

# **Project Name:** Upper Mainstem – South Fork John Day Conifer Thinning

## **Contact Information**

South Fork John Day Watershed Council

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ODF [REDACTED] John Day District

## **Treatment location** (150-word limit)

The location would encompass HUC12 Smokey Creek-South Fork John Day River, HUC10 Fields Creek John Day River and HUC12 Dry Creek John Day River. The landownership we're striving to target are private lands within those watersheds. The Wildfire Risk Class for the HUC12 Smokey Creek is moderate, the majority of HUC10 Fields Creek is benefit with a little low risk, and HUC12 Dry Creek is benefit. With historic fire suppression and vast current juniper encroachment, we see a great benefit for treating these lands.

We currently have 6 landowners interested in treatments of their high Juniper densities. We will utilize our Juniper Prioritization tool to select high priority treatment areas. This tool prioritizes Juniper treatment based on Juniper phase, slope, aspect, road proximity, stream proximity, and wildlife benefit.

## **Description of Treatment Activities** (350-word limit)

Proposed funding will be used for multiple landowners across the watersheds stated above. The six landowners are interested in conifer thinning on their property to prevent wildlife risk and improve wildlife habitat for Mule Deer and Rocky Mountain Elk. We are requesting \$153,670 to assist six interested landowners and entice more to treat their heavily forested lands in the area. Each landowner enrolled will own 640 acres or less, and we will target thinning approximately 50 acres of conifer (Pine, Fir, or Juniper). We are requesting funding for an additional 50 acres for prospective landowners to total 350 acres. With the landowners already interested and the involvement of Smokey Creek watershed which includes the town of Dayville, we will prioritize thinning to protect infrastructure and roadways.

Most of the woodlands in this geography are heavily encroached by Western Juniper and so most of the funding will be going to thinning out these Juniper stands. According to the Oregon Mule Deer Initiative, western juniper has significantly expanded its range and abundance due to fire suppression and grazing practices of the early 20th century. As juniper densities increase, shrub, grass, and forb species are out competed resulting in significant decline in deer forage.

Reports from the US Forest Service about fire regimes of juniper communities in the Columbia and northern Great basins state as succession proceeds, juniper canopies close and shrubs in the understories die out. Some of these communities are outside the historical range of variability. In late succession, these communities are susceptible to crown fires during severe fire weather. Nonnative annual grasses have increased surface fuel loads and continuity in juniper and

adjacent shrub and grassland steppe communities. This has resulted in shorter fire intervals and larger fires in juniper-sagebrush ecosystems than what likely occurred historically.

Our objective of thinning dense forest stands is to allow more water to penetrate the surface to increase perennial grasses which could outcompete invasive annual grasses as well as enhance forage for wildlife habitat. With the lessened invasives, we hope to decrease the fuel loads and create a fire resilient landscape.

**Description of the anticipated benefit** (250-word limit)

This planned treatment will be close to ongoing work of our 495-acre Juniper cut, pile, and burn project occurring on the Phillip Schneider Wildlife Area across the South Fork John Day River from the Smokey Creek watershed. The South Fork John Day Watershed Council currently has Juniper projects occurring in the Fields Creek watershed to total 400 acres. We also have an ongoing OWEB Stakeholder Engagement grant to aid the Upper Mainstem territory of our watershed. This outreach will help connect private landowners with funding to implement restoration on their properties. We hope to serve vulnerable populations across the watershed by keeping an open source of funding for desperately needed forest treatments. Due to our project occurring in Grant County, we will be able to serve low-income households (14% of the county lives in poverty) and elderly (31% of the county is 65+) all according to the U.S. Census for 2021.

This project is in a vital area due to the South Fork John Day River being its own Conservation Opportunity Area. The COA 171 area includes the South Fork John Day River and mainstem John Day River and surrounding high quality fish and wildlife habitat. Recommended conservation action of “maintain and/or initiate shrub-steppe restoration and management” fits perfectly with our project treatment. Control of western juniper that has encroached into sagebrush rangeland has been shown to increase understory productivity, cover, and diversity (Evans and Young 1984; Rose and Eddleman 1994; Bates et al. 1998; Bates et al. 2006).

