

NOTES AND AGENDA FROM JULY 30, 2002, MEETING OF THE
UNCOMPAHGRE WORKING GROUP,
Bill Heddles Recreation Center, Delta, Colorado,
6:30 PM TO 9:30 PM, Co-Hosted by UP and GMUG

[Facilitator: Tony Cheng, Assistant Professor of Forestry and Natural
Resource Policy, College of Natural Resources, Colorado State University,
and Kathy Bond

Note-taker: Carol Howe, Terrestrial Group Leader, GMUG planning team.]

Agenda [the following agenda was distributed as a handout]

6:15–6:30 Registration

6:30–6:45 Welcome/Introductions; Review of agenda and meeting
objectives; Review of last meeting/field trip

6:45–7:50 Panel presentations on prescribed fire, grazing, and logging by
resource specialists and users. Questions following from other panelists
and meeting participants.

7:50 Break

8:00 Panel presentations (continued)

8:30 Q & A from meeting participants on any/all of the management
tools

9:10 Wrap Up/Feedback form/meeting evaluation

9:20 What's next?

Next Meeting [the following meeting date and location was distributed as
part of the agenda handout]:

Tuesday, August 20, 2002, 6:30–9:30 PM

Bill Heddles Recreation Center,
Delta, Colorado

Upcoming Field Trip

On August 10, 2002, there will be a field tour of the Burn Canyon fire.
Interested persons can meet at the Norwood Community Center at 9:00
a.m. to car pool. The tour will end up at house that didn't get burned,
where there will be a discussion about defensible space. The group will
return to Norwood by 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Objectives:

To share perspectives between resource specialists, users and interest
groups about current and historic uses of prescribed fire, grazing and
logging as management tools on public land.

Panel Discussion:

Resource users and specialists presented their views during a panel discussion. These panelists were asked to participate based on their interest/expertise and availability. Each panelist introduced themselves. Everyone at the meeting was provided with a copy of a one-page Desired Condition Statements handout. A discussion framework (below) was given to panelists, containing questions that might not often be asked in a public meeting setting, not just intellectual questions but what the Forest Service (FS) is grappling with:

Management Tools on the Uncompahgre Plateau

Discussion Framework for Panelists

The discussion framework is based on the Desired Future Condition statements developed in previous Uncompahgre Working Group meetings and synthesized by the Forest Service Core Planning Team.

- 1) Acknowledgement of the desired future condition statement.
 - a. What's missing? Should anything be added to this statement?

- 2) Do the current conditions on the Uncompahgre Plateau/landscape/communities reflect the desired conditions?
 - a. If not, what percentage does? Does not?
 - b. In which areas on the Plateau do you see a need for change?
 - c. On a scale of 1–10 (with 10 being high), how would you rate the magnitude of this problem?

- 3) What events/management practices have led to the current conditions being outside of a desired condition?

- 4) Which land management practices have substantially contributed to the desired condition in the past 20 years?

- 5) Which management tools need to be applied to improve the desired condition (or, to make progress toward achieving the desired condition)?

- 6) At what rate must tools be applied to make meaningful progress? (e.g., x number of acres per year).

- 7) Do you see obvious conflicts with potential desired conditions with other resources of socioeconomic conditions?
 - a. What can be done to reduce these conflicts?

b. What role do you see for public involvement in addressing these conflicts?

Discussing fire and prescription burning as a management tool were:
Dan Huisjen (BLM Fire Ecologist in Montrose, worked interagency with FS, Fire Management Officer in NM with BLM, and time with National Park Service [NPS] and FS)

Discussing grazing as a management tool were:

Floyd Reed (Range Specialist, FS in Delta, and Range Conservationist on Norwood District in previous life)

Robbie Baird-LeValley (Area Livestock and Range Extension Specialist for CSU)

Discussing logging as a management tool were:

Nancy Fishing (works for sawmill, President Colorado Timber Industry, chair Colorado's Forestry Advisory Board)

Tim Garvey (Silviculturist Ouray and Norwood Districts of the FS, most of career in Colorado, some in Arizona PP forests, 9 years in SW Alaska and MS)

Bill Gray (logger, family logging since 1949, degree in EMT and fire sciences) and

Ken Smith (owner, Smith Forest Products, family came to Sawmill Mesa in 1890)

Representing Others were:

Ron Turley (Western Area Power Administration, environmental and engineering background, some perspective from utilities)

Andrea Robinson (doesn't represent the conservation community, member Audubon Society/Western Colorado Congress, worked as a seasonal employee on the GMUG 24 -25 years ago as fire fighter and timber marker, worked for the NPS as Naturalist/Interpreter and Botanist, on SW Resource Advisory Committee for BLM, worked for permittee on Uncompahgre).

Walt Rule (retired, 30-year veteran of the Forest Service, former Uncompahgre District Ranger, Western Colorado Congress)

Stu Krebs (Public Lands Partnership [PLP]/Western Colorado Congress, Montrose native, family was in the sheep business, Professor of Geography at CSU with interest in biogeography and bioclimatology, took Holistic Resource Management course taught by Alan Savoy)

Bill Patterson (Western Colorado Congress on public lands committee; public health inspector, environmental health specialist)

Fire Panel

Dan Huisjen:

(Item 1a of the Discussion Framework for Panelists): Vegetation is related to Desired Future Conditions (DFCs). What are the processes and are they functioning properly? Fire is not functioning as it should.

(Item 2) We are missing early seral stage. When fire is not allowed to function woody species increase, become more dense, and move into grasslands. In a ponderosa pine (PP) stand without fire, it is more dense and continuous. In the Bucktail Fire and Burn Canyon Fire, this resulted in a crown fire that killed all the trees.

(Item 2a) What percentage of current conditions represent DFCs? About 30–40 percent grass; there is too much of the woody species (70–80 percent now, but it should be 30–40 percent with a moving mosaic). Pinyon–juniper (PJ) is worst, PP next. Grass in PJ is missing due to fire exclusion for the past 100 years (fire events show up every 10–15 years or so).

(Item 2c) On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 high), he ranks the magnitude of the problem at 8 to 9, based on the fire behavior we are seeing. In a few years, it might be a 10. This is not just due to dry conditions, but to the presence of fuels. Fire exclusion is largely due to fire suppression in the 1980s and 1990s. Now we're seeing it isn't right.

(Item 5) All the tools we have available need to be kept available, including prescribed burning, grazing or harvest. We can't understory burn PP. We need to log vegetation first (thin/pre-commercial thin/harvest). If we lose industries to do these processes, we won't be able to do the treatments. This will result in increased changes to wildlife habitat and watershed conditions.

(Item 6) Based on current conditions, agencies can't do enough to make a significant change in the next 5 to 10 years. We don't have the industry or agency resources. It will take 20 to 30 years.

Andrea Robinsong:

She indicated she is not representing other points of view. She wants to clarify some finger-pointing and accusations that the environmental community prevented the agencies from using prescribed burns. People have confused logging as a tool and fire as a tool. Fire is an effective tool and prescribed burning can be used to control understory. She is concerned about small diameter PJ and oak at the wildland-urban interface where PJ has been increasing, reducing grasslands. She would like to see fire as a tool in these areas to prevent the destruction we've seen this year.

The excuse of fire shouldn't be a tool for wholesale logging of large timber. Focus on PP for the Uncompahgre Plateau. Ideally want on-the-ground managers to have idea of how to use fire (this drought is an emergency). Bureaucracy gets in the way of management and science. Wants best good science used. Constraints are changing and don't use fire as way to have timber sales in old forests. Logging disrupts forest soils, resulting in noxious weeds and other undesirable conditions.

(Question and Comments on Fire from other panelists)

PP forest observed on the Plateau is because of fire suppression and other natural factors. The structure today is different from 300 years ago. We have Overstocking in younger age (<120 years) are situations where it would be risky to run fire through dense stands as we have. We have to harvest/thin to reduce density and fuels before fire. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish projects for profit, from projects for fuel reduction. Some will be done for profit. We no longer see logging like it was done in the past. It is now on a smaller scale thinning from below, When agencies are appealed, it is not done with an understanding of ecology, of what is going on in woods.

Fire exclusion started when there was a change in conditions under which fires were allowed to burn (1880 and on, due to grazing). This has resulted in an increase in woody plants with no understory. Fire suppression is going out with the intent of putting the fire out. Roads often stop the spread of fire. Really, it is a fire exclusion issue. Fire management is part of the policy on BLM to allow fires to burn.

The only person killed by the Hayman fire was from smoke. Are environmental standards from the Clean Air Act no longer so important in interest to see fire as the only restoration tool? Because of the current conditions, it is at a point fires are threat to humans and environment. Only speaking to fire, not only as a tool.

Regarding air quality, we often see valleys get smoked in but we haven't violated EPA standards. Smoke management is an aesthetic issue.

It is important to educate all people about fire as a management tool.

Regarding mechanical work before using fire, blackjack (small diameter ponderosa pine) and 12–16" diameter trees had to be removed in restoration project on the San Juan National Forest before fire could be used.

Grazing Panel

Floyd Reed:

Agrees with all DFCs. Nothing is missing over the last 35 years. Nothing is forever. There are always pros and cons on each project.

We didn't have a weed threat in the 1970s–1980s. Noxious weeds, cheatgrass especially, are a concern.

Natural communities are dynamic.

It will take a long time to achieve DFCs. In the 1960s, prescriptive management came down from the Washington Office with no follow-up and maintenance. We didn't change grazing strategies, we used non-native species. That was not wrong for time.

Now we are reviewing past projects. We are working with Colorado Division of Wildlife and BLM planning and follow-up. Need new disturbances.

Early seral and very late seral plant communities have been managed for good condition and late seral communities need lots of disturbance to get to early seral. A problem is noxious weeds—it is the biggest challenge---and we need to be prepared for it.

We need to integrate actions (logging, fire, alter grazing to get benefits). One size does not fit all.

We don't want all late seral PP; we need all seral stages for wildlife.

Caution don't want one prescription for all plant communities.

PJ tends to be 65 percent late seral. It should be 5 to 15 percent. Need lots of distribution in late seral PJ. We have lost the fine fuels. Mechanical treatments and fire are less expensive.

Our primary responsibility is to protect the watershed. If you take care of the watershed many things flow from that.

Stu Krebs:

DCFs are good.

Grazing happens. Grazing, like fire, is a process. It exists without humans. It can be used with good or ill human purpose. It is one way to support ourselves off natural systems. Ecosystems evolved with all players intact and function best and in a sustained manner the closer you are to the original condition.

Management tools include grazing. Idea of grazing returned to Holistic Resource Management (HRM)—uses nature with monitoring and continuous reevaluation.

Building on the DFCs, broaden diversity to the landscape level for socio/economic reasons as well. We need a spectrum of urban communities to agricultural lands to public land to untouched areas (areas for respect and for economic benefits). For example, in Africa they exterminated wildlife to remove vectors for sleeping sickness to livestock. They realized bad areas resulted where wildlife was removed. Many plants need animals. This resulted in an increase in plants, which changed the landscape spectrum.

Robbie LeValley:

Grazing involves all sorts of animals. We often assume is only means cattle but actually includes wildlife, cattle and sheep.

(Item 1) Add that livestock can be used as a restoration tool (applicable to all Geographic Areas) and that this is being done successfully to enhance available forage. There is a threat from cheatgrass and other knapweeds that we didn't have in the past. We need to be aggressive because it reduces the amount of forage for wildlife and livestock and damages the landscape. We need to ask why weeds are present. We can use goats and other livestock for knapweed and whitetop control.

(Item 2) Yes, there are grazing management examples in the room of people who have changed grazing management and it resulted in increased positive responses. Forage improved substantially. The landscape can recover when folks use biological principles. Two-thirds of the permanent transects on the Forest show an upward trend and the other one-third are static.

(Item 2b) Areas that need flexibility – in grazing/restoration – Need to change how we utilize areas after treatments.

(Item 3) Encroachment of woody species has led to the current condition being outside of a desired condition.

(Item 4) There has been improved grazing management over the last 20 years. There is no argument that past efforts were bad. That was then, this is now.

(Item 5) Opening up oak with cows resulted in an increase in grass, which resulted in elk in areas and lush forage. Sagebrush has been opened up with livestock with supplements resulting in an increase in grass. You can use livestock to plant seed into the ground. There are numerous cases of doing things right. The perception is that livestock are creating problems.

(Question and Comments on Grazing from other panelists)

Elaborate on monitoring with the West Elk Grazing pool.

The West Elk allotment is managed under a more intensive grazing system: 1200 head on 30 units in BLM and FS Wilderness. We reread permanent transects and established new ones. We reread photo points. The recovery has been dramatic in the last 7 years. Second monitoring transects showed an upward trend in measured and apparent indicators of change (gully with grass in bottom, greater ground cover, recycle manure). Focus on this example. First indicator after a change in management is old cow trails; in a good situation they disappear in 2 to 3 years.

