



**4FRI Stakeholder Group Meeting
Minutes**

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

Zoom 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: 9:01 a.m. Mary Price, Amanda Grady, Tracy Bazelman, Melanie Colavito, Randy Fuller, Neil Chapman, Tabi Bolton, Tom Mackin, Jay Smith, Devon Suarez, Joe Loverich, Anne Mottek, Kevin McCully, Pascal Berlioux, Jason Whiting, Rob Nelson, Bob Seidler, Brad Gent, Lacey James, John Souther, Evan Lautzenheiser, Tami Conner, Travis Wooley, Brad Worsley, Michelle Paduani, Nick Wilhelmi, Patrice Horstman, Amy Waltz, Adam Livermore, Alicyn Gitlin, Allen Reidhead, Brett Crary, Cerissa Hoglander, Christine Mares, Elvy Barton, Erika Luna, Judy, Justin Schofer, Kara Kirkpartrick-Kreitinger, Marissa Kuntz, Mark Nigrelli, Matt McGrath, Michele Ralston, Mike Hannemann, Patrick Moore, Todd Schulke, Chris Newell, Connor Davidson Crouch, D. Taliaferro, George Stedeford, Kristen Waring, Kennvin McCully

Approve Minutes from the November 17, 2021 Stakeholder Group Meeting: The minutes were approved as presented.

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

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. Innovations in Fire Management briefing for SHG, select date and content	Tami Conner, Neil Chapman, Steering Committee	Ongoing
2. Follow Up with Melanie on Stakeholder Engagement Workgroup survey	Neil Chapman	Ongoing

3. Follow up with Tami re: comments in zoom chat and Alicyn re: FWPP	Neil Chapman	Complete
4. Send Rapid Assessment & Optimization Doodle with additional dates	Pascal Berlioux	Complete

1. Neil indicated that they are working on options for presentations for the next meeting and that he will leave this as Ongoing.
2. Neil stated that the workgroup survey is Ongoing.
3. Neil stated that this has been completed.
4. Neil advised that they had the first meeting and that this will be addressed later in the meeting.

Call to the Public: There were no public comments.

USFS updates: Tami Conner provided a brief update regarding information from the Engineers on the 300 Road work, indicating that they are looking at FY23 to pave an additional 6 miles from Woods Canyon Lake turnoff to the junction of Forest Service Road 34 and that the expected cost is approximately 7 to 7.5 million. She stated that the remaining portion of the 300 Road they are not recommending paving because the road would have to be realigned and it's not set up for higher speeds. She advised on the Rim Country FEIS they are looking at March 4, 2022 to have the early release go out and then the objection period would begin March 11, 2022 but indicated that those dates are still tentative. She stated that they are starting to plan FY23 programs of work and that they are looking at a similar budget level to FY22.

Brad Worsley inquired if they are planning any road improvements outside of paving on the 300 Road? Tami indicated that she is not aware but that they have the full maintenance on the rest of the roads for 4FRI that they are planning on.

Allen Reidhead indicated that significant work is needed on the 300 Road up to CC Cragin Watershed area that would be helpful.

Oystershell Scale Mitigation Trials: Amanda Grady stated that they have been doing a lot of work on aspen and monitoring aspen health across Arizona for decades and that for the past 3-4 years they have been focused on evaluating impacts from Oystershell Scale (OSS) migration from urban areas. She indicated that they are going to talk about a specific project that they would like to propose and collaborate with the Stakeholder Group on. A presentation was shown.

Marissa Kuntz, the ID Team Lead for the project talked about the program and highlighted on the importance of aspens, aspen decline and OSS as follows:

- Quaking Aspen is the most widely distributed tree in North America providing an array of eco system services such as providing a habitat for a wide range of species, they provide a large portion of biodiversity and contribute to carbon sequestration and water yield potential.
- Aspen is in a state of decline in Northern Arizona due to fire suppression, climate change, drought, native insects and now OSS.
- Oystershell Scale is an invasive sap sucking armored scale, it has been in North America for over 300 years and has recently spread into natural aspen forests in northern Arizona, where it is causing aspen dieback and mortality.

She stated that when OSS reaches outbreak proportions it can affect entire stems and branches which can result in crown and limb dieback and eventually the death of the host. She indicated that OSS is not only affecting aspen trees and stated that the other species of trees will also need to be treated in this

project. She talked about the areas in northern Arizona that they have observed OSS and the area of the proposed project. She stated that the aspen on the Mogollon rim have been in decline and that a monitoring plot network was established in 2017 to monitor mortality levels, regeneration and recruitment success as well as the impact of insects and disease. She advised that the results showed that there were no saplings recruited over 4 feet and that 90% of regeneration showed signs of chronic browsing. She addressed the recruitment on the Mogollon Rim over four feet. She stated that approximately 50% of aspen on the Coconino National Forest are infested and that the severity of OSS on the Mogollon Rim has contributed to the decline of the few aspen stands left. She talked about the impacts on the different size classes and indicated that OSS compromises important conservation strategies and that they need to investigate way to mitigate damage from invasive OSS to maintain resilient aspen with a variety of age and size classes. Ms. Kuntz talked the about OSS Mitigation Trials Project indicating that the objective of the project is to gain information that is important to development treatments to reduce OSS and to sustain aspen long term. She stated that this project would provide managers with recommendations and guidelines in this region. She stated that the proposed project would be long term, would take several seasons and would include:

