



4FRI Stakeholder Group Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, November 17, 2021, 10:15 am – Noon
ZOOM Audio Meeting

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: Brett Crary, Dan GS, Patrice Horstman, Adam Livermore, Keith Watkins, Joe Miller, Ben De Blois, Gregory Nelson, Julian Wolff, Dave Dorum, Tabi Bolton, Anne Mottek, Melanie Colavito, Petros, Adam Cooley, Pascal Berlioux, Devon Suarez, Patrick Moore, Andy Stevenson, Amy Waltz, Tami Conner, Adrian Skablund, John Souther, Bob Seidler, Keith Brekhus, Michele Ralston, Kenna Belsky, Mark Nigrelli, Neil Chapman, Cerissa Hoglander, Elaine Kohrman, Ariel Leonard, Jason Whiting, Elvy Barton, Kelly Gannon, Paul Tetterton, Kara Kirkpatrick-Kreitenger, Rob Nelson, Amy Waltz, Greg Smith, Alicyn Gitlin, and Carol Covington taking minutes.

Approve minutes from the October 27, 2021 Stakeholder Group meeting— Approved as presented.

Review action items from the October 27, 2021 Stakeholder Group meeting

Action Item	Lead	Status
Innovations in fire management briefing SHG item for future meeting, select briefing date, ID desired content	Tami Conner, Steering Committee	Ongoing – January SHG
USFS indicated they would review NEPA to determine if mechanical thinning is allowed on steep slopes – report at Nov SHG meeting	Tami Conner	Complete (see below)

Tami Conner reported that the Innovations in Fire Management briefing is targeted to be presented at the January Stakeholder meeting. Addressing the second action item, the first EIS did not address steep slope mechanical thinning, however, Bill Williams and Flagstaff Watershed Protection did analyze and allow this, and Rim Country NEPA has some allowances but with caveats. Adam Cooley (who had initially posed the question) indicated that he would follow up with Tami regarding the specifics of what is allowed.

Call to the Public – None.

Forest Service Chief Announcement – Elaine Kohrman USFS, was having audio difficulties, so Tami Conner shared the powerpoint presentation shared at the 11/9/22 announcement by Chief Moore. She urged everyone to review the [4FRI Restoration Strategy document](#). She then proceeded to review Chief Moore's remarks regarding the USFS new strategy for 4FRI:

- Recognize the critical need to reduce the risk of wildfire, restore forests and protect important values across the 4FRI area.
- New approaches are necessary to face growing wildfire threat.
- Moving ahead on a redesigned 4FRI Restoration Strategy (see link above) with a new focus on the priority areas where a wildfire is most likely to place homes, communities and infrastructure at risk.
- The decision represents an important step towards the USFS larger national strategy.
- National strategy aligns with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed by Congress
- Committing to \$54 million in Fiscal Year 2022 to accelerate the needs for implementing high priority projects over the next 10 years including roads and bridges.

Key points of the strategy

1. High priority partner projects – reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire to communities
2. Implement 5-year plans – 295,000 acres over 20 years to maintain existing industry. This includes 18,500 on Coconino and Kaibab for westside industry for FY2022 only.
3. Tonto and Kaibab NFs – treat approximately 86,000 acres using prescribed fire and non-commercial thinning
4. Conduct Rapid Assessment and Optimization – Coconino and Kaibab NFs – Approximately 300,000- 350,000 acres over 20 years beginning with FY2023.
5. Resolve Enabling conditions – focus on resolving enabling condition for industry success

Highlights

- The strategy is quicker and more diverse with opportunities for existing and new industry
- It uses a variety of scales, different contracts and agreements, over multiple time frames
- The strategy also integrates mechanical thinning and prescribed fire as complimentary ways to reduce wildfire risk to meet desired conditions
- The funds (54K in FY22) support approximately 35,000 acres in mechanical thinning in FY 2022.
- Considering the total acres and planned they will be treating 47% of the 4FRI area.

Next Steps – Implement 4FRI Restoration Strategy

- Implementation plan for Restoration Strategy- tracking of acres and budget expenditures – budget approval with site specific plan to spend \$54 million anticipated 12/15/21
- 4FRI team to conduct rapid assessment and optimization on Coconino and Kaibab NFs – rapid assessment: Jan-Mar 2022; Board approve FY 23 program of work 3/31/22; Optimization April/May/June 2022.

- RIM Country EIS – FWS consultation Dec/Jan 2022; Objection Period: begins after BO received; decision 4 months after objection period begins
- They welcome and are seeking further dialogue with industry on market research and partners on these commitments to further define the details
- They commit to a transparent, open process

Amy Waltz extended thanks for the presentation, and noted that the 4FRI Stakeholder Group was not invited to the public announcement so this is the first time the information has been seen by the Stakeholder group. She also asked for clarification about the role of the SHG in the optimization prioritization effort. From the presentation, she understands that the Forest Service will be leading that effort, with work starting in December. The USFS timeline is not consistent with the SHG timeline. Pascal and Tami asserted that the process will include Stakeholder Group active participation.

Alicyn Gitlin asked for confirmation that the final EIS will be released after January 2022. Tami Conner confirmed.

