

Project Name: South Obenchain Forest Resiliency and Wildfire Risk Reduction Project

Contact Information

Applicant Sponsor: Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District

Contact Person: [REDACTED]

ODF District Representatives:

Treatment location (150-word limit)

This project will treat 220 acres of fuels on private lands impacted by the South Obenchain Fire, in northeastern Jackson County, to reduce future severe risk from small-diameter fuels regrowth and dirty burn areas that continue to threaten structures, egress, and firefighter safety. The project area encompasses properties on Butte Falls Highway, North and South Obenchain Road, Worthington Road, and Highway 62. The project is in the Rogue watershed (HUC6), across Big Butte, Little Butte, and Reese Creek subwatersheds (HUC10), areas ranked as at extreme and very high risk of wildfire (OR Explorer). These watersheds are a priority for drinking water quality for the Medford area, where severe wildfire could have a significant detrimental impact. Wildfire is a priority risk concern to homes and infrastructure in this WUI area, where the South Obenchain fire destroyed 100 structures but has left a significant unburned fuel load within the fire footprint.

Description of Treatment Activities (350-word limit)

This project overlaps the footprint of the South Obenchain Fire, which burned with extreme fire behavior over 32,600 acres, including 17,500 acres of private non-industrial forest land, and destroyed over 100 structures. This fire burned with mixed severity across the landscape, killing much of the conifer stands but only top-killing hardwood species that are less fire resistant. These areas are now regenerating, becoming dominated by herbaceous species, small-diameter shrubs and stump sprouting hardwoods, and highly flammable invasive species like Himalayan blackberry. Coupled with dense regrowth are areas with only partially consumed fuels characteristic of a “dirty burn,” which continues to pose significant risk to infrastructure and homes from future severe wildfire. Without active vegetation management, these sites are quickly becoming dominated by fine, flashy herbaceous fuels and fire prone shrubs like manzanita (*Arctostaphylos spp.*), buckbrush (*Ceanothus spp.*), madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), and scotch broom (*Cystisus scoparius*). These species often grow in dense patches that outcompete more fire-resilient conifers like Ponderosa pine, further reducing forest resilience to future fire.

The intent of this project is to mechanically remove highly flammable, small diameter re-growth, ground fuels, and partially burned standing fuels that represent the greatest potential reburn hazard. Work will selectively thin regrowing stems to steer stands toward large-diameter, wider spaced individuals that will become characteristic of an open forest structure historically characteristic of the area. Treatments will be targeted at priority partially consumed or high-regrowth zones that have high transmission risk to structures, infrastructure, and roads. Work will also prioritize properties on shared driveways with remaining heavy fuel loads that present hazard for egress and firefighter access, as well as properties that are contiguous or adjacent to prior treatments completed by JSWCD and ODF. The project will target 118 eligible private woodland owners in the Rogue HUC6 watershed, shown as High Wildfire Risk Class. Treatments will mechanically remove small-diameter regrowth; thin partially-burned fuels <8” dbh; and treat unburned Ponderosa impacted by beetle kill over the last year. Material will be cut and hand-piled and burned, or chipped or masticated with heavy machinery, depending on accessibility. Larger-diameter material will be cut and piled for firewood use by landowners.

Description of the anticipated benefit (250-word limit)

This project builds on past collaborative fire resiliency work on the South Obenchain Fire, drawing on expertise and priorities from ODF and other partners. After the fire, JSWCD and ODF partnered to treat 50 acres of partially-burned fuels on 25 private properties to expand fuel breaks, improve defensible space, and thin fuels to protect homes, infrastructure, and aquatic habitat. That post-fire work emphasized the need for continued investment in the area as remaining fuels presented a significant fire hazard, and fire-resilient species would not recover without active management. This project is a collaboration between ODF, OSU Extension, JSWCD, and private landowners to build on the treatments completed in Spring 2021. Priority will be given to treatment areas adjacent to work conducted as part of that effort, other ODF treatment areas, and past and future work on BLM land (see Map).

