Healthy Forests Report

FY 2007 Accomplishments

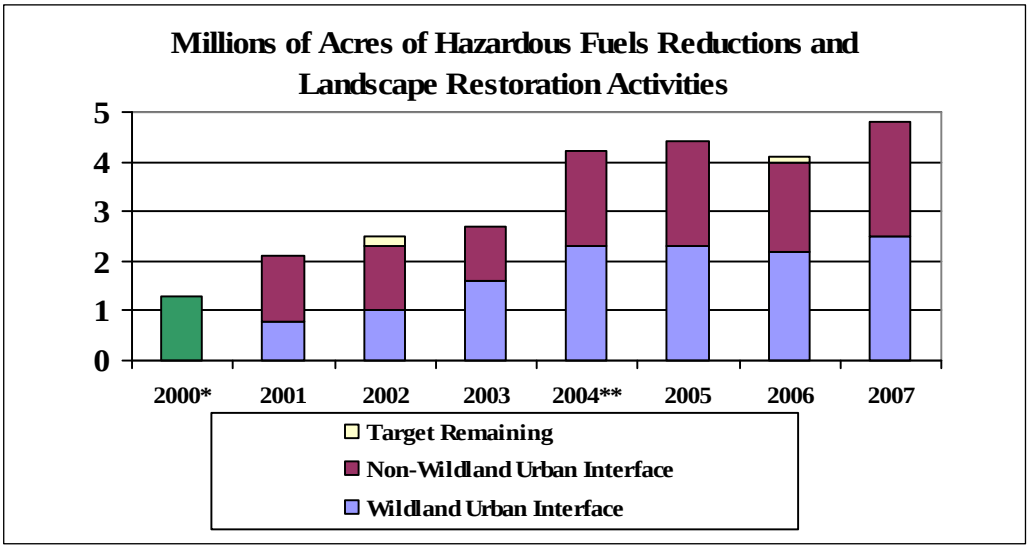
The Department of the Interior (DOI) and the USDA Forest Service implement the National Fire Plan (NFP) and Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI) to help save the lives of firefighters and citizens and to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire to our communities, forests, and rangelands.

HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION & LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PROJECTS

An excessive accumulation of hazardous or unusually flammable fuels in our forests, woodlands, and grasslands is the root cause of the unprecedented fire risk facing our public lands. Land managers remove hazardous fuels via programs funded specifically for that purpose and in other programs whose principle goals are to achieve a variety of resource management objectives that can be broadly labeled landscape restoration. Treatments occur both inside and outside the wildland urban interface (WUI).

1. Inside the WUI treatments reduce fuels around homes, communities, and resources to slow or stop wildland fires from threatening these high-value areas.
2. Beyond the WUI, treatments not only help protect communities by creating conditions that enable firefighters to more successfully suppress fires before they enter the WUI but also reduce fire severity and its impact on valued landscapes and natural resources.

From 2001 through 2007, Federal land management agencies have treated over 24 million acres of federal lands under the Healthy Forest Initiative and the National Fire Plan. The effectiveness of these treatments in protecting communities and resources from wildfire has been demonstrated numerous times.



→ Set at Fiscal Year target to display over-accomplishment

* FY 2000 is used as a baseline for reporting, as the NFP was implemented in FY 2001. Treatment location was not included in reporting prior to FY 2001.

** Acres treated under landscape restoration activities were not reported prior to FY 2004.

Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Landscape Restoration Accomplishments
2001-2007
(Acres in millions)

