

WCC: Coordination of Western Regional Extension Forestry Activities



Annual Meeting and Tour

October 17 – 20, 2022

Gila National Forest, New Mexico

The Western Coordinating Committee (WCC) for Extension forestry activities invites you to join us for our annual meeting in southern New Mexico in and around the Gila National Forest. Our primary objective will be to “share institutional ideas to strengthen regional partnerships through open forums and shared experiences at the annual WCC meeting and field tour.”

AGENDA

Monday, October 17: Travel Day – Fly into El Paso International Airport (ELP). Plan to arrive at ELP before 3 p.m. At that time we will congregate and drive a 15-passenger van to Silver City, NM (~3 hour drive) located at the foothills of the Gila National Forest. We have a block of rooms reserved at the historic Palace Hotel in downtown Silver City. **Please call 575-388-1811 to reserve your room by October 1st;** request the Extension Foresters room block. We will have a meet and greet dinner in downtown Silver City within walking distance of our hotel.

Tuesday, October 18: Enjoy a complimentary breakfast at the hotel. Across the street, at the historic Murray Hotel, we will meet upstairs at 8:00 a.m. in the ballroom for our annual WCC board meeting lead by our president Chris Jones (AZ). This meeting will include an opportunity to hear from our WCC administrative advisor Dr. Holly Ober and NIFA representative Dr. Diomy Zamora. We will also be joined by a few local guest speakers to share their experiences and perspectives on forestry in the Southwest. At 10:30 we will load up the van and start our all day field tour through the Gila. Our first stop will be to see the biochar workshop of [Mr. Gordon West](#). Additional stops will be included as we make our way north through the forest and alongside the Black Fire that burned over 300,000 acres this spring (of course, size does not matter in this case, but rather [burn severity](#)). We will spend the night at Beaverhead in the heart of the Gila. Beaverhead is a FS Work Center, so our accommodations will be minimal. Plan to bring either a sleeping bag or sheets and a blanket for the provided beds. We will conclude the day with a cookout around a campfire.

Wednesday, October 19: After enjoying another field-prepared meal for breakfast, we will head out from Beaverhead and stop at additional forest sites to see and talk about current issues challenging western U.S. forests such as prescribed burns, “box and burn” suppression strategies, wildland fire use, fuel reduction and restoration treatments, timber sales, T&E species such as the Mexican spotted owl and gray wolf, watershed and riparian management, multiple use, and drought. We will stop at Winston, NM for lunch and visit with local wood products entrepreneur Mr. Randy Lack. We will see his guest cabin and community church that were made with raw wood materials from the Gila that he milled on his sawmill and four-sided planer. Finally, we will return to Las Cruces for dinner and a hot shower at the Las Cruces Ramada (near the NMSU campus). **Please call 575-613-4693 to reserve your room by October 1st;** request the Extension Foresters room block.

Thursday, October 20: Travel Day – Depart for ELP and return home. We will make one a.m. run to ELP in the van (departure time to be determined). Alternatively, participants can book a shuttle to ELP using Las Cruces Shuttle (call 575-525-1784).

Additional Details: To cover our field-based meals (e.g., cookout dinner at Beaverhead Work Center), we will need to collect a “registration fee.” We will share the exact amount with you when you arrive, as it will simply be the cost of food divided by the number of participants. Thank you.

October weather in the Gila is typically fantastic with an average high of 70° and low of 40°F. However, for our field tour, please bring a rain jacket and fleece.

Please utilize this [RSVP link](#) as soon as possible to confirm your intention to participate in the annual meeting. We look forward to seeing you in southern New Mexico. Please contact Dr. Doug Cram, Extension Forest and Fire Specialist at New Mexico State University for more information or to answer any questions.

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