Collaborative Forest Restoration in the Rio Chama Landscape

Tier 2 Proposal

Safeguarding and enhancing the headwaters and communities of the Chama, Rio Grande, and San Juan watersheds

The health of Colorado's forests and natural resources heavily influence the social, economic, and environmental landscapes throughout the State. Forest health and natural resource management issues are not confined or defined by ownership and administrative boundaries.

-Shared Stewardship MOU between Colorado and US Forest Service (October 23, 2019)

Management of fire risk and protection of water are of utmost importance in New Mexico. The livelihoods and well-being of New Mexico residents depend more on scarce, and precious, surface and ground water supplies than on almost anything else. Many of New Mexico's water sources originate in high-elevation forests on private, tribal, and public lands that are vulnerable to uncharacteristically large and catastrophic wildfire.

- Shared Stewardship MOU between New Mexico and US Forest Service (November 14, 2019)

Rio Chama Landscape and Proposal Overview

Moisture that falls on the Rocky Mountains of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico supports hundreds of thousands of people in communities large and small, as well as agriculture, fish and wildlife, and recreationists. The Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) footprint extends into the San Juan, Rio Grande, Carson and Santa Fe National Forests in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. The proposed project area contains the headwaters of the Chama, Rio Grande, and San Juan Rivers, critical drainages that supply the life blood of the arid Southwest. It spans over 3.77 million acres of public and private lands, of which over 50% (approximately 1.9 million acres) is managed by the USDA Forest Service. The remaining lands within the project area are held by tribal nations, the States of Colorado and New Mexico, the Bureau of Land Management, and private landowners. This landscape and the communities that depend on it have been impacted by wildfire, insects and disease, drought and flooding – disturbance agents which do not heed political or ownership boundaries.

Notable features, challenges, and opportunities within the Rio Chama landscape include:

- San Juan Chama Interbasin Project, which delivers water to more than 400,000 people in New Mexico, including the residents of Santa Fe and Albuquerque.
- Of 213 subwatersheds in the footprint, 202 have high to very high fire potential based on GIS data from the *Forest to Faucets* project, which considers fire intensity, weather, fire frequency, and size.
- The 2018 Wildfire Hazard Potential (WHP), which represents uncharacteristic fuel build-up, identified 28% of the landscape (over 1 million acres) at high or very high risk of extreme fire behavior.
- 1.75 million acres have been identified in LANDFIRE's Vegetation Departure (VDEP) analysis as greater than 50% departed from historical reference conditions.
- Based on the 2018 National Insect and Disease Risk Map (NIDRM), 630,183 forested acres are expected to have greater than 25% mortality over the next 15 years, which is three times the natural background rate.
- The footprint spans some of the most uninterrupted wildlife habitat in the contiguous lower 48 states, providing a unique opportunity to enhance ecosystem function for the benefit of large, interconnected meta-populations of wide-ranging wildlife.

The Rio Chama CFLRP footprint was developed through multiple meetings with the national forests and local partners. Working at a watershed scale across landownerships and political boundaries makes sense based on the importance of what this landscape provides, the issues that it faces, and the interdependence of its communities and resources. Much of the water in New Mexico comes from the forests in Colorado. Dozens of small towns and villages have depended on the forests for centuries for building materials, firewood to heat their homes, and water to irrigate their fields. Wildlife migrate across ownership and political boundaries throughout the landscape. The water that makes its way into the major rivers supports large

metropolitan areas, including Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and beyond to Texas and Mexico. Yet wildfire, insects, and disease have become increasingly common, with sometimes catastrophic effects. In 2011, the Los Conchas Fire devastated almost the entire subwatershed on Santa Clara Pueblo, not only affecting its water supply, but the water supply to communities hundreds of miles downriver. Costs to suppress the Los Conchas Fire and stabilize the watershed have exceeded hundreds of millions of dollars, demonstrating the importance of contiguous treatments across a broader landscape to help mitigate the effects of uncharacteristically large and severe fires in the future.

A collective vision of reestablishing natural fire regimes and reducing wildfire risk has galvanized communities in this landscape. As a result, state and federal land managers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), industry, and the public have made shared stewardship and cross-boundary efforts a priority to meet restoration objectives. Some of these efforts include:

- The Rio Arriba County Community Wildfire Protection Plan and Fire Adapted New Mexico Learning Network help prioritize wildfire threat reduction at the grassroots/community level.
- The Rio Grande Water Fund has identified this landscape as a priority and is generating sustainable funding to restore 600,000 acres in the upper Rio Grande basin in New Mexico and Colorado.
- The 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy Partnership brings two watersheds (the San Juan and Chama), three rivers (headwaters of the San Juan, Chama, and Rio Grande Rivers) and two states (Colorado and New Mexico) together to develop resilient landscapes and communities.
- The San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership brings multiple agencies together with NGOs and the public to support the health of the watershed.
- The Natural Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program has committed $3.5 million toward private land restoration within the Rio Chama CFLRP footprint.
- The national forests work with state agencies on shared initiatives:
  - In New Mexico, the Forest and Watershed Restoration Act has committed $500,000 to this landscape.
  - The New Mexico Forest Action Plan has identified this area as a priority.
  - Shared Stewardship Agreements have been signed between the Governors of Colorado and New Mexico and the Forest Service.
  - This project aligns with key habitat connectivity corridors identified by the New Mexico (NM) Department of Game and Fish, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the Jicarilla Apache Tribe.
  - The NM Department of Game and Fish has committed $1.5 million to thin fire-prone forests within this landscape. In Colorado, incorporated habitat improvement projects would qualify for Habitat Partnership Program funding.

  - The NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department is implementing the New Mexico Energy Transition Act, which sets state targets for renewable energy, including woody biomass.
  - The San Juan National Forest has been selected for the Rocky Mountains Restoration Initiative, which will bring collaboration and funding to forest restoration projects in southwestern Colorado over the next 10 years.
- The Northern NM Riparian Project will provide National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) coverage for multiple projects to restore riparian, aquatic, and wetland systems across the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests.
- Santa Clara Pueblo has Reserved Treaty Rights Lands (RTRL) projects currently underway in this landscape.

Economic, Social, and Ecological Context:

The Rio Chama Watershed is a rural landscape with a rich cultural heritage. The national forests within the project area are unique in their continued support of subsistence economies and ways of life centered around wood, water, forage, wild game, and traditional arts and culture. These headwaters are sacred to several federally recognized pueblos and tribal nations and home to a significant number of cultural sites. The project area was also the birthplace of some of the earliest Spanish *mercedes* (land grant communities) to promote colonial settlement.

The declining populations of many of the small towns and villages are aging as younger people leave the area to find jobs. The Great Recession of 2008 saw a more than 70% drop in timber employment in the area, from which there has been limited recovery. Based on data from Headwater Economics in 2018, overall unemployment in the five counties that encompass the project area (Archuleta and Conejos Counties in Colorado and Rio Arriba, Sandoval, and Taos Counties in New Mexico) is 26.6% higher and average wages are 51% less than the national averages. Overall unemployment has led to a high poverty rate 19.2% above the national average. Most residents in these small towns continue to rely on small wood products – especially fuelwood – to heat their homes and, in some cases, cook. Collecting firewood is a centuries-old tradition in these communities, and *leñeros (*skilled woodcutters) harvest thousands of cords of firewood every year off the national forests.

There is evidence that investing in wildfire risk reduction projects supports jobs and positively affects local economies in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. A recent study examining projects funded through the Rio Grande Water Fund found that the projects "…supported an estimated 22 jobs, $1,089,000 in labor income, $1,324,000 in value added, and $1,907,000 in economic output in the 17 Western States economy." The study also found that hiring within a 13-county area in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado represented a majority (73%) of the expenditures, clear evidence that these projects produce direct economic benefits to the rural communities where they are being implemented (Huber et al, 2019).

The Forest Service is working with local communities to leverage a "mayordomo" model of community-led forestry, working with *leñeros* to both improve economic and social conditions

in culturally relevant ways and effectively reduce hazardous fuels on the forests. These projects are a modern adaptation of the acequia (irrigation) governance structure that has a long history in traditional Hispanic villages. Under the mayordomo model, *leñero* community members develop, implement, and oversee small-scale stewardship projects to treat acres in and around their communities. The Cerro Negro Forest Council's project on the Carson National Forest is a good example of the mayordomo model. These projects focus on fire-prone communities, providing a boost to local economies while building fire resiliency.

Subsistence farming and ranching are supported by the acequia system (irrigated agriculture) and communal use of the *ejido*, the forested uplands. Restoration projects like the Rio Chama CFLRP support subsistence economies by improving forest health and resiliency and providing better access to forest products such as fuelwood, wildlife, pasture for livestock grazing, acequia infrastructure, and culturally important plants.

There are opportunities for sustainable growth in forest products industries (sawmills, commercial wood cutters, furniture making, biomass and biochar) by adapting modern technologies and diversification to a traditional industry sector and encouraging private capital investment. For example, the Vallecitos Federal Sustained Yield Unit (VFSYU) on the El Rito Ranger District of the Carson National Forest has never met its potential as a model for community forestry. A CFLRP grant could potentially provide the needed restructuring of the unit to make it work for the local communities as originally intended.

The Northern New Mexico Community College provides apprenticeship training programs and other vocational courses (i.e., a Spanish Colonial furniture program) that create opportunities to apply recent developments in sustainable technologies to workforce development and collaborative forest management. The project area also boasts a thriving recreation and tourism industry in a landscape that inspires artists, filmmakers, and outdoor enthusiasts alike. Healthy forests and watersheds are the key to all of these industries.

Over 1 million acres of the project area are classified as high or very high fire hazard. In recent years, multiple fires have threatened small communities within the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Full suppression was the strategy for many of those fires, but when appropriate the Forest Service has the option to manage natural ignitions for resource benefit. Earlier restoration treatments near the communities of Canjilon and Cebolla, NM, gave fire managers the opportunity to manage wildfire for resource benefit with far less risk than there would have been without treatment.

Vegetation types within the Rio Chama landscape follow an elevational gradient ranging from grasslands and piñon-juniper woodlands at lower elevations to ponderosa pine and mixed conifer (frequent-fire) forests at middle elevations to mixed conifer, aspen and spruce-fir (infrequent-fire) forests at the highest elevations. With a history of harvest and fire exclusion, all these vegetative communities are departed from historical conditions.

Ponderosa pine and mixed conifer (frequent-fire) forests are the most highly departed as a result of over a century of fire exclusion and suppression. Today these forests are dense, homogenous, and lack spatial and understory species diversity. According to the 2018 WHP, they are also at risk for high-severity wildfire with over 1 million acres within the project area at high or very high risk of extreme fire behavior. The desired condition for these forests is a relatively open multi-aged structure with variation in tree size, age, density, and spatial pattern. Composition would favor the most fire-resistant species like ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir. Grassy openings would be created and maintained through frequent (5- to 20-year return interval) surface fires. Overall, these forests would be more resistant to drought and insect outbreaks (i.e., bark beetles), and fuel loading and ladder fuel structure would be returned to historical conditions.

