

Front Range Roundtable Quarterly Progress Report May 2008



The Front Range Roundtable has been extremely busy this quarter. Our members have been mobilized and engaged through a variety of activities. Some highlights:

May 1st Meeting

Our quarterly meeting, held on May 1st, was well attended. Following updates and reports from our workgroups, we spent the afternoon in full group discussion. One outcome of that dialogue was agreement that we need to focus on potential changes to the prioritized landscape as identified in our 2006 report. Three recent developments in forest health underlie this focus: the advent of the Mountain Pine Beetle, new attention to the role of watersheds, and scientific insights into the ecology of the Upper Montane forest type. To foster coordination among groups working on these issues, and to better tie those efforts into the Roundtable's initial 10 recommendations, we have scheduled a full-day meeting for July 17th.

Award

During our May 1st meeting, the Roundtable was presented with a Silver Award from the Denver Regional Council of Governments for its work as a "cooperating partner" on Gilpin County's Road & Bridge building. The award was for Community Outreach and Education as part of the Local Governments Innovation Award program. Gilpin's Road & Bridge building has become a regional model for its use of local wood products to provide heat & renewable energy.

County Workshop Series

This spring, the Roundtable has launched a series of workshops designed to improve community capacity for addressing forest health and wildfire risk. Five workshops have been scheduled: biomass (May 8), grantwriting (May 16), Forest Improvement Districts (May 22), slash & mulch (June 6), and planning & zoning (June 22).

Community Demonstration Project

The Roundtable's Request for Information has a May 15th deadline for communities wishing to be considered for the Demo Project. Once a community has been selected (by June 1st), the Roundtable will devote its considerable resources toward treating priority acres and improving local biomass utilization. Implementation will begin this summer.

Policy

The 2008 legislative session just ended, and several forest health bills passed. All are now awaiting a signature from Governor Ritter.

- HB08-1110 Income Tax Deduction for Wildfire Mitigation Costs
- HB 1269 Sales and Use Tax Exemptions for Beetle Killed Trees
- HB 1318 Mitigation of the Effects of the Pine Beetle Infestation
- SB 39 Training Directors of Fire Protection Districts in the WUI
- SB 71 Extend the Forest Restoration Pilot Program
- SB 221 Watershed Bonding for Forest Health