

SBEADMR Adaptive Management Meeting Notes

April 21, 2022

The SBEADMR Adaptive Management Group (AMG) convened a MS TEAMS virtual meeting on Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 9:00 AM. Present and representing the various “seats” on the AMG were:

<u>Designated Seat</u>	<u>Regular Member</u>	<u>Alternate Member</u>
Delta County	absent	absent
Gunnison County	Jonathan Houck	TBD
Hinsdale County	absent	TBD
Montrose County	Justin Musser	absent
Ouray County	Ben Tisdell	absent
San Miguel County	Hilary Cooper	absent
Environmental/Conservation	Chris Jauhola	Enno Heuscher
Environmental/Conservation	vacant	absent
Forestry Processor	Tim Kylo	
Forestry Logger	absent	TBD
Community at Large		
East Zone	TBD	TBD
North Zone	absent	TBD
West Zone	Nancy Fishing	Andy Goldman
Water Resources	absent	absent
Recreational User Groups	Ralph Files	TBD
Wildlife and Fish	Craig Grother	absent
Education	TBD	TBD

Resource/Staff Present: Sean Ferrell, Michael Salazar, Kim Phillips, Regina Rone, and Matthew Vasquez, GMUG Nat’l Forest; Jason Sibold, Mike Battaglio, Tony Cheng, Kevin Barrett, Jarod Dunn, and Tyler Beeton, SBEADMR Science Team and CFRI staff and Tanya Banulis and Jeffrey Rainey, Colorado State Forest Service

Guests: Chuck Carpenter, NWTF; Donna Shorreck, Ecologist, USFS Regional Office; Matt Reed, High County Conservation Advocates (Gunnison County) and Oliver Wood and Peter ??, Wilderness Workshop (Carbondale).

Approval of April 7, 2021 AMG Meeting Notes: *M/S/P Musser/Cooper.* Approve the meeting notes of the 10/28/21 AMG meeting as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

Item No 1: Debrief of 2022 Annual SBEADMR/Taylor Park EA Combined Stakeholder Meeting

- Positive feedback from AMG members and GMUG staff on the virtual meeting format, synergy derived from combining the annual stakeholder meeting with the Taylor Park EA project and the continued success of the Story Map as a tool to display the proposed treatment projects and to provide the public an opportunity to comment electronically.
- Looking ahead to 2023, anticipate that the annual stakeholder meeting can be a “hybrid meeting” providing the option for both an “in person” meeting and virtual meeting format.

Item No. 2: Proposed AMG Recommendation for Change in SBEADMR Design Criteria to Allow the Use of Cut-to-Length Equipment in SBEADMR Treatments

Nancy Fishing, AMG Monitoring Committee member, introduced the topic by explaining that *Carlyn Perovich*, GMUG Forest Ecologist, first introduced the above referenced change to SBEADMR Design Criteria at the 10/28/2021 AMG meeting. Given the questions raised and interest in obtaining more information, the proposal

was referred to the AMG Monitoring Committee and Science Team to gather more information and report back to the AMG with a draft recommendation on the proposal in early 2022. On 12/2/2021, the AMG Monitoring Committee convened a meeting with the Science Team, GMUG staff and guests from Oregon State University and Chuck Rhoades of the USDA Rocky Mountain Research Station to learn more about the harvesting technique and equipment. After that meeting, the AMG Monitoring Committee prepared the following draft recommendation approving the proposed change:

“Recommend approval of the proposed SBEADMR Pre-Implementation Checklist change as specified below (in red) and subject to further stipulations recommended by the SBEADMR AMG. AMG stipulations: the use of this equipment would serve as a pilot project subject to monitoring, further site-specific research and future adaptations or fine tuning of the checklist.”

Proposed Change

To allow for Cut-to-Length harvesting systems (tethered or untethered) to be used in SBEADMR treatments, GMUG staff propose the following changes (in red) to the SBEADMR Pre-Implementation Checklist:

WQSP-5B(D) Avoid ground skidding on sustained slopes steeper than 40 percent and on moderate to severely burned sustained slopes greater than 30 percent. **Use of cut-to-length harvester/forwarder systems that travel on a slash mat, rather than bare soil, is acceptable on slopes up to 60%.** Conduct logging to disperse runoff as practicable.

(WQSB-7B(A)) Skid trail locations will be agreed to by the Forest Service in advance of construction; spacing will be approximately 100 feet apart, allowing for topographic variation and skid trail convergence. **If cut-to-length logging equipment that travels over a slash mat rather than bare soil is used, 50-60 foot spacing of trails is acceptable.** Space water bars as appropriate on skid trails according to slope and soil type, as indicated in Table A-14.

(WFRP-11) Skid trails and landings will be located to minimize impacts to advanced regeneration. Skid trails will be placed at least 100 feet apart, except where they need to tie in together at landings. **If cut-to-length logging equipment that travels over a slash mat rather than bare soil is used, 50-60 foot spacing of trails is acceptable.”**

Questions/concerns raised and discussed were:

- What species is this harvesting treatment appropriate for, e.g., Monarch Pass treatment area?
- Did this treatment receive appropriate Forest Service analysis during SBEADMR EIS?
- Concerns for type of soils where treatment would be used and prevention of soil erosion
- Vertical vs horizontal treatment patterns, e.g., Monarch Pass treatment area
- Concern for slash mats, e.g., depth and slash piles

After discussion, *Hilary Cooper* suggested amending the above draft language with the addition of language that the equipment be approved for use “at the right place and at the right time”. There being no show of hands in opposition of the proposed recommendation as amended, there was AMG consensus to submit the recommendation as amended to the GMUG Forest Leadership Team for consideration

Item No. 3: Review of Updated 2022 AMG Annual Report/Monitoring Matrix and Proposed AMG Recommendations for Adaptations

As requested by the AMG membership and specified in the SBEADMR roles/timeline document, the AMG Monitoring Committee met with the Science Team, GMUG staff and resource specialists in late March, following the February annual stakeholder meeting. The purpose of said meeting was to review in detail the findings and interpretations of various monitoring activities and to draft proposed AMG recommendations for adaptations to treatment design and/or implementation to present to the full AMG membership in April.

Given the level of said review by the Monitoring Committee, the AMG began its review of the draft AMG report/monitoring matrix by first considering the seven recommendations proposed by the Monitoring Committee for specific SBEADMR Goals or Decision Triggers as highlighted in the monitoring matrix. *(final 2022 AMG Adaptive Management Report with FLT conclusions will be available [here](#))*

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg. 5): More locations from which firefighters can safely and effectively manage fires (*ROD Public Safety Goal #1*)

PROPOSED AMG RECOMMENDATION: Recommend that the GMUG staff provide update to AMG on where SBEADMR Priority Treatment Areas (PTA's) and GMUG Potential Operational Delineations (POD's) treatment opportunities overlap.

DISCUSSION:

- In 2021 GMUG staff completed mapping Potential Operations Delineations (PODS) on the Forest.
- GMUG Fuels team will prioritize treatment areas.

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg.7): Provide commercial forest products to local dependent industries at a level commensurate with the GMUG Land Resource Management Plan direction...(Recovery Goal #1, ROD p.4)

PROPOSED AMG RECOMMENDATION: Recommend continue monitoring in terms of meeting stated goal and assessing impacts on administrative costs and local economies.

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg. 7): Subsequent to salvage, treat fuels, prepare sites, and reestablish and maintain forest cover via replanting where seed sources are lacking (*Recovery Goal #2, POD p. 4*)

PROPOSED AMG RECOMMENDATION: Recommend the GMUG provide numbers from the stocking surveys at the required intervals.

DISCUSSION:

- Stocking survey data will be reported at 5-year intervals

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg. 8): Maintain soil productivity, minimize human-caused erosion, eliminate or minimize soil damage from machine pile burning, and maintain integrity of associated ecosystems (Decision Trigger, FEIS, Table 6, pp 44-45)

PROPOSED AMG RECOMMENDATION: Recommend additional design criteria or other means to ensure treatment impacts remain below the 15% disturbance limitations

DISCUSSION:

- Gina Rone, GMUG Hydrologist/Soils referred to the Figure and Table in Appendix B to put the 3 units that exceeded the 15% soil disturbance limitation in perspective in terms of the bigger picture of the 17 units monitored.
- Gina offered suggestions of other means of minimizing soil disturbance, e.g., ensuring slash pile rehab, water bars/ground cover on steeper skid trails, temp road/non-system road scarification, etc.

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg. 8): No more than 30% of lynx habitat in a Lynx Analysis Unit (LAU) is converted to a stand initiation structural stage . . . due to natural or human-caused disturbance (Southern Rockies Lynx Amendment Standard VEG S1: Decision Trigger, FEIS, Table 6, pp. 44-45)

PROPOSED AMG RECOMMENDATION: Recommend presale analyses of LAU to determine proximity to 30% threshold before the sale rather than after the fact.

DISCUSSION:

- Matt Vasquez, GMUG Wildlife and Fish Program Manager, addressed the recent remapping of the LAU's which was the contributing factor to the LAU's that exceeded the 30% threshold.

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg.8): No more than 15% of lynx habitat in an LAU would be regenerated via forest vegetation management of a 10-year period starting in 2009 (Southern Rockies Lynx Amendment Standard VEG S2; Decision Trigger, FEIS, Table 6, pp 44-45)

PROPOSED AMG RECOMMENDATION: Recommend presale analyses of LAU to determine proximity to 15% threshold before the sale rather than after the fact.

GOAL/TRIGGER (pg. 10): Continue the public participation and collaborative learning that occurred (FEIS Appendix E, Public Engagement in Adaptive Implementation, Goal 2 p.2)

PROPOSED AMG RECOMMENDATION: Recommend AMG review and prioritize the recommendations for improvement.

DISCUSSION:

- Discussion deferred to Agenda Item # 4

There being no further questions/comments on the updated AMG monitoring matrix and proposed AMG recommendations for adaption, *M/S/P Fishing/Kyllo*. Accept the recommendations of the AMG Monitoring Committee as presented and submit to the Forest Leadership Team for its consideration.

Item No. 4: A “5 Year Check-In” on SBEADMR and Adaptive Management Process and Prioritize Recommendations for Improvement.

April, 2022 marks the five-year anniversary since the SBEADMR AMG had been formally established to assist the GMUG in the implementation and monitoring of the multi-year SBEADMR project. During the past several months, *Dr. Tony Cheng and Tyler Beeton*, Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, had performed an assessment of the Adaptive Management Process to date and identified recommendations for improvement based on survey results (*see Appendix A. for full presentation*)

Tyler highlighted the proposed recommendations noted under the following theme areas for improvement:

- Increase engagement and outreach
- Shared learning, understanding and transparency
- Collaboration throughout the process
- Outputs and outcomes

Some comments noted were:

- Need to target specific interest groups that should be represented and go out to them to engage, e.g., Soil Conservation District, Water Conservancy Districts, West Colorado Wildfire Council, Bureau of Reclamation
- Use summer field trip as an opportunity to invite and engage interests that have not been represented
- Commit to improving dialogue and feedback between AMG and Forest Leadership Team (FLT); improve communication and understanding of adaptations made; invite a few AMG members to May FLT meetings when AMG recommendations are considered
- Would be helpful to know how many POD’s are within SBEADMR PTA’s during the pre-treatment reviews or field trips to better understand concept of POD’s in the field.

Next step would be to prioritize the proposed recommendations from the assessment and/or other recommendations proposed by AMG members. Placing the prioritization on the October AMG meeting.

