

Zuni Mountains Collaborative “all hands” meeting

December 12th, 2020

Zoom meeting

Objective

A review of 2020 progress and learning and a look ahead to 2021

Next Steps and Action Items

Presentations from the meeting are available on the Collaborative website. Please watch your email and zunimountaincollaborative.org for updates on future meetings and spring field trips. Action items from the December meeting included:

1. Extension request to continue funding past 10th year (deadline May 2021). Stay tuned for meeting in spring of 2021.
2. Complete development of monitoring plan for Puerco CFLR taking into account lessons learned from 4FRI and FWPP.
3. Monitoring task team development to aid adaptive management into Puerco. Stay tuned for information about a field visit in late March or early April of 2021 (covid-19 dependent)
4. Small group engagement to develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion statement and possible land acknowledgement from the Zuni Mountains Collaborative. Contact: eytan@forestguild.org

Meeting summary

On Wednesday, December 12th, 2020, members of the Zuni Mountains Collaborative gathered for a virtual “all hands” meeting on Zoom to discuss the past years accomplishments and challenges and what is planned for 2021. The presentations are available on zunimountaincollaborative.org. For full meeting notes and/or Zoom chat transcript contact gabe@forestguild.org.

Attendees

Consuelo Lemaire – USFS, Mt. Taylor RD.
Jay Williams – USFS, Cibola NF., Timber Program Manager
Jason Eakins – USFS, Mt. Taylor RD, Timber Management Assistant and Sale/Agreement admin.
Kevin Parrish – FMO for the NPS
Molly Wright – USFS, Cibola SOP Fire Ecologist
Doug Decker – McKinley County
Aaron Johnson – USFS, East Zone Forester, Cibola NF
Leonora Pepper – The Forest Stewards Guild
Clay Benton – State Forestry Division
Matt Piccarello – The Forest Stewards Guild
Jordan Stone – Cottonwood Gulch
Gabe Kohler – The Forest Stewards Guild
Matt Allen – Mt. Taylor Millworks and Manufacturing
Molly Callaghan – Congresswoman Deb Haaland’s Office
Joe Trudeau – Center for Biological Diversity
Bob Findling – The Nature Conservancy, Rio Nutria Preserve

Brenda McKenna – Congresswoman Deb Haaland’s office, Field rep.
Susan Ostlie – Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Eytan Krasilovsky – The Forest Stewards Guild

Annual Report Update

Shawn Martin (USFS) gave an update and shared some 2020 accomplishments. These included:

- Jobs numbers increased from 54 to 94 people this year despite MSO injunction.
- National Wild Turkey Federation put money in the agreement for acres to be treated in the future.
- The Cibola NF will be submitting an extension request for CFLR funding that is due in May 2021
- Puerco decision signed April 2020: 81,000 acres, looking to thin/burn 31,000 acres, rehab 200 miles of road.

MSO Injunction Update

Shawn Martin (USFS) updated the collaborative on the Mexican Spotted Owl (MSO) injunction. The injunction has been lifted and can not be brought up again by Wild Earth Guardians. Harvesting actions have begun on the Puerco area in early December. The Cibola NF is insuring the conservation and recovery of MSO through trend monitoring, surveying owl habitat, and assessing effects of mechanical and prescribed fire treatments on the owl and its habitat. This effort includes convening a group of experts to aid in modelling and mapping of MSO habitat areas.

Approved Work in Bluewater/ Puerco

Bluewater:

- Peavine (61 acres)
- Northwest (827 acres)

Puerco:

- McGaffey (1,734 acres)
- McQue (781 acres)
- Perea (1,231 acres)
- Continental Divide (215 acres)
- Zuni Mountain (300 acres)

Check-in with Project Partners

NMSF: FAWRA treatments on private land

Clay Benton from New Mexico State Forestry shared information about treatments completed on private land in 2020 through the Forest and Watershed Restoration Act that helped to stabilize mill infrastructure in the region. Treatments followed a similar prescription as those completed on USFS land. 4500 acres have been identified throughout the CFLR and over 739 acres have been completed so far.

Cottonwood Gulch: Partnerships that meet community needs

Jordan Stone, Executive Director with Cottonwood Gulch shared information about the Gulch's partnerships with community organizations Chiz for Cheii and The Navajo-Hopi covid-19 relief effort that provide food and firewood to tribal communities in the project landscape.

Mt. Taylor Millworks: A brutally difficult year

Matt Allen owner of Mt. Taylor Millworks and Manufacturing in Milan, NM shared that 2020 has been the hardest year in over 37 years of business and that his business has never sustained losses like they did in 2020.

The Forest Stewards Youth Corps: Youth employment amidst a pandemic

Eytan Krasilovsky, Deputy Director with The Forest Stewards Guild shared a highlight about the challenge of implementing Mt. Taylor Forest Stewards Youth Corps amidst the covid-19 pandemic.

Monitoring Updates

MSO Monitoring

Shawn Martin (USFS) shared information about the 86 permanent monitoring plots that were installed through a Guild contract with Jefferson Natural Resources. Data is being loaded and will be reported out in 2021 to help choose the best potential treatments to maintain/improve habitat.

Weather Station

Matt Piccarello, SW Director with The Forest Stewards Guild shared an update about improvements made to the remote automated weather station (RAWS) that The Forest Stewards Guild manages in the Zuni Mountain landscape. Data is now being shared with the Western Regional Climate Center.

Water Quality Monitoring

Matt Piccarello shared that new devices were installed at Tampico Draw using a new technique designed to address past issues with tampering. Rapid riparian assessments were completed according to Spring Stewardship Institute standards.

Adaptive Management and Monitoring Task Team

Gabe Kohler, program coordinator with The Forest Stewards Guild gauged interest of collaborative members in participating in a monitoring task team that would help evaluate and adapt monitoring processes to improve treatment outcomes in the Rio Puerco project area.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) Statement and Land Acknowledgement

Eytan Krasilovsky asked the collaborative if they would be interested in pursuing the development of a statement that recognizes the collaboratives commitment to improving DEIJ. This would take place in a small group and could include a statement that acknowledges the history of colonization and forceful removal of native Americans from their ancestral lands.