



# Record of Proceedings

**The Western Counties Partnership on Restoration (CPR) Summit:  
A Response to the President's Healthy Forests Initiative and  
the Western Governors' Association 10-Year Plan**

***Moving from Planning to Implementation of  
Collaborative Forest and Watershed Health Projects***

**Wednesday & Thursday, March 30 & 31, 2005  
Ruidoso Convention Center, Ruidoso, New Mexico**

**Summit Hosts: Otero County, USFS Lincoln National Forest, New Mexico State  
Forestry**

# Western Counties Partnership on Restoration (CPR) Summit

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### List of Acronyms

BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMP	Best Management Practices
CPR	County Partnership on Restoration
CFRP	Collaborative Forest Restoration Program
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plan
DFC	Desired Future Condition
DOI	Department of the Interior
EAP	Economic Action Program
EIS	Environmental Impact Study
EMNRD	Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department
EMS	Environmental Management Systems
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FLM	Federal Land Manager
FS	Forest Service
FWH	Forest and Watershed Health
GAO	Government Accounting Office
HFRA	Healthy Forest Restoration Act
ITC	Intertribal Timber Council
LNF	Lincoln National Forest
MLA	Montana Logging Association
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NASF	National Association of State Foresters
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFMA	National Forest Management Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
OMB	Office of Management & Budget
PFW	Partners for Fish and Wildlife
PUC	Per unit cost
R&D	Research & Development
SWCD	Soil & Water Conservation District
TWS	The Wilderness Society
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
WFLC	Wildland Fire Leadership Council
WGA	Western Governors' Association
WUI	Wildland Urban Interface

# Executive Summary

## Background

Since the 2000 wildfire season that captured the nation's attention, Congressional representatives have worked with the US Departments of Interior and Agriculture and the Western Governors' Association (WGA) and other partners to develop policy, legislation, and allocate funding for forest and watershed restoration projects. The National Fire Plan, the Healthy Forests Initiative, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, and the Western Governors' Association 10-Year Implementation Plan are all part of a long-term national strategy to address the wildland fire and hazardous fuels situation and the needs for ecosystem restoration and rehabilitation.

The National Forest County Partnership and Restoration Program (CPR) was established to promote restoration of watersheds and landscapes, and address threats to homes and lives from wildfire. The CPR program is focused on achieving outcomes outlined in the Healthy Forests Initiative, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act and the WGA's 10-Year Implementation Plan. These plans and initiatives all include, as major components, community involvement, collaboration between citizens and governments, and the use of best science over large landscapes.

Nearing the five-year anniversary of the 2000 wildfire season, Otero County and the Lincoln National Forest (two of the partners in the Lincoln National Forest County Partnership and Restoration Program) joined together with New Mexico State Forestry to host the Summit which was designed as a platform from which to begin to address implementation and funding of forest and watershed health restoration on a national basis.

## Summit Overview

A wide range of congressional representatives, administration officials, and experts from across the west were convened for the two-day Summit to develop strategies to move from planning to implementation. The Summit was attended by a diverse group of 300 participants from 11 states and the District of Columbia, representing federal, state, tribal and local governments, public interest groups, academics and private landowners.

The Summit's plenary sessions provided policymakers with a forum to explain current initiatives and priorities, as well as to express concerns and discuss barriers. Eight breakout sessions provided more in-depth opportunities to engage specific issues. The breakout sessions were led by panels comprised of representatives from all stakeholder groups and ten western states. The Summit showcased the wide range of Western successes in collaborative planning, including state level plans like the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Health Plan, and local plans that follow the format of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) such as those of the California Fire Safe Councils. The Summit Exhibition Hall featured pilot implementation and biomass utilization projects from a wide variety of entities working in ecological restoration and community protection.

## Summit Findings

The following major issues were addressed at the Summit, with findings on progress and barriers noted for each, as well as recommendations for possible action.

## **1) Collaboration: The key to successful planning and implementation. What is being done to institutionalize the collaborative process?**

Progress: Collaboration is included in HFRA language; The highest levels of USFS and DOI are committed to collaboration; Success stories exist throughout the west that serve as models; WGA is hosting workshops on collaboration.

Barriers: Collaboration is not yet “the dominant paradigm”, in fact many, even within the agencies, do not understand the concept and its role in planning; Not enough specific tools exist about how to collaborate (process design, stakeholder involvement, information needed, funding), how to measure the success of collaboration, and what to expect in terms of timeframe and results; Concern over lack of NEPA in both planning and project levels in new NMFA Rules, especially given the current low level of success with collaborative processes; High turnover in FS personnel in small communities thwarts collaboration which is based on trust and relationship.

Recommendations: Develop a simple definition for collaboration as well as an explanation of its role in planning that can be used in all materials and trainings; Develop more specific guidance for how to start and develop collaborative processes as well as benchmarks of success; If collaboration is the new process to address NEPA and other recent regulations and legislation, then a greater level of accountability in the agencies for utilizing collaborative processes is needed: develop a performance measure that ties funding to successful collaboration; Develop recruitment and orientation procedures in the FS that promote collaborative relationships; Add collaboration to agency personnel performance evaluations.

## **2) Restoration: Actions to restore healthy ecosystems include but are not limited to fuel reduction. How to make restoration that integrates all aspects of ecological health a clear and vital priority over the long-term?**

Progress: Agency officials expressed a clear emphasis on restoration; WGA has established a Working Group to develop a conceptual framework for Restoration; Improvements to Landfire will enable better focus on restoration through Condition Class; Performance of agencies is being tied to improvement of Condition Class.

Barriers: Fuel reduction and community protection are still not well linked to the larger restoration initiative; No clear, compelling vision/definition at the national level for ecological restoration; Confusion as to the desired future condition of restored landscapes: is this based solely on ecosystem condition or are socio-economic needs and values to be considered as well?; Restoration is not specifically and comprehensively addressed in legislation and rules; Restoration message (or lack thereof) is confusing to policy-makers and the public.

Recommendations: Develop a vision and a concise definition for ecological restoration that considers all aspects of ecosystem health (vegetation, soils, water, wildlife, etc.) and that addresses the role of socio-economic values; Develop a strategy to communicate the restoration message to policy-makers and the public; Create a Restoration line item in Agency budgets that is distinct from Hazardous Fuels and integrate it with other programs

that work on specific restoration objectives (habitat, invasive species, water, etc.) to create transparency for restoration work and expenditure.

### **3) Landscape Level Planning & Implementation: Restoration work is effective and lasting when it is based on landscapes. What is being done to encourage this approach?**

Progress: Collaborative planning and treatment efforts are beginning to work across-ownerships; WGA Forest Health Advisory Committee Report addresses landscape scale as a needed focus.

Barriers: Confusion persists as to what is meant by landscape approach (e.g., the location and sequencing of projects to affect restoration objectives for the entire landscape that considers all aspects of the ecosystem); CWPP and other local collaborative efforts are generally too small geographically to apply a landscape approach; Affecting change at the landscape level is more effective and cost efficient over time but is more complex and requires additional expertise, monitoring, and data-sharing up front; Agencies only get funding to treat their own jurisdictions so this acts as a disincentive for them to participate in getting important sequential projects done that involve other jurisdictions.

Recommendations: Develop a clear and broadly accepted definition of what is meant by the landscape approach; Collaboratively develop statewide guidance on how to utilize the landscape approach including monitoring guidelines, identification of landscapes, coordination among groups working within a landscape, integration of various restoration objectives (watershed, forest, fire protection, etc.); Develop incentives for agencies and stakeholders to adopt a landscape approach; Explore ways to share data of private landowners and tribes that protect their rights.

### **4) Project Prioritization: How to prioritize so that the most critical landscapes are addressed such as those involving safety of communities and healthy ecosystems?**

Progress: Title 1 of HFRA enables local groups to affect the priority of projects through the CWPP; The emphasis on cross-ownership planning and sequencing of projects means priority will be applied to the entire landscape for greater impact.

Barriers: Concern that agencies (FS in particular) are not integrating community planning priorities into implementation; Prioritization through collaboration takes time and may be thwarted by the sense of urgency to act; Agency performance measures and culture that stress acres treated may work against the process of community prioritization (CWPP and others); Agencies have conflicting pressures to address both high priority acres but also treat as many acres as possible for the lowest cost.

Recommendations: Reconcile the opposing pressures listed above and develop consistent direction for the on-the-ground agency personnel that will result in effective prioritization of treatment and funding allocation; Create realistic expectations of accomplishment now and over the long term by establishing benchmarks for success and associated performance measures: short term accomplishment should emphasize successful collaborative process and utilization innovations over number of acres treated and PUC; long term accomplishment should emphasize effective treatments that affect desired ecological conditions over large landscapes paid for by the private sector rather than the public sector.

**5) Performance Measures: What meaningful measures of success are being used and/or are in the process of being developed to ensure that dollars are being spent effectively and efficiently?**

Progress: Performance measures specifically tied to high priority acres and to those improving Condition Class are being used to drive funding; A performance measure under consideration counts how many acres are pursuant to CWPPs which will indicate those that result from a collaborative process.

Barriers: There is still a gap between what is being counted as an indicator of successful performance and the goals for performance themselves: goals include 1) institutionalizing the collaborative process so as to circumvent the high costs and gridlock of litigation and 2) developing a robust utilization industry that is compatible with local capacity and supply so as to replace federal subsidy of restoration and maintenance; There do not seem to be performance measures to indicate progress toward these primary goals and therefore the dollars spent on reaching them are not being adequately justified; Even the application of performance measures to capture high priority acreage and improvement of condition class too often get distilled down to the most acreage for the least amount of money; Confusion persists among collaborative groups about how performance measures affect their work and funding.

Recommendations: Continue to develop a meaningful set of performance measures for the primary goals associated with effective long-term restoration and maintenance of ecological health, and develop a matrix linking all of them so that accomplishment can be measured on a variety of fronts simultaneously; Actualize the use of performance measures that consider collaboration, utilization and priority restoration goals; Communicate that effective treatment that takes longer is preferable to quick treatment that may need to be re-done or worse, corrected; Develop guidance for CWPPs and other collaborative groups about how to build effective programs that incorporate performance measures from the outset.

**6) Funding: How is funding being utilized so that effective restoration projects can be accomplished efficiently?**

Progress: More funds are available in 2005 than ever before; Fire borrowing has been addressed to preserve fuel reduction and other budgets utilized in ecological restoration efforts.

Barriers: Increased implementation activity means increased competition for funds; Federal funds will likely not be maintained at this level over time (e.g., budget cuts this year); States lack adequate funding that can be used as federal match and for on-the-ground implementation; Private sector is still encountering an array of challenges that prevent significant federal cost reductions; National Fire Plan dollars are still not effectively getting on the ground, i.e., high priority acres determined in a collaborative and landscape approach are not receiving treatment.

Recommendations: Minimize budget cuts in the near term (especially for programs like EAP that facilitate utilization and capacity) through the enlistment of support from WFLC, NASF, WGA; Develop a template for federal and state agencies to pool funds and make decisions as to how to allocate them on a statewide basis; States develop strategies to

develop funding for ecological restoration efforts; Develop a “10-Year Plan for A Transitional Strategy” that addresses wood supply, incentives, subsidies, and contracts as well as land management, workforce, biomass utilization and marketing to develop sustainable industries that will over time cover the costs of restoration and maintenance; Align federal and state budgets to reflect restoration and maintenance priorities.

### **7) Monitoring and Evaluation: What is being done to ensure that monitoring and evaluation are a part of every project to promote effective action?**

Progress: NFMA Rules and Regulations emphasize performance through accountability and monitoring as the tool; WFLC’s current monitoring initiative.

Barriers: Lots of talk about monitoring but still very little actual monitoring and even less evaluation is taking place; Lack of consistent monitoring protocols among all cooperating agencies thwart comparison at spatial and temporal scales; The role of science in collaborative processes and in implementation is still unclear; Land management has not fully integrated the science on cumulative impacts and multi-species management into best management practices, both of which are necessary to landscape approaches to restoration and maintenance.

