Suggested Structure of PFC February Agenda Presentations

Vegetation

Introduction

- Murphy covers Cliff Notes
- Specialist(s) brief the PFC on the following

PFC Priority One: Retain/Enhance Large Tree Size Class

- PFC objective for vegetation priority one treatment is less than all alternatives.
- PVG 6 CT/FT treatment acres: PFC estimated 1000 acres and requested refinement. Table 3-13 indicates that suitable acres are >1700. Is this a result of field recon identifying more acres with seral species?

A large part of it was habitat typing in field season 2014. A net of 600 acres that were previously PVG 2, 5 and 7 typed out at PVG 6. Field recon also identified more potential CT stands. 485 acres that did not have survey data in April of 2014 were identified for CT. A smaller amount of area that were previously thought to be CT potential were re-evaluated and put into another category.

- PFC encouraged clustering of stands treated (research supporting WCS). Describe strategy to block treatments and combine a subset of lower priority treatments (plantations) with the clusters of Priority One stands.

- Focus of treatments in the Fuels treatment areas first
- After that there are natural treatment clusters
- Would base treatment priorities on location and revenue of the stewardships.
- Currently the Payette NF has approximately 4.5 million in retained receipts from MCCM contracts which need to be used for restoration. Additionally, there is potential to compete for additional funds from other sources to complete service work in CFLRP restoration areas.
- Example of Indefinite delivery/ indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contract used for NCT in MCCM with retained receipts
- Potential Lower priority treatments could be
    - Isolated treatment units
    - Nonforested vegetation treatments
    - Low site quality treatments
    - BA/PL

PFC Priority Two: Accelerate Transition to Large Tee Size Class

- All action alternatives would treat fewer acres than PFC objective for CT/FT and CT/MP.
    - Are acres treated by BA/PL and FT-PC-MSw source of this difference?

Yes. In general throughout the MFWR project area there are fewer stands that were considered CT/FT due to the lower amounts of early seral species. However, Aspen was not considered as early seral so some of these stands could have that component but it is not reflected well in the data.

1) BA/PL – Greys Creek fire reduced the number of medium and large tree acres in PVGs 2 and 5 which reduced the number of CT/FT and CT/MP harvests
2) Within PVG 6 there are more acres that were initially determined to be regeneration harvest (considered the wetter version on PVG 6) units because they lacked adequate amounts early seral components.
3) CT/Aspen also reduced some acres in CT/FT

- PFC prioritized natural stands higher than plantations. Priority Two was intended to accelerate naturally occurring medium tree size stands. The Coalition requested that treatment acres and costs be reported and contrasted for the naturally occurring (non-plantation) vs. plantations.
    - Are CT/MP treatment acres commercially viable or simply of commercial size? Would be good to note that the acres proposed for treatment are almost identical between the alternatives.

- It is a mixture. Some stands are between 8-10 DBH which is considered commercial size however they are not generally commercially viable (there may be opportunity for post and pole contracts since Parma Post and Pole are interested in ponderosa and a lot of the plantations have lodgepole regenerating in them).
- The stands averaging between 10 and 13 inches DBH would generally be used for biomass which is a commercial product but tends to cost more to remove then the value of the product.
    - NCT acres – what is mix of natural stands and plantations receiving this treatment? What is estimated cost per acre?

Most of the NCT acres are plantations (77%). Plantation thinning is estimated at $225/acre and in mature stands at $75/acre.

Sum of Acres	Plant Year			
	0	1984-1998	2000-2011	Grand Total
Row Labels	0			
Fuels Treatment				
Immature/Mature Low Stocking	84			84
Mature/Over-mature High Stocking	23			23
Mature/Over-mature Low Stocking	27			27
Partial Cuts (mature/over-mature) Moderate Stocking	43			43
Fuels Treatment Total	177			177
PCT				
Clearcuts		15	20	35
Immature/Mature Low Stocking			4	4
Mature/Over-mature Low Stocking	23		5	28
Partial Cuts Low Stocking	89	12	372	473
Sapling/Poles - Planted	10	272	280	563
PCT Total	123	299	681	1102
Grand Total	299	299	681	1279

- Be sure to highlight restoration benefit of stands receiving NCT treatment. If the current condition of a PVG is an abundance of large tree size class stands, describe the benefits expected from thinning small or medium tree size class stands in that PVG.

