WELCOME TO THE
INTERMOUNTAIN
REGION
WILDFIRE CRISIS
STRATEGY
ROUNDTABLE

5/3/2022
Today’s Agenda

• Welcome and Opening
• Partners in Leadership Panel
• 10-year Strategic Implementation Plan
  ▪ Overview and Plans for Engagement
• Questions and Answers
• Closing
OUR WILDFIRE CRISIS STRATEGY
GET READY TO ACT!

Regional Forester Mary Farnsworth
National Wildfire Crisis Strategy Roundtable
May 3rd, 2022
A MOUNTING CRISIS …

Area burned by wildfires, United States, 1985-2020.
A MOUNTING CRISIS …

Wildfire costs, United States, 1985-2020
RESTORING FIRE-ADAPTED FORESTS

THINNING

BURNING
NEW APPROACH NEEDED
HIGH-RISK FIRESHEDS
Intermountain Region Priority Landscapes

- Intersect geospatial out-year vegetation management plan with priority areas:
  - High Exposure Firesheds;
  - Regionwide QWRA (2019);
  - Shared stewardship priority areas
  - State forest action plan priority areas

- Identify landscapes with highest risk

- Evaluate capacity, partnerships, community readiness, etc.

- Discuss priorities with State Partners
Southwest Idaho Initial Investment Landscape

- Project boundary closely aligned with priority Firesheds
- Boise Front Fireshed ranked #1 in the Region
### SW Idaho Overview

1 of 10 landscapes identified across the west for initial Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total size</th>
<th>1.7 Million acres</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NFS lands</td>
<td>928,000 acres</td>
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<tr>
<td>non-NFS</td>
<td>791,000 acres</td>
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Goal is to treat 20 – 35% of lands within Fire Sheds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY22</th>
<th>FY22-24</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acres</td>
<td>dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>$17.4 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>$59.5 million</td>
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We Can’t Do This Alone
Intermountain Region Roundtable
USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station
Monica Lear, Station Director
The charge to FS Research & Development

- Provide best available science as basis for decisions
- Project layout and development
- Building social acceptance of fire
- Monitoring and data collection
- Economics and the bioeconomy
- Integrate biological, physical and social sciences
- Data collection, management and availability
Science Programs

- Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute
- Fire, Fuel and Smoke*
- Forest and Woodland Ecosystems
- Human Dimensions
- Inventory and Monitoring / FIA*
- Maintaining Resilient Dryland Ecosystems*
- Water and Watersheds*
- Wildlife and Terrestrial Ecosystems*
- Science Applications and Communication

*Scientists located in ID, NV and UT

NOTE: Scientists from other programs not located in R4 are doing work there.
Science-based decision making
✓ Before, during and after fire
  • Assess risk
    o Priority landscapes
    o Critical watersheds
    o Communities
  • Mitigate Risk
    o Build community preparedness
  • Manage risk
    o Fire behavior modeling
    o Fire decision support
    o Firefighter safety
Identifying the right places

- Firesheds

- PODs
Identifying the right places

- Values at Risk
  - Wildfire Risk to Water Resources
  - Forest health and wildlife habitats
  - Species of Conservation Concern
  - Recreation
  - Communities
Identifying the right places

- Building social acceptance
  - Rx Fire
  - Fire Management
  - Smoke effects
- Wildfire Risk to Communities
  - CoMFRT
  - Wildfire Research (WiRē)
- Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA)
Fire response

- Fire and fuels management planning
- Wildland fire management planning and operations
- Fire behavior prediction tools
- Quantitative wildland fire risk analysis methods
- Modeling, assessment, and planning to support fire management decisions
- Real-time identification of wildfire responder hazards and operational engagement opportunities
After the fire

- After Fire Toolkit for managers
- BAER tools and support
- Prioritizing infrastructure protection
- Water quality monitoring
- Recovery and restoration
- Effectiveness monitoring


- Restoring dry mixed-conifer forest structure (RMRS-GTR-373)
- Post-fire patterns of regeneration in “Grey Phase” forest
- Great Basin Native Plant Project
- Great Basin Five-Needle Pine Strategy
- Long-term watershed restoration
- Using biochar to remediate soils
Monitoring Outcomes

- Project layout and development
- Long-term studies of forest management and species of conservation concern
- Treatment effectiveness at reducing wildfire risk
- Water quality responses to mechanical and prescribed fire fuel treatments and wildfire
Projections are for a 10-100% reduction in April snow water equivalent across Region 4 forests, meaning reduced water holding capacity at higher elevations.
Partners in Leadership Panel

- **Dustin Miller**, Director, Idaho Department of Lands
- **Emily Fife**, Utah State Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- **Dominique Etchegoyhen**, Deputy Director, Nevada Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
- **Joel Bousman**, Commissioner, Sublette County, Wyoming
- **Clifford Banuelos**, Tribal-State Environmental Liaison, Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada
- **Mike Rau**, Water Quality and Finished Water Department Manager, Central Utah Water Conservancy District
FOREST SERVICE WORK UNDER THE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT

- WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE TEAM – Hazardous Fuels
- NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM
  - Recreation
  - Restoration
  - Reclamation
  - Roads/Trails
- STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY
  - Grants and Agreements
  - Firefighter Pay
  - Community Wildfire Protection Plans
- RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT – Supporting all efforts with up-to-date science
THE HISTORY

• More than 20 years of milestones have set the stage for our work today

Wildfires have been growing in size, duration, and destructivity.

Nearly a quarter of the contiguous United States remain at moderate to very high risk of severe wildfires.

We must dramatically increase fuels and forest health treatments on America’s forests.
CONFRONTING THE WILDFIRE CRISIS

The Forest Service wildfire crisis strategy combines an historic investment from congressional funding with years of scientific research and planning into a national effort that will dramatically increase the scale of forest health treatments.

Treating up to an additional 20 million acres of National Forest System lands.

Treating up to an additional 30 million acres of other Federal, State, Tribal, and private lands.

Developing a plan for long-term maintenance beyond the 10 years.
HIGH-RISK FIRESHEDS

Community exposure is a central factor in the strategy to confront the wildfire crisis. Other factors include Tribal and State plans, watersheds, equity, climate forecasts, and partner priorities.
IMPLEMENTATION

• Years 1-2. Early implementation.
• Years 3-10. The right work, in the right place, at the right scale.
AGENCY EXPECTATIONS

• Active management
• Engagement
• Equitability
• Accountability
WHAT’S NEXT?
PARTNER and EMPLOYEE ROUNDTABLES  
(Feb – May 2022)

- **Purpose:** Targeted listening sessions to identify opportunities and challenges in getting to scale with fuels and fire risk management efforts.

- **Post Engagement:** Presentation of findings and recommendations to the Forest Service - National Leadership Council in June. A series of webinars for participants and interested publics to follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roundtable Geographical Focus</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>February 3, 4, 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Region 3</td>
<td>February 22, 23, 24</td>
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<td>February 28, March 1, 2</td>
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<td>March 16, 17, 18</td>
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<td>May 3, 4, 5</td>
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<td>May 17, 18, 19</td>
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<td>May 31, June 1, 2</td>
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<td>Tribal</td>
<td>April 26</td>
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OUR ASK TODAY

• WHAT are we trying to achieve?
• How can we reach these goals?

Let’s work together to shift the future for our forests
WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN 2031

• **Treated up to 20 million acres** on the National Forest System and an **up to 30 million acres** on other Federal, State, Tribal, and private lands in the West.

• A plan for long-term maintenance.

• A paradigm shift in the way we work.
THANK YOU
THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING