WILDLAND FIRE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment

> Monitoring and Performance Report

DRAFT Executive Summary 2007



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Goal 1: Improve Fire Prevention and Suppression	. 4
Goal 2: Reduce Hazardous Fuels	6
Goal 3, Part A: Restoration of Fire-Adapted Ecosystems	. 8
Goal 3, Part B: Post-Fire Rehabilitation of Fire-Adapted Ecosystems	. 10
Goal 4: Promote Community Assistance	. 11
APPENDIX A: Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Landscape Restoration Accomplishments 2001-2007	. 13
APPENDIX B: Goals, Implementation Outcomes, Performance Measures & Monitoring Questions	. 14

Broadcast Burn on Ashley National Forest, Utah



Introduction

The goals of "A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment: 10-YearStrategy," (10-Year Strategy), 2001, are broadly stated as:

- improve fire prevention and suppression,
- reduce hazardous fuels,
- restore fire-adapted ecosystems,
- rehabilitation from post-fire effects in fire-adapted ecosystems, and
- promote community assistance.

Monitoring and evaluation are learning tools, important in implementing an adaptive management approach to the 10-Year Strategy at all levels.

The adaptive approach is the process by which management actions, policies, procedures and decisions are modified to better achieve the desired implementation outcomes.

To track progress toward the key goals and outcomes of the 10-Year Strategy, performance measures and monitoring questions were designed to provide information useful for adaptive management at all levels.

There are 28 elements that comprise the Wildland Fire Leadership Council's (WFLC) monitoring strategy and performance measures listed in Appendix B for your reference. As of fiscal year 2007, data were available on 23 of the 28 elements. Procedures for data collection on the remaining 5 are pending.

Results to date provide a generally positive report of progress toward meeting the goals of the 10-Year Strategy and its Implementation Plan. The fiscal year 2007 data on several elements are not included here, but future versions of the report will include additional information as it becomes available. Some of the absent elements will be important when telling the more complete story of progress toward the broad goals and implementation outcomes. Relying on the information available to date, a summary outcome is represented for each major goal. The outcome considers available information and reflects whether conditions are moving toward or away from the broadly stated goals of the 10-Year Strategy. The symbols reflected below are used to represent the degree to which measurements indicate movement toward or away from desired outcomes.

Symbols represent the movement toward or away from desired outcomes

The National Fire Plan, Healthy Forest Initiative, Healthy Forest

Û	Indicates movement toward the desired outcome
\bigtriangleup	Indicates some movement toward
	Indicates some movement toward and some away
$\overline{}$	Indicates some movement away
	Indicates movement away from the desired outcome

Restoration Act and 10-Year Strategy have all contributed to better federal, state and local coordination. These initiatives have assisted in reducing fuels on nearly 25 million acres from 2001 through 2007. To provide additional context, Appendix A, *Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Landscape Restoration Accomplishments*, is included and details the accomplished treatment work to reduce hazardous fuels and improve the condition class—including State Fire Assistance Hazard Mitigation Grants and wildland fire use, by the Forest Service (FS) and Department of the Interior (DOI) from 2001 through 2007.

Goal 1 – Improve Fire Prevention and Suppression

Progress toward improvements in fire prevention and suppression were mixed. Percent of wildfires controlled during initial attack (IA) changed little from 2006 to 2007 with the success rate remaining high. Fewer large FS fires exceeded the Stratified Cost Index (SCI) in 2007 than in 2005 and 2006; but the number of unwanted, human-caused wildfires in 2006 exceeded the 10-year average. Wildland firefighter fatalities in 2007 numbered less than the average from 1999-2006, but structures lost in wildfire in 2007 were more than the average from 2000-2006. More acres burned with high severity in 2005 than in 2004.



While remaining at or above 97 percent, the IA success rate for all agencies combined moved downward in 2005 and 2006, leveling out in 2007. The success rate in 2007 was 97.16 percent. Despite the fact that any fire exceeding 300 acres in size does not meet the interagency threshold for IA success, many fires larger than 300 acres in grass and shrublands, with light fuels and rapid spread rate were contained by IA crews. As the agencies continue to emphasize "appropriate management response" (AMR), it is likely that more fires will exceed the 300 acre threshold. (PM-1.1)

While the overall IA success rate has remained relatively stable, the total number of fires increased in 2007 decreased to 16,102, a 14 percent reduction compared to the 1996-2006 average of 18,780 fires. (PM-1.1).

