



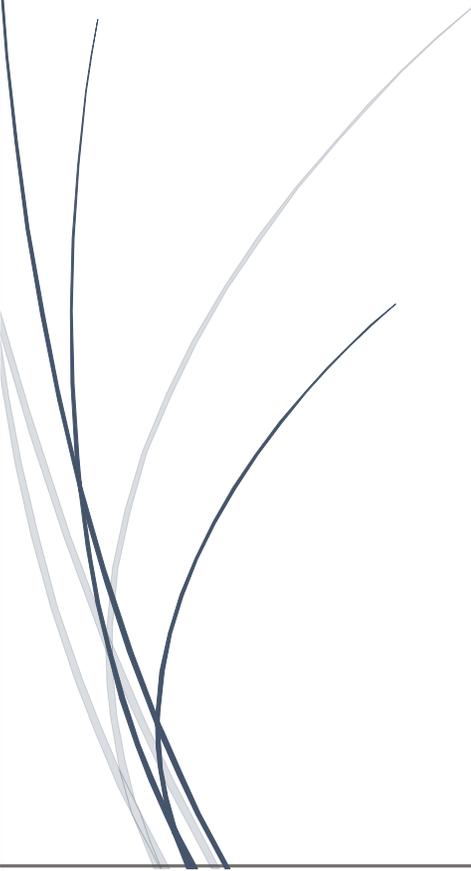
2022

Lewis & Clark County

Forest Resiliency in the Wolf Creek Community

Targeted Implementation Plan

Phase One



Lewis & Clark County
Forest Resiliency in the Wolf Creek Community TIP

Program: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Land Use(s) Eligible: Forest

Resource Concern Category: “Degraded Plant Condition”

Primary Resource Concern: “Excessive plant pest pressure”

Secondary Resource Concern: “Inadequate structure and composition” and “Wildfire hazard, excessive biomass accumulation”

Proposed Project Dates: Fiscal Year (September 30th) 2022 – 2026

Project Summary:

This project directly addresses phase one, phases two through five will be separate projects with independent proposals expected in the next five years. Planning for future phases has begun and will continue in conjunction with this project.

The goal of this Targeted Implementation Plan (TIP) is to restore forests to a healthy and resilient condition around the community of Wolf Creek by assisting private landowners in mitigating the impacts of forest pests and reducing the risk of wildfire. Forest pest activity in the area has negatively affected the health of the forest by killing large numbers of native conifers. The resource concern category that will be addressed is “Degraded Plant Condition” with a focus on the primary resource concern “excessive plant pest pressure” and consideration given to the secondary resource concerns “Inadequate structure and composition” and “wildfire hazard, excessive biomass accumulation”. Removal of dead, dying, and undesirable trees will increase plant productivity and health, improve forest structure and composition, and reduce plant pest pressure in treated stands, while simultaneously mitigating wildfire hazard.

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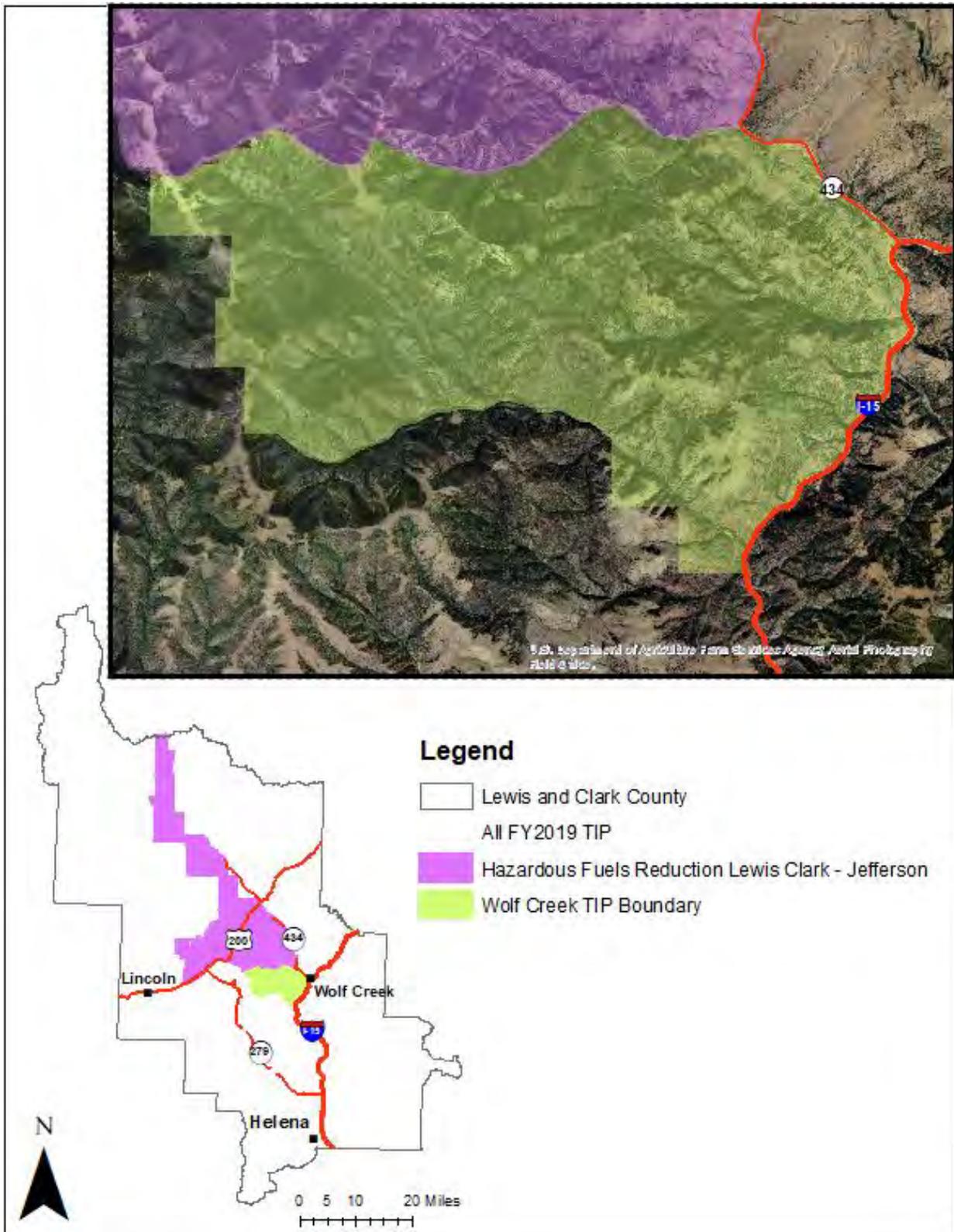


Figure 1. Project Location Map

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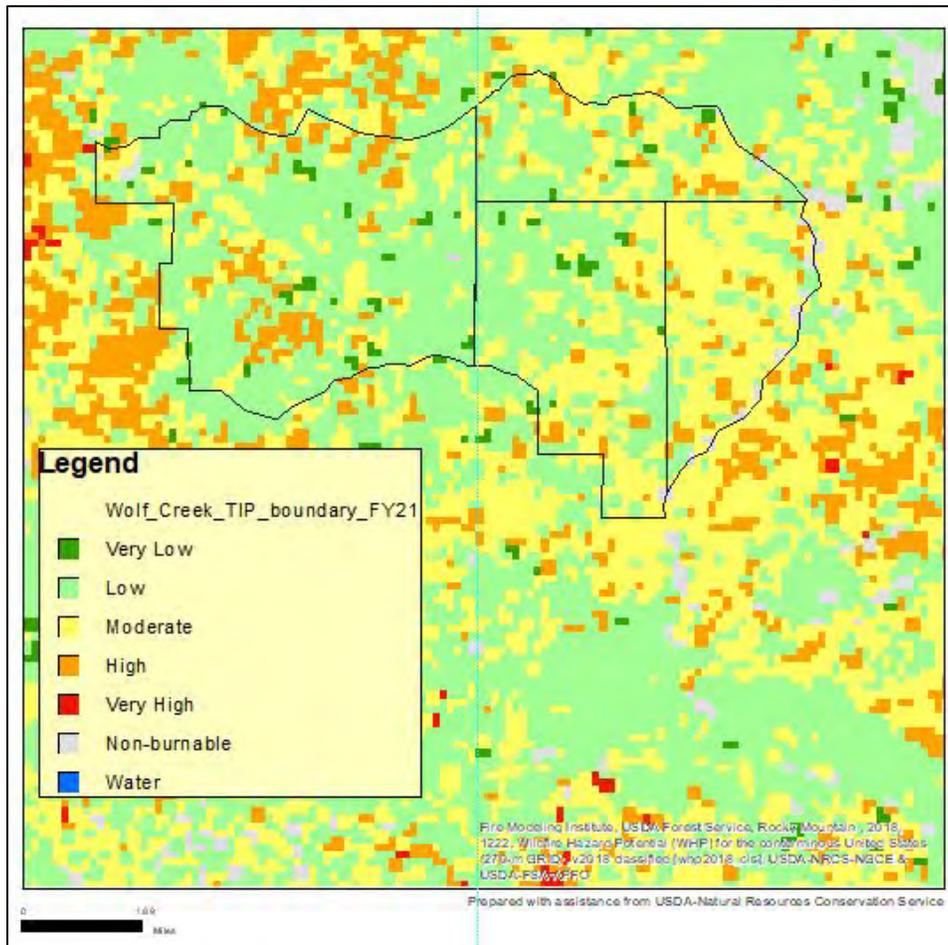


Figure 2. Wildfire Hazard Potential Map for whole project area. This map is a raster geospatial product produced by the USDA Forest Service. Areas with higher Wildfire Hazard Potential values represent fuels with a higher probability of experiencing torching, crowning, and other forms of extreme fire behavior under conducive weather conditions, based primarily on landscape conditions. <https://www.firelab.org/project/wildfire-hazard-potential>

Based on preliminary inventory data collected by the Field Office the number of trees per acre (TPA) within the TIP's targeted focus area tend to correlate with the wildfire hazard potential categories. Trees per acre for each category are listed below, these are intended to show trends, not to be used as a diagnostic tool to determine current conditions.

- Very low: 0-800 TPA
- Low: 801-1,200 TPA
- Moderate: 1,201-1,600 TPA
- High: 1,601-2,000 TPA
- Very High: 2,001+ TPA

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Multi-Phased Approach:

Due to geographic, time, financial, and outreach limitations, we propose breaking our TIP into five phases (see figure 3). Each phase will be presented as a separate TIP proposal; this project represents the first of five phases. Phase one was selected as the initial project because it has the greatest number of landowners who have expressed interest in starting projects soon.

By breaking the TIP into multiple phases, the Field Office will be able to distribute the resources and workload required to achieve landowner goals over a greater span of time. The dominant factor influencing this decision is the extraordinary amount of funds that would need to be obligated in a single round of funding to accomplish the project. Our estimations show that over the life of the project, over five million dollars of assistance are needed.

