

National Forest Foundation's Colorado River Basin Watershed Program & SW Stage 0 Implementation

Katie Sickmann, SW Watershed Coordinator
ACOE Arid SW NNBF Workshop



National Forest Foundation



National Forest Foundation

Chartered by Congress, the National Forest Foundation was created with a simple mission: *bring people together to restore and enhance National Forests and Grasslands.*



• Forest Restoration • Watershed Protection • Wildlife Habitat Improvements
Recreational Enhancements • Wildfire Risk Reduction • Tree Planting • Collaboration

How we work



Work with Forest Service staff and communities to develop relationships and understand holistic restoration and partnership needs

- Forest health, watershed restoration, responsible recreation, community engagement



Raise non-federal funds to support implementation of restoration projects for forest health and outdoor experiences

- Traditional development & conservation finance mechanisms



Support preparation and implementation of on-the-ground projects:

- Develop appropriate agreements with the USFS
- Issue grants and contracts to implementation partners
- Oversee and manage on-the-ground activities
- Monitor and communicate project accomplishments

NFF in the SW

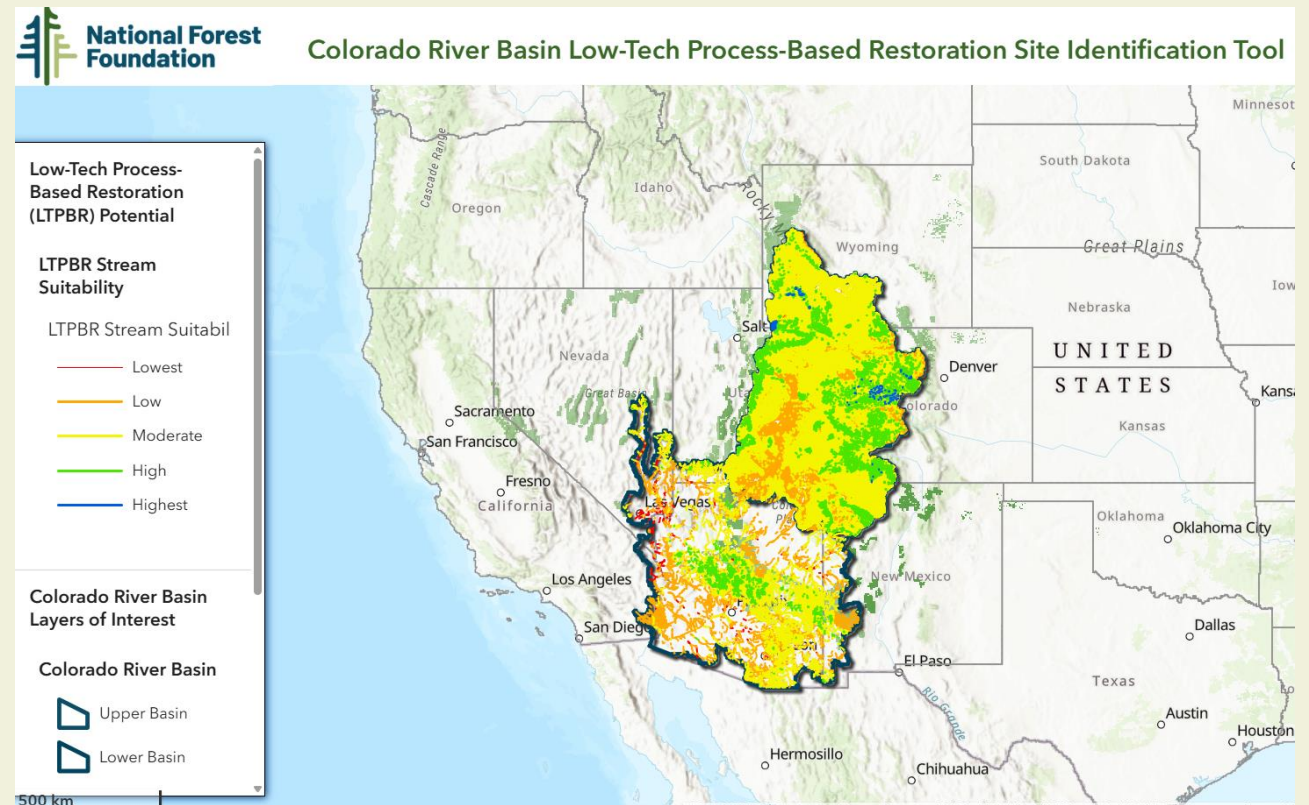
On-the-Ground Impacts

- **15 staff across the SW** based in Tucson, Phoenix, Flagstaff, Payson, Santa Fe, Taos, Gallup, Silver City
- Supporting **forest and habitat restoration, hazardous fuels, watershed health, and responsible recreation** projects across Arizona and New Mexico



Colorado River Basin Watershed Program

- Process Based Restoration
 - Low – Tech PBR
 - High – Tech PBR – Stage 0 / 8
- Water Quality & Quantity Improvement
- Sediment Retention & Reduction
- Wildfire / Water Nexus
- Conifer Thinning / Veg Plantings



Leveraging Dollars on the Ground

- Northern / Southern AZ Forest Fund & Northern / Southern NM Forest Fund
 - Municipalities, Businesses, Utilities, Vested Stakeholders, NGOs, Individuals, Etc.
- Conservation Finance
 - Corporate beneficiaries
- State Funding
- Federal Appropriations / Agreements
- Local Funding



Project Highlight:

Little Green Valley Fen | Tonto National Forest
Salt River Watershed

Project Timeline

- 2018- Partner & USFS Engagement
- 2020 – Elk Fence Ex closure
- 2021 – Rocky Mountain Institute Feasibility Study
- Spring 2024 – USFS Enterprise Team Project Scoping & Modeling
- Fall 2024 – Phase 1 Implementation
- Fall 2025 – Phase 2 Implementation
- 2026 – Minor Maintenance & Monitoring

First Stage 0 / Stage 8 project in the SW with USFS



Little Green Valley Fen – The Problem

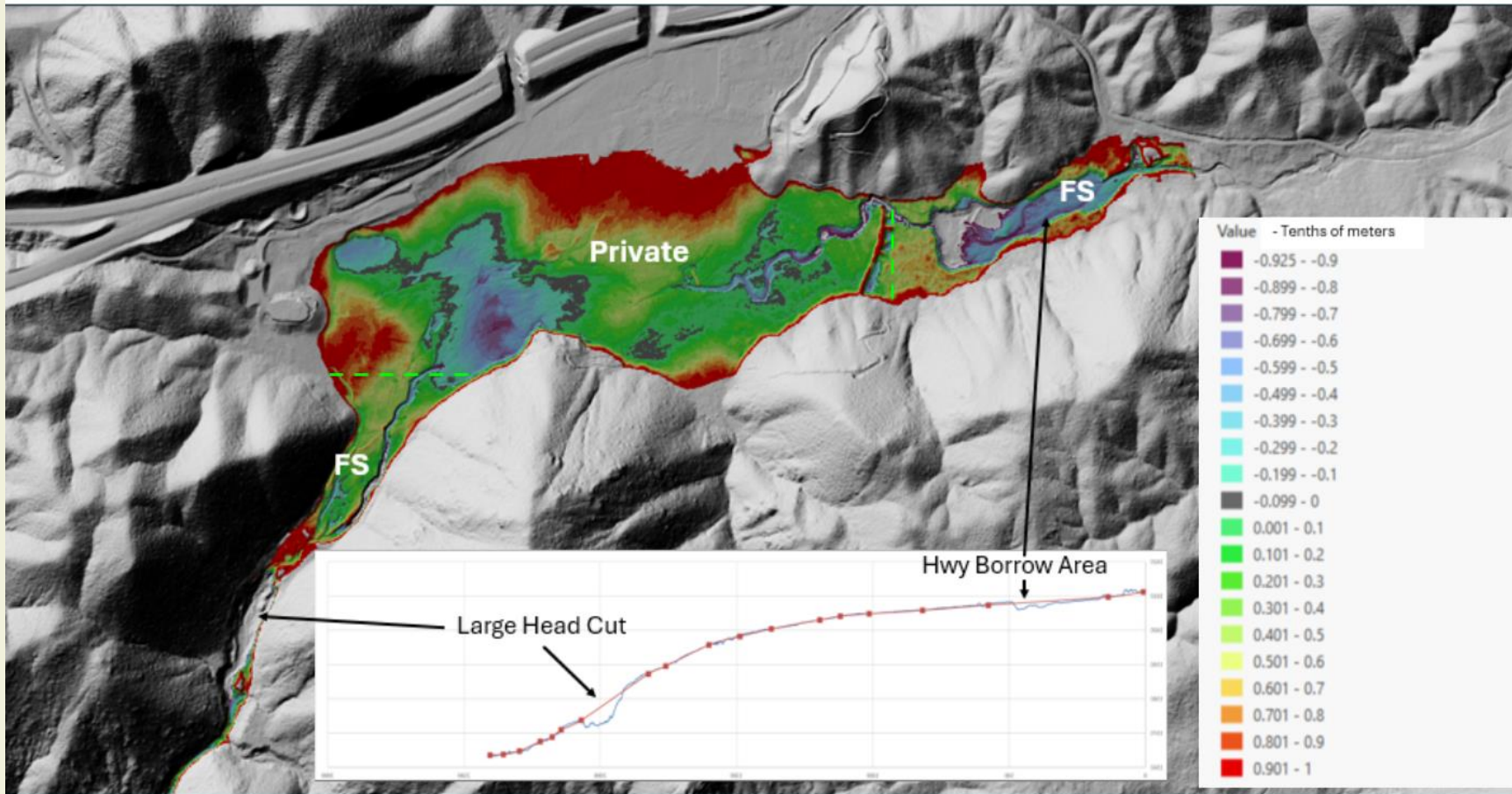


Little Green Valley Fen – The Problem

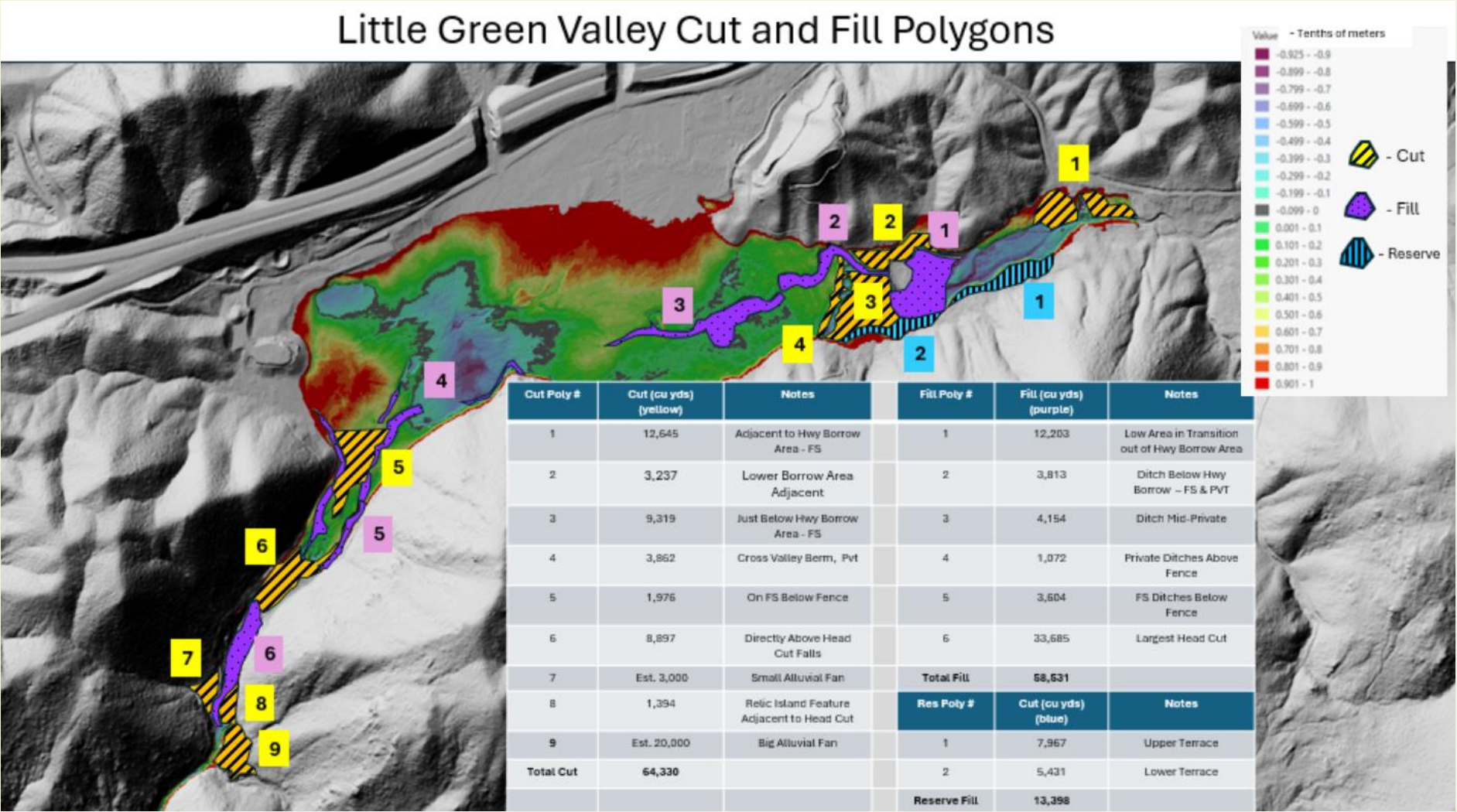


Little Green Valley Fen – Modeling

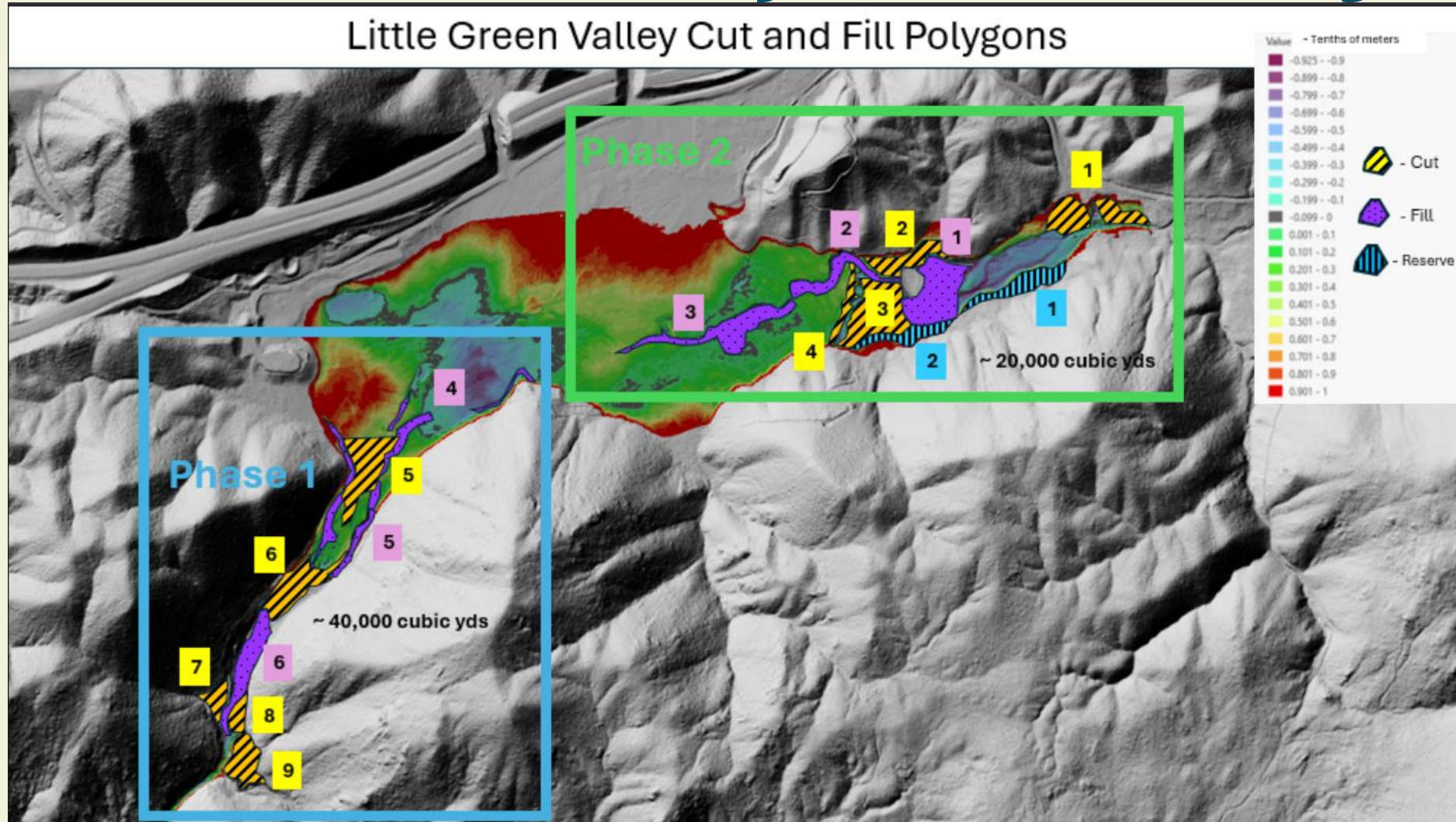
Map 1 - Little Green Valley Relative Elevation Map and Profile



Little Green Valley Fen – Modeling

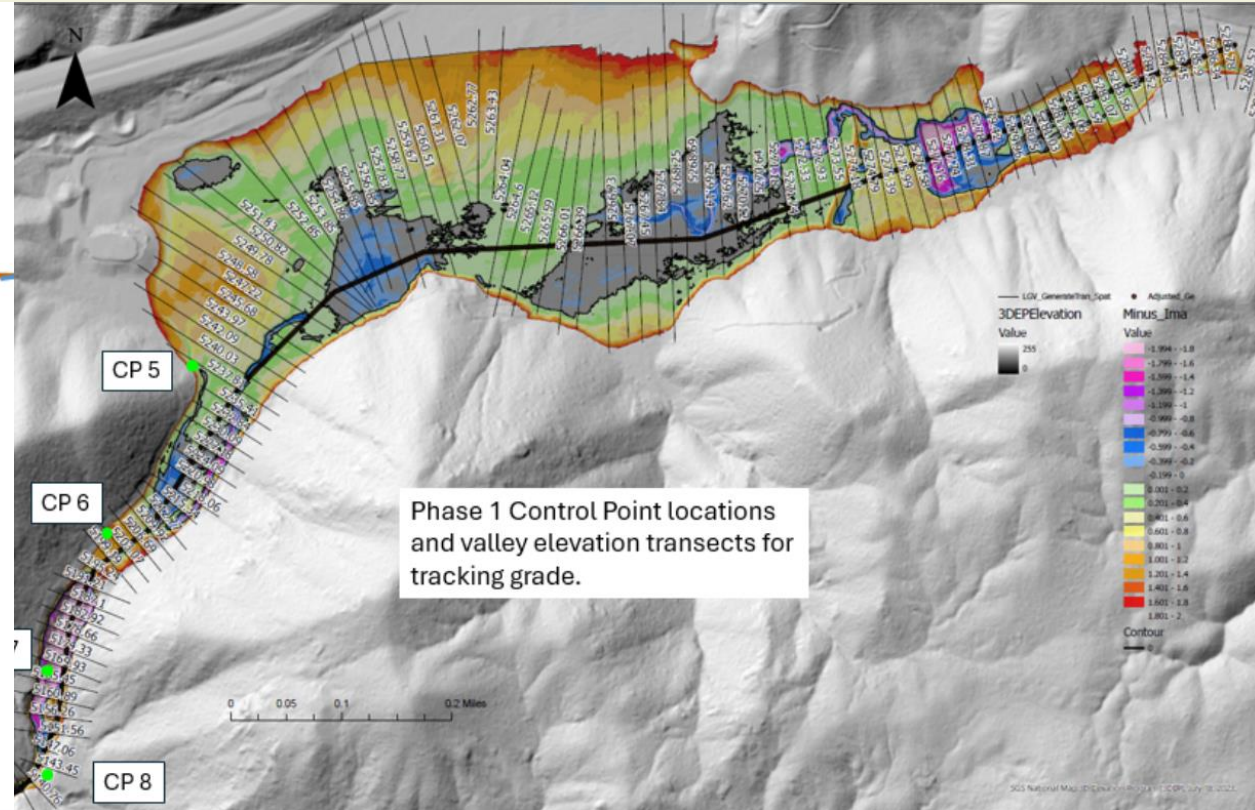
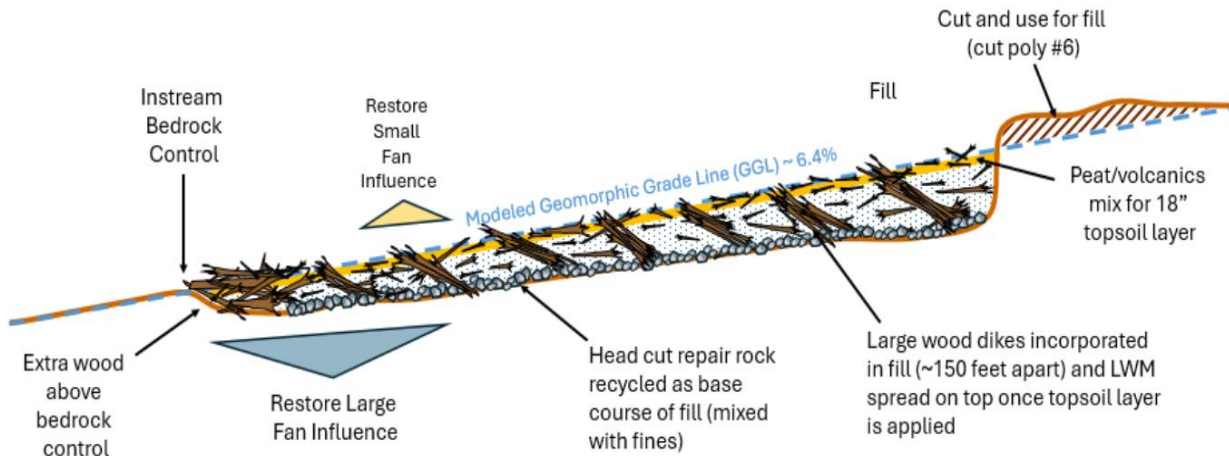


