



New Mexico: Isleta Project

The Partners

Since May 2008, 11 project partners have committed to this multi-jurisdictional project. Cooperating agencies include: Cibola National Forest (Cibola); the Pueblo of Isleta; Chilili Land Grant; and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Other partners include: the Estancia Basin Watershed Monitoring Group, New Mexico State Forestry, NRCS, private businesses, and representatives from groups such, grazing permit holders, private landowners, and Land Grants. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is also procuring funding to implement restoration projects. The Edgewood Soil and Water Conservation District will assist in coordinating activities across all lands.



The Project

Several large wildfires have severely impacted the project area over the last decade, burning private lands and homes and impacting the area's natural resources. In 2008 several landscape scale wildfires burned in close proximity to the tribal reservation boundary.

Approximately 10,420 acres are identified for treatment on this landscape including approximately 2,000 acres on The Pueblo, 620 acres on Chilili, and 7,800 acres on National Forest System lands. These projects are cross-jurisdictional efforts that will help protect communities, cultural resources, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities and improve overall watershed health.



Conservation treatments will directly protect water quality and supply in primary water source areas for Isleta, Chilili, and the Tajiique Land Grant as well as private homeowners living adjacent to the

area. Treatments will also protect upland forest areas that have direct impacts on water quality and supply for a larger area within the Rio Grande Basin Watershed and the Estancia Basin, which supplies water for many cattle and agricultural producers. This project is within one hour of Albuquerque and would serve as a demonstration area for what can be accomplished with partners.



The Benefits of Additional Resources

The current signed NEPA decision covers 10,420 acres and current funding only covers approximately half of the needed activities. Additional funding would enable implementation of all activities. For example, an additional \$1,000,000 in USFS investment in FY2014 would yield 2,500 acres of treatment on National Forest System lands, and an additional \$1 million in NRCS funds would yield 2,600 acres of joint treatment on The Pueblo and Chilili.



The Measure of Success

One of the overall measures of success for this project will be in the reduced threat to communities and homes in the project area from destructive wildfire, demonstrated by fuels reduction and improved resiliency (e.g., thinning). Treatments conducted through this partnership will protect tribal communities as well as the ecosystem services they rely upon from across the landscape.

In addition, some work on National Forest System lands will be implemented

using tribal crews through agreements under the Tribal Forest Protection Act, providing an economic benefit to tribal communities. Additional economic benefits include local job retention and creation, firewood for subsistence communities that rely on wood for heating and cooking, and development of commercial wood product industries to provide a sustainable source of employment and income for the future.