



Southwest Wildfire Impact Fund (SWIF) Implementation Plan

Version 1, Updated November 19, 2020

1.0 Purpose of Implementation Plan

The project team (Mountain Studies Institute, Quantified Ventures, Ellen Roberts, Bob Cole, and the San Juan National Forest) created this document to provide insight into the Southwest Wildfire Impact Fund's operations and how the Fund will be implemented. Our hope is that participating organizations and stakeholders will find this a useful guide as we move the project forward from the feasibility phase. This document will be updated regularly based on project developments.

2.0 Background

A history of land management practices that have created dense, fuel-heavy forests, coupled with increasing drought conditions and bark beetle infestations, has increased the threat of wildfire for the people, environment, and economy of Southwest Colorado. Forest health treatments like thinning and prescribed burns have been shown to reduce the risk of wildfire, but often treatments are conducted within one jurisdiction *ad hoc*, based on available short-term funding and implementation capacity. This dynamic can hinder coordination across boundaries to treat an entire defined landscape. Treating at this landscape-scale maximizes the benefit of any given treated acre by also treating priority parcels within that same landscape, to achieve the greatest level of protection. However, a coordinated, well-funded, and landscape-scale treatment program has yet to be implemented in the region of Southwest Colorado. To meet these challenges, a collaborative team is working to establish the **Southwest Wildfire Impact Fund (SWIF)**.

In 2019, through a grant supported by the USDA Forest Service and the Walton Family Foundation, team members partnered to explore the feasibility of using creative, outcomes-based financing to increase forest health interventions around the San Juan National Forest in cross-boundary areas and within the wildland-urban interface (WUI), using a shared stewardship approach. Throughout the process of completing that assessment, the project team developed with partners an ambitious forest health treatment plan that considered several program benefits, including reduction of wildfire risk to properties, infrastructure (including water and power infrastructure), and local economies, as well as watershed impacts and the health of the natural environment. The team assessed treatment cost, gathered information about the value of these benefits, and modelled the flow of funds needed to support this work. This assessment led to the design of a Southwest Wildfire Impact Fund that could enable partners in the region to scale these treatments using upfront capital.

