

GLOSSARY

Action area - All areas to be affected directly or indirectly by the Federal action and not merely the immediate area involved in the action [50 CFR 402.02]. This usually includes areas beyond the boundaries of the project area.

Activity Component - See Activity Type.

Activity description (Activity narrative) - A description of the activity and the manner in which it would be implemented for the Northwest National Fire Plan Project Design and Consultation Process. Designed to provide background information and descriptions of *Activity Types*, *Activity Components*, and *Work Elements*. Note: the *species effects determination criteria* were drafted using the exact wording of the activity descriptions. If the user needs additional information, we recommend that they ask their local agency specialist or consult agency materials (e.g., handbooks, manuals).

Activity fuels - Fuels produced from some type of human manipulation of vegetation (such as from thinning, chaining, herbicide use, etc.).

Activity Type, Activity Component, and Work Element

Activity Type – There are 14 Activity Types funded under the National Fire Plan (e.g., reforestation, prescribed fire), and one general Activity Type (Access and equipment maintenance) that are the foundation of this process. The criteria for determining the potential effects to species are organized by Activity Type. These 15 activities occur in burned areas and where opportunities exist to reduce the threat of wildfire, such as in the *wildland urban interface*.

Activity Component – Each of the *Activity Types* was further divided into Activity Components, which provide a second tier, and thus more detail to describe the actions carried out on the ground.

Work Element – Every *Activity Component* is divided into Work Elements that describe, in detail, the project actions carried out on the ground. *Effects determination criteria* were drafted for most Work Elements unless they fell under the *all except where otherwise noted* category.

All except where otherwise noted – Category used to reduce redundancy when effects to species from several individual *Activity Components* or *Work Elements* are essentially identical. In this case, one criterion was developed for those *Work Elements* or *Activity Components* with similar effects, and identified as *all except where otherwise noted*.

Broadcast burn - Prescribed fire that is ignited and allowed to burn over the entire treatment area (severity of burning may or may not vary throughout the treatment area).

Brushbeating/Mowing - Cutting shrubs using a rotary or flail mower mounted on the back of a tractor. Height of cutting blades can be adjusted.

Complete consultation package – All the documents required to qualify for expedited consultation for National Fire Plan projects in the Northwest;

- 1) Completed *consultation summary worksheet* that contains project description, location, baseline, cumulative effects, and effects determinations for each species;
- 2) Completed *criteria application worksheets*; and
- 3) References or supporting documents (i.e. Matrix of Pathways and Indicators, as needed).

Condition class – Three condition classes categorize the current condition of vegetation with respect to each of the five historic Fire Regime Groups. Current condition is defined in terms of departure from the historic fire regime, as determined by the number of missed fire return intervals with respect to the historic fire return interval and the current structure and composition of the system resulting from alterations to the disturbance regime. The relative risk of fire-caused losses of key components that define the system increases for each respectively higher numbered condition class (from Class 1 to Class 3), with little or no risk at the Class 1 level.

Conserve/Restore - This criteria category allows the species teams to capture options that would contribute to the conservation of species. It is applied **IN ADDITION** to any criteria developed for the particular *Activity Type*, *Activity Component*, or *Work Element*. These represent optional actions that, if taken, would benefit the species or further reduce adverse effects to the species. These actions may include, or be similar to, conservation actions, recovery actions, or conservation recommendations. While application of these criteria would improve conditions for a species, they do not necessarily change the determination of effects or result on an automatic beneficial effect. For example, the criteria might improve conditions for the species in the long run but there are still potential adverse effects that must be addressed. Even if a project applies the conserve/restore criteria, an effects determination will need to be conducted for the action.

Consultation summary worksheet – Used for summarizing the results of applying the *effects determination criteria* for the entire project.

Criteria application worksheet – Used to document the effects determinations (can also be used for documentation of project effects for non-listed species).

Effects determination criteria (project criteria) – Criteria designed by species experts to screen projects for potential effects to listed, proposed, and candidate species, and to designated and proposed critical habitat, as well as other selected species at risk. The criteria contain six components:

- **1) Conditional statement** – Description of the specific conditions under which the associated effect may occur.
- **2) Effects pathway** – Manner in which the action, if conducted in the situation described in the *conditional statement*, would affect the species.
- **3) Potential effect** – Potential effect of actions described in the *conditional statement*, before application of any *project criteria*.
- **4) Project criteria** – For actions that have a *potential adverse effect*. Project-specific criteria that, if met, would reduce the impact to the species to *not likely to adversely affect*, or *no effect*.
- **5) Rationale** –
 - 1. For conditions with *potentially adverse* effects, the rationale for why the criteria would reduce the project effect to *not likely to adversely affect*, or *no effect*; **or**
 - 2. For conditions with a potential effect of *not likely to adversely affect*, or *no effect* (i.e., not needing *project criteria*), the rationale for these effects; **or**
 - 3. The rationale for why there are no *project criteria* (i.e. *final effect* is potentially adverse).
- **6) Final effect** – Final effect to the species if the action meets all of the *project criteria*. In some cases, there are no criteria (criteria unnecessary - NLAA, NE, or criteria could not be developed at this scale) therefore the final effect remains the same as the potential effect.