	Wildland Urban Interface				Non-Wildland Urban Interface				
	Rx Fire	**Mechanical**	**Other**	**Total**	**Rx Fire**	**Mechanical**	**Other**	**Total**	**Grand Total**
2001									
FS	0.461	0.140	0.011	0.612	0.685	0.064	0.001	0.750	**1.362**
DOI	0.088	0.075	0.001	0.164	0.419	0.110	0.035	0.564	**0.728**
Total	**0.549**	**0.215**	**0.012**	**0.776**	**1.104**	**0.174**	**0.036**	**1.314**	**2.090**
2002									
FS	0.711	0.051	0.002	0.764	0.433	0.061	0.000	0.494	**1.258**
DOI	0.069	0.125	0.015	0.209	0.635	0.149	0.066	0.850	**1.059**
Total	**0.780**	**0.176**	**0.017**	**0.973**	**1.068**	**0.210**	**0.066**	**1.344**	**2.317**
2003									
FS	0.970	0.143	0.001	1.114	0.281	0.058	0.000	0.339	**1.453**
DOI	0.218	0.158	0.104	0.480	0.567	0.103	0.109	0.779	**1.259**
Total	**1.188**	**0.301**	**0.105**	**1.594**	**0.848**	**0.161**	**0.109**	**1.118**	**2.712**
2004									
FS*	1.163	0.436	0.101	1.700	0.491	0.357	0.013	0.861	**2.561**
DOI	0.250	0.294	0.016	0.560	0.572	0.299	0.200	1.071	**1.631**
Total	**1.413**	**0.730**	**0.117**	**2.260**	**1.063**	**0.656**	**0.213**	**1.932**	**4.192**
2005									
FS*	1.044	0.515	0.099	1.658	0.688	0.343	0.033	1.064	**2.722**
DOI	0.284	0.276	0.049	0.609	0.598	0.233	0.180	1.011	**1.620**
Total	**1.328**	**0.791**	**0.148**	**2.267**	**1.286**	**0.576**	**0.213**	**2.075**	**4.342**
2006									
FS*	0.812	0.683	0.095	1.590	0.580	0.356	0.021	0.957	**2.547**
DOI	0.243	0.236	0.108	0.587	0.420	0.229	0.220	0.869	**1.456**
Total	**1.055**	**0.919**	**0.203**	**2.177**	**1.000**	**0.585**	**0.241**	**1.826**	**4.003**
2007									
FS*	1.018	0.392	0.244	1.654	0.858	0.504	0.011	1.373	**3.027**
DOI*	0.332	0.244	0.275	0.851	0.663	0.168	0.105	0.936	**1.787**
Total	**1.350**	**0.636**	**0.519**	**2.505**	**1.521**	**0.672**	**0.116**	**2.309**	**4.814**
FS Total	**6.179**	**2.360**	**0.553**	**9.092**	**4.016**	**1.743**	**0.079**	**5.838**	**14.930**
DOI Total	**1.484**	**1.408**	**0.568**	**3.460**	**3.874**	**1.291**	**0.915**	**6.080**	**9.540**
Grand Total	**7.663**	**3.768**	**1.121**	**12.552**	**7.890**	**3.034**	**0.994**	**11.918**	**24.470**

* All treatment work that reduces hazardous fuel or improves condition class, including State Fire Assistance Hazard Mitigation Grants and Wildland Fire Use

Table 1: Fiscal Year 2007 HFI Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Landscape Restoration Activities

	Hazardous Fuels Appropriations (acres accomplished)		Landscape Restoration Appropriations (acres accomplished)		
Treatment Type	**Prescribed Fire**	**Mechanical & Other**	**Prescribed Fire**	**Mechanical & Other**	**TOTAL**
Forest Service	1,442,000	284,000	434,000	867,000	3,027,000
DOI	836,000	497,000	159,000	295,000	1,787,000
TOTAL	2,278,000	781,000	593,000	1,161,000	4,814,000

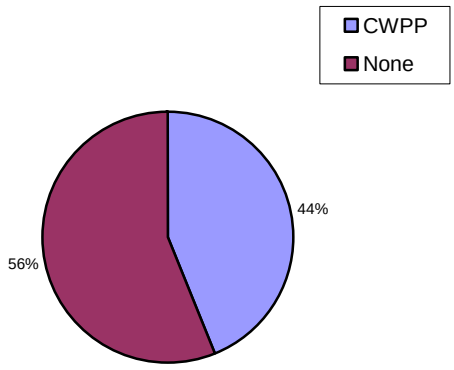
Note: Total includes acres treated through State Fire Assistance hazard mitigation grants and Wildland Fire Use.

Hazardous Fuels and Landscape Restoration Priorities

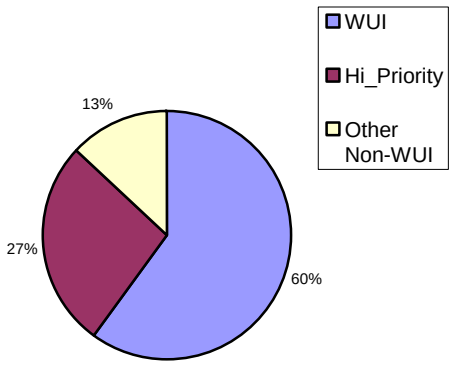
The Forest Service and the Department of the Interior design hazardous fuels reduction and landscape restoration activities to meet one or more of three objectives:

1. Directly reduce wildfire threats within the wildland urban interface.
2. Treat areas outside of the wildland-urban interface (non-WUI) that are at greatest risk of catastrophic wildland fire. These *high priority non-WUI treatments* reduce the risk of unwanted fire to natural resources, achieve other natural resource management objectives and in some cases also serve to protect WUI areas.
3. Maintain desired landscape conditions achieved through previous treatments outside the WUI in order to retain the associated benefits.

WUI Acres Treated Associated with a Community Wildfire Protection Plan in FY 2007



Treatment by Restoration Priority in FY 2007



TREATMENT BY AUTHORITIES

Table 2: Healthy Forests Activities

	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	TOTAL
HFRA Title I Authorities	33,000	99,000	163,000	**295,000**
HFI Authorities	289,000	362,000	417,000	**1,068,000**
Other NEPA Decisions #	3,322,000	2,904,000	2,524,000	**8,750,000**
Other Authorities *	684,000	605,000	1,710,000	**2,999,000**
TOTAL	**4,328,000**	**3,970,000**	**4,814,000**	**13,112,000**

 # - Typically NEPA tools or decisions predating HFI and HFRA

** - Includes activity on private land and decisions where the NEPA tool is unspecified*

STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS & AGREEMENTS AWARDED

Stewardship contracting includes natural resource management activities that improve land conditions. These projects shift the focus of federal forest and rangeland management towards a desired future resource condition. They are also a means for federal agencies to contribute to the development of sustainable rural communities, maintain healthy forest ecosystems, and provide a continuing source of local income and employment.

Table 3: Stewardship Contracts & Agreements

	Bureau of Land Management		Forest Service	
2003	2 contracts	300 acres	50 contracts	14,000 acres
2004	22 contracts	6100 acres	64 contracts	42,000 acres
2005	58 contracts awarded	15,700 acres	45 contracts	35,500 acres
2006	56 contracts awarded	20,900 acres	92 contracts	57,500 acres
2007	63 contracts awarded	9,900 acres	121 contracts	77,600 acres
Total	**573 contracts / agreements for 279,500 acres***			

*Not all projects in table above were authorized under HFRA.

UTILIZATION OF FOREST BYPRODUCTS

Byproducts removed during hazardous fuels reduction and landscape restoration activities are often utilized in certain forest products (timber, engineered lumber, paper and pulp, furniture) and bio-energy and bio-based products (plastics, ethanol, and diesel). In FY 2007, the Forest Service and DOI treated 1.3 million acres mechanically; of these, 23% have included biomass utilization.

In September 2007, the interagency Woody Biomass Utilization Desk Guide was completed. The purpose of the Desk Guide is to: 1) provide a quick reference guide; 2) assess the viability of offsetting hazardous fuels and ecosystem restoration treatment costsby utilizing marketable small-diameter trees and other biomass; 3) provide suggestions regarding how to use current NEPA planning tools to start and maintain a biomass-utilization program; and 4) provide cost-effective sale preparation and timber sale, stewardship, and service contract preparation techniques to provide increased supplies of biomass. The Desk Guide is available on-line at http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/Woody_Biomass/documents/biomass_deskguide.pdf.

Further, the Forest Service continued its commitment to furthering biomass utiliztion through awarding 17 grant proposals for forest product projects that increase the use of woody biomass from National Forest system lands The woody biomass utilization grant program is intended to help improve forest restoration activities by using and creating markets for small-diameter material and low-valued trees removed from forest restoration activities, such as reducing hazardous fuels, handling insect and diseased conditions, or treating forestlands impacted by catastrophic weather events.

For further information on the Forest Service's woody biomass programs, visit the Woody Biomass Utilization website at http://www.fs.fed.us/woodybiomass, and for further information on Department of the Interior and interagency woody biomass programs and coordination, visit: http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/Woody_Biomass/index.shtml.

HFRA TITLE IV: APPLIED RESEARCH

The Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003 contained provisions under Section 403 and 404 of Title IV authorizing accelerated information gathering (AIG) and applied silvicultural assessments (ASAs) for insect and disease problems listed in the act or identified by the Secretary of Agriculture. Ten projects are currently being conducted nationally:

- Southern pine beetle, West Gulf region
- Gypsy moth-oak decline, Kentucky
- Gypsy moth effects, West Virginia
- Red oak borer, Arkansas Ozarks
- Hemlock wooly adelgid, Allegheny National Forest
- Hemlock wooly adelgid, Southern Appalachians
- Fuels treatments, California
- Western white pine and blister rust, Pacific Northwest region
- Port of entry and origin trapping systems for exotic beetles,
- Pine-feeding insects, Florida (complete)

To date, these projects have produced 40 peer-reviewed publications, 4 MS Theses, 1 PhD Dissertation, and 60 presentations.

FOREST SERVICE USE OF COUNTERPART REGULATIONS

Since the Counterpart Regulation's training module on procedures, Section 7 consultation standards of review and monitoring was prepared in March, 2004, 331 Forest Service line officers and 579 biologists have taken the training and been certified to use the regulations. As of February, 2007, more than 160 NFP projects utilized the process. The evaluation of Counterpart Regulation use is ongoing; the results of this continued effort will be used to make improvements for the use of this important tool.

