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TREE FARM BULLETIN

2020 NEW MEXICO FOREST ACTION PLAN

A Collaborative Approach to Landscape Resilience

Executive Summary

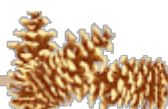
The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) Forestry Division and their many partners worked together to create this 2020 New Mexico Forest Action Plan. The plan provides an assessment of the current conditions of our natural resources and sets forth all lands strategies that address key issues in forest and watershed management in a changing climate.

States are required by the USDA Forest Service (as authorized by the federal Farm Bill) to develop a Forest Action Plan on a recurring 10-year plan cycle. This 2020 plan builds upon the first plan developed in 2010. Two notable differences between the 2010 and 2020 plan are that this plan provides:

- 1) a vision and next steps for collaboration between agencies and organizations and is not just intended to guide the actions of the Forestry Division alone; and
- 2) strategies and priorities to implement the Agreement for Shared Stewardship signed by New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and USDA Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen on November 14, 2019.

The Agreement for Shared Stewardship strengthens an already solid partnership between the State of New Mexico and USDA Forest Service and establishes the Forest Action Plan as the primary tool to guide co-management of forests and watersheds in the state.

The 2020 New Mexico Forest Action Plan supports the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department's Strategic Plan and works within the context of other state plans, such as the New Mexico State Wildlife Action Plan, State Water Plan, Nonpoint Source Management Plan, and Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The Division also incorporated new programs created in 2019 and 2020 at the Office of Outdoor Recreation (Economic Development Department) and Healthy Soil Program (New Mexico Department of Agriculture).



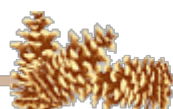
This plan further supports Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's Executive Order 2019-003 addressing Climate Change and Energy Waste Prevention. The Forestry Division is charged with integrating climate mitigation and adaptation practices related to natural and working lands into state agency operations and promoting forest and watershed management that will help ensure the long-term sustainability and resilience of New Mexico's natural and working lands and reduce the vulnerability of natural resources and communities to climate risks.

The Assessment (Chapter 2) section of the Forest Action Plan provides a geospatial analysis of the conditions and trends of forests and other natural resources in New Mexico as well as threats to forested lands, natural and cultural resources, life, and property. The Assessment used over 200 layers of data collected from dozens of sources to look at eight themes, each with a stakeholder group that guided the use of the data. These themes were paired with eight key threats to help identify vulnerabilities. The analysis and some original data sets are included in an on-line Data Atlas, providing easier public access to the Assessment information than was previously possible.

The ultimate purpose of the Assessment is to gather and consider the best science available for developing Strategies (Chapter 3) and other decision making. The Assessment identifies high risk areas where hazards pose the greatest threat to resources, and priority areas where strategies can be implemented to protect and enhance public benefit from natural resources.

The ten strategies set forth in this 2020 plan are:

1. Restore Forests and Watersheds addresses the legacy of fire exclusion and current land conditions to mitigate catastrophic wildfires burning much hotter than previously experienced with forest management treatments.
2. Fire Management restores the ecological role of fire to foster resilient landscapes and watershed health; sustains wildfire response on state and private lands; supports regional, state, and national wildfire response on all jurisdictions; and fosters collaboration of postfire response after high severity wildfire.
3. Private Land Stewardship provides strategies to improve and support private land stewardship and provide services to assist landowners, including both government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with tools for resource stewardship that contributes substantial public benefits.
4. Utility Rights of Way addresses the risk of wildfire ignition and threat of damage to utility infrastructure by increasing vegetation management along right of ways.
5. Rare Plants are addressed by incorporating key actions from the Division's Rare Plant Conservation Strategy to ensure protection of New Mexico's extraordinary plant diversity.



6. Reforestation addresses the need to reforest burned areas and bridge the state's reforestation backlog, and to do so with seedlings that will mature into trees capable of withstanding the anticipated growing conditions of the future.

7. Urban Forests and Communities addresses the need for trees where 80% of New Mexicans live and obtain essential benefits such as cooling shade, clean air, and stormwater runoff reduction.

8. Restoration Economy is the driving force behind forest management activities and addresses the need to invest in workforce development for all of these strategies, and to 12 rebuild and retool forest industry and wood processing to capture the by-products of restoration and manage forests for resilience in changing climate conditions.

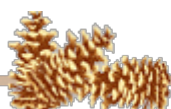
9. Land Conservation provides a statewide blueprint for land conservation to guide the investment of state and federal funds to provide tax credits for conservation easements or purchase land or easements and increase collaboration among local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and land trusts.

10. Outdoor Recreation is positioned to become a major economic driver in the state and the strategy identifies the importance of forest management to provide beautiful and safe places for recreation.

