



4FRI Stakeholder Group Meeting

Wednesday, November 29, 9AM-12PM

Coconino National Forest Supervisor Office

1824 S Thompson St, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

MEETING RECORDING

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wVqYpCrgpfd5JGnjdyoxfsWQ5i25H7Fb/view?usp=sharing>

Participants: Eli Jensen, Jay Smith, Tom Mackin, Tabi Bolton, Mike Hanneman, Joel Jurgens, Devon Suarez, Greg Smith, Brad Worsley, Melanie Colavito, Amy Waltz, Elizabeth Johnston, Scot Rogers, Nina Shams, Cerissa Hoglander, Mary Lou Zimmerman, Christina Mares, John Richardson, Nicole Branton, Brett Crary, Taylor Grysen, Richie Sinkovitz, Charles Dawson, Rosie Keller, Mart Duitemeijer

Facilitation Team: Carrie Eberly and Jessica Archibald (Southwest Decision Resources -SDR)

9:00 Welcome and Agenda Review - Southwest Decision Resources (SDR)

9:07 Approve October 25, 2023 Stakeholder Group Meeting Minutes - SDR

- Approved

9:08 Review Action Items

Action Item	Lead	Status
Discuss additional Industry meeting	Jay, Joel, James, Pascal	Ongoing
Create/add a tonnage table for contracts (to best show activity and inactivity).	Brett	Ongoing
Provide clarity on keystone partners and relationship to 4FRI	Nicole	Ongoing
Aquatic/watershed restoration monthly updates	Brett, Monitoring Coordinator	Ongoing
Post information about Parks West Project to Basecamp	Tabi, Joel	DONE
Discuss adding a watershed health action or comprehensive restoration action in the charter	Charter Team	DONE

Email Melanie if you feel that mission does not sufficiently address comprehensive restoration	All	DONE
Set up tracking for “good standing”	SDR	DONE
Review final version of charter on basecamp for final approval of proposed changes	All	DONE
Coordinate meeting between Industry and FS 4FRI team	Industry Group, 4FRI Team	Ongoing

- Jay S.: There isn’t an update on industry meetings, working on moving that forward with the Industry Working Group.
- Tonnage table:
 - Jay S.: Think that it was updated.
 - Tabi B.: Still in process, but updates were made.
- Keystone partners: Nicole and Scot will work on this.
- Aquatic and watershed update:
 - Carrie E.: Brett said would work with the new monitoring coordinator. Still working on this.
 - Cerissa H.: For these updates, it would be good to work with the Comprehensive Implementation Working Group.
- Parks West information: Tabi completed.
- SDR is tracking who is in good standing.
- Scot R.: I will work with Brett and Nicole on their action items.

9:11 Call to the Public

- None.

9:12 USFS Updates - Scot Rogers

- Do not have FY24 priority landscape funding, the main source of funding for 4FRI from BIL and IRA. These funds are being reviewed and the decisions are being made at the Washington Office level. Will be having a meeting next week in Phoenix with the Washington Office. Expect to have much more clarity on what funding will look like. Funding won’t be released until next year.
- Don’t expect an impact on FY24 work. Had around \$10 million in carry-over funding, prioritized this to move forward projects on the ground to meet industry needs. These should be on track for the most part.
- For hiring, Mary Lou Zimmerman is here as the new Monitoring Coordinator. She is new to the agency, working on getting onboarded. Please be patient as she gets onboarded and has access to all the necessary portals and resources.
 - Mary Lou Z.: I most recently worked with BLM in Montana and worked on similar projects. Worked with a great group of partners in the past. Looking forward to working with this group and moving restoration forward.

