

AZSFWC  
P. O. Box 12590  
Glendale, AZ 85318-2590

**Grant Recipient:**

Arizona State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF)

**Award Amount: \$40,000**

**Project Title:** Pinaleno Ecosystem Restoration Project (PERP Stewardship)

Year 4 2016-2017, completed 15 March 2017

Year 4 of the PERP Stewardship Project was more productive relative to past years and progress was made in project sub-unit 301 of Treasure Park A Treatment Unit. Work on this project is logistically challenging and work was not initiated until November 2016 due to our primary contractor having issues obtaining Worker's Comp Insurance. Weather caused a few delays as well, but 54.4 acres were treated and 82 loads of biomass (logs) were removed from the project site. Logs were hauled to a sort yard located on Graham County property and stacked. In January 2017 an interested party was identified who agreed to purchase all logs previously hauled to the sort yard including those currently being hauled. By mid-March only a few small, short logs remained and these will likely be sold locally as fuel wood. All proceeds raised through the sale of logs is returned to the project and used as non-Federal match allowing for additional work to occur.

Issues related to our current logger obtaining Worker's Comp Insurance have been resolved and he will be ready to start at the beginning of September 2017 for Year 5. A second logger has worked on the project each of the previous years and he arrived in January 2017 and assisted the logger already working. He is likely to return in the fall of 2017 but often has scheduling issues with wildfire season. Also during January 2017 a logger not previously involved in this project expressed interest in coming to work on the project in September 2017. Negotiations are ongoing with this logger and I hope to have him join the project this summer. If all 3 loggers return, or are able to work in Year 5 we should see significant progress (over 500 acres, possibly closer to 800 acres). This work is estimated to cost approximately \$750,000 to as much as \$1.6 million in Year 5 alone.

The funding provided by this grant from AZSFWC, \$40,000, enabled the NWTF to provide non-Federal match for an additional \$160,000. Non-Federal match is vital to this project. Since this grant was awarded an additional \$69,000 of non-Federal funding has been secured from other sources, allowing obligation of an additional \$276,000 of Federal funding to the project. NWTF funding has currently reached \$243,000 as of fall of 2016 (the latest numbers available). In order to reach our goal of treating up to 3,000 acres on this project much more funding will be required and grants such as this from AZSFWC are vital and appreciated. The current funding

available is \$2,042,904 of both Federal and non-Federal funds. I estimate over the life of this project in excess of \$10 million will be required to meet the objectives of the project.

### **Overview of PERP Stewardship**

The Pinaleno Ecosystem Restoration Project (known as PERP Stewardship) is a large-scale project in the Pinaleno Mountains (Mount Graham) in Graham County, AZ. This project was initiated to reduce dense timber stands (high fuel loads) in order to better manage and protect habitat of the endangered Mount Graham Red Squirrel. The existing high fuel loads/dense timber stands threaten the health of the forest and also present conditions which too often lead to catastrophic wildfires. Fire not only converts current forest stands, but also threatens human infrastructure, including recreational infrastructure such as access roads and trails, campgrounds, and prime hunting areas in GMU 31. Additionally, high fire danger threatens the multi-billion dollar observatory found on the summit of this range. PERP Stewardship allows for the prescribed thinning of forest stands in order to reduce fuel loads yet keep healthy stands of mixed-conifers. The NWTF is the primary contractor for the USFS on this project and employs multiple loggers to complete the work. Trees removed from the forest are either processed on site (chipping or masticated) or de-limbed and logs hauled to a sort yard near Safford.

Watershed map of the Pinaleno Mountains, Graham County, AZ

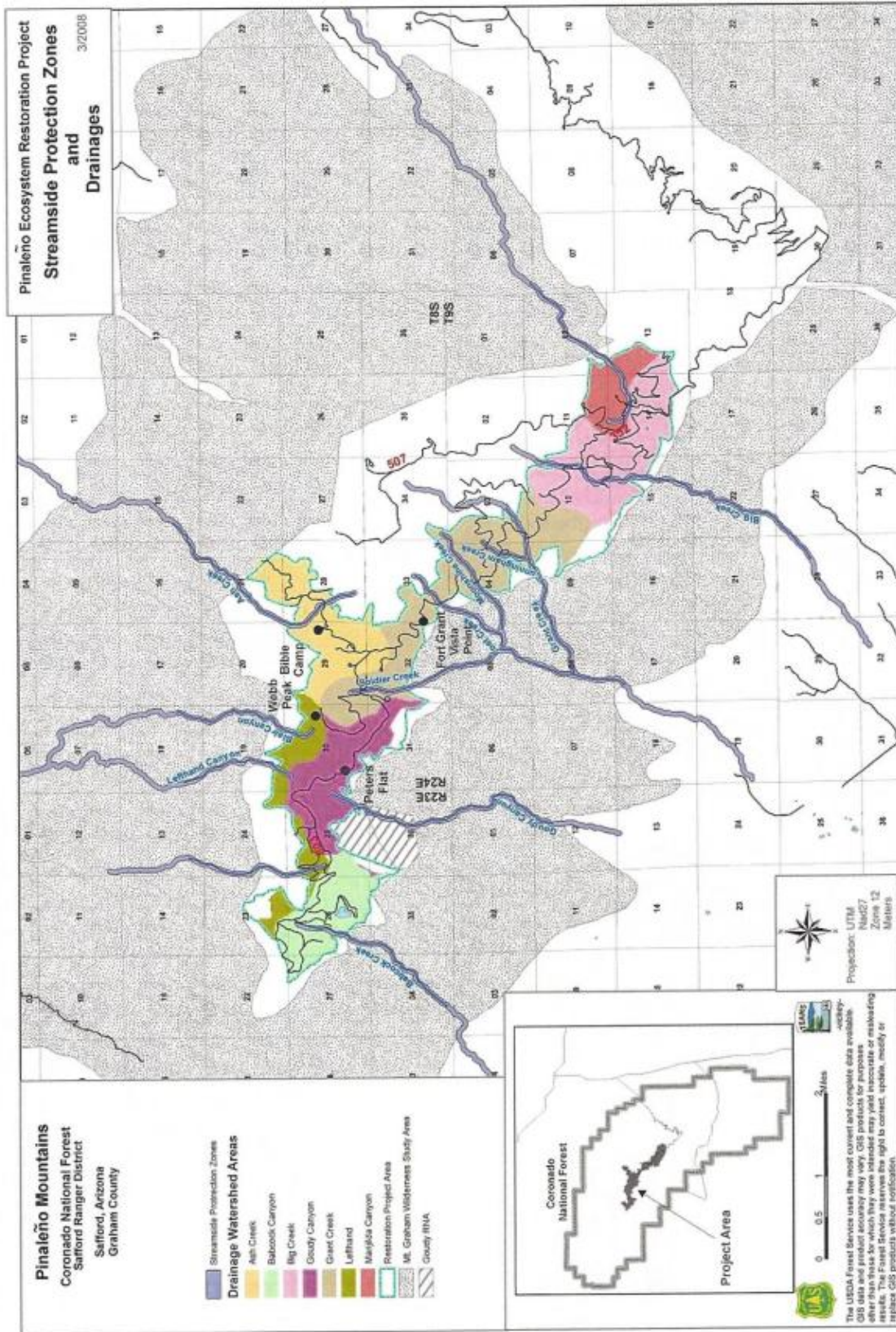


Figure 44. Drainages eligible for Wild and Scenic River status

Marked trees prior to treatment, PERP Stewardship Project



Skid trail following timber harvest, Grant Creek Unit, PERP Stewardship Project



Miscellaneous logs and duff immediately after harvest, PERP Stewardship Project



Skid trail following timber harvest, Grant Creek Unit, PERP Stewardship Project



Portion of Grant Creek Unit prior to harvest, PERP Stewardship Project



Portion of Grant Creek Unit following harvest, PERP Stewardship Project



Portion of log decks at the Graham County sort yard, with Pinaleno Mountains in the background.



Recently harvested unit near Cunningham Campground, PERP Stewardship Project





Timber harvesting equipment, PERP Stewardship Project



Recently completed harvest near Cunningham Campground, PERP Stewardship Project

