

Appendix A. HFI/HFRA NEPA Environmental Assessment's Completed by the Forest Service to Date

Case Study Decision Criteria Matrix							
Name of Project	Location of Project	Description of Project	Project Contact (USFS)	P&N	Project issues (T&E, Wetlands, Section 106/SHPO, etc)	Level of Public Controversy/ Public Involvement	NEPA Documentation Complete
<p>Memorable Pine HFI Fuels Reduction 2003 http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/hmnm/pages/healthy_forest.htm</p> <p>This is one of the pilot projects for HFI/HFRA</p>	<p>Huron Manistee National Forest</p> <p>Huron Shores Ranger Station, Harrisville and Tawas Ranger Districts</p> <p>Alcona and Iosco Counties, Michigan</p>	<p>Reduce the fuel hazards in the vicinity of five subdivisions of the Huron National Forest by creating and/or expanding fuel breaks on National Forest System lands adjacent to or near these public and private improvements. The Forest Service would also continue work with private landowners to identify treatment on their property that will optimize the effectiveness of this project.</p>	<p>Nicholas T. Schmelter, Team Leader (989) 739-0728 nschmelter@fs.fed.us</p>	<p>The purpose is to increase fire suppression effectiveness and reduce the probability of damage to adjacent private and public improvements from a wildfire. The current fuels situation presents a significant crown fire risk that needs to be reduced to provide defensible space for safe firefighting and the protection of adjacent improvements.</p> <p>Reducing fuel height, increasing the spacing between fuels and reducing the amount of fuel on the ground would meet the purpose and need of the treatment areas through vegetative manipulation.</p>	<p>The project areas being considered are within the WUI adjacent to identified Communities at Risk within the National Fire Plan.</p> <p>Alts 1 and 2 may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect the Indiana bat and Kirtland's warbler.</p> <p>Also, may impact individuals, but not likely to cause a trend toward federal listing of Michigan bog grasshopper, dusted skipper, and southern grizzled skipper.</p> <p>Some archaeological sites, but determined as no impact...</p> <p>All non-issues.</p>	<p>Scoping letters were sent to 326 individuals including property owners in all adjacent subdivision, area fire departments, township and county officials as well as the districts normal scoping list. 8 individuals responded to scoping. One had reservations about the project being adjacent to his property; another representing two national environmental groups (FCC and NFPA) had a number of issues and concerns.</p>	<p>FONSI (May 2003)</p> <p>Decision Notice (no date)</p> <p>EA (May 2003)</p>
<p>2004 Spruce Decline http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnfm/natres/eis/so/spruce_decline/index.html</p>	<p>Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest</p> <p>Ashland, Bayfield, Florence, Forest, Langlade, Oconto, Price, Sawyer, Taylor, and Vilas Counties, Wisconsin</p>	<p>Project designed to address an epidemic of dying white spruce in the summer of 2004. The proposal is an authorized hazardous fuels reduction project as defined by HFRA.</p> <p>Alternative 1 selected as the Preferred (includes monitoring) to address current and anticipated mortality in upland white spruce stands on the C-N NF (approximately 4,500 acres currently affected and 3,200 acres anticipated to be affected) that have been affected by Spruce Decline. It does this through activities that restore healthy forests and reduce undesirable fuels.</p> <p><u>Specific Actions:</u> Under the proposed action, between 4,500 and about 7,600 acres of affected (and monitored) spruce would be actively restored to desirable forest stocking and composition, and acceptable fire hazard conditions. On 500 to 1,100 of these same acres, the restoration actions would be specifically designed to provide suitable habitat for spruce grouse. All of these acres would be managed initially using timber salvage. Some acres would receive additional treatments of site preparation, planting and further fuel reduction. About 2.6 miles of temporary road would be created to provide necessary access. Temporary roads would be obliterated following completion of proposed actions. Also under the proposed action, between 600 and 1,200 acres of impacted spruce would be maintained for CWD habitat.</p>	<p>Mark Theisen, Project Leader mtheisen@fs.fed.us (715) 362-1346</p>	<p>Healthy forest restoration, hazardous fuel reduction, sensitive species habitat restoration and providing wood products.</p>	<p>Spruce grouse habitat- regional species of concern.</p>	<p>Non-controversial. Some dispute internally over the definition of spruce grouse habitat.</p> <p>No objection received during the 30 day objection period.</p> <p>Public involvement efforts and opportunities were determined to be adequate for the scope and scale of the action and in compliance with NEPA and HFRA. (804 members of local public on the mailing list)</p>	<p>Decision Notice and FONSI (April 2005)</p> <p>Public Notification Letter (February 18, 2005)</p> <p>EA (February 2005)</p>

