

## **COPWRR Project-Level Ecosystem Monitoring Report - Summary**

Project Evaluated: Park Fire Project

Field Visit Date: November 8, 2006

Units Visited: 1 and 2

### **1) Summary Comments on Implementation and Effectiveness**

Field visit participants had the opportunity to see both units of the Park Fire project and found:

- that the treatments were implemented as planned and described in the Categorical Exclusion document;
- that Management Measures from the C.E. were adhered to; and
- that the project addressed the Purposes and Needs and the specific Management Objectives listed in the C.E.

Attendees agreed that the BLM and State Parks “did what they said they would do” and that the results were as planned and desired. Hazardous Fuel Loads, Hazard Trees, Ecosystem Health and Function, and Visuals have all benefited from the project.

### **2) Key BLM Insights from Project Implementation**

- A. The BLM demonstrated that a small salvage sale can be planned and implemented thoughtfully on a very rapid timeline. Still, planning and implementing on such a rapid timeline is challenging and time intensive. It is not easy to fit all of the public review and stakeholder interaction that is needed to do a project well into a short time frame.
- B. The BLM and State Parks learned that some large hazard trees can be retained by topping them and turning them into snags.
- C. There are still many long term fuels management concerns in the State Park, both within and outside the project area.

### **3) Considerations for Future Project Planning**

Though salvage projects have generated a lot of controversy in recent years, field visit attendees felt fairly comfortable with the results of the Park Fire project. Still participants had a handful of suggestions that might help the BLM to continue to innovate and improve on similar future projects. The COPWRR Ecosystem Monitoring Committee respectfully submits the following thoughts for BLM consideration:

- A. Field visit participants suggested that the Park Fire project could be a good site for educational activities (to teach visitors about fire adapted ecosystems) and for dialogue among environmental and industry stakeholders about salvage operations. One thought would be to link a visit or review of a project like the Park Fire with scoping for an upcoming similar project.
- B. It would be worthwhile to ask ourselves what number of trees per acre, in what kind of spatial arrangement we are ultimately hoping to see in this area so that a series of plantings, thinnings, patch cuts, etc can be planned out to get us there. The question that came up about the density of the plantings suggests that there is not a common vision in the public about how dense a forest we want, which is key to determining how to get there.
- C. How do we restore the riparian corridor in sites such as this where the flow regime and groundwater levels have been drastically altered? If a key factor to regenerating appropriate riparian vegetation is the flow regime and water/water table levels, what can BLM and State Parks do?