



San Juan Headwaters FOREST HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership Meeting Notes for Friday, July 22, 2022

In Attendance: Dana Guinn (MSI), Julia Ledford (MSI), Melissa May (MSI), Brookelynn Pitsch (SJNF Intern), Josh Peck (SJNF), Dave Neally (SJNF), Jason Lawhon (SJNF), Tim Leishman (SJNF), Matt Tuten (USFS R2 State and Private Forestry), Bill Trimarco (WAP), Todd Weaver (Archuleta County Attorney), Bob Milford (PATC), Caleb Stotts (CPLA), Herb Grover (WAS), Doug Seacrist (SJWCD), Bill Hudson (Pagosa Daily Post, PAWSD, SJWCD), Matt Ford (Pagosa Forest Products, Clean Forest Energy), Mike Remke (FLC), Kyle O'Neill (NRCS), Allan Pfister (Upper San Juan WEP), Estevan Vega (CSFS)

NOTES

9:00 – 9:15 Welcome and Introductions

9:15 - 9:30 Partner Updates

- Pagosa Area Trails Council (PATC)
 - PATC and their partners have cleared 4,000 trees across 485 miles of trails this summer
 - The Pagosa Tourism Board is helping to support a website to keep track of progress. They are also receiving comments and feedback from the public.
- Aaron Kimple has accepted a job as the Program Director for the Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI's) and will be leaving Mountain Studies Institute.
 - Aaron has expressed tremendous gratitude for this Partnership and the work we have done in Southwest Colorado.
 - He will be staying in Durango and is excited for the opportunity to bring the SWERI's to Southwest Colorado and continue working with SJHFHP in the future.
 - Aaron's last day will be August 19th. He will be travelling to Pagosa for the Headwaters meeting that day and there will be a lunchtime going-away celebration for him afterwards.
 - Dana and Anthony will be back-filling for Aaron at MSI.
- Wildfire Adapted Partnership (WAP)
 - WAP has been flooded with requests from private property owners for assessments and work plans this summer.
 - WAP currently has 4 different grant programs:
 - Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation (FRWRM) through the State of Colorado
 - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQUIP) from NRCS
 - Projects funded through EQUIP will be ready for implementation first thing next spring.
 - Funding for projects along the HWY 84 corridor

- WUI grants through the State Fire Assistance (SFA) program, which can be used in the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association (PLPOA) and is specifically needed for work within the green belts of the POA.
 - On average, WAP works with 30-60 property owners each year, with each project usually being a few acres. In addition, they conduct about 100 site visits/per year.
 - Natural Recourse Conservation Service (NRCS)
 - The NRCS recently funded 5 more forestry projects.
 - Team 7 with the NRCS has funded 7 forestry projects this year, 5 of which are in Archuleta County.
 - San Juan National Forest (SJNF)
 - The USFS has worked with the BLM to create the BLM's first statewide agreement with the National Forest Foundation (NFF).
 - This is the first time the BLM has entered into an agreement with the NFF. It presents opportunities for the BLM and SJNF to collaborate on cross-boundary projects in the future.
 - A pilot project, called Grassy Mountain, is being conducted on the Columbine District. This project involves private, State, BLM and Forest Service lands.
 - Personnel updates within SJNF:
 - Lo Williams will be detailing in the Shared Stewardship Project Coordinator position to integrate and develop cross-boundary work.
 - A communications position surrounding large-scale initiatives (like CFLRPs and RMRI) is also being filled by a detailer.
 - Adam Tlachac has accepted a permanent position with SJNF filling in behind Matt Tuten.
 - Autumn will be starting a permanent position in the Recreation department.

9:30 – 10:00 Regional Initiatives

- CFLRP Overview
 - The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) is a national program that was initially authorized by Congress in 2009 and re-established in 2018. The program specifically outlines collaborative goals for the USFS in priority landscapes across the United States.
 - The Headwaters footprint includes two recently funded CFLRPs: the Rio Chama and the Southwest Colorado.
 - The Rio Chama CFLRP includes 3.77 million acres of public, private, state and tribal lands across southern Colorado and northern New Mexico, where communities are tied together by water that flows out of the San Juan Mountains. In April 2022 the Rio Chama CFLRP was awarded \$30 million dollars for landscape-scale forest restoration over the next 10 years (\$3 million/year).
 - The 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy Partnership is the coordinating body for non-governmental involvement in this CFLRP. They will help plan and implement projects on non-Forest Service lands and conduct ecological and socioeconomic monitoring throughout the program's duration. These are requirements of the CFLRP legislation.
 - The Southwest Colorado CFLRP roughly spans the geography of San Juan National Forest and also includes, other public lands, private, tribal and

state lands. This CFLRP was awarded the same amount of \$30 million for the next 10 years.

- This CFLRP is governed by a Coordinating Council, which includes representatives from each of the three collaborative groups across the footprint (SJHFHP, Four Rivers and DWRF) and other elected members. The Coordinating Council will work with San Juan National Forest to make decisions about CFLRP projects.
- Work plans for both CFLRPs are due on October 14th and build off plans submitted in the initial proposals.
- Relationship between Southwest Colorado CFLRP, Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative, and Rio Chama CFLRP
 - Both CFLRPs were within the top 3 proposals selected for funding in this round.
 - The Southwest Colorado CFLRP was awarded funding because of ongoing collaboration in the area (like the work that Headwaters is doing!).
 - There will not be extensive projects happening on the ground this year. However, the Pagosa District will be using CFLRP dollars for weed spraying in Williams Creek and preparation for future Jackson Mountain work.
 - The Forest Service is already implementing projects on the ground using Rio Chama CFLRP dollars this year.
 - Origins of the Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI) trace back to the Shared Stewardship program within the USFS.
 - Shared Stewardship was a strategy released in 2018 by the Secretary of Agriculture as a response to the wildfire crisis across the U.S. The strategy sought to find new ways to work together and focus resources in order to address the scale that wildfires are affecting.
 - RMRI was created after the Wild Turkey Federation met with the Forest Service to discuss what more could be done in the Western U.S. to address wildfires.
 - After a series of prioritizations, three regions in Colorado were selected as the pilot landscapes for RMRI, with the Southwest Colorado RMRI landscape being the first area of focus.
 - Focusing resources into specifically defined areas is fundamental in the RMRI in order to maximize the benefit of resources made available through this Initiative.
 - RMRI + CFLRP
 - Both initiatives are intended to be all-lands approaches to address wildfire risk and restoration.
 - The Southwest Colorado CFLRP overlaps with the Southwest Colorado RMRI landscape. The most restrictive funds will be used first, followed by the less restrictive funds to cover the remaining costs of landscape-scale restoration.
 - In general, RMRI has more forest-wide flexibility with funding than the CFLRP, even though RMRI doesn't cover the Pagosa District.
 - There is even more funding available aside from RMRI and CFLRP. These sources include:
 - The Infrastructure Bill
 - The State of Colorado

- Funding for recreation that hasn't been tapped into yet
 - Other grants
- Funding mechanisms of the CFLRP
 - CFLRP is congressionally appropriated and has its own funding code within the Forest Service.
 - A certain amount of funding is required to be used by collaborative (non-Forest Service) groups to plan and conduct monitoring. However, CFLRP funding does not cover the implementation of projects on non-Forest Service lands.
 - RMRI funding comes through appropriated budgets within the Forest Service (it does not have its own funding code).
- Implications and opportunities for the SJHFHP
 - Headwaters and the Pagosa District are juggling two CFLRPs that are moving at different paces and with very different organizational structures.
 - An elected representative from the Headwaters group will serve on the Coordinating Council for the Southwest Colorado CFLRP.
 - There will be plenty of opportunities for planning cross-boundary projects using CFLRP dollars, but it may take a few years. We should continue to think about how these resources can be used for the benefit of our landscape and community.
 - The 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy Partnership is hosting a stakeholder meeting on August 10th in Pagosa Springs. This is a great opportunity to get more involved with the Rio Chama CFLRP. Contact Julia (julia@mountainstudies.org) for more information about the meeting.
- Discussion and Questions

10:00– 10:30 Southwest Colorado CFLRP Engagement

- Charter review
 - The Charter is the governing document for the Southwest Colorado CFLRP.
 - The Charter can be reviewed on an annual basis.
- Committee formation, participation, and progress to date
 - The charter identifies 6 committees:
 - The Projects and Places Committee
 - The Science and Multiparty Monitoring Committee
 - The Forest By-Products Committee
 - The Outreach and Education Committee
 - The Agreements and Funding Committee
 - The Entertainment and Fun Committee
 - The Committees have convened and elected Chairs.
 - Some Committees have a list of work to get started on immediately. Otherwise, a full stakeholder meeting is planned for early August when ex-officio members will be elected to finalize the Coordinating Council, who also has a list of work to get started on as soon as possible.
- Introduction of Coordinating Council opportunity and need
 - The Charter identifies a coordinating council that consists of:
 - Projects and Places Committee Chair
 - Science and Multiparty Monitoring Committee Chair
 - Forest By-Products Committee Chair
 - Outreach and Education Committee Chair
 - Agreements and Funding Committee Chair
 - Representative from Dolores Watershed Resilient Forest Collaborative

- Representative from San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership
- Representative from Four Rivers Resilient Forest Collaborative
- Three members of the community at large
- 9 ex-officio members (no decision-making authority):
 - US Forest Service/San Juan National Forest
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Colorado State Forest Service
 - Colorado Parks and Wildlife
 - Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative
 - Wildfire Adapted Partnership
 - Tribes
 - Entertainment and Fun Committee Chair
 - Additional, invited individuals with specific expertise or geographic knowledge
- SJHFHP Coordinating Council Representation through June 2023
 - Nominations for Chair
 - Bill Trimarco
 - Not willing to be considered for the position due to lack of capacity for additional work.
 - Dana Guinn
 - Matt Ford
 - Vote by hand between Dana and Matt:
 - For Dana: 8
 - For Matt: 3
 - Dana will serve on the Coordinating Committee to represent SJHFHP, Matt Ford has offered to support Dana as needed.
- SJHFHP engagement with Southwest Colorado CFLRP short term, long term
 - There are no projects planned yet, but there will be plenty of opportunities for planning cross-boundary projects using CFLRP dollars in the future. This will probably take a few years.
 - We should continue to think about how these resources can be used for the benefit of our landscape and community.

10:30 – 10:45 Upcoming SJHFHP Events

- Tours (fall)
 - Plumtaw Fire
 - Talking points:
 - Impacts of the fire
 - How previous management created decision space/management opportunities during the fire
 - How can we continue to consider priority projects in our area?
 - Hope to include folks that were directly responding to the fire.
 - Jackson Mountain
 - This tour is somewhat contingent on Adam Tlachac's attendance, so we will wait until he returns to the area.
 - Proposed changes to treatments:
 - Meadow enhancements
 - Aspen regeneration
 - Potentially rerouting Snowball connector trail

- Meetings
 - Upcoming 2-3-2 Meetings in Pagosa Springs
 - August 10th 2-3-2 Partnership Meeting
 - Business meeting
 - 8:00-noon at the PLPOA clubhouse.
 - Open to the public!
 - Coffee will be provided and lunch will be available for purchase.
 - Afternoon tour with two stops:
 - Banded Peak Ranch (opportunity to look at work being done on private lands)
 - Price Lakes (projects on public lands)
 - August 11th Monitoring Plan Meeting in Pagosa Springs
 - Socioeconomic monitoring
 - Ecological monitoring
 - Contact Julia (julia@mountainstudies.org) for more information about these meetings. They are all open to the public and we welcome your involvement.
 - August 19th SJHFHP Meeting
 - Lunch and celebration for Aaron's contribution to the partnership will follow the meeting

10:45 – 11:00 Business Items and Announcements

- Plumtaw Fire film proposal
 - Dana has asked Christi Bodi with Moxiecran Media to submit a proposal for a film about the Plumtaw Fire.
 - Christi has quoted us around \$6,000 for the film. We will wait for approval from the Finance Committee before moving forward with this payment.
 - The film will focus on how previous management (largely led by Headwaters) affected the outcome of the Plumtaw Fire.
 - We should be careful not to overstate how treatment impacts fire behavior because we don't want to make promises to the community that can't be kept (for example, weather and fire conditions have the final say in the outcome of a fire).
 - The film should focus on the decision space that was created as a result of previous treatments.
 - We should consider how the film will be dispersed (this often comes at a significant cost).
 - There is a similar story coming from the Midnight Fire in New Mexico.
 - Currently, we are looking at this as a local opportunity, but it could be expanded to the 2-3-2 landscape.
- Archuleta County Liaison
 - Bill Trimarco has volunteered to serve as the County Liaison.
- Communications Plan
 - The SJHFHP Communications Plan needs to be updated. We will be requesting feedback over the next 6 months.
- Finance
 - Carmen Dille-Hachmann is the new Director of Finance for Mountain Studies Institute
 - Finance Committee meeting this September

- Need volunteers to serve on this Committee