

# Greater Flagstaff Forest Partnership

## Key Elements of the Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership

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The Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership [www.gffp.org](http://www.gffp.org) is an alliance of more than 20 academic, environmental, business and governmental organizations in Flagstaff, Arizona. The Partnership is dedicated to testing and adapting new approaches to restoring forest ecosystem health in the forests surrounding Flagstaff. The Partnership specifically seeks to:

- Restore natural ecosystem composition, structures and functions in ponderosa pine forests.
- Manage forest fuels to reduce the probability of catastrophic fire and to protect the community of Flagstaff.
- Research, test, develop, and demonstrate key ecological, economic, and social dimensions of restoration efforts.

While the Partnership does not claim any absolute solutions to these complex problems, we are committed to sharing the information we gain with others seeking to restore damaged forest ecosystems. Key elements of the Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership include:

- **A Framework for Restoring Forest Ecosystems:** The Partnership uses a framework of comprehensive ecological restoration as our guide in developing proposed actions in the forests. Restoration treatments may include combinations of selective small tree thinning, reintroduction of surface fire, access and recreation management activities, road obliteration, weed control, etc.
- **Strong Scientific Foundation:** Projects are designed based on a rigorous scientific understanding of the processes that shaped the natural ecosystem's structure and function. Actions are proposed to improve forest ecosystem health and sustainability based upon this understanding.
- **Restoration is Approached as an Experimental Field:** The Partnership recognizes that there is much that we don't know about restoring forest ecosystems. This uncertainty requires us to test a variety of approaches. We are currently testing and researching restoration prescriptions developed by Northern Arizona University's Ecological Restoration Institute, the USDA/USFS Rocky Mountain Research Station, and the Southwest Forest Alliance.
- **Extensive Research and Monitoring:** The Partnership is committed to researching and monitoring the key ecological, economic and social impacts and issues associated with landscape-scale restoration. The Partnership's first 10,000-acre landscape scale project at Fort Valley includes a \$500,000 ecosystem research budget and over 20 ongoing studies.
- **Commitment to Adaptive Management:** Research and monitoring results are fed back into the Partnership to improve the design of future projects. The Partnership's scope covers a 100,000-acre analysis area, in which a mosaic of restoration activities will be proposed over a 10-year period, moving in a step-wise, adaptive fashion. We estimate that ultimately 30-50% of the overall area will receive some type of restoration treatment.
- **Broad-Based Inclusion of Interests:** Diverse interests and the broad community are involved in the process of designing, implementing, monitoring and adapting restoration programs. There is a respect for and accommodation of social objectives.
- **Separate Economic Demands for Wood Products from Restoration Forestry:** The Partnership model seeks to separate economic interests from project design and implementation to ensure that ecological

objectives are not influenced by economic motivations.

- **Foster Sustainable Development and Restoration-Based Economies:** However, the Partnership firmly believes that small trees, the renewable resource by-products of restoration, can and should be used in appropriately-scaled economic enterprises to create jobs and offset the high costs of restoration.
- **The Partnership is One of Several Forest Management Efforts in the Flagstaff Area:** There are a number of other related efforts to reduce fuels in the Flagstaff Wildland Urban Interface. These include Forest Service projects, City of Flagstaff Fire Department projects, Arizona State Land Department projects, and fuels reduction conducted by private citizens.

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For further information, visit the Partnership's web site at [www.gffp.org](http://www.gffp.org) or contact: [admin@gffp.org](mailto:admin@gffp.org)

The Partnership holds monthly meetings that are open to the public. Contact the GFFP office for more information.

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