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<p>Bordeaux Creek Fuels Reduction Project</p> <p>http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/nebraska/projects/EA_and_EIS/bordeaux/index.shtml</p>	<p>Nebraska National Forest</p> <p>Pine Ridge Ranger District</p> <p>Dawes County, Nebraska</p>	<p>The Pine Ridge Ranger District, Nebraska National Forest, is proposing fuel reduction treatments on federal land located between Nebraska Highway 385 and Bordeaux Creek Road. It also includes the 159 acres of disjointed federal land that straddles the Bordeaux Creek Road. The project area encompasses approximately 16,429 acres of which about 52 percent is dominated by ponderosa pine. About 46 percent of the remainder of the vegetation is dominated by grass and about 2 percent by deciduous hardwoods (box elder, green ash, cottonwoods, etc.). The majority of the hardwood acres are found in the Bordeaux Creek and Strong Canyon drainages.</p> <p>High fire hazard conditions occur in the Bordeaux Creek project area. The intermingling of grass-dominated parklands and dense ponderosa pine stands can create a severe fire hazard. High rates of fire spread in grass, along with potentially high flame lengths, can easily lead to crown fires in forested stands, depending on the extent of ladder fuels, the amount of ground and surface fuels, and topography.</p> <p>In order to meet the objectives outlined under P&N column, the proposed action would implement a combination of thinning, pile burning, broadcast burning, and mowing. These treatments would likely begin in 2006 and continue for 5 to 7 years. The rate of completion for thinning treatments would depend on funding availability. Implementation of broadcast burning would depend on funding along with weather conditions.</p>	<p>Diana McGinn, Team Leader (308) 432-4475</p>	<p>The purpose and need for the Bordeaux Creek Fuels Reduction Project is to reduce the potential for large, stand-replacing, uncharacteristically severe wildfires and to manage for the long-term health and sustainability of ponderosa stands. The objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the accumulation of surface fuels; - Reduce ladder fuels; - Decrease the density of pine stands to reduce the potential for large-scale, active crown fires; - Implement treatments along public/private land boundaries to expand the benefits of fuel reduction projects completed on private land; - Improve firefighter safety by reducing the amount of available fuel and by implementing strategic treatments to improve safety zones and escape routes; - Create a mosaic of stand conditions across the landscape configured to reduce the extent of continuous fuel; - Manage the density of pine stands to move toward more acres dominated by fewer, larger diameter, healthy trees (late successional stand structural conditions, as described in the Forest Plan). 	<p>There would be no adverse effects to cultural resources, provided that project design criteria are followed.</p> <p>Two management indicator species, the pygmy nuthatch and the plains sharp-tailed grouse, are present within the project area and may be affected by implementation of the proposed action.</p> <p>Eight Forest Service sensitive species within the project area could potentially be affected by the proposed action.</p>	<p>The Bordeaux Creek Fuels Reduction Project is an authorized project under Title I of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (P.L. 108-148) due to its classification as part of the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) for the town of Chadron and surrounding homes and infrastructure. The project area is also within the Wildland-Urban Interface identified in the Fire and Fuels Management Plan, Pine Ridge Planning Area #1(2003), developed as a community wildfire protection plan, by the Chadron and Crawford Volunteer Fire Departments in cooperation with the Forest Service.</p> <p>The proposed action was mailed to the public on December 13, 2004 for a 30-day comment period and an informational meeting was held on January 11, 2005 to review the proposed action and provide an opportunity to meet with resource specialists. Seven people attended the public meeting and five letters were received in response to scoping.</p>	<p>FONSI (May 2005)</p> <p>EA (May 2005)</p>

