

MMG Field Trip (August 8, 2020)
Guideline Recommendations for Prescriptions
Units 29, 30, 31, 61

Meeting Information: We will be meeting along South Beaver Creek Road adjacent to the power plant located at the north end of South Beaver Creek Road. To access from Highway 72, head south .2 mile down South Beaver Creek Road, and the power plant is located on the west side of the road. We will meet there at 9:00 before driving to the east end of Unit 29 for our first stop. After some hiking and discussion we will move to the west end of the unit. Parking for 10 vehicles at all of our stops will be a challenge so we will have to be creative with the parking. The field trip will last from 9:00am-1:00pm.

As a reminder due to COVID-19, the maximum group size is 10 people. Spatial distancing and face masks will be required.

Unit 29 (164 acres; 49 acres can be treated)

USFS Objectives:

- Reduce the severity and intensity of a wildfire within the wildland urban interface (WUI).
- 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.
- Emulate natural disturbance in lodgepole pine dominated stands to mimic variable structural and spatial patterns across the landscape in order to increase resistance and resiliency to future natural disturbance.
- Provide private property landowners the opportunity to complete defensible space mitigation around their homes on adjacent NFS lands.

Background:

- The Average Existing Basal Area = 101 ft²/acre; Average Existing Basal Area (dead) = 8 ft²/acre.
- The unit is identified as a Lodgepole Pine Treatment in the DN.
- The unit has a mixture of stands including lodgepole pine dominated stands, mixed conifer stands, and aspen stands being encroached by conifers. All these stand structure components have a represented range within the unit. The unit is primarily composed of trees ranging in size from 5" DBH to 16" DBH (72% in the overstory). Aspen makes up about 6% of the area on average in the overstory.

- Species Mix (overstory/understory¹): lodgepole pine (63%/38%), ponderosa pine (12%/3%), Douglas-fir (10%/9%), Aspen (6%/17%), Engelmann spruce (3%/5%).
- The unit has areas of old growth (inventoried/retention) and interior forest.

Stop 1 - East End of Unit: Park along the roadside of Emory Road

Emory Road Vicinity Discussion Points:

- Emory Road Corridor Treatment and Old Growth
- Defensible Space Buffer Treatment

Teagen's Track 18 Polygon Discussion Points:

- Thinning in mixed conifer (matrix forest/interior forest)

Gating of 2-Track Road Leading North of Emory Road

- Note location with follow up conversation during 8/12 MMG meeting.

Stop 2 - West End of Unit: Park in the pullout and vicinity south of Unit 61

Track 15 Discussion Points:

- Split existing polygon into an aspen treatment/patchcut and polygon modifications

USFS Additional Polygon (East of TB26) Discussion Points:

- Treatment options patchcut/thin

Surface Fuel Treatment (TB 26, 27, 28 Vicinity) Discussion Points:

- Address questions of treatment

Track 16 Discussion Points:

- Patchcut Treatment
- Extension of boundary to the east

The treatments in Unit 61 did not result in disagreement between the MFG and USFS. So a stop in the unit was determined to not be needed.

Note: If there is time to visit Unit 31, a smaller group will visit the unit to discuss concerns. If not, another date will be planned to visit the unit with a smaller group. This is due to the limited parking in the area.

Unit 31 (73 acres; 21.9 acres can be treated)

USFS Objectives:

- **Reduce the severity and intensity of a wildfire within the wildland urban interface (WUI).**
- **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.**
- **Emulate natural disturbance in lodgepole pine dominated stands to mimic variable structural and spatial patterns across the landscape in order to increase resistance and resiliency to future natural disturbance.**

Background:

- The Average Existing Basal Area = 47 ft² / acre; Average Existing Basal Area (dead) = 10 ft² / acre.
- The unit is identified as Lodgepole Pine Treatment in the DN.
- The unit is dominated with lodgepole pine with a light mixture of other conifers (including ponderosa pine that didn't show up on the step transect survey) and aspen. The unit is primarily composed of trees ranging in size from 5" DBH to 12" DBH (70% in the overstory). Aspen makes up about 6% of the area on average in the overstory.
- Species Mix (overstory/understory): lodgepole pine (85%/58%), Douglas-fir (1%/1%), Aspen (6%/4%).
- The unit has areas of heavily infested dwarf mistletoe which has resulted in the unhealthy appearance and condition of the stands within the unit boundary.

Stop 1- Off of La Chula Road North Facing Patchcuts

Discussion Points:

- Lodgepole pine patchcuts located on north facing aspect

The treatments in Unit 30 did not result in disagreement between the MFG and USFS. So a stop in the unit was determined to not be needed.