

# 2008 Meeting Minutes

## 2008 Technical Advisory Panel Meeting

### April 21-57, 2007

MCM Elegante Hotel  
2020 Menaul NE  
Albuquerque, NM

## Purpose, Desired Outcomes and Agenda

### Meeting Purpose(s):

- Use a consensus based process to develop recommendations for the Regional Forester regarding which proposals best meet the objectives of the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP).
- Use a consensus based process to develop recommendations for the Regional Forester regarding the effect of each proposal on long-term management.
- Create an environment in which interest groups that have a stake in the management of public forestland in New Mexico can build agreement on how forest restoration should occur on those lands.

### Desired Outcomes:

- A recommendation for the Regional Forester on which project proposals best meet the objectives of the CFRP and should be funded in fiscal year 2008.
- A report on the panel's recommendations regarding the strengths, weaknesses and suggested revisions for each project proposal submitted under the CFRP in 2008.
- Suggestions on how the panel can improve the project evaluation process for their next meeting.
- Suggestions on how to improve the CFRP Request for Proposals for 2009.
- Suggestions on how to improve and expand program outreach activities to prospective grant applicants.

**Time:** April 21-25, 2005 beginning at 1 p.m. on Monday, April 21st

**Place:** MCM Elegante Hotel  
2020 Menaul NE,  
Albuquerque, NM 87107  
505-884-2511

**Chairman and Designated Federal Official:** Walter Dunn

**Facilitator:** Jennifer Pratt Miles

**Meeting Recorders:** Jerry Payne and Melissa Zaksek

**Panel Staff:** Melissa Zaksek, Susan McDonnell

**Meeting Minutes:** Rex Raimond

### Contact for Further Information:

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## Proposal Review Process

When each individual proposal is being reviewed, the Panel's proposed strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for that proposal will be displayed on a screen in the front of the room.

Approximately 25 minutes has been allocated for the discussion of each project as follows:

Introduction by Panel member assigned to present that project	5 minutes
Discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the proposal	15 minutes
Assign proposal to category (1), (2), (3) or (4)	5 minutes

A category of 1, 2, 3 or 4 will be assigned to each grant proposal to describe how well it addresses each of the evaluation criteria using the following definitions:

1. The proposal is an **excellent match** with the purposes and objectives of the Act and the panel **recommends funding** as written. The proposal may have minor administrative weaknesses.
2. The proposal is an **excellent match** with the purposes and objectives of the Act. The proposal has **some substantive weaknesses**, but it is eligible for funding.
3. The proposal is a **good fit** to the purposes and the objectives of the Act, but the weaknesses identified in the work plan, budget, and/or monitoring plan **must be addressed before the project can be recommended** for funding.
4. The proposal **does not clearly address the objectives** of the Act and/or successful implementation is doubtful.

The Panel will discuss proposals sequentially by number starting with CFRP 01-08. After discussing the strengths and weaknesses of a proposal, the panel will assign it to category 1, 2, 3 or 4 as defined above.

The panel may recommend partial or complete funding for each individual project. After reviewing all the proposals, the Panel will reexamine specific proposals as necessary in response to issues raised during Public Comment periods. The Panel will then evaluate the number of proposals in category (1) to determine if there is sufficient funding to award grants to all of them.

If the number of proposals in Category 1 exceeds the available funding, or if there is sufficient funding to provide grants to applicants in Category 2, the Panel may use a matrix or some other process to determine which projects to recommend for funding. This process may include additional clarifying criteria to determine which proposals best meet the program objectives. Examples of clarifying criteria used by prior Panels include: 1) Is the project part of a longer term and/or landscape level comprehensive collaborative forest restoration effort?; 2) Does the project demonstrate an innovative approach that adds value to the CFRP?; 3) Would the project

be sustainable?; 4) Is there a high degree of collaboration?; and 5) Would the project add significant capacity for forest restoration?

The panel will seek to use a consensus based decision-making process to develop its recommendations and will submit a list of recommended projects to the Regional Forester that does not exceed the total amount of available funding.

## AGENDA

**Monday, April 21, 2008**

**Monday, April 21**

<b>When</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>
1:00-1:15 PM	Welcome and Introductions	Walter Dunn, Chairman
1:15-1:30 PM	Opening Remarks	Fay Krueger, Deputy Regional Forester
1:30-1:45 PM	Meeting Logistics and Introductions	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Facilitator
1:45-2:15 PM	Review of Purposes, Desired Outcomes, and Agenda	Jennifer Pratt Miles
2:15-2:30 PM	What It Means To Be A Federal Advisory Committee	Walter Dunn
2:30-2:45 PM	BREAK	
2:45-3:00 PM	Review Panel Charter & Bylaws	All Panel Members
3:00 – 3:30 PM	Presentation: CFRP Objectives and Accomplishments	Walter Dunn / Panel
3:30 – 4:00 PM	Discussion: 2008 CFRP TAP Sub-Committee	Walter Dunn / Panel
4:00 – 5:00 PM	Recommendations for 15-Year Monitoring of CFRP Restoration Treatments	John Harrington / Ann Moote
5:00 – 5:15 PM	Public Comment Period	Members of the Public who submitted written comment
5:15 – 5:30 PM	Review of Days Work and Agenda for Tuesday, Day Two	Jennifer Pratt Miles
5:30 PM	Adjourn	

**Tuesday, April 22**

<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>
8:30 – 8:45 AM	Review Agenda for the Day	Jennifer Pratt Miles
8:45 – 9:15 AM	Review Proposal Evaluation Process	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Chairman & Panel Members
9:15 – 10:30 AM	Review proposals 1 and 2	All Panel Members
<i>10:30 – 10:45 AM</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	
10:45 – 11:15M	Review proposal 3	All Panel Members
11:15 - 11:30 AM	Public Comment Period	Members of the Public who submitted written comment
<i>11:30 – 1:00 PM</i>	<i>LUNCH</i>	
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Review proposals 4, 5, 6, and 7	All Panel Members
<i>3:00 – 3:15 PM</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	
3:15 – 5:00 PM	Review proposals 8, 9 and 10	All Panel Members
5:00 – 5:15 PM	Public Comment Period	Members of the Public who submitted written comment
5:15-5:30 PM	Review of the Day’s work and Agenda for Wednesday, Day 3	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Facilitator
<i>5:30 PM</i>	<i>Adjourn</i>	

**Wednesday, April 23**

<b>When</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>
8:30 - 8:45 AM	Review Agenda for the Day	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Facilitator
8:45 – 10:15 AM	Review proposals 11, 12 and 13	All Panel Members
<i>10:15 – 10:30 AM</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	
10:30 – 11:30 AM	Review Proposals 14 and 15	All Panel Members
11:30 – 11:45 AM	Public Comment Period	Members of the Public who submitted written comment
<i>11:45 – 1:15 PM</i>	<i>LUNCH</i>	
1:15 – 3:15 PM	Review proposals 16, 17, 18, and 19	All Panel Members
<i>3:15 – 3:30 PM</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	
3:30 – 5:00 PM	Review proposals 20, 21, and 22	All Panel Members
5:00 – 5:15 PM	Public Comment Period	Members of the Public who submitted written comment
5:15-5:30 PM	Review of the Day's work and Agenda for Thursday, Day 4	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Facilitator
<i>5:30 PM</i>	<i>Adjourn</i>	

Purpose, Desired Outcomes and Agenda

**Thursday, April 24**

<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>
8:30-8:45 AM	Review Agenda for the Day	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Facilitator
8:45 – 10:15 AM	Review proposals 23 and 24	All Panel Members
10:15 – 10:30 AM	BREAK	
10:30 – 11:30 AM	Review Proposals 25 and 26	All Panel Members
11:30 – 11:45 AM	Public Comment Period	Members of the Public who submitted written comment
11:45 – 1:15 PM	LUNCH	
1:15 – 1:45 PM	Review Proposal 27, 28 and 29	All Panel Members
1:45 – 2:00 PM	BREAK	
2:00 – 4:30 PM	Review Proposals in categories 1, 2, 3 and 4 for consistency in decision-making, and address public comments	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Facilitator
4:30 – 4:45 PM	BREAK	
4:45-5:00 PM	Review of the Day's Work and Agenda for Friday, Day 5	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Facilitator
5:00 PM	Adjourn	

**Friday, April 25**

<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>
8:30-8:45 AM	Review Agenda for the Day	Jennifer Pratt Miles, Facilitator
8:45-10:00 AM	Develop list of recommendations within available funding.	Panel Members
<i>10:00-10:15 AM</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	
10:15-10:45 AM	Review of Proposal Evaluation Process To Identify Areas For Improvement Review 2008 Request for Proposals to Identify Areas for Improvement	All Panel Members
10:45-11:15 AM	Update on 2008 Annual CFRP Workshop	Walter and all Panel Members
11:15-11:30 AM	Public Comment Period	Members of the Public who submitted written comment
11:30-12:00	Closing Remarks	Walter Dunn, and Panel Members
<i>12:00 noon</i>	<i>Adjourn</i>	



# Minutes

**Monday, April 21, 2007**

## **Panel:**

Arturo Archuleta  
Robert Berrens  
David Borland  
Anne Bradley  
Rick DeIaco  
Walter Dunn - Chairman/DFO  
David Huffman  
Tom Jervis  
Esteban Muldavin  
Jim Norwick  
Brent Racher  
Tammy Randall-Parker  
Matthew Silva  
Ann Watson

## **USFS Staff:**

Faye Krueger – Deputy Regional Forester  
Susan McDonnell – Grants and Agreements Specialist  
Jerry Payne – CFRP  
Melissa Zaksek – CFRP

## **Meridian Institute Staff:**

Jennifer Pratt Miles - Facilitator  
Rex Raimond – Meeting Minutes

## **Members of the Public in Attendance:**

Michael Rivera, Professional Service Associates

## **Meeting Called to Order**

1:10 p.m.       Walter Dunn calls the meeting to order

Walter Dunn, the Designated Federal Official for the Technical Advisory Panel (Panel), calls the meeting to order, and makes brief opening remarks. Mr. Dunn notes that proposals build on previous year's projects and that the quality of proposals continues to improve. He says that Panelists deserve credit for the continuing maturation of proposals. In this panel, we will face the question "Which of these good ideas best meets the intent of the Act?"

Walter Dunn introduces Faye Krueger, Deputy Regional Forester for the Southwestern Region. Ms. Krueger welcomes Panel members and thanks them for taking time to serve on the Panel. The TAP is the lifeblood of the CFRP

program and your work in making these tough decisions about project funding is much appreciated. CFRP grantees are developing the future of forests. The USDA Forest Service (USFS) Chief’s office speaks very highly of the program and grantees. The program is setting the stage for large-scale restoration and offers a glimpse of the future around the nation. Faye Krueger recognized each of the Panel Members individually for their contributions to the work of CFRP.

- 1:15 p.m. Faye Kruger leaves the meeting.
- 1:15 p.m. Walter Dunn introduces the facilitators and reminds TAP members of the importance of the meeting minutes as a legal document and formal record of the meeting’s proceedings.
- 1.21 p.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles gives logistical information and then initiates a round of introductions among the Panel and the public.

The Panel includes the following members:

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>INTEREST GROUP</b>
Arturo Archuleta	NM Land Grant Council	Local Communities
Anne Bradley	The Nature Conservancy	Conservation Interests
Robert Berrens	Economist, University of New Mexico	Independent Scientist
David Borland	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Federal Agency
Rick DeIaco	Director of Forestry, Village of Ruidoso	Local Communities
Walter Dunn	CFRP Program Manager, Cooperative and International Forestry, Southwestern Regional Office, USDA Forest Service	Chairman and Designated Federal Official
David Huffman	Research Associate, Ecological Research Institute	Independent Scientist
Tom Jervis	Audubon New Mexico	Conservation Interests
Esteban Muldavin	New Mexico Natural Heritage Program, University of New Mexico	Independent Scientist
Jim Norwick	Field Operations Director, NM State Land Office	State Government Interests
Brent Racher	Restoration Solutions	Commodity Interests
Tammy Randall-Parker	District Ranger (Ouray Ranger District), USFS	Federal Agency
Matthew Silva	Rancher	Commodity Interests
Ann Watson	Santo Domingo Tribe	Tribal Interests

Other participants and members of the public:

- Susan McDonnell, USFS, Grants and Agreements Specialist
- Melissa Zaksek, USFS

Jerry Payne, USFS  
 Ian Fox, Cibola National Forest, CFRP Forest Coordinator  
 Michael Rivera, Professional Service Associates  
 Jennifer Pratt Miles, Meridian Institute  
 Rex Raimond, Meridian Institute

## **Review of Purposes, Desired Outcomes, and Agenda**

1:32 p.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles reviews the purpose, desired outcomes, and agenda for the meeting. She mentions that in previous years panel discussions have gone later than 5:00 p.m. She reminds the Panel that at the end of each day the Panel turns to the public for comments.

Regarding the second meeting purpose, Walter Dunn added that there will be a proposal for a TAP sub-committee on multi-party assessments, which looks at completed multi-party assessments and will review recommendations from NMFWRI regarding candidate projects for 15-year monitoring projects. NMFWRI will also propose some core monitoring indicators for all future CFRP projects to lay the groundwork for future long-term monitoring.

## **What it Means to be a FACA Committee**

1:40 p.m. Walter Dunn reviews what it means to be a FACA Committee. This committee was established by statute. This is a non-discretionary committee, meaning that only Congress can create or dissolve. This is an open committee, which means that anyone (members of the public, grant applicants, etc.) can attend the meetings. Per US Department of Agriculture policy, no FACA Committee meetings can be closed. This means that any information discussed by the TAP is in the public domain. The Panel also has a procedure for public comment. Members of the public may address the Panel during the public comment sessions provided they have submitted written comment before the public comment period.

If project proponents provide additional information during the public comment period, this information will go into the meeting minutes. The Panel will decide what will happen with this information. In some cases, the additional information can help answer a key question from the Panel. However, there is a challenge in determining when additional information changes the proposal or meets proposal requirements that should have been met by the proposal deadline. It is up to the Panel to decide what to do with the additional information. Jerry Payne added that CFRP wants to select the best proposals. Having proponents in the room offers an opportunity for Panel members to ask the applicant for clarification.

Members of the Panel are listed in the US Government Services Administration (GSA) federal advisory committee list. Meeting minutes and the Panel report must be available in electronic form; they are made available on the CFRP website, and are also available on the GSA website. Anything discussed by the Panel must be available for copying for any member of the public who requests it. For example, if a Panelist references a paper, it must be made available upon

request. CFRP staff has gone the extra step of making copies of the proposals being reviewed and making them available in the room for the public.

The evaluation forms sent to Panel members and Panel member notes are your personal property and not public information. Payne added that strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations that the Panel agrees upon are documented.

Both the CFRP TAP Charter and Panel member appointments are for two years. Members' terms cannot be extended, but Panelists can re-apply after their two-year term. Panel members cannot serve for more than six years.

Federal Advisory Committees do not make decisions. They make recommendations to federal agency decision makers, who are responsible for the final decisions. In this case, the Regional Forester has followed 100% of the Panel's recommendations. The Panel makes recommendations regarding which proposals should be funded.

1:58 p.m. Break

## **CFRP Panel Charter and By-Laws**

2:22 p.m. Walter Dunn reviews the Panel Charter and By-Laws. FACA applies to committees that meet repeatedly and include members that are not governmental organizations. Each FACA committee requires a charter. The CFRP TAP Charter is the legal document that creates this Panel. The Regional Forester appoints the Panel Members. Membership is balanced and Panel Members represent the range of different stakeholder perspectives identified in the Charter.

Walter Dunn explains that he serves as the Designated Federal Official (DFO). The DFO establishes priorities, identifies issues to be addressed, and ensures compliance with statutes. He also serves as the Chair. The Panel may elect a Chair. The main task of the Chair is to review the report and certify that it accurately reflects the nature of the discussions and decisions of the Panel. The Panel asked Walter to remain Chair of the Panel.

The By-Laws describe the roles and responsibilities of Panel Members. Panel Member responsibilities include: review and score each proposal, take the concerns of other panel members as seriously as their own, and support the recommendations of the Panel in their work places and in other groups concerned with forest restoration.

The By-Laws also provide specific definitions and rules regarding conflict of interest. For instance, if a Panel Member helped write a grant or is a proposed grantee, this Panel Member has to recuse herself.

## **Presentation: CFRP Objectives and Accomplishments**

2:55 p.m. Walter Dunn reviews some of the CFRP's accomplishments, including:

- Building awareness of the program and confidence in the process
- Building trust and establishing partnerships

- Challenging institutional barriers

CFRP is placing continued emphasis on program improvements through field program reviews and by better aligning program direction with land management policies and needs (e.g., separate grant proposals for NEPA and planning, reporting, etc.).

DeIaco: does a grant for NEPA planning fit the program and our evaluation criteria? This will also require a collaborative approach by the federal agencies that are responsible for taking NEPA decisions.

Dunn: the project proposals for a NEPA planning grant should be designed as a precursor to an implementation proposal. It should still meet requirements for collaboration, etc.

Randall-Parker: I share DeIaco's thoughts on this issue. As I evaluated proposals, I did not know this aspect. In going back to the CFRP Act, they are there to do forest restoration, to do monitoring, and to build industry. NEPA can be expensive; is this the best use of CFRP monies to do planning work?

Dunn: We have found that NEPA has been a bottleneck. If you use an off-the-shelf NEPA you have a non-collaborative document as a starting point for the prescription. You need collaboration in the development of NEPA. CFRP does place emphasis on impact on the ground, but you have to start with a collaborative process. When CFRP funds a project on non-USFS land (e.g., tribal land, state land, etc.), the Forest Supervisor has to determine if the planning documents meet USFS NEPA standards.

Jervis: In some cases, proponents have determined that categorical exclusions apply (e.g., in case of a Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) project), and it seems that in that case there is no collaboration or analysis. Do we still apply the same (proposal evaluation) standards to the planning process?

Dunn: the Panel does not evaluate whether a NEPA decision (or Categorical Exclusion) was the right decision.

Bradley: We have enough criteria to evaluate against.

Borland: If we evaluate the proposals against the given criteria, we see that a NEPA planning proposal may not meet as many criteria as others.

Dunn: The Panel has repeatedly funded projects that deal with some objectives really well. These have often been very successful. A few well-done projects that focus on a few objectives can be grant monies well spent.

Muldevin: Understanding what NEPA work has been done tells you a lot about the work that has been done, the science behind it, and think through the prescription. It provides a rigorous starting point for the project.

Norwick: Some of the criteria may appear contradictory.

Berrens: Not all projects have to meet all objectives. What should be in every one is: a collaborative stakeholder component and a multi-stakeholder monitoring component. The projects don't have to meet all of the other objectives. That reconciles the appearance of contradictory criteria.

DeIaco: planning grants have often been capacity building. By applying the CFRP criteria to NEPA processes, we are now expanding the impact of the CFRP program beyond the implementation to planning.

Dunn: The CFRP program has been encouraged to move towards cross-jurisdictional implementation, which also requires cross-jurisdictional planning.

Payne: The boilerplate strengths and weaknesses are just a template, a tool to speed up the process. They are not locked in stone. It depends on the scenario how these are applied.

3:30 p.m.

Walter Dunn continued his presentation. Multi-party monitoring is a unique aspect of the program. Enough projects have now been completed and assessment reports are coming in. CFRP is trying to use these reports to learn programmatically. This summer, CFRP is conducting the second Technical Advisory Panel Multiparty Monitoring Review meeting to look across reports to see what they tell CFRP about ecological and socio economic effects of the individual projects as well as the program. CFRP is also developing long-term indicators to measure impact.

The program is highly successful. Indicators of the CFRP program's success include:

- Continued increase in grant proposal quality as a result of grant writing tools and workshops.
- Replication of the program's approach. Colorado is now starting a Community Forest Restoration grant program that was created in 2007 by the CO State Legislature (\$1M, 46 applicants, 12 funded projects).
- Diversity of projects. Project range from recycling to forest restoration, riparian restoration, etc.
- National recognition of the program. The 2007 Forest Service Chiefs Review of the Southwestern Region stated: *"The CFRP holds out hope. It shows that small-scale community-based projects are key to capacity building, setting the stage for large-scale restoration. The program offers a glimpse of the future nationwide. The lessons learned are invaluable for the Forest Service."*

The total projected acreage treated under the CFRP program is approximately 20,600 (approximately 13,500 completed to date). Other data:

- 249 proposals received
- 102 projects funded
- \$37.8 million invested (\$30.3 million Federal funds; \$7.5 million matching funds & in-kind services)
- Average number of proposals per year submitted: 35 proposals for \$11.6 million
- Average number of projects per year awarded: 15 grants for \$4.3 million

The program has had significant social and economic impacts, including:

- Increasing focus on youth
  - Inclusion of youth in multiparty monitoring efforts
- New and innovative partnerships

- Inter-tribal collaborative efforts
- Cross jurisdictional projects
- Identification and filling of “niche” needs, e.g. Bosque Riparian Nursery
- Supporting development of Management Plans, e.g. Santa Fe Watershed Management Plan

Randall-Parker: The new Forest Service Chief has placed emphasis on connecting youth to forests. There may be opportunities to connect these programs.

Berrens: we did research on decision-making. What happens if a project proposes cross-jurisdictional projects, the Panel Members identify complexities that are added to the project and appear to create obstacles to the project, even though this may be exactly the area where CFRP can have a big impact.

Walter Dunn mentioned that important reasons for CFRP’s success are the fundamental elements of: requiring collaboration by a diverse and balanced group of stakeholders, and using a consensus-based approach to decision-making by the multi-stakeholder TAP.

As every evolving and growing program, CFRP faces a number of challenges and opportunities. For the coming years, these include:

- Outreach to (new) prospective applicants, for instance Land Grants, which can now receive grants directly.
- Defining and encouraging sustainability, in particular economic sustainability.
- Developing a strategy for 15-year monitoring of ecological effects.
- Encouraging cross-jurisdictional projects that act as a catalyst to facilitate landscape scale treatments in priority watersheds.

Racher: Sustainability is a hard topic. How long should we continue to fund a project?

Muldavin: CFRP is going to be around; are people expecting to keep dipping into this? Grantees also understand how to get funded, are they going to really become sustainable?

Dunn: Some proposals really have plans for sustainability. That is a very good development. It is a proposal-by-proposal evaluation. If projects are innovative, that may be a key issue.

McDonnell: Grant programs are never intended to cover 100% of a project cost. They are intended to get a project off the ground.

Watson: If you see projects that are a continuation of a past project, these may not appear to have shown how they will become sustainable. This is a really tough issue.

Jervis: Some proposals ask for funding to do projects on Forest Service land that seemed like they perhaps could be funded by the Forest Service. Is that an innovative activity that should be funded?

Dunn: There are some projects that go about developing and implementing projects in a collaborative manner. That is different from how many USFS staff worked in the past and creates a different mind-set. CFRP needs to harmonize the business work planning by USFS (which usually happens 2 years in advance) and the grant planning. CFRP really funds things that would not have happened otherwise, and as a result of the collaborative nature and priority setting.

