

Items #34, and #35: Regeneration Harvest

Evaluation Question: How did acres harvested compare with planned harvest?

Resources to be measured:

Acres of regeneration harvest by year

Acres of intermediate harvest by year

Data Sources: R1 Standard Report, acres harvested by cutting method

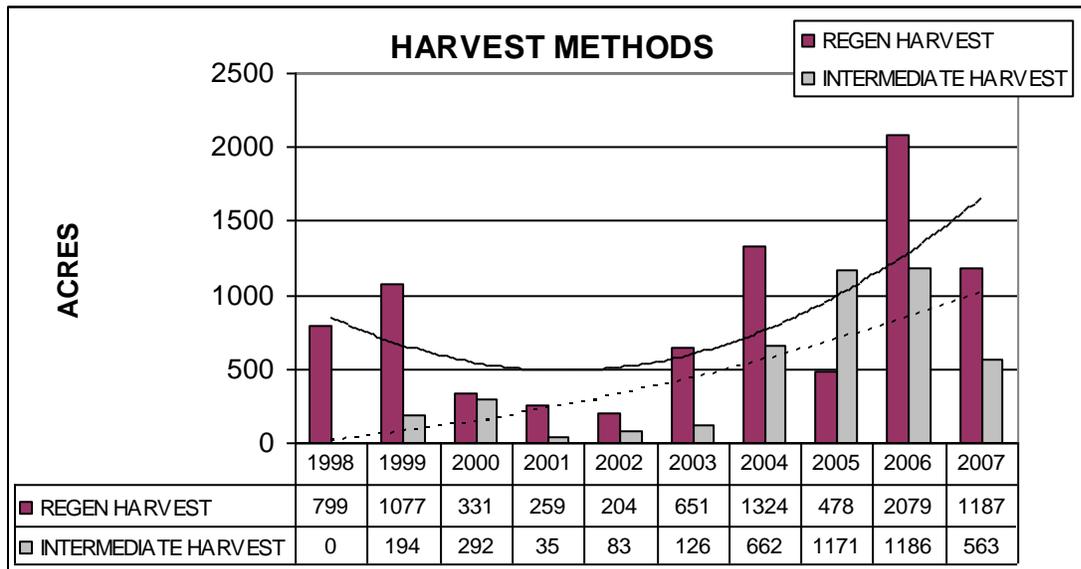


Figure 1: Harvest Methods from 1998 to 2007, Flathead National Forest

This harvest breakdown differs from the prior chart of total harvest, in that salvage and overstory removal harvest are not displayed.

The 1986 Forest Plan record of decision (ROD) projected an average of 6,600 acres of regeneration harvest and 2500 acres (27%) intermediate harvest or 9,100 acres per year. As amended with A21 in 1999, the Forest Plan projected treatments through 2001, with an average of 2,500 acres regeneration and 6,500 acres (72%) intermediate harvest. This included an anticipated 2,500 acres of old growth restoration treatments in late seral/old growth stands. Omitting the old-growth restoration treatment which has not occurred as projected, the amended Forest Plan would project 61% of harvest to be intermediate treatment.

Monitoring results show that overall acreages continue to be less than the totals projected in the plan, averaging 3,599 acres over the last 5 years. The last 5 years are more representative of the current and projected program. Regeneration harvest acres have averaged 1,144 acres in the last 5 years, with intermediate harvest averaging 742 acres. Intermediate harvest in the last 5 years averages 38% of the harvest total, also less than projected. Salvage harvest acres, not projected in the plan, have averaged 1619 in the last 5 years.

Beginning in 2004, there is a large increase in acres of intermediate harvest, reflective of projects which are focused on reducing fuels in the wildland urban interface (WUI). These projects, developed to address priorities from the 2001 National Fire Plan, began to be harvested in 2004. The proportion of intermediate harvest will continue to increase over the next few years, as harvest of projects developed since 2004 are completed on the ground. Wildland urban interface projects continue to focus on thinning from below with lesser amounts of regeneration harvest. When priority WUI projects are completed, the sales program may address broader landscape restoration opportunities to a greater degree.

Recommended Actions: Continue to monitor overall harvest levels and trends in treatment types