Forest Management Treatments Adjacent to Reservoirs and Within Watershed ZOCs

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Projects

- Upper South Platte Watershed Restoration Project
- Moonridge/Sprucewood Stevens Project
Upper South Platte Watershed Restoration Project

• Objectives:
  – Reduce catastrophic wildfires and risks to human life, property, water quality, and air quality
  – Assess the effectiveness of landscape-scale forest protection and restoration practices

• Partners:
  – USFS (South Platte Ranger District, Rocky Mountain Research Station)
  – CSFS
  – Denver Water
  – Environmental Protection Agency
  – CSU
Upper South Platte Watershed Restoration Project

• Timeline:
  – 1998: Concept developed
  – 1999: Funding obtained/landscape assessment completed/implementation on ground (DW)
  – 2000: EA completed for USFS lands
  – Most work completed 1999-2008

• Forest management activities include: ponderosa pine restoration, thinning, wildfire hazard reduction, prescribed fire, reforestation, post-fire erosion control.
The Upper South Platte Project
Management Activities
Challenges

• Limited road access to treatment areas
  – Potential haul roads too steep, narrow
  – Minimal opportunities for new roads
  – Winch/skid material
Challenges

- Abundance of small diameter material (non-merch)
Challenges/Opportunities

• Limited markets for large and small diameter material
  – Local contractors utilizing firewood, boughs, post/poles on small scale
  – Firewood permits for adjoining/local landowners
Opportunities

• Scale of treatments/merchantable material
  – Partner with USFS on adjoining lands

Swayback/Jenny Gulch Timber Sale 2006/2007

• 400 acres

• Create openings

• Further reduce stand densities

• Test Finney’s research on landscape fuels treatments to reduce fire spread

• 1.2 million feet
Swayback/Jenny Gulch

Pre-treatment
Moonridge/Sprucewood Project
Moonridge/Sprucewood Project

– Private lands within Strontia ZOC
  • Past treatments through Forest Ag program and various grant funds (ESF, FRFTP, Stevens, EQIP).
  • Meeting with community in 2011

– Funding:
  • Stevens/CAFA: Treat adjacent non-Federal lands to protect communities when prescribed fire projects are planned on NFS lands that have the potential to place such communities at risk.
    – USFS Bear/Bennett Mountain Treatment Areas (pile burns)
  • Colorado Forest Restoration Grant (DW)

– Objectives:
  • Improve forest health and reduce wildfire hazards
  • Reduce tree densities, improve crown spacing between residual trees, remove ladder fuels, break up contiguous oak
Project Areas

STEVENS Grant: Priority #1 Fuels Mitigation Area: 276.5 acres
STEVENS Grant Priority #2 and #3 Project Areas: ~227 acres
SPRD_Completed_Restoration_Treatment
SPRD_Future_Restoration_Treatment
Moonridge/Sprucewood Project

- Phase 1: 276.5 acres
  - Project funding received 2012/2013
  - Work started 2013, completion summer 2015

- Phase 2: 199 acres (91 acres funded)
  - Completion fall 2015

- Phase 3: Remaining acres from Phase 2 (108 acres) with additional 28 acres

- ~50-60 landowners, several large acreage
Moonridge/Sprucewood Project

– Treatment methods:
  • Masticate trees under 7” dbh
  • Harvest trees above 7” dbh for firewood, sawlogs, post/poles
  • To date: 1300 cords firewood harvested, 15 loads sawlogs sold

– Equipment used:
  • Bobcat/Kubota tracked skid steer with fecon head, tree shear
  • Skidder
Next Steps

• Secure additional funding for Phase 2/3

• Discussions with landowners surrounding Moonridge Project area