**Timeline for implementation** (75-word limit, Bullets preferred)

- February 2022: Funded grant
- February -April 2022: Stakeholder Engagement for treatment projects (e.g. mailings, social media, newspaper and radio ad)
- March 2022 – June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023: Implement and complete projects
- June 2022: Status report to ODF
- June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023: All invoices and reporting sent to ODF

**Budget** (150-word limit) and complete the provided Budget Worksheet

We are proposing for \$153,670 to complete approximately 350 acres of conifer thinning on at least six private land properties. With our added match of the stakeholder engagement grant and the ODFW Wildlife Area Juniper cuts to total \$208,476, the total project cost will be \$362,146. The watershed council is asking for \$27,670 for personnel time, administration funding, supplies, and travel for the project management. We will contract \$126,000 for the conifer thinning and piling. Budget estimates are based on recent bid tours held throughout the watershed, as well as NRCS cost rates.

## Budget Worksheet

Instructions: Fill out blue-bordered boxes

Grant Agreement #/Project Name:

#

/ Upper Mainstem - South Fork John Day Conifer Thinning

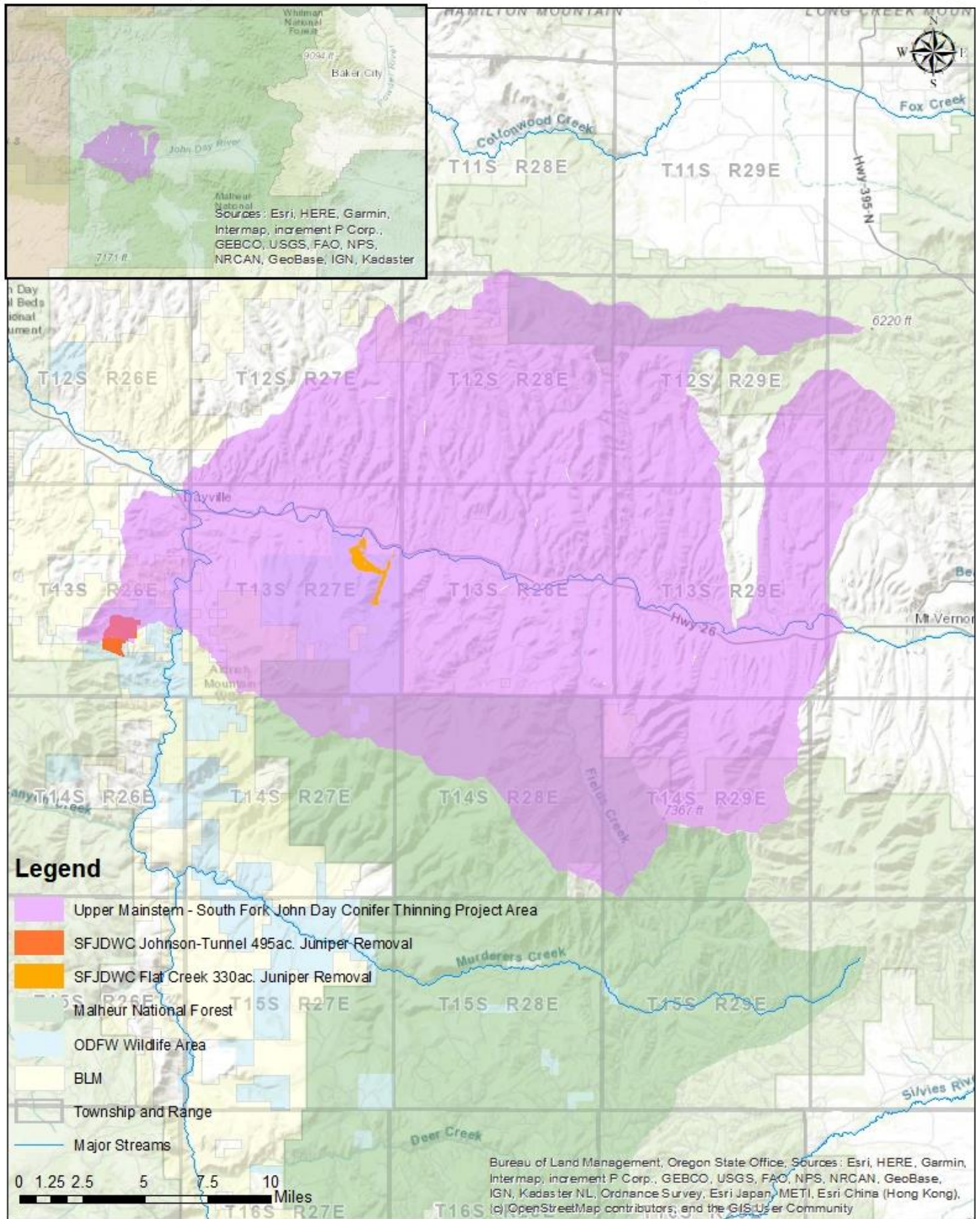
Deliverables	
Below are examples, replace with your projects quantified treatment activities (acres)	
350	350 acres of conifer cutting and piling
#	
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#	
#	
Treatment Footprint	350 acres

