

Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project



Summer 2012 AFR Project News

AFR's Current Phase: Commercial Thinning

This summer, Lomakatsi Restoration Project will oversee the first 100 acres of environmentally sensitive, ecological forestry work, which will reduce hazardous fuels to protect water quality, older forests, wildlife, people, property and quality of life. Work for this phase of the project began on July 9th, 2012. Through a competitive solicitation and bidding process, Lomakatsi and the AFR partnership selected Forest Energy Group, a local logging contractor to implement the project. Lomakatsi managers are overseeing the daily operations of the project, working closely with Forest Energy Group and the Forest Service. The ecological forestry work will generate logs as the byproducts of the forest restoration work, which will be sent to Murphy Veneer, a local mill in White City. From this 100 acres, 275,000 board feet of lumber will be generated. This is equivalent to 85 log trucks, each truck carrying an average of 3,000 board feet per load.

Project Objectives

Reduce Fuel Hazards and Forest Stand Density

Many decades of fire suppression and former management practices encouraging rapid and dense tree regeneration have resulted in an overabundance of dense, young forests. Vast areas of extremely high tree densities present a variety of forest health issues including increased canopy fire potential, poorer individual tree growth and health, and reduced cover and diversity of ecologically important understory plant species. Density management reverses these trends by reducing tree density, breaking up canopy fuel continuity, and, in many cases, increasing the diversity of tree ages and sizes within the stand.



Protect and Enhance Older Trees

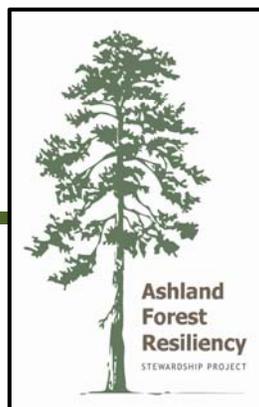
When older trees (a.k.a. "legacy" trees) remain in a forest landscape where fire suppression and prior management have resulted in dense growth of young trees, the resilience and health of old trees can be compromised. This occurs when many young trees grow up and surround old growth legacy trees, competing for water, sunlight, and nutrients. If the encroaching trees are of a more shade-tolerant species (i.e. white fir or Douglas-fir) the encroached old growth may suffer greater stress as its higher light requirements are compromised by shade from increased tree density. Increase in density of young trees around old growth also creates increased potential for disease transmittance and detrimental canopy fire. Legacy tree release removes younger trees from the immediate vicinity of old growth in order to restore and promote legacy tree vigor and

survival by reducing competition, canopy fuel, and potential for the spread of forest diseases and pests.



Restore Forest Health and Resiliency

Studies have found that forests with greater diversity of tree ages, sizes, species, and structural arrangements (i.e. variable density or forest patchiness) are generally more resilient to insect and disease outbreaks, climate variations, and extreme wildfires. Both density management and legacy tree release described above focus on maintaining or improving forest diversity and individual tree health to encourage progression toward more resilient, healthier forest stands.

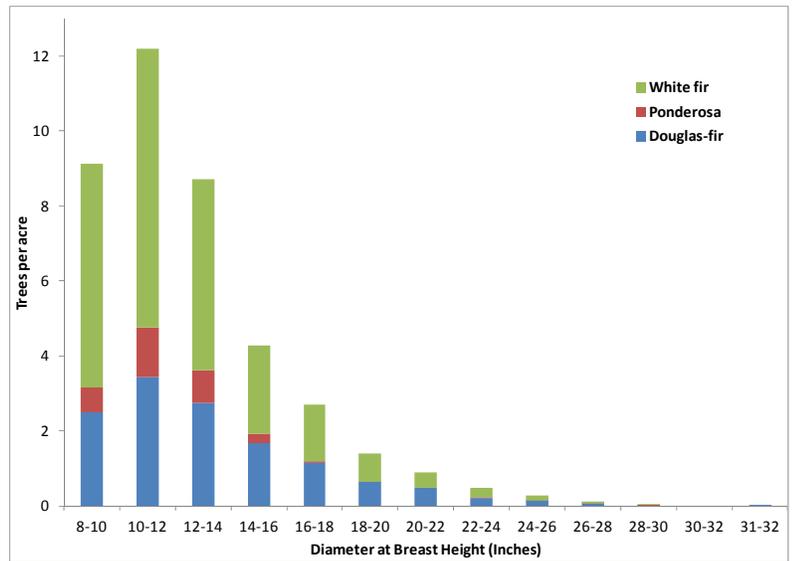


Protecting Our Soils

In an effort to protect effective ground cover and minimize treatment impacts to the soil, machinery will operate on previously cut limbs and tops wherever possible, and tree removal routes will be concentrated to identified skid trails leaving the majority of the forest soils free from disturbance.

Skid Trails and Log Landings

Skid trails are the pathways created to transport trees that have been cut to the log landing. A log landing is an identified central staging location where logs are hauled, stacked, and loaded onto trucks to take to the mill. To reduce landscape impacts from logging operations, there are no new roads being built and only pre-existing skid trails and log landings are being utilized.



From the data collected from the AFR project, this histogram shows that the majority of the trees that will be cut are of a small diameter and in most cases are surrounding the larger legacy trees.

Logging Equipment Used

Hitachi 200 Track Mounted Log Loader



Used for pulling logs from the forest onto the road and loading logs onto log trucks.

548E Rubber Tired Grapple Skidder



Used to skid logs to the log landing and to drag slash onto skid trails for restoration.

John Deere 650H Skidder / Dozer



Used to move logs to log landings and clear debris.

Cat 320L Log Loader with Jewel Tong Throwing Attachment



Used to pull logs onto established skid trails.



Short Term Impacts for Long-Term Forest Health Benefits

In an effort to reduce extreme fuel hazards and forest density, the removal of selected trees will be facilitated through ecological thinning and log removal operations. There will be some minor short-term impacts and compaction on existing skid trails. The long-term benefits of restoring the health of the forest ecosystem and reducing the risk of future catastrophic wildfires is vital to maintaining the integrity and health of the Ashland Watershed.