- Restoration benefits include
- Species selection (i.e., can choose early serals)
- Spatial pattern
- Faster movement to the next size class
- Promotes resiliency, reduces competition, and increases growth rates of residual trees

Landscape Pattern/Patches and PVGs 6, 7, 10 and (11?)

- The PFC discussed restoration purpose and objectives for PVGs 6, 7, 10.
- For PVG 6, the issue was the appropriate treatment of the more moist acres (or perhaps better described as those without seral species).

Moist PVG 6 was generally placed within FT-PC-MSw treatment type but can be a FT if the early seral species are present

- For all 3 PVGs, the desired restoration treatment should address landscape pattern (patches in a mosaic), the shortfall of GFSS in the distribution of successional stages, and size of the patches.

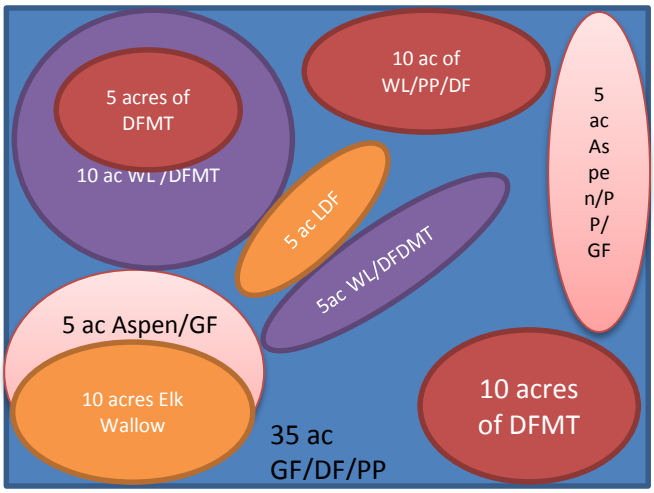
None of the alternatives directly address the shortfall of GFSS in PVGs 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11. The retention of greater than 10% canopy cover in the openings as well as the size of the openings does not create GFSS. However, these openings are expected to create gaps in the vegetation that will promote regeneration.

- The PFC Recommendation Report supports this approach, but the Vegetation Committee had insufficient background information to recommend an objective (i.e., treatment acres).
- Since each action alternative has significant acres in the FT-PC-MSw treatment, background on

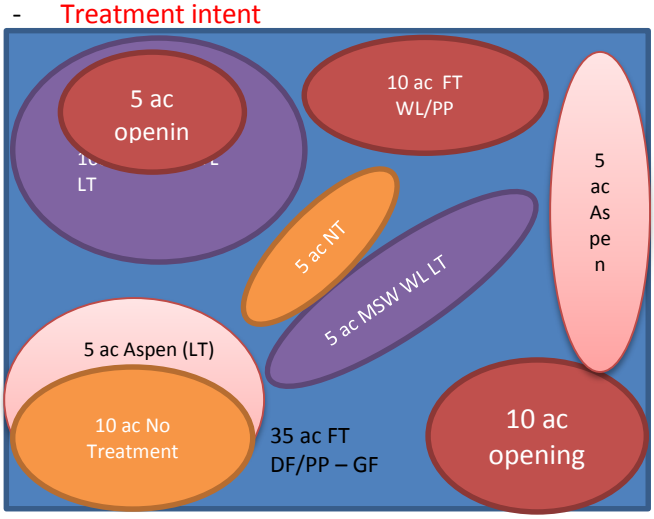
this treatment will be important to communicate to the PFC.

- Stand characteristics pre- and post- treatment

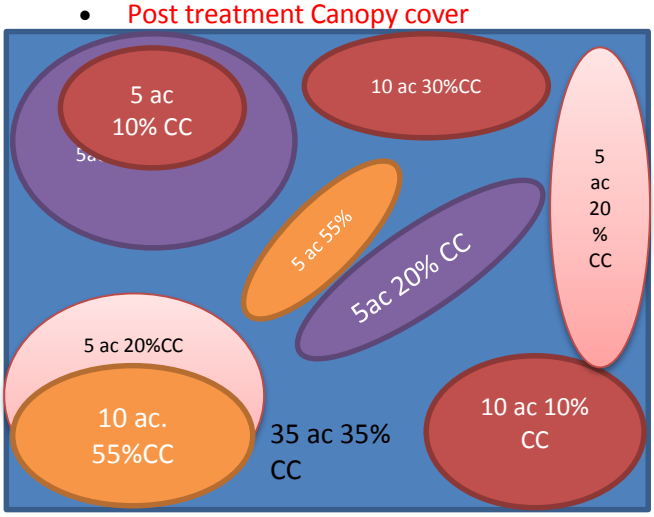
- Pre-Treatment



- Treatment intent



- Post treatment Canopy cover



- The weighted average is approximately 30% for the stand

Acres	%CC	Average
35	35	12.25
5	10	0.5
5	20	1
5	20	1
15	55	8.25
10	20	2
10	10	1
5	20	1
10	30	3
100		30