Unwanted Human-Caused Wildfires by Year



The number of unwanted, human-caused wildfires for all agencies combined in 2006 (11,727) was 10.6 percent more than the 1996-2005 average (10,599). The amount of unwanted, human-caused wildfires reported by the Forest Service (FS) and National Park Service (NPS) were less in 2006 than the 1996-2005 average for their agencies (FS 15 percent less; NPS 16 percent less). The number further declined for the FS in 2007 by an additional 7 percent. These declines can be partially attributed to the effectiveness of fire prevention efforts. (PM-1.2).

The available SCI data for the Forest Service indicated a favorable trend—fewer fires exceeded the cost index in 2007 than in 2006 and 2005. (PM-1.3)



Percent of Fires not contained in IA that exceeded SCI

The average number of firefighter fatalities from 1999-2006 was 21.6, higher than the average for the period from 1990-1998 (16.3 per year). The number of fatalities in 2007 was nine, a reduction of nearly 60 percent from the average in 1999-2006. Enhanced interagency safety programs may explain part of this reduction. Vehicle accidents and heart attacks have increased as a cause of fatalities. The incidence of heart attack among volunteers is high in relation to other categories of wildland firefighters. Improved reporting procedures for accidents and fatalities is attributed to the increase – earlier reports did not always include vehicle accidents/fatalities for volunteer firefighters. (MQ-1.1)

Wildland Firefighter Fatalities and Cause of Death



The number of structures lost during the 2007 fire season exceeded the 2000-2006 average but was less than the number of structures lost in the 2003 fire season. (MQ-1.3)

Structures Lost in Wildland Fire (2000-2007)

Structures Lost				
Calendar Year	Primary	Other	Totals	
2000	867	844	1711	
2001	214	592	806	
2002	1090	1728	2818	
2003	4088	1687	5775	
2004	340	839	1179	
2005	342	714	1056	
2006	728	1603	2331	
2007	2969	2357	5326	
Average	1330	1296	2625	

In both 2004 and 2005, the majority of all burned areas analyzed in the Monitoring Trends in Burn Severity Project occurred in Alaska (6.5 million and 5.0 million acres in 2004 and 2005 respectively). Nationwide, the areas that burned with high severity included 778,000 acres in 2004 and 1,604,000 in 2005.

In 2004, Alaska, California and the Northern and Northwest zones had large fires in forested environments where more than one acre burned with a high severity for each seven acres that burned with moderate, low or unburned severity. In 2005, the forested environments of the Great Basin, Northern, Rocky Mountain and Northwest demonstrated this same rate. In 2004/2005, on average, over 60 percent of the area mapped within the burn perimeter was classified as unburned or low burn severity. (MQ-1.4)

Goal 2 - Reduce Hazardous Fuels

There has been progress toward the goals of reducing hazardous fuels. All fuels treatments involved some level of collaboration, ranging from public participation in planning to extensive collaborative processes.

In 2007, 51 percent of the acres treated were in the wildland urban interface (WUI), compared to 58 percent for the period of 2003-2006. This can be attributed to the increase in overall acres treated using leveraged resources from other program areas with hazardous fuels reduction as a secondary benefit. More acres were treated overall, but the proportion in the WUI was less.

There was a slight reduction in the total number of WUI acres treated in 2007 (1,975,000 aces) compared with 2006 (2,042,000 acres); however, there has been a substantial increase in the number of WUI and non-WUI treatments.

Acres Treated and Objectives Met by Agency

The number and percent of treatments involving non-Federal ownerships was reduced. Records show only the actual acres treated on other ownerships, so the involvement of other owners in collaborative planning with benefits beyond federal acres is not reflected in this total. The area treated per million dollars of investment has been relatively flat from 2003 to 2006.

While the total number of WUI acres treated in 2007 was slightly less than treated in 2006, it was one percent more than the average treated from 2003-2006. The total number of non-WUI acres treated in 2007 (1,869,000 acres) reflected an increase over the average number of non-WUI acres treated from 2003-2006 (1,397,000 acres).



WUI Fuels Treatments (Acres)



The increase in total WUI and non-WUI acres treated is the result of a small decline in WUI acres treated and a substantial increase in non-WUI acres treated. (PM-2.1) This reflects increased integration, wherein other program activities succeed in reducing hazardous fuels while meeting other restoration and resource objectives.

