

Meeting Notes for the Santa Fe Fireshed and Cohesive Strategy Planning Session
February 9, 2016
Fire Station #3, Santa Fe NM

Website for posting information on the planning effort http://www.forestguild.org/SantaFe_Fireshed

Attendees: Lawrence Crane (State Forestry, Bernalillo District), Steve Romero (Pecos / Las Vegas District Ranger), John Boe (Espanola District Fire Management Officer), Mark Allison (NM Wilderness Alliance Executive Director), Porfirio Chavarria (City of Santa Fe Fire Department), Phillip Silva (Tesuque Pueblo), Eytan Krasilovsky (Forest Stewards Guild), Bob Findling (The Nature Conservancy), Anne Bradley (The Nature Conservancy), Andy Otto (Santa Fe Watershed Association Executive Director), Krys Nystrom (Wildfire Network), Laura McCarthy (The Nature Conservancy), Collin Haffey (USGS Jemez Research Station), Ellis Margolis (USGS Jemez Research Station), Eliza Kretzmann (State Forestry and NRCS), Dennis Carril (Santa Fe National Forest), Steve Bassett (The Nature Conservancy), Brandon McCain (State Forestry, Bernalillo District), Dave Sperling (Santa Fe County Fire Chief), Michael Casaus (Wilderness Society, NM State Director), Sandy Hurlocker (Espanola District Ranger), Alan Hook (City of Santa Fe Water Division), and Dale Lyons (The Nature Conservancy).

Next Steps:

1. Next meeting: 2/19/16, 9:00-11:00 am for the Core Team (see table below) at The Nature Conservancy Santa Fe Office (<https://goo.gl/maps/kNo9EVGiks82>).
2. Eliza Kretzmann will present progress to the broader Cohesive Strategy group on 2/22. This includes a description of two team organizational structure, the proposed team roles and responsibilities, proposed timeline for strategy completion, cite the signatories page on the Taos strategy and ask the group consider the question who the signatories should be for the Santa Fe final strategy- organizations, community leaders, agencies, tribes. Ask how any cohesive strategy group members not already signed up for the extended team would like to participate as the strategy develops, and mention the recommendation that a public outreach strategy be coupled with the fire mitigation strategy.
3. Roles and responsibilities table:

Organization	Core Team Representatives	Extended Team Representatives	Contributions
The Nature Conservancy	Anne Bradley and Steve Bassett	Bob Findling and Laura McCarthy	Staff time, maps, and modeling, fundraising assistance, stewardship of Aztec Spgs.
Forest Stewards Guild	Eytan Krasilovsky	Zander Evans	Staff time.
Santa Fe National Forest	Sandy Hurlocker and Bill Armstrong	Steve Romero, John Williams, and Dennis Carril	Staff time, existing planning information and data for the two Districts
Tesuque Pueblo			<i>Waiting to hear from Sage and Ryan.</i>
State Forestry / NRCS	Eliza Kretzmann	Susan Rich	Staff time, data, and editing.
State Forestry Bernalillo	Todd Haines	Lawrence Crane	Data, priority alignment

District			
City of Santa Fe Fire Department and Water Division	Porfirio Chavarria	Alan Hook	Staff time, meeting venues, WUI data, watershed data and plans, and flow analysis.
Santa Fe Watershed Association		Andy Otto	Staff time.
Santa Fe County Fire Department		Dave Sperling	Leverage resources, meeting venue, county priorities
Wildfire Network	Krys Nystrom		Staff time, community connections and home site risk data.

Meeting Notes:

- 1) The meeting began with introductions. Anne then gave some background of why this meeting was convened and how it related to other efforts. She mentioned the 2/22 meeting convened by NM State Forestry and the City of Santa Fe Fire Department. Anne covered the objectives of this meeting and what the outcomes need to be to carry the effort forward. This meeting’s objectives were to 1) review some relevant work that could inform the development of a landscape restoration strategy, 2) finalize (for now) strategy team membership, 3) settle on process to begin the strategy, identify roles of the meeting participants in the process, and 4) provide an opportunity for information sharing on the proposed wilderness expansion.
- 2) Several presenters then provided background on some related projects for the meeting participants starting with Laura McCarthy.
 - a) Laura gave a presentation on the Taos Canyon Restoration Strategy and handed out copies for everyone (a link to this strategy can be found here :http://www.forestguild.org/SantaFe_Fireshed)
 - i) Laura commented that the Santa Fe Fireshed Restoration Strategy could build on and expand the initial Taos efforts, but that following a similar path would be valuable. She emphasized the importance of the signature page, which documents the broad agreement with the Taos strategy. Laura’s review:
 - ii) The Taos strategy coincided with the Taos County CWPP update and engaged many of the same partners.
 - iii) They used a collaborative process, made decisions in good faith, and agreed to go after funding together and share funding where appropriate.
 - iv) The Taos strategy used Ecological Response Unit forest type classification system to dovetail with the Carson Forest Plan Revision process.
 - v) Not included in the final strategy, but used by the group was a general soil erosion map that was well received by the collaborative group.
 - vi) Community water sources, particularly mutual-domestic wells and intakes (but also including municipal wells) were an important landscape feature to map.
 - b) *Laura posed the question for this group to evaluate, “What is the importance of water to this effort?”*

