**MMG Field Trip – Mixed Conifer June 22, 2019**

Forsythe II Objectives:

1. Reduce the severity and intensity of a wildfire within the wildland urban interface (WUI).
2. Restore ponderosa pine/mixed conifer stands, aspen, and meadows/shrublands toward their characteristic species composition, structure, and spatial patterns in order to increase resistance and resiliency to future natural disturbance.

Habitat Structural Stages:

1M = grasses/forbs; 2T = trees under 0.9”DBH; 3A = trees 1.0” - 8.9” DBH, cover percent < 40; 3B = trees 1.0” – 8.9” DBH, cover percent > 40 and < 70; 3C = trees 1.0” – 8.9” DBH, cover percent > 40; 4A = trees > 8.9” DBH, cover percent < 40; 4B = trees > 8.9” DBH, cover percent > 40 and < 70; 4C = trees > 8.9 DBH, cover percent > 70.

**Forsythe Trailhead ~8,000’**

Stop 1

Background:

* Implemented in 2014; Gross Task Order of Long Term Stewardship Contract
* Cover Type Post Treatment -ponderosa pine
* Basal Area – 50-100 ft2/ac
* Aspect – South
* Habitat Structural Stage – 4B
* Stand Structure – Predominantly large size classes up to 20” DBH
* Transitional zone between Lower and Upper Montane Zone
* Fuel Loading – Light (recreationists most likely have picked up woody slash in vicinity for campfires).

Cutting Guides (Manual) - Forsythe Fuel Reduction Project:

1. Cut all live/dead ponderosa pine 2” to 4.9” DBH.
2. Cut all live/dead lodgepole pine 1” to 8.9” DBH.
3. Cut all live/dead Douglas-fir 1” to 7.9” DBH.
4. When present, cut Rocky Mountain Juniper, leaving only one per acre. When selecting which Rocky Mountain Juniper to leave, select the largest and healthiest.
5. Cut all mountain pine beetle infested live/dead lodgepole pine and ponderosa pine within the boundaries of the unit.
6. Aspen – Where the number of aspen trees with diameters >1” DBH are greater than the number of conifers within the clone perimeter, cut conifers >1” DBH to 9.9” DBH if they can be felled without creating excessive damage to the clone. Do not cut Engelmann or blue spruce within the clone perimeter.

Discussion Points:

* How does the treated stand look?
* If this was a unit under the Forsythe II decision, would it meet the objectives of the project?
* GTR 373
* Can prescribed fire be re-introduced into this location and meet Forsythe II objectives in the current condition?
* With a prescribed fire, would there be a change to existing basal area? Species composition? Stand structure?
* Would the location be resilient to a wildfire under 50th percentile fire conditions? 90th + percentile fire conditions?
* If slash was present, would there be a change to existing basal area? Species composition? Stand structure?

Stop 2

Background:

* Implemented in 2014; Gross Task Order of Long Term Stewardship Contract
* Cover Type Post Treatment –lodgepole pine
* Basal Area – 0 – 5 ft2/ac in “patchcut”
* Aspect – North
* Habitat Structural Stage – 1M/2T in patchcut
* Stand Structure – In patchcut, regeneration w/ light overstory
* Transitional zone between Lower and Upper Montane Zone
* Fuel Loading – Light/Moderate in patchcut

Cutting Guides (Manual) - Forsythe Fuel Reduction Project:

1. Cut all live/dead lodgepole pine 1” DBH to 8.9” DBH.
2. Cut all mountain pine beetle infested live/dead lodgepole pine and ponderosa pine within the boundaries of the unit.

Discussion Points:

* How does the treated stand look?
* If this was a unit under the Forsythe II decision, would it meet the objectives of the project?
* GTR 373
* Can prescribed fire be re-introduced into this location and meet Forsythe II objectives in the current condition?
* With a prescribed fire, would there be a change to existing basal area? Species composition? Stand structure?
* Would the location be resilient to a wildfire under 50th percentile fire conditions? 90th + percentile fire conditions?
* If slash was present, would there be a change to existing basal area? Species composition? Stand structure?

Stop 3

Background:

* Implemented in 2013; South Winiger Task Order of Long Term Stewardship Contract
* Cover Type Post Treatment –lodgepole pine
* Basal Area – 60 – 120 ft2/ac
* Aspect – North
* Habitat Structural Stage – 4B
* Stand Structure – Predominantly large lodgepole pine, little understory, some snags and large down woody material (blowdown)
* Transitional zone between Lower and Upper Montane Zone
* Fuel Loading – Moderate

Cutting Guides (Manual) - Forsythe Fuel Reduction Project:

1. Cut all live/dead ponderosa pine trees 2” DBH to 9.9” DBH
2. Cut all live/dead Douglas-fir 2” DBH to 8.9” DBH.
3. Cut all live/dead lodgepole pine 2” DBH to 7.9” DBH.
4. When present, cut Rocky Mountain Juniper, leaving only one per acre. When selecting which Rocky Mountain Juniper to leave, select the largest and healthiest.
5. Aspen – Where the number of aspen trees with diameters >1” DBH are greater than the number of conifers within the clone perimeter, cut conifers >1” DBH to 9.9” DBH if they can be felled without creating excessive damage to the clone. Do not cut Engelmann or blue spruce within the clone perimeter.

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**Unit 48 ~ 8,200’**

Step Transect Summary (Unit 48)

**Stop 1:**

* What components make this a preferred habitat for Elk (Management Indicator Species)?
* How will treatment affect those components?
* What is the group’s opinion of the slash currently here?
* How will the USFS manage the already downed slash (surface fuel) during treatment? What if the slash is larger in diameter? What is the difference in manual v. mechanical units?
* How does slash affect the reintroduction of fire/wildfire?
* How will trees be selected for cutting in Ponderosa Pine/Mixed Conifer units when lodgepole comprise a portion of the trees present (individuals or clumps)?

**Stop 2:**

* What is the group’s initial reaction to the two stands? Would it be different if it were closer to homes/community?
* Are there components here that benefit wildlife, in particular Mountain Lions?
* (Non-USFS) How would you treat the stands & why?
* (USFS) How would you treat the stands & why?
* Can fire be reintroduced here (*if not covered above*) pre-thinning, post-thinning?

How would aspect change treatment?