Jervis: CFRP has built capacity in a group of collaborators to do this kind of work (training, equipment, markets) and there may not be ongoing work for them. If we develop a capacity, a market, are we obliged to maintain the capacity or market, or does that become a responsibility of the District Ranger?

Randal-Parker: Compared to a few years ago, you find lots of projects that are innovative and often there is still added capacity needed to get the restoration work done.

Payne: The first few years of CFRP we were pushing District Rangers to collaborate in these projects and identify areas where projects could take place. We are now getting much better collaboration in planning.

Racher: Do Districts or Forests see the CFRP issues as a priority? When CFRP funding becomes unavailable, will that lead to the demise of new businesses and local capacity?

Dunn: The capacity CFRP is building is critical.

4:13 p.m. Walter Dunn welcomed Ken Smith and Vicki Estrada of the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWRI).

## **Recommendations for 15-year monitoring of CFRP restoration treatments**

### **Ken Smith, NMFWRI**

4:14 p.m. Ken Smith, Director of the NMFWRI, provided an update on the NMFWRI and an overview of a process to identify candidate projects for 15-year monitoring.

The Institute started just over a year ago with two staff. They have now added a number of very capable staff – foresters, GIS experts, and administrative assistant – and involve students from Highlands University as much as possible. In May 2007, the Institute took over the multi-party monitoring technical assistance program. Tori Derr and Eytan Krasilovsky are continuing to provide technical assistance to CFRP grantees and multi-party monitoring teams.

NMFWRI evaluated the 102 past and current CFRP projects and identified ones that appear promising candidates for 15-year monitoring. Evaluation criteria during this first pass included:

- Geographic distribution
- Forest type
- Land tenure
- Type of treatment
- Existence of baseline data

- Types of indicators monitored
- Reliability of data
- Unique features
- CFRP Coordinator recommendations

There are 30 recommended projects that were selected by:

- Excluding business and planning projects
- Selecting projects with highly reliable ecological monitoring
- Focusing on projects that measured a large number of ecological indicators
- Examining project by National Forest Management Area
- Balancing Forest type, treatment, land tenure, coordinator suggestions, and unique features.

Some issues that have come up regarding 15-year monitoring include:

- Should these CFRP monitoring protocols be reconciled with USFS Stand Exam and BLM protocols?

Dunn: Reconciling these protocols would facilitate aggregation of data. If 15-year monitoring is going to take place, who will do it? Probably USFS. What protocols should they use? And, USFS is a partner in the collaborative projects. However, we need to reconcile this with the philosophy behind multi-party monitoring.

Bradley: What does NMFWRI get out of long-term monitoring?

Smith: We want to see which treatments were successful and why.

Estrada: If we do the monitoring over multiple years, we really want to learn and get something back about how different types of treatments (e.g., different types of burning) are or aren't working. This will really help land managers.

Berrens: If the object is to draw inferences, shouldn't you draw a random sample? There is a lot of variability in the monitoring data and whether projects work or not. Be careful not to skew this to projects that have worked. Include both successes and failures.

Smith: We are going to do basic meta-analysis, but not planning to do statistical analysis because the data gathered is so diverse.

Estrada: If Forest Coordinators made a recommendation, that did not determine which projects were recommended. We took a number of other – objective – criteria to prioritize projects.

DeIaco: Changes in USFS may influence the ability to implement a long-term monitoring program. It might be better to place this with one of the institutes. They can also tap into colleges and high schools to implement the monitoring.

Randall-Parker: This piece could really be helpful. As you read the monitoring plans, why are we monitoring things that we already know? The long-term monitoring should lie with the institutes. Or, we should involve the USFS Research Stations.

Jervis: Reintroducing fire is a process. All the selection criteria used are condition-based variables. I am concerned that there are no process-based criteria. Is there a commitment to reintroduction of fire?

Smith: We are very interested in keeping track of processes. We are looking for information on these aspects in the project documentation.

Dunn: The grant applicants cannot burn. As a result, it is often absent from the proposals. But it can be part of the USFS collaborators commitment.

Muldavin: Is it possible to get the baseline done with some basic assessment tools (rapid ecological assessment techniques) to have consistent baseline data from all projects. Do this every 5 years to gather data. Maybe add that on top of what is already being done.

Borland: At some point you need pre- and post-treatment data so we can see what happens over time.

Jervis: After you start to do the monitoring, you can gather data on a smaller set of variables because some are likely to be parallel. Then you create a standard set of variables that everyone has to measure.

Berrens: A separate issue is that the TAP needs some feedback about what has been working and what has not. That is a separate issue.

Ken Smith continued his presentation. Future considerations for monitoring could include:

- Future CFRP projects would be enhanced by requiring grant recipients to fill out a simple checklist related to monitoring and project implementation as part of the progress report.
- This would make retrospective studies easier to undertake and would make project summaries easier to understand.
- Who will conduct 15-year monitoring? Where will interim and final reports be housed? The institute could do it.
- Need to recognize tribal sovereignty.
- What should happen with new and future projects and what will they be asked to do?
- How will the information be used? Should data provide answers about treatment effectiveness?

Vicki Estrada and Ken Smith encouraged the TAP to provide feedback on the initial suggestions for 15-year monitoring.

### **Discussion: 2008 CFRP TAP Sub-Committee**

5:08 p.m. Dunn: This will be a 1-day meeting looking at 15-year monitoring. The sub-committee will be a smaller group. We need some volunteers, but we will add a grantee (e.g., RM Youth Corps), some non-TAP members, New Mexico Environment Department who provide Clean Water Act 319 Grant monies, and perhaps a USFS Forest level person.

The Panel Members agreed that this is an important topic for a sub-committee to look into and provide feedback to the TAP.

## **Public Comment Period**

### **Members of the Public who submitted written comment**

5:12 p.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles noted that there was written comment. These will be read into the record now.

#### **Ken Smith, NMFWRI**

As you know, we have been asked to assist with monitoring activities on several proposals (approx 12) that will be reviewed by the CFRP TAP this year. All the matches that appear in these proposals will come from the state side of our budget. Our field monitoring crew is funded through state money as is any office space/equipment used in these activities.

Regards,  
Ken

Ken Smith  
Director  
New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute  
New Mexico Highlands University  
P.O. Box 9000  
Las Vegas, NM 87701  
Office: 505-426-2081  
<http://www.nmhu.edu/nmfwri>  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/partnerships/institutes/index.shtml>

Walter Dunn: We have received four anonymous written comments that make unsubstantiated allegations of unsuitability. These are anonymous and not very specific to the CFRP program. Due to the anonymous nature, I feel compelled not to report them.

TAP members asked about the nature of the letters and whether they report illegal activity that should receive follow up. Panel members felt that given the circumstances they trusted Walter Dunn's judgment in this matter.

Dunn: We have received emails from people in support of a NM Forest Industry Association proposal. I will read them now.

#### **English Bird, Executive Director, New Mexico Recycling Coalition**

Dear Mr. Dunn,

On behalf of the New Mexico Recycling Coalition, I would like to submit a strong recommendation to support the proposed NMFIA grant proposal. Our CFRP grant program, entitled "Don't Trash That Slash" will complete this summer. We have made plans to pass on our legacy materials to the NMFIA to continue providing technical assistance to thinning contractors, tribes and state agencies who may be interested in creating value out of their slash material. NMFIA will be able to connect interested parties to appropriate compost, slash and erosion control consultants, will host information on their website, and will provide

technical assistance in working with the NM Department of Transportation, an end-market consumer of wood mulch and composted wood mulch products.

My best regards,

English Bird, Executive Director  
New Mexico Recycling Coalition  
505-983-4470  
english@recyclenewmexico.com  
www.recyclenewmexico.com

**Fran Peterson, President, Forest Rehab, inc.**

Please be advised that our company, Forest Rehab, Inc is strongly supporting the New Mexico Forest Industry Association Proposal to the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program to assist New Mexican contractors with improving their administrative capacity to write winning proposals and the expansion of the Forest Worker Safety Certification training program to reduce workers' compensation insurance rates.

To implement and carry out forest restoration, businesses need help in developing a winning proposal for competitive posturing. Start-up and existing forestry related services companies alike need help in developing and enhancing the financial, managerial, and technical skills they need to complete and succeed in today's complex business environment. It is rare to find a company that has all of these skills to understand, develop, and write a collaborative proposal.

To level the playing field and reduce administrative barriers, we find that the New Mexico Forest Industry Association fills that gap through developing proposal competitiveness by one-on-one training, technical assistance and understanding, and gaining certified Forest Worker Safety training.

In recap, we see this proposal as developing and growing a healthy, sustainable New Mexico forest industry.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,  
Fran Peterson, President  
Forest *Rehab, inc.*

**Sterling Grogan, New Mexico Project Manager, Biophilia Foundation**

Dear Walter Dunn:

Greetings! I hope all is well with you and yours.

The purpose of this message is to express the support of the Biophilia Foundation for the New Mexico Forest Industries Association (NMFIA) CFRP grant proposal. As a charter member of NMFIA, Biophilia exists to support, among other endeavors, the efforts of many individuals and organizations to create and sustain a viable forest/smallwood industry in New Mexico. We have made available (at no cost) the meeting facilities and forest at our Pritzlaff Ranch to host the New Mexico's first "train-the-trainers" event April 14-19, 2008, so that New Mexico will have qualified trainers to carry on the crucial forest worker

safety training program. Our own forest workers are safety-trained, and we will continue to support the safety training program. We see the involvement of FWRI at Highlands U., and the Highlands students, as additional and very important benefits of the work described in the NMFIA proposal.

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the April 22 review session due to a previous commitment. If, however, I can be of assistance in any other way, please don't hesitate to call on me.

Warm regards,

Sterling Grogan, New Mexico Project Manager  
Biophilia Foundation  
Pritzlaff Ranch  
HC68 Box 11A  
Sapello, NM 87745  
505.454.8382  
sgbiophilia@gmail.com

5:22 p.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles summarized the day's proceedings and provided a preview of Tuesday's agenda.

**5:32 p.m. Panel adjourns for the day.**

## **Tuesday, April 22, 2007**

### **Panel:**

Arturo Archuleta  
Robert Berrens  
David Borland  
Anne Bradley  
Rick DeIaco  
Walter Dunn - Chairman/DFO  
David Huffman  
Tom Jervis  
Esteban Muldavin  
Jim Norwick  
Brent Racher  
Tammy Randall-Parker  
Matthew Silva  
Ann Watson

### **USFS Staff:**

Susan McDonnell – Grants and Agreements Specialist  
Jerry Payne - Recorder  
Melissa Zaksek - Recorder

### **Meridian Institute Facilitation Staff:**

Jennifer Pratt Miles – Facilitator  
Rex Raimond – Meeting Minutes

### **Members of the Public in Attendance:**

Joe Seidenberg, ERI  
Jay Moolenijzer, Pueblo of Jemez  
Ruben Montes, Santa Fe National Forest, USFS  
Naomi Engelman, NM Forest Industry Association  
Jeff Morgan, Santo Domingo Tribe  
Ian Fox, Cibola National Forest, USFS  
Kent Reid, NMFWR  
Michael Rivera, PSA  
John Galvan, Pueblo of Jemez  
Carol Raisk, USDA FS RMRS  
Alice McSweeney, USDA FS RMRS  
Sean Maduro, NEC  
Clarence Montoya, Adelante RC&D  
Kenneth Alcon, USDA-NRCS  
Mary Passaglia, RMYC  
Douglas Jeffords, Upper Pecos Watershed Association  
Coleman Smith, RMYC  
Michael Benjamin, Pine Ridge Forest Products

- 8:35 a.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles convenes the Panel, reviews the agenda, and asks members of the public to sign in. Panel members and members of the public introduce themselves.
- 8:44 a.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles reviews the proposal evaluation process and reminds Panel members of the Proposal Evaluation Criteria and existing Strengths, Weaknesses and Recommendations to which Panelists can refer in presentations and discussions of proposals.
- Jennifer Pratt Miles and the Panel then review the ranking categories that Panelists use to review proposals.
1. Category 1 may have some administrative weaknesses and some minor recommendations that can easily be corrected and the Panel agrees that this proposal should be funded. Proposal can be funded “as written”, which makes it a very stringent category. It means that everyone agrees that this is a really good proposal.
  2. Category 2 proposals can be funded, but they may require that some recommendations are addressed.
  3. Category 3 need some work to bring the proposals up to the necessary level.
  4. Category 4 proposals are not eligible for funding.

Racher: I would like the Panel to define “administrative weaknesses” in the course of the week.

McDonnell: I offer the following working definition: “Mistakes that can easily be corrected and have no bearing on the substance of the proposed work.”

Pratt Miles reviews the process used to review the proposals. Each proposal is introduced by a Panel Member. The Panel decides by consensus, and ultimately all Panel members agree to support the proposals that are recommended for funding. Pratt Miles asks Panel members to be specific regarding proposal strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations in addition to using the boilerplate language. This will enable CFRP staff to provide relevant information if an applicant has questions about the evaluation and/or how to improve their proposal.

On Friday, after reviewing all the proposals, the Panel will reexamine specific proposals as necessary in response to issues raised during Public Comment periods. The Panel will then evaluate the number of proposals in category (1) to determine if there is sufficient funding to award grants to all of them.

If the number of proposals in Category 1 exceeds the available funding, or if there is sufficient funding to provide grants to applicants in Category 2, the Panel will use a matrix to determine which projects to recommend for funding. The matrix will include additional clarifying criteria to determine which proposals best meet the program objectives. Examples of clarifying matrix criteria used by prior Panels includes: 1) Is the project part of a longer term comprehensive collaborative forest restoration effort?; 2) Does the project demonstrate an innovative approach that adds value to the CFRP?; 3) Would the project be

sustainable?; 4) Is there a high degree of collaboration?; and 5) Would the project add significant capacity for forest restoration.

Walter Dunn adds that, as the Panel goes through the proposals, another criterion might emerge that can be applied to all proposals as another screen to select the best proposals.

Pratt Miles reviews decisions from the 2007 TAP meeting to incorporate public comment and in particular submissions from proponents or letters from others regarding a proposal. If these should have been included in the proposal, they were not taken into account in the evaluation.

Rex Raimond then reads the decision from last year's TAP meeting, that "we agreed to regarding public comment is we will take information provided in response to a request for clarification or if it is a factual correction. We will not include information in our discussion if it is new information not included in the original proposal, or if it was not in response to a request for clarification from the Panel."

Walter Dunn reminds TAP members that proposals that are very specific about areas to be treated can prevent difficulties during implementation.

9:52 a.m. Ann Watson recuses herself and leaves the room.

## **CFRP 01-08**

9:53 a.m. Jim Norwick reviews Proposal 01-08.

People, a Plan, and P-J: Adaptive Landscape Management in the Fire, Insect, and Disease Prone Piñon Juniper Woodlands of Santo Domingo Pueblo.

Santo Domingo Pueblo application to treat 144 acres within 32,000 acres of high-risk PJ woodland. High tree densities and mortality in the 32,000 acres. Received 1-year CFRP for 2004. Have a fuel treatments management plan written. In 2007, started using the plan to treat and use chip and slash in tribal compost. Proposal is for 144 acres within a future landscape scale project to treat 144 acres that are in poor health and high risk. Proposal is to elaborate on the plan and actually treat acreage. Proposal is to treat 144 acres of overstock, gather ecological and social info, build institutions capacity for fire training to maintain restoration. This grant proposes to expand the remaining acreage after the life of the grant.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 24, 27

- Good collaborative effort that goes beyond the minimum requirements.
- The proposal includes the support of the National Parks Service, which is unique to this set of proposals.

Weaknesses: 5, 24

- The costs per acre appear higher than fair market value for similar work.
- The size of the plots (4 acre plot) may not provide sufficient amount of information to make the adaptive decisions that the treatment design seeks to address.

Recommendations: 3, 5

- Proponent needs to clarify the specific steps that need to be taken to develop the management plan and the cost associated with it.
- Proponent should include consideration of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Fire Management Plan in the proposal.
- Provide more specificity on the stand density relative to the piñon die-off; the proponent should consider identifying or describing your habitat types or plant associations in more detail.
- Proponent should clarify how existing science / findings from studies of similar prescriptions in similar ecosystems are incorporated in the project design (i.e., Brian Jacob's research).
- Proponent should follow the recommendations provided by Hawks Aloft as a result of their surveys (e.g., timing restrictions).

Category: 2

Bradley: Early in the project there will be a lot of monitoring and data gathering (e.g., about effectiveness methods used to be treated), which might explain a limitation on the number of acres treated.

Jervis: In the previous grant they developed the plan to treat the woodland. This proposal is to develop a woodland management plan. Why are they doing an experimental plot when they already have a woodland management plan? There is a lot of data already available and their collaborators have been involved in PJ treatment. They need to treat acres.

Randall-Parker: I did not see anything that addresses the role of fire and the use of fire as a tool.

Norwick: There is something in the proposal (page 6) on fire training for tribal members.

Borland: BIA has prepared fire management plans for this area, which should be incorporated in the proposal.

Randall-Parker: Can you clarify how the proposal builds on past projects?

The proponent clarified that this proposal is an outgrowth of the past proposal to use new capacity (the pueblo has a professional forester) to develop and begin implementing a woodland management plan (not just a fuel management plan) that is focused on the uplands.

Huffmann: I like that this is not just about fuels treatment, but a more experimental approach to restoring understory conditions. I am concerned that the scale is too small to get good information about response.

Muldavin: Dead trees can actually reduce fire risk. In the context of the die-off, what is the treatment going to do? Are there effects in the understory that we don't know about yet? Can we ask the proponent to clarify the maps?

Borland: Add a recommendation to identify habitat types or plant associations on the treatment sites.

Racher: That may be too much to ask.

Muldavin: In the future we should require more information from proponents about what the stands are about. It would be helpful to know more about current state.

Proponent in response to Norwick's question: The fuel treatment inventory plan did not do much inventory in the uplands. This information is not readily available, but it would be part of the woodlands management plan. We don't have that yet.

Berrens: The budget includes a line item for GIS work, but it is not specified in the proposal. Also the monitoring does not specify who does what.

Proponent: the GIS work will be done by the Indian School and a GIS technician on staff.

Berrens: The Indian School letter does not specifically spell out the match contribution.

Zaksek: Budget units need to be specified.

Norwick: There is detail in the budget.

Muldavin: I had trouble understanding who was doing contracting and when. I am confused about the work plan.

Jervis: The collaborators on the program have studied similar prescription in similar systems and that knowledge has not been incorporated into the proposal. There is known science on PJ treatment on the Parito Plateau.

DeIaco: I would turn this into a recommendation.

Muldavin: I think that science is included but there is more to be learned. Even this study design is too minimal to address questions the project is trying to answer at the landscape level.

David Huffman: Brian has looked at lop and scatter. This project looks at different treatments; lop and pile, and mastication. It will generate better understanding about treatment efficacy: can we get the same bang for our buck with other treatments?

Jervis: Recommend that the work be done between August 15 and April 15 to avoid destroying nesting birds. Conduct surveys for grey vireo and incorporate appropriate recommendations.

Racher: The time limitation is a critical issue. It could mean shutting down forest operations for five months when some areas are most accessible.

Dunn: This could have big implications. As part of building forest restoration capacity, how do we ensure we build economic opportunities for these people. Could we remove the time restriction, if we recommend that the proponents follow the Hawks Aloft recommendations?

Bradley: We want to be careful. This is much like the work that Huffman and Muldavin have done – beginning to understand what is appropriate, when it is appropriate. Encourage you to help us integrate that thinking into the projects.

Bradley: If proponent can clarify what work goes into the work plan, then we can evaluate the relevant efficiency.

Archuleta: It is hard for some of the Panel members to judge what cost is reasonable. Is there information the Panel can get from CFRP staff about average cost per acre? Other information may also be helpful, such as lists of high priority fire mitigation areas.

McDonnell: The only information we can provide is on service contract wages. We need to rely on expertise on the panel to provide this insight.

Racher: The way I looked at this proposal, it is also about maintaining capacity of the Tribe. The cost does not seem unreasonable from that perspective.

Zaksek: recommend for next year's RFP that all proposals must include a letter from the Forest that will be responsible for administering the grant (due to admin responsibilities of the Forest Service in regards to NEPA, etc.).

Racher: I would like to ask for clarification on what constitutes a conservation group. Are Hawks Aloft a non-profit organization?

Muldavin: We need the environmental perspective in thinning proposals. Usually, we would like these to be non-profits. In particular, Hawks Aloft is a non-profit.

Norwick: Good proposal. I suggest category 2.

Bradley: Let's look at the list of weaknesses and recommendations, should it be a 3.

Jervis: Cost and clarity in the budget/work plan, and ambiguity about a plan to continue thinning after the project make me argue for making this a category 3.

Dunn: of all the proposals, which are the best?

Archuleta: I thought this was one of the better projects. I think there was a lot of discussion, but it is the first one out of the gate. This is a 2.

Muldavin: I like some of the approaches it is testing. It is a 2 to me.

Borland: Looking at the map, the treatments are located strategically, which is a plus.

Panel agrees on category 2.

11:32 a.m. Ann Watson rejoins the group.

## Public Comment

11:34 a.m. Pratt Miles checked whether there were any written comments from the public. There was one comment.

### Jeff Morgan, Tribal Forester, Santo Domingo Tribe

Public Law 95-561 amendments to PL-93638, the Indian Self-Determination Act:

- Specifically states federal dollars contracted under PL 93638 lose their federal identity; and
- Specifically authorizes these dollars eligible for use as “matching non-federal dollars.”

Jeff Morgan  
Tribal Forester

11:35 a.m. The Panel breaks for lunch.

## **CFRP 02-08**

1:04 p.m. Tammy Randall-Parker reviews Proposal 02-08.  
Improving New Mexican Contractor’s In-State Competitiveness by Reducing Administrative Barriers

This would be a first grant for the New Mexico Forest Industry Association (NMFIA). The project is to expand the Forest Worker Safety Certification Training program and provide administrative technical existence to New Mexican contractors. It has strong partnerships and letters of support.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 12, 22, 24, 26

- The proposal supports building the technical capacity of local operators to submit competitive bids.
- The proposal includes the goal of getting contractors to a functional level of capacity.
- The proposal will continue the Forest worker Safety Certification Program.

Weaknesses: 3, 5, 19

- Youth component lacks detail in how it will accomplish the monitoring.

Recommendations

- Proponent should improve the monitoring plan to define expectations about deliverables and outcomes.
- Proponents should develop a detailed monitoring form to track individual successes and/or accomplishments of those trained.

Category: 1

Randall-Parker: Asks for explanation on weakness # 6.

Dunn: This is a different grant, because it is about technical assistance. We have done that in the past, for instance with ERI for multi-party monitoring.

Racher: The grant is not looking to develop markets, utilize, or treat. Do weaknesses 10, 15, 17, 18 really apply? I suggest we remove.

Silva: I am listed as a member of NMFIA. I am a dues paying member and do not derive benefits. I agree with Racher’s suggestion.

DeIaco: As with monitoring. Do we require workers compensation? Yes, required by law. Will it lead to programs to more effectively achieve the CFRP objectives? Is this a piece that is missing that would allow CFRP to achieve its objectives more effectively?

Jervis: Would the trainees pay for their training? (Randall-Parker: Some will pay for training. Some grantees have money to pay.) This supports the overall program. Will this project be sustainable beyond the life of the grant? Would companies pay to send workers to the program?

Racher: This is about educating the bosses to be more effective grant applicants.

Archuleta: It seems a bit vague on who would pay for the training. If this is similar to NMFWR, if they provide free support to grantees, should that be the same in this case? If some grantees build this into the budget and others don't, that does not make sense.

Zaksek: Footnote on page 8 confirms that grantees who have budgeted for the training would pay for it, while others would receive it for free.

Norwick: Would like to hear from land management agencies if they have problems finding contractors to do work? Or, do we not have enough projects. (Borland: we have people who are not able to submit adequate proposals; Randall-Parker: we have had difficulty getting bids – in the proposal it says that 77% of contracts are awarded to non-NM contractors; also with stewardship contracting, the complexity of bidding for stewardship contracts will go up).

Berrens: I would like to hear more from other Panel Members about the value of this proposal. What are the limiting factors (capacity to submit bids; limitations of bids; lack of mechanization for large projects). An alternative could be that the constraint is in mechanization for large-scale contracts, and not in capacity building. So, if this addresses a key constraint, then this is great.

Payne: There are several constraints – capacity, mechanization, workers comp. We are coordination SPL and CFRP programs to enable purchase of large equipment, which is not easy through CFRP.

Racher: there is an issue with capacity.

Dunn: Top of page 8 does address long-term sustainability.

Zaksek: The monitoring plan is a bit vague in places.

Randall-Parker: We could develop concrete monitoring items.

Archuleta: I would recommend something like this: The proponent should provide free services to all CFRP grant recipients whose proposals include the same training components. In other words, all (future) CFRP grantees should get this for free and not include this in their budgets. It may make sense to give some guidance to CFRP grantees so that there is a consistent approach.

Payne: Could we change the recommendation to: If funded for the period of this grant, .... proponents should strive to make the project self sustaining.

Racher: Given the nature of the proposal, it does not seem weak on conservation groups.

Bradley: I agree.

Jervis: Broader involvement is good, but with narrow focus of the proposal, this is fine.

DeIaco: The project would be strengthened by incorporating a tracking work sheet for CFRP grantee applicants.

Randall-Parker: Developing a detailed monitoring form to track individual successes or accomplishments of those trained.

Berrens: On the form, I would like to see responses from the trainees. That would be helpful.

Dunn: How many of the NM contractors have realized those savings and what does it say about how much further CFRP monies can go in terms of treatments. Is there a way to manage this? Does this translate into more money to treat more areas.

Silva: Contractors are required to have workers comp. You could measure in terms of tonnes of production. Hard to use acres treated as the measure.

Randall-Parker: Can we track whether the training leads to reductions in claims? Do we have fewer injuries in the woods?

Watson: The fact that they have reduced cost of insurance is a proxy indicator that the training reduces the number of claims.

Randall-Parker suggests category 1. Berrens and DeIaco have moved to 1 as a result of the discussion. Jervis is wondering how the training will be transferable. Will it reinvent the wheel to some extent (safety training, but also grant proposal development). It would be better if it were broader or resulted in a transferable product (e.g., if they developed guidebooks for developing government grants or a curriculum).

Payne: This is a project of a fledgling association. It will help build membership and with NMFIA becoming sustainable, this would help.

Archuleta: I could not find descriptions of match.

Randall-Parker: Can we get that clarification from the proponent?

Naomi Engelman: NMFWRI will provide 20k, which is described in their letter and the budget. There will also be a match from COOL through reduced rates for their services.

Panel agrees on category 1.

## **CFRP 03-08**

2:11 p.m. David Borland reviews proposal 03-08.

Pueblo of Jemez Sustainable Forest Stewardship Strategy

Conduct NEPA analysis on 2,500 acres tribal forest lands so that Pueblo's forest management plan can be put in place; conduct commercial timber harvesting, prescription on 30 acres, conduct NEPA analysis on another 500 acres, provide

training for personnel; and generate income from forest timber sales. The plan includes thinning.

Strengths: 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 17, 28, 19, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30

- The project has contracted with Barela Timber Management to do treatment on tribal lands and they are attempting to build capacity for forest workers in the future.
- The project includes a good youth component.
- Jemez Pueblo has been a key partner in landscape level restoration with multiple jurisdictions, including the USFS, Valles Caldera, and Jemez River watershed.
- Unique use of gap funding to extend NEPA on tribal lands, facilitating the capitalization of the private entrepreneur; represents strong collaboration between two partners.

Weaknesses: 2, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 31

- No reference to a completed Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
- The proposal lacks enough detail to determine if the NEPA is a commercial timber operation or if it is restoration.
- The reference to uninterrupted harvest does not meet CFRP objectives for restoration.

Recommendations: 1 (conservation groups), 5, 11

- The proposal could be strengthened by a broader base of collaboration with conservation partners in the NEPA.

Category: 3

Racher: Is this USFS NEPA? It seems limited to a few components.

Payne: We require some NEPA but Pueblo is not held to the same standards as USFS.

Archuleta: This is good about doing NEPA planning to get things rolling. They also have a good plan for generating revenues and making the operation sustainable in the future.

Jervis: Concern that this is not about restoration. It appears as if clearing land is for 1,2 million board foot timber operation. Is this really restoration? This is a question for the panel.

Bradley: We are in the dilemma of clearing vs. restoration. The proposal is not clear.

Huffman: I share Jervis and Ann's concerns. They are doing commercial timber harvest and utilizing small diameter timber. It seemed like this was not a good fit for CFRP.

Berrens: Some collaborations are wide and some are deep. Unique use of gap funding to extend NEPA on tribal lands, facilitating the capitalization of the private entrepreneur; represents strong collaboration between two partners. This will create the entrepreneur to bid on bigger projects.

Dunn: The proposed idea is to generate income from timber sales to pay for forest health/restoration work (see page 2).

Archuleta: The NEPA should inform the timber harvest so the treatments and commercial timber harvests also support restoration goals.

DeIaco: We are paying for field snacks? McDonnell: We can pay for it if the crews are nowhere near a location where they can get food.

Muldavin: Not specifying how the partnerships will collaborate about how NEPA will contribute to the timber harvest vs. the restoration component.

Borland suggests a category 3.

Archuleta: I feel that there are good reasons, especially the economic development opportunities, this should be a 2.

DeIaco: I think it is a good idea, but the proposal needs more clarity and link to CFRP goals.

Racher: Also agree that this is a 3, but really like the proposal for the economic development opportunity. Hope it comes back.

Randall-Parker: Agree.

Borland: Encourage the Pueblo to apply for biomass grants. There is lots of opportunity for biomass grants that could benefit the community (e.g., wood fired central heating units for multiple homes).

Watson: I want to reiterate what Dave said. There are other opportunities.

DeIaco: This could be a really strong proposal. Would like to see it come back.

The Panel agrees on category 3.

## **CFRP 04-08**

3:04 p.m. Ann Watson reviews Proposal 04-08.

Barbero Grazing Allotment Collaboration and Restoration Project.

The project proposes a project on a portion of Rowe Mesa that seeks to restore the area to its historic grassland and savanna conditions. The project area has light to heavy encroachment of woody species. The first year is for NEPA clearance; the last two years are to restore 700 acres to desired condition. In addition to the grant portion, 2,500 acres will be treated. Material will be distributed to underprivileged and elderly residents of the Pecos area.

Strengths: 1, 2 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 26, 29

- Livestock permittee involvement.
- The proposal leverages the use of an EQIP grant.

Weaknesses: 5 (some), 8, 12, 15, 19 (monitoring does not match timeframes), 20 (budget)

- The work schedule does not describe activities chronologically.

- Proposal does not include a discussion of livestock practices and their impacts on the restoration treatment.

Recommendations:

- Proponent should more clearly describe the relationship of the EQIP grant to the restoration objectives of the proposal.
- Proponent should clarify how grazing management supports reintroduction of fire.
- Proponent should include monitoring of grazing effects on the restoration treatment.
- Proponent should secure written commitment from Barbero Grazing Association, Pecos Independent Schools, Quivira Coalition, Village of Pecos, Adelante RC&D, and San Miguel County with regard to the educational outreach.
- Proponent should more clearly describe baseline conditions of treatment areas.

Category: 2

Watson: It is unclear who will conduct the monitoring (NMFWRI?).

Racher: Need clarification from the proponent. In years 2 and 3 the budget contains skid steer, Masticator and other equipment are based on quotes. With this equipment they can achieve 700 acres in 2 years.

Muldavin: They are focused on the grazing allotment and they should talk to the impact on grazing on the restoration and recovery.

McDonnell: Are the skid steer, trailer, etc. are equipment that are used as match. That should be categorized as "Other" in the budget, because it is match, not purchase of equipment. Equipment purchase should be listed as match (admin weakness).

Jervis: Would like to ask the proponent, is NEPA underway on part of this project. The whole project is 5,000 acres. For some of this, a NEPA process is underway. For the other part, NEPA needs to be done still. None of the acreage on the map is covered by NEPA.

Randall-Parker: I would like to see the livestock grazing weakness removed. Probably, many of these proposals have a livestock component and we have not taken that into consideration. It is a strength of this proposal that the livestock permittees are involved. Permittee involvement will better lead to reestablishment of natural fire regimes.

Muldavin: The permittees are collaborators and the project talks about reintroducing fire. How do you do that when you have grazing permits on the allotment? We want to know how they will make this work.

Randall-Parker: You could address that in another strength. The NEPA is not done and involvement of permittees in the NEPA will allow the proponents to incorporate those issues in the planning phase.

Muldavin: And, you have to wonder whether environmental and scientific aspects will become collaborators in the NEPA planning process.

Jervis: The proponents don't link grazing to woody encroachment. Grazing may have contributed to lack of fire (i.e., no grass to carry a fire).

Norwick: Would like more clarification on whether NEPA is in the process, and is 12 months enough time to carry out the NEPA.

Proponent mentioned that the timetables are provided by NEPA. Some of the surveys have been done, USFS requires 12 months to complete the NEPA.

Borland: Are there private lands in the area.

Proponent: There are no private lands and this is a public lands EQIP grant (one of 3 in the state).

Watson: Great that they have another grant.

Bradley: This has focused on restoration and creating better conditions for the grazers. This is a little bit different from other grants.

Randall-Parker: Still have an issue with listing discussion of impacts of livestock grazing as a weakness. It seems that they are being treated unfairly, assuming that other projects will also affect grazing allotments.

Jervis: A monitoring plan should be in the proposal. They are hiring contractors. The letters don't say how they will support monitoring.

Borland: Will monitoring correlate to introduction of fire one year after treatment? They should demonstrate that the fuel loading will be adequate to sustain fire reintroduction in 1 year.

Proponent states that the Quivira coalition has volunteered to keep cattle on their land while fuel load is built.

Norwick: None of the other proposals specifically mention fire reintroduction and the connection with grazing. It seems that the grazing issue is a valid issue to consider in the context of this proposal.

Watson: There probably is a grazing management plan in place.

Dunn: Is a grazing management plan something that the permittee does or the USFS?

Muldavin and Norwick: Agree that the development of a grazing plan is part of the collaborative effort.

Bradley: We know we want to burn and want to improve rangeland. How do these practices work together? That is the clarification we are looking for.

Muldavin: In the past we have not looked at grazing and fire interactions.

Jervis: Audubon has sent a letter

Watson suggests a 2. Others agree. Randall-Parker suggests a 1 for the size of the treatment proposed beyond the grant. Jervis suggests a 3 because the proposal raises questions that are not answered.

Dunn: Suggest that the recommendation regarding grazing impacts should be made boilerplate and apply to all proposals that include reintroduction of fire and grazing allotments.

Muldavin: I don't think we are ready to make this boilerplate. I do want to keep the recommendation.

Panel agrees on category 2.

## CFRP 05-08

4:26 p.m. Bob Berrens introduces the proposal.

### Upper Pecos Watershed Riparian Forest Restoration Program

This is a planning project. No on the ground treatments are included in this grant. Goals are to reduce and prevent human-caused fire events, minimize high-intensity natural fire events, and mitigate water-quality impacts on the Upper Pecos Watershed. During the first year, the project would conduct public outreach and information based on the "Firewise" model. During the second year they will conduct and complete the NEPA assessments of archeology and wildlife.

Strengths: 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28

- Proposal includes strong focus on creating better fire buffers near high-use riparian recreation areas (with potential for human-induced fire events)
- Proposal makes good use of available "Firewise Model" to design and implement community outreach program
- The proposal critically connects mitigation and outreach to communities at risk with larger planning efforts in riparian areas.

Weaknesses: 2, 3 5 (specifically NMGF), 6, 8

- There is no clear commitment on the specific match for the Advisory Committee and Firewise Committee.
- The cost of the project is not within a reasonable range for similar type work; the cost for NEPA planning on ten sites seems very expensive.

Recommendations: 1 (tribes), 4, 17, 18

- It would be helpful to include more description of the UPWA itself (e.g., how big, how broad, who composes, etc.) somewhere in the narrative; e.g., it would be helpful to see a direct statement of who the project coordinator is (rather than simply inferred).
- Utilization or sale of restoration residue may help pay for treatment in the implementation phase.
- Proponents should enhance the proposal by identifying sites for NEPA and planning.

Category: 3

Jervis: Why is the Ranger District not doing this? Invite the proponent to clarify.

Proponent: the project spans NM Game and Fish and USFS land. It is multi-jurisdictional.

Muldavin: Should we use CFRP money to support an activity in and around these recreation sites?

DeIaco: The project does not seem ripe. For instance, last paragraph on page 7 talks about commitments from partners, but no commitment letter to support that key organizations are committed and no descriptions of their contributions to the project. Same on page 4 (NM Game and Fish), 8 (community leaders) and 9 (local waste utility companies).

Dunn: The match is in personnel, it consists of people who donate their time.

Proponents: We have organization members. All the time is donated, including time by advisory board members.

Racher: Is the project coordinator a volunteer?

Proponent: 319 grant expires in June and will not cover project coordinator time.

Bradley: After the plan is done, how will you accomplish the work.

Berrens: The plan says that they will seek future grants to carry out the work.

Randall-Parker: add weaknesses 17 and 18. Campgrounds are tricky. Visual aspects of treating slash, etc. You need to think about these up front. There may also be by-products that could help pay for the work (e.g., hazard trees and firewood).

Archuleta: It might strengthen the proposal if the collaborating partners would identify sites for future work and NEPA planning in the proposal.

Berrens: Don't agree. They have given us a list. They are proposing more scoping and collaboration to refine the list. Then, we will identify the locations for NEPA.

DeIaco: It feels like this is a great idea, but there is a need for more planning for a more mature proposal.

Dunn: I think CFRP should fund collaborative planning efforts, because it will create high caliber proposals. We are encouraging collaborative planning.

Randall-Parker: A weakness in the proposal is that the costs of the project are not within the range for similar type work. \$206,000 for NEPA planning on 10 sites appears very expensive.

Berrens: They propose a multi-jurisdictional planning proposal, but also linking the community to the planning (FireWise). You get much more for the money than a traditional plan.

DeIaco: This at least needs commitment from the partners and the letters need to show it.

Archuleta: Support the idea of using funds for planning, but this one does not seem ripe.

Jervis: The grant will document existing conditions. Much of the information they mention sounds like data that is known. In 2000, there was a big fire in this area. Why did they not implement FireWise at that time? Why will they be receptive to this type of education now?

Berrens: The literature does not support that the community should have responded to the 2000 fires with mitigation. The FireWise model is a proven method to educate the community and change behavior.

Randall-Parker: This is a good project. When we talk about restoration around campgrounds, that has support. The NEPA does not have to be expensive. The implementation, however, could be expensive because of the visual aspects.

Berrens: I suggest a 1.

Muldavin: I think a 2; the project is not mature enough to implement these grand ideas.

DeIaco: I see Berren's points. I end up on a 2.

Racher: There are a couple of weaknesses and recommendations that we hold other applicants to, I think this should be a 3.

Norwick, Silva, Randall-Parker agree.

The Panel agrees that the proponents are encouraged to resubmit the proposal.

The Panel agrees on category 3.

## Public Comment

5:20 p.m. Pratt Miles checked whether there were any written comments from the public. There were none.

## CFRP 06-08

5:21 p.m. Este Muldavin reviews Proposal 06-08.

### Restoration through Utilization and Educational Outreach Video

The proposal is to expand an existing forest thinning and round log milling operation with a wooden pallet mill that will be located in Mora, NM. The grant would support purchase of milling equipment. A 146 acre thinning project will create the initial supply of wood fiber for the operation and will also serve as demonstration project for a video production. The video production is intended for youth education and awareness.

Strengths: 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 17, 18, 22, 23, 29

- Video education and outreach is innovative and new for CFRP.

Weaknesses: 2 (NGO conservation groups), 8, 9, 10, 12, 18, 19, 21, 25

Recommendations: 1 (conservation groups), 5

- Involve USFS Public Affairs staff in the development of the video in order to ensure that federal government video production requirements are met.

Category: 2

Archuleta: Is the Soil and Water Conservation District considered a conservation group?

Payne and Dunn: It is a quasi-governmental organization. Conservation groups are usually NGOs, but the types of organizations are so broad that it is very difficult to define.

Dunn: The match is provided by the applicant in their labor. Contractor costs are not clear.

DeIaco: The letters from partners need to confirm the commitments.

Jervis: Should we add weakness 15? Is there a market for these pellets in the Mora area?

Dunn: We have a grantee that has been producing pellets and is viable.

Racher: We don't have the information to verify that there is a market, or that the business can be viable.

Bradley: Should there be a section 18 review of an aging NEPA?

Proponent: A Section 18 review will be conducted to ensure that the NEPA is still appropriate.

Racher: I would like to add strengths 4 and 10.

DeIaco: Not 4. There are 7 organizations mentioned in the proposal that are not committing in their letters.

Randall-Parker: Video education and outreach is innovative and new for CFRP.

Muldavin: Suggest a 2, because we need some more clarity on the treatment. The Panel agrees.

## **CFRP 07-08**

5:55 p.m.

David Huffmann introduces the project.

Youth Restoring the Forest: RMYC's La Jara Canyon CFRP Proposal

Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) will treat 175 acres of mixed conifer and aspen forest in La Jara Canyon. RMYC will train youth crews. These crews will do the thinning work but also provide Firewise presentations to the communities of Angel Fire and Taos. RMYC will also report to the Taos Canyon Monitoring Panel.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30

Weaknesses:

- The exact size of the treatment area is unclear (e.g., it varies throughout the proposal).

Recommendations: 10

- Proponent should adjust the budget so that the costs of the wood permit are not coming out of federal dollars.
- Proponent should clarify how they plan to distribute a one-page survey.

Category: 1

Huffman: Several unique elements, including: lots of detail on the treatment; and feeding data from monitoring back into the planning process.

Berrens: Amigos Bravos is the conservation group they are collaborating with. They are a well-known and respected conservation group

Racher: Add strengths 7, 23, 27. The proposal has really good utilization plan. Industry is paying for the material. The treatment area description varies throughout the document. It would be better if that were consistent.

Racher: There is money in the budget for USFS permits.

Berrens: The budget does not specify how they will pay for the survey. If they use federal dollars, they will need OMB approval.

RMYC provided clarification: We plan to use non-federal monies for the survey. Our Corps members will survey members of the public at a community event (not at our meetings), so we get information from the community at large.

Jervis: I like the project, but am concerned about sustainability. Will this lead to more projects by the same people? It is not moving the capacity to be able to do more restoration work.

Racher: They are not looking to create a sustainable business. However, they are training youth to become involved in forest restoration and start new businesses related to forest restoration.

Dunn: RMYC is at the core of CFRP objectives.

Huffman: I suggest a 1. The Panel agrees.

## **CFRP 08-08**

6:16 p.m.

Anne Bradley reviews the project.

Ensenada Forest Health Restoration Project II

Chacon and Sons will create jobs and treat 245 acres of the Ensenada area within the Vallecitos Federal Sustained Yield Unit. The project would treat the area by hand, provide training to crews, and collaborate with another CFRP grantee for product utilization.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 (priority watershed), 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30

- The proposal includes a plan to implement a cross-walk for monitoring measures (e.g., FS Stand Exam Protocols and CFRP Multiparty Monitoring protocols).

Weaknesses: 12 (specific on aspen regeneration), 15

Recommendations:

- Disposition of any merchantable material needs to be agreed upon with the USFS in advance of grant award.

Category: 1

Bradley: The project has some good collaborative aspects, e.g., on establishing the treatment.

Silva: The project uses a 12-inch cap. That seems high.

Payne: USFS is doing this, but anything below 12 inches in diameter is considered non-merchantable. It depends on the market and who is using the product. Most of NM is at 12 inches.

Dunn: The Executive Summary states the amount of merchantable product.

Racher: Can someone clarify current science on aspen regeneration?

Payne: USFS has done 20 acres for aspen regeneration; you have to do top kill and prevent browsing.

Jervis: There has been experience in Jemez on aspen regeneration. This has only worked where there are locusts to keep elk out.

Racher: Is this business going to be sustainable?

DeIaco: Add strengths 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 18, 21, 23, 24, 27

Proponent: The area is in a watershed at risk.

Archuleta: Road closures can be funded.

Jervis: Weakness is inadequate description of existing conditions, particularly regarding aspen regeneration.

Bradley: Don't see significant increase in restoration capacity.

DeIaco: See the letter from the District Ranger. Agree that it does not add significant capacity.

Bradley: At the top of page 5, does this address Jervis's concern regarding aspen regen?

Jervis: No.

David Borland: Is there information on stand characteristics? That might give a good indication of merchantable material.

Bradley: Innovative in involving partners in defining the prescription and involving youth. I recommend a 1.

Jervis: I prefer a 2. This may be a watershed at risk. Why this place. I think there are higher priority areas elsewhere in the Vallecitos. I am also concerned about the aspen regeneration component.

Payne: The partners have identified this as high priority area.

The Panel agrees on category 1.

## CFRP 09-08

6:40 p.m.

Tom Jervis reviews Proposal 09-08.

Black Lake Forest Restoration and Workforce Sustainability Project.

Vigil Small Products proposes to restore 500 acres of predominantly ponderosa pine. The proposed work will employ 6 workers and complete the restoration of 500 acres. Demonstration areas will be set up in ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forest types, with outreach and education to specific groups. Training will be provided.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28

- The project builds on previous CFRP project.

