

20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan Eastern Washington

2018 and 2020 Planning Areas and SB 5546 Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Workplan

Version 2 - March 2018



WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF
**NATURAL
RESOURCES**

Introduction

Washington's 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan sets a goal of treating 1,250,000 acres over the next 20 years to improve the resilience of forests in eastern Washington. To accomplish this ambitious target, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will work with landowners and stakeholders to select and treat 125,000 acres each biennium. The plan lays out a process for the DNR to strategically identify planning areas where state funding for forest health and restoration projects will be focused¹. Planning areas will consist of 1-7 HUC 6 watersheds, which equates to approximately 15,000-200,000 acres. The SB 5546-Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Framework requires DNR to assess a minimum of 200,000 acres of fire prone lands and communities each biennium to identify forest health treatment needs and develop a prioritized list of treatments to include in an appropriations request.

The purpose of this document is to describe the process DNR undertook to identify planning areas for the 2018 and 2020 planning cycles as well as describe the work plan for implementing SB 5546 Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Framework.

SB 5546 Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Framework Workplan

Identifying forest health treatment needs and locations to accomplish the goals of the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan will follow the general steps shown in figure 1 below. For more details on these steps please see pages 22-23 and Appendix 1 of the strategic plan.

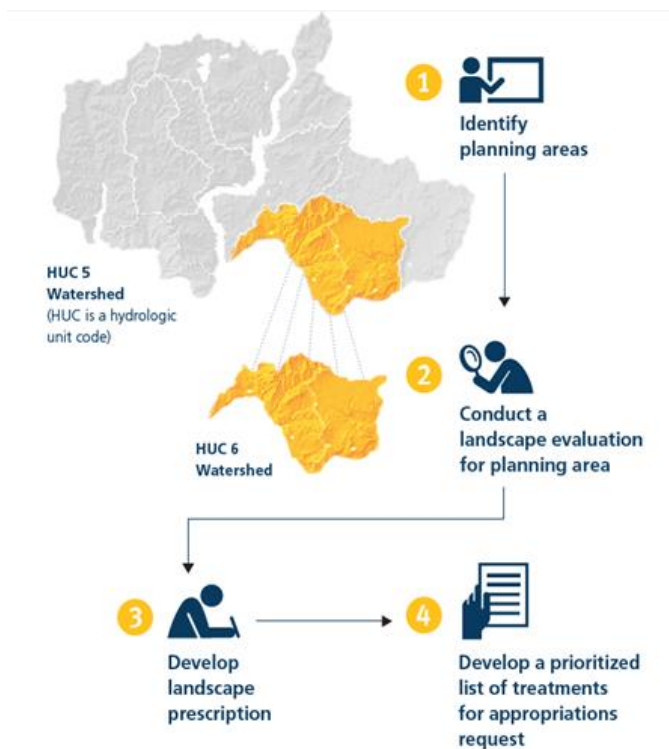


Figure 1: Steps to accomplish treatment goals of 20 Year Plan.

¹ For a full description of this process, see Appendix 1-II of the [20 Year Forest Health Strategic Plan](https://www.dnr.wa.gov/ForestHealthPlan). <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/ForestHealthPlan>

In March 2018, DNR finished the process of identifying planning areas to evaluate for forest health treatment needs for the 2018 and 2020 planning cycles (Step 1 in Figure 1). To guide this process, the DNR first completed a data driven prioritization of HUC 6 watersheds in December of 2017. This prioritization assessed fire risk, restoration need, aquatic function, economic potential, wildlife habitat, and other resources across all forested HUC 6 watersheds in eastern Washington. DNR staff then met with US Forest Service staff, DNR regional staff, and other local stakeholders in Wenatchee, Colville, Moses Coulee and Trout Lake in January 2018 to present the HUC 6 watershed prioritization and gather feedback on which watersheds would be good candidates for planning areas.

In February 2018, DNR shared draft proposed planning areas with the Forest Health Advisory Committee, forest collaboratives, US Forest Service, Tribes, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, DNR staff, and many other partners. The proposed planning areas were based on the HUC 6 prioritization and feedback received from the meetings and conversations with local stakeholders. DNR then solicited and received extensive feedback on the proposed planning areas from these same partners. The DNR incorporated this feedback to produce the final list of planning areas for the 2018 planning cycle, as well as areas for 2020 (Figures 3 and 4 and Table 1).

