

## **GT Comments on the FS “Topics for Discussion”**

### Areas of Agreement:

2. I wouldn't call prescribed burning a “strategy” but only a tactic that is sometimes a useful tool in the implementation of a more comprehensive fire protection strategy. As a tactic, prescribed burning should be reserved for highest priority uses, not spent on routine fuel reduction where other methods can have most of the needed effect.
3. If the management objective is to prevent crown-to-crown propagation of wildfire in highly adverse fire weather conditions, then 50% crown cover as the thinning objective would almost never be effective. The only likely exception is if the thinned stand has denser clumps within a matrix that covers most of the area and is thinned to separate crowns enough that they stay separated adequately until the next thinning treatment. In that case an average of 50% over the stand might be acceptable..
4. Need a rigorous and detailed description of exactly what “radial thinning” means and how it can be implemented.
7. Group selection is also appropriate in other situations, not just dense homogeneous white fir.
8. Provided each specialist and scientist is “consulted,” but not given veto power.
9. There is a need to reduce impacts from all fires except those that are planned and handled as what is sometimes called “Wildland Fire Use,” in effect an unscheduled prescribed fire of natural origin, such as lightning ignited, where fire effects stay within a pre-planned prescription.

### Areas of Potential Agreement:

5. There is NO wildfire situation where wildlife habitat can be given higher priority than community protection. Every National Forest fire plan says that human safety is the number one priority, no exceptions.

### Areas of Disagreement:

10. Need to remind them of the Organic Act, which specifies timber production as a legally required goal of NF management.
13. The question isn't whether local communities should have “influence” but whether they have local knowledge and local expertise that should be considered. For example, we made a good argument to Congress that certain aspects of the local situation made the Pilot Project a good fit with national policy. Congress “influenced” the FS to implement it (or at least tried to), and no “local” has any more right to influence the process than has any other citizen, wherever they are. Our local views will perhaps more often be heard and maybe even heeded, but that is an advantage all locals have, all over the country, not just here and not just on these issues. Or, to put it the other way around, if locals can't be allowed to participate fully, because that might give them undue “influence,” then all the opponents have to do is refuse to participate, in order to exert a permanent veto on any local participation at all. Oh...where have I seen that before? Sounds familiar...