Workshop Purpose

(1) Share updates on the Restoration Strategy and current activities.
(2) Collaboratively refine proposed restoration treatments/design features for use in NEPA process.

Participants: Forest Service Jemez District Ranger (L.Riddle), Santa Fe Forest Supervisor (M.Garcia), Regional NEPA Team Leader (S.Bruin) and many specialists; Valles Caldera National Preserve Director (D.Trujillo), Chief Scientist (B.Parmenter) and many resource specialists; The Nature Conservancy, NM Game & Fish, NM Environment Dept-Water and Air Bureaus; US Fish & Wildlife Service; Jemez Pueblo; Santa Clara Pueblo; Audubon Society; Hawks Aloft; WildEarth Guardians; Forest Guild; Trout Unlimited; La Cueva Volunteer Fire Dept; Caldera Action; National Park Service-Bandelier; Los Amigos; Southwest Energy Institute; University of NM.

Agenda:

(1) Welcoming remarks and introductions
(2) Overview of the Restoration Strategy and NEPA process
(3) Facilitated group discussions of concerns and recommendations for restoration treatment design
(4) Focus group report outs, and workshop wrap-up (what's next).

Notes: Water, Riparian, and Fish Group

Group focused on discussing current riparian restoration treatments, including: Redondo, Indios, and San Antonio Creeks, including a beaver habitat suitability study with NMGF and WildEarth Guardians; bank stabilization work San Antonio Creek (Los Amigos); Respect the Rio and campsite rehabilitation (Forest Service); Rio Grande cutthroat trout reintroduction, beaver habitat exclosures and willow plantings (Santa Clara Pueblo). Then focused on recommendations for future restoration treatments.

Recommendations:

1. Get more participation from grazing permittees throughout project planning and implementation.
2. Continue dispersed camping education programs.
3. Improve habitat before returning fish to creeks. Sediment and high water temperature are key issues.
4. Maximize NEPA coverage (e.g. one EA for SWJM-Riparian), for efficiency in time and cost, and to increase leverage for getting funding/grants. SFNF may start with CEs in interim.
5. Prioritize NEPA. Jemez River may be best restoration opportunity due to good access and no grazing.
6. Find sources of willow cuttings. Santa Clara Pueblo can provide a list of suppliers.
7. Start fish restoration/reintroduction projects at headwaters.
8. Consider that the use of piscicide is a growing public issue (concern).
9. Partners are encouraged to help advocate and find funding for these projects.

Notes: Wildlife Group

Group focused on design features/mitigation measures for treatments in habitat for northern goshawk, Mexican spotted owl, Jemez Mountains salamander, and other species. Discussed potential effects of prescribed burning and thinning in Paliza area, and timing of implementation.

Recommendations:

1. Conduct nest search/occupancy survey prior to treatments; avoid occupied habitat in breeding season
2. Avoid or minimize skidding or dragging of logs
3. Require high-flotation equipment to minimize ground pressure.
4. Design monitoring to focus on effects to wildlife in general, not just individual species.
5. Northern goshawk: avoid occupied habitat during breeding season; follow goshawk guidelines.
6. Jemez Mtns salamander: In occupied habitat, cut fire-line around large logs and stumps; avoid activities during monsoon season. Improve mapping and surveys of salamander habitat.
7. Mexican spotted owl habitat: Use low intensity backing fires; identify MSO suitable areas.
8. Peregrine falcon: They do fine with fire, but are affected by suppression and ignition activities.
9. Migratory birds: Avoid or minimize mechanical treatment April-August (nesting season); best to conduct mechanical treatments in June (dry ground) or winter (frozen ground).

Notes: Air Quality/Smoke Group

Group focused on concerns and mitigation measures for proposed burns such as Paliza, how to meet emissions regulations and minimize smoke drainage into communities.

Recommendations:

1. Use mass ignition techniques to reduce the amount and duration of smoke. Go Big, Go Fast!
2. Identify and contact smoke sensitive individuals well in advance of burn.
3. Establish smoke refuges, possibly in Los Alamos.
4. Engage community associations and business groups.
5. Monitor smoke output and use information for future burns and NEPA- ‘what to expect’
6. Collaborate closely with NMED-Air Quality for the duration of the treatment
7. Write emission reduction techniques into the NEPA
8. Do public outreach, emphasize that smoke is inevitable, but we can choose wildfires or Rx burns.
9. Conduct spring burn if feasible as it’s best for smoke dispersal conditions; but we understand it can increase risks and containment challenges, is more hazardous to crews, and crews are often busy with wildfires.