

Minutes

SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

THURSDAY
August 24, 2023

HYBRID
MEETING STAFF
CONFERENCE ROOM AND
MICROSOFT TEAMS 211
WEST ASPEN AVENUE
4:30 P.M.

Vision: The City of Flagstaff is a culture and community that thrives in response to the Climate Crisis.

Mission: To advise Sustainability Division Staff on matters related to climate and sustainability, support community projects through Neighborhood Sustainability Grants, and provide feedback to the City Council on sustainability issues.

Members of the public may join the meeting online, via Microsoft Teams.

1. **Call to Order**

Chair White called the meeting of the Sustainability Commission held August 24th, 2023, to order at 4:39 pm.

2. **ROLL CALL**

NOTE: One or more Commissioners may be in attendance through other technological means.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair Kevin White | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Mary Ellen Metzger |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Priscilla Boateng | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Dorcas Naa Aku
Shika Quarshie |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Kristen Konkel | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Amy Wolkowinsky |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Molly McCormick | |

Others Present: Briana Aurilio (Minutes), Tia Hatton (Staff), Nicole Antonopoulos (Staff), Austin Aslan (City Council Member), Mark Nabel (Presenter).

3. **Land Acknowledgment**

The Sustainability Commission humbly acknowledges the ancestral homelands of this area's Indigenous nations and original stewards. These lands, still inhabited by Native descendants, border mountains sacred to Indigenous peoples. We honor them, their legacies, their traditions, and their continued contributions. We celebrate their past, present, and future generations who will forever know this place as home.

4. **Public Comment**

At this time, any member of the public may address the Commission on any subject within their jurisdiction that is not scheduled before the Commission on that day. Due to Open Meeting Laws, the Commission cannot discuss or act on items presented during this portion of the agenda. To address the Commission on an item that is on the agenda, please use the Teams Chat function: simply type in "public comment" to indicate to the Chair that you would like to comment. The Chair will then recognize you when it is time for public comment, and staff will unmute your microphone if needed.

No public comment.

5. Approval of July Minutes (5 minutes)

Moved by Commissioner McCormick, seconded by Commissioner Metzger to approve the July 27th, 2023 minutes.

Vote: 6-0 Unanimously Passed

Please note that Commissioner Konkol was not present for this vote.

6. Business

- a. Welcome & Introductions (10 minutes) All
Recommended Action: Informational

Commissioners and staff introduced one another.

- b. Post-Fire Revegetation Efforts Presentation and Q&A (40 minutes)
Mark Nabel, Silviculturist - USFS Coconino National Forest
Recommended Action: Informational and Discussion

Mark Nabel gave a presentation about post-fire revegetation efforts.

Commissioner Konkol asked what kind of education or outreach is provided for people who wish to replant on private property. Mr. Nabel replied that there is a private forestry group/the State that does a lot of the outreach and that there is communication with volunteers on what they can do on their private land.

Nicole Antonopoulos asked what methodology the Forest Service uses regarding replanting and climate change and whether it would be possible for everyone to use the same models to sink up information with other work being done. Mr. Nabel answered that he does not have to subscribe to the same climate change model but that it is important for everyone to be on the same page.

Commissioner Metzger asked what the purpose of orange stripes painted on trees and if we are taking good steps towards creating a more healthy forest. Mr. Nabel answered that money from the federal government is opening the door slowly for creating a healthier forest and that thinning trees helps create more vigorous individuals that are more resistant to bark beetles and fires. Mr. Nabel answered that orange stripes mean that the tree is going to

stay and blue means the tree will be cut. He also reported flagging marks boundaries.

Chair White asked in terms of volunteer work how much preparation and work goes into training volunteers. Mr. Nabel answered that there is a group called Friends of Northern Arizona Forests (FoNAF) for people to get more involved with volunteering and that it can take up to a day to get good work out of a volunteer. There are also other partner organizations that have additional background, have a crew leader, and can effectively run a group.

Chair White asked in terms of other resources that the community could potentially contribute materials such as compost. Mr. Nabel answered that they use mulch from their own planting projects however there is potential to partner with residents.