The communities served here have been excluded from past investments in fire resiliency and lack resources to undertake costly fuels treatments on their own. About 30% of residents in the project area are below poverty level, which is 65% greater than 11% average statewide. Unemployment here is 22% compared with 4.7% statewide average.

This project is within the Shady Cove Foothills COA, which recommends fuels treatments to restore fire resiliency. Numerous conservation partners have made significant investments in the Reese Creek, Salt Creek, and Little Butte Creek watersheds through OWEB, TNC has a FIP in the Salt Creek drainage, and KSON has submitted an application for a FIP for oak woodland restoration that overlaps this project area. This project will add to the investments already made in the area to build a stronger foundation for a future NRCS CIS focused on wildfire resiliency and drinking source water protection.

Larger-diameter material removed through hazardous fuels reduction or defensible space treatments will be cut into firewood for the landowners, many of whom heat their houses primarily with wood.

Timeline for implementation (75-word limit, Bullets preferred)

Spring/Summer 2022

- Landowner contact and additional outreach as needed for recruitment
- RFP/Invitation to Bid to private contractors (may select more than 1 to complete work)
- Write prescriptions and lay out treatment areas, site visits to coordinate with landowners and contractors throughout the process
- Prioritize landscapes to be treated based on greatest impact to fuel reduction and best likelihood of reestablishment of mature, healthy, fire resilient forests.

Fall 2022

- Complete layout and fine-tune prescriptions based on risk and landowner's specific management objectives
- Begin treatment work (end of fire season Fall 2022)

Winter/Spring 2023

- Complete fuel reduction, chipping, pile burning on selected properties prior to fire season

Budget (150-word limit) and complete the provided Budget Worksheet

This project will be administered by Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District. The total project cost is estimated to be \$425,150, with \$191,125 requested of the SB762 Small Forestland Grant Program and \$82,500 as match from project partners (Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District, OSU Extension, and ODF). ODF assistance, provided by [REDACTED], is provided as match, and JSWCD staff time for technical assistance and landowner outreach and communications is also provided as match. OSU Extension support includes \$2500 of personnel/fringe, and \$500 in outreach supplies. Leverage is provided from \$105,000 in OWEB post-fire restoration grants; \$60,000 in JSWCD District Funds; and \$9600 in JSWCD staff time already invested in this project writing a FEMA HMGP grant and SB762 Landscape Resiliency Grant in overlapping/adjacent geographies.

**Oregon Department of Forestry
Small Forestland Grant Program
Budget Calculation Sheet**

Instructions: Fill out blue-bordered boxes

Grant Agreement #/Project Name:

#

/ South Obenchain Forest Restoration and Wildfire Resilience

Deliverables	
Below are examples, replace with your projects quantified treatment activities (acres)	
1	100 acres of non-commercial thinning of brush regrowth (DBH~<3")
2	120 acres of non-commercial thinning, material <8" DBH
3	170 acres of slash pile burning, where chipping is inaccessible
4	50 acres of chipping material, where accessible
#	Add deliverables as needed
#	Add deliverables as needed
#	Add deliverables as needed
#	Add deliverables as needed
#	Add deliverables as needed
#	Add deliverables as needed
#	Add deliverables as needed
#	Add deliverables as needed
Treatment Footprint	220

Cost Category	Grant Request	Leverage (25% required)		Total Project Cost
		Match (if any)	Leverage (if any)	
1. Personnel	\$ 1,195.00	\$ 23,700.00	\$ 9,600.00	\$ 34,495.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$ 1,305.00			\$ 1,305.00
3. Travel	\$ 550.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,650.00
4. Equipment				\$ 0.00
5. Supplies	\$ 500.00	\$ 200.00		\$ 700.00
6. Contractual	\$ 170,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 165,000.00	\$ 385,000.00
7. ODF (if applicable)				\$ 0.00
8. Indirect				\$ 0.00
Total	\$ 173,550.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 176,600.00	\$ 425,150.00

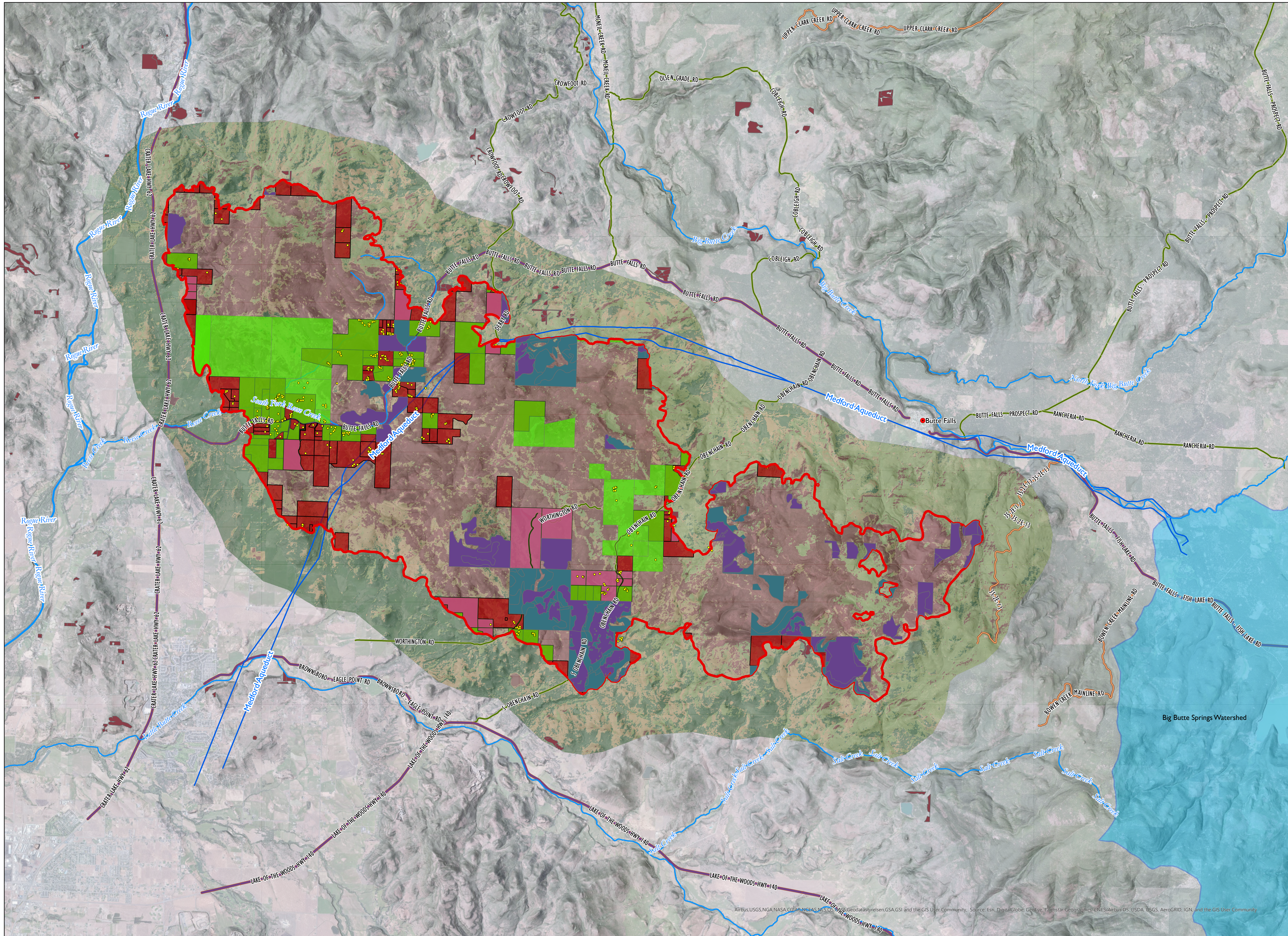
Narrative justification by line item: totals should match claim above.