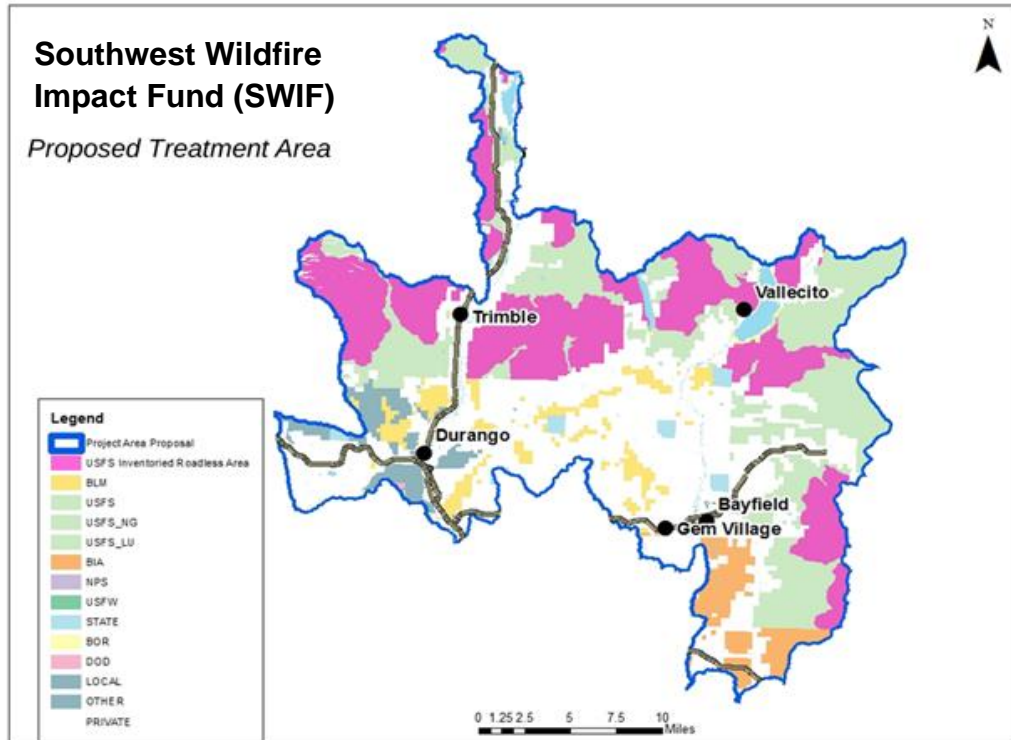


Figure 1: Proposed Treatment Geography - subject to change

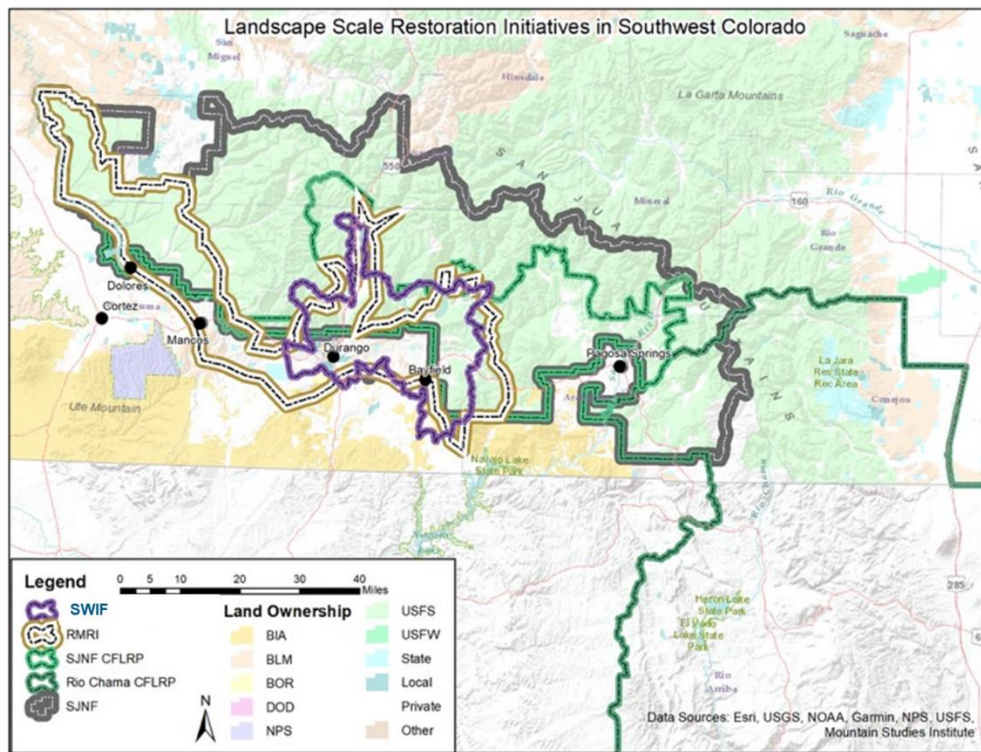


Figure 2: Overlap of SWIF, RMRI, and Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) geographies (current as of October 2020)

As the team began to validate findings with stakeholders, we engaged with several public and private entities who are potentially interested in participating in the Fund as “outcomes payors”, based on the benefits generated from these treatments. In addition, the team identified a state agency with legislative authority to issue bonds for these forest health treatments. Positive feedback received from these stakeholders, and an assessment that the project would be feasible, led the team to pursue funding to support the structuring of the SWIF. The team secured support from the Southwestern Water Conservation District, the Walton Family Foundation, the Gates Family Foundation, and the Innovative Finance for National Forests program, sponsored by the US Endowment for Forestry & Communities, the National Forest Foundation, and the USDA Forest Service. The team has now begun to re-engage with potential payors and implementation partners, designing and constituting an intergovernmental authority to oversee the SWIF, addressing compliance with Colorado’s Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR), and applying for additional grants to capitalize the Fund. This implementation plan describes the team’s vision and anticipated actions to launch the SWIF by the end of 2021, adding greater detail on the operations of the SWIF than what was able to be provided in the [Feasibility Study](#).

The SWIF would function as a revolving loan fund, capitalized by bond proceeds, grants, and appropriations initially enabling treatments on a large number of private acres, as well as state and local lands. The team approached local tribes to encourage their participation in the project. Beneficiaries would repay loans from the SWIF, based on the value of validated wildfire risk reduction and other outcomes, with additional funding via property owner cost share and utilization of biomass material. The SWIF would reduce the catastrophic risk of wildfire, better protect local water resources, and reduce flooding risk while improving forest health and the environment by fostering a local biomass industry. The SWIF will also enable future treatment programs in the same or expanded geographic area. The SWIF will work alongside the broader Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI), a collaborative effort for increased focus, scale, and pace of forest restoration in Southwest Colorado. Specifically, the SWIF is the foundational strategy for RMRI’s work on private lands in shared focal areas, which make up a large proportion of the SWIF target treatment area.

The cumulative cost of the initial program, predominantly focused on private land, is estimated at \$42 million, which the team continues to refine as part of implementation. To pay for the plan, the project team plans to “crowd in” funds from other sources to capitalize the Fund and help repay the revolving loans. Several local entities, such as county and municipal governments, water and electric utilities, and tribal governments, have already expressed interest in the SWIF based on the benefits of the treatments and biomass utilization. As impact loans, the amount repaid by these outcomes payors will depend on how successfully the treatments reduce risk of wildfire, as evaluated through modeling to simulate spread and likelihood of fires starting in treatment areas before and after the treatments are conducted.

The SWIF could be initially seeded from a bond issued by a state-level entity such as the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority (CWRPDA), which is responsible for issuing debt for water and power projects. The project team will also work to secure grants and appropriations from federal, state, and philanthropic sources to complement this bond issuance.

3.0 SWIF Operating Model

This section describes the components of the SWIF in terms of the envisioned roles of SWIF Authority members and other partners. Relevant processes and flow of funds through the SWIF Authority to contractors and local payors are also described. This section is intended to describe what the SWIF will look like once launched, while section 4 describes the steps the project team will take with partners to achieve that vision.