Chair White asked Mr. Nabel if he could speak at all to the problems posed by topsoil loss, if there were any techniques or plans involved in areas where there was a loss of topsoil due to flooding, and if there are any preemptive plans to reduce the potential for topsoil loss before fires happen in different areas of forest. Mr. Nabel answered that the best approach for limiting topsoil loss is planned burns and keeping roots in place, and that they are an effective tool to keep other fires from burning as hot as they do. After the fire is when mulching comes in as well as contouring fallen trees to help stabilize the soil.

Chair White asked if it were possible for the Sustainability Commission to coordinate with the Forest Service in terms of organizing a mulch or compost initiative. Mr. Nabel answered that they do have a volunteer coordinator and that he can share their contact info.

Chair White asked if it were possible to open more pathways for volunteering in light of a difficult to access locations. Mr. Nabel answered that it could be possible for a group of hardy people to execute a long hike but they lean towards contractors for those kinds of tasks. Mr. Nabel comments that there could be future opportunities.

Chair White asked Mr. Nabel if he had any estimated timeline as to the rate at which reforestation will reduce flooding in Flagstaff. Mr. Nabel responded that it is not the reforestation that will reduce flooding but shrubs and grasses reestablishing themselves that will create most of that stabilization and could take fifty years post fire.

Commissioner McCormick asked Mr. Nabel to expand on the controversy of replanting and what he is trying to accomplish by

replanting. Mr. Nabel answered that some of the controversies include tree shelters blowing off seedlings creating litter and people stating that these open grasslands created by fire should be left alone however Mr. Nabel stated that with the amount of thinning being planned there will only be more grassland being created. Mr. Nabel continued answering that there is some benefit of sticking trees back into the ground whether it be benefiting wildlife or the aesthetic value of the forest.

Presentation slides available at the end of this document.

- c. Neighborhood Sustainability Grants: Overview of Staff/Division Updates, Review Timeline, & Q&A (30 minutes)

Tia Hatton and Chair White

Requested Action: Informational and Vote on Additional Updates

Ms. Hatton shared information on the updated guidelines and application materials on the Neighborhood Sustainability Grant. Key updates included eliminating the rule to exclude awardees from receiving other grant awards, eliminating the 501c3 status as 501c4 as allowed to apply, and updates to the category objectives. Ms. Hatton and the Sustainability Commission discussed the updates, further improvements to the scoring rubric, and alterations to the application and guidelines for applicants for the Neighborhood Sustainability Grant. Ms. Hatton will make those modifications and send them out the the Commission.

Moved by Commissioner Konkel, seconded by Commissioner Walkowinsky to use the Neighborhood Sustainability Grant application and rubric as modified.

Vote: 7-0 Unanimously Passed

- d. Vice Chair Election (10 minutes)

Chair Kevin White

Requested Action: Vote

Tabled to next month.

- e. Adopt-An-Avenue: Commission Avenue, Alternatives, & Schedule Clean-Up (10 minutes) Chair Kevin White and Nicole Antonopoulos
Requested Action: Discussion and Possible Vote (?)

Chair White discussed how different organizations and groups can adopt different streets and that the Sustainability Commission has adopted Aspen Avenue. Chair White reported it's been about a year since the Commission last did a clean up.

Chair White suggested the Sustainability Commission do a trash clean up on Aspen Avenue. Chair White also mentioned the newer clean up program which include the Adopt-A-Stream or the Adopt-A-Flagstaff Urban Trail (FUTS) programs.

Chair White asked the Commission if they wanted to continue adopting the avenue or adopt a stream or a FUTS instead and asked for this topic to be a future agenda item. Chair White recommended we schedule it in the coming months before weather turns.

Commissioner Wolkowinsky asked if there is a fee involved or is this just volunteer based. Ms. Antonopoulos answered that it is volunteer based and the Sustainability Office provides all materials.

- f. Sustainability Division Updates (10 minutes) Tia Hatton
Recommended Action: Informational

Tia Hatton posted the summary of the Sustainability Division Updates for the Sustainability Commission to view with the Agenda.

Chair White encouraged the Commission to view this document.

6. To and From (5 minutes) - All

Ms. Hatton shared that Flagstaff Foodlink will be having a Seed Saving Workshop on September 9th and a Harvest Festival & Indigenous Farmers Market on September 23rd.

Ms. Antonopoulos shared updates on the Floodproofing Grant and requested for the Commission to spread the word about the grant. Ms. Hatton will send out information about both of these items following the meeting.

7. Future Agenda Item Requests

Chair White requested to have a discussion with either Emergency Services or Emergency Planning about climate change related emergency preparedness and Flagstaff over the next couple years specifically. Ms. Antonopoulos commented that Emergency Management is run by the county but there has been an Emergency Management program started by the city but will not operate at the same level.

Commissioner McCormick requested what would the perceived risks be and what is Flagstaff doing about those perceived risks.

Ms. Antonopoulos suggested creating a list of questions to provide for future conversations.

8. Adjournment

The meeting of the Sustainability Commission on August 24th, 2023, adjourned at 6:37 pm by Chair White.

CERTIFICATE OF POSTING OF NOTICE		
The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Flagstaff City Hall on been posted on the City's website and can be downloaded at www.flagstaff.az.gov .	_____	at _____ a.m./p.m. This notice has
Dated this day of _____, 2023.		
_____ Tia Hatton, Sustainability Coordinator		

Coconino National Forest Post-Fire Revegetation Efforts

Mark Nabel

Silviculturist, Flagstaff Ranger District

mark.nabel@usda.gov (928)214-2456



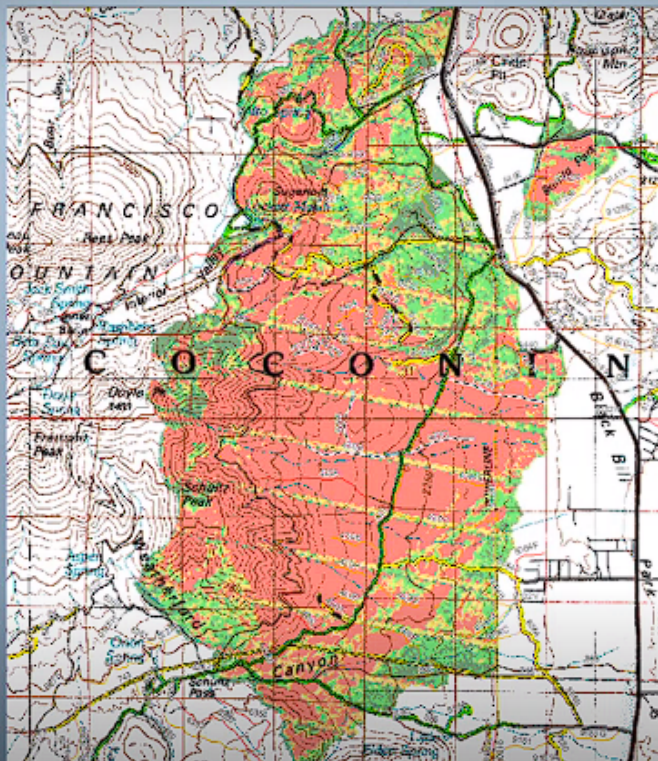
What I'll talk about

- How do we decide where post-fire vegetation efforts are needed?
- Types of actions considered
- Reforestation needs assessment
- Formal project planning (NEPA process)
- Past reforestation efforts
- Future reforestation efforts
- Factors to consider when tree planting

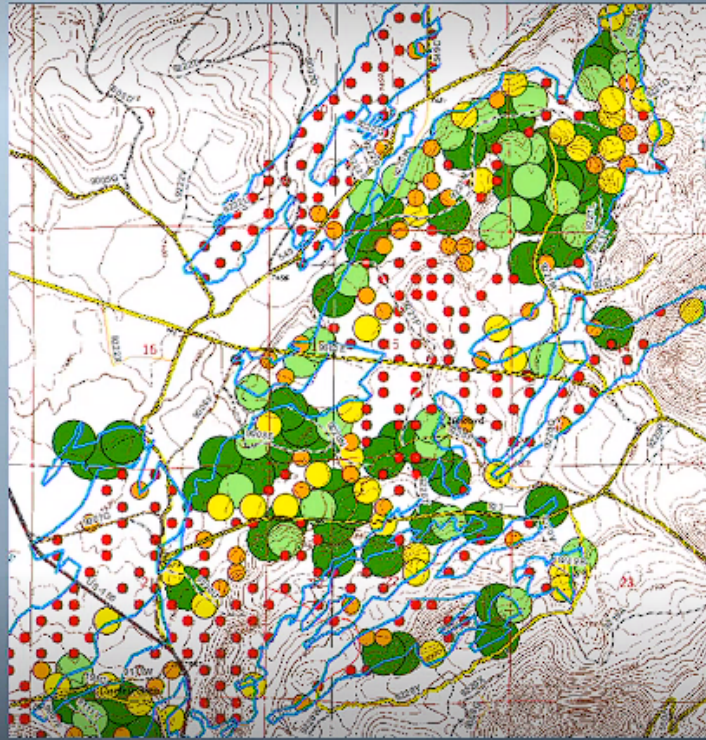
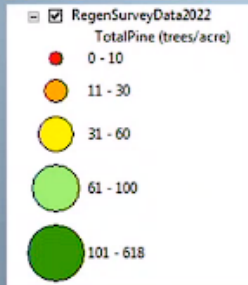
How do we decide where post-fire vegetation mgmt. action is needed?

- Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER)
 - Designed primarily to address emergency stabilization issues (infrastructure/environment)
 - Options include heli-mulching, aerial seeding
- Reforestation Needs Assessment
 - Designed to determine where reforestation needs exist and how to address them
 - Determinations vary by land suitability, management objectives, whether part of “timber base”
 - Options include natural regeneration, planting, natural recovery

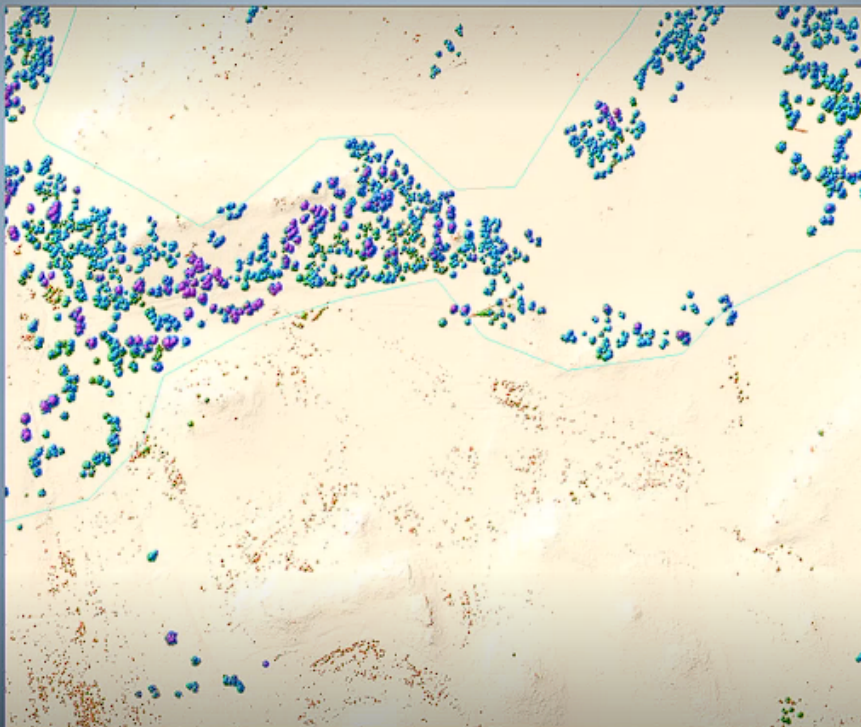
Reforestation Needs Assessment (RAVG)



Reforestation Needs Assessment (Surveys)



Reforestation Needs Assessment (Lidar)



Reforestation Planning (NEPA process)

Decision Memo

Schultz Fire Reforestation and Site Preparation Project

USDA Forest Service
 Southwestern Region, R-3
 Flagstaff Ranger District
 Coconino National Forest
 Coconino County, AZ

Signed 2011 - Authorized up to 4,500 acres of planting across Schultz Fire

Decision Memo

Flagstaff Ranger District Reforestation Project

USDA Forest Service
 Flagstaff Ranger District
 Coconino National Forest
 Coconino County, Arizona

