

Catalina-Rincon FireScape Meeting Notes

September 2, 2010

9:30 am to noon at The Nature Conservancy, 1510 E Fort Lowell, Tucson

In attendance: Cori Dolan, Angie Elam, Don Falk, Brooke Gebow, Stan Helin, Steve Plevel (notes by Cori Dolan and Brooke Gebow – approved by Angie Elam)

PIL/Proposed Action/launching NEPA update

Having the proposed action and scoping put together before scheduling an IDT meeting was discussed. Once we have the fire behavior model runs, we will be able to move forward with that. Brooke reminded the group that the scoping notice informs the public that we are getting ready to do an Environmental Assessment. Our goal for the next meeting (Oct 7th) will be to have gone through and reviewed the scoping rough draft. Based on schedules, the group set a tentative date of November 17th-18th for a kickoff IDT meeting (not necessarily both days).

Janel will let USFS and other federal partners know about these dates. We will confirm this date for the IDT meeting at the next OCT 7th working group meeting. Inviting the new Forest Supervisor to our December meeting was also discussed.

Brooke and Angie will meet on Thursday, Sept 9th to discuss the proposed action and wilderness options.

Fuels map update

Brooke reported that we are waiting on modeling runs to help us find priority treatment areas as we go out with our proposed action. It's taking longer than expected because Joe Scott and Don H. are breaking new ground here and learning as they go as well. We can expect a product by the end of next week. Chris is in contact with them and will take ownership of the map when we get it. We will have an annual refresher to add new fires.

Brooke and Don reconfirmed for the group what we have done with regard to mapping and how that informs treatment options. The fuel model allows predicting fire behavior in a vegetation type based on the amount and spatial distribution of fuels. We have used the Landfire map and corrected it for our area. The fire behavior and effects model runs help justify the proposed action. We can use the fuels map to analyze a number of situations—for example, we can look at Mexican Spotted Owl (MSO) habitat and see what fire behavior and effects might occur in those areas. Modeling runs will also be added to the scoping notice, purpose and need, effects analysis and then lastly outreach and to get prescriptive treatments. They inform decisions on what areas to treat first in light of limited resources.

MSO design criteria

Brooke reported that we took the set of Huachuca design criteria and revised for our specific areas. Mark Crites from US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) came to the Chiricahua FireScape meeting and recommended noting in the chart where we are deviating from the Recovery Plan and explaining specifically how the Mexican Spotted Owl (MSO) benefit from that deviation. Mark also noted that there is a new Recovery Plan in process. The final product delivery date is uncertain but is fairly close to the review stage. Mark suggested we be rigorous about our

explanations for treating in the breeding season and treating in cores specifically if that is what we are proposing to do. **Brooke will bring those statements to the next meeting as examples for Catalina Rincon FireScape.**

Website needs + unit description and outreach updates

Cori reported that the new design for the website will cover all the FireScape projects. The new design is about half way finished, but we may have lost our website help at the U of A. Averill Cate has taken a full-time job off campus, but has offered to continue, through the ART lab at the U of A, working on our website on nights and weekends. The group discussed whether our proposed timeline could handle a prolonged delivery date on the website. It was decided that **Cori and Don will meet with Craig Wissler, head of the ART lab, to discuss options for website help.** UPDATE: Averill has continued to work on the website, which is now closer to three-quarters complete. **Don will write a short introduction piece for the new website homepage and deliver to Cori.**

Next meeting is Thursday October 7, 9:30 am at The Nature Conservancy.