

# **NR 378: Forests, Fire, Restoration, and Biomass Energy in New Mexico**

**A new offering for summer 2011 (2 credits)**

**Instructors: Austin Troy and Bill Keeton**

**Course dates: August 8-12 (with travel on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>)**

**Location: The Zuni Mountains in the Cibola National Forest, New Mexico**

**Collaborators: Forest Guild and Cottonwood Gulch Foundation**

- **Spend a week in the beautiful Zuni Mountains of northern New Mexico**
- **Learn about collaborative ecological restoration and sustainable management of forests for biomass energy and fire risk reduction**
- **Participate in an ongoing project with the non-profit Forest Guild, including stakeholders from the Forest Service, native American groups, and local business**
- **Visit ecologically and culturally significant landscapes**
- **Stay in rustic cabins at the 500 acre Cottonwood Gulch Foundation Facility in the Zuni Mountains—all meals prepared for you!**
- **To learn more, come to the organizational meeting at 4:15 on Thursday, February 24 in the Gund Conference Room**

## Course Background:

The Zuni Mountain Range in the Cibola National Forest is a beautiful, ecologically diverse and culturally rich landscape where the harvesting of traditional forest products is generally not economically feasible. Nevertheless thinning and other treatments are needed to maintain forest health and restore fire regimes. Harvesting forests for biomass energy provides one potential means for making fuel treatments economically feasible while also generating needed revenue for the region. The challenge is to harvest biomass in a way this is socially and economically viable, ecologically sustainable, and culturally sensitive.



The camp at Cottonwood Gulch

This will be a field course in which students work with non-profit Forest Guild ([www.forestguild.org](http://www.forestguild.org)) in the Mt. Taylor district of the Cibola National Forest, located near the Navajo and Zuni Reservations in northwestern New Mexico. Students will participate in an ongoing project that works with local stakeholders to restore degraded forests using strategies including replanting, fire management and biomass harvesting. In the process students will learn about the economic, ecological, and social constraints to restoration. Participants in this project include the Forest Service, Zuni Forest Products, the Ramah Navajo Chapter Natural Resources Division, Southwestern Sustainable Forest Partnership, and New Mexico State Forestry Department.

While in New Mexico, students will meet with key stakeholders in this project, visit sites where ecosystem restoration, biomass harvesting, and fire management are occurring, learn about the ecological and economic issues relevant to the study area, visit lands representing ecologically/recreationally/culturally significant values, and potentially observe restoration work in action.

## Logistics

Participants will travel to Albuquerque and will be responsible for their own travel arrangements, including airfare. Once there, they will be picked up at the airport and brought to the beautiful 500 acre property of the Cottonwood Gulch Foundation ([www.cottonwoodgulch.org](http://www.cottonwoodgulch.org)), located at nearly 7,000 feet elevation in the Zuni Mountains, adjacent to the Cibola National Forest. Cabin lodging and food will be provided. The course fee is estimated at \$650 per person plus airfare. Additionally two tuition credits must be paid for. A \$200 deposit must be paid to Continuing Education by April 15<sup>th</sup> to secure a place. Students holding funded assistantships may be allowed to borrow credits from their 2011-2012 academic year assistantship awards to cover the cost of tuition. Contact Carolyn Goodwin Kueffner to determine eligibility.

**There will be an organizational meeting at 4:15 on Thursday Feb 24 in the Gund Conf. Room.** All interested students should attend this meeting. If you can't, please contact the instructors to meet individually.

Questions? Email Austin Troy at [atroy@uvm.edu](mailto:atroy@uvm.edu) or call 656-8336