

## Introduction

There are numerous laws, regulations and policies that govern how *forest vegetation* is managed on National Forest System (NFS) lands. This document addresses how the Wildfire Adapted Missoula project complies with *forest vegetation* requirements of the Lolo Forest Plan (LRMP), Forest Service policy, and federal law.

## Analysis Framework: Statue, Regulation, Forest Plan, and Other Direction, Relevant Laws, Regulations, and Policy

The basic regulatory direction originates from the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA), the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA), and general Forest Service policy. For the Lolo National Forest, the Forest Plan (LRMP) contains specific direction on the management of forest vegetation. *The Lolo LRMP was developed to be consistent with the broader laws, regulations, and policies; therefore, if a site-specific project is consistent with the Forest Plan then it would be in compliance with the broader direction.* The most relevant information on this topic is summarized below and is meant to provide the basic context of the regulatory framework and requirements that must be met regarding the management of forest vegetation.

### Forest Service Policy

The Forest Service has regulations and policies in the Forest Service Handbooks (1909.60 and 2409.17) and Forest Service Manuals (1920, 2020, 2470, 2471 and 2472) related to forest vegetation. Relevant direction in those handbooks and manuals was used in the development of this project.

### National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act

The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resource Planning Act states, "It is the policy of Congress that all forested lands in the National Forest System (NFS) be maintained in appropriate forest cover with species of trees, degree of stocking, rate of growth, and conditions of stand designed to secure the maximum benefits of multiple use sustained yield management in accordance with land management plans."

The NFMA directs that Forest Plans will be developed which specify guidelines to identify the suitability of lands for resource management. The guidelines also direct forest plans to:

- provide for the diversity of plant and animal communities based on the suitability and capability of land areas to meet multiple-use objectives;
- where appropriate, to the degree practicable, preserve the diversity of tree species similar to that existing in the planning area; ensure that timber will be harvested from NFS lands only where soil, slope, or other watershed conditions will not be irreversibly damaged;
- ensure that the lands can be adequately restocked within five years after harvest;
- provide protection for streams, streambanks, shorelines, lakes, wetlands, and other bodies of water where harvests are likely to seriously and adversely affect water conditions and fish habitat; and,
- the harvesting system used is not selected primarily because it will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output of timber.

## Suitability

Identification of lands generally suitable for timber harvest and timber production is made at the land management plan level; however, these identifications are estimates that are validated at the project level (36 CFR 219.12(a)(2)(D)(ii)). Project-level suitability determinations were made during silvicultural diagnoses; final suitability determinations on lands proposed for timber harvest would be documented in a site-specific silvicultural prescription prepared or reviewed by a Certified Silviculturist.

A plan that identifies lands as suitable for timber production includes plan components, including standards or guidelines, to guide timber harvest for timber production or for other multiple use purposes on such lands. Timber harvest on lands not suitable for timber production can occur *for purposes other than timber production* throughout the plan area, or portions of the plan area, as a tool to assist in achieving or maintaining one or more applicable desired conditions or objectives of the plan in order to protect other multiple-use values, and for salvage, sanitation, or public health or safety. Examples of using timber harvest to protect other multiple use values may include improving wildlife or fish habitat, thinning to reduce fire risk, or restoring meadow or savanna ecosystems where trees have invaded (36 CFR 219.11(c)). The treatments in Alternative B to reduce wildfire hazard and associated risk are proposed on lands suited (60%), unsuited (30%), and other or tentatively suited (10%) for timber production. This project is consistent with 16 USC 1604 (k) and 36 CFR 219.11 the implementing regulations of the National Forest Management Act of 1976.

## Regeneration Assurance

Mechanized wildfire risk reduction fuel treatments in Alternative B would treat three areas (Units 22-24) with high wildlife hazard due to severe dwarf mistletoe infection and regenerate up to 100 acres with desired species composition, stocking, stand health to ensure forest productivity and growth as appropriate for each habitat type. Any openings created by sanitation and even-aged harvest would be less than 40 acres. These sites would be reforested within five years of harvest with disease-resistant species. Mistletoe infection and high wildfire hazard would be reduced, as most infected trees would be removed or killed, and healthy seedlings established. Reforestation with desired species composition and stocking levels would ensure the productivity of the sites. If natural regeneration of desired species and stocking levels anticipated do not occur, the sites would be planted. Generally, western larch would be planted on the north, northwest, northeast, and east aspects where soil conditions are moister and more favorable. Ponderosa pine may be planted on drier and warmer west, southwest, and south aspects. Regeneration or planting of native tree seedlings would fulfill the Agency's legal requirements and trend the vegetation component toward desired future conditions outlined in the Forest Plan. Assurance is given that all even-aged harvests in Alternative B can be adequately restocked within five years of harvest. This conclusion is supported by 25 years of reforestation experience and FACTS regeneration status reports that cover the Missoula Ranger District (see Project File).