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*01 Nutrioso WUI Fuels Reduction Project http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf/projects/	Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest Alpine and Springerville Ranger Districts Apache County, Arizona	The NWUI Fuel Reduction Project proposes to reduce fuels by thinning, chipping, and/or pile burning and broadcast burning in order to reduce fire risk to the community of Nutrioso and adjacent outlying communities and State lands. The intent of the project is to reduce fuel loading around private lands and within wildlife species habitats, help create wildfire suppression zones, and improve public safety.	James D. Copeland, jcopeland@fs.fed.us or Richard Davalos, rdavalos@fs.fed.us Alpine Ranger District, P.O. Box 469, Alpine, AZ. 85920, (928) 339-4384	The purpose of this project is to respond to the need for public and firefighter safety and protection of important wildlife species habitats by reducing the wildland fire potential in and around the at-risk community of Nutrioso and other adjacent private and State lands. The need for action is to reduce the risk of serious threat to human life or property because of a large-scale wildland fire event, should one occur.	Some design issues that were incorporated into the Proposed Action	The proposal has been continuously listed in the A-S NFs Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) since February, 1998. The proposal was provided to 446 members of the public and other agencies for comment in a scoping report dated January 21, 2005. On January 21, 2005, a letter was sent to all on the mailing list, informing interested parties that the project is being planned under the authority of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act. Required public meetings to describe and discuss the proposal and receive comments were held in Nutrioso, AZ on December 9, 2004, and February 12, 2005. Forest Service Representatives from the ID Team were involved in these and other meetings sanctioned by Apache County for development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, as part of the collaborative process. Eighty-one scoping responses were received between January 24, 2005 and April 10, 2005. No key issues were identified during scoping. Fourteen design issues were raised during scoping (see Comment Summary and Issue Determination From Scoping, Project Record #155). These design issues were utilized to develop design criteria that were incorporated into the Proposed Action to minimize the risk of adverse affects.	EA (June 2005) Notice of Objection Period letter (30 days after June 1, 2005) No FONSI or decision notice as of the date of this report.
*03 Chitty Creek Ecosystem Restoration and Hazardous Fuels Reduction – 0103	Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest Clifton Ranger District Greenlee County, Arizona	Analysis to address hazardous fuels and fire use issues along the Mogollon Rim over about 16,000 acres. Issues include coordination with permittee, T&E habitats including Mexican spotted owl, Mexican wolf, Native fish, restoration objectives are the primary focus.	Kim Kuhar 928-687-1301 kkuhar@fs.fed.us	Vegetation management (other than forest products), Fuels management	Project involves habitat of Mexican spotted owl, Mexican Wolf, native fishes, etc., but none of this is controversial because their habitats historically included periodic fires. Arizona Game and Fish had a question about reference to resting grazing areas for 1 growing season (1year) in the document when in AZ there can and often are 2 growing seasons in a year. Kim said this was just a matter of clarifying text rather than an issue, really.	According to Kim, people supported this project. One of the more active environmental groups in the area (Center for Biological Diversity) has been onboard with this project from the beginning and has actually commended the FS for their work on this one. The purpose of this project is ecosystem restoration and despite its involving habitat of some high profile species, the intent is to improve habitat (even with burning), thus there is little to no controversy associated with projects like this. The location of the project area in the high country-desert/remote area may contribute to a lack of controversy. Kim noted that typically, logging and grazing projects are contested by environmental groups.	EA has been completed (date?) No FONSI yet (waiting on BO from USFWS).

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*06 Eagar South WUI- 0106	Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest Springerville Ranger District Apache County, Arizona	The Forest Supervisor for the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests proposes to conduct fuel reduction treatments, including thinning and burning, on National Forest System lands adjacent to private and State lands within the Eagar South Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) near the community of Springerville / Eagar AZ, in Apache County. The Eagar South WUI area encompasses approximately 21,779 acres (see attached Project Map). This includes approx. 48 acres of private land in a single parcel, in the western portion of the analysis area.	Bruce A. Buttrey Integrated Resource Specialist (982) 333-6271	The purpose of the proposal is to reduce the fire hazard potential in and around the communities of Eagar and Springerville. Reducing fire hazard risk is also intended to protect the municipal watershed of these communities from adverse effects of large-scale wildfire. The project is also expected to protect and enhance important wildlife species habitats and improve soil, watershed, riparian condition and the health of the vegetation on the area.	In 2004, in response to the HFRA, Apache County developed the Apache Communities' Wildfire Protection Plan ³ (ACWPP), which includes the Eagar South Wildland Urban Interface. In March of 2004, the Town of Eagar requested analysis of the area and treatments begin as soon as possible. The request was made to provide protection to private property along the Forest/Town boundary and the municipal watershed from catastrophic fire. The proposed action would require a project-specific amendment to the FLMP because it would deviate from the management recommendations for the Northern Goshawk in the southwestern United State such that the proposed density requirements may not meet the canopy cover requirements for the species in some treatment areas.	Bruce said this project has had some controversy (Forest Guardians and Center for Biological Diversity) because there is some cutting of trees over 16 dbh. However, it's only those trees that are diseased (dwarf mistletoe) that are affected by this project. Noted that environmental groups have been quiet since the Rodeo Chedeski Fire (recent catastrophic [200K+ acres burned] fire) came through the area. Objecting to treating within the WUI would upset locals since they recently suffered a loss from fire. It could be politically damaging to object to treatments within the WUI at this time. This project was listed in the SOPA in July 2004. On March 16, 2005 a public meeting was conducted for the project. On December 6, 2004 stakeholders were invited to participate in the project analysis. Subsequently, a scoping report was mailed out to all participants. 11 respondents commented on the scoping letter. No key issues were identified.	EA (November 2005) Eligibility to file an objection letter dated November 16, 2005 No FONSI or decision notice as of the date of this report.
Ash Canyon WUI Hazardous Fuels Reduction This project has been unfunded for 2 or 3 years, still on the SOPA, but unfunded. Planning studies have not started yet.	Coronado National Forest Sierra Vista Ranger District Santa Cruz County, Arizona	Proposed mechanical treatment to reduce fuel loads. Currently this project is unfunded and no planning has begun to date. The project is located in an Oak Woodland Forest. Because of the density of the forest, the FS would go in and cut first (cutting and piling), then they would do broadcast burns. Bill said this project would likely not be elevated to an EA, it would likely be a CE or DM. Before the planning can begin, the FS would do an inventory of the area so they can determine what type/methods of fuels reduction would work and what types of critters would be impacted.	William Wilcox 520-378-0311 wwilcox@fs.fed.us	Fuels management	N/A	Bill said this WUI community has not completed a CWFPP and they are more stratified, not united. They might piggyback the efforts of the adjacent community of Paliminas who is more unified and has done some community wildfire protection planning, but not sure.	Not funded. Will likely be a CE or DM, but not an EA.

