

HFQLG collaboration – topics for discussion
Forest Service
3/11/09

Areas of existing agreement among parties

1. There is a need to treat forest fuels. **Do we agree on how much, where, and pace of treating forest fuels?**
2. Maintenance using prescribed burning can be an appropriate strategy. **Agree, but so can logging in some cases.**
3. 50% canopy cover in DFPZs, may be acceptable, where site-specific conditions allow management objectives to be met. **Follow Standards and Guidelines of the 2004 SNFramework.**
4. Radial thinning around large trees may be an appropriate strategy **defining Rx and consulting literature needs to happen**
5. There may be a need for treatment in spotted owl habitat areas (SOHAs) and protected activity centers (PACs)
6. There may be a need for treatment in some off base or deferred areas
7. Group selection is appropriate in dense homogeneous white fir stands **and in other situations, esp. for species diversity (pines, oak, etc.)**
8. Project design benefits from bringing the technical experts (scientists, specialists) to the table with stakeholders.
9. There is a need to reduce impacts from large, high-severity wildfires (stand-replacing fires).
10. Healthy watersheds are important. **Feather River watershed is unique in California and uniquely important to the People of the State of California because it is the State Water Project watershed.**
11. There is a need for a fire resilient landscape.
12. Forests in the HFQLG area are outside the natural range of variability in stand conditions.
13. **There is a need to sustain the local forest products infrastructure.**

Areas of potential agreement

1. 40% canopy cover in DFPZs may be acceptable, with variability in structural design (patches, leave islands, etc), particularly in eastside pine. Follow Standards and Guidelines of the 2004 SNFramework.
2. There is a need to keep wildfires on the ground (vs. in the canopy)- this has implications for scale, intensity, and location of treatments.
3. Not all large trees or stands of large trees are equal in habitat value- other site conditions (topography, abiotic features, distance to water, etc.) also come into play. Agreement must be reached on defining: small, medium and large trees as well as young and old growth trees.
4. Climate change, disease, and insects are likely to change Sierra Nevada forests.
5. There may be situations where it is appropriate to prioritize community protection over wildlife habitat. Always because thinning stands to a 40% crown closure also maintains the foraging habitat for wildlife.
6. There may be situations where it is appropriate to prioritize wildlife habitat over community protection. Community protection should always come first.
7. Spot fires happen.

Areas of disagreement among parties

1. Interpretation of science or, the integration of different sciences about multiple species and multiple resources and climate change expectations
2. Scale of treatments and rate of treatments across landscape, ecologically & 2001 Framework conservation strategy
3. What canopy cover is needed to meet objectives of reducing fuel loading; disagreement on whether canopy cover objectives are for fuel reduction or for healthy resilient forest long term - what would canopy cover objectives be for healthy, resilient forests long-term? Pine, oak, other diversity objectives; differences in slope, aspect, soils' productivity and erosiveness, geographic relationship to other values, and current stand conditions.
4. Desirable stand density for how long (length of treatment effectiveness)? For fuels only or for long-term adaptability to climate change?

5. Diameter limits 30" dbh adopted by Jared Verner et al. in seminal Sierran document in 1992; still seems to be best balance point today, but we're listening
6. Size of group selection units we're listening. There issue is not just size, but also location and intensity of acres implemented.
7. Treatment in late mature old growth habitat we're listening
8. How much risk is too much relative to potential impacts, of treatments vs. catastrophic wildfires, on wildlife and other risk categories. (Do we need to treat old growth and spotted owl habitat in order to save it?) see Fites et al. 2008; see also Johnson & Franklin Senate testimony December 2007
9. Whether economics should be an objective for project design. 2001 Framework says so. Organic Act, NFMAAct, MUSYAct, Weeks Act and HFQLGAct.
10. Whether commercial timber sales are an appropriate management tool. 2001 Framework says so. Organic Act, NFMAAct, MUSYAct, Weeks Act and HFQLGAct
11. Whether management changes need to be made in response to climate change We have to manage forest evapo-transpiration for State Water Project and other instream (fish! yellow and red frogs!) and downstream beneficial uses.
12. Whether there is a need to bring crown fires to the ground (vs. to keep ground fires on the ground)- this has implications for scale, intensity, and location of treatments. Yes is the answer and this is just one of the purposes for a DFPZ. Other needs are to provide a safe location for fire fighters to initiate fire suppression activities and penetration of aerial fire retardants.
13. How much influence local communities should have in national forest management.
14. How much influence national and other NGO organizations should have in national forest management. Are national forests so similar they can be effectively managed from Washington, D.C.?
15. How much influence should local forest supervisors have in the management of the national forests they supervise?