

Practice 15.26-2007 Gallatin National Forest Soil Productivity Protection Best Management Practice (Gallatin Soil BMP) Version of August 1, 2007

OBJECTIVE: to protect soil productivity in tractor harvest operations on the Gallatin National Forest

EFFECTIVENESS: High

IMPLEMENTATION:

Require a systematic skid trail pattern during logging.

Use ground-based harvest systems only on slopes having sustained grades less than 35 percent.

Maintain an average of at least 100 feet between skid trails, and allow no ground-based skidding equipment off these trails at any time, with the exception of designated landings and system roads.

The above do not apply if operating on soils with at least 8 inches of snow cover, or over soils frozen to at least 4 inches in depth. Winter logging has a negligible effect on soil or vegetation cover.

Allow no mechanical site preparation equipment off established skid roads unless the soil is frozen or snow-covered as discussed above, or where a continuous slash mat is at least 12 inches deep; with exception of feller/bunchers. This equipment type should minimize repeat passes over the same ground.

Allow ground-disturbing operations off designated skid trails only when the soil is dry (not moldable in the hand).