

# NOTES LV29: SOFAR Landscape Vision Committee

Held December 12, 2019

## Meeting in Brief

The committee spent time review GIS layers to think about the red fir strategy. The group agreed that it is now time to shift from the Red Fir Field Report, which was more of an internal development document, to an external facing document to outline the high level strategy for future project planning (to be completed by April 2020).

## Next Meeting, Jan 23, 1:00-3:15 @ EID

### NEXT MEETING ON RED FIR

- Committee will shift Field Report into external-facing document.
- 1/16 or 1/17: circulate external facing doc.
- Initial feedback on external-facing document.
- Beverly Buluan will do a deeper dive on Dwarf Mistletoe and Root Disease
- Fine tune the analysis, will they help us with the projects coming up for planning?
- Look at the fire effects' analysis.
- Consider and use data to think about the fire management on the area. Where would fire management or control on the landscape need to occur on the land?

## Action Items

1. **Traci:** will take the first cut at outlining the external facing document.

## [Link to All Meeting Materials](#)

## Red Fir Strategy

Traci Allen, ENF, developed and continued to refine a Red Fir Field Report summarizing insights from the field visit.

### Data housed on Box Site

Snow pack data is now uploaded to Box.

### LIDAR Data available in July 2020

Becky reports that we should have LIDAR data by July 2020. The data may need post-processing.

### Root Disease

**Root Disease** is usually an indicator that something has happened. Trying to find in wilderness is difficult. Beverly Buluan reports that assuming root disease is present is typically the best approach. Beverly will discuss further at the next meeting.

### Fungi and Insect Monitoring

Adding monitoring to the approach might be of interest. Beverly Buluan suggested that this type of monitoring would depend on project needs and goals.

### Dwarf Mistletoe

DMT data do not exist and probably won't anytime soon. The big question is that we know that DMT is a stressor. Most heavily infected trees become an inoculation source. If a tree is really infected, the question is whether it is a problem. DMT is a native species. No one can

eradicate DMT. Managers can mitigate the impact. There are strategies that can be implemented, but very little monitoring of those strategies has occurred in red fir and with DMT so clarity on which strategies will work or benefit are unclear. It will not wipe the stand out. At what levels can stands tolerate it? Beverly Buluan has a lot of these same questions. She would benefit from SOFAR identifying the key questions that SOFAR is trying to explore.

## GIS Data Discussion

Brian Deason and his EID colleague Jan Wolf have been working on GIS data layers. They walked the group through the layers to help deepen understanding of how GIS data might be used to inform the approach.

## Tasks

### 1. General Comments

- One approach might be to bundle red fir with Jeffrey pine and sugar pine since they are at the same elevation.
- Lodge pole occurs on the landscape in wetter or cooler areas.

### 2. Fire return interval

For red fir, the group would expect a 40-year fire interval (or a range of years around that). In SOFAR, approximate 60,000 acres is red-fir dominant landscape.

Overlapping FRI and Red Fir data yields an output. A lot of the red fir landscape has not burned. In the current SOFAR records, essentially no reported fires have occurred over the last 103 years on 56,835 acres. In the last 25 years, fire has been reported on 4.6 acres. In some areas, the group has identified areas where it has only missed two fire intervals so using prescribed fire is an option.

Older fire data are not that accurate. Many did not report fires before 1980s or 90s.

The Mean Fire Return Interval is 40 years for Red Fir.

10,463 acres of red fir is in PACs  
3,920 acres of white fir is in PACs

### 3. Climate

The committee had previously discussed climate as a data gap. The goal of this was to compare two snowpack layers to determine the difference between the climate projected model and current conditions. (Corrected data are on Box.) Climate data are on a very course scale, elevation-related. The group is unsure how useful the analysis is.

## Insights on Red Fir Strategy

The group talked about the challenge of knowing the end state of its work on the red fir strategy. Evaluating the baseline condition is challenging because of climate. The group framed a number of questions:

- Are we only managing existing areas?
- Are we identifying where we want red fir to be?
- In stop 2, there was an area that was converted via a plantation of pine. Are we trying to shift the former plantation to red fir? Or, are we just trying to treat the red fir area?
- Do we want resilience? Do we want recovery?

The group concurred that the timeframe for management is setting up for greater resilience and seeing results in 10-20 years. Prediction is difficult. Projecting 50-100 years is too difficult in the face of uncertainty. The fire return interval could also prove helpful in advancing resilience and understanding treatment potential.

The lack of clarity on the DMT infestation creates greater uncertainty.

Doing nothing or relying solely on prescribed fire in certain areas is also an option, similar to the “happy place” stop on the field visit.

### **Work between now and 1/23 to advance the work**

The group agreed to shift from working on the field report to concentrate on an external or outward-facing document that would help guide project planning into the future.

Scot Rogers has two upcoming sites that he will be planning two timber sales later this year. (Pack Saddle and one other). He would like to be able to draw on the strategy for planning these projects. Scott anticipates using a categorical exemption (CE) for forest health for these projects.

Sue Britting suggested that the group could think more about the bigger landscape as it advances its work. The group might be able to think more about treating with fire to blend some red fir areas into wilderness. Another thought would be to follow on or sequence from General Sherman and Caples to reach larger landscapes. Thinking at a larger scale and across projects could help evaluate the cost / benefit of the work in particular areas and link to goals of building resilience.

### **Background Work**

1. Meeting notes @ <http://sofarcohesivestrategy.org/meetings/>
2. Link to [Project Priorities Development List](#) (on Google Drive)
3. Link [Desired Conditions Zone Table](#) (on Google Drive)

**Attendees:** Beverly Bulcan, Sue Britting, Lester Lubetin, David Zelinsky, Brian Deason, Jan Wolf, Traci Allen, Becky Estes, Nancy Nordensten, Scot Rogers, Facilitator Gina Bartlett