

fine filter A component of the multi-level approach to biological conservation (i.e., coarse filter/fine filter), where the focus is on individual species (i.e., plant, animal) across a plan area. See also **coarse filter**.

fire control See **fire suppression**.

fire hazard The potential fire behavior for a fuel type, regardless of the fuel type's weather-influenced fuel moisture content or its resistance to fireline construction. Fire behavior assessment is based on physical fuel characteristics such as fuel arrangement, fuel load, condition of herbaceous vegetation, and presence of elevated fuels.

fire regime The role of fire in ecosystems and its interactions with dominant vegetation. The periodicity and pattern of naturally occurring fires in a particular area or vegetative type, described in terms of frequency, intensity (heat energy released), severity (ecological effect), seasonal timing, and aerial extent (Anderson, 1982). The five natural fire regimes on the Flathead National Forest are as follows:

- **I** 0 to 35 year frequency and low (surface fires most common) to mixed severity (less than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced);
- **II** 0 to 35 year frequency and high (stand replacement) severity (greater than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced);
- **III** 35 to 100+ year frequency and mixed severity (less than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced);
- **IV** 35 to 100+ year frequency and high (stand replacement) severity (greater than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced);
- **V** 200+ year frequency and high (stand replacement) severity.

fire risk The probability or chance of fire starting determined by the presence and activities of causative agents.

fire severity The ecological effect of the fire; refers to the effect of the fire on the dominant overstory vegetation, which is coniferous trees on the Flathead National Forest. Three levels of fire severity are recognized:

- **High severity** Greater than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation are killed. Also referred to as stand-replacement or stand-replacing fire.
- **Moderate severity** 35 to 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation are killed.
- **Low severity** Less than 35 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation are killed.

In addition, **mixed-severity fire** refers to a fire event or an area where a broad mix of low, moderate, and high fire severity burn conditions occur.

fire suppression The work and activities connected with fire-extinguishing operations, beginning with discovery and continuing until the fire is completely extinguished.

fire-adapted ecosystem An ecosystem in which the organisms (i.e., the plants and animals) are adapted to fire as it functions under the natural fire regime. These ecosystems are resilient to fire and dependent on the resulting ecological effects of fire to sustain the natural diversity of vegetation conditions and animal species.