Weaknesses: 2 (conservation groups), 15, 18, 30, 31

Recommendations: 1, 3, 5,

1. Clarify whether demand for small diameter wood is outstripping supply beyond the need for firewood (include this in monitoring plan).

Category: 2

Jervis: Not sure that this is a high priority area. It is a good idea and meets thinning objectives, but several uncertainties: the proposal is vague, existing conditions are vague, new partnerships are vague.

Racher: Charges for long-distance calls and monthly phone bills. Has to be either direct or indirect.

McDonnell: Not an issue.

Racher: Add strengths 13, 24.

Jervis: Not 24.

Dunn: It builds on previous CFRP project successes.

DeIaco: Add strengths 7, 28 and 29. Should we add 12?

Jervis: It is mostly existing CFRP crew.

Racher: They are mechanizing, which is adding significant capacity. So, yes.

DeIaco: Add 15.

Borland: The proposal does not provide a good estimate of volume. Remove weakness 17.

## Minutes

Bradley: I recommend that socio-economic monitoring clarify that the lack of small diameter wood is related to firewood or demonstrate that demand is outstripping supply.

Norwick: (in response to a question from Dunn) For activities on State Trust Land, they will contract for archeological survey and our office would conduct biological survey. Our office will complete the documentation and submit it to the decision-making authority for review. The State Land Office does not handle scoping activities.

Proponent: NEPA is not done but it has started.

Racher: Involve conservation groups in NEPA will be good.

Jervis: I suggest category 3, because I have concerns about NEPA and because they proposed starting work in the second year at the same time as providing the clearances. That seemed unrealistic. A good idea, but not a strong proposal. I can also end up on 2.

Racher: I am a 2. (Muldavin, Randall-Parker, others agree)

DeIaco: I think it is a 1. But can go with 2.

The Panel agrees on Category 2.

7:07 p.m.

Dunn: For the next proposal, there is a letter explaining that USFS cannot do the contracting of the project at this time due to legal procedures related to NEPA Categorical Exclusion 10. Let's spend a small amount of time to review the proposal and develop recommendations to enhance the proposal.

7:10 p.m.

Pratt Miles: We start promptly at 8:30 a.m. tomorrow morning. We are adjourned for the day.

## **Wednesday, April 23, 2008**

### **Panel:**

Arturo Archuleta  
Robert Berrens  
David Borland  
Anne Bradley  
Rick DeIaco  
Walter Dunn - Chairman/DFO  
David Huffman  
Tom Jervis  
Esteban Muldavin  
Jim Norwick  
Brent Racher  
Tammy Randall-Parker  
Matthew Silva  
Ann Watson

### **USFS Staff:**

Susan McDonnell – Grants and Agreements Specialist  
Jerry Payne – CFRP  
Melissa Zaksek – CFRP

### **Meridian Institute Staff:**

Jennifer Pratt Miles - Facilitator  
Rex Raimond – Meeting Minutes

### **Members of the Public in Attendance:**

George Devis, Urban Interface Solutions  
Gabriel Partido, Gila NF, USFS  
Joe Seidenberg, ERI  
Ignacio Peralta  
Max Cordova  
Gilbert Vigil  
Ian Fox, Cibola NF, USFS  
Dennis Aldridge, Magdalena RD, Cibola NF, USFS  
Ed Walhagen, Ramah Navajo Chapter  
Bill Avey, Lincoln NF, USFS  
Lynda Middleton, Alamo Navajo School Board  
Terri Lamemen, Navajo Department of Water Resources  
Elizabeth Milford, Natural Heritage NM  
Mike Henio, RNC  
Linda Ford, Firewise Community of Taos Pines Ranch  
Jannette Cordova, Lama Junction Sawmill  
Michael Rivera, PSA  
Ruben Charreon, RC Forest Products LLC  
Steven Albert, Parzmetrix

8:42 a.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles opens the meeting, initiates a round of introductions from Panel members, and welcomes the public. She reviews the work completed Tuesday

She reminds the Panel to write thoughts down during discussion so they can provide language for recommendations in order to move things along. She reminds Panelists and members of the public to mute cell phones.

Dunn: Proposals 10 and 15 would do work in an area where the NEPA compliance was accomplished under Category 10 Exclusion. The 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court recently ruled against the USFS on the Category 10 decisions. After close scrutiny of the decision, the USFS has decided they cannot enter into any new financial agreements to do work in those areas. Unfortunately, there is no way to move forward with these projects. We hope that this issue can get resolved in the next year, so that the projects can be reviewed next year. Given the likelihood that these proposals come back to the panel, can the Panel offer some idea about strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations, so that the proponents can use the time to improve their proposals.

Randall-Parker: There are other projects that are under Category 10 decisions. Should the Panel review the proposals as the others and leave it up to the line officer to make the decision. Also, perhaps the collaborators can contact the courts. Or, the Regional Forester could ask the Forest Chief for a solution.

Dunn: Once the award letter is signed, the money is no longer available to the CFRP program. If the project does not move forward this year, the money is gone and not available to other projects.

Zaksek: Are there other projects that are in the same boat? Should we canvass all other proposals to find out if they used a CE10?

Ignacio Peralta: We are enjoined from using CE10. Projects that are at or near completion should move forward. We can award a grant, but if they use contract labor to implement the grant, we cannot put projects in place. Other projects may not be enjoined from implementation.

DeIaco: If we award money and the project does not go forward, we lose the money. The TAP could also sign on to a letter. However, we should not jeopardize money if a project is prevented from moving forward because they cannot set up sub-contracts.

McDonnell: Grants are set up as contracts.

Racher: We don't want to risk the money if there are good projects to move forward. Also, can the Coordinators let us know by Thursday if there are any other projects that fall under CE10.

Bradley: I suggest that we evaluate all of the projects, identify which ones are at higher risk and let the USFS make the decision. Our job is to evaluate the projects against a set of criteria.

Dunn: That is fine. When it comes to the decision, the Panel should identify projects (equal to the amount of the projects with the CE10 issue), so USFS has

alternative projects to fund if the decision is to hold off on funding projects that are enjoined by the CE 10 decision.

## CFRP 10-08

8:50 a.m.

Jim Norwick reviews the proposal.

Forest Restoration Project in Taos Canyon – North Shady Brook Project

This project will complete a forest restoration project currently underway in the Taos Canyon under CFRP grant #06-04. The original project would treat 274 acres, but additional money is needed to treat 90 acres and allow for completion of the project. The project completes a firebreak in Taos Canyon. Public awareness and education outreach are carried out under the existing grant.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29 (maintain existing jobs), 30

- The project builds on past CFRP project accomplishments (new boilerplate 30).

Weaknesses: 3, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 24, 27

- Non-federal match does not appear to be adequate in the budget justification (e.g., the project manager is over-paid by 3 months a year, making the match insufficient).

Recommendations:

- Proponents should develop a FireWise program in the community.
- Proponents should clarify in writing who will do the activities in the workplan.
- In the prescription development with the USFS silviculturalist, the proponent should maximize planning to consider treatment alternatives.
- The proponents should collect pre-treatment monitoring data.

Category: 3

Norwick: The project has really good collaboration. It is a difficult area to treat and difficult accessibility. It finishes up a program that has started. It is well documented. However, the education component is not clearly described.

Zaksek: Adds an admin weakness.

Borland: I am not sure how the project can preserve old and large trees without information on the current state. Was that in the NEPA?

Ignacio: yes.

Bradley: Would like to see a FireWise program in the community. This is an expensive project. Building awareness in the community is important.

Jervis: Was this area included in the original grant?

Dunn: The NEPA cleared acres were not completed. The original project cleared more acres than they proposed in their project. They exceeded the grant. The

NEPA activity, however, has not been completed. They spent the CFRP money, treated more than they predicted, and then decided to complete the NEPA work.

Ignacio Peralta: Within the original NEPA cleared area. These acres were not included in the original grant proposal.

Racher: Rivers and Birds are a conservation group. Regarding weakness 24: Cleared unit costs on some but not on others. The project managers seem to be working 15 months per year. The indirect charges are vague.

Randall-Parker: Weakness 15, 17, and 18. Can Panel Members clarify? Why is there no utilization component? Are there some industries in the area that can use the product?

Norwick: The proposal states that no material will be removed. That's why weakness 17 was not on there originally.

Racher: These types of projects are service contracts because if they cannot get the material out of the area, the areas still need to be cleared.

Ignacio: You have to go through a lot of private land to get to the areas. The crew has to walk up a steep slope to get to the treatment area. There is no way to get materials out. Also, there are utilization industries. The other two projects from this area do have utilization component.

Racher: There was a project last year that tried to use material. The Panel told the proponent to remove that component.

Watson: Weakness 21. I would like to see specification on who does what.

DeIaco: This is a great idea, but who is going to do it? We need clear accountability. Would like to add a recommendation.

Berrens: I don't think the match meets the 20% requirement.

Borland: It would help strengthen the NEPA if the silviculturalist is involved in the treatment. Maybe use the fuels and fire extension model to show alternatives.

DeIaco: Suggest a 2.

Racher: Budget issues make this a 3.

Ann: Budget and monitoring issues are not up to par, and specifics about who does what. Suggest a 3.

The Panel agrees on category 3.

## **CFRP 11-08**

9:47 a.m. Bob Berrens has to leave the meeting for a few hours.

9:47 a.m. Rick DeIaco reviews the proposal.  
La Jara Taos Pines Ranch Firewise Community Forest Health  
Restoration/Education/Monitoring

This project is a re-submittal.

This proposal is to implement a landscape designed, ecologically minded forest restoration project. The project will provide Firewise community protection treatments. It intends to treat 100 acres.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27 (multiple interests, 28

- The proposal makes good use of Firewise outreach.

Weaknesses: 5, 15, 18, 19 (does not monitor the utilization in the work plan)

- The details regarding the disposition of the merchantable materials are unclear.
- The project does not describe how project income will be used.
- Fuel treatment costs that are being paid to contractors should be included in the contractor line of the budget, not under the personnel line.
- It is unclear why the budget includes the cost of purchasing equipment if the thinning is being contracted out.

Recommendations:

- Proponent should include the USFS Public Affairs staff in the development of the video in order to ensure that federal government production requirements are met.

Category: 2

McDonnell: The project would develop a video. Involve public affairs office.

Randall-Parker: Not all letters clearly verify match. No estimates of markets.

Racher: It is hard to make the match work with the utilization business model. The Panel has no way to verify the viability of the match component.

DeIaco: They have addressed all the recommendations from last year, but that opens doors to new criticism. The proposal does not include estimates of volume, but the monitoring plan does not address this. This is a new issue.

Randall-Parker: Clarification from proponent. How is this different from previously funded projects.

Ignacio: There is an ownership map in the proposal. North and South Shady Brook areas are included in the watershed. This area is completely new, but adjoins other treatment areas.

Muldavin: Urban Interface Solutions is overseeing the monitoring plan. Who will do the modeling?

Ignacio Peralta: USFS will do the modeling. UIS will do the data gathering.

Huffman: With regards to monitoring, can the cap come down?

Muldavin: checks strengths on behalf of Bob Berrens.

Dunn: In the executive summary they specify the volume. The second paragraph on page 7 also addresses this point.

Racher: The budget includes a line item for the Pueblo Work Group for removal of materials, but that is not described in the work plan. How is that material used

Archuleta: Utilization is addressed in the proposal. There may be some vagueness in the treatment itself or transportation.

Silva: Utilization depends on the market, and that can change by the week. It is difficult to predict how material is going to be used. Their market can change rapidly. Remove “the vagueness” in the utilization plan.

Archuleta: I don’t agree that the utilization plan is tied to removal of forest product.

Randall-Parker: I need help to understand the proposal. Are the users paying for the products or paying to transport the product to them. Is that reflected in the budget? Will there be any revenues that allow more acres to be treated.

Dunn: What is going to be the disposition of merchantable material.

McDonnell: We also call it program income. The SF424 does not estimate program income. So, it appears that material will be sold.

Archuleta and Silva asked the proponent for clarification.

Ignacio: Page 7, second paragraph refers to letters of intent to purchase materials. Other users will not purchase but may contribute removal as match.

Racher: Looking at the budget, they talk about contracting RMYC. Fuels reduction should be under contractors, instead of personnel. There are line items about purchasing equipment, but they are also contracting work out. Are they paying double?

Muldavin: The treatment is not vague in terms of the prescription?

Racher: It is vague in places.

Ignacio: Proposal is to build capacity (page 6) of Urban Interface Solutions.

Racher: I am fine with building capacity. We should not pay treatment cost per acre **and** buy equipment.

Ignacio: Personnel line item is to do the work by UIS. They have not included RMYC who are removing materials.

DeIaco: I like it, but considering the issues still on the table it is maybe a 2.

Racher: It is not quite ready to go. It should not be a 1. It needs more detail. I am at a 3. Specific weaknesses in the work plan and inconsistencies in the budget (contracting vs. buying equipment – are they both included in the cost per acre and are we paying double?).

Jervis: Agrees that it is a 3.

Bradley: Budget concerns are an issue. This is a stronger proposal than last year. This is a 2.

Archuleta: I think this is a strong proposal. Would support a 2. The monitoring plan is strong, but the weakness is about a narrow aspect of the monitoring plan.

Watson: Would support a 2.

Muldavin: The project on the whole is good. There are issues that need to be reconciled. Are these unclarities enough to send it back another year. The project mostly addresses the utilization components and the clarification is really on details.

McDonnell: The budget inconsistency is a concern that has to be addressed.

Dunn: They are not bringing out much merchantable material. The focus is on fire risk mitigation. They are trying to find ways to bring material out, and the weaknesses are not at the core of the issue.

The Panel agrees on category 2.

10:48 a.m. The Panel breaks for 12 minutes.

## CFRP 12-08

11:00 p.m. Matthew Silva reviews the proposal.  
El Greco Forest Restoration in the Truchas Mountain Area of the Carson National Forest

This project proposes to implement restoration and harvesting on 135 acres. Products such as firewood and value-added timber will be removed from the area, processed, and sold. The project includes job creation and training.

Strengths: 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 22, 29, 30, 31 (NEPA is not complete)

Weaknesses: 2 (conservation group), 3, 4 (State Forestry not included), 11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 25 (smaller equipment should be listed under supplies), 31

- The proposal includes federal funds to purchase a federal permit.
- Worker's comp rate is very low and is probably inaccurate
- There is no budget for safety training
- Proposal does not describe how income will be used.
- Budget detail for the technical support is unclear and each contractor should have been broken out in the budget.
- The NEPA is complete, but a section 18 review is needed, which may take up to 2 years.

Recommendations: 1 (conservation groups), 6, 7, 11

- Clarify that federal permits are not purchased with federal funds.
- Proponents should consider inflation in future years.
- Proponents should consider collaboration with the "Truchas" Land Grant Board of Trustees (elected officials in addition to members).
- Work plan needs to include Picuris Pueblo role in proposal.
- Proposal table 3 should include some information about existing ecological conditions and desired future conditions.
- The proponent should look for opportunities to engage collaborators in the treatment layout.
- Proponent should ensure that wages are within prevailing wages for the area.

Category: 3

Comment:

- The proposal is unclear if there was collaboration in the design of the treatment to be used in the project.

Silva: District Ranger letter says that NEPA documents would need review, which can take up to two years. The work plan says that NEPA is completed. A table of meetings is missing. The maps are not very specific. There is strong partner support. The utilization plan is very specific. Budget: includes low wages for field crews, cost for USFS permits, and youth team work is not clear, does not include budget for safety training, building purchase.

McDonnell: Can proponent clarify purchase of the garage unit?

Proponent: The structure will house workers and the mill. Not envisioned as a permanent structure. Something that can be moved to house the mill, some equipment, and provide shading.

McDonnell: Budget lists chainsaws and other items that should be listed as supplies (instead of equipment).

Randall-Parker: I did not see collaboration with a conservation group. Suggest removing strengths 1 and 2.

Silva: There is reference to a table that would list meetings that have taken place (page 29). The table seems to be missing.

Dunn: There has been strong collaboration.

Huffman: The treatments are clear. It is not clear that there was collaboration in developing the treatments. It is not clear how the treatments were developed.

Muldavin: The letters don't make strong commitments and they are not explicit about what they commit to or how they contributed to the proposal.

DeIaco: Recommend that they include documents that describe what is included.

Dunn: Suggest that we add a comment that the proposal is unclear if there was collaboration in the design of the treatment to be used in the project.

Muldavin: Berrens had a comment on the budget. Technical support was lumped together and should specify tech support.

Bradley: Engage partners in the lay-out of the treatment.

Archuleta: On page 28 regarding scientific basis mentions number 6 Categorical Exclusion.

Racher: Add strength 22. State Forestry did not provide a letter. A comment on wages, which should be at the discretion of the proponent.

Jervis: Remove weakness 8. The maps show two lines around the area, which is pretty clear. These areas are pretty flat and the cost per acre seems high.

Racher and DeIaco: Not sure this area is easy to treat.

Dunn: The NEPA is complete, but a section 18 review is needed, which may take up to 2 years.

Zaksek: A red flag is that the Ranger says that this may not align very well with their priorities.

The Panel agrees on category 3.

## Public Comment

11:59 a.m. Pratt Miles checks if there were written comments submitted. The following comments were provided.

### **George Devis, Urban Interface Solutions**

Panel should not be discussing prescription or NEPA decisions. That was a waste of time. A copy of the decision notice is required. How are you second guessing the FS NEPA process. When the Panel does not understand something they should say so, not continue to bring up an issue.

They should give the coordinator ample time to clear up issues. The TAP just dismissed his comments when in fact the issue was addressed.

When a company is going to do work and contract other parts of the work, if they don't understand they should let the coordinator explain it.

When a proposal comes in as a revision and all the weaknesses are addressed, they should be able to continue and if these items were addressed.

Requesting a process like monitoring utilization and not do it for the all the other proposals is not good.

There was no way to put utilization material cost back in the budget when there is no way to know what the market value is at that time, so we did address it in the narrative.

The panel had to be constantly reminded of what their job was – the weakness and recommendations were all over the place.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit a proposal and that it is reviewed. When you have questions it may that we do not have enough room to explain the details in the 10-page limit of our proposal.

George Devis

12:05 p.m. The Panel breaks for lunch.

1:36 p.m. The meeting reconvenes. Bob Berrens rejoins the Panel.

1:36 p.m. Dunn: Clarification that if a project takes place in an area where NEPA has been completed, the project has to use the prescription described in the NEPA.

## CFRP 13-08

1:39 p.m. Brent Racher reviews proposal 13-08.  
Forest Thinning for Fire Prevention and Education of Youth in Questa

The proposal is to treat 200 acres in the NEPA approved Questa/Lama WUI. The project will consist of hiring a local contractor to create a fuel break. A project coordinator will be hired by the Village of Questa. The youth education component will be done at the Singing River Field Center.

Strengths: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 30

Weaknesses: 2, 3, 4 (youth component), 9, 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24

- Expenses under “other” are not defined in budget.
- Singing River Youth Center did not provide a commitment letter.

Recommendations: 1 (conservation groups, commodity groups)

- Proponent should ensure that thinning subcontractors ensure safety of operators / operations
- The proposal would be strengthened by explaining how the expenses for youth education component will be spent.

Category: 3

Proponent: The “Other” is for a summer camp for village youth. The acres treated are a total of 50.

Bradley: Add weakness 19

Berrens: The youth component has three components. It is not clear who will be the contractor. We don’t have a letter from Singing River Youth Center.

Watson: It is important to have a clear budget justification. It is not required, but it is really helpful.

The Panel decided to discuss requiring budget justification in future RFPs on Friday.

Borland: Add weakness 16. No forest workers safety provided in the proposal.

Racher: They are contracting this out. Would that be taken care of in the contract?

McDonnell: Since the proposal does not identify the contractor, the weakness should stay in.

Dunn: We have funded many proposals that did not identify the contractor. Not sure it is a weakness.

McDonnell: We don’t know who is doing what.

Jervis: The prevailing winds are from the Southwest. Should this area have been treated much sooner? This is an important piece of land to treat. This should have been done a long time ago.

Dunn: They have been working in this area. This project is a continuation of previous work.

DeIaco: Adding weaknesses 20 – 24.

Randall-Parker: The letter from the ranger states that this work complements work being done on private land. The work is taking place across multiple jurisdictions.

Racher: a 2 because there are important questions about budget and maturity.

Jervis: Important questions about budget and role of youth component. This is a 3.

DeIaco: Many things that do not address the objectives of the Act. I think it is a 3.

Silva: This is an important area to treat. Could be catastrophic if fire moves through.

The Panel agrees on category 3.

## CFRP 14-08

2:05 p.m.

Arturo Archuleta reviews proposal 14-08.

Forest Thinning for Fire Prevention and Education for Youth in the Questa/Lama Area

This proposal is to conduct thinning and harvest on 75 acres to reduce risk of fire hazards and improve the health of the forest. The project would integrate new processing capacity at the existing plant to expand utilization to meet demand of small diameter woods for existing markets.

Strengths: 3, 6, 10, 17, 18, 20, 27

Weaknesses: 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27

- Did not include key personnel qualifications
- Lack of clarity on the role of the partners (e.g., Chevron mining is listed as contributing match, but that is not reflected in the budget and not confirmed in the letter of support).
- Total match does not add up to 20%.

Recommendations: 1 (conservation, youth), 5, 11

- Establish a business plan that clearly described product types, volume estimates and that strengthens the utilization of products.
- Identify specific treatment sites and strengthen the restoration treatment section.

Category: 3

Berrens: Commitments and specifics are lacking for many non-federal components, for instance, Wilson's Camp (no verification of match in the letter), Marlene Torres (does not give specifics of verification). In the collaborator commitment table (page 4 and 5), we see Chevron as a contributor, but their letter does not specify this.

Racher: 20% match is not achieved. Total match is not adequate.

DeIaco: Add several weaknesses.

Archuleta: The letters show strong support for the mill. The project needs more work, but it is a good idea. The local support, especially from retailers, was really positive.

Archuleta: Suggest a 3. Panel agrees.

## **CFRP 15-08**

2:22 p.m.

Tammy Randall-Parker reviews proposal 15-08.  
The Project to Complete Pot Creek Forest Restoration

Project is to treat about 150 acres. Cut woods would be used for erosion control and wildlife habitat, and the remaining fuel wood will be distributed to senior citizens, artists, and Pot Creek residents. This project will provide training and educational outreach (e.g., through pottery classes). This builds on a CFRP grant in 2004 to complete the thinning.

Strengths: 2, 3, 6, 9, 15, 21, 30

- The project is innovative in blending the forest restoration treatments with the arts and youth outreach.

Weaknesses: 3, 4 (UIS), 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20

- Even with the sale of the equipment, the budget will fall short of covering the full cost of treating the full 150 acres.

Recommendations:

- Provide more information about current conditions and desired future conditions in the monitoring plan (i.e., would be nice to include specific numerical metrics).
- Prior to grant award, the proponent should ensure that the sale of equipment complies with OMB Circular A-110.

Category: 2

Randall-Parker: The NEPA is complete under a Section 10 Categorical Exclusion, but the work is under way, so this should not be affected by the recent court decision.

Racher: They are selling the equipment at the end of the project, which is a unique way to accomplish objectives.

DeIaco: Why would they not keep the equipment?

Racher: There will not be doing ongoing work.

Randall-Parker: When they sell the equipment, the money goes back to the Forest Service.

Zaksek: If they sell the equipment before the end of the project to use the money to treat more acres.

McDonnell: My sense is that if the grant is still going, we would have the capability to put the money in the project. I will confirm this. McDonnell

clarified issues with regards to equipment. If they are below \$5000, equipment does not need reimbursement to the USFS.

Berrens: There seems to be an error in the budgeting with regards to funds available for thinning.

DeIaco: The matching is not 20% per year, but 20% over the life of the project.

Zaksek: That is not an issue.

Randall-Parker suggest category 2.

Archuleta: It seems that the weaknesses are similar to those of the Greco project that we ranked as a 3.

Jervis: Given the history of the project, there is more specificity than we first thought. I am comfortable with a 2.

Dunn: Project evaluations can appear similar when you use the boilerplate language. They can still be very different in the relative complexity behind the boilerplate language.

Racher: Some monitoring plan improvements need to be addressed before funding. I am going for a 3.

Randall-Parker: It is a unique project in that it has unique connections.

Archuleta: This is a one-time shot. How do you meet the objective of a long-term sustainable economic activity?

Randall-Parker: There is the potential that the art work and the availability of the kiln will fuel ongoing work and economic activity.

Muldavin: I am not sure how the translation of education to art is going to work.

Zaksek: They have a community firing of the kiln, where they invite members of the community. The artists can fire their pieces at that time. They provide education about forest health at the same time.

Randall-Parker: The budget spelled out pottery classes when they also talk about where the wood from the kiln came from.

Huffman: It meets several objectives but it is also a community based project. I like that. I think it is a 2.

Berrens: RMYC and another contractor do the thinning. There is some capitalization because the equipment goes to the contractors.

Archuleta: There is value in creating wealth in the community. That is community development.

Panel Members are comfortable with making this a category 2.

3:10 p.m. The Panel breaks

3:25 p.m. The Panel reconvenes.

McDonnell: Equipment can be given to another grantee for use in line with the objectives of the CFRP program. Or the equipment can be sold and the proceeds

go back to the USFS. If they sell it during the grant, they have to give it to another grantee or return to USFS. If the proceeds are under \$5,000, there is no obligation to return the money.

## **CFRP 16-08**

3:28 p.m.

David Borland reviews proposal 16-08.

Creating Landscape-Scale Opportunities on the Carson National Forest

This proposal is for a 2-year project to assist the Ranger Districts in the Carson National Forest in developing NEPA ready locations for CFRP and other restoration projects, to provide training and education in order to prepare future potential project proponents/grant applicants, and to create markets for small diameter projects.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29

- Proposal has strong focus on transportation costs and good collaboration to identify those costs.

Weaknesses: 2 (Forest Service), 5, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 30, 31

- It is unclear who would use the services for transportation since there is no letter of commitment from other projects.
- There are no numeric estimates of acres that could be NEPA cleared or number of projects that could be completed.
- There are no maps or other information about priority areas for this NEPA work.
- It is not clear that the current USFS program of work includes time for specialists to assist in the implementation of the proposed project.
- The proposal lacks information on current gaps in markets, transportation, and industry capacity.
- The connection between the transportation aspect of the proposal and the NEPA clearance/identification of the proposal is unclear.

Recommendations: 5

- The proposal could be strengthened by collaboration with the NMFWRI.
- The proposal could be strengthened by addressing the NM Forest Restoration Principles and the PJ Framework in the NEPA process.

Category: 3

Borland: If successful this will be a catalyst for future restoration projects. They expect about 20 new jobs. Addressing marketing and transportation problems are a unique aspect.

Berrens: In objective 3, they look at marketing and transportation costs. They have a number key partners involved in collecting that information by the right partners on what it costs to move product from the site to the sawmill. This is also included in the monitoring.

Muldavin: I would like to add to recommendation of using NMFWR. This is a chance to not have an off-the-shelf NEPA. They can address forest restoration principles and PJ restoration principles.

McDonnell: I was confused by the transportation issue. They say they will lease or buy transportation equipment. There should be some cost analysis of leasing vs. purchasing. Will this be used on treatment projects? The \$22,000 for this equipment, where will it be used?

Jervis: In the budget narrative they reference objective 3 to address transportation problems in other CFRP projects. Given the focus on planning, it seems that they should clarify how the equipment will be used.

Randall-Parker: The USFS Rangers could have helped a lot in identifying priority areas for the NEPA work.

Archuleta: I am confused about how this will be implemented. Reading the first letter of support, are there potential barriers in accomplishing objective 1. Can this project get off the ground?

Berrens: If the NEPA work is not done, we get an early reference point. If NEPA work is done we get a later reference point. Both of those can co-exist in the area. The project would match grant applicants to NEPA cleared areas.

Bradley: We are discussing market weaknesses. It would be helpful to have more information about market weaknesses and what can be done to close the gap between businesses that try to get off the ground and access to forest products.

Berrens: They don't provide that background, but you need the feasibility studies to get a better understanding of transportation challenges.

Jervis: The proposal has the transportation part and the NEPA clearance identification part. These parts are not really connected.

Berrens suggests a category 3. Panel agrees.

## **CFRP 17-08**

4:11 p.m.

Ann Watson reviews proposal 17-08.

Shiprock Hazardous Fuel Reduction and Restoration

This project is a resubmittal.

This project will implement restoration treatments on the San Juan River in and around the town of Shiprock on the Navajo Nation. The project will include reclamation work on a river trail system. The main objective is to remove invasive, non-native woody species from riparian areas. Treated areas will be restored using native species.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 (excellent), 27, 29

- The project includes an innovative approach to outreach using the river walk as an interpretive tool.

- The addition of Fort Lewis College as a collaborator is a strength because of their emphasis on natural resources management on tribal land.
- Restoration of native vegetation.

Weaknesses: 2 (conservation group)

Recommendations:

- Native, old and large trees should be preserved.
- Proponent should conduct pre-project bird surveys, collaborating with Hawks Aloft as to methodology, so that data collected will be comparable to other studies on riparian restoration.
- In as much as possible, the work should be done between August 15 and April 15.
- The proposal would be strengthened by discussion of the role of fire in the riparian communities.
- The proposal should strive to treat the center portion of the treatment site.

Category: 1

Watson: The acreage treated (100 acres) is limited.

Racher: They are doing a lot of follow up, which is expensive.

Norwick: Overall I liked the project that includes a unique approach. The 100 acres is probably along the river channel that is quite a large area. There aren't old and large trees there, so weakness 9 does not apply.

Proponent: There are old cottonwoods on the site and they will not be treated.

Racher: The project will keep personnel working that are currently working in that environment. I think we should remove weakness 13.

Dunn: The role of the Fire Department is in identifying treatment areas. That role has been completed.

Jervis: Hawks Aloft has been doing surveys on bosque restoration projects. One of their findings was that treatments that are not followed up by replanting are harmful for bird life.

Randall-Parker: Did the proponents look at mechanical treatment vs. biological controls.

Proponent: We get better results with mechanical treatments. Beetle releases happening in Utah are within 10 miles of San Juan River and they are moving 10 miles per year. The beetles may show up at this site. Majority is Russian Olive instead of Salt Cedar.

Borland: Weakness 10 is addressed in the proposal.

Racher: They more than adequately addressed the recommendations from the Panel.

Muldavin: Fire in riparian areas is a rare event. Fire regime is not really applicable. How does the project prevent future fires?

Jervis: What is the land management status of the Whole in the Donut by the water treatment plant.

Watson: I suggest that this is category 1. A strong revised proposal.

Panel agrees.

4:41 p.m. Esteban Muldavin recuses himself and leaves the room.

## **CFRP 21-08**

4:42 p.m. Anne Bradley introduces proposal 21-08.  
Post-Fire Restoration in the Middle Rio Grande Bosque: A Landscape Approach towards Revitalization of an Ecosystem

The project is to treat a 100-acre site that burned in February 2007 and left hundreds of standing dead trees and non-native species that are rapidly regenerating. The project is focused on reducing hazardous fuels, including non-native species and dead trees, and restoring natural processes on the site. The project will involve school children and their families in implementation, environmental education programs, and site monitoring.

Strengths: 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28

- Seasonal work restrictions are commendable.
- Inclusion of soil moisture management is commendable.
- The inclusion of an ecologically based rapid assessment methodology, testing and sharing with other potential CFRP projects is an important strength of this proposal.

Weaknesses: 14, 16, 18

- The utilization plans are vague.

Recommendation: 1 (Forest Service and BLM)

- Ask State Forestry to further develop the utilization plan.
- Proponents should specify which native species will be used in the restoration, and the relevant amounts.
- Proponents should ensure that non-native species left as cover on the treatment site are treated so that they do not serve as a seed source.

Category: 1

Berrens: Given overall program requirements, I would like to add specificity on a strength.

Norwick: Can the proponent clarify how wetting of the area will happen?

Proponent: Part of the plan is to create a canal so that water can enter the site. We are also knocking down natural levies that have been built up.

Huffman: Specify which native species and amounts of species that are going to be used in the restoration.

Proponent: In response to questions about budgets. There are supporting budgets for the contractors. The overall budgets include the work done by contractors for years 1, 2, and 3.

Bradley: They mention amount of materials that will be removed, but not what will be done with it. For many projects, this would not be a big deal, but the project states utilization as an objective.

Proponents: The utilization of the wood is not a primary focus. We have always given wood to the community. We may use some on site and are investigating other uses. Based on previous projects our plan is to put materials into rounds and inviting the public to remove it.

Racher: No description on herbicide application (weakness 14). No description of training in herbicide application (weakness 16).

Bradley: NEPA is not complete, but there is commitment to complete the NEPA.

Proponent: Interstate Stream Commission is the lead agency on the area. Bureau of Reclamation signs off on the NEPA. Bureau of Reclamation is represented on the ISC.

Randall-Parker: A weakness (2) is that there was no collaboration from the USFS to help develop the project, or the BLM. Just so that they are familiar with the projects and are also learning from the project.

DeIaco: Clarify budget number match.

Berrens: My understanding is that they are using imputed indirect cost (difference between audited cost (50%) and allowable federal match (10%)).

Racher: Youth component had excellent detail. Cross-jurisdictional work is usually very challenging.

Proponent: We only hire contractors that have herbicide applicator licenses and have the required training and certification.

Bradley suggests a 1. Panel members nod in agreement.

5:13 p.m. The Panel takes a 15-minute break.

5:17 p.m. Muldavin returns to the room.

## **CFRP 18-08**

5:31 p.m. Bob Berrens reviews 18-08.  
Ramah Navajo Forest Management and Forestry Energy Development Program  
This proposal is to develop a self-supporting forestry program by the Ramah Navajo Chapter Natural Resources Department that would implement the forest management activities outlined in the Chapter Forest Management Plan. The project would create a utilization program that enables treatment of 400-600 acres. This is a forest restoration crew that has been sub-contracting to other CFRP projects. The project would develop education and training opportunities for youth and other community members. The project would also identify biomass utilization opportunities and value-added product opportunities.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19 (potential to supply materials), 21, 22, 23 (good work plan), 24, 25, 28, 29 (has the potential to create new jobs), 30

Weaknesses: 2 (conservation group), 4, 8, 18, 24

- Proposal creates a special advisory committee as part of monitoring and evaluation plans, but they are lacking a letter of support/commitment from one of the proposed committee members (Craig Allen)
- Use of the forest advisory board in this project has the potential to strengthen our understanding of on-the-ground PJ restoration throughout New Mexico.
- Weakness 2 is to some extent mitigated by the establishment of the technical advisory committee.

Recommendations: 5,

- It is unclear who the ‘consulting forester’ is; this position accrues a total of \$38,000 across the life of the project, and we don’t know the units.
- Surveys should be conducted for grey vireo, and treatment plans adjusted accordingly.
- The proposal offers opportunity to address the interaction between grazing and the reestablishment of a natural fire regime.

Category: 1

Jervis: Small scale experiments are mentioned, but the utilization plans for value-added processing are not specified.

Racher: Modify strengths 19 and 23 and add weaknesses.

DeIaco: Page 2 references additional jobs.

Berrens: These are not there yet. If they cannot spend the dollars outside the base, then it might create jobs.

DeIaco: Field trips – who pays gas, bus, etc. – should that be under the “travel” line item.

Muldavin: Add recommendation regarding interaction of fire and grazing.

Randall-Parker: Adding to strength 30. The project is an excellent example of becoming self-sufficient and successful in bidding on and completing restoration projects and government contracts.

Berrens: There can be public and community benefits that are non-market in nature. There is self-sufficiency if they do work in the larger public interest.

Berrens suggests category 1. The Panel agrees.

6:02 p.m. Este Muldavin recuses himself and leaves the room.

## **CFRP 19-08**

6:02 p.m. Rick DeIaco reviews proposal 19-08.  
Lucero Fire Restoration Project

The project is for restoring native floodplain habitat on a 180-acre area.

Strengths: 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 29

Weaknesses: 2 (conservation groups), 3, 5 (USFWS, NM Natural Heritage Program, US Army Corps of Engineers), 6, 9 (all native vegetation), 10, 14 (herbicide safety)

- External collaboration should be strengthened.

Recommendations: 1 (external and conservation groups), 3, 4,

- Native vegetation should be clearly marked and protected prior to treatment
- The proposal should include a discussion of the ignition sources of the recurring fires on the treatment sites.
- Proponents strongly consider including a bird survey plan in collaboration with Hawks Aloft methodology.
- The proposal could be strengthened by consulting with other affected tribes and CFRP recipients that may have an interest in this type of work or who are involved with similar projects.

Category: 2

DeIaco: The project is well thought out and nested within projects that are not funded by CFRP.

Borland: Can proponent clarify seed amount calculations?

Proponent: Calculated by a colleague.

Jervis: Are willow flycatchers found in the area?

Proponent: No.

Proponent: The NEPA is 6 or 7 years old. We have reviewed the NEPA documents and they are adequate.

Racher: Weakness 10. We have discussed ecological role of fire. In an altered ecosystem, will we see fire more often? Do we need to redefine the role of fire?

Jervis: In this case, they are allowing some diversion of river water at high flows. That is constrained by a nearby railroad bridge. It is hard to say that this would be natural. You might be developing a different type of habitat.

Norwick: What are ignition sources for the recent fires? We need some discussion of fire in the management plan.

DeIaco: Is there any mention of fire in the Master Plan?

Proponent: The plan does talk about fire in the area where the bosque transitions.

Huffman: The budget and implementation plan. The 188 acres will be planted with cuttings. They describe a lot of cutting and the budget. Where are the willows and cottonwood cutting coming from?

Proponent: There are several islands that have these cuttings. That will be the source. The Pueblo has a permit to remove islands from the river. During the removal of the islands, the cuttings will be removed for the restoration project.

Berrens: What is the budget item for?

Proponent: It is for labor.

Watson: The proposal does not mention anything about herbicide application / safety efforts.

Proponent: NM Natural Heritage has been working with the Pueblo on bird surveys.

Payne: There is opportunity to collaborate with other tribes that are doing similar work. The relevant recommendation could be expanded.

Racher: Nothing mentioned about an irrigation system. Are they restoring a natural environment or not?

Proponent: A separate project funded through different resources is going on simultaneously. This is captured as additional work going on in the area. This will be a natural grassland area. Irrigation is to get the grass established.

DeIaco suggests category 2. Panel members agree.

6:31 p.m. Muldavin rejoins the Panel.

## **CFRP 20-08**

6:32 p.m. David Huffman reviews proposal 20-08.  
Alamo Community Capacity Building through Collaborative Forest Restoration  
This proposal is a resubmittal.

The proposal is for establishing a Natural Resources Department and to build a local workforce for forest restoration by the Alamo Navajo School Board. The project will also include treatment of 940 acres of WUI.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29

Weaknesses:

- Work plan table is inconsistent with the letter from the District Ranger and table on page 8 in the proposal (number of treatable acres)

Recommendations:

- For the crew members during year 1, ensure that wages are similar to prevailing wages in the area.
- Proponents should discuss resources needed to sustain the department beyond the life of the grant.

Category: 1

Randall-Parker: The project seems to fit really well with a number of other projects that are going on, especially the value-added industries that are being created. A number of other really good strengths.

Racher: This is very important for this area, also for land management areas.

Huffman: What is needed to sustain the program? It would be helpful to have that discussion.

Jervis: They don't discuss what happens with the biomass that comes off these acres. Will it be chipped, what?

Racher: The proposal is to build capacity to bid on treatments, not doing treatments.

Huffman suggest category 1. The Panel agrees.

6:45 p.m. Arturo Archuleta and Anne Bradley recuse themselves and leave the room.

## **CFRP 22-08**

6:47 p.m. Tom Jervis reviews proposal 22-08.

Ojo Peak Crown Fire Restoration Planning Project: Developing a Plan for Restoring Post-Crown Fire Watershed Integrity

This proposal is to develop a strategic plan to restore post-crown fire watershed integrity to a site burned in fall of 2007. This project would obtain NEPA clearance, develop a restoration plan to protect soil and hydrologic features, revegetate stream banks, and replant trees on hill slopes for a 387 acre proposed site.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 22, 23, 24, 27

- The goal of restoring ecosystem function is particularly laudable.
- The proposal is innovative in its integrated watershed scale and interdisciplinary approach to post-fire restoration and is supported by a strong team of collaborators.
- The applicants have built into the proposal outreach to a land grant organization to strengthen their planning and restoration efforts.

Weaknesses: 12

- The Forest Service letter of endorsement does not confirm the degree of collaboration that took place during proposal development (Forest Coordinator clarified that a high degree of collaboration with the FS did take place).

Recommendations: 6

- The proponent should ensure that personnel and contractual costs are displayed under the correct line items (e.g., Melissa Savage's costs for completing the monitoring report should be under "personnel", as is explained in the letter of commitment from the Four Corners Institute).

- The proponent should use certified weed-free hay in the treatment or on-site materials, or mulch.
- The proposal could be strengthened, as part of the planning process, by a description or estimate of volume or the removal of by-products that could potentially pay for the burned area restoration.
- Given the project's intent to expand the current body of knowledge regarding post-fire restoration, the proposal would be strengthened by the incorporation of references to the current body of scientific information that exists on this topic.

Category: 1

Jervis: This meets an important need, but could be more convincing if it would include some pilot project sites.

Zaksek: Some items under personnel should be under contractor and vice versa (e.g., Melissa's time should be under personnel).

Randall-Parker: Was this burn in ponderosa pine. How big was the burn.

Borland: Yes, it was mostly ponderosa pine. The burn area was 7,000 acres.

Racher: Mountainair Schools are involved in other CFRP grants in the area.

Racher: Who does the funding go to (weakness 20), i.e., the sub-contracts?

Racher: This is a fire rehab planning effort. If we do planning now, and then ask for funds to restore the area. Are they waiting too long to rehabilitate the area?

Randall-Parker: We have not done NEPA on BAER (burnt area emergency rehabilitation) activities. We don't have to do emergency restoration.

Muldavin: Not sure the timing for restoration and rehabilitation is an issue.

Huffman: Agree with Muldavin about restoration and rehabilitation. There are no guarantees no matter when you do it.

Racher: There is concern about non-native seed coming into the seed. They also talk about coming in with agricultural straw.

Randall-Parker: The proposal did not incorporate current science on burned area recommendation. How will this proposal add to what we currently know?

Randall-Parker: The proposal should have included an estimate of salvage and by-products to pay for restoration.

Borland: The USFS can still apply for burned area rehabilitation or other funds.

Jervis: She is focusing this on restoring ecosystem function to the area.

Racher: I read this letter from the Forest Supervisor, which mentions that they can provide support. It indicates that they may not have been very involved in the proposal.

Huffman: Back to the timing issue. There is nothing in the proposal to suggest that this site cannot be rehabilitated.

Jervis suggests category 2. There are weaknesses, but it would meet an important need.

Muldavin: I think this is innovative (post burn, watershed approach), uses Forest Restoration Principles and it is new for CFRP. I think this should be a 1. This will apply to other burns.

Matt: It has substantive weaknesses, e.g., 13.

Dunn: If we are building planning capacity, then weakness 13 does not apply.

Payne: Does the burned area qualify for rehabilitation?

Muldavin: We have done a lot of work in WUI's. Ultimately, in the West, we need to look at rehabilitation in big burn areas. The more we understand how to do it, the better off we are and it will help other CFRP grantees who are dealing with ecosystem function restoration. That is a long-term look on capacity.

Jervis: a template is a piece of infrastructure. This project would build that. Should remove weakness 13.

Huffman: Restoration is defined on page 1.

Borland: If we go this way, do BAER implementation first.

Jervis: The toolkit would also inform BAER implementation and be more effective in ecological restoration.

Randall-Parker: If this proposal is not funded through CFRP, the proponents could still work with USFS to look for other sources of funding.

The Panel agrees on a category 2.

7:38 p.m. Archuleta and Bradley rejoin the group.

## Public Comment

7:38 p.m. Pratt Miles checks if there were written comments submitted. The following comments were provided.

### **Ruben Carreon, RC Forest Products**

Dear Technical Advisory Panel,

Thank you for the opportunity to address this public input session. My name is Ruben Carreon, president of RC Forest Products LLC in Reserve, New Mexico. We would like to represent to the CFRP Technical Advisory Panel for further consideration, a letter of support from the Quemado Ranger District and a letter of commitment from our main collaborator JL Enterprises.

These letters were left out when I put our proposal together.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ruben Carreon  
RC Forest Products LLC

Ruben Carreon  
RC Forest Products  
Mile Marker 1, Hwy  
Reserve, New Mexico 87830

Re: Letter of Endorsement

Dear Mr. Carreon:

JL enterprises would like to take this opportunity to endorse RC forest Products in there efforts to obtain a CFRP grant for the purpose of purchasing a Cord King firewood processor and a Caterpillar 950 front end loader. This equipment in conjunction with firewood processed by JL Enterprises will provide enough firewood to increase retail outlet markets already established with Wal-Mart and Home Depot. This processor will be used to process small diameter timber harvested through past CFRP projects. By increasing the production of more small diameter timber, that would otherwise require additional cost for their treatment by other methods, the forest ecosystem will be promoted to a healthier state by reduction of catastrophic wildfire, insects, and disease. The increased use for small diameter timber into value added product will increase the demand for additional material which in turn reduces the cost of treating to the forest.

The increased demand for small diameter timber will not only restore the forest ecosystem but provide job opportunities not only in production of firewood but in other forest occupations as well. The purchase of this equipment will provide an estimated 20 jobs in an already economically depressed area. The jobs will not only consist of packaging and bundling the firewood but skilled jobs such as forklift, front end loader, and firewood processor operator and supervisor. Additional skilled forest jobs will be required through this endeavor to harvest the necessary small diameter timber that will be required.

NEPA ready projects have already been identified by the Quemado and Reserve Ranger Districts that will support this endeavor and promote not only a healthy forest but a healthy watershed as well.

The award of a CFRP Grant to RC Forest Products will assist in the stimulation of the local economy, promote job growth, reduce the cost of treatment to the forest and watershed, reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire and promote forest health. It is with these benefits in mind that JL Enterprises whole heartily supports and collaborators with RC Forest Products. Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of the requested to award a CFRP grant to RC Forest Products.

Sincerely  
Linda Cooke  
Owner

Mr. Ruben Carreon  
RC Forest Products LLC  
P.O. Box 655  
Reserve, NM 87830

Dear Mr. Ruben Carreon:

Minutes

The Quemado Ranger District of the Gila National Forest would like to support your proposal for a CFRP Grant to purchase a firewood processor and a front end loader to process small diameter timber into firewood. The use of this type of equipment will further develop a market for small diameter timber on the Gila National Forest by capturing a market for the material that currently has a very limited market in the area.

By developing a market for this small diameter material you will enable the Gila National Forest to treat more acres of the Forest to restore fire adapted ecosystems, manage the Forest to promote a healthy forest that is resilient to insects and disease, reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire, and provide social and economic values to the local communities.

The treatment of the Gila National Forest would be enhanced by the development of markets for the small diameter timber in the local area as it would reduce the cost to treat the Forest enabling us to treat more acres in the future as the costs for treating the area will be reduced due to the utilization of this material rather than having to treat the residual material by other means.

Sincerely,

Janice S. Stevenson  
District Ranger

7:46 p.m. Pratt Miles: We will start tomorrow at 8:30 a.m.

7:46 p.m. Meeting adjourned for the day.

## Thursday, April 24, 2007

### Panel:

Arturo Archuleta  
Robert Berrens  
David Borland  
Anne Bradley  
Rick DeIaco  
Walter Dunn - Chairman/DFO  
David Huffman  
Tom Jervis  
Esteban Muldavin  
Jim Norwick  
Brent Racher  
Tammy Randall-Parker  
Matthew Silva  
Ann Watson

### USFS Staff:

Susan McDonnell – Grants and Agreements Specialist  
Jerry Payne - Recorder  
Melissa Zaksek - Recorder

### Meridian Institute Facilitation Staff:

Jennifer Pratt Miles – Facilitator  
Rex Raimond – Meeting Minutes

### Members of the Public in Attendance:

Gabriel Partido, USFS  
Macario Griego, Carnue Land Grant  
Merry Jo Faul, Sierra SWCIS  
Ruben Charreon, RC Forest Products  
Bertha Charreon, RC Forest Products  
Gordon West, Santa Clara Woodworks and Gila WoodNet  
Ken Smith, NMFWRI  
Doug Cram, NMSU-Cooperative Extension  
Matt Schneeberger  
Sherry Barrow, SBS Wood Shavings  
Connie Zipperer, Lincoln NF, USFS  
Victoria Gammill  
Carmen Austin  
Mark Walthall, Walthall Environmental

8:36 a.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles convenes the Panel, reviews the agenda, and asks members of the public to sign in. Panel members and members of the public introduce themselves.

Racher: What is the total amount of funding available this year?

Zaksek: \$3,814,000

Dunn: We reviewed the proposals and it appears that there are no additional proposals (other than 10 and 15) where the issues regarding Categorical Exclusion 10 are relevant.

8:48 a.m. Arturo Archuleta recuses himself and leaves the room.

## **CFRP 23-08**

8:48 a.m. Jim Norwick reviews proposal 23-08.  
New Mexico Community Land Grant Planning & Preparation for Community Forest Restoration Pilot Project

The proposal is to plan and prepare for restoration projects located on common lands of the community land grants of Carnue and Chilili. The planning will include NEPA and NHPA clearances. The project will include the development of a strategic economic development plan for the utilization of small diameter products. The preparation portion will include training and certification of land grant heirs to implement forest restoration. Outreach and training about the benefits of forest restoration will be conducted with the land grants.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30 (Santa Clara)

- The applicants have built into the proposal outreach to other land grants to strengthen their planning and restoration efforts.
- The Forest Service Sandia and Mountainair Ranger Districts should be identified as partners in the proposal and letters of support were not included.
- The proponent includes a plan to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for future implementation activities.
- This is an innovative collaboration among land grants and Santa Clara Pueblo, with the potential of developing cross-jurisdictional treatments of land grant, Pueblo, and Forest Service lands.

Weaknesses: 3, 4 (Forest Service), 9, 10, 19

- The proposal does not include a discussion of potential products

Recommendations:

- Proponent should consult with NM State Forestry and NMFWRRI during the NEPA planning process.
- Proponent should ensure that the NM Forest Restoration Principles are used.
- The proposal could be strengthened by including a description of the current conditions and desired future conditions as identified in the Community Fire Plans.
- More formal collaboration with the Forest Service that would result in a larger planning effort across jurisdictional boundaries that will facilitate cross-jurisdictional planning leading to a larger landscape level approach.

- The proponent should work with conservation groups to develop activity and timing plans (e.g., to protect nesting bird habitat).

Category: 1

McDonell: The budget mentions 'food and drink' during training. That is okay if the training is in the field.

DeIaco: Training is in the field.

Borland: Proponent should consult with NM State Forestry and NMFWR.

Racher: Chilibi butts up against Forest Service Land, so it would be good to see a letter from the District Ranger.

Racher: I am not sure if weaknesses 11, 14, 17, and 18 are relevant. The relevant information will be gathered during the project. They don't know the volumes that will be treated.

Norwick: Regarding weakness 18 would like to see more discussion of the area, ecological site conditions, etc.

Randall-Parker: It would be nice to better understand the area. The NEPA is to develop treatment plans.

Dunn: The point of the project is to develop the proposed treatments. It seems that this weakness is not relevant. Maybe you need more information on current and desired future condition.

Norwick: What are the current conditions under the Fire Plan. They both have Fire Plans that identify these conditions. Then, they could also state what they would like to achieve in the future. That would give a little more background.

Jervis: The planning and NEPA process is to develop alternatives and not to rubber-stamp decisions that are already made.

Dunn: Planning and NEPA – they are not the same thing.

Bradley: They are doing good outreach to other land grants.

Randall-Parker: Weakness 4 should specify Sandia and Mountainair District Offices. Also, encourage the proponents to work with the USFS on cross-jurisdictional planning.

Muldavin: USFS is not listed as a collaborator.

Dunn: Can the proponent clarify role of USFS.

Proponent: USFS is very supportive of the project because we are building a key partnership and the precedent setting nature. The District Rangers have been kept informed and they are highly supportive.

Racher: There is much cross-jurisdictional work going on in a watershed group and in other efforts in the Estancia River Basin.

Dunn: The proposal does not express the level of support and excitement that is there.

Payne: There may be other key partners that were not identified to support cross-jurisdictional planning.

Watson: Weakness 19 and strength 21 are in conflict.

Muldavin: This should not be a weakness, because it is not relevant to the planning process. Also, remove the strength.

Zaksek: Every grant has to have a monitoring plan for the proposed work plan. Leave weakness 19. A strength is that they are thinking ahead.

Jervis: Suggest that the proponent limit groundwork to August 15 – April 15 to limit disturbance to nesting birds.

DeIaco: The point is valid but it does not seem to fit here.

Berrens: They are not doing implementation.

Racher: Suggests change to the recommendation.

Randall-Parker: I think it is a weakness that there is no discussion of the types of utilization that might be relevant.

DeIaco: The proposal says that they will include the utilization plan in the planning phase.

Bradley: This seemed general enough and adequate. The capacity building is to better understand equipment options, utilization options, etc.

Dunn: The project will include the development of a strategic economic development plan. That is what they are going to do. This is not a weakness.

Payne: Developing the plan is appropriate. Right now the big market that might be available (a power plant) is unclear, so the potential for use is unclear.

Norwick: The proposal should have included a discussion of potential products.

Norwick suggests that, given strengths and innovative nature, this should be a category 2.

Bradley: I think this is a 1. Agree with the recommendations, but they left room for the planning process to address them.

Watson: I also think this is a 1. Really good partnership and innovative project.

Berrens: I am going with a 1. They focus on the planning, cross-jurisdictional planning.

DeIaco: I think the weaknesses and recommendations can be addressed easily. We have addressed the utilization plan issue.

Muldavin: also agree with a 1.

Randall-Parker: Agree that they have a good price.

Norwick: I am willing to go with a 1, not having the understanding of last year's discussion.

The Panel agrees on category 1.

Dunn: Create a boilerplate based on the last recommendation.

9:41 a.m. Arturo Archuleta rejoins the group.

## **CFRP 24-08**

9:42 a.m. Este Muldavin reviews proposal 24-08.  
Eastern Gila Forest and Community Restoration Project

This proposal is a resubmittal.

This proposal is to establish a local community forest restoration cooperative from which to conduct forest restoration (including 25 acre treatment and reestablishing timber equipment infrastructure) and conduct an economic analysis to scientifically assess the successes and roadblocks to fiscally sustainable forest restoration. They would also develop a series of desk guides to assist entrepreneurs and future CFRP applicants in the decision making process regarding the development of forest restoration-based businesses in remote locations.

Strengths: 2, 3 (particularly NMFWRI), 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 29.

- The project has the potential to assist many future CFRP projects through the feasibility analysis and economic case studies, and the publication of entrepreneur desk guides.
- The project is unique and innovative in that it adds value to wood products that would be utilized through a coop in a rural community in Southern New Mexico.
- Inclusion of an economist is a strength.
- The proposal provides good value to the CFRP by adding capacity, performing treatments, and enhancing economic understanding of small diameter timber utilization.
- The project is a good opportunity to engage a broader conservation community in the project.

Weaknesses: 2 (land management agencies - BLM), 3, 4, 15, 16

- There is no resume from the project coordinator.
- There is no detail on sustainability of the coop.

Recommendations:

- The proposal could be strengthened by collaboration with the BLM for cross-jurisdictional restoration potential.
- The project is a good opportunity to expand collaboration to include organizations that are not traditional partners in rangeland conservation.
- The proposal could be strengthened by a more thorough description of the ecosystems or vegetation types and which restoration activities will take place.
- The economic case study should detail the role of the coop.

Category: 1

Jervis: They talk about the association as the proponent and they talk about collaborators who are also members of the association. It is not clear who the collaborators are and who the proponents are.

Jervis: Regarding weakness 15, the business plan for the pellet operation is not clear.

Proponent: The people listed on page 3 and the Forest Service are the collaborators.

Muldavin: NRCS and Wahoo Ranch are listed on page 3, but there are no letters of support from these organizations.

Racher: Weakness 8, looking at the map of figure 3, they are relatively clear. The box inside was treated in the past with another CFRP.

Muldavin: I could not tell what the small boxes on the map were. No big deal.

Proponent: small boxes are private land.

Jervis: The proposal is unclear about: is Laura Schneeberger proposing this or the association? The members of the association can commit and do this. Are the members also collaborators as independent entities?

Bradley: When you look at the letters, the individual members offered their own match. I understood the connection.

DeIaco: Collaborators are doing something, often to provide match. I don't see this as a weakness.

Jervis: Withdraw this weakness.

Racher: There was a particularly strong letter of support from the NMFWR.

Racher: Can we look at strengths 2, 4, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 21

Watson: If you look in the proposal, it is very vague about youth. How are they going to be involved – no discussion in the work plan.

Berrens: There is a Range Club that commits students and has a letter with specific commitment.

Muldavin: Having the range club involved in monitoring, but they are not involved in economic analysis and other components of the project.

Watson: The proposal needs to state what the Range Club will be doing.

Payne: The letters are part of the proposal.

Dunn: The narrative should describe who the partners are and what they are going to do.

Randall-Parker: Adds strengths.

DeIaco: Weakness 2. The proposal includes the Quivira Coalition. Is that a conservation group?

Bradley: They offer helpful management advice, but they do not represent the voice of the broader conservation perspective. They are heavily range oriented.

Jervis: The letter from Quivira is a letter of support, does not specify their collaboration.

Dunn: They are perceived as a conservation group.

Jervis: Yes, by the ranching community.

Muldavin: This point is important in this project. Conservation group involvement in Gila, this project offers an opportunity to bring conservation groups into the conversation.

Watson: Good opportunity to establish a relationship with broader conservation groups.

Archuleta: The Quivira Coalition letter does not state strong collaboration. That is a weakness.

Proponent: In the proposal, the group itself is a conservation group that is on the land. Their goal is conservation and sustainability of natural resources. Also the university group is focused on sustainability and conservation of natural resources. We have approached several environmental NGOs, who are not interested or who just don't have the resources to collaborate on another project.

Dunn: What do you do when an applicant reaches out, but the groups – for whatever reason – decide not to participate?

Jervis: Is this new information?

Randall-Parker: Who was collaborating in the NEPA?

Proponent: On the scoping the USFS sent letters to Sierra Club, CBD, Wild Earth, and another group. We received comments and alternatives were developed as a result of those comments.

Muldavin: In the proposal itself, there is not this information.

DeIaco: Beyond what was said here, this does not seem like a weakness, but we suggest a recommendation.

Bradley: I am fine with that. The programmatic issue is really important. Everyone who comes to the table has the best intentions, but we need broader expertise or critical eye on issues that may not be on the proponents' mind. We are trying to interject that into the discussions.

Payne: It may be hard to include these organizations. Other projects in this area have had traditional conservation groups.

Jervis: If people have contacted organizations, but late in the process, then that is not outreach.

Muldavin: This is an economic development proposal. We want more collaboration in that aspect. That's why I would suggest we turn the weakness in the recommendation.

Racher: During the discussion last year, the Panel was okay with the involvement of Quivira.

Berrens: It seems that the monitoring plan, budget, and letters verify the match. Remove weakness 3.

Muldavin: What will be the role of the NMSU Range Club in monitoring. That was the question.

Berrens: We have an extension economist and we are hiring a master's student economist. That is fine. If you get a good grad student, you can get a good study.

Huffman: Adds a recommendation.

Jervis: There is a pellet mill that is run by a co-op. This is similar to what has been developed in the Silver City area. It does add value, but it is not unique or innovative given the example that exists in the area.

Payne: There is a built in market, which is innovative.

Dunn: The pellet mill in Silver City is no longer in business.

Muldavin suggests category 2, because of questions about coop sustainability and plan. It is innovative. Where are the conservation interests.

Racher: I think this is a strong proposal, but considering the weaknesses I am at a 2. They did a good job addressing issues from last year.

Jervis: I have this at a 3. Had a hard time understanding the appendix that lists how last year's weaknesses were addressed. Maybe a 2.

Berrens: I like the role of cooperative extension. We get a lot of bang for our buck. We engage cooperative extension, we get a pellet mill, and we get economic analysis. I am a 1.

Randall-Parker: Great to see the economist, like the idea of a local coop, capacity that is needed in the area. Need details on how the coop will work.

Archuleta: I support 1 because of the big value. It is really important that we get economists involved. This will help build capacity for CFRP in general.

DeIaco: I see the weaknesses, but none are substantial. I am at a 1.

Archuleta: If we can develop a recommendation to describe the coop structure, it would really strengthen the proposal and would have broader benefits.

DeIaco: In the past, we have asked proponents to do something before they receive funding.

Muldavin: What will the role of the coop be.

Berrens: I think these details will be worked out in the case studies.

Silva: There is a dearth of information on the use of small diameter trees. This proposal will begin to get us some information. That makes it an important project. I am on a 1.

Borland: I agree that the proposal has minor weaknesses. We are interested in the economic analysis. I think this is a 1.

Jervis: The intent of this proposal is important and the economic inclusion is very good. I am concerned that there are significant weaknesses. There are not just

minor administrative weaknesses. The collaboration issue, the lack of estimates of markets, and the lack of sustainability are substantive weaknesses. This should be a 2.

Norwick: I agree that there are substantive weaknesses combined with recommendations. This should be a 2.

Racher: The business plan is lacking. Berrens feels that these can be deferred. If that is what they will figure out, I am okay with making this a 1.

DeIaco: They are buying a pellet plant and doing that prior to other activity. Based on that, I am moving to a 2.

Huffman: Weakness 19 is hanging me up. The annual economic reports are monitoring of the work plan.

Payne: Does the monitoring plan monitor the activities in the work plan.

Muldavin: I am not sure this is sufficient.

Huffman: On page 8, the proposal seems to describe what is being done in the monitoring.

Racher: Who is doing what is described in the letters.

Bradley: If we are concerned about the coop, I am not sure we can say the monitoring plan is clear.

Randall-Parker: The proposals that are just now proposing NEPA and it is easier to cover the bases in 10 pages. In this proposal, they are doing a lot (acres treated, economic analysis, utilization). It is hard to describe that in 10 pages.

Huffman: They use 8.5 pages, so they had room to provide more detail.

Watson: I am at a 2.

Muldavin: I can support a 2.

Silva: I think we can remove 19, because this is addressed.

Racher: The economic analysis will cover business proposals and estimates of markets. That is why it is not a substantial issue.

DeIaco: I agree that 19 can be removed, because the monitoring is explained.

Jervis: There are preconceived notions about what the project would do (there is a model for the business and the coop), but it is not clear. Who is the coop, who is the permittees association, who is buying the pellet mill, etc. – that is not clear in the proposal.

Berrens: I don't want them to say that this will be profitable before they do the economic analysis. That is why 15 is not substantive.

Muldavin: Because of the way this is structured, does Berrens feel comfortable that the economist can deliver an analysis that provides results?

Berrens: This will depend on the skill set of the economist. They have Cooperative Ag Extension Service and NMFWRRI that provides access to

resources and expertise. They are going to do the analysis and they can tap the skill sets at agricultural extension service.

Bradley: I can agree on a 1. I feel comfortable that the weaknesses are not substantive.

Jervis: I can live with a 1.

The Panel agrees.

## Public Comment

11:38 a.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles mentioned that several written comments were received. These will be read into the record now.

### ***Yasmeen Najmi, Planner, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District***

Response to the CFRP Review Panel Recommendations for Proposal #21

1. The panel would like to see a letter of support from the Bureau of Reclamation regarding NEPA Review.

Response: The Interstate Stream Commission (ISC) and MRGCD recently met with the Bureau of Reclamation on the Environmental Assessment (E.A.) for ISC projects funded through the Bureau of Reclamation and the Bureau is the Federal Decision Agency. It was agreed that the Project in CFRP Proposal #021 would be included in the ISC's E.A. and this E.A. is already under development.

2. The MRGCD should work with the New Mexico Forestry Division to develop a utilization plan for this project.

Response: The MRGCD has a long working relationship with State Forestry and they have agreed in their letter of support to assist the MRGCD with this project and we will seek their input on options for utilizing wood generated by this project.

3. The MRGCD should specify which native species will be used in the restoration and describe the amounts.

Response: We have attached a list of species commonly used in MRGCD bosque restoration projects. The total numbers of plant materials proposed can be found in Years Two and Three of the project budget, but, as stated in the proposal, final locations and acreages (including planting densities/acre) will be determined by a site analysis and restoration plan.

4. The MRGCD should collaborate with Federal agencies in project design, implementation and monitoring.

Response: The MRGCD will collaborate with the Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to seek their review of environmental compliance documents, restoration design and implementation and monitoring. If awarded a CFRP grant, The MRGCD will also work with Mr. Ian Fox, CFRP Coordinator, to identify representatives from the USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Indian Affairs to be involved in this project, including site visits, if desired.

5. The proponent should ensure that non-native species left as cover be treated so that they do not serve as seed sources on site.

Response: Organizations and agencies conducting monitoring and research on bosque fuels reduction and restoration projects have recommended that bosque managers, as an interim measure, leave scattered, larger diameter non-native trees on a site where little to no native understory exists for habitat structure, until native plants planted on the site provide desirable structure for wildlife. When it is determined that native plants provide desired habitat, the non-native trees and shrubs will be removed. Nonnative re-sprouts from previously removed trees or new re-sprouts will be treated until restoration targets are met.

**Max Cordova (CFRP 12-08)**

Regarding NEPA Assessment:

Comments from Max Cordova

We see that the areas are fully prepared and NEPA-ready, and are scheduled for forest restoration immediately. Both treatment areas decision memos have been completed in 1999 and 2001. The decision memo on these projects has been signed. The decision to treat the areas was done under categorical exclusions or environmental assessments. It is our understanding that the review process that Mr. Miera states in his letter of endorsement of our project can be completed prior to the project implementation and within the timeframe already listed in the proposal. Notice on Table 2 on the El Greco proposal the prescribe treatment will happen starting in April 2009, one year from now. In our conversations with Mr. Miera and the Carson National Forest, El Greco fully believes that the review can take place efficiently immediately. It is also important to note the projects were grand fathered in and in accordance with all applicable reviews. The process that Mr. Miera speaks about is not a complete implementation of efforts that have already been done in regards to NEPA-ready assessments. It is a review of the existing paperwork that already has been in existence, completed and filed with the district.

El Greco believes that it has completed with collaboration on the prescribed treatment areas that have been identified and are NEPA ready. We have years of working with the Carson National Forest and the viable interest groups. We believe that the committee is not understanding the intentions of Mr. Miera in that the areas are ready, but would need to go through typical administrative reviews to comply with NEPA. The areas have been documented and NEPA-ready since 2001. The Panel's concern that it may take two years to review the process by Mr. Miera are misunderstood and will not take that long to complete. Mr. Miera may also be reflecting the fact that he is new to the Carson National Forest Camino Real Ranger District and still becoming familiar with previous efforts already completed prior to his involvement. His understanding, perhaps of the NEPA requirements may reflect the fact that the Camino Real Ranger District has had four different Rangers within the past four years, and each one needs adequate time to understand what has been previously completed.

It is potentially dangerous, to not do anything immediately in the proposed treatment area. Truchas and the nearby communities have immediate fire danger

which was evident in three major forest fires in the area which include the 15,000 are Borrego Mesa Fire, which came within 100 yards of the community of Truchas. We have done years of due-diligence and have worked with the Carson National Forest to select the areas in the greatest need of treatment in an effort to curtail the possibility of having a catastrophic fire in the area. We believe that Mr. Miera's letter on review are being taken out of contexts and are not being adequately understood by the committee as towards what his true intentions which were in reviewing the areas that are to be treated. The process is not a process that will take two years.

In conclusion, in viewing other proposals submitted to the committee, there seems to not be continuity in how the committee views the letters of endorsement made by the relevant Rangers and their districts. Many of the letters made by the rangers, seem only vague and a general letter of support. The same evaluation criteria made by the committee in weighing these letters does not seem to be the same in proposals.

Respectfully submitted  
Max Cordova  
PO Box 521  
Chimayo, NM

**Gary Hatham and Teri Lamemen, Navajo Department of Water Resources (CFRP 17-08)**

Written Comment  
From Proposal 17-08  
Shiprock Restoration Project  
04-22-08

The proponents of this project fully acknowledge the recommendations of the committee and are committed to open dialogue with Hawks Aloft and discussion of protocol on avian monitoring.

We are also committed to treat the "donut" area at the wastewater treatment plan with other monies as they become available. We have a request into New Mexico State Forestry for \$100,000 for the treatment of Russian Olive and Salt Cedar in the prevention of wildfires. This could be a possible source of funding to treat the entire area.

Gary Hatham, Project Coordinator  
Teri Lamemen, Navajo Department of Water Resources

**Superintendent, Pine Hill School District (CFRP 18-08)**

Pine Hill School District  
Draft Support / Participation Letter

Walter Dunn  
USDA Forest Service

State and Private Forestry  
 Cooperative and International Forestry, Room 329  
 333 Broadway SE  
 Albuquerque, NM 87102

Dear Mr. Dunn:

We are writing to express our support for the Ramah Navajo Natural Resources Department proposal "Self-Reliance and Economic Security through Wood Energy Development". Our small remote school district faces substantial challenges due to the continued cutbacks in BIA and other education funding. At the same time, because we are so remote, all of the resources we need to run and maintain our facilities are expensive, particularly the energy we need to heat our buildings.

Given the success of the "Fuels for Schools" programs in other areas, we are especially interested in evaluating our schools for the potential for utilizing wood energy systems. We are particularly excited about the possibility that doing so would also keep more money in our community and thereby create and support more local jobs and economic development.

We strongly encourage you to support this program. We feel it could be a demonstration for other rural schools in our region. We have already directed our facilities manager to begin working with Ramah Navajo's Natural Resource Department to gather the utility use information that will be necessary for this evaluation. We are ready to move forward with this assessment as soon as we have the word that this program has been funded.

Sincerely,  
 Superintendent  
 Pine Hill School District

- 11:53 a.m. Zaksek: I note that proposal 08-20 is also subject to a NEPA Section 10 Categorical Exclusion.
- 11:53 a.m. Pratt Miles: We will break for lunch. Return at 1:20 p.m.
- 1:27 p.m. The meeting reconvenes. Pratt Miles reminds members of the public to sign in.
- Jervis: 25, 27, and 28 are part of the same system. Do we want to discuss those in order (i.e., 26 first)?
- Others: no.

## **CFRP 25-08**

- 1:29 p.m. Matthew Silva reviews proposal 25-08.  
 Burro Mountain Homestead Restoration Project
- The proposal is to thin 400 acres over 3 years. The project will be done 25 miles SW of Silver City. They will use mechanized shredding with a very-low PSI steel-tracked skid-steer and Bull Hog shredder to do a lot of mulching. Usable small diameter trees will be removed and used by Santa Clara Woodworks for flooring. They have completed another CFRP project.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30

- 1 - Including an ATV group (Gila Rough Riders).
- Very comprehensive utilization plan.
- 8 – includes a well-developed and youth component with a track record of success.
- Potential markets are described in detail.
- The proposal includes a detailed assessment of the challenges of creating a sustainable business.
- A strength is the ongoing working relationship with the Small Business Development Center.
- The proposed offers a good discussion and chance to monitor the re-sprouting issue regarding removed trees, particularly Alligator juniper.

Weaknesses: 10

- The proposal does not discuss or reference the best available science with respect to persistent PJ woodlands.

Recommendations:

- The proposal should include provisions to ensure old and large trees are preserved.
- The proponent should work with conservation groups to develop plans for the timing of ground disturbing activity to account for wildlife needs (e.g. to protect nesting bird habitat).
- The proponents should ensure that the interactions among other CFRP grantees are clear and that funding does not overlap.

Category: 1

Silva: This project will help keep tree thinners employed year round.

DeIaco: This is a good project for capacity building.

Jervis: The diameter cap is pretty high for PJ. They are not preserving old and large trees. If these woodlands are not fire-adapted, then we won't be able to reintroduce fire. There is inadequate discussion of the role of fire.

Muldavin: Because this is a WUI project, I don't think fire reintroduction is relevant. Fire can be an event. I am not sure that the discussion of fire is a weakness.

Jervis: The wording used to describe thinning is not accurate. Leave the weakness on, but it is not a significant weakness.

Huffman: Is this a WUI project or not? WUI are not a focus for restoration.

Jervis: Yes, it looks like a WUI.

Dunn: Can you clarify the WUI question?

Proponent: This treatment is a WUI. It is in the Silver City District, which is doing burns in the area. This would create a fuel break for the community and protection in the WUI.

Dunn: Can you discuss the prescription?

Proponent: Because this is a fuel break, this is heavier than our typical treatment. The prescription calls for old and large trees. The average DVH is 11.9 for pinyon; for Ponderosa it is about 15. We call for retaining old and large trees.

Borland: Is this PJ – Ponderosa transition.

Proponent: Part of it is, but some are historically PJ.

Borland: There is a reason to thin PJ to protect Ponderosa.

Jervis: The question is that PJ can move fast during dry years. This may be a condition considering current climate.

Dunn: strength 30. Add to the strength 1 – including an ATV group (Gila Rough Riders). I think this is the first time we have seen this.

DeIaco: Clarify weakness 9. Are we holding the proponents to a different standard because they have stated a diameter cap.

Racher: Ecological role of fire; this area of NM may not be adequately described by science.

Muldavin: This is described in general terms.

Borland: Habitat types vastly different? Do they have different fire regimes?

Muldavin: They describe this as persistent woodlands. These are more prone to crown fires. They probably have the treatment right for a WUI.

Randall-Parker: Great proposal. Their method has found no re-sprout after their treatment. Can you build the re-sprouting into monitoring?

Silva: It is in the monitoring plan.

Silva proposes that this is a 1. The Panel agrees.

## **CFRP 26-08**

2:05 p.m.

Brent Racher reviews proposal 26-08.

SDT Firewood Production Through the Purchase of a Firewood Processor

The proposal is for equipment and machinery acquisition for the processing of CFRP acquired small diameter timber. It will draw from past CFRP projects. The proposal is to purchase a CordKing firewood processor and a Caterpillar front end loader.

Strengths: 2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 19, 22, 29 (maintain and expand existing job opportunities), 30

- This project supports the growth of 2 businesses.

Weaknesses: 2, 4 (JL Enterprises), 8, 19,

- 2 - state, municipal and/or county groups.

Recommendations: 1

- Monitoring plan could be strengthened by measuring production before and after new equipment is used.

Category: 1

Bradley: Adds a strength and a recommendation.

DeIaco: Is the NEPA complete?

Racher: They are not treating, but taking materials from other projects that are NEPA complete.

DeIaco: No money for safety training in the budget.

Jervis: I would remove the weakness. They have certification and are paying attention to it.

Racher: The people working at a facility, they may not be required to take the safety training or re-certification.

DeIaco: Proposal says that training will be provided.

Huffman: Add weakness 8. Hard to see where they are getting the materials from. Not a big issue.

Racher: A letter from a key partner was not included with the proposal. It was read into the public record during the meeting.

Pratt Miles: If the information was a requirement for the proposal submission, you have to decide if it can be taken into account.

Racher: In the past we have received many letters after the due date.

Bradley: It is still a weakness, but we can now determine how severe it is.

Randall-Parker: Why is weakness 9 in there?

Watson: Primary goal is to preserve old trees. I think we can remove the weakness.

Racher suggests category 2.

Jervis: are there any significant weaknesses?

Racher feels that collaboration with state and local governments and vagueness in the monitoring plan lead to a 2.

Archuleta: I don't think the weaknesses are substantial enough. Suggest a 1.

Berrens: It is a capitalization project. They put some of their own money in the capitalization. That is good. They have a connected market. It would have been nice to see a letter from Wal-Mart and Home Depot to buy the chord wood. I am leaning towards a 1.

Zaksek: What did we purchase for JL Enterprises in the past?

Proponent: A trailer. They are using it to haul bigger loads of wood.

Panel agrees on a 1.

**CFRP 27-08**

2:37 p.m.

Arturo Archuleta reviews proposal 27-08.

Acquiring and Processing Pinyon Pine into Value-Added Products

The proposal seeks to purchase and fabricate equipment to allow Santa Clara Woodworks to collaborate with other partners to acquire piñon pine boles from restoration and WUI thinning projects and process them into flooring and fuel biomass. Collaboration with several other CFRP projects.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 12, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 29

- Integrates other CFRP recipients into project
- Grant request utilizes only a small amount of CFRP dollars in comparison to allowable amount.
- A strength of the proposal is an ongoing relationship with the small business development center.
- A strength of the proposal is to investigate green product certification and utilization of woodland product.

Weaknesses: 3, 15, 16, 19 (not multi-party)

- The proposal and budget does not display anticipated product income (from the flooring production).

Recommendations:

- The proponents should ensure that the interactions among other CFRP grantees are clear and that funding does not overlap.
- Proponent should ensure that any estimated program income is accounted for in the budget.
- Proponent should consult with CO Forest Restoration Institute / CO Wood regarding their efforts to produce pinyon flooring.
- Proposal can be strengthened by discussion of outcomes of previous grant-funded ventures from this applicant.

Category: 1

Jervis: Why do they buy all the equipment together?

DeIaco: I think they are building it in-house.

Huffman: I would have liked to see more analysis on the size of the market, pricing, willingness to pay, etc.).

Huffman: They do have a good idea. They have received a number of other grants. Have these really paid off? Are they grant dependent?

Archuleta: Part of it is testing the market, but the big idea has not come yet. There is some trial and error. It has some innovation to try new ideas and make it sustainable long-term.

Jervis: I have the same concern about the validity of the business plan.

Zaksek: These three projects (25, 27, and 28) are related. The proponents need to ensure that there is no double payment of costs, but also that they can be successful independent of one another.

Zaksek: Can proponent clarify the independent success or are they contingent on one another?

Proponent: Gila Tree Thinners is working in another project and there are other projects that the woodworks could get the materials from.

Silva: This is also mentioned in one of the support letter.

Racher: These proponents have constantly tried and tested new markets. This is something we have to do.

Racher: Safety of operators is not mentioned.

Randall-Parker: Will there be flooring produced by the end of this grant, or is it experimentation and testing.

Archuleta: I think they would produce.

Proponent: The flooring portion will be self-sustaining by the end of the grant.

Randall-Parker: I did not see income for the value-added product being produced. The proposal states that some products can be very high value.

Proponent: In the budget, the grant dollars are spent for the experimental product runs. It describes that in the introduction. Flooring would be post development and not paid through the grant.

DeIaco: If material is merchantable, it has to be in the grant – profit derived from the treatment.

Archuleta: This proposal is for capitalization of equipment, so this is not relevant.

Jervis: Have we asked for program income for other businesses / other proposals?

Randall-Parker: A few years ago a similar project was proposed. That was not funded because of item 15. In this case, there is a defined product, but there should have been more detail in the proposal about the value of the products and a business plan associated with these products. It is a great idea, though that can work, but we need more detail on 15. I suggest a 2.

Huffman: Recommendation. I am at a 2.

Jervis: I rated this as a 2, but I don't see a distinction between pinyon flooring and the pellet mill. I argued for a 2.

Randall-Parker: In that proposal, they were hiring an economist to answer these questions. In this case, they are buying the equipment.

Berrens: They have SBDC involved and are doing economic monitoring. These are test runs in the dry kiln. We are not funding capitalization. We have a capacity issue in having good economists to work with these people. SBDC can do part of this. The additional feature is the green certification. If you can get that, you have something. I go with a 1.

Archuleta: The way I see it, there is the unmet need of high value for small diameter products. You have to invest in these test runs. I think it is in the interest in these projects, because it can create a big solution in a problem we have.

DeIaco: I think the innovation in green wood and capacity are important, this is a 1.

The Panel can live with a 1.

3:02 p.m. Pratt Miles reviews the agenda for the remainder of the day. The panel breaks for 10 minutes.

## **CFRP 28-08**

3:12 p.m. Tammy Randall-Parker reviews proposal 28-08.  
Forest Restoration Thinning on the Signal Peak North Project

This proposal seeks to implement 240 acres of ecosystem restoration thinning treatments in the Signal Peak North analysis area. It is estimated that 10 – 25 tons of biomass per acre will be removed. Of that, 2,000 tons will become high value products and 4,000 tons will be used as biomass in energy and/or mulch. Several jobs will be created. The proponent is a past CFRP grantee.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30

- The discussion of whole cloth and restoration economies is a strength of this proposal.

Weaknesses: 5, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 28

- The costs of the project are very high and do not seem to be within the range of the fair market value.
- Proposal is unclear how the estimated economic impact of \$2Million (page 4) is calculated.

Recommendations:

- The proponents should ensure that the interactions among other CFRP grantees are clear and that funding does not overlap.

Category: 2

Randall-Parker: The proponent describes what they are producing from past grants. What would have been helpful is to begin showing the value of these products to see how it would reduce the cost of the project.

Jervis: Adds strength 30 and weaknesses 5 (regarding Joe Sainz commitment and support) and 8.

Berrens: Some of these ventures may not be successful but society may still want to move forward with restoration. Acknowledge that the recognition of restoration economy is a strength.

Racher: Some indirect costs are listed as direct cost (annual CFRP workshop).

Randall-Parker suggests a 2. Panel agrees.

3:33 p.m. Brent Racher recuses himself and leaves the room.

## **CFRP 29-08**

3:34 p.m. Borland reviews proposal 29-08.  
McMillan Native Vegetation Restoration Project

The project will implement the restoration of 198 acres of riparian/upland area on Bureau of Reclamation land. The material will be extracted, composted on site, mixed with native grass and shrub lands, and then spread this mixture out over the extracted area.

Strengths: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 29, 30

- This proposal, if successful, would add to the toolbox for salt cedar eradication.

Weaknesses: 12, 16

- The proponents do not discuss what the desired future condition should be.
- The proponents do not discuss available science for salt-cedar eradication (e.g., how does this treatment compare to other salt cedar eradication projects, such as the one at Bosque del Apache).
- In its current location, this project may not meet the restoration objectives of the CFRP (vs. reclamation).

Recommendations: 11 (change in location or treatment method).

- The proponent should separate out the costs per acre according to activity (e.g., extraction, mulching, seed cost, etc.).
- The proponent is strongly encouraged to collect pre-treatment monitoring data.
- The proposal could be enhanced by including a more comprehensive restoration plan that incorporates the river and riparian attributes that reflects historical conditions.

Category: 3

Borland: Unique component is the composting and mixing it with seeding. What is the seed mix?

Borland: Would like to see seed cost broken out from other restoration cost.

Jervis: Other successful salt cedar removal projects (e.g., Bosque Del Apache) have taken place in NM. The proposal should describe how this compares to other projects.

Muldevin: Is this a restoration or a reclamation project. I am not sure if this is appropriate for CFRP. We don't know what we are restoring to. It

Watson: It does seem like the project is removed from the CFRP objectives.

Huffman: Restoration is about restoring an ecosystem – a system we know about that was there before. I think CFRP is also about reducing risk of catastrophic wildfire and have said that WUI and other bosque projects are fine.

Norwick: Riparian, bosque, PJ, etc. are all forest ecosystems. This is a dry lakebed and I don't think this project fits.

Borland: Refers to evaluation criteria 2. If we are reducing threat of wildfire and threat of non-native species, does it fit?

Muldevin: This is not restoration to a prior state and in a new area. Is this an area with high priority?

Jervis: The key to this is in the map. The proposed area is in the lakebed. If this project is really successful, if it ever rains and the lake fills up, the area will come back to salt cedar. We could create grassland, but if the lake ever fills up, this area will reseed itself. I don't see this as sustainable.

DeIaco: On page 5, second paragraph refers to NRCS Soil Survey.

Proponent: The Soil Survey and knowledge about the area informed the composition of the seed mix.

Huffman: Recommendation about effectiveness of ecological monitoring. Need pre-treatment monitoring data.

Bradley: The objectives on page 4 are within the purview of the CFRP.

Muldevin: This is restoration on a dry, artificial lakebed. I don't see restoration here.

Norwick: I agree with Muldevin – considering the objectives, I suggest placing this project on a tributary of the Pecos River. There is room for this project on a tributary of the Pecos River.

Jervis: Can the proponent clarify the proposed project area. What are the conditions to the South and West.

Proponent: All salt cedar to the south and west. In the north the soils are closer to natural (not deep clay). Treated area has been sprayed in 2004.

DeIaco: If it is not going to fill up – which the proponents say – would restoration then be feasible?

Dunn: They build on mulching and composting experience of other grantees.

Dunn: modify the weakness to restore this project.

Archuleta: I would like to see more clarity on the location. It is off the Pecos River channel.

Muldevin: But it is on the lakebed.

Borland suggests category 3. The Panel agrees.

4:15 p.m. Racher rejoins the Panel.

4:15 p.m. Pratt Miles mentions that a copy of the report up until CFRP 25-08 is now being handed out. The remainder of the summary is being printed and will be handed out in a few minutes. The panel needs to review this report before the consistency review.

We have gone through a rigorous process already. The next step is a check to make sure you are all comfortable with your conclusions. The Panel is asked to do two things in checking consistency in their review of the proposals. Did you hear anything during the public comments that you think change any of the conclusions you have reached, and review the report and ask yourself two questions:

1. Did you apply the criteria consistently?
2. Did you assign the categories consistently?

Does anything stand out to you that should be revisited? Your conclusion may be – no changes necessary or changes to the categorizations. Also, there may be some strengths, weaknesses, or recommendations that were added in later proposals that should be added to the earlier ones.

DeIaco: This evolved. It is worthwhile doing, but it does not mean you need to make changes. This evolved over time. You should look at this stuff and trust your gut – did we miss stuff or did we not include certain strengths or weaknesses that we had for the later proposals and did not include in the earlier ones.

Pratt Miles: You already started to check yourselves in how you applied these criteria and making sure you were consistent.

Berrens: Were there any biases to proposals getting assigned to a category, especially for the earlier proposals.

Muldavin: If the category would change if you would add boilerplate language to some of the earlier ones.

Jervis: Were we more or less critical at different times during the review process.

Dunn: I suggest we do the consistency review on Friday morning. Panel members nod in agreement.

Pratt Miles: We start at 8:15 a.m. on Friday.

## Public Comment

4:32 p.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles mentioned that several written comments were received. These will be read into the record now.

### **Glen Griffin, Gila Tree Thinners**

The Fort Bayard Biomass Project is tied into proposal 28-08. My own proposal, 25-08, needs Gila WoodNet to process biomass for Fort Bayard.

Throughput is critical to these proposals, without 28-08 the keystone is lost in these collaborative efforts. The pinyon flooring proposal, 27-08 also needs 28-08.

We lost the Fort Bayard Biomass Plant in 2005 and Gila Tree Thinners has struggled to create throughput on pinyon. Now we have the Fort Bayard Biomass Project, we lose the biomass plant again by losing the Signal Peak North Restoration Project.

Sincerely, Glenn Griffin

### **Gordon West, Signal Peak Restoration Project**

It seems that this proposal received very brief discussion, especially in the light of the significance of the achievements and responsibilities that the Gila WoodNet holds.

Restoration thinning treatments are essentially service contracts by a grant process. GWN has persevered through many years and difficult trials in creating a networked "restoration industry", serving the needs of the GNF, environmental community, local business, and the State of New Mexico.

GWN is at the core of this network. Without a relatively significant and consistent supply of small trees, a whole cascade of partners will be seriously impacted. Once a "machine" of the size and complexity of the "Net" is shut down, it will be all but impossible to restart.

In summary, GWN has done all that CFRP was enacted to do. This position is not particularly solid, given the nation's lack of will to invest in restoration. Letting GWN collapse because there is no funding for restoration thinning is hard to make sense of.

I did not see in the discussion the sort of weaknesses that are usually associated with projects at the level of developments as this one.

I sincerely hop you will let the Signal Peak Restoration Project compete with the #1 ranked projects for funding.

Thanks,  
Gordon West

4:51 p.m.

Pratt Miles: We are adjourned for the day.

## Friday, April 25, 2007

### Panel:

Arturo Archuleta  
Robert Berrens  
David Borland  
Anne Bradley  
Rick DeIaco  
Walter Dunn - Chairman/DFO  
David Huffman  
Tom Jervis  
Esteban Muldavin  
Jim Norwick  
Brent Racher  
Tammy Randall-Parker  
Matthew Silva  
Ann Watson

### USFS Staff:

Susan McDonnell – Grants and Agreements Specialist  
Jerry Payne – CFRP  
Melissa Zaksek – CFRP

### Meridian Institute Staff:

Jennifer Pratt Miles - Facilitator  
Rex Raimond – Meeting Minutes

### Members of the Public in Attendance:

Glenn Griffin, Gila Tree Thinners  
Michael Rivera, PSA  
Gabriel Partido, Gila National Forest  
Ruben Carreon, RC Forest Products  
Bertha Carreon, RC Forest Products  
Jeff Morton, Santo Domingo Pueblo  
Eytan Krasilovsky, Forest Guild  
Linda Ford, Taos Pines Ranch  
Sang Hyup Park, UNM Student  
Thu H. Doan, UNM Student

8:20 a.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles calls the meeting to order, reviews the agenda, reminds members of the panel to check with Melissa Zaksek about travel vouchers, and asks members of the public to sign in, and asks Panelists to introduce themselves.

8:26 a.m. We will now do the consistency check on your review of the proposals. Especially check if you heard public comment that changes your review of a proposal and if you think early proposals were assessed the same as the later proposals.

DeIaco: We have heard from some proponents who felt that several projects were linked. How do we treat those proposals?

Dunn: We have advised proponents to ensure that projects are independent. All proposals are reviewed independently on their individual merits.

Bradley: The proposals should be evaluated independently. We also need to ensure that the proposals were reviewed equally.

Jervis: This raises a broader question. There were several proposals that struck me as high priority for the Ranger Districts, but that the districts had not yet treated. You could infer from the proposals that the districts are not putting out thinning/treatment contracts at a rate that provides opportunities long-term for the capacity CFRP is building.

Dunn: Districts are very supportive of the CFRP program and are identifying locations for projects. CFRP provides administrative funds to the districts, but often there is limited staff to move work forward. CFRP has to assess where its work can have strategic impact and leverage further work.

Jervis: In short, the broader question is: If there are projects that need to be done, why are the districts not putting them out?

Pratt Miles: Did you apply the evaluation criteria consistently, and did you apply the ranking categories consistently? Which ones do you have an issue with?

DeIaco: We should add Jervis' boilerplate for all riparian projects. Also, strength 30, we could apply. Beyond that, we were consistent in evaluating and ranking.

McDonnell: The other boilerplate is on project income.

Silva: category #1: 1 -7 weaknesses; category #2: 4 – 11 weaknesses; category #3 – 5 -25 weaknesses. Conclusion that there can be a correlation between number of weaknesses and the ranking.

Bradley: There was some boilerplate on grazing and fire reintroduction.

Muldavin: The boilerplate could apply to 04, 18

Randall-Parker: Almost all the lands are open to grazing. Should all the proposals then talk about this?

Muldavin: This is new stuff that we need to discuss for the future. We should also include some boilerplate on current condition and desired future condition.

Watson: There may be other uses that may be impacted and should be noted. Include some boilerplate on this.

DeIaco: Let's go back to the consistency review. It appears that we are adding recommendations, but we need to focus on the consistency check.

Huffman: I found an error. In project 10-08. The project builds on CFRP success is listed as a weakness, should be a strength.

Berrens: I have evaluated this statistically in the past and did not find a bias related to the order in which projects were reviewed. I am comfortable with the way we have categorized the proposals.

Zaksek: Does #3 have strength 30? It should be added.

Jervis: I think we need to revisit: 4, 6, 9, 15, and 24.

Muldavin: Revisit 22.

Bradley: Revisit 28.

### **CFRP 04-08**

Jervis: Looking over weaknesses and recommendations. I thought we should drop this to a 3. In particular, the combination of the monitoring plan, the narrative not supporting the budget, no sequential discussion of activities. The cumulative impact of these issues.

DeIaco and others do not agree. Panel agrees that this stays as a 2.

### **CFRP 06-08**

Jervis: Looking over weaknesses and recommendations, the cumulative impact of these issues seems to move this to a 3.

Muldavin: Weakness 5 should be removed. I am still at a 2.

DeIaco: Don't move it to a 3 because of innovative nature.

Panel agrees to keep this as a 2.

### **CFRP 09-08**

Jervis: I think we should move this to a 1. I was initially not excited, but they don't have major weaknesses left and good strengths.

Racher: A strong recommendation was to include conservation groups in the planning process. Agree to move it to a 1.

DeIaco: I agree, but I can stay at a 2.

Muldavin: Did we get public comment on this? No.

Silva: We really have to make sure we can live with moving anything.

Jervis: I thought we should move it after comparing this to CFRP 08-24.

Randall-Parker: When I looked at these last night, I thought the weaknesses were substantive enough to keep it at category 2.

Panel agrees to keep this as a 2.

### **CFRP 15-08**

Jervis: Again, looking at the balance, I think we could move this to category 3. I don't have specific issues worth debating. It really is the balance of issues.

Muldavin: Relative to 09-08, this could be moved. However, we need to identify a specific issue if we are going to make a change.

Norwick: Did we get clarification on Categorical Exclusion 10?

Dunn: There won't be. We have to create a provision for projects with the CE10 issue.

Bradley: I don't want to reopen the discussion. We discussed quite fully the difference in weighting and I don't think we need to move.

Randall-Parker: This has an innovative element that mitigates some of the weaknesses. I stay at a 2.

The Panel decides to keep this in category 2.

## **CFRP 22-08**

Archuleta and Bradley recuse themselves from the discussion.

Muldavin: We do not require a literature review and citation of scientific literature. This proposal has a lot of embedded science that sets the stage for what they are going to do. It also has a team of experts that are involved. I suggest we remove the weakness and add a strength that the proposal is innovative. There is a weakness listed regarding the USFS letter of endorsement. We know that there has been a high degree of collaboration, which is listed in the proposal and confirmed in coordinator clarification. On page 10 of the proposal, it lists what will happen and who will be involved. I think weakness 19 should be removed.

Racher: In the letters of the USFS, there appeared to be a lack of communication, in particular with the people on the ground in the District.

DeIaco: Does the plan identify who is going to do what?

Muldavin: Savage is going to do this.

Jervis: Somebody other than the presenter suggested this weakness. Who suggested this.

Berrens: Page 7 also has specifics on monitoring plan. Page 9 and 10 say more about this.

The Panel removes weakness 19.

Muldavin: There was some language about the inclusion of land grants in the process. This proposal includes them in the socio-economic monitoring. We should include that as a strength.

Muldavin: It is about bank for your buck. We get a lot for it.

Muldavin: I think this should be a 1.

Watson: The proponent is trying to build information that will help future grantees. It builds important capacity. I think this should be a 1.

DeIaco: This should be a 1.

The Panel agrees.

Archuleta and Bradley rejoin the discussion.

## CFRP 24-08

Jervis: In comparing this to 09-08, and the discussion on 22-08. I see this one as comparable to 09 and 22.

Racher: The innovative aspects made this project a category 1.

Panel members agree. This stays at category 1.

## CFRP 28-08

Bradley: Based on the public comment, I think we should review this.

Bradley: It is not the amount of time, but the quality of the review. I think

Silva: This proposal has several weaknesses.

Jervis: This was a very straight-forward project to treat acres. Not a lot of complicated issues. I think that made it easier to review and why we spent less time on it.

DeIaco: We did not object to this project, Panel members quickly agreed on the strengths and weaknesses.

Panel agrees the proposal stays as a 2.

10:00 a.m. The Panel discusses adding new boilerplate language to some of the proposals. They suggest considering several new items from this year as boilerplate for future review panels.

10:01 a.m. Pratt Miles reviews the process to identify projects recommended for funding. If there is enough funding to fund all category 1 projects, the Panel will use a “matrix” to review which category 2 projects can be funded.

Zaksek: All of the category 1 projects can be funded. There is an additional \$97,000 remaining.

Berrens: We now have to identify 2 or 3 projects from category 2 that should be funded with the remaining money and to have as back-up to project 20 (which is in category 1 and where the NEPA Categorical Exclusion 10 may be an issue).

Dunn: We have funded projects partially. We may have some ideas, but we can also ask the proponent for a suggestion for what could be done with partial funding.

Dunn: Also, list 3 ranked projects that can be held in reserve.

Pratt Miles: I propose the Panel first identify the projects that should be added to those recommended for funding. Then, the Panel should identify two projects that can be held in reserve if something prevents another project from moving forward.

10:11 a.m. Pratt Miles: Take a 10-minute break, while we set up the matrix.

10:23 a.m. Pratt Miles calls the panel to order. There is an additional \$97,000 remaining after all the projects in category 1 would be funded. Next step would be to rank

order the category 2 projects to determine which additional project(s) should be funded and to identify 3 projects to hold in reserve.

Zaksek: Out of the total CFRP budget, we fund program staff, multi-party monitoring technical support and other costs. The remainder is available for grant funding.

Dunn: Other things that are included are administrative costs of the Forests. This year we changed the formula for calculating administrative costs of the Forests (\$55 times the number of acres projected for treatment). This gives a more accurate flow of administrative funds to the Forests. Every other year when we do the subcommittee, that increases cost.

Pratt Miles: We will use the matrix to evaluate the category 2's. The top one will be used to allocate the remaining funding. The other two will be held on reserve.

Randall-Parker: We are done discussing category 1 projects.

Pratt Miles: Yes, you have come to agreement that all category 1 projects will be recommended for funding.

The Panel reviews the criteria for rank ordering the category 2 projects.

1. Part of a longer term comprehensive CFR
2. Innovative approach that adds value to CFRP
  - E.g., it adds value by testing new approaches, new ideas, or generating new information that will help the CFRP.
3. Sustainable – will effort continue?
  - E.g., is it a good investment for the CFRP (e.g., clear management structure); will it continue past the grant period?
4. Quality of the collaboration
5. Adds significant capacity to restoration
  - E.g., training, intellectual capacity, systems, etc.

Pratt Miles: next step is for each category 2 project to decide if it meets the criteria or not. In the past, the Panel has decided not to weight the criteria.

Dunn: When there is a conflict of interest, the Panel Member cannot participate in the discussion.

## CFRP 01-08

Watson is recusing herself from the discussion.

Huffman: This is innovative because it includes overstory and understory, and it has an adaptive mechanism by which we can learn.

Racher: Most of these methods have been tried in other areas. Several National Forests are trying this and there are published results (Jacobs, Bonfantine).

Huffman: They are looking at lop and pile **and** lop and scatter **and** side by side. That has not been done before. There is uncertainty in what is working or not. This is cutting edge work that allows them to look on their site what works and incorporate that learning into their management. That is the innovative part.

Berrens: They are talking about social assessment about the history of the use of the land and include that in the management plan.

Panel supports that this is innovative.

DeIaco: Is this sustainable? This is not applicable.

Jervis: If the funding is needed to do this part, will there be funding for the implementation?

Berrens: Will the project continue in the future, could also mean: is the collaboration so strong that they will continue to work together. There may be other means to fund implementation.

Huffman: They demonstrate commitment to a long-term program.

Bradley: What demonstrates that there is commitment to keep the effort going past the project. For instance, in other projects collaborators have hired a person for the long-term.

Racher: A new project could say something about whether they have a plan to keep the project going after the CFRP project. The related question is, will a project come back for future funding.

Archuleta: If it has a strong youth component, then that might also be an indicator of long-term sustainable management. The tribes have demonstrated that they are good long-term, sustainable land managers. That indicates that there will be long-term, sustainable approach.

Bradley: In the broader world, that is right. If you develop a curriculum that can be used repeatedly, that could be a sustainability indicator.

Jervis: Does the project stand out in this area?

Panel agrees that the proposal meets the criteria in the matrix except "sustainability".

Ann Watson rejoins the conversation.

#### **CFRP 04-08**

Randall-Parker: Does have strong collaboration. Unique that it has grazing association.

DeIaco: Do have high quality collaboration? There are things missing from the work plan, which indicates that the level of collaboration may not be all there. Four letters don't commit to work.

Watson: Some of the key collaborators don't commit to specific tasks.

Huffman: It is about the diversity of collaboration and whether they include adversaries.

Jervis: They are not adding new people or jobs.

Berrens: They add some mechanization.

Racher: Mechanization adds more capacity for restoration.

Panel agrees that the proposal meets the criteria in the matrix except “innovative approach”, and “quality of collaboration.”

#### **CFRP 06-08**

Archuleta: The video will be a tool for long-term impact.

DeIaco: There are a number of letters of support that don't clearly state their type of support.

Panel agrees that the proposal meets the criteria in the matrix except “quality of collaboration”.

#### **CFRP 09-08**

Panel agrees that the proposal meets the criteria in the matrix except “innovative approach”.

#### **CFRP 11-08**

Panel agrees that the proposal meets the criteria in the matrix except “innovative approach” and “sustainable”.

#### **CFRP 15-08**

Archuleta: They are selling their equipment. Not long-term.

Panel agrees that the proposal meets the criteria in the matrix except “longer term comprehensive CFR” and “sustainable” and “adds significant capacity to restoration.”

#### **19-08**

Muldavin recuses himself from the discussion.

Panel agrees that the proposal meets the criteria in the matrix except “innovative approach” and “sustainable” and “quality of collaboration” and “adds significant capacity to restoration.”

Muldavin rejoins the discussion.

#### **CFRP 28-08**

Berrens: They are trying to achieve economies of scale. They are trying to build clusters that will capture economies of scale and maybe get this to work. This is innovative.

Jervis: We should stick with our assessment of these as independent projects. The fact that it is linked to other projects, does not make the project innovative.

Randall-Parker: I see the point relevant to sustainability and capacity, but not as an innovative issue. This project is dollars for treatment.

Berrens: I accept that.

Muldavin: The proposal talks about the bigger picture. It is a grassroots effort that develops this concept that can apply to other areas. I want to recognize the aspect of how you work together.

Berrens: There is a huge issue and that is what number of investment is needed to get to the economy of scale that makes these efforts sustainable.

DeIaco: What is new here?

Berrens: If it works it helps get them to the next step.

Silva: They need another thinning project to be sustainable. They are dependent on this.

Norwick: We are considering the proposals as individual proposals, but there is the element of being part of a larger landscape effort. However, we evaluate proposals on their own.

Randall-Parker: Cost of treatment per acre is high and that is not sustainable. How do you bring the cost down? It would be great if they could have had an economist.

Bradley: You need to develop markets to bring the cost down. We are looking for value added. If you look at sustainability, should you only look at this particular project or at the broader scope. They are trying to build links so we can get there.

Randall-Parker: The grant does not show income or cost reduction per acre as a result of some markets.

DeIaco: Are we almost to the tipping point? There would be an end to funding. Where we are right now, there is a lot of potential to be sustainable. You cannot always just base it on price. If we are close to a tipping point, I would say that we are sustainable.

Jervis: The economies of scale question is very important. That is not the criterion, however. If this is an innovation, we should acknowledge that.

Silva: The budget provides for economic analysis.

Racher: It is either innovative or sustainable. I suggest innovative.

Berrens: The fact that it is linked to other projects, they are creating capacity.

Norwick: This only maintains capacity for thinning.

Muldavin: At the larger scale it does have a multiplier effect.

Berrens: There is the Wood Network that is identified in the proposal, so we have these other entities that are linked to other groups that will be benefiting. It extends the multiplier argument.

Racher: This maintains capacity, it does not add capacity. The Forest should be maintaining this capacity. This is just a service contract.

Jervis: Every one of these projects has a multiplier effect.

Racher: I don't think the businesses would grow.

Norwick: It would change the situation if businesses would start paying for the wood. If they don't then there is not new capacity.

Muldavin: If the thinning does not get done, is there then a problem with sustainability? Would there then be a collapse of these other businesses?

Archuleta: There is the project and the bigger vision. Where do we go with this.

Berrens: Economies of scope. You have GilaWoodNet that does restoration. Then there are other businesses that put the cluster together. Scope means that if you get enough of these things together, you might reduce all of their cost, because they are connected. You then have size, scale, and scope. If you pull out this part, then you lose the scale and scope.

Racher: Maybe the issue is that we don't add.

Panel agrees that the proposal meets all criteria in the matrix except "sustainability" and "adds significant capacity to restoration."

12:37 p.m. Pratt Miles: There are three projects that meet four categories (01, 06, and 09). Which one should receive funding?

Archuleta: The only project that could do one year of work, is project 01-08.

Pratt Miles: Let's look at the strengths and weaknesses of these 3 and rank them.

Jervis: I would rank them as 9, 1, 6. In that order, based on the fact that 9 has the most strengths and fewest weaknesses, then 1, and then 6.

Dunn: From an administrative point of view, it is helpful to look at which project can be funded in chunks.

DeIaco: I agree with the ranking, but I prefer to go with the administrative consideration.

Bradley: In project 6, there is also equipment purchase which could be lifted out.

Archuleta: If the equipment is purchased, then would the proponent be able to carry out the work.

Racher: I agree with Jervis on the ranking. Looking at project 09-08, this includes a significant planning component that could be pulled out but also equipment.

The Panel agrees on the following ranking:

1. 09-08
2. 01-08
3. 06-08

Archuleta: If project 20-08 does not work out, then the money should go to 09-08 first (for the remainder if that project is only partially funded).

12:55 p.m. Break

1:09 p.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles reconvenes the Panel.

## Public Comment

1:10 p.m. Jennifer Pratt Miles mentioned that written comments have been received. They were read into the public record.

### **Eytan Krasilowski, Forest Guild**

CFRP TAP Panel 2008

Black Lake Forest Restoration and Workforce Sustainability Project

Please reconsider the proposal # 09-08 on behalf of HR Vigil Small Products. I have been involved in this project as part of the multiparty team beginning in the fall of 2007.

This need for this proposal to reduce fire risk (probability of a large fire) is supported by both the Enchanted Circle CWPP, the NM Communities at Risk (NMCAR) list, and the ForestERA spatial data generated from the North-Central NM Landscape Assessment.

The Enchanted Circle CWPP, using on-the-ground local knowledge and a collaborative process, and the NMCAR both identify the community of Black Lake as being at high risk of uncharacteristic wildfire. To question or discount this categorization of Black Lake undermines the local and regional planning that went into those assessments.

The ForestERA data provides third party confirmation, a double check if you will, of the CWPP and NMCAR assessments via its fire risk, basal area, and tree density spatial models. These models (trained from ground plots) indicate that fire risk, basal area, and tree densities surrounding Black Lake (3 mile buffer) are significantly higher in the proposed treatment area.

Environmental and cultural compliances have been thoroughly planned for according to the precedent set by previously funded CFRPs on State Land Office lands and on Carson NF land. SLO has offered their resource management expertise in the NEPA component and a reputable cultural compliance contractor has been identified in the proposal.

The collaborative team working with HRVigil Small Products, including the State Land Office (SLO) and the Carson NF, have taken all of these factors into consideration when selecting restoration sites proximate to the HR Vigil Small Products workforce and the areas in need of attention identified by the SLO.

1. Helpful to provide strengths and weaknesses in print of electronic form to aid in comments.
2. Helpful to allow final public comment prior to final assessment of projects.

Eytan Krasilovsky  
Forest Guild

## Review of Proposal and Evaluation Process to Identify Areas for Improvement

1:14 p.m. The next thing we are going to do is think about how did the process do this year and how can we make it better?

### What Worked?

- The Panel worked well together, was respectful, and heard each others arguments.
- We were rational about the discussions on the merits of the proposals.

### What Should be Improved?

- During the discussions, maintain focus on the criteria.
- There will be questions about how we ranked them. Having had a full discussion of the strengths and weaknesses, but we need more structured process – e.g., economies of scope and scale could be a new criteria.
- Create some more definition around the criteria (or examples) used in the matrix.
- The Panel could use the evaluation criteria checklist.

### Discussion:

Dunn: The evaluation form is hard to use, because it uses yes/no answers. Instead you could ask: to what degree does the proposal meet the objectives (scale of 1 – 5).

DeIaco: I use the form as a guide.

Racher: The criteria in the matrix have been tweaked every year. We can change them as needed.

Dunn: Keep the language in the RFP as it is, but it would be better to discuss the criteria at the start of the meeting.

Berrens: I use the evaluation form to make notes. Not every proposal has to meet all objectives. Also, you cannot quantify the ranking. They are also manipulable; you want to avoid.

Berrens: I agree to keep the discussion of the 5 criteria at the start of the meeting. In the end it comes down to group judgment and discussion to reach consensus.

### The Panel suggested the following improvements:

- Discuss the matrix criteria on the first day of the meeting.
- Add the matrix criteria to the checklist.
- Incorporate evaluation criteria in the review process.
- Consider alternative mechanisms to get through an impasse.
- Limit times for public comment.
- Add public comment period prior to the consistency review.
- Put in space for the reviewer to provide more detail, explain the concern: 15, 18, and 19.
- Have on hand estimates (by Forest) of the numbers of acres being made available for treatment contracts.

- Change category 1 by striking “administrative.” Also strike, “as written.”

Dunn: If we start earlier on Monday, people who are traveling need to leave earlier.

McDonnell: Instead of staying late during the days, start earlier. Keep the introductory stuff brief.

Jervis: Making the time longer, we will still use the time.

Muldavin: Maybe we can speed up the work. Prefer to do intros on Monday afternoon and start the reviews on Tuesday.

Archuleta: The evaluation form, move number 1, down to 4.

Zaksek: Add public comment prior to the ranking and matrix process.

McDonnell: A lot of people are using the public comment as a time to advocate for their proposal. That is not the intent.

Dunn: Reads Federal Register language. That language requires that the commenter is there in person. Also, they can be given a limited amount of time to make the comment.

DeIaco: Do the last public comment period before the final ranking and consistency review.

Archuleta: Earlier grants have the advantage. On the last day, it should come first. There was discussion about the public comment during the final ranking.

Racher: How do we take public comments and incorporate them in our review. We did it better this year, but we should be more explicit.

Dunn: We cannot limit what people comment on during the public comment period.

Jervis: We can listen to it, but may not change our evaluation of the proposal.

Dunn: A member of the public can read public comment (even if it addressed specific recommendations from the Panel). That is within the limits of what the Federal Register allows them to do. The Panel then has to decide what they do with that comment.

Randall-Parker: Could we give each applicant 5 minutes immediately following the review of their proposal.

Muldevin: We have discussed this in the past. It always becomes longer than 5 minutes and it opens up the conversation to anything the proponent wants to bring up. Instead, we can always ask proponents for clarification.

Payne: Perhaps the CFRP staff can be available to gather information from proponents and bring that to the table.

Bradley: Some weaknesses are typical. Can we put in space for the reviewer to provide more detail, explain the concern: 15, 18, and 19.

Jervis: Ask staff and chair to look at boilerplate language and see if they can be reduced in length. Also, where are the districts in terms of # of acres they are

putting to bid. Some of the proponents are doing the work, but they are not telling the Panel this in the proposals. How can this Panel get an idea of the available acreage per forest for these kinds of restoration and WUI cuts?

The Panel agreed that the categories that are used to sort proposals works, but they need to be applied consistently.

Randall-Parker: Adding the words innovative, etc. (from the matrix) to the description of category 1 projects.

Pratt Miles: Reminded the Panel that the matrix criteria are not from the objectives in the act.

Bradley: We were not always clean in how we applied the categories. In particular in category 1. We broadened that. Can we change the language to: "minor". We have to be very clear about whether you think a weakness is minor or not.

Jervis: Can we specify in the report, which ones are major and which ones are minor weaknesses.

Muldevin: Keep modifying the boilerplate to make it specific to the proposal. We should not try to organize it too much.

Payne: The Panel members should specify this during the review.

### **Sub-Committee on Multi-Party Monitoring**

2:15 p.m. Rick DeIaco, Anne Bradley, and Esteban Muldevin volunteered for the sub-committee.

### **Review 2008 Request for Proposals to Identify Areas for Improvement**

2:18 p.m. Archuleta: I have to leave. In attempt to broaden the cross-jurisdictional work, encourage all applicants to consult with the land grants.

Muldevin: Can we add to the RFP that the proposals include some information about the current conditions or site descriptions? Ecological site description or Habitat Type description, or use the key that is in Romney et al.

Other suggestions:

- All proposals must include a letter from the Forest that will be responsible for administering the grant (due to increasing admin responsibilities of the Forest Service in regards to NEPA, etc.)
- If 02-08 is funded, include note in 09 RFP that applicants do not need to budget for safety training.
- Require a budget narrative in each proposal.
- Ask all applicants to consult with adjacent, active land grant communities.

Muldevin: Could require the NEPA Decision Document for all land jurisdictions (including FS), for those proposals that include on the ground activities. This would be used to get at stand characteristics.

Dunn: For NEPA ready projects, include the decision memo. For planning/NEPA compliance provide information on the existing conditions and desired future conditions.

Bradley: They could get this information from the collaboration with the land management agency.

Dunn: Need information about existing conditions and desired future conditions.

### **Ideas for the 2008 CFRP Annual Workshop**

2:29 p.m.       Dunn: On day 3, there was a funder's forum trying to link CFRP to other funding opportunities for landscape level work.

Randall-Parker: It would be good to include NMFIA in that third day.

Pratt Miles: On behalf of the Meridian Team, we really enjoy working with all of you and are impressed by the task you carried out.

Dunn: Thank you very much for your hard work. This panel, more than any other, was prepared and fully participative. The members showed great caliber and professionalism.

2:40 p.m.       Meeting is adjourned.