

Coconino County Board of Supervisors
Chairman Carl Taylor
District 2 Supervisor Liz Archuleta
District 3 Supervisor Matt Ryan
District 4 Supervisor Mandy Metzger
District 5 Supervisor Lena Fowler



Contact:
Nathan Gonzalez
Public Information Officer
Phone: 928-679-7172
Cell: 928-699-1726
ngonzalez@coconino.az.gov

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Coconino Co. Applauds Initiative Aimed at N. AZ Forest Health

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Coconino County officials applaud an announcement today by the U.S. Forest Service and Gov. Jan Brewer that a contract has been awarded to restore the health of four overgrown National Forests and reduce the risk of devastating wildfires.

Coconino County and several northern Arizona organizations have been integral in helping shape the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI). The initiative aims to restore forest ecosystems on portions of the Coconino, Kaibab, Apache-Sitgraves and Tonto National Forests.

“This initiative is a once-in-a-life-time project that has the potential to enhance forest health and our rural lifestyle with outcomes that will resonate on a national level,” said County Supervisor Mandy Metzger. “I applaud this long-awaited announcement to restore our forests across northern Arizona. The significance of the 20-year contract is key as it guarantees a steady wood supply and ensures lasting benefits for Coconino County.”

The 4FRI project was selected for funding under the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP), which was established in 2009 to foster collaborative, science-based restoration on priority forest landscapes around the country.

The aim of the program was to establish job stability, achieve a reliable wood supply and restore the forests to good health, which would reduce the costs and risk of devastating wildfires. Metzger added that the project would also work to clean and protect surface and groundwater supplies across Arizona and provide for increased habitat for wildlife.

“I’m really excited to see that this contract has been awarded,” said County Supervisor Matt Ryan, whose district rests in Kaibab and Coconino National Forests. “There has been a lot of work done regionally by multiple stakeholders. We have all been working toward this end and look forward to beginning these healthy treatments to our forests.”

Those stakeholders include conservations, scientists, local governments and industry leaders and others who have worked for years on 4FRI.

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