Item No. 5: Consider Options for the 2022 SBEADMR Summer Field Trip

Michael Salazar, GMUG Timber Program Manager, announced that the 2022 summer field trip would be on the Paonia Ranger District. A specific site yet to be determined. It will most likely be scheduled the second or third week in July depending on Science Team members’ availability. Michael plans to have more definite plans/logistics firmed up by June 1, 2022.

Item No. 6: Brief Update on Where Efforts/Interests are to Address Concerns for Watershed Protection and Wildfire Mitigation

Facilitator Susan Hansen noted that watershed protection and wildfire mitigation were frequently raised interests/concerns at previous AMG meetings and to what extent were they addressed or should be addressed within the sidebars of the SBEADMR ROD. This topic was meant to provide an opportunity for AMG members to learn of what efforts (statewide or local) were ongoing to address the concerns. Several members noted that the concerns were “front and center” in the minds of many groups/organizations across the state and there would be more and more opportunities for engagement in addressing the concerns. Examples cited were the recent CLUB 20 Spring meeting, increased funding and resources for the West Colorado Wildfire Council, *Enno Heuscher’s* example of reaching out to water user groups in upper Surface Creek area to engage in wildfire mitigation discussions, *Hilary Cooper’s* example of a wildfire mitigation working group in San Miguel County, several county’s currently updating their Community Wildfire Protection Plans, Upper Gunnison Watershed working group, increase of federal and state funds to assist local efforts, etc. There was consensus to keep SBEADMR updated on efforts and to be aware and take advantage of opportunities and resources for SBEADMR projects.

Item No. 7: AMG Housekeeping – Current Status of AMG Member Vacancies

A copy of the updated AMG membership list was distributed, and vacancies noted. Susan announced there was a vacancy in the “regular” seat for the environmental/conservation interest with the departure of Lexi Tuddenham from Sheep Mountain Alliance. Her successor, Mason Osgood, has expressed interest in serving on the AMG as well as Matt Reed of High County Conservation Advocates. In accordance with the AMG Operations Manual, AMG seats were self-selected by each of the interest groups represented. Susan will refer this matter back to the environmental/conservation individuals either currently appointed or interested and ask them to self-select a replacement for the vacant seat. It was suggested that one of the alternate members be “moved up” to the regular seat given their history and participation with SBEADMR and the AMG over the years. Members were asked to review the updated list and suggest names for individuals to fill other vacancies.

Opportunity for Public Comment: There were no public comments.

Closing and Adjourn Meeting was adjourned at 11:58 AM

Notes compiled by Susan Hansen, Facilitator

Assessing progress and performance of the SBEADMR collaborative monitoring and adaptive management process



Tyler Beeton and Tony Cheng
Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI),
Colorado State University
Tyler.Beeton@colostate.edu



Is the collaborative adaptive management process functioning as it was originally intended in FEIS and expected by participants?



Key informant interviews

- 12 semi-structured interviews
- Baseline information on how SBEADMR meeting goals, participant expectations, successes, challenges, recommendations