- Up to 20.5 acres of aspen within 21 aspen enclosures with the size ranging from .018 acres to 2.5 acres
- Enclosures located along Forest Service roads 300, 321 and 137 in the southeastern section of the Mogollon Rim Ranger District

She advised that the proposed treatments areas were based off of a study done by NAU and that treatments would include:

- Clear-felling: which remove all trees greater than 2 feet tall and sanitation thinning treatments, which removes infested trees and leaves trees with no signs of OSS
- Systemic Insecticide – Dinotefuran: which is used on sap feeding insects, could be used on 8 aspen stands totaling 3.5 acres
- Conifer Thinning: would be done by hand and left in place and that Yellow pines and snags 18-inch diameter breast high would be retained, this could take place in aspen exposures or within a 200-foot buffer.
- Prescribed burns: would be a low to moderate severity prescribed fire
- Fence maintenance:

She stated that the objective of the project is to gain information that is critical for the development of treatments to reduce OSS infestation and for long-term sustainability of aspen in areas affected by OSS. She thanked the group for allowing them to present today.

Amanda Grady stated that this is just the beginning of the process and get some feedback on monitoring ideas. She indicated that they are involving a lot of different collaborators that have different expertise for the project.

John Southern thanked them for their presentation and inquired about timeline for the project.

Amanda stated that they have already started to implement some removals, such as clear-felling and thinning treatments on the Flagstaff and William Ranger Districts since 2020 but that they don't have any chemical treatments under way yet. She stated that they are hoping to have mechanical treatments done in the first year and then pesticides applied in the second year of treatment. She indicated that they want to be able to recruit OSS free regeneration.

Neil stated that Alicyn inquired if there will there be a comment period?

Amanda stated yes, that this is just the beginning, but there will be a comment period. She indicated that they can have follow up meetings to review concerns and possibly do field trips to see what the

needs are and what is going on. She stated that they are trying to reach out to broad audience through their outreach work.

Neil inquired as to the thoughts on broadcast burning in the areas in case the bugs are on the ground. Amanda indicated that it is one of the proposed treatments, that there are areas in the enclosures that are infected below the aspens due to other hosts and that they need to clean them up. She stated that some of the areas have been treated before, that the burns have been a good clean up and that in the areas it's been done they haven't seen OSS over the past 2 years on the regeneration.

Mary Price indicated that they are looking at using a new CE category to do the analysis, that part of that category is used for analyzing pesticides and that one of the requirements of using it is to do some collaboration before they finish the analysis.

A discussion was held regarding them presenting to the Monitoring Board.

Neil thanked Amanda and Marissa for the presentation and indicated that they appreciate the work they are doing.

Oak Creek Watershed Study: Jay Smith, with Coconino County, stated that the study for the Oak Creek Watershed in Munds Park is to determine prioritization for treatment in certain areas.

Joe Loverich and Matthew Scragg, with JE Fuller, introduced themselves. Joe indicated that the purpose of the study was to give them an understanding of what the post-fire flood risk to Oak Creek could be, what watersheds have the greatest risks and what the treatment prioritization for the watersheds are. He stated that the study is an evaluation of post fire/flood potential for the Oak Creek watershed and then determine the forest treatment prioritization of wildfire hazard potential, treatment feasibility and treatment availability. He further stated that it is not a detailed fire modeling, integration or projection of land scape change, assessment of the treatments proposed in 4FRI or the impact of burn severity and a 4FRI recommendation or MSO consideration.

Matthew addressed the location of the project and indicated that it was broke into four sub watersheds. He reviewed the project approach:

- Watershed Fire Modeling, which looks at burn severity and burn probability.
- Watershed H&H Analysis which looked at the pre-fire and post-fire discharges for flow changes.
- Post-Fire Hydraulic Analysis which looked at the extent of flooding and depths for rainfall events.
- Forest Treatment Prioritization Analysis, which is a grid-based analysis of the fire and post-fire flood risk.

He talked about the details and different steps of the project. He stated that the result from the project can be used to classify potential post-fire flood risk, help determine acres that contribute the most to post-fire flood risk and helps them gain an understanding of the post-fire flood risk if a fire were to occur in the study area.

Travis inquired if they considered modeling/examining which treatments, feasible vs. less feasible would have a great effect on the water modeling outcomes. Joe stated that they didn't do an analysis of the treatment proposed, that it would be something that could be added.

