

GREENLEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CLIFTON, ARIZONA

January 31, 2012

The Greenlee County Board of Supervisors met on this date in Work Session in the Board Meeting Room, 2nd floor Courthouse Annex, Clifton, Arizona, with the following members present: Richard Lunt, Chairman; David Gomez, Member; and Ron Campbell, Member. Also present were Deborah K. Gale, County Administrator, and Yvonne Pearson, Clerk of the Board.

Supervisor Campbell led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Lunt called the work session to order at 10:00 a.m.

Present on behalf of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest were Jim Zornes, Acting Supervisor, Christine Dawe, Acting Deputy Supervisor and Carol Telles, Clifton District Ranger.

Apache-Sitgreaves Forest Plan Revision

Mr. Zornes stated that the Forest Plan Revision had been put on hold due to the Wallow Fire but is now on schedule to have a draft out in October 2012 with a public comment period to open on October 1st. The Plan will not deviate much from the plan that was put together prior to the Wallow Fire.

Chairman Lunt presented a letter of comments drafted by Greenlee County that had been submitted to Chris Knopp, Forest Supervisor, prior to his retirement. He stated that Greenlee County believes the forest should have multiple uses, have more cattle grazing and more fuel reduction. Mr. Zornes assured the Board that timber salvage continues.

Discussion took place regarding the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) with Mr. Zornes stating that they are still committed to 4FRI with 15,000 acres available for the first 4FRI contract and 6,000 more available if the contract allows. He stated that he understands that there is a team working through the award of contract which is not in his hands.

Supervisor Campbell stated that he believes that more grazing and more timber cutting would result in less fire damage. He asked for clarification whether replacement of burned fencing is a part of the Forest Plan. Mr. Zornes replied that they are working on grazing as part of the restoration process. The Forest Service received some funds in September to begin to rebuild fences. He stated that material and a contract has been put in place to begin 70 miles of fence replacement. Letters will be going out to permittees this week to schedule to meet with them and discuss their needs and concerns. Ms. Telles stated that it is the responsibility of permittees to take care of and

maintain fences as a part of their permits. She stated that they held permittee meetings in November and that some fencing material has been given out.

Supervisor Gomez asked what type of funding is available to assist permittees with fencing. Mr. Zornes stated that they have fence material stockpiled and available to permittees but that the current budget for fencing is tapped out and cannot tell when additional material will be purchased.

Apache-Sitgreaves Travel Management Plan

Mr. Zornes advised the Board that the Travel Management Plan is put on hold and will not be in competition with the Forest Plan Revision for completion. He stated that he does not see that any changes will take place in the Travel Management Plan and intends to keep it as it was when it was put on hold due to the Wallow Fire but that this Plan is not a priority right now.

Supervisor Campbell asked about roads that have been gated regulating access. Mr. Zornes replied that 54 sets of gates exist as a part of the Burned Area Emergency Recovery (BAER) after fire program. He stated that the gates are "locked open". If a gate is locked closed then that means that dangerous conditions exist on that road. The gated roads do not affect the Travel Management Plan.

Apache-Sitgreaves Wild and Scenic River Designation Recommendation for Blue River

Mr. Zornes reviewed a map showing the designated areas on the Blue River explaining the four colored sections. Sections 1 and 4 have been removed from the "suitable for designation" for Wild & Scenic which includes the populated areas on the Blue River. The areas that have been designated as suitable will have more restraints if any changes to existing roads, etc. are wanted.

Blue River Emergency Repair Projects

Ron Pearson, Public Works Manager, updated the Board on the Blue River Emergency Repair Projects on roads which resulted from unusual monsoon high water due to the Wallow Fire. He stated that there were seven sites in the project with the last two sites due to be completed this week. The projects are being funded by Arizona Department of Emergency Management funds with Greenlee County responsible for 25% of the total cost.

Other discussion took place regarding the need to establish road material pits. Ms. Telles stated that she is ready to work on a special use permit to include material pits so that material can be taken without having to get special permission every time material is needed. She stated that Juan Miller and Eagle Creek area have been surveyed.

Hazardous Fuels Mitigation Grant

Ms. Gale explained that the projects that the grant supports is a part of the conditions of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan and helps property owners. Mr. Pearson explained the process that property owners must follow in order to participate in the project. He stated that there have been twelve fire wise assessments completed with one more scheduled in February and two more are pending completion of paperwork. One property has been completed. He stated that another Hazardous Fuels grant period has opened up and that he will be applying for an additional \$200,000 to continue the grant project.

Other Local Issues

Ms. Telles stated that a News Release has been submitted regarding prescribed burns on Four Bar Mesa in block C. She also stated that a Cultural Resources Management Informational meeting will be scheduled in March as a continuation of the monthly informational meetings the Forest Service has been having. The Range Management Informational meetings will conclude in February.

Mr. Zornes stated that they are working with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) to identify and handle hazard trees concerns on Highway 191. There is a possibility of road closures mainly north of Hanagan Meadow while ADOT is doing the tree treatment.

There being no further business to discuss, the work session was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

APPROVED: /s/ Richard G. Lunt, Chairman

ATTEST: /s/ Yvonne Pearson
Clerk of the Board