The Wildfire Adapted Missoula project (Alternative B) meets the following specific management requirements set forth in Title 16 United States Code (U.S.C) Section 1604:

- Under 16 U.S.C. 1604 (g)(3)(E) (ii) there is assurance that such lands can be adequately restocked within five years after harvest;
- (iv) the harvesting system to be used is not selected primarily because it will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output of timber;
- and, 16 U.S.C. 1604 (g)(3)(F), insure that clearcutting, seed tree cutting, shelterwood cutting, and other cuts designed to regenerate an evenaged stand of timber will be used as a cutting method on NFS lands only where: (i) for clearcutting, it is determined to be the optimum method, and for other such cuts it is determined to be appropriate, to meet the objectives and

requirements of the relevant land management plan; (ii) the interdisciplinary review as determined by the Secretary has been completed and the potential environmental, biological, aesthetic, engineering, and economic impacts on each advertised sale area have been assessed, as well as the consistency of the sale with the multiple use of the general area; (iii) cut blocks, patches, or strips are shaped and blended to the extent practicable with the natural terrain; (iv) there are established according to geographic areas, forest types, or other suitable classifications the maximum size limits for areas to be cut in one harvest operation, including provision to exceed the established limits after appropriate public notice and review by the responsible Forest Service officer one level above the Forest Service officer who normally would approve the harvest proposal, provided, that such limits shall not apply to the size of areas harvested as a result of natural catastrophic conditions such as fire, insect and disease attack, or windstorm; and, (v) such cuts are carried out in a manner consistent with the protection of soil, watershed, fish, wildlife, recreation, and esthetic resources, and the regeneration of the timber resource.

## **Lolo National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP)**

“The Forest Plan serves as the single land management plan for the Lolo NF. Similarly, this Forest Plan directs the management of all resources on the Lolo NF (V-1). Overall, the Lolo NF Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) provides for the maintenance of a diverse mosaic of vegetation development well-distributed across the Forest to insure ecological integrity (II-2).

The management direction provided by the Forest Plan comprises the sideboards within which project planning and activities take place. It defines management area goals and management standards that guide project activities toward achieving a desired future condition for the management area and, collectively, for the Forest. It provides guidance concerning land and habitat type constraints including assumptions about the appropriate vegetation management practices. (V-2)”(U.S. Department of Agriculture 1986).

### **Desired Condition**

The Desired Future Condition (DFC), “describes what the future (Lolo National) Forest should be like if the management direction contained in the Forest Plan is implemented. It summarizes the anticipated physical changes which would result from carrying out planned management practices...”(U.S. Department of Agriculture 1986).

#### *The Forest in 2035*

DFC per LMRP (II-6-7): Timber will have been harvested on 948,000 acres with an annual program of 131 million board feet of regulated harvest and an estimated 15 million board feet of unregulated harvests. There will have been a change in the Forest-wide distribution of the mature age classes (from 45 to 24 percent) and an increase in the immature age classes (from 55 to 76 percent) on the suitable timber lands. Reforestation will have been accomplished on 528,000 acres through planting and natural regeneration. The reforestation program will have kept up with the harvest program. Timber stand improvement will have been applied to 39,570 acres. Old-growth habitat will still exist to meet the needs of old-growth dependent wildlife. Forest soil productivity will have been maintained (U.S. Department of Agriculture 1986).

### **Forest-Wide Standards**

Alternative B is consistent with the Forest Plan Standards that are applicable to the management of forested vegetation on NFS lands administered by the Lolo NF in the Wildfire Adapted Missoula project. The following Forest-wide standards are the *most* pertinent to the management of *forested vegetation* on NFS lands administered by the Lolo NF in the Wildfire Adapted Missoula project. They are intended

to supplement National and Regional policies, standards, and guidelines (II-8):

***Recreation:***

Provide for a wide spectrum of Forest-related dispersed recreation activities and range of skill levels available to Forest visitors including the elderly and handicapped. The program will provide for use of the Forest on a year-round basis in areas that will minimize conflicts between user groups and other Forest resources (6). The following will be emphasized to increase communication and service to the public: ... (f) Inform public of Forest activities through use of the media; ... (n) Modify timber sale contracts to avoid disturbance to Forest visitors during key periods...