Now that the final planning areas are selected for the 2018 cycle, landscape evaluations will be conducted in each planning area to assess forest health conditions and determine treatment needs (Step 2 in Figure 1). A landscape evaluation is a data driven approach to understanding the current conditions of a landscape and its level of resilience to future disturbances and climatic change. In watersheds where similar types of evaluations have recently been completed by other landowners (e.g. US Forest Service Landscape Evaluations or Environmental Assessments), the DNR will seek to complement the existing evaluations where needed.

The information from the evaluations will then be synthesized into a landscape prescription that lays out treatment targets and identifies potential treatment locations (Step 3 in Figure 1). The DNR will then work closely with local managers and stakeholders to recommend and prioritize specific treatments for each planning area. These recommendations will be submitted to the Forest Health Advisory Committee and then packaged into an appropriations request to the state legislature (Step 4 in Figure 1). The timeline for evaluating treatment needs for 2018 planning areas is short. A number of meetings and check-in points with local partners will be needed in the over the remainder of 2018. A timeline of the process and meeting dates is shown below (Figure 2).

Each even-numbered year, DNR must submit a forest health treatment appropriations request to the Legislature to fund treatments in the following biennium. The DNR's first forest health appropriations request using the SB 5546 Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Framework will be in the fall of 2018 for the 2019-2021 biennium. Thus for 2018 planning areas, the DNR will be analyzing and prioritizing treatments during 2018 for an appropriations request in the Fall 2018 for funding in the 2019- 2021 biennium. Funds for treatments will be available beginning in July of 2019. For 2020 planning areas, DNR will be analyzing and prioritizing treatments in 2019 and 2020 for an appropriations request in 2020 for funding in the 2021-2023 biennium. Funds for treatments will be available beginning in July of 2021.

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept - Oct
Select Planning Areas									
Meet with agencies & collaboratives									
Forest Health Advisory Committee meeting & recs									
Final recs and decision by Commissioner									
Landscape Evaluations									
Coordinate workplan w/ agencies & collaboratives									
Inventory data: LiDAR/Phodar or Photo Interp									
Departure Assessment									
Fire Risk Assessment & Strategic Treatments									
Aquatic Evaluations									
Economic Analysis									
Other Resource Analysis (Habitat, Cultural, etc.)									
Analyze data & complete Landscape Evaluations									
Landscape Rx & Treatment Areas									
Draft Landscape Rx & ID potential treatments									
Meet with agencies & collaboratives to review Rx									
Forest Health Advisory Committee presentation									
Fieldwork to verify treatment areas as needed									
Risk reduction & revenue analysis									
Meet with agencies & collaboratives to finalize treatment selection									
Final selection of treatments									
Appropriations Request									
Forest Health Advisory Committee meeting									
Prioritize projects across State									
Package funding request to legislature.									

Figure 2: Timeline for SB 5546 Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Framework Implementation in 2018

2018 and 2020 Planning Areas

Below are maps (Figures 3 and 4) depicting the final planning areas for the 2018 funding cycle under SB 5546 Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Framework, as well as areas for 2020. As described in the preceding section, these planning areas are based on extensive local stakeholder feedback and the HUC 6 prioritization conducted by DNR. There are 31 planning areas for the 2018 and 2020 funding cycles. For the 2018 funding cycle, the planning areas contain approximately 1 million acres of forestland. Almost all of these planning areas consist of multiple HUC 6 watersheds.

As is evidenced by Figure 4, the vast majority of the HUC 6 watersheds contained in these planning areas are high priority watersheds based on DNR’s HUC 6 prioritization. Table 1 describes some attributes of these planning areas including the acres of forestland and land ownership. Table 1 also describes the stage of NEPA planning on US Forest Service lands in the planning area, DNR’s planning role, and what DNR would likely be requesting in the appropriations request. DNR’s planning role and potential appropriations request will vary depending on the stage of NEPA planning on US Forest Service Lands:

1. New Planning Area or Very Early US Forest Service NEPA

- DNR Role: Conduct all lands landscape evaluation to identify forest health treatment need across all lands. The landscape evaluation will provide baseline analysis of landscape conditions and treatment needs that could be used by the US Forest Service in their pre-NEPA planning process and potentially move the NEPA planning timeline forward for the planning area. In cases where a National Forest has conducted or will conduct a landscape evaluation, the DNR will collaborate with USFS staff to expand the evaluation and prescription to private and state lands.
- Potential appropriations request: DNR would request funding for private and state forest health treatment needs in the planning area. DNR could potentially request funding to fund full NEPA planning on US Forest Service lands in the planning area if it is likely that the result of the NEPA planning will achieve the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan's mission of landscape-scale forest resilience. DNR could also potentially request funding for surveys and data needs (such as LiDAR) necessary for full NEPA planning in the planning area.

2. Mid-Course NEPA Planning

- DNR Role: In areas where the US Forest Service is already in the process of NEPA planning, DNR's primary role would to evaluate forest health treatment needs on non-US Forest Service lands and coordinate treatment planning among landowners. DNR would also evaluate all lands to ensure achievement of risk reduction goals in the planning area.
- Potential appropriations request: DNR would request funding for private and state forest health treatment needs in the planning area.

3. NEPA Planning Completed (Signed Decision)

- DNR Role: In areas where the US Forest Service has completed NEPA and there is a signed decision, DNR's primary role would be to evaluate forest health treatment needs on non-US Forest Service lands and coordinate treatment planning among landowners. DNR would also evaluate all lands to ensure achievement of risk reduction goals in the planning area.
- Potential appropriations request: DNR would request funding for private and state forest health treatment needs in the planning area. DNR could also request funding for US Forest Service forest treatments needs in the planning area. DNR will only request funding for US Forest Service treatments when there is a signed decision.

The exact boundaries of the 2018 planning areas (Figures 3 & 4) may be modified in some cases during the landscape evaluation process due to data availability, resource conditions, capacity, and other factors. In addition, the 2020 planning areas are subject to change as planning and implementation of the 20 Year Plan further develops.

**Planning Areas for 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan / SB5546
Eastern WA
-March 2018 Version 2-**

