



U.S. Forest Service

Quarterly Partnership Updates

February 1st 2016

Topic: Quarterly Partnership Updates for the NLC – October-December 2015

Issue: In the first quarter of FY2016 partnerships demonstrated collaborative all-lands approaches to sustainable recreation, historic preservation, improved watershed management, and fire risk reduction in a variety of landscapes. The Forest Service developed new national, regional, and local partnerships with MOUs, Service First Agreements, and a new position focused on conservation education and outreach. Existing Forest Service partnerships engaged in strategic visioning by designing structures, protocols, and comprehensive plans for successful project implementation. Partners worked with the Forest Service to create marketing and communications materials to outreach to new audiences, and to create meaningful connections between people and the outdoors. Forest Service partnerships generate innovative solutions, leverage resources, and deliver benefits to people. Brief summaries follow.

High Performance Partnerships

The Nature Conservancy: The Chief of the Forest Service Tom Tidwell and The Nature Conservancy CEO/ President Mark Tercek signed a new national level Memorandum of Understanding in October. This MOU renews a long-standing partnership that helps implement solutions to contemporary conservation challenges. The Forest Service and TNC work together in a wide array of natural resource management, science and education efforts across the U.S. and internationally. The renewed partnership will bring together the energy, innovation and access of a global organization with the capacity, impact and mandate of the Nation's forest and grassland agency for lasting conservation outcomes.

America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative: ALRI accomplished 1.5 million acres of restoration in 2015, with the coordination help of Region 8. High quality collaboration, momentum, and accomplishments continued in 2015 with various on-the-ground longleaf restoration activities on over 1.5 million acres, including tree planting, prescribed burning, invasive species control and native understory plant establishment. In June 2015 the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation announced the awarding of \$4.6 million to support the longleaf ecosystem and advance the objectives of the Range-Wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine. 22 projects received funding that ultimately will restore more than 11,600 acres and enhance more than 163,000 additional acres of longleaf pine habitat, while leveraging over \$6.4 million in additional funds from grant partners.

Western Utilities: In April 2015, the Rocky Mountain Region (Region 2) executed an updated agreement with Xcel Energy, a utility supplier of electric power and natural gas service in CO, MI, MN, NM, ND, SD, TX and WI. The partners agreed to accelerate hazardous fuel treatments to help reduce risks to transmission structures on National Forest system lands. Xcel is contributing an initial \$360,000 with an agency match of \$630,000 to implement projects on over 1,000 acres near and adjacent to 100 priority structures. To date, treatments near 68 priority structures and on 294 acres have been fully completed through this partnership.

Rocky Mountain Watersheds Partnership, Upper South Platte Partnership: In 2015, this collaborative secured over \$4 million in funding from USFS cohesive strategy pilot project funds, Denver Water, and corporate donations through the Nature Conservancy from PepsiCola, MillerCoors, and WellFargo. FY2016 Q1 accomplishments include development of the partnership structure and protocols, a two-day research and monitoring symposium with the USFS Rocky Mountain Research Station, and planning for private land treatments to be implemented in 2016.

Western Watershed Enhancement Projects: The Western Watershed Enhancement Projects proactively improve the health and resiliency of forests and watersheds in areas critical for providing and delivering water supplies.

- The Colorado-Big Thompson (C-BT) Project on the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests is directing \$1,060,000 to implement hazardous fuel treatments on NFS and private lands. Approximately 260 acres have been fully completed and another 215 are under contract. An additional contract for 800 acres is expected to be awarded in 2016. The partnership is also adding Rocky Mountain National Park and the Western Area Power Authority to the MOU.
- The Pacific Southwest Region partnered with Bureau of Reclamation to reduce the risk of forest fires and their impact on water quality. BOR awarded The Hemlock Project on the Stanislaus National Forest \$300,000 in the summer of 2015. The project is located within a 12,000 acre landscape restoration project in the Mokelumne River Basin.
- The Boise River Pilot Project is planning activities for FY2016 including: Placement of large woody material in rivers and tributaries, non-native invasive plant treatments, and restoration/ reforestation. The Bureau of Reclamation recently funded \$10,000 for ponderosa pine seedlings growing at Lucky Peake Nursery in Boise to be planted in previously burned areas in 2016.

Region/Station/Area Summaries

The Northern Region (Region 1) partners with the Urban America Outdoors television program on the ‘Bridging Cultures Conservation Corps’ partnership. Joni Packard, Regional Youth Program Coordinator in the Northern Region and Urban America Outdoors helped introduce a group of urban youth to public lands and national forests in Idaho and Montana. Working side by side with Forest Service staff on timber sales, engineering, and recreation, these young visitors learned about ‘their’ public lands and explored future career opportunities in conservation. Urban America Outdoors filmed the ‘Bridging Cultures Conservation Corps’ partnership experience and the episode is available online: <https://vimeo.com/146684498>.

Region 2 collaborates with NFF to develop a comprehensive historic interpretation plan for the Camp Hale-Eagle River Headwaters Project. A workshop to craft a vision for the interpretive plan with guidance from historians, 10th Mountain Division descendants, and other interested stakeholders will be held on Monday, February 8 in Avon, Colorado. This project will restore a watershed and revive the history of an iconic place. It is a great reminder that our National Forests are national treasures for many different reasons.

The Lincoln National Forest in Region 3 partners with the Mescalero Tribe on ‘Indigenous Generation Green’ (IGG). As part of IGG, the Lincoln National Forest established an agreement with the Mescalero Tribe to expand tribal youth’s knowledge of natural resource careers. The agreement connects the tribe’s Sovereign Nations Service Corps youth with the Forest Service to provide professional natural resources experience. The Tribe and the Forest partnered with their local educational cooperative to bring career planning, job seeking skills, knowledge about natural resource careers, paid & volunteer opportunities, and conservation education to Tribal youth in three different school systems.

The newly established Middle Rio Grande Urban Conservation Corps (Region 3) is sponsored in partnership by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The interagency partnership hired young people ages 15 to 18 for twelve weeks to work on projects in the Albuquerque, New Mexico area including the Cibola National Forest. The program was much more than a job—each teen was guided by a mentor who works in the conservation profession. Towards the end of the program, the participants engaged one weekend per month to act as ambassadors at scheduled events focusing on youth in the outdoors.

Region 4 celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Jackson Hole Ski Resort with an “It’s All Yours” marketing campaign connecting people to the outdoors. On December 19, the Bridger-Teton National Forest partnered with Jackson Hole Ski Resort and the Grand Teton Association to participate in a day on the mountain. The purpose was to educate the public about the connection of the National Forest to the recreational opportunities on the resort. Uniformed FS employees and Teton Association members staffed It’s All Yours Tents across the mountain. Smokey Bear was there on skis to reach out to youth with Junior Snow Ranger programming. The

event reached over 1000 visitors, including 200 youth. The Forest Service capitalized on social media, utilizing Yonder, Twitter, and Facebook leading up to and throughout the event.

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest in Region 6 executes a Service First Agreement with the National Park Service. The Gifford Pinchot NF executed a Service First Agreement with the National Park Service to co-locate with the Fort Vancouver National Historic Monument. In addition to leasing office space in the Fort Vancouver campus, the Forest Service and the National Park Service will co-manage the new Gifford Pinchot Fort Vancouver visitor center sited just across the Columbia River from Portland.

Forest Collaboratives in the Pacific Northwest Region (Region 6) are 'Restoring Oregon's Dry Side'. The Pacific Northwest Region entered into a partnership agreement with Ecotrust and the State of Oregon to develop communication materials that build public understanding and support for collaborative forest management. In November 2015, the partners released a short, professionally-produced video titled "Forest Collaboratives: Restoring Oregon's Dry Side," available at <https://vimeo.com/143402503>. The video features testimonials from Forest Service and collaborative group leaders, describing the current state of collaboration and further opportunities to restore forests and sustain rural economies through a collaborative approach. Region 6 also welcomed a Regional Conservation Education Coordinator into the Office of Communications & Community Engagement which will help implement the Integrated Strategy for Youth across the Region.

Washington Office Heritage Staff in Region 9 the and Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest partner with Northland College to develop a unique Historic Preservation lease for Forest Lodge. Forest Lodge is an ecological lodge donated to the Forest Service on a headwater of the Mississippi River. The Historic Preservation Lease will enable Northland College to become a full partner with the US Forest Service and collaborate on the development of Forest Lodge into an ecological campus. Northland College obtained a \$10 million endowment to create a center for freshwater innovation on Forest Lodge that will specialize in water science and cultural offerings inspired by nature. The site is significant to the Ojibwe Nations in the Ceded Territories of Wisconsin.

Northern Research Station leads forest and ecology exploration activities for 4th grade students for Every Kid in a Park. Fourth graders from Dayton City Schools as part of an Every Kid in a Park partnership between Dayton City Schools, Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, Central State University, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. This effort is just one part of a new cooperation between NRS, Central State and NRCS. Other activities will include participation in Central State's annual career fair and a conference for minority and women small farmers in April 2016.

The Northern Research Station supports the USDA Forest Service Making Tracks Program partnership with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf). This partnership promotes the conservation of wild turkey habitat preservation and the preservation of hunting heritage. The Northern Research Station is hosting the NWTf's National Forestry Programs Manager, Rebecca Barnard, in the Station's St. Paul office. Co-locating with the Forest Service is enhancing opportunities for collaboration on common interests such as landscape restoration as well as increased interaction between NWTf forestry staff and Forest Service researchers.

The Rocky Mountain Research Station's Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute (Leopold Institute) published a special issue of the Journal of Forestry. The Institute and partners recently completed a special issue of the Journal of Forestry (to be published May 2016) with over 57 authors and 22 peer reviewed papers summarizing the accomplishments of wilderness science over the past decade. The Institute is currently developing a new science strategy that describes wilderness science needed for the next decade. It will be completed and released online in December 2016. The Institute regularly and effectively uses Service First Authority for its collaborations with the Bureau of Land Management.

The Pacific Northwest Research Station partners with tribal leaders to present a climate adaptation training. Along with the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals, Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, the Sitka Tribe, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative, the PNW Research Station presented a 3 day climate change adaptation training for SE Alaska tribes December 7-9. Tribal members and staff from the Tulalip and Swinomish Tribes in Washington assisted with the

training. Thirty tribal members and employees from 22 different communities made the trip from Alaska for the training at the Tulalip conference center. The event was truly a demonstration of partnership across agencies, states, tribes, and levels of government. Participants went home with ideas and tools to help their communities plan for climate change.

New partnership between the California Academy of Sciences and the Pacific Southwest Research Station. Meetings in mid-December 2015 outlined objectives for a partnership agreement focused on resilience, collaboration, public participation, and social science. The geographic area of interest is the South Fork of the American Large Landscape project. There is also interest in work on the Women in Science Summit.