Spruce-fir and mixed conifer with aspen communities are less departed from historical conditions than frequent-fire systems, but they too are threatened and have been heavily impacted by recent insect outbreaks. Aspen and wet mixed conifer forest stands have been similarly impacted and have suffered from western spruce budworm and bark beetle due to dense, closed, multi-storied structure. At the landscape scale, desired conditions for these forests consist of landscapes of multiple species of varying ages in a mosaic of seral stages and structures.

The Forest Service Watershed Condition Framework classified 77% of the subwatersheds in the project landscape as either functioning at risk or impaired. The primary factors driving these rankings are fire risk; impaired riparian, wetland, and aquatic biota; water quality impacts; areas of high road density; and impaired soils.

The project area contains established and newly discovered populations of invasive plants such as yellow bluestem, Canada thistle, jointed goatgrass and cheatgrass. Multiple species listed as threatened and endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (i.e., Canada lynx, Jemez Mountain salamander, Pagosa skyrocket, etc.) have core or critical habitat in the project footprint. The area also contains current populations of and prime habitat for the Rio Grande and San Juan lineage cutthroat trout. Sustainable habitat for all these at-risk species depends on mitigating the risk of uncharacteristically large and severe wildfires.

Landscape Strategy and Proposed Treatments:

The Rio Chama CFLRP tiers from national initiatives like the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and Shared Stewardship, and ties together existing local strategies and collaborative efforts like the 2-3-2 Partnership, the State Forest Action Plans, and the Rio Grande Water Fund. These efforts share common restoration goals and objectives that form the foundation of the proposed Rio Chama CFLRP strategy. For example, the project would align with the National Cohesive Strategy's goal to restore and maintain landscapes by addressing vegetation and fuels through the expanded use of management options including prescribed fire, fuels treatments, and managed wildfire for resource objectives.

The Rio Chama CFLRP would return fire to the landscape and increase resilience to catastrophic wildfire and other natural disturbance events, thus sustaining healthy forests and watersheds for future generations. Project goals and objectives are also consistent with the *Community Wildfire Protections Plans* in the project area and include:

- Reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire;
- Restoring natural fire regimes;
- Increasing forest diversity and old growth characteristics;
- Improving fish and wildlife habitat and connectivity;
- Conserving critical habitat to help recover threatened and endangered species;
- Improving water quality and watershed function;
- Mitigating climate change impacts.

The Rio Chama CFLRP will prioritize treatments to meet these objectives with collaborative input. Additional considerations will include NEPA clearance, adjacency to existing treatments, cost effectiveness, availability of partnership funds, and wildfire and watershed risk assessment analyses.

The Rio Chama CFLRP strategy aligns with the Forest Service's national Shared Stewardship strategy by creating shared space for state and federal agencies, counties, tribes, and NGO partners to define landscape goals and prioritize treatments across ownership boundaries. The scenario planning tools like those developed by Alan Ager at the Rocky Mountain Research Station's National Fire Decision Support Center will help prioritize treatments to be most effective and beneficial across jurisdictional boundaries.

Restoration goals and strategies will be informed by the best available science and monitoring data aimed at reducing the impact of uncharacteristic disturbances and changes associated with future climate projections. A key example of this research is described in detail in "Restoring Composition and Structure in Southwestern Frequent-Fire Forests: A science-based framework for improving ecosystem resiliency" (Reynolds et al. 2013) otherwise known as GTR-310. GTR-310 was developed collaboratively with the Forest Service and scientific experts in the southwest and provides a restoration strategy from a compilation of the best available science for the two key forest types in the Rio Chama landscape: ponderosa pine and dry-mixed conifer. Treatments across all forest types will increase age and structural diversity and promote mature and old growth forest conditions.

The forests are lacking mature and old-growth trees and treatments would be structured to increase those characteristics as part of uneven-aged management. This is consistent with stated goals of retaining and increasing old growth characteristics in the forest plans. Throughout the landscape treatments will open the canopy, reduce the risk of broad-scale bark beetle attack, and reduce the potential for large-scale stand-replacing wildfire, thus increasing the conditions for increased old and large trees.

Over 145,000 acres of terrestrial wildlife habitat for a wide variety of native species are expected to be improved through thinning, burning, and riparian restoration. This will increase foraging habitat for northern goshawk, Mexican spotted owl, and peregrine falcon, as well as for deer, elk, bear, small mammals and many other bird species. The relative abundance of important habitat components such as large-diameter trees, snags, and downed logs will be maintained or increased by treatment. Work in threatened or endangered species habitats will be designed in close coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, NM Game and Fish, and CO Parks and Wildlife, and will follow the applicable species recovery or conservation plans, along with forest plan standards and guidelines.

Invasive exotic plants will be controlled through a combination of manual, mechanical, and chemical herbicide methods. Treatments will be designed to identify and reduce populations of invasive plants known to occur within the project area. The project will use established agreements with federal, state, and county partners to work with willing landowners to reduce invasive plants on intermixed private lands. These management actions are expected to reduce the spread of invasive and exotic plants, improve native plant communities, and improve fish and wildlife habitat, including potential habitat for ESA-listed species.

Improvement, maintenance, and decommissioning of roads and trails are another important aspect of the strategy. Road improvements will reduce resource impacts while facilitating the removal of woody biomass. Temporary routes may be built to facilitate removal of forest products and byproducts but would be decommissioned after short-term use. Up to 40 miles of roads are expected to be decommissioned over the term of the project, prioritized by cost and the degree of impact to biological, water, and heritage resources. Decommissioning will also discourage illegal motor vehicle use off designated routes and reduce the introduction and spread of invasive species. Trail maintenance and improvements will focus use on open travel routes, improve recreation opportunities, and reduce impacts on water resources and sensitive wildlife habitats.

Watershed function is expected to be greatly improved by proposed treatments. Restoration activities will improve watershed conditions of forests as well as riparian systems. By strategically pairing hillslope and riparian restoration, treatments will improve the overall watershed by providing buffers to the spread, severity, and impacts of wildfire. This increased resiliency will be measurably better for mitigating the impacts of climate change. Watersheds will be less susceptible to large, high-intensity wildfires causing severe floods and mass movement of soil and ash into stream channels. Eliminating or improving system trails and roads near streams will allow revegetation of denuded areas, reduce erosion, and reduce negative user impacts to riparian ecosystems.

Riparian and aquatic ecosystem restoration techniques will promote healthy watersheds which are resilient to climate change, wildlife impacts, and reduced sediment loads. Projects will take place along stream corridors and in wet meadow and wetland ecosystems. Treatments will be strategically located to address areas of severe stream or riparian/wet meadow degradation,

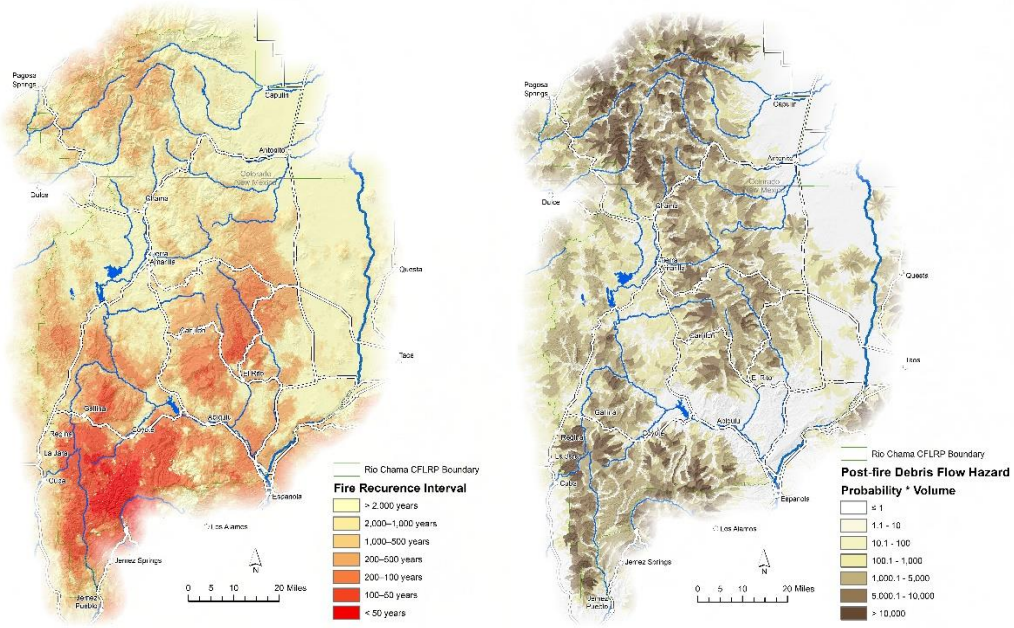
especially areas currently or historically supporting threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. Treatments will improve overall stream and hydrologic function, landscape-based water storage, and fish migration and breeding habitat, increasing overall aquatic habitat diversity. Treatments will improve the abundance of native wildlife, including native species of cutthroat trout, and reduce invasive, non-native, and exotic aquatic species.

Wildfire Risk Reduction

Given current conditions in the project area, uncharacteristic wildfire poses a considerable threat to the health and function of vital watersheds, upon which many communities rely. Potential impacts include compromised drinking water supplies, impacts to agriculture, the degradation or loss of plant and wildlife habitat, and loss of recreational opportunities and associated revenues. Post-fire effects, including flooding, debris flow, and erosion, have the potential to severely impair watershed function, threatening not only the project area but hundreds of miles downstream.

Mitigating the threat of large and severe wildfire requires actively managing vegetation within the project area. Proposed restoration treatments would include:

- Strategically placed commercial (over 25,000 acres) and non-commercial (over 8,000 acres) thinning and broadcast burning (almost 110,000 acres) treatments to reduce fuel loading, reduce the risk of large high-severity fires, provide future fire management options across the landscape, and build resiliency to future disturbances exacerbated by a changing climate.
- Improvement and regeneration harvests within mixed-conifer and aspen forests intended to recover forest product value, reduce overall fuel loading, and move landscape forest structure and composition toward conditions more resilient to climate change, insects, and disease.



Managing wildfire for resource benefit is an effective tool for reintroducing beneficial fire to the landscape. Fuels treatments lower wildfire management costs by reducing fire intensities and providing safe anchor points for suppression. In frequent-fire ecosystems, regular intervals of fire (either prescribed fire or managed wildfire) maintain a range of desired conditions and minimize fire risk into the future. The Santa Fe and Carson National Forests currently have a unified fire and fuels program that provides shared resources for implementing prescribed fire, leveraging resources through diverse partners, and enhancing opportunities for outreach and education. This model may be appropriate for the forests in Colorado. Multiple agreements are in place with cooperators who can bring additional capacity to prescribed fire implementation. Partnerships already active in the Rio Chama CFLRP footprint will continue to coordinate cross-boundary work, taking advantage of mechanisms like the Wyden Authority, which authorizes Forest Service funds to be used off of National Forest System (NFS) lands to benefit watersheds within NFS lands.

Benefits to Local Communities:

The Rio Chama CFLRP has several intended benefits to local communities. Community safety and security are central to the proposal, with obvious benefits stemming from the emphasis on wildfire risk reduction. The project would also create and sustain robust and cohesive collaborative relationships among diverse partners and stakeholders based on a shared commitment to the unique historical and cultural legacy of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The Rio Chama CFLRP strategy recognizes the traditional and cultural values of the region by giving communities a significant voice in the development and implementation of a program of restoration work. Community engagement has played a key role in shaping this

proposal from its inception. The project will enhance community stability by helping to stem the outmigration of young people who leave their rural communities because of high rates of poverty and unemployment and lack of opportunity for rewarding work. The sustainable flow of byproducts associated with forest restoration work would also allow local businesses to reliably invest in capital improvements and personnel, bringing an important level of financial stability to these communities. Healthy landscapes and the associated wildlife benefits also support recreation and tourism economies which are increasingly important economic drivers in these communities and likely the best opportunity for growth in the future.

The Rio Chama CFLRP proposal would build on current momentum and existing partnerships to restore forests and watersheds to desired conditions and ecological integrity. Successful implementation will deliver key socioeconomic benefits to local communities by:

Enhancing economic sustainability by:

- Maintaining or increasing the number of youth, minority group representatives, or people from low-income communities hired to work on the project and the type of work they are conducting
- Maintaining or increasing the acceptance of frequent, low-intensity wildfire or prescribed fire

Improving quality of life by:

- Maintaining or increasing the availability and/or access to medicinal, food, heating, or building materials
- Maintaining or increasing the number of acres protected from fire through the creation of defensible space, fuel breaks, and other fuels reduction projects

Building on partnerships and collaboration by:

- Maintaining or increasing the quality and timeliness of communication among all project partners
- Maintaining or increasing the partner contributions (in-kind time and funding) committed to shared project goals

Utilization of Forest Restoration Byproducts:

The Rio Chama CFLRP project is uniquely positioned to deliver restoration byproducts to over a half-dozen operating timber mills within its working circle, as well as several multi-generational small timber operators who have been locally active for decades. The project will generate multiple products at various scales, from commercial timber to smaller-scale products important to this region, such as *latillas* (fencing) and *vigas* (beams), wood pellets, posts, and firewood. The project is anticipated to produce approximately 175,000 CCF over 10 years, and annually the projected harvested volume is expected to be between 15,000 and 25,000 CCF.

On the south end of the project, Walatowa Timber Industries (WTI) operates a mill in Jemez Pueblo, NM, that produces multiple forest products and has the capacity to process materials

from the Rio Chama CFLRP. Majority owned by the Pueblo of Jemez, WTI is a successful example of the tribe's economic development program and Forest Service support. In addition, a new, high-capacity wood milling and processing facility in Blanca, CO, has the capacity to process approximately 20 million board feet of timber a year to support a sustainable regional timbering operation. Several existing smaller mills are both within and adjacent to the project landscape, and new milling investments in Dolores and Montrose, CO, could utilize logs and byproducts produced by the Rio Chama CFLRP.

WTI runs a successful wood pellet operation using small diameter material from local restoration work. The Rio Chama CFLRP would help leverage the broader project area to develop a reliable biomass fuel supply by growing and stabilizing the supply of biomass materials, increasing forest management industry investment, and supporting rural economic development by creating jobs and opportunities.

One of the challenges to scaling forest restoration is figuring out what to do with non-merchantable forest biomass, which is expensive to transport if there are no nearby markets or energy transmission facilities. The Rio Chama CFLRP would be a beneficiary of the New Mexico 2019 Energy Transition Act, which sets a target of 40% renewable energy by January 1, 2025. The act limits woody biomass in the state's renewable energy portfolio to small diameter timber from New Mexico river basins or watersheds and certified to be (1) of appropriate scale and local sustainability, (2) with zero lifecycle carbon emissions, and (3) in line with scientifically determined restoration principles. The Energy Transition Act also incentivizes decentralized energy systems to meet the heat and power needs of individual communities or businesses. The Rio Chama CFLRP can tie into the Northern New Mexico Community College's biochar heating pilot project, funded by the New Mexico Collaborative Forest Restoration Program, on its El Rito campus. The pilot will be fueled by woodchips from power line thinning and WUI projects, sequestering carbon in biochar and adding value to waste woody biomass.

There are many challenges to successfully utilizing forest restoration byproducts locally, including the lack of a skilled workforce, scaling and simplifying contracting, and developing emerging market opportunities. The Rio Chama CFLRP is ahead of the game with already-established markets for a diversity of products and actively engaged partners. The Rio Chama CFLRP collaborative, including the four national forests, will use the Forest Products Modernization strategy and adaptive management to build efficiencies, scale the footprint of management efforts, and minimize the risks to successful implementation.

Collaboration:

In 2013, the West Fork Fire burned across the alpine ridge separating the San Juan and Rio Grande National Forests, threatening communities and vital water infrastructure in southwest Colorado and northern New Mexico. The unprecedented behavior of the fire and the value of the resources at stake brought together land managers, private landowners, and NGOs in Colorado and New Mexico to develop a cohesive, multi-faceted strategy to address forest health concerns and protect and enhance water quality in the region. The ensuing collaborative

was named the Two Watersheds – Three Rivers – Two States Cohesive Strategy Partnership, better known as "the 2-3-2." Officially launched in 2016, the 2-3-2 brings together a diverse "team of teams" comprised of many groups, including the Chama Peak Land Alliance, Wildfire Adapted Partnership, San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership, the All Hands All Lands burn program of the Forest Stewards Guild, and the Rio Grande Water Fund. A full list of partners can be found in the Letter of Commitment.

The 2-3-2 Partnership has a robust history of convening partners across this landscape and has developed trust and shared goals among members. In 2018, the 2-3-2 facilitated a cross-boundary tour and meeting between New Mexico and Colorado's state foresters, the regional foresters from the Forest Service's Southwestern and Rocky Mountain Regions, and multiple stakeholders to discuss the shared values across the regions and opportunities to advance rural economic development through forest management. That conversation laid the foundation for the Rio Chama CFLRP proposal.

The 2-3-2 Partnership will serve as the collaborative for the Rio Chama CFLRP. The structure of the 2-3-2 Partnership includes an executive committee and sub-committees – Biomass and Markets, Outreach and Education, Fire Management, Capacity and Efficiency, and TRAM (technology, research, assessment and monitoring) – that align with the goals of the CFLRP. The 2-3-2 Partnership employs a consensus-based decision-making approach based on pre-established ground rules that leverage the diverse knowledge of the membership and research on successful collaboratives. While members of the 2-3-2 Partnership reflect diverse interests, the 2-3-2 succeeds because members share common values, a collective vision, and a commitment to making science-informed decisions.

To develop this proposal, the collaborative held two workshops with partners as well as several smaller meetings focused on specific sections. The Rio Chama CFLRP will become the primary focus of the 2-3-2 Partnership, which would manage collaboration and the multiparty monitoring process.

Collaboration between the 2-3-2 Partnership and Forest Service will include:

- Quarterly meetings between the 2-3-2 Executive Committee and the Forest Service's designated Rio Chama CFLRP coordinator, district rangers, designated forest-level line officer, or ecosystem staff officer.
- An annual workshop with the collaborative, including the four forests, to report on completed projects and lessons learned, assess barriers and potential problems for the coming year, and identify out-year projects with feedback and prioritization from the 2-3-2.
- An annual all-hands meeting of the collaborative open to the public to provide a broader vision for work on the landscape and offer updates on completed work and out-year plans.

Long-standing relationships between members of the diverse collaborative will serve the Rio Chama CFLRP well. Since 2016, the 2-3-2 Partnership has secured more than $5 million additional dollars and (1) facilitated the use of prescribed fire with resources from multiple forests; (2) secured Rural Conservation Partnership Program funding to work on private lands; (3) built an online spatial data portal for partners to access when planning treatments; (4) worked with partners to identify future projects; (5) promoted collaborative development of fire management decision support tools (i.e., PODS); (6) monitored impacts of forest treatments; and (7) facilitated dialogue between forest and wildlife advocacy groups. In 2019, the 2-3-2 Partnership completed a three-year strategic plan outlining discreet goals for advancing the following objectives: watershed protection; cross-boundary collaborative planning; the application and management of fire across boundaries; advance industry opportunities; elevate and enhance the success of local efforts; encourage a holistic approach to forest management; and utilize and promote relevant science. The partners challenge the notion of administrative boundaries and work together to realize a collective impact on a watershed scale.

Multi-Party Monitoring:

Collaboratives working across the Rio Chama CFLRP landscape anticipate actively monitoring project goals and impacts as they relate to forest conditions, water quality and quantity, wildfire risk, wildlife, economic impact and social values, acceptance, and state of knowledge. All aspects of monitoring will be designed to inform iterative management frameworks that address specific risks associated with specific projects within the CFLRP landscape.

Key stakeholders to support monitoring efforts have been identified by various collaborative groups working within the CFLRP landscape. The 2-3-2 Partnership will work with its sub-committees to support the implementation of standard monitoring techniques that ensure that data collection is done cohesively, allowing for comparability across the landscape. A science- and monitoring-based sub-committee will help formulate monitoring goals and methods, guide the interpretation of results, and inform management decisions. All monitoring will involve pre- and post-treatment measurements conducted periodically over the life of the project and extending 5 years beyond when projects have been completed.

Through the science and monitoring sub-committee outlined above, monitoring questions and methods will be determined and vetted to ensure that monitoring efforts are cogent across the CFLRP landscape and accurately measure project goals as they pertain to an adaptive management process. Monitoring results will be reported annually after review by the science committee. Results will be presented at the annual all-hands meeting to demonstrate the beneficial impact of project implementation and how the Rio Chama CFLRP is influencing the ecological and social dimensions of the landscape.

Monitoring results will provide the foundation for informing adaptive management plans for the CFLRP landscape. Each project will identify specific metrics that determine whether the goals of the project are being met and when there is a need to employ alternative management

strategies. The science and monitoring sub-committee will help make sure that analyses properly identify when predetermined thresholds are met and provide scientific justification for alternative actions. The multi-party monitoring team will establish long-term monitoring plots stratified across vegetation types and latitudinal gradients to document changes brought about by treatments.

The Rio Chama CFLRP will share the monitoring results and research in peer-reviewed journals, technical reports, conferences, and public forums hosted for community education. Community participation in education programs and citizen science opportunities will help garner public support and trust by allowing the public opportunities to actively participate in monitoring the impacts of projects.

Monitoring results will be shared and accessible to all partners and members of the public. This allows for transparency in data and monitoring efforts across the Rio Chama CFLRP footprint.

