Eldorado National Forest Roadside Hazard Tree Project
Proposed Action and Purpose and Need
February 8, 2018

Purpose and Need

Trees become a hazard when there is likelihood of imminent failure and are within falling or striking distance of road infrastructure. This occurs on an ongoing basis. There is a need to maintain public safety along major transportation corridors on the Forest by mitigating hazards to the roadway from dead, dying, and structurally unsound trees while being considerate of resource needs.

Proposed Action

The ENF proposes felling and removal of hazard trees for public health and safety associated with road maintenance of the Forest's transportation system. The Proposed Action covers hazard trees that have the potential to hit the roadway within 200 feet of the centerline of Maintenance Level 2, 3, 4, and 5 National Forest System (NFS) roads. Hazard trees would be identified using the Pacific Southwest Region Hazard Tree Guidelines for Forest Service Facilities and Roads in the Pacific Southwest Region, 2012 Report # RO-12-01 or any Regional Guidelines that supersede these guidelines.

Treatments would involve commercial and non-commercial removal via ground based mechanical equipment and disposal of biomass material as a result of the removal and retrieval of individual hazard trees. Disposal of biomass may include but is not limited to: pile burning, lop and scatter, mastication, chipping, commercial and non-commercial sale.

This action also includes treatment of conifer stumps with appropriate fungicide (such as Sporax) to maintain forest health and to prevent further hazard trees from spread of *Heterobasidion spp*. (annosus) fungi.

Project activities would occur during the next 10 to 15 years, in various locations as needed.

No permanent road construction will be done as part of this project.

Project Area Description

Approximately 2,078 miles of NFS roads on the four Ranger Districts of the Eldorado National Forest would be eligible for treatment of hazard trees to maintain safety for the public and personnel. These roads are distributed by ranger district and by road maintenance level below in Table 1.

As there will be an approximately 200 foot buffer on either side of the roads, the project area includes approximately 108,200 acres of roadside forest that could be treated for roadside hazard tree abatement on an ongoing, as-needed basis. The Proposed Action, Design Criteria, and maps are currently being refined.

Table1. Miles of National Forest System (NFS) Roads in Eldorado NF by Ranger District

	Amador	Georgetown	Pacific	Placerville	**Total**
Level 2	324	369	304	537	**1,554**
Level 3	98	78	60	139	**375**
Level 4	34	31	23	36	**124**
Level 5	3	0	0	22	**25**

Maintenance Levels

Level 2 – Assigned to roads open to high clearance vehicles. Passenger car traffic, user comfort, and user convenience are not considerations. Motorists should have no expectations of being alerted to potential hazards while driving these roads. Traffic is minor, usually consisting of one or a combination of administrative, permitted, dispersed recreation, or other specialized uses. Log haul may occur at this level.
Examples: Webber Mill (11N38), West Peavine Ridge (11N63)

Level 3 – Assigned to roads open and maintained for travel by a prudent driver in a standard passenger car. User comfort and convenience are not considered priorities. Warning signs and traffic control devices are provided to alert motorists of situations that may violate expectations. Roads in this maintenance level are typically single lanes with turnouts. Appropriate traffic management strategies are either "encourage" or "accept." "Discourage" or "prohibit" strategies may be employed for certain classes of vehicles or users.
Examples: Eleven Pines (14N08), Granite Springs (11N99), Cat Creek (09N17)

Level 4 – Assigned to roads that provide a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience at moderate travel speeds. Most roads are double lane and aggregate surfaced. However some may be single lane. Some may be paved /or dust abated. The appropriate traffic management strategy is "encourage." However, the "prohibit" strategy may apply to specific classes of vehicles or uses at certain times.
Examples: Jaybird Springs (11N60), North South Road (10N83), Salt Springs (08N50)

Level 5 – Assigned to roads that provide a high degree of user comfort and convenience. These roads are normally double lane, paved facilities. Some may be aggregate surfaced and abated. The appropriate traffic management strategy is "encourage."
Examples: Mormon Emigrant Trail (10N50), Aspen Creek (11N09)