Forest Service Angora Recovery Efforts

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Fire Facts

- Started June 24, 2007; Contained July 2; Controlled July 19
- Size: 3,100 acres (7% of Upper Truckee River Watershed)
- National Forest System lands: 2,736 acres
- Fire Burn Severity (soil): 24% low, 42% moderate, 34% high
- Vegetation Types: Mixed conifer, Jeffrey Pine, Lodgepole Pine
- Public Closure order issued 7/1/07 on National Forest System lands effective through 11/30/07

Three Phases of Rehabilitation

- Fire Suppression Rehab
  - Rehab fire lines, roads, urban lots
  - More than 95% during fire mop-up
- Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER)
  - Assessment of burned area
  - Treatment plan implemented within one year
- Long Term Recovery
  - Non-emergency treatments
  - Restore/improve resources not likely to recover naturally

Fire Suppression Rehab

- Convert suppression routes back to trails or remove completely
- Restore and reinforce drainage dips
- Maintain and replace culverts
- Urban lots seeded
- Most work completed by FS crews but final contract work began this week in Tahoe Mountain and Sawmill areas

Burned Area Emergency Response

Erosion Control:

- Wood and rice straw hand treatments
- Aerial Hydromulch
- Log check dams and filter (silt) fences

Protecting Resources and Safety

- Hazard tree removal
- Noxious weed detection and control
- Install log/worm fences and signs to prevent access that could result in additional resource damage or accidents.

Final Phase: Long-Term Recovery

- Stage 1: Hazard tree removal
  - Completed on FS urban lots
  - Planned on approx. 225 acres. Public comment opened October 25
- Stage 2: Treatment options designed to assist with ecosystem recovery.

Proposed Action Development (pre-NEPA)

- Existing Conditions
  - Inventory and assess condition of burned area
- Desired Condition – *Short & Long Term*
  - Forest Plan Direction (as amended by SNFPA)
  - Restoration of critical ecosystem processes
  - Restoration of desired vegetation composition and structure
  - Social, Political & Economic influences
  - Public input & Partner Agency consultation

Proposed Action Development
(pre-NEPA)

- Menu of possible actions that will attain Desired Conditions
- Formulation of integrated Forest Service Proposed Action

Proposed Action
(NEPA starts)

- Scoping
- Identification of Issues
- Alternatives
- Effects
- Significance
- Decision
- Implementation

CONSIDERATIONS - SCIENCE

FIRE

GEOLOGY/SOILS

WATERSHED/STREAM NETWORK

VEGETATION

ANIMALS

PUBLIC LAND USE

- Informs land managers of:

