

Sugar Pine Plot Data Summary Table Existing and Proposed Action Conditions

The Sugar Pine plot data summary table displays plot data collected within the proposed treatment areas displayed on the Sugar Pine EIS map. Variable plots were taken using a 30 Basal Area Factor prism. Trees less than 4 inches dbh were not sampled (4 inches was the smallest diameter being considered for biomass treatments). Due to the wide variability of vegetation present within these proposed treatment areas and the project as a whole, plots representing similar stand conditions were grouped together by proposed treatment area. It would be misleading to display an average for the project area. The column labeled "No. Plots" displays the number of plots within each grouping. Although plots were taken within specific potential treatment areas, similar stand conditions may be present in other areas as well. Plot conditions varied widely from a basal area low of 90 ft² to 510 ft² per acre. Plot data recorded variations in trees 4 inches dbh and larger per acre from 15 to over 1000. In some plots no small trees were captured in the sample while in others hundreds per acre were. Several plots represent "groupings of conifers with increased BA retention (20-30" dbh)" similar to those retained in the Cedar Valley project area.

The term "light" which accompanies a number of the proposed treatment areas refers to those areas/plots where the basal area present is generally light and would result in minimal removal of trees 10 inches dbh and larger. Although an area may be designated as "light" due to lighter basal areas present, there may still be a need to treat heavily stocked pockets of smaller diameter trees (less than 4 inches dbh) that may not have been sampled during the sampling process.

The majority of the Sugar Pine project area was heavily railroad logged between 1918 and 1924. Logs were processed at the mill at Sugar Pine. The 1944 aerial photos provide a graphic display of the extent of that activity. In some areas scattered older trees were left following logging. The vast majority of conifers present today were seedlings and saplings present in the understory that survived the logging entry. Except for the 40 year old pine plantation adjacent to Road 6S07, a small pine plantation along Road 5S79, and a couple of others in the Big Sandy area, stands proposed for treatment average 90 to 110 years of age. Overall average site quality sampled is a Dunning 1.

Plot data indicates that the majority of the stands within the area surrounding Sugar Pine are a pine type that is quite heavy to the more shade tolerant, but fire prone, incense cedar. In this area, mixed conifer stands where white fir is a significant component, are found in only a few locations, predominantly near cooler, more moist, draws. White fir stands mixed with red fir and pines comprise a large proportion of the stands in the smaller subwatershed being studied near Big Sandy as a part of the hydrology portion of the project. Crown Closures present were taken from the data sheets with a reduction made for crown overlap. Suppressed trees were not included as part of the existing crown closure.

The plot data and summaries shown provide insight into the variability of the vegetation present within the proposed treatment areas. During collection of the plot data, trees that might be selected for removal under the proposed thinning prescription for that species composition were noted. From that data potential leave and cut basal area, leave and cut tree sizes and numbers and existing and post harvest crown closures were determined. On a number of plots, for various reasons, leave basal area exceeds targets for that species composition.