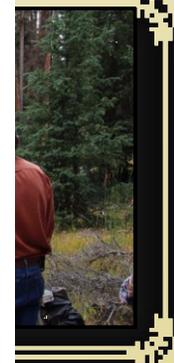
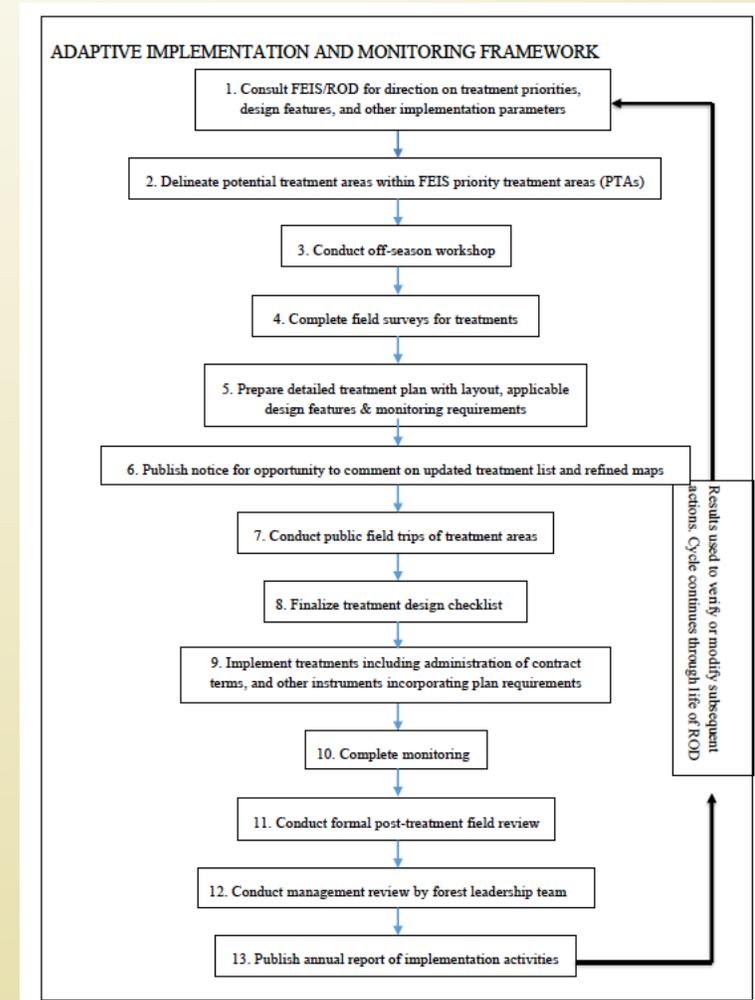
Questionnaire

- Online (Qualtrics)
- Grounded in findings from interviews
- Piloted by SBEADMR participants
- Administer to – FLT, AMG, Science Team, Resource Specialists, partners, public
- Distribution – SBEADMR Listserv – 58 usable responses (30% of sample)

Appendix E:

Public Engagement in Adaptive Implementation

A Process for Adaptive Implementation of the Spruce Beetle Epidemic-Aspen Decline Management Response EIS