Fire regime – There are five historic natural fire regime groups defined, based on fire return interval and fire *severity*:

Fire Regime Group	Frequency (Fire Return Interval)	Fire Severity
I	0-35 years	Low <i>severity</i>
II	0-35 years	Stand replacement <i>severity</i>
III	35-100+ years	Mixed <i>severity</i>
IV	35-100+ years	Stand replacement <i>severity</i>
V	>200 years	Stand replacement <i>severity</i>

General criteria – Each species criteria may contain general criteria that must be applied prior to the more specific criteria for *Activity Type*, *Activity Component*, and *Work Element*. Be sure to read the introduction for each species section carefully for more detailed instructions on using any general criteria.

Indirect effects - Those effects that are caused by or will result from the proposed action and are later in time, but still reasonably certain to occur.

Interdependent effects - Effects of actions that have no independent utility apart from the proposed action.

Interrelated effects - Effects of actions that are part of a larger action and depend on the larger action for their justification.

Level 1 streamlining team – Interagency review team created under the interagency streamlining guidance. This team, or another interagency team, reviews and validates the results of the application of the *effects determination criteria* prior to consultation.

Natural fuels - Natural fuels result from natural plant growth and death. This includes all leaf and branch material as well as whole trees if they are on the surface. Duff and litter are also included.

No effect – Reserved for actions that have absolutely no effects on species. This does not include actions that have likely direct *beneficial* effects or actions with short-term adverse effects despite long-term benefits.

Not likely to adversely affect (NLAA) – An effects standard from section 7 of the Endangered Species Act that includes actions that would be *beneficial*, *discountable*, or *insignificant*. The NLAA standard does not require a Biological Opinion in order to complete the consultation. Portions of the definitions below for beneficial, insignificant, and discountable that are in italics are from the March 1998 ESA Section 7 Consultation Handbook.

- **Beneficial** - *Actions that have only contemporaneous positive effects without any adverse effects to the species.* This usually does not include effects that are very distant in time, peripheral, or are not reasonable certain to occur.
- **Insignificant** - (This is **NOT** the NEPA definition of insignificant) - *relates to the size of the impact and should never reach a level where take occurs. Based on best judgment, a person would not be able to meaningfully measure, detect, OR evaluate the effects of the action.* Simple lack of ability for instruments to detect over the background variability of the system does not make the effect negligible, as we are able to predict or evaluate effects for many of these types of actions. In earlier versions of the PDCP, the term **Negligible** was used as a synonym for insignificant.
- **Discountable** - *Effects that are extremely unlikely to occur.*

Patch/Jackpot burn – (A form of *broadcast burning*) prescribed fire that is ignited in patches across the treatment area; other patches are left unburned. Burning is focused on patches of fuel concentrations in the midst of standing forest or woodland.

Pile burn - A type of prescribed fire that only targets the piles created by hand- or machine-stacked or mounded vegetation.

Potentially adverse - Actions that, based on a reasonable “worst case” scenario, could result in potentially adverse effects in the short or long term. A reasonable “worst

case” does not include actions that are very unlikely to occur (*discountable*) or *insignificant* as described above. This can include actions with some adverse effects even if the overall effect of the action is beneficial. This is not a final determination for consultation, but indicates the need for further, site-specific review at the local level to determine the actual effect. This category includes all actions that do not meet the *no effect* and *not likely to adversely affect* definitions. This may include actions that are ultimately determined to be *likely to adversely affect*, *not likely to adversely affect*, or *no effect* based on this local review and consultation

Project tracking worksheet – This worksheet is designed to be an ESA-NEPA crosswalk document. It is primarily used to ensure compatibility with the NEPA document, but may also be useful for completing consultation. You may use this worksheet or develop other tracking methods that meet your needs.

Scorch damage - The amount of burn injury on tree boles caused by the above-ground heat in a wildland fire.

Scorch height – The maximum vertical height at which lethal scorching of foliage occurs. Below this height, all needles are brown and dead; above it, live and green.

Severity - The effects of the fire on the ecosystem, whether it affects the soil, surface, canopy or some other part of the ecosystem. Severity relates to the degree that on-site plants survive a fire or reproduce from on-site materials (rhizomes, root crowns, seeds, etc.) and is also based on the amount of organic matter lost by burning.

Small diameter tree – Any tree less than or equal to 7 inches “diameter breast height”.

Species range – The current or potential area occupied by the species. If in doubt whether the species exists in the area, assume the area is occupied. Some critical habitat may not be currently occupied, but is considered critical to the recovery of the species and should be evaluated. Check the individual species instructions for further information.

Treatment intensity - Treatment intensity in the prescribed fire tables is a qualitative description of the magnitude of the applied fire treatment. It does not refer to any pre-fire treatment levels. This is **NOT** fire intensity.

Understory burn - (A form of *broadcast burn*) a type of prescribed fire that is usually used in forests that are adapted to more frequent fire return intervals. The understory burn removes small downed, dead woody material and kills shrubs and most young trees to eliminate the fuel ladder for a potential wildfire fire from reaching the canopy and becoming a crown fire.

Wildland urban interface - The line, area or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.

Woody debris (large) – Any downed material greater than or equal to 7 inches in diameter and greater than or equal to 3 feet in length.

Woody debris (small) – Any downed material less than 7 inches in diameter and less than 3 feet in length.

Work Element – See Activity Type.