

Mill Creek-Council Mountain CFLRP Proposal

Submitted by the Payette NF in Collaboration
with the Payette Forest Coalition

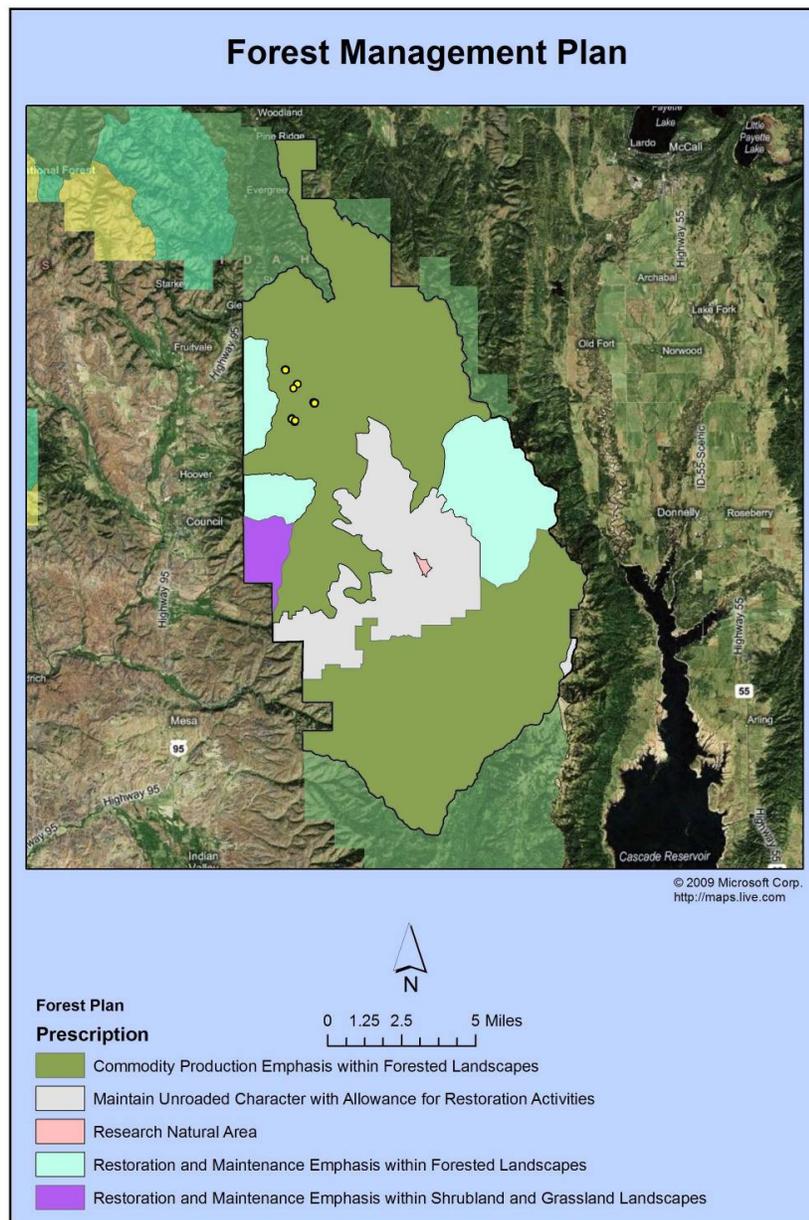
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Proposed Treatment

Overview – Restoration activities will begin in FY 2010 within the 100,000 acre Mill Creek – Council Mountain Landscape. National Forest System Lands account for the majority of the landscape, 88,000 acres, and over 90 percent is forested with pine and mixed conifer species. Private lands account for a small percentage of the landscape (12,000 acres, 12 percent) and are managed as industrial forests or in some cases small non industrial forests. The western boundary of the landscape is a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). A small Research Natural Area (RNA) lies within the central portion of the landscape (334 acres), and the Council Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) (approximately 7,900 acres) surrounds this RNA (See Forest Management Plan below).



Restoration Goals – The Forest and Payette Forest Coalition (PFC) agreed on the following four goals:

1. Improve wildlife habitat for white-headed woodpeckers, by restoring appropriate forested stands to Historical Range of Variability (HRV). Improve habitat for other wildlife species including elk and deer, as appropriate.
2. Contribute to the economic vitality of the communities adjacent to the Payette NF.
3. Reduce wildfire hazard in forest stands with conditions that depart from the HRV.
4. Encourage woody biomass utilization as a revenue source to support goals 1, 2 & 3.

Treatment Objectives – Specific Objectives were built to help achieve the restoration goals above:

1. Implement white-headed woodpecker habitat improvement actions on the highest priority areas (5,000 to 10,000 acres) within five years. Improve forage conditions and habitat security for elk and deer.
2. As an output of landscape restoration, harvest sawtimber and biomass to contribute to the Forest Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) and to provide jobs in two counties with nearly 20 percent unemployment. Estimates of outputs total 30 to 40 million board feet (MMbf) of sawtimber, and 60,000 to 80,000 tons of biomass.
3. Move 10,000 acres of forested stands from fire regime condition class 2 or 3 towards condition class 1 within five years.
4. Improve the health of the watershed by gravel surfacing roads, installing fish passage culverts or bridges, and decommissioning roads no longer needed for access. Acres and miles of improvement will be quantified in the NEPA Document.

Desired Outcome - A significant portion of the forested landscape is moving towards the HRV, which would provide optimal habitat for the white-headed woodpecker, the WUI wildfire hazard is reduced to an acceptable level, the fire regime condition class is at condition class 1, and the outputs of restoration activities contribute to the local economy. In addition, the health of the watershed has been improved and is moving towards the desired condition of functioning appropriately.

Strategic Placement of Treatments – The collaborative group, PFC, recommends a strategy that identifies specific stands that could be thinned now and would create white-headed woodpecker habitat within 10 to 20 years. These opportunities are called restoration stands. In addition, other stands in need of restoration (such as 30 year old plantations) will need several treatments including thinning and prescribed burning over a 50 to 60 year time period before restoration is achieved. The highest priority stands that can create habitat in the shortest time period have been identified for immediate treatment.

The PFC has also made recommendations for stands that may have lost their seral species and have moved into climax vegetation (in this landscape, grand fir dominates stands that have not been disturbed by fire or timber harvest). The PFC refers to these stand conditions as reserve stands and recommends that a small percentage of these stands be regenerated with seral species including ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir and western larch. Reserve stands may take up to 100 years before they fall within the desired conditions similar to HRV for wildlife species like the white-headed woodpecker.

Refer to the Maps section of the this proposal (Maps - Page 2 – PFC Existing Condition, and Maps - Page 3 – PFC Second Draft Recommendation) to see strategic placement of stand treatments designed to build blocks of restored wildlife habitat.

