

New Mexico Forest Action Plan Review Team Meeting Minutes

September 28, 2018
Zoom/Conference Call
1:30 to 2:00 pm

Present at Meeting

Kent Reid	NM Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute
Ken Leiting	NM Association of Conservation Districts
John Waconda	U.S. Forest Service
Kim Kostelnik	NM Forest Industry Association
Ali San Gil	U.S. Forest Service
Anne Bradley	The Nature Conservancy
Jim Wanstall	NM Dept. of Agriculture
Alan Barton	NM Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute

Introductions

The meeting was held using Zoom software, so some participants were connected on a computer and some by telephone.

Kent Reid opened the meeting by greeting everyone and noting who was on the call.

He then reviewed the (brief) agenda.

He explained we had not followed up yet on contacting subject matter experts to solicit recommendations for new data sources on the maps/assessment. We need to do that.

Conclusions from the July Meeting

(1) This will be a **hybrid process** using some of the maps from the previous iterations, and soliciting recommendations from subject matter specialists on how to improve the maps.

(2) Format of final plan - We want some hard copies, but it would be more useful on a website as a series of **dynamic maps** that could be updated regularly or as needed.

Timeline Discussion

(1) How much time is available for this process?

Kent proposes this committee continue until **June, 2019**, and then we let NMSF take over.

Ali San Gil said she has heard that the Forest Action Plans should be in place by the beginning of 2020. June sounds like a reasonable target for this committee to conclude its work, since this will get all the changes in the plan to NMSF with enough time to complete and file everything.

(2) What is this team responsible for?

Kent noted that he has consulted the **USFS's *Statewide Forest Resource Assessments and Strategies (State Forest Action Plans): Requirements Checklist for -----<State>-----***

See: https://www.fs.fed.us/spf/redesign/ten_yr%20checklist.pdf

Kent suggests this committee is primarily responsible for the **resource assessment** and **improving the atlas of maps**.

Ken Leiting asked if we want **updates on existing programs** such as the Rio Grande Water Fund or the Cooperative Forest Restoration Program.

Kent clarified that **this is not part of what we are doing**. We are taking a broader approach than looking at individual programs. The programs may feed into some models, but the original work looked at broad themes like fish & wildlife or forest health, and the tasks were analysis and assessment.

(a) Forest Legacy Program

Kent noted this is on the USFS checklist. NMSF may take responsibility for this or we may review this as well.

Kim Kostelnik noted that the only people who would know about this would be **NMSF or USFS** – they would be the source for this information.

Ali said the Forest Legacy Program requires the state to identify their priority areas for conservation easements or lands for forest legacy. This is why it has to be in the Forest Action Plan. It's a **prioritization map** on where the state wants to focus. They are looking for forested private properties that might apply to the Forest Legacy Program.

Kent noted that this committee will produce an overall prioritization map, and this overall map could satisfy the Forest Legacy Program requirement without creating a specific Forest Legacy Program map for the Forest Action Plan directly.

Ali said she'll send more information on this. The USFS may be seeking a **separate map** or a **separate layer** on a map. Key is the conservation value and public benefits an area provides.

Kim suggested we do the prioritization map, and NMSF can take that and do the map for the Forest Legacy Program.

Kent agreed.

(b) Forest Strategy Matrix

Kent said that a review of the Forest Strategy Matrix is also on the USFS checklist. On the 2010 NM Forest Action Plan, this matrix is huge, many pages long. This seems like an NMSF task.

Kim asked what the matrix is telling us.

Kent showed the page to those on zoom. It is under Alignment with State and Private Forestry Objectives, and is Table 1: Themes, Objective and Strategies.

Kim said that has to be an NMSF deal. They need to figure out which programs are a priority, and only NMSF can do this.

Kent pointed out that it's about 40 pages long, however, and if we're going to leave them enough time to do that, they may need the things this committee is committed to providing before June.

Kim suggested that NMSF take a look at it and see if it even makes sense anymore. They may want to delete about 2/3 of it. It probably won't take that long. She noted that the matrix was created for 2010, and NMSF probably updated it for the 2015 interim report.

Farm Bill Progress

Kent said that at July 13th meeting, there was a discussion of the Farm Bill currently before Congress. At that time, money for Forest Action Plan revisions was in bill. NMSF had also gotten money from the federal government in 2010 for the Forest Action Plan.

Kim clarified that in 2010, the Farm Bill did not provide any money for Forest Action Plans. All the money came from the State of New Mexico – it was an unfunded mandate.

Kent checked his notes and confirmed Kim's point. His notes say Senator Heinrich included it in the farm bill.

For now, we'll go ahead and assume it will be paid for this year.

Subject Matter Specialists

Kent reiterated that we have not contacted the subject matter specialists yet. We need to do this and ask for feedback and recommendations on the models. Kent proposes we ask for **comments back by middle of January**.

Jim Wanstall wanted to clarify that this ties in to what new data is out there and that kind of thing.

Kent affirmed, and hearing no other responses, said we'll ask for info back from specialists by mid-January.

Then what do we do once we get the responses back? Do we give ourselves another month to look at that?

Kim asked what we are asking the specialists to look at – additional information to update this?

Kent said yes. We're asking **where data are** and **how can we get access to it**.

Kim asked if we also are sending the components of each model.

Kent agreed that it needs to be done that way, although most of the people were involved in 2009-10, but they may not all remember everything. Then we'll look at it and winnow it down if necessary.

So, the timeline would be, we get **the input from the specialists in mid-January**, then the **committee spends a month looking at that**, then we have approximately **3 months until it goes to NMSF in June**.

Who pays for all this is a question for NMSF that we need to confirm.

Kim said we can't really move forward without input from NMSF.

Kent agreed. He was satisfied that we had accomplished the goals on the agenda, and adjourned the meeting.

New Mexico Forest Action Plan Review Team

28 September 2018

Zoom / conference call

1:30 to 3:30 pm

I. Introductions and Opening

II. Conclusions from July meeting:

- We will use a hybrid process:
 - Will use existing models when deemed good
 - Will solicit specialist recommendations when improvements are needed
- Format of final Plan was discussed
 - at least some web presence for the final Plan

III. Timeline discussion

- How long do we have for this process,
- what this Team is responsible for in that timeline, and
- responsible party.
- Tasks for possible inclusion
 - Feedback from specialists
 - Farm Bill progress?
 - Forest Legacy Program?
 - Review Forest Strategy matrix?