  - Historical conditions for stands in the respective fire regimes (were there blocks of large tree size class stands, patches distributed within the stands, what is the appropriate size of the patches).

- Mixed Severity 1 – patch size ranged from <1- 600 acres (PVGs 5, 6, 7 and 10) – 10-50% mortality
- Mixed Severity 2 - patch size ranged from <1- 25,000 acres (PVGs 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11) – 50-90% mortality
- Lethal - patch size ranged from >25,000 acres (PVGs 8, 9 and 10) – 90+% mortality
- Note we only have 1,535 acres within the lethal fire regime well below the minimum patch size
- Openings were determined based on the minimum opening size to promote the regeneration of early serals – this is a very conservative size

Historic Fire Regime	Vegetated Project Area Acres	Percent of Each Fire Regime Improved by Alternative by Acres (%)		
		Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4
Non-Lethal	5,677	*4,769 (84%)*	*4,144 (73%)*	*4,769 (84%)*
Mixed-Severity I	16,152	*10,499 (65%)*	*6,784 (42%)*	*11,791 (73%)*
Mixed-Severity II	14,626	*8,776 (60%)*	*7,167 (49%)*	*10,530 (72%)*
Stand Replacement	617	*153 (25%)*	*0 (0%)*	*385 (63%)*
TOTAL / Percent of project area improved	37,073	*24,292 (65%)*	*18,519 (50%)*	*27,434 (74%)*
Note: It has been assumed that stand treatments consisting of both, thinning and burning would have the greatest impact in restoring fire regimes. Additionally, grasslands proposed for burning are included in these acres of improvement.				

  - Since some of the acres will be treated as FT, will the post-treatment condition of those stands be lower canopy closure large and medium tree size classes? No

- FT areas would generally have less than 20-40% CC
- MSW would retain approximately 11-20% CC
- Openings would retain approximately 10% CC
- Skips would generally retain greater than 50% CC

  - What are the habitat benefits and fire management benefits derived from this treatment?

Benefits to habitat and fire management

1. Reduces fuels homogeneity – which can reduce fuel continuity thus reducing the potential for crown spread
2. Promotes aspen/willow which can be effective fire breaks as well as wildlife refugia
3. Can reduce DMT and other insect and disease pockets
4. Promotes regeneration of early seral species
5. Promotes resiliency, reduces competition, and increases growth rates of residual trees
6. Releases legacy trees
7. Reduces density of SAF around WBP populations

  - The DEIS assessment of lynx habitat concluded that Alternative 4, in the long term, will improve the habitat. It would be good to have Jon prepared to describe the benefits from creating the mosaic resulting from the increased acres treated with a FT-PC-MSw acres prescription. Why? Some members of the PFC will likely by suspect of benefits from MSw treatments.

Road and Recreation Infrastructure

Introduction

- Murphy introduces Cliff Notes comparison
- Resource Specialists address topics below

Watershed Condition

- PFC prioritized Granite Creek (1) and Mica Creek (2) for improving watershed condition
- Also recommended improving indictors that were rated as poor in 2011, and specifically mentioned aquatic habitat, roads/trails, soils.
- The Recommendations Report requested that the DEIS evaluate change in watershed condition post-treatment.
- The Cliff Notes highlight 1) reduction in sediment delivery from roads, 2) stream miles improved, and 3) acres moved towards historical fire regime. It would be of benefit to discuss the anticipated improvement in watershed as a result of the treatments (poor to fair, or poor to good) by alternative. And would the treatments degrade any indicators? Working thru the WCF arithmetic, what is the potential for Granite or Mica to improve watershed condition from Impaired to one At Risk? When I (naively) work thru the arithmetic, Granite could be very close!

