

**Upper San Juan Mixed Conifer Working Group
Meeting 5, December 17, 2010
Pagosa Community Center
Meeting Notes**

This fifth meeting of the Upper San Juan Mixed Conifer Working Group focused on reviewing the mission/purpose statement and the previous month's work on resiliency and desired conditions. The group discussed future educational topics and Christina Schmidt gave an overview of the Archuleta County CWPP.

Attendees: Beverly Warburton, John Taylor, Ryan Bidwell, Jimbo Buickerod, Ray Ball, Greg Schulte, Christina Schmidt, Bob Frye, Sam Burns, Thurman Wilson, Marsha Porter-Norton, and Steve Hartvigsen.

Ryan gave a quick update on the Governor's Forest Health Advisory Council, which is working on a new structure (assuming that the new Governor will want to keep it). They want a closer tie to place-based organizations such as ours, but aren't sure how to accomplish that (group size logistics could be a problem). Ryan normally attends in his Colorado Wild role and could also represent our group.

Some outreach to other organizations is occurring. Steve and J. R. are going to a Backcountry Horseman meeting and Scott is going to an Audubon meeting.

Marsha reviewed the mission statement:

The Upper San Juan Mixed Conifer Workgroup is committed to collaborative approaches to improving the health and long-term resilience of mixed conifer forests and the communities located near them in southwest Colorado. The Workgroup will focus on strengthening understanding, sharing knowledge and lessons learned, developing management approaches, initiating high priority projects, and monitoring results using an adaptive framework.

There was a question on what "adaptive framework" meant. Most of the responses related to monitoring to see the results of activities, learning, and adjusting new actions based upon the knowledge gained. How the Apache-Sitreaves adjusted their tree marking guidelines in their Eager-South project was used as an example. Having an "open attitude" was another response. It was suggested that using "integrative approaches" as we move forward could be a part of it. That was described as being open to a variety of tools, not having tunnel vision towards just one use.

We agreed to try to add the concept of integrative approaches to the mission statement. There was a discussion of developing a set of guiding principles that would be a level of detail beyond the mission statement (Uncompahgre Plateau example).

Marsha also reviewed the beginnings of a vision statement that she formed from the November meeting's brainstorming session on the meaning of resilient mixed conifer forests. *(notes in blue italics are comments on it from the December meeting)*

What we want for the future of the Upper San Juan mixed-conifer forests:

- Mix of species, size classes and ages classes *(see Draft Forest Plan desired conditions and Dave Dallison's presentation from the first meeting)*
- Resilient communities and forests *(need to describe what will get us there), (describe attributes that we want and where we want it – if you can maintain that, you have resilience), (need to define what social resilience means to Pagosa Springs – how the town can successfully live through change), (Pagosa Springs is still trying to decide what it wants to look like), (there is a mix of interested publics – residents, second home owners, visitors – with different attitudes and different ways of being reached with education), (need to think about scale – too much of any one thing [second homes, ski areas, timber harvest,... is usually not best; diversity is usually good])*
- Endemic levels of insect and disease *(always some level in the background), (need to understand role of natural forces – if we do nothing in the next 20 years, things will still be different), (need to understand the potential effects of our strategies and actions)*
- Resembles desired conditions over time *(dynamic nature)*
- Mix of human uses and natural conditions *(find a balance), (human use will have an impact – mitigation needs), (can't control all conflicts), (love to death), (fire issues and smoke)*
- More natural further from WUI *(fire is an easier tool to use as you move further from community)*
- Reduced fragmentation *(disease corridors)*
- Wildlife corridors
- Inclusion of "working forest" uses *(need balance), (appropriate tools vary depending on setting - from working forest to roadless and wilderness), (won't go all the way back to pre-settlement conditions – unrealistic), (define attributes of a working forest)*

How we achieve the desired conditions can be as important as agreeing on the details of what the desired conditions are. An integrated strategy is needed for getting there.

There was agreement that we need to keep refining the mission, vision, and desired condition work. We need to agree to definitions of key terms, including desired condition (achieving/maintaining certain attributes [economy, diversity, wildlife, fire, ...] and ecological functions), resiliency, restoration, and fragmentation. We need to make sure that everyone has what they need in terms of understanding because of our different backgrounds.

We reviewed the list of educational topics and agreed to try to cover CWPPs in the January meeting, wildlife and sensitive species in February, and maybe soil compaction in March.

Christina handed out the CSFS Minimum Standards for Community Wildfire Protection Plans and the Community Wildfire Protection Plan Framework. She also passed around a copy of the Archuleta County CWPP.