

## Firewood Resource Report

In the past 20 years an average of approximately 300 personal use firewood permits were sold per year on the Silver Lake Ranger District. An average of 1,200 cords or 600 thousand board feet (600 Mbf) were removed per year. Firewood cutting is dispersed throughout the Ranger District. Dead lodgepole pine trees, primarily killed by the mountain pine beetle, have been the preferred source of firewood by most permit holders (Lee Bowers, personal communication, 2003).

Approximately 10 percent of the firewood removed in the past came from the project area. In addition to tree species, haul distance is an important factor for selecting areas to cut firewood. Local residents from Silver Lake, Christmas Valley, Fort Rock, and Summer Lake have been the primary gatherers of firewood due to the proximity of these communities to the project area.

Firewood cutting has generally been dispersed throughout the project area in the past. Some minor localized concentrations have occurred in lodgepole pine stands. Cutting standing dead and down timber in areas where firewood cutting is allowed by permit has not affected stand development, structure, or composition. The removal of approximately 600 Mbf per year from accessible areas affected a very limited portion of the landscape.

In the near future, firewood cutting in the moderate to very high burn intensity stands is expected to decrease slightly until charred bark is loose enough to fall off the dead stems. During that time some of the local woodcutters may be displaced from the project area. The numbers of people displaced should be relatively minor since stands with a low intensity burn are still available throughout the project area. Displaced woodcutters will not have to travel far to find ample sources of firewood elsewhere on the Ranger District.

The trend is for an increase in firewood cutting District-wide. In 2002 permits for 1,570 cords or approximately 785 Mbf were sold for the District. The increase is expected to come from residents in larger communities such as La Pine, Bend, and Redmond who are ranging farther from their homes to find firewood. The northern end of the Ranger District is expected to receive most of the additional cutting since it is closer to Highway 97 and more lodgepole pine stands occur there.

In the short term, the fires of 2002 increased the total amount of dead timber available for firewood cutting. Although charred stems may be less desirable than beetle killed timber, none of the alternatives would have a direct adverse impact on the ability of permit holders to harvest firewood. Indirectly, some permit holders may choose to cut elsewhere or may cut in lightly burned stands for a few years until “clean” wood is available.

The long-term opportunities for personal use firewood cutting in the entire project area by the public, including members of the Klamath Tribe, primarily depend on the access management strategy associated with the individual alternatives. Alternative A (No Action) would leave all classified roads open (271.0 miles). Action alternatives E and G would leave 188.9 miles open. Alternatives C, H, and D would leave 129.1, 126.5, and 123.9 miles open, respectively. Alternative D would leave 123.9 miles open and would have the greatest impact on the availability of personal use firewood.

Members of the Klamath Tribe can gather free firewood from former Klamath Indian Reservation lands. Approximately 3 ½ sections of former Tribal lands are in the southern end of the Silver Fire. Alternatives A and C would leave all existing classified roads open. Alternatives E, G, and H would each decommission several roads with specific resource management concerns. Alternative D would decommission and close the highest mileage of road on former Tribal lands.

**Table 1: The following table compares the alternatives with respect to long-term firewood gathering opportunities.**

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Public Firewood Gathering</b>	<b>Tribal Firewood Gathering</b>
A	Least impact overall, 217.0 miles open.	Tied for least impact. No roads decommissioned or closed.
C	Intermediate impact, 129.1 miles open.	Tied for least impact. No roads decommissioned or closed.
D	Most impact overall, 123.9 miles open.	Most impact. Roads decommissioned and closed.
E	Tied for least impact, action alternative, 188.9 miles open.	Intermediate impact. Several roads with resource concerns decommissioned.
G	Tied for least impact, action alternative, 188.9 miles open.	Intermediate impact. Several roads with resource concerns decommissioned.
H	Intermediate impact, 126.5 miles open.	Intermediate impact. Several roads with resource concerns decommissioned.

Cumulatively, dispersed firewood cutting will not affect stand development, structure, or composition. Since there is an excess supply District-wide, there would be no reduction in the overall availability of personal use firewood. Also, firewood cutting by Tribal members rarely occurs in the project area because of the distance from their homes. Former Tribal lands west of the project area in the Winema National Forest are considerably closer to most members' residences.

This Toolbox Fire Recovery Project specialist report was prepared during March, April and May of 2003. It will be used, along with specialist reports from multiple resource areas, to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Toolbox Fire Recovery project. This specialist report will become a part of the planning record for the project, filed under:

“Toolbx/ Planning Record/ E\_Specialists\_reports\_data\_inventory\_and\_collection”

This report will be filed both in the ‘hard-copy’ planning record binders, on file at the Silver Lake Ranger District, and on the Fremont National Forest “K-Drive”. In the interest of planning process efficiency, particularly in light of time and budget constraints, editing that occurs to the content of this report during the preparation of the DEIS will be reflected in the DEIS and will not necessarily be entered back into the content of this report. To insure the accuracy of such edits, I will review the content of both the DEIS and the (Final) FEIS and certify that their content is consistent with the analytical conclusions in this report. If during DEIS or FEIS editing, substantially different conclusions or interpretations are reached or substantial additional analysis is prepared from that displayed in this report, an addendum to this report will be prepared.

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