(Questions and Comments on Grazing from floor)

There is a large portion of late seral woody species with missing a seed bank. Are there ways to combine treatments to get restoration?

Yes, the challenge is we need to reseed before weeds get established, need to let plants establish and be flexible to use livestock to plant seed to help restore grass. Can't do business as usual. Some grasses reproduce vegetatively. If you graze them (defoliate) then get off, this can result in regrowth and can fill in an area. For example, we did crested wheatgrass seeding in the past. Continuous grazing resulted in sparse plants. We switched to early grazing and the plants grow closer together. This can reduce bare soil just with a proper grazing plan. We monitor and adjust if it doesn't work.

Logging/Timber Management Panel

Tim Garvey:

We are managers of ecosystems not because they intrinsically require management but because they are required for our existence. It is not an issue of IF but the bigger issues of HOW, WHERE, and WHEN. Change is with us. This always applies to forests and the Forest Service (FS). Ecosystems change. The past is not the same as today. There is always natural change but there is also human-caused change (such as fire suppression, grazing, timber management) that results in structural changes to forest. The history of changes is one thing the FS is considering in the Forest Plan revision and that UP is interested in looking at. Changes under natural conditions, to determine the range of natural variability (RNV) and compare current with historic conditions to determine where or if they fit within RNV.

There has been a change in the culture and objectives of the FS. In the past, the objective was often quantitative – board feet and other numerical targets. There has been a shift from commodity production targets to structural condition targets or DFCs. The volume harvested is a result of achieving the DFCs. He is pleased with where the agency is going.

Bill Gray:

Last month he was in Los Alamos doing restoration/salvage work. He saw damage and problems and waste of timber due to the lengthy processes of government. Most timber in the area is going to waste.

We need to use logs on the Uncompahgre Plateau to prevent fires. This will thin the forest and use the wood (versus wasting it).

In New Mexico they are chipping wood for mulch. Millions of board feet are going to waste but we can prevent this on the Plateau.

He's been logging on the Plateau since 1944. Most loggers branched out to stay in business. If the agency can't streamline the planning process to harvest, loggers will go out of business. He branched into hydromulching and firewood.

Timber management is occurring on private land. Most fires start on federal land. Most private lands have some timber management (thinning/fuel reduction).

In order to use pole trees 5" to 9" in diameter there has been a change in the equipment used for logging and utilizing the material. Bark is used for landscaping. Sawdust for hog feed. There is much more use of all timber.

Walt Rule:

First subject is the vision for a healthy forest. Logging, grazing, fire are interrelated and interdependent. Historical photos show overuse. Water may have been the first resource to be overused and we established water rights. Later we realized timber and grazing has use limitations. Past methods of management and manipulation were not always sound.

In 1968 there was a large clearcut on the Alpine Plateau. A few years ago aspen clearcutting began and has resulted in inadequate reproduction.

The FS recognizes the need for restoration because past practices were inadequate. The overall goal is to restore these lands to their natural conditions, that the health of the forest involves all resources not just commodities.

Some properly managed uses and natural events can be beneficial if scientifically applied.
Biodiversity is key to restoration.

Care and use of the land should be based on its capacity.

Intact natural areas, refuges and areas of high ecological integrity should be protected.

Restoration activities must consider Threatened and Endangered Species and laws.

Long term economic and social welfare is based on how we treat the land.

Short term economic returns are inappropriate.

Wildlife populations are managed at carrying capacity, not for economic interests.

Principles of conservation biology, ecological integrity, biodiversity are used to accomplish restoration.

The Forest Service is responsible for establishing scientifically based standards for forest conditions, current and future needs, and provide public information.

Forest Service is not responsible to balance user demands at the expense of the resource.

Their job is to provide CPR (conserve, preserve, restore) for suitable use and future generations.

One standard does not fit all; use science as a basis for actions.

Nancy Fishering:
(Item 1) Agrees with DFCs.

(Item 2) From reviewing the draft Uncompahgre Plateau Landscape Assessment (prepared by Foster–Wheeler):

Seventy–two percent of the overall vegetation has dense vegetation conditions.

Sixty–six percent of the vegetation is in a mature successional stage.

Less than one percent of the vegetation is seedlings—there are no baby trees.

Seventy percent of the vegetation is at a high to moderate risk for insect attack. (This is not just the case on the Uncompahgre Plateau, but across Colorado).

These conditions don't meet DFCs.

(Item 5) What do we do if today's conditions are not the DFC? Logging is a tool to restore a more natural condition. People don't like to have trees

cut. They forget there are only 10 to 15 tree species, but over 600 understory species. If there are too many trees there is less understory. We are not going to log outside of the suitable timber base. Logging should be a tool.

The previous discussion has been a blending between historical and today's practices. We don't clearcut spruce today. We are not doing the old style of logging. Today's operator's have sustainable forestry training and use best practices.

We keep talking about current practices. Let's talk about technology advances and investment in new equipment that doesn't have the same effects as the old equipment. We have precise equipment in Colorado, such as forwarders, hydroaxes, cedar flailers. Some of this equipment can handle material down to 7 inch diameters. All mills are geared to take small diameters. Industry is now looking at, and ready to be a part of, biomass and co-generation (turning wood products into electricity) efforts. Let's draw the line between past and present. We have to join hands to be successful.

The Bucktail Fire stopped when it came up against a stand that had been thinned to treat for bugs.

If we don't get products from Colorado or other locations in the US, then we will be importing wood and exporting problems somewhere else.

Wood is a renewable product and the timber industry wants to be part of the process.

Ken Smith:

He is reminded of an analogy from his grandfather. A bunch of people are in a rowboat. If they all crowd to one side or the other at the same time, somebody will get wet. It is like if a pendulum swings too far, somebody will get wet. This has happened with Congress, the FS, and the environment. We have to get to the center of a project and move forward, and instead of couching things negatively, we need to be positive.

He has invested in equipment (cedar eater). The cedar eater was built for structural firefighting---it grinds trees to create defensible space around a building. Oak and PJ can be ground with a hydroax. Local soil types need biomass for aquatics (to reduce runoff and siltation). Wildlife has been seen coming back into treated areas within a day. He is seeing lots

of things (habitat features) that his tool can create but that fire cannot create. We can use tools in conjunction with fire.

Timber management is a tool to help control vegetation and can result in DFCs.

Industry is using all parts of a timber stand. In the past, yum piles were considered waste, but now, all material is hauled out so that deck areas can be mulched. It is a different technology than 20 years ago. . The timber industry has changed.

(Question and Comments on Logging from other panelists)

(Questions to Bill Gray) From your experience in Los Alamos on the fire from 2 years ago---because of the slow bureaucracy -- what does the noxious weed situation look like?

They are in a drought situation like here. They planted pine and it died. They haven't done much of anything else. We removed trees located in the creeks and chipped them. We mulched the rest onsite. The mulch kept the soil in place.

What proportion of the burn area was treated/mulched?

We only treated 87 acres on the ground in town.

(Question to Tim Garvey) What percent of aspen that was clearcut on the Plateau has regenerated?

Ninety-five percent has regenerated. There have been some problems with some soils. We are no longer logging on these soils. Aspen clearcutting has been a success.

There are still loggers harvesting aspen for paneling. We still have an industry that needs aspen and has been successful.

Dr. Shepperd said something in a study of his, that he understands there has been an outbreak of trees on the National Forest.

In ponderosa pine treatments, fire marks trees and we can see fire scar rings that devalue lumber.

(Walt Rule) The FS hired Barry Johnston to do a survey on aspen reproduction, and the results showed 23 percent regeneration. If a large majority of organic material is removed from the forest floor (such as in Douglas fir in the northwest, where organic material is removed from the forest floor for 3 generations), productivity of sites declines. We need to return some organic material to the ground.

(Nancy Fishing) Yum piles aren't seen anymore. Slash is scattered and left on site. Barry Johnston's study was an adaptive management study to see why areas hadn't regenerated. He looked at high risk sites that had not met the 5 years regeneration standard (in the current Forest Plan). Only 27 percent of high risk areas hadn't regenerated. Walt has taken the results out of context.

The FS must use adaptive management and move on. To get to DFCs we need a timber industry and we need to use adaptive management.

[NOTE: Barry Johnston is the Forest Ecologist for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests. His study, titled, "Multiple Factors Affect Aspen Regeneration on the Uncompahgre Plateau, West-Central Colorado" was published in Shepperd, W.D.; Binkley, D.; Bartos, D.L.; Stohlgren, T.J.; and Eskew, L.G., compilers. 2001. Sustaining Aspen in Western Landscapes: Symposium Proceedings, June 13-15, 2000, Grand Junction CO. Proceedings RMRS-P-18. Fort Collins, CO: USDA, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station. 460 p. This study showed that high water tables, heavy browsing by livestock and wildlife, soils with a thin Mollic surface layer and logging practices that compacted large portions of a unit affect aspen regeneration success on the Uncompahgre Plateau.

http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs/rmrs_p18/rmrs_p18g.pdf]

(Questions and Comments on Logging from floor)

Pine and spruce were logged on the Uncompahgre Plateau in the 1880s. There were clearcuts in the 1960s. That was an administrative decision--that was not a forester's decision. We need to manage for what's there and realize we sometimes make mistakes.

Any idea how long this [timber] supply will last?

There is no intent of using everything available for co-generation and biomass operations. A mill in the State of Washington has no waste--- anything unusable goes into co-generation to make their own electricity. They also recycle community waste.

One commenter is encouraged to hear everybody is on the same page—we want to recover an ecosystem we all depend on, and agree it isn't doing too good and is pleased that the Western Colorado Congress will support use of logging, fire, and grazing to restore the landscape because it is important.

There are two convergent trends to deal with so we must err on the side of caution. The first is climate change. We need to be cautious. If we overcut, overgraze, overuse things will be worse. We'll see destruction, massive weed invasion, massive fires. The second point involves increasing human population. This affects the health of the ecosystem (as the population increases, ecosystem health usually declines) so we must err on the side of caution.

Others have mentioned overuse of grazing and timber, but what about the tremendous fires due to underuse of grazing and timber?

We need the timber industry to manage forests properly. Trees die from fire. Insect and disease management can harvest mature trees before a hazard is created. Insects always takes the older trees first. Then after another disturbance they get in younger stands. If trees are thinned they grow more vigorously.

He is glad to see changes. In the past they could not utilize small diameters. Clearcutting spruce is not the answer. In the 1950s there was a spruce beetle epidemic in the Dunten area. The only thing to do was to apply chemicals or log anything larger than 6 inches in diameter. So, you'd only get dead trees or bare ground with no regeneration. This is why spruce is selectively cut on small (one-acre) patches to keep moist site conditions for regeneration. Lodgepole pine needs to be clearcut since it won't regenerate under its own shade.

Water and Watershed Health

Bill Patterson:

Regarding the DFCs for aquatics, there are 3 areas of concern: 1) public water supplies, 2) riparian health, and 3) instream flows.

Water is limiting reagent, it needs to be pure for living organisms.

The Uncompahgre Plateau is 90 miles long and surrounded by 6 different rivers. The systems and tributaries that drain the Plateau are a tiny

fraction of the earth but responsible for life of 85 to 90 percent of living things.

1) As for public water supplies (25 people get their water supply or 15 taps and greater), how many are sourced on the Plateau? There are 15 permits: Naturita, Nucla, Norwood, several subdivisions, and the Gateway school. It is important to understand what is going on. The organics in the Norwood water supply are increasing.

2) As for the riparian systems, there is an interlinking of stream health with the health of other organisms. A 1999 CSU study of living systems showed that salt desert scrub and riparian zones are at risk on the Plateau. Things that affect riparian systems include cattle (they add nutrients, trample vegetation, and increase erosion which adds sediment) and logging (old and abandoned roads increase sediment and erosion if not maintained, and affect water filtration).

3) As for instream flows, they affect the health of fish. It is an element critical for planning and compromise. We need to estimate instream flows for creeks and streams on Plateau.

Electrical Utilities

Ron Turley:

He manages 2000 miles of transmission lines and 4,000 to 5,000 miles of access roads. The footprint on Plateau is small but it has large consequences. It is important to local and national economics and security.

He sees missed opportunities – opportunity to merge many different management objectives (timber management, grazing management, wildlife management). Put common objectives together and develop solutions.

The problem is not the fire, it's the trees. They could take lines out of service for a long time. Trees, system reliability, economic impact of a down system, need common objectives, a holistic management approach.

Not one solution for all areas. Different in each situation. We need to recognize the difference.

Traditional agency relationships and philosophy of plenty is to wait until we have a problem and then react. We need to be proactive. Plan for and execute before we get into a problem.

