

**Forsythe II Multi-Party Monitoring Group (MMG)
Monday, November 20, 2017
Meeting Summary**

Attendance

25 people attended the meeting, including private citizens, US Forest Service (USFS) employees, and Magnolia Forest Group (MFG) members.

Next Steps

<i>Heather</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organize a meeting with Teagan and Kevin to populate the table and review the initial protocol language.• Draft a rough meeting schedule with Kevin after the field trip on December 9.• Send out Avenza maps when they are available.• Send out a Doodle for the next meeting date.
<i>Marin</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send Heather maps for Avenza and post them on the CFRI website.• Send Heather step-by-step instructions for using Avenza.

Acronyms

The following commonly used acronyms are used regularly in forestry discussions:

- Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grasslands (ARP)
- Boulder County Parks and Open Space (BCPOS)
- Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP)
- Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI)
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
- Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)
- Magnolia Forest Group (MFG)
- National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)

This list should continue to be updated to ensure the discussion is understandable by all attendees.

MMG Roles and Commitments

Monte Williams, Forest Supervisor on the ARP, joined the meeting by conference call and offered additional information about USFS roles and commitments to inform the group discussion. Below are the highlights of Mr. Williams' comments and the ensuing group discussion.

US Forest Service Commitments

- The US Forest Service Regional Office provides each National Forest with objectives or targets that must be met on a yearly basis and often include things such as amount of timber harvest and acres of fuels treated. These numbers have budgetary implications and often guide work for future years. These guidelines should be secondary treatment drivers after ecological restoration and hazardous fuels mitigation.
- The ARP Forest Leadership Team agreed that it would be possible for the ARP to reach its objectives for 2018 without treatment on Forsythe. This means that contracting deadlines for the treatment will be pushed back to later in 2018, but the MMG and ARP staff must continue working to meet the new deadlines.
- Contracting deadlines are being moved back to January 2019 rather than January 2018. This means that Phase I and Phase II of Forsythe will likely be completed in 2019.

- Currently, the ARP is working to meet timber and fuels treatment objectives, but those goals are not the driving force behind the Forsythe II treatment or the MMG. They are more cumulative goals rather than project-level goals.
- The USFS is sincerely committed to working with the MMG through the life of the Forsythe II project.

USFS Roles

- The USFS is especially interested in hearing feedback from the MMG about adaptive management so the treatments can continue to improve.
- The USFS retains all authority and decision-making powers through this process, but will seriously consider feedback from the MMG. The whole process will be conducted in a way that is in accordance with NEPA and all other legal boundaries.

MMG Roles

- The MMG has a chance to develop strong working relationships with ARP staff on the Boulder District, which will create more meaningful outcomes in the future.
- The MMG offers a chance to landowners and community experts to come together through a collaborative process that is more than the sum of its parts.
- Participating in the MMG process allows community members to engage with USFS staff on a different level.
- One of the main roles of the MMG is to inform unit-level treatment plans, including social values. This will help both the MMG and USFS staff better understand the other's tradeoffs and external/internal commitments.

Feedback to the Forest Service

- It would be ideal if the USFS received regular feedback so that it could be incorporated throughout the process rather than just be considered at the end.
- Feedback that represents a multitude of voices and perspectives would be better legally for the USFS than a consensus report. A final report detailing process, convergence, divergence, and "if-then" scenarios would be very useful.
- Anyone is allowed to submit feedback to the USFS regarding this project according to FACA, but those not participating in the MMG will likely have different experiences.
- It is useful and more effective to have all feedback on the prescriptions before the project begins, as stopping the work of a contractor once they are on the ground is challenging. If the contractor is violating the contract, work can be stopped, but stopping work goes through the contracting office which has different ways of operating.
- Kevin Zimlinghaus should be the USFS point of contact for any contractor-related issues in the future.

Process

- The first field trip was useful as it allowed community members to understand the USFS's point of view on the units.
- Contractors are penalized for any breach in contract once they are working on the units. They are usually held to 90 percent contract compliance standards.
- Building relationships between the community and USFS staff may help overcome issues such as contractor actions on the ground.

Forsythe Treatment Information

- Phase I of the treatment will be completed manually while Phase II will be completed mechanically.
- The projects will be put out for bid in January 2019, and hopefully, local contractors will bid on them.
- The USFS is currently beginning to lay out treatment units and paint trees near the project boundary; however, nothing is permanent at this time.
- Ideally, the USFS will have all the preliminary prescriptions available and ready for distribution on December 16, 2017. The currently available prescriptions are drafts.
- The project is currently slated to take five years, which includes monitoring; however, monitoring will likely continue for 15 years.
- The current treatment information provides actions, but not the reasoning behind them. There needs to be clear and measurable goals for all units. The MMG needs this information to provide feedback on treatment design.
- The current treatment information provides direction to the crews who are implementing treatments and is not meant to offer reasoning for the directions. However, there are opportunities to make this information available through other avenues.
- There needs to be more information about distances between fuel breaks, as well as the difference between fire breaks, fuel breaks, and breaks between piles.
- A future meeting could consist of USFS staff walking MMG members through the process of what data is collected, how it is displayed, and what the data translates to in terms of tree marking/prescription.
- All Forsythe II prescriptions will be in accordance with national norms, local knowledge, best available science, and design criteria examined and set forth by USFS resource specialists. Resource specialists on the Boulder District include a hydrologist, a fishery biologist, a soil scientist, a wildlife biologist, an archaeologist, a fuels specialist, a silviculturist, an air quality scientist, a botanist, and a landscape architect, among others.
- The prescription will differentiate between mature trees and old-growth forest structure.

Heather Bergman, Teagan Blakey, and Kevin Zimlinghaus will use this information to populate the table on the future for the MMG and the USFS commitments before the next meeting and report back.

Protocols

MMG participants discussed the guidelines by which they will operate in the future. Below are the highlights of this conversation.

Name

The group will continue to be referred to as the Multi-Party Monitoring Group (MMG)

Purpose and Authority

The purpose of the MMG is to:

1. Continue the public participation and collaborative learning that occurred during the planning phase, and encourage and support the continuation of collaborative efforts throughout implementation
2. Help inform unit-level treatment plans and implementation instructions to attain ecological and social objectives
3. Conduct a transparent implementation process that keeps the public informed of and involved in treatment unit timing, design, and monitoring

4. Ensure that implementation of treatments responds to dynamic, local on-the-ground conditions
5. Demonstrate compliance with management direction specified in the Environmental Assessment (EA)
6. Ensure integrated engagement of interdisciplinary team members, field personnel, line officers and the public
7. Assess the effects of treatments on ecological and social attributes
8. Conduct monitoring activities, interpret and share results, adapt implementation practices to improve results and better meet project objectives

The MMG has no official authority, but the USFS has said that it will seriously consider MMG input and perspectives.

Membership

There was concern that people could join late in the process without sharing in the previous group learning and that this could derail progress. Participants agreed that it is the role of the facilitator to ensure forward momentum and group learning, which may sometimes come in the form of managing duplicative or counterproductive conversations.

Representation

Some participants attend meetings to represent themselves, while others represent their agencies or organizations. It is assumed that all participants are representing their own perspectives unless stated otherwise. The exception to this is the Colorado Parks and Wildlife representative, who is always representing the agency.

Subcommittees

Subcommittees and workgroups can be a useful option in accomplishing work between meetings. Participants agreed that task groups should be allowed as long as they are acting on behalf of the MMG and bring back their work for review. Participants reviewing task group work should be respectful of the task group effort and strive to honor it as much as possible.

Decision Making

The MMG is not working to achieve consensus. No decision-making processes need to be in place since there is no need to reach an agreement. Instead, MMG participants will work together and discuss to identify areas on convergence and divergence in perspectives.

Agency Roles

The US Forest Service, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Boulder County Parks and Open Space, and Colorado Forest Restoration Institute will all actively participate in the MMG. Their roles is to offer their agency perspectives when needed and exchange information with the public when applicable.

