steve Rosenstock, Evan Lautzenheiser, Arthur Gonzales, Rob Nelson, Richard Gonzalez, Tom Mackin, Marcos Roybal, Jeremy Kruger, Paul Callaway, Alexander Spannuth, Mark Nigrelli, Bryan Zebrowski, Tayloe Dubay, David Vincelette, John Richardson, Mark Bellis, Mark Nabel, Hannah Griscom, Duke Reidhad, Pascal Berlioux, Kara Kirkpatrick-Kreitinger, Patrick Moore, Cerissa Hoglander, Chuck Smith, Elvy Barton, Tabi Bolton, Justin Schofer, Todd Schulke, Melanie Colavito, Ariel Leonard, David Dorum, Jay Smith, Laura Jo West, Travis Bruner, Tom Osterday, Brad Worsley, Eric Frandsen, Adam Livermore, Tom Holl, Joe Miller, Adam Cooley, Shaula Hedwall, Neil Chapman, Art Babbott, Garry Domis, Steve Reiter, Greg Smith, John Souther, Patrice Horstman, Tracy Bazelman, Lynn Krigbaum, Adam Livermore, Ericka Luna, Steve Horner, Anthony Madrid, Adrian Skabelund, and Carol Covington taking minutes.

Approve minutes from the February 24, 2021 Stakeholder Group meeting — Approved as presented.

Review action items from the February 24, 2021 Stakeholder Group meeting — None

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. none		

Call to the Public – None

USFS Update – Jeremy Kruger

Personnel – New 4FRI operations coordinator will begin in roughly 2.5 weeks. He introduced Adam Livermore who is acting public affairs officer.

RFP – Updated data including LIDAR necessitated adjustments to the RFP to adjust the total project acres downward. The evaluation process is still expected to wrap up with an award in June 2021.

Kaibab National Forest - old growth logging [presentation](#) and discussion – Heather Provencio introduced a slide presentation summarizing the past, present, and future of the Jacob Ryan project in the Kaibab National Forest, as

well as opportunities for collaboration. She provided an overview of the North Kaibab forest area. She pointed out similarities and differences between the North Kaibab and 4FRI designated area. She described events, which over time, necessitated adjustments to managing old growth within the forest. Preservation of old growth trees is balanced with wildlife habitat needs, including endangered species. She offered a summary of circumstances that would necessitate removal of old growth trees for safety, habitat, fire mitigation, etc.

Anne Mottek invited Duke Reidhead, Reidhead Forest Management to make comments. He asked for some clarification on balancing old growth preservation, impacts of the Mangum Fire, and climate issues which have produced excessive beetle populations. Richard Gonzalez, Forestry Resources Manager North Kaibab, responded that there are limits to what can be done, but noted that the strategy underway uses a combination of burning and thinning. Restoration of the function of the forest is certainly an emphasis of the work being done. Duke Reidhead expressed concern that there is urgency to address mitigation of the insect infestation before it compromises the residual forest and tracks toward the 4FRI footprint.

Todd Schulke expressed disappointment in the presentation citing the message received as not addressing the concern, but rather, a standard Forest Service party line message. He remarked that logging is not a means to mitigate beetles and noted his support for industry. Heather Provencio suggested that meeting in the field to observe conditions on the ground and discuss shared values for forest restoration. Randall Walker interjected that the role of forest managers is to consider all options to make the landscape resilient. There is a purpose and need to restore structure across landscapes.

Eli Jensen shared a concern about beetle infestation offering the help of Ironwood Forestry to assist. He is interested in more data and encouraged all to consider newer technologies. Alex Spannuth, Fire Ecologist, offered that they are currently exploring new ways to look at forest structure down to the individual tree. He described a host of tools to look at the data.

Eric Frandsen with K&D indicated that a lot of the old growth trees are compromised by beetle infestation, which they remove, though they have little to no value. He noted that as loggers, they are working to help the forest, but also need to make money from the logs they remove. The beetle infestation quickly diminishes the value of the logs. He emphasized that the effort requires coordination and collaboration. Randall Walker responded they are indeed working on a proposal to meet the needs of the landscape in a timely manner.

Steve Rosenstock, Grand Canyon Trust noted that the one of the initial agreements of 4FRI was that there would be no old growth trees harvested. He is concerned that the management plan which includes old growth removal, will jeopardize the social license of all forest management in Arizona and the Southwest. Heather Provencio replied that she agrees, and feels that the bottom line is what is left on the ground, not what is removed. She underscored that they are removing some old growth when necessary, but by no means is it wholesale removal.

Rob Nelson underscored the commitment of AZ Game and Fish Dept to preserve large and old growth trees. He welcomes the invitation to meet on the ground and would like to be a helpful partner.

Joe Trudeau noted that he stands by every fact presented in his presentation last month. He expressed concern that the preservation of old growth trees was not being addressed. He asserted that there is no evidence that logging old trees and creating VSS1 patches reduces fire severity.

Brad Worsley remarked that industry does not want nor need the old growth trees. Cutting the old growth trees in North Kaibab is such a small percentage of the total, it could be set aside without making a significant difference, while quelling the concerns about the social consensus/social license.

Amy Waltz asked for clarity on what the take-aways are, and what is the path forward for Jacob Ryan? Heather Provencio replied that Jacob Ryan area is under contract and there is little they can do moving forward. Ariel Leonard offered some details about treatments and cutting in specific areas of the North Kaibab.

Pascal Berlioux offered that there is no need to remove trees that are 300-500 years old. These should simply be left alone. Within 4FRI, there has always been a strong consensus that old growth trees will not be cut. He expressed confusion about when the science is true and when it is not true. He noted that the Kaibab forest is one of the 4FRI Forests but acknowledged that the 4FRI footprint does not include all of the Kaibab Forest. It becomes confusing to all when the science seems to shift, and he suggested there should be consistency across all of the Forests for approaches to landscape scale restoration.

Anne Mottek invited everyone to offer comments via google forms <https://forms.gle/vEoF7pQDWkPDKv4j6> to help shape the follow up conversation on this topic at the April Stakeholder Group Meeting.

Break (10 minutes)

Pascal Berlioux suggested that a wrap up from the previous conversation would be in order, i.e. what are the next steps. Anne Mottek offered that the intent is to collect comments beyond this meeting via chat comments, and link above to summarize and determine next steps at the April meeting. A validation of this approach was solicited. Steve Rosenstock suggested that moving more quickly on this might be considered, by forming a smaller working group in advance of the Stakeholder Group meeting. This strategy was confirmed. Volunteers for this ad hoc group include: Todd Schulke, Shaula Hedwall, Eli Jensen, Brad Worsley, Joe Miller, Pascal Berlioux, Adam Cooley, Tom Holl, Duke Reidhead, Joe Trudeau, with Steve Rosenstock as the lead.

Stakeholder Engagement Working Group [Update](#) – Melanie Colavito and Steve Rosenstock

Steve Rosenstock started by laying the groundwork about why this working group was established, and how the effort began. Melanie Colavito offered a summary of their benchmarking from other collaboratives with a similar purpose. She highlighted some of the facets of each, which could serve to inform the work of this working group. From their information gathering, they found some models for community engagement that could be considered in 4FRI stakeholder engagement. Some of the major themes from their information gathering include:

- Depth and extent of engagement are contingent on stakeholder capacity – dedicated “champions” are essential.
- It is important to articulate clear roles and expectations for engagement and how to work together.
- Agency and stakeholder turnover are major challenges.
- Engagement should include both science and social components.
- Industry involvement is an important bridging activity.
- Conflict is unavoidable but can lead to constructive outcomes.
- The best learning and relationship building happens on the ground.
- Storytelling is important.

A question was asked “Is your implementation discussion focused on mechanical thinning? It seems CIWG does a lot of the cool implementation for springs and riparian restoration, and raises matching funds. Are they engaged in this effort, too?” They responded that it is not just about mechanical thinning, and there are very large elements of science and social license to consider what we do in that realm. Anne Mottek asked how the assessment would be approached for the April Stakeholder Group meeting.

Steve Rosenstock posed a set of questions to the Stakeholder Group for consideration as groundwork for the

assessment piece planned for next month's meeting:

- What are the (three) most important roles for the stakeholder group (SHG) as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning is completed, and large-scale implementation (hopefully) begins?
 - How should these be codified (MOU or another format)?
- How should stakeholder engagement in implementation be structured (e.g., broad conceptual framework, template for approaches within specific forests and districts that can be modified locally, etc.)?
- Should these efforts be organized in the semi-official "ad-hoc" fashion the SHG has used to date or vested within a more formal entity, e.g., a 501 c 3 or other?
- What specific resources and capacity (e.g., direct financial support, personnel time, other in-kind) can your organization contribute to this effort?
- What is Decision Space for the Forest Service in applying "actionable information" developed through this process (socio-political, monitoring data, other new science) to modify actions on the ground?