A series of five phases is optimal for this situation as it provides four primary phases which capture early adopters and adopters. Once the initial four phases are completed and the area geographically covered, a fifth phase can be utilized to cover the area in its entirety to capture late adopters and bring a positive wrap to the project. The intent of the final (fifth) phase is to include any individuals who may have been missed for various reasons during the previous four phases. This allows the Field Office to incorporate those landowners who are enticed into cooperation based on the work they see happening on their neighbor’s properties. The Helena Field Office recognizes that not all individuals like to pioneer new projects or management techniques, some people like to watch and learn from the success, and failures of others before initiating work of their own. The final phase is designed to allow those learning types to participate in this project, avoiding penalizing those who are slow to the table in the pursuit of the most complete final outcomes.

Table 1. Landowners and Respective Acreage, within all five phases

Owner	Acres within whole TIP Boundary
Private	19,179 ac
BLM	398 ac
Forest Service	640 ac
State of Montana	9,888 ac
Total	30,105 ac

There is a total of 30,105 acres within the whole, five phase TIP boundary. Of the privately owned lands about 17,200 acres are forested, which represents 90% of the 19,179 acres of privately owned lands.

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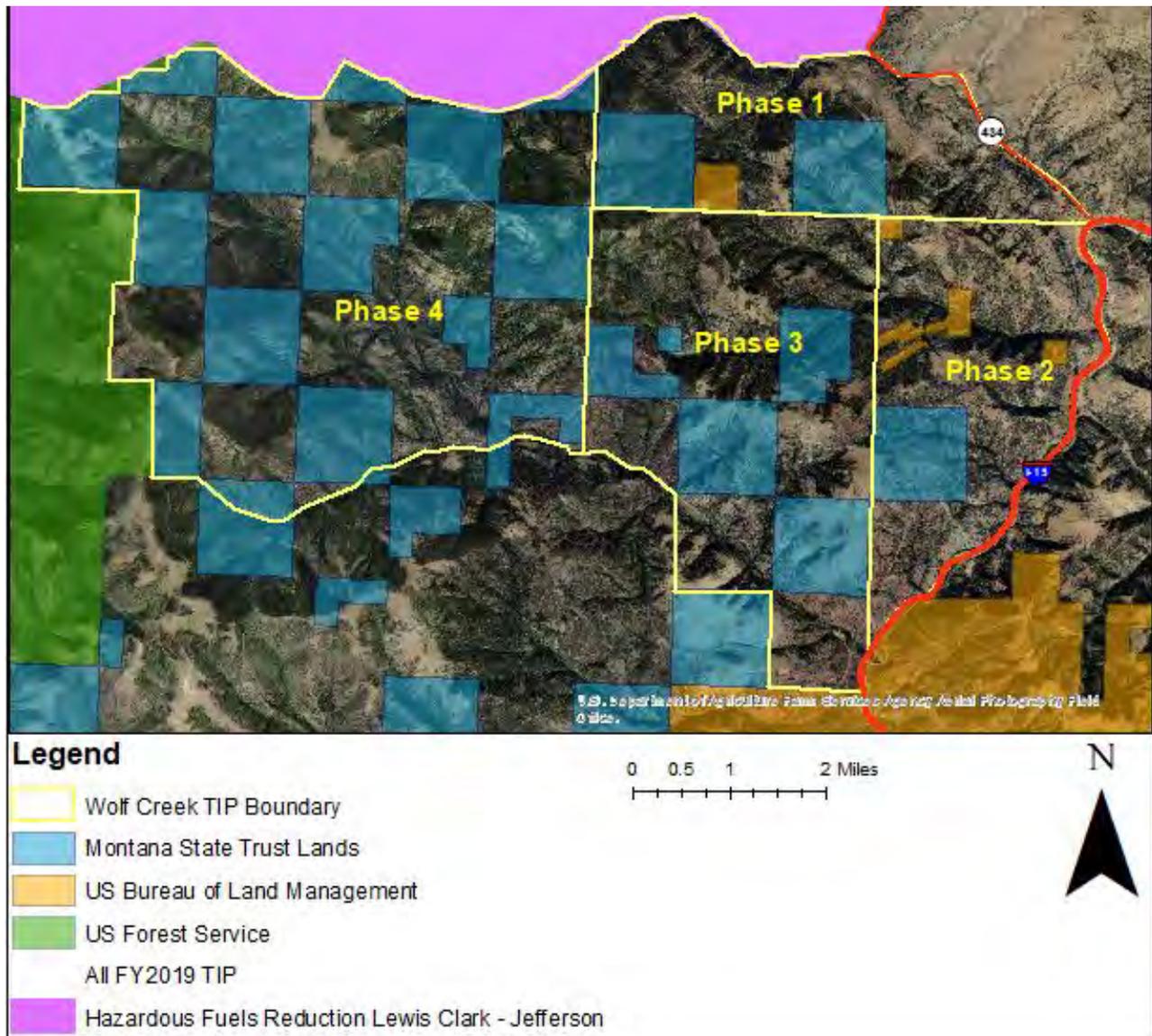


Figure 3. Phase Map

Location / Targeted Focus Area: This TIP will focus on part of the Wolf Creek community where interest has been expressed by multiple landowners concerned with forest pest damage. Boundaries were developed based on amount of landowner interest. The TIP boundary, (shown in figure 3) is I-15 to the east, Highway 434 and the 2019 Lewis & Clark-Jefferson Hazardous Fuels TIP boundary to the north, Forest Service to the west, and Lyon’s Creek to the south. This boundary is completely within Lewis and Clark County. There are some state land and BLM lands within the boundary (see figure 3).

The goal of the 2019 Hazardous Fuels TIP is to lower the risk of wildfire by reducing stocking densities and woody debris loading. That goal and the practices used to achieve it are shared with this proposed TIP, this is important because of the adjoining nature of the two boundaries.

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The proximity means the two projects will have wider landscape scale benefits beyond the inherent value of either project. This is achieved by creating a geographically large area of forest treated for wildfire risk in a patchwork distribution. This irregular distribution of disturbance more closely resembles the historical forest condition, that was shaped by small area, high frequency, low intensity wildfire. The medley of treatment areas reduces the risk of megafire while providing a greater degree of plant diversity.

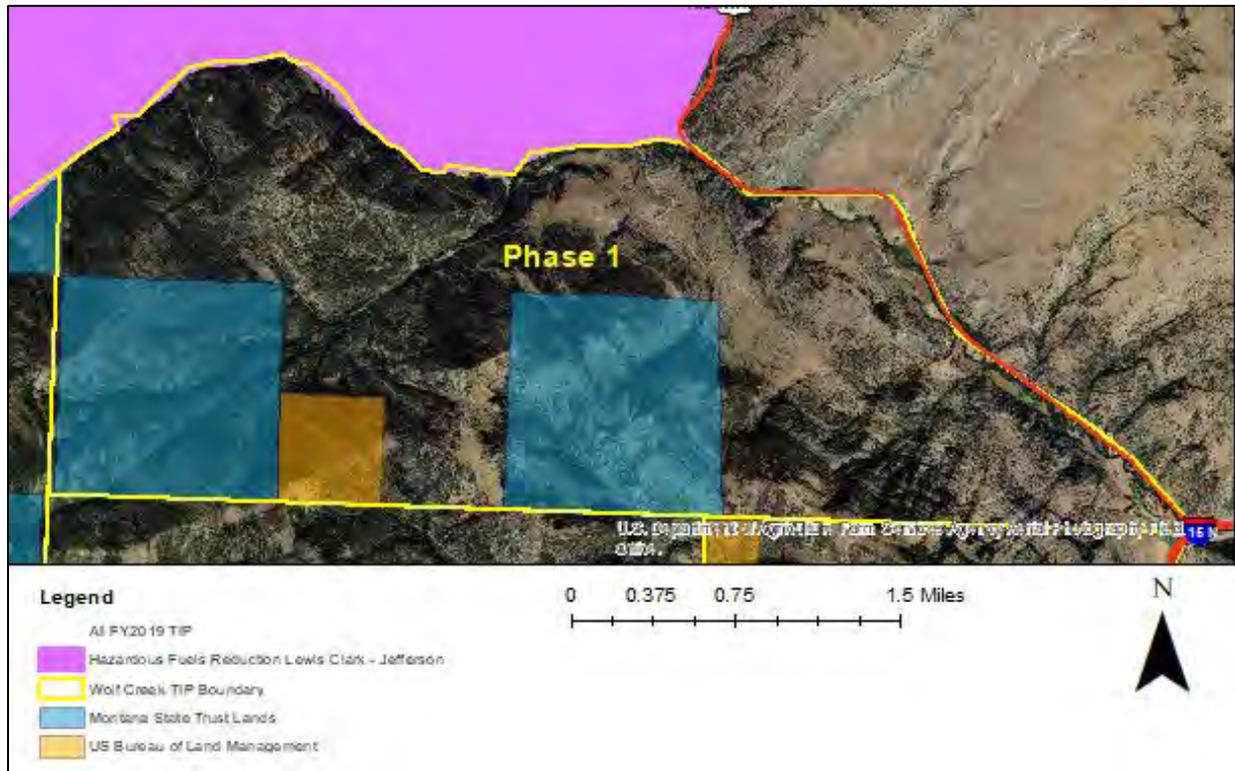


Figure 4. Phase 1 Map

Current Conditions: Preliminary inventory data shows there are two distinct stand types within the targeted focus area, those on northly aspects and the other on southerly aspects. Across all aspects, mountain pine beetle (*Dendroctonus ponderosae*) activity has resulted in high rates of mortality in existing forest stands.

North facing slopes receive a lower relative amount of sunlight, and thus retain higher levels of soil and fuel moisture. These slopes feature canopies dominated by Douglas-Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*). These stands tend to be more densely stocked than their southerly facing counterparts with inventory data showing stand density as high as 1,980 trees per acre and basal area nearly 180 ft² /ac. Additionally a high number of snags in these stands create a potential falling debris hazard. These stands resemble Fire Group Five (cool, dry Douglas-fir types) and Fire Group Six (moist Douglas-fir types) as described in Fire Ecology of Western

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Montana Forest Habitat Types (Fischer-Bradley 1987). “Fire group five: Cool, dry Douglas-fir habitat types. Douglas-fir is often the only conifer present on these sites. In the absence of fire, a dense Douglas-fir sapling understory may develop. Fire Group Six: Moist Douglas-fir habitat types. Douglas-fir often dominates all stages of succession on these sites, even when subjected to periodic fire” (Fischer-Bradley 1987 pg. 2). Stand structure varies slightly in conjunction with the associated fire group. Portions of the stand which align with Group Five have a dominant canopy of Douglas-fir with a co-dominant component of ponderosa pine. Below the dominant canopies lie a dense, suppressed canopy of Douglas-fir regeneration in the seedling and sapling stage. In contrast, the portions of the stand that more closely align with Fire Group Six have a single and uniform canopy of Douglas-fir with no other conspicuous canopy structure until reaching the forest floor where there is a mixture of Douglas-fir seedlings and various herbaceous plants. Both stand types feature ample fuel continuity through the canopy with staggered canopy classes in Fire Group Five and ladder fuels in Fire Group Six. Fire return intervals in these stands was probably between 35 and 45 years historically (Fischer-Bradley 1987).

