

MGT AREA 8 -- PINON/JUNIPER

A VISION

The foothills are full of the majestic pinon and juniper. Their fragrance fills the air. The trees are bushy and full. The opening among the stands are full of grass and new trees are coming on.

This looks into the future, although some of it may be happening now. It is stated in the "present tense" as if it is already that way. This gives a feel of where we are heading. It paints a general picture with a broad brush.

DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION

- Manage for habitat diversity
- Maintain an average of 50 percent or more of pinon acres in a balanced age class distribution.
- In juniper areas there will be at least 10 trees large trees per acre. The trees will have greater than 25 percent living crown.
- This is good habitat for the plain titmouse and elk.

This table snaps a more detailed picture of what this management area will look like in the future. Since much depends on natural cycles, which need time, these conditions may take many years to achieve. Some of it may be in this condition now.

DESCRIPTION

There are two conditions that exist in this management area:

- Pinon pine, Utah-seed juniper and Rocky Mountain juniper comprising the tree canopy with a wide variety of grass, forbs and shrubs in the understory.
- The transition zone where the pinon-juniper woodland type joins the ponderosa pine. This is characterized by dry, warm climatic conditions and poor ponderosa site productivity classes (site index less than 55).

The area has provided firewood since man arrived. Many people prefer pinon as firewood over all other species. The east side of the Carson and the Tres Piedras Ranger District have been extensively cutover for firewood, and average size classes are three inches to five inches in diameter at ground level. Other traditional uses have included hunting, pinon nut gathering, Christmas tree and juniper post cutting, big game winter range and grazing. There are numerous two-track nonsystem roads that provide access into the area.

Fire occurrence is low and potential for large fires is extremely low. Ground fuels are light, less than five tons per acre, except in stands that have been harvested for firewood.

D. Management Area Prescriptions

Standards and Guidelines

This section contains the standards and guidelines against which activities and uses are to be compared. It focus on and provides more details about the "Desire Future Conditions." In some cases, it gives the long term 'where and when.' The Forest Plan Implementation Schedule is the tool used for all short-term planning and scheduling. The Implementation Schedule provides the operational perspective [making the commitment -- asking for the dollars and scheduling what year it will be done in.] The tactical perspective [the execution] is the actual implementation on the ground. This is done after we get the funding. It is also documented as accomplishments in the Forest Plan Implementation Schedule.

JUNIPER DIVERSITY... Unless other management objectives are determined to have priority, as determined by interdisciplinary team review, manage the juniper (Rocky Mountain and Utah) components to provide for habitat diversity. The following guidelines will be used on those areas where juniper diversity is to be maintained:

- In areas where juniper comprise less than 10 trees/acre retain all live juniper trees.
- In areas where juniper comprise more than 10 trees/acre retain at least 10 of the largest live juniper trees. Trees retained should have greater than 25 percent living crown.

JUNIPER... Maintain juniper and other species as a component when they are in pinon stands.

HARVESTS...

- Pinon-juniper harvests will be primarily under a shelterwood system with intermediate cuts used to improve growth and meet other management objectives. Standard rotation age is 180 years.
- Using integrated stand management to meet wildlife and other resource objectives, harvest pinonjuniper firewood from slopes 15 percent gradient or less.

UNEVEN AGE... Uneven-aged management may be used.

FIREWOOD... Priority will be given to personal-use sales. Commercial sales may be made to meet objectives when:

- 1) the Ranger District ASQ exceeds personal-use demand.
- 2) access is limited to commercial yarding equipment.
- 3) species mix or product size does not attract personal-use.

LAW ENFORCEMENT... Patrols are conducted during firewood cutting- season (normally, May through November) to help reduce illegal fuelwood removal.

PONDEROSA PINE... Do not harvest ponderosa pine, unless the objective is to improve big game cover and other wildlife habitat components over the long term.

BIG GAME WINTER RANGE... Treat pinon-juniper stands on big game winter ranges as per forest-wide standards and guidelines.

REPLACEMENT OF RANGE IMPROVEMENTS... Replacement of structural improvements will be on a 30-40 year cycle and will take priority over new structures.

SEE FOREST-WIDE... Reference standards and guidelines in the Forest-wide section related to planning, inventory, silvicultural exam, and sale preparation and administration.