

Forest Products Modernization

At A Glance – June/July 2020

Modernization Accomplishment Highlights

People

- **Project Management Training:** From June 16-30, the FPM team and CI International delivered a Project Management 101 course to 150 employees. The purpose of the training is to employees a chance to learn the core principles of the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) and new skills to help them better manage the complex projects that are typical within the agency. The classes covered the "top ten" processes which the Forest Service may utilize in PM, application of key project management processes using specific Forest Service examples; identification of common project management "language" to facilitate better communication and project management checklists/templates to use on future projects. Due to overwhelming demand for the class, we are offering eight more sessions in August to reach an additional 240 employees.
- **Silviculture Certification Updates:** A virtual National Silviculture Certification Workshop was held May 19-20, 2020 to explore options for reducing the complexity and time commitment required for silviculturist certification and ensuring more qualified employees can achieve certification. Workshop objectives were to discuss core competencies for silviculture certification and to discuss four alternative Minimum National Standards (MNS). The workshop was a success. The Regional Silviculturists finalized the core competencies and discussed the pros and cons of each of the four alternative MNS. After the workshop, WO Forest Management leadership selected the preferred MNS. The working group is now working to finalize the Task Book and update FS directives pertaining to silviculture.

Business Practices

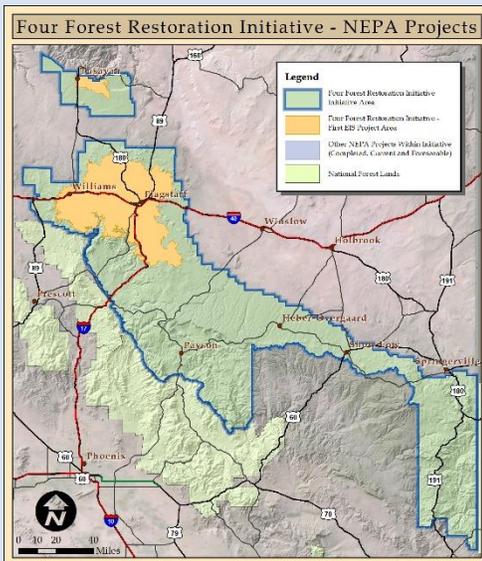
- On Wednesday, June 10th, the FPM Markets and Utilization team joined the WO Ecosystem Management Coordination team's "Planning Deep Dive" session. The theme of the June Deep Dive was "**All Things Timber: Markets Information and Determining Suitability**" and was the most-attended session to date! The Markets and Utilization team discussed market conditions and trends and how they inform the design of Forest Plan sale quantities (e.g., PTSQ, PWSQ) and/or utilization standards, both of which are necessary components of forest plan revision. If you were unable to join, you can access a recording of the session [at this link](#). Click [here](#) for the PowerPoint presentation and [here](#) for notes from the session. Attached is a flier announcing the new [Timber Suitability Analysis for Land Management Planning Technical Guide](#).

Policy

- After many months of anticipation and coordination with the Department and the White House Office of Management and Budget, Batch 1 of Timber Management Directives updates are slated to be published for Public Notice and Comment in late July. Batch 1 includes changes to five chapters of the Timber Management Manual (FSM 2400), five chapters of the Timber Sale Administration Handbook (FSH 2409.15) and three chapters in a new Suspension and Debarment Procedures Handbook (FSH 2409.18a).

We will send a separate announcement to all internal and external FPM contact lists the day they are posted for public comment. We will also hold a public webinar to explain the most significant changes made to FS manuals and handbooks in Batch 1, answer clarifying questions and explain how partners and other stakeholders can submit comments. The date for that webinar will be confirmed once the Federal Register Notice and Comment date is confirmed.

MODERNIZATION IN THE FIELD: Implementing Large-scale NEPA for Accelerated Restoration



Map of the 4FRI project area with boundary of first EIS project in blue.

In Region 3, the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) has undertaken landscape-scale NEPA projects that pave the way for multiple timber removal projects under one decision. The first 4FRI EIS, signed in April 2015, covered just under 1 million acres on the Coconino and Kaibab National Forests and cleared up to 430,261 acres for mechanical harvest. The EIS also cleared other restoration work, including prescribed fire, decommissioning 960 miles of roads, and stream restoration.

Because 4FRI is a Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project (CFLRP), stakeholders were included in the crafting of decisions, provided language for portions of the document and participated in the objection resolution process, although all decision-making authority remains with the Forest Service. Local Districts that would ultimately implement projects under the EIS also participated in the planning process. The 4FRI planning team created an implementation process for the EIS and visited each District involved in implementing the project to review the EIS and display where they can access data that can be used in projects.

The 4FRI planning team is implementing a second landscape-scale NEPA project, the [Rim Country Draft EIS](#) that will cover three National Forests and 1.24 million acres and may clear up to 900,000 acres for mechanical harvest. Applying lessons from the first EIS, this project is utilizing condition-based management rather than a specific treatment type per stand.

Next Steps and Actions Underway

People

- Over the last 7 months a small team developed a nationally standardized set of training modules focused on Permanent and Trust Funds. Overall, 26 modules have been developed and will be available to be viewed online as well as utilized in person in the future. The trainings focus on the Authorities, Policies, and Laws affecting the funds; responsibilities, and appropriate uses for the funds. Documentation and tracking are covered as well. We are still exploring the immediate delivery method, but are hopeful the modules will be available in the next 3 months.

Technology

- National Timber Sale Dashboard:** Over the past several months, Forest Management staff has been building a national timber sale dashboard in response to a request from partners to have a single online tool to get information on sales available for bid. The dashboard will not replace National Forests' timber sale webpages; rather it will aggregate information from TIM and spatially display all sales across the agency on a single map. The dashboard team presented a beta version to several internal and external stakeholders and is now working on integrating the feedback they received and working with the Department to publish the dashboard on the public Forest Service website.