Cost Category	Grant Request	Leverage		Total Project Cost
		Match (if any)	Leverage (if any)	
1. Personnel	\$ 11,200.00	\$ 39,226.00		\$ 50,426.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$ 13,970.00			\$ 13,970.00
3. Travel	\$ 1,500.00			\$ 1,500.00
4. Equipment				\$ 0.00
5. Supplies	\$ 1,000.00			\$ 1,000.00
6. Contractual	\$ 126,000.00	\$ 169,250.00		\$ 295,250.00
7. ODF (if applicable)				\$ 0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 153,670.00</b>	<b>\$ 208,476.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 362,146.00</b>

Narrative justification by line item: totals should match claim above.

For each line item	Detail by position or item cost, rate, number of units, and subtotals. Tie costs to Deliverables. <b>Example:</b> Personnel and Fringe ( \$1,480 and \$740=\$2,220) for 1 Ecologist working 40 hours @ \$37/hour to treatment plan 100 acres of fuel treatments
Personnel & Fringe	Personnel: \$11,200 for 1 Executive Director and 1 Project Manager working 160 hours each (320 total) at \$35/hour for outreach and implementation of project Fringe: \$13,970 for 10% of total funds for admin to the watershed council
Travel	Travel: \$1,500 for approximately 2,500 miles at \$.585/mile for project managers to travel to treatment projects across watersheds
Equipment	
Supplies	Supplies: \$1000 for mailings, postage, newspaper ads, and radio ads for outreach to landowners about funding opportunity
Contractual Payments	Contracts: \$126,000 to cut and pile approximately 350 acres of conifer at \$360/acre according to average current conifer treatment prices. Price was increased to account for inflation and type of treatment needed for properties.
ODF (if Applicable)	
Leverage Sources	Our personnel match source is \$39,226 from our OWEB Stakeholder Engagement grant that is used for our Upper Mainstem John Day River territory to engage landowners in restoration projects on their property. The other match sources are \$49,250 from our Flat Creek Juniper Removal cut and pile project for 330 acres combined with our Johnson-Tunnel Juniper Removal project for \$120,000 to cut, pile, and burn 495 acres all on the ODFW Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Area. Total contractual match funds are \$169,250. Overall total match funds are \$208,476.

# SFJDWC Upper Mainstem - South Fork John Day Conifer Thinning



Coordinate System:  
WGS\_1984\_Web\_Mercator\_Auxiliary\_Sphere

Map Scale: 1:300,000

Number of Panel Reviewer #1		Project Name	South Fork John Day Conifer Thinning Final	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	10	
Reviewer Comments	350 acres: Conifer cutting and piling. Utilize Juniper Prioritization tool to select high priority treatment areas which prioritizes Juniper treatment based on Juniper phase, slope, aspect, road proximity, stream proximity. With the lessened invasives, we hope to decrease the fuel loads and create a fire resilient landscape.			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	8	
Reviewer Comments	The Wildfire Risk Class for the HUC12 Smokey Creek is moderate, the majority of HUC10 Fields Creek is benefit with a little low risk, and HUC12 Dry Creek is benefit. We will prioritize thinning to protect infrastructure and roadways.			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	7	
Reviewer Comments	Six landowners enrolled with other landowners already interested.			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	The objective of thinning dense forest stands is to allow more water to penetrate the surface to increase perennial grasses which could outcompete invasive annual grasses as well as enhance forage for wildlife habitat. As juniper densities increase, shrub, grass, and forb species are out competed resulting in significant decline in deer forage. Prioritize wildlife benefit for Mule Deer and Rocky Mountain Elk			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	7	
Reviewer Comments	The South Fork John Day Watershed Council currently has Juniper projects occurring in the Fields Creek watershed to total 400 acres, across the South Fork John Day River. We also have an ongoing OWEB Stakeholder Engagement grant to aid the Upper Mainstem territory of our Watershed.			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	Due to our project occurring in Grant County, we will be able to serve low-income households (14% of the county lives in poverty) and elderly (31% of the county is 65+) all according to the U.S. Census for 2021.			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	This project is in a vital area due to the South Fork John Day River being its own Conservation Opportunity Area – COA 171.			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	0	
Reviewer Comments	Could not find information to address this criterium.			
<b>Final Score</b>		Out of 100	<b>67</b>	

Number of Panel Reviewer # 2		Project Name	Upper Mainstem-South Fork John Day Conifer Thinning	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	15	
Reviewer Comments	lacking in specifics on treatment activities, but clear on need & benefits			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	10	
Reviewer Comments	little to moderate risk, infrastructure noted but not specified			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	yes			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	10	
Reviewer Comments	wildlife habitat enhancement, invasive grasses			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	yes			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	5	
Reviewer Comments	in intent, although not noted for current participants			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	yes			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	0	
Reviewer Comments	not indicated			

**Final Score**

Out of  
100

**75**



Number of Panel Reviewer #3		Project Name	Upper Mainstem- South Fork John Day Conifer Thinning	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	12	
Reviewer Comments	Juniper treatments across multiple land ownerships at ~50 acres each. Appears like a reasonable approach to reduce risk of high severity wildfire, but it's over a very large area. More detail on the treatment though would benefit the application			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	12	
Reviewer Comments	Application was confusing in denoting wildfire risk class. Will prioritize treatments to protect infrastructure.			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	Multiple properties.			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	Application focuses on how project will benefit mule deer, and potentially reduce invasive annual grasses (although that's a little less clear without active treatments)			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	8	
Reviewer Comments	Map includes other treatments within project footprint. Footprint is quite large though.			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	Application notes vulnerable communities within Grant County (demographics)			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	South Fork John Day COA			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	0	
Reviewer Comments	Not noted			
<b>Final Score</b>		Out of 100	<b>82</b>	



Number of Panel Reviewer # 4		Project Name	South Fork John Day Conifer Thinning	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	10	
Reviewer Comments	The proposal is describing a general treat and no specific landowner treatment focused on thinning and juniper treatment			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	7	
Reviewer Comments	The area is primary open rangelands along the John Day and in a medium to low-risk zone.			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	7	
Reviewer Comments	The proposal addresses the potential interest of 6 landowners.			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	7	
Reviewer Comments	The treatments may address these risks but are not clearly defined to do so.			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	5	
Reviewer Comments	The proposal does not clearly define a collaborative effort.			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	5	
Reviewer Comments	The project area is very rural and has a low-density population.			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	5	
Reviewer Comments	No specific forest management plans are identified for the 6 landowners listed in the proposal.			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	0	
Reviewer Comments	The project doesn't identify non-traditional forest products			
<b>Final Score</b>		Out of 100	<b>46</b>	

Number of Panel Reviewer # 5		Project Name	SFJD Conifer Thinning	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	17	
Reviewer Comments	Clearly describes treatment activities with metrics. Discusses future condition improvements			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	5	
Reviewer Comments	In a low risk area, states that thinning will prioritize infrastructure and roadways but does not quantify.			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	6 landowners identified with an additional 50 acres including new landowners			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	14	
Reviewer Comments	One of the best applications demonstrating additional resource concerns, drought and enhancing wildlife specifically, mentions invasive species. Maintenance plan would have been great.			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	8	
Reviewer Comments	Mentions other treatment areas and displays some on map. Quantified investments from partner/adjacent projects would have led to a higher score.			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	6	
Reviewer Comments	Provides area level demographic information but "hopes to serve vulnerable populations". Would have like to see treatment relation/prioritized funding to these populations. Does mention outreach that may help this.			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	8	
Reviewer Comments	COA, treatment activities are tied directly to COA listed. Another planning area or landowner forest mgmt. plans would have led to a higher score.			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	0	
Reviewer Comments	None listed.			
<b>Final Score</b>		Out of 100	<b>73</b>	