- Will be filling Mark Nigrelli's position, potentially next week. This is fantastic! No name to release yet, but it is someone who will know the area and will be able to get on board quickly.
 - Cerissa H.: Excited to hear the GIS person starting sooner. The Multiparty Monitoring Board is looking to connect with that person. If they start before the end of the year, there will be another meeting in December they could attend.
 - GIS person is already a FS employee, should be a smoother transition. Scot will share more information as soon as he can.
- Moving forward with exploring potential pilot with an additional 5-10,000 acres of contract in the Kaibab area. That would be a G to Z contract, IRSC contract type. G to Z means that the awarding would help with marking, additional stewardship items. Trying to identify where this will be. Won't impact FY 24/25 offerings. More on this to come in January. It likely will be on the west side.
 - Tabi B.: Do you have a partner picked out yet?
 - Scot R.: No, but it could be partner could be competitive. Would be 5-10,000 acres. Don't know the complete amount of preparation work necessary. Some areas may need archaeology/wildlife surveys. Likely all areas will need timber preparation. Still early in these conversations, haven't picked locations just yet. Trying to increase offerings as much as possible.
- FS national policy currently states that can't encumber biomass in the land indefinitely. There is a potential policy change that they are asking for comments on. Scot posted this to Basecamp. He knows that there is some interest in biomass storage on the land, just wanted to be transparent about that.

9:20 DFFM Update - John Richardson

- DFFM reorganized with a focus on districts, and they now have 5 districts. Just filled three of five district positions. Each district has 8 people. Still will have statewide staff as well. Really ramping up the district model.
- [DFFM Good Neighbor Agreement \(GNA\) in the 4FRI footprint as of 11/28/23](#)
- [300 Road Accomplishments](#)
- Will do private contractor award in December 2023.
- Jay S.: Impressed great work! Someone called the other day, thinking about doing mastication in AZ. How do they get involved?
 - John R.: The statewide application is currently closed, but will be reopened soon after review. Contractors generally come on every 5 years, but due to recent changes with DFFM decided to reopen that. Expect the first calendar quarter of 2024. Then will close for 5 years likely.
 - Christine M.: any potential contractors need to sign in to the AZ procurement portal before any application. Jay - you can share their contact information with me.
- Tabi B.: Can you update the contractor offerings document more frequently? Doing a lot.
 - John R.: Yep. It essentially outlines all projects, types of work, timeline for solicitation, and a few other pieces. It is a good opportunity for contractors to forecast what is coming.

- Tom M.: Thank you for the presentation. Mentioned staffing - how did all this funding become available to support this greater level of activity?
 - John: Appropriated more funding, \$32 million under wildfire mitigation (fire prevention, forest and watershed restoration, structure, etc.). This allowed them to build more capacity and get into the game of forestry in AZ. Were doing work before, but now ramping up more. Have a lot of support in Hobbs administration through resiliency plans. Optimistic to be able to continue and emerge as a leader in the State.
 - Tom M.: With that funding source, comfortable that that level will continue?
 - John R.: as comfortable as can be. Had a lot of accomplishments in recent years, and the fact that they are so engaged and working heavily with FS all continues to support what that funding is there for.
 - Tom M.: Is the other side of State Lands, did they benefit from these activities?
 - John R.: They are a sister agency, work closely. Do concurrence on all state trust land. Unsure of their funding, DFFM takes care of anything aboveground on state lands.
 - Scot R: for 23 alone, the FS went into GNA with State. Provided \$31.6 million. Other partners brought \$20.6 million. The amount of match that the state provided is unbelievable.
 - John R.: Important to have SRP at the table as well.
 - Scot R.: DFFM mentioned 100 people across the state. Talked about how partners are interacting with lots of more foresters at the state level. Unbelievable work! Thank you!
 - Tom M.: It would be great to get this out to the general public to publicize the positive efforts, often only hear the problems and shortcomings. This a huge coup if you will. To get that work out, would be good to share.
 - Brad W.: At Novo Power, grateful to DFFM. They are a solution space for challenges been facing the past decade. Off CC Cragin and elsewhere, looking for dollars allocated for grinding. It will be hard to grind and haul it out. Please consider setting aside dollars to cover grinding costs.
- Cerissa H.: Do GNA projects just operate on FS lands? Or others as well?
 - John R.: GNA is given to the state to do projects on federal lands, not only FS. Have GNA agreement on BLM as well. It is authority that gives us the ability to do work on federal lands.
 - Scot R.: There are other avenues to get funding for state lands, not currently happening within the 4FRI footprint.
- Christine M.: We are getting more interest from FS to increase scale with cross-boundary work. Talking more about incorporating adjacent land ownership for GNA projects.
- Melanie C.: Does GNA include fire?
 - Christine M.: It can if there is a capacity need from the FS
 - Nicole B.: DFFM is doing archaeology on the Kaibab. This helps with capacity staffing issues to be at the pace they want to be.

