



Controversy and Activities for Treatment and Resilience for SOFAR

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The SOFAR Collaborative has identified this list of potential actions to help project sponsors to anticipate support or concern with projects and correspondingly streamline approval processes. The SOFAR Collaborative will consider supporting all projects that partners bring forward, including projects with actions that might include moderate (yellow light) or controversial (red light) actions. Project sponsors are on notice that the SOFAR Collaborative anticipates that projects with actions deemed controversial would need time for discussions to build understanding and increase comfort levels to secure support. SOFAR requests a one-page overview with map for the web site for all projects.

First and foremost, projects must comply with existing rules, laws, and regulations.

GREEN LIGHT - Noncontroversial

Actions can move ahead after a brief check in with the Landscape Vision Committee 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.
- Routine maintenance along utility easement.
- Improvements to developed facilities within the existing footprint.
- 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.
- 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 Committee 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
- Meadow restoration that does not include logging legacy trees (*defined as predated logging*).

RED LIGHT - Controversial, thorough discussion needed

These actions may be controversial although 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.
- 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 and sensitive plants near activities, including staging areas.

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.