For each line item	Detail by position or item cost, rate, number of units, and subtotals. Tie costs to Deliverables. Example: Personnel and Fringe (\$1,480 and \$740=\$2,220) for 1 Ecologist working 40 hours @ \$37/hour to treatment plan 100 acres of fuel treatments
Personnel & Fringe	JSWCD Staff time: 200 hours at \$48/hr for two conservationists to coordinate activities, write prescriptions, layout treatment areas, and serve as liason between landowners, contractors, and partners OSU Extension: 50 hours at \$50/hr for Outreach staff to conduct communications with landowners ODF: 100 hours at \$45/hr for stewardship forester to write prescriptions and coordinate with contractors
Travel	3000 miles at \$0.55/mile, for site visits to project area, roughly 60 miles round trip from JSWCD, OSU Extension, and ODF offices
Equipment	
Supplies	\$700 for printed materials and mailings to 118 eligible property owners in the project area
Contractual Payments	100 acres of small-diameter regrowth treatment, hand piling, and pile burning at \$1000/acre=\$100,000 120 acres of larger diameter fuels reduction (<8" DBH), hand piling, and pile burning or chipping based on accessibility, estimated at \$1200/acre= \$120,000 Leverage is \$165,000 in fuels treatments (Spring 2021), funded by OWEB and JSWCD
ODF (if Applicable)	
Leverage Sources	
Indirect Costs	This is for the administrative and oversight costs associated with the grant for the sponsor organization. This number represents 10% of contractual costs for the project.

SOUTH OBENCHAIN FOREST RESTORATION AND WILDFIRE RESILIENCY PROJECT



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South Obenchain Restoration Areas

- BLM_mechharvest_obenchain_clip
 - BLM_RxFire_Obenchain_clip
 - South Obenchain Fire Perimeter
 - Structures
 - Completed Post-Fire Forestry Work
 - Private Landowners Consulted for Post-Fire Restoration
 - Private Taxlots Eligible for Treatment
 - Major Tributaries
 - Rogue River
 - Butte Falls
 - Big Butte Springs
- Major Roads**
- CFCC**
- Primary Access
 - Highway
 - Secondary Access
 - ODF_FuelTreatment_Areas

- South Obenchain Burn Severity**
- Extreme
 - High
 - Moderate
 - Vegetated

For reference purposes only. Elements not authoritative or precise.

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AUTHOR:	MEGHAN MONTGOMERY
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CREATED:	2020-09-22
UPDATED:	1/21/2022

Number of Panel Reviewer #1		Project Name	South Obenchain Forest Resiliency and Wildfire Risk Reduction	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	18	
Reviewer Comments	220 acres: Mechanically remove highly flammable, small diameter re-growth, ground fuels, and partially burned standing fuels that represent the greatest potential reburn hazard on private lands impacted by the South Obenchain Fire, with only partially consumed fuels, to reduce future severe risk from small-diameter fuels regrowth and dirty burn areas that continue to threaten structures, egress, and firefighter safety.			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	Treatments will be targeted at priority partially consumed or high-regrowth zones that have high transmission risk to structures, infrastructure, and roads. Wildfire is a priority risk concern to homes and infrastructure. High Wildfire Risk Class.			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	The project will target 118 eligible private woodland owners.			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	This project will treat 220 acres of fuels on private lands impacted by the South Obenchain Fire.			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	This project is a collaboration between ODF, OSU Extension, JSWCD, and private landowners to build on the treatments completed in Spring 2021. Priority will be given to treatment areas adjacent to work conducted as part of that effort, other ODF treatment areas, and past and future work on BLM land.			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	About 30% of residents in the project area are below poverty level, which is 65% greater than 11% average statewide. Unemployment here is 22% compared with 4.7% statewide average.			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	9	
Reviewer Comments	OWEB invested in Reese Creek, Salt Creek, and Little Butte Creek watersheds. KSON has submitted an application for a FIP for oak woodland restoration that overlaps this project area.			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	4	
Reviewer Comments	Larger-diameter material will be cut and piled for firewood use by landowners.			
Final Score		Out of 100	96	

