

NEWS RELEASE

Four Forest Restoration Initiative



Website: www.fs.usda.gov/4fri

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4FRI projects exceed many forest restoration goals

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. – Over the past five years, restoration projects stemming from the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) have met or exceeded restoration goals for hazardous fuels reduction, watershed sustainability, and wildlife habitat improvement. A summary of restoration accomplishments is available at the 4FRI website at <http://go.usa.gov/sZQk>.

“Since the start of 4FRI in 2010, the U. S. Forest Service has been working to address the wildland fire, wildlife habitat, and watershed issues that are so critical to Arizona,” said 4FRI Team Leader, Annette Fredette. “Wildlife habitat, as well as watershed function and resilience, has been improved on approximately 300,000 acres.”

Across the 4FRI national forests, efforts are being made to accelerate restoration well into the future through innovative planning and strategic investments. For example, forests are sharing sale prep and fire crews to increase the acres of prescribed fire and thinning task orders, with noticeable results. Accomplishments since 2010 include:

- Reducing the risk of catastrophic fire on approximately 300,000 acres through hazardous fuel treatments.
- Reducing the risk of stand-replacing fire across 23% of the 4FRI landscape.
- Harvesting more than 32,000 acres of timber from forest lands totaling approximately 773,000 CCF (100 cubic feet). This is enough lumber to build over 65,000 homes.
- Treating invasive plants on more than 14,000 acres.
- Maintaining or improving approximately 800 miles of trails.
- Producing more than 1.1 billion kilowatt hours of bio-energy with green biomass removed from forest lands. This is enough energy to power 100,000 homes for a year.

These restoration efforts have been supported by extensive interaction between the U.S. Forest Service and the 4FRI stakeholder group. “Through collaboration, we are laying the groundwork to restore the landscape at the scale of the problem,” said Diane Vosick, current co-chair of the 4FRI stakeholder group and Director of Policy and Partnerships for the Ecological Restoration Institute at Northern Arizona University. “These accomplishments are just the beginning for a ground breaking project like 4FRI.” The Four Forest Restoration Initiative is a collaborative effort to restore forest ecosystems on portions of the Coconino, Kaibab, Apache-Sitgreaves and Tonto National Forests in northern Arizona.

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Fire crews from the Kaibab and Coconino National Forests work side-by-side to accomplish a 2,700 acre grassland restoration prescribed fire on the Kaibab National Forest in January 2014.

Photo credit: USFS/Holly Krake