

Fact Sheet

Background

1. The Mogollon Rim supports the largest contiguous ponderosa pine forest in the world, covering nearly 3 million acres, and ranging from the Grand Canyon across the Mogollon Rim to the White Mountains of eastern Arizona, and the Gila Mountains of southwestern New Mexico.
2. Due to a legacy of unsustainable land management practices, including fire suppression, old growth timber harvest, and livestock overgrazing, ponderosa pine forest ecosystems are highly degraded, at risk of unnatural fire that threatens wildlife, watersheds, and communities.
3. The best available science clearly indicates that a strategic combination of mechanical thinning, prescribed burning, and Wildland Fire Use fire is best for restoring natural fire to forested ecosystems, conserving key habitats, and protecting communities from unnaturally severe fire.
4. The current cost of restorative thinning (~\$1,000 per acre) makes it unlikely that agency capacity will be able to support landscape scale restoration. Implementation at this scale is contingent upon the U.S. Forest Service issuing landscape-scale long-term wood contracts.
5. Since 2003, the Arizona Forest Health Council has worked, under both Democratic Governor Napolitano, and current Republican Governor Brewer, to build politically durable agreement regarding science-based, collaborative landscape-scale forest restoration strategies for the state.
6. The *Analysis of Small Diameter Wood Supply in Northern Arizona*, conducted by the Forest Ecosystem Restoration Analysis Project at Northern Arizona University, and supported by broad stakeholder involvement, provides clear treatment parameters for ecologically appropriate restoration.
7. Consensus agreements reached within the small diameter wood supply study stipulate support for the mechanical thinning of nearly 1 million acres of small diameter trees over the next 20 years.
8. Overwhelming support has been expressed for ecologically appropriate, agreement-based, industry-supported restoration by Governor Napolitano, Governor Brewer, Congresswoman Kirkpatrick, all seven northern Arizona counties, the Eastern Arizona Counties Organization, the County Supervisors' Association of Arizona, and the Northern Arizona Council of Governments.
9. This MOU builds on collaborative agreements and ongoing collaborative restoration projects such as the White Mountain Stewardship Contract and is a vehicle for complimenting and implementing those agreements.

Potential ecological implications of this Memorandum of Understanding

1. This effort would be one of the largest forest restoration efforts of its kind in the country, and unprecedented in its integration of rigorous science, collaboration, and partnerships with appropriately-scaled industry.
2. As part of a landscape-scale effort to restore forests, conserve biodiversity, and protect communities, this MOU supports nearly 1 million acres of small

diameter forest thinning treatments to occur over the next 20 years. Approximately 300,000 acres of thinning would occur around communities across the Mogollon Rim, and more than 600,000 acres would occur in wildland areas.

3. Strategically-placed community protection-focused treatments, restoration and biodiversity conservation-focused treatments, including prescribed burning and Wildland Fire Use fire, will create a landscape context that facilitates the restoration of natural fires and landscape heterogeneity – bringing forests onto a trajectory of resilience over an area approximately 3 million acres in size.

Potential economic implications of this Memorandum of Understanding

1. Small diameter wood and biomass produced by restoration into high-value engineered wood products and renewable energy will generate the economically sustainable revenue necessary to fund the implementation of landscape scale restoration.
2. The implementation of landscape scale restoration by AZFRP will sustain 600 stable and high paying jobs in rural counties, and inject up to \$200 million annually in the northern Arizona economy.
3. AZFRP will partner with the existing local industry for the thinning and provide the critical mass and economic stability necessary for the rebuilding of an appropriate wood industry in northern Arizona.
4. AZFRP is a locally owned company developing an Oriented Strand Board (OSB) plant, and integrating a biomass energy plant in Winslow AZ, within an economically viable wood supply radius of the Mogollon Rim. The plants will process wood and biomass produced by collaboratively-defined restoration efforts across the Mogollon Rim.
5. AZFRP has demonstrated a strong attachment to collaboration, science-based restoration, ecological sustainability, public monitoring and adaptive management. The company is committed to clear, open and transparent processes to implement on the ground collaborative decisions.