Conversely, stands on southern aspects receive more sun light and energy resulting in warmer and drier conditions. These stands have a dominant canopy comprised of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), inventory data shows stand density around 840 trees per acre and basal area around 120 ft²/ac. Due to the increase in fuels drying capacity of these slopes, the fire return interval is higher, this is supported by evidence of past fire such as burned root wads and scorched bark. Coarse woody materials tend to be downed creating a forest floor with continuity of ground fuels for extended areas. Woody debris loads on the forest floor are likely between 12 and 15 tons per acre using the MT NRCS Forestry Technical Note #21 (Logar 2008) for reference. Also, worth noting are portions of the forest with little or no ground cover, these are more common at higher elevations with steep slopes and talus fields. These stands resemble Fire Group Four as defined by (Fisher-Bradley 1987). “Fire Group Four: Warm, dry Douglas-fir habitat types. Under "natural" conditions, these sites support fire-maintained ponderosa pine stands. In the absence of fire, Douglas-fir regenerates beneath the pine and eventually dominates the overstory” (Fisher-Bradley 1987 pg. 2). Fire return intervals are expected to be 5-25 years but may be as high as 50. Based on conversations with landowners and analysis of historical aerial photographs there has not been a significant fire event since 1992 at the earliest, but likely at least a decade prior although an exact date is difficult to pinpoint. Regardless, there has not been fire on the landscape in at least 30 years, longer than the likely natural fire regime.

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Figure 5. Photo showing densely stocked stands of Douglas-fir typical of northerly aspect stands.



Figure 6. Photo demonstrating thinning work (image left) that a landowner has undertaken independently. Note the small proportion of area around structure (image center) that has been thinned, landowner indicates inability to keep up with management without assistance.

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Figure 7. Photo exhibits loading of coarse woody materials (image center) across forest floor typical in south aspect stands. Also shown (image background) are developing stands of densely stocked young Ponderosa pine.

Project Description / Objectives:

If left unaddressed, forest pests and fuel loading will continue to worsen putting the community at risk for high intensity, high severity wildfire.

Enacting this TIP will enable landowners to improve the resilience of forest stands on their properties. There are landowners who are currently working to improve their forest stands and reduce fuels but many lack the resources to adequately address the issues at hand on their own. Proactive management helps to improve forest health while reducing biomass accumulation, both serve to accomplish the community's goals as outlined in the Lewis and Clark County Long Range Plan (see section on long range plan below and pg. 20 of the Long Range Plan). NRCS will help achieve these goals through this TIP by providing landowners with technical and financial assistance.

The primary objective of this TIP is to address the Montana NRCS resource concern category "degraded plant condition" and the primary resource concern "excessive plant pest pressure" with consideration also given to the secondary resource concerns "inadequate structure and composition" and "wildfire hazard/excessive biomass accumulation".

Plant productivity will be improved in treated areas through forest thinning to reduce stand density and improve structure and composition. Lowering the stand density reduces competition for available sunlight, nutrients and moisture allowing the remaining trees to devote more energy and resources to growth and defense mechanisms. Stand structure will be

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modified by reducing ladder fuels, breaking up fuel continuity and lowering fuel loads. Trees selected for leave will be free of insect and disease infestation; have vigorous crowns and little physical defect such as crooked stems or broken tops. Where available, seral species such as ponderosa pine will be favored over shade tolerant Douglas-fir. The increased vigor and modified structure of treated stands will result in increased resilience to western spruce budworm defoliation and bark beetle attack. Additionally, risk of high severity, high intensity wildfire will be reduced from lower fuel loads and continuity. When combined with the 2019 Lewis Clark-Jefferson Hazard Fuels Reduction TIP to the north, larger, landscape scale benefits will be realized.

Several other Montana NRCS resource concern categories will be addressed through this project as a bonus return on investment. These include the following “Air Quality Impacts, Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife, and Livestock Production Limitation.” Reductions in fuel has the potential to reduce the emissions of particulate matter, greenhouse gasses, and ozone precursors by reducing the likelihood of severe wildfires. Habitat will be improved by creating a greater diversity in stand composition and structure. Livestock Production Limitation of inadequate forage will be remedied as the canopy is opened allowing more light to the understory for grass and shrub development.

Lewis & Clark County Long Range Plan:

Through a series of Local Work Group Meetings, a long range plan for Lewis & Clark County was developed by Field Office staff and the local Conservation District. During the planning process a list of nine natural resource problems and desired outcomes was developed. Among these “Forestry Concerns” (page 20 of the Long Range Plan) is the most pertinent to this proposed TIP.

The plan describes the various issues specific to beetle killed forests including fire hazard, danger of falling timber during high wind events, and the exclusion of livestock and wildlife. The plan goes on to propose two methods of addressing the issue, controlled burning and collaborative treatment. This TIP aims to lay the groundwork to begin collaborative treatment amongst landowners.

Montana State Forest Action Plan:

Notably, the project aligns with the recently released State of Montana Forest Action Plan. Of the seven priority concerns detailed in the Plan, this project addresses six. These include Forest Health, Wildfire Risk, Working Forests and communities, Biodiversity and Habitat Conservation, Human and Community Health, and Sustainable Cross-Boundary work in Montana. Many of these have been addressed above through the overlap with NRCS objectives so only novel ideas will be discussed.

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The concept of Working Forests and Communities is directly linked to the amount of management taking place on a landscape. By providing incentives and technical assistance NRCS is contributing to the local community by helping to develop projects and the jobs associated. This concept is further explored in the next section of this document “Public Investment”.

There are two notable outcomes of the project that have significant impact on Human and Community Health. First, by reducing the risk of wildfire, the chance of harm occurring to individuals during a blaze is reduced; in particular, the worst negative health impact, loss of life. Second, the overall health of local communities may be improved through wildfire reduction as the impacts of smoke may be managed.

Public Investment

Investment of public funds into this project will yield a variety of benefits to the average taxpayer.

The project addresses climate change by implementing practices that may result in less carbon emissions into the atmosphere. When a forest undergoes a high intensity wildfire some of the carbon stored above ground in organic material is volatilized and released into the atmosphere as the fuels burn. If wildfire intensity can be minimized through forest management such as the thinning proposed in this plan, there should be more organic matter and fuels remaining in a forest after a fire. Those carbon pools remain on site and are not released into the atmosphere where they contribute to climate change. In addition to above ground carbon pools, forest soils contain significant amounts of carbon. Similar to carbon pools above ground these carbon sources may become volatilized by wildfire events. The good news is that the proportion of the total soil carbon released to the atmosphere during a burn correlates with the heat of the blaze as described in Fire and Fire-Suppression Impacts on Forest-Soil Carbon (Page-Dumrose, Jurgensen, and Harvey 2003). In summary, the more intense the heat the higher the rate of carbon released. Thus, limiting the severity of wildfire and correlating heat will limit the contributions of soil carbon to the atmosphere.

Allocation of funding to this project is expected to generate an increase in forest management work and related jobs in the area. These include positions for loggers, equipment operators, hand crews, and others such as payroll and logistics managers. These positions contribute to the local, state, and national economies by providing a cash flow in those communities and through the expected tax revenues associated. These tax revenues provide a return on investment for the funding of the project.

Completion of the project will also protect public investment in other programs including fire response and public lands. The increase in fire resiliency on the landscape may reduce the need to spend future tax revenues on fire response as the spread of fire across the landscape may be reduced. The cost of fire response is typically greater than the cost of fire preparedness as

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response cannot be planned prior to the fire event due to the inherent nature of emergency response. Similarly, the protection of existing investments such as structures and infrastructure including homes and roads insulates taxpayers from future spending to recuperate those losses. This is particularly true for public lands in or adjacent to the project area.

A final consideration for the average taxpayer is the protection of life. Wildfire is innately dangerous for communities, and the individuals who lay their lives on the line to protect those communities. Specifically, emergency responders are at risk every time they respond to an event in the field. Taking preventative action to limit the potential for emergency situations can save lives, a value that cannot be quantified, but should be upheld as the ultimate benefit to the public wellbeing.

Reportable Progress:

1. Amount of forest area with improved structure and composition resulting in improved pest resiliency, plant health, and wildfire resistance. Measured as the number of acres reduced to the suggested stocking densities outlined in MT NRCS Practice Specification Forest Stand Improvement 666. The specifications are copied here for reference:

“Stocking Guidelines by Species

Use the D+X spacing in even-aged stands. Use Basal Area in uneven-aged stand. Refer to the National Forestry Handbook, Part 636.2 for proper inventory methods.”

D+X is defined as: Average stand diameter (D) after treatment plus a constant (X). EXAMPLE: If D = 9” and X = 6, then average spacing is 9+6, or 15 feet. Stocking at 15’x15’ = 194 trees/acre.	
Ponderosa pine	Even-aged: D+ 6 to 10*
	Uneven-aged: 63-84 FEET ² /ACRE*
Douglas-fir, Spruce, Fir, Cedar, Hemlock	Even-aged: D+ 7 to 9*
	Uneven-aged: 65-88 FEET ² /ACRE*
Western larch	Even-aged: D+ 8 to 10*
	Uneven-aged: 56-75 FEET ² /ACRE*
Lodgepole pine	Even-aged: D+ 5 to 7*
	Uneven-aged: 78-110 FEET ² /ACRE*
* Use the upper stocking levels in healthy stands on more productive sites where understory production (grass, shrub, and tree seedlings) is not a concern. Use the lower stocking levels on less productive sites, to encourage growth of established tree seedlings, to improve forage production on grazable forests, to reduce fire hazards, or where lower levels are necessary when removing undesirable species or infected trees.	

2. Number of existing dwellings, permanent or seasonal that have been made more fire resistant. Measured as the number of dwellings with fuel breaks implemented on all adjacent forest land.

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3. Proportion of forest made more resilient to forest pests. Measured as the difference in the number of acres with forest stand improvement and woody residue treatment practices implemented before and after TIP completion.
4. Documentation of before and after photographs of various practice implementation.

Eligible Practices and Proposed Cost-Share Rates:

Table 2. Eligible Practices and Payment Rates

Practice Code	Practice Description	Cost-Share Rates Per Acre*
315	Herbaceous Weed Treatment	\$28.35 - \$110.85
383	Fuel Break	\$783.81 - \$1,367.51
384	Woody Residue Treatment	\$352.58 - \$483.02
660	Tree / Shrub Pruning	\$293.69 - \$352.43
666	Forest Stand Improvement	\$276.10 – \$660.25

*Cost share is based on FY2021 cost list and is subject to change

Herbaceous Weed Treatment (315) will be implemented to control weeds that are currently present on site. Weed control is critical to the project to ensure disturbance from management does not result in the prolific spread of existing noxious weeds, further degrading plant condition.