Number of Panel Reviewer #2		Project Name	South Obenchain Forest Resiliency and Wildfire Risk Reduction	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	20	
Reviewer Comments	well described: need, treatment, benefits			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	10	
Reviewer Comments	very high & extreme			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	10	
Reviewer Comments	are the 118 landowners already participating or only potential?			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	10	
Reviewer Comments	previous fire footprint, invasive species			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	yes			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	5	
Reviewer Comments	poverty of (potential?) landowner/participants			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	yes			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	5	
Reviewer Comments	firewood			

Final Score

Out of
100

80

Number of Panel Reviewer #3		Project Name	South Obenchain Forest Resiliency	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	18	
Reviewer Comments	Yes, very good description of the treatment activities and how they would reduce risk of further high severity fire			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	yes			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	yes			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	12	
Reviewer Comments	Yes, invasive species. However, maintenance is not mentioned.			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	8	
Reviewer Comments	Yes, but the application would benefit from a discussion of how the work proposed here will alter the trajectory and move toward a desired future condition. That is, will we see the same application treating small-diameter fuels in this same area in two years?			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	Yes, good metrics associated with this provided in the application			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	Yes, several plans noted			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	5	
Reviewer Comments	yes			
Final Score		Out of 100	93	

Number of Panel Reviewer # 4		Project Name	South Obenchain Forest Resiliency and Wildfire Reduction Project	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	18	
Reviewer Comments	The project is intended to assist multiple landowners reduce fuel loads that have grown following a previous fire in a high-risk area.			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	13	
Reviewer Comments	The treatments will work to protect existing infrastructure while reducing fuel densities on multiple ownerships			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	13	
Reviewer Comments	The project covers multiple acres found with in the Obenchain Fire that affected multiple landowners.			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	14	
Reviewer Comments	Treatments proposed will assist with treating these concerns.			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	This project includes multiple landowners and agencies which is a collaborative approach.			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	The project covers an area the has numerous elderly and restricted residence.			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	7	
Reviewer Comments	No direct forest plan is address, but the area is within a High Hazard Fire Zone			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	4	
Reviewer Comments	Nontraditional forest products, the like of firewood and chips will be turned over to the landowners.			
Final Score		Out of 100	89	

Number of Panel Reviewer # 5		Project Name	South Obenchain Forest Resiliency	
Priority	Proposal Scoring Rubric	Possible Points	Reviewer Score	
1	Clearly describes treatment activities and how future condition reduces risk of high severity wildfire	20	18	
Reviewer Comments	Good job listing existing condition and desired future condition and treatment specifications			
2	Project protects infrastructure, creates shaded fuel breaks along roadways, or is in a Wildfire Risk Class of High or Extreme (HUC 6 watershed)	15	10	
Reviewer Comments	Very high risk, map shows protection to structures and overlapping roadways			
3	Project treats or protects multiple properties	15	15	
Reviewer Comments	118 landowners			
4	Proposed treatment(s) address insects and disease, drought mortality, invasive species, storm damage or enhances wildlife habitat	15	11	
Reviewer Comments	Post-fire rehab, references stand density, invasive species, and prioritizing fire resilient species and drinking water.			
5	Clearly demonstrates collaborative approach including treatment proximity to previous or planned hazardous fuel treatments	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	Good articulation of current collaborative work and how this project furthers this collaboration. Map does a great job displaying previous treatments with proposed activities here along with prior outreach/planning in place			
6	Proposed treatment(s) benefit vulnerable populations or under protected properties	10	8	
Reviewer Comments	30% of residents in project are below poverty line, lack of previous funding mentioned as well.			
7	Treatment area references a forest management plan or is located within a priority planning area listed in Funding Priority 6	10	10	
Reviewer Comments	Ties current strategic plans and priority areas to proposed treatments. NRCS CIS for wildfire resiliency.			
8	Project utilizes non-traditional forest products	5	3	
Reviewer Comments	Firewood listed but not quantified, landowner use wood as primary heat source.			
Final Score		Out of 100	85	