

Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition
Monitoring/Collaboration Protocols
(Approved 4-22-2008)

Introduction:

The Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition (NEWFC) is a local community-based collaborative group that provides input and support in the design and implementation of large scale projects on the Colville National Forest. In 2007 NEWFC received a Title II grant to develop monitoring protocols tested on two completed Stewardship projects in both Ferry and Stevens Counties. NEWFC collaborated with Forest Service staff to in development of these protocols to test assumptions and improve future project outcomes.

I. Monitoring Protocol Objectives

- Provide an unbiased, documented third-party data collection that will inspire confidence in the collaborative process
- Compare National Forest pre-project prescriptions and data to field collected data
- Map and identify plot locations within project units with GPS and GIS
- Identify species and number of trees remaining in various size classes

Intent:

Project monitoring improves dialogue between various individuals and groups interested in developing, demonstrating, and evaluating ecologically sound forest management practices.

II. Third Party Contractor

NEWFC will hire a third-party consultant to collect field data and over a minimum of 3.5 months analyze the data.

III. Monitoring Process

Acquisition¹ of Baseline² Information:

Third-Party Contractor³ will acquire Colville National Forest information specific to projects:

Silvicultural prescriptions and corresponding metrics used to define post treatment results

GIS layers of timber sale units

Stand data

Control site⁴ data

Purpose and Need

Objective(s)

Field Work:

- 1) Third-party contractor will submit proposal regarding collection of field data to sample treated units.

¹ Colville National Forest Contact is Bill Shields

² Baseline data: Data collected at the beginning of a project to document the existing situation. These data provide a benchmark against which change that occurs during the project period can be assessed.

³ Brett Winterowd

⁴ Control site: An area similar to the project site but where no project activities occur. The same indicators are measured in the control area as in the project area.

- 2) Establish number of plots to provide less than or equal to 10% error.
- 3) Establish plot locations using GPS coordinates and locate on GIS.
- 4) For each plot identify a Plant Association Group⁵ (PAG)
 - Dry PP PAG
 - Dry DF PAG
 - Dry GF PAG
 - Mesic GF PAG
 - Mesic DF PAG
 - Cedar & Hemlock Series
- 5) For each plot identify species and number of trees/acre in 2" diameter size classes 0"-30" [
- 6) Identify and Include prescribed fire mortality within number of trees/acre.
- 7) For each plot, indicate whether the area was proposed for prescribed fire, and identify whether prescribed fire has been implemented
- 8) For each plot identify basal area (BA) and stand density index (SDI) for areas with thinning prescriptions.
- 9) For stumps identified equal or greater to 22", indicate species and if tree was 21" DBH.⁶ Note circumstance of stump i.e. in skid trail, landing, etc.
- 10) If a plot center falls within an opening larger than 1 acre, that appears to be created rather than natural, then an approximate size that is established by routine field procedures rather than GPS/GIS, will be noted. This would enable such openings to be identified and further explored by more accurate and comprehensive methods if the initial monitoring indicates that there were a number of such openings created. (Note: there were no openings prescribed, but natural openings may exist.)
- 11) Evaluate each plot for clumpiness. (Yes or No?)
- 12) On Bangs, plot information will include estimated average tree height and % crown ratio.
- 13) For every 20 plots (5% of total number of plots), contractor should take four photos in each cardinal direction⁷.
- 14) The third-party contractor will determine the feasibility of evaluating, Roads to be closed, obliterated, or blocked, as shown on the project maps; as he is accessing units for plot measurements. Is the road in such a condition as to prevent vehicle usage?

Assessment of Field Data and Reporting for Implementation Monitoring:

The third-party contractor, a monitoring coordinator⁸, and members of NEWFC will:

- 1) Indicate whether the Agency implemented mechanical treatments as proposed.
- 2) Assess whether post treatment field data is within 10% of Forest Service Prescriptions.
- 3) Indicate whether Colville National Forest monitoring was required and/or completed for each project and/or unit.
- 4) Compare monitoring results of third-party contractor and results of the Colville National Forest.

⁵ PAGs identified from NEWFC SDI Thinning Guidelines

⁶ Stump size is site and species specific

⁷ At least one photo plot per unit.

⁸ Dick Dunton (NEWFC approved)

- 5) Provide plot data to USFS for Fuels modeling, and Torching, Crowning Index determination

Assessment of Field Data and Reporting for Adaptive Management:

The third-party contract monitoring coordinator⁹ and members of NEWFC will:

- 1) Indicate percentage of thinning acreage within each project
- 2) Indicate percentage of regeneration acreage within each project.
- 3) Indicate percentage of clumps occurring within regeneration units.
- 4) Compare post treatment SDI averages to current NEWFC SDI guidelines for thinning. Post-treatment averages will not include areas without adequate leave trees to meet the SDI target.
- 5) Indicate number and size of created landscape openings. Indicate how many openings were less or equal to one acre. Indicate how many openings were between 1-3 acres in size. Indicate if, number, and size, of openings over 3 acres.

IV. Outreach

The NEWFC Education and Outreach Committee will provide public education through one of more of the following:

- a power-point presentation
- photos
- maps
- news releases
- tours for the public, special interest groups, local, state, and national elected officials, and additional groups interested in the collaborative process.

⁹ Dick Dunton