

## **AGENCY TRAMMELLING ACTION TRACKING INSTRUCTIONS**

Tracking agency authorized trammeling actions for the WSP Agency Management Action element 6 and 8 point level needs to be done in a consistent way, so that a clear objective view, over time, can be created to inform wilderness managers and future decision making. If different things are tracked, specifics of what is counted or not counted, how the counting occurs, a less objective view could be created. Wilderness Character Monitoring (NRM-WCM) also gathers agency authorized trammeling actions information. Counting instructions of agency authorized trammeling actions should be consistent between WSP and WCM. The NRM-WCM counting instructions are adopted for the WSP AMA element, and are detailed below. Refer to the NRM-WCM support tools for Authorized Actions for more details and updates. Please note, WSP AMA does not require counting of unauthorized trammeling actions.

Reference:

[http://fsweb.nrm.fs.fed.us/support/help/wilderness/#t=Enter\\_Authorized\\_Actions\\_Structures\\_Measure.htm](http://fsweb.nrm.fs.fed.us/support/help/wilderness/#t=Enter_Authorized_Actions_Structures_Measure.htm) (Authorized Actions/Structures Measures)

### **Authorized Actions/Structures Protocols**

The counting protocol for authorized trammeling actions is as follows, with counting instructions grouped in categories including scale of action, timing of action, location of action, fire-related actions, persistent structures, and other clarifications:

#### **Timing of Action**

- Ongoing, multi-year actions are counted once annually per fiscal year.
- A single action that incidentally spans the fiscal year is only counted as a trammeling action for the initial fiscal year (e.g., a watershed stabilization project implemented between September 15 and October 15, 2015, counts as one action for fiscal year 2014 and zero actions for fiscal year 2015).

#### **Location of Action**

- The decision to take an action that occurs simultaneously in multiple locations in a wilderness is counted as a single action (e.g., treatments of discrete invasive species populations located in different areas using herbicide counts as a single action). Similarly, concurrently stocking fish in multiple lakes across a wilderness counts as a single trammeling action.
- Actions that occur outside of wilderness with the explicit intent of manipulating the biophysical environment within wilderness count as trammeling actions.

#### **Fire-related Actions**

- Single wildfire incidents—whether naturally ignited or human-caused—that involve multiple types of fire management actions count as multiple trammeling actions because there are opportunities for restraint in the decision to use any given fire management tactic. The different types of applicable trammeling actions include:

- Fireline construction (handline, tree felling, explosives, dozer line, wet line, leaf blowers, sprinkler systems, or mechanical clearing of safety zones).
  - Burn operations (backfiring, burn outs, or black lining).
  - Extinguishing fire (use of water, dirt, or flappers).
  - Application of fire retardant.
- The number of trammeling actions related to the management of fire in wilderness is determined by summing the types of trammeling actions that occurred for each incident for a total of up to four possible trammeling actions (e.g., suppression of a wildfire by constructing fireline and conducting burn operations during the course of the incident would count as two trammeling actions).
  - Use of the same action on multiple incidents is counted once per incident. For instance, the construction of a fireline on two discrete wildfires in a wilderness in the same fiscal year counts as two trammeling actions.
  - The issue of scale described above does not apply to management of wildfire because seemingly minor attempts to alter the behavior of a natural fire can have significant consequences. For instance, cutting down and suppressing a burning snag started by lightning—an action that is seemingly small in scale—may prevent a natural fire that otherwise may burn thousands of acres.
  - Suppression of a fire adjacent to but outside of wilderness where there is reasonable certainty that it would have likely burned into wilderness absent any suppression action constitutes a trammeling action.
  - The use of prescribed fire, regardless of the tactics used to manage the burn, counts as a single trammeling action because of the decision to intervene in natural processes in accordance with the management prescription developed by the agency. The implementation of multiple prescribed fires in a wilderness in a single fiscal year also counts as a single trammeling action if each burn was authorized via the same burn plan. Prescribed fires conducted in the same fiscal year authorized by multiple burn plans—for instance in a wilderness managed by two Forest Service regions or forests—counts as multiple trammeling actions.
  - Different types of Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) treatments – where they pass the threshold for scale – constitute separate trammeling actions for each incident they are associated with.

### **Persistent Structures**

- To be counted as a trammeling action, a persistent structure must be intended to purposefully alter, hinder, restrict, control, or manipulate the “the earth and its community of life.” Examples of persistent structures that would be counted under this measure include, but are not limited to fish barriers, dams, water diversions, guzzlers, bat gates, or fencing (e.g., wildlife or cattle enclosure areas). Each unique persistent structure that manipulates any component of the biophysical environment is counted for each year that it exists.

- An action to install a persistent structure that alters the biophysical environment in wilderness is counted once as a trammeling in the year that the installation occurred and once per year subsequently, as long as the structure persists. The installation and existence of the structure in the first year are not double counted as two trammeling actions. Persistent structures that are no longer functioning as intended are not counted as a trammeling if it can be demonstrated they do not alter or manipulate any component of the biophysical environment (e.g., fencing previously used to form a cattle enclosure that has fallen down).

### **Other Clarifications**

- Single projects or decisions that involve related yet distinct actions count as multiple trammeling actions. For example, a stream restoration project that involves both the release of piscicide and restocking native fish count as two trammeling actions. Treating one or more species of invasive plants with herbicide and a biological control agent also count as two trammeling actions—one action for the use of herbicide, and one action for the release of the biological control agent. The number of species affected by each treatment is incidental.
- Actions intended to manipulate the biophysical environment within wilderness that are unsuccessful are still counted as trammeling actions.