Fuel Break (383) will be used to remove or reduce vegetation, debris, and detritus to diminish the risk of wildfire spreading across the landscape. Fuel Breaks will be emphasized around infrastructure such as dwellings, structures, and roadways that provide egress.

Woody Residue Treatment (384) is intended to treat the woody materials present due to pest activity in addition to any residual woody materials created during project implementation. Treatment of woody materials will reduce hazardous fuels, reduce habitat and forage for forest pests, and improve access to forage for livestock and wildlife. This practice is commonly used in conjunction with forest stand improvement code 666.

Tree/Shrub Pruning (660) has been included to offer a management tool deal with low hanging branches that may act as ladder fuels during a fire event. The intent is to prevent fire from moving into tree canopies and decrease chance of crown fire occurring.

Forest Stand Improvement (666) will be used to manipulate the species composition, stand structure, and stocking densities by cutting and removing trees. These techniques will reduce wildfire risk and improve stand vigor in defense against forest pests.

Alternatives:

Alternative #1 No action will result in a failure to address continued degraded plant condition and buildup of fuels with correlating risk of wildfire. Risk of fire jeopardizes the health and

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safety of the communities in the targeted implementation zone. Resource concerns will continue to be addressed by individuals in a piece meal approach providing some improvement over existing conditions but will do little to address the issues at a landscape scale.

Alternative #2 (Preferred) Executing a Targeted Implementation Plan with stakeholders would bolster the ability of individuals to take the actions outlined in the Practice Code table (Herbaceous Weed Treatment, Fuel Break, Woody Residue Treatment, Tree/Shrub Pruning, and Forest Stand Improvement) to address the “Degraded Plant Condition” resource concern category on their properties. More importantly, the project would unite individual efforts and address forest health concerns at a landscape scale.

Alternative #3 Technical assistance and outreach to the community from NRCS and Partners will continue without financial assistance from NRCS. NRCS provides technical assistance to individuals which improves planning and management recommendations resulting in better prioritization of work completed by landowners, management will not necessarily meet NRCS practice standards. Landscape conditions will improve; however, the lack of cost share will limit the amount of management taking place on the ground reducing the overall efficacy of management. NRCS will recommend programs including cost share available through other agencies such as LCCD, MT Department of Natural Resource Conservation (DNRC), Tri-County Fire, etc.

Outreach/Number of Producers:

At the time of TIP proposal, three landowners have expressed interest in participating in the program. Further outreach will be performed by Lewis and Clark Conservation District and the Helena NRCS staff, once TIP is approved. Word of mouth has also proven to be a valuable resource in the Wolf Creek community during past projects.

Estimated Number of Acres:

Table 3. Landowners and Respective Acreage, in Phase One

Owner	Acres within Phase 1 Boundary
Private	3,254 ac
BLM	149 ac
State of Montana	1,270 ac
Total	4,673 ac

Within phase one, there are a total of 4,673 acres. Of the privately owned land (3,254 acres), approximately 90% or 2,930 acres are forested. This means that within phase one of this TIP there are 2,930 eligible acres (privately owned and forested). The eligible acres are divided amongst 50 landowners. The Helena Field Office aims to implement contracts with 40% of the landowners or 40% of the eligible acres in phase one, which is a total of 1,172 treated acres or 20 landowners.

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Figure 8. Distribution of Eligible, Ineligible, and Public Holdings in Phase 1

