

Controversy and Activities for Treatment and Resilience for SOFAR

Working Draft 12/18/18

The Collaborative would like to discuss the list of actions that might or might not be controversial toward a goal of helping project sponsors to anticipate support / concern with projects and correspondingly streamline approval processes. The Collaborative would consider supporting actions that might be moderate or controversial, but would necessitate discussion to build understanding and consider support. SOFAR requests a one-page overview with map for the web site for all projects.

GREEN LIGHT - Noncontroversial

Actions can move ahead after a brief check in with the Landscape Vision Working Group or with the SOFAR contact Jason Sieg. Projects can move ahead without formal SOFAR vetting. Re-routing roads and trails around meadows.

- Road repairs to improve water quality.
- Road repairs to provide fire fighting access
- Meadow restoration that does not include logging legacy trees (*defined as predated logging*).
- Modest improvements to developed facilities.
- Prescribed fire with agency-approved plan
- Plantation thinning when consistent with the forest plan and using General Technical Report 220 [\[Link\]](#) principles.
- Removing trees less than 16" dbh.
- Hazard tree (*trees that impact human health and safety*) removal from roadsides and developed sites, as long as tree marking does not overreach.
- Herbicide use as a temporary treatment to change vegetation conditions or to treat non-natives, not as long-term maintenance strategy.

YELLOW LIGHT – Moderate, *some discussion needed*

These actions may result in moderate controversy and require touching base with the Collaborative or Landscape Working Group for discussion.

- Logging trees 16 to 20" dbh, especially in key habitat areas like PACs or den buffers.
- Logging trees 20 to 30" dbh, especially in HRCAs and fisher territories.
- Aspen restoration that includes logging trees >30" dbh (even if legacy trees are retained).
- Herbicide near drinking water source

RED LIGHT - Controversial, *thorough discussion needed*

These actions may be controversial. However, the SOFAR Collaborative could still approve. Because these actions are more sensitive, the Collaborative anticipates that it would need to discuss thoroughly to deepen understanding and increase comfort levels to secure SOFAR support.

- Road development.
- Logging in inventoried roadless areas.
- Roadside hazard tree logging when marking overreaches.
- Logging trees >20" in PACs.
- Logging trees >30" dbh for "forest health" (e.g., red fir dwarf mistletoe).
- Reducing canopy cover in high quality spotted owl habitat to a lower canopy cover class.
- Reducing canopy cover to less than 50% in spotted owl HRCAs.
- Multiple CEs for logging used in a concentrated area over a short duration (cumulative effects).

- Salvage logging, especially when sensitive wildlife may be affected.
- Aspen restoration that includes logging legacy trees.
- Herbicide use for plantation establishment.
- Herbicide use for creating or maintaining large fuel breaks indefinitely.
- Rare plan habitat should not be used as a staging area.

Other factors that affect the level of controversy:

- Project size, depends on effect.
- As we move from more directive forest plans to more descriptive forest plans, the number of activities that result in controversy is likely to increase.
- We have recently seen an exclusion category (i.e., 36 CFR 220.6(e)(6), Timber Stand and Wildlife Habitat Improvement) used for an intensive logging project in spotted owl habitat, i.e., PACs and HRCAs. This category does not have an acreage limit and the actions that may be implemented under it are broad. If large-scale logging projects that include controversial activities were implemented under such a category controversy would be high.