He then summarized next steps anticipated to move the effort forward. These include:

- Stakeholder assessment (April SHG meeting)
- Recommendations to SHG for approval
- Develop framework w/ USFS
- Embed in 4FRI MOU revision (complete prior to Rim Country ROD)

In summary, Melanie Colavito asked the stakeholders how they would like to be involved in this work. She invited suggestions about how to move this forward. Amy Waltz suggested that the small working groups often consist of the same small range of people, and offered that this could be an opportunity for new participants to become involved. It was then suggested that there could be articulation of what the roles need to be first, then soliciting participation. Facilitated discussion of the questions presented could be a useful approach.

Industry Updates – Anne Mottek

Brad Worsley NOVO Power, reported that the business is running very well at this time. A concern was expressed that a Forest Service contract on Apache-Sitgreaves Forest was recently issued with a no bid status. Delay in awarding the RFP continues to impact the ability of NOVO power to plan for the future and enter into contracts. He also expressed concern about the last-minute substantive change to the acreage in the RFP. Jeremy Kruger confirmed that the date of the anticipated award has not changed from the June 2021 target.

Adam Cooley, New Life Forest Products, offered that they have increased capacity at Heber facility. Lumber prices are at a high point, which has enabled expansion of facilities. Bellemont facility is moving forward, and they hope to announce a startup date soon.

Tabi Bolton, Campbell Global, reported that TNC is active and they are delivering to nine customers. Business is strong, lumber prices are high.

Working Group Updates – Anne Mottek

- Final Environmental Impact Statement WG – Steve Rosenstock reported that the executive board has made a number of decisions to address the stakeholder recommendations and the collaborative work that has been completed, which was a really good milestone.
- Industry/Biomass WG - Brad Worsley reported that there will not be an industry roundtable meeting until after the RFP is awarded.
- Communication WG - Tayloe Dubay reported on the status of the newsletter, which will be posted to basecamp for review very soon.
- Multi-Party Monitoring Board WG – Stephen Flora reported that they had made final revisions to the 4FRI Rim Country monitoring plan and received information about citizen science outreach work from NAU.
- Stakeholder Engagement WG - Melanie Colavito and Steve Rosenstock (addressed above).

- Comprehensive Implementation WG – No updates since last month.

Stakeholder Disclosures –

Cerissa Hoglander reported that they are seeking additional funding for restoration projects this summer to restore riparian sites.

Christopher Jones noted an invitation to the Biochar Opportunities in the Southwest Extension Workshop April 7-9 <https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2021-04-07/biochar-opportunities-southwest-extension-workshop>

Pascal Berlioux let the group know about substantial work being done on the Mexican Spotted Owl. They are preparing to make a presentation during the April Stakeholder Group meeting. It will be a great opportunity to get up to speed on management and monitoring.

Review Action Items

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. Convene small work group to compile comments on North Kaibab presentations and explore what role the 4FRI SHG should play in the N. Kaibab for April SHG meeting discussion	Rosenstock	
2. Stakeholder Engagement assessment agenda item at April SHG meeting	Rosenstock and Colavito	
3. Meet with Anne Mottek to strategize stakeholder engagement assessment agenda item	Rosenstock, Colavito, Mottek	
4. Post survey link for comments on the KNF old growth issue to basecamp with a deadline for submittal.	Colavito	
5. Newsletter – circulate draft for comment	Dubay	
6. MSO presentation at April SHG meeting, strategize timing	Berlioux	

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm

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

- Zoom - 4/28/2021, 5/26/2021, 6/23/2021, 8/25/2021, 9/22/2021, 12/17/2021
- Coconino NF Supervisor’s office - 7/28/2021, 10/27/2021

	2021	
	Hot Chair	Cold Chair
January	Jay Smith	A Mottek
February	Jay Smith	A Mottek
March	A Mottek	M Colavito
April	A Mottek	M Colavito
May	A Mottek	M Colavito
June	M Colavito	P Berlioux
July	M Colavito	P Berlioux
August	M Colavito	P Berlioux

September	P Berlioux	N Chapman
October	P Berlioux	N Chapman
November	P Berlioux	N Chapman
December	NO SHG MTG	NO SHG MTG