



2-3-2

# CROSS-BOUNDARY MEETING

October 2018

## ABSTRACT

The Statement of Findings within contains a cover letter, executive summary, and appendix complete with observations, highlights, and materials from the October 15 & 16, 2018 cross-boundary meeting of the 2 Watersheds, 3 Rivers, 2 States Cohesive Strategy Partnership.



January 5, 2019

Dear Partners and Interested Friends of the 2-3-2 Partnership,

On behalf of Donald Griego and Mike Lester, State Foresters from New Mexico and Colorado, as well as Cal Joyner and Brian Ferebee, USFS Regional Foresters from Region 3 and 2, we want to thank you for your participation and/or your interest in the recent cross-boundary meeting hosted by the 2 Watersheds, 3 Rivers, 2 States Cohesive Strategy Partnership (the 2-3-2 Partnership). The meeting brought together decision makers and leaders from both Colorado and New Mexico, two Forest Service Regions, and three National Forests to think creatively and comprehensively about opportunities for landscape-scale work that protects our shared forests, watersheds, and local economies.

During our time together, we covered a lot of ground, both in terms of physical miles and of subject matter. Side conversations and group discussion alike went a long way to elucidate the success of the 2-3-2 Partnership, its challenges, and its potential. The sites that we visited – from mechanical thinning in subdivisions to diversion dams, and from forest health work on private lands to a burgeoning wood mill—furthered attendee understanding of the need for cross-boundary work and the challenges associated with it. At Aspen Springs, we saw the potential for property and human losses when coordinated work on our forests and our private lands isn't accomplished; at the Canjilon Ranger Station, we discussed the critical importance of having multiple voices and multiple funding sources at the table; at the Oso Diversion Dam, we marveled at the vulnerability of our water infrastructure to fire, and the critical connections between our forested headwaters and downstream water users; on the top of Wolf Creek Pass, we couldn't deny the interconnectedness of our shared ecological and economic values; and at the Blanca Wood Products Mill, we were inspired by the opportunities for local wood products industries and challenged to work together across boundaries to provide more reliable resources.

While each stop was unique, the geography of the 2-3-2 Partnership is representative of the stewardship challenges that we face when trying to tackle the immense geographic scope of the problem. Large-scale partnerships, cross-boundary project prioritization, developing and supporting wood products industries, and incorporating multiple and varied ecological interests are complex challenges with wide reaching implications.

The 2-3-2 Partnership has work ahead of it to *truly* collaborate across boundaries, rather than simply through coordinated efforts on lands that run adjacent to one another. But it is also true that the 2-3-2 Partnership has the potential to be bold in its implementation and establish precedence for this kind of work. To that end, we have prepared the attached "Statement of Findings" to inform those partners not at the meeting, to invite continued communications and engagement and, finally, to challenge ourselves to continue to move forward together on this important work.

Aaron and Page  
2-3-2 Partnership Coordination Team

# STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

## SUMMARY

After three years of working together, members of the 2 Watersheds— 3 Rivers – 2 States Cohesive Strategy Partnership (2-3-2 Partnership) hosted a cross-boundary meeting in October 2018. Participants in the meeting included State, Federal, Tribal, non-profit and private landowner representatives. They came together on both sides of the Colorado/New Mexico border to discuss opportunities and obstacles associated with working on a landscape scale to improve forest and watershed health. Attendees toured active forest management projects, visited the Oso Diversion dam and critical infrastructure that transports water from Colorado to New Mexico, shared lunch at a private ranch where the owners invest in wildlife management and forest health treatments to improve downstream water supplies, stood at the imperceptible divide between two forests at the summit of Wolf Creek Pass, and toured a thriving lumber mill in Blanca, Colorado that relies on the wood from nearby forests on Forest, State, Tribal and public lands.

### Attendees:

**The following elected officials, organizations and government agencies were represented at the meeting:**

New Mexico State Forestry and Colorado State Forest Service; Region 2 and 3 of the U.S. Forest Service; Representatives Tipton (CO) and Lujan (NM); New Mexico Senators Heinrich and Udall and Colorado Senators Gardner and Bennett; San Juan, Carson and Rio Grande National Forests, Chama Peak Land Alliance, Banded Peak Ranch, Trout Unlimited, Colorado State Forest Service, Mountain Studies Institute, Wildfire Adapted Partnerships, East Rio Arriba Soil and Water Conservation District, Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, The Nature Conservancy, San Juan Citizen’s Alliance, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control, Bureau of Recreation, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Southern Ute Agency, and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.



## MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Over the course of the two-day meeting, themes emerged from site visits that were shared experiences between the two delegations (CO & NM), or expanded upon topics presented during morning presentations or evening discussions. To that end, highlights below are organized by themes with specific and more detailed references available in the appendix.

### THEMES

#### I. Trust is critical

See: “Accomplishments”, Appendix B

#### II. We can get more done by working together *in the right circumstances*.

See: “Turkey Springs”, Appendix E & “The Wedge”, Appendix G

#### III. Public/private partnerships are central to landscape-scale work

See: “Turkey Springs”, Appendix E

#### IV. Protecting forests in Colorado protects water that services communities in Colorado and New Mexico

See: “Banded Peaks”, Appendix H & “Wolf Creek”, Appendix J

#### V. On-the-ground work protects communities in immediate proximity to forests and those that rely on the water they provide

See: “Oso Diversion”, Appendix I & “Banded Peaks”, Appendix H

#### VI. Proactive work and coordinated planning are many times more effective and substantially less costly than what would be required post catastrophic wildfire

See: “Oso Diversion”, Appendix I & “Aspen Springs”, Appendix C

#### VII. Social, ecological and economic values are shared across borders:

See: “Wolf Creek Pass”, Appendix J & “Banded Peaks”, Appendix H

#### VIII. Coordinated, pro-active management can help address needs of all user groups and communities in the landscape, and can lead to increased pace and scale of restoration through the sharing of resources and development of creative financing strategies

See: “Wolf Creek Pass”, Appendix J & “Blanca Mill”, Appendix K



**IX. There is growing interest and demand for sustainably produced local forest products in the 2-3-2 landscape**

See: “Wolf Creek, Appendix J & “Blanca Mill”, Appendix K

**VIX. Forest management is a long-term commitment**

See: “Turkey Springs”, Appendix E & “The Wedge”, Appendix G

**VX. Our forests play a key role in the quality and availability of water for downstream users**

See: “Oso Diversion”, Appendix I & “Banded Peaks”, Appendix H

**X. Creating and maintaining a fire-adapted wildland urban interface (WUI) is a continuous process that requires sustained efforts over time**

See: “Turkey Springs”, Appendix E & Placita Garcia, Appendix F

**XI. Forest health efforts can to be supported by multiple funding sources**

See: “Placita Garcia”, Appendix F

**XII. Support for outreach, education and coordination is essential and requires continuous investment, especially in landscapes where social values and fire hazards intersect**

See: “Turkey Springs”, Appendix E; “The Wedge”, Appendix G; “Wolf Creek”, Appendix J

**XII. The 2-3-2 Partnership elevates existing partnerships, establishes new ones, and offers opportunity for partners to leverage funds & capacity to accomplish work on a landscape scale**

See: all appendices

## **FINDINGS (*Challenges to Address Going Forward*)**

The 2-3-2 Partners participated as a group in planning the cross-boundary meeting and one objective of their input was to identify issues that, if addressed, could help to strengthen the partnership while also ramping up progress on the ground in the 2-3-2 landscape. The items they identified (below) were validated during the meeting, and/or at one of the sites or they were otherwise discussed and vetted by trip participants or other partnership members.

## COMMUNICATION/COORDINATION

- Identify a USFS POC/s position to provide coordination across the 3 forests, 2 regions
  - Include interaction with state and NGO Partners
  - Support cross-boundary planning efforts
  - Promote coordinated implementation of on-the-ground work
- Host an annual meeting and mid-year phone conversation with participation from (*proposed*):
  - 3 Forest Supervisors
  - 2 State Foresters
- Importance of an integrated wood supply approach that bridges the social, economic and ecologic components of the region
  - Need to fully analyze the costs and returns related to future timber supply
  - Coordinate efforts across public, State, Federal and Tribal Lands
  - Explore and implement creative funding solutions
  - Support wood utilization markets now and into the future

## PLANNING

- **Promote landscape-scale thinking, planning, and identification of priority work**
  - Work with partners on the landscape
- **Participate in coordinated management of the 2-3-2 landscape**
  - Confirm that State Forest Action Plans and state priorities include recognition of efforts that cross state boundaries like the 2-3-2
  - As Colorado and New Mexico explore Shared Stewardship agreements with USFS, ensure cross- boundary efforts like the 2-3-2 are included as part of those agreements and that States and the Forest service acknowledge the need to plan and implement across traditional boundaries with other jurisdictions and with existing collaboratives and partnerships.

## FUNDING

- Fund regional initiatives to support appropriate industry
  - Diversify wood product utilization
  - Develop local wood initiatives
  - Promote cross-boundary networking of sales and industry
- Fund collective, collaborative planning across forests, regions, and the land ownership
  - Commit resources (printing, mapping, modeling)
  - Commit staff and involvement in the conversation

## CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

The 2-3-2 Partnership will incorporate the findings and issues raised at this meeting or by partners into the 2019 work plan. As we heard during the meetings, we should prioritize working and having accomplishments on-the-ground, continue building trust between partners, engage state, National Forest & Regional Forest Service support in planning decisions and opportunities, while continuing to elevate local efforts. We invite your support and participation in helping the 2-3-2 Partnership to accomplish these objectives and more.





**2-3-2**  
COHESIVE  
STRATEGY  
PARTNERSHIP

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