

Catalina-Rincon FireScape Meeting Notes

February 3, 2009

12:30 p.m. at The Nature Conservancy (1510 E. Fort Lowell)

In attendance: Cori Dolan, Don Falk, Brooke Gebow, Stan Helin, Randall Smith (notes by Cori Dolan and Brooke Gebow)

We discussed changing the Steering Group name to Key Participants, particularly for the website.

We discussed changing the time and/or day of the Key Participants meeting from the first Wednesday of the month at 12:30pm to another time/day. **Cori will send an email to the group to find out if there is a more convenient time/day.**

FLRA directions: Randall reported that he is submitting a proposal as a Sky Island Collaborative Restoration Package for the Huachuca and PERP projects. Ultimately this funding umbrella might allow for additional projects including the C-R FireScape. Brooke and Drew Leiendecker are working on the Huachuca portion of the proposal and Craig Wilcox, the PERP part. Randall reported proposals go to the Region, and the Region's selections go before a national FACA committee for review.

Fuels Assessment Update: Don reported that things are moving faster than expected with regards to fuels assessment. Kristy, Josh, Kevin, Perry, Chris, and Don had a working session where they were going to use ELTs to refine LandFire, but it was decided that using Rapid Refresh would be better as the data then becomes part of the national LandFire database (which can also be updated once per year). The group also did a test run to see if they would get the appropriate fire behaviors with the given fuel models, and it worked very well. The group will be working on this further with Joe Scott in mid-February. Don posed the question: does LandFire see post-Aspen/Bullock fire mosaics (and other fires in the last 15 years)? Don reported that February and March would be spent finishing up the fuels homework and March thru May could start fire simulation modeling. He laid out three analysis steps that lead to picking treatment areas: 1) fire behavior under the current condition; 2) fuel moisture stress; 3) fire return interval departure. Don also laid out three ways to accomplish number 4: using expert opinion, looking at torching and crown fire likelihood, and trying a treatment optimization algorithm process that runs as a Farsite overlay. We should inquire about TEAMS capacity for that last option.

Details of Joe Scott visit: Joe is arriving to Tucson mid-morning on Tuesday, Feb. 16th. So far, his week is arranged as such:

Tuesday, Feb. 16th: Noon to 1:30pm meet with Steve Yool (BSE 218), 2:30 – 5pm meet with Brooke and Stan, 5pm dinner with Brooke, Don, and maybe Tom

Wednesday, Feb. 17th: 10am-2pm meet with Tyson Swetnam in BSE ART lab; 1:30-3pm meet with Aaryn Olsson in Arid Lands (there is time for a lunch meeting this day)

Thursday, Feb. 18th: 10am – 2pm – Fuels session (BSE 311), 2-3pm Don's Lab Group Meeting

Friday, Feb. 19th: 9am-5pm available to finish up any fuels homework (BSE 311)

C-R FireScape Steps/Schedule: Brooke suggested the following schedule of events:

February through March	Fuel model assessment/assignment
March through June	Fire behavior/effects modeling, analysis, and treatment options
August	Public information sessions
October	Finalize Proposed Action

Brooke will write up this schedule of events for inclusion on the website.

Brooke posed the question, “What is the best way to present the information we have gathered to the public?” Randall suggested we ask TEAMS to help us facilitate the public information sessions. He also suggests that we present our treatment areas, tools options, and recommendations as a place to start discussions and then let the public ask questions and tell us their concerns/suggestions. The group also discussed if it would be good to start meeting with key people and organizations prior to meeting with the public at large. If so, we would start those meetings late summer/early fall. Brooke and Randall also suggested that we meet with the Permittees as soon as we have something to present. **Stan and Cori will work on organizing a BBQ or similar get-together for the Permittees. Cori will contact Tim Connors to see if he will suggest a good time to hold the BBQ.**

Stan reported that Toni Strauss suggested a FireScape-wide get-together to share methods, successes, problems. **Stan will bring this up to the Board of Rangers when they meet on the 17th to see if there is interest.**

January Presentations: Brooke reported that the presentations at the Governor’s Forest Health Council and the FLT were well received.

Website latest: The website is now live at www.azfirescape.org. The name Steering Group was changed to Key Participants.

Coordinating with Buffelgrass Coordinators: Brooke reported that the SABCC has one employee, few resources, a huge amount of possible projects, and little support. Brooke asked what role C-R FireScape could play in regard to buffelgrass and the SABCC. Don suggested that the Science Working Group could be a point of contact for SABCC to collaborate with other buffelgrass projects (e.g., Aaryn Olsson, Travis Bean). The Coronado has authorized but not filled a weeds coordinator position.

Desired conditions update: Jennifer was not able to attend the meeting but relayed through email that the desired condition statements for deserts and grasslands should be finished by the week of Feb. 15th.

Fire field trip for UA range students: Bill Halvorson requested a fire-ecology related field trip for his Vegetation Management students on April 23rd. **Cori will call Chris Stetson regarding a possible FireScape-themed field trip.**

Galiuro Update: Don reported that Keith Lombardo is prepared to do the field work. Randall recommended that Keith also write a justification for using chainsaws in the wilderness. **Don suggested using an existing one as a template and will forward the Sheep Range National Wildlife Refuge justification to Keith. Randall will coordinate with TEAMS to help with this project as well. He will also speak with Jeanine Derby about it and identify locations and species of interest.**

Chiricahua Update: Brooke reported that Bill Edwards has three information sessions upcoming. Janel from TEAMS will be attending. Don and Tom will be presenting a science-based PowerPoint and Bill and Brooke will be presenting the treatment options for different vegetation types. Stan recommended Sue Kozacek as a point of contact for the Portal area. Don reported that Jesse Minor, a UA Geography PhD student, will be working on the fire history and social content side.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday March 3 at 12:30, TNC. If we get enough response on a new meeting time we may attempt to move it. Otherwise, we'll try again to get a better day and time on the 3rd. Focus of that meeting will be the results of fuels sessions with Joe Scott and next steps on outreach to the public.