Readiness to Implement Strategy

The Rio Chama CFLRP is well positioned to deliver immediate results. The four national forests currently have more than 450,000 NEPA-cleared acres, and priority projects are already moving forward on both NFS and interspersed non-NFS lands. In addition, several key planning efforts are underway that will clear an additional 165,000 NFS acres for mechanical thinning, prescribed fire, and timber sales. The Santa Fe and Carson National Forests are also conducting NEPA analysis on a flexible toolbox approach for riparian, aquatic, and wetland restoration projects in northern New Mexico, which should be ready for implementation in 2021. Similarly, the Rio Grande National Forest's NEPA cleared (2005) watershed and fisheries conservation treatments will facilitate hydrologic restoration treatments on the Conejos District. The Rio Grande's forest plan revision process has also identified two priority watersheds on the Conejos Ranger District – the Archuleta and Chama basins –which combined with the forest-wide NEPA will provide ample opportunity for watershed restoration work. On the San Juan National Forest, completing the essential projects in the Blanco River Priority Watershed Action Plan will further promote holistic restoration work on the Rio Chama proposal landscape.

All of these projects are in alignment with current forest plans. The Rio Grande, Santa Fe, and Carson National Forests are currently revising their forest plans, and the Rio Chama CFLRP is in alignment with the new draft plans. (The Rio Grande plan is expected to be finalized in 2020, and the Santa Fe and Carson plans are expected to be finalized in 2021.) With a significant number of acres already cleared for restoration work, the Rio Chama CFLRP partners will be able to immediately implement meaningful work on the landscape while continuing to set priorities and plan work over the full term of the project.

The four forests have contracts and agreements already in place that would allow the project collaborative to begin implementing projects immediately, and new agreements are in process. For example, the Santa Fe and Carson are setting up a Service First roads agreement with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to improve, maintain, and decommission roads, and the Rio

Grande has a Service First agreement with the BLM for invasive species treatment. Current agreements with the Mule Deer Foundation, which has been doing work on the Rio Tusas/San Antonio landscape on the Carson is ongoing, and the Southwest Conservation Corps may bring in additional funding for crews to do saw and/or trail work. While the Rio Chama CFLRP would require additional agreements and contracts, meaningful work within the project footprint could begin without delay based on the agreements and contracts already in place.

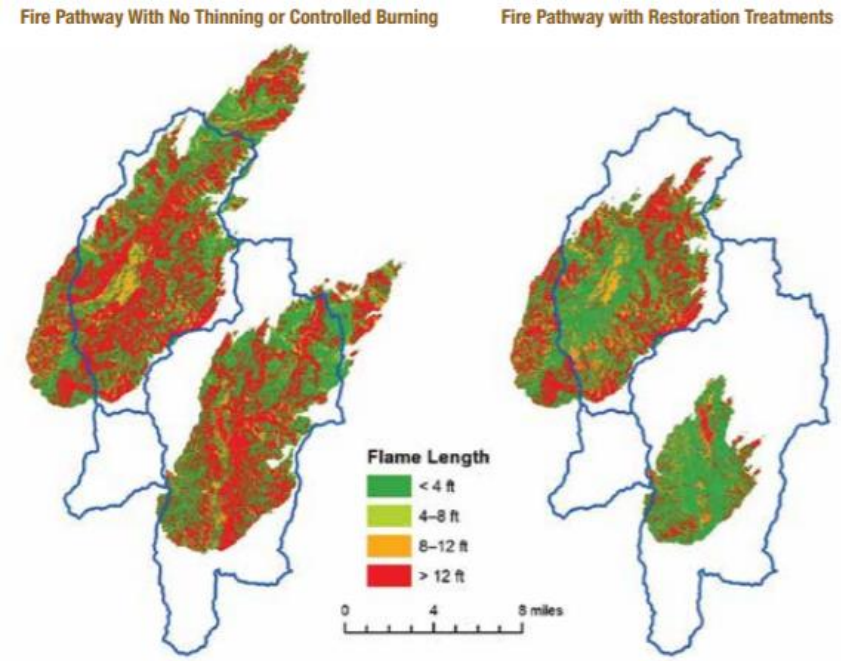
Unit Capacity and Project Funding:

Many of the project partners have worked together on two other CFLRP projects and dozens of other projects and proposals, providing a strong foundation for the Rio Chama CFLRP. This successful history of collaboration has helped partners overcome capacity challenges. Examples include using existing data to meet monitoring needs and building thinning capacity by forming non-profit and/or youth crews to perform restoration work. The Rio Chama CFLRP project will require a robust timber and fuels organization on the four forests, which already share resources across boundaries. The Santa Fe/Carson zoned fire and fuels organization has a proven track record of accomplishing significant acres of thinning and prescribed fire annually by working seamlessly across borders. The four forests have also successfully shared timber staff and completed priority work across boundaries, all while meeting significant increases to timber and hazardous fuels targets over the last few years. Capacity gaps can be addressed by contracting with local businesses, using the innovative All Hands All Lands Burn Team, and engaging youth crews. The forests will also continue to apply Forest Products Modernization tools and other technologies, like designation by prescription, to increase efficiencies and reduce per-acre treatment costs.

While the forests have a proven track record of innovative approaches to build capacity, a project of this scale will require new investments. To help with implementation, the Forest Service plans to hire at least one full-time equivalent (FTE) to ensure coordination and collaboration across the forests. An agreement between the Forest Service and the collaborative would call on the collaborative to coordinate partnerships and take responsibility for multiparty monitoring, with the forests committing 15-20% of the funds for this purpose. The San Juan National Forest also intends to purchase a $150,000 masticator/skid steer with CFLRP funds, as a resource to support smaller tract management efforts and for fuelbreak construction for prescribed fire preparation.

Congress intended for the CFLRP to decrease restoration unit costs over time and reduce fire suppression costs. The tiered strategies to achieve these goals are to (1) increase competition, (2) use multiple and diverse contracts, including Integrated Resource Timber Contracts (IRTC), (3) continue to encourage and supply biomass projects, and (4) use managed wildfire for resource benefit. In some parts of the project area, wood product bids and competition are already on the rise. There are currently two examples in the project area where retained receipts have been used for stewardship work to offset service work. Growth in bids, competition, and retained receipts accounts will be dependent on the consistency of supply

over the next 10 years. The large and diverse footprint of the Rio Chama CFLRP increases opportunities for different treatments and markets and should help the cost per acre for prescribed fire and managed fire to trend downward. Further, economic analyses supported by the Rio Grande Water Fund, highlight the potential return on investment for doing restoration work in two subwatersheds in the footprint as being between 246%-375% (see figure below).



Restoring the 17,000 acres shown in this model would cost an estimated $9 million. The model predicts a substantial reduction in the probability and severity of wildfire, with an estimated benefit from $32 to $44 million depending on wildfire location, timing and other variables.

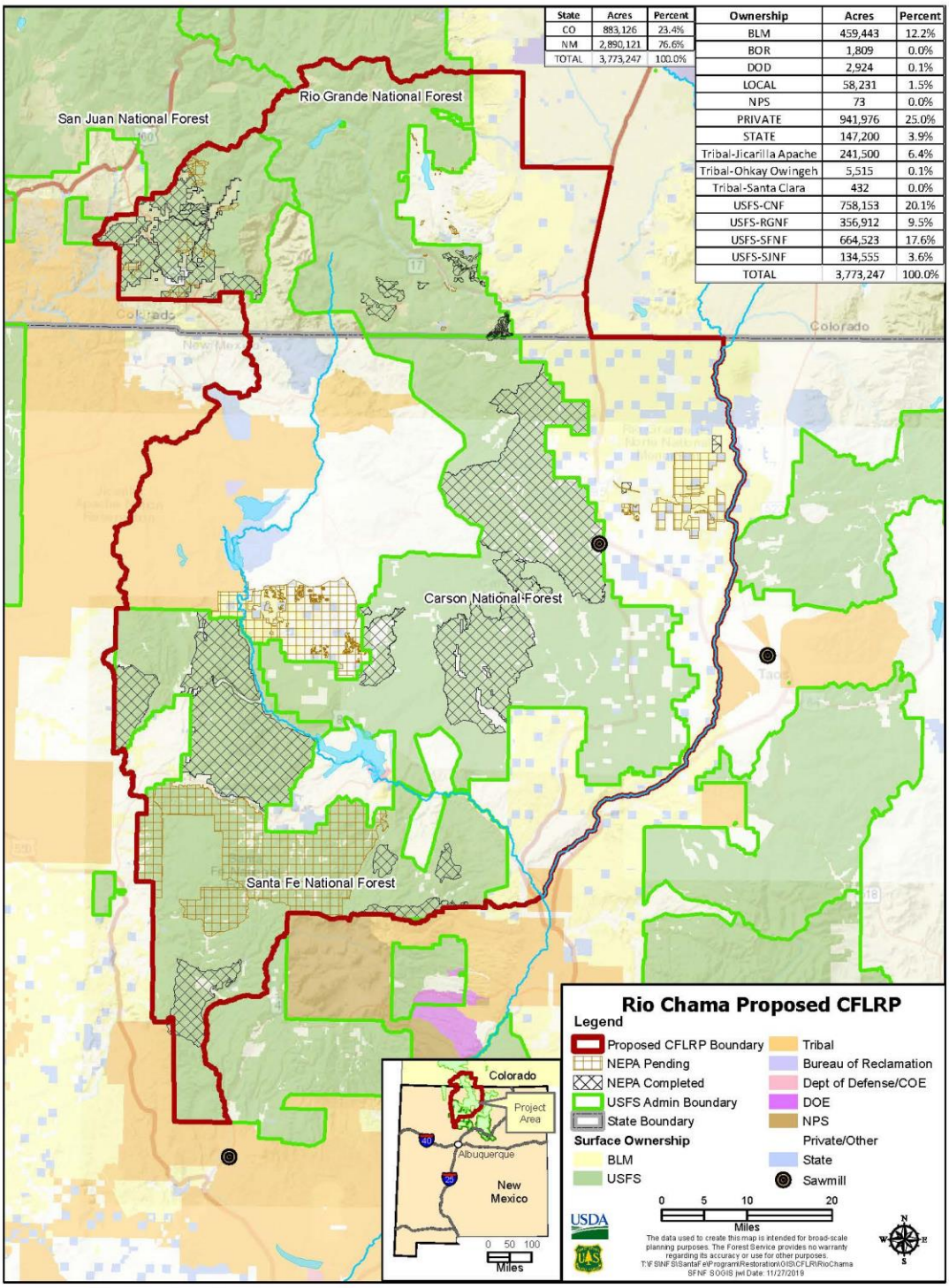
The Rio Chama CFLRP is requesting $4 million annually or $40 million over the full ten years in CFLRP funding (see attachment F). Currently partners contribute in excess of this annually in the footprint both on and off NFS lands. Those key partners include the NM Department of Game and Fish, NM State Forestry, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Rio Grande Water Fund, NRCS, and corporate donors. The Rio Chama CFLRP proposal would allocate 15-20% of the CFLRP funds to go toward collaboration and multiparty monitoring. For perspective, other CFLRP projects, including the Southwest Jemez Mountains CFLRP, have allocated 7-10% of funding for monitoring support. Due to the unprecedented scale, multiple jurisdictions, four national forests, two states, two Forest Service regions, and the number of partners, the additional funding for collaboration is appropriate.