Joe Miller echoed Amy's comments and expressed concern that the Forest Service presentation did not seem to reflect Stakeholder Group involvement. He asked for clarification on some of the points she made. Tami's presentation indicated that the Craigin Watershed Protection area will have action plans by mid-December – what projects will be done, how will they be scheduled, how will they be funded? He asked that the Stakeholder Group be informed about decision making in the allocation of funding apparently being finalized mid-December. Tami Conner apologized for the unintentional oversight of inclusion of the Stakeholder Group in the timeline presented in the powerpoint. That was not the intent. She indicated that all of the projects are on a five to ten- year implementation plan. Implementation will take place incrementally. Joe Miller offered a follow up question about Craigin Watershed. The EA was approved in 2018 as a fuels-management activity. Forest Restoration work (vegetation and watershed) they were told, would be covered as part of the Rim Country EIS. He wonders how the Craigin forest restoration will be addressed as part of Rim Country EIS. Tami responded that they are very good questions and she would like to learn that information as well. She offered to follow up, and to work on outlining first steps.

Elaine Kohrman expressed strong gratitude to the Stakeholder Group for all of the collaborative work which was instrumental to securing the \$54K for 4FRI. She underscored that the intent is to dovetail the Forest Service work with the Stakeholder Group work.

Melanie Colavito noted that in social science research, collaborative groups such as 4FRI respond to disturbances. The 4FRI as a group is responding to the cancellation of the RFP. One of the things that has come out of this research, is the importance in such conditions, to return to the institutional agreements, and memories. She suggested that it would be useful to touch base with all of the good work that has been done, as a reminder of all of the good work completed to date. She asked Tami if there is already a discussion of how the optimization prioritization will be approached or if that has yet to be determined. Tami Conner replied that the first steps are to assess what is the base data within the 4FRI footprint. Rapid assessment will include compilation of existing data layers, task orders, etc. which will inform the optimization process. Neil Chapman indicated that there was good communication for the FWPP went very well.

Industry Updates

Adam Cooley, New Life – There is work being done on both the west and east sides, feeding the New Life Heber facility. The air quality permit has been issued allowing a continuation of installation of new equipment at the Bellemont facility.

Devon Suarez, Suarez Forestry – Officially finished cutting Parks West, moving into Clover.

Working Group Updates

- Final Environmental Impact Statement WG – Amy Waltz/Rob Nelson – Amy reported that the working group met last week to review regional comments in advance of receipt of the next iteration of the FEIS. She reported that the issues conveyed had been addressed in the revision.
- Industry/Biomass WG - Brad Worsley/Adam Cooley – no meetings since the Industry Roundtable. The industry is working to build a winter deck of biomass to ensure supply through the winter months.
- Communication WG - Tayloe Dubay – Joe Miller reported that the newsletter will be a semiannual publication.
- Multi-Party Monitoring Board WG – Bryce Esch/Cerissa Hoglander – John Souther reported that the group has not met this month, however field work has been underway.
- Stakeholder Engagement WG - Melanie Colavito, Pascal Berlioux – No update.
- Comprehensive Implementation WG – Hannah Griscom – Cerissa Hoglander reported they have been working to develop packaged projects and integrating these with existing projects.

Stakeholder Disclosures – All

- End of ERI administrative support to 4FRI – Melanie Colavito reported on the changing role of ERI in the administrative function of the Stakeholder Group.
- What ERI is withdrawing
 - Taking minutes at SHG and SC meetings
 - Developing SC and SHG agendas and sending reminders
- What ERI is maintaining
 - ERI will continue to maintain 4FRI website and Basecamp access
 - ERI will continue to host zoom meetings and recordings will be retained for 4 months on the NAU cloud
 - ERI will continue to maintain Excel database of organizations in good standing and will work with current cold chair to obtain list of attendees at each meeting to facilitate this.
- What ERI is proposing
 - Hot chair and Cold chair are responsible for agenda development, conducting the meetings, taking notes per the charter instructions, and seeing that approved minutes are posted to Basecamp, as follows:
 - (a) Co-chair one: Develops committee meeting agendas in cooperation with the committee, conducts the meeting; ensures notes are taken, edited and posted to BASECAMP
 - (b) Co-chair two: Facilitates meeting logistics including taking or delegating note taking responsibilities.
- ERI will routinely forward meeting recordings to the Cold-Chair / Co-chair two, to facilitate note taking.
- We will work with SC to ease the transition
- What ERI can provide
 - Templates for agenda and notes
 - ERI admin handbook to 4FRI (can be revised for current protocols)
 - Guidance as needed for the transition.
 - Timeline
 - ERI will continue to provide the same level of administrative service until the end of 2021 at which time the new model will be engaged.

Pascal Berlioux remarked that he suspects that adding this responsibility to co-chair jobs, would dampen the enthusiasm of folks to volunteer for leadership positions. However, he has asked Eastern Arizona Counties Organization leadership if there is some way to fill in the administrative

gap. No determination has been made yet. He expressed appreciation to ERI and Carol Covington for the good work. Joe Miller echoed his gratitude.

Review Action Items

Records retention should be retained by ERI. Alternatives to this can be revisited at the January meeting.

Action Item **Lead** **Status**

1. Post 2022 meeting dates to Basecamp	Carol Covington	Complete
2.		

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 11:45 pm

2022 Stakeholder Group Meeting Schedule – these dates are posted on the 4FRI website.

- Zoom - 1/26/2022, 2/23/2022, 3/23/2022, 4/27/2022, 5/25/2022, 6/22/2022, 7/27/2022, 8/24/2022, 9/28/2022, 10/26/2022, 11/16/2022
- Coconino NF Supervisor’s office – none until further notice

2022		
	Hot Chair	Cold Chair
January	N Chapman	J Whiting
February	N Chapman	J Whiting
March	N Chapman	J Whiting
April	J Whiting	B Worsley
May	J Whiting	B Worsley
June	J Whiting	B Worsley
July	B Worsley	G Smith
August	B Worsley	G Smith
September	B Worsley	G Smith
October	G Smith	
November	G Smith	