



Forest Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FS-1187d | April 2022



## WILDFIRE CRISIS

Landscape Investments

# CONFRONTING THE WILDFIRE CRISIS

Initial Landscape Investments to Protect Communities and Improve Resilience in America's Forests

# INITIAL LANDSCAPE INVESTMENTS

Based on results of years of scientific research and planning, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service released the “[Confronting the Wildfire Crisis: A Strategy for Protecting Communities and Improving Resilience in America’s Forests](#)” in January 2022. In the initial step of launching this strategy and identifying high-risk landscapes for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) investments, the Forest Service engaged other Federal (especially U.S. Department of the Interior), State, and local agencies; Tribes; communities; collaborative groups; nongovernmental organizations; private landowners and other partners.

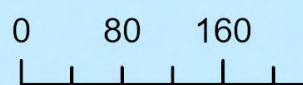
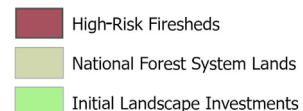
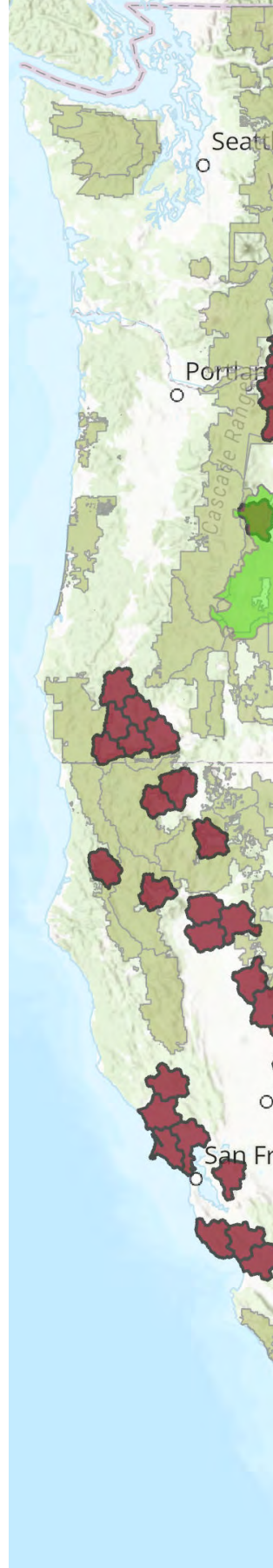
As outlined in the [Implementation Plan](#), the goal of this process was to identify landscapes that (1) have projects that are at scale or can be built out to scale, (2) are outcome driven, (3) are collaboratively developed with communities and ready for implementation, (4) allow for investment in underserved communities, (5) could leverage current partner investments, and (6) could maximize use of existing authorities.

In total, 29 candidate Initial Landscape Investments were proposed, ranging in size from 5,000 to 1.6 million acres. Of those proposals, the Forest Service selected 10 Initial Landscape Investments in 8 States for this round of BIL funding and implementation in fiscal year (FY) 2022. The remaining landscapes may be identified for fuels reduction work through other funding source and reconsidered for future rounds of BIL investments.

In selecting these landscapes for initial investment, the Forest Service considered where BIL investments could reduce exposure of people, communities, and natural resources to the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Working together with partners, the agency also considered collaborative efforts already in place and initial opportunities to invest in underserved and socially disadvantaged communities. Proposed projects in these landscapes include other Federal, Tribal, and State and private partner investments and complement community investments in fire-adapted communities. The landscapes align with State Forest Action Plans and provide opportunities to leverage past work and available congressional authorities and programs, including the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, Tribal Forest Protection Act, Good Neighbor Authority, Joint Chiefs’ Landscape Restoration Partnership Program, and Shared Stewardship agreements. These investments are occurring in tandem with a broader portfolio of work from other funding sources related to wildfire risk and recovery and resilience in communities across the country. Many high-risk firesheds, however, remain to be treated beyond those captured in this round.

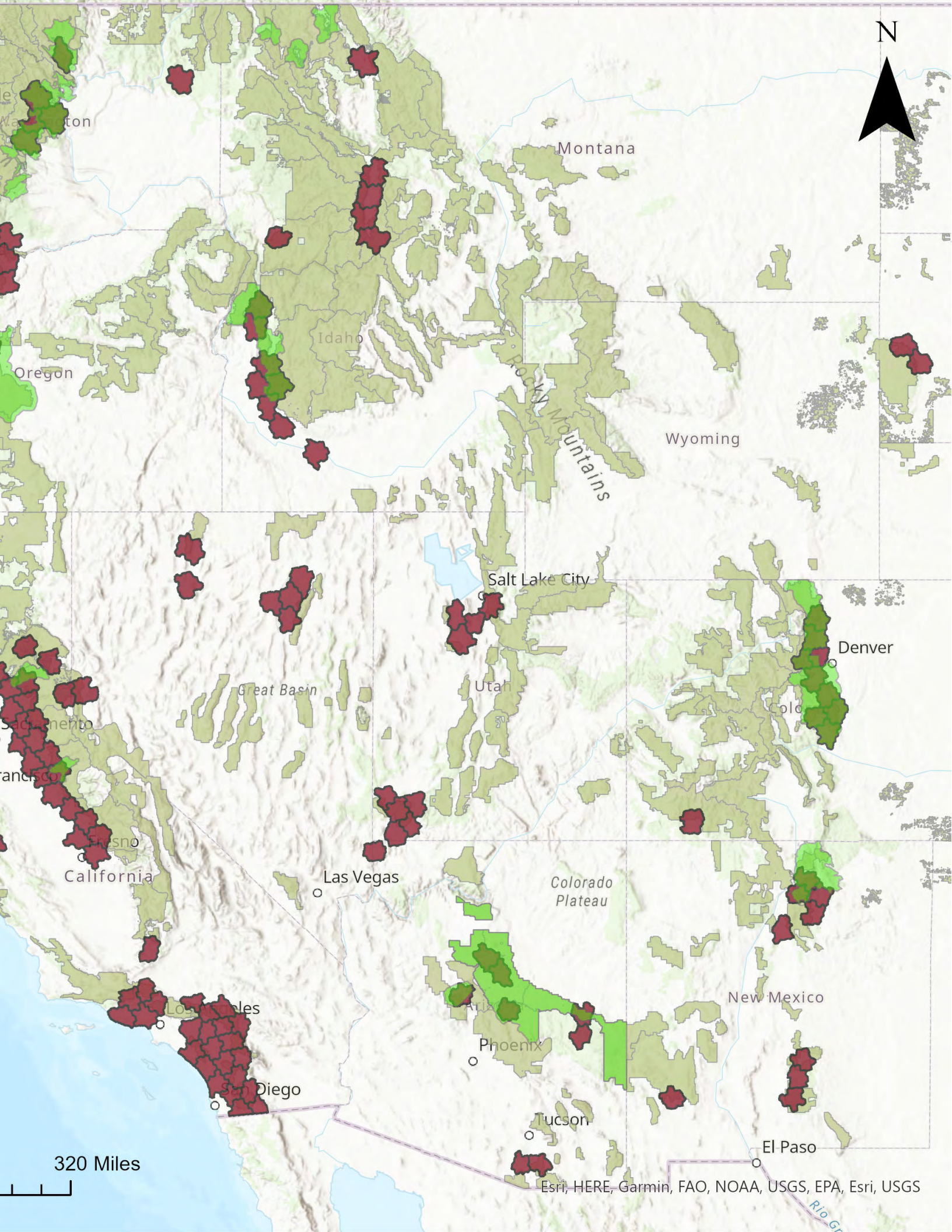
Through ongoing roundtables and other engagements, the Forest Service will continue to work with ALL partners—from the U.S. Department of the Interior agencies to Tribes to local communities—to address different values and priorities, identify common ground, support implementation, and identify additional investments needed in a way that is transparent and built on relationships.

Together with its partners, the Forest Service must work at the scale needed to protect communities while conserving important ecological values at risk from wildfire and drought. The following 10 Initial Landscape Investments reflect the Forest Service’s commitment to that work.



## FIRESHEDS AND LANDSCAPES

Firesheds identified under the Wildfire Crisis Strategy are displayed with initial landscapes where the Forest Service is ready to invest in hazardous fuels mitigation.



N

Montana

Idaho

Wyoming

Salt Lake City

Denver

Great Basin

Utah

Colorado

California

Las Vegas

Colorado Plateau

New Mexico

Los Angeles

Phoenix

Tucson

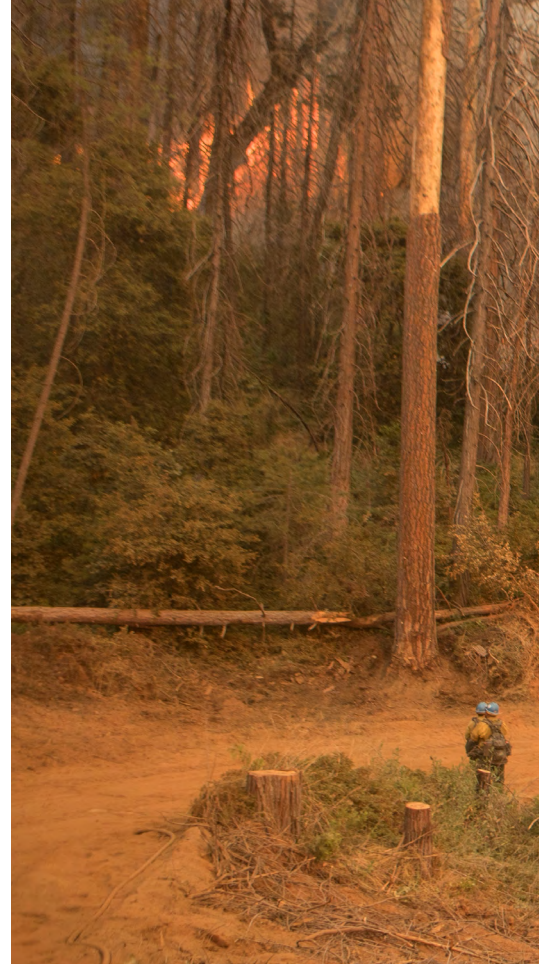
El Paso

320 Miles

Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, Esri, USGS

Rio G

Sierra Hotshots conduct and monitor a controlled burn on the Sierra National Forest, CA. USDA Forest Service photo by Kari Greer.



# RECOMMENDATION

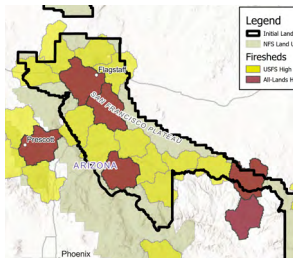
The following list represents those landscapes that are most closely aligned with high-risk firesheds and provide treatments at a scale or can be built out to scale that will make a difference in reducing wildfire risk. This initial announcement is a total of 10 landscapes in Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Montana, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. In FY 2022, the agency intends to invest \$131 million for implementation within high-risk firesheds, as well as investing in enabling conditions that will lead to increased capacity over time (including \$34 million in salary). These investments will lead to 207,787 acres of treatment in FY 2022, but more importantly, will lead to increased outcomes in subsequent years.

