

Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Southwestern Crown of the Continent

Talking Points – December 2009

Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP)

- Earlier this year, Congress established the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) under Title IV of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009.
- The intent of the CFLRP is two-fold: 1) to encourage collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes; and 2) select and fund landscape-level restoration treatments that meet the goals and objectives of the CFLRP.
- CFLRP restoration treatment projects should also:
 - encourage ecological, economic, and social sustainability;
 - leverage local resources with national and private resources;
 - facilitate the reduction of wildfire management costs, including through reestablishing natural fire regimes and reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire;
 - demonstrate the degree to which various ecological restoration techniques achieve ecological and watershed health objectives; and,
 - encourage utilization of forest restoration by-products to offset treatment costs, to benefit local rural economies, to and improve forest health.
- Title IV established funding authority specific to the CFLRP projects through 2019. The funding authority allows 10 restoration treatment projects on National Forest System land to receive no more than \$4 million per fiscal year. Therefore, up to \$40 million can be allocated for CFLRP treatment projects, nationwide, over the life of the program.
- CFLRP project proposals are submitted to Regional Foresters, who then nominate eligible projects to the Secretary of Agriculture for final selection. No more than two projects may be selected in each Region.

CFRLP Project Proposal—Northern Region: *Southwestern Crown of the Continent*

- The Crown of the Continent is term used to describe a 10-million-acre convergence of the world's premier mountain ranges that links the Canadian Rockies in Alberta and British Columbia with the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness in western Montana.
- Approximately 20 percent of the Crown is in private ownership; the remaining 80 percent of the Crown of the Continent is public land managed as parks, Wilderness, roadless areas and working forest lands.
- The Southwestern sub-region of the Crown of the Continent consists of the Blackfoot, Clearwater and Swan watersheds and covers 1.85 million acres; of which 60 percent is publicly owned. The Lolo, Flathead and Helena National Forests manage nearly half of the publicly-owned portion of this area.
- Several years ago members of numerous local communities initiated discussions and led interagency collaboration and partnership development in an effort to transfer a 223,295-acre segment of the privately-owned Southwestern Crown of the Continent to U.S. Forest Service management.
- The Southwestern Crown of the Continent is one of the most biologically diverse and intact landscapes in the western United States. It supports an estimated 250 species of birds, 63 species of large and small mammals, 25 species of fish, six species of reptiles and five species of amphibians.

- Beyond its natural diversity and significance, the Southwestern Crown is located near many small communities within western Montana, all of which continue to face economic hardships. Population growth is modest, at best, in these communities; however, focused restoration treatments will help ensure that this landscape maintains its ecological health as well as provide recreational opportunities that could help boost the economies in these communities.