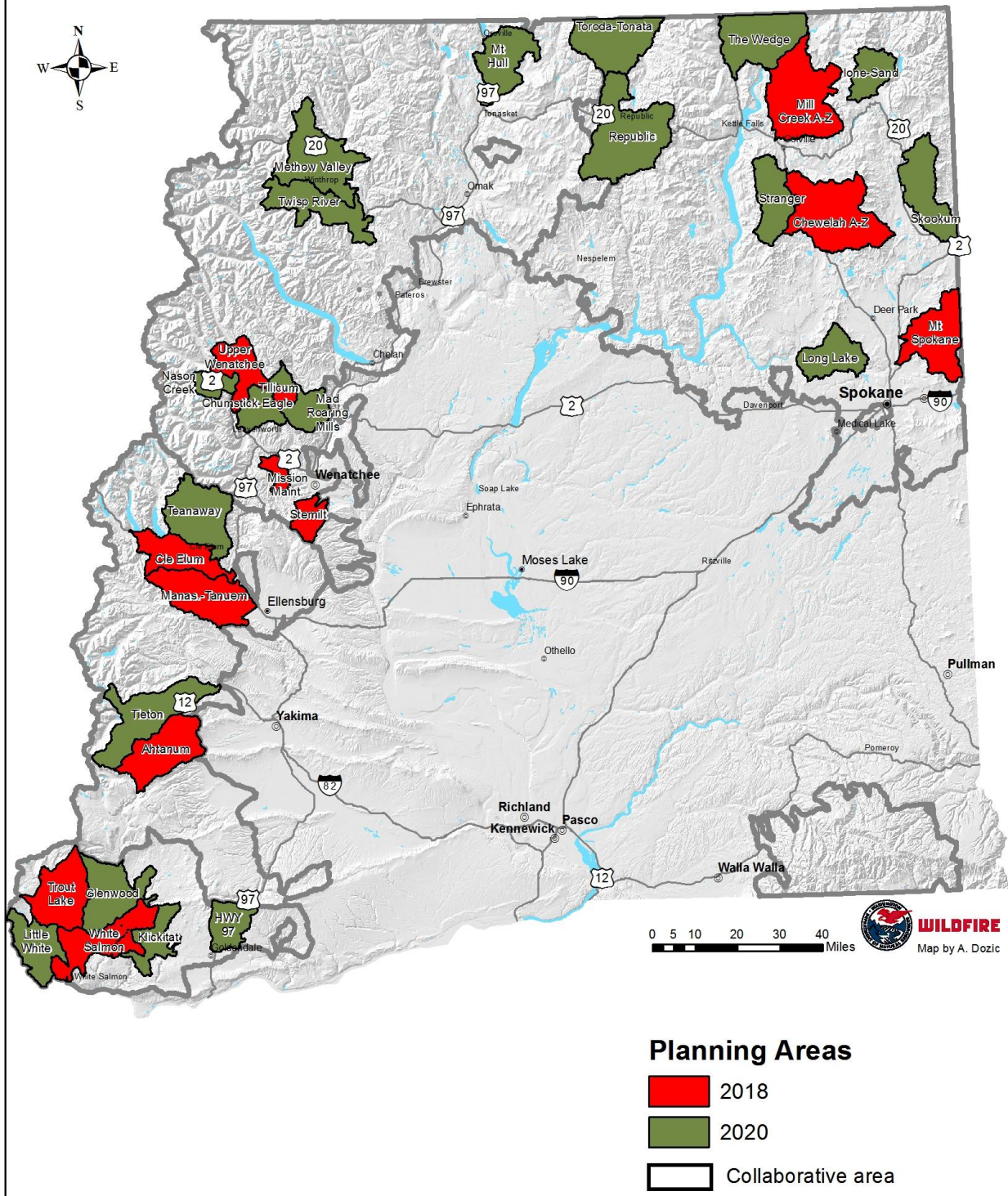


Figure 3: 2018 and 2020 Planning Areas for the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan/SB 5546

**Planning Areas for 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan / SB5546
Eastern Washington Forest Health Priority HUC6 Watersheds
-March 2018-Version 2-**

