

Reduced Emissions from Megafires Forecast Methodology

Version 1.0 Forecast Methodology Summary

Forecast Methodology Overview

Accounts for the GHG benefits associated with fuel treatment activities that modify fire behavior and reduce fire severity. Eligibility activities include:

- Broadcast/prescribed/cultural burning
- Thinning focused on the removal of smaller trees and the reduction in stand densities
- Mastication
- Pruning
- Mechanical removal of surface fuels

Primary benefits recognized under the methodology include the reduced emissions associated with the modifications to the behavior and intensity of future wildfires on the project area, as well as the reduced potential for the delayed natural regeneration of tree cover following high-severity burns.

Project Requirements

Location: The Reduced Emissions from Megafires Forecast Methodology is initially applicable in the Western United States—specifically, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, subject to the availability of data required for credit quantification. Additional locations may be eligible for participation with future updates to the methodology.

Project Initiation and Duration: The start date of a project is the first date that eligible fuel treatment activities are initiated in the project area. Credits, known as Forecast Mitigation Units or FMUs, are issued in recognition of the benefits expected to accrue over a 40-year period on a probabilistic basis.

Additionality:

- Performance standard test: Projects meeting all eligibility requirements are considered additional to the extent they are projected to produce GHG benefits relative to the baseline scenario.
- Legal requirement test: No federal, state or local laws, statutes, rules, regulations or ordinances, court orders or other legally binding mandates require the project activity.
- Enhancement payment stacking: Enhancement payments such as grants or subsidies in support of fuel treatment activities being conducted under a project are allowed. However, projects obtaining in excess of 50% of their fuel treatment costs from enhancement payments must obtain approval from the Reserve for payment stacking to ensure the additionality of their proposed project.

Permanence of Carbon Storage: Since quantification of FMUs under the methodology is based on the emissions that are reduced as a result of fuel treatment activities rather than retaining higher levels of carbon, there is no stored carbon that is at risk of impermanence. In fact, the methodology directly addresses one of the biggest threats to the permanence of forest carbon—wildfires—and credits for reducing the risk they pose.

Environmental and Social Safeguards:

- Environmental safeguards for participating projects are based on compliance with relevant environmental and resource management regulatory requirements.
- Projects are encouraged to engage in collaborations of multiple ownerships to foster landscape-level planning that broadens the scale of impact. Furthermore, projects are required to notify relevant local resource management groups and agencies who may be involved in similar fuel treatment activities to potentially spark collaboration.

Regulatory Compliance: Projects must comply with all applicable laws directly related to fuel treatment activities.

Project Implementation: A Project Implementation Report must be completed prior to project confirmation and issuance of FMUs. Quantification requirements based on forest growth, fire behavior, and emissions modeling are outlined by the methodology and standardized data sets and assumptions are provided on the webpage for the methodology. Additionally, an easy-to-use tool is provided on the methodology webpage to facilitate the final calculation of FMUs based on outputs from modeling and other components of the quantification approach.

Confirmation Schedule: Confirmation with a site visit occurs once, after the completion of all project activities. Projects have no ongoing monitoring, reporting and confirmation obligations under Climate Forward.

Important Note: This is a summary of the forecast methodology. Please read the full forecast methodology for a complete description of project requirements.