

Preliminary Alternatives and Performance Measures Summary

The Western Region's Phase II Report stated the following regarding alternatives being investigated during Phase III:

“Throughout the Cohesive Strategy effort there has been a desire to offer alternative means of accomplishing the three national goals. Phase I identified the need to formulate regional alternatives during Phase II. However, as Phase II progressed it became apparent that a more effective way to move forward was through an interactive process during the analysis scheduled in Phase III. To that end, the WRSC has developed management scenarios that reflect the insights of the western region and facilitate transition into Phase III. These scenarios are not meant to be a complete picture of the future, but to characterize a range of possible and realistic futures in a way that highlights the interrelatedness of the national goals and the potential impacts of various prioritization and investment strategies across those goals and the related western objectives and actions. The scenarios are budget neutral – based on the reallocation of existing resources rather than an increase or decrease from current investment levels – but lend themselves to being combined with various investment support alternatives during Phase III of the Cohesive Strategy”.

The vision for the next century, as defined by the Cohesive Strategy, is “to safely and effectively extinguish fire, when needed; use fire where allowable; and as a nation, to live with wildland fire.” Phase I of the Cohesive Strategy adopted Guiding Principles and three national goals:

- Restoring and Maintaining Fire Resilient Landscapes
- Creating Fire Adapted Communities
- Responding to Wildfire

The Western Region Phase II Assessment describes objectives and actions designed to meet the national goals and implement the guiding principles and outlined “Management Scenarios” to be considered during Phase III. These management scenarios provide the basis for identifying preliminary alternative emphasis patterns to be analyzed during Phase III.

The National Science and Analysis Team in conjunction with the Western RSC will use the preliminary alternatives to inform their sensitivity analysis, which is an analytical technique used to support the development of recommendations, making them more credible and understandable. The performance measures will be used to both assess the effectiveness of the alternatives at meeting the goals of the Cohesive Strategy, as well as to gauge the projected outcomes of each alternative.

Alternative #1: Emphasizes landscape resiliency; activities contribute to forest and rangeland health, are prioritized geographically and consider opportunities to stimulate economic activity to the largest extent possible; over time significantly reduces/modifies wildland fire response. Wildland fire (all uses) will also be a major emphasis, mechanical fuels treatment will be used prior to wildland fire; aggressive wildland fire suppression is essential to protect values and mechanical treatment of vegetation is a primary tool used to achieve and maintain resiliency.

Performance Measures Emphasized and Expected Outcomes:

- Employment rates (as related to forest resources) will increase
- Landscape resiliency to wildfire will improve
- Number of communities impacted by wildland fire (both long and short term e.g. smoke, economies, homes/structures lost) will be reduced
- Number of large wildland fires not meeting management objectives will decrease
- Risk to landscapes will be reduced
- Departure from Historic Range of Variability (HRV) will be reduced
- Costs of wildland fire will decrease

Alternative #2: Emphasizes hazardous fuel treatments to create Fire-Adapted Communities; substantially increase fuels treatments by all means within WUI; treats the middle ground, directly connected to approved CWPP's or other planning efforts which have prioritized fuels treatment in WUI and middle ground; focus on the overall well-being of the community; over time significantly reduces/modifies wildland fire response.

Performance Measures Emphasized and Expected Outcomes:

- Employment rates(as related to forest resources) will increase
- Market changes by virtue of the work will improve
- Acres treated within WUI and middle ground by all means will increase
- Number of communities negatively impacted by wildland fire (both long and short term e.g. smoke, economies, homes/structures lost) will be reduced
- Homes lost where treatments have and have not been implemented will decrease
- The number of FMAG declarations, which are FEMA declarations when structures are threatened will be reduced OR INCREASED?
- Costs of wildland fire will decrease.

Alternative #3: Emphasizes creation of Fire-Adapted Communities through collaboration and self-sufficiency; similar to Alternative #2, additionally remove barriers to encourage and facilitate actions by private citizens and all stakeholders to increase collaboration efforts and results to protect values at risk; over time significantly reduces/modifies wildland fire response.

Performance Measures Emphasized and Expected Outcomes:

- Number of collaborative efforts focused on Fire-Adapted Communities will increase
- Employment rates (as related to forest resources) will increase
- Market changes by virtue of the work will improve
- Acres treated within WUI and middle ground by all means will increase
- Number of communities negatively affected by wildland fire (both long and short term e.g. smoke, economies, homes/structures lost) will be reduced
- Homes lost where treatments have and have not been implemented will decrease
- The number of FMAG declarations, which are FEMA declarations when structures are threatened will be reduced OR INCREASED?
- Acres negatively affected by wildland fire within WUI will decrease
- Costs of wildland fire will decrease

Alternative #4: Emphasizes effectiveness in wildland fire response; effective/efficient risk-based response that maximizes firefighter and public safety; wildland fire use for resource benefit blended with aggressive wildland fire suppression; protection of property/resources are emphasized, cost management which means wise use of funds; all hands/all lands; integrate local (including community) capacity including private sector resources; shifts in training, mobilization, decision making and does not inadvertently transfer risks; and pre-planning and situational preparedness are key.

Performance Measures Emphasized and Expected Outcomes:

- Acres burned at acceptable fire intensity levels will increase
- Successful initial attack percentages where appropriate will increase
- Landscape resilience will improve through suppression by protecting important resource values
- The number of acres and communities negatively affected by wildland fire (both long and short term e.g. smoke, economies, homes/structures lost) will be reduced
- Costs of wildland fire will decrease

Preliminary Performance Measures – The set of performance measures being considered includes all of those emphasized in the preliminary alternatives.

Comparison of Alternative Emphasis and Outcomes by Preliminary Performance Measure

The following table provides a comparison of alternative emphasis and expected outcomes by preliminary performance measures.

Preliminary Performance Measures	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4
Employment rates will increase	X	X	X	
Market changes by virtue of the work will improve		X	X	
Number of large wildland fires not meeting management objectives will decrease	X			
Landscape resiliency to wildfire will improve	X			
Risk to landscapes is reduced	X			
Departure from Historic Range of Variability (HRV) will be reduced	X			
Acres burned at acceptable fire intensity levels will increase				X
Landscape resilience will improve through wildfire suppression by protecting important values				X
Number of acres and communities negatively affected by wildland fire within WUI will decrease	X	X	X	X
Acres treated within WUI and middle ground by all means will increase		X	X	
Homes lost where treatments have and have not been implemented will decrease		X	X	
The number of FMAG declarations, which are FEMA declarations when structures threatened will be reduced		X	X	
Number of collaborative efforts focused on Fire-Adapted Communities will increase			X	
Costs of wildland fire will decrease.	X	X	X	X
Successful initial attack percentages where appropriate will increase				X