



4FRI Stakeholder Group Meeting

MINUTES

Wednesday, April 26th 2023 9 am – Noon

Coconino National Forest Supervisor's Office
1824 South Thompson Street, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

OR Virtual:

ZOOM Audio Meeting

<https://nau.zoom.us/j/82295020517?pwd=MFBmamk1a1ZvWnpDOHo0QU1KNHN6Zz09>

Meeting ID: 822 9502 0517

Password: SHG

MEETING RECORDING -

https://nau.zoom.us/rec/share/3wNzUR9wLTu6jLhxByT8dT6Ch0mZF1dvVTFUPuplZ_4DipPGiNVmLHh6JAFg9Hj.qamodNdg_Bvinuag

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 and to introduce yourself and affiliation.
- Please be aware that zoom private messages become part of the official transcript.

Attendees: Melanie Colavito, Jay Smith, Amy Waltz, Aaron Mayville, Amber Dorsch, Amy Ormseth, Randy Kreger, Mark Nigrelli, Devon Suarez, Chris Johansen, Travis Woolley, Maggie Hardy, Brad Worsley, Michelle Paduani, Greg Smith, Gary Moore, David Brock, Tom Mackin, Mike Hannemann, Lisa Bolton, Tabi Bolton, Carl Nelson, Brett Crary, Ariel, Leonard, Luke Thompson, Lynn Krigbaum, Nicole Branton, Cerissa Hoglander, Pascal Berlioux, Patrick Moore, Brian Nowicki, Alicyn Gitlin, Christine Mares, Evan Lautzenheiser, Hannah Griscom, Tracy Bazelman, Yvette Paroz, Andi Rogers, Carrie Eberly, Jessica Archibald, Jill Beckman, Keith Pajkos, Randy Fuller

9:00 Approve Feb minutes, review action items — Jay – Approved

Action Item	Lead	Status
1. USFS to set up a meeting to discuss new monthly reporting format	Brett	Complete
2. USFS to post 5-yr plans to Basecamp	Tami/Amy	Complete – put into monthly update (Appendix B), not Basecamp
3. Post Jan. 25 th Meeting Summary Doc to	Melanie	Complete

	Website/Basecamp		
4.	Gather proposals for external support/Facilitation, post to basecamp	Melanie & Jay	Complete

9:05 Call to the Public – Jay – N/A

9:08 USFS updates – Amy and other USFS Reps

- Tami Connor accepted new position on National Priority Landscape (San Carlos), Amy Ormseth serving as acting while 120 detailer gets into place, and the position for 4FRI coordinator will be flown nationally
- Michelle Paduani returning to position
- Scott Rogers – District Ranger on El Dorado R5 – will be serving in 120 detail for 4FRI – will work virtually for first few weeks – starts Monday, May 1 – title “Program Manager”
- FS in transition with Wildfire Crisis Strategy (WCS) and National Priority Landscapes – Scott will help transition 4FRI into WCS realm, help determine what that means for reporting, etc.
- R3 is shifting supervision of 4FRI back to Coconino NF
- There is still a 4FRI Executive Board across the 4 forests
- *See recording for additional discussion*
- 4FRI Monitoring Coordinator position is stuck in Forest Service HR
 - o Hiring is number one barrier across the Forest Service to accomplish WCS
 - o Hiring events are underway nationally to increase capacity
 - o Should be a decision shortly on Monitoring Coordinator – maybe 3-4 months until they are here

9:30 Prio-Opt “What is Optimization” discussion – Amy Waltz or Travis

- See recording for Amy Waltz’s presentation
- Aaron Mayville – direction from FS Chief is focused on treating the right 20-40% of acres, cannot fail, and the agency is using strategic planning tools – how do these efforts dovetail?
 - o Nigrelli – doing a lot of the same things and the same time, so need to focus on our goals for optimizing this landscape and determining which tools can get us to our goals and monitor to determine how the treatments we are doing are changing the risk
 - The PriOpt workshop will help us determine what is the best tool for our needs and who can help us accomplish that for 4FRI, in a way that includes FS and SHG, and then determine how to implement it into treatment process
- Waltz – multiple researchers focused on this, so of the suite of tools, which are the ones that can answer our questions, and which are the ones that the FS needs to focus on accomplish reporting
- Colavito – need to ask model/ tool developers to articulate who is the audience for a given model, what geographic scale of reference it has, and what questions it can answer
- Waltz – Failure can be ok, can help lead to adaptive management, can we be flexible to adapt and learn
- Nowicki – Going back to letter of commitment, optimization is supposed to inform future sequencing to reduce overall risk of catastrophic fire to reduce risk to our highly valued assets, but that does not always mean treating the areas with the highest value attributes. We need to allow models to tell us where the work should be done to provide the greatest effect. How do we build the biggest boxes of restored fire regime with the most reasonable inputs as quickly as possible? Process of determining values more important than the model itself.
- Smith – what does work group need from stakeholder group?
 - o Waltz – values assessment is broad stakeholder engagement, especially important to include industry and operational perspectives. Similar effort occurring on Burnt Corral, discussion on how we might leverage efforts.
 - o Woolley – we don’t want to recreate learning over and over, so it will be important to participate in learning as we move forward

- Waltz – want to include fire professionals, and be aware of fire season

10:00 Review SDR proposal for external support – Melanie or Jay

- Forest Service has budgeted for the estimated costs for SDR, can start in FY24
- Might be best to have fiscal sponsor come from county, NAU's overhead rate is 25.5%
- Good to think about more facilitation needs than less
- **Agreement to move forward with SDR facilitation for 4FRI according to proposed scope/ budget**
- **Next steps:**
 - **Jay to determine if County can be fiscal sponsor; Travis will also ask TNC**
 - **Jay and Melanie to confirm financial commitments**
- As soon as there is funding in place with some entity, SDR can start
- There will need to be two separate contracts/ agreements, one for FS and one for SHGs via the fiscal sponsor

10:30 Future Agenda Items – Jay

- Forest Biomass Coalition – Diane Vosick can speak in June 2023
- Road infrastructure discussion/ subgroup of industry work group – potential for June 2023
- TNC recent papers relevant to 4FRI and restoration, post-fire regen, carbon – could be June or August 2023

10:35 Industry Updates – All

- Campbell Global – TNC SPAs ongoing; road/ ground conditions improving; doug fir and hemlock species are a 1/3 to 1/2 their price for lumber, which impacts 4FRI and ponderosa thinning negatively; Parks West SPA has two contractors (Dakota logging subcontract to Hammer logging); also doing meadow restoration/ wildlife corridor creation by I-40 and removing some ponderosa overgrowth for pile burning; TSI post-treatment areas for burning
- RFOR – Walker Hill ongoing, and subcontractor on Camp Navajo, still wet in spots making things challenging; planers going in on mill; Elk Clark getting started, discussion ongoing
- Canyon Creek – drying out on most sales, just did Miligan Valley Stewardship project; lot of operations were shut down through winter but kept crews busy with PJ work; actively investing in new equipment to double logging capacity; moving about 40 loads a day between logging and biomass but hope to push to 50-60 in coming months
- Novo – week and a half of inventory; current challenge is running at full load just on juniper but in better place than in winter, and hopeful about getting some pine soon; TriStar is having difficulties; NovoStar plans to start this week at about half capacity and truck fleet down to 1/3 of what it used to be, so this is a major shift and Canyon Creek is filling some capacity gaps; Novo bought remaining sawmill equipment from Vaughan Group to help them avoid foreclosure; these capacity issues will impact work getting done on CC Cragin due to the haul distance as it will be a priority for limited trucks to go somewhere close; frustration that Novo was not qualified for haul assistance program because of concern about WIPA grant and stewardship agreement overlap as the agreement barely covered increased costs of inflation (Aaron asked for a note from Brad with the details on this); offered to assist with SDR agreement if appropriate
- Suarez – working in Walker Hill demo and worked decently through winter and have about half skidded; finished plowing 300 road for Cragin; hoping to get 100 loads decked on Roosevelt; hope to be into Baker in 7 weeks
- Coconino County – several SHG groups attended R3 FS-hosted industry roundtable, not a lot of actionable outcomes from the meeting; there was some discussion about why the roundtable as not applicable to 4FRI, likely because 4FRI has already had a lot of the discussions
- DFFM – five new GNA agreements coming for about 32K acres on Coconino and Tonto, not including first GNA with Kaibab that is requesting help with arch services; 2023 task orders – looking at 7 for hand

thinning, mastication, and timber removal for 12K acres; working with Mogollon Rim district with plan and funding in place to start working on road repairs to Cragin

10:45 Working Group Updates

- Industry/Biomass WG - Brad Worsley – have not met
- Communication WG - Tayloe Dubay – no update
- Multi-Party Monitoring Board WG – Cerissa Hoglander
 - Working within subgroups to get 2023 field season running – ground plots and springs monitoring in first phase 4FRI
 - Also planning for expansion into Rim Country, capacity limited
 - Working on FY24 budget proposal for review
- Comprehensive Implementation WG – Hannah Griscom
 - Several projects planned for summer with partners AZ Elk Society and FONAF and GCT in CC Cragin watershed, as well as Lake Mary watershed with GCT leading and help from Coconino in planning and implementing those projects this summer
 - New hydrologist on Coconino working on out year planning for watershed restoration implementation in collaboration with CIWG
 - Letter submitted on March 28, 2023 requesting increased capacity for channel/ stream restoration and engagement with forest to help with projects, have not received any formal engagement from the letter yet, but hoping it is in review and consideration with respect to hiring plans in FS
 - Some field trips planned to look at more specific planning (May 3 – Lake Mary; May 22 – Mogollon Rim – let Hannah know if you want to join)
- Treatment Prioritization and Optimization WG – Amy Waltz/ Travis Woolley
 - See earlier presentation

11:00 Stakeholder Disclosures – All

- Tom Mackin - mentioned the Sunday evening 4-hour TV session on forests, fires, recent CA fires – channel 265 on April 23 – Aaron may be able to track it down and share
- Brad Worsely – Novo part of Biomass Power Association, going through rebranding to American Biomass Energy Association
- Jay Smith - Biomass Demo (Coconino County FCD, FS, ERI, etc.) doing a biomass demo this week (April 27, 10am public demo on Copeland and there are signs) of the CharBoss equipment
- Jay Smith – Orpheum was going to do video for Wildfire Awareness month, contacted County and asked for help – May 19 from 5:30-8:30 there will be a public event at the Orpheum on wildfire awareness, will post to Basecamp when there is a flyer
- Amy Waltz – ERI is hosting a Cross-Boundary Landscape Restoration workshop in Ft. Collins May 2-4, 2023

11:05 Review Action Items – Jay Smith

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

Determine if Coconino County can be fiscal sponsor for SDR facilitation agreement	Jay Smith	
TNC will also explore if they can be fiscal sponsor/ waive overhead	Travis Woolley	
Confirm financial agreements from SHG on SDR facilitation agreement	Melanie Colavito, Jay Smith	
Follow up with RMRS fire modeling groups for presentations	Amy Waltz, Maggie Hardy	

Adjourn –

UPDATE AS APPROPRIATE

Steering Committee Meetings (second Tuesday of each month)

- 1/10/2023, 2/14/2023, 3/14/2023, 4/11/2023, 5/9/2023, 6/13/2023, 7/11/2023, 8/8/2023, 9/12/2023, 10/10/2023, 11/14/2023, December no meeting

Stakeholder Group Meetings (fourth Wednesday of each month, except November)

- 1/25/2023, 2/22/2023, 3/22/2023, 4/26/2023, 5/24/2023, 6/28/2023, 7/26/2023, 8/23/2023, 9/27/2023, 10/25/2023, 11/29/2023, December no meeting

	2023	
	Hot Chair	Cold Chair
January	Melanie Colavito	Neil Chapman
February	Neil Chapman	Jay Smith
March	Neil Chapman	Jay Smith
April	Neil Chapman	Jay Smith
May	Jay Smith	Anne Mottek
June	Jay Smith	Anne Mottek
July	Jay Smith	Anne Mottek
August	Anne Mottek	P. Berlioux?
September	Anne Mottek	P. Berlioux?
October	Anne Mottek	P. Berlioux?
November		
December	NO SHG MTG	NO SHG MTG