Kennedy, Kathy - FS, WY

From:	FS-Comments-Bighorn
Sent:	Wednesday, February 22, 2023 7:56 AM
To:	Kennedy, Kathy - FS, WY
Subject:	FW: [External Email]Pole Creek Veg. Management Project comment
Attachments:	Elk hiding and thermal cover guidelines in the context of lodgepole pine stand density.pdf

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In past discussions on density management of regenerated lodgepole pine stands, I often refer to the attached research as a guide. In my conversations with local specialists it appears they are unfamiliar with this foundational research. Properly applied, stands can be managed to achieve elk hiding cover status earlier and longer. I encourage you and your staff to become familiar with this, and cite it often when managing young lodgepole stands.
If I remember correctly, the current Forest Plan projections for even-aged management were based on a single pre-commercial thin to around 150-190 trees per acre (15x15 to 17x17), a commercial thin 20-30 years later, and a final harvest at rotation age.. In my experience best results for consolidating growth and maintaining elk hiding cover are within this range. I wouldn't be surprised if some of the stands thinned in the early 90s are now ready for a commercial (pole sized) thinning.

Chris Thomas

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Chris Thomas, CF