son National Forest

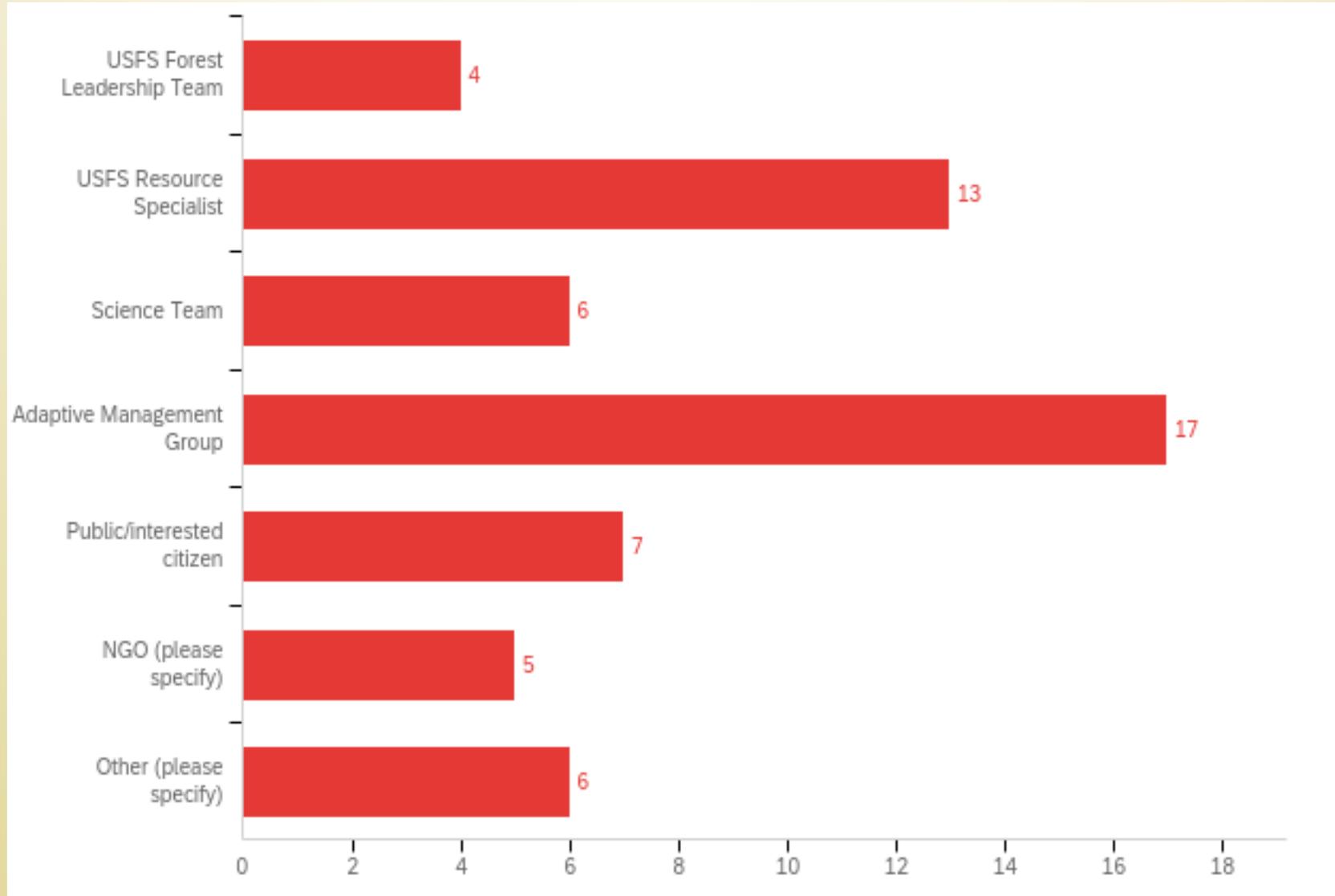
DA Forest Service
Colorado State University

Survey participation



SBEADMR
Sub-groups

Public &
Partners



Summary of findings and agenda for today



- Participants generally agree that SBEADMR meeting EIS objectives and stakeholder expectations
- Though areas for improvement
- We offered several actionable recommendations for the SBEADMR group to consider
- **Today** – Review recommendations, identify priority list



Questions to consider...



1. Do these suggested recommendations resonate with you?
2. Do you have other specific recommendations not included here that would improve the collaborative process?
3. Which of these stand out and should be a priority?



Theme	Example recommendations
Increase engagement and outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Engage with groups who have not historically been involved (e.g., CPW, Tribes, CO DNR) -Reduce turnover and vacancies in AMG/FS Staff -Consider membership composition of AMG -Increase new and traditional modes of communicating to the public -More opportunities to engage with communities and District Rangers/Staff -County commissioner representation at field trips -Hire a communication specialist or coordinator
Shared learning, understanding and transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Field trips: pre- and post- in same location; debriefs -Shared understanding of resilience concept in context of SBEADMR -Process for integrating scientific information brought to the group -Be more transparent about how science informs lynx management and mitigation -Develop onboarding processes for new participants
Collaboration throughout the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide more detail on planned treatments during out-year planning -Increase opportunities for dialogue with AMG, FLT concerning what adaptations were made, and why or why not -Enhance communication internally with GMUG staff
Outputs and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evaluate success and challenges of process and document SBEADMR model of collaborative adaptive management in reports, blogs, publications -Enhance readiness to receive increased state and federal funding for wildfire mitigation – link to wildfire risk modeling, decision-support (PODs), and pivot towards fuels mitigation and fiber harvest

Priorities and timeline – what can we do and when should we do it



1. Insert priorities here