Relatively small changes in the number of acres treated per million dollars were noted between 2001 and 2007. For DOI, the number of acres treated per million dollars in 2007 was 6,556 acres, as compared to the 2001-2006 average number of acres treated per million dollars of 5,638 acres. For FS, the number of acres treated per million dollars in 2007 was 5,382 acres, slightly less than the 2001-2006 average number of acres treated per million dollars in 2007 was 5,382 acres, slightly less than the 2001-2006 average number of acres treated per million dollars in 2007 was 5,382 acres, slightly less than the 2001-2006 average number of acres treated per million dollars (6,236 acres). (PM-2.2) This is a reflection of work in more difficult, expensive high-priority acres.

Changes in the number of acres treated per million dollars invested in 2007 largely reflect the increasing use of mechanical/other treatments, as compared to prescribed fire, and that projects in the WUI have become more complicated. Many of the sites that were relatively inexpensive to treat have now been completed. (PM-2.2)

Acres on which fire objectives were achieved was a new performance measure in 2007. While all treatments meet the definition for hazardous fuels reduction, the FS reported achieving fire management objectives on 58 percent of acres treated. The DOI agencies reported achieving fire management objectives on between 93 and 100 percent of acres treated. This difference reflects more complex fuels loads and treatment challenges on FS lands where typically two to three entries are required to fully meet fire management objectives. (PM-2.3)

DOI reported nearly 1.3 million treated acres as maintained or moving toward desired condition (approximately 96 percent of their treated acres). The FS reported 2.4 million acres or approximately 86 percent of all treated acres as moving toward desired condition. This does not account for those entries necessary as the first steps in treatment but may not achieve restoration objectives as a stand alone treatment. (MQ-2.1) Forest Service Fuels Treatment Acres, Dollars Obligated, and Acres Per Million Dollars



DOI Fuels Acres Treated, Dollars Obligated, and Acres per Million Dollars



Note, the acreage figures reported here for Performance Measure 2.1 are a subset of the acres reported in Appendix A as accomplished within and outside the WUI.

In 2007, there were 13,425 WUI treatments compared to the 2003-2006 average number of WUI treatments of 6,872. This reflects the Forest Service's new reporting system and the necessity to split out groups of treatments that had been historically lumped together for reporting purposes in NFPORS. All agencies reported an increase in 2007 above the 2003-2006 average. (MQ-2.2)

All Agencies Combined—WUI and Non-WUI Treatments WUI and Non-WUI Treatments All Agencies Combined 15000 12000 9000 9000 6000 3000 0 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007

Goal 3—Part A, Restoration of Fire-Adapted Ecosystems

There has been improvement toward the goal to restore fire-adapted ecosystems due in part to increases in the total area treated. All successfully implemented treatments were collaboratively planned through inter– and/or intra-agency coordination, the NEPA processes, and public involvement/comment process. Using National Fire Plan (NFP) and non-NFP funding, the total area treated in 2007 increased above the 2003-2006 average. Comparing 2007 against the 2003-2006 averages reveals that mechanical/other fuels treatment acres were above the average, while prescribed fire acres treated were slightly below the average.

Acres Treated by Year and Method Used



Wildland fire use increased 4 percent above the 2003-2006 average. As reported in Goal 1, mapping of burn severity for 2004 and 2005 showed that nearly 60 percent of the area within the mapped burn perimeters were unburned or burned with a low severity.

All successfully implemented treatments were planned and implemented through a form of collaboration that ranged from public meeting to an extensive collaboration process. In 2007, the total acres treated using NFP and non-NFP funding was 3,965,000 acres, a 7 percent increase compared to the 2003-2006 average. Comparing the 2007 acres treated for all agencies combined against the average acres treated from 2003-2006, there was a:

- 2 percent decline reported in prescribed fire acres,
- 4 percent increase in fire use acres treated , and
- 23 percent increase in acres treated with mechanical/other means.

The proportion of acres treated with mechanical and other treatments increased from 20 percent in 2003 to 37 percent in 2007 (PM-3.1)

In 2007, there were 369,000 acres of wildland fire use reported for all agencies—a 4 percent increase above the 2003-2006 average. Conditions largely out of the federal agencies' control, i.e., weather and climate, dictate the degree to which fire use is possible. (PM-3.2)

Through fuels treatments in 2007, the total amount of acres moved toward desired condition (2,671,000 acres) is more than double the acres that are maintained (1,038,000 acres) in desired condition. The amount of acres that are neither maintained nor moved toward desired condition is relatively small (439,000 acres). (PM-3.3)

No data regarding the number of treatments that were informed by the multiparty monitoring process is available for the FS for 2007. The DOI used the multiparty monitoring process to inform 1,300 treatments in 2007. (MQ-3.1) Acres Maintained and Moved Toward Desired Condition



DOI used the multiparty monitoring process during 2007



Goal 3—Part B, Post-Fire Rehabilitation of Fire-Adapted Ecosystems

There was movement toward the desired outcomes with respect to postfire rehabilitation of fire-adapted ecosystems. All burned acres that were identified as needing treatments in approved post-wildfire rehabilitation plans were treated. There was a substantial increase in the number of acres treated in 2007 compared to the 2004-2006 average. The amount receiving treatment is largely dependent on conditions when and where fire burns, factors mostly out of control of the wildland fire agencies.

In 2007, there were 1,916,000 acres reported as treated for postwildfire rehabilitation for all agencies combined, an increase of 72 percent above the 2004-2006 average acres treated (1,114,000 acres). This increase is largely attributable to the reported increase in acres treated by the BLM – 1,773,000 acres in 2007 versus the average 2004-2006 acres treated of 904,000 (a 96 percent increase). The FS reported a decrease of 69 percent; BIA 17 percent decrease; FWS 43 percent decrease; and, NPS 296 percent increase. The amount of acres receiving restoration or rehabilitation treatments following fire is highly variable. The amount receiving treatment is largely dependent on conditions when and where fire burns, factors mostly out of control of the wildland fire agencies. (PM-3.4) Acres Treated following Wildland Fire by Year, Agency and Acres



Goal 4 — **Promote Community Assistance**

Progress was made toward the goal of promoting community assistance. In 2007, there were 51,612 communities at risk. There were 4,762 (9.2 percent) with Community Wildfire Protection Plans and 3,814 (7.4 percent) were at reduced risk either because they were recognized as a FIREWISE community or equivalent, or they enacted a mitigation/fire prevention ordinance or high priority hazardous fuels as identified in a CWPP. (PM-4.1)

There were more than 64,000 firefighters from 1,854 communities trained in 2007, and 11,595 communities assisted with upgraded or new fire suppression equipment in 2007. This represents increased capacity for 23.4 percent of the communities at risk of wildfire. (PM-4.2)

64,000 Firefighters trained as capacity was increased for more than 23.4 percent of communities at risk



In 2007, nearly 3 million green tons of biomass was utilized from fuels reduction and restoration projects with the FS providing 94 percent of the total green biomass utilized. In 2007, over 6.7 million board feet of biomass was utilized with the FWS and BIA providing 75 percent of the total board feet of biomass utilized. (PM-4.3)

Biomass production increased from 2003

The number of stewardship contracts increased substantially in the



last five years. In 2007, there were 184 stewardship contracts reported, a 100 percent increase above the average for 2003-2006 (92 contracts).

The acres treated through stewardship contracts have increased substantially. In 2007, total acres treated through stewardship contracts were reported as over 87,500 acres, an 88 percent increase above the 2003-2006 average of 46,680 acres.

The amount of timber volume produced through stewardship contracting in 2007 (655,000 CCF by the FS and 27,300 MBF by the BLM) exceeds the 2003-2006 average (210,000 CCF for the FS and 12,700 MBF for the BLM) by substantial amounts (212 percent increase for the FS and 115 percent increase for the BLM).

