



Mitigation Crew Cutting Guidelines

July 2011

Mitigation Program Cutting Policy

In order to clarify how the Fire Mitigation Crew decides on what kind of work to do throughout the year, the Board of Directors, working with the Mitigation Coordinator and the Fire Chief, is putting together a set of standard operating guidelines. This first subject addresses cutting during the beetle flight season. Although it would be ideal to cease cutting during the flight season, it is not practical, nor financially viable for us to shut down mitigation activities.

It is the policy of the Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District mitigation program to cut trees year round in support of fire break, fire mitigation and forest health activities. The BMFPD recognizes that there are potential beetle attractants due to ponderosa and lodgepole pine tree cutting activities during the beetle flight season. Reprioritizing cutting activities, such as cutting Douglas Firs, will be attempted during the flight season to minimize such a potential. This reprioritizing will only be done, however, when it does not interfere with fire mitigation or fire-related grant activities.

1. In fuel break and thinning projects when selection of trees to be cut is primarily based on spacing, form and size, select for removal any tree with evidence of beetle hits, even if the beetle attack may not have been successful this year.
2. Freshly cut logs will not be stacked against leave trees. (Leave trees = trees you plan to save).
3. Chip to a maximum depth of 6 inches, unless restricted by lot size, topography or tree density in the area. Avoid blowing chips onto leave trees or piling chips closer than 6 feet from leave trees.
4. Crew is not responsible for raking chips of depths greater than 6 inches and/or removal of chips from lot in those areas where distribution of chips is restricted.
5. Although cutting and chipping should be done during cool weather, it is understood that the Crew must operate during beetle flight times. Homeowners can follow-up with such practices as:
 - Contract a chip truck to remove a large portion of the chips
 - Raking the chips to a 2" depth
 - Hauling the freshly cut green wood away promptly
 - Spraying green wood left behind with Permethrin.
6. Where practical, uninfested green wood left in or near the thinning area should not be piled. It should be left lying on the ground in the sunniest location possible to hasten drying. No green wood should be left lying within 3 feet of standing green trees. Recommend that homeowners do not pile wood just before the first snow unless they intend to burn the wood that winter.
7. BeetleBusters recommend that any tree that has sustained more than 3 hits should receive additional inspection (peeling bark to look for galleries and blue stain). It is not expected that the Crew will do this, but contact BeetleBusters or the State Forest Service for further evaluation. Contact Mitigation Services if you decide to have the tree removed.
8. BeetleBusters recommend a mixture of 5 quarts Permethrin (Astro) to 100 gallons of water for protection of high value trees, in spring as soon as snow is off the ground. If 2 rounds of spraying are elected, then 2.5 quarts per application should be used in early spring and later summer. Research suggests that spraying, while it does not kill beetles under the bark, does kill attacking beetles, thus helping to reduce the local beetle population.
9. Crew will treat known beetle infested trees with varying methods, depending on access, such as chipping, splitting, or covering wood in plastic. Trees located beyond 150 feet of a chipper accessible point and are greater than 15 inches in diameter are difficult to remove from site.