

Output 1: Pre-treatment Checklist

Focus Area: Acorn Focus Area		District: Brush Creek-Hayden Ranger District
Partnership Project: Yes	Partner(s): Mule Deer Foundation, National Forest Foundation, Town of Encampment, World Resources Institute, Wyoming Association of Rural Water Systems, Wyoming State Forestry Division	
Accounting Unit: Battle Pass		Accounting Unit: Choose an item.
Objective(s): Projects in the Acorn focus area will meet all seven of objectives of the LaVA project: #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 and municipal water supplies; #5 restore wildlife habitat; #6 enhance access for forest visitors and permittees; and #7 provide for human safety.		
Location Description: The Acorn focus area is located on the eastern slope of the Sierra Madre range both north and south of Wyoming Highway 70. Ongoing projects (Acorn Timber Sale [TS] and Acorn precommercial thinning [PCT]) are located north of Highway 70 on both sides of the Jerry Acord Road (National Forest System Road [NFSR] 443), while preliminary treatments (Acorn South) are generally located south of Highway 70 and along both sides of Hog Park Road (NFSR 550), stopping just north of Dead Horse Park.		
Legal Location: Township 14 North, Range 84 West, Sections 19 and 30; Township 14 North, Range 85 West Sections 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 35.		
Management Areas: Treatment units and preliminary treatment areas are located in Forest Plan Management Area (MA) 2.1 (Special Interest Areas); 3.31 (Backcountry Recreation, Year-round Motorized), 3.33 (Backcountry Recreation, Summer Motorized with Winter Nonmotorized), 4.2 (Scenery), 5.12 (General Forest and Rangelands, Rangeland Vegetation Emphasis), 5.13 (Forest Products), 5.15 (Forest Products, Ecological Maintenance, and Restoration Considering the Historic Range of Variability), and 8.21 (Developed Recreation).		
Treatment Opportunity Areas: Treatment units are located primarily in the Scenic and Aspen Emphasis Treatment Opportunity Area (TOA) and the Recreation Emphasis TOA, with some treatment units located in the Forest and Rangeland Resiliency and Forest Products Emphasis TOA and a small area in the Special Emphasis (limited suite) TOA. No temporary roads are allowed in the portion of the Recreation Emphasis TOA that corresponds with MA 3.31. In addition, the entire focus area falls within the overlapping Fuels Treatment and Safety Emphasis TOA.		
Pinyon Data Location(s): https://usfs.box.com/s/hkf5jokvefeefwh549qhvw3upoxofip2		
GIS Data Location(s): T:\FS\NFS\MBRTB\Project\LaVA_Implementation\GIS\Acorn\Data		

Description of Preliminary Treatments (narrative):

Preliminary treatment areas were identified and a pre-treatment checklist for the Acorn focus area was prepared in 2021. Since then, the Acorn TS (352 acres) and Acorn PCT (193 acres) have moved into implementation. In 2022, the Acorn focus area was expanded south of Highway 70 when focus areas were designated for the entire LAVA landscape. For this reason, we are preparing a revised pre-treatment checklist for the Acorn focus area.

A large part of the municipal watershed for the Town of Encampment falls within the Acorn focus area. This watershed has become a high priority for vegetation management to reduce risk from wildfire. The Acorn South project is being developed to focus on vegetation management to reduce the risk of

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adverse wildfire effects on the municipal watershed of the Town of Encampment. It will include an area of about 2,000 acres, in which about 500 acres have been identified for preliminary treatment and another 500 acres remain to be evaluated. 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.

Commercial timber removal is expected on several hundred acres, while the remainder will be non-commercial. Commercial volume is estimated at 3,000 hundred cubic feet (CCF). We expect to include some treatment units from the north end of the Miner focus area in a single contract with the Acorn South project. A limited, but unknown extent of temporary roads will be needed for the commercial timber removal.

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.

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

YES	NO	Issue:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatments have the potential to affect long-term stream health. (If yes, go to Decision Trigger 1).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatments are designed to maintain or improve wildlife habitat. (If yes, go to Decision Trigger 2).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatments have the potential to alter wildlife security areas. (If yes, go to Decision Trigger 3).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatments are located in a Lynx Analysis Unit or Linkage Corridor. (If yes, go to Decision Triggers 4 thru 9).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatments will use temporary roads. (If yes, go to Decision Trigger 10 and 11).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatments have the potential to affect public access. (If yes, go to Decision Triggers 13 and 14).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed treatments were 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 treatments will deviate from any Forest Plan Guideline? (If yes, elaborate on the next page)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will the proposed treatments affect 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 treatments, 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 ongoing and 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 Hydrologic Unit Code level 7 (HUC7) watersheds in the focus area ranges from 3.9% to 16.5%, 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) ¹	Available under Yellow-Light Trigger (ECA acres)	Preliminary Treatment Area (ECA acres)
Middle North Fk Encampment ²	10180002050703	3.9%	676	525
Willow Creek	10180002050704	13.4%	163	0
Lower North Fk Encampment Rvr ²	10180002050705	16.5%	122	511
Cow Creek	10180002060201	5.1%	1,908	457
Middle North Fk Composite ³	n/a	3.5%	2,406	525
Lower North Fk Composite ⁴	n/a	5.8%	2,690	1,036

¹ Includes the ongoing Acorn TS and Acorn PCT

² Composite watershed

³ Includes Upper North Fk Encampment Rvr, Sierra Madre, and Middle North Fk Encampment

⁴ Includes Upper North Fk Encampment Rvr, Sierra Madre, Middle North Fk Encampment, Willow Ck, and Lower North Fk Encampment Rvr

If all preliminary treatments were implemented, the post-treatment ECA in the Lower North Fork Encampment watershed would increase to above the 25% threshold for a yellow-light trigger; however, since it is a composite watershed, ECA acres can be moved downstream to reflect the cumulative effects across the entire composite watershed. As shown in the table, ECA is not expected to reach the yellow-light trigger for the composite watershed.

Final treatment acres are likely to be reduced by 20-25% during field validation. The current expectation is that the reduction in acres during field validation would further limit ECA and the yellow-light trigger would not be reached in any watersheds. If analysis of the validated treatment units indicates ECA would increase above 25% in any watershed, the LaVA Appendix A adaptive options would be implemented. These options could include validating watershed information, conducting a stream health assessment, or modifying the project to reduce cumulative watershed effects. Additional design features could be developed to maintain or improve watershed condition.

Trigger 2

Some preliminary treatments may improve habitats for some wildlife species; however, none of the treatments are design specifically to improve wildlife habitats; therefore, none of the treatments will be counted toward achievement of this trigger.

Trigger 3

Proposed treatments will not affect wildlife security habitat because there is none in the focus area.

Triggers 4-9

The western and southern sections of the focus area are in the Battle Creek Lynx Analysis Unit (LAU), which is shared with part of the Miner, Teddy/Vulcan, and a small bit of the Sandstone focus areas. The entire western and southern sections of the project are also within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) as defined by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA). Approved and preliminary treatments in this LAU that will convert suitable habitat to a currently unsuitable condition include (in acres): Acorn TS (207), Teddy TS (560), Teddy/Vulcan range and partner wildlife (70), Vulcan TS (3), and Teddy Vulcan roadside fuels (181). The Battle Pass fuels project is too early in development to consider at this time.

Combined approved and preliminary treatments noted above will convert 1,021 acres of suitable lynx habitat to a currently unsuitable condition, all in HFRA-defined WUI areas. There are 4,975 total acres (4,800 + 175) available for conversion to a currently unsuitable condition in the Battle Creek LAU and 3,980 acres available for conversion to currently unsuitable within the yellow-light trigger. The Acorn South project can convert up to 2,959 acres (3,980 – 1,021) of lynx habitat to currently unsuitable condition before the yellow-light trigger is exceeded for Triggers 4, 5, and 6 using the WUI exemptions identified for the LAU in the LaVA analyses. This is substantially more than the estimated 850 acres that would be converted by the Acorn South project, indicating that the yellow- and red-light triggers would not be reached.

There are 350 acres of PCT available in the LAU without using WUI exemptions. There are 280 acres of PCT available in the LAU within the yellow-light trigger. There have been 90 acres of PCT authorized in the Battle Creek LAU as part of the Acorn PCT project. Acorn South can include up to 190 acres of PCT in the LAU before the yellow-light trigger is exceeded (280 – 90) for Trigger 7 without using WUI exemptions. No PCT is currently proposed as part of the Acorn South project; therefore, we do not expect the yellow- and red-light triggers would be reached.

There are 11,573 acres of WUI exemptions available for vegetation management across several LAUs in the LaVA project area. There are 9,258 acres of WUI exemptions available before the yellow-light trigger is exceeded. LaVA projects have used 1,021 acres of WUI exemptions in approved and preliminary treatments currently (acres): the Acorn TS (207), Teddy TS (560), Teddy Vulcan range and partner wildlife (70), Vulcan TS (3), and Teddy Vulcan roadside fuels (181). The Acorn South project can use up to 8,237 acres (9,258 – 1,021) of WUI exemptions before the yellow-light trigger is exceeded for Trigger 8. This is substantially more than the estimated 850 acres that would be converted by the Acorn South project, indicating that the yellow- and red-light triggers would not be reached.

There are 2,893 acres of incidental damage, as defined in the Southern Rockies Lynx Amendment, available within LAUs in the LaVA project. The Acorn South project is not expected to cause any incidental damage to vegetation; therefore Trigger 9 will not be affected.

Triggers 10 and 11

Across the LaVA landscape, 24.7 miles of temporary roads are planned or in place in approved projects, including 4.1 miles for the Acorn TS. To date, none of these roads have been rehabilitated because their associated projects are not complete. Use of temporary roads is expected but currently unknown for the

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Acorn South project. The use and rehabilitation of temporary roads is expected to be well within the limits for the yellow light (400 miles) and red light (600 miles) 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

Preliminary treatments in the Acorn South project were developed in consultation with several partners and specifically targeted to reducing the risk of adverse effects from wildfire to the municipal watershed for the Town of Encampment. Implementation of the project is expected to take place through a stewardship contract and could require additional funds beyond those typically available to the US Forest Service. Additional funds for implementation have not yet been secured, but a variety of sources are being explored.

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 is attached and planning for the proposed treatment(s) can proceed.

Approved By (District Ranger): Jason Armbruster

Signature and Date: