



**4FRI Stakeholder Group Meeting
Minutes**

Wednesday, April 28, 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: Steve Rosenstock, Pascal Berlioux, Paul Chapman, Molly Pitts, Anne Mottek, Steve Reiter, Michelle Ralston, Adam Cooley, Evan Lautzenheiser, Bob Seidler, Devon Suarez, Jeremy Kruger, Joe Miller, Brett Crary, Arthur Gonzalez, Tabi Bolton, Tom Mackin, Brad Worsley, Eli Jensen, Greg Smith, Cara Staab, Patrice Horstman, Brienne Pettit, Ericka Luna, Joe Trudeau, Shaula Hedwall, Tracy Bazelman, Adam Livermore, Cerissa Hoglander, Justin Schofer, Rob Davis, Adam Cooley, Mike Hannemann, Kara Kirkpatrick-Kreitingner, Todd Schulke, Alex Schay, Alicyn Gitlin, Keith Pajkos, Mark Nigrelli, John Souther, Patrick Moore, Amy Waltz, Melanie Colavito, Stephen Flora, Robbin Bundrock, and Carol Covington taking minutes.

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

Review action items from the March 24, 2021 Stakeholder Group meeting — Anne Mottek Reviewed as presented. No comments.

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	Complete
2. Stakeholder Engagement assessment agenda item at April SHG meeting	Rosenstock and Colavito	Agenda item – WG update
3. Meet with Anne Mottek to strategize stakeholder engagement assessment agenda item	Rosenstock, Colavito, Mottek	Complete
4. Post survey link for comments on the KNF old growth issue to basecamp with a deadline for submittal.	Colavito	Complete
5. Newsletter – circulate draft for comment	Dubay	Complete

6. MSO presentation at April SHG meeting, strategize timing	Berlioux	Agenda item
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Call to the Public – None

Mexican Spotted Owl habitat management update – Pascal Berlioux provided a brief summary of the background regarding activities leading up to the focused strategy to monitor and protect habitat for the Mexican Spotted Owl in regional forests. Cara Staab and Shaula Hedwall spearheaded this effort, and presented a summary of the [MSO Regional Management Strategy](#) developed (the presentation was posted to Basecamp).

Strategy Points

1. MSO population trend monitoring
2. Identify and protect MSO
3. Assess the effects of mechanical and prescribed fire treatments on the owl and protected activity centers (PAC)
4. Track long-term trends in PAC and recovery habitat on R3lands to assure retention/development of adequate habitat for recovery
5. Establish MSO leader’s forum
6. Establish working teams for MSO ecological management units.

Amy Waltz asked about spatial layers shown and is interested in learning more about availability. She asked what the vegetation layers used on the hexagon maps and remote sensing were. Shaula offered to engage in a separate conversation. Travis Wooley also expressed interest in being included in a more in-depth conversation about this. Joe Miller asked if the ecological management unit is a new approach vs “recovery plan.” Shaula Hedwall clarified that this is not a replacement, but that new terminology has been adopted (recovery units are now referred to as ecological management units). She underscored that part of the goal here is to make data accessible and available to the public. Pascal Berlioux noted that there is a concerted effort to make information clear to all. As part of the process of working through the notice of intent to litigate, filed by the Center for Biological Diversity, it was discovered that what was taking place on the ground to monitor and protect MSO was on target, but communicating what is taking place was lacking. Tom Mackin asked if current trend data is available. A data analysis slide was presented; however, it was acknowledged that six years of data is less than desirable to build on or predict trends (need 10 years+).

USFS Update – Jeremy Kruger offered a brief update on behalf of the USFS.

- **Rim Country Biological Assessment** – USFS has formally submitted the Rim Country Biological Assessment to Fish and Wildlife for official consultation. He extended thanks to the partners who assisted.
- **Personnel:** Heather Provencio is on detail in Washington DC office, Arthur Gonzalez is serving as Acting Forest Supervisor for the N Kaibab. Tim Short will come in as Acting Supervisor of the Kaibab on May 10. He then introduced Brett Cray as 4FRI Operations Coordinator.
- **RFP** – Discussions are ongoing.
- Brett Cray shared a few highlighted achievements. Updates will be posted on basecamp.

North Kaibab Discussion (review draft letter) – Steve Rosenstock provided a brief background of events leading up to this draft letter and summarized the formal 4FRI Stakeholder Group approach to reach a level of agreement as documented in the 4FRI SHG Charter. He reminded the group that the Center for Biological Diversity presented a concern about apparent logging of old trees on the North Kaibab, and was invited to make a presentation to the Stakeholder Group in Feb. Subsequently, the Kaibab National Forest was invited to present in March. Considerable conversation resulted at the April SHG meeting. He was asked to

work with a sub group to distill solicited comments from the 4FRI Stakeholder Group. These results were presented to the Steering Committee, and at that time it was determined that a letter to the Forest Service expressing concerns would be in order. These concerns and recommendations have been distilled down into the [draft letter](#) that was posted to Basecamp and is presented today for consideration.

Jay Smith indicated that he drove up to the North Kaibab and Jacob Ryan project with Supervisor Fowler this week. He confirmed that there were large trees that had been harvested. He also reflected on a desire to seek additional scientific information and a group site visit. He shared some concern about wording of some of the bullet points in the draft letter (e.g., defining “old trees as >150 years and the last bullet in the “Importance of old trees” list).

Patrice Horstman added that this has been a discussion point for the Coconino County Board of Supervisors. She conveyed that the county would request delaying for 30 days to allow acquisition of additional information and a visit by the Coconino County Board of Supervisors to the site. Travis Wooley added that he too would like additional information and a site visit.

Joe Trudeau acknowledged the desire of stakeholders to visit the Jacob Ryan; however, his impression is that the Forest Service is not interested in supporting visiting the sites that CBD identified where old growth harvesting has been observed. Anne Mottek offered that a site visit would ideally be coordinated between the Forest Service and 4FRI stakeholders.

Steve Rosenstock expressed disappointment at the suggestion to delay action on this, given the number of months (2.5 mos.) that this discussion has taken place. Jay Smith was surprised that Coconino County is the only group that has taken the time to visit the site besides the Center for Biological Diversity. Travis Wooley said that he has had a hard time fitting in a trip to the site but believes the discussion would be more fruitful if such a trip was made. Upcoming treatments are something that he would like to focus on. Pascal Berlioux added some general comments:

- There is a need to see the site personally. For the Little Creek issue, there were three site visits. If the purpose of the field trip is to document what is taking place on the ground, it is critical that the USFS participates; however, the SHG would determine which sites to visit as well as consideration of sites recommended by the USFS.
- This is a discussion about forest restoration in northern Arizona. Industry is a key partner in this effort, however the primary guide is science. It is difficult to see continuity of scientific applications across different administrative jurisdictions.

Arthur Gonzalez offered that the Kaibab National Forest is intent on collaborating, are open, and attempting to make the best use of time when visiting the Jacob Ryan and Burnt Corral sites. They are fully expectant of a collaborative effort to gather additional information with the Stakeholder Group. Anne Mottek added that from her perspective, as long as the site stops on the agenda are developed collaboratively, that the stakeholder group will be satisfied.

Amy Waltz noted that the founding director Wally Covington, and the Ecological Restoration Institute have been long time advocates for science-based advocacy for old tree retention. ERI is an empirical based organization that collects data, and then reports on it. This it has been done for 30 years. She suggested that pausing the movement of the letter to allow site visits by stakeholders seems reasonable.

Alicyn Gitlin reported that she had a conversation with Randall Walker, the North Kaibab District Ranger, on April 14. In that conversation she reported that he said he would not want to go anywhere Joe Trudeau wanted to go and would not travel to active logging sites, which caused her concern that the Forest Service

wanted to decide what the field trip would include. Arthur Gonzalez was asked for comment and indicated that he could not address the specific comments reported as he was not part of the conversation between Gitlin and Walker, but that the Forest Service has the intent to visit sites on the Jacob Ryan and Burnt Corral sites for their own planning purposes. He noted, one item to consider in selecting sites to visit is extended travel time to very remote sites.

There were then a number of comments in support of a field trip as soon as possible. Rob Davis noted that the letter has long term implications and must be right. He too would like to visit the area. Joe Miller offered that this does not appear to be a one-day field trip. He endorsed the idea that the Stakeholder Group should be involved in determining the agenda for such a trip. There was support for making the focus of an initial site visit on the Jacob Ryan site, and separate the Burnt Corral visit for another time. Joe Miller interjected that litigation pauses everything for a long time. He suggested that the N Kaibab Ranger District might hold off on action (cutting trees) for a couple of months to allow this discussion to take place. Tracey Bazelman asked, if it is possible for the KNF to provide the remaining acreage, and an estimate of the number of old trees remaining to be cut in the Jacob Ryan Project footprint, to assist with resolution - as requested in the proposed letter? Arthur Gonzalez offered to round up information about what remains. He noted that the Mangum Fire last year was a reminder that there is a lot of work to do, and he does not have an easy answer about pausing work. He noted that the Forest Service is working on a site visit for their purposes and would invite anyone who wishes to participate and that the Stakeholder group may need a different tour than that which is planned and they are willing to collaborate on that.

Joe Trudeau noted that he had posted a site report to Basecamp last week that shows that there are about 3,700 acres of Jacob Ryan left to be cut. The project is about 50% cut so far. Anne Mottek asked Arthur Gonzalez if a timeline could be predicted to provide additional information (remaining acres and # of old trees to be cut on the Jacob Ryan Project). No, he does not have the information to provide a timeline.

Joe Trudeau offered that he had looked at the pre-sale cruise reports, and for just 4 uncut Jacob Ryan timber sales that Forest Service provided documentation on, there are approximately 6,200 trees to be cut over 18", which on the North Kaibab Ranger District generally correlates with trees well over 150 years. Forest Service did not provide information for trees to be cut for the remaining three timber sales, but based off the four sales for which he has information, he estimates that there are 10,000+/- old trees that might still be cut.

Pascal Berlioux asked to define what the field trip(s) would be designed to accomplish; 1) what is the field trip intended to accomplish (is it in tandem with the Forest Service or separate), and how long would it take, 2) schedule this as soon as possible – within the next thirty days if possible, perhaps by doodle poll. Anne Mottek suggested that this could be referred to the Steering Committee to design a draft agenda and sites, and proposed dates. Melanie Colavito further suggested that she and Anne as the co-chairs could take this task on and then run it by Steering Committee and Stakeholder group as a means to speed up the process. Steve Rosenstock underscored that the urgency is real and is concerned that a timeline should be a part of the mandate.

Joe Miller noted that the next Stakeholder Group meeting is in four weeks, which makes action urgent (one week for planning a field trip) if there is going to be any action before the May 26 Stakeholder Group meeting. He suggested that a doodle poll would be difficult. Whoever is leading the visit should pick dates. Todd Schulke noted that the USFS selected May 11 or 18 for potential field visits.

The following process was suggested:

- Co-chairs send draft objectives and run those by the Steering Committee
- Steering Committee to offer thoughts on time allotment, dates, agenda, sites
- Plan logistics
- Invite Stakeholder group to attend

Industry Updates

Brad Worsley, Novo Power – Continuing to run exceptionally well. Verbal agreements are in place and he has concern about bureaucracy and how the slow action on the RFP is putting industry in dire straits. He noted his concurrence that with respect to Jacob Ryan, he does not support cutting old trees and wants it to stop.

Adam Cooley, NewLife Forest Products & Good Earth Power AZ - Trucking is going well, moving product well. There have been weather constraints. Heber site added a twin vertical bandsaw which has increased production substantially. Williams facility is temporarily shut down and employees are moved to Bellemont Windfall facility. In the long term the Williams facility will be closed down and combined with the Bellemont facility.

Tabi Bolton, Campbell Global – The market is strong and industry partners are preparing for expansion. He reported that The Nature Conservancy is making steady progress on two spots utilizing three local logging contractors. He reported hearing some concerns about the availability of acres outside of the two 4FRI contracts going forward.

Working Group Updates

- Final Environmental Impact Statement WG – Amy Waltz expects a response from the 4FRI Executive Board on the response to comments and issues and will share that with the Stakeholder Group when it's ready.
- Industry/Biomass WG - None
- Communication WG - None
- Multi-Party Monitoring Board WG – Stephen Flora reported that at their last meeting they worked on final revisions to the Rim Country monitoring plan and looked at updates regarding funding. They continue to discuss development of data management for monitoring data, and what gaps need to be addressed to create a better decision support tool. They plan to discuss the use of citizen science for monitoring and discuss spring stream flow and snowpack and how they might factor into monitoring projects.
- Stakeholder Engagement WG - Melanie Colavito and Steve Rosenstock reported that they are planning to implement a live poll at the May Stakeholder Group meeting to seek guidance on direction of this working group. In June, they plan to report back on the results of the May exercise. *(Subsequent to this meeting the timing was adjusted so that guidance for direction exercise would be at the June Stakeholder group meeting, and the report back on that exercise would take place at the July Stakeholder group meeting)*
- Comprehensive Implementation WG – None

Stakeholder Disclosures – All

Joe Miller noted that there is always an annual AZ Game and Fish and Trout Unlimited conference. It did not happen this year; however, there was a series of webinar presentations and panels, with a panel discussion about planning and implementation strategies for the Rim Country EIS. [AZ-TU.org website](http://AZ-TU.org) is where this is available to view. He is also working with Payson and others in advancing the Cragin Watershed Protection project. They are discussing strategies for moving forward and collaboration.

Review Action Items

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. Co-chairs send draft objectives for N Kaibab site visit to Steering Committee for comment	Melanie Colavito, Anne Mottek	
2. Coordinate dates of N Kaibab site visit with Forest Service	Anne Mottek	
3. Steering Committee to offer thoughts on time allotment, dates, agenda, sites	Steering Committee and co-chairs	
4. Plan field trip logistics	Steering Committee/USFS	
5. Invite Stakeholder Group to attend field trip	Melanie Colavito, Anne Mottek	
6. Schedule a Nature Conservancy/Campbell Global presentation to Stakeholder Group on their work to date	Travis Wooley, Tabi Bolton	
7. Stakeholder Engagement Working Group poll scheduled for June Stakeholder Group meeting	Melanie Colavito, Steve Rosenstock	
8. Contact Jeff Robbins from Payson	Anne Mottek	

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 11:52 am.

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

- Zoom - 5/26/2021, 6/23/2021, 8/25/2021, 9/22/2021, 12/17/2021
- Coconino NF Supervisor’s office (tentative) - 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