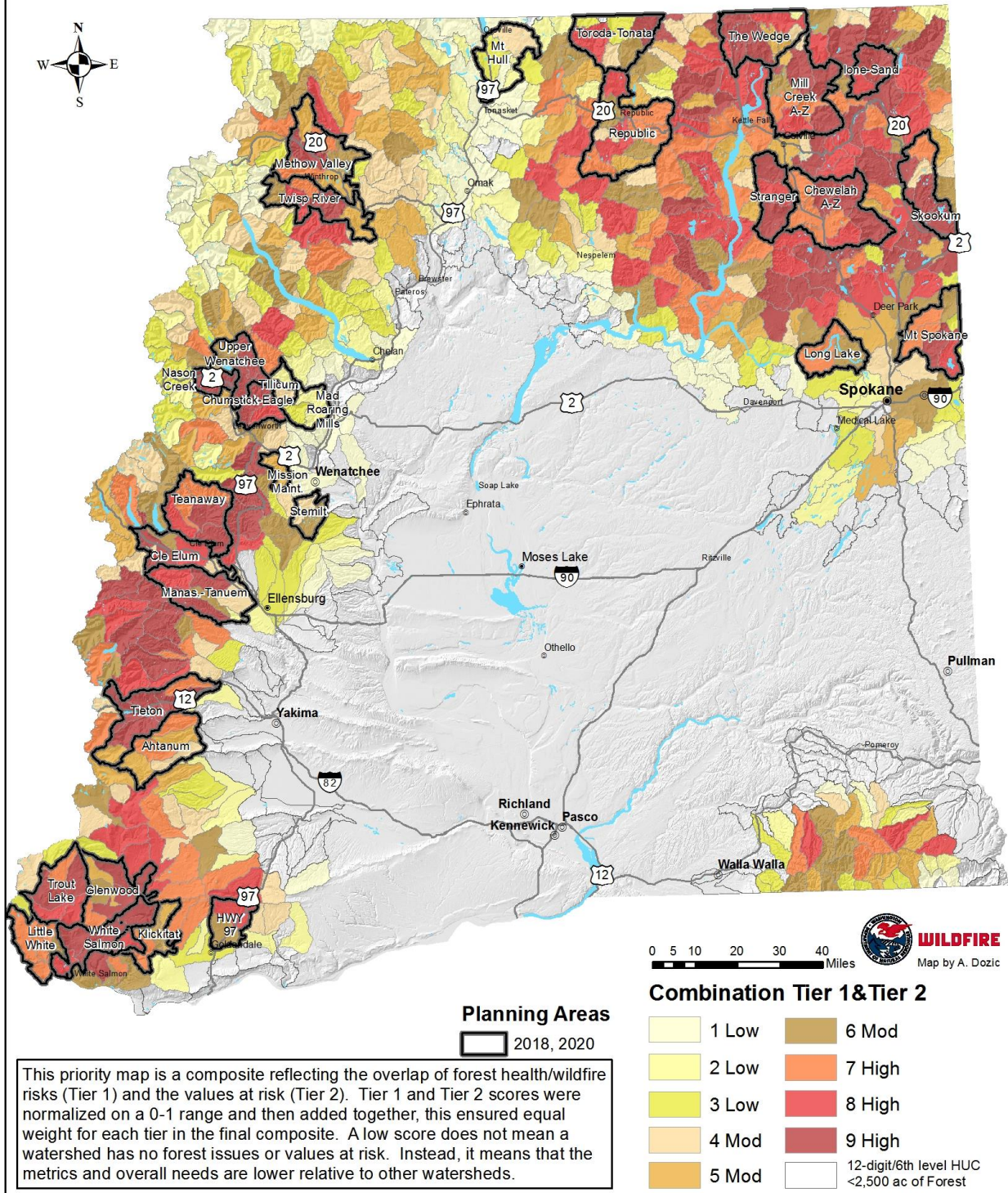


Figure 4: 2018 and 2020 Planning Areas for the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan/SB 5546 and priority ranking of HUC 6 Watersheds based on multiple resources.

Table 1: 2018 and 2020 Planning Areas for the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan/SB 5546

2018 and 2020 Planning Areas for the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan/SB 5546 (As of March 27, 2018)										
Planing Area	FS Planning Stage	Request Year	DNR Planning Role	Funding Request	Priority Score (0-3)	Total Acres	Forested Acres	Fed	State	Private & Other
Northeast Washington										
Chewelah A-Z	Very early - next A-Z project	2018	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx	Treatments on private and State	2.8	195,408	151,500	54%	5%	41%
Mill Creek A-Z	Complete - implementation in progress	2018	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	2.5	186,305	158,574	32%	11%	57%
Mt Spokane	None - no FS land	2018	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	2.3	121,767	93,062	0%	20%	80%
Toroda-Tonata	Very early	2020	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx.	Treatments on private and State. Potentially NEPA on OWNF portion	1.8	129,879	93,403	68%	9%	22%
Long Lake	None - no FS land	2020	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	2.3	80,297	35,519	0%	17%	83%
Ione-Sand	Early	2020	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx	Treatments on private and State	2.8	59,571	54,671	73%	7%	20%
Stranger	None - no FS land	2020	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	3.0	89,904	70,419	1%	25%	74%
Skookum	Very early	2020	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx	Treatments on private and State	2.6	115,066	92,737	43%	8%	49%
Republic	Complete or not on schudedule	2020	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	2.2	208,002	163,920	66%	5%	30%
The Wedge	Complete - implementation in progress	2020	Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx.	Treatments on private and State.	2.5	138,547	118,811	49%	13%	38%

Table 1 continued:

