

Forest Guild Southwest Region Program

Challenges · Solutions · Projects

The Forest Guild's Southwest region encompasses the states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah. The Guild's Southwest Region supports the organization's goal of practicing and promoting excellent forestry by building a sustainable forest-based economy, developing future forestry leaders, practicing ecological forest restoration, and training and educating forest workers and landowners.

Major Challenges in the Southwest

- Forested landscapes need ecological restoration due to more than a century of fire suppression.
- High workers' compensation insurance rates limit the ability of contractors to bid on and win federal fuel reduction contracts.
- Inconsistent supply of federal forest restoration and thinning contracts hampers a viable forest industry.
- Low income, rural, and minority populations are vulnerable to catastrophic wildfires. Meeting the Challenges: Practicing and Promoting Excellent Forestry ^

- Community Forestry

The Forest Guild's community forestry program reaches out to forest workers in rural communities to engage them in excellent forestry. The program's overarching goal is to promote a viable small-scale timber economy that can meet the forest restoration needs of the region's public and private lands. Small businesses that provide forestry services and manufacture value-added products have a stake in excellent forestry: the people are connected to the land, and they know that if the forest is healthy, it will sustain them indefinitely.

- Ecological Forestry

The Forest Guild's ecological forestry program works with public, private, and non-profit partners to demonstrate forestry that is ecologically responsible and supported by good science. The Guild supports forest restoration that goes beyond reducing forest fuels and actually restores ecosystem function. Some examples of the Guild's work on ecological forestry in the Southwest are available here.

- Public Policy

The Southwest Region's public policy program works to educate Congress and other decision makers about the importance of forest restoration funding, incentives for small scale woody biomass utilization, continuation of landowner assistance programs, and programs that keep working forestlands working. Southwest Region Projects ^

- The Southwest Fire Science Consortium

The SW Consortium will be a way for managers, scientists, and policy makers to interact and share science in ways that can effectively move new information to management practices. The SW consortium together the many localized efforts to develop scientific information in an efficient and inclusive way. We also seek to link the academic community and the management community in educating future fire professionals with up-to-date science as well as practical experience. More

- Forest Worker Safety Certification Program

Extremely high workers compensation rates in New Mexico represent one of the greatest barriers to local businesses being able to win fuel reduction and wildfire hazard reduction contracts. The Guild continues to build on past success in improving safety and the availability of insurance in New Mexico. More

- Forest Guild Youth Conservation Corps

Each year the Guild provides youth training and an introduction to natural resource management through the successful Youth Conservation Corps program. More

- Collaborative Forest Restoration

Though the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP), the Guild has expanded forest restoration in New Mexico by providing multiparty monitoring and other technical assistance to communities and by implementing forest restoration projects including:

- Collaborative Forest Restoration Program Map
- Tres Piedras Forest Restoration Project
- Bluewater Watershed Restoration Project: Final Report
- Santa Cruz and Embudo Creek CFRP: a multi-jurisdictional forest restoration project

- Valle Grande II (#23-04) Socioeconomic Monitoring Report

- Technical Assistance to Forest-Dependent Communities and Businesses

The Guild provides direct technical assistance to communities in forest worker training, forest product business development, and collaboration with land management agencies. Productive working relationships and increased community capacity benefit everyone—and restore degraded forests.