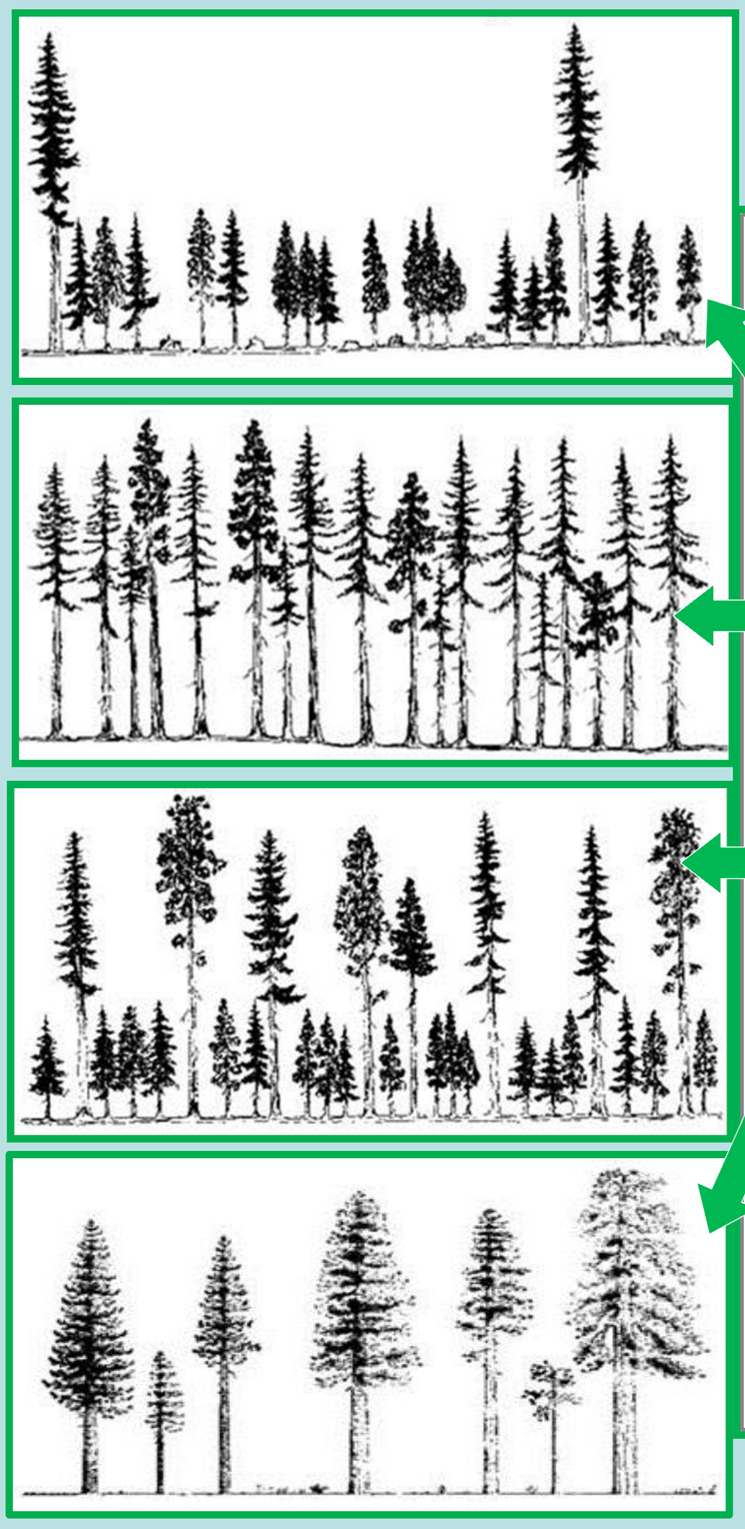
Blue Mountains National Forests Plan Revision—Forested Vegetation

The preferred alternative would create healthier forests

Healthy forests are resilient

- When forests experience disturbance from wildfire, insects, or disease, they are able to recover and retain their same basic structure and function.
- When disturbances do occur, they occur within a range of severities and frequencies similar to what occurred historically.
- Healthy forests have the capacity to adapt to stress and change, such as climate change.