1. What affect did the fire have on natural resources?

2. What will the Angora Fire area look like 2, 5, 10, 20 years from now?

3. What are the elements of post-fire ecosystem processes important to restore and/or maintain?

4. What areas will be better suited towards natural recovery?

5. How can adjacent human property or other important features on the landscape be protected from future fires?

6. What tools or methods exist that allow us to restore ecosystem function and provide other services to the public?

CONSIDERATIONS - POLICY

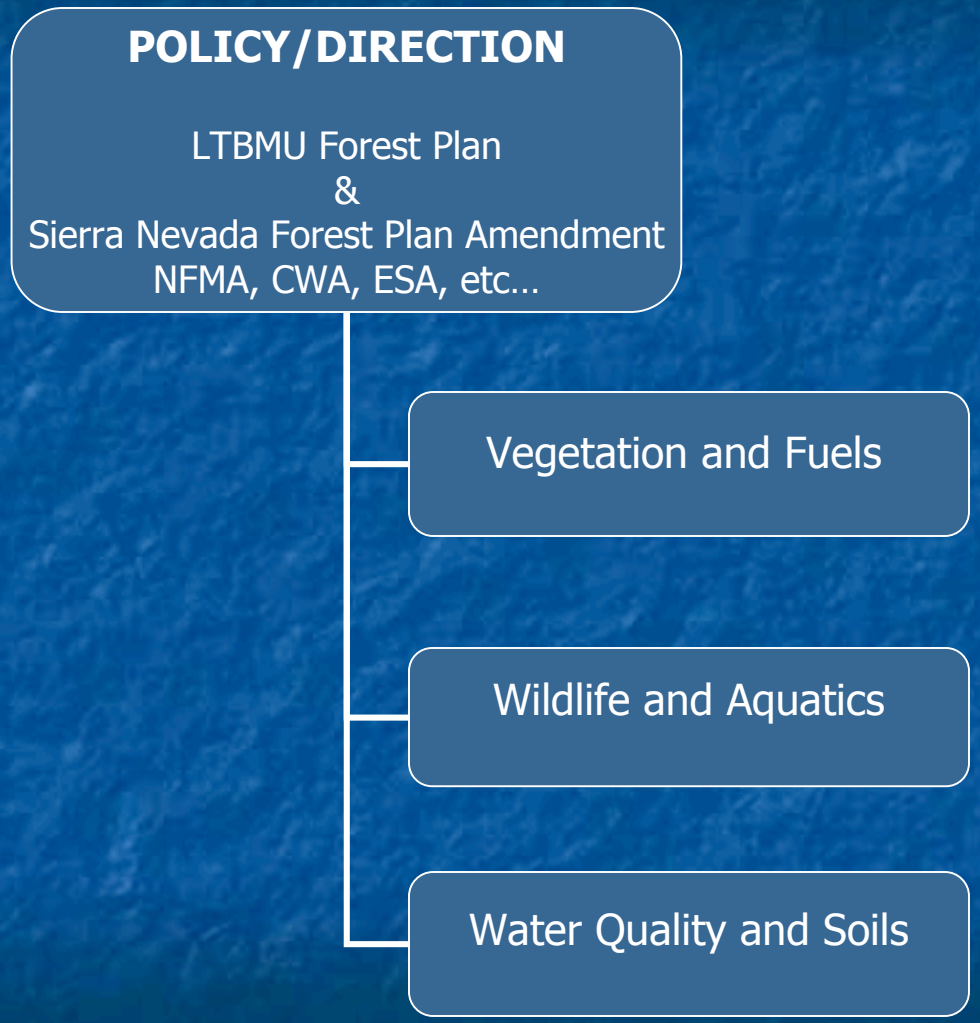
- Forest Plan gives direction for multiple resources.
- Specifically, for Angora Fire:

1. Area-wide standards for silvicuture, range and noxious weed vegetation prescriptions

2. Fuels/veg. management standards within the WUI, PACs and RCAs/SEZs

3. Standards/guidelines for watershed function, soils and water quality attainment

4. Roads, trails, recreation, scenic….



ANGORA FIRE:
WHAT A PROPOSAL(S) COULD LOOK LIKE

DESIRED CONDITIONS

A. Fuels loading meets WUI defense zone standards for fire behavior and fireline construction over the long term (approx. 20 years).

B. Vegetation structure and function support special habitats including aquatic and terrestrial systems.

C. Maintain and restore critical ecosystem processes. Soil and nutrient cycling, hydrologic processes and vegetation structure is more fire resilient.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

A. Reduce the long term fuel loading in the burned area: remove standing dead and down wood, chipping, mastication, biomass removal and underburn.

B. Manage naturally regenerating conifers encroaching into special habitats: thinning and/or burning in RCAs/SEZs and meadow systems.

C. Reconnect stream floodplains and increase relative in-channel roughness/aquatic habitat: channel reconstruction, placing large wood in streams, and riparian planting.

Decision Criteria

- Analysis presented in NEPA document
  - Success in attaining Desired Condition
  - Forest Plan Consistency
  - Environmental Impacts
  - Economic Factors/Feasibility
  - Risk vs. Predictable outcome
- Public Comment

For more information

- www.fs.fed.us/r5/ltbmu
- www.fs.fed.us/r5/angorafuelsassessment/