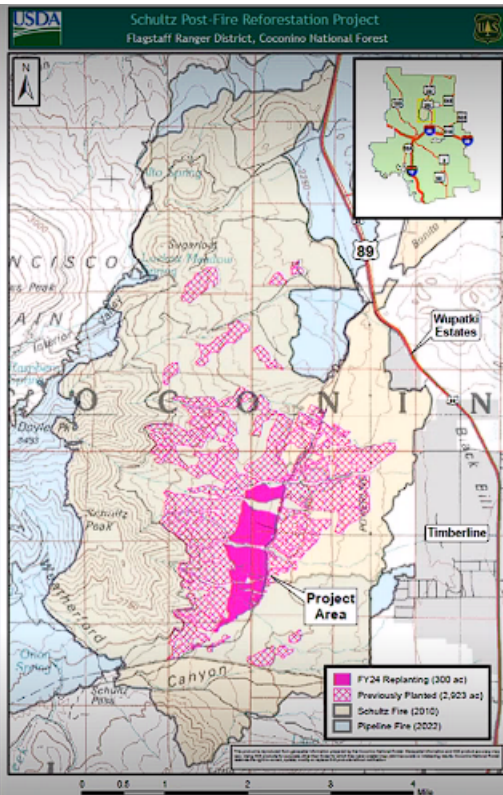
Signed 2018 - Authorized up to 13,000 acres of planting across 10 fires + 2 small clearcuts

Table 1. Proposed locations for reforestation across the Flagstaff Ranger District, including size and year of occurrence.

Project Area Name	Acres	Fire Year	Comments
HOCHDERFFER	6686	1996	
RADIO	382	1977	
TAYLOR	513	2009	
HORSESHOE	3545	1996	
BELLE	337	1967	
PIPE	298	2000	
WHITEHORSE	293	1951	
PUMPKIN	401	2000	
CLEARCUTS	81	0	From two previous clearcuts, not from fires
TRICK	63	1993	
RED	61	2009	Resource Benefit Fire

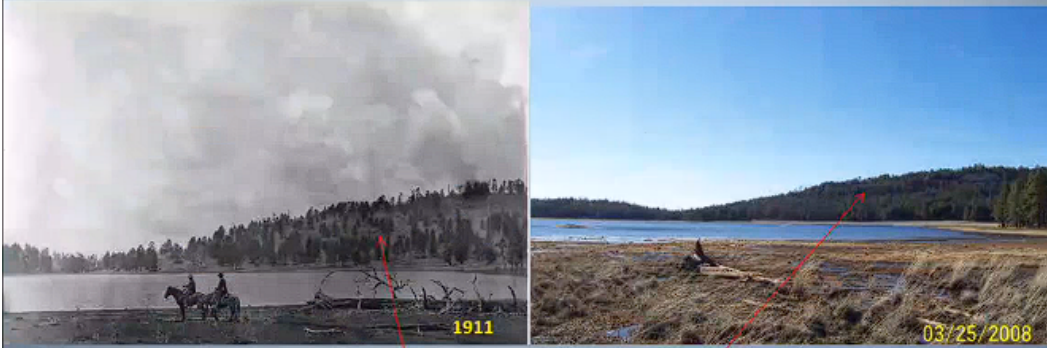
Post-Fire Reforestation Implementation (Schultz Fire)