Public Meetings and Participation

The MMG wants to ensure all interested citizens have a chance to participate if they want. Notice of all meetings will be posted in the *Mountaineer* and the *Weekly Register Call*. Anyone who would like to receive meeting announcements via email should email the facilitator at Heather@PeakFacilitation.com. All meetings are open to the public, and the facilitator is expected to manage meetings so they run smoothly.

Documentation

Peak Facilitation Group will write a non-attributory meeting summary at the end of every meeting. Meeting summaries will report the varying perspectives and themes of what was said at the meeting and should not be considered consensus documents. MMG participants will have a chance to review meeting summaries for accuracy before they are finalized. Meeting summaries will be sent to participants roughly one week after the meeting. All final meeting summaries will be posted on the USFS and CFRI website.

Meeting Frequency, Duration, and Location

Meetings may not be held at regular intervals but rather may vary based on upcoming USFS deadlines. The MMG will revisit this issue after the next field tour on December 9, 2017. At that time, Heather Bergman and Kevin Zimlinghaus will draft a rough meeting schedule. All meetings will be held in Nederland and will last two to three hours. Any meeting whose sole purpose is to transmit information may be held as a webinar and be recorded.

Media Interactions

MMG members may talk to the media about their own perspectives and thoughts but will never speak on behalf of other members or the MMG as a whole. Peak Facilitation will never speak to the press.

Interactions with Other Entities

MMG members may talk to other entities about their own perspectives and thoughts but will never speak on behalf of other members or the MMG as a whole. Participants are encouraged to discuss all Forsythe-related issues with the USFS through the MMG to preserve the integrity and productivity of the process. It is understood that some participants have legal standing to go to court with the USFS over their comments and objections; however, this should not undermine the MMG process. Other entities are welcome to join the MMG meeting process, and participation from local organizations would be highly valued.

Funding

The USFS pays CFRI; CFRI pays for facilitation. These organizations will continue to explore additional funding opportunities for the MMG in the future, particularly those that could be used to fund a monitoring effort.

Heather Bergman, Teagan Blakey, and Kevin Zimlinghaus will review the drafting of the protocol language and intent offline before the next meeting.

Monitoring

MMG members are interested in the role monitoring will play in this process in the future. Below are the highlights of their discussion.

- MMG members would like to impact implementation and effectiveness monitoring. This will happen soon, as baseline data must be gathered before treatment.
- Some thought that while monitoring is very important, treatment design is more pressing and should be the first priority. Others thought that both monitoring and treatment design could be explored at the same time.
- Seasonality impacts monitoring, as it is hard to complete pre-treatment monitoring of plant diversity and wildlife in the winter.
- The MMG needs to spend more time discussing the monitoring questions.
- It is likely that future monitoring efforts will have to be voluntary due to budget constraints.

- There is concern that money may run out and post-implementation monitoring will not be completed.
- Avenza offers a way for the public to communicate social and ecological concerns with the USFS using a spatial tool. This tool is easily usable by the USFS, but there could be an issue of too much collected data if there is no restriction on what can be included. With clear sideboards, this process could be standardized between individuals and small groups.
- Having MMG members collect and share data via Avenza would be useful to the USFS, particularly in regards to local social and ecological values.
- The pins on Avenza could be combined to identify themes that people care about. Future MMG meetings could focus on discussion of individual pins in Avenza to identify shared concerns and unique or outlying concerns.

Next Steps

MMG members identified the following next steps:

- The next field trip will be held on December 9.
- Heather Bergman will email out the maps for Avenza as soon as they are available and post them on the website as well.
- Marin Chambers will provide Heather Bergman with step-by-step instructions of how to use Avenza so she can email them out to the email listserve.
- Heather Bergman will send out a Doodle to find a date for the next meeting.
- Kevin Zimlinghaus will share what the USFS is currently doing as well as the updated prescriptions at the next meeting.