

Output 1: LaVA Pre-treatment Checklist

Project: Teddy/Vulcan Focus Area		District: Brush Creek-Hayden Ranger District
Partnership Project: Yes	Primary Partner(s): Wyoming State Forestry Division, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Mule Deer Foundation	
Project Objective(s): #1 mitigate hazardous fuels; #2 provide for recovery of forest products; #3 enhance forest and rangeland resiliency to future insect and disease infestations; #4 protect infrastructure; #5 restore wildlife habitat; #6 enhance access for forest visitors and permittees; and #7 provide for human safety		
Accounting Unit: Battle Pass	Accounting Unit: Jack Savery	
Project Description and Location: The project area is located generally along National Forest System Road (NFSR) 443, north of Wyoming State Highway 70, on the east side of the Sierra Madre Range. It includes an area east of Battle Pass both north and south of Highway 70. Vulcan: This focus area includes portions of Townships 14 and 15 North, Ranges 85 and 86 West, 6 th P.M., Carbon County, Wyoming. Forest Plan Management Areas in this focus area include 2.1 (Special Interest Areas), 3.31 (Backcountry Recreation, Your-round Motorized), 4.2 (Scenery), 5.12 (General Forest and Rangelands, Rangeland Vegetation Emphasis), and 5.13 (Forest Products). Treatment Opportunity Areas (TOAs) in this focus area are primarily Forest and Rangeland Resiliency and Forest Products Emphasis with smaller area of the Recreation Emphasis TOA (no temporary roads), Scenery and Aspen Emphasis TOA (no temporary roads), Special Emphasis TOA, and substantial overlap with the Fuels Treatment and Safety Emphasis TOA.		
Data File Location(s): T:\FS\NFS\MBRTB\Project\LaVA_Implementation\GIS\Teddy_Vulcan\Data\1_PreTreatment		

Project Description (narrative):

Five preliminary projects have been identified in the Teddy/Vulcan Focus Area. Many of the preliminary treatment areas have not been reviewed in detail on the ground and are likely to change based on site-specific resource surveys, application of the design features and standard operating procedures identified in Appendix A, public and Cooperator feedback, and other factors.

Several areas of potential cross-boundary treatments have been identified. The partners, other state and federal agencies, or private landowners will develop and implement these treatments, which are outside of the LaVA analysis but complementary to LaVA objectives (for example, aspen enhancement or fuels reduction). Depending on the implementation tool, some LaVA and cross-boundary treatments could be combined (for example, in a Good Neighbor Authority agreement) for efficiency.

Preliminary Treatments

Forest Products

Approximately 3,929 acres of treatments have been identified to produce commercial forest products (primarily dead lodgepole pine) and meet objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7. Harvest prescriptions could include clearcutting, overstory removal, or similar stand initiation treatment options. Current plans include two timber sales: Teddy Salvage in the south half of the focus area and Vulcan Salvage in the north half of the focus area. Within the Teddy Salvage area, most of the units have been field validated as areas of potential treatment, and an estimated 461 acres will be laid out for harvest. Within the

Vulcan Salvage area, none of the harvest units have been field validated, but an estimated 600 acres will be laid out for harvest. Temporary roads will likely be needed to access many of the harvest units.

Fuels

Approximately 1,195 acres of treatments have been identified to reduce or modify fuels and meet objectives 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7. Current plans include two fuels projects: Roadside Fuels along NFSRs 440 and 443 (475 acres) and Battle Pass Fuels (720 acres) along Highway 70 east of Battle Pass. Activities could include thinning, mastication, prescribed burning (broadcast or pile burning), or other fuel treatments. Recovery of forest products (objective #2) is not anticipated but could occur. Commercial thinning could be the most cost-effective option. Temporary roads are not anticipated but could be needed to facilitate use of mechanized equipment.

Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

Approximately 653 acres of treatments have been identified to enhance the long-term health of wildlife habitats including mountain shrub and aspen communities and meet objectives 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7. Fuel reduction and clearing of hazard trees along the boundary fence line would be secondary objectives. Activities could include brush mowing or mastication, removal of conifers encroaching on aspen stands, aspen cutting, or other treatments. Activities will be further refined during field validation. Recovery of forest products (objective #2) is not anticipated but could occur. Commercial thinning could be the most cost-effective option. Temporary roads are not anticipated but could be needed to facilitate use of mechanized equipment.

For all “yes” answers below provide documentation on the next page.

