



Collaboration and Support for Treatment and Resilience Activities

Updated December 17, 2024

The SOFAR Collaborative has identified potential actions to help project sponsors anticipate support or concern with projects and correspondingly streamline approval processes. As soon as possible, SOFAR requests that sponsors provide a one-page overview with map and picture for each project for consideration and for web posting. (Sponsors can send to the Eldorado NF District Ranger and/or the facilitator.) The SOFAR Collaborative reviews these descriptions as part of determining its support.

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.

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, the SOFAR Collaborative, or even Steering Committee. Projects can move ahead without formal SOFAR vetting.

- 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.
- Research or programs advancing understanding of biomass utilization.
- Is not an on-the-ground project, but advances collaboration, and/or SOFAR/Cohesive Strategy goals, and/or non-controversial actions as described below.

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. Sponsors may contact the facilitator or a Collaborative member to schedule a discussion with the Landscape Vision Committee. (Meeting dates are on the web site.)

- Re-routing roads and trails around meadows.
- Logging trees 16 to 20" dbh in key habitat areas like PACs or den buffers.
- Logging trees 20 to 30" dbh 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*).
- Research, programs, or infrastructure advancing biomass utilization in the SOFAR footprint that reflects support from public engagement and public input (please include documentation of this public input).

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. The sponsor should contact a Collaborative member or the facilitator and schedule a discussion early with the Landscape Vision Committee.

- 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.
- Research, programs, or infrastructure advancing biomass utilization that do not reflect support from public engagement and public input.
- Efforts advancing any regulations, legislation, or litigation.

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.