***Timber:***

Regional standards will be followed for tree utilization, management intensity, measurement, growth suitability for timber production, tree openings, and silvicultural systems (10).

An economic analysis will be completed for timber sales (11).

The guidelines in Appendix G will be used for selecting timber harvest systems during timber sale preparation (12).

Increase the use of the available wood fiber consistent with management objectives and economic principles (13). Management emphasis items for tools to accomplishing increased use include: (a) Transportation planning including road management will be done to enhance timber salvage and firewood removal opportunities; (b) Increased utilization will be encouraged; (c) Favor lump sum sales over scaled sales; (d) Improve information services to inform public and private sectors of the various uses for wood fiber and its availability; and, (e) Harvested stands will be regenerated using techniques that encourage natural regeneration. Regenerated stands will undergo stocking level control when: (1) Necessary to meet resource management goals such as wildlife and visual; (2) Necessary to obtain future stand yields as projected in the Forest Plan yield tables. Thinning activities generally will only be undertaken when an economic analysis shows positive value increase. However, some thinning will occur where an analysis does not show a positive increase but is needed to meet future timber outputs projected in the Forest Plan. In these cases, an economic evaluation will be used to determine the highest priority stands for treatment; and, (3) Necessary to protect stands from fire, insects, or disease where the lands are classified as suitable for timber production.

***Water and Soils:***

All management practices will be designed or modified as necessary to maintain land productivity (18).

***Wildlife and Fish:***

In the portion of the Forest more than 200 feet from all system roads, sufficient snags and dead material will be provided. (25). See Appendix N, procedures to implement the forest plan snag standard.

***Minerals:***

The Lolo National Forest will preserve corners and legitimate improvements on mining claims during timber harvest or other management activities (38).

***Fire:***

A fire management plan complete with prescriptions for unplanned ignition prescribed fires, as appropriate, will be maintained to accomplish management direction and allocation contained in the Forest Plan (44).

An Escaped Fire Situation Analysis will be made for all escaped fires to determine appropriate control measures. All unplanned fire ignitions will be evaluated to determine appropriate response measures, based on values at risk, cost effectiveness, and existence of site-specific fire management prescriptions

(45).

*Visuals:*

Visual rehabilitation of past management activities will be evaluated where needed during preparation and implementation of the timber sale program (53).

*Insects and Disease:*

Implementation of the principles of integrated pest management will be accomplished through sound silvicultural prescriptions. Silvicultural practices will be designed to consider past, current, and potential impacts from insects and diseases (56).

Biological and vegetative management practices will be utilized to control insect and disease infestations. Chemical control will be recommended when other methods are ineffective and only after following all required procedures (57).

In mountain pine beetle epidemic areas, all stands will be risk-rated and treatment priorities established on the highest risk stands (58)(U.S. Department of Agriculture 1986).

**Forest Plan Management Areas Alternative B**

MA	Acres	Description	Forest Vegetation Standards and WAM Project Consistency
1	504	<b>Non-Forest - Non-Commercial Forest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-forested land</li> <li>• Unsuitable for timber production</li> <li>• Tree removal allowed to remove safety hazards or firewood removal</li> <li>• Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes.</li> <li>• <b>Wildfire Risk Reduction (WFRR) Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 4, 6, 7</b></li> </ul>
5	597	<b>Transportation and Utility Corridors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree removal within clearing limits.</li> <li>• Generally unsuitable, but may be classified suitable and managed for timber with adjacent MA</li> <li>• Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes.</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
7	24	<b>Campground and Picnic Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree removal to maintain or improve recreation values</li> <li>• Unsuitable for timber production</li> <li>• Hazardous tree and insect and disease conditions reduced</li> <li>• Prescribed fire may be conducted especially in habitat type groups 1, 2, 3 for enhancing the appearance of the sites, hazard reduction, and slash disposal purposes. Burning intervals will approximate natural fire cycles in these groups</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
8	64	<b>Ski Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree removal to eliminate safety hazard or construct or expand facilities</li> <li>• Unsuitable for timber production</li> <li>• Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes.</li> </ul>

Wildfire Adapted Missoula Project, Forested Vegetation – Regulatory Framework

MA	Acres	Description	Forest Vegetation Standards and WAM Project Consistency
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hazardous tree and insect and disease conditions reduced</li> <li><b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10</b></li> </ul>
9	11,142	Concentrated Public Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree removal to eliminate safety hazard, permit road or trail construction, or meet other management objectives</li> <li>Unsuitable for timber production</li> <li>Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li><b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
13	7,855	Riparian Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suitable or unsuitable for timber production depending on location</li> <li>Provide for healthy stands of timber</li> <li>Tree removal to eliminate safety hazard, permit road or trail construction</li> <li>Prescribed fire may be used big game habitat maintenance or improvement</li> <li><b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
14	1,574	Riparian Areas with Grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suitable or unsuitable for timber production depending on location</li> <li>Provide for healthy stands of timber</li> <li>Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes.</li> <li><b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
16	17,982	Timber Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suitable for timber production</li> <li>Provide for healthy stands of timber and optimize timber growing potential. Full suite of silvicultural systems</li> <li>Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes. Full suite of prescribed burning objectives and tools.</li> <li>Emphasis of timber stand improvement for insect and disease prevention</li> <li>Emphasis on maintaining and regenerating components of ponderosa pine and western larch in natural stands.</li> <li><b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
17	7,131	Timber Management on Steep Slopes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suitable for timber production</li> <li>Provide for healthy stands of timber and optimize timber growing potential. Full suite of silvicultural systems</li> <li>Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes. Full suite of prescribed burning objectives and tools.</li> <li>Emphasis on maintaining and regenerating components of ponderosa pine and western larch in natural stands.</li> <li><b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
18	10,486	Big Game Winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considering the needs of big game, maintain healthy stand of timber and optimize timber growing potential.</li> </ul>

Wildfire Adapted Missoula Project, Forested Vegetation – Regulatory Framework

MA	Acres	Description	Forest Vegetation Standards and WAM Project Consistency
		<b>Range and Timber</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timber harvest to improve or maintain big game winter range</li> <li>• Suitable for timber production</li> <li>• Prescribed fire for big game habitat maintenance or improvement where appropriate</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
19	8,381	<b>Big Game Winter Range No Road Construction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree removal to eliminate safety hazard, permit road or trail construction, or meet other management objectives</li> <li>• Unsuitable for timber production</li> <li>• Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
21	4,341	<b>Old Growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for timber production. Timber harvest will be employed to improve or maintain old growth habitat.</li> <li>• Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
23	3,460	<b>Timber, Big Game Winter Range, and Partial Retention Visual Quality Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for timber production.</li> <li>• Maintain healthy stands of timber within the constraints of partial restoration and big game cover: forage MA goals.</li> <li>• Prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
24	1,080	<b>Timber and Retention Visual Quality Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for timber production</li> <li>• Provide for healthy stands of timber and optimize timber growing potential within the visual quality objective constraints</li> <li>• To achieve management goals and objectives, prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
25	15,053	<b>Timber and Partial Retention Visual Quality Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for timber production</li> <li>• Provide for healthy stands of timber and optimize timber growing potential within the visual quality objective constraints</li> <li>• To achieve management goals and objectives, prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11</b></li> </ul>
26	342	<b>Critical Elk Summer Range</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for timber production</li> <li>• To achieve management goals and objectives, prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li>• Management allowed to meet goals and objectives</li> <li>• Timber harvest will be employed to improve or maintain critical summer elk habitat</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,</b></li> </ul>

Wildfire Adapted Missoula Project, Forested Vegetation – Regulatory Framework

MA	Acres	Description	Forest Vegetation Standards and WAM Project Consistency
			<b>10</b>
27	3,232	<b>Uneconomical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsuitable for timber production</li> <li>• Tree removal limited to that required to eliminate safety hazards or for firewood removal adjacent to roads.</li> <li>• No scheduled timber harvest would occur. Timber salvage and firewood removal may occur where access exists.</li> <li>• To achieve management goals and objectives, prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11</b></li> </ul>
28	5,881	<b>Rattlesnake National Recreation Area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsuitable for timber production</li> <li>• Tree removal limited to that required to eliminate safety hazards or permit construction or expansion of facilities.</li> <li>• Timber removal limited to that needed to maintain or improve recreation values.</li> <li>• To achieve management goals and objectives, prescribed burning to maintain or restore the composition and structure of plant communities, or for hazard reduction purposes</li> <li>• The visual quality objective will be retained with some short term falldowns associated with prescribed burning. Trailheads are partial retention.</li> <li>• Homestead meadows will be treated by burning, handpiling, and/or cutting to remove invading trees and noxious weeds to retain the typical cleared homestead appearance.</li> <li>• The ponderosa pine flat between Spring Creek and Poe Meadow bordered by Strawberry Ridge and Rattlesnake Creek will be treated by cutting and/or prescribed fire to encourage a mosaic of old-growth pine with interspersed openings and thickets</li> <li>• <b>WFRR Fuel Treatments consistent with LRMP: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7</b></li> </ul>

(U.S. Department of Agriculture 1986).

## Project Design Elements and Resource Protection Measures

### Design Elements

The following design elements for *forested vegetation* (VEG) are incorporated into the proposed action to ensure law, policy, and LMRP plan compliance:

#### Design elements

Design Element Label	Design Element Title	LMRP Component, Other Guidance
VEG-1	Large Tree Retention	Old Growth, MA 21, CWPP guidelines
VEG-2	Insects and Disease	Forest-wide Standards, Appendix C, FS Policy
VEG-3	NFMA Requirements	Appendix C, NFMA, FS Policy

### VEG-1: Large Tree Retention

- Silvicultural prescriptions will favor the retention of large, healthy dominant/codominant trees where possible to meet project and Forest Plan objectives. A Certified Silviculturist will prepare or review site-specific prescriptions and marking guides and may include language such as “thin from below” or specify an upper diameter limit of trees eligible for removal to meet this objective.
- MA21: silvicultural prescriptions would retain live trees >20” dbh to the extent possible.
- Where prescribed by a Silviculturist, measures (e.g. raking, slash pullback) will be taken to retain at-risk and/or large diameter (i.e., >20” dbh) trees from excessive crown and bole scorch to the extent feasible to avoid unintentional mortality.
- Avoid removal of large diameter ponderosa pine and western larch (>20” dbh) to the extent possible when locating landings, skid trails, and skyline corridors.
- MA 21 and *unsuited management areas*: treatment areas were or will be carefully evaluated and/or field surveyed, as necessary, to determine their old growth status prior to project implementation. Any treatment area that meets the old growth criteria in the Forest Plan and/or Green and others (1992, errata 2011) would meet it following treatment or would be dropped (e.g., Blue Mountain Unit 17) (see Project File).

### VEG-2: Insects and Disease

Where prescribed by a silviculturist:

- Treat any susceptible ponderosa pine stumps, greater than 12” dbh with borate product (e.g., Cellu-treat) within 24 hours to reduce the potential risk of *Annosus* root disease spread.
- Slash piles that contain ponderosa slash would be burned in a timely fashion or baited with traps to reduce the likelihood of Ips population buildup.
- Verbenone or MCH may be applied within the analysis area to repel mountain pine or Douglas-fir bark beetles from individual trees or small areas.
- Incidental girdling/felling may occur to reduce dwarf mistletoe infection, and heavy crown fuels, overhead hazards, protect regeneration, or create snags.

### VEG-3: NFMA Requirements

- Within *unsuited management areas*, silvicultural prescriptions and treatments will include design elements to meet the specific management area objectives including, but not limited to: concentrated public use, Rattlesnake National Recreation Area (limits of acceptable change), visual quality, ski areas, and uneconomical lands (i.e., biomass removal).
- To ensure long-term site productivity and prevent resource damage, *unsuited area inclusions*, where tree regeneration assurance is lacking, as identified by low tree stocking, low productivity potential (i.e., < 20 cubic feet/acre/year), and/or surface rock or scree, or subsurface rocky soil, will be excluded from harvest and mechanized equipment to the greatest extent practicable.
- Openings created by removal of heavy crown fuels and diseased trees through even-aged regeneration harvest would be less than forty acres and regenerated within 5 years. If natural regeneration is unsuccessful sites would be planted.
- To ensure tree stock adaptability, planted trees would be from locally adapted seed sources and

cared for and planted with necessary protection for survival (e.g., shade, animal browse netting).

- Reforestation investments and areas of acceptable regeneration that meet stand stocking, species preference, and Forest Plan objectives would be retained followed burning (first and second order fire effects) as described in the silvicultural prescription.

Prepared by:

/s/ Sheryl Gunn, Certified Silviculturist

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U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Lolo National Forest. 1986. The Lolo National Forest Plan.