3.1 Components of the SWIF: Partners and Roles

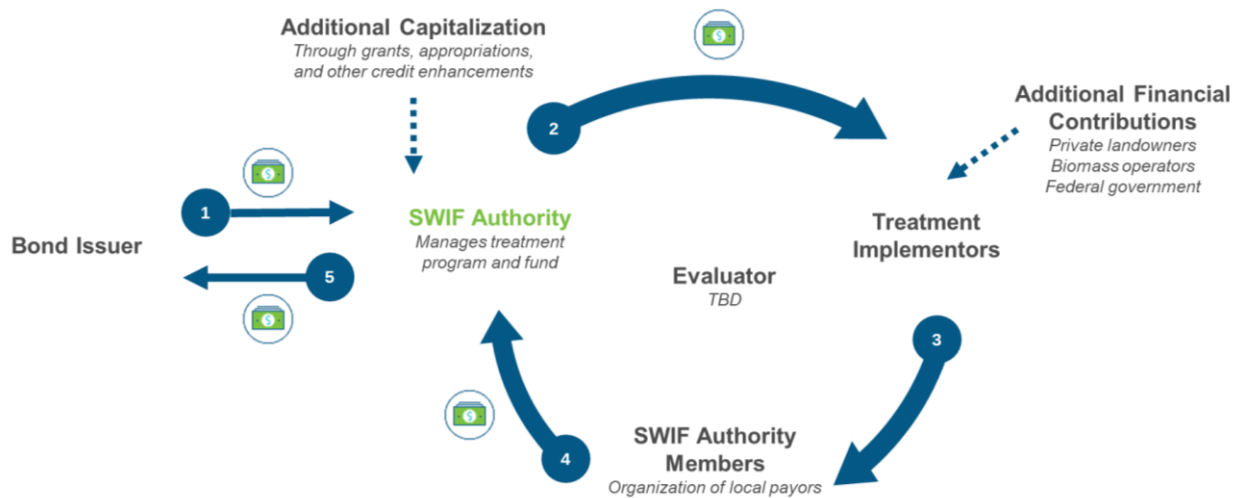


Figure 3: Overview of Southwest Wildfire Impact Fund (SWIF) Operations

SWIF Authority

The SWIF will be managed by the Southwest Wildfire Impact Fund Authority (SWIF Authority), an intergovernmental entity established by a coalition of local government entities and others. The primary objectives of this Authority are to:

1. Use local priorities to plan, finance, and implement forest health improvement projects, including projects to reduce hazardous fuels and protect communities within the boundaries of any Member;
2. Establish, fund, operate, maintain, and manage one or more revolving loan programs to finance forest health improvement projects for the Members and other borrowers.

The Authority will be governed by a Board of Directors responsible for investing the Authority's funds and overseeing the financial transactions of the Authority. The Board will also serve as the contracting party for all necessary contracts for forest health treatments and biomass sales. More details on the Authority are laid out in its creation agreement, which the SWIF project team has drafted and is currently engaging with La Plata County and City of Durango staff and others to refine and execute. See section 4 for additional details on the implementation approach for this Authority.

SWIF Members

By pooling resources, potential payors will maximize impact and capture economies of scale in areas of high risk for catastrophic wildfire. The SWIF Authority members will help determine the focus of the treatment program based on their priorities and assets and commit to repaying the loans issued by the SWIF Authority for treatments based on the validated wildfire risk reduction outcome for each member. This risk reduction validation will be conducted by an expert evaluator and will determine the effective interest rate at which members will repay the loans.

The project team noted interest from 5-6 potential payors who were engaged during the feasibility phase of this project. This interest came from a variety of local entities, including governments, tribal organizations, and utilities. As previously mentioned, the project team is currently engaging with the City of Durango and La Plata County regarding the agreement to create the SWIF Authority. The team intends to engage other payors as they indicate commitment. Members can be added to the SWIF Authority following its creation, in accordance with its charter and bylaws.

Bond Issuer

The CWRPDA has bonding authority to issue debt on behalf of local government agencies and therefore could be responsible for issuing bonds to capitalize the SWIF. Furthermore, the CWRPDA has statutory authority to issue bonds for forest health treatments that has yet to be utilized. CWRPDA's Board has authorized staff to work with the project team in defining and planning a bond issuance, subject to final Board approval. Currently the project team is considering two issuances - one to enable launch in 2021, and another to allow for increased implementation in later years.

Additional Capitalization

In order to ensure sufficient long-term capital in the Fund and concessionary terms for borrowing by SWIF Authority members, the proceeds of the bond may need to be significantly leveraged by grants, appropriations, and or/credit enhancement for the Fund's initial capitalization. The project team is working to identify and apply for grants and appropriations that are relevant to this project. Specifically, the team has identified the State and Private Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) program, the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) Forest Restoration & Wildfire Risk Mitigation grant program, and the USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Alternative Funding Arrangement program as primary targets for the first several years. Additionally, the team will explore philanthropic support from foundations focused on wildfire risk and resilient communities. Eventually, the SWIF Authority will own and manage the process for finding and applying for grants and other sources of funding to capitalize the SWIF through its formative years.

Treatment Implementers

The SWIF Authority will be responsible for allocating where and how the project treatment acres are implemented across state, local, tribal, and private lands. The Authority will work with project partners that have relevant areas of expertise to refine the overall and incremental (1-3 year) treatment programs, with input from regional collaboratives. In setting up the SWIF, the Authority will create a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with an organization (for example CSFS,

Wildfire Adapted Partners, National Forest Foundation (NFF), American Forest Foundation (AFF) or others) to coordinate the treatments across all land ownership types, with multiple contractors selected and managed by this organization to implement the actual treatments. The project team is discussing capacity and needs with each of these organizations to determine a recommendation, but the SWIF Authority will have final say in selecting a treatment manager. Once the treatment plans are finalized, the treatment manager will launch a bidding process for contractors interested in executing the work.

Additional Financial Contributions

Since the majority of the proposed treatment plan is on private land and this area is typically the most difficult and expensive to treat, private landowners will be expected to pay a percentage of the treatment cost (excluding biomass collection, processing, and transport) on their land. The project team will also seek revenue from biomass contracts that sell the small-diameter material taken off the forest for conversion to electricity, biochar, or other products. Lastly, the SWIF treatment area will complement a larger cross-boundary coordinated treatment effort, including federal lands on the San Juan National Forest and beyond. The project team is working to validate and operationalize this vision with relevant partners.

