

Four Rivers Resilient Forest Collaborative
Monthly meeting



Date: December 15th, 2022

Time: 9:00-11:00 AM

Location: Zoom

Attendance: Anthony Culpepper (Coordinator, Mountain Studies Institute), Julia Ledford (Mountain Studies Institute), Alex Handloff (Mountain Studies Institute), Dana Guinn (Mountain Studies Institute), Clay Kampf (San Juan National Forest), Tim Leishman (San Juan National Forest), Steve McClung (Colorado Parks and Wildlife), Andy Hawk (Phoenix Recycling), Paulette Church (Falls Creek HOA), Ryan Cox (Colorado State Forest Service), James Savage (Bureau of Land Management), Mike Wight (San Juan Mountains Association), Christy Curd (La Plata Open Space Conservancy), Cody Robertson (Natural Resource Conservation Service), Bruce Evans (Upper Pine FPD), Adam Hirshberg (Studs Lumber Company), Molly Pitts (Colorado Timber Industry Association)

Agenda:

- Welcome and introductions
- Updates
 - CFLRP – Andy Hawk
 - La Plata County CWPP revision
 - Stakeholder updates
- Goal setting for 2023
- Communications strategy/priorities
- 2023 field tour/focused meeting need
- Wrap-up
 - On deck for January
 - 2022 accomplishments
 - Priorities map update
 - Annual review/assessment

MEETING NOTES

Updates

- Southwest Colorado CFLRP
 - First annual report has been submitted to the Washington Office for review and signature
 - Coordinating Council approved Expectations and Commitments and Conflict of Interest forms
 - Will need to be signed by Committees
 - Desired conditions are being drafted by small working groups of the Projects and Places and Science and Multiparty Monitoring Committees
 - The Coordinating Council will review the draft at January 10th meeting
 - Project Evaluation and Review Tool (PERT) is in the first stages of development for evaluating projects for the CFLRP
 - A [Google Drive](#) has been set up to share meeting notes, agendas and other materials from the Coordinating Council and Committees.
 - This storage location will be used until the CFLRP website is functional.
 - Anyone from the public can view documents in the Google Drive. Members of the Coordinating Council have editing abilities.
 - Exciting outlook for cross-boundary projects
- La Plata County is revising the county-wide Community Wildfire Protection Program (CWPP).
 - Wildfire Adapted Partnership (WAP) is assisting with the revision.
 - The last revision was in 2006, so this is overdue.
 - La Plata County and WAP held a meeting with the Meta group on December 8th.
 - Next meeting will be held on January 26th.
 - [Contact Anthony](#) if you would like to be involved with the Meta group and the CWPP revision.
 - A draft revision of the CWPP will be circulated in February.
- Stakeholder updates
 - Mountain Studies Institute
 - Moving out of the Meyer building to an office space in Bodo, starting January 1st.
 - More parking!
 - San Juan National Forest
 - Staff updates
 - Tim Leishman accepted a position on the Payette National Forest in Idaho to build more Wood For Life programs.
 - He will start the job in January, but will stay in the Durango area until June.
 - Will continue to tune into the Grassy Mountain project until he leaves.
 - New Columbine District Ranger, Nick Glidden, has started
 - Will attend the January Four Rivers meeting
 - Finalizing a \$4 million agreement with the National Forest Foundation (NFF) for Wood For Life.
 - The hard part (financial plan) is done.

- The contracting officer needs to review the agreement, should be executed in early January.
 - The 5-year agreement will bring tons of money to SJNF for hauling biomass and will fund 21 weeks of Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC) hand-thinning.
 - Moving forward with NFF Grassy Mountain shared stewardship project
 - Tim Leishman is working with a forester from the Gunnison National Forest to devise a prescription.
 - Getting info to the BLM to start their DNA process (similar to the NEPA clearance process within the National Forests).
 - All clearances have been completed on the SJNF side.
 - There is a ton of money for the project already, with more coming in.
 - Adam Tlachac, Timber Management Assistant on the Pagosa Ranger District, will fill in for Tim Leishman on the project.
- NFF is in the last phase of interviews for position funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).
 - Hybrid partnership/coordinator/forester position
 - Position should be filled in January
 - This person will take on some responsibilities for the Grassy Mountain project in Tim's absence.
- Upper Pine Fire Protection District
 - Mitigation work in Forest Lakes in Little Bear area
 - Forest Lakes brings in 28% of funding for the district
 - 11 acres done using BLM money
 - Trying to push a CWPP for Sweetwater
 - Have had a few fires over there
 - Want continuous CWPPs between subdivisions
 - Just finished up work in Heartwood
 - Leftover money will be used for Mira del Sol
 - French intern from university will be starting soon
 - Positions open for ranger bosses
 - Have housing options for seasonal workers
 - Chipper is available for anyone that needs it
 - Needs type 2 wildland crews
 - Contractors can't keep up with the amount of work
 - Prison teams are diminishing because people aren't being sentenced for petty crimes
 - KIVU available for seasonal staff housing
- Phoenix recycling
 - Andy helping to develop a large-scale composting program
 - Will need ~6,000 tons of woody biomass to grind/year
- Completed burn plan for Beaver Creek Ranch
- Falls Creek Ranch

- Started mini Wood for Life project
 - Had logs that weren't suitable for Timber Age
 - Contacted Shiprock chapter house of Dine nation who have come three times now to collect logs for firewood
 - Hoping to continue the relationship with the Dine nation
 - Homeowners are getting the message about home hardening and wildfire mitigation
 - More homeowners are starting to remodel homes with fire-resistant materials
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
 - Hired two foresters in partnership with the National Wild Turkey Federation
 - Getting geared up for the full swing of Environmental Quality Incentive Programs (EQIP) in 2023
 - Received lots of money through the BIL.
 - Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
 - Project in Grandview, above hospital
 - Thinning, piling
 - Will be burning piles this winter
 - Thinning on Edgemont Highlands parcel
 - Challenges with access and road damage
 - Will hire a GS-7 fuels tech
 - Will probably hire a seasonal crew for summer 2023
 - Upcoming projects:
 - Planning efforts in Skyline Drive area
 - Have put BLM funds into the NFF for Grassy Mountain, moving forward with planning silvicultural prescriptions
 - Animas City Mountain awaiting prescribed burn
 - Colorado Parks and Wildlife
 - Wildlife project on Perins Peak State Wildlife Area
 - Looks like they have cleared archaeological requirements
 - Will be treating 300 acres on the east end of Perins in summer 2023

Goal setting for 2023

- Strategic plan is at the end of its life
 - Need to revisit mission, vision and values
- Discussion from the group about things to add and consider in updated guiding documents:
 - Community
 - Ability to successfully speak to our community about what is happening and why
 - MSI's new capacity gives Four Rivers the opportunity to have an appropriately loud voice in the community.
 - Risk reduction and safety
 - Evacuation routes
 - Home hardening

- Mitigation at the landscape scale
- Ecology and mitigating effects of climate change
 - Climate change is an important term to be included in messaging, don't beat around the bush.
 - Consider the role of ecological adaptation and anticipate conversations about assisted migration.
 - Mature and old growth
 - As the Biden administration rolls out requirements for old growth, we need to decide what that means for us
 - Promoting old growth and trajectory toward old growth in the future
 - What is the greatest risk to mature and old growth stands?
 - Have open and transparent conversations about how these stands are preserved, maintained and grown
- Infrastructure
 - Connect to data from CPAW and work that MSI, CSFS and WIIN has/will accomplish.
 - Consider continuing development and the proliferation of high density WUI in the Four Rivers landscape.
 - Conservation easements can be a useful tool in critical watersheds.
 - Preservation of value in property and insurance challenges that come with buying a home in wildfire-prone areas.
- Communication
 - Be strategic with messaging about transitioning forest structure.
 - Gather examples of areas where the stand density was reduced to a level that is more resilient to climate change and familiarize the public with that image.
 - Help the public understand the role of active forest management in climate change
 - Utilizing wood products = storing carbon
 - Help people understand why resilience is important in the long term
 - Quarterly newsletter, website, social media

Communications strategy/priorities

- Website
 - Internal documents
 - Meeting notes, agendas
 - Outreach blog
 - Interactive map
- Newsletter
 - Alex developing templates
 - Just get one done! Get the ball rolling!
- Social media presence
- Story bank

- [Google drive](#) for the group
 - Meeting notes
 - Agendas
 - Meeting recordings

2023 field tour/focused meeting need

- Field trip to Pagosa to look at the Adaptive Silviculture for Climate Change (ASCC) sites on Jackson Mountain

Wrap-up