

RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Fillius Park Fire Mitigation Project description

Loughery, Coleman B. - DPR CJ3149 Parks Natural Resources Technician II <Coleman.Loughery@denver.gov.org>

Hello Jean & L ,

The healthy mature Ponderosa pine are being preserved throughout the 44 acre project area. I am allowing the harvester operator to cut some of the larger Douglas fir throughout the unit, those Douglas-fir that are not marked in blue flagging. All of the large diameter healthy ponderosa pine is being retained as well as the younger ponderosa pine that has been outcompeted and shaded out by the Douglas fir along the north aspect. In time, the forest ecosystem will respond positively to this treatment. Douglas fir is a shade tolerant species and is faster to grow and dominate these northern facing topographical aspects with more available moisture. Historically ponderosa pine was dominant throughout lower montane forests at elevations between 6,000-7,900 feet. This was due to low intensity fire occurring frequently (every 10-50 years) within ponderosa pine woodland ecotype. Over the last 150 years Douglas-fir has encroached in these dry ponderosa pine woodland sites with higher moisture availability because of humans suppression of natural fire. This suppression of natural fire started when Anglo-Europeans started to move into these western forests. The prescription and intent of this forest treatment at Fillius park is to restore the forest to be ponderosa pine dominant with occasional Douglas-fir interspersed.

This higher forest density you have grown accustomed to during your time living adjacent to and within these forests along the front range of the Rocky Mountains facilitates unimpeded spread of high severity fire that we have seen in western forests more frequently in the last 20-50 years. Historically however fires that moved through these forests stayed at low intensity (i.e. fire moving through along the ground at low flame lengths cleaning the accumulated pine litter and more abundant herbaceous layer). These historical fires stayed low intensity because of the openings that were more persistent due to fires top killing the encroaching shade tolerant species like douglas-fir. Again these douglas fir that are present are creating a more continuous fuel that supports the undesirable higher intensity fire.

I understand that the harvester machine moves quickly and is rapidly changing the forest composition yourselves and the other neighbors have grown accustomed to but the ecosystem health is and has always been the number 1 priority. The "logging" market in the state of Colorado is poor at best. The company that is operating the harvester and forwarder are finding a market for the wood being cut but this is just to be able to utilize this material in a responsible manner. If the contractors were to leave this material Denver Mountain Parks department would be VERY hard pressed to find a suitable use for the wood. I assure you that profit from the material being pulled out of the project site is at the bottom of the list of what is driving treatment intent and prescription.

I appreciate your compassion for the lands that we all love and cherish and I welcome your feedback. I hope in time you will see that this forest treatment is beneficial to the land.

Sincerely,

-Coleman Loughery
303-968-5433

From

Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 2:12 PM

To: Jean Shindel <jdshindel@hotmail.com>

Cc: Loughery, Coleman B. - DPR CJ3149 Parks Natural Resources Technician II

<Coleman.Loughery@denvergov.org>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Fillius Park Fire Mitigation Project description

I also frequent the trail Ms. Shindel is referencing and the amount of mature trees being removed is truly decimating the ecosystem. Not only is this a shared space for humans, but also for many animals who will be affected by this logging.

Can you please give us more information about your shift from the approved plan and justifications for this dramatic shift in approach?

Thank you,
L

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 21, 2023, at 10:37 AM, Jean Shindel <jdshindel@hotmail.com> wrote:

Coleman,

The original specs called for preserving healthy trees over 12 inches. I know that you developed these specs after careful thought and analysis. However, now you are allowing the contractor to remove almost all of these mature healthy trees, except for the few marked with blue tape.

I am asking you to do what is best for the forest - and that is to preserve healthy mature trees as per your original plan. The contractor's goal is to maximize profit by cutting the best lumber. Please do not allow his wishes to override your carefully thought out specs, and what is best for forest health.

In addition, I would like to point out that it is important to retain a forest that is both healthy and enjoyable for our community to use. I believe your original specs would have achieved that.

