

Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition
Quarterly Meeting
April 15, 2020

Meeting was held on Zoom.

Attendance

Mar Reddy-Hjelmfelt
Alan Barton
John Williams
Alan Hook
Anne Bradley
Lawrence Crane
Esmé Cadiente
Julie Anne Overton
James Melonas
Hannah Bergemann
Porfirio Chavarria
Jacob Davidson
Sam Berry

Ellis Margolis
Sandy Hurlocker
Steve Romero
Mori Hensley
Jon Malvig
Javonne Goodman
John Boe
Jonathan Frenzen
Andy Otto
Jan-Willem Jansens
Mike Feulner
Brad
Ryan Swazo-Hinds

Action Items

Wildfire Research Center

Porfirio – showed a short video on the Wildfire Research Center

Video: <https://youtu.be/X2fYBOsk4Qg>

The Wildlife Research Center contacted Porfirio about surveying people they've done home assessments on. Idea is to develop messaging ideas.

Potential questions: Barriers to action, GSFFC fuels reduction project, perceptions of smoke

SF Mtns Resiliency project update (Hannah):

Hannah –

Santa Fe Mountains Resiliency Project. ID Team working on draft EA. Contractor is SWCA. Comment period will open once draft is complete. They considered holding open houses to get more input, but due to the pandemic, this will have to be virtual meetings. Want to make sure they're providing quality public involvement opportunities.

James - make sure we hit key elected officials as we do the rollout.

Porfirio – people may want an update on what's going on in the NF besides the Resiliency Project. Alan Hook said the Council may want additional info as well.

Sandy – can meet one-on-one or one with a couple of people is possible. Doesn't have to be a council meeting. The FS can go out and look at the ground.

Anne – Would a short video presentation to post on the GSFFC website help? Standalone product might be useful.

Hannah, Esmé and James M. liked this idea.

Timing of public comment period – can hold the comment period around the time of the next GSFFC meeting.

Hannah.Bergemann@usda.gov

Time Frame: Late June/Early July

Multiparty monitoring update (Esmé/Hannah)

Esmé – The FSG will develop a multi-party monitoring plan for the Santa Fe Mountains Resiliency Project.

Hannah – want to develop a monitoring tied to their effects analysis, forest plan, and other policy requirements.

There has been talk of a citizen science monitoring group, holding field trips to project areas pre- and post-treatment to talk about them.

Need to reconvene the Monitoring Team that was formed but has not been too active. There are monitoring-related interests coming up.

Esmé – Have discussed some areas to focus the monitoring on. Three areas have been identified as:

- Key concerns that came up during scoping (Hannah will develop list of public concerns to be addressed by monitoring)
- Watershed monitoring – need input from Alan H
- Treatment effectiveness

Monitoring team will flesh this out. Identify monitoring that is achievable and tied to the policy requirements.

Lawrence – did photo monitoring project a few years ago with the SLO, and they engaged Boy Scouts to do the photo monitoring. This helped them with 3 merit badges: Forestry, Photography, and GIS. Worked very well. Low maintenance.

Alan H – there are other groups that could be involved in this type of project as well.

Joint Chiefs Proposal

Joint Chiefs is a three-year funding commitment. SFNF got \$560,000, split with NRCS, for this fiscal year. Plans for this are to put money into Santa Fe Mountains Project, and a few other things.

Applications for Equip funding are due May 1st, Quick turn around. A little funding is available to continue to support education and outreach with the FSG in year 1. Subsequent years will support SF resiliency project.

Coalition Manager Contract

Susan Rich did a great job in the past as manager. She has now retired from this job. Folks from FSG have been very helpful in filling in doing manager work. The City has a number of contracts with the FSG already, so they have added managerial responsibilities – coordinating agendas – to this contract for the next three meetings (through Jan 2021). The contract should be in place by the beginning of May.

Several people supported this idea.

Hannah - USFS is looking into sharing the funding of the manager's position to support the Guild to continue to be the Coalition Manager beyond Jan 2021. Others may look at sharing the funding.

Esmé – Guild is funded for meetings through the end of this year, but looking for funding beyond that is good.

Task Team Reports

Communications Task Team

► Prescribed Burns

Alan H - Alert Santa Fe – using this to update Rx burn conditions. Alan H – the City FD has used this for some processes.

Jonathan – many people have been afflicted with respiratory distress. This will raise concerns about smoke from Rx burns. We need to be careful with our communications so as not to alarm people too much. How can we address people's anxieties?

One potential solution – use thinning as a means of employing people in post-coronavirus recovery. Employees a lot of people, easily controlled, less intense smoke. Use thinning rather than Rx burns after the coronavirus fades.

John Boe – not doing any Rx burning right now, so as to avoid impacts on people in Santa Fe and other communities. Still dealing with the MSO injunction. Changing how they're doing fire response as well, to maintain social distancing. Also not managing natural starts for resource benefits.

Jonathan – can we get some money from Congress, they're investing a lot in keeping people employed?

James – FS has already discussed ideas revolving around shovel-ready projects. This would take an appropriation from Congress. With MSO injunction and pandemic, they're working with some unusual situations right now.

Sandy – When a decision comes out on the Santa Fe Mountains project, and they have shovel-ready acreage, they'll know more about how they can spend money on thinning. If they get through the EA this year, they'll be ready next Spring for projects. This is why they want to put the EA out for comments in July.

Jonathan – a crisis is a terrible thing to waste. How can we put the crisis to good use? Some funding advancing thinning and putting Rx burns off until people are not as concerned about respiratory distress would be beneficial.

Alan H – we should use Alert Santa Fe more for projects around Santa Fe, on private lands through NMSFD, and other projects.

Porfirio – re Alert Santa Fe, Porfirio is hosting a webinar on April 23 to help people know how to subscribe – they need more subscribers on this.

Lawrence – large thinning projects may overextend NMSFD resources.

Alan H – as we move into the fall, when there is a lot of opportunity for burning, we'll see where we stand.

► Ambassadors Program -

Sam – the big Ambassador's event was cancelled due to COVID. They've put together a blog to share stories. They also will have webinars.

<https://www.santafefireshed.org/blog2/2020/4/15/wildfire-wednesdays-3>

All Hands All Lands Burn Team – Sam is picking up coordination for this group – they'll be back in the Fall.

Implementation Task Team

Santa Fe Pojoaque LSR Grant – an inspector is out there near the Glorieta Baptist Camp, for a project of 50 to 60 acres.

There was a problem with some members of a homeowners association who didn't like some of the work they were doing. High Summit Homeowners Association.

SFFD is doing an inspection in the Santa Fe River drainage as well. About 50 acres in this project.

Steve R – La Cueva project, have 70-80 acres left of pile burning. Plan was to do it this winter but it was held up by MSO injunction.

Sandy – haven't moved much on Pacheco and Hyde Park projects, due to MSO injunction. There is funding for Hyde Park once injunction is lifted or clarified. Good collaboration with Tesuque Pueblo with resources and funding. They have a lot of funding right now but need to figure out where to put it. Need to verify what is and isn't owl habitat – can't do that field work right now.

Alan – updates on tribal lands?

Sandy – they're working on some adjacent lands, when they can get their crews out. There is some work on FS land that they can work on if they get clarification on the injunction.

Ryan – right now, the pueblo is pretty much shut down. They may be back end of April or early May. Halted on RTRL funding projects. They have some Rio Grande Water Fund money to do thinning and piling in Vigil grant. But with COVID a lot of their work will fall behind.

Landscape Resiliency Team

Anne – Hannah, Steve, Sandy and Anne have been meeting regularly and have tried to figure out how to complete the Resiliency Strategy. They have two possibilities. We have our mission, vision, our communications strategy. As for actions, we need to think through operational frameworks. What would be useful would be to streamline the document as much as possible, to make room for more frequent updates. The idea is not to have to revise the document as much as possible. Hope to have it done by end of May. She'll send out requests for info soon.

Focal areas – want to describe each focal area, in terms of acreage, landownerships, vegetation, ongoing or planned projects, wildfire and post fire hazards, VRAs, susceptibility to VRAs, and community groups or stakeholders.

Want to include work that groups are doing within the focal areas so that nothing is left out – communities, Firewise groups, funding available on private land, etc.

Forest Action Plan – TNC is working closely with NMSFD, doing all the data analysis for the FAP. Like 10 years ago, this one will have layers for values and threats to values statewide. The plan will be available to everyone. They have good updated data on many factors, including a new analysis of climate change impacts. Goal is to finish this by the beginning of July.

Members of the State Forestry Coordinating Group will have a draft of the FAP soon.

New Business/Updates

Mike F – this is a good time to put out some ads to get people to work on hardening their property.

James M – SFNF is coordinating with the County on wildfire response.

Lawrence – most FDs are aware, today the departments are putting together response strategies.

Mike – drafts of these are out, but this is on a large scale and doesn't really relate to local response.

Sandy – this fire season is something we've never seen before. All decisions are going to be affected by COVID and the closure. Any decision they make on one fire will affect how they can respond to future fires. If there is a COVID exposure on a fire, they have to quarantine firefighters, and this reduces the force for the next fire. The smaller fires, the fewer resources they have to bring in from elsewhere, the better. These are all new issues they've never dealt with before.

Porfirio – the City is looking at fire restrictions end of May or so, about the same time as the county. They also are putting in procedures to avoid COVID – smaller crews on vehicles, making sure their bosses aren't working at the same time so if one goes down they'll be others available.

John B – a helicopter is available now, on contract for 3 months.\

Esmé – please send her notes if you have them. She will compile and post.

Next Meeting

June 17, 2020, 1:30 to 3:30 pm, likely on Zoom. FSG will coordinate. Send any agenda items to Esmé, Esme@forestguild.org.