



Arizona Game and Fish Department

Contact:

Nora Fascenelli (602) 571-3570

nfascenelli@azgfd.gov

Public Information Officer, AZGFD

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release, May 24, 2012

Arizona Game and Fish Department applauds award of stewardship contract for forest restoration

PHOENIX - The Arizona Game and Fish Department applauds the U.S. Forest Service's action to advance much-needed forest thinning in Arizona through its award of a stewardship agreement.

The agreement, awarded after a lengthy review process, is the largest ever issued by the Forest Service, covering restoration thinning treatment of 300,000 acres on the Apache-Sitgreaves, Coconino, Kaibab and Tonto national forests over a 10-year period.

The winning bidder, Pioneer Forest Products, plans to build a plant near Winslow, Ariz., that will produce high-value lumber and finished wood products as well as biodiesel fuel from thinning slash and mill waste material.

The thinning treatments are a core element of the Four Forests Restoration Initiative (4FRI), a collaborative effort to improve forest health and wildlife habitat, reduce wildfire risk, and develop a new sustainable forest products industry in northern Arizona.

Game and Fish has supported and participated in 4FRI since its inception, working closely with the Forest Service and other stakeholders to ensure that restoration efforts yield the greatest possible benefit to forest ecosystems, wildlife habitat, and local economies.

"This is a critical step forward," said Game and Fish Department Director Larry Voyles. "The forest products industry is an essential partner in the restoration equation. The 2012 fire season has once again brought a sobering reminder of the unhealthy conditions in Arizona forests and the need for large-scale restoration projects like 4FRI. It's time to get to work."

For more information about the Four Forests Restoration Initiative, visit www.fs.usda.gov/4fri or www.4fri.org.

-30-

The Arizona Game and Fish Department prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its programs and activities. If anyone believes that they have been discriminated against in any of the AGFD's programs or activities, including employment practices, they may file a complaint with the Director's Office, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix, AZ 85086-5000, (602) 942-3000, or with the Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Dr. Ste. 130, Arlington, VA 22203. Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation or this document in an alternative format by contacting the Director's Office as listed above.