Recommendations: Develop guidance about the role of science in collaborative processes (CWPP and others); Develop guidance on monitoring and evaluation, including monitoring parameters and protocols, examples of successful adaptive management strategies, etc.; Develop performance measures tied to monitoring and evaluation; Include the science and monitoring guidance in materials associated with collaborative processes and implementation (CWPP and others).

### **8) Woody Biomass Utilization: How are policies and systems being re-structured to support the development of new industries and markets?**

Progress: Stewardship Contracting legislation provides new tools for utilization; Examples of community-based woody biomass utilization efforts are emerging throughout the west; WGA’s new Biomass Task Force; USFS Strategic Plan on Biomass.

Barriers: The focus on biomass for energy is overshadowing higher value uses of woody biomass; The old systems and mind-sets of the Forest Service to ensure equity in historical timber markets are not useful for the development of a new industry based on small diameter wood (e.g., policies such as merchantability standards, best value contracts, fair market value and bonding requirements, etc.); Federal agencies still have no process to match the scale of biomass utilization to the scale of restoration treatments needed, and analyses of available supply are occurring independently from Fire Management Plans; Woody biomass utilization is not appropriately scaled to the ecology, community and economy of the place; Inconsistency of contracts and utilization negatively affects the local workforce.

Recommendations: The definition of woody biomass utilization needs to go beyond energy to include all value-added products and integrated production systems, and policy and subsidies should reflect this broader definition; There should be an emphasis on using woody material for the production of the highest valued products first and always working to capture as much of the generated revenues locally; Fund EAP (or

some similar program) to promote and fund innovation and capacity building for utilization; Create performance measures tied to woody biomass utilization that are linked to the performance measures for priority setting, collaboration, landscape approach and effective treatment; Develop a “10-Year Plan for A Transitional Strategy” that addresses wood supply, incentives, subsidies, and contracts as well as land management, workforce, biomass utilization and marketing to develop sustainable industries that will over time cover the costs of restoration and maintenance.

### **9) Legislative Tools: What tools are available to promote collaboration and implementation across ownerships and how are they working?**

Progress: HFRA; new NMFA Rules and Regulations focus on the need to work more effectively in the field by using collaborative planning processes, and on the need to root performance in accountability through monitoring; Stewardship Contracting, CWPPs, and Tribal Forest Protection Act encourage innovative approaches.

Barriers: Concern over lack of NEPA in both planning and project levels in new NMFA Rules, especially given the current low level of success with collaborative processes; Concern that it takes time for new legislative tools to be understood and well-used on the ground.

Recommendations: If collaboration is the new process to address NEPA and other recent regulations and legislation, then a greater level of accountability in the agencies for utilizing collaborative processes is needed; Add collaboration to agency personnel performance evaluations; Develop a performance measure that ties funding to successful collaboration; Develop explicit guidance with examples for use of new legislative tools on the ground.

### **10) Leadership: Leadership is key to the long-term action needed to restore and maintain the landscape. What is being done to ensure that all partners are taking a leadership role?**

Progress: State leadership is taking place on a state-by-state basis, there are some excellent models available now; WFLC has the membership and mandate to provide visionary leadership; Both federal and state governments are recognizing the importance of tribal participation in land management decisions.

Barriers: There is wide variation in the way states are participating in the collaborative process; Lack of effective state leadership leaves a gap between local efforts and agencies, and results in road blocks to implementation; Federal agencies are not organized to effectively implement legislation or funded programs with their partners to maximize collaborative efforts; With exceptions, affected Counties are not adequately involved in the collaborative process; Tribes, for the most part, are still too isolated from cross-jurisdictional collaborative decision-making; Concern that ecological restoration and maintenance are long-term efforts that will be circumvented by the shorter cycles of political change.

Recommendations: Adopt a template with guidance for state leadership and State Plans for ecological restoration; Adopt a template with guidance for county leadership and develop outreach to western counties to engage them in leadership; Adopt a template with guidance for tribal leadership and develop outreach to western tribes to engage

them in leadership; Consider a new management paradigm for the nation's natural resources along the lines of the Federal Reserve Board that would manage over longer cycles more in-keeping with ecosystem function.

## **Conclusion**

Many successes and achievements have been realized since the National Fire Plan was first developed five years ago. From these successes, there has been a substantial evolution in thinking about and understanding the issues that are involved: most importantly, 1) that wildfire risk and fire suppression are really only one aspect of the much larger concern of ecological health; 2) that collaboration among *all* affected entities is the way to develop effective solutions; and 3) that private sector involvement in restoration and maintenance will be necessary to accomplishing and adequately financing the work.

In each of the ten areas above, the concerns and recommendations spring from this evolved thinking. Through these, we are attempting to retool the framework that was created five years ago to better fit the current understanding and circumstances, in order to fully realize the long-term goals and objectives of ecological health on public land and on that of its neighbors. This is adaptive management in action.

However, instead of continually working to retool the existing framework, it may be time to re-think the National Fire Plan. An expanded national plan for comprehensive ecological restoration and maintenance that includes all aspects of the ecosystem (e.g., vegetation, soils, water, and air quality, and fire regime, flooding and other natural processes), as well as social and economic values, is needed to fully address the complexity of the problem. This plan should integrate the values, goals and lessons learned from the National Fire Plan and the Comprehensive Strategy, including the important role of collaboration and partnership, and in doing so, would enable us to address many of the concerns expressed above. Further, such a plan would provide the much-needed vision for this work, and a new platform that accurately communicates the needs and solutions, allowing for the development of legislative tools and funding mechanisms appropriate to the task.

## Proceedings

*Digests of the Plenary Session Speaker's remarks and discussion, followed by highlights from the Breakout Sessions (refer to the Summit Agenda). Links to unabridged material (e.g., PPTs, Speeches, etc.) are included where available.*

### Day I: Wednesday, March 30, 2005

#### Welcome

Leon Eggleston, Mayor of Ruidoso  
Michael Nivison, Otero County Commissioner

#### Opening Remarks

Bill Richardson, Governor, State of New Mexico

The diversity of people here today is no surprise for two reasons. First, people care about the ecological issues that are facing us in New Mexico: we care about water, about healthy forests that protect our water and give us a place to recreate, we care about landscapes resilient to wildfire and other natural processes, and we care about the condition of the land that we leave for future generations. And second, because people want to work together. In the West, we know the complexity of the issues involved, and we have had our share of conflict and gridlock. We want to work together to reduce the threat of wildfire and improve forest and watershed health.

The New Mexico Forest and Watershed Health Plan is a landmark document, being one of the first to broaden collaboration by linking fire reduction, improvement of watersheds, biomass development and environmental protection in addressing forest and watershed health issues. Not only will this Plan enable NM to accomplish more with greater efficiency on our lands here, but it will also enable us to continue our regional work with WGA and other western states. The Plan, which I will sign today, calls for using science as a basis for decision-making and this may require additional resources which we at the State and Federal level need to commit to.

*[Governor Richardson called Joanna Prukop, NM Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources; Butch Blazer, NM State Forester; and Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) to join him at the podium for the signing.]*

In cooperation with our partners in the Department of Interior, the USDA, Tribes, private landowners, and others, I am going to announce a new statewide office on forest and watershed health to implement the Plan's recommendations. This new office will be a catalyst for new investment in forest and watershed health restoration and will help to streamline work for greater results. This will not be a bureaucracy, but rather a lean entity whose job will be to support decisions and action at the local level, like the excellent work pioneered here in Ruidoso.

The federal government is looking more to states to address issues on their own. Plans like this that involve all stakeholders will enable us to take the needed steps. But we will need federal action on the important ecological issues like forest and watershed health,

drought, and climate change. We have good cooperation on fighting fires, and this type of cooperation needs to be expanded into the larger arena of forest and watershed restoration. We also need better federal cooperation on roadless areas that we need to preserve and protect.

The New Mexico congressional delegation has done excellent work on ecological issues, and we are lucky to have them working so hard on our behalf in Washington. Senator Bingaman is here to speak to you on some of these issues and successes.

I look forward to the work that will come out of your session here, and I am anxious to see the results. I encourage you to continue to find ways to build collaborative efforts that address the health of our forests and watersheds.

### **The Roles of Science and Collaboration in National Forest Decision-Making**

Jeff Bingaman, US Senator (D-NM)

[\[Link to the Full Speech\]](#)

I would like to make a few observations this morning about the importance of science and collaboration in forest restoration. Many of our pre-European-settlement forests were open, grassy, and park-like, and frequent fires were critical to preventing fuel build-up. This knowledge was verified as early as 1864, and then again in 1890, in the early 1900s, in the 40s, and again in 1962. We have ignored science at our own peril. Imagine where we would be today if we were having this conference in 1912, or even in 1940, when the science certainly was sufficiently established to justify reorienting forest management policy.

While science has made great strides and provoked action, we cannot afford to neglect it as we move forward. But there are troubling indications that—at least in the Forest Service—continued investment in science is being neglected. For example, the number of scientific researchers in the Forest Service has fallen by approximately 45% since 1985. This year, the Forest Service’s Rocky Mountain Research Station plans to abolish 11 more research positions because of budgetary shortfalls. A 2002 National Research Council report confirms that “Many scientific disciplines appear to have dwindling numbers of research scientists and dwindling expertise despite rapid increases in pressing problems regarding the productivity, health, management, and protection of our nation’s forests.” We should renew our commitment to support science, both within and outside of the Forest Service.

Let me also say a few words about collaboration. Even though we may be inventing it as we go, collaboration is working, and so long as there is more work to do than resources to do it, I believe that it will—and should—play an increasingly important role. There are many examples, here and around the West, like the hundreds of projects being implemented under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 and the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program here in New Mexico. Between the two programs, less than a handful of projects have been appealed, and I am not aware of any that have been litigated. That is an impressive track record, and I believe it is attributable to collaboration.

We have made some good progress on these issues in Washington: we passed the Healthy Forests Restoration Act; we have provided additional restoration funds in the National Fire Plan to circumvent fire borrowing; and we have established ecological forest restoration institutes in the Southwest to address science in a collaborative approach. Good progress has been made here in New Mexico too, like the efforts in Ruidoso, Cloudcroft, and in the Rio Puerco and Santa Fe watersheds. New Mexico communities and many others in the region have accomplished a lot, but we all have more work to do.

The Administration's proposals to eliminate the Economic Action Program, to cut 84% of the funding for the forest rehabilitation and restoration program, and to cut 53% from the cooperative forest health management program would be large steps backwards. Despite commitments to improve Forest Service monitoring, its proposed funding represents nearly a 20% cut from its 2001 capacity. We can do better. I pledge my best efforts to see that the good progress that has been made continues.

### **Restoring Forest and Watershed Health – Lynchpins to Success (Taped Message)**

Harv Forsgren, Region 3 Forester, US Forest Service

[\[Link to DVD of the Taped Message\]](#)

Administrative and legislative changes resulting from bi-partisan support of elected officials from county government all the way to the White House has led to increased funding and reduced process burden. This public and political consensus provides us with an unprecedented opportunity. For us to take full advantage of this opportunity, I would suggest that we need to pay extra attention to two areas: collaboration and utilization.

Collaboration: there are many definitions, but I would say that it simply means people coming together to develop solutions to a mutual problem. And I believe collaboration is essential to how we work to solve this problem. Why? Because the scale at which the problem exists crosses many ownerships and no one entity has the full authority to address it. Because the complexity of the problem demands a range of knowledge that is widely dispersed among organizations and individuals. And because the costs are beyond the capacity of any one entity, so they need to be shared. Collaboration is not easy, but we must rise to the challenge and leadership must fully embrace it. The shared and transparent decision-making that comes from collaboration demands uncommon leadership, and is increasingly expected by society.