3.2 SWIF Flow of Funds and Relevant Processes

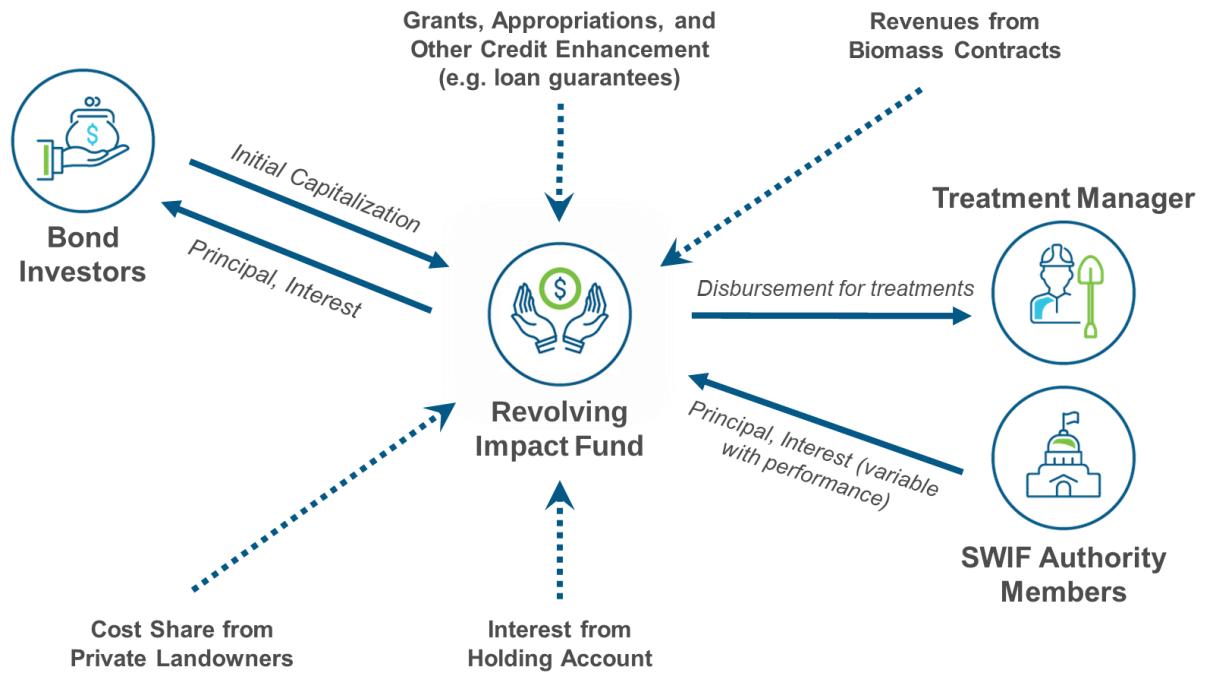


Figure 4: Flow of Funds Overview

Sustainable Revolving Loan Fund

The SWIF would function as a revolving loan fund, partially capitalized at Year 0 from the bond proceeds, grants, and appropriations, with future grant applications bringing in additional capital over the years during which forest health treatments are being implemented. The Fund would then be drawn down to disburse discrete revolving impact loans incrementally for 1-3 year forest health treatment programs and pay back over time the bond investors that initially helped capitalize the SWIF. At the same time, the debt service and outcomes payments repaid from the individual revolving impact loans would start to stabilize and grow the balance of the Fund, until the last impact loan is paid off. Once the initial bond investors of the Fund are repaid, these payments would recycle back into the SWIF to create a pool of capital available for additional loans for future mitigation work, including re-treatment of past areas or treatment of an expanded geography. Figure 5 illustrates the revolving loan structure, while Figure 6 shows that the SWIF would be drawn down to pay for treatments but then replenished over time as the debt service on the initial bond is paid off and SWIF members pay in. This revolving structure of the SWIF would carry investments further into the future and create a sustainable structure to tackle long-term wildfire risk in the region, which will advance long-term watershed resilience to natural and human disturbance.

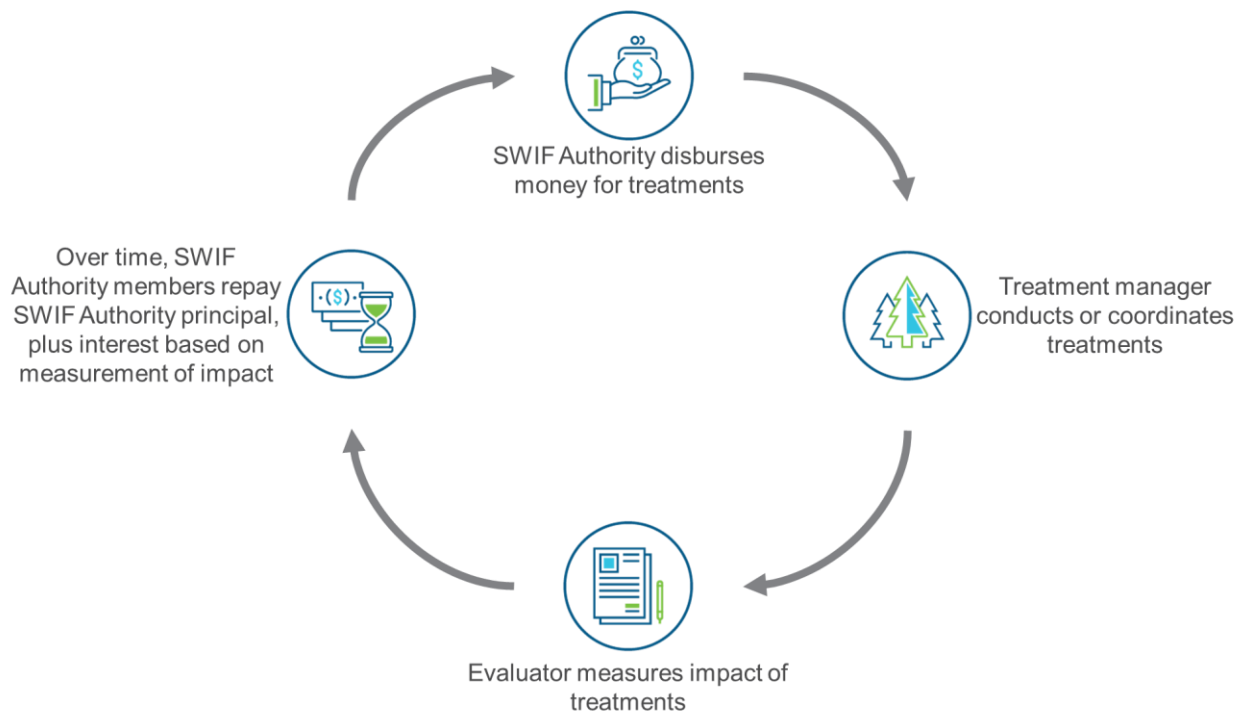


Figure 5: Illustration of Revolving Loan Structure

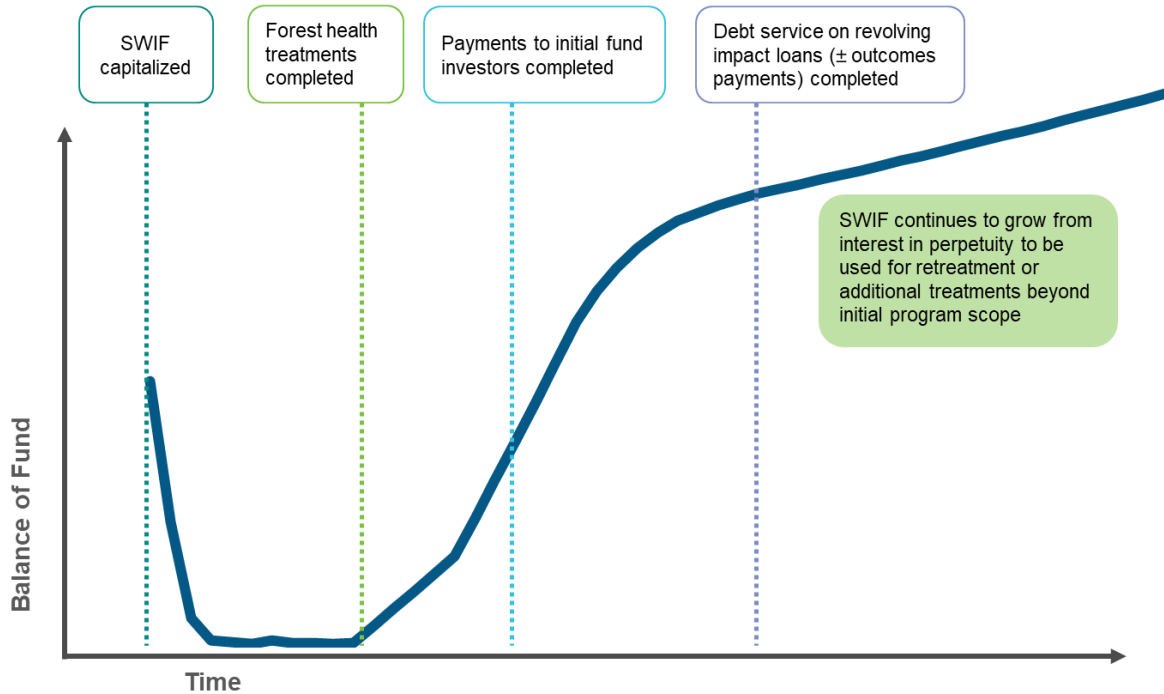


Figure 6: Revolving Fund continues to grow after bond is repaid

Contributions from Private Landowners

In the spirit of shared stewardship, private landowners will contribute to treatments on their property. Private landowners will be identified through the SWIF treatment area prioritization process and will work with a contractor identified to have the capacity and equipment needed for implementation work. That contractor will invoice the SWIF Authority for the entire cost of treatment for that parcel, and then the SWIF Authority will bill the landowner for their cost share (up to 50% of treatment costs). Other approaches to managing the work and cost share may be explored once the SWIF Authority is formed and can weigh in.

Outcomes Payments

In an outcomes-based financing structure, parties agree upfront to an outcome metric that determines additional outcomes payments or changes to interest rates. The SWIF will include a “wildfire risk reduction” outcome metric that determines whether SWIF Authority members make or receive an additional outcomes payment based on project performance. In order to evaluate wildfire risk reduction, an evaluator would use fire simulation modeling, such as FARSITE/NTFB, to project and compare the extent and likelihood of fires in treated parcels based on differences in vegetation conditions before treatment and after treatment. These tools can model the impact of a simulated wildfire before and after treatments, in terms of burn severity, exposure, and probability, on physical assets, water resources, suppression costs, and potentially other outcomes. Contingent on sufficient capital in the SWIF from all sources to ensure debt service on the bond, loans will be structured as impact loans where SWIF members make debt service payments plus or minus variable outcomes payments based on reduced wildfire risk of conducted treatments, as determined by the agreed-upon evaluation methodology. In this approach, if this

difference in modeled impact before and after treatment is greater than expected (high performance), SWIF Authority members would make an outcomes payment to the SWIF in addition to their debt service on the revolving impact loans. If the difference is lower than expected (low performance), SWIF Authority members would receive an outcomes payment from the SWIF to lower their debt service on the revolving impact loans. In a base case (base performance), no additional payment would be made either in either direction. Figure 7 illustrates these scenarios.

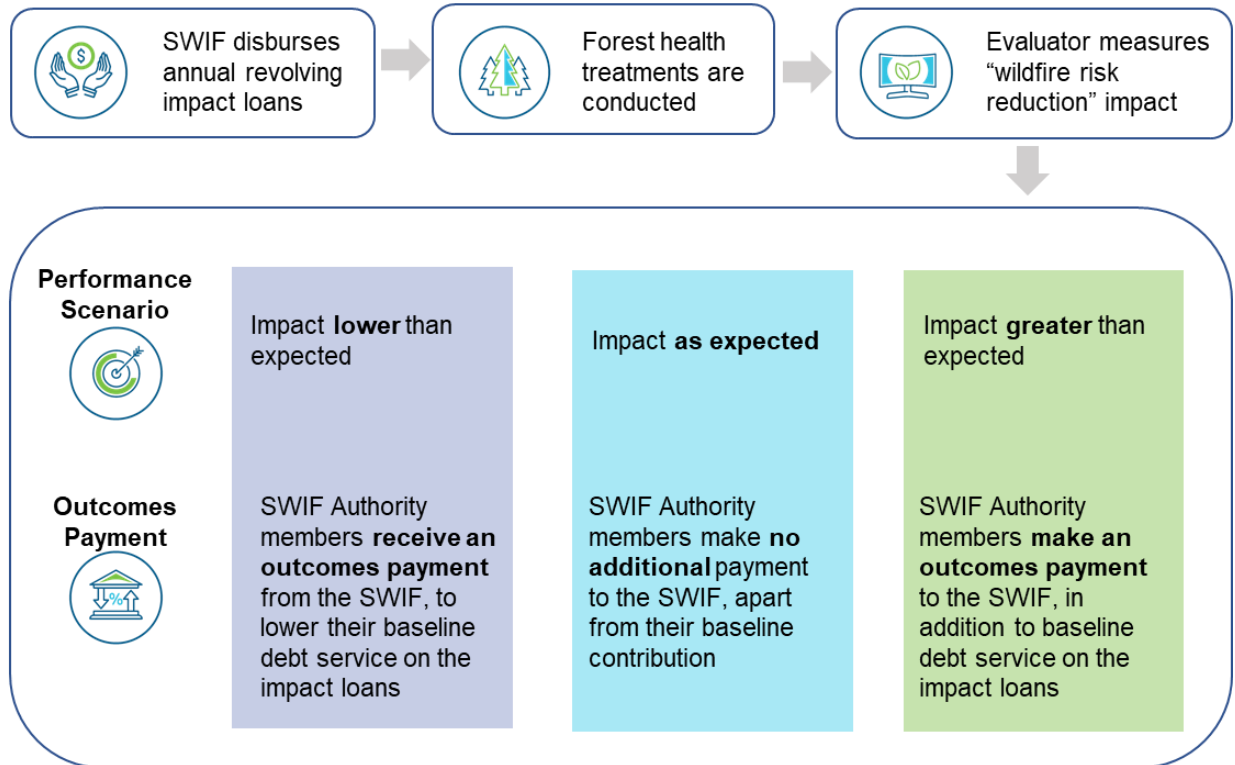


Figure 7: Outcomes Payments Dependent on Performance Scenario

SWIF Processes

The following table summarizes the high-level processes related to the SWIF, including each process owner and the frequency with which the process is repeated.

Table 1: Overview of SWIF Processes

Process	Owner	Frequency
Issue bond to capitalize SWIF	State of Colorado (potentially CWRDPA)	Most likely in 2021 and again in 2024
Manage SWIF (bond proceeds, grant monies, etc.)	SWIF Authority	Ongoing
Seek out grants, appropriations and other credit enhancement to support SWIF in concert with bond proceeds	SWIF Authority	Ongoing

Approve treatment programs, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and types of treatments • Processes and rules for changing geographic boundaries of treatment program • Coordination among federal and nonfederal treatments 	SWIF Authority	Periodically (every 1-3 years)
Disburse payments for treatments	SWIF Authority	Periodically (every 1-3 years)
Collect contributions from SWIF Authority members based on treatment program	SWIF Authority	As agreed
Evaluate treatment to determine outcomes payments	3rd Party Evaluator	Annually, beginning a certain number of years (to be determined) after treatment
Contract with landowners for all non-federal lands	SWIF Authority via the designated treatment program manager	Annually
Collect and manage private property owner cost share	SWIF Authority	Annually
Contract with biomass operators	SWIF Authority	1-2 times during life of SWIF (goal is for longer-term contracts)
Contract with forest health treatment implementers	SWIF Authority or its designated treatment program manager	Annually
Collect and/or distribute biomass	Designated treatment program manager	Ongoing
Make payments to State of Colorado Bond Issuer	SWIF Authority (with backing from members)	As agreed
Pay debt service on bond	State of Colorado Bond Issuer	As agreed

4.0 Implementation Approach

In order to use the CWRPDA’s current authority to issue a bond for forest health treatments, and to accelerate risk mitigation, the project team developed this implementation plan that will achieve launch of the SWIF in Fall 2021, while phasing in some of the other elements of the SWIF program over time to reduce immediate complexity. The following sections describe that approach.

