



## Forest Health and Water Supply Protection Project

*Ballot Question #405*

**Question & Answer Sheet #2**

25 Sept 2012

***Are there any citizen groups - pro or con - on this bond question?***

Pro: *Protect Our Watersheds/Support #405* is a local advocacy group that has formed in support of this bond question. More information on the group can be found on their website at: <https://sites.google.com/site/yeson405/home>

Con: We are unaware of any group at this time that is advocating against this bond question.

***How were the two watersheds identified as priority treatment areas?*** Both the Dry Lake Hills area (Rio de Flag watershed) and the Mormon Lake watershed were first identified as priority areas in the *Greater Flagstaff Area Community Wildfire Protection Plan*, approved by the City and County, and others, in late 2004 - early 2005. (A copy of this Plan can be viewed at: [http://www.gffp.org/media/pdf/CWPP\\_full%20Report 2006.pdf](http://www.gffp.org/media/pdf/CWPP_full%20Report%202006.pdf)). Their importance, and vulnerability, was made clearly apparent following the Schultz Fire (2010) and subsequent flood events (2010 - present). In 2011, the City and Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership championed their priority and treatment needs as part of the Four Forest Restoration Initiative project.

***What size trees will be removed?*** The ecological and science-based focus of forest restoration efforts is on removal of excess small-diameter trees, generally less than 10 inches in size. Developing industry is also, by contract, focused on products that can be produced using this smaller material. Larger trees are an important, and vanishing segment, of our forests, and they are to be protected unless there is compelling reason to remove select individual trees.

***What's the City's involvement in forest treatments?*** Since 1997, the City has been an active leader and partner in restoring our forests, reducing wildfire threat, and encouraging the establishment and long-term success of appropriately-scaled small-diameter industry to achieve our goals. We have treated over 10,000 acres within the City, and have helped facilitate and conduct treatments on tens-of-thousands of additional acres around the City.

In addition, we have a professional Wildland Fire Management section within the Flagstaff Fire Dept, have adopted a unique Wildland Interface Fire Code designed to reduce risk to our community, have been awarded the national FireWise Leadership Award (2007), established and still retain a leadership role in the Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership, and are engaged with the Four Forest Restoration Initiative Stakeholder group in an on-going basis. Our success is a national model, and our interests, as evidenced by this bond question, extend outside the city boundaries.

***Can you provide more information concerning the economic impact of a serious fire and subsequent flooding?*** The 2003 Study (discussed in the first Q&A sheet), determined a \$60 million negative economic impact of a serious fire in Flagstaff. This was based upon what happened to communities in the White Mountains following the 2002 Rodeo-Chediski wildfire. Significantly, this \$60 million figure did not include any subsequent post-fire flooding impacts.

At the time, that figure seemed high, but now, in retrospect, it appears to have been prophetic - for 2003. In the past decade or so, recovery costs have grown tremendously, and it is not uncommon for these to exceed the cost of fighting the fire itself. But these secondary costs are often hidden and not fully appreciated. For example, the 2010 Schultz fire cost over \$12 million to fight the fire itself, but post-fire flood recovery efforts have cost an additional \$50 million. Significantly, this \$50 million figure does not include any funds individuals have spent on their own home or property, and, the overall recovery costs continue to grow.

As one final example, consider the 2012 Waldo Canyon fire immediately outside of Colorado Springs: A recent report from that area cited that in the two months since the fire, local businesses have experienced a 40-60% decline in revenue (during their historically busiest season), Manitou Springs businesses have laid-off nearly 80 employees, the Broadmoor Resort, a five-star destination, has had 4,000 nights cancelled, and the cost of simply rebuilding (not recovery, only rebuilding what was damaged or lost) is estimated at over \$100 million.

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For more information on the Forest Health and Water Supply Protection Project bond question, visit the City website at: [www.flagstaff.az.gov/bondinformation](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/bondinformation). You can also refer to your Voter Information Pamphlet or contact Flagstaff Fire Dept at (928)-213-2500 or by email at [flagfire@flagstaffaz.gov](mailto:flagfire@flagstaffaz.gov)