2018 and 2020 Planning Areas for the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan/SB 5546 (As of March 27, 2018)										
Planing Area	FS Planning Stage	Request Year	DNR Planning Role	Funding Request	Priority Score (0-3)	Total Acres	Forested Acres	Fed	State	Private & Other
North - Central Washington										
Upper Wenatchee	Early - landscape evaluation complete	2018	Expand existing landscape evaluation and Rx to private. Assist USFS with NEPA process	Treatments on private	2.5	74,777	67,109	85%	1%	14%
Tillicum	Complete - implementation beginning	2018	Expand existing landscape evaluation and Rx to private and State	Treatments on USFS and private	1.5	14,326	13,134	49%	1%	50%
Mission Maint.	Complete - implementation beginning	2018	Fund FS projects & nonFS	Treatments on USFS, private, and State	2.0	24,164	14,123	47%	2%	51%
Stemilt	None - very little FS land	2018	Assist Chelan County with landscape evaluation and plan.	Treatments on private and State	1.8	38,961	25,164	11%	40%	49%
Mt Hull	Mid - landscape evaluation complete	2020	Expand existing landscape evaluation and Rx to private and State	Treatments on USFS, private, and State	0.9	105,431	34,308	54%	4%	42%
Twisp River	Early - landscape evaluation in progress	2020	Collaborate with USFS to develop landscape evaluation and Rx. Fund LiDAR	Treatments on private, State, and USFS. Potentially NEPA	2.4	114,524	80,840	89%	4%	7%
Methow Valley	Not on schedule	2020	Collaborate with USFS to develop landscape evaluation and Rx. Fund LiDAR	Treatments on private and State.	2.3	153,477	105,640	82%	6%	11%
Chumstick-Eagle	Not on schedule	2020	Collaborate with USFS to develop landscape evaluation and Rx.	Treatments on private and State.	3.0	50,310	46,431	60%	5%	35%
Mad Roaring Mills	Mid - landscape evaluation complete	2020	Expand existing landscape evaluation and Rx to private and State	Treatments on USFS, private, and State	1.0	65,008	40,610	64%	8%	28%
Nason Creek	Not on schedule	2020	Collaborate with USFS to develop landscape evaluation and Rx.	Treatments on USFS and private	3.0	31,679	28,661	60%	2%	38%

Table 1 continued:

2018 and 2020 Planning Areas for the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan/SB 5546 (As of March 27, 2018)											
Planing Area	FS Planning Stage	Request		DNR Planning Role	Funding Request	Priority Score (0-3)	Total Acres	Forested Acres	Private		
		Year							Fed	State	& Other
Tapash-Central Washington											
Manas.-Tanuem	Early - landscape evaluation complete	2018		Expand existing landscape evaluation and Rx to private and State	Treatments on USFS and private	2.5	135,470	99,707	41%	45%	15%
Cle Elum	Very early	2018		Conduct landscape evaluaion and landscape Rx. Assist USFS with NEPA	Treatments on private and State	2.4	91,320	69,415	20%	10%	71%
Ahtanum	None - no FS land	2018		Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	2.1	120,479	104,856	1%	63%	36%
Tieton	Very early	2020		Collaborate with USFS to develop landscape evaluation and Rx. Fund LiDAR. Assist USFS with NEPA	Treatments on private, State, and USFS. Potentially NEPA	2.7	148,634	130,315	84%	12%	4%
Teanaway	Early - landscape evaluation in progress	2020		Collaborate with TNC and USFS to develop landscape evaluation and Rx. Focus on State lands	Treatments on private and State	2.7	132,120	120,634	52%	40%	8%
Klickitat/Skamania-South Gifford Pinchot											
Trout Lake	Complete - Implementation in progress	2018		Conduct landscape evaluaion and landscape Rx.	Treatments on private, State, and USFS.	2.8	117,155	106,970	62%	17%	21%
White Salmon	None - no FS land	2018		Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	3.0	120,530	111,556	1%	24%	75%
Little White	Very early - begin in 2020	2020		Conduct landscape evaluaion and landscape Rx.	Treatments on private, State, and USFS. Potentially USFS surveys or NEPA	2.4	83,865	69,423	64%	17%	19%
Klickitat	None - no FS land	2020		Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	2.2	59,581	40,105	2%	25%	73%
HWY 97	None - no FS land	2020		Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private	2.5	60,397	45,418	0%	0%	99%
Glenwood	None - no FS land	2020		Conduct landscape evaluation and landscape Rx focused on private and state lands	Treatments on private and State	2.4	116,774	101,313	2%	35%	63%