4.1 Implementation Plan Summary

The CWRPDA currently has legislative authority to issue bonds for forest health treatments, recognizing forests as watershed infrastructure. The CWRPDA has not yet been approached with a project to exercise this authority. Additionally, due to continued high risk of catastrophic wildfires, the local governments that the project team is currently working with have expressed concern about waiting to begin implementation until all of the pieces of the envisioned SWIF are in place. Some of these pieces, such as incorporating biomass revenues, may require more lengthy investigation and process. Therefore, the project team is targeting a phased approach.

Phase 1 would include launching the SWIF Authority with initial members and covering a smaller treatment program. Phase 1 would be supported by a bond issuance from CWRPDA, with additional grants to be secured, but not yet including any revenue from biomass. This approach will enable work to begin around the areas of interest to local payors in 2022. Table 2 summarizes the major milestones in Phase 1, with more detailed plans included in the Appendices to this Plan document.

A more long-term Phase 2 would add additional members and project affiliates, and finance additional treatments through a second bond issuance while building in revenues from biomass. The second bond issuance would be dependent on efforts to extend the CWRPDA’s statutory authority to issue bonds for forest health treatments beyond 2023.

Table 2: Overview of Phase 1 Major Milestones

Action Item	Timeline
Create timeline and strategy for priority grant applications	September 2020
Engage with CWRPDA to determine bond requirements and issuance process	September - November 2020
Determine approach for City and County to provide revenue commitments in support of bond issuance	September – November 2020
Initiate assessments that will inform detailed design of the treatment program, identifying parcels in prioritized areas	October 2020
Launch program to secure state legislation to support City and County commitments and extend CWRPDA mandate	October 2020

Define governance and implementation mechanism for forest health treatments	November 2020
Secure City Council approval for SWIF participation and associated 2021 commitments for SWIF start-up costs	December 2020
Secure County Commissioner's approval for SWIF participation and associated 2021 commitments for 2021 start-up costs	December 2020
Create SWIF Authority & integrate payors	December 2020
Commence public communications program	Winter 2021
Complete application to CWRPDA	Spring 2021
Conduct outreach to targeted private landowners	Spring 2021
Finalize Year 1 treatment program, including treatment areas, costs, financing approach, and required revenue commitments from SWIF Authority members	Spring 2021
Secure contracts with private landowners, including commitment for cost share contribution	Summer 2021
Secure revenue commitments from SWIF Authority Members to support bond issuance	Summer 2021
Engage with CWRPDA to issue first bond	Summer 2021
Secure grants to supplement bond proceeds	Summer 2021
Sign MOU for management of treatment program	Summer 2021
Issue RFP for forest health treatments	Fall 2021
Finalize pricing thresholds and evaluation methodology	Fall 2021
Award contracts for forest health treatments	Annual from 2022
Initiate Year 1 treatment program	Spring 2022

4.2 Phase 1 Implementation in Detail

The following sections discuss issues and challenges for various areas of work for the project, and how the project team plans to address these issues and challenges.

SWIF Authority Development

Since early 2019, the project team has been engaging with local government, utilities and tribal organizations to gauge interest in joining and contributing financial resources to the SWIF Authority. The most extensive discussions have occurred with La Plata County, City of Durango, Southwestern Water Conservation District, La Plata Electric, and the Southern Ute Tribe. Currently, the plan is to form the SWIF as an Intergovernmental Authority pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes, Sections 29-1-203 and 29-1-203.5, with the City of Durango and La Plata County as the founding members. Other entities would be able to enter into project participation agreements and governmental entities could join the SWIF Intergovernmental Authority as an Authority governing board member. While governance of the SWIF Intergovernmental Authority will be limited by state statute to local governments, participation in the SWIF activities for non-governmental entities is anticipated to include advisory roles to the governing body and collaboratively developing and prioritizing forest health projects. The project team has developed a draft SWIF Authority 'Creation Agreement' which legal staff at both the City and County are reviewing. Issues being focused on include:

- Managing parallel engagements with multiple entities who could participate in the SWIF at differing levels
 - The City and County are being asked to create the SWIF Authority, which would oversee all aspects of SWIF activities and pilot initial forest health treatments of high priority to the City and County governments.
 - Based on initial experience, the SWIF Authority would be expanded to include other local governments and project participation pursued with non-governmental entities. The nature of this expansion would be determined by the treatment interests of joining entities.
- Ensuring adequate legal authority for local governments to join the SWIF Authority and make secure revenue commitments, and the SWIF Authority to perform the forest health work through qualified forest contractors and secure and repay forest health financing, in compliance with state and local law and the TABOR Amendment to the Colorado Constitution
 - The project team will pursue legislative changes through the Colorado General Assembly to ensure legal authority for these activities
 - Public elections, replacement collateral, lease purchase financing are two mechanisms that may be needed to secure local government and SWIF Authority revenue repayment obligations associated with forest health financing
 - Voluntary assessment and payment liens from non-governmental property owners and beneficiaries may be used to secure payments from non-governmental participants.