Melanie Vining, WZ Hydrologist will respond to these point in the meeting

Access - Roads

  - Road decom (and specifically obliteration) will be a discussion topic. I think it will be important to describe changes in the PA compared to the last TAP update (Jan 2014).Both system and unauthorized miles increased some, compared to the 2014 TAP update.
  - I assume the source for these miles were in the IDT Evaluate category of the 2014 TAP update.
  - The increases aren't large (as they were in MCCM), but be prepared to explain the outcome of the further evaluation by the IDT that led to the increase.

- Alt 2 -TAP update 15.1 miles of decommissioning
- IDT Evaluate to Decommission
- 50166 1.0 miles
- Additional unauthorized road identified since TAP update – 7 miles

- Mac questioned the road access for stands with mechanical harvest.
  - Does the reduction in access to suited timberlands by alternative reduce access to acres recommended for mechanical treatment?

- Current access for mechanized treatment in Alt 2 more than ¼ mile from road

Row Labels	Sum of Acres
Aspen Treatments	24
Commercial Thin	188
FT-PC_SH	544
MP	1
Restoration on LSQ	109

Grand Total	**866**

- It is expected that some area will drop out and temporary roads may be adjusted.
    - Does the reduction in access to suited timberlands constrain acres that would require treatment in the next 30 years?

Table 3-1. Suited timber lands within 0.25 miles of an open National Forest System road (includes administrative use only roads)

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2		Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres	10,972	9,911		9,342	10,810
Change in Acres	0	–1,061		–1,630	–162
Percent Change (%)	0.0	–9.7		–14.9	–1.5

-
- Temporary roads – I don't recall total miles of temporary roads being this high – i.e., the unauthorized road prisms used and then obliterated post-treatment. I recommend that you be prepared to answer the question about management access requirements over the next 30 years. Or is this a case where, under CFLRP rules of the road, all temporary roads need to be obliterated as part of the project?
- During the review of the Proposed Action, the PFC requested two hardcopy maps: existing road network (system and unauthorized) and Road network post restoration (assuming the PA is implemented). Were those maps produced and reviewed by the PFC?

Access-Trails/Roads

- IDFG requested an evaluation of elk security areas during the review of the PA. The DEIS does a good summary by alternative.
- Regan was hoping for a "no net loss" of elk security areas. Each alternative reduces the elk security areas compared to the no action. Are there any additional season closures of roads (or trails) that would mitigate this outcome? How much of an impact is the proposed new trail on elk security areas?
- Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
    - PFC objective was no change to ROS. DEIS reports this is true for winter and summer, with the caveat that the winter ROS will have a temporary impact.
    - A likely question will be related to road decommissioning. Does that restoration action in aggregate alter the ROS (i.e., either diminish or improve current recreation opportunities)?

Economics

Introduction

- Murphy reviews Cliff Notes.

Treatment Costs/Revenues

- I suspect that the members will be less interested in the economic analysis method used to estimate project cash flow, and more interested in example treatment costs.
- The MCCM DEIS had summary tables of costs and revenues by treatment category (pp. 3-186, 3-187). Comparable summaries would be useful for MFWR.
- It would be good to communicate the total costs of road improvements and road maintenance compared to road obliteration for the project. My guess is the ratio is $8/$1 (including stream crossings).
- The small and medium tree size class thinnings should also be included as a category of costs.

Alt 2

Sum of Acres	Column Labels			
Row Labels	Small	Medium	Large	Grand Total
CT MP	1060	11	9	1080
Grand Total	1060	11	9	1080

Alt 3

Sum of Acres	Column Labels			
Row Labels	Small	Medium	Large	Grand Total
CT MP	1015	15	9	1039
Grand Total	1015	15	9	1039

Alt 4

Sum of Acres	Column Labels			
Row Labels	Small	Medium	Large	Grand Total
CT MP	1060	21	9	1090
Grand Total	1060	21	9	1090

Alt 2

Sum of Acres	Column Labels				
Row Labels	Sapling	Small	Medium	Large	Grand Total
Fuels Treatment			53	124	177
PCT	35	563	477	28	1102
Grand Total	35	563	530	152	1279

Alt 3

Sum of Acres	Column Labels				
Row Labels	Sapling	Small	Medium	Large	Grand Total
PCT	33	555	297	35	921
Grand Total	33	555	297	35	921

Alt 4

Sum of Acres	Column Labels				
Row Labels	Sapling	Small	Medium	Large	Grand Total
Fuels Treatment		14	109	780	904
PCT	35	582	490	28	1135
Grand Total	35	596	599	808	2038