



Heavens Forest Management Project

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Heavens Forest Management Project lies within the Front Range of the Colorado Rocky Mountains, approximately 9 miles southeast of Conifer, Colo. The project is an Upper South Platte Partnership project and is located on the properties of five landowners who jointly own 556 acres of private land. A total of 359 acres have been identified for forest management activities and delineated as a treatment area. The treatment area has been broken into 12 units, each with a unique prescription. The area contains two different forest types, along with openings and meadows dispersed throughout the properties.



A planned treatment unit in the Heavens Forest Management Project (Photo Credit: CSFS Golden Field Office)

PROJECT PURPOSE

The Heavens Forest Management Project is designed to address forest restoration, fuels reduction and watershed health. Forest restoration will occur by returning tree densities to a state more resilient to current and future landscape disturbances such as wildfire and forest insect and disease outbreaks. The reduction of fuels will occur by creating changes to the forest structure that will reduce the potential intensity and impacts of a wildfire, providing opportunities for successful fire suppression activities and improvement of ingress and egress routes for homeowners. The overall health of the forest will benefit through forest restoration and fuels reduction activities while protecting water resources in the Upper South Platte watershed from potential post-fire impacts.

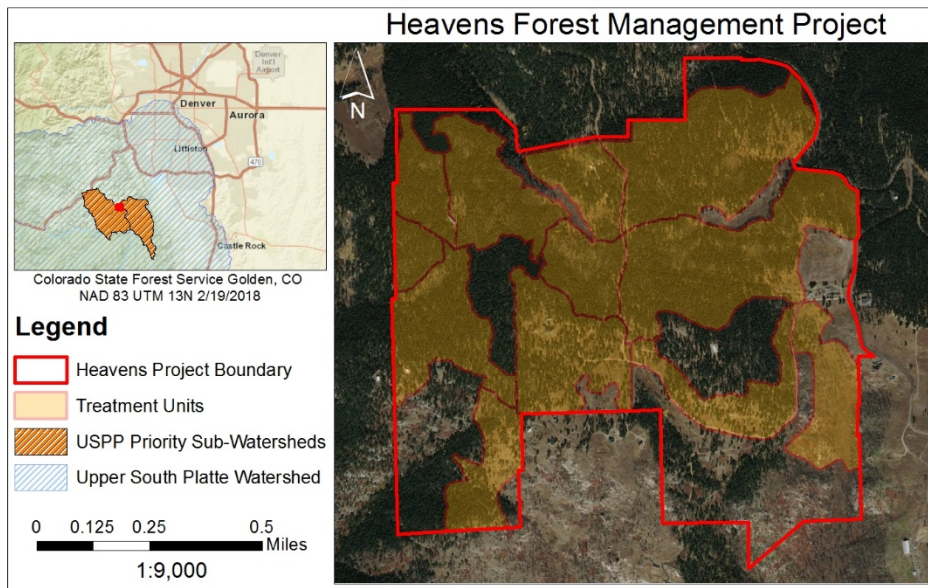
FOREST CONDITIONS

The elevation within the Heavens Forest Management Project ranges from approximately 7,900 to 8,800 feet. Throughout the project area, there are two main forest types: dry mixed-conifer and wet mixed-conifer. Lower elevation sites are mainly dry mixed-conifer, composed of ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, aspen and Rocky Mountain juniper. Higher elevation sites transition into wet mixed-conifer forest, consisting of the same species as well as some lodgepole pine and Engelmann spruce. Throughout the treatment area, the average tree density is approximately 150 trees per acre, with lower densities occurring on southern-facing slopes and higher densities on northern-facing slopes.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF WORK

The Heavens Forest Management Project aims to achieve the project goals through whole-tree harvesting and full product utilization. Specific treatment prescriptions were developed and guided by current forest conditions, aspect, elevation, soils and underlying moisture regimes. Treatments around roads will follow fuelbreak guidelines to improve egress routes for the community and provide opportunities for wildland fire suppression. Meadows will be restored and expanded by removing unwanted conifers to promote healthy and functional ecosystems while also providing safety zones for firefighters in the event of a wildfire. Conifers will be removed from aspen stands to discourage competition and promote new aspen regeneration. All trees harvested will be utilized as wood products, such as saw logs and firewood, or wood chips for a biomass power plant in Gypsum, Colo.

MAP



Heavens Project Location Map (Map Credit: CSFS Golden Field Office)

COOPERATORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Colorado State Forest Service, Denver Water, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Forest Service, Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District, Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, American Forest Foundation

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Colorado State Forest Service: <https://csfs.colostate.edu/>
- Upper South Platte Partnership: <http://uppersouthplattepartnership.org/>
- Addington et al. 2018. Principles and practices for the restoration of ponderosa pine and dry mixed-conifer forests of the Colorado Front Range. RMRS-GTR-373. Fort Collins, CO: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station. 121 p.

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