- c) We discussed map A18 in the Taos Strategy map book which displays the current strategy boundaries, selected priority areas for forest treatment and rationale for the choices:
 - i) McGaffey is the anchor point for the landscape since it's in relatively good ecological condition for ponderosa pine and is in need of prescribed fire. It is also in the southwest corner of the landscape and aligned with dominant winds.
 - ii) The Pueblo Ridge area (half Taos Pueblo and half Carson NF) is the next highest priority area. It doesn't have NEPA but is critically located between two important drainages.
 - iii) Next is the Rio Hondo wildland-urban interface (WUI) themed treatment.
 - iv) This is followed by the El Salto WUI themed treatment.
 - v) They included the San Cristobal treatments since those are underway or close to being implemented.
 - vi) Laura described how the strategy is useful to secure funding and to support agencies as they pursue NEPA.
- 3) Ellis Margolis then presented on the rationale and approach of the Rowe Landscape Assessment as a document that greatly assisted Ellis and the Pecos District to complete an environmental assessment (EA) across 17,000 acres on Rowe Mesa. Ellis described how this assessment had fewer partners, was smaller in scale, and had little to no WUI issues. He started out describing how the assessment continually took into consideration the existing restoration work on the Mesa since 2000. He then described the assessment and its treatment optimization modeling component.
 - a) First they built a GIS based on existing remotely sensed data and paired it with field data. The field data was a combination of forest and fire history (fire scar samples) and current forest structure, composition, and cover from plots.
 - b) They then developed a FlamMap probability model which he described as one of the most useful products of the process. *He tested this model versus the physical fire history data and found alignment.*
 - c) This led to the treatment optimization model which is being implemented now. He is trying to treat 20% of the landscape mechanically so that fire is able to be used at a larger scale.
 - d) Steve Romero added how useful the assessment was in completing NEPA across 17,000 acres.
 - e) Chief Sperling commented that this kind of fire and treatment optimization analysis could be useful in developing county ordinances to address fire risk.
- 4) Eytan described the proposals to the Rio Grande Water Fund covering the same landscape, including the partners engaged, and how those proposals led to the City of Santa Fe Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Resolution and the December 2015 Cohesive Strategy meeting.
- 5) Porfirio then described in greater detail how Mayor Gonzales and City Council supported the Fireshed Resolution effort and how Chief Litzenberg is passionate about implementing the National Cohesive Wildland Strategy in and around Santa Fe.
- 6) Michael Casaus and Mark Allison described the Pecos Wilderness expansion campaign that they have been pursuing since 2009. They are working to get areas congressionally designated as Wilderness and also using the Special Management Area (SMA) tool to allow certain uses. In their meetings with communities over this time, there was a consistent concern around wildfire. Mark said he was interested in how he can incorporate wildfire analysis in their work. Mark added that they are pursuing Wilderness designation to protect lands from commercial development and extractive industries.

- 7) Anne then used the whiteboard to parse out roles and responsibilities (see Follow-up Items above). Sandy added that he met with the BIA and Tesuque Pueblo last week to help secure BIA funding for some restoration treatments on Pueblo lands surrounded by USFS lands (Vigil Meadows or Aspen Ranch parcels).
- a) *The group gathered in this meeting will need to present its timeline for strategy completion, proposed team structure, the need for a public outreach plan, concept of collecting plan signatories to the broader Cohesive Strategy group on 2/22.*
 - b) The current proposed organizational structure is to have a “core” team responsible for writing the strategy narrative, producing final maps products, and drafting the outreach plan. In addition to the core team, would be an “extended” team, responsible for providing needed information to the core team, attending core team meetings as requested, and reviewing draft documents. The question still remains whether all the participants in the State Forestry Cohesive Strategy group become part of the extended team or there are members who would provide a different advisory role.
 - c) Anne shared a proposed set of steps to help guide the steps of strategy development based on a TNC process called *Conservation Action Planning*. The tool provides a sort of checklist to make sure we have covered the right content and contacted the right stakeholders. She also shared an outline of the final Taos Restoration Strategy document, including some recommendations for improvement offered by TNC’s Taos area representative Ernie Atencio.
 - d) The group discussed the pros and cons of a short or longer timeline for completion. The group discussed that an August completion date would align with support from existing County Commissioners, potential funding from the CFRP, and keep the momentum. We also discussed how to keep progress on a Restoration Strategy going while also engaging the affected communities. This led to the suggestion of an outreach plan as part of the strategy.

Sign in sheet 2/9

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