Utilization: 85% of the lands in the Forest Service Southwest Region are in moderate to high risk of catastrophic wildfire, which translates to more than 17 million acres on national forests in NM and AZ alone. This situation is due, simply, to too many small trees. Removing and disposing of this material is neither environmentally sound nor economically feasible: we cannot burn all of it, and we cannot overload our landfills with it, and even if we could, we cannot afford to do so. Therefore, we must capture the economic value of the material that needs to be removed so as to help offset the costs

of treatment. To do this will require the collective efforts of local, state, tribal, and federal elected officials and public servants, and the private sector.

Securing utilization of this material will require focus on three areas:

Incentives: we need state and federal legislative incentives to improve the economic viability of the developing utilization industry. I urge Washington DC officials to vigorously pursue the inter-departmental MOU on biomass they crafted.

Supply: we need the coordinated efforts of land managers to provide greater assurance of supply through increased NEPA planning, work across ownership boundaries, and use of longer term stewardship contracts.

Technical/Financial: We need to provide technical and financial assistance to promote development of the fledgling utilization industry.

If we will collectively focus on these three areas, we can turn effective woody biomass utilization from dream to reality. Together we will be successful.

### **Government Restoration Partnerships**

A Development Path for Federal, State, Tribal, and Local Government Partnerships

David Garrett, PhD

Executive Director, Lincoln National Forest CPR

The development at the state level of a comprehensive approach to address forest and watershed health is a terrific undertaking and I applaud NM on the Plan.

I want to address a question I was asked recently: "Have we gone very far on restoration progress in the US?" We have made significant headway, but we also have a long way to go.

Our progress to date has included:

The development of good science principles and good treatment methods, we pushed for legislation and we've gotten it (the National Fire Plan and HFRA), natural resource administrators have developed good planning and resource capability. NM is an excellent example of the leadership that is needed by the States.

The challenge ahead:

With good laws and rules, leadership and planning, we still have a massive problem. For example, 17 million acres under the Forest Service in just two states (NM & AZ). How do we deal with the magnitude of this problem? We need a commitment for a permanent program: we need to equip ourselves for the long haul. I am concerned by the cuts in resources like the State Forestry budget.

We are getting better at collaboration and the result is that we are developing plans together. On the action side however, we still need to get there. Partnerships seem complex, but the answer is to simplify them. The partnerships are there so we can share the load; do not be concerned with who has the problem or when the partnership will end. Collaborative partnerships have been a long time in coming; they are the way we must do business and they will not end. In these partnerships we need to focus on fixing the problem, not on who gets the credit or who gets the money.

The Lincoln/Apache Sitgreaves is an example of one of these partnerships that encourages and embraces partnership among all stakeholders to get the job done. You can hear more specifics about this partnership this afternoon in one of the breakout sessions. Our mission is to address the most at risk acres in the next 10 years based on science with monitored results to ensure effectiveness.

There is a critical need to involve local collaborative working groups to accomplish the restoration work themselves: to develop demonstration areas with prescriptions that demonstrate treatments that work and that are monitored to show results. The work gets done by the locals so we must have this level to implement.

### **The Importance of the State's Role**

NM's Forest & Watershed Health Plan and the new Forest & Watershed Restoration Office

Arthur "Butch" Blazer, NM State Forester

New Mexico's Plan integrates fire and forest health with the larger issues of watershed health and ecological restoration. From the beginning the planning committee sought to integrate all of these as a way to begin to get our hands around the reality of the ecological challenge and also as a way to focus on creating greater synergy between the various groups working on restoration efforts. We saw a lot of duplication of effort across the state, individuals in the Soil & Water Conservation Districts, working under the EPA 319 program, communities addressing wildfire protection, and many of them are doing the same kinds of things. Our vision was for an effort that would seek to leverage these various efforts, use successes as templates that can be replicated, share information that has already been gathered, all toward greater efficiency and more result.

The State was in a unique position to take the lead on this and we were gratified by the amount of support we found for this vision. It would have been much easier to just focus on forest health, but the planning committee knew that taking the bold step of integrating all ecological restoration activities would benefit us in the end. The new office that the Governor spoke of this morning will be key to making the Plan come off the page and making this integrated ecological restoration approach a reality.

When the Governor first called me about the State Forester position, he told me he wanted a plan that would address all lands within the state: federal, state, tribal, private. This meant involving an extremely diverse group at multiple levels of leadership: policy makers to provide the will and managers to provide the specific expertise. Forty individuals developed the draft, then previewed it to a diverse group of more than 250 people here in Ruidoso, and then we took it out on the road in town halls. Comments were used to revise and strengthen the document. There was a final Planning Committee meeting, then a public comment period. The plan was finalized with the executive team in November and presented to the Governor in December.

It took us about six months to design our approach and gather the team. From the first kick-off meeting to the delivery of the final product was one year. The thing I learned is

that real collaboration takes time: building relationships, developing a common understanding and language, coming to agreements about the important issues and educating each other. The more complex the issues and the broader the diversity of the group, the more time it will take. But this investment of time is key and well worth it for several reasons:

- there is good buy-in and support in the end for what you have decided to do,
- what you are able to agree on grows and therefore you can accomplish greater things than you thought possible,
- there is a new level of trust and mutual respect among the partners that is lasting and makes work more efficient into the future.

The monetary value of each of these results that come from collaboration have yet to be calculated.

### Plan Overview

The plan document addresses the need for the plan, describing the forest and watershed issues as they are specific to New Mexico. It also articulates the Vision and Mission of the Plan, and sets out the Guiding Principles under three main areas that we all agreed to:

I. Ecological: Promoting ecological integrity, natural processes, and long-term resiliency is the primary goal of the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Health Plan.

II. Socio-Cultural: The values of New Mexico's diverse human communities will be supported and sustained by ecological restoration.

III. Economic: Economic productivity is dependent on healthy ecosystems, and will be leveraged to full advantage in support of long-term ecological health.

The Plan then makes 20 recommendations that, today with the Governor's signature, became action items. These action items fall under three sections:

1) State-Level Action in Support of Local On-the-Ground Efforts that will directly and immediately strengthen local restoration efforts through the creation of resources, tools and incentives.

2) State-Level Strategic Planning and Coordination that will develop the large-scale tools and resources needed to promote implementation over the long term.

3) State-Level Management and Administration to outline the leadership entities needed to manage the integrated approach to the State's ecological restoration activities and that will be responsible for implementation of the Plan.

An example of how the Forest & Watershed Health Plan is already serving its coordinating function. Phreatophyte Implementation Plan: they could use FWH Plan template to fit their work into the larger umbrella plan. As the Governor said, the new office will enable us to put the plan into action, and I look forward to being a part of this effort.

## **Wildland Fire Leadership Council**

Jim Erickson, Intertribal Timber Council

*[Mr. Erickson graciously acted as an impromptu stand-in for Lynn Scarlett, Assistant Secretary, Policy, Management and Budget, US Department of the Interior, who was unable to attend the Summit]*

The interagency Wildland Fire Leadership Council was created in 2002 to provide a coordinated seamless management structure to all aspects of wildland fire policy. From its inception, it was recognized that the inclusion of non-agency partners would greatly enhance the work of the Council. Other partners who were added include the Western Governors' Association, the National Association of Counties, the State Foresters, the Intertribal Timber Council and others. WFLC's early focus was fire and fire risk, but soon broadened to encompass ecosystem health, which the group addresses at the broad policy level.

Corbin Newman (USFS) and Jim Hubbard (DOI) manage much of the work of the Council, and you will hear from them later during this session.

One of WFLC's current focuses is monitoring: how can we develop monitoring that accurately demonstrates our effectiveness while also being practical. Another focus is information gathering – we all do things differently, but when it comes to information, we need consistency in the data to support effective decision-making across land ownerships. We have been working on the LandFire web database that will have its first outputs in 2006. Although originally developed for fire, this really is a comprehensive land management database that will have applications for water, wildlife, and many other issues. WFLC is also committed to long-term collaboration and works with WGA and other partners to ensure that collaboration is a dynamic part of how we do business.

## **The National Environmental Management Strategy: Current Applications on Federal Lands**

Jim Hubbard, Director of the Office of Wildland Fire Coordination, US Department of the Interior; Mike Anderson, Senior Resource Analyst, The Wilderness Society; Joanna Prukop, Secretary, NM Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department, Moderator

### Jim Hubbard, US Department of the Interior

The big fire seasons of 2000 and 2003 resulted in unprecedented national attention on the threats to the health, stability and livelihood of our forests and ecosystems. The National Fire Plan was passed and infused a billion dollars of new funding into this work.

In the first meeting between some of the Western Governors and the agency heads to develop the Comprehensive Strategy, the governors articulated three imperatives:

- Full involvement by the Governors
- All lands considered
- Long-term commitment to the work

WGA still has this work as one of its major priorities: a testament to the commitment to and importance of forest and watershed restoration in the West.

The Comprehensive Strategy articulates four goals, the first two of which have taken more priority in the first years:

- Preparedness
- Fuel Reduction
- Community Assistance
- Restoration

Twenty-million acres have been treated since the National Fire Plan, 75% with fire and 25% with mechanical treatment. This equals just 10% of the GAO's identified 190 million acres in need of treatment in the West. And yet, even though 10% seems small, if that 10% is well placed on the landscape and well sequenced with other projects, this could be the amount necessary to make a major restoration change. We know the importance of placement of treatments, and Landfire will enable us to get even better at placing for maximum impact. This will become even more important as the 4 million acres per year that we are treating now increases under HFRA.

This also needs to tie into Fire Management Plans and CWPP. We will not have to suppress all fires; some we will be able to use to do restoration. However, fire use in many areas may not yet be an option due to extreme fuel build-up. There are also a lot of issues, like air quality impacts and wildfire risk, with fire use that make it important for us to work closely with communities on burning projects. HFRA encourages CWPPs that involve local government, state fire, forestry and others to set priorities. This is not required but clearly the intent is to have priorities set locally and these will drive the treatments.

Our Field Guidance discourages the submission of fuel treatment projects if they are not part of a collaborative process. On the other hand, we must be careful not to be too prescriptive or it will look like an unfunded mandate.

Utilization: there is not any blanket fix – solutions are being encouraged locally, and material will be supplied based on community identified needs. Maybe energy and biomass can help, but most solutions to the biomass utilization challenge will come from what can be produced locally. There will not be massive industry created. Tying this to local communities need and capabilities will make it more sustainable.

At the same time, we need to pay attention to what WGA wanted: we need to cross ownership in the same planning framework and landscape context. This can be done at the state level, like what has been done here in New Mexico, but more systematically across the West. This is an excellent opportunity for federal land managers to be involved in the collaboration effort.

We will continue to do treatments because we have been told to do so by congress and the administration, but these will truly be effective when they fit with what local communities want and support.

Mike Anderson, The Wilderness Society

[\[Link to M. Anderson Abstract\]](#)

[\[Link to the PPT\]](#)

I am here to try to represent the national environmental perspective, but we should all acknowledge that there really is no such thing. There is a lot of diversity of opinion as well as a lot of movement in positions. And right now, we are in a transition regarding perspectives on restoration and fuel reduction.

The Wilderness Society (TWS) was founded in 1935 and currently has 250,000 members. Aldo Leopold, the NM scientist/philosopher who helped establish the first wilderness area in the Gila in 1924, co-founded the Wilderness Society. His ethic still inspires our work today.

TWS focuses mostly on federal land policy, fire policy in particular. We put together a group to develop the principles that we would like to see guiding management of public lands, which are:

- Integrity, Health, Sustainability
- Do no harm
- Use Best Science
- Economical sound management
- Citizen participation

The national legal framework for the restoration work we are all doing actually does not have restoration as a very strong theme in any one of the laws.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA 1969) – does note restoring environmental quality

Endangered Species Act (1973) – mentions recovering species and conserving their ecosystems

National Forest Management Act (1976) – mostly focuses on reforestation of clear cuts

HFRA – (2003) – talks about restoration but within the context of fire

In sum, there is no holistic direction for restoration of federal lands.