HEALTHY FORESTS AND COMMUNITIES

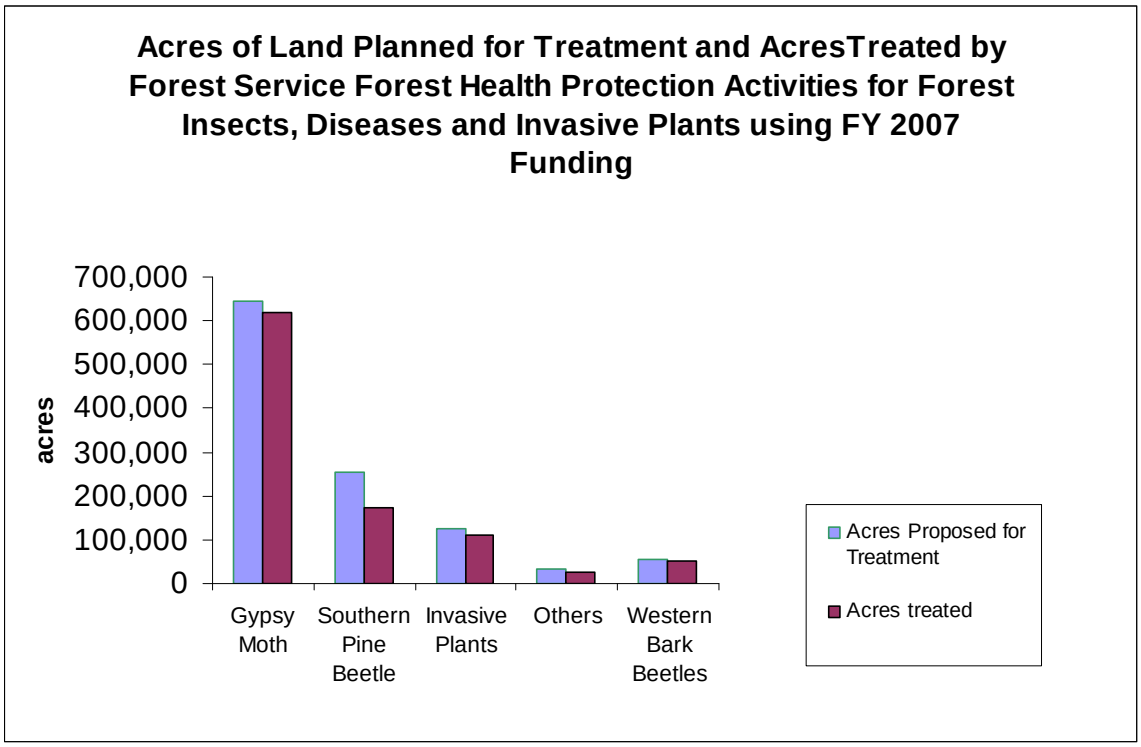
In FY 2007, assistance and funding were provided for hazard assessments and Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) for Communities at Risk (CAR). CWPPs address wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness and structure protection; CWPPs provide communities a tremendous opportunity to influence where and how Federal agencies implement fuels reduction plans on Federal and non-federal lands.

State Foresters evaluate the progress made toward reducing the threat of wildfire in communities at risk. A CAR may be considered at reduced risk by the State Forester if the community has treated high priority fuels according to its CWPP, achieved Firewise or equivalent recognition or has enacted mitigation or fire prevention ordinances. The following chart illustrates the current status of CWPPs, as well as Communities At Risk.

NASF Region	States With CAR List/Map	Total CAR	Communities Covered By CWPPs	CAR at Reduced Risk
West	17	6,169	3,145	1,412
South	13	40,984	1,160	888
NE	19	4,459	457	1,514
TOTAL	49	51,612	4,762	3,814

INVASIVE SPECIES AND FOREST HEALTH

Forest Service Forest Health Protection activities include both prevention and suppression efforts and provide resources to restore lands impacted by native and nonnative forest pests on federal, state and private lands. Some of the nonnative pests addressed in FY 2007 included hemlock woolly adelgid, white pine blister rust, gypsy moth, sudden oak death, emerald ash borer, Asian long horned beetle, Sirex wood wasp, cycad scale, wiliwili gall wasp and invasive plants. Nearly one million acres were treated as a result of Forest Health Protection efforts funded in FY 2007.


Acres of Land Planned for Treatment and AcresTreated by Forest Service Forest Health Protection Activities for Forest Insects, Diseases and Invasive Plants using FY 2007 Funding
acres
700,000
600,000
500,000
400,000
300,000
200,000
100,000
0
Gypsy Moth
Southern Pine Beetle
Invasive Plants
Others
Western Bark Beetles
Acres Proposed for Treatment
Acres treated