Landscape Name	State	Size of Landscape (Acres)
4FRI	Arizona	2,400,000
Prescott	Arizona	401,000
North Yuba	California	313,000
Stanislaus	California	245,000
Colorado Front Range	Colorado	3,500,000
Southwest Idaho	Idaho	1,720,000
Kootenai Complex	Montana	800,000
Enchanted Circle	New Mexico	1,500,000
Central Oregon	Oregon	2,600,000
Central Washington Initiative	Washington	2,450,000
<b>Total</b>		

Table 1. Proposed Initial Landscape Investments. NOTE: Acreage denotes the size of the landscape, not actual acres to be treated within that landscape. This summary table represents total size of landscapes, FY 2022 funding and planned accomplishments, as well as total funding and accomplishments for FY 2022-2024. The landscape size does not represent total planned treatment acres. Strategic treatment objectives focused on reducing approximately 80 percent of the exposure to structures indicate the need to treat 20 to 40 percent of the overall fireshed. The overall size of these 10 landscapes is 16 million acres, of which 7 million acres are high-risk firesheds. Applying the 20 to 40 percent treatment objective would indicate the long-term need to treat 1.4 to 2.8 million acres on these landscapes.



FY 2022 Funding (Millions)	FY 2022 Accomplishment (Acres)	Total FY 2022-2024 Funding (Millions)	Total FY 2022-2024 Accomplishment (Acres)
\$12.0	100,000	\$160.0	300,000
\$11.1	28,000	\$28.7	87,700
\$6.8	4,500	\$25.5	16,900
\$21.8	8,500	\$55.2	32,500
\$18.1	10,000	\$170.4	36,100
\$17.4	18,000	\$59.5	55,000
\$3.6	900	\$19.3	7,200
\$6.6	9,000	\$11.3	32,500
\$4.5	5,000	\$41.3	50,000
\$24.6	24,000	\$102.6	124,000
<b>\$131.3</b>	<b>208,000</b>	<b>\$673.8</b>	<b>742,000</b>



# FOUR FOREST RESTORATION INITIATIVE (4FRI)

Southwestern Region | Region 3

## NATIONAL FOREST

Kaibab, Coconino, Apache-Sitgreaves and Tonto National Forests

## STATES

Arizona

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

2,400,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2042

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$12 million

**FY 2022 - 2024:** \$160 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

AZ-1, AZ-3

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

The Forest Service consults with 17 Native American Tribes, as well as 10 Navajo Nation chapters on 4FRI and the Rim Country EIS.

## PARTNERS

The Nature Conservancy, The Center for Biological Diversity, Trout Unlimited, Great Old Broads of Wilderness, The Grand Canyon Trust, county representatives from all 4FRI counties, National Forest Foundation, Ecological Restoration Institute, National Wild Turkey Federation, Northern Arizona Loggers Association, NewLife Forest Products LLC, Novo BioPower, Campbell Global, Salt River Project, AZ Department of Forestry and Fire, AZ Game and Fish Dept, Bureau of Reclamation, and AZ Commerce Authority

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) is a landscape-level effort to restore the structure, pattern, composition, and health of fire-adapted ponderosa pine ecosystems across 2.4 million acres in northern Arizona. The project uses a full suite of restoration approaches that are carried out by Forest Service personnel, partners, volunteers, and contractors. The 4FRI vision is to restore forest ecosystems, reduce threats of destructive wildfire to thriving forest communities, support sustainable forest industries that strengthen local economies, protect critical watersheds, conserve natural resources, and maintain aesthetic value, as well as ensure the long-term success of this project and industry.

The 4FRI Restoration Strategy outlines an approach to restore a landscape that includes 6 out of 10 of the highest priority firesheds in the Southwestern Region. There are also 9 of the 10 Arizona high-priority, fire-risk areas located in the 4FRI footprint. The strategy focuses on partner projects in at risk areas and broadens the scale of treatment to more immediately reduce wildfire risk, protect communities, and restore the health of forests.

The Rim Country Project is 4FRI's second multi-forest restoration project Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was released for the 45-day objection period on March 18, 2022. The FEIS is one of the largest landscape-scale restoration planning efforts in Forest Service history and the decision outlines 991,060 acres of treatments over 20-years. This project is a prime example of the collaborative and innovative approach toward landscape-scale forest restoration taken by 4FRI and is designed to maximize flexibility in how and where restoration occurs. Rim Country proposes a condition-based management approach to provide flexibilities for the right treatment in the right location over the long term. The Rim Country Project FEIS is a key prerequisite to implementing the 4FRI restoration strategy with existing and new industry opportunities and has broad public support both locally and nationally.

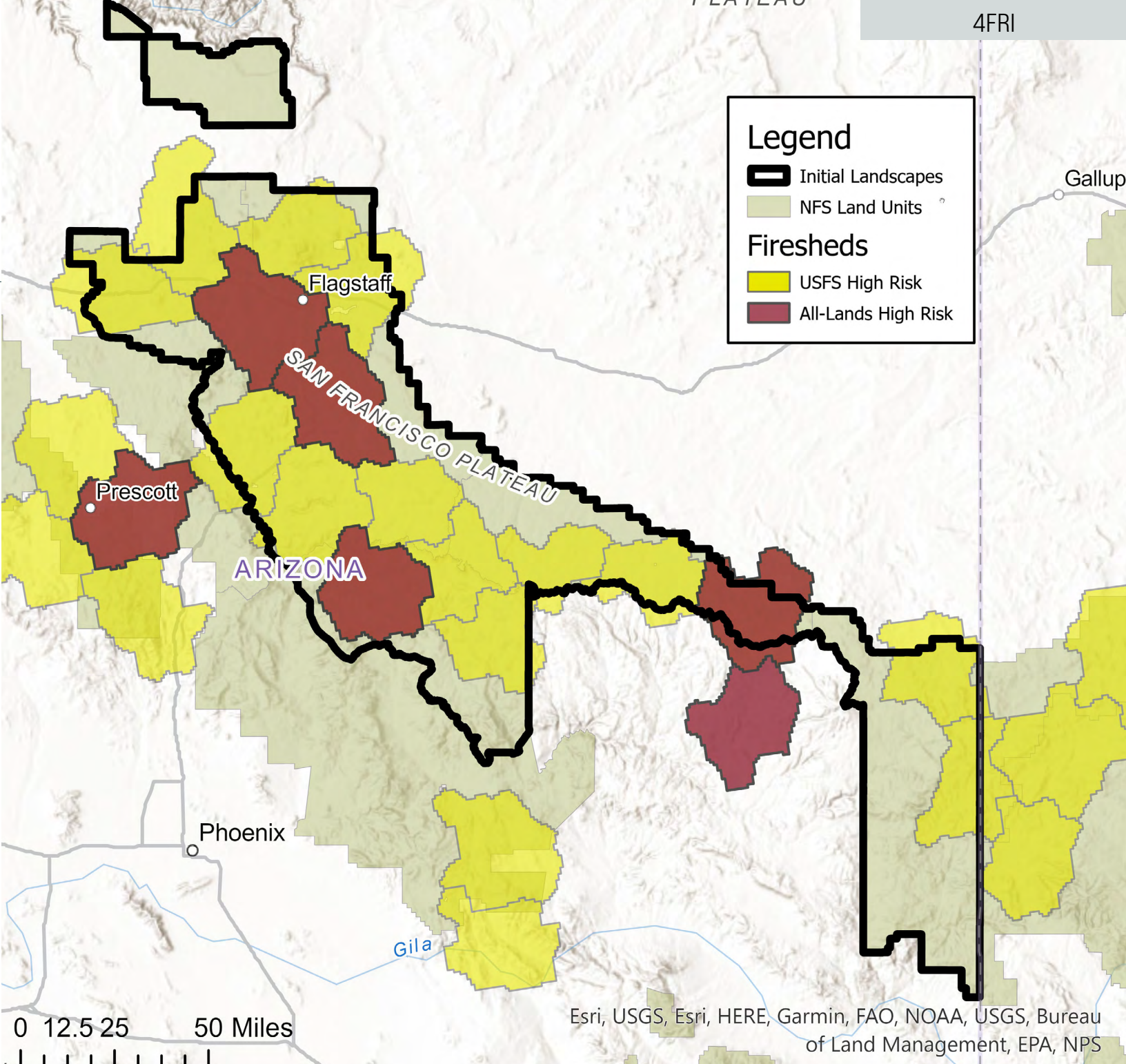
## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

Multiple challenge/cost share and master stewardship agreements are already in place and being developed. Notably, the regional forester signed agreements with the Salt River Project and Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire to cost-share long-term implementation of Cragin Watershed Protection Project and Tonto Restoration Project. The Kaibab National Forest recently completed a Master Stewardship Agreement with National Forest Fund for the Bill Williams project to ensure completion over the next 5 years. A Master Stewardship Agreement with the National Wild Turkey Federation for restoration is ongoing. The full suite of timber sale contract mechanisms are also being utilized for 4FRI program of work on each forest in timber, hazardous fuels reduction, and roads/bridge work.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

**FY 2022:** 100,000 acres

**FY 2022 - 2024:** 300,000 acres

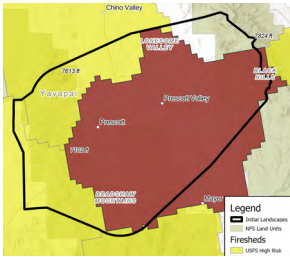


## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Results from 4FRI will include accelerating treatments in high-priority locations; providing wood products to existing industry, now and into the future; and creating innovative approaches that attract and sustain forest products industry. Considering the total acres treated and planned under this strategy (up to 1.2 million acres) across the 2.4 million acres landscape, the outcome is approximately treating 47 percent of the 2.4 million acres.

4FRI associated watersheds capture, store, and release clean water to municipal, domestic, irrigation, and industrial uses for millions of people in the Phoenix metropolitan area and beyond. As outlined in the 4FRI Restoration Strategy, nine high-priority partner projects will improve watershed conditions. Two examples are:

- The Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project will reduce the risk of severe wildfire and subsequent post-fire flooding in the Rio de Flag and Upper Lake Mary watersheds.
- The Cragin Watershed Protection Project—a collaborative 64,443-acre forest restoration project to thin trees and apply prescribed fire treatments—will restore the forest to healthier conditions and protect the C.C. Cragin Reservoir, which is the primary water supply for the Town of Payson and surrounding communities.



# GREATER PRESCOTT AREA WILDFIRE PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

Southwestern Region | Region 3

## NATIONAL FOREST

Prescott National Forest

## STATES

Arizona

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

401,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2032

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$11.1 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$28.7 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

AZ-4

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe, Yavapai-Apache Nation, Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, Hopi Tribe, Hualapai Tribe, Tonto-Apache Tribe

## PARTNERS

Bureau of Land Management, AZ Division of Forestry & Fire Management, Prescott Area Wildland Urban Interface Commission, Yavapai County Emergency Management, Yavapai County Public Works, Yavapai County Sheriff's Office, Local Fire Departments, above listed Tribes, National Forest Foundation, Arizona Game & Fish, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Natural Resource Conservation District, Arizona Public Service, Salt River Project

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The objectives of this project are to reduce community wildland fire risks while restoring and increasing ecosystem resiliency. Implementation efforts will focus on the top priority firesheds identified in the National Forest Scenario Investment Planning Platform, building upon historic fuels treatments and capitalizing on cross-boundary opportunities to collaborate with public, Tribal, and private-area partners. Focusing on priority firesheds that have been identified by fire scientists as the best places to treat the fewest acres while affecting the largest reductions in community risks from wildfires, this a strategic and proactive investment of public funds and a new approach. The forest will utilize a full complement of restoration tools, including but not limited to prescribed fire, mastication, timber thinning and harvest, road improvement, and fuel breaks.

The project will enhance public and firefighter safety by creating defensible space within and adjacent and leading up to communities, Tribal lands, and youth camps. Firefighters will be able to more effectively manage the spread of unplanned ignitions, providing increased operating margins and time for the public to evacuate. The planned treatments will simultaneously restore and add resiliency to these fire dependent ecosystems.

The project also reduces the wildfire threat to popular recreation areas and trail systems crossing jurisdictional boundaries. These areas attract more than 750,000 visitors per year and accounts for roughly 40 percent of the nightly hotel stays in the Greater Prescott area. There will be a direct economic benefit to local businesses in the hospitality, fuel services, shipping, and heavy equipment maintenance sectors.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

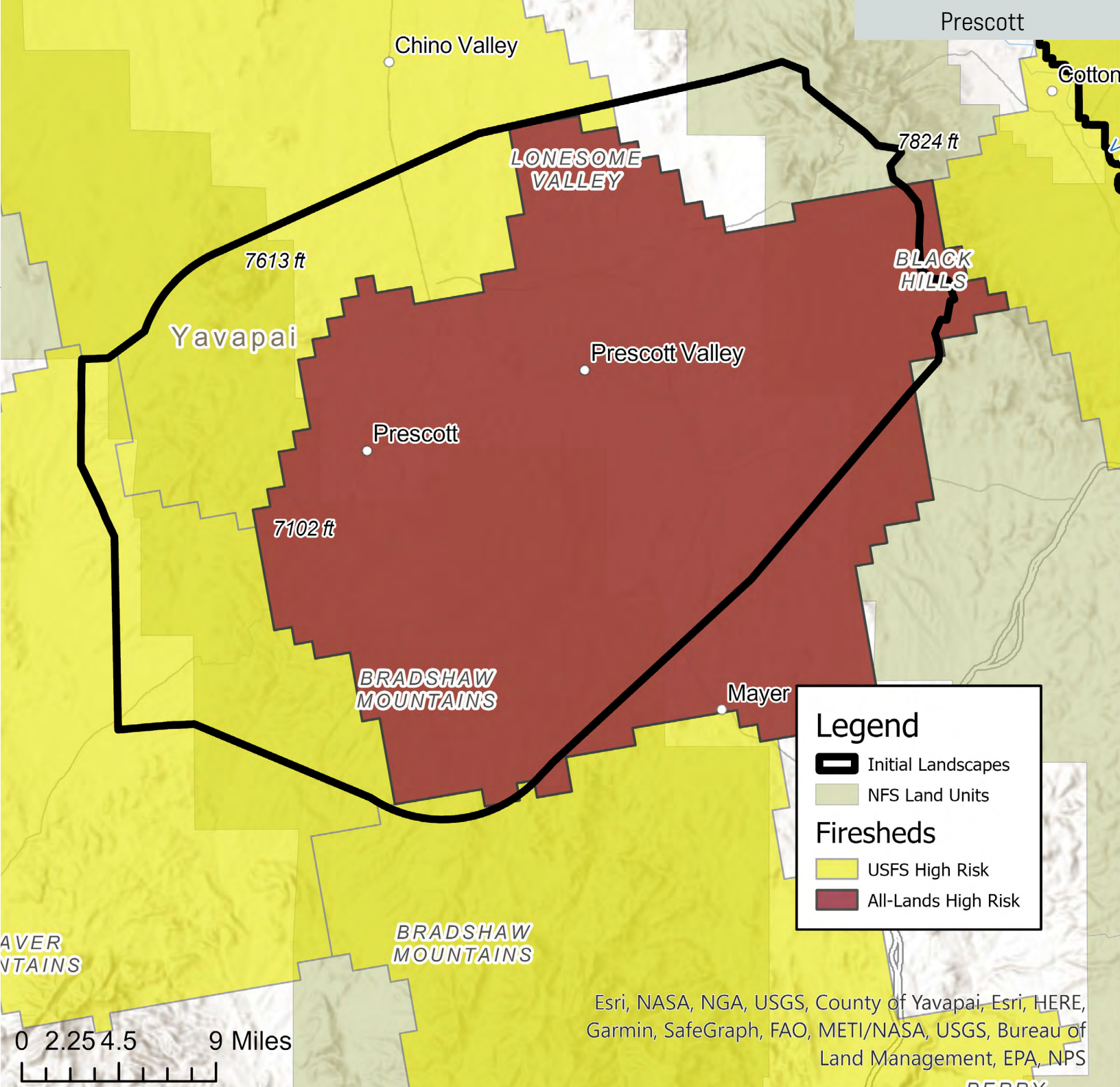
The project will use in-house Forest Service personnel; existing and new local, statewide, regional, and national agreements (funded and nonfunded); existing and new contracts; as well as partnership and cooperator capacity to contract and implement roads, fuels, and vegetation treatments.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

**FY 2022:** 28,000 acres

**FY 2022 - 2024:** 87,700 acres



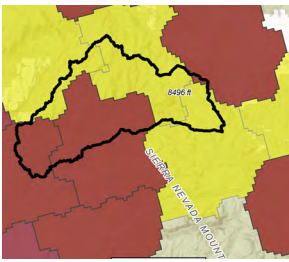


**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

The project will improve overall ecosystem health and watershed function while reducing the wildfire hazard to the communities/areas, including but not limited to Prescott, Prescott Valley, Dewey, Humboldt, Mayer, Cottonwood, Crown King, Walker, Groom Creek, Ponderosa Park, Highland Pines, and Jerome. This project will meet the strategic treatment objective of restoring fire-adapted ecosystems to 40 percent of the landscape to reduce 80 percent of the exposure from wildfire.

The project capitalizes on existing and new agreements with partners and local area church/youth camps allowing for cross-boundary collaboration and implementation (prescribed fire and mechanical treatments).

The project includes cross-boundary ecosystems and watersheds, shared with Tribal nations, local/State/Federal jurisdictions, and private entities. Aligned with the Regional Strategic Plan, the focus is on large-scale ecosystem management that is accomplished through shared stewardship.



# NORTH YUBA LANDSCAPE

Pacific Southwest Region | Region 5

## NATIONAL FOREST

Tahoe National Forest

## STATE(S)

California

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

313,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2032

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$6.8 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$25.5 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

CA-1

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Nisenan of the Nevada City Rancheria

## PARTNERS

National Forest Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Blue Forest Conservation, Yuba Water Agency, Sierra County, Nisenan of the Nevada City Rancheria, South Yuba River Citizens League, Camptonville Community Partnership

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The 313,000-acre North Yuba Landscape watershed is one of the largest contiguous “unburned” landscapes remaining in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The North Yuba watershed is also an important water source for residential and agricultural areas surrounding Sacramento. It feeds a reservoir retained by the tallest dam in California, which also provides power to the Sacramento area.

The nine entities making up the North Yuba Forest Partnership have demonstrated commitment and success in transitioning the North Yuba watershed to a healthier and more resilient state, reducing wildfire risk to communities and enabling the watershed to withstand other disturbances associated with a changing climate. Through ecologically based thinning and prescribed fire, the partnership seeks to protect North Yuba communities from the threat of catastrophic wildfire and restore the watershed to a healthier, more resilient state.

The North Yuba Landscape project is the proving ground for innovations, including community-based biomass utilization development, large-scale planning, and conservation finance through the first two Forest Resilience Bonds that leverage substantial private sector investments to help fund implementation of this work.

The Forest Service is committed to working with the North Yuba Forest Partnership to protect communities and create economic opportunity in rural parts of California that have lost industries and population in recent decades, including areas designated by the State as low income and disadvantaged.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

The project will use Master Stewardship Agreements with the National Forest Foundation, Sierra County, and American Conservation Experience; Challenge Cost Share agreement with The Nature Conservancy and South Yuba River Citizens League; contracting via an Indefinite Duration Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) instrument, Forest Resilience Bond to expedite project execution, and Integrated Resource Timber Contracts.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

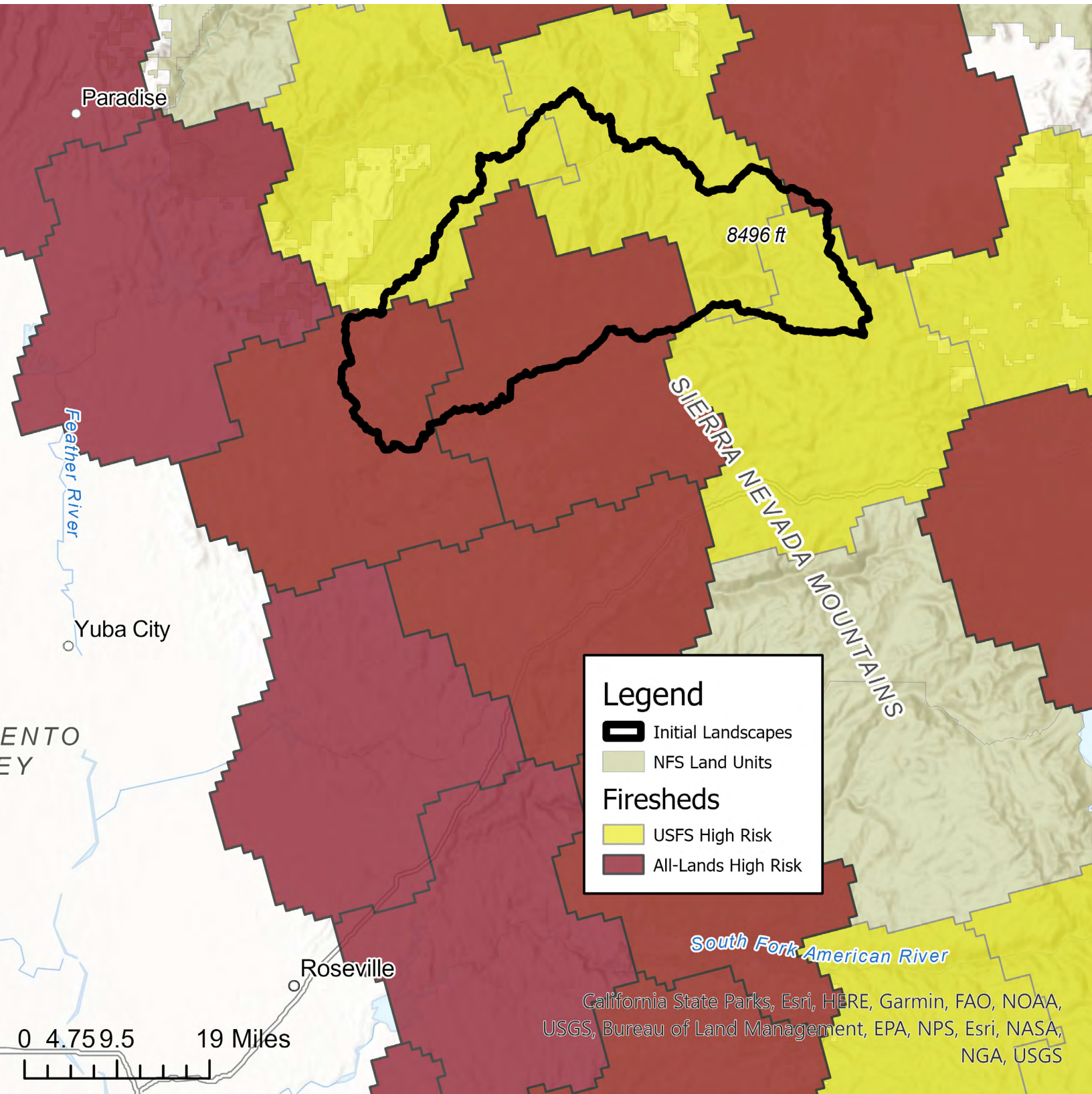
**FY 2022:** 4,500 acres

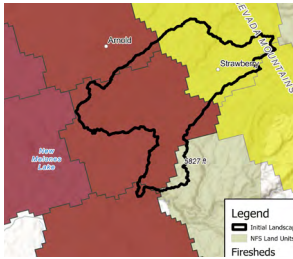
**FY 2022 - 2024:** 16,900 acres

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

In addition to reducing the fire risk to the communities of Camptonville, Goodyears Bar, Downieville, Sierra City, the Yuba Water Agency infrastructure, and others within the North Yuba watershed, the project will improve forest conditions across the landscape to enhance fire resilience and adaptability to a changing climate.

The project aims to improve watershed resilience by protecting 260,000 acre-feet of water supply for 60,000 acres of productive farmland while also protecting water quality in the Sacramento Delta. Ongoing project work has protected 50-million-acre feet of water supply within the North Yuba watershed.





# STANISLAUS

Pacific Southwest Region | Region 5

## NATIONAL FOREST

Stanislaus National Forest

## STATE(S)

California

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

245,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

Implementation of project activities is set to begin in spring 2022.

Implementation of all desired treatments is expected to take approximately 7 to 10 years overall.

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$21.8 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$55.2 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

CA-4

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk

## PARTNERS

Tuolumne County (Master Stewardship Agreement), Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (Collaborative), Great Basin Institute, Institute for Bird Populations

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The Stanislaus Landscape Project aims to apply a full suite of needed treatments to restore forest resilience at a landscape scale. These treatments include mastication, biomass removal, machine piling for burning, hand piling for burning, hand thinning, timber harvest, hazard tree removal, prescribed fire, and fuel break construction and maintenance. Combined, these efforts will reduce hazardous fuels and create a landscape that can better withstand disturbances such as wildfire, insects, disease, and drought conditions, while also protecting local communities, providing for critical species habitat, and supporting forest use and recreational opportunities.

After more than a decade of collaboration with the Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions collaborative, this landscape provides one of the richest environments for Shared Stewardship as demonstrated through joint support of project design, surveys, layout, and implementation of numerous projects.

Within the Stanislaus Landscape, the newly signed Social and Ecological Resilience Across the Landscape (SERAL) project uses emerging models to demonstrate how vegetation treatments will help wildland fire play its natural role within the fireshed, leading to greater ecosystem integrity and protection of collaboratively identified high-value resources and assets (communities, California Spotted Owl and other habitat, water systems, powerlines, roads, communication sites, and more).

This project leverages substantial grants from CAL FIRE, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, as well as a partnership with the American Forest Foundation to expand planned treatments onto private lands. The forest is working with Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk to develop a Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA) component that will capitalize on existing agreements with the Tribe to support implementation.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

The Stanislaus National Forest has three supplemental project agreement modifications and one contract to execute this work in FY 2022.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

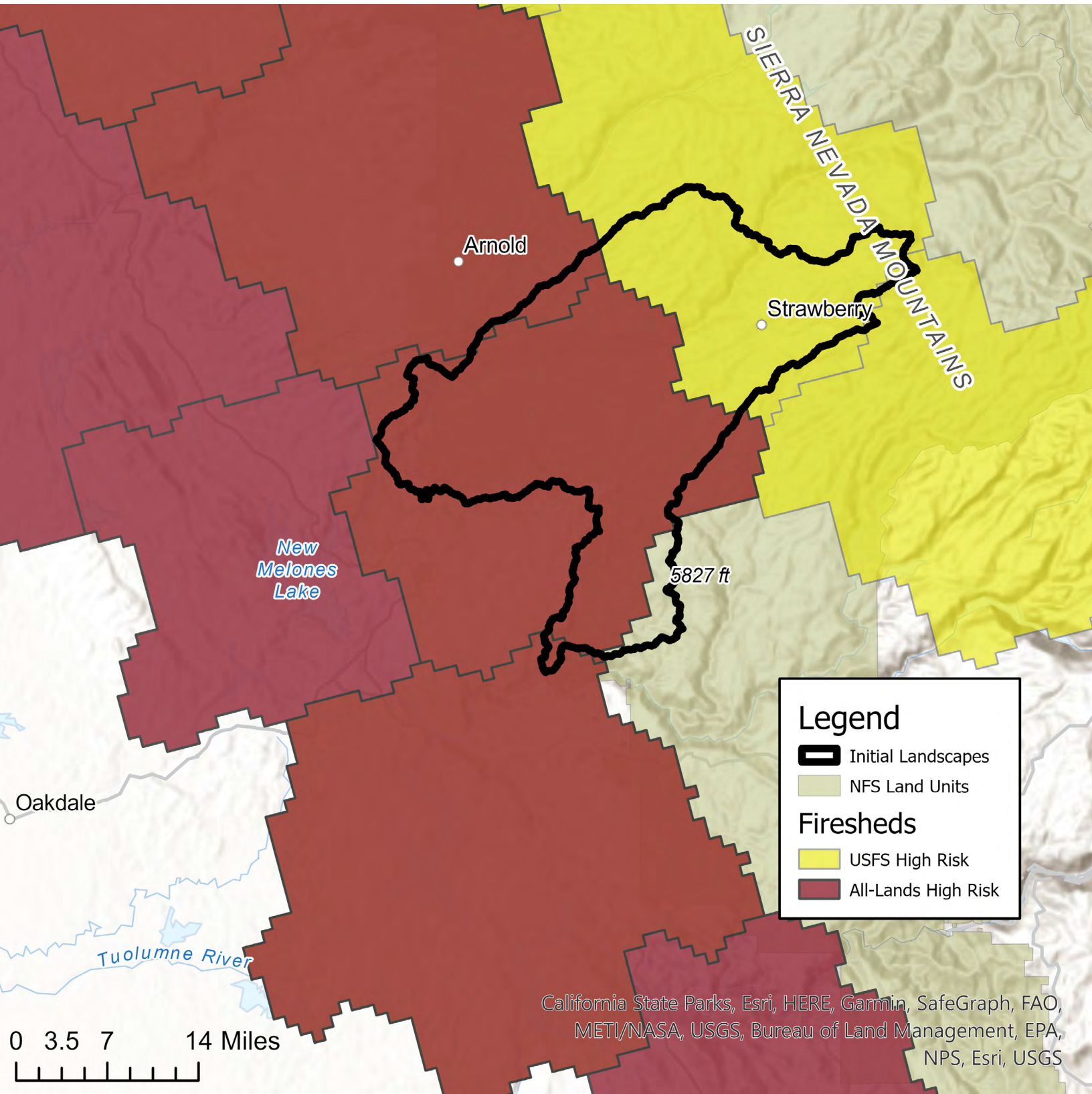
**FY 2022:** 8,500 acres

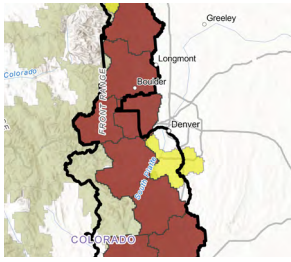
**FY 2022 - 2024:** 32,500 acres

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Outcomes include reduced fire risk to several foothill communities (Sonora, Columbia, Cedar Ridge, Twain Harte, Strawberry, Pinecrest, Long Barn); protection of power infrastructure (hydropower facilities and transmission and distribution lines); reduced risk to multiple communication sites and facilities both on private and public lands; and road improvements (to provide access for various treatments, as well as improved public recreation and access for emergency response).

The South and Middle Forks of the Stanislaus River are the primary water sources for Tuolumne County and provide potable water for other municipalities throughout the Central Valley, as well. Additional outcomes include less risk to community infrastructure (beyond homes), including the watershed, water reservoirs (Pinecrest Lake, Lyons Lake) and the historic wooden flume that provides 90 percent of the water to the local area. These watersheds provides substantial water for agricultural uses and habitat for several species of conservation concern.





# COLORADO FRONT RANGE

Rocky Mountain Region | Region 2

## NATIONAL FOREST

Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, Pike and San Isabel National Forests

## STATES

Colorado

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

3,500,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2027-2029

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$18.1 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$170.4 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

CO-2, CO-3, CO-4, CO-5, CO-6, and CO-7 (after November)

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Apache Tribe of Oklahoma; Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma; Cheyenne River Sioux; Comanche Nation; Jicarilla Apache Nation; Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma; Navajo Nation; Northern Arapaho Tribe; Northern Cheyenne Tribe; Oglala Sioux Tribe; Osage Nation; Pawnee Nation; Rosebud Sioux Tribe; Southern Ute Indian Tribe; Standing Rock Sioux; Taos Pueblo; Three Affiliated Tribes; Southern Ute Indian Tribe; Ute Mountain Ute Tribe.

## PARTNERS

Aurora Water; Cities of Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, and Ft Collins; Coalition for the Upper South Platte; CO Dept. of Fire Prevention & Control; CO Forest Restoration Inst.; CO Springs Utilities; CO State Forest Service; Denver Water; local counties/conservation districts; National Forest Foundation; National Wild Turkey Federation; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; CO Parks & Wildlife, National Arbor Day Foundation, Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative, Rocky Mountain National Park, Rocky Mountain Research Station; The Ember Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, Upper South Platte Partnership, and more.

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The Colorado Front Range project focuses on cross-jurisdictional, strategically important fuels treatments. The project will maximize collaboration with communities and partners to prevent devastating wildfires throughout the high-risk Front Range.

Due to years of fire suppression, Colorado's Front Range forests are unhealthy and lend themselves to intense wildfires. Reintroducing fire back into this fire-adapted ecosystem is vital to its long-term health and success of future fire management.

This strategy progresses communities through stages of readiness to increase their collaboration and support to build more resilient forests through implementation and beyond.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

The forests will use an integrated approach across the landscape, starting with mechanical thinning and followed by prescribed fire. To execute this work in FY 2022 the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests expects to use four contracts, three timber sales, multiple prescribed fire projects, one Good Neighbor Agreement, and three new agreements. The Pike and San Isabel National Forests expects to use five contracts, one Good Neighbor Agreement, and two agreement modifications.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

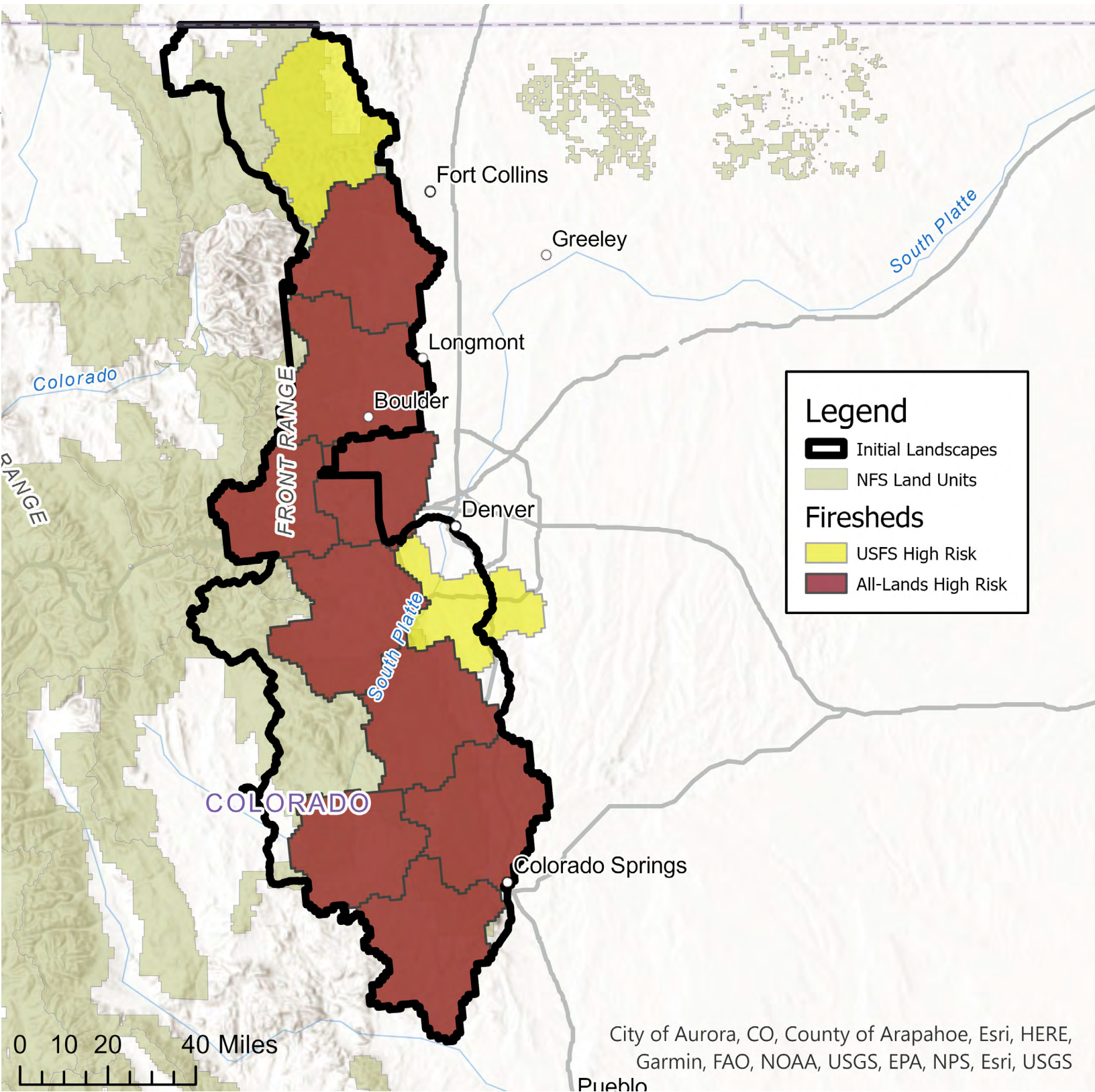
**FY 2022:** 10,000 acres

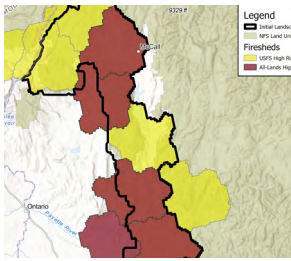
**FY 2022 - 2024:** 36,100 acres

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Outcomes include landscape-level strategic fuels treatments, reducing fire risk and effects for people and businesses that are not achieved through output-based treatments. Through collaboration and strengthened relationships with communities/partners, target treatments for implementation/maintenance will reduce externalities, such as insurance and recovery/rebuilding costs, carbon released into the air, and watershed/health impacts.

These forests are the only sources of water for the Colorado Front Range, making it critical to reduce the likelihood, intensity, and size of fires and lesson sedimentation and increase water retention. These actions reduce costs to water providers, key members of the strategy along with watershed coalitions.





# SOUTHWEST IDAHO

Intermountain Region | Region 4

## NATIONAL FOREST

Boise and Payette National Forests

## STATE(S)

Idaho

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

1,720,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2027 - 2029

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$17.4 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$59.5 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

ID-1, ID-2

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Nez Perce, Shoshone-Paiute, Shoshone-Bannock

## PARTNERS

Idaho Department of Lands; The Nature Conservancy; National Forest Foundation; Bureau of Land Management; Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association; Valley, Adams, Gem, Boise, and Ada Counties; Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership; Boise Forest Coalition; and Payette Forest Coalition

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The goal of southwest Idaho fuels reduction project is to treat approximately 250,000 acres (25 percent) of hazardous fuels on National Forest System lands over 5 to 7 years. Collaborative efforts to treat the national forests and adjacent Federal, State, and private land through a shared stewardship approach will decrease the risk of catastrophic wildfire to communities, improve watershed health, sustain industry, protect recreation, and improve forest resilience.

The investments made in this landscape will significantly reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire while increasing the resiliency of the landscape to climate change and other stressors.

The project will amplify and accelerate forest restoration and wildfire risk reduction work already occurring through use of Good Neighbor Authority and Shared Stewardship.

Well-established and effective partnerships with Tribes, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the State of Idaho, the Boise and Payette Forest Coalitions, and other groups will help the Forest Service and partners achieve desired outcomes in this landscape.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

Since 2016, the Boise and Payette National Forests and State of Idaho have been using Good Neighbor Authority to increase the pace and scale of forest and watershed restoration activities on National Forest System lands. In December 2018, the State of Idaho and USDA signed the Nation's first Shared Stewardship Agreement, memorializing a commitment to expand critical treatments beyond national forests onto all ownership boundaries. The forests also have contracts in place for noncommercial thinning work and cooperative agreements with other agencies to aid in prescribed fire implementation.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

**FY 2022:** 18,000 acres

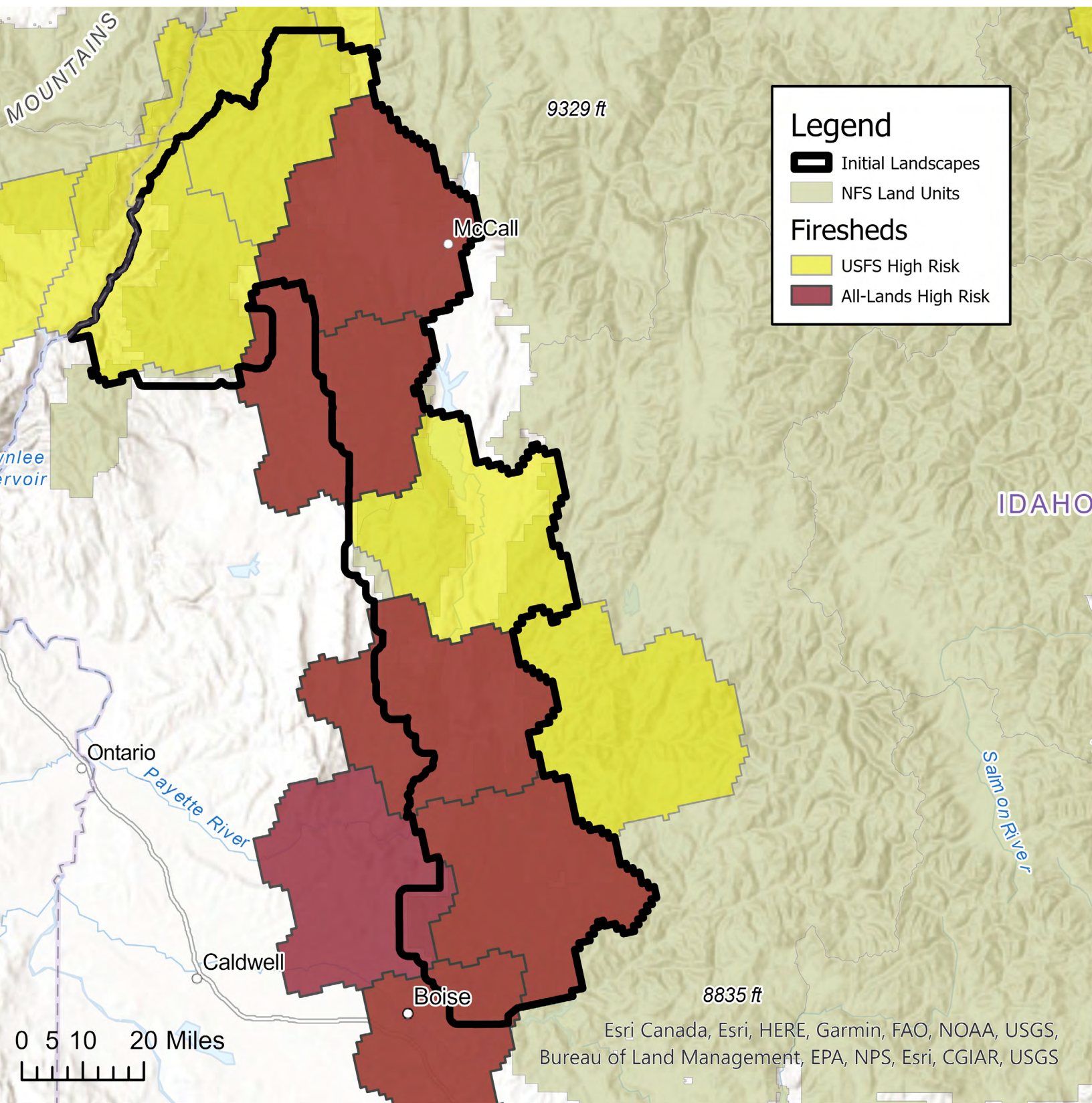
**FY 2022 - 2024:** 55,000 acres

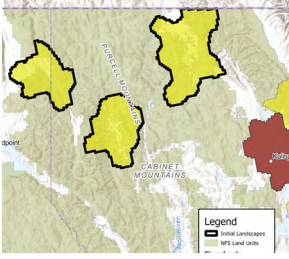
## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The risk of catastrophic wildfire to the cities of Boise, Horseshoe Bend, Idaho City, Garden Valley, McCall, Cascade, Donnelly, New Meadows, Council, and Cambridge will be reduced by incorporating an all-lands approach to forest management and achieving long-term results based on science and socioeconomics.

Implementation of this project will improve watershed conditions and terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem health in major watersheds, including the Boise, Payette and Weiser subbasins. These river basins include habitat for important species, including threatened steelhead, Chinook salmon, and bull trout populations.







# KOOTENAI COMPLEX

Northern Region | Region 1

## NATIONAL FOREST

Kootenai National Forest

## STATES

Montana, Idaho

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

800,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2029-2032

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$3.6 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$19.3 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

Montana At-Large and a small portion of ID-1

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

## PARTNERS

Primary partners are Lincoln County, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (MT DNRC), and USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS). Other partners supportive of the Kootenai National Forest include the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes; the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho; Kootenai Forest Stakeholders Coalition; Cities of Eureka, Libby, and Troy; Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; American Forest Foundation; Bonneville Power Administration; Mule Deer Foundation; National Wild Turkey Federation; and Wild Sheep Foundation

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The Kootenai Complex Project aims to treat hazardous fuels across 150,000 acres within high-risk firesheds surrounding the communities of Libby, Troy, Eureka, Stryker, Fortine, and Trego, MT. Recent cutting edge wildfire science confirms that Lincoln County, MT, communities are at a particularly high risk of being impacted by severe wildfire events. This project is part of an ongoing cross-boundary effort to connect past, present, and future activities and is designed to reduce and mitigate wildfire threats to communities. In addition, this project complements an ongoing countywide effort to increase infrastructure capacity for wood product utilization, which will further contribute to employment opportunities in this underserved community. Additional project benefits include improving wildlife habitat, forest health and resiliency, and water quality, as well as providing employment to the local economy

BIL funding will accelerate the needed forest health and wildfire risk mitigation activities necessary to reduce community exposure across ownership boundaries, expanding on the great work occurring under the Lincoln County Shared Stewardship Initiative.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

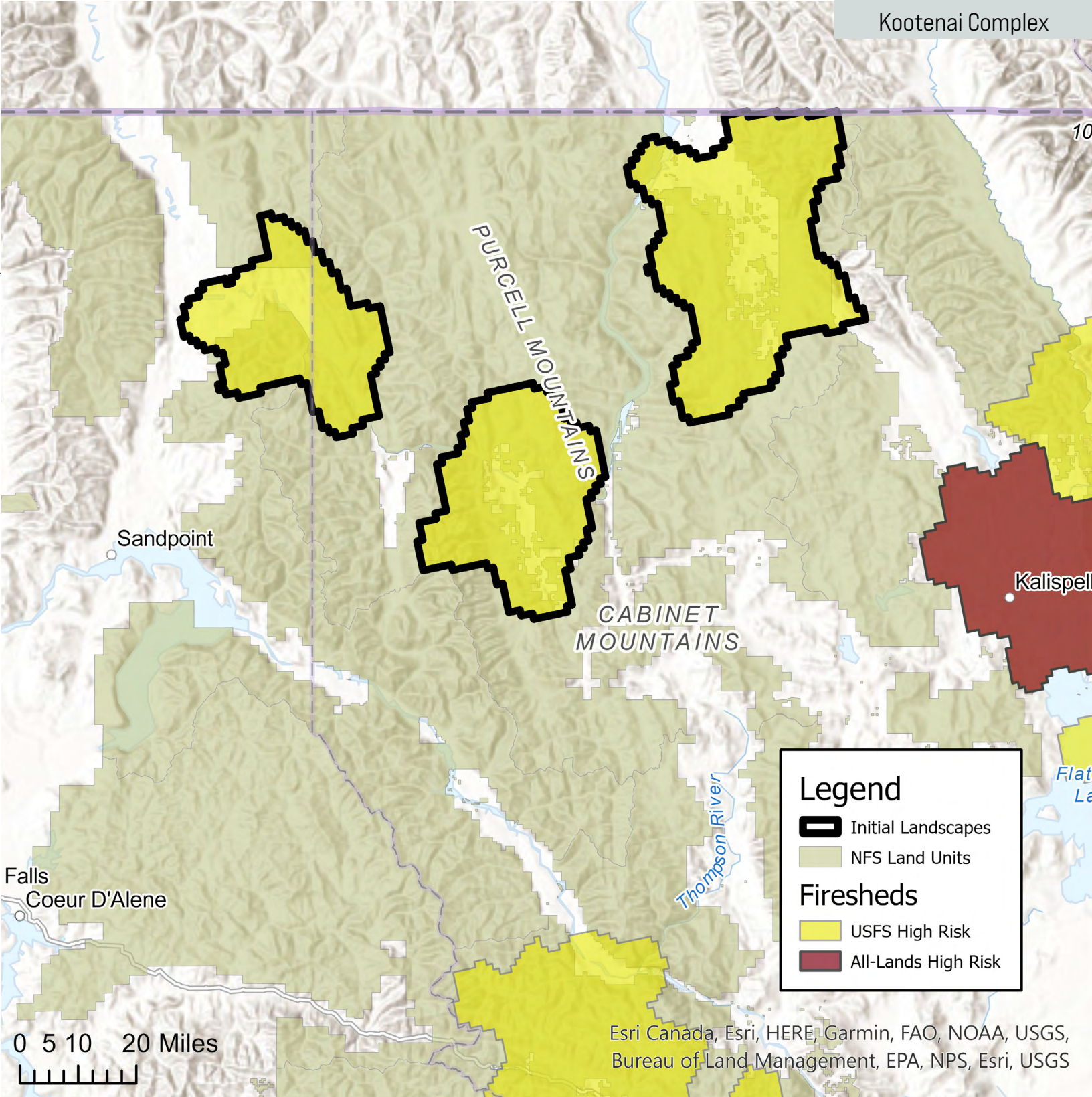
The Kootenai National Forest has a memorandum of understanding with Lincoln County, MT DNRC, and NRCS to accomplish fuels treatments across all lands within Lincoln County. Additionally, the Kootenai National Forest has a Good Neighbor Authority agreement with MT DNRC to increase pace and scale across the forest. This project includes resources to increase the capacity of the Kootenai National Forest and the Good Neighbor Authority program to accelerate treatments across the project area.

Lincoln County, NRCS, American Forest Foundation, and MT DNRC are working collaboratively with outreach, coordination, and implementation on private lands across Lincoln County. Additionally, the Lincoln County Community Wildfire Protection Plan identifies priority areas for treatment across Lincoln County and provides recommendations for treatment on private lands.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

**FY 2022:** 900 acres

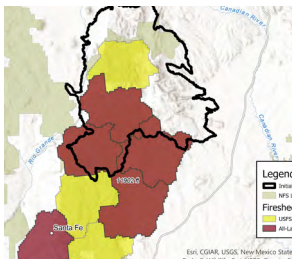
**FY 2022 - 2024:** 7,200 acres



**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

The desired outcomes of this project will increase the pace and scale of vegetation treatments across the landscape, bolstering the local economy through the increased use of the Good Neighbor Authority and other contracts and agreements. In addition, the project will reduce fuels around communities and other values at risk, increase capacity of the infrastructure needed to accomplish large-scale vegetative restoration, minimize large wildfire on the landscape, improve forest health, and improve/create wildlife habitat.

Watershed health is maintained or improved through the same type of management actions. Additionally, this project helps protect critical infrastructure, such as a newly constructed \$11.5 million-dollar replacement dam and reservoir, within the municipal watershed that supplies domestic water to 1,800 households.



# ENCHANTED CIRCLE

Southwestern Region | Region 3

## NATIONAL FOREST

Carson National Forest

## STATES

New Mexico

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

1,500,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2032

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$6.6 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$11.3 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

NM-3

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Taos Pueblo, Picuris Pueblo, Sandia Pueblo

## PARTNERS

Rio Grande Water Fund, Taos Valley Watershed Coalition, Toas Pueblo Department of Natural Resources, Picuris Pueblo, Cerro Negro Forest Council, Trampas Forest Council, New Mexico Forest Industry Association, New Mexico State Lands Office, New Mexico State Forestry, Cimarron Watershed Alliance, Philmont Scout Ranch

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The Enchanted Circle will use collaboratively developed prescribed fire and mechanical fuels treatments, as well as timber sales and wetland and stream restoration treatments, across Tribal, private, Federal, and New Mexico State Forest and Land Trusts.

Fuels treatment and fuelwood removal work is being completed on private lands within the landscape, similar to work done on Federal lands and with many of the same contractors. Thinning and fuelwood harvesting will continue near the Town of Taos, on the Philmont Scout Ranch, on Land Grant lands managed by the Rio Costilla Cooperative Livestock Association, as well as the Village of Taos Ski Valley, and many of the unincorporated communities across the landscape.

There are long-term collaboratives in place that include Tribes and local (acequia water managers, land grant managers, nonprofit environmental groups, and local government officials.

Projects have been developed and prioritized collaboratively, and they align with community wildfire protection plans.

Treatments will provide desired forest products to industry and the public, while creating resilient, fire-adapted landscapes.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

The project will use in-house Forest Service personnel; existing and new local, statewide, regional, and national agreements (funded and nonfunded); existing and new contracts; as well as partnership and cooperator capacity to contract and implement roads, fuels, and vegetation treatments.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

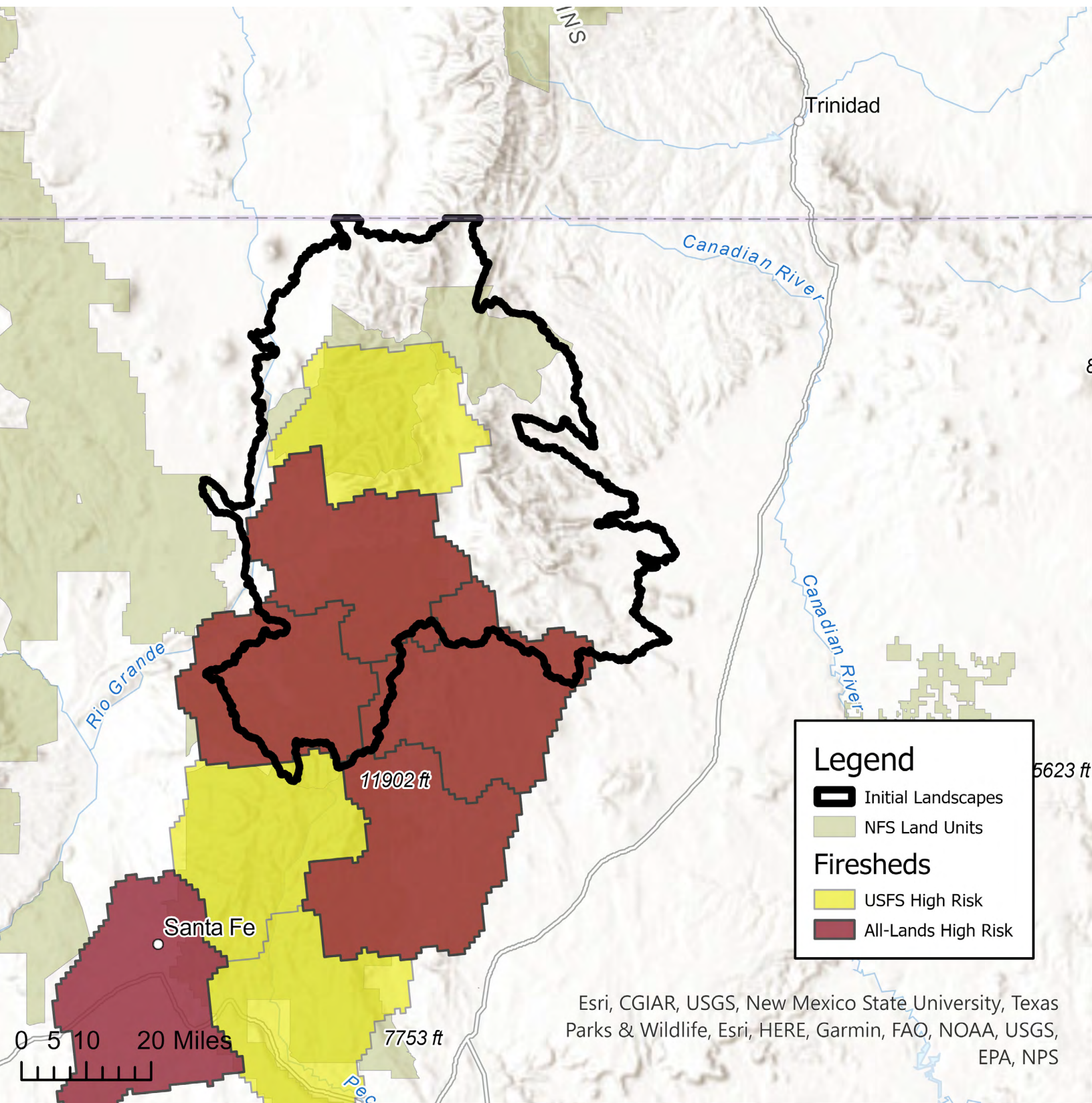
**FY 2022:** 9,000 acres

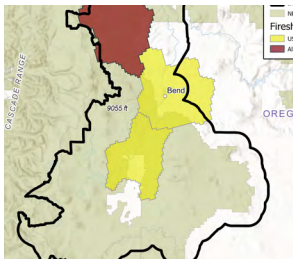
**FY 2022 - 2024:** 32,500 acres

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Outcomes include reduced fire risk to communities and increased watershed resilience, provision of traditional forest products with a focus on fuelwood to the public, and forest resistance to insects and disease.

Providing headwaters leading into the Canadian and Rio Grande watersheds, this project area already benefits from the efforts of the Comanche Creek Working Group Collaborative focused on watershed improvement and wetland restoration. There are efforts currently under way by the recipients of Natural Resource Damage Assessment funds on the Cabresto Creek, as well as wetland restoration by Chevron, Inc.





# CENTRAL OREGON

Pacific Northwest Region | Region 6

## NATIONAL FOREST

Deschutes (a portion of the project includes the Crooked River National Grassland)

## STATE(S)

Oregon

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

2,600,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2032

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$4.5 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$41.3 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

OR-2

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

## PARTNERS

Oregon Department of Forestry, Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project, Central Oregon Forest Stewardship Foundation, Deschutes Trails Coalition, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Discover Your Forest, Upper Deschutes Watershed Council, Central Oregon Shared Stewardship Alliance, Deschutes County, The Nature Conservancy, Deschutes Land Trust; Walker Range Fire Patrol, Oregon Living with Fire, local municipalities

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The Central Oregon Landscape covers State, private, and Federal lands on the eastside of the Cascades. This area is rich in collaboration and has been a leader in implementing the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration program, Joint Chief’s Projects, and National Cohesive Strategy. Additional investments will continue to reduce the risk of fire transfer to numerous, growing communities and critical infrastructure and build upon work already accomplished.

Central Oregon is experiencing the most extensive community growth in the State with some communities increasing almost 30 percent in the past 10 years. Hundreds of thousands of acres of Federal land are immediately adjacent to communities and subdivisions, which puts those communities and subdivisions at risk of fire.

Central Oregon’s economy is driven by recreation and tourism. The Deschutes National Forest is the primary destination, setting, and background for this economy. In 2021, in trail trips alone, \$136 million were spent in Deschutes County. Mitigating wildland fire risks is critical to ensuring a sustainable local economy.

Central Oregon has a long history of collaborative engagement to address wildland fires and active management to minimize impacts to communities. Further investment will allow these community-based partners to build upon work already accomplished.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

The Deschutes National Forest has five agreement modifications (including Good Neighbor Authority Agreements with Oregon Department of Forestry, partnership agreements with county and nongovernmental organizations, and interagency agreement with Bureau of Land Management) and 3 to 5 contracts to execute this work in FY 2022. Utilization of existing mechanisms under Joint Chiefs, Cooperative Forest Landscape Restoration Fund, Oregon Senate Bill 762, and agreement authorities paired with scheduled planning efforts are anticipated to increase pace and scale of treatment over the duration of the project.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

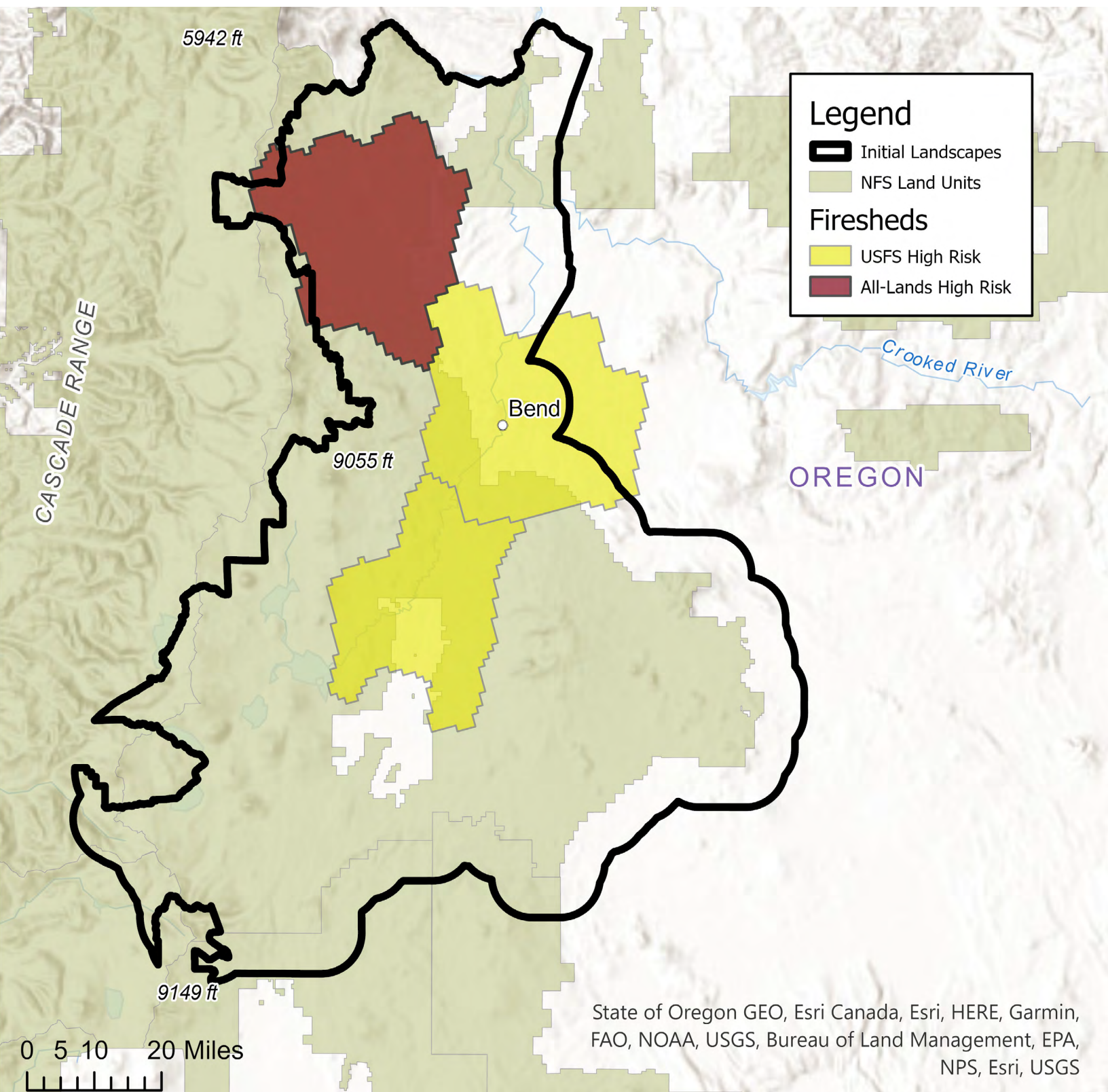
**FY 2022:** 5,000 acres

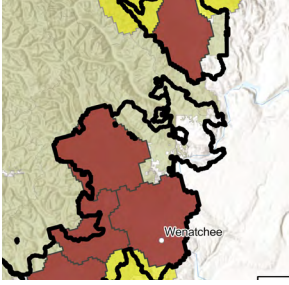
**FY 2022 - 2024:** 50,000 acres

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Implementation of landscape scale cross-boundary projects through cohesive partnerships will conserve and restore forested landscapes while reducing wildfire risk and impact to life, property, and economic assets in and adjacent to the communities of Bend (R6 Tier 1 Wildfire Risk), Sisters (#1 at risk Oregon Fireshed), Sunriver (#6 at risk Oregon Fireshed), LaPine, and Crescent.

Emphasizing forest health and reintroduction of fire on a larger scale complements restoration efforts to improve aquatic and terrestrial habitats for sensitive and listed species like Oregon spotted frog and Chinook salmon. The Deschutes National Forest is a leading member of a strong partner network that is strategically increasing holistic watershed function across public and private ownerships, supporting a reliable rural and urban water supply to the Bend Municipal Watershed amidst an exceptional drought.





# CENTRAL WASHINGTON INITIATIVE

Pacific Northwest Region | Region 6

## NATIONAL FOREST

Okanogan-Wenatchee

## STATE(S)

Washington

## LANDSCAPE SIZE

2,450,000 acres

## EXPECTED COMPLETION OF INITIAL TREATMENTS

2032

## EXPECTED BIL FUNDING

**FY 2022:** \$24.6 million

**TOTAL FY 2022 - 2024:** \$102.6 million

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

WA-4, WA-8

## TRIBAL CONNECTION

Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation and Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

## PARTNERS

Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative, Tapash Collaborative, Blue Forest Conservation, counties (Okanogan, Yakima, Kittitas and Chelan), The Nature Conservancy, The Wilderness Society, American Forest Resource Council, and more.

## LANDSCAPE HIGHLIGHTS

The Central Washington Initiative (CWI) landscape spans national forests and State and private lands across four counties, including six high-risk firesheds (Twisp, Chiwaukum, Wenatchee, Leavenworth, Cle Elum, and American River) across 2.45 million acres (1.35 million acres Forest Service lands, 1.1 million acres non-Forest Service lands). Restoration work across this landscape capitalizes on strong, existing partnerships to reduce the risk of wildfire through targeted investments over the next 10 years.

The CWI addresses a range of urgent challenges, among them the expanding risk to communities, natural resources, and local economies, as well as to our citizens and firefighters; the loss of critical fish and wildlife habitat; and degradation caused to watershed health.

Of the top 10 highest risk to wildfire exposure communities in Washington, 6 are included in the CWI landscape. Threats from wildfires, evacuations, and smoke impacts have become part of life for these communities and that comes at a high cost to community and forest health, as well as to local economies. More than 3.5 million people visit the CWI landscape each year. The impacted communities depend on healthy, resilient forests for tourism and community amenities. Targeted investments in this landscape will result in benefits to community health and economics of these fire-prone, fire-adapted landscapes.