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) Regulations came out in December 2004 and we have some concerns:

- For the first time, forest planning is exempt from NEPA – no EIS, no alternatives need be considered. HFRA already reduces NEPA at the project level, so it is alarming that these regulations take NEPA out of the planning level as well.
- There will be no environmental standards in plans, only guidelines. No requirements, only “shoulds” or “oughts”.
- The new regulations put science in an advisory role, whereas the previous language said planning should be “consistent with science.”
- Environmental Management Systems (EMS): We have yet to fully understand how this will be utilized, but the rules for them are available to the public at a cost of \$81 on the International Standards Organization website.
- Regulations put strong emphasis on collaboration as partial replacement for NEPA

## TWS Project Example: Lakeview Stewardship Group

### Project Goals

1. Sustain & restore a healthy diverse resilient forest ecosystem that can accommodate human and natural disturbances
2. Sustain & restore the land's capacity to absorb, store and distribute quality water
3. Provide opportunities for people to realize their material, spiritual and recreational values and relations with the forest

Monitoring is very important. It showed, for example, that the sub-soiling restoration technique (to counter soil compaction and roads) is found to promote invasive species.

### In Conclusion

I will offer some tips for how restoration projects can receive greater support from the environmental community:

- Do not confuse restoration with WUI fuel reduction; techniques used for community protection may not be appropriate for use beyond WUI. Treatment methods need to be based on sound science and monitored to ensure that ecosystem integrity is restored and maintained.
- Take old growth and roadless areas off the table for restoration projects.
- Minimize road development and soil impacts (contractors' equipment needs to be "light on the land").
- Integrate forest and watershed restoration goals and develop agreed upon goals prior to taking action.

Joanna Prukop, Secretary, NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

[\[Link to the Full Speech\]](#)

The Administration, Congress, the Western Governors as well as all of the entities represented in this room are making forest and watershed health serious priorities, and this is a good thing because coming together will result in effective action. In NM, we are in close cooperation with our federal partners on forest and watershed health issues, and also on energy, mining, and other important ecological fronts. In NM, there is also strong and increasing cooperation on these issues among the state and federal agencies, tribes, public interest groups, the universities, the private sector and SWCDs, and others key to these issues, as evidenced by the Plan that the Governor signed this morning.

There are some cautions that we all need to keep in mind as we move forward on the complex and substantial problem of forest and watershed restoration.

- Lack of a national strategy with regard to drought: act on the Western Governors' Association call for the creation of a national policy to plan and mitigate the impact of drought, especially when it relates to wildfires, and increase funding levels for emergency drought relief and preparedness actions.

- Need to balance the pressure to act swiftly with the importance of sound science. Make sure that the streamlining of NEPA, which is needed to get work done, does not mean eliminating the wisdom brought through the public review and science assessment process.
- Need for balance between commercial harvest and ecosystem health. Related to this are the proposed changes to the Federal Roadless Rule that could open up millions of acres of pristine forest areas to new roads for logging and development.
- The woody biomass issue is a huge challenge that requires several areas of focus:
  - Investment in the innovations that are coming out of our rural communities and that include but go beyond the old methods. We need to supply R&D funds to the best of these innovations and help develop markets for them.
  - Continue to develop and refine effective legislative tools that promote collaboration and secure the supply of material. These tools need to meet the challenges of small diameter harvesting while conforming to the National Environmental Policy Act.
- The Federal funding commitment to this problem:
  - The National Fire Plan: millions of dollars in recently proposed cuts (e.g., Economic Action Program, Forest Rehabilitation & Restoration Program and the Cooperative Forest Health Management Program) could hinder our ability to fight potentially catastrophic wildfires that endanger not only our natural resources but lives as well.
  - We must strive for balance between adequately supporting fire suppression activities while also making a firm and proactive commitment to restoration funding, which over the long-term will decrease the need for suppression dollars.
  - Because funding is so precious and the needs so great, we must develop and use more meaningful measures of performance that drive budget allocation. Acreage targets that encourage “easy” acreage over priority acreage must not continue.

Finding balance between often opposing pressures will be key to our success. Balancing the need to act now with the need for sound science; balancing the need for removal of material with the development of a sound ecologically-based industry to do it; balancing the need for suppression dollars with the equally important need for restoration and R&D funds. In short, we must balance the short term and the long term: this is the challenge of leadership, to act to protect current interests while preserving the future. I am certain we can achieve this balance as we continue to work together.

## Questions & Answers

Q: Assurance of supply is the primary issue to spurring the private sector, which we must do because the federal agencies do not have enough money to do all the work themselves.

A: (JH) I agree that this is an important issue, but we also need to make sure that we let the ecological objective drive the supply. (MA) We have found that including a supply plan in our work can help get agreement on what is needed and smooth the way to realizing adequate supply. (JP) In NM we are creating legislative incentives like tax cuts for the purchase of biomass equipment to aid in the development of a biomass industry.

Q: (To MA) I want to clarify: did you mean absolutely no fuel reduction in old growth and roadless areas?

A: (MA) I did not intend to give that impression. But we do not feel restoration is justified if roads have to be built. Only 1/10 of 1% of wilderness qualifies as WUI, so for now it seems that it is not really a priority.

Q: (To MA) What if the old growth is Ponderosa that does indicate the need for restoring to its natural fire regime?

A: (MA) We are not opposed to doing treatment in old growth, we just do not want the old growth cut. We define old growth as at least 120 yrs old and 21 inches in diameter. This is our definition and certainly this varies regionally. We are even okay cutting large diameter trees if they are not native to the area (e.g., white fir).

Q: Are you familiar with successful biomass utilization projects and can you tell us about some?

A: (Butch Blazer) One in New Mexico is the Jemez school project that just installed a wood-burning heating system that will burn forest thinnings. I do want to emphasize the importance of us making sure that we match up the appropriate utilization business with the available supply. This will vary based on vegetation and other factors.

Q: Shouldn't we start restoration work at the head waters where the water originates, which would mean in wilderness?

A: (JH) We have confused decision-makers about what restoration is. We need to be sure we are clear about our objectives for what we want from the forests, so in our collaborative groups we need to start there. If one objective is water supply, then wilderness may come up. At that point, there are alternatives to thinning that can be considered, like fire use. This process isn't black and white. (MA) TWS is supporting prescribed burning in wilderness areas, which is a change from our previous position.

## **Banquet**

### **Guest Speaker: Representative Steve Pearce, US Congress**

The County Partnership Restoration Program:

- Established by Congress in 2001, working with the Western Governors and counties.

- Gave to counties the ability to work collaboratively with the Forest Service as co-lead agency in an effort to reduce catastrophic wildfire and protect life, property, watersheds and the environment.
- Goals:
  1. Improve Fire Prevention and Suppression;
  2. Reduce Hazardous Fuels;
  3. Restore Fire-adapted Ecosystems;
  4. Promote Community Assistance.

#### Four Approaches for Success:

##### 1) Ecological Restoration through Collaborative Partnerships:

- Bottom up approach rather than top down. Starts at the local level with county and community involvement. Moves up to state and tribal level, and finally to the national level. Greatest success is achieved when local leaders have input.
- Counties, in conjunction with the Forest Service, are the co-lead agency responsible for ensuring forest health.
- All interested parties share information, and monitor forest conditions to improve forest health.
- County government involvement ensures long-term commitment and effectiveness.

##### 2) Best Available Science:

- The best available science must be used along with local and indigenous knowledge.
- Faulty science, or agenda drive “science” harms the environment and local residents, but does not improve forest health.

##### 3) Restoring landscapes:

- Restoring landscapes across a large area, concentrating on watersheds improves:
  1. water yield and quality;
  2. reduces fire hazard for communities and individuals;
  3. maintains forest health;
  4. improves biodiversity;
  5. And improves economic stability by developing wood fiber and biomass industry infrastructure.

##### 4) Flexibility within existing Laws and Policies:

- Flexibility within existing law and policy is crucial for success, but must have Forest Service buy in.
- After passage of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, the forest service has won 14 out of 14 appeals for thinning projects.
- HFRA, County Partnership Restoration program and the Forest Stewardship program are having positive benefits for forest health.
- The biggest positive for forest health will be passage of Mr. Walden’s Sound Science bill that would require peer reviewed science for all ESA decisions. This would free up the Forest Service to manage with the best available science instead of junk

science. It would also keep the courts from using junk science to dictate how forests are managed.

**Presentation: Mescalero Apache Tribe**

Thora Padilla, Program Manager, Division of Resource Management & Protection

[\[Link to the PPT\]](#)

**Day II: Thursday, March 31, 2005**

**Community Wildfire Protection Workshop**

Richard Remington, Logan Simpson Design, AZ

[\[Link to the PPT\]](#)

**Welcome Back**

Michael Nivison, Otero County Commissioner

**The President's Forest Health Initiative**

Maggie Grant, Special Assistant to the President, Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, The White House

*Ms. Grant was unable to attend the Summit.*

**Progressive Use of New Administrative Rules and Law Supporting Restoration and Native American Programs**

Dave Tenny, Deputy Under Secretary, US Department of Agriculture

*[Mr. Tenny addressed some of the points that Ms. Grant was scheduled to cover.]*

Chronology of Events

Wildfire of 2000, 2002 and 2003 left indelible impressions on our minds. The media picked up on the horrific images from these fires and public opinion was shaped.

In 2001 Congress responded with the National Fire Plan, and instructed the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior, with WGA, the tribes, the National Association of Counties and the State Foresters to develop the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy, which was completed in August of 2001. In May, 2002 the Implementation Plan was finalized, which provided the vision for where we'd be going, as well as a context for accomplishment and specific benchmarks for progress. The Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) was also formed to convene intergovernmental agencies (DOI, USFS, FEMA, ITC, etc.) to streamline our approaches for optimum effectiveness.

In 2002, the President announced the Healthy Forests Initiative, which provided the administrative tools and streamlined procedures under NEPA and the Endangered Species Act, all under the critical premise of collaboration. The Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) was signed in December 2003. Long-term stewardship contracting was also enacted that year. HFRA was an unprecedented validation: it

passed totally on its own merits with 2/3 approval in the House and unanimous support in the Senate.

This triggered a response from the Forest Service, which occurred at the USFS Supervisors Conference in February 2004. In a transformational moment for the Agency, all the forest supervisors in attendance signed a pledge to full commitment to meet the objectives, and presented this pledge to the Chief. The result of this was that 4.2 million acres were treated last year by DOI and USFS, as compared to 2.6 million the year before. This is an affirmation of what can happen when there is unity of purpose.

We have also passed the Tribal Forest Protection Act and issued the new National Forest Management Rules, which focus on the need to work more effectively in the field by turning planning into a collaborative exercise as opposed to a test of wills, and second, to root our performance in accountability, which means monitoring.

### Budget

In 2005, there is more money than we've ever had to do this work, and in the Forest Service, we have re-aligned the budgets so that they converge on the same common goal. This has created a new level of competition: how to allocate funds for fuel reduction/restoration when every region can demonstrate need and has success stories? Each year the money allocated must be earned, which only increases the competition. The allocation basis must be performance.

The performance measures that we use come from the 10-Year Implementation Plan:

1. Acreage targets for high priority acres (set through the collaborative process) as well as cost per acre. These two measures will tell us if we are treating enough acres and if we are treating efficiently. We must focus on the cost side of the equation.
2. Number of acres treated to improve Condition Class (outside WUI), which means we must focus on the effects of our treatments: monitoring
3. Number of acres treated by products that are utilized, which will mean economic development in our communities and increased infrastructure capability

We are in a performance-based budget environment, so we must demonstrate accomplishment under each of the three performance measures. What is your integral role in this? First, you should be involved with the formulation of the FS budgets by helping to identify local priorities. And you need to be aware of the budget timeframes, e.g., the 2006 Program of Work must be completed by May 2005. Second, you should be aware of the tools (e.g., Categorical Exclusions, Stewardship Contracts, Title 1 of HFRA) that are available to improve collaboration, reduce costs and work more efficiently. These tools are available on the web at: [www.healthyforests.com](http://www.healthyforests.com) or your Forest Supervisor can help. Use these as aggressively as you can. CWPPs will help with this as they are an indication that you have collaborated.

