

Wind Mountain Collaborative Forest Restoration program (CFRP) Restoration Prescription: General

Objectives

1. Restore historical forest structure and processes to improve the resilience of the forest to disturbances such as wildfire, insects, drought and climate change.
2. Prepare the treatment units for the reintroduction of fire in 2017-2018.

Existing conditions

Old growth piñon-juniper and ponderosa pine stands exist. Some uncharacteristically dense stand conditions exist. Continuous canopy, exposed soil, sparse understory vegetation (grass and forbs) and encroachment of PJ into ponderosa forest type (Figures 3-5) exist in some areas. Natural openings currently exist (Figure 2). Some treatment will occur within the Cerro del Aire wildfire burn scar.

Restoration prescription

- Utilize existing terrain and vegetation features to guide implementation by expanding openings and defining groups of trees (Figure 2).
- Leave larger ponderosa pine (>18" dbh) and piñon and juniper (>11" drc).
- Primarily remove small (<5-8" diameter) vegetation.
- Improve forest health through removal of stress, damage, and mortality agents such as dwarf mistletoe and spruce budworm.
- Favor ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and Rocky Mountain juniper. Use existing ponderosa groups as anchor points for action. Where PIPO groups exist, thin from below to create more space around leave trees.
- On more productive sites, more discretion with tree removal is required to create openings. Look for depressions, flat areas, and high densities of small diameter trees as potential openings. As with other areas, use large/old trees as anchor points for openings.
- Within groups of trees, strive for a diversity of age, height, and size classes.
- Do not limb leave trees.
- Openings can include sparse individuals or groups of 2-3 trees of varying size and age classes.
- Avoid cutting piñon and juniper trees >10" in diameter at root collar.
- For ponderosa pine, when possible avoid cutting trees >12" in diameter at breast height.
- Retain dead standing trees (snags) with a DBH/DRC >10" and a height >12' where they don't pose an immediate safety hazard.
- Fell snags <10" DBH/DRC and <15' in height. Fell trees parallel to contours to help minimize erosion.

Slash

- Slash height should not exceed 24"
- Stump heights should not exceed 6"
- Felled trees should be bucked to lengths to maximize contact with the ground
- Limbs and tops should be separated from the bole
- To the greatest extent possible, spread slash evenly across exposed soil. For example, when moving between cut trees, drag slash with you.
- Slash will not be placed under the dripline of leave trees.
- Avoid piling slash on or within 3' of existing large diameter dead and down logs and standing snags greater than 12" in diameter (Figure 1)

Large dead and down log

Snag



□ **Figure 1.** Example of a snag and large diameter dead and down log in the project area. Avoid piling slash on or within 3' of existing large diameter dead and down logs and standing snags greater than 12" in diameter

Thin to expand opening



Figure 2. Natural openings currently exist in the project area. Utilize existing terrain and vegetation features to guide implementation by expanding existing openings and defining clumps of trees.



Figure 3. Existing conditions. Exposed soil, sparse understory vegetation (grass and forbs), 8000 – 8300 ft.



Figure 4. Existing conditions. Ponderosa pine, old and large pinon and juniper.