Travis inquired is steep slopes would be more effective at flood mitigation than flat areas. Matthew talked about modeling flat areas vs. steep canyon walls in the project area.

Cerissa inquired if the flood risk modeling could also be used to highlight priority areas for stream channel restoration which rock structure could support slowing intense water flow events/reducing erosion. Matthew stated that it could be used for that. Joe stated that there is a lot of data in the study and that using the data for other things is a possibility.

Alicyn inquired if the potential treatments could increase water yield in a negative way.

Matthew stated that they didn't look into that. Joe indicated that they haven't looked into that but that if others have information that is good analysis of that they would be interested in seeing it.

Amy addressed the optimization or prioritization work that 4FRI is doing and indicated that they would like to engage and have more information provided to a smaller group of interested people.

Matthew indicated that they will provide contact information.

John inquired if they have data for non-federal pieces of land and where the risk may be high as well as the feasibility.

Matthew stated that they have the base data of the expected post fire burns severities and probabilities are and the discharges.

Neil – will follow up with jay in optimization group.

Jay smith – wanted to get the information out there – information is perfect – made a good investment

Tom inquired what Coconino County plans to do with this information.

Jay talked about the plans for the study.

Optimization Work Group Next Steps: Neil stated had a meeting recently and discussed the vision for the process and everyone's ability to contribute to the process. He indicated that they went through a follow up on consolidating the comments from the group and that once it is finalized, they will put it in Basecamp. He stated that for next steps they have a doodle poll out right now and that once the responses are received, they will schedule the next meeting for the small group to start working on the Charter and align the group organization. He further stated that if any changes are need to the notes to provide comments by end of today so it can be posted this week.

Industry Updates: Bread Worsley, with Novo Power, reported that they have had some struggles the past 4-6 weeks to control emission at the same output that they have historically and that they are working to find out what it could be. He indicated that they have had to reduce their load by approximately 10% in order to maintain compliance with their air permit. He stated that if they knew they would be long term that they could invest in an SCR but that it is approximately two million dollars. He advised that they continue to be in contact with their utilities, that they continue to bring in good wood, that their wood inventory has risen from ten days to twenty days and that the facility is up and running they just can't put out as many megawatts.

Allen Reidhead, with Tristar, reported that they are continuing to harvest, that they have had to move around with the weather but that they are still bringing logs in and cutting lumber. He stated that the markets are looking good, that they are looking at ways to upgrade and increase capacity and that they are just trying to keep running.

Brad Gent, with Lignetics, reported that their plants running well, that they are running 24/7 and that they are sitting in a good inventory position in the wood yard.

George Stedeford, with New Life Forest, reported that the weather has them jumping around, that the last two weeks they have been getting biomass products out. He stated that they are setting up acres and that it is all going well aside from the weather.

Devon Suarez, with Suarez Forestry, reported that over the past couple months they finished the spa agreement with T&Z, that they finished the Clover Spa in Williams and that they have a couple of projects around Flagstaff that they are working on right now. He indicated that they are affected by the weather right now but that they are looking forward to good spring and summer.

Working Group Updates:

- Final Environmental Impact Statement WG – Amy Waltz/Rob Nelson: No update.
- Industry/Biomass WG - Brad Worsley/Adam Cooley: No update.

- Communication WG - Tayloe Dubay: Melanie indicated that Tayloe is asking if any has ideas for spring newsletter, and if so, to send them to her.
- Multi-Party Monitoring Board WG – Bryce Esch/Cerissa Hoglander: Travis reported that they have been working on setting up agreements on FY22 funding. He stated that recently they have been working with NAU on the results for the Chimney Springs Vegetation plots, that they will review those over the next couple months and engage with the Work Group to discuss the results. He stated that they are working on planning a presentation to the 4FRI Executive Board to provide an update due to the turnover they have had.
- Stakeholder Engagement WG - Melanie Colavito, Pascal Berlioux: Melanie reported that she has been working with Stakeholder Group and Steering Committee to finalize a survey that will be done at the March or April Stakeholder Meeting. She stated that the survey will be live with virtual polling so that they can get a sense of where the Group is at with key issues as the move into completing the Rim County and completing planning and into engagement in the implementation process. She stated that if you are in the group you will have received an email to review the draft survey.
- Comprehensive Implementation WG – Hannah Griscom: Cerissa reported that they have been meeting to continue conversation on spring channel and spring restoration prioritization based on the original areas that were cleared and that they are developing proposals based on that. She advised that their next meeting will be March 8, 2022 from 3-4 p.m. and that they will be updating the larger Group after that.

Stakeholder Disclosures: There were no Stakeholder disclosures.

Review Action Items:

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. Add presentations from meeting to Base Camp.	Neil Chapman	
2. Check if Adam Cooley is still co-chair for Industry/Biomass WG	Neil Chapman	
3.		

Adjourn: 10:35 a.m. meeting adjourned.

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

- Zoom - 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
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	
December	NO SHG MTG	NO SHG MTG