The amount of biomass made available through stewardship contracting in 2007 (457,210 tons) exceeded the 2003-2006 average biomass (80,487 tons) by 468 percent. (MQ-4.1)

In 2007, the proportion of fuels treatments that included biomass was 21 percent for the FS with all other agencies varying between 9 percent (NPS) and 5 percent (FWS). These represent an increase above the 2003-2006 average for all agencies except the BIA (32 percent decrease). Consistent with the distribution of forested lands among the agencies, the Forest Service provides a higher percentage of treatments that include biomass products. (MQ-4.2)

The number of communities needing Community Wildfire Protection Plans has grown substantially between 2005 and 2007. The growth stems from increases in the South and Northeast. The West appears to be making good progress establishing CWPPs for the communities in need. While the total number of communities in the South that have CWPPs more than doubled in 2007, the South has just 3 percent of the communities needing plans that actually have them. There is an expectation that the number of communities needing CWPPs may continue to climb due to states implementing improved processes for identifying communities at risk. (MQ-4.3) Communities with CWPP by Year and Geographical Area



Communities with CWPP

Appendix A: Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Landscape Restoration Accomplishments

Year	Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)*			Non-Wildland Urban Interface*					
	Rx Fire	Mechanical	Other	Total	Rx Fire	Mechanical	Other	Total	Grand Total
2001 FS	0.461	0.140	0.011	0.612	0.685	0.064	0.001	0.750	1.362
DOI	0.088	0.075	0.001	0.14	0.419	0.110	0.035	0.564	.0728
Year Total	0.549	0.215	0.012	0.776	1.104	0.174	0.036	1.314	2.090
2002 FS	0.711	0.051	0.002	0.764	0.433	0.061	0.000	0.494	1.258
DOI	0.069	0.125	0.015	0.209	0.635	0.149	0.066	0.850	1.059
Year Total	0.780	0.176	0.017	0.973	1.068	0.210	1.166	1.344	2.317
2003 FS	0.970	0.143	0.001	1.114	0.281	0.058	0.000	0.399	1.453
DOI	0.218	0.158	0.104	0.480	0.567	0.103	0.109	0.779	1.259
Year Total	1.188	0.301	0.105	1.594	0.848	0.161	0.109	1.118	2.712
2004 FS**	1.163	0.436	0.101	1.700	0.491	0.357	0.013	0.861	2.561
DOI	0.250	0.294	0.016	0.560	0.572	0.299	0.200	1.071	1.631
Year Total	1.413	0.730	0.117	2.260	1.063	0.656	0.213	1.932	4.192
2005 FS**	1.044	0.515	0.099	1.658	0.688	0.343	0.033	1.064	2.722
DOI	0.284	0.276	0.049	0.609	0.598	0.233	0.180	1.011	1.620
Year Total	1.328	0.791	0.148	2.267	1.286	0.576	0.213	2.075	4.342
2006 FS**	0.812	0.683	0.095	1.590	0.580	0.356	0.021	0.957	2.547
DOI	0.243	0.236	0.108	0.587	0.420	0.229	0.220	0.869	1.456
Year Total	1.055	0.919	0.203	2.177	1.000	0.585	0.241	1.826	4.003
2007 FS**	1.018	0.392	0.244	1.654	0.858	0.504	0.011	1.373	3.027
DOI**	0.332	0.244	0.275	0.851	0.663	0.168	1.105	0.936	1.787
Year Total	1.350	0.636	0.519	2.505	1.521	0.672	0.116	2.309	4.814
10 B	24 (A) (A)	19		112 - 11 - 11	8. 20 B		23 B	12413	
FS TOTAL	6.179	2.360	0.553	9.092	4.016	1.743	0.079	5.838	14.930
DOI TOTAL	1.484	1.408	0.568	3.460	3.874	1.291	0.915	6.080	9.540
GRAND TOTAL	7.663	3.768	1.121	12.552	7.890	3.034	0.994	11.918	24.470

Appendix B: Goals, Implementation Outcomes, Performance Measures & Monitoring Questions

Table of Goals, Implementation Outcomes, Performance Measures and Monitoring Questions

Goal 1: Im Implementa	prove Fire Prevention and suppression tion Outcome: Losses of life are eliminated and firefighter injuries and damage to communities and the environment from wildfires are reduced.					
Performance	Performance Measures					
PM-1.1	Percent of wildfire controlled during initial attack					
PM-1.2	Number of unwanted human-caused wildfires					
PM-1.3	Percent of fires not contained in initial attack that exceed a Stratified Cost Index (SCI)					
Monitoring Q	uestions					
MQ-1.1	What are the trends and changes in loss of life among firefighters?					
MQ-1.2	What are the trends and changes in loss of life among the public due to wildland fire? (DROPPED—No entity tracks this information)					
MQ-1.3	What are the trends and changes in loss of residences to wildland fire?					
MQ-1.4	What are the trends of severely burned acreages by vegetation type of federal lands?					
Goal 2: Redu Implementati	ce Hazardous Fuels on Outcome: Hazardous fuels are treated, using appropriate tools, to reduce the risk of wildfire to communities and environments.					
Performance	Performance Measures					
PM-2.1	Number and percent of WUI acres treated that are identified in CWPPs or other applicable collaboratively developed plans, and the number and percent of non-WUI acres treated that are identified through collaboration consistent with the 10-Year Implementation Plan.					
PM-2.2	Number of acres treated per million dollars gross investment in WUI and non-WUI areas.					
PM-2.3	Percent of collaboratively identified high priority acres treated where fire management objectives are achieved as identified in applicable management plans or strategies.					