NEPA Decisions – Previous NEPA decisions permit landscape restoration to begin this fiscal year (FY 2010). Road decommissioning, road improvements, fish passage structures and aggregate surfacing of existing roads will be accomplished in FY 2010 as the first set of restoration activities within the Mill Creek- Council Mountain Landscape. Wildlife habitat, hazardous fuels, and vegetation management restoration activities will begin in FY 2011 after a comprehensive NEPA document has been prepared as described below.

The 100,000 acre landscape has been split into two halves. The PFC developed specific recommendations for Phase 1, the northern half (50,000 acres) and the Forest began the NEPA Process for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in April 2010. A Record of Decision and Final EIS are expected to be issued in May 2011.

Pre-NEPA work (NFMA side of the planning triangle) will begin in FY 2011 for the southern half of the landscape, and NEPA would begin in FY 2012 for this area. All of these planning activities would be done in collaboration with the PFC.

Types of Treatments – The following treatments are anticipated over a five to ten year period beginning in FY 2011:

1. Timber harvest including thinning across diameter classes (most large seral species would be left), thinning from below, and regeneration harvests. Logging systems would include ground based yarding and skyline yarding. Expensive aerial logging systems are not necessary in this landscape.
2. Some road relocation is needed to eliminate roads in riparian conservation areas (RCA's) and relocate on midslopes or ridgetops. Temporary roads would be used if new access is needed. All temporary roads would be returned to production (obliteration) after harvest operations are completed.
3. Road and watershed improvements would include aggregate surfacing to reduce erosion and deposition of sediment within RCA's, replacement of culverts with structures that provide aquatic organism passage, and road maintenance activities designed to reduce sediment.
4. Prescribed burning is planned for nearly all harvested acres and for some stands that do not require harvest at this time. Prescribed burning is also planned for aspen stands, areas with scattered timber, grass and shrubs.

5. All landing slash is planned for biomass removal (chipping or grinding into hog fuel to be delivered to an energy plant such as a cogeneration facility).
6. Understory ladder fuels will be yarded to the landing for biomass processing.
7. Precommercial thinning in plantations 20 to 50 years old is planned along with hazardous fuel reduction (mechanical and/or prescribed fire). Older plantations would yield biomass as part of the restoration prescription.
8. Trails – Signing, converting old roads to loop trails, trailhead construction for horse trailers.

Implementation Mechanism - Stewardship Contracts will be the primary implementation tool. The Forest anticipates that an Integrated Resource Service Stewardship Contract (IRSC) will be needed to accomplish most of the landscape objectives. Our intent is to bundle all possible work into the IRSC, but there might be a few activities that are more efficient to complete with force account such as tree planting or road obliteration. FY 2010 watershed activities will be done by a combination of contract and force account.

Acres Treated – The following estimates are part of the proposed action for the Environmental Impact Statement (Phase 1 for the 50,000 acre landscape - northern half). Actual acres implemented will be determined when the Record of Decision is issued May 2011. Implementation of Phase 1 would take approximately three to five years.

1. Restoration stands – thinning – 4,800 acres.
2. Reserve stands – regeneration – 700 acres.
3. Prescribed fire – underburn harvested stands – 5,500 acres.
4. Prescribed fire – underburn only – 2,800 acres.
5. Prescribed fire – grass, brush, aspen, scattered timber – 12,100 acres.
6. Plantation thinning – older than 30 years (biomass removal) – 2,800 acres.
7. Plantation thinning – young stands (lop and scatter) – 1,700 acres.

Treatments on other lands – Private lands only account for 1,270 acres within the Phase 1 northern half of the landscape (less than 3 percent). These private forests are usually managed to maximize revenue from timber harvest and thinning across all diameter classes is typical. Most private timber stands do not have trees larger than 20 inches diameter at breast height, and do not provide optimal habitat for species like white headed woodpecker. Restoration on federal lands is generally not supported by forestry practices on private lands.

Monitoring – The PFC has requested a role in the design and implementation of multi-party monitoring of restoration treatment effectiveness. The Council Ranger District IDT will begin assembling a monitoring strategy with specific elements during the development of the draft EIS this summer and fall. The Payette NF is committed to multi-party monitoring and views the relationship with the PFC and other monitoring partners as a long term investment.

Monitoring will be designed to measure specific elements of success such as acres of restoration within HRV or acres moved from fire regime condition class 3 towards condition class 1. Social elements such as jobs created will also be considered for monitoring.

Ecological Context

Current Vegetation Conditions – Most of the landscape is highly departed from the reference conditions described in the HRV. The low elevation pine and mixed conifer stands have too many small diameter trees per acre, too high a canopy cover, and not enough large diameter trees greater than 20 inches dbh. In addition, many stands have lost seral species (ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir and western larch) and have shifted to climax species like grand fir. These departed conditions do not support terrestrial wildlife species of conservation concern such as the white-headed woodpecker, a Regional Forester Sensitive Species and Management Indicator Species (MIS).

The current fire regime condition class in these low elevation forests is also departed from HRV and is estimated to range somewhere between condition class 2 and 3. Several natural fire cycles have been missed, and stand structure now contains a heavy understory layer of ladder fuels that are unnatural and pose a significant wildfire hazard. Thin barked climax species including grand fir dominate the understory of most stands.

Desired Vegetation Conditions – The reference conditions for HRV in these low elevation pine and mixed conifer stands are as follows: (1) landscapes are dominated by stands of large diameter pine, Douglas-fir or western larch trees. (2) Canopy cover generally ranges from low cover to moderate cover. (3) Understory vegetation is fairly sparse – stands are open, with scattered pockets of regeneration. (4) Prescribed fire occurs every 20 to 50 years to mimic the natural disturbance within HRV.

Terrestrial Wildlife – Focal Species and Sensitive Species – Two independent studies have concluded that the Mill Creek- Council Mountain Landscape is one of the highest priority watersheds to begin restoration for a Family of terrestrial wildlife species (focal species and/or regional sensitive species) that depend on open, low to moderate density old forests dominated by ponderosa pine.

The Ponderosa Pine Task Force Report assessed pine ecosystems throughout Idaho, and concluded that the Mill Creek- Council Mountain Landscape contained clusters of potential habitat that could be restored in less than 10 years if actions were taken immediately. This landscape is one of two ponderosa pine ecosystem clusters “that appeared to be exceptionally important at the state level.”

The Payette, Boise and Sawtooth NF’s developed a Wildlife Conservation Strategy (WCS), including forest plan amendments, that directs these Forests to take restoration actions to build habitat for wildlife species of greatest conservation concern. The habitat restoration priority map classifies the Mill Creek – Council Mountain Landscape as a highest priority, and the WCS expectation is that significant amounts of restoration will be achieved in the next decade.

Insect and Disease Concerns - Outbreaks of bark beetles (Douglas-fir beetle, and western pine beetle) generally occur in dense stands that are outside HRV, and Fir engraver beetle is common in drought years in dense stands of grand fir. Current bark beetle populations are at endemic levels, but increasing stand density is expected to create conditions conducive to larger outbreaks associated with significant tree mortality and possibly threaten old forest habitat.