- Determining the Authority's annual budgetary needs for the initial start-up period and forest health treatments, and secure commitments from the founding members, the City and County
 - The project team will calculate this based on the size and scope of the initial treatment program and secured grant funding

Watershed Protection And Forest Health Bonds

To provide timeliness and sufficient scale to the forest and watershed health, restoration and improvement treatments, the SWIF will utilize existing statutory authority pursuant to Section 37-95-112.5, C.R.S. for the CWRPDA to issue bonds and make loans to fund watershed protection and forest health projects of governmental agencies. Proceeds of watershed protection and forest health bonds issued by the CWRPDA will be loaned to the SWIF, and used by the SWIF to conduct the forest and watershed health, restoration and improvement treatments, based on implementation loans to the beneficiary payors. The beneficiary payors shall consist of the local governments, state agencies, utilities, tribal governments and other entities that participate in the SWIF as Authority members and through participation agreements. Repayment commitments to the SWIF from state and local government payors and non-governmental entities will rely on a variety of mechanisms to provide the levels of security and coverage sufficient to satisfy market requirements associated with the SWIF's repayment obligation to the CWRPDA. As mentioned in the above section on SWIF Authority Development, enhancements to existing statutory authority may be sought to ensure sufficient repayment security to satisfy investors purchasing the CWRPDA watershed protection and forest health bonds, and provide continuing authorization for the CWRPDA to issue watershed protection and forest health bonds.

Finance & Operating Model

The project team has developed a comprehensive financial and operating model for the SWIF, accounting for all flows of funding into and out of the fund. The model is designed to be used to help optimize decisions around number of acres that can be treated in each year, based on constraints around ensuring sufficient balance in the Fund, maximum acres that can be treated in a given year, and maximum limits on payor contributions, while also taking into account costs of the treatment program, debt service schedules, and timing, terms, and amounts of funds coming in from grants, appropriations, bond proceeds, private landowner payments, and biomass revenues. The model can also be used to help size necessary bond issuances to capitalize the Fund, based on all other parameters.

Because the model can be used to both inform and be informed by decisions for a multitude of parameters as part of SWIF operations, it is expected that this modeling, and implications for SWIF economics and operations, will be iterative as other workstreams listed here become more and more refined.

Treatment Program Design & Evaluation

The design of the SWIF treatment program will coordinate with the prioritization efforts of RMRI, providing more details on specific parcels and the types, cost, and impact of treatments in areas that RMRI partners have identified significant values to water, wildlife, community, and recreation.

The project team is currently working with the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) to finalize the treatment program by January 2021. Their expertise will help inform measures of success for the treatment area, cost estimations, and priority private property targets. Working with CFRI, the City of Durango, La Plata County, Wildfire Adapted Partnership, CSFS, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), AFF, the Four Rivers Forest Restoration Partnership, and RMRI, the project team will identify priority project areas and align them with other efforts occurring on the landscape. Especially in the first years of treatment, incremental treatment plans must integrate considerations of priority parcels with the capacity of contractors to complete work across those priority parcels. These same partners will be working to develop monitoring protocols that will evaluate the effectiveness of the work that is occurring within the project areas. Mountain Studies Institute will support the monitoring and evaluation of project work.

Aligning the effort of the SWIF with the RMRI will allow for a landscape scale approach to forest management, improving the effectiveness of efforts to reduce fire risk.

Private Property Owners

Once priority project areas are identified, a strategy for outreach to private landowners within those areas will be developed and coordinated with capacity building of existing local and trusted organizations such as Wildfire Adapted Partnership and CSFS. The strategy will work with local efforts already underway and include a presentation on how work on those properties will support community wellbeing, the SWIF program, the opportunities and process for implementation, and the type of treatment proposed. Because landowners should be brought in as close to the actual treatment implementation as possible, this outreach will be an ongoing, annual effort, coordinated with other local work.

Engagement will be developed and conducted by the treatment manager identified in the MOU with the SWIF Authority. Local partners have existing relationships and processes that can be leveraged for this effort. The SWIF will work to expand capabilities and capacities of these partners to work with an increased number of landowners.

Grants & Appropriations to support SWIF

To ensure sufficient long-term capital in the Fund and terms for outcomes-based payments, bond proceeds will need to be supplemented with additional funds from philanthropy as well as grants and appropriations. The project team will be pursuing this funding by:

- Engaging with philanthropic organizations and individuals who have a dedicated focus on the health of Colorado's forests, the quality of its water supply, and the resilience of Colorado communities.
- Exploring opportunities to leverage public grant programs and appropriations from the US Forest Service, NRCS, Colorado State Forest Service and Colorado Parks and Wildlife, as well as other sources

After the SWIF Authority is created, the Authority itself can apply for grants and determine whether to use secured grant funding to defray costs for SWIF Authority members, expand the treatment program, or grow the balance of the fund.

4.3 Phase 2 Overview

A phased approach to implementing the SWIF will allow forests to be treated sooner, based on science-based best practices, but the team maintains a longer-term vision for broader SWIF Authority membership, incorporation of biomass sales, and an ambitious treatment program. While the details of Phase 2 will depend on the implementation of Phase 1, Phase 2 will likely include:

- Incorporation of additional payors as members of the SWIF Authority or project participants
- Collaboration with RMRI partners on the incorporation of biomass sale and revenues into SWIF operating model
- Expansion of treatment program beyond limited geography, in line with prioritization processes and risk analyses conducted during Phase 1
- Additional bond issuance from CWRPDA
- Additional grants and appropriations to support expanded geography

5.0 SWIF Team

A locally-grounded team has formed around previous work in this area to make the SWIF a reality. MSI's Program Director Aaron Kimple manages this effort and is involved in several regional forest health initiatives & collaboratives. Ellen Roberts, a former state senator working on projects addressing improved forest health & watershed protection, provides critical policy analysis & stakeholder engagement in this area. Robert Cole with Collins Cockrel & Cole - a Colorado-based law firm with expertise in local governments - is consulting on this project in the design of an intergovernmental legal entity that complies with all applicable laws & regulations. Quantified Ventures, an outcomes-based capital firm, brings expertise in designing & structuring innovative financing approaches to drive transformative impact. Jason Lawhon represents the San Juan National Forest and ensures appropriate coordination with the RMRI.

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