The CWI takes a proactive "all hands, all lands" approach to fuels and forest health treatments in a complex landscape. Targeted investments in this landscape leverage established partnerships with State agencies, Tribes, and collaboratives to allow work to be quickly and effectively executed through shared stewardship while maximizing the use of existing authorities.

## MECHANISMS FOR EXECUTION

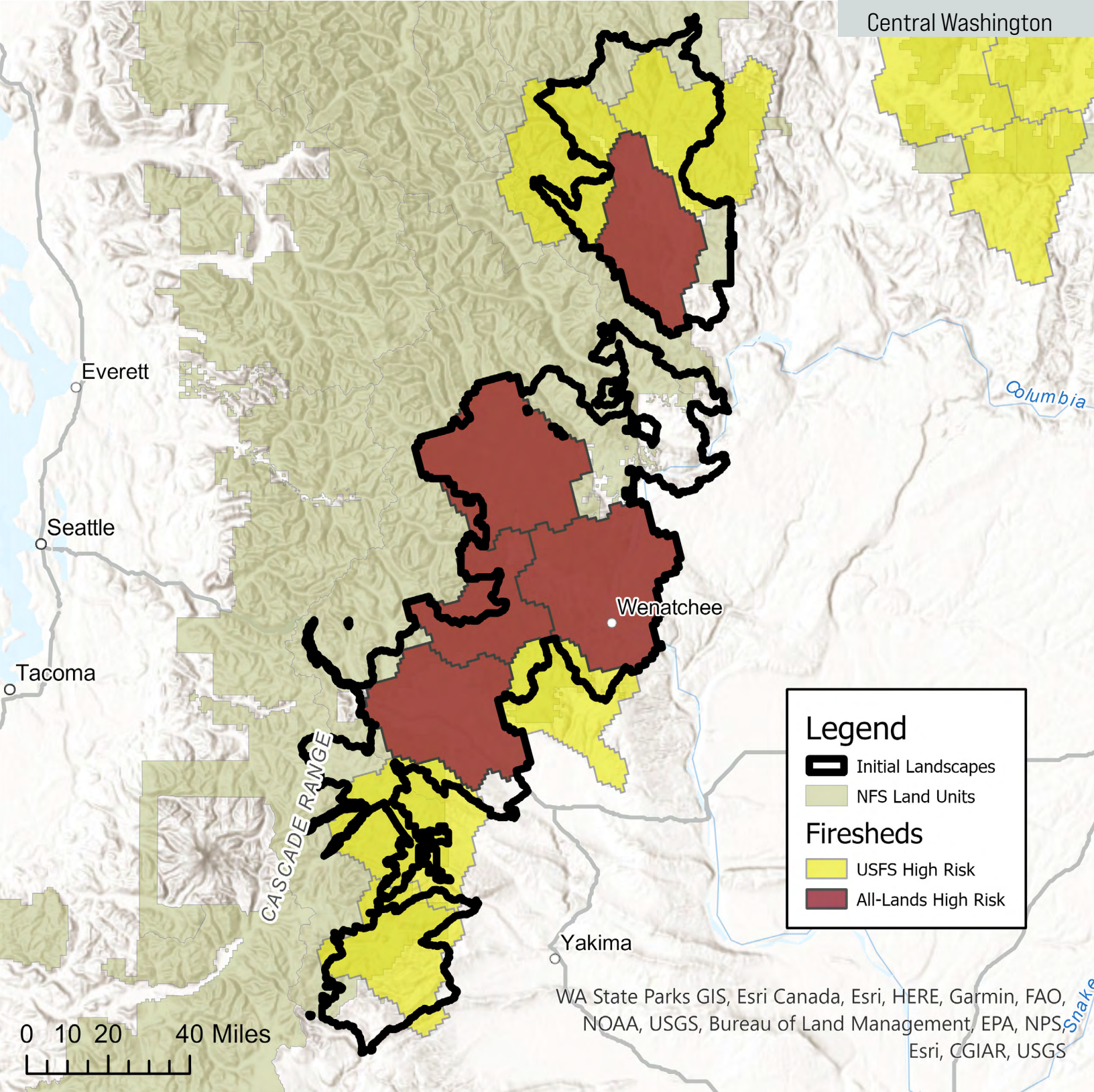
The forest and DNR are developing an agreement to formalize the shared commitment to completing CWI work and accomplishing wildfire risk reduction work on 35,000 acres per year of National Forest System (NFS) and non-NFS lands within the CWI landscape. Additionally, the forest is developing a Tribal Forest Protection Act project and a Public Law 93-638 agreement with Yakama Nation; has two forest-wide Good Neighbor Authority Agreements with WA DNR; has agreements with Bureau of Land Management; has partnership agreements for collaboration, monitoring, and technical assistance; and is using existing regional contracts to plan categorical exclusion fuel breaks on two ranger districts. In addition, the forest has active fuels reduction integrated resource timber contracts; stewardship agreements for timber, fuels, and aquatics projects; and a heritage survey contract, as well as pursuing a Forest Resiliency Bond with Chelan County and Blue Forest Conservation.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

**FY 2022:** 24,000 acres

**FY 2022 - 2024:** 124,000 acres





**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Wildfire exposure and smoke impacts will be reduced in Wenatchee, Leavenworth, Yakima, Chelan, Naches, Cle Elum, Winthrop, and other smaller communities adjacent to the forest.

The CWI's landscape includes six priority watersheds under the Watershed Condition Framework and hundreds of miles of habitat for threatened and endangered anadromous and resident fish species. In addition to fuel reduction, the CWI will include targeted aquatic restoration to complement wildfire risk reduction work, enhancing overall forest and watershed health through improved resiliency and maintained water supplies for municipal sources on NFS lands serving the communities of Yakima, Cashmere, and Chelan Falls.



# CONSIDERATIONS

## **Overlap With Critical Watersheds**

Stand-replacing events can have significant postfire impacts to source water supplies over time. Healthy vegetation in forested headwaters is critical to potable water quality and quantity, as denuded landscapes can expedite sedimentation and ash deposits into reservoirs as well as decrease filtration capacity essential for recharge. The agency has characterized potential wildfire exposure to public source watersheds using national Environmental Protection Agency source water protection area data to identify where public water systems may be most vulnerable.

## **Social Justice Connections**

Simply because a county does not pass the commonly accepted numerical threshold for vulnerability does not mean there are not vulnerabilities or equity considerations within those counties. Inhalation of smoke, even from prescribed fires, can also have health implications, especially for vulnerable communities.

Several factors, including poverty, lack of access to transportation, and crowded housing may weaken a community's ability to prevent human suffering and financial loss in a disaster. These factors are known as social vulnerability and are what the Center for Disease Control's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) measures.

The Forest Service examined the vulnerability of populations at the county-level within each of the initial landscapes proposed for FY 2022 BIL funding under the Wildfire Crisis Strategy and, then, conducted a preliminary and rapid analysis of social vulnerability based on the SVI for the 10 Initial Investment Landscapes. The exercise is an initial effort to demonstrate how demographic information might be used to promote equity considerations in future decisions processes and management activities and will be used to inform opportunities as a part of the implementation of FY 2022 investments.

## **Carbon Sequestration**

Forest carbon implications of contemporary fuels management



Firefighters meet with scientists during a prescribed fire at Fishlake National Forest, UT. USDA Forest Service photo by John Smith.

treatments are complex and the subject of ongoing research. What the science points to is that carbon stocks of both live and dead biomass on the landscape are out of balance, undermining long-term ecosystem health and carbon stocks. Across the West, interactions between drought and temperature increases, insect and disease-killed trees, and fuels buildup from a century of fire exclusion are driving patterns of heightened wildfire incidence and severity<sup>1</sup>. Investments in large-scale interventions to remove the excess fuels implies a near-term carbon loss in favor of fostering a more resilient landscape in the long term. This near-term loss can be mitigated by transforming fuels into harvested wood products, including

innovative uses such as biochar that store carbon over long periods. A lack of intervention will likely serve to maintain carbon stocks in the near term but give way to greater net emissions and loss of ecosystem services in the long term, given the persistent patterns of wildfire, drought, and climate change.

### **Partner Connections to Landscapes**

Each landscape is dependent on a place-based network of partners who have come together united in a common goal to work together on the landscape. Achieving the desired pace and scale of land treatments on these landscapes will require the support of State and local governments, Tribes, nongovernment organizations, and

private contractors. Many of these initial landscapes already have momentum in leveraging resources across boundaries. Once landscapes are announced, work will begin in earnest to develop long-term, leveraged funding plans on these landscapes.

As the agency begins to design and implement projects in initial landscape investments and identifies additional high-risk firesheds, it will complete further analyses to examine impacts and benefits to underserved and/or socially vulnerable communities.

1 Koch, Frank H.; Ellenwood, James R. 2020. Sustainable Forest Indicator 3.16. <https://www.fs.fed.us/research/sustain/criteria-indicators/>

# ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

## **Building Out Selected Landscapes Action Plans, Including Long-Term Funding Needs**

Investments in these landscapes in FY 2022 represent the initial long-term, sustained funding needed to achieve desired outcomes co-developed by partners. The Wildfire Crisis Strategy committed to coordinating with State and local agencies, communities, collaborative groups, nongovernmental organizations, private landowners, Tribes, and other partners and stakeholders to build the necessary workforce capacity and coalition support for complementary, cross-boundary treatments across landownerships. In addition to building Forest Service workforce capacity to accomplish fuels and forest health treatments at the necessary pace and scale, the agency will also assist in building and sustaining an inclusive workforce for partner organizations. Similar to sharing resources for wildland fire suppression, organizations will need to share resources for fuels and forest health treatments, post-fire recovery, and reforestation. While accomplishing this work with and through partners, the agency will also continue to incorporate emerging data and technology and use scientific tools, like potential operational delineations and fire behavior models.

The Forest Service is developing a Landscape Action Plan template that will provide a consistent framework across all landscapes to describe outcomes, strategies, and funding needs. Each selected landscape will be required to develop an action plan.

## **Understanding Necessary Investments in Enabling Conditions To Bring Additional Landscapes into Readiness for Implementation in Outyears.**

Many high-risk firesheds remain to be treated beyond those captured in this initial round of initial landscapes funded for implementation in FY 2022. Alongside partners, the agency will be working to identify the enabling condition investments necessary to begin work on these additional landscapes in the coming years. Examples of investments in key enabling conditions, in addition to workforce capacity, includes planning and consultation, collaborative capacity and community engagement, transportation and utilization of woody material from treatments, and additional training needs.

Under cross-deputy leadership, the Forest Service will develop an agency-wide Equity Toolkit targeted to the full spectrum of agency employees and their work. The toolkit will have three main components: (1) social data and mapping options for use during project analysis and decision making; (2) reference documents, including a glossary of terms with associated uses and application; and (3) training and learning opportunities for agency employees.

Firefighters observe a wildfire approaching community property. BLM photo courtesy of Jim Bartlett.







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**WILDFIRE CRISIS**

Landscape Investments