We have an on-going effort to improve the work on the ground, but legislative tools are just the beginning. Let us know how the current tools are working and if there are others

we can develop. Remember the passion that brought you here – there is really nothing that cannot be accomplished with the collective will. Everything we do is going to rise or fall on collaboration.

So that we can get to questions, I will close with the message that the Administration is looking for better tools to add to the quiver. We seek your input. We want to help you as much as we can.

#### Questions & Answers:

Q: There are highly motivated Forest Service supervisors and rangers that are generating funds for these projects. But they have told us that many times these funds are siphoned off for other priorities in the region. How can we keep this from happening?

A: I know of two such allocations. First, consolidation of our business practices - the savings here should be \$100 million per year but there are some up front costs. These may be what they are referring to, but we must do this to create efficient business practices. Also, Landfire: this is a major research initiative to identify condition class. This also takes investment but will pay huge dividends. These are two I know of; if you know of other allocations that I am not aware of, I would like to know.

Q: The Northern Rockies continues to be hindered by the appeals process. What is your take on the appeals process. Do you anticipate any changes?

A: The Appeals Reform Act for non-HFRA projects is really not an effective process, since it does not promote collaboration and sets the appeal after the decision-making is final. It needs changing. HFRA includes a pre-decisional objection process, which fosters more collaboration prior to the decision-making. It is similar to what BLM uses.

Q: Tribal Forest Protection Act. What can you advise the Mescalero Apache Tribe, who are the first to initiate actions under this new act, to expedite this so we can get treatments on the ground?

A: Don't wait for policy to be developed in DC. Go ahead because you have the law. Go forward and use the legislation, innovate, come up with new ideas. What you do to make it work will guide how we shape our policy, not the other way around.

Q: Clarifying question: The term collaboration has been used a lot. We endorse the concept of it but something has recently happened that prompts my question. There was a training given by the Forest Service the end of which was: "Forest Service retains full authority for sole decision-making." I find this to be in conflict with the collaboration process. Could you clarify.

A: I would recommend that they choose a different formulation of words; however, I do not think there was ill will behind them. What I think was being communicated is that by law the Forest Service has ultimate responsibility and accountability for the decision. Collaboration is difficult to define and carry out. However, once the CWPP is in place, the collaboration has occurred and for a Forest Service representative this is the best assurance.

Q (BIA): You mentioned performance-based budgeting and how it is used to allocate funding and how this will instigate competition – is this perhaps a contradiction? And secondly, how do you measure successful collaboration?

A: DOI and USDA budgets will remain separate. I cannot speak to the competition among the agencies within the DOI but I expect that their budgeting process will continue as it always has. Each agency will get its discrete budget and the competition will occur inside them rather than between them.

How we define performance is key. We are still learning how to do this. This is becoming more a focus, not because it is new but more because it has been evolving for so long. We do realize that we cannot compare Montana to Mississippi, but we can compare Montana to Montana. We can look at how your performance is improving over time. It is not enough to look at acres treated in isolation. We need to look at high priority acres that are determined by you and these high priority acres should be a high percentage of what you do. We are also going to look at your per unit cost (PUC) expecting that the tools we have created should help you reduce PUC over time. We realize that PUC will differ between WUI and outside WUI areas. Your responsibility is to help us see that distinction as you describe PUC. PUC is also a measure of collaboration. Nothing makes PUC spike more than extended procedures and processes when people disagree.

Also, how well is utilization occurring? Ultimately, utilization has the twin effect of helping communities and helping us increase infrastructure and making us more efficient over the long term. Those three measures are not the entire universe, but they are important. They are consistent with the 10 Year Strategy and they are discrete performance measures that can tell us a lot. We are also working on others: e.g., acres that are benefited, meaning if we treat an acre here will there be a collateral benefit elsewhere. Also, one that measures how many acres are pursuant to CWPPs and we're working on others as well. But we need your input on these to ensure that we are measuring what makes sense.

Q: Another budget question: We have heard from the Forest Service their frustration over the yo-yo budget. They get money then it gets taken back, then they only have 6 weeks to spend it. Is there something we are doing about this?

A: If this phenomenon was tied to borrowing, we have been working with Congress to address it. In fact, last year was the first time we have not had to borrow for fire suppression. I have heard of the yo-yo concept. It depends in part on the program. Forest Service does do a mid-year evaluation of effectiveness of allocations and where the greatest opportunities are. But I would like to hear more about this.

Q: I like the vision you lay out and how it's supposed to start working. Had you been here yesterday, I think you would have heard, even from this extremely diverse group, that there is really phenomenal support for restoration, but also a lot of frustration over a whole range of problems at the implementation level. A lot of us in this room care about how it is going to happen. A lot of our little problems may add up to a bigger collective problem with getting the work done.

A: I'd like to know more about the problems. I have three questions for you: 1) Are you satisfied that we are where we are? 2) Are you satisfied that we are making progress?

3) Do you know what is preventing us from getting where we want to be? That last one is the crux and perhaps the proceedings from this summit will provide more information on this. Our role in Washington is to look for opportunities to provide more tools and better policy to enable results on the ground. We look to you to give us those opportunities. I hope you'll give me some concrete things that ought to be improved upon.

### **USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan**

Joel Holtrop, Deputy Chief for National Forest Systems, US Forest Service

[\[Link to the USFS Strategic Plan\]](#)

Those of us in natural resources have the obligation to work across all levels of government to reduce threats of wildland fire and ensure the long-term health of our resources: forests, watersheds and communities. I am pleased to be addressing such a diverse group of leaders, which despite that diversity has the common goal of addressing these challenges.

We have a national direction with the National Fire Plan Comprehensive Strategy and the Healthy Forests Initiative. These are important first steps. But following them can be a challenge; at all levels of planning and implementation we are faced with:

- Resource Limitations
- Operational Differences
- Legal/Political Sidebars
- Continued expansion of WUI
- Aging dead trees/invasive species

### Budget Perspective

As we look at the situation Americans face today, the Forest Service has a role in fiscal restraint. But, I refuse to think that there are things we are not going to be able to do because of that. Instead we need to redouble our efforts to: identify the highest priority work, work with partners, and find efficiencies within the agency (e.g., how we organize to accomplish business functions, resource work, etc.).

### Forest Service Strategic Plan

The Forest Service Strategic Plan was released in November 2004 for 2004-2008. It embodies the agency's many areas of responsibility in six primary goals/objectives:

Goal 1: Reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire and improve the health of our forests and grasslands.

Putting this as goal 1 reinforces our commitment to the National Fire Plan and the Healthy Forests Initiative.

There are 3 objectives to accomplish this goal:

- Improve forest & grassland health
- Minimize fire suppression costs

- Assist communities at risk

We have made significant progress. Collectively the agencies have treated 12 million acres since 2001. Focusing on WUI – there has also been excellent success in suppression of unwanted wildfire. Last year 99% of wildfires were contained with the initial attack. The most effective step to reducing costs is catching fires when they are small. In the long-term, the best way to reduce costs is to treat the resource so that it can withstand fire. This success also helps to prevent fire borrowing.

The Forest Service Plan sets specific performance measures to ensure we are making a difference on the ground. One such measure is the completion of Fire Management Plans – 99% are complete. We are also working to provide assistance to rural firefighters and develop CWPPs.

#### Goal 2: Reduce Invasive Species

Invasive species cause \$4 billion in damage per year to our forests.

Progress: the National Invasive Species Strategy in cooperation with DOI and other agencies, tribes and other partners.

#### Goal 3: Provide high quality outdoor recreation while sustaining public lands.

As the population grows, this will become even more important. We are working to improve management of off highway vehicle access and use.

#### Goal 4: Help the nation reach its energy resource needs.

We are considering opportunities for energy development and supporting infrastructure. Our forests and grasslands play a significant role in meeting America's need for energy.

#### Goal 5: Improve Watershed condition.

Watersheds provide critical resources and are important to ecosystem health. Watershed quality has been compromised and many are at risk from catastrophic wildfire.

#### Goal 6: Conducting other mission related activities.

For example, the Research and Development program contributes to the advancement of science. The Range Management program provides habitat for a variety of plant and animal species, clean water, sustainable grazing and browsing.

Although we address each goal specifically, our greatest success will come from recognizing the interdependence of these goals. For example, we need to recognize how we can improve the condition of watersheds while reducing fire risk through the use of woody biomass that can help meet energy needs. The most important tool we rely on

to meet these goals: renewed commitment to collaboration. However, we face obstacles in our work:

- Increased demands on human and financial resources
- Accelerated tree mortality from drought and insects
- Continued expansion of WUI
- Legal and regulatory constraints

Partnerships and collaboration are the most important tools we have to overcoming these obstacles, and the Forest Service is actively improving ways to improve our use of them. For example, in January we kicked off the year with the Centennial Congress. This was not just a celebration but also an opportunity to hear from our partners about what our focuses should be in the next 100 years. The key theme from Congress' breakouts was: the value of partnerships and collaboration. We need to expand and build our capacity for partnerships and institutionalize collaboration as the dominant paradigm in project planning.

Also, in February the Forest Service and DOI hosted a Leadership Summit on Collaboration in Albuquerque. Over 130 people attended the meeting and found significant agreement. And later this year, we will kick-off the Cooperative Conservation Campaign. The ultimate objective is to integrate cooperative decision-making into all land management activities.

In conclusion, what is most important to addressing the issues is a common set of goals and objectives and a shared understanding of the problem:

- Dedication to shared goals and objectives
- Initiative and drive to follow through on implementation, monitoring and evaluation

We rely on state and local level groups to make an on-the-ground difference. Your goals and approaches and ours are in synch, they complement each other, and they depend on each other. We need you to bring the national and state plans to a more localized level. Through our partnerships we can promote greater awareness of local issues and concerns during the planning and implementation stages.

#### **Western Governors' Association Panel:**

#### **The Report on the Implementation of the 10-Year Strategy**

Julia Altemus, Montana Logging Association; Walter Dunn, CFRP/US Forest Service; Taylor McKinnon, Grand Canyon Trust; Jay Jensen, WGA, moderator

#### Jay Jensen, WGA

Introduction:

Update on 10-year Implementation Plan developed by the Forest Health Advisory Committee in its Report. The Report may be found on the WGA website at:

<http://www.westgov.org/wga/initiatives/fire/tempe-report04.pdf>

Context for this Report: National Fire Plan instigated by President Clinton; developed by Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior. Congress then liked it so much, asked them, with Governors and other interests, to develop a Comprehensive Strategy.

The Comprehensive Strategy articulates a collaborative framework that includes: Suppression, Fuels Reduction, Restoration, and Community Assistance. This led to: CWPPs: State, regional, local levels collaborate differently.  
WGA: Forest Health Summit, Montana 2003: Formed Forest Health Advisory Committee out of the Summit – broadly representative.

Each of the panelists is a member of the Forest Health Advisory Committee and will share their perspective on the Report, its development and findings.

#### Taylor McKinnon, Grand Canyon Trust

Co-chair of AZ Advisory Council and member of WGA Forest Health Advisory Committee.

Grand Canyon Trust is a Regional Conservation Organization which has been working on restoration since the '90s, and has lots of projects around Flagstaff, AZ. A key focus is State/Regional/National Policy, and forging reciprocal relationships with all partners that result in political agreements for the long-term.

The structure that was developed in the Comprehensive Strategy of local, state, tribal, WGA, WFLC provides an excellent mechanism for information exchange. The WGA Forest Health Advisory Committee Report states that there has been very good progress to date on implementing the 10-Year Strategy, with a few areas noted for improvement:

- Collaboration is not being applied in a consistent way – local work is good, but state level is inconsistent or non-existent. In many cases, processes do not include everyone (beyond government agencies) and is by “invite only.”

Solution: Establish workshops to teach collaboration and develop criteria for this (first one scheduled for May 19-21 in Casper, WY)

Establish strategies to promote more meaningful stakeholder involvement in WFLC.