Little Green Valley Fen – Modeling

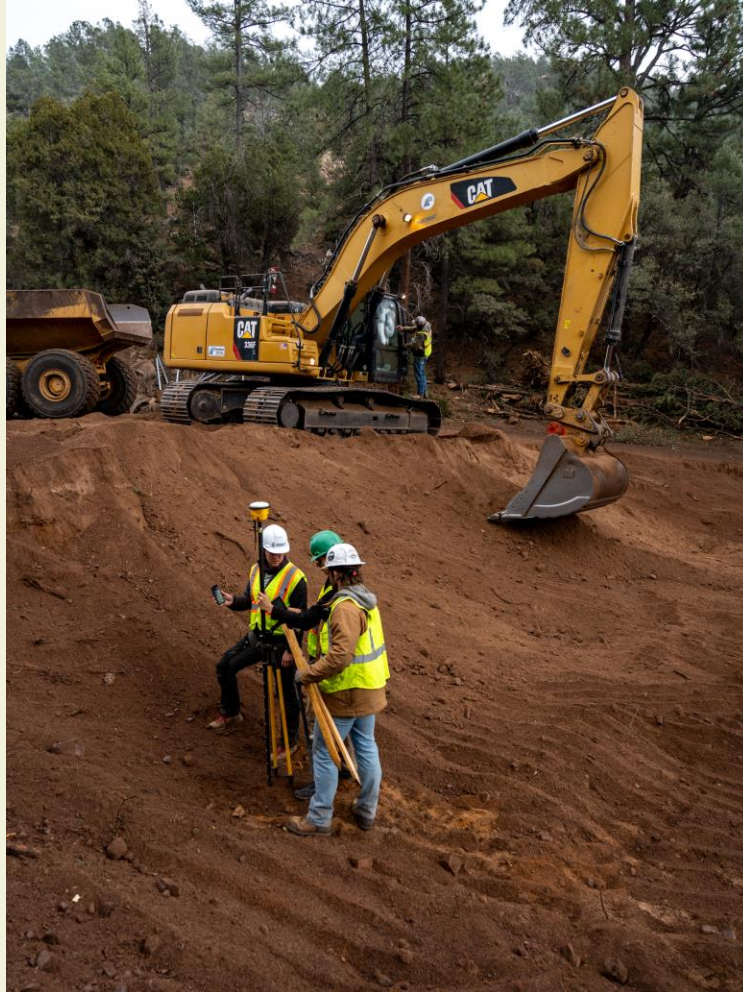


Little Green Valley Fen – Modeling

Head Cut Fill - Profile View



Little Green Valley Fen – Implementation



Little Green Valley Fen – Implementation



Little Green Valley Fen – Implementation



Lessons Learned & Looking Ahead

Little Green Valley Fen | Tonto National Forest
Salt River Watershed

- Working in a predominant DG system
- Keeping intact the integrity of the fen / historic peat
- Private landowner relationship
- Staffing & work scheduled
- Elevations & modeling
- Phase 2 implementation slated for Fall of 2025
- Applying for different avenues for funding
- Ongoing monitoring will take place
- Overall watershed program looks to continue strong partnerships with USFS & others for watershed restoration throughout priority landscapes



Acknowledgements

- Project success to date would not have been possible without the support & main leads at the Tonto National Forest (Kelly Mott LaCroix, Haley Bull & Others), USFS Enterprise Team (Riverscape Restoration Team), and Rare Breed Leasing Inc (Contractor)
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Questions?

Katie Sickmann, SW Watershed Coordinator

ksickmann@nationalforests.org

928.890.9343



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