Proposed restoration treatments emphasize thinning to reduce density and increase individual tree vigor, and also emphasize the harvest of climax species like grand fir that are not drought resistant. Incidental amounts of dwarf mistletoe occur in both pine and Douglas-fir stands, but thinning treatments discriminate against trees with mistletoe and levels of this disease are expected to be maintained within HRV.

Noxious Weeds, Invasive and Exotic Species - Invasive species are present in the landscape, but are not considered a significant threat to restoration goals. The Forest will complete an inventory this summer and expects to find small localized populations of rush skeleton weed (high priority to detect and treat), Canada thistle and houndstongue (both low priority for treatment). Force account crews will monitor (post harvest or after prescribed burning) and treat these invasive species as needed as an integral part of our restoration strategy. Noxious weed treatments are an ongoing program on the Forest, and we do not anticipate any problems accomplishing these treatments.

Stewardship contracts will contain all of the current contract language and provisions designed to minimize spread of invasive species. For example, rock crushing and logging equipment will be inspected prior to entering the project area and will be required to be cleaned if necessary to insure this equipment is weed free.

Water Quality/Watershed Improvements/Roads – The Forest Plan aquatic conservation strategy (ACS) classified this landscape as a high priority watershed for active restoration. Sediment caused by past road construction within riparian conservation areas, and fish passage concerns associated with culverts are the primary issues. Legacy issues are especially important in this landscape, because bull trout, a threatened and endangered species, occupy the cold headwaters. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed critical habitat for bull trout within this landscape.

The collaborative group, PFC has recommended a strategy that would improve water quality, fish habitat, and watershed health by implementing the following activities on the ground:

1. Decommission approximately 20 miles of road no longer needed to manage vegetation within the Phase 1 northern half landscape.
2. Aggregate surface haul roads where sediment is currently being delivered to streams.
3. Use existing roads as first priority for vegetation restoration treatments.
4. When new roads are needed, there is no net gain in roads within the landscape. Wherever possible, use temporary roads, avoid riparian conservation areas, and return to production (obliteration, or rip and outslope) after harvest is completed. Initial estimate of planned temporary roads totals six miles.
5. Replace culverts with other structures like open bottomed arches where fish passage is restricted.

Collaboration

Interest Groups Represented – The Payette Forest Coalition (PFC) consists of over 30 individuals representing a wide variety of interest groups. Two groups took on the leadership responsibility as meeting conveners: Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and the Woody Biomass Utilization Partnership. Payette National Forest employees are not members of the PFC, but did attend meetings to provide maps, GIS support, landscape data summaries, and to interpret the Forest Plan.

A complete list of PFC partners is included in Appendix B of the document titled *Recommendations*, which is attached as a link in the **Landscape Strategy** section of this CFLRP Proposal. Table 1 summarizes the types of interest groups who participate in the PFC.

Table 1 – Examples of some of the PFC Interest Groups

| Interest Group Name | Type of Interest | Number of participants |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation | Conservation | 3 |
| Spatial Interest | Social/Conservation | 1 |
| West Central Sage-grouse Local Working Group | Conservation | 1 |
| Idaho Conservation League | Conservation/Environmental | 2 |
| The Wilderness Society | Conservation/Environmental | 2 |
| Western Watersheds Project | Conservation/Environmental | 1 |
| The Nature Conservancy | Conservation/Environmental | 1 |
| Three local sawmills, and two logging contractors | Timber/Commodity | 5 |
| Woody Biomass Utilization Partnership | Biomass/Social | 1 |
| Idaho Department of Commerce | Biomass/Social | 2 |
| Idaho Department of Fish and Game | Conservation | 1 |
| Three Counties (County Commissioner) | Timber/Biomass/Social | 1 |
| Blue Ribbon Coalition | Motorized Recreation/Social | 1 |
| Three federal congressional offices | Collaboration | 3 |
| Heartland Back Country Horsemen | Trails | 2 |
| Secesh Wildlands Coalition | Conservation/Environmental | 1 |
| Council School District | Biomass/Social | 1 |
| Adams County Natural Resource Committee | Timber/Biomass/Trails/Social | 1 |
| Local ATV Riders Group | Motorized Recreation/Trails | 1 |
| Total | | 31 |

PFC Collaborative Group Function – The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation convened the PFC with assistance and financing from the Woody Biomass Utilization Partnership (WBUP). In May 2009, RMEF and the WBUP sent letters to more than 75 interest groups inviting them to convene for a collaborative effort beginning in June 2009. A paid professional facilitator conducted the meetings.

At the first meeting, the group discussed shared interests and objectives. Through a consensus process, the participants established the primary goals of the PFC:

1. Improve wildlife habitat on a landscape scale;
2. Contribute to economic viability of surrounding communities;
3. Reduce Wildfire hazard;
4. Encourage utilization of woody biomass as a byproduct of the process.

Organization – A four-person steering committee augmented by two ex officio members from the Payette National Forest was formed to help plan monthly meetings, and field trips. The coalition established ground rules for how meetings would be conducted, how conflicts would be resolved, and how the group would determine whether they had arrived at consensus.

At each meeting, the focus of the group was reinforced before any discussions began. Meetings were open to the public and people could join the PFC if they wished. An agenda was distributed to participants prior to each meeting so that members could prepare ahead of time, and discussions could be focused and productive.

The PFC met approximately once a month from June 2009 through February 2010. Some meetings were scheduled for two days in order to accomplish the stated goals. The September 2009 meeting included an all day field trip to several sites in the proposed landscape treatment area so that participants could view different types of restoration opportunities and gain a better understanding of varying forest stand conditions. The field trip and descriptions by Payette National Forest staff provided the necessary background for the coalition to draft landscape scale objectives and treatment priorities.

Accomplishments to Date – Conveners sent invitations to prospective participants in May 2009 for the initial meeting in June 2009. In April 2010, the PFC provided the Payette NF Supervisor with a detailed Landscape Strategy for the Phase 1 landscape (approximately 50,000 acres), to be used by the Payette NF in the NEPA process as the collaborative proposed action. This 35 page document, titled *Recommendations, Payette Forest Coalition Landscape Conservation*, was adopted by consensus, and contains goals, landscape objectives, and treatment priorities for the 50,000 acre project area. *Recommendations* included landscape objectives and priorities for the following forest management topics: Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat Restoration, Riparian Conservation Areas, Transportation Network, Trails, and Economic Viability.

The PFC believes that the broad range of interest groups represented on the coalition and the process of collaboration and consensus will decrease the risk of administrative appeals or litigation concerning this proposed project. Although the *Recommendations* document was constructed within the framework of a Stewardship Contract option, the PFC acknowledged that the Payette NF may implement additional administrative agreements or contracts in order to accomplish the landscape restoration project.

Multiparty Monitoring – The PFC has asked the Payette NF to be included in the design of the multiparty monitoring and the subsequent implementation of the monitoring. The PFC will be actively engaged throughout the NEPA planning process as public involvement proceeds from a proposed action to a final decision document. Participation remains a high priority for coalition partners, particularly in the treatment of forest stands that were the subject of significant deliberation as to the silvicultural method and degree of treatment (for example in the red colored reserve stands).

Wildfire

Wildfire Behavior (Current Conditions) – Ignitions within this landscape can be expected every summer. Between 1999 and 2009, 117 fires were reported in this general area. On average, 12 fire starts can be expected each year. Most of these wildfires are suppressed during initial attack at a small size, at an average cost of \$2,500 per fire.

Over the past six years the Forest has taken aggressive suppression actions on four wildfires to protect natural resource values and adjacent private property within the Mill Creek – Council Mountain 100,000 acre landscape. Three of the wildfires escaped initial attack and exhibited uncharacteristic behavior including crown fire resulting in stand replacement or lethal fire behavior within vegetation types that were historically non-lethal or mixed¹ fire regimes. The Hall Ridge Wildfire (2003), the Messenger Wildfire (2006), and the Gray’s Creek Wildfire (2007) burned during drought periods associated with high summer temperatures. The Mill Creek Wildfire followed heavy rain in June, 2009 (twice the normal June precipitation), and was suppressed during initial attack.

Table 2 below summarizes fire behavior, acres burned and cost of suppression for these four wildfires. Without significant restoration efforts across this landscape, the Forest expects future wildfires to exhibit uncharacteristic behavior similar to the three fires that occurred during drought years.

Table 2 – Wildfire Name, Year, Acres Burned, Suppression Cost and Fire Behavior of four Wildfires

| Wildfire Name | Year | Acres Burned/Suppression Cost in dollars | Fire Behavior |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| | <i>Drought Years</i> | | |
| Hall Ridge | 2003 | 1,900 / 4 million | Lethal – stand replacement |
| Messenger | 2006 | 220 / 2million | Lethal – stand replacement, minor amounts of mixed severity |
| Gray’s Creek | 2007 | 25,000 / 10 million | Lethal – stand replacement, minor amounts mixed severity |
| | <i>Normal Precipitation Years</i> | | |
| Mill Creek | 2009 | 35 / 0.05 million | Mixed severity |
| Total | | 27,155 / 16.05 million | Mostly lethal – stand replacement |

Natural Fire Regimes – Most of the forested landscape falls within the non-lethal or mixed¹ natural fire regimes, typical of low elevation ponderosa pine and mixed conifer ecosystems in the Intermountain Region. The historical landscape within HRV experienced frequent ground fires, with occasional crown fires; however, patch sizes of lethal fire behavior were small (probably 100 to 1,000 acres).

Wildfire Behavior (Restored Conditions) – After landscape restoration activities have returned significant acreage to conditions more similar to HRV, fire behavior is expected to match the natural fire regime: mostly ground fires that are non-lethal with small patches of lethal or mixed¹ fire behavior. Our Forest Plan allows wildfires within this landscape to be managed to improve natural resources such as wildlife habitat or to achieve desired conditions for vegetation. Some wildfires may be allowed to burn within certain prescriptions once landscape restoration has been achieved.

Because this landscape is mostly suited timberland, suppression will continue to be used when necessary, and aggressive suppression may be needed during drought years, especially during the next five to 10 years, while active landscape restoration activities are being implemented (thinning and prescribed burning).

Community Wildfire Protection Plans – The Adams County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan Committee in cooperation with Northwest Management, Inc. developed a WUI Wildfire Mitigation Plan, on January 26, 2004. This county mitigation plan addressed wildfire threats within the western portion of the Mill Creek- Council Mountain CFLRP Landscape, as well as on private lands adjacent to this landscape. The county mitigation plan recommended fuel reduction treatments similar to the PFC's recommendations: (1) reducing hazardous fuels through timber harvest, (2) slash piling and burning or chipping, and (3) underburning. The plan also addressed the need to reduce the risk of crown fire during a wildfire event.

Long Term Wildfire Management Cost Reductions – The Forest expects long term wildfire suppression cost to drop to less than \$50,000 per year across this 100,000 acre landscape, which is similar to suppression costs during normal precipitation years. Without active landscape restoration at the scale we are proposing, suppression costs would probably range between two and 10 million dollars during drought years which occur about three times each decade. Over a ten year time period, the difference between this restored landscape (within HRV) versus the current landscape would equate to a savings of 5.5 million dollars using the low estimate of suppression, and could be as high as 29.5 million dollars using the 2007 Grays Creek Wildfire Suppression Cost.

Utilization

Biomass Volume – Utilization of biomass and the associated jobs in the community are key goals established by the collaborative PFC. The primary sources of biomass would include small diameter understory trees (ladder fuels) removed from restoration stands, slash at the landing (whole tree yarding) consisting of tops and limbs, cull material, and pre-commercial thinning in plantations older than 30 years.

The total amount of biomass that would be chipped or ground and hauled to an energy plant is approximately 100,000 to 150,000 green tons for the 100,000 acre landscape (Phase 1 and 2). The anticipated use of this biomass is hog fuel (dirty chips with bark and needles) to fuel a cogeneration plant such as the Tamarack six megawatt facility near New Meadows, Idaho, or for the Council School Fuel for Schools heating and cooling facility. The Tamarack facility buys approximately 100,000 tons of hog fuel annually, and the Council school uses about 300 tons.

The Adams County Commissioners are conducting an in depth feasibility study to build and operate a 10 to 13 megawatt electrical plant fueled with biomass. They anticipate an annual fuel requirement of 140,000 tons of hog fuel. The Adams County plant would be built near Council, Idaho and could be up and running by 2013. If this plant comes on line, a high demand, limited supply scenario would play out for chips.

Biomass Value – Hog fuel is a relatively low value wood product that historically has sold for \$10 to \$15 per ton in our local working circle. The Forest believes the Adams County Plant would be constructed as a public private partnership, and would create significant competition for biomass chips. Their preliminary business plan assumed a fuel cost of approximately \$30 to \$40 per bone dry ton.

Currently, it does not pay to chip or grind slash at the landing and deliver to Tamarack, because the cost is estimated to be \$20 to \$30 per ton and the delivered price is much lower at \$10 to \$15 per ton. If demand increases, and hog fuel rises to \$40 per ton, biomass utilization would be slightly profitable. It is doubtful that biomass utilization in our landscape would be profitable or offset other restoration treatment costs, but it is conceivable that hog fuel would break even if the Adams County Plant or a similar plant is built.

There are other ecological and social reasons the Forest and the PFC choose to utilize biomass instead of burning it in the forest.

1. USDA Forest Service is committed to utilizing biomass to create renewable energy.
2. Creating energy with biomass is believed to be carbon neutral as opposed to burning fossil fuels.
3. The Forest is under increasing pressure from air quality boards such as the State of Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to reduce smoke emissions from open burning in the woods.
4. Utilizing biomass creates jobs in a rural area with nearly 20 percent unemployment.

