



Meeting Notes for Friday, February 17th, 2023

Location: Pagosa Springs Visitor Center Conference Room

Regular meeting: 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Attendance: Dana Guinn (Coordinator, Mountain Studies Institute), Julia Ledford (Mountain Studies Institute), Herb Grover (Weminuche Audubon Society), Jimbo Buickerood (San Juan Citizens Alliance), Cody Dems (Forest Stewards Guild), Estevan Vega (Colorado State Forest Service), Todd Weaver (Archuleta County), Adam Hershberg (Studs Lumber company), Bob Milford (Pagosa Area Trails Council), Jean Zirnhelt (Weminuche Audubon Society), Matt Ford (Pagosa Forest Products), Bill Trimarco (Wildfire Adapted Partnership), Nick Olson (National Forest Foundation), Cody Robertson (NRCS), Danny Margoles (DWRF), Kevin Emde (SJNF), Adam Tlachac (SJNF), Matt Tuten (USFS), Sandee Dingman (Santa Fe National Forest, Rio Chama CFLRP), Brandy Richardson (San Juan National Forest, Rio Chama CFLRP), Lo Williams (SJNF)

MEETING NOTES

SJHFHP and partner updates

- Partner updates
 - Pagosa Area Trails Council
 - Seasonal crews clear trails throughout the summer.
 - Experiencing challenges with hiring seasonal employees.
 - Previously hired through the USFS.
 - Exploring options of working with San Juan Mountains Association (SJMA) to hire seasonal employees.
 - If you know anyone that might want to work on a trail crew this summer, [contact Bob Milford](#).
 - Going after a \$70,000 grant to purchase an excavator for trail work.
 - Expanding the parking lot and building a bathroom at Opal Lake.
 - Rio Chama CFLRP funding earmarked for Opal Lake.
 - Farm Bill legislation making its way up through Congress
 - Senator Michael Bennet is co-leading an effort to [reauthorize and expand the scope of the CFLRP legislation](#) through the Farm Bill, potentially with the ability to use funds for planning (NEPA).
 - Wildfire Adapted Partnership (WAP)
 - SJHFHP has a FRWRM grant through State of Colorado.
 - 200 acres near end of the airport runway.
 - Working with NRCS to come up with a plan.
 - Looking at 40-60 acres of fuels reduction and forest health work.

- 60% reimbursement to the property owner.
 - Chipper rebate program to restart in mid-April.
 - Cost-sharing plans for full mitigation work on private property (applies to almost everyone in the HWY 84 corridor) with 60% reimbursement.
 - 40% reimbursement open to anyone in PLPOA.
 - Ongoing work in the greenbelts
 - The San Juan Conservation District is sponsoring a landowner awareness day in March at the CSU extension office.
 - Most folks that are new to the area are also new to living in a rural environment.
 - Will provide opportunities for folks to learn how to live sustainably in this ecosystem.
 - Fire Adapted Colorado is hosting the [Colorado Wildland Fire Conference](#) in Fort Collins, April 12-13.
 - Wildfire mitigation courses will be provided at the conference and online.
 - 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy Partnership
 - Looking for folks to participate in the Biomass Committee.
 - [Contact Bill Trimarco](#) if you are interested.
 - Studs Lumber Company
 - Working with Build Pagosa to expand their CTE programs through the high school.
 - Looking for board members
 - Contact Adam Hershberg to get involved.
 - Will be hiring an administrator/project manager soon.
 - Moving forward with their school to work program enabled through the CDC.
- USFS
 - [New SJNF Supervisor, Dave Neely](#)
 - Comes from the Washington Office
 - Started in the 90s as a seasonal employee for the Forest Service
 - Served as a District Ranger in Vail, Colorado
 - Detailed in the Forest Supervisor position last summer
 - Planning a meet and greet for the spring
 - Press release
 - Mark Lambert leaving
 - Head of Lands and Public Service Program, which oversees recreation.
 - Public comment period for the Jackson Mountain EA ends February 23rd.
- CFLRP
 - Rio Chama
 - Finalizing multiparty monitoring plan.
 - Southwest Colorado
 - Coordinating Council and Committees
 - Coordinating Council meetings are open to the public and are held on the second Tuesday of the month.
 - Contact Dana if you are interested in attending a meeting.
 - Developed a set of [desired future conditions](#).

- These can be updated in the future.
- Developing a process for how projects will move from idea to implementation through the following system as outlined in the Charter:



- The Coordinating Council will provide guidance to the Projects and Places Committee to develop a tool for reviewing and evaluating potential projects.
- The Science and Monitoring Committee is still working through how best available science is brought to the project and disseminated through stakeholders.
 - If you are interested in participating in the Science and Monitoring Committee, [contact Nick Olson](#).
- Ongoing SJHFHP involvement
 - The CFLRP is focused on restoration and bringing fire back to the ecosystem.
 - Desired conditions are the first filter for projects to flow through.
 - Alignment of priorities:
 - The PROMOTe model is being applied to the entire Pagosa Ranger District and can help identify areas for future NEPA as well as priorities in NEPA-ready acres.
 - All of the NEPA shelf stock on the Pagosa District was developed collaboratively by this group.
 - Unique to this district.
 - Planning is the easy part, it's hard to get to implementation.
- [2023 Wood Innovations and Community Wood Grant Programs](#)
 - Deadline for applications is March 23rd.
- Headwaters communications, feedback, reporting
 - No responses to feedback survey.
 - Will have time at March meeting for feedback and comments.
- Thank you to our local partners for their support!
 - Banded Peak Ranch
 - Pagosa Area Water Sanitation District (PAWSD)
 - Alpine Cascade
 - San Juan Water Conservancy District
 - JR Ford

Upcoming events

- Plumtaw Fire film
 - Event planning
 - Working to reserve the theater to premier the film during Wildfire Awareness month.
 - Will also have a panel discussion.
 - Fundraising event.

- Riff Raff 10th Anniversary Party in May
 - Headwaters will table at the event.
- Rio Chama Congreso February 24th and 25th at the Ghost Ranch near Abiquiu
 - Theme: Water after Wildfire

Weminuche Audubon Society (WAS) Bird Monitoring

- Project and partnership overview
 - The [Bird Community Monitoring](#) project helps us understand how forestry practices impact wildlife habitat and bird populations.
 - Started when Herb Grover got involved with the WAS and identified a common skill among members: bird identification.
 - Have more than 50 different volunteers, with 20-25 each year and about 12 volunteers that have been involved since the beginning.
 - Sponsors the [Bird of the Week](#) in the Pagosa Sun.
 - Provides several educational programs:
 - ~1,200 kids come through programs at the Hershey Ranch.
 - Snow science day in conjunction with the Great Backyard Bird Count.
 - Sponsors the Christmas Bird Count.
 - Coordinates the Pagosa Wetlands Partners.
 - Ongoing monitoring efforts in the HD Mountains are likely to expand.
 - Received a grant to purchase owl monitoring devices.
- 2022 video and report
 - [Bird Communities in the Southern San Juan Mountains of Colorado](#)
 - Questions/comments
 - Rio Chama has identified Lewis' woodpecker as a species of concern
 - Interested in seeing the data that WAS has collected.
 - Pagosa's large population of Lewis' woodpecker is an anomaly. There are only about 70,000 individuals worldwide.
 - Amazing photography!
 - Most of the photos were taken on site by volunteers.
- Looking forward to 2023
 - Program applications further afield
 - Volunteer recruitment
 - Volunteer orientation in early June
 - SJHFHP birding day during the study season
 - Similar to a headwaters tour, but the tour would be us going out and collecting data for this project

Wrap up and next steps