- Restoration: Implementation here has been poor. Wildfire suppression and fuels reduction have needed to come first, but at the expense of making meaningful progress on restoration. Language in the Implementation Strategy is confusing: rehabilitation vs. restoration.

Solution: A Working Group is being established to review this and develop a conceptual framework for restoration that integrates site specific and landscape scale planning and ecosystem scale fire reintroduction. Also, define restoration in such a way that distinguishes between restoration and post fire rehabilitation.

Under the current funding situation of \$150/acre allocated for planning and fuels reduction, there is no way we will be able to treat the acres we need to before fire gets there. Therefore, we must be strategic about where we do fuel reduction treatments so as to facilitate safe landscape scale fire management.

In conclusion: The Importance of Political Leadership

The theme running among all the success stories we have is that of leadership. That the leadership has successfully provided a forum for people to sort out their priorities and strategies, and then provided a politically durable vehicle to move forward. We must have this kind of leadership so that we can continue to make progress. Without it we will be subject to the political ebb and flow every four to eight years and get no place. It is very important for leadership to understand this.

#### Walter Dunn, CFRP/US Forest Service

The Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP) is a granting program that has been in place for 5 years. This is a congressionally mandated program in New Mexico that provides grants to diverse groups of stakeholders to implement forest restoration and small diameter utilization projects on public forest land (federal, tribal, state, municipal).

Jay asked me to address why I support the 10-Year Strategy and WGA's efforts. WGA gives a wide variety of people a place at the table and views are incorporated into final products. The integrity of this process is confirmed by the ownership members take in the products. The process also enables local level folks to communicate directly up the ranks to the highest levels.

The Implementation Plan of the Comprehensive Strategy addresses four goals:

1. Improve Fire Prevention and Suppression
2. Reduce Hazardous Fuels
3. Restore Fire -Adapted Ecosystems
4. Promote Community Assistance

The strong emphasis that has been needed on fuels comes at the expense of restoration and community assistance. How do you honor all four goals? The most important acres may not be the cheapest.

“What is collaboration?” Collaboration is defined in the Implementation Plan. How do we improve collaboration?

- Need to establish measures of success (BMPs) for collaboration at all levels of the 10-Year Strategy
- Deliver workshops on how to implement the Collaboration Framework
- Develop incentives for landowners to plan treatments across boundaries and improve landscape approaches

#### Restore Fire Adapted Ecosystems

Where is the place to develop the conceptual framework for forest ecosystem restoration? WGA is the place because of the integrity and ownership I discussed earlier.

It has been an honor for me to be a part of the WGA process because it is a very elegant model. Look for upcoming WGA events: Casper Workshop on collaboration. This is a first of others to be offered.

### Julia Altemus, Montana Logging Association (MLA)

MLA is a 28 year-old organization that is very progressive in its work in MT. MT has a lot of infrastructure, but also has a lot of appeals and litigation as well. Altemus works on the development of federal policies with the federal agencies to promote sustainability. They use the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy as the framework, ensuring that the document's goals on collaboration, fuels reduction and monitoring are addressed.

MT also has a very active State Forester, Bob Harrington, who works at the state and federal level. There is a massive problem in MT of 1 billion board feet of growth and mortality and they only harvest 225 million board feet. This is spurring the need for action.

MT is working on developing its CWPPs and also on a number of other collaborative issues. To address these, various entities have been established: e.g., the MT Forest Council Association (27 different interests that meet quarterly) and the Congressional Timber Task Force. MLA also works with the Tree Farms, as well as private landowners and loggers on stewardship and education.

The Association is involved with convening and developing a number of collaborative processes around the state, and uses WGA's collaborative model as guidance. However, the amount of litigation in MT (300 million board feet are currently in litigation) has been a challenge in the collaborative process.

### **Implementing the USFS National Fire Plan and Forest Restoration Programs with State and Federal Government**

Corbin Newman, National Fire Plan Coordinator, US Forest Service

#### **[\[Link to the PPT\]](#)**

The challenges we face are many, both socially and environmentally. I am confident that we can meet them – never more than today.

Overview of what I have heard at the Summit: Problems can be solved when there is

- Agreement on the problem
- Shared desire to work on problems
- Passion to find solutions and willingness to compromise

Out of 2000 wildfire season came, at the National level, a new objective in natural resources: restoration of fire adapted ecosystems. The wildfires have given us the broad motivation to do something.

Do we have the national will to do this? Yes, in the form of:

National Policy  
Agency Authorities  
Money

Restoring forests and grasslands in fact did not start with the National Fire Plan. 2000 Fire Policy was the first time we had articulated as federal agencies that the real problem with fire was the unnatural fuel build up. We had been seeing that the forests were changing – there was too much fuel. This understanding, developed over time, was then put into the National Fire Plan as a response to the 2000 wildfire season.

Broad will

Comprehensive Strategy developed a structure to make use of the broad level of support/motivation, and the 10-Year Implementation Plan has put it into action. WFLC was developed to put collaboration into place at the national level so as to provide oversight to fire policy and to implement the 10-Year Plan.

As the work began, people identified barriers. The Healthy Forests initiative provided answers to the barriers, but this wasn't enough. There were still legislative barriers that needed to change. There was amazing bi-partisan support to address this, and HFRA is the result. It got nearly unanimous support. The political will is definitely there.

Funding

We as Americans are by far the richest country in the world and we have committed more resources to the environment than anyone.

Overview of Wildfire Appropriations (USFS)

Fire Program	FY 2000	FY 2005	Comment
Preparedness	408	706	
Suppression	139	648	Increased to prevent borrowing
Hazardous Fuels	70	292	
Assistance	27	72	

Hazardous Fuels Reduction does not equal restoration. Hazardous fuels may be a component, but many times we do it to protect communities. However, the Forest Service has all kinds of resources that we can apply to restoration.

Other FS Budgets

FS Program	FY 2000	FY 2005	Comment
Forest Health	62	104	Need to be more & more focused on restoration
Forest Products (timber sales)	238	273	This is fairly flat
Vegetation Management	166	190	More of this can go to restoration
Fish & Wildlife Management	115	135	Terrestrial habitat component is well suited to restoration activities

## In Conclusion

While we still have barriers, we also have an enormous amount of activity – the work is happening in every state across the country. As we have discussed here, the barriers are many and include: pressure to produce; demands to do more with less; tidal wave of information; pace of change: tech, info, science; cry for broader collaboration; increasing sense of urgency; and the heavy burden of responsibility. But, we also have incredible assets to apply to the problem. These are: world class research community (challenge: synthesize & distribute!); incredible technology; tremendous financial resources; dedicated professionals and PASSION.

## **Ratification of the Summit Resolution**

Michael Nivison, Otero County Commissioner

[\[Link to the Draft Resolution\]](#)

A Resolution was drafted and presented to the Summit attendees at the conclusion of the session. However, after general discussion was held among participants, the decision was made not to move forward with the Resolution at this time.

## **Summit Official Adjournment**

Arthur “Butch” Blazer, NM State Forester

## **Tour (Optional)**

Thora Padilla, Mescalero Apache Tribe and Buck Sanchez, US Forest Service

## Itinerary

Depart and travel through the Gavilan Canyon to Sierra Contracting

Thora Padilla – Mescalero and Buck Sanchez – Smokey Bear Ranger District discussed Village of Ruidoso projects, the Moon Mountain CFRP, and cooperative projects among agencies.

Sierra Contracting: Paul Wetzel of Sierra Contracting discussed decomposition and utilization operations.

On the bus: Thora Padilla – Mescalero and Buck Sanchez – Smokey Bear Ranger District talked about cooperative projects among agencies.

Mescalero Travel Center: John Andrews with BIA presented information on the Mescalero fuels/forest projects.

Travel through Mescalero, passing new Inn of the Mountain Gods, to Grindstone Lake.

Grindstone Lake: Rick Delaco – Village of Ruidoso and Ruth Esperance – Sacramento Ranger District: talked about past and future projects and cooperation among agencies.

Return trip: Thora Padilla – Mescalero and Buck Sanchez – Smokey Bear RD talked about interface issues and cooperation among agencies.

## Breakout Sessions

*Eight breakout sessions were held on the afternoon of March 30. Each of the sessions involved a panel comprised of diverse speakers who presented on the panel topic, followed by discussion with session participants. Highlights from each session follow, with links to unabridged material where available.*

### **Breakout A) Practical Approaches to Science-Based Watershed Restoration**

#### Description

Managers need clear concepts of restoration for varied landscapes and conditions i.e., restoration approaches are different for riparian corridors, SW aspect pine forest and NW aspect steep slope spruce fir forests. Critical to this understanding are (1) knowledge of historical range of resource variation (2) desired future resource conditions (3) and knowledge of physical socioeconomic architects of change. Diverse examples of on the ground restoration accomplishments illustrate the range of approaches needed.

#### Panelists

Terrell "Red" Baker	New Mexico State University (NM)
Kris Havstad	USDA Ag. Research Service /Jornada Experimental Range (NM)
Anne Bradley	The Nature Conservancy (NM)
Rick Baish	Otero Soil & Water Conservation District (NM)
Sterling Grogan	Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (moderator) (NM)

#### Highlights from the Breakout Session

1. Desired Future Condition (DFC) and the role of "science" in land management decision-making: Long discussion over the role of "science" (not defined) in the development of DFC on USFS land. Panelist Dr. Red Baker suggested need to acknowledge that development of DFC, which is a necessity for any watershed remediation project, is largely a socio-political endeavor. This is consistent with the notion that DFC, as well as other aspects of watershed remediation, need to be addressed through collaboration. However, several field-level USFS and other technical folks objected strenuously, insisting that DFC has to be primarily based on the biology of the site to be remediated. This evolved into discussion of the role of "science". Panelist Dr. Kris Havstad suggested use of the term "science-involved" rather than "science-based", to clarify fact that land managers decisions cannot be only based on "science", but have to incorporate legal, socio-political, and economic realities. Havstad also emphasized need to incorporate ecological principles into planning for watershed remediation, because the change that remediation represents may or may not be appropriate depending upon site characteristics, off-site influences, and the availability of resources (financial, human, biological).

2. Maintenance of treated watersheds: One participant commented that maintenance is critical, almost never discussed, and by far the most difficult endeavor of watershed managers, although new Conservation Security (NRCS Farm Bill program) rules may eventually pay private land managers to maintain treated watersheds. Panelist Sterling Grogan urged communities to begin dialogue with their legislators and others to bring

attention to need to maintain treated watersheds, as part of a new "watershed management paradigm" necessary for land management in New Mexico.

3. Fire planning: Panelist Anne Bradley described the role collaboratively developed science can play in supporting on the ground restoration projects. Using an example from the Jemez Mountains of New Mexico, she discussed the importance of collaborative teams jointly developing a number of products during the landscape analysis stage:

- Clear goal statements,
- Local information on fire history, ecology and land management,
- An implementation plan, including key barriers to success and suggested solutions
- Ecological models that illustrate how partners think the forest systems work, including fire and other key processes,
- Quantitative and spatially explicit existing and desired conditions,
- A monitoring plan that ties back to the existing and desired conditions.

4. Geology: Panelist Rick Baish described many years of planning and implementing fuels reduction programs in the Sacramento Mountains, and the realization that, even though much is known about the hydrology of the Sacramento Mountains, there is no synthesis of that knowledge that is available to land managers. Without an understanding of the Mountains as a hydrologic unit, it is impossible to plan and manage watershed treatment for improved water yield.

## **Breakout B) Collaborative Programs for Community Wildfire Protection**

### Description

Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) are collectively a very successful program for merging the talents of federal, state, tribal, and local government and communities toward effective wildfire prevention plans and applied projects. The panel presents both how-to guidelines and recommendations for improved process.

### Panelists

Rick Delaco	Village of Ruidoso (NM)
Tom Zimmerman	US Forest Service/Fire and Aviation (NM)
Tracy Katelman	California Fire Safe Council (CA)
Paige Lewis	Colorado State Forest Service (CO)
Steve Campbell	University of Arizona (moderator) (AZ)

[\[Link to T. Katelman's Material\]](#)

### Highlights from the Breakout Session

Paige Lewis presented from the national perspective on the development of the CWPP Handbook, which outlines a multi-step process to be used in local planning efforts:

- Convene decision-makers
- Involve all relevant federal agencies
- Engage interested parties

- Create community base map (fire risk)
- Undertake a Community Risk Assessment (veg fuel hazards, values at risk, etc.)
- Establish priorities for fuel treatments
- Identify treatment methods
- Develop implementation plan with action and assignments

CWPP gives communities an opportunity to have an impact on federal land managers' planning and decisions, and in turn, federal land managers get to implement projects with community buy-in.

Tom Zimmerman presented from the regional perspective on the FS strategic framework for implementation. There are several challenges to this:

- Scale
- Changing Needs
- Sequencing of Projects
- Application Focus
- Program Integration within the Agency
- Collaboration

WUI focuses on community protection, but from there we can build toward restoration. Recommendations: improve efficiency re: treatment targets, budget cycles, expectations of treatment projects, improve cost efficiency, continue to expand CWPP.

Tracy Katelman presented from the state perspective (CA) on collaborative planning. An EAP grant enabled her community to develop its fire plan. The plan is available on the web (see CA Fire Safe Councils). From this experience, a statewide template was developed (also on the web). Fire Safe Councils (130 around the state and some in NV and OR) and the CA Fire Alliance created a clearing house for grants that is working, as well as an online data library that enables communities to make their maps online. Important lesson learned re: collaboration: everyone must come into the process as equal from the beginning.

Rick Delaco presented from the local perspective on collaborative planning. Ruidoso is the number 1 at-risk community in NM, and utilization is a huge issue. One of the main objectives of their planning process was to increase economic development locally, since, when the grant funds are gone, the need will still be there. Grant funds were used to develop infrastructure. Federal agencies are great resources. Also need opinion leaders and a political champion. Start small on what you can get agreement on, as relationships and trust build, so can the scope of work.

## Discussion

The increased mobility of FS personnel over the years has contributed to seeing FS as outsiders rather than members of the community "family". This in turn contributes to the lack of trust of the agency, especially in small communities. It can take time for a new individual to establish good working relationships within the community. Mobility also can interrupt community plans and momentum, which is frustrating to locals and leads to negative feeling.

FS Fire Budget and acreage targets don't always match, which makes prioritization difficult. Acres targets are in conflict with the higher dollar acres (the at-risk acres generally) that are the right acres to be doing – this is an important message to deliver to DC and OMB. The FS is getting mixed messages: HFRA says 50% of funds must go to WUI (the highest cost acres) but at the same time, the FS is asked to treat as many acres as possible.

Landscape scale: FLMs only get funding to treat their own jurisdictions so this does not help FLMs work to get important sequential projects done – there is no incentive.

The increasing cost of fuel is driving up the cost of acreage treatment.

Q: How is monitoring/maintenance being addressed?

A: (RD) Ruidoso requires fuel management but cannot require monitoring on private land unless the funds come from the state or feds. Ruidoso does monitor on municipal land, but not on private lands. However, we have established a maintenance cycle of 2 years through a certification process for Ruidoso residents.

Comment: Monitoring is required in HFRA on federal and nonfederal land. The feds have put together a multi-disciplinary, multi-party monitoring board that can be used for all ownerships on projects that cross boundaries.

Q: How did Ruidoso do a CWPP when Cloudcroft said they are unconstitutional?

A: (RD) That issue did not come up in Ruidoso. The motivation was wildfire and everyone was fully behind the ordinance.

(SC) It can help to clarify that the CWPP is not a plan from the US government but rather a community developed plan that addresses our needs/issues. There is no requirement for anyone to approve (especially not feds) but rather that everyone locally agree.

Q: How to resolve the potential conflict set up between treatments for community protection and those for restoration?

A: (PL) The CWPP process offers the opportunity to discuss these issues and develop mutually satisfying actions.

(TK) And also to educate people about the different needs we have based on whether we are talking about watershed restoration or community protection or wildlife habitat.

(SC) This is also a learning and adaptive process so that is why it is so important to have all interests at the table and to monitor.

(RD) Yes, there is ecological restoration, but there is always an overlay of other land management objectives. Very rarely do you end up with pure restoration.

(SC) True ecological restoration is impossible from where we sit today unless we are looking at what it is going to look like in 150 years. This is a dynamic process and that is exciting.

## **Breakout C) Tribal Partnership Opportunities**

### Description

Tribal opportunities for restoration are revealed both through a discussion of existing federal laws and programs and examples of actual existing working tribal government programs.

### Panelists

Dale Kanen	USFS Tribal Relations Office (Wash. DC)
Thora Padilla	Mescalero Apache Tribe (NM)
Arthur "Butch" Blazer	New Mexico State Forestry (NM)
John Waconda	Bureau of Indian Affairs (moderator) (NM)

### Highlights from the Breakout Session

John Waconda, Introduction

Tribes are very much a part of any action, or any plan in New Mexico if it relates to Forest and Watershed Health. Tribes and BIA and other agencies have worked well together – coordinate and collaborate - and accomplishments will be showcased tomorrow during the tour.

Thora Padilla, Mescalero Apache Tribe

Mescalero projects are run by the Tribe but working with BIA funding. Use contractors. Collaboration is not without pain, but that's the nature of collaboration. We coordinate the development of all the projects and then work with other groups.

It is becoming apparent that the scale at which a lot of our work is done is not large enough. We need to work on larger watershed landscape projects and more sharing of data. The next big stumbling block we need to work with is sharing data. There is hesitancy by tribes to share data.

We need reliable, sustainable amounts we can count on from Forest Service lands for the long-term.

Arthur "Butch" Blazer, New Mexico State Forestry

The next level of collaboration or example of partnership is at the state level. The state has recognized the value and potential the tribes have to offer to the state. One of the first things Governor Richardson did to improve opportunities for the tribes was raise the level of the Commission of Indian Affairs to a cabinet level position. The Governor also signed the Tribal Consultation Policy for State Parks, which will be used as a template for other departments within the state. The federal mandate is only for federal agencies – it is quite a significant step for the state to develop a consultative policy with the tribes.

It has been amazing to sit at the table with people from around the country to discuss and develop national environmental policy and when you bring up anything tribal most people don't have a clue as to the impact of tribal issues. Tribes are finally getting a voice in national policy.

The NM EMNRD Cabinet Secretary is very interested in offering tribes assistance in the natural resource arena. At the latest Legislative Session the development of tribal infrastructure was discussed – a bill was passed that calls for the development of a tribal infrastructure program within the state that would provide baseline funding to tribes to assist and provide dollars that can be matched with federal dollars to develop infrastructure on our reservations.

We want tribes to take advantage of the many opportunities available to them – but there is always the issue of capacity. The workforce does not exist to address the current problem. Tribes have started on treatments but often do not have the qualified personnel to address adequate science and monitoring, biomass utilization issues such as small diameter business development, cogeneration, planning, collaboration and administration. Will the federal agencies fill in the gaps to provide people to assist the tribes with projects offered by the feds? If we are going to have an effective partnership, we need to give the tribes the tools and where-with-all to be effective.

Dale Kanen, USFS Tribal Relations Office

Collaboration at the national level: Tribes hold a key position in this whole arena. The Forest Service has taken a very aggressive approach to develop and improve relations with tribes.

The Office of Tribal Relations' mission is to develop an infrastructure that supports high quality interaction across forest service administered programs with tribes on a government-to-government basis. To help guide us in our efforts to improve tribal partnerships we are working hard to establish the charter framework for a tribal advisory council. We are also developing a national training module for line officers. A wide variety of partnerships has been developed: Tribal Forest Restoration Act, Healthy Forest Restoration projects, Work Initiative, Education Programs, etc.).

We are continuing to work with the administration to enhance our authorities with tribal relations. There is a draft bill to help clarify existing authorities and provide new authorities for traditional or cultural activities.

## Discussion

Lack of “process people” involved in collaborative processes, instead a preponderance of “techies” could be having a negative impact on realizing successful collaboration.

Private enterprise can far exceed the resource capability of the federal government so we must figure out how to build private enterprise (both for treatment and utilization) successfully and sustainably. This will take first a coming together of the community.

Tribes prefer to have their own people running things, so we need training to grow our own workforce. This would also address the tribal employment issue. We need to build and secure our own capability.

Contracting with private entities triggers the sovereignty issue.

Tribal land is held in trust (in most tribes) so this can create complications in making long term capital/infrastructure improvements.

Tribes need to work to develop meaningful partnerships with outside entities (e.g., universities, state agencies, etc.) that can provide resources. This can be done by providing tribal expertise to these entities to assist them with their tribal relations: quid pro quo.

Tribal concerns over data sharing are an impediment to their full participation in collaborative processes. Tribes will need to address this issue in order to be effective partners. This can be decided on a case-by-case basis by each tribe, based on a risk assessment of what might be caused by data sharing.

## **Breakout D) Roles of Local, State, Tribal, and Federal Governments, Science, and Stakeholders in Collaborative Partnerships**

### Description

Strong partnerships utilize the authorities and greatest strengths of individual partners. Using examples from existing partnerships, panelists will discuss guidelines for building strong partnerships that effectively utilize the strengths and resources of all, stress the need of multi-levels of government, and that maximize landscape level treatments.

### Panelists

Howard Hutchinson	Coalition of Arizona/New Mexico Counties (NM)
Laura McCarthy	Forest Guild (NM)
James Erickson	Intertribal Timber Council (WA)
Pete Shumway	Navajo County (AZ)
John Fowler	RITF/New Mexico State University (moderator) (NM)
Patrick Lyons	New Mexico State Land Office (NM)

[\[Link to H. Hutchinson's Paper\]](#)

### Highlights from the Breakout Session

Hutchinson and Shumway represented the county perspective in the role of partnership and collaboration; McCarthy represented community groups; Jim Erickson represented tribes, and Patrick Lyons spoke about the role of the State Land Office.

#### Hutchinson

The specific knowledge of place that comes from generations of occupancy and use of the land is a critical component of collaborative partnerships. County government is an excellent convener of this local knowledge which includes soil and water conservation districts, irrigation districts, villages, and other entities.

The moving target of changing administrations is a huge challenge to this work. The complexity of federal and state regulations is a maze that is daunting if not impossible to negotiate.

We do need to think and work at the landscape level and design management schemes that mimic natural processes.

“Collaboration” is the new term for something we have been doing for a long time: getting together, talking and listening, coming up with solutions and trying them on the land, then evaluating our work so we can make corrections as needed.

Shumway

In restoration work we need to stop finding fault with government entities and get involved, become a player in the process. Through the collaborative process we can learn from each other and develop solutions that will work for all. We need diverse representation in these partnership groups, not just government representatives but also community interests, business, etc.

We need to realize that federal subsidies will not last forever, and this makes the work of the collaborative partnerships even more important. Through these partnerships we will develop solutions not only for treatment, but also for biomass utilization that replace the need for subsidy.

McCarthy

Three major points about successful collaborative partnerships:

1) Involvement of community members other than official government representatives is critical for strong, effective partnerships.

Partnerships of only government representatives are good for information and resource sharing, but generally do not result in restoration action on the land.

Restoration needs all stakeholders including NGOs.

2) Partnerships are strongest when they are about taking action together. Through this action comes learning and evolution, and the land is restored.

3) Models for partnerships are useful for illustrative purposes, but there is no one model that works. Just as treatments must be designed based on the character and needs of the land, so partnerships should be developed based on the character and culture of the community.

Also, regarding scale: the project level and the community level are fairly similar in terms of scale. Counties are generally broader geographically than projects, so it is useful to develop partnerships at the community level, i.e., several in the same county.

Erickson

There are many opportunities for partnering with tribes in restoration partnerships, and the tribes participation brings abundant value.

1) Tribes have access to a tremendous workforce that is highly capable in all aspects of forest management

2) There is still a lot of infrastructure for processing biomass on tribal lands that can be utilized.

