**Implementation of the insect and disease provision in the 2014 Farm Bill**

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Abstract: Mortality caused by insects and diseases is on about 4.5 million acres nationwide and over 70 million acres are predicted to be at risk. On February 7, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Agricultural Act of 2014, better known as the Farm Bill. Section 8204 of the Farm Bill amends the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003 to address qualifying insect and disease infestations on National Forest System lands. To date, the Chief has designated approximately 52 million acres of National Forest System lands. Within the designated areas, the Farm Bill provides the authority to use the expedited NEPA procedures for an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement or the use of the newly legislated Categorical Exclusion. This provides the Forest Service with an increased ability to address insect and disease infestations, and improve resiliency in these landscapes. Thirty four projects have been proposed under this provision, including commercial timber harvesting, pre-commercial harvesting, prescribed burning, and chemical and biological control of pest species. The presentation provides an overview of the progress made implementing this important Farm Bill provision and highlights some of its challenges.