Desired conditions would be based on what the forest looked like historically (Historic Range of Variability or HRV)



Within the dry forest, we have too much of the understory reinitiation stage and not enough of the old forest single-story and stage initiation stages.

How many acres would be treated every year under the preferred alternative?

- The preferred alternative would double the pace and scale of restoration activities within all three national forests.
- Would utilize a combination of mechanical harvest treatments, planting, thinning, and prescribed burning to help restore the health and resiliency of our forests.
- Would reintroduce fire to the ecosystem so that fire could play its natural role in ecosystem processes.

Activity	Malheur	Umatilla	Wallowa-Whitman
	Estimated annual acres		
Total timber harvest	12,500	10,600	9,350
Planting	1,400	1,200	1,000
Pre-commercial thinning	1,400	1,600	2,600
Prescribed burning and fuels removal using equipment	22,000	20,600	19,850

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The preferred alternative would contribute to healthier communities

- Sustained flow of products from national forest lands
  Estimated annual harvest volumes:
  Malheur – 56 MMBF
  Umatilla – 56 MMBF
  Wallowa-Whitman – 50 MMBF
- Increase in the estimated jobs and income supported by timber harvest
- Reduced risk of wildfire to communities located within the Wildland-Urban Interface

Why can't more volume be produced from national forest lands under the preferred alternative?

1) Only a portion of each national forest could potentially be treated using timber harvest activities:

- Malheur – 1.3 million acres treatable of 1.7 million acres total (~ 75%)
- Umatilla – 710,000 acres treatable of 1.4 million acres total (~ 50%)
- Wallowa-Whitman – 970,000 acres treatable of 1.8 million acres total (~ 50%)

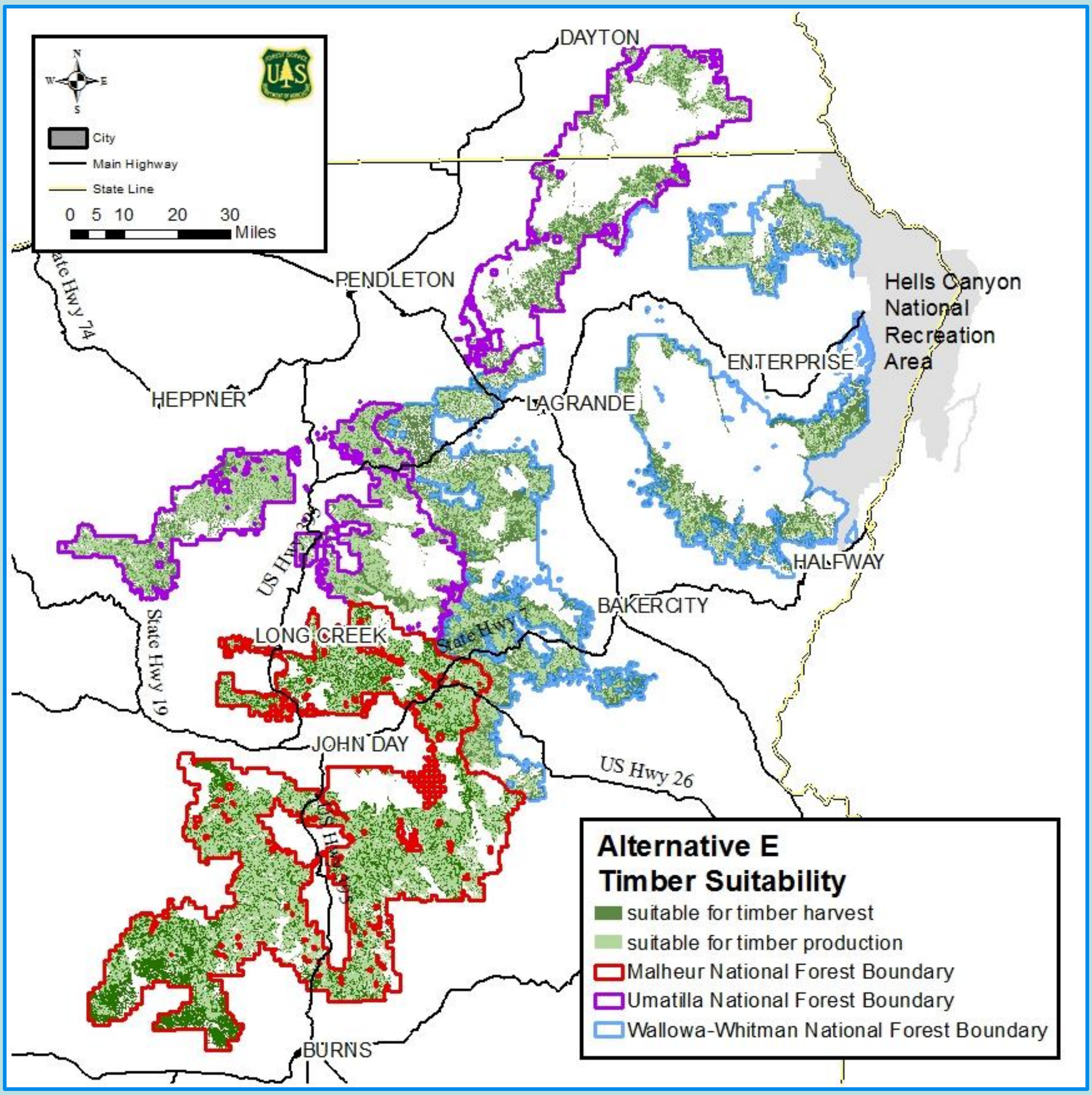
2) Requirements to provide a sustained, non-declining flow of timber volume

3) Too much of the understory reinitiation stage and not enough of the old forest stage

4) Available funding

Areas that are not suitable to treat using timber harvest include:

- Wilderness areas
- Recommended wilderness areas
- Research Natural Areas
- Non-conifer areas
- Inventoried Roadless Areas (very limited harvest allowed)



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The preferred alternative would create healthier old forest

- Old forest would not be considered suitable for timber production (regular, repeated entries every 20-40 years) but can harvest non-old trees to meet the desired conditions.
- Would use the historic range of variability (HRV) for old forest as the desired condition. Emphasis would be on increasing the percent of the landscape in old forest where existing conditions are less than the HRV.
- Thinning and burning treatments within old forest stands would focus on improving ecological resiliency, tree health, forest structure, species composition, and reducing the risk of mortality due to fire, insects, and disease.

Dry Forest Structural Stage	Desired (HRV)	Malheur		Umatilla		Wallowa-Whitman	
		Existing	After 50 Years	Existing	After 50 Years	Existing	After 50 Years
		Percent of the Dry Forest					
Old Forest Single-story	40-65	3	16	4	15	1	11
Old Forest Multi-story	1-15	20	15	8	7	14	8

Dry, Old Forest

- There is a significant difference between the existing conditions and the desired conditions for the old forest single-story stage.
- Harvest treatments would convert multi-story stands to single-story stands by removing smaller diameter trees and retaining old trees.
- Over the next 50 years, the amount of single-story old forest would increase while the amount of multi-story old forest would decrease.
- It will take a long time to grow the amount of old forest that is described in the desired conditions.

Flat, platey "yellow" bark

How would the preferred alternative manage individual old trees?

The preferred alternative would contain a guideline that emphasizes retaining live trees with certain old tree characteristics, such as flat, platey, "yellow" bark, rather than a 21-inch diameter limit on harvesting.