- Brad W.:
 - Right now Novo Power is sitting on 5 days of usable inventory. This winter hasn't been as devastating, been able to work. Not where we want to be, but better than nothing.
 - Had a wonderful visit with SRP directors and executives. They flew into Show Low and spent 6 hours with them. Visited Tom Hols sites including the Spring Sale and OW sale, and they also visited the SRP facility. There was a deep connection and understanding there. SRP saw and understood that there needs to be additional help. It has been four years of PPA renewal, trying to get Novo Power to a place where they can settle in and run. Not making enough money to be the support that they are being right now. If Novo Power goes away, it would be a big problem for loggers. APS has already been on board. Between FS, APS, and SRP, there seems to be collaboration to help Novo Power run better.
- Devon S.:
 - Currently working on the Roosevelt GNA through DFFM. At 300 acres this month.
 - Another project with DFFM to Tom Hol and Canyon Creek - good progress here. Hopefully getting prepared for the winter and weathering that.
 - Brad W.: Want Devon to buy a grinder
 - Devon S.: Economically don't know if can make it happen, just bought \$1.4 million in equipment in the last quarter. Been tough but want to step up the pace and scale. Need some support. Want to survive in the end.
 - Scot R.: What is the cost of a grinder?
 - Brad W.: \$1.3 million
- Joel J.:
 - Not active right now, sealing up an agreement to start as soon as possible after winter (April 1). In discussion with Kaibab and Coconino County for additional projects under development right now.
 - Some may remember the Walker Hill demo, which trialed many processes for marking and harvesting (lots of timestamps, 183 plots, pre- and post-). Currently analyzing this data and looking to release a few publications on this probably next summer. Hoping that this is useful for FS and operations.
 - Starting a new fire-related initiative - as an organization, we have recognized that only dabbling in one part of the restoration process. Want to do comprehensive restoration with FS and State on fire activities. Met with ERI and SW Fire Consortium yesterday. Engaged R3 as well, and will be reaching out to local folks to see what challenges and barriers are and how they can assist with increasing fire on the ground so that collectively can secure investment in thinning operations. Also tied in on keystone agreements, about \$55 million that TNC has received. Looking to tap into that, but don't want to assume what is needed so doing outreach first.
- Brad W.: Sawmill Springs - looking to get the right equipment into the State (e.g., the right trailer size). Placed an order for 6-axle trailers. Hope this may increase the load and may be sold to suppliers in the future. Novo Power taking a bet on what they see as the future.
 - Jay: Are they just the typical possum?

- Multi-Party Monitoring Board WG - Cerissa Hoglander
 - Will have one more meeting in December. Excited to have Mary Lou on board, really important capacity and a big gap to fill. Excited to ramp up work.
 - Excited to hear that GIS is coming as well, looking forward to picking up some projects there.
 - Focusing on planning out 2024.
- Comprehensive Implementation WG - Cerissa Hoglander
 - Focused on 2024 planning. Meeting with Coconino tomorrow to plan out work.
 - Got great work done this year (Buck Springs, Clarks Spring, Hoxworth Springs, and more!)
 - CIWG letter was sent earlier this year and haven't received a formal response. Appreciate capacity coming forward, looking to round out even more capacity. Want to ensure FS capacity for moving forward watershed work.
 - Tom M.
 - To dovetail on Cerissa, with Friends of Northern Arizona Forest (FoNAF). Wrapped up work season beginning in November. Increased volunteer activity with AGFD and FS as well as other NGOs.
 - As Cerissa mentioned with Aspen and wetland exclosures, FoNAF monitors and keeps prepared 80 on Kaibab, 15-20 on Mogollon Rim, and 75 on Flagstaff. All are part of CIWG type of activities.
 - There was a big push in the last three years has been old fence removal on range. 2021 removed 14 tons, 2022 17 tons, 2023 23 tons of old wire, t-posts, and old aspen exclosures. Did run into a small problem, always tried to recycle these, but the outlet will no longer accept wire. Been taking it to the landfill where they have another outlet to get rid of that.
 - As Cerissa mentioned, in the planning process for 2024. Recently reached out to AGFD and FS to meet in January with specialists to develop plans.
 - Completed 37 projects last work season. Been going along very well. Very pleased that during COVID, having so many volunteers coming out added work. Thankful to FS for providing extra transportation support and equipment support.
 - Have gotten grants from OHV group for equipment materials and fencing material (e.g., logworm fencing) to protect meadows and wetlands.
 - Looking to do more work on the Flagstaff and Mogollon districts!
 - Cerissa H.: Can't understate the impact that FoNAF has on the landscape and these efforts. FoNAF is all volunteer, one of Tom's many volunteer efforts. Huge thanks to them!

10:25 BREAK

10:30 Prioritization and Optimization WG Update -Amy Waltz/Richie Sinkovitz (Southwestern Regional Fire Analyst)/ Taylor Grysen (Spatial Fire Analyst at Enterprise)

- Amy W.: This takes the place of the Pri-Opt short update, going to do a longer one. For those that don't know Pri-Opt, been working for 18 months but has been a little delayed by staff capacity and things. Had a co-produced letter of agreement from stakeholders and FS with objectives which asked for stakeholder engagement in Pri-Opt during implementation mode. There is ready acknowledgment that this is tied to national direction including WCS and other approaches.
- Amy W. and Richie S. presented a powerpoint with several updates (PowerPoints to be posted to Basecamp when available)
 - Amy W.: Trinity (California) and Enchanted Circle (New Mexico) are also WCS High Priority Landscapes.
 - Amy W.: The recording for last week's virtual session Prioritizing Landscape Treatments is now posted on the [RMRS website](#) - in case you missed it or would like to share with others.
- Cerissa H: For models in use, how are they fairing? How well are they doing in fire risk component and treatment outcomes on the ground?
 - Richie S.: Don't have a great answer at this point. A lot of these efforts are very nascent. The southern Idaho landscape is an example of a frontrunner group to develop this methodology with FMI. Most landscapes are still trying to agree on objectives. Very few deliveries have been done. In our region, the only one that has been done is the Prescott landscape. They haven't had enough to implement to assess the outcomes. I get asked often how will these be assessed. At the regional level, they are doing a fire risk assessment yearly. There will be an assessment of change, which may assess how this helps. Still early in the process and getting off the ground. Still trying to explain the terminology.
 - Cerissa H.: Thanks, exciting how these could be used for 4FRI. Acknowledge that it is hard to assess trends with only a few years, and also because currently, we are in a period of rapid environmental change. Follow-up question -what is the opportunity for incorporating the best available data to narrow uncertainty?
 - Amy W.: These models are designed to be iterative. Things are adjusted for change each year.
- Pri-Opt WG has some clear next steps:
 - Bringing in these types of capacities (e.g., presenters today) to support 4FRI implementation.
 - Bringing this information to the 4FRI Executive Board in January.
 - Scot R.: Shouldn't be a problem. Some may be familiar, but it will be good to get everyone on the same page.

11:15 Ironwood Forestry's Sponsorship of MIT's Energy and Climate Hackathon - *Eli Jensen*

- Eli Jensen from Ironwood Forestry presented about his recent efforts with MIT and the Climate Hackathon ([presentation link](#), [video Link](#))
- Eli participated in a Hackathon at MIT in 2023 and sponsored a challenge. Worked well!

- The challenge was originally to have students build a tree-specific fire simulator and simulation of different treatment options. However, expanded it to be more broad - if have 200,000 to 300,000 trees what would you want to do with that data?
- Students had 36 hours to put their work together, no student participants had any forestry information. Had to explain a lot of metrics to them.
- Eli presented a keynote presentation about forestry and 4FRI. Told MIT to put your workboots on. Don't focus on problems in reports, go out to the frontline.
- Showed video about recent project efforts and the proposed challenge (see presentation). See the presentation to watch the student's pitch.
- About a half dozen interns from different backgrounds are interested in coming next year to intern/incubate with the 4FRI project to continue pursuing these types of solution opportunities for 4FRI.
- The Hackathon challenge students were present in the 4FRI meeting and answered questions:
 - Brad W.: Participated in things like this in the past. What would you all like to do if you were to come out?
 - Rosie K.: What would be exciting would be to see what the challenges are and which are most pressing that they can build a challenge around and problem solve. Want to do something tangible for the stakeholders in the group right now. If there were 2 to 4 top challenges, that would be valuable. Not locked into a specific project just yet. Enjoyed the project that they started with, and could continue to build it out.
 - Mart D.: It is nice to hear about problems virtually, but to know what is going on, need to see what is happening on the ground to build a solution whether technical or not.
 - Melanie C.: Love the potential for fresh eyes to take a look at something. Neat to think about external perspectives. Your model is amazing. Curious about what would come out as priorities. What are the logistics of internships?
 - Eli J.: Still new, could be hosted by Ironwood but work with other groups that participate in 4FRI.
 - Melanie C.: Cool, lots of potential ideas to explore.
 - Eli J.: Whatever they are working on, need to have a path for it to be integrated into the workflow of 4FRI. Don't want to build a tool that can't be integrated.
 - Nina S.: I think there are also policy problems to solve besides the technological ones! It would be great to hear from the domain experts (yourselves) on what you think should be prioritized on the policy side.
 - Carrie E.: Since no time to brainstorm top challenges now for these internships, this could be a future action item for the Stakeholder Group.
 - Scot R.: Ironwood has excellent tree-specific data through stands due to lidar. Don't even have a full areal lidar of 4FRI, but a year or two from now they should. Question to the group - how integral is that stand component of someone on the ground vs the areal lidar?

- Charles: The two ways that I see integrating those two, would depend on the granularity of analysis looking forward. If want an analysis of the tree level, maybe need a more fine scale. If looking at aggregate, the satellite may be useful. Interesting overlap between the two - could ask how could you predict tree-level analytics with wider-scale data.
- Scot R.: Thank you. Gets to Nina's point - have cultural challenges about how accurate the treatments need to be. This is a political problem that could be addressed.
- Carrie E.: Thanks, we can discuss this at a future SHG meeting.

11:50 Review Action Items

Action Item	Lead	Status
Share new potential contractor information with DFFM	Jay S.	
Contact Jay/Han/Melanie if you are interested in running FOT programs on the east side	All	
Contact Anne M if you are interested in drafting an update for the quarterly tribal newsletter	All	
Provide formal response to CIWG letter	Scot R.	
Discuss additional Industry meeting	Jay, Joel, James, Pascal	Ongoing
Coordinate meeting between Industry and FS 4FRI team	Industry Group, 4FRI Team	Ongoing
Aquatic/watershed restoration monthly updates	Brett, Mary Lou, Scot	Ongoing
Create/add a tonnage table for contracts (to best show activity and inactivity).	Brett, Scot	Ongoing
Provide clarity on keystone partners and relationship to 4FRI	Nicole, Scot	Ongoing
Contact Eli J. if you are interested in learning more about the climate hack-a-thon results and internships	All	
Treatment Pri-Opt Presentation to 4FRI Exec Board	Pri-Opt WG, 4FRI Exec Board	
Coordinate future report out to SHG about recent efforts with the region for Pri-Opt	Pri-Opt WG	

12:00 Adjourn

Steering Committee Meetings (second Tuesday of each month)

- **2024:** 1/9/2024, 2/13/2024, 3/12/2024, 4/9/2024, 5/14/2024, 6/1/2024, 7/9/2024, 8/13/2024, 9/10/2024, 10/8/2024, 11/12/2024, December no meeting

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

-**2024:** 1/24/2024, 3/27/2024, 5/22/2024, 7/24/2024, 9/25/2024, 11/20/2024 (fourth Wednesday, every other month)