

HFQLG collaboration – topics for discussion
Forest Service
3/11/09

Areas of existing agreement among parties

1. There is a need to treat forest fuels.
2. Maintenance using prescribed burning can be an appropriate strategy.
3. 50% canopy cover in DFPZs, may be acceptable, where site-specific conditions allow management objectives to be met.
4. Radial thinning around large trees may be an appropriate strategy
5. There may be a need for treatment in spotted owl habitat areas (SOHAs) and protected activity centers (PACs)
6. There may be a need for treatment in some off base or deferred areas
7. Group selection is appropriate in dense homogeneous white fir stands
8. Project design benefits from bringing the technical experts (scientists, specialists) to the table with stakeholders.
9. There is a need to reduce impacts from large, high-severity wildfires (stand-replacing fires).
10. Healthy watersheds are important.
11. There is a need for a fire resilient landscape.
12. Forests in the HFQLG area are outside the natural range of variability in stand conditions.

Areas of potential agreement

1. 40% canopy cover in DFPZs may be acceptable, with variability in structural design (patches, leave islands, etc), particularly in eastside pine.
2. There is a need to keep wildfires on the ground (vs. in the canopy)- this has implications for scale, intensity, and location of treatments.
3. Not all large trees or stands of large trees are equal in habitat value- other site conditions (topography, abiotic features, distance to water, etc.) also come into play
4. Climate change, disease, and insects are likely to change Sierra Nevada forests.

5. There may be situations where it is appropriate to prioritize community protection over wildlife habitat.

Areas of disagreement among parties

1. Interpretation of science
2. Scale of treatments
3. What canopy cover is needed to meet objectives of reducing fuel loading; disagreement on whether canopy cover objectives are for fuel reduction or for healthy resilient forest long term
4. Desirable stand density
5. Diameter limits
6. Size of group selection units
7. Treatment in late mature old growth habitat
8. How much risk is too much relative to potential impacts, of treatments vs. catastrophic wildfires, on wildlife and other risk categories. (Do we need to treat old growth and spotted owl habitat in order to save it?)
9. Whether economics should be an objective for project design.
10. Whether commercial timber sales are an appropriate management tool.
11. Whether management changes need to be made in response to climate change
12. Whether there is a need to bring crown fires to the ground (vs. to keep ground fires on the ground)- this has implications for scale, intensity, and location of treatments.
13. How much influence local communities should have in national forest management.