

Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment

Volume 1, Summary, Chapters 1 & 2

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Effect on Wildfire. Over the last 30 years Sierra has averaged about 47,000 acres of wildfire per year. In the last ten years, the average has risen to about 76,000 acres per year. It will take at least two decades of fuels treatments before we expect significant changes in wildfire. Because we want to reintroduce fire as an ecosystem process, the reduction in fire severity is more important than the reduction in total acres burned by wildfire. 40

Effect on Air Quality. Fuels treatments, both mechanical and prescribed fire, can reduce the amount of particulate from wildfires and from prescribed burns. In addition, timing of prescribed burns helps reduce particulate emissions during periods of critical air quality. 40

Fuels Treatments. The following tables summarizes the estimated fuels treatments to be accomplished by each Alternative. 41

Principal Forest Products. Estimated offering. The period 2001-2010 includes treatments under the HF-QLG Pilot Project. During the six years (1988-1993) preceding the 1993 CASPO Interim Guidelines, the average timber offered for sale (green plus salvage) was 879 million board feet (mmbf) per year; amount sold was 765 mmbf/yr. The average amount of timber offered during the six years since the CASPO Guidelines, 1994-1999, was 372 mmbf/yr.; amount sold was 179 mmbf/yr..... 41

Grazing/Forage. There are presently 7,165,000 acres of national forest in active grazing allotments and 412,734 animal unit months (AUMs). This table illustrates the estimated reduction of livestock AUMs for the Sierra Nevada National Forests by alternative. 42

Economy. During the five years preceding the 1993 CASPO Interim Guidelines, the average annual receipts to counties were \$48.9 million. The average annual receipts to counties during the years 1994-1998 were \$27.8 million. 42

USFS Budget. The differences in annual budget between alternatives are related to amounts of fuels treatments, timber harvest and watershed analyses. 42

Old Forest Conservation. Alternatives 2- Modified 8 present a range of approaches to increasing the amount of old forest ecosystems. Important measures of old forest condition are the number of individual large trees, patches of large trees with additional old forest characteristics, and the connectivity or relationship among the trees, patches and larger stands of old forest..... 43

The degree of confidence about the alternatives reducing fuels and not damaging resource values. The judgment is based mostly on the degree to which the alternative employs strategic fuels treatments using mechanical and prescribed fire, and implementing the treatments in the “right place at the right time.” 44

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