In addition to identifying ten strategies to address the natural and human-caused threats considered in the Assessment, the plan also identifies priority landscapes for the application of the strategies. The Assessment models were augmented with a Scenario Investment Planning (SIP) process supported by the Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS) National Fire Decision Support Center and vetted by local subject matter experts. The effort generated a set of priority landscape maps that include:

1. Priority Landscapes (Chapter 4) for restoration across all jurisdictions with forest and woodland cover types and identifies the top 500 watersheds in the state ranked by wildfire risk and importance for water source protection and biodiversity. These priority landscapes account for approximately 20% of all watersheds at risk.
2. Shared Stewardship for high priority landscapes on National Forest System lands and adjacent lands and identifies the top 250 watersheds in the state ranked by wildfire risk and importance for water source protection and biodiversity.

The Assessment, Strategy and Priority Landscapes chapters provide information to guide all forest and watershed managers in the state to invest and leverage resources where they will garner the greatest benefit. This plan will guide partners in planning, funding, and conducting restoration activities across jurisdictions over the next 10 years.



Acknowledgements

The Forestry Division acknowledges the vast gifts of expertise, opinion, and assistance from over a hundred individuals statewide via the Forest and Watershed Coordinating Group. The breadth and depth of this plan is attributable to the diverse participation from many stakeholders.

The final draft of the 2020 New Mexico Forest Action Plan is available. Please click on the following link to view and download pdf version:

http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/documents/NMFAP_2020_Version1_2020_09_28_web.pdf

If you would like to view 2020 New Mexico Forest Action Plan maps, related documents and web mapping applications please click on the following link:

<http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/statewideassessment.html>



WILDLAND STORIES:

DENDROCHRONOLGY WITH DR. JUSTIN DEROSE

The trees that surround us have a story to tell, yet so many of us have no idea what that story is. What is dendrochronology? How old is the oldest recorded tree? Can trees get scars? Where are some of the oldest forests located? These are just some of the questions we aim to answer with our guest Dr. Justin DeRose, Assistant Professor of Silviculture and Applied Forest Ecology at Utah State University.

**Hosted by Darren McAvoy and Gabrielle Harden
22 January 2021 at 9:00 am MT**

To register for this webinar, click on the following link:

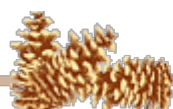
https://usu-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/4816057094386/WN_5L320c9YS--otG7SALVaiA

*Please note, we currently are not offering credits for this series.

**Limited capacity of 500. If you are unable to access the webinar on the day of the event, visit our YouTube page to watch the live stream. <https://www.youtube.com/usuextensionforestry>

1) SPRING 2021 FIELD DAY

The Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year event will be held on April 24, 2021 at the Spirit Hill Certified Family Forest owned by Carl Struck and Johanne Riddick. Lunch will be provided by the New Mexico Tree Farm Committee. Additional information will be forthcoming as we get closer to the Spring Field Day.



2) COMMITTEE MEETING

All Tree Farmers are invited and encouraged to take part in our 1ST New Mexico Tree Farm Committee Meeting of the year (three held annually). Please join us at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, March 10th, 2021. This meeting will be VIRTUAL utilizing "ZOOM", an invite will be sent to you via your e-mail address prior to March 10th. Join us and hear what other tree farmers have been up to and share your tree farm accomplishments with the group. We look forward to visiting with you. If you have any questions, please contact Arnie Friedt at arnie.friedt@state.nm.us

3) SUGGESTED READING FROM CARL STRUCK (2019 OTFY)

This article (link below), passed to me by a friend, is not only a great read but explains in sufficient detail the way I've come to think of forests after living in and with them for nearly 50 years! It explains why I've come to be cautious and conservative when it comes to forest "management" practices, erring on the side of bio-diversity over efficient human-centered calculations. I hope you take the time to read it all the way through...our walks in the woods will be soooooo much richer for it! Enjoy! Carl <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/12/02/magazine/tree-communication-mycorrhiza.html?referringSource=articleShare>

4) SUPER QUIZ

Score 1 point for each correct answer on the Freshman Level, 2 points on the Graduate Level and 3 points on the Ph.D. Level. Subject: TREES (e.g., Term for the botanical study of trees and other woody plants. Answer: Dendrology.)

FRESHMAN LEVEL

1. Defining trees by use, they are plants from which _____ can be produced.
2. Two of the major tree types are the conifers and the _____.
3. The outermost layer of the trunk is called the _____.

GRADUATE LEVEL

4. Quote the first two lines of Joyce Kilmer's poem "Trees."
5. Complete the title of Betty Smith's novel "A Tree _____."
6. Which of Walt Disney World's theme parks is represented by "The Tree of Life"?

PH.D. Level

7. Term for the care and cultivation of forest trees.
8. What type of tree is on the flag of Lebanon?
9. J.R.R. Tolkien created this race of beings resembling trees.

ANSWERS: will be posted in January 2021 Tree Farm Bulletin.

SCORING: 18 points – congratulations, doctor; 15 to 17 points – honors graduate; 10 to 14 points – you're plenty smart, but no grind; 4 to 9 points – you really should hit the books harder; 1 point to 3 points – enroll in remedial courses immediately; 0 points – who reads the questions to you?

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