3) It is calculated that there are some 800 million board feet annually on tribal lands available through ecologically sensitive harvesting methods. This is a huge resource.

4) The Tribal Forest Protection Act: this gives tribes the right to work with federal partners, to propose activities, to engage communities, to take the lead.

- 5) Tribes have been working with collaborative partnerships for several decades and have done so successfully in a number of areas.
- 6) Tribes have a long and rich history of living and working on the land with sustainable ecosystem management.

## Lyons

The NM State Land Office has 13 million acres with a charge of making money for education in a sustainable way. The Land Office is working with the private sector to develop biomass utilization strategies. It is very important to involve the private sector since this is where the economic development opportunity lies – and simply there are not enough federal dollars to do all the work needed. The private sector strengths are:

- 1) Private industry can solve the problem at the minimum cost.
- 2) It provides product to consumers, e.g. wood shavings.
- 3) There is a job market that grows with the opportunity.

## Discussion

Q: What is the key place we can focus our efforts in collaboration?

A: (HH) Municipality/County level since it corresponds best to watersheds. Counties are invested with multiple statutory authorities that go across both state and federal statutes, and therefore provide a direct conduit to both the state and federal levels. County governments are also a very useful structure that can get you down to the smaller level.

(LM) Although all levels are important, I think now is the time for a focus at the state level to address two critical issues: accountability and barriers to utilization. From the state level you can telescope up or microscope down, depending on the issue.

(PL) The tribal level is where there is the most opportunity.

Q: How are we going to solve the dilemma of where to focus our restoration efforts?

A: Every collaborative group will address this question, and will prioritize based on their situation, their values and the condition of the land. It will be important to look for areas to work on that address multiple needs/values. Also, treated acres protect other areas – so looking at the landscape as a whole to design locations and sequencing of projects that will most benefit the whole landscape is a way to go.

Comment: We are in the midst of cultural change: thinking and acting with the landscape level in mind. But there is no one in charge of this. We need to institutionalize landscape level planning and thinking through statewide landscape guidelines that are developed collaboratively. Collaboration and partnerships are tools to reconcile the disparate interests and values, and circumvent lawsuits. We are in a cultural change that needs to be institutionalized to make it work efficiently.

Q: There is a proliferation of this term “collaboration” – why has it become so prolific in natural resource management, and is it a fad or is it going to be the way to do things? And is really getting anything done?

A: Collaboration takes time, but in America we always seem to have the time to do things over instead of doing them right the first time. I think collaboration is a way to get things right from the outset. “Right” meaning to circumvent dissent and litigation by

discussing all the points of view prior to acting, and then monitoring to ensure that we are getting the result we intend over the long term.

“Collaboration” is a new term for something we have been doing for a long time. The terms and language keep changing, which confuses people. Simply, we need to talk things through in groups, come up with solutions, go out on the ground and do the work, watch what we’re doing and make correction.

Q: In the collaborative process, how do you reconcile the often opposing pressures of the community of place (determined by geographical boundaries) and those of the community of interest (determined by a set of shared values)?

A: It is often the combination of these two forces that creates balance and results in the best solutions. However, this is not to say that bringing these communities together is easy – this is what takes time and requires a lot of listening and learning.

Also, when a community’s values come into conflict with society’s values, the entire burden cannot be born by the community; some equitable compensation needs to occur.

Q: If science has been telling us since the late 1800s what we now are acting on, what are we ignoring now that we should be attending to?

A: We have not done well with cumulative impacts and multi-species management. We need a more global science approach to be able to address the complexity of the natural system. We also need to do a better job of communicating our findings.

Q: Biomass utilization seems to be the key to the entire picture of restoration; what is being done to really address this?

A: Community-based forestry groups came up with the following barriers to utilization and communicated them to policy-makers in DC:

- 1) Consistency and merchantability of supply
- 2) Investment funds for new and modification of infrastructure (loss of EAP)
- 3) Definition of biomass must go beyond energy and include the array of small diameter products
- 4) And the policies must also address the whole range of products and markets
- 5) Matching the supply to the production facility to the business interests and capacity

We also are dealing with outmoded management systems that were set up under large scale logging that need to be updated to serve the developing market of a range of products. The current regulatory maze grew up around an established industry, and now we have an entrepreneurial situation that needs incentives not burdensome regulations.

Q: How to continue to make progress in restoration work under the changing winds of political cycles? Ecosystems function in much longer cycles than the cycles of congress or the administration. We need a management entity that transcends these, something like the Federal Reserve Board, only it would be the “Federal Natural Reserve Board”: Some entity that designs law, regulation and policy that governs federal lands on a longer term basis that more parallels that of nature. This will be a major challenge given the enormous political capital in natural resource management, but it is imperative to long-term ecosystem health.

## **Breakout E) Development of Restoration Industry**

### Description

A discussion of projected wood materials from restoration projects is addressed by examining the product opportunities offered from bio-energy (pellets, hog fuel) and value added products (composites, laminated solid products). Related policy issues will also be addressed.

### Panelists

Frank Stewart	Quincy Library Group (CA)
Maia Enzer	Sustainable Northwest (OR)
Richard Wolfe	Gateway Interagency Fire Front (ID)
David Bacon	Southwest Energy Institute (NM)
Rene Parker	Select Engineering Services (moderator) (NM)

### Highlights from the Breakout Session

There is a concern over the elimination of Economic Action Programs (EAPs) that help to leverage additional dollars and jumpstart private industry.

Development of a restoration industry is different based on the availability of an existing wood products infrastructure versus the need to build or rebuild an infrastructure.

Need to look at land management, workforce, biomass utilization and marketing as a coordinated approach to the development of a restoration industry.

There should be an emphasis on using woody material for the production of the highest valued products first and always working to capture as much of the generated revenues locally.

Federal dollars should be used to stimulate private sector. Tiered subsidy system that provides a subsidy for the highest financial return first.

Problem with U.S. Forest Service not matching up priorities with targets.

Low bid versus best value criteria. Best value needs to be defined.

Need to minimize boom and bust funding. Shift from reactionary to proactive.

Need to clarify language...restoration forestry versus sustainable forestry. When developing businesses hear restoration, it implies the work has a definite end versus sustainable forestry which implies that the work...supply...will be ongoing.

Need to have greater involvement/participation from the State Engineer, Interstate Stream Commission.

U.S. Forest Service needs to narrow its mission and assist in streamlining the NEPA process.

Need to address limiting factors within contracts. There should be a move towards outcome based contracting.

Need to address limited operating times within the contracts.

Implementation is the hardest part of collaboration. Need assurances from the federal government that once prescription plans are approved, they can no longer be appealed.

Guaranteed supply continues to be a problem, particularly when attempting to develop a business plan or seek financing.

## **Breakout F) Federal Funding and Application**

### Description

Perspectives of congressional opportunities for federal funding for restoration programs in 2005-2010 is addressed through federal, state agency and tribal plans for restoration programs.

### Panelists

Hollis Fuchs	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NM)
Ed Singleton	Bureau of Land Management (NM)
Frank Gladics	Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee (Wash. DC)
Bob Averill	National Association of Forest Service Retirees (CO)
Joy Nicholopoulos	US Fish & Wildlife Service (moderator) (NM)

### Highlights/Questions from the Breakout Session

Q: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding (NRCS Program) question concerning Federal matching.

Comment and question on the new Acts (Healthy Forest, Tribal and Restoration) - how to use the tools if no funds were appropriated.

Q: How has the Healthy Forest Initiative been funded (was it fully funded) and how much did FS and BLM in NM get.

A: You can go to the websites to see this information or write the agency and/or your member of Congress to get the answers. Concern that the FS does not respond to letters. Audience wondered why the FS was not represented on the funding panel. Was the FS invited to be on the panel? Did the FS refuse to send someone to sit on the Panel? *[Editor's Note: Harv Forsgren, Regional Forester for the Southwest Region, was originally included on this panel; when his travel schedule precluded him from attending the Summit, Summit planners did not follow through with getting a replacement. This was the Summit planners' oversight, not the Forest Service's.]*

Q: What is the difference between authorized and enacted funds? Was the \$760 million authorized or enacted?

Q: EQIP and PFW funds - is there a deadline to submit proposals?

Q: Forest legacy - why funded, what is it?

Q: Ability to sue - does that impact funding? Is Congress going to stop the ability to sue?

Some in attendance were not confident that the federal agencies would coordinate closely with others, e.g., communities, counties, and the state in accomplishing priority work.

It was stressed that true collaboration and sharing of resources was key to all our success, and that the private sector must play an important role in assisting the federal agencies effectively leverage funding for the accomplishment of priority work.

Effective local stakeholder groups are key to the successful implementation of hazard fuels reduction and forest and watershed health improvement projects.

### **Breakout G) The Lincoln National Forest County Partnership and Restoration Program Strategy**

#### Description

The Lincoln National Forest CPR Program strategy for 2005-2010 is addressed from various federal, state, tribal and local perspectives. Impacts of constraints articulated for endangered species, budget administration, and industry development.

#### Panelists

Ron Hannan	Lincoln National Forest (NM)
Michael Nivison	Otero County Commission (NM)
Jose Martinez	Lincoln National Forest (NM)
David Garrett	M3 Research Consulting (moderator) (CO)

#### Highlights from the Breakout Session

This session focused specifically on the LNF CPR Program Strategic Restoration Plan. The Plan is posted on the Otero County, NM and LNF web sites. The Abstract and Executive Summary presented here presents information on the major segments of the Plan, including restoration strategies and budget needs.

The key questions that were raised in the discussion and a summary of the responses follow:

- What will be the basis for restoration treatments? The basis is the extensive science and management information that is now available for southwest forests. LNF managers have incorporated this knowledge directly into their restoration prescriptions.
- What is the desired future restored conditions? The primary goal is improved forest health. This is guided somewhat by the original pre-settlement conditions of these forests.
- How long will the restoration program take? Complete restoration of at risk LNF forest, woodland and range areas will require several decades if an aggressive program is pursued.
- Where will needed restoration funds come from? Initially, for five to ten years, Congress and the USDA Forest Service are asked to provide most of the start up

funding. As industry is developed, it is expected that sales of products will support much of the costs.

## **Breakout H) The Importance of State Leadership**

### Description

Federal/local government collaborative partnerships without state leadership are ineffective. Discussions of the critical importance of state involvement and leadership is illustrated by existing programs in New Mexico, Arizona, Montana and Wyoming.

### Panelists

Bill Crapser	Wyoming State Forestry Division (WY)
Randy Shipman	Sweetwater County Conservation District (WY)
Bob Harrington	Montana Department of Natural Resources (MT)
Jay Jensen	Western Governors' Association (moderator) (CO)

[\[Link to R. Shipman's Paper\]](#)

### Highlights from the Breakout Session

State Leadership does not necessarily mean state "agency" leadership, but perhaps more appropriately state "level" leadership. There is a need to have state level coordination, leadership on forest/rangeland health restoration issues.

State (level) leadership is vitally important if we are to achieve landscape level goals. Local leadership is necessary to energize people and projects on-the-ground, but state leadership is necessary to keep the bigger picture in mind.

State leadership helps with prioritization and strategic decision making.

State leadership brings complementary, but perhaps parallel efforts together. The example of water was given...there is much forest/rangeland restoration work being done by state water agencies that is completely complimentary to forestry agency work. State leadership helps to bring the two concurrent efforts more in-line with each other and also helps to create economies of scale, particularly as it relates to scarce fiscal and manpower resources.

There was some discussion about identifying and forming state-level bodies (similar to what NM is doing and what other states have done/are planning to do...ID, AZ, CA and MN, WI, MT) to address landscape issues and to provide project/program/grant coordination.

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*All documents related to the Western Counties Partnership on Restoration (CPR) Summit may be found at the New Mexico State Forestry website ([www.nmforestry.com](http://www.nmforestry.com)) and at the Otero County website (<http://co.otero.nm.us/>).*