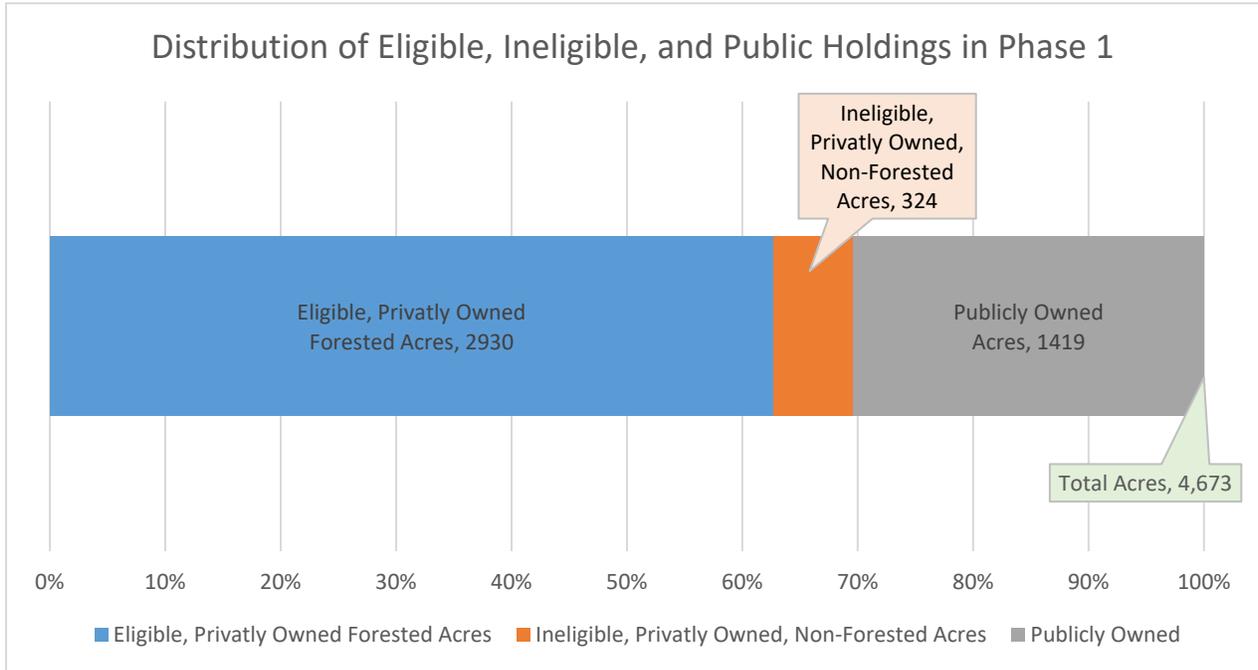


Table 4. Wildfire Hazard Rating Distribution

Wildfire Hazard Potential Rating	Acres of Private within Phase 1	Acres of BLM within Phase 1	Acres of State land within Phase 1
Non-burnable	22.8 ac	0 ac	0 ac
Very Low	25.3 ac	6.5 ac	16.1 ac
Low	1,251.2 ac	87.5 ac	641.3 ac
Moderate	1,672.4 ac	55 ac	565.1 ac
High	282.3 ac	0 ac	47.5 ac

NRCS Workload Information: Workload will be handled by the existing NRCS field office staff, with assistance from the Conservation Planner at Lewis & Clark Conservation District, and DNRC service foresters.

Table 5. NRCS Workload Estimates

Expected NRCS Technical Assistance Hours per 50 contracted acres			
Task	Hours Traveled	Hours Work	Hours Total
I&E	2	3	5
Plan Development		4	4
Contract Development		4	4
Implementation	2	4	6
Certification	5	8	13

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Expected NRCS Technical Assistance Hours per 50 contracted acres			
Task	Hours Traveled	Hours Work	Hours Total
Contract Maintenance		12	12
Total	9	35	44

Project Fund Request:

Table 6. Obligation Schedule

TIP Obligation Request		
Year	Acres Contracted	Obligation Requested*
2022	300	\$350,000
2023	300	\$350,000
2024	235	\$260,000
2025	235	\$260,000
2026	105	\$110,000

*Yearly obligation amount based on estimated contract acres per year being \$1,000 - \$1,100/ac.

Prioritization: Will be done using the MT prioritization tool.

TIP Ranking Questions:

1. What are the existing average trees per acre on the planned acreage?
 - a. 1,601 tpa or more
 - b. 801 – 1,600 tpa
 - c. 800 tpa or less
2. Does the application include stands that have identified disease or insect problems in more than 1 tree species?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
3. What is the majority of the planned acreage according to the 2018 USFS Wildfire Hazard Potential map?
 - a. Very high
 - b. High
 - c. Moderate
 - d. Low
 - e. Very Low
4. Does the landowner have an existing Forest Management / Stewardship Plan? (20 Points)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

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Partner Contributions:

Table 7. Partner Financial Contributions

Partner Contributions - Financial					
Partner	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
LCCD*	\$1,637.30	\$1,637.30	\$1,169.50	\$1,169.50	\$467.80

*LCCD are based on hourly rate (\$23.39) of Conservation Planner

Table 8. Partner Time Contributions

Partner Contributions - Time (in hours)					
Partner	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
LCCD	70	70	50	50	20
DNRC	70	70	50	50	20
TOTAL	140	140	100	100	40

These partners will be assisting with outreach, inventory, writing Forest Management Plans, and certifications.

Lewis & Clark Conservation District (LCCD) - The Lewis & Clark Conservation District has entered into a cooperative agreement with NRCS Helena Service Center. Per the agreement, LCCD will continue to assist NRCS in the form of Technical Assistance. Assistance will include help with outreach, contract development, and implementation of this project.

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation – DNRC has and continues to do forestry work in and around the TIP boundary. A DNRC project of note in the area is the Golden Crown Stewardship Initiative which treated 190+ acres of forested lands from 2016 to 2020. The Initiative is in its second round and has a goal of treating hazardous fuels on an additional 210 acres of private land. DNRC also provides service foresters who help private landowners with planning and management of their forest properties.

U.S. Forest Service – Fuel reduction projects, completed and underway, along roads and trails on Forest Service grounds. Forest service has designated this area a priority and while project details are yet to be released, forestry focused projects are expected in the near future.

Lewis and Clark County Weed District – Provide landowners with weed management technical assistance and help developing noxious weed management plans. These management plans work synergistically with the forest management activities in this project by improving the results of management and reducing NRCS workload. The Weed District also offers an herbicide cost share program eligible to those landowners within the TIP.

Supporting Partners:

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These partners are not contributing directly to the project but are either supportive of the goals and objectives of the project or benefit directly from the outcomes of the project.

Wolf Creek Fire Department – The Lincoln Fire Department is in support of reducing large scale fire hazards. Their knowledge on fire behavior is a benefit to the community, more importantly the outcomes of the project will benefit the group.

Tri-County Firesafe Working Group – Has done many projects throughout Lewis and Clark county and are in support of this TIP. Their knowledge of wildfire management and contacts will be utilized.

References

William C. Fischer and Anne F. Bradley. (1984) Fire Ecology of Western Montana Forest Habitat Types. *Intermountain research Station*

Robert D. Logar. (2008) Photo Guide for Estimating Downed Woody Material. *Forestry Technical Note*

Deborah Page-Dumroese, Martin F. Jurgensen, and Alan E. Harvey. *Fire and Fire-Suppression Impacts on Forest-Soil Carbon Chapter 13*

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