

Backlog Reforestation Program FIA Policy

While this policy must be considered in the development of FIA proposals for backlog treatments, the relative priority assigned to the assessment and treatment of backlog and impeded areas will be established through priorities in management unit strategies

The backlog program consists of areas where timber was harvested, damaged, or destroyed before October 1, 1987. Proponents conducting backlog treatments should rank the treatment of backlog NSR and impeded areas through the application of the Backlog Cost Guidelines ¹while ensuring that current land use and other resource values are recognized.

The objective of backlog treatments should be to ensure that:

- Backlog areas are brought to free-growing status to achieve a free-growing or **otherwise acceptable stand**. It is recognized that certain areas will never reach the current free-growing standards under present economic or biological constraints, and that further investments cannot be justified or may not be appropriate.
- When appropriate, investments on impeded areas (pre-October 1, 1987 satisfactorily restocked) are maintained to achieve desired objectives before allocating funds to treatment of NSR.
- Backlog areas are proclaimed satisfactorily restocked with no further treatments required; or, in the case of untreatable, not satisfactorily restocked (NSR) areas, the NSR label is replaced with an accurate inventory label where the NSR area is untreatable for social, economic, or environmental reasons, or the stocking is appropriate in view of the need to achieve non-timber resource objectives (e.g., fisheries, wildlife, range, or recreation)

The following constraints must be considered:

1. Forest health concerns should be addressed when determining silviculture treatments for each opening.
2. The cumulative cost of all required treatments to produce a free growing stand on “Backlog Reforestation” or “Impeded Area” blocks should not exceed \$10.00/m³ based on the estimated total cost of the silviculture regime divided by the projected net volume gain produced by the regime. Sunk costs are not factored into this analysis. Where average costs are proposed to be higher than this, document the rationale for the higher costs. The Backlog Cost Guidelines can be used to calculate the recommended maximum expenditure to produce a free growing stand.
3. The Forest Investment Vote does not fund backlog areas that are the responsibility of a licensee as a forest management obligation under a licence

¹ Backlog cost guideline tables are available (as of March 2002) for Sx or PI NSR, herbaceous, tall shrub, and broadleaf complexes as well as for western hemlock/ red alder.

4. Consider all treatment options, including no treatment, before the treatment choice is made. Evaluation will be based on the effectiveness of available options for meeting prescription objectives, considering higher level plans, cost effectiveness, worker safety, impact on people, the environment, range, and recreation resources.
5. Use methods and techniques for each activity that will maintain or enhance the natural productivity of forest sites.
6. Prescribe a regime of silviculture treatments to produce a free growing stand for each site to be treated.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- **"backlog area"** means an area
 - a) from which the timber was harvested, damaged, or destroyed before October 1, 1987; and,
 - b) that in the District Manager's opinion, is insufficiently stocked with healthy, well-spaced trees of a commercially acceptable species
 - **"impeded area"** means an area
 - a) from which the timber was harvested, damaged, or destroyed before October 1, 1987; and,
 - b) that in the District Manager's opinion, is satisfactorily restocked with healthy, well-spaced trees of a commercially acceptable species, but not free-growing
 - **"not satisfactorily restocked (NSR)"** means productive forest land that has been denuded and has not been regenerated to the desired stocking standards for the opening
 - **"satisfactorily restocked (SR)"** means productive forest land that has been denuded and has been regenerated to the desired stocking standards for the opening
 - **"free-growing stand"** means a stand of healthy trees of a commercially valuable species, the growth of which is not impeded by competition from plants, shrubs, or other trees
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