



Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project

SUMMARY

DRAFT RECORD OF DECISION

June 29, 2015

PURPOSE – Primary purpose of this effort is to reduce the potential for high-severity wildfire and subsequent flooding in two key watersheds critical to Flagstaff.

BACKGROUND – \$10 million bond approved by Flagstaff voters in Nov 2012 (74% approval).

RESULT – The Draft Record of Decision (DROD), specific only to US Forest Service lands, was signed by Acting Forest Supervisor Scott Russell on June 23rd, 2015, and the official Notice published in the *AZ Daily Sun* on June 26th, 2015. Publication of the Notice initiated the 45-day Objection Period, which will close on August 10th, 2015.

The DROD encompasses 10,544 acres of US Forest Service lands within the two FWPP watersheds – Dry Lake Hills (Rio de Flag) and Mormon Mountain (Lake Mary). Another 1,872 acres of US Forest Service lands are within the FWPP footprint, but have already been analyzed and are covered under previous National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] decisions.

In preparing the DROD, all 530 individual comments received during the public input period were considered, and much of what was provided is reflected in the decision. The decision incorporates aspects of earlier proposed alternatives # 2, 3, and 4. Proposed Alternative #1 (*No Action*) is not part of the DROD. Two other earlier alternatives (#5 – *No Temp Roads and Hand Thinning Only*) and #6 (*Treatment within Kachina Peaks Wilderness*) were eliminated from detailed study. The *Modified Large Tree Retention Strategy*, developed by the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) Stakeholder Group is included. Two Forest Plan amendments (#1 – *One Time Variance for managing Mexican Spotted Owl habitat*, and #2 – *Allowance for Steep Slope treatment*) are authorized. A permanent Campfires ban is enacted in the Dry Lake Hills area.

As shown in Table 2 of the DROD (attached), forest treatments will include a combination of Hand, Traditional Ground-Based Mechanized, Specialized Steep-Slope Mechanized, Cable, and Helicopter. An *Adaptive Harvesting Matrix* allows for less obtrusive treatment methods to be utilized if conditions permit at the time of planned treatment without having to reanalyze that action. As an example, if it is found that an area identified for cable treatment (more intrusive, generally less expensive) can be treated by helicopter (less intrusive but more expensive) within budget and within time period required, then it will be allowed.

Table 8, 9, 10, and 11, along with Figure 6 and 7 of the DROD (attached) show the *Existing and Post Treatment Fire Hazard* for the two watersheds. (Note that Figure 6 includes both the footprint and the actual burn severity experienced within the 2010 Schultz Fire area).

The FWPP Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and DROD can be found on-line at:
www.fs.usda.gov/goto/FWPP

For additional information on the FWPP, contact:

- Flagstaff Fire Dept at 928-213-2500;
- US Forest Service at 928-526-0866; or
- Click on www.flagstaffwatershedprotection.org

Table 2: Summary of treated acres and harvesting methods across the project area

Project Area	Treated Acres*	Harvesting by Helicopter	Harvesting by Cable Logging	Specialized Steep Slope Equipment	Traditional Ground Based	Hand Thinning	Burn Only	No Treatment	Total Project Acres
Dry Lake Hills	5,692 acres	566 acres	414 acres <i>114 acres skyline 300 acres excalaine</i>	250 acres	3,497 acres	498 acres	468 acres	1,876 acres	7,569 acres
Mormon Mountain	2,975 acres	0 acres	0 acres	73 acres	2,320 acres	180 acres	402 acres	0 acres	2,975 acres
Total	8,668 acres	556 acres	414 acres	323 acres	5,817 acres	678 acres	870 acres	1,876 acres	10,544 acres

*Totals may differ slightly due to rounding errors

Table 8: Fire Hazard Post-Treatment, Dry Lake Hills

Existing Fire Hazard (No Action)	Acres	Percent	Post Treatment Fire Hazard	Acres	Percent
Extreme	2,582	67%	Extreme	91	2%
Very High	72	4%	Very High	268	8%
High	613	15%	High	510	13%
Moderate	470	12%	Moderate	1,930	50%
Low	100	2%	Low	1,036	27%

Table 9: Fire Hazard Post-Treatment, Mormon Mountain

Existing Fire Hazard	Acres	Percent	Post Treatment Fire Hazard	Acres	Percent
Extreme	2,089	75%	Extreme	526	18%
Very High	197	8%	Very High	10	1%
High	273	10%	High	273	9%
Moderate	174	6%	Moderate	736	26%
Low	51	1%	Low	1,284	46%

Table 10: Crown Fire Potential under Schultz Fire Weather Conditions, Dry Lake Hills

Crown Fire Type	Existing Crown Fire Potential (Schultz conditions)	Decision, Dry Lake Hills (Schultz conditions)
Active	3,832 acres	745 acres
Passive	749 acres	99 acres
Surface	2,881 acres	6,591 acres

Table 11: Crown Fire Potential under Schultz Fire Weather Conditions, Mormon Mountain

Crown Fire Type	Existing Crown Fire Potential (Schultz Conditions)	Decision, Mormon Mountain (Schultz conditions)
Active	2,068 acres	63 acres
Passive	725 acres	329 acres
Surface	176 acres	2,577 acres

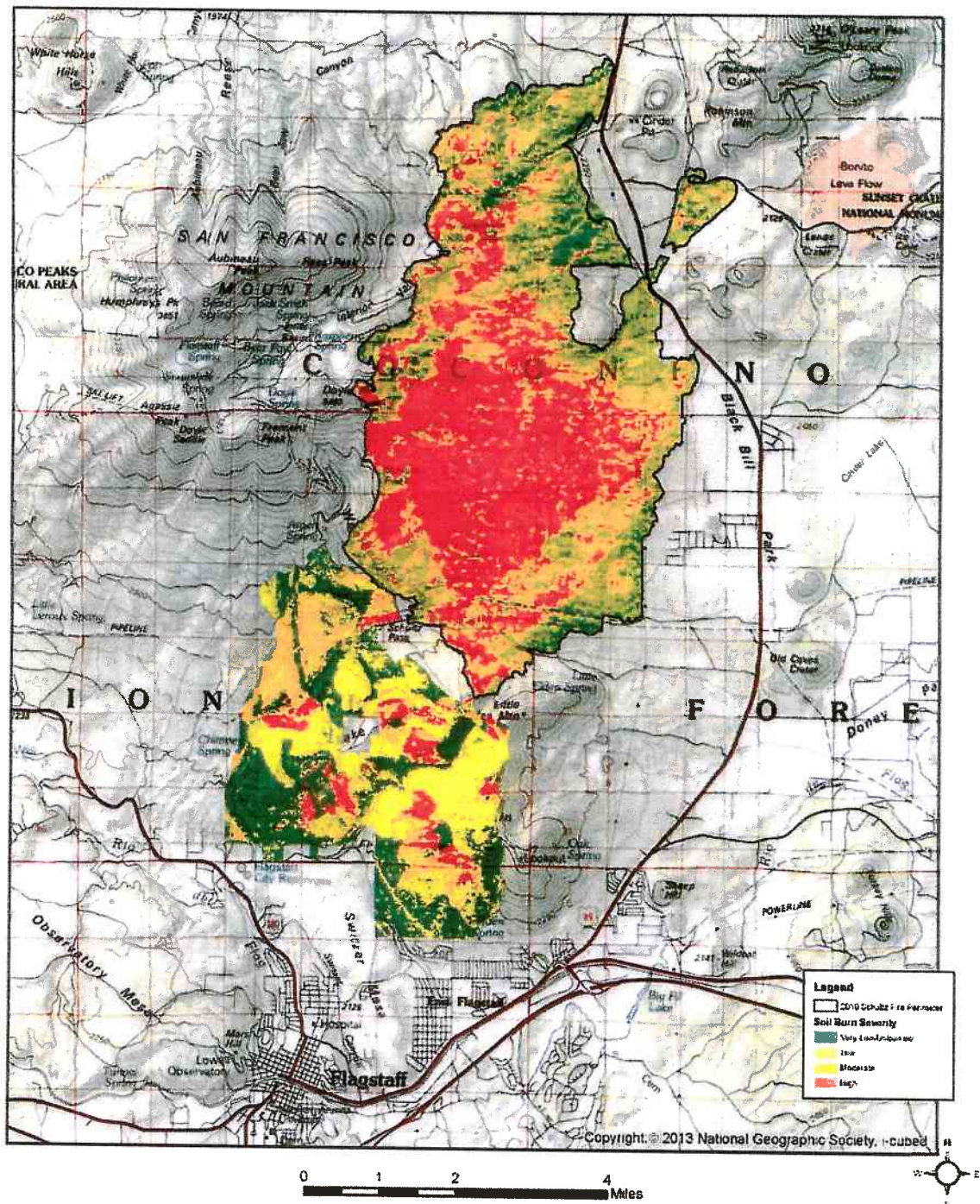


Figure 6: Predicted Soil Burn Severity for the Dry Lake Hills under the Decision

