

Output 1: LaVA Pre-treatment Checklist

Project: Fallen Pines Focus Area		District: Laramie Ranger District
Partnership Project: Yes	Primary Partner(s): Wyoming State Forestry Division	
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: North Corner	Accounting Unit: Rock Morgan	
Project Description and Location: Treatment areas are located north of Highway 130 in the eastern Snowy Range along National Forest System Road 329. This focus area includes portions of Township 17 North, Range 78 West, and Township 16 North Range 78 West, 6 th P.M. Albany County, Wyoming. Forest Plan Management Areas in this focus area include 3.58 (Crucial Deer and Elk Winter Range), 5.13 (Forest Products), and 5.15 (Forest Products, Ecological Maintenance, and Restoration Considering the Historic Range of Variability). Treatment Opportunity Areas (TOA) in this focus area include Forest and Rangeland Resiliency and Forest Products Emphasis (both full suite of tools and no temporary road management areas) and the Wildlife Emphasis TOA.		
Data File Location(s): T:\FS\NFS\MBRTB\Project\LaVA_Implementation\GIS\Fallen Pines\Data\1_PreTreatment		

Project Description (narrative):

Four preliminary treatments have been identified in the Fallen Pines Focus Area. Many of the preliminary treatment units 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 [GNA] agreement) for efficiency.

Preliminary Treatments

Forest Products

Currently, approximately 1,669 acres of treatment are identified in the focus area with the potential to produce commercial forest products and meet objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7. This includes about 1,073 acres of potential timber harvest shown on the attached map as “Forest Products” and an additional 596 acres of mixed timber harvest/fuels reduction shown on the attached map as “GNA – Timber/Fuels”. Harvest prescriptions could include clearcutting, overstory removal, or similar stand initiation treatments. Additional areas are suitable for timber harvest and will be identified in the field season of 2023. Temporary roads are likely to be needed for access to many of the forest projects treatment units.

Fuels

There are approximately 689 acres of treatment designed to reduce or modify fuels and meet objectives 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7. Activities could include hand or mechanical 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.

Pre-commercial Thinning (PCT)

Approximately 2,252 acres of PCT have been identified to improve the health of younger conifer stands and meet objectives 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7. Much of this area needs to be field validated still. Activities could include hand or mechanical thinning. A secondary objective will be reduction of hazardous fuels. Prescribed fire (broadcast or pile burning) could be used to reduce fuels post-thinning. Recovery of forest products will not be included in these treatments and no temporary road use is anticipated.

Wildlife (Aspen Enhancement)

An unknown amount of treatment (estimated at 500 to 1,000 acres) designed to enhance the long-term health of aspen stands and meet objectives 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 could be added in this focus area. Activities could include removal of conifers encroaching on aspen stands, aspen cutting, or other treatments, including hand or mechanical thinning, mastication, or prescribed fire (broadcast or pile burning). 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 3:

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 less than 1% to 12%, 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 (acres)*
Little Laramie Rvr C	10180010060401	0.15%	265	2
Bald Mountain South	10180010060402	6.75%	262	165
Mill Ck	10180010060601	8.97%	760	1,023
North Fk Mill Ck	10180010060602	9.03%	127	221
Cooper Ck	10180010080101	3.14%	738	96
New - Nellis Creek	101800100606*A	0.20%	115	150
New - Fourmile Ck-Laramie Rvr (HU12)	101800100702*A	11.61%	342	429
New - Sevenmile Ck-Laramie Rvr (HU12)	101800100703*A	8.17%	354	231

*Does not include PCT, which does not contribute to ECA.

If all preliminary treatments were implemented, the post-treatment ECA in four watersheds would increase to above the 25% threshold for a yellow-light trigger, including Mill Ck (31%), North Fk Mill Ck (37%), Nellis Ck (33%), and Fourmile Ck-Laramie Rvr (28%).

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 – Aspen Enhancement) will be designed specifically to maintain or improve wildlife habitats, although some benefits to wildlife habitat are expected from the other treatments as well. Based on current estimates, this treatment could represent about 10-20% of

the total treatments in the focus area and would contribute to achievement of the desired condition for this trigger.

Trigger 3

Wildlife security areas are located along the northwestern edge (Rock Creek Ridge) and southeastern edge (near the Forest boundary) of the focus area. About 575 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 North Corner accounting unit, there are about 589 acres of wildlife security areas available for treatment below the yellow-light trigger and 456 acres of preliminary treatment areas, meaning that treatment of security habitat will not exceed the yellow-light trigger.

In the Rock Morgan accounting unit, there are about 1,143 acres of wildlife security areas available for treatment below the yellow-light trigger and 118 acres of preliminary treatment areas, meaning that treatment of security habitat will not exceed the yellow-light trigger.

Triggers 4-9

There are two Lynx Analysis Units (LAUs) in the focus area: Morgan and Snowy Range East. Both LAUs have relatively moderate percent unsuitable habitats (14.3 and 16.2%, respectively).

At present, there are 4,160 acres of suitable lynx habitat available for conversion under the yellow-light threshold (Trigger #4) in the Morgan LAU, but only 1,328 acres of preliminary treatments in suitable habitats. Similarly, there are 3,480 acres of suitable lynx habitat available for conversion in the Snowy Range East LAU, compared with 2,272 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 Morgan and Snowy Range East LAUs would increase to 17.3% and 23.2%, respectively, and would remain below the threshold for the yellow-light trigger.

WUI exemptions to Standards VEG S1 or VEG S2 (Trigger #5) are not available in the Morgan or Snowy Range East LAUs and will not be used.

A relatively small proportion of suitable habitat has been converted to unsuitable in the Morgan (0.2%) and Snowy Range East (1.0%) LAUs in the past 10 years (Trigger #6). At present, there are 4,148 acres of suitable lynx habitat available for conversion under the yellow-light trigger in the Morgan LAU in the next decade, compared with 1,328 acres of total proposed treatments in suitable habitat. Similarly, there are 3,222 acres of suitable lynx habitat available for conversion in the Snowy Range East LAU in the next decade, compared with 2,272 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.

Large areas of potential PCT treatment areas have been identified in the Fallen Pines focus area. The 1% exemption to Standard VEG S5 (Trigger #7) will be used for the proposed treatments. At present, there are 430 acres of PCT available under the red-light trigger in the Morgan LAU, compared with 467 acres of

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proposed PCT in suitable habitat. Similarly, there are 326 acres of PCT available under the red-light trigger in the Snowy Range East LAU, compared with 738 acres of proposed PCT in suitable habitat. The actual amount of PCT in suitable habitat that will be field validated is currently unknown and would not be known until treatment units and prescriptions are finalized; however, the extent of proposed PCT treatments will need to be substantially reduced to remain below the threshold for the red-light triggers.

WUI exemptions to Standards VEG S1, VEG S2, VEG S5, and VEG S6 (Trigger #8) will not be used for the proposed treatments.

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).

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): Frank Romero

Signature and Date: