



Fire With a Purpose

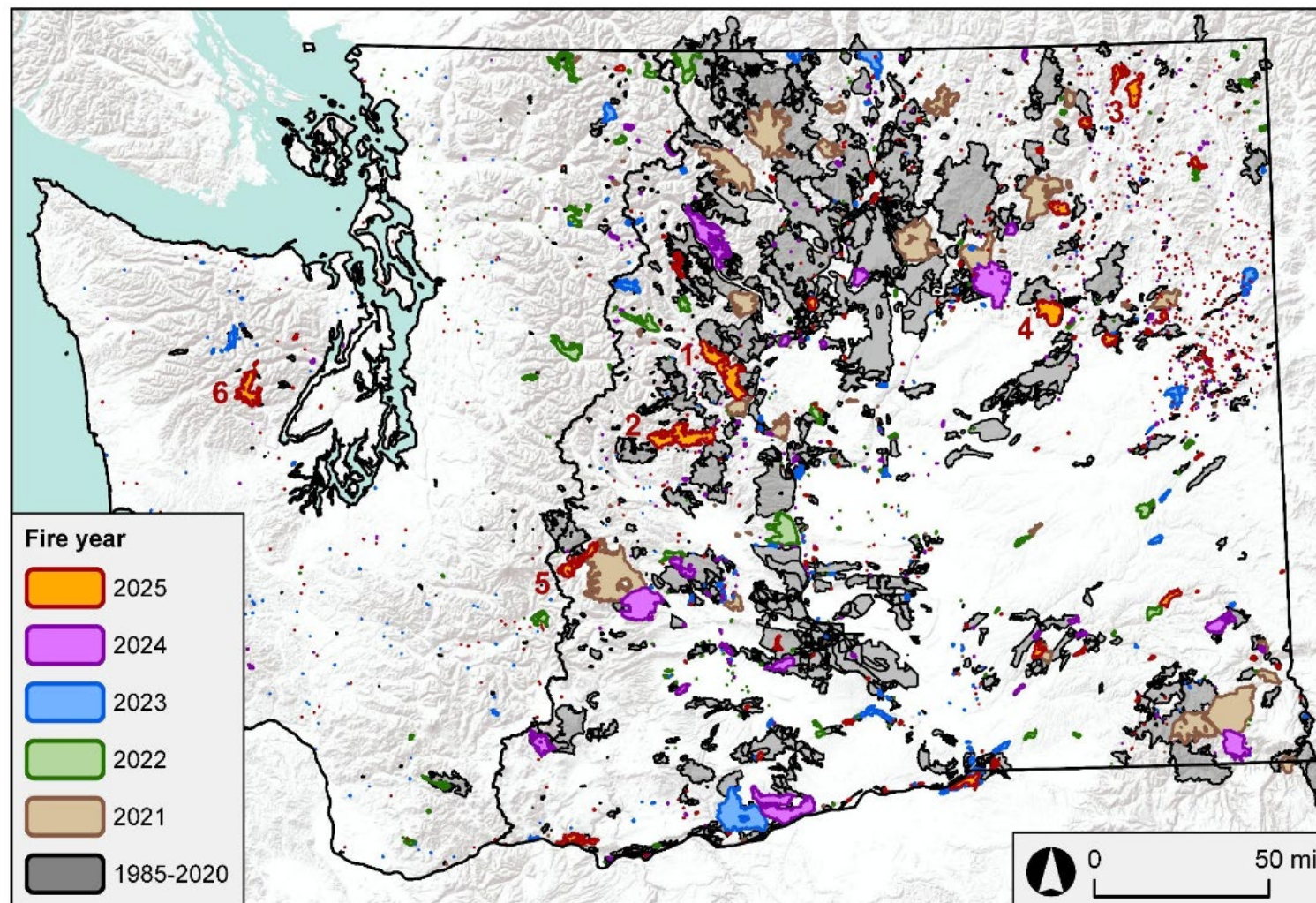
- Chelan Douglas Land Trust
- September 30, 2026 Lunch & Learn
- Nolan Brewer – Prescribed Fire Planner
- Washington DNR



Presentation Outline

- Making The Case for more prescribed fire in Central WA
- Our prescribed fire setting here in Central WA (Context)
- So, what is it you want your prescribed fire to do?
- Considerations for using prescribed fire (Management Planning, Sequencing, and Watchouts)
- Takeaways and closing

Recent fire extent across Washington





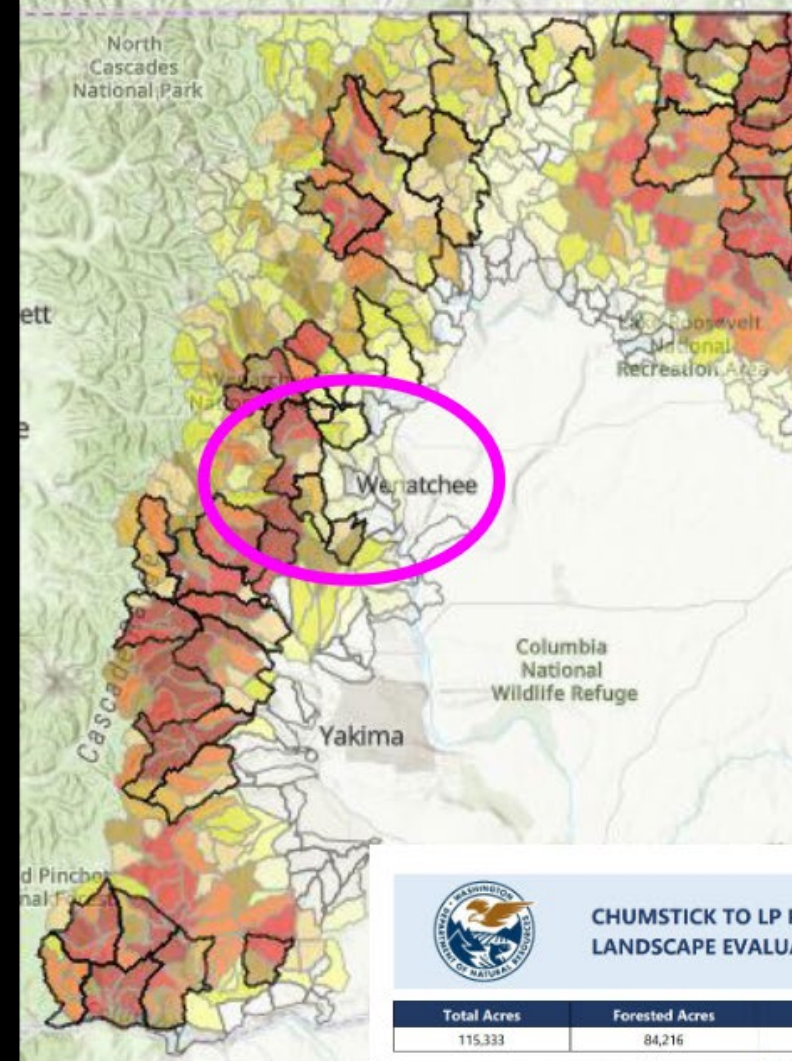
20-YEAR FOREST HEALTH STRATEGIC PLAN

EASTERN WASHINGTON



GOAL 1

Conduct 1.25 million acres of scientifically sound, landscape-scale, cross-boundary management and restoration treatments in priority watersheds to increase forest and watershed resilience by 2037.



CHUMSTICK TO LP LANDSCAPE EVALUATION

Total Acres	Forested Acres
115,333	84,216



Above: Figure 1. Planning area location.
Right: Figure 2. Planning area geography and fire risk to forests, homes, and infrastructure.

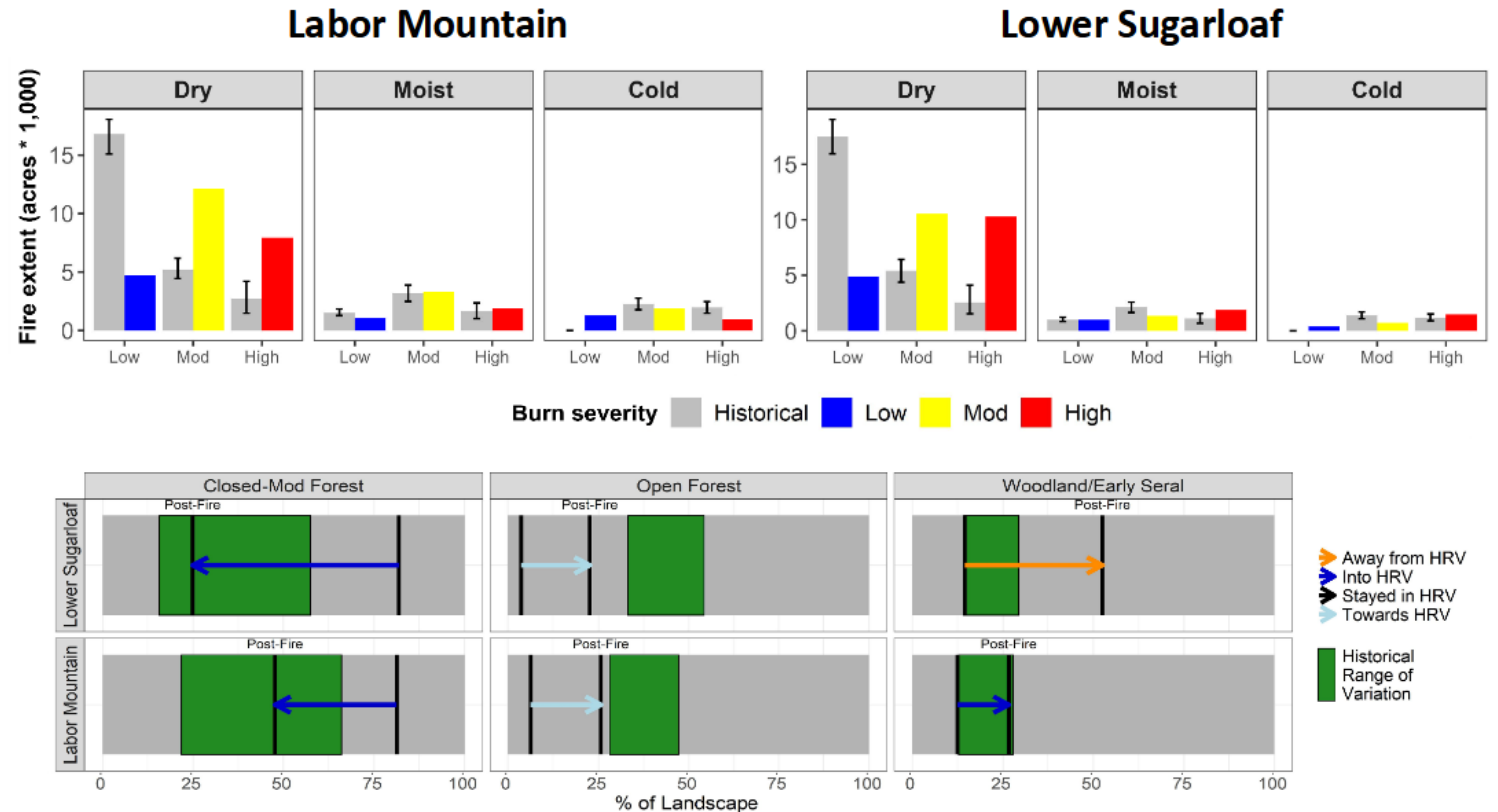
Planning Area Highlights

- This planning area extends from Chumstick Creek in the north to Lower Leavenworth in the south and includes Leavenworth and other

The Case for Prescribed Fire in Central WA: Restore and maintain stand structure patterns across the landscape

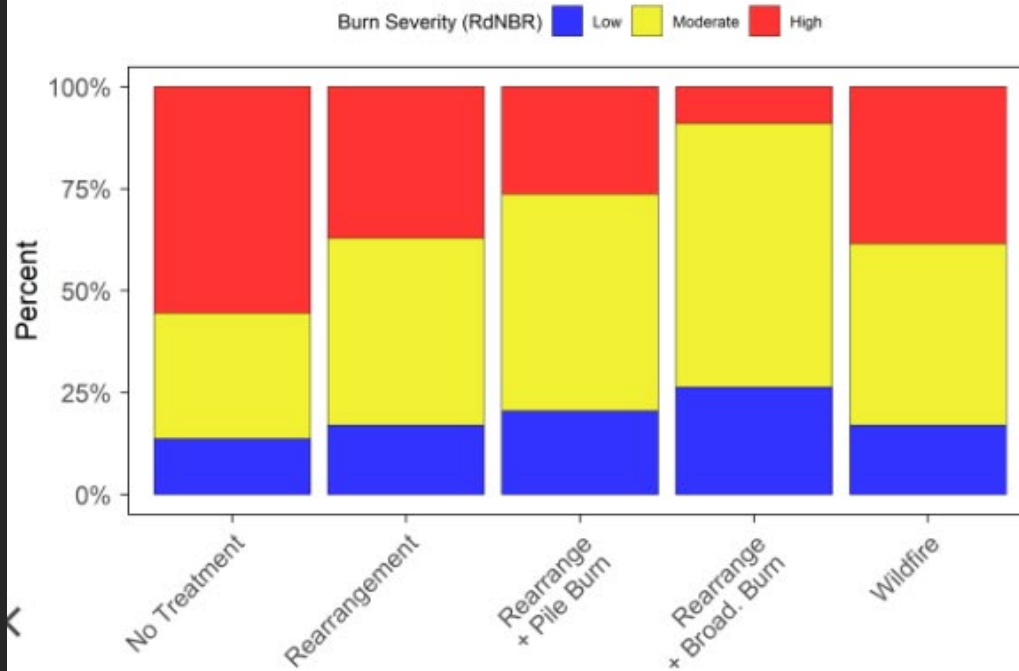
2025 Work of Wildfire Report, Forest Health Science Team WA DNR

2025 CWI Fires - Current vs. historical severity & structure change

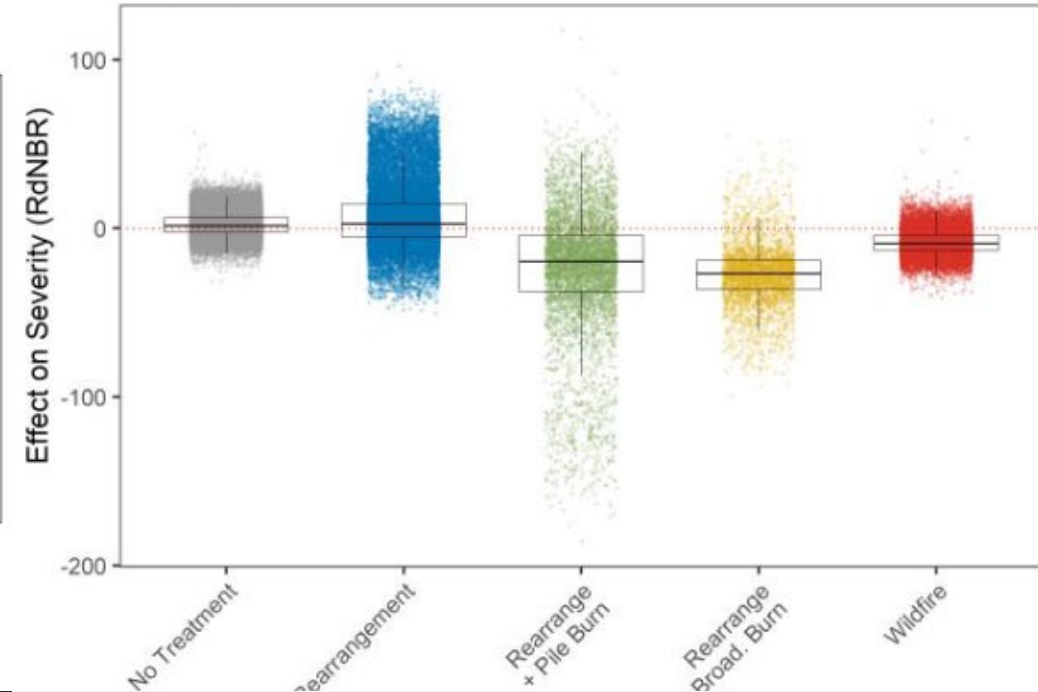


- Uncharacteristically high severity in dry forests relative to historical regimes.
- Restoration of closed and open forest structure at watershed scale.

Burn Severity Class by Treatment Type



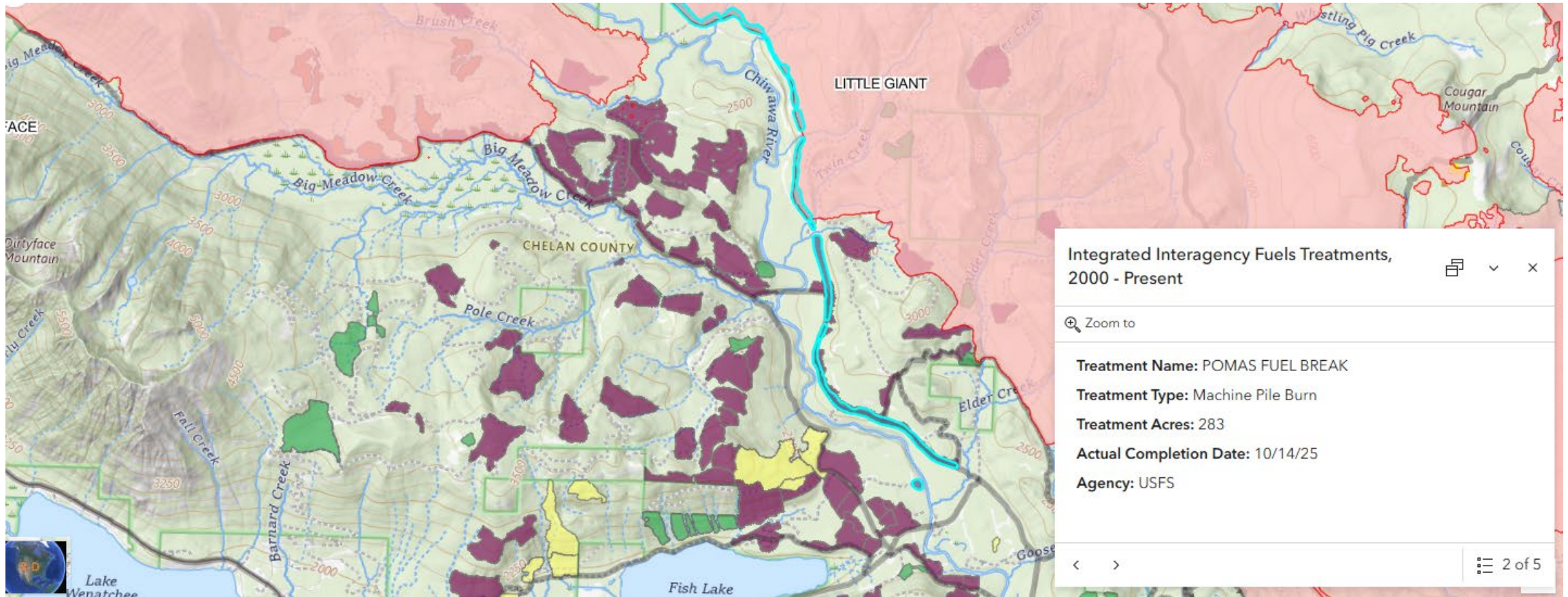
Modeled Treatment Effects on Burn Severity



The Case for Prescribed
Fire in Central WA: Restore
Fire Stand Severity Patterns

2025 Work of Wildfire
Report, Forest Health
Science Team WA DNR

The Case for Prescribed Fire in Central WA: Alignment with Strategic Fire Suppression Goals





Treatments along fire perimeter before and after the Lower Sugarloaf Fire (photos: John Marshall).

The Case for Prescribed Fire in Central WA: Alignment with Strategic Fire Suppression Goals



So, what is it that you want your prescribed fire to do?

What tools are available to help land managers?

Your Forest Stewardship Plan, Land Management Plan, etc.