Please stop the logging of these mature trees.

Following is an excerpt from your original plan and, per our discussion, you did indicate that the diameter of healthy Douglas Fir that would be retained would be 12 inches:

"along the southern aspect of the unit in the strict ponderosa pine forest type we want to leave groups of more mature trees in less than 1 acre in size patches ranging from 3 to 30 trees per group. We also want to create openings between these groups that provide opportunity for grasses, forbs and shrubs to dominate. We are retaining Rocky mountain juniper where feasible and not causing too much of a

concentrated fuel cache. Along the north aspect of the unit we want the same groups and opening mosaic, retaining naturally occurring blue spruce, aspen and ponderosa pine focusing removal efforts on small diameter Douglas fir."

Please adhere to your original plan for forest health and stop the contractor from removing these healthy mature trees.

Regards,
Jean

From: Loughery, Coleman B. - DPR CJ3149 Parks Natural Resources Technician II
<Coleman.Loughery@denvergov.org>
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2023 8:35 AM
To: Jean Shindel <jdshindel@hotmail.com>
Subject: Re: Fillius Park Fire Mitigation Project description

Good morning Jean,
Thank you for your email. I'm out here at Fillius this morning making sure Cary is cutting trees as he and I have discussed. I am allowing him to take some of the Douglas fir that is larger than 14 inches diameter at breast height to achieve the canopy density we, at Mountain parks, would like to see as an end result. I am marking more of the larger diameter Douglas fir to keep. There is no "clear cut" harvesting techniques being performed on site. The amount of remaining ponderosa pine and Douglas fir where Cary has cut is to the spec we want to achieve. Please give me a call at (303) 968-5433 if you would like to discuss further. I prefer to chat with you over the phone or face to face rather than go back and forth on email.
Thank you for your attention and concern.
Sincerely,

-Coleman Loughery
303-968-5433

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From: Jean Shindel <jdshindel@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2023 11:36:52 AM
To: Loughery, Coleman B. - DPR CJ3149 Parks Natural Resources Technician II
<Coleman.Loughery@denvergov.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Fillius Park Fire Mitigation Project description

Coleman,
I am concerned that the contractor is not adhering to your plan for tree removal on the north side of the ridge. When I spoke with the Ponse Machine operator, Cary, he told me he was cutting **ALL** Douglas fir, regardless of size, unless marked in blue. He has already cut a

"clear-cut" swath on the North Side, heading downhill. There were quite a few trees cut that are over 12 inches.

It also appears that the same contractors who are doing the cutting are the ones getting the lumber. This creates a conflict of interest - They will cut down the trees that are the best lumber, i.e. large and healthy.

I hope that you can clarify this situation. The amount of destruction 1 Ponsse Harvester can do in a day is enormous.

Regards,
Jean Shindel

From: Loughery, Coleman B. - DPR CJ3149 Parks Natural Resources Technician II
<Coleman.Loughery@denvergov.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 8:36 AM
To: Jean Shindel <jdshindel@hotmail.com>
Subject: Fillius Park Fire Mitigation Project description

Good morning Jean,

I have attached a short description of the work to be conducted at Fillius park. When we spoke previously you had mentioned posting information on Nextdoor and your local newsletter. If you could please post this pdf on any publication you think may be relevant for the neighborhood that would be much appreciated!

Also, we will be starting the next phase of the fire mitigation work up there with heavy machinery tree harvesting starting next week or the week of March 13th. Signage will be posted along Fillius trail. There will be no hard closures. We are just asking that park users keep a safe distance from all operations of at least 150 feet.

Thank you,

Coleman Loughery | Forestry Program Coordinator
Denver Mountain Parks | Denver Parks and Recreation | City and County of Denver
p: (720) 865-0839 | coleman.loughery@denvergov.org | c: (303) 968-5433
<[image001.jpg](#)>