BCAP Program Administered by Farm Service Administration (FSA) – The Tamarack cogeneration plant (renewable energy producer) and logging contractors (fuel suppliers) have been in discussion with FSA and have filed their paperwork to be certified under the BCAP Program. The Forest believes these incentives will greatly improve biomass utilization in our area. In FY 2010, the Payette Forest awarded eleven IRSC stewardship contracts that require removal of approximately 40,000 tons of biomass.

Investments

Federal and Non-Federal Investments – Federal Investments within the Mill Creek- Council Mountain Landscape are estimated to be nearly 31 million dollars over the next ten years, should this proposal be accepted. Landscape restoration within this area is considered the top priority wildlife habitat, vegetation management, fuels reduction project on the Forest and considerable effort is being expended by numerous personnel to make this happen. Non-federal investments within this landscape are estimated to exceed \$860,000 over the next decade. Restored acres and other indicators of success are described on page 4 of the Proposed Treatment Section, and for watershed improvements on page 2 of the Ecological Context Section.

Job Creation – Implementing landscape restoration at the scale we are proposing, using stewardship contracts, will maintain current woods jobs within the Payette National Forest working circle. Although it is difficult to determine new jobs, we estimate that 40 to 50 may be created in the biomass utilization sector. Biomass and watershed restoration jobs would include the following:

1. Loggers – Up to 10 new positions operating harvesting equipment to cut and yard small diameter trees not currently utilized as sawtimber.
2. Grinding or Chipping Crew – Up to five new positions operating slash grinding or chipping equipment needed to process biomass.
3. Chip Van Drivers – Ten chip vans with stinger-steered trailers will need drivers to efficiently haul biomass from the landscape to an electrical cogeneration facility.
4. Adams County 13 MW Proposal – If this plant is constructed in 2013, an additional fifteen jobs would be created to operate the cogeneration facility. The construction cost (non-federal investment outside the landscape) of this cogeneration facility is estimated to be \$25 million dollars. Construction jobs are not included in this proposal estimate.
5. Five new jobs would be created by additional watershed restoration work such as aggregate surfacing roads, constructing arches or bridges to allow fish passage, and decommissioning roads no longer needed.

All of the jobs described in items 1 through 5 are estimated to pay out at least \$20 per hour which is considered a fair living wage in our local counties. Current unemployment rates are nearly 20 percent in both Adams County and Valley County. These two counties should benefit most from creation of new woods jobs.

Local Employment – Local infrastructure in the sawmilling and logging sectors is already in place, and additional jobs created are expected to be local in nature (Adams and Valley Counties). Several local logging companies have the equipment and financing capability to add new positions as needed to respond to an increase in work in the woods.

Funding Estimate

Funding Estimate Tables were built for Fiscal Years 2010 through 2016. The Forest expects the last stewardship contract to be awarded in FY 2016, and may request funding beyond FY 2016 to finish up other force account activities including prescribed burning. This request would be made at a later date if our proposal is accepted. The first Funding Estimate Table for FY 2010 addresses watershed restoration activities already cleared through the NEPA planning process.

| Funds to be used on NFS lands for ecological restoration treatments and monitoring that would be available in FY 2010 to match funding from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year 2010 Funding Type | Dollars/Value Planned |
| FY 2010 Funding for Implementation | \$250,000 |
| FY 2010 Funding for Monitoring | \$10,000 |
| 1. USFS Appropriated Funds | \$268,000 |
| 2. USFS Permanent & Trust Funds | |
| 3. Partnership Funds | |
| 4. Partnership In-Kind Services Value | \$10,000 |
| 5. Estimated Forest Product Value | |
| 6. Other (specify) | |
| FY 2010 Total (total of 1-6 above for matching CFLRP request) | \$278,000 |
| FY 2010 CFLRP request (must be equal to or less than above total) | \$260,000 |
| Funding off NFS lands associated with proposal in FY 2010 (does not count toward funding match from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund) | |
| Fiscal Year 2010 Funding Type | Dollars Planned |
| USDI BLM Funds | N/A |
| USDI (other) Funds | N/A |
| Other Public Funding | N/A |
| Private Funding | N/A |

| Funds to be used on NFS lands for ecological restoration treatments and monitoring that would be available in FY 2011 to match funding from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year 2011 Funding Type – Phase 1 Landscape | Dollars/Value Planned |
| FY 2011 Funding for Implementation | \$2,750,000 |
| FY 2011 Funding for Monitoring | \$125,000 |
| 1. USFS Appropriated Funds | \$975,000 |
| 2. USFS Permanent & Trust Funds | \$100,000 |
| 3. Partnership Funds | \$150,000 |
| 4. Partnership In-Kind Services Value | \$25,000 |
| 5. Estimated Forest Product Value | \$1,625,000 |
| 6. Other (specify) | |
| FY 2011 Total (total of 1-6 above for matching CFLRP request) | \$2,875,000 |
| FY 2011 CFLRP request (must be equal to or less than above total) | \$2,875,000 |
| Funding off NFS lands associated with proposal in FY 2010 (does not count toward funding match from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund) | |
| Fiscal Year 2011 Funding Type | Dollars Planned |
| USDI BLM Funds | N/A |
| USDI (other) Funds | N/A |
| Other Public Funding | N/A |
| Private Funding | N/A |

| Funds to be used on NFS lands for ecological restoration treatments and monitoring that would be available in FY 2012 to match funding from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year 2012 Funding Type – Phase 1 Landscape | Dollars/Value Planned |
| FY 2012 Funding for Implementation | \$2,750,000 |
| FY 2012 Funding for Monitoring | \$125,000 |
| 1. USFS Appropriated Funds | \$975,000 |
| 2. USFS Permanent & Trust Funds | \$100,000 |
| 3. Partnership Funds | \$150,000 |
| 4. Partnership In-Kind Services Value | \$25,000 |
| 5. Estimated Forest Product Value | \$1,625,000 |
| 6. Other (specify) | |
| FY 2012 Total (total of 1-6 above for matching CFLRP request) | \$2,875,000 |
| FY 2012 CFLRP request (must be equal to or less than above total) | \$2,875,000 |
| Funding off NFS lands associated with proposal in FY 2010 (does not count toward funding match from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund) | |
| Fiscal Year 2012 Funding Type | Dollars Planned |
| USDI BLM Funds | N/A |
| USDI (other) Funds | N/A |
| Other Public Funding | N/A |
| Private Funding | N/A |

| Funds to be used on NFS lands for ecological restoration treatments and monitoring that would be available in FY 2013 to match funding from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year 2013 Funding Type – Phase 1 Landscape | Dollars/Value Planned |
| FY 2013 Funding for Implementation | \$1,775,000 |
| FY 2013 Funding for Monitoring | \$75,000 |
| 1. USFS Appropriated Funds | \$975,000 |
| 2. USFS Permanent & Trust Funds | \$100,000 |
| 3. Partnership Funds | \$100,000 |
| 4. Partnership In-Kind Services Value | \$25,000 |
| 5. Estimated Forest Product Value | \$650,000 |
| 6. Other (specify) | |
| FY 2013 Total (total of 1-6 above for matching CFLRP request) | \$1,850,000 |
| FY 2013 CFLRP request (must be equal to or less than above total) | \$1,850,000 |
| Funding off NFS lands associated with proposal in FY 2010 (does not count toward funding match from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund) | |
| Fiscal Year 2013 Funding Type | Dollars Planned |
| USDI BLM Funds | N/A |
| USDI (other) Funds | N/A |
| Other Public Funding | N/A |
| Private Funding | N/A |

| Funds to be used on NFS lands for ecological restoration treatments and monitoring that would be available in FY 2014 to match funding from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year 2014 Funding Type – Phase 2 Landscape | Dollars/Value Planned |
| FY 2014 Funding for Implementation | \$2,750,000 |
| FY 2014 Funding for Monitoring | \$75,000 |
| 1. USFS Appropriated Funds | \$975,000 |
| 2. USFS Permanent & Trust Funds | \$100,000 |
| 3. Partnership Funds | \$100,000 |
| 4. Partnership In-Kind Services Value | \$25,000 |
| 5. Estimated Forest Product Value | \$1,625,000 |
| 6. Other (specify) | |
| FY 2014 Total (total of 1-6 above for matching CFLRP request) | \$2,825,000 |
| FY 2014 CFLRP request (must be equal to or less than above total) | \$2,825,000 |
| Funding off NFS lands associated with proposal in FY 2010 (does not count toward funding match from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund) | |
| Fiscal Year 2014 Funding Type | Dollars Planned |
| USDI BLM Funds | N/A |
| USDI (other) Funds | N/A |
| Other Public Funding | N/A |
| Private Funding | N/A |

| Funds to be used on NFS lands for ecological restoration treatments and monitoring that would be available in FY 2015 to match funding from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year 2015 Funding Type – Phase 2 Landscape | Dollars/Value Planned |
| FY 2015 Funding for Implementation | \$2,750,000 |
| FY 2015 Funding for Monitoring | \$75,000 |
| 1. USFS Appropriated Funds | \$975,000 |
| 2. USFS Permanent & Trust Funds | \$100,000 |
| 3. Partnership Funds | \$100,000 |
| 4. Partnership In-Kind Services Value | \$25,000 |
| 5. Estimated Forest Product Value | \$1,625,000 |
| 6. Other (specify) | |
| FY 2015 Total (total of 1-6 above for matching CFLRP request) | \$2,825,000 |
| FY 2015 CFLRP request (must be equal to or less than above total) | \$2,825,000 |
| Funding off NFS lands associated with proposal in FY 2010 (does not count toward funding match from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund) | |
| Fiscal Year 2015 Funding Type | Dollars Planned |
| USDI BLM Funds | N/A |
| USDI (other) Funds | N/A |
| Other Public Funding | N/A |
| Private Funding | N/A |

| Funds to be used on NFS lands for ecological restoration treatments and monitoring that would be available in FY 2016 to match funding from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year 2016 Funding Type – Phase 2 Landscape | Dollars/Value Planned |
| FY 2016 Funding for Implementation | \$1,775,000 |
| FY 2016 Funding for Monitoring | \$75,000 |
| 1. USFS Appropriated Funds | \$975,000 |
| 2. USFS Permanent & Trust Funds | \$100,000 |
| 3. Partnership Funds | \$100,000 |
| 4. Partnership In-Kind Services Value | \$25,000 |
| 5. Estimated Forest Product Value | \$650,000 |
| 6. Other (specify) | |
| FY 2016 Total (total of 1-6 above for matching CFLRP request) | \$1,850,000 |
| FY 2016 CFLRP request (must be equal to or less than above total) | \$1,850,000 |
| Funding off NFS lands associated with proposal in FY 2010 (does not count toward funding match from the Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration Fund) | |
| Fiscal Year 2016 Funding Type | Dollars Planned |
| USDI BLM Funds | N/A |
| USDI (other) Funds | N/A |
| Other Public Funding | N/A |
| Private Funding | N/A |

Funding Plan

Implementation FY 2010 – Approximately \$268,000 of appropriated funds have been obligated to begin landscape restoration (watershed improvement activities) in FY 2010. The Funding Estimate Table for FY 2010 requests \$260,000 in matching dollars from the CFLRP Program Fund to accomplish the following watershed improvement projects: (1) road maintenance including aggregate surfacing, (2) road decommissioning, and (3) replacement of culverts with open bottomed arch structures.

Regional Forester’s Funding for Planning – The FY 2010 budget approved by the Regional Forester (RF) included approximately \$610,000 for the Payette NF to conduct planning (both NFMA and NEPA) on the Mill Creek – Council Mountain CFLRP. In addition, the FY 2010 budget approved approximately \$274,000 to begin on the ground preparation of the stewardship contract to be offered in FY 2011. The NFMA collaborative work with the PFC was completed April 2010, and NEPA Scoping began in early May. A draft EIS is due out in October 2010. Another \$250,000 will be budgeted for completion of the FEIS and ROD in FY 2011. NEPA will be completed for the 50,000 acre Phase 1 landscape by May 1, 2011.

Implementation (FY 2011 and Beyond) – The FY 2011 budget has not been finalized at the WO or RO level, but the RF intends to fund implementation and monitoring using approximately \$975,000 of appropriated funds, and \$100,000 of Permanent and Trust Funds. Table 3 below summarizes the funding by budget line item (BLI). Similar budgets are anticipated for Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013. Implementation of the Phase 2 landscape would begin in FY 2014 and would take approximately three years to complete (FY 2016 would be the last year of implementation). The Forest and Region estimate the matching dollars from appropriated funds and permanent and trust funds for FY 2014 through 2016 to be similar to the annual amounts shown in Table 3 below.

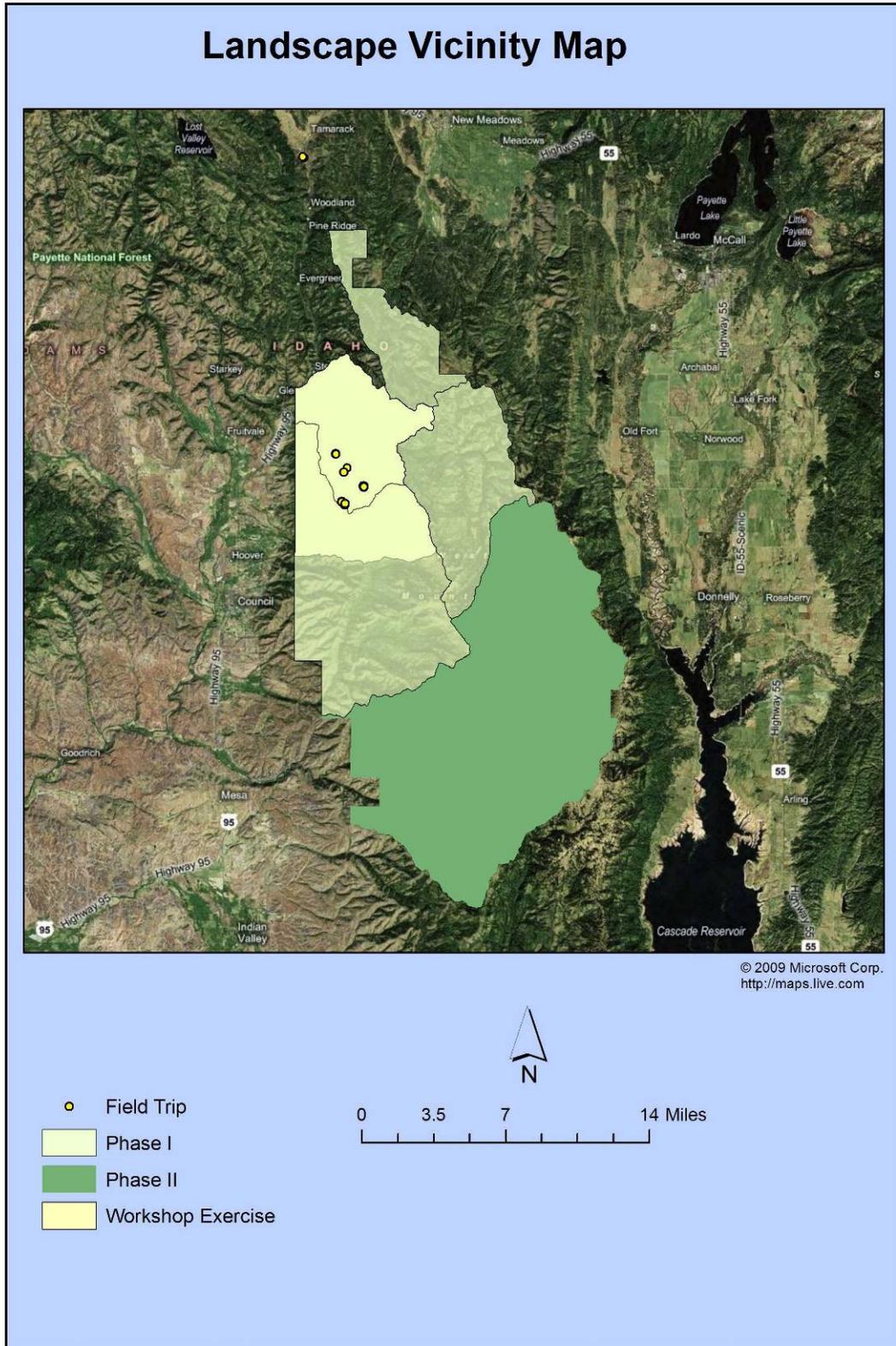
Table 3 – Anticipated FY 2011 Implementation Funding (Matching dollars) by BLI

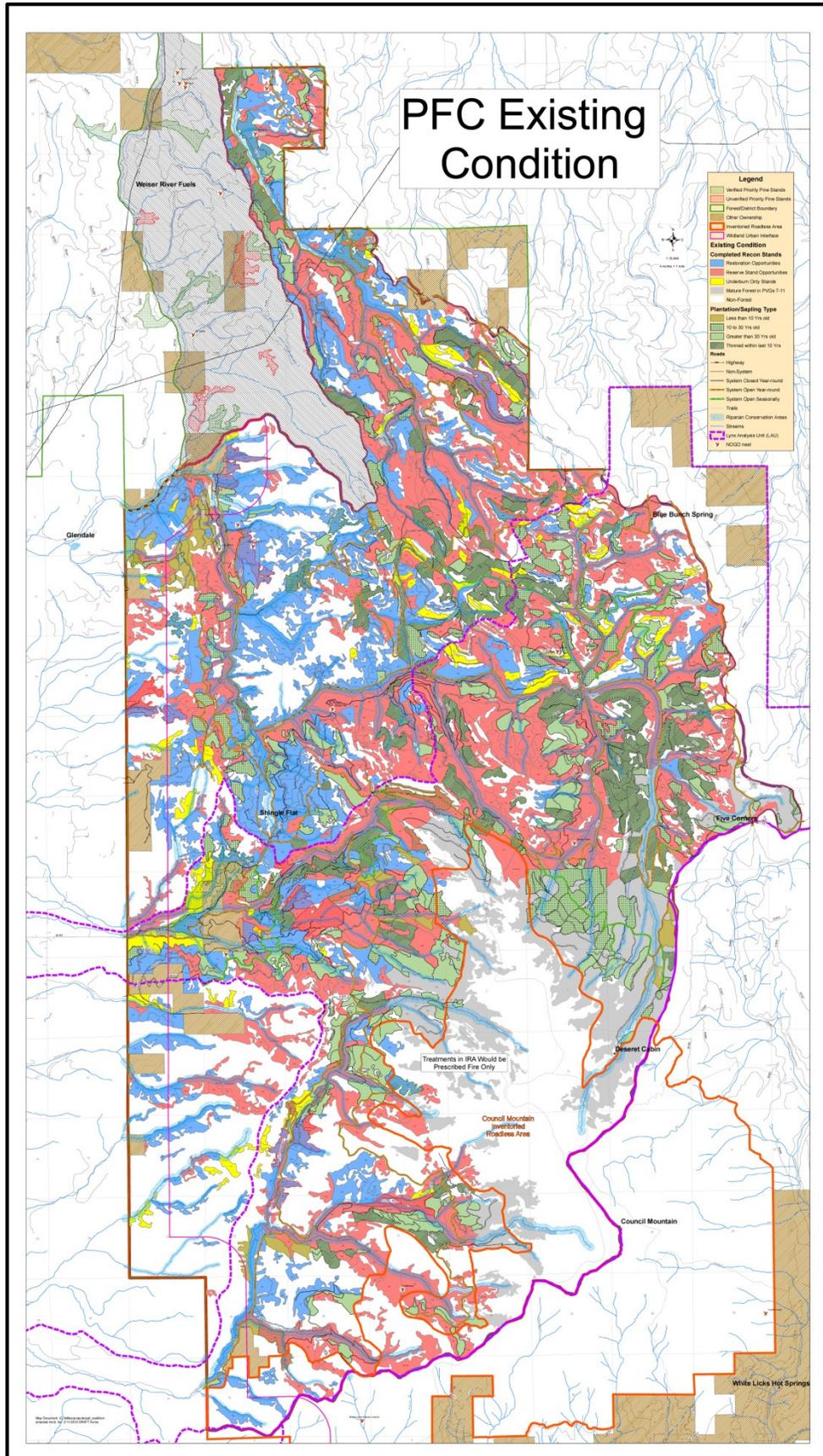
| BLI | Implementation Activity | Funding Amount |
|--------------|---|-----------------------|
| | <i>USFS Appropriated Funds</i> | |
| NFVW | Plantation Thinning | \$250,000 |
| SPFH | Thinning - Bark Beetle Prevention | \$125,000 |
| NFVW | Watershed Restoration – Native Plants | \$50,000 |
| NFWF | Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat Restoration | \$50,000 |
| WFHF | Hazardous Fuels Reduction | \$100,000 |
| CMLG | Legacy Roads Program – Fish Passage, and Road Decommissioning | \$300,000 |
| CMRD | Road Maintenance including Aggregate Surfacing | \$100,000 |
| | Subtotal of Appropriated Funds | \$975,000 |
| | <i>USFS Permanent and Trust Funds</i> | |
| CWF2 | Aggregate Surfacing of Roads and road maintenance | \$100,000 |
| Total | | \$1,075,000 |

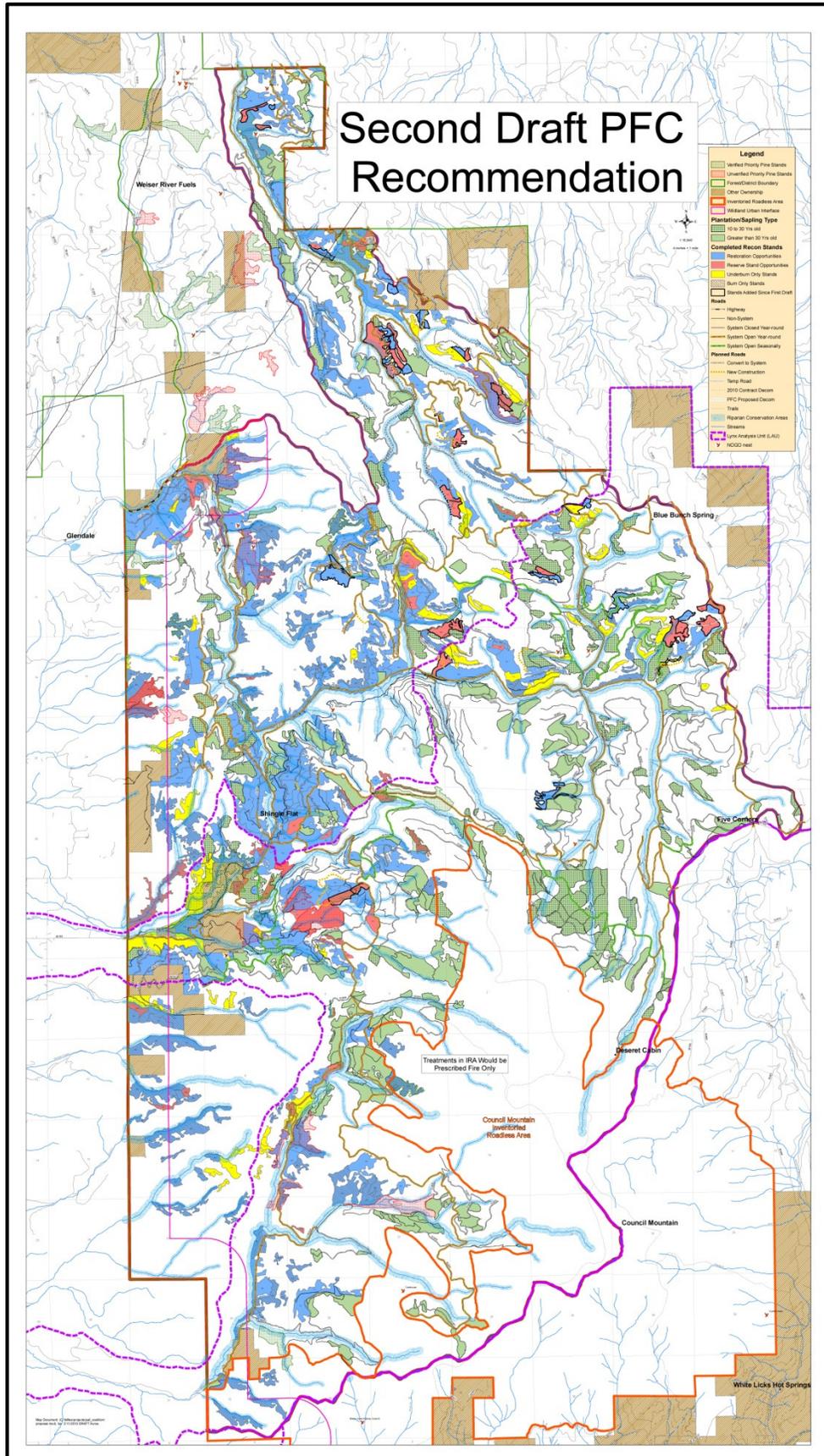
Assurance – If the Mill Creek – Council Mountain CFLRP Proposal is selected for funding, the Forest commits to allocating the CFLRP funds for ecological restoration treatments the same year the funds are transferred to the Forest, beginning in FY 2010.

Monitoring – Monitoring in FY 2010 is estimated to cost \$10,000. Approximately \$50,000 per year will be budgeted for multiparty monitoring beginning in FY 2011. The PFC has expressed an interest in helping with some of this monitoring; an initial estimate of this in kind contribution is \$25,000 per year. Multiparty monitoring will be funded to assess ecological, social, and economic effects for at least 15 years after project implementation commences.

Maps







Landscape Strategy

Payette Forest Coalition document *Recommendations* - The Landscape Conservation Strategy is contained in the 35 page document titled *Recommendations*, prepared by the PFC, dated March 01, 2010. It can be found on the Spatial Interest web site along with field trip photos, meeting notes and other information related to the PFC. To direct link to the PFC Landscape Conservation document, click on [Recommendations](#).

The PFC collaborative landscape strategy is consistent with the Payette National Forest Plan and the draft Wildlife Conservation Strategy (WCS) which will amend the Forest Plan. The WCS requires active restoration on the highest priority landscapes such as the Mill Creek-Council Mountain area. The Mill Creek – Council Mountain CFLRP Proposal and the WCS both incorporate the best available science. The WCS requires that restoration actions be taken to maintain existing old forest characteristics as well as restore old forest characteristics. The reduction of hazardous fuels is an integral part of the landscape strategy and both mechanical treatments and prescribed burning would be used to reduce fuels.

PDF Format and CD – The Mill Creek – Council Mountain CFLRP Proposal document has been converted to PDF format to allow reviewers to zoom in on maps, and to send maps to color printers or plotters. The Forest encourages reviewers to fully utilize these features to better understand the spatial context of the landscape strategy. Black and white maps and color maps at small scale such as 8.5 inch by 11 inch page format do not convey the spatial strategy very well.

An electronic copy in PDF format and ten compact diskettes (CDs) are included in this proposal. Please contact Robert S. Giles, Payette NF Resources Staff Officer, at (208) 634-0707, e-mail address rsgiles@fs.fed.us should you have any questions about the CDs or PDF format.