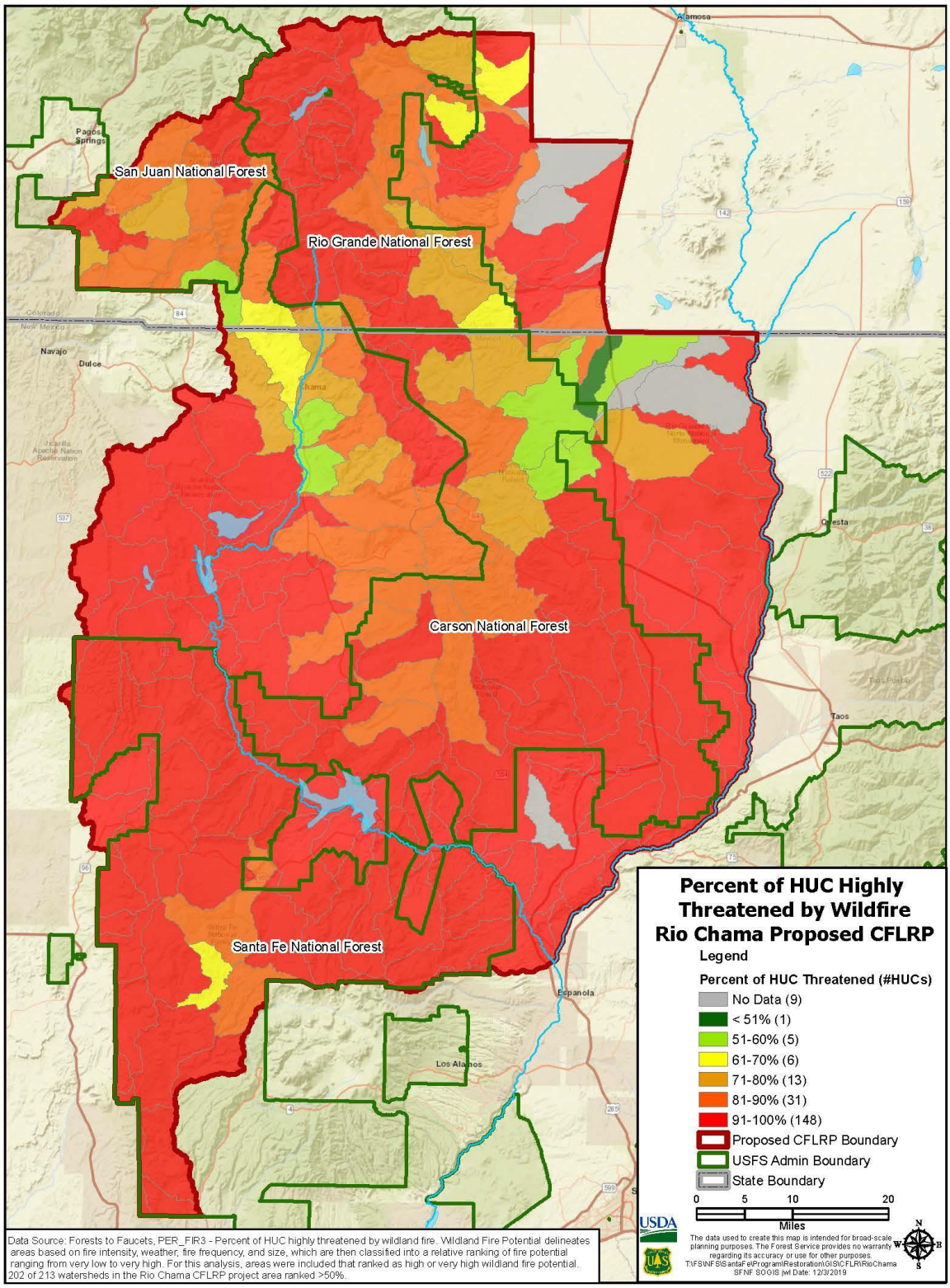
Recognizing the complexity of this landscape and the many issues it faces, it may be unrealistic to expect that, even if fully funded, all of the work can be completed within 5-10 years. But a consistent vision shared by all members of the collaborative and a commitment to this important landscape undoubtedly create momentum. While the Forest Service and multiple partners have made significant investments within the project area, it has not yet reached the scale needed to ensure the desired benefits over the long term. That said, there are signs that we are on the cusp of something transformative for the communities and the landscape of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, including the new mill in Blanca, CO, and the focus on biomass. Local utility companies are also becoming more engaged.

With additional funding for the right landscape-scale project with the right partners, we can dramatically increase the likelihood of a major ecological and economic transformation in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. Forest restoration that returns beneficial fire to the landscape and creates a stable wood products industry and forest management contractor base will be a large-scale catalyst for meaningful change in a landscape with both tremendous need and opportunity.

Attachments –

ATTACHMENT A: Project map.




San Juan National Forest
Rio Grande National Forest
Carson National Forest
Santa Fe National Forest
Alamosa
Pagosa Springs
Navajo
Dulce
Colorado
New Mexico
Chama
Jicarilla Apache Nation Reservation
Questa
Taos
Taos Pueblo
Espanola
Los Alamos
Percent of HUC Highly Threatened by Wildfire
Rio Chama Proposed CFLRP
Legend
Percent of HUC Threatened (#HUCs)
No Data (9)
< 51% (1)
51-60% (5)
61-70% (6)
71-80% (13)
81-90% (31)
91-100% (148)
Proposed CFLRP Boundary
USFS Admin Boundary
State Boundary
0 5 10 20
Miles
The data used to create this map is intended for broad-scale planning purposes. The Forest Service provides no warranty regarding its accuracy or use for other purposes.
T:\FS\NFS\SantaFe\Program\Restoration\GIS\CFLR\RioChama
SFNF SOGIS jwl Date: 12/3/2019
Data Source: Forests to Faucets, PER_FIR3 - Percent of HUC highly threatened by wildland fire. Wildland Fire Potential delineates areas based on fire intensity, weather, fire frequency, and size, which are then classified into a relative ranking of fire potential ranging from very low to very high. For this analysis, areas were included that ranked as high or very high wildland fire potential. 202 of 213 watersheds in the Rio Chama CFLRP project area ranked >50%.

ATTACHMENT B: Planned Treatments**. (See Attachment)**

ATTACHMENT C: Utilization of Forest Restoration Byproducts. **(See Attachment)**

ATTACHMENT D: Collaborative membership. **(See Attachment)**

ATTACHMENT E: Letter of commitment developed and signed by all collaborative members **(See Attachment)**

ATTACHMENT F: Project funding. **(See Attachment)**

ATTACHMENT G: Letter of commitment signed by Forest leadership, indicating understanding and commitment to meeting the eligibility requirements of CFLRP, as described in the CFLRP Proposal Process and Selection Criteria document. **(See Attachment)**

CFLRP proposals are ***not*** **expected to include ALL of the core treatment types below** in their strategy - highlight those treatments that are core to your stated treatment objectives. Note that there are options to use "other" in this table.

Estimated treatments should include all planned treatments in the proposed CFLR landscape, regardless of landownership type. Provide an estimate of the % you expect to occur on NFS lands in column J, and list the other

Core Restoration Treatment Types	***Please briefly fill in additional background information for the prompts below***	**Year 1***	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Years 5-10**	***TOTAL***	**Key treatment objectives**	**Estimated % accomplished on NFS lands (across all ten years)**	**Other landownership types (other federal, tribal, state, private, etc.) where treatments will occur**
Hazardous Fuels Reduction (acres)										
Mechanical Thinning (acres)	Precommercial hand and mechanical thinning to support rx fire; commercial thinning.	523	620	680	620	5,775	8,218	Facilitate prescribed fire, reduce ladder fuels; reduce tree regeneration density	90%	Federal (BLM), State (NM & CO), Tribal, Private, County
Prescribed Fire (acres)		11,511	12,160	9,223	20,000	66,000	108,652	Reduce fire hazard and severity; reduce watershed impacts of wildfire; reduce tree stocking	95%	Federal (BLM), State (NM & CO), Tribal, Private, County
Other (acres)	mastication contracts	0	0	700	1,200	1,300	3,200	Reduce fire hazard and severity; reduce watershed impacts of wildfire; facilitate prescribed fire; reduce tree stocking	100%	Federal (BLM), State (NM & CO), Tribal, Private, County
Wildfire Risk Mitigation Outcomes - Acres treated to mitigate wildfire risk		6,155	6,338	4,158	4,723	30,000	51,374	Reduce fire hazard and severity; reduce watershed impacts of wildfire; facilitate prescribed fire; reduce tree stocking	95%	Federal (BLM), State (NM & CO), Tribal, Private, County
Wildfire Risk Mitigation Outcomes - WUI	Canjilon, El Rito Canyon, Tio Gordito,	493	370	430	370	2,000	3,663	Reduce fire hazard and	80%	Federal (BLM), State
Invasive Species Management (acres)	est annual treatment.	565	570	575	575	8,400	10,685	Contain/control high priority invasive weeds	75%	Federal (BLM), State (NM & CO), Tribal, Private, County
Native Pest Management (acres)		50	50	50	50	5,300	5,500		100%	
Road Decommissioning (miles)	Blanco Basin Road Decomissioning	3	6	6	6	20	41		100%	
Road Maintenance and Improvement (miles)	Buckle, Nipple Mountain and Porcupine Roads	4	14	9	9	35	71	Place gravel to facilitate harvests in Year 3 and 4	100%	
Road Reconstruction (miles)	year 1-5 erosion control structure repair and Mesa Cortado Road reconstruction	3	3	6	5	11	28	Repair erosion control structures on closed roads	100%	

Trail Reconstruction (miles)		15	27	27	27	170	266	Allow for passage on wilderness trail system trails	100%	
Wildlife Habitat Restoration (acres)	Thinning, Rx fire and mastication/mowing acres	13,603	15,208	11,988	14,093	86,375	141,267	Improve winter/transition range habitat	75%	Federal (BLM), State (NM & CO), Tribal, Private, County
Crossing Improvements (number)		0	1	1	2	6	10		100%	
In-Stream Fisheries Improvement (miles)	There is flexibility in timing of these projects	15	6	7	7	36	71	Improve trout habitat in Rio Blanco; Install fish barrier on Rito Blanco to establish habitat for San Juan lineage cutthroat trout	100%	
Lake Habitat Improvement (acres)		0	0	0	0	0	0			
Riparian Area Improvements (acres)		30	40	50	60	1,463	1,643		100%	
Soil and Watershed resources enhanced or maintained (acres)		0	5	10	5	25	45		100%	
Priority watersheds moved to improved condition class (number)		0	0	0	0	2	2		100%	
Stand Improvement (acres)	Mechanical thinning, Rx fire, mastication/mowing acres	2,195	2,100	810	1,310	10,030	16,445	Associated target with prescribed fire, invasive weeds treatments and mechanical thinning	100%	
Reforestation and revegetation (acres)		0	0	0	0	0	0			
Timber Harvest (acres)**	100% ground based	1,569	2,428	2,650	2,700	15,600	24,947	Improve forest health, produce forest products, improve range conditions	100%	
Rangeland Vegetation Improvement (acres)	Stand improvement, invasive species treatments, timber sale acres	2,800	3,200	3,000	3,550	16,000	28,550		75%	Federal (BLM), State (NM & CO), Tribal, Private, County
Abandoned Mine Reclamation/Remediation		0	0	1	0	0	1		100%	
Other		0	0	1	0	1	1	repair failing water infrastructure		

**Assume funding requested for Year 1 will be allocated in February 2020 at the earliest*

***Note that timber volume produced from the treatment is estimated in a separate attachment - Attachment C.*

Rio Chama CFRLP Proposal Attachment C: Utilization of Forest Restoration Byproducts

Fiscal Year	Estimate of acres treated annually that will generate restoration byproducts	Total projected annual harvested volume (ccf)	Expected percentage commercially utilized*
2020	1,569	21,955	85%
2021	2,428	12,870	85%
2022	2,650	21,700	85%
2023	2,700	19,450	85%
2024	2,150	13,050	85%
2025	2,700	16,800	85%
2026	2,300	13,800	85%
2027	3,500	24,600	85%
2028	2,650	17,850	85%
2029	2,300	13,800	85%

*Commercially utilized refers to the volume you expect to sell across all product classes (sawtimber, biomass, firewood, etc.)

Forest Service staff representative(s) working with collaborative: (Please provide list of key staff):	All Natural Resource Staff, Heritage, Partnership Coord., CFRP Coord., Recreation staff
Carson	James Duran- Forest Supervisor Donald Ashby- Natural Resource Staff Officer Jeremey Marshall- District Ranger Angie Krall- Deputy District Ranger
Rio Grande	Dan Dallas- Forest Supervisor Andrea Jones- District Ranger Sidney Hall- Fuels Program Manager Kirby Self- Vegetation Program Manager
San Juan	Kara Chadwick- Forest Supervisor Kevin Khung- District Ranger Matt Tuten- Forester
Santa Fe	James Melonas- Forest Supervisor Josh Hall- Natural Resource Staff Officer; Lance Elmore- Fire Staff (Carson & Santa Fe); Gennaro Falco- Forestry Program Manager; Dennis Carril- Carson& Santa Fe Fuels Program Manger; Jamie Bennet- District Ranger

Collaborative Member/Partner Name	Organizational Affiliation (if applicable)	Was this person involved in proposal development?	Primary Issue Category	Second Issue Category	Third Issue Category	If "other," briefly describe
Anne Bradley, Collin Haffey	The Nature Conservancy	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Fire Management*	*Forest Products*	
Mary Stuever	NM State Forestry	*Yes*	Watershed	Fire Management	Forest Products	
Adam Moore	CO State Forestry	*Yes*	Forest Products	Fire Management	Watershed	
Jacob Davidson, Donald Auer	NM Dept. Game & Fish	*Yes*	Wildlife	Watershed	Fire Management	
Eytan Krasilovsky, Esme Cadiente, Matt Piccarello, Zander	Forest Stewards Guild	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Fire Management*	*Forest Products*	
Aaron Kimple, Page Buono	Mountain Studies Institute	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Fire Management*	*Forest Products*	
Dagmar Llewellyn, Dave Park	US Bureau of Reclamation	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Federal*		
Caleb Stotts	Chama Peak Land Alliance	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Fire Management*	*Forest Products*	
Toner Mitchell, Garrett Hanks	Trout Unlimited	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Wildlife*	*mmunity Development*	
Daniel Denipah, Phillip Silva, Isaac Gutierrez, Garrett Altm	Santa Clara Pueblo	*Yes*	*Tribal*	*Watershed*	*Forest Products*	
Aaron Cajero	Jemez Peublo	*Yes*	*Tribal*	*Watershed*	*Forest Products*	
Ron Lovato, Albert Bowie, Larry Phillips	Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo	*Yes*	*Tribal*	*mmunity Developme*	*Forest Products*	
John Ussery	Northern NM College	*Yes*	*College/University*	*Youth*	*Forest Products*	
Kent Reid, Alan Barton	New Mexicon Highlands University	*Yes*	*College/University*	*Fire Ecology*	*Youth*	
Arturo Archuleta	NM Land Grant Council	*Yes*	*Forest Products*	*Fire Management*	*Watershed*	
Paula Garcia, Chavela Trujillo	NM Acequia Association	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Fire Management*	*Forest Products*	
Terry and Joby Conley	Walatowa Timber Industries	*Yes*	*Forest Products*			
Jessica Johnston	Aguas Nortenas	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Forest Products*	*mmunity Development*	
Rene Romero	Taos Pueblo	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Fire Management*	*Forest Products*	
Felicity Strachan	NM Office of State Engineer	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Fire Management*	*Forest Products*	

Gordon West	The Trollworks	*Yes*	*Forest Products*	*Research*	*Utility*	
Mary Stuever	San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Forest Products*	*mmunity Development*	
Bill Trimarco	Wildfire Adapted Partnership, Archuleta County	*Yes*	*Fire Management*	*ommunity Developme*	*Forest Products*	
Theodore Padilla	Padilla Logging	*Yes*	*Forest Products*			
Norman Vigil	East Rio Arriba Soil and Water Conservation District	*Yes*	*Watershed*	*Fire Management*	*Forest Products*	

January 8, 2020

CFLRP Federal Advisory Panel Members
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear CFLRP Federal Advisory Panel Members,

The undersigned members of the Two Watersheds - Three Rivers- Two States Cohesive Strategy Partnership ("the 2-3-2 Partnership") are writing to express our support and commitment to the Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) program proposal. Members of this collaborative have been involved in the development of the restoration strategy and will, together with the broader project community, make this initiative a success. The 2-3-2 Partnership has convened partners from across much of the Rio Chama landscape since 2016, and has developed trust and shared goals among its diverse members. In recognition of the added complexity of a CFLR, the Partnership will conduct a collaboration-focused needs assessment to ensure existing structure and protocols meet the needs of its membership under the CFLR, and would revise the structure and decision-making protocols as necessary. To ensure success at the beginning of a decade-long initiative, all parties will clarify and solidify their roles and responsibilities, express their commitment to the collaborative process, and develop a common understanding of shared goals.

The 3.77 million-acre project area centered on the Rio Chama Watershed is rich in natural and cultural resources, and its defining feature – the Rio Chama itself – flows through a scenic landscape steeped in history and culture. This critical watershed provides more than a third of New Mexico's drinking water, supports local rural economies in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico, and is a major draw for outdoor recreation. The landscape's diverse ownership includes the lands of several Native American Tribes, Pueblos, Hispanic Land Grants, private forest landowners, and land managed by the states of New Mexico and Colorado, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as the Carson, Santa Fe, Rio Grande and San Juan National Forests.

The Rio Chama CFLR would leverage and build upon several successful collaborative partnerships and restoration efforts currently being implemented on this important landscape, including (but not limited to): Chama Peak Land Alliance, Wildfire Adapted Partnerships of Southwest Colorado, San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership, the All Hands All Lands burn program, and the Rio Grande Water Fund. Further, the CFLR would also advance the three-forest fire and fuels work, which the collaborative hopes to scale up and expand across the region.

The 2-3-2 Partnership endorses the USFS's intent of sharing hazardous fuels reduction and restoration accomplishments across the four forests and two regions. This will involve sharing financial, technical, and staff resources across the CFLR footprint. The 2-3-2 Partnership commits to facilitating this process as appropriate. There is already a local example of this at a smaller scale related to prescribed burning, where for the past several years, the three forests in northern New Mexico have used a resource-sharing model to "surge" personnel, funding, and technical assistance to any forest where an opportunity exists to accomplish a flagship burn or hazardous fuels reduction target. According to land managers and fire staff, this practical solution has led to an increase in prescribed fire, improved crew cohesion, and an ability to capture favorable burning opportunities across a broad landscape. The Partnership wants to promote this approach broadly to achieve CFLR goals.

Additionally, the 2-3-2 Partnership encourages the USFS to develop a method of sharing funds across two regions, potentially modeled after the Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI). In the SWERI model, funds delivered to one region are shared across multiple states, and both Region 2 and 3.

The USFS Regions are in a unique position, with strong cross-boundary and collaborative partnerships already in place. In order that the Rio Chama CFLR builds upon those but does not put them at risk, the 2-3-2 Partnership expects the USFS to:

- Use CFLR funding for implementation rather than new NEPA efforts,
- Provide effective CFLR project coordination, collaboration, and monitoring efforts by communicating with and supporting the 2-3-2 Partnership
- Fund external coordination at 10% of the CFLR budget,
- Fund multi-party monitoring at 10% of the CFLR budget,
- Promote consistent engagement and cogency with 2-3-2 during turnover of key USFS staff or positions via an onboarding approach,
- Share resources across the landscape to achieve implementation priorities, and
- Hold the Collaborative and USFS staff accountable to the vision of the Chama CFLR over the course of the project.

In turn, the 2-3-2 Partnership commits to:

- Coordination and collaboration,
- Support 2-3-2 Partnership taking this leadership role,
- Running multi-party monitoring and adaptive management programs,
- Engage communities within the CFLR footprint,
- Leverage CFLR funds for additional projects and planning across all lands,
- Develop clear communication channels between stakeholders, collaborative group and USFS, in a way that welcomes and introduces new USFS staff and partners to the 2-3-2, and
- Hold the USFS and stakeholders in the collaborative accountable to the vision of the Chama CFLR over the course of the project.

Through the 2-3-2 Partnership, diverse stakeholders will provide feedback and recommend priority treatments and projects that protect high-value resources like cultural sites, critical water delivery systems and infrastructure, old and large trees, and wildlife habitat for priority funding through the CFLR. Through mechanical thinning and the reintroduction of fire into these ecosystems, restoration partners aim to increase ecosystem resilience to climate change, drought, and forest pathogens. Restoring riparian areas, improving range conditions, and enhancing wildlife habitat are also project goals. The collaborators will implement a multi-party process in order to learn from our interventions and adapt to changing conditions. The Partnership commits to monitoring restoration effectiveness, and ecological, social, and economic effects. Given that 202 of the 213 watersheds in the project area are classified as highly susceptible to wildfire, a key component of the restoration strategy is to create fire-adapted communities and promote resilient landscapes by addressing the highest risk to the health, resilience and function of the landscape from large, high-intensity crown fire events.

The CFLR program is an important tool that leverages existing investments in improving forest health and economic development. By working together to prioritize treatments and leverage funds across four national forests, the Rio Chama watershed landscape strategy approaches forest restoration and economic development at the necessary scale to achieve meaningful ecological, social, and economic results for northern New Mexico and southwest Colorado. The Forest Stewards Guild will serve as the

fiscal agent, in close coordination with the 2-3-2 Partnership, to achieve these ambitious goals and to conduct robust collaboration, coordination, and multi-party monitoring. The Forest Stewards Guild is a national 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that has worked in this landscape for over twenty-five years.

The roles and responsibilities of the 2-3-2 Partnership are further described in the proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Below-signed members of the 2-3-2 Partnership.

Mountain Studies Institute
Marcie Demmy Bidwell
marcie@mountainstudies.org

Forest Stewards Guild
Eytan Krasilovsky, Deputy Director
eytan@forestguild.org

The 2-3-2 Executive Committee
Aaron Kimple, Coordinator
akimple@mountainstudies.org

The Nature Conservancy
Anne Bradley
abradley@TNC.org

NM Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute
R. Kent Reid, Director
rkreid@nmhu.edu

River Source
Rich Schrader, Director
rich@riversource.net

Chama Peak Land Alliance
Caleb Stotts, Director
caleb@chamapeak.org

Colorado State Forest Service
Alamosa / Salida Field Offices
Adam Moore, Supervisory Forester
Adam.moore@colostate.edu

New Mexico State Forest Service
Chama District Forester
Mary Stuever, New Mexico Forestry Division

mary.stuever@state.nm.us

Trout Unlimited
Toner Mitchell, New Mexico Water and Habitat Program Director
Garrett Hanks, (title forthcoming)
tmitchell@tu.org; ghanks@tu.org

San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership
Mary Stuever, Director
mary.stuever@state.nm.us

Padilla Logging
Theodore Padilla
padillalogging@yahoo.com

Wildfire Adapted Partnerships
Bill Trimarco, Archuleta County Coordinator
archuletafirewise@gmail.com

East Rio Arriba Soil and Water Conservation District
Norman Vigil, Project Manager
norman.vigilsr@outlook.com

January 22, 2020

CFLRP Federal Advisory Panel Members
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear CFLRP Federal Advisory Panel Members,

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The 3.77 million-acre project area centered on the Rio Chama Watershed is rich in natural and cultural resources, and its defining feature – the Rio Chama itself – flows through a scenic landscape steeped in history and culture. This critical watershed provides more than a third of New Mexico's drinking water, supports local rural economies in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico, and is a major draw for outdoor recreation. The landscape's diverse ownership includes the lands of several Native American Tribes, Pueblos, Hispanic Land Grants, private forest landowners, and land managed by the states of New Mexico and Colorado, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as the Carson, Santa Fe, Rio Grande and San Juan National Forests.

The Rio Chama CFLR would leverage and build upon several successful collaborative partnerships and restoration efforts currently being implemented on this important landscape, including (but not limited to): Chama Peak Land Alliance, Wildfire Adapted Partnerships of Southwest Colorado, San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership, the All Hands All Lands burn program, and the Rio Grande Water Fund.

The 2-3-2 Partnership endorses the USFS's intent of sharing hazardous fuels reduction and restoration accomplishments across the four forests and two regions. This will involve sharing financial, technical, and staff resources across the CFLR footprint. The 2-3-2 Partnership commits to facilitating this process as appropriate. There is already a local example of this at a smaller scale related to prescribed burning, where for the past several years, the three forests in northern New Mexico have used a resource-sharing model to "surge" personnel, funding, and technical assistance to any forest where an opportunity exists to accomplish a flagship burn or hazardous fuels reduction target. According to land managers and fire staff, this practical solution has led to an increase in prescribed fire, improved crew cohesion, and an ability to capture favorable burning opportunities across a broad landscape. The Partnership wants to promote this approach broadly to achieve CFLR goals.

Additionally, the 2-3-2 Partnership encourages the USFS to develop a method of sharing funds across two regions, potentially modeled after the Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI). In the SWERI model, funds delivered to one region are shared across multiple states, and both Region 2 and 3.

The USFS Regions are in a unique position, with strong cross-boundary and collaborative partnerships already in place. In order that the Rio Chama CFLR builds upon those but does not put them at risk, the 2-3-2 Partnership expects the USFS to:

- Use CFLR funding for implementation rather than new NEPA efforts,
- Provide effective CFLR project coordination, collaboration, and monitoring efforts by communicating with and supporting the 2-3-2 Partnership
- Fund external coordination at 10% of the CFLR budget,
- Fund multi-party monitoring at 10% of the CFLR budget,
- Promote consistent engagement and cogency with 2-3-2 during turnover of key USFS staff or positions via an onboarding approach,
- Share resources across the landscape to achieve implementation priorities, and
- Hold the Collaborative and USFS staff accountable to the vision of the Chama CFLR over the course of the project.

In turn, the 2-3-2 Partnership commits to:

- Coordination and collaboration,
- Support 2-3-2 Partnership taking this leadership role,
- Running multi-party monitoring and adaptive management programs,
- Engage communities within the CFLR footprint,
- Leverage CFLR funds for additional projects and planning across all lands,
- Develop clear communication channels between stakeholders, collaborative group and USFS, in a way that welcomes and introduces new USFS staff and partners to the 2-3-2, and
- Hold the USFS and stakeholders in the collaborative accountable to the vision of the Chama CFLR over the course of the project.

Through the 2-3-2 Partnership, diverse stakeholders will provide feedback and recommend priority treatments and projects that protect high-value resources like cultural sites, critical water delivery systems and infrastructure, old and large trees, and wildlife habitat for priority funding through the CFLR. Through mechanical thinning and the reintroduction of fire into these ecosystems, restoration partners aim to increase ecosystem resilience to climate change, drought, and forest pathogens. Restoring riparian areas, improving range conditions, and enhancing wildlife habitat are also project goals. The collaborators will implement a multi-party process in order to learn from our interventions and adapt to changing conditions. The Partnership commits to monitoring restoration effectiveness, and ecological, social, and economic effects. Given that 202 of the 213 watersheds in the project area are classified as highly susceptible to wildfire, a key component of the restoration strategy is to create fire-adapted communities and promote resilient landscapes by addressing the highest risk to the health, resilience and function of the landscape from large, high-intensity crown fire events.

The CFLR program is an important tool that leverages existing investments in improving forest health and economic development. By working together to prioritize treatments and leverage funds across four national forests, the Rio Chama watershed landscape strategy approaches forest restoration and economic development at the necessary scale to achieve meaningful ecological, social, and economic results for northern New Mexico and southwest Colorado. The Forest Stewards Guild will serve as the fiscal agent, in close coordination with the 2-3-2 Partnership, to achieve these ambitious goals and to

conduct robust collaboration, coordination, and multi-party monitoring. The Forest Stewards Guild is a national 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that has worked in this landscape for over twenty-five years.

The roles and responsibilities of the 2-3-2 Partnership are further described in the proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Below-signed members of the 2-3-2 Partnership.

Mountain Studies Institute
Marcie Demmy Bidwell
marcie@mountainstudies.org

Forest Stewards Guild
Eytan Krasilovsky, Deputy Director
eytan@forestguild.org

The 2-3-2 Executive Committee
Aaron Kimple, Coordinator
akimple@mountainstudies.org

The Nature Conservancy
Anne Bradley
abradley@TNC.org

NM Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute
R. Kent Reid, Director
rkreid@nmhu.edu

River Source
Rich Schrader, Director
rich@riversource.net

Chama Peak Land Alliance
Caleb Stotts, Director
caleb@chamapeak.org

Colorado State Forest Service
Alamosa / Salida Field Offices
Adam Moore, Supervisory Forester
Adam.moore@colostate.edu

New Mexico State Forest Service
Chama District Forester
Mary Stuever, New Mexico Forestry Division
mary.stuever@state.nm.us

Trout Unlimited
Toner Mitchell, New Mexico Water and Habitat Program Director
Garrett Hanks, Northern New Mexico Project Manager
tmitchell@tu.org; ghanks@tu.org

San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership
Mary Stuever, Director
mary.stuever@state.nm.us

Padilla Logging
Theodore Padilla
padillalogging@yahoo.com

Wildfire Adapted Partnerships
Bill Trimarco, Archuleta County Coordinator
archuletafirewise@gmail.com

East Rio Arriba Soil and Water Conservation District
Kenny Salazar, Chairman
ksalazarswcd@gmail.com

Walatowa Timber Industries
Terry Conley, Owner
terryandrandy@yahoo.com

Santa Clara Pueblo
J. Michael Chavarria, Governor
governor@santaclarapueblo.org

Upper Chama Soil and Water Conservation District
Norman Vigil, Chairman
Norman.vigilsr@outlook.com

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 16th, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

The New Mexico Congressional Delegation writes in support of the 2-3-2 Partnership's proposed Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) as reviewed by the United States Department of Agriculture. This CFLRP proposal will enable National Forests, state land agencies, and local partners along the Rio Chama in Colorado and New Mexico to better coordinate their wildfire prevention efforts by establishing an interstate fire mitigation and watershed management system.

The Rio Chama is a major tributary of the Rio Grande River that runs through southern Colorado and northern New Mexico, including portions of the San Juan, Rio Grande, Carson, and Santa Fe National Forests. In turn, the Rio Chama sustains communities consisting of hundreds of thousands of residents across these two states, as well as numerous industries across northern New Mexico such as outdoor recreation and commercial logging.

Unfortunately, much of the forestland in the Rio Chama region has accumulated increasingly dangerous concentrations of fuel, creating the conditions for major wildfires such as the 2011 Los Conchas Fire, which devastated the Santa Clara Pueblo's watershed and disrupted the water supply of communities hundreds of miles downriver. The cost of suppressing this Fire and repairing the resulting damages reportedly exceeded one hundred million dollars, demonstrating the needs for proactive fire control policies to mitigate the threat posed by future wildfires across the region.

Accordingly, the 2-3-2 Partnership has assembled a coalition consisting of federal, state, and local stakeholders such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, United States Forest Service, Colorado State Forestry Service, New Mexico State Forestry Division, San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership, Rio Grande Water Fund, and private landowners to develop the Rio Chama CFLRP. This CFLRP proposal aims to establish a fire mitigation and watershed management system covering a 3.77 million-acre area surrounding the Rio Chama in which the aforementioned entities will share resources to establish a natural fire control regime to collectively address future mitigation priorities.

Specific objectives of the Rio Chama CFLRP include expanding commercial and non-commercial thinning and broadcast burning treatments to reduce fuel loads, regenerative harvests, and the implementation of forest composition improvements to generate resiliency against the adverse effects of climate change, insects, and disease on forest health. To achieve these objectives, the partnering organizations propose to implement a unified fire control system across the project

region in order to share personnel and resources needed to achieve priority fire mitigation projects and other shared stewardship objectives.

The New Mexico Congressional Delegation proudly supports this effort to reduce fire risk across the Rio Chama region and we commend the members of the 2-3-2 Partnership for their efforts to protect this vital ecological resource for future generations. We respectfully ask that you give this proposal thorough consideration as a CFLRP candidate under Department review guidelines.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall
United States Senator

Ben Ray Luján
United States Representative

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

Deb Haaland
United States Representative

Xochitl Torres Small
United States Representative

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Albuquerque Area Office
555 Broadway NE, Suite 100
Albuquerque, NM 87102-2352

IN REPLY REFER TO:
ALB-402
1.1.2

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Mr. James Melonas
Forest Supervisor
Santa Fe National Forest
11 Forest Lane
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508

Subject: Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP)

Dear Mr. Melonas:

The Bureau of Reclamation's Albuquerque Area Office supports the U.S. Forest Service's CFLRP application for the Rio Chama watershed, which would incorporate portions of the San Juan, Rio Grande, Carson, and Santa Fe National Forests. Reclamation manages water diversion and storage facilities within the proposed project area, including the San Juan-Chama Project trans basin diversions, Heron Reservoir, and El Vado Reservoir. Reclamation's infrastructure and our ability to meet the needs of downstream irrigators and municipalities is vulnerable to the effects of potential wildfires in the headwater regions of the San Juan and Chama basins. The activities proposed under the Rio Chama CFLRP would mitigate that vulnerability and therefore benefit Reclamation.

Reclamation also supports collaborative efforts within and near the project area that perform forest treatments and watershed improvements on both public and private land, including the Chama Peak Land Alliance, the San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership, and the Upper Rio Grande Watershed District, and hopes that the CFLRP can work collaboratively with these organizations. Over the last few years, Reclamation has funded an Americorps VISTA Volunteer, co-supervised with the Chama Peak Land Alliance, to support the San Juan-Chama Watershed Partnership. This organization has worked closely with The Nature Conservancy's Rio Grande Water Fund and the 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy Partnership to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire on private lands adjacent to the San Juan, Rio Grande and Carson National Forests.

Additionally, Reclamation has provided funding through its WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP) to several watershed groups located within and near the proposed Rio Chama CFLRP project, including the East Jemez Landscape Futures project area, which focuses on restoration of landscapes affected by the Las Conchas and Dome fires. Once formed, these watershed groups work to identify and implement restoration needs within their watersheds.

Members of my staff have attended several of your meetings and have contributed to the development of the goals for the Rio Chama CFLRP, including: 1) connecting people with the land, 2) reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire by improving fire resiliency, and 3) providing for high water quality in runoff and streamflow from National Forest System lands. These goals complement Reclamation's mission.

We applaud the Forest Service for embarking on the Rio Chama CFLRP, and we wish you success in making your proposal become reality. Should your proposal be selected, Reclamation looks forward to continuing to work with the San Juan, Rio Grande, Carson, and Santa Fe National Forests to fulfill the objectives of this large, multi-state and multi-basin Forest initiative.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Dagmar Llewellyn at (505) 462-3594. For Text Telephone Relay Service access, call the Federal Relay System Text Telephone (TTY) number at (800) 877-8339.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Faler, P.E
Area Manager

WALATOWA

PUEBLO of JEMEZ

Dear CFLRP Federal Advisory Panel:

The Pueblo of Jemez is in full support of the Forest Service's proposed Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). This project would benefit the Pueblo of Jemez by helping restore more resilient forests adjacent to our tribal lands and bringing improvements to the health of our waters and wildlife. The project would also help to strengthen area communities and help to sustain rural economies.

The proposed project area captures the headwaters of the Chama, San Juan and Rio Grande rivers, and would benefit sovereign tribal lands as well as lands administered by other agencies that are sacred and continue to be utilized by tribal members. The project area has an abundance of natural and cultural resources that are at great risk due to disturbances that do not respect our respective boundaries. This proposed project would help to reduce these risks, such as wildfire, insects and disease, drought and flooding.

The Pueblo supports this proposed project because it will leverage and build upon existing collaborative partnerships and restoration work already underway to reestablish natural fire regimes and to reduce wildfire risk on this important landscape. The Pueblo of Jemez has been involved in the development of the restoration strategy and is committed to its success. The project would further build shared stewardship and enhance ongoing collaborations. The project would also serve to prioritize treatments and leverage outside funding which we believe is paramount to achieving meaningful results at the landscape scale.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthy proposal and if I can provide any additional information on why we support this project, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

John Galvan
1st Lt. Governor

Office of the Governor
PO Box 100 • Jemez Pueblo • New Mexico • 87024
(575) 834-7359 • Fax (575) 834-7331

The Jicarilla Apache Nation

EXECUTIVE OFFICES

P.O. Box 507 • Dulce, New Mexico • 87528-0507 • (505) 759-3242

Jicarilla Apache Reservation
February 11, 1887-1987

January 23, 2020

James Melonas
Forest Supervisor
Santa Fe National Forest
11 Forest Lane
Santa Fe, NM 87508

Dear Mr. Melonas:

The Jicarilla Apache Nation, a federally recognized tribe, writes in support of the Forest Service's proposed Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) project which would help restore resilient ecosystems, viable communities and sustainable rural economies across approximately 3.8 million acres in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado.

Encompassing the headwaters of the Rio Chama, San Juan River and Rio Grande, the proposed project footprint includes sovereign tribal lands as well as lands sacred to many pueblos and tribes. The project area is rich in natural and cultural resources that are at heightened risk due to natural disturbances that do not follow political boundaries, including wildfire, insects and disease, drought and flooding.

The Rio Chama CFLRP will leverage and build upon existing collaborative partnerships and restoration work already underway to reestablish natural fire regimes and reduce wildfire risk on this important landscape. The Jicarilla Apache Nation has been involved in the development of the restoration strategy and is committed to its success. We believe that shared stewardship, working together to prioritize treatments and leverage funding, is the most effective way to achieve meaningful results at the necessary scale to make this important landscape more resilient to its many stressors now and into the future.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

Darrell Paiz, President
Jicarilla Apache Nation

P.O. Box 1099
Ohkay Owingeh, New Mexico 87566
Phone (505) 852-4400
Fax (505) 852-4820

January 23, 2020

Mr. James Melonas
Forest Supervisor
Santa Fe National Forest
11 Forest Lane
Santa Fe, NM 87508

Dear Mr. Melonas:

Ohkay Owingeh, a federally recognized tribe, writes in support of the Forest Service's proposed Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) project which would help restore resilient ecosystems, viable communities and sustainable rural economies across approximately 3.8 million acres in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado.

Encompassing the headwaters of the Rio Chama, San Juan River and Rio Grande, the proposed project footprint includes sovereign tribal lands as well as lands sacred to many pueblos and tribes. The project area is rich in natural and cultural resources that are at heightened risk due to natural disturbances that do not follow political boundaries, including wildfire, insects and disease, drought and flooding.

The Rio Chama CFLRP will leverage and build upon existing collaborative partnerships and restoration work already underway to reestablish natural fire regimes and reduce wildfire risk on this important landscape. Ohkay Owingeh has been involved in the development of the restoration strategy and is committed to its success. We believe that shared stewardship, working together to prioritize treatments and leverage funding, is the most effective way to achieve meaningful results at the necessary scale to make this important landscape more resilient to its many stressors now and into the future.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

For Ron Lovato
Governor

Complete the table below and respond to the question at the bottom of the tab.
For 2010 Project extensions, fill in the annual funding request for the number of years requested for the extension (up to 10)

Fiscal Year 1*	**Funding Planned/Requested**	
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	$2,000,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	$150,000	
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	$10,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	$2,500,000	
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$4,660,000	
CFLRP Funding Request	$4,000,000	
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$4,000,000	Intent is to commit 15-20% towards Monitoring and Collaboration annually.
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	$500,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	$75,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands		
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	$575,000	

Assumed funding requested for Year 1 will be allocated in February 2020 at the earliest

Fiscal Year 2	**Funding Planned/Requested**	
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	$2,000,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	$150,000	
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	$10,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	$2,500,000	
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$4,660,000	
CFLRP Funding Request	$4,000,000	
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$4,000,000	Intent is to commit 15-20% towards Monitoring and Collaboration annually.
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	$500,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	$75,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands		
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	$575,000	

Fiscal Year 3	Funding Planned/Requested	
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	$2,000,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	$150,000	
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	$10,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	$2,500,000	
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$4,660,000	
CFLRP Funding Request	$4,000,000	
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$4,000,000	Intent is to commit 15-20% towards Monitoring and Collaboration annually.
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	$500,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	$75,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands		
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	$575,000	

Fiscal Year 4	Funding Planned/Requested	
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	$2,000,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	$150,000	
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	$10,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	$2,500,000	
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$4,660,000	
CFLRP Funding Request	$4,000,000	
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$4,000,000	Intent is to commit 15-20% towards Monitoring and Collaboration annually.
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	$500,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	$75,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands		
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	$575,000	

Fiscal Years 5-10	Funding Planned/Requested
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	$12,000,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	$900,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	$60,000

USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	$15,000,000	
Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$27,960,000	
CFLRP Funding Request	$24,000,000	
Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands	$24,000,000	Intent is to commit 15-20% towards Monitoring and Collaboration annually.
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	$3,000,000	
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	$300,000	
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands		
Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands	$3,300,000	

Please provide an **estimate of any funding needed for NEPA and environmental compliance** in support of the CFLRP Project. You may copy/paste the response to the Tier 1 template and/or elaborate with additional details as needed. *NOTE: CFLN can only be used for implementation and monitoring (not planning).*

Most of the key NEPA has already been completed. For the current NEPA underway, this has already been planned with current funds. No additional funding is expected to complete any NEPA to accomplish the projects expected to be completed over the life of the CFLRP.

Forest Service

Southwestern Region 3
Carson National Forest
208 Cruz Alta Road
Taos, NM 87571

Santa Fe National Forest
Supervisor's Office
11 Forest Lane
Santa Fe, NM 87508

File Code: 2400 Date: January 17, 2020
Route To:

Subject: Forest Supervisor commitment to success of the Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program

To: CFLRP Federal Advisory Panel Members

We, the Forest Supervisors of the Carson, Rio Grande, San Juan, and Santa Fe National Forests write to express our strong leadership commitment to the success of the Rio Chama Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program.

We have been personally involved, along with key staff on each forest and multiple partners, in the development of this proposal. All four national forests have recognized the importance of this critical landscape and have been engaged for several years in cross-boundary restoration work. This proposal will be a catalyst to accelerate collaborative restoration efforts and forge new opportunities for partnerships and leveraging our shared successes.

This project will also build upon already strong internal relationships across the four forests. We have a proven track record of sharing resources and surging employees across forest and regional boundaries to get more work done while supporting and learning from each other.

We are also committed to the collaborative model articulated in the proposal and working with our partners throughout the project, prioritizing implementation of the work and using monitoring to inform adaptive management. In the spirit of our respective Shared Stewardship Agreements in Colorado and New Mexico we are dedicated to focus our work and leverage our resources on shared priority areas in the landscape.

We are all personally committed to the enduring success of this project.
Sincerely

JAMES D. DURAN
Forest Supervisor
Carson National Forest

DAN DALLAS
Forest Supervisor
Rio Grande National Forest

JAMES E. MELONAS
Forest Supervisor
Santa Fe National Forest

KARA CHADWICK
Forest Supervisor
San Juan National Forest