Monitoring	Questions				
MQ-2.1	Number of treated acres moved to or maintained in the desired condition?				
MQ-2.2	What is the number and percentage of hazardous fuels reduction and forest restoration projects on federal lands identified in existing CWPPs (or equivalent collaboratively developed plans) that have been annually implemented?				
MQ-2.3	What is the number and percentage of hazardous fuel reduction and forest restoration projects conducted each year that were jointly planned to consider and where appropriate include multiple ownerships or jurisdictions?				
MQ-2.4	What are the environmental effects of fuels treatment on wildlife habitat, air and water quality?				
MQ-2.5	What are the trends and changes in fire hazard on federal lands?				
MQ-2.6	What are the trends in effectiveness of fuels treatment at achieving desired fire behavior objectives?				
Performan					
Performan	ce Measures				
PM-3.1	Number and percent of acres treated, through collaboration consistent with the <i>Implementation Plan</i> , identified by treatment category (prescribed fire, mechanical and wildland fire use).				
PM-3.2	Percent of the natural ignitions occurring in areas designated for wildland fire use or consistent with wildland fire use strategies that are allowed to burn and the number of acres burned.				
PM-3.3	Number and percent of acres treated to restore fire-adapted ecosystems which are: 1) Moved toward desired condition; 2) Maintained in desired condition				
Monitoring	Questions				
MQ-3.1	Of the hazardous fuels reduction and forest restoration projects that utilize the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) or stewardship contracting authorities conducted each year on federal lands, how many are being informed by the multiparty monitoring process?				
Goal 3: Re Part B: Po Implement	storation and Post-Fire Rehabilitation of Fire-Adapted Ecosystems st-Fire Rehabilitation of Fire-Adapted Ecosystems ation Outcome: <i>Lands damaged by wildfire recover to a desired condition</i> .				
Performan	ce Measures				
PM-3.4	Percent and number of burned acres identified in approved post-wildfire rehabilitation plans as needing treatments that actually receive treatments.				
	Percent of burned acres treated for post-wildfire rehabilitation which is trending toward desired condition.				
PM-3.5					
PM-3.5 Monitoring	Questions				

Goal 4: Promote Community Assistance Implementation Outcome: Communities at risk have increased capacity to prevent losses from wildland fire and realize economic benefits resulting from treatments and services.

Performance Measures				
PM-4.1	Number and percent of communities-at-risk covered by CWPPs or equivalent that it at reduced risk from wildland fire. A community is at reduced risk if it has satisfied at least one of the following requirements: 1) Recognized as FIREWISE community or equivalent, 2) Enacted a mitigation/ fire prevention ordinance, 3) High priority hazardous fuels identified in a CWPP are reduced or appropriate fuel levels on such lands are maintained in accordance with plan schedule.			
PM-4.2	Percentage of at risk communities who report increased local suppression capacity as evidenced by: 1) Increasing number of trained and/or certified firefighters and crews or 2) Upgraded or new fire suppression equipment obtained, or 3) Formation of new volunteer fire department or expansion of an existing department.			
PM-4.3	Number of green tons or volume of woody biomass from hazardous fuel reduction and restoration treatments on federal land that are made available for utilization through permits, contracts, grants, agreements or equivalent.			
Monitoring Questions				
MQ-4.1	How many stewardship contracts have been awarded, how many acres are included and how much woody biomass has been utilized?			
MQ-4.2	What proportions of fuels treatments produced woody biomass that was utilized (includes fuels stewardship projects)?			
MQ-4.3	What percentage of communities needing community wildfire protection plans (CWPP) as identified by the State Forester has completed a CWPP?			

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