



San Juan Headwaters

FOREST HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

Friday, April 17, 2026

Location: Archuleta County Administrative Office, 398 Lewis St, Pagosa Springs, CO

Meeting time: 9:00 – 11:00 am

MEETING NOTES

Partner & Agency Updates

Mountain Studies Institute (MSI)

- MSI is preparing for the upcoming field monitoring season.
- Staff will begin coordinating with partners regarding:
 - progress on projects where pre-treatment monitoring has already occurred
 - post-treatment monitoring needs
 - identification of at least one additional pre-treatment monitoring site
- MSI is in the process of hiring a **watershed restoration research scientist**, which could strengthen future collaboration around watershed science and restoration effectiveness.

Key takeaway: Monitoring capacity remains strong, and MSI continues to be an important technical/science partner.

Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB)

- CWCB highlighted the **Wildfire Ready Watersheds Program**.
- Statewide susceptibility analyses are available to help communities assess post-fire impacts to water infrastructure.
- CWCB encouraged the partnership to pursue a **Water Plan Grant**, noting the group appears well-positioned for the next application cycle.
- **Next grant deadline:** July 1.

Key takeaway: Strong alignment between WRAP goals and CWCB funding priorities.

National Forest Foundation (NFF)

- Williams Creek Campground renovation/restoration remains temporarily paused while agreement details are finalized.
- NFF is in discussions with **Chama Peak Land Alliance** regarding potential collaboration opportunities.

Key takeaway: Some project implementation is delayed administratively, but partnership-building continues.

San Juan Mountains Association (SJMA)

- Leadership transition update:
 - New Executive Director: **Ashley Carruth**
- SJMA continues supporting:
 - volunteer stewardship efforts
 - trail education initiatives
 - public engagement programming

Key takeaway: SJMA remains a valuable stewardship and public engagement partner despite leadership transition.

San Juan National Forest / US Forest Service

Forest Service updates covered both operational planning and broader organizational uncertainty.

Staffing / Organizational Changes

- Current expectation is **minimal immediate staffing impact locally** despite broader federal restructuring discussions.
- No district consolidations were identified at this time.
- Significant uncertainty remains regarding:
 - regional office restructuring
 - budget allocation pathways
 - future program management authority

Key takeaway: Local operations remain functional, but broader structural uncertainty could affect long-term implementation.

Recreation & Operations

Updates included:

- restroom servicing/logistics support across multiple recreation sites
- volunteer trail ambassador program reactivation
- expanded visitor education efforts at priority trailheads
- progress toward reopening/renting Forest Service cabins after repairs

Key takeaway: Recreation infrastructure and stewardship partnerships remain active.

Shared Stewardship / CFLRP Discussion

A substantial discussion focused on the evolution of collaborative governance and project prioritization.

Governance Reflections

- Previous governance structures created stronger communication and collaboration around project development.
- However, the current structure may be resource-intensive and difficult to sustain at the same level.
- Partners discussed balancing collaboration with implementation efficiency.

Funding / Project Approval Reality

A major theme was the changing federal funding landscape.

Discussion points:

- Projects previously considered straightforward may now face additional approval challenges.
- Funding certainty has decreased.
- Staff emphasized the importance of focusing effort on projects with realistic implementation pathways.
- CFLRP remains a major asset for the landscape despite uncertainty.

Key takeaway: Collaboration remains strong, but project selection must increasingly reflect implementation feasibility.

Forest Funding & Project Planning

The Forest Service presented a broad overview of planned investments and project priorities.

Notable Themes

- Continued investment in:
 - fuels reduction
 - recreation infrastructure
 - restoration implementation
 - shared stewardship planning
- Some funding pathways remain uncertain due to agreement/administrative barriers.
- A proposed shared stewardship forester position for the Pagosa area is unlikely to move forward this year, but may remain a future priority.

Estimated total project investment discussed:

- approximately **\$10M+**, though exact allocations remain fluid.

Partner Input Request

Forest Service requested partner feedback on project priorities before final internal review.

Feedback requested especially if:

- major projects are missing
- priorities appear misaligned
- there are significant concerns requiring adjustment

Key takeaway: This remains an important window for partner influence on implementation priorities.

WRAP (Wildfire Ready Action Plan) Update

WRAP remains a major partnership priority.

Current Status

- Application development is underway.
- Work experienced minor delays due to staff scheduling, but momentum is continuing.
- Core team members are actively moving the effort forward.

Funding Match Opportunity

A major update was the emergence of a potential **The Nature Conservancy (TNC)** funding opportunity.

Potential significance:

- could provide WRAP match support
- may reduce match burden on individual partners
- could improve implementation readiness if awarded

General Sentiment

The group expressed optimism about this funding pathway and its strategic importance.

Key takeaway: WRAP remains highly viable, with promising funding support emerging.

Decisions / Agreements

- Continue moving forward with WRAP application development.
 - Pursue CWCB Water Plan Grant opportunity.
 - Explore TNC funding as WRAP match support.
 - Maintain current partner coordination around monitoring and restoration implementation.
 - Solicit final partner feedback on Forest Service project priorities before internal review.
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Action Items / Next Steps

Partnership

- Submit feedback on Forest Service priority projects if concerns exist.
- Continue WRAP application drafting and coordination.
- Evaluate TNC funding opportunity and match strategy.
- Advance CWCB Water Plan Grant planning.

Forest Service / Agency Partners

- Share project map with partners.
- Continue refining implementation priorities.
- Coordinate monitoring needs with MSI.

Collaborative Partners

- Support volunteer stewardship/trail ambassador efforts.
- Continue identifying implementation-ready projects.

ZOOM:

Topic: SJHFHP Monthly Meeting

Time: March 20, 2026 09:00 AM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

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