Chelan-Douglas Land Trust Mountain Home Forest Stewardship Management Plan



Horse Lake Reserve

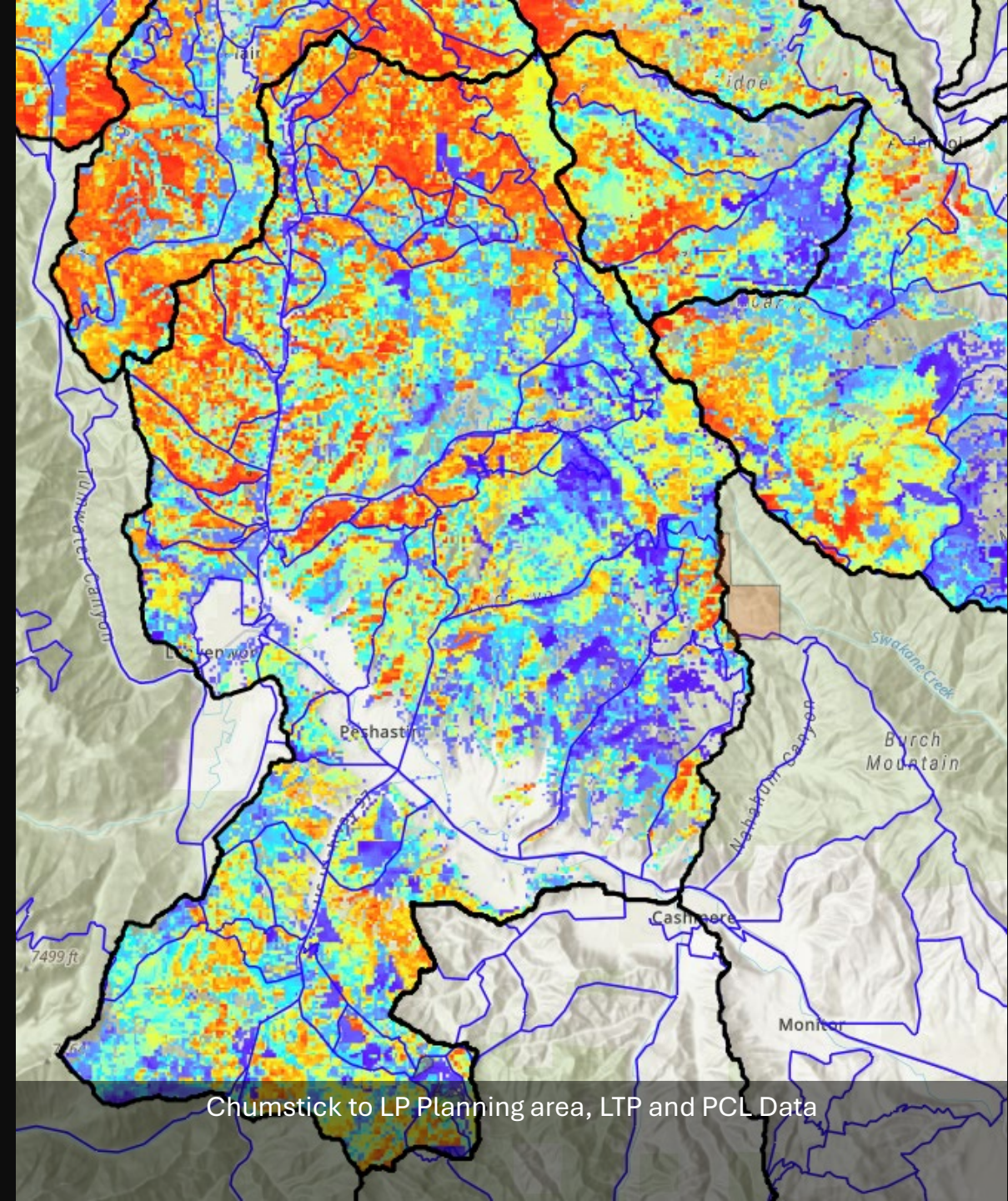
Burts and Wallace Ranches
and
Upper Fairview Canyon



Stewardship and Management Plan
Updated October 2012

What tools are available to help land managers?

- DNR Landscape Treatment Priority (LTP) Data
 - Interagency PODS/PCL Data
 - Community Wildfire Risk Data
-





**DENSE
FOREST**

TREATMENT PHASES

Each acre of forest may require multiple types of treatments.



Dense forest at high fire and drought risk is selected for restoration.



**DENSITY
REDUCTION**

PHASE 1

Trees are removed to reduce density and shift species composition.

Treatments include thinning, mastication, fuel rearrangement, regeneration harvest, and mixed severity wildfire.



**SURFACE
FUEL**

PHASE 2

Surface fuels are consumed by burning.

Treatments include pile burning, prescribed fire, and low or mixed severity wildfire.



**RESTORED
FOREST**



Restored forest resistant to fires and drought will require maintenance every 10–20 years.



Phase 1 work



TREATMENT PHASES

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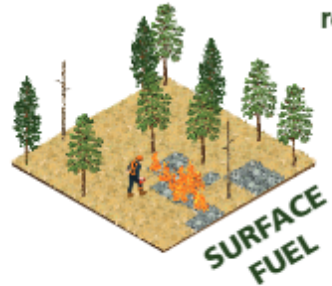
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Prescribed Fire “Watchouts”

- Prescribed fire perception vs reality... remember prescribed fire is a blunt tool and may not produce perfect outcomes across the entire prescribed fire area.
- Postfire Issues:
 - Invasive Species
 - Unintended Tree mortality and/or engraver beetle issues
 - Reforestation. Do you want it or not?
- Failure to plan for maintenance
- Smoke fatigue and public perception. Solid planning and communication helps!





Takeaways

- Prescribed fire can (and should) be a part of that plan in Central WA Forests
- Have a plan! Make sure it considers CDLT's objectives into the future
- There are resources available to help with Forest Management Planning (NRCS and DNR Service Forestry) and Prescribed Fire Planning
- There are examples of this exact type of work occurring in a relatively short amount of time – Columbia Land Trust, Chelan Co NRD

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