2012-2019:
2,923 acres



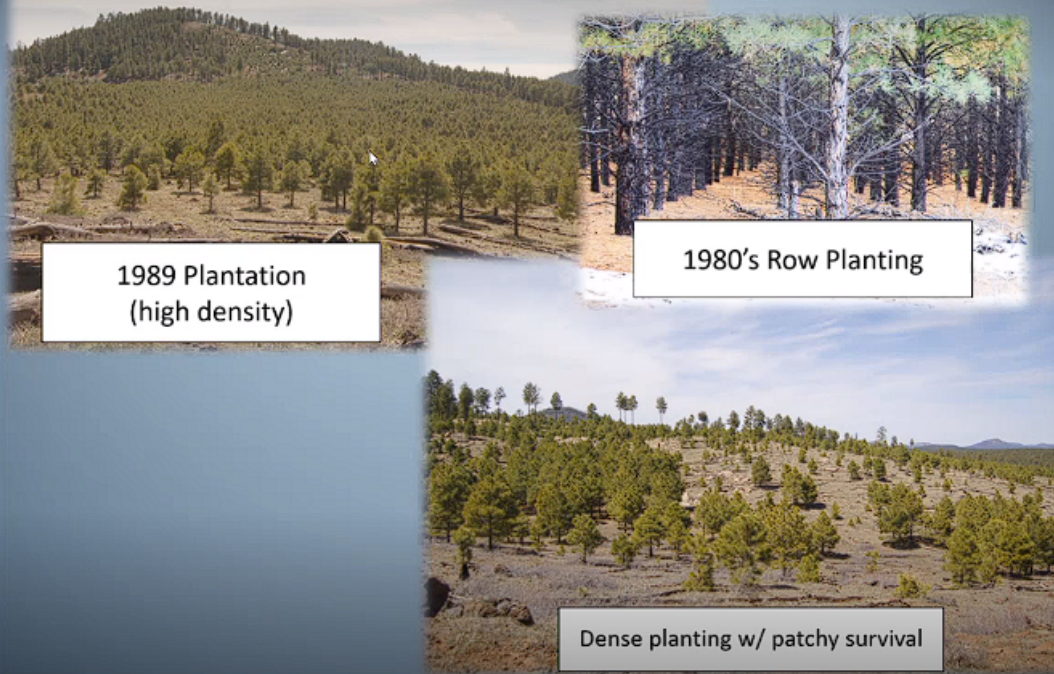
Historical Context and Reference Condition: Side by Side

Williams Ranger District
Coleman Lake



Compare and contrast
historical density

Traditional Planting



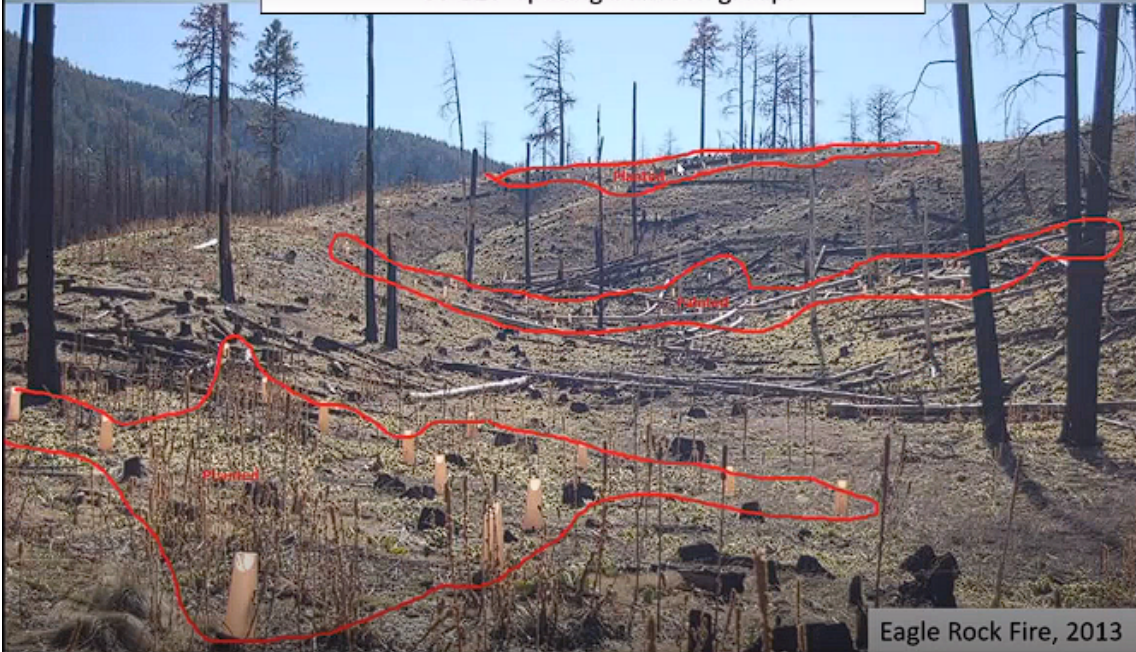
1989 Plantation
(high density)

1980's Row Planting

Dense planting w/ patchy survival

Large Groups

- 100 TPA (75-125 TPA)
- Large groups (75-125 trees)
- 5-20' tree spacing within groups
- 80-120' spacing between groups



Questions?

- Mark Nabel
- Silviculturist, Flagstaff Ranger District
- mark.nabel@usda.gov (928)214-2456

