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Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

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Route To:

Subject: Biological Evaluation of Pacific Timber Sale Project (FHP Report No. N08-04)

To: Tom Contreras, Forest Supervisor, Mendocino National Forest

Cynthia Snyder (Entomologist) and Pete Angwin (Plant Pathologist) from Forest Health Protection visited Jesse Rosenquist Silviculturist for the Grindstone Ranger District, Mendocino National Forest to look over several stands in the Pacific Timber Sale. The sale is still in the layout phase. Half of the sale is being administered by the Mendocino NF and half by a TEAMS group. TEAMS is a unit of the National Forest Service Enterprise Program.

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The objective of the sale is to manage timber in the “matrix”. A SPLATs (Strategically Placed Landscape Area Treatments) design is being considered due to the close proximity of the forest’s largest WUI (Wildland Urban Interface), a nearby LSR (Late Successional Reserve) and widespread OHV (Off Highway Vehicle) trails. Due to the many permanent and seasonal cabins on 20-160 acre lots scattered throughout the area, the Blue Slides LSR and heavy OHV use in the area, there is a recognized need for fuels reduction. A combination of precommercial and commercial thinning as well as prescribed burning is being proposed for 300-500 acres across the landscape. Of the 429 acres currently identified within the sale, about 100 acres has been identified as not economically viable for commercial sale.

The first stand we looked at (Stand #789) was a generally young (~120 years old) ponderosa pine stand with a light mix of sugar pine and oak (Photo 1). The stand had been underburned 2-3



Photo 1. Pacific Timber Sale Project, stand #789, young, dense ponderosa pine with a mix of sugar pine and oak.



years previously but is still in need of thinning. A small patch of fire scorched trees was being attacked by western pine beetle with about 10 trees either dead or recent faders. Dwarf mistletoe was stated as a concern; however we only found one pocket of ponderosa pine dwarf mistletoe, *Arceuthobium campylopodum*, with about 10 trees affected. This pocket was in a small swale surrounded by oak for the maximum distance that the dwarf mistletoe seeds might spread. Dwarf mistletoe could be thinned out during treatment. A major desire is to protect the sugar pine resource as none were showing signs of white pine blister rust infection and there is less than one percent known genetic resistance on the Mendocino. It was also suggested that leaving the oak for wildlife habitat would be advantageous.

The second unit we looked at (Stand #2-2) was adjacent to the Cedar Camp Campground within the Blue Slides LSR. This stand was a mature mix of ponderosa pine, incense cedar, white fir, sugar pine, and Douglas-fir (Photo 2). Although it was also in need of thinning, the rules associated with canopy cover retention within the LSR must be incorporated in any treatment. Jesse expressed a desire to open this stand up as much as possible, with a clumpy distribution perhaps, where it currently exceeds LSR specifications for crown closure. This plan would definitely improve stand conditions. There was a patch of pine mortality that was not identified to cause.

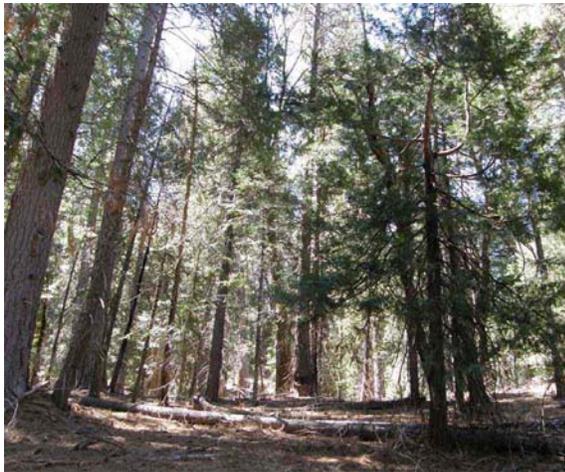


Photo 2. Stand #2-2, mixed conifer within the Blue Slides LSR.



Photo 3. Pacific Timber Sale Project, stand #14-2, mature Douglas-fir with mix of ponderosa pine, incense cedar and oak.

If you have any questions and/or need additional information please contact me at 530-226-2437.

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