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*Greer WUI http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf/projects/	Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest Springerville Ranger District Apache County, Arizona	<p>The Greer Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) area was originally identified in the year 2000. The Greer Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction proposal was listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) in 2004. Analysis for the project was initiated in January of 2004 by Springerville District Ranger, John A. MacIvor to meet direction described in the Federal Wildland Fire Policy of 1995, the 10-year Comprehensive Strategy and Implementation Plan 2001 & 2002, the A/S Land Management Plan and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.</p> <p>Implementation of this decision includes the following: 1) Thin trees less than 16" dbh on approximately 17271 acres of the analysis area to lower tree densities and reduce ladder fuels. Trees > 16" dbh will be retained on these treatment acres. Thin trees less than 9" dbh on approximately 2358 acres to lower tree densities and reduce ladder fuels. Trees > 9" dbh will be retained on these treatment acres. 2) Treat all activity slash on the above treatment areas. As much as possible, slash will be treated by removal from the site, chipping or other mechanical means to reduce the need to burn activity slash piles. Existing fuels will be treated as an additional measure to lower fire hazard potential. 3) Broadcast burning will be planned in treated areas following thinning. 4) Trees encroaching established meadows will be removed and broadcast burning of grasslands will be planned. 5) The proposed action will result in commercial and noncommercial thinnings. Any products generated from the treatments that have commercial value will be used to offset the cost of the non-commercial treatments. 6) All currently closed roads opened for treatments will be closed after use. No new roads will be constructed for the treatments; only existing roads will be used. 7) Designated old growth will be managed on approximately 4463 acres, which is approximately 20% of the forested acres on the analysis area. Noncommercial and intermediate thinning, along with slash treatments, and broadcast burning will be performed in designated old growth stands. Some old growth stands will be deferred from treatment to meet MSO nest site and restricted habitat requirements.</p>	Bruce A. Buttrey Integrated Resource Specialist (982) 333-6271	The purpose and need for this project is to reduce the fire hazard potential in and around the communities of Greer and South Fork. The intent is to increase the likelihood that fire behavior will result in flame lengths less than 4 feet and minimize crown fire potential. The intent is to create a condition that provides for homeowner and firefighter safety while allowing for direct attack and a high probability of success.	Trees less than 16dbh are recommended for thinning (non-controversial- not old growth) No new roads for this action proposed. Controversial species: Mexican spotted owl habitat, Northern goshawk, Southwestern willow flycatcher, turkey habitat, and Peregrine falcon. Streamside buffers to protect waters Livestock grazing areas.	Waiting to see the EA for details. According to Bruce, this project is non-controversial especially since there will be no cutting of trees over 16 dbh.	EA (September 2004) DN and FONSI have been published (no date).
Upper San Francisco	Gila National Forest		Information not available on this project. Gila contact: Ceci McNicholl (505) 388-8261				Unable to identify this project.

Source of project names: Rowland 2005. *Note:* this list was a comprehensive list of all HFI/HFRA projects completed as of the date of this step in the research project (September/October 2005). Lists of proposed Forest Service projects are continuously updated as each National Forest publishes a Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) at least 4 times a year and projects can also be initiated outside of the SOPA.