



Zuni Mountain Landscape Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program

Funded by the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP), of the USDA Forest Service

All Lands Implementation strategy meeting

Time: 9 a.m.

Date: 6/30

Location: New Mexico State University (Grants)
Martinez Hall, Room # 007

Meeting purpose: Many ecological and economic investments have been made in the Zuni Mountains over the last decade. An “all lands” strategy will help protect those investments by helping to ensure a sustainable wood supply, employment and training opportunities, foster fire adapted communities, and to continue to build the restoration economy in the Zuni Mountains. This meeting brings together timber harvesters, processors and land managers to strengthen the connection between those with acres in need of treatment and those with the capacity to treat them. By coordinating our efforts, we can navigate common challenges including available NEPA cleared acres, lack of markets, transportation, and capacity.

Notes:

I. Introductions: name, affiliation

Dan Weaver (WW Logging), Nick Olson (Guild), Eileen Yarborough (Cibola County Econ Development), Asha Houston (USFS), Owen Ludwig (Guild), Larry Winn (McKinley County and Lava Soil and Water Conservation Districts), Matt Allen (Mt. Taylor Manufacturing), Shirley Piqosa (Pueblo of Acoma), Alvin Whitehair (Mt. Taylor District Ranger), Raymond Lucero (Pueblo Laguna), Steven Ikeda (NM State Land Office), Jeanne Dawson (Cibola National Forest), Ian Fox (Cibola National Forest), Matt Piccarello (Guild)

Who else should be included in this collaborative effort?

- Extend beyond the Zunis
- Landowners in the Zunis
- Private landowners along Forest Road 50
- Alvin Whitehorse: Need more tribal representation, the success and relative ease of projects to date is in large part due to support and partnership of tribes
- Larry Winn: this group (the Zuni Mountain Landscape Collaborative) is a parallel to “Landscape Teams” informing the Cibola National Forest plan revision.
- Recently, starting to see increased participation of diverse stakeholders
- After updates, landscape teams morph into advocates for “good stewardship” in that area
- Legislators

- Firewood harvesters
- Public health organizations

II. The context for an “all lands” approach

- Protect ecologic *and* economic investments in the Zuni
- Currently operating under the umbrella of the Zuni Mountains Landscape Collaborative (ZMLC)
- The ZMLC operates outside of USFS, but USFS is at the table to provide information in a technical advisory role.
- Ian Fox: Need to expand/morph from solely Zuni to include Mt. Taylor, etc.,
- Resiliency: economic and ecological
 - Ecological resilience is more commonly understood. Economic resilience on the other hand needs to be better defined for each community.
 - In general, economic resilience means adapting to typical disturbances such as market fluctuations and also novel disturbances that are in predicable and unexpected.

III. Discussion

What challenges are land owners/managers facing that limit the ability to treat acres? What institutional bottlenecks/barriers exist to implementing treatments?

- USFS districts still have to compete for money
 - Partnerships help Zuni Landscape to be more competitive for funding
- (Ian) NEPA itself is not a barrier
 - Surveys are the challenge (cultural, wildlife, and otherwise) at the landscape scale due to the cost
 - Need greater funding to meet NEPA requirements
- (Steven I.) Large scale is when NEPA requirements become a challenge
 - need to include preliminary planning costs as part of whole project
- (Jeanne) Adapting timeline to include the planning and reporting phase of NEPA, etc.
- (Larry) Limitation when thinking about our partnerships, need to create unified vision in order to free up government funding
- (Matt P.) Having some success bringing diverse voices to the table for ZMLC meetings.
- (Shirley) NEPA surveys require contractors to be certified
 - Barrier for some Native American land managers because they have tribal members who could do cultural surveys and have traditional knowledge but are not certified
 - NEPA process can sometimes delay project to the point of impeding implementation
- (Shirley) Difficulty finding adequate contractors/skilled labor
 - Trying to keep it within the Pueblo
 - Looking for trainings to help community members increase skill set
- (Shirley) Lack of machinery to move timber

- (Matt) Models exist that demonstrate success of equipment sharing among communities to increase capacity without having to purchase new equipment.
- (Steven) Finding new funding sources
 - State can't apply for many programs itself
 - Goal is to get more private, local groups to apply for various funding sources and partner with the State Land Office to accomplish goals.
- (Steven) Leadership turnover in public offices- e.g. state commissioner has 4 year term.
 - Challenge of connecting new commissioners to local groups and making those connections with each new commissioner.
- (Eileen) Difficult to create jobs when businesses can't plan for future contracts.
 - Need to build local relationships to avoid even regional organizations from undercutting local jobs

What challenges are harvesters and processors facing that cause delays, setbacks, and other problems? What are your thresholds, break-even points?

- (Matt A.) Can't invest into new infrastructure, etc. right now because only 3 years left on CFLR project
 - Can't pay off debt load of new infrastructure in 3 years
- "Mud season" tough on workforce and contractors.
- (Danny) Had to learn how to integrate both timber sales and restoration treatments
 - Learning how to adapt on a tight budget is a challenge
 - Interfacing manual methods and mechanical methods is difficult to do
- (Ian) Opening new markets
- (Matt A.) funding necessary to purchase equipment needed to make new products
- (Raymond) Training for Laguna crews, cutting and prescribed burning.
 - (Matt A.) New Mexico Forest Industries can train for cutting
 - (Dan) Can send folks out to WW Logging for free as apprentices

What steps can we all take to address some of those challenges?

- Operating plan would help mitigate impacts of turnover, maintain institutional knowledge
- (Matt) A cooperative would help compete against regional/national competitors
- (Matt) Regular check-in
- Jeanne (online forum)
- (Larry) Written document (SOP) specific to our area
- Planning to funding to implementation
- Having organizations/people communicate with politicians other than federal agencies may lend to a stronger voice

IV. Next steps:

- Consider creating a document that compiles projects and sources of funding.
- Rename/re-brand the Zuni Mountain Collaborative to include a broader region and more stakeholders.
 - (Matt A.) have to be careful not to open ourselves up to too much competition
 - (Ian) proposes Cibola, McKinney Counties as geographic boundaries.
 - (Matt A.) Mt. Taylor/Zuni Collaborative?
 - (Alvin) Sacred Mountains Initiative
- Presentation on Rio Grande Water Fund (or other successful collaborative projects) as a template.
- List of local crews and their capacities on Zuni Mountain Landscape Collaborative website.
- Create a format where contractors and land managers can share calendars and availability for treatments.
- List of available acres and projects, possibly in map form as well.

V. Tour of Mt. Taylor Manufacturing (Hosted by Matt Allen)

Meeting participants concluded the meeting with a tour of Mt. Taylor Manufacturing's saw mill.