YES	NO	Issue:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The treatment has the potential to affect long-term stream health. (If yes, go to Decision Trigger 1).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatment includes treatments meant to maintain or improve wildlife habitat. (If yes, go to Decision Trigger 2).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatment has the potential to alter wildlife security areas. (If yes, go to Decision Trigger 3).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatment occurs within a Lynx Analysis Unit or Linkage Corridor. (If yes, go to Decision Triggers 4 thru 9).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This treatment will utilize temporary roads to access treatment areas. (If yes, go to Decision Trigger 10 and 11).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The treatment has the potential to affect public access. (If yes, go to Decision Triggers 13 and 14).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The treatment was brought forward or is primarily funded through a partnership source.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do any “yes” answers above result in a Yellow-Light Trigger?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Do any “yes” answers above result in a Red-Light Trigger?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is it likely that the proposed treatment will result in a deviation from any Forest Plan Guideline? (If yes, elaborate on the next page)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Does the proposed treatment impact the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail or a Wild and Scenic River? (If yes, describe length of trail/river affected, type of effects, and duration of effects on next page).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Based on the proposed treatment, further Design Features are anticipated. (If yes, elaborate on next page).

Describe any Issues or Triggers from Page 2:

Following is an assessment of the preliminary treatments in relation to the Appendix A triggers. The analysis will be updated prior to completion of Implementation Checklists, once the treatment units are field validated.

Trigger 1

Pre-project Equivalent Clearcut Area (ECA) in HUC7 watersheds in the focus area ranges from 0.1% to 13.7%, under the 25% threshold for a yellow-light trigger. The table below shows the existing condition, area available for treatment, and preliminary treatment areas for all HUC7 watersheds in the focus area.

Watershed Name	HUC7	Cumulative ECA (% of NFS lands)	Available under Yellow-Light Trigger (ECA acres)	Preliminary Treatment Area (ECA acres)
Cow Ck	10180002060201	6.5%	1,773	1,255
Calf Ck	10180002060202	10.7%	283	641
South Spring Ck	10180002070301	4.7%	1,380	1,925
Heather/Shingle Cks	10180002070302	13.7%	299	925
Upper North Fk Encampment Rvr	10180002050701	0.1%	842	0

If all preliminary treatments were implemented, the post-treatment ECA in three watersheds would increase to above the 25% threshold for a yellow-light trigger, including Calf Ck (43%), South Spring Ck (33%), and Heather/Shingle Cks (49%).

Final treatment acres are likely to be reduced by 25% to 50% during field validation. The current expectation is that the reduction in acres during field validation would limit ECA to below 25% in all watersheds.

If analysis of the validated treatment units indicates ECA would increase above 25% in any watershed, treatments would be modified to limit cumulative ECA in that watershed to no more than 25%. Alternately, watershed information would need to be validated and a stream health assessment may need to be conducted. If a stream health assessment were to indicate a moderate or high potential for a long-term change to a lower stream health class (red-light trigger), treatments would be modified as needed to avoid this risk following the options described in Appendix A. Additional design features may be developed to improve watershed condition.

Trigger 2

One of the preliminary treatments (Wildlife Habitat Enhancement) was designed specifically to maintain or improve wildlife habitats, although some benefits to wildlife habitat are expected from the other treatments as well. This treatment represents about 11% of the total treatments in the focus area and will contribute to achievement of the desired condition for this trigger.

Trigger 3

Several small patches of wildlife security areas are located along the western edge of the focus area. About 94 acres of preliminary treatment areas overlap with security areas. Some of this overlap is likely

to be removed from the final treatment units because of poor access, steep slopes, or other factors identified during field validation; however, it is likely that some security habitat will be treated.

In the Battle Pass accounting unit, there are about 461 acres of wildlife security areas available for treatment below the yellow-light trigger and 70 acres of preliminary treatment areas, meaning that treatment of security habitat will not exceed the yellow-light trigger.

In the Jack Savery accounting unit, there are about 1,517 acres of wildlife security areas available for treatment below the yellow-light trigger and 24 acres of preliminary treatment areas, meaning that treatment of security habitat will not exceed the yellow-light trigger.

The Forest Plan (page 1-40) contains a guideline to maintain or increase security areas; however, the proposed treatment of security areas will not meet this guideline. Deviation from this guideline was acknowledged and analyzed in the LaVA Modified Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision. Of note, some preliminary treatments in the Teddy area could reduce a block of security area below the 250-acre minimum size for security areas (Forest Plan page 1-40). This would effectively remove 344 acres of security areas by splitting a block of security area into pieces smaller than 250 acres each. The removal of 344 acres of security area is still below the yellow-light trigger for the Battle Pass accounting unit.

Triggers 4-9

There are two Lynx Analysis Units (LAUs) in the focus area: Battle Creek and Upper Sierra Madre. Both LAUs have moderate amounts of habitat in a currently unsuitable condition (23.3% and 17.6%, respectively). At present, there are 3,727 acres of suitable lynx habitat available for conversion to currently unsuitable under the yellow-light threshold (Trigger #4) in the Battle Creek LAU, and 2,115 acres of preliminary treatments in suitable habitats. Similarly, there are 6,257 acres of suitable lynx habitat available for conversion in the Upper Sierra Madre LAU, compared with 2,795 acres of preliminary treatments. The precise amount of lynx habitat that would be converted to unsuitable is currently unknown and will not be known until treatment units and prescriptions are finalized. If all preliminary treatments in suitable lynx habitat were implemented, the proportion of unsuitable habitat in the Battle Creek and Upper Sierra LAUs would increase to 29.5% and 24.4%, respectively, and would remain below the threshold for the yellow-light trigger.

WUI exemptions to Standards VEG S1 or VEG S2 (Trigger #5) will be used for all treatments in lynx habitat in the Battle Creek LAU. All preliminary treatments in the Battle Creek LAU are in HFRA-defined WUI. At present, there are 3,840 acres of WUI exemptions available for use under the yellow-light trigger in the Battle Creek LAU, compared with 2,115 acres of preliminary treatment areas.

There are 3,026 acres of WUI exemptions available for use under the yellow-light trigger in the Upper Sierra Madre LAU in addition to the 6,257 acres available to be converted to unsuitable in Trigger 4 above, compared with 2,795 acres of preliminary treatment areas. The precise amount of WUI exemptions that would be used is currently unknown and will not be known until treatment units and prescriptions are finalized. If all preliminary treatments were implemented as WUI exemptions, 1,725 and 231 acres of WUI exemptions would remain below the threshold for the yellow-light trigger in the Battle Creek and Upper Sierra Madre LAUs, respectively.

A relatively small proportion of suitable habitat has been converted to unsuitable in the Battle Creek (2.7%) and Upper Sierra Madre (0.3%) LAUs in the past 10 years (Trigger #6). At present, there are 3,172 acres of suitable lynx habitat available for conversion under the yellow-light trigger threshold in the

Battle Creek LAU in the next decade, compared with 2,115 acres of total proposed treatments in suitable habitat. There are 6,170 acres of suitable lynx habitat available for conversion to currently unsuitable in the Upper Sierra Madre LAU in the next decade, compared with 2,795 acres of total proposed treatments in suitable habitat. The amount of habitat that would be converted is currently unknown and would not be known until treatment units and prescriptions are finalized; however, even if all proposed treatments in suitable lynx habitat were implemented, the amount of conversion would remain below the threshold for the yellow-light trigger.

No PCT is currently proposed in lynx habitat in the Teddy/Vulcan focus area. The 1% exemption to Standard VEG S5 (Trigger #7) will not be used for the proposed treatments; however, 280 and 324 acres are available in the Battle Creek and Upper Sierra Madre LAUs, respectively, if PCT is added in the future.

Total WUI exemptions (Trigger #8) will include WUI exemptions to Standards VEG S1 or VEG S2 used in both LAUs. These 4,910 acres represent about half of the total available (9,258 acres) under the yellow-light trigger.

The use of other exceptions to the SRLA standards (Trigger #9) is unknown but is expected to be a small fraction of the 2,314 acres available under the yellow-light trigger.

Triggers 10 and 11

The use of temporary roads is expected, but currently unknown for forest products units, but not for other treatment types. The use and rehabilitation of temporary roads is expected to be well within the limits for yellow-light triggers.

Trigger 13 and 14

Public access will not be affected in the long-term. Minor, short-term restrictions on some routes may be needed to protect public safety during active treatment operations.

Other Supplemental Information

At this point in the Appendix A process, the need for additional design features is unknown. Additional design features may be needed to address ECA concerns, lynx habitat, or other issues that arise when the preliminary treatments are field validated. Additional design features, if any, will be added during preparation of the Implementation Checklist(s).

There is a known active goshawk territory in the Vulcan area. Additional surveys for goshawks will be conducted in 2023. Forest Plan Standards (page 1-42) and corresponding LaVA Appendix A Design Features and Standard Operating Procedures will be followed to protect nesting, post fledging, and foraging habitats for goshawks.

There is a small amount of overlap of sage-grouse geographic distribution and preliminary treatment areas in the Teddy area; however, the forested areas proposed for treatment are not sage-grouse habitat.

District Ranger Approval/Review

District Ranger signature confirms all appropriate documentation for necessary pre-implementation items is attached and the treatment planning can proceed.

Approved By (District Ranger): Jason Armbruster

Signature and Date: