

CENTENNIAL FOREST

FALL/WINTER 2013

ROGERS LAKE RESTORATION PROJECT

Northern Arizona's largest evidence-based ecological restoration project is located within Centennial Forest in the Rogers Lake Natural Area, an area of land newly acquired by Coconino County for open space. This 640 acre project is located about 6 miles southwest of Flagstaff within an important wildland fire buffer zone that protects the City of Flagstaff from catastrophic wildfire. This project is a collaborative effort between Coconino County, Centennial Forest, Arizona State Forestry Division, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish, and the Ecological Restoration Institute. This project was funded by the U.S. Forest Service.



View of Rogers Lake looking north toward the San Francisco Peaks

Over time, this area had become very dense with small diameter trees. Therefore, ecological restoration and the removal of many of these trees to improve forest health was a driving factor for the project. Also important were the needs to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire near Flagstaff; create wildlife habitat for elk, deer, and other large mammals; and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

The thinning treatment followed a 1:3 prescription, meaning that 3 trees were left for
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Two Students from the School of Forestry marking trees to be cut in the Rogers Lake Restoration Area

WHAT IS CENTENNIAL FOREST?

NAU's Centennial Forest (CF) is the Southwest's premiere research, education and demonstration forest. With over 45,000 acres of forested land within the world's largest contiguous ponderosa pine forest, the CF offers both students and researchers the chance to experience and study in multiple ecosystem types.

Many faculty and student-led research projects are currently being facilitated within our Forest. These studies are very diverse, including topics such as climate change, bark beetle infestation, reforestation, and fire risk.

CF is also very dedicated to educating the public about the environment. We host

youth environmental camps and events throughout the year, including our Junior and Senior Forester Academies during the summer.

If you are interested in holding an event at our field campus, contact us for more information at (928) 523 – 8175 or www.nau.edu/cfcamps

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Centennial Forest



We're on the Web!
www.nau.edu/CentennialForest



Before treatment, some areas in the Rogers Lake Restoration Area were extremely dense with small diameter ponderosa pine, posing a fire risk to nearby Flagstaff, AZ.



Post-treatment, tree densities in the area are substantially reduced. Debris on the forest floor was gathered into piles and has recently been burned by Flagstaff Fire Dept. and monitored by students in the School of Forestry.

ASK A FORESTER!

Question:

"Greetings! Do you know how many trees per acre is ideal in order for a forest to be full and healthy? I heard that you do not want more than 200 trees, but I am not sure if this is correct."

Answer:

That is a great question! The answer is: it depends on what kind of objectives you are trying to meet. Many forests in this area are very

dense because fire has been excluded from our ecosystem for the past century. High density equates to high risk of wildfire, which can be catastrophic to your property. Dense forests can also perpetuate the spread of disease and devastating insects.

In this area, the process of reducing density through ecological

restoration based on pre-settlement evidences has been gaining momentum. Some common treatments based on this idea include leaving 1.5, 3, or 6 trees for every pre-settlement evidence found on your property. If you would like a visual of what this density looks like, you can visit the restoration demonstration plots at the Roger's Lake Natural Area.

ROGERS LAKE (FROM PAGE 1)

every 1 pre-settlement evidence encountered. These evidences were primarily defined as any highly decayed stump or log or tree germinated before 1900.

Coconino County plans to foster recreation in this area by creating trails and wildlife viewing platforms for visitors to enjoy the beautiful scenery and wildlife.

This project has been ongoing for the past two years, but thinning operations were completed this summer. Pile burning was completed this fall.

INTERNSHIP VALUES

I have been employed at the Centennial Forest since April of 2011, and I cannot imagine my educational experience without it. The CF has given me the incredible opportunity to see concepts taught in Forestry classes applied on the ground in real-time. While taking classes for my certificate in Ecological Restoration, I was able to participate in Northern Arizona's largest full ecological restoration treatment from start to finish. This included proofreading the prescription, implementing it through tree marking, riding along on site visits during timber sale administration,

and looking forward to prescribed burning in the coming winter.

This experience gave me a far more thorough understanding of Forestry, than classes alone ever could have. My experiences with the Centennial Forest were integral in my decision to continue my studies in graduate school as well as in my success at securing a full Research Assistantship in the NAU School of Forestry's Quantitative Ecology Lab.



-Mike Johnson
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School of Forestry Graduate Student