

United States  
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**Forest Service**  
Fremont-Winema  
National Forests

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# FREMONT - WINEMA NATIONAL FORESTS

## Monitoring and Evaluation Report

**Fiscal Year 2004**



# KEY FINDINGS

**Ecosystem Restoration:** Over the last few years, the Upper Klamath Basin and the Chewaucan Watershed have been the focus of extraordinary ecosystem restoration efforts in agricultural lands, wetlands, forested uplands, and riparian systems. In the Klamath Basin, the endangered species, water quality, and water quantity problems, with their associated agricultural, tribal, and social and economic impacts have demanded Presidential and Congressional attention and attracted millions of dollars for study and active restoration. The Fremont-Winema National Forests have been and are now cooperating and partnering with the Klamath Tribes, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of Forestry, US Environmental Protection Agency, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Klamath and Lake Counties, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Hatfield Upper Klamath Basin Working Group, local communities, the Resource Advisory Committee and local watershed councils to restore habitats and improve water quality and quantity across the area. Data collection, large-scale wetland restoration, riparian habitat enhancement, and the addressing of point and non-point source pollution problems are progressing full speed in and around the Winema and Fremont National Forests.

The Forests' efforts to improve ecosystem conditions have expanded well beyond the scope envisioned in the Forest Plans. For example, the Winema's Plan included an estimate of ten acres per year of watershed improvement. In 2004, the Forests improved watershed characteristics on 256 acres, just along Rock Creek. The Forests completed other related activities that were not discussed in the Forest Monitoring Plan like replacing culverts to allow fish passage, planting willows along stream banks, and returning road cuts to the original contour of the land.

The Fremont-Winema Resource Advisory Committee, formed in accordance with the "Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000," supports restoration activities on both private and federal lands. The Forests have implemented many projects with these funds, including several that reduced the impacts of roads and others that addressed hazardous fuels accumulations.

**Employee Involvement.** The Forests' employees' leadership and expertise has been provided on watershed restoration projects in the Upper Klamath Basin, Chewaucan, and other watersheds. They have worked closely with most of the local watershed working groups and councils. Forest employees were members of the technical review team and assisted in the development of the Upper Williamson Watershed Assessment for the Klamath Basin Ecosystem Foundation (funded by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board). The Forests have been actively participating in the Hatfield Upper Klamath Basin Working Group, responsible for many of the significant and effective restoration efforts to date.

**Implementation of Standards and Guidelines** continues to be a focus of Forest monitoring. The Forest continues to make changes in range allotment management to insure compliance with programmatic biological opinions issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A review during helicopter placement of logs in Rock and Threemile Creek revealed that pilots and crews were able to position the logs in a manner that will increase fish habitat complexity. A review of under burns in the Fourmile Watershed noted that insufficient snags were present, primarily because these areas had been used heavily by personal use firewood cutters in years past. The decisions for these under burns were signed before the Northwest Forest Plan. Nonetheless, the projects were developed at the same time as the Northwest Forest Plan and incorporated many of the concepts of that plan. The Round Meadow Restoration project was completed in 2003 and reviewed in 2004. The abundance of wildlife such as rails, geese, duck, sandhill cranes, and tree frogs, that were absent before the project, indicated a successful project. A review of the SF II proposed timber sale noted that branding, tagging and painting met Forest standards. Monitoring for neotropical birds at the Chemult Townsite Fuels Reduction project began in 2002 and continued through 2004. Monitoring will continue for several more years so that enough data can be collected to allow meaningful analysis. Stream surveys and water temperature monitoring has continued across the Forests however analysis and evaluation of the data have been limited.

**Threatened, endangered and sensitive species** are doing well where there is sufficient information to make an informed judgment. Bald eagles continue to do well on the Forests. A spotted owl demographic study, involving the Klamath Ranger District, continued. Spotted frog monitoring, including egg mass surveys and water quality sampling, continued in Jack Creek on the Chemult District. The Forest was also a cooperator in a Master's research project to determine the effects of grazing on spotted frogs. Flights over wilderness did not detect wolverine denning. Yellow rail monitoring continues in marshlands on and adjacent to Upper Klamath Lake. A pumice grape fern sensitive plant study continues. Numerous planned forest activities were analyzed for effects to bald eagle, Lost River, shortnose, and Modoc suckers, and bull trout. Recovery projects are being implemented for bull trout. Monitoring of Bull Trout in Threemile Creek revealed no brook trout or brook/bull hybrids for the fourth straight year. It appears the population is now pure bull trout and the risk of competition/hybridization with brook trout has been eliminated. Partnership recovery projects are being planned and implemented for bull trout including removal of brook trout and bull trout/brook trout hybrids from Long Creek.

# ACCOMPLISHMENT OF OUTPUTS AND SERVICES

Monitoring Item	Winema NF		Fremont NF		Comments
	Plan	2004	Plan	2004	
<b>Allowable Sale Quantity</b> MMCF/Year	19.4	2.2	24.7	7.1	Both Forests continue to sell less timber volume than anticipated in the Forest Plans. A Regional amendment to the Forest Plans, Eastside screens, eliminated harvest of trees over 21 inches in diameter but did not change the planned harvest levels, thus current volumes are less than planned. Most harvest this year was fire salvage.
<b>Timber Sale Program Quantity</b> MMCF/Year	34.7	2.7	28.0	7.1	
MMBF/Year	166.8	12.0	154.8	40.6	
<b>Dead Lodgepole Sold</b> MMCF/Year	11.5	0.7	-	0.2	Mortality in lodgepole pine on the Winema has returned to near normal levels. Dead LPP was harvested earlier in the planning period, thus harvest volumes now are significantly less than planned.
MMBF/Year	40.2	3.7	-	1.2	
<b>Ponderosa Pine Sold</b> MMCF/Year	8.8	1.7	-	6.8	Most Ponderosa pine harvest on the Fremont came from salvage of the Toolbox Fire area.
MMBF/Year	53.9	7.0	-	39.0	
<b>Silvicultural Treatments</b> (Ac/Year)					The focus of harvest has changed to thinning, selection and salvage harvests, with no regeneration harvests occurring. The factors affecting the harvest volume also have affected the number of acres harvested. Most of the salvage harvest on the Fremont was associated with the Toolbox Fire.
Commercial Thinning	2,700	3,955	7,500	708	
Overstory Removal	1,600	2,209	0	0	
Regeneration Harvest	500	0	8,900	0	
Selection Harvest	8,400	0	12,500	992	
Salvage Cut	13,700	917	-	7,876	
<b>Reforestation</b> (Ac/Year)	6,400	917	4,000	1,348	With no regeneration harvests, there is little or no planting needed for harvested areas. Most reforestation work is for wildfire restoration or involves site preparation for natural regeneration.
<b>Timber Stand Improvement</b> (Ac/Yr)	14,400	6,121	8,000	3,204	Appropriated funds limit the amount of TSI. Alternative funds like the Payments to Counties funds and appropriated wildlife funds are providing most of the funding for TSI.
<b>Fuel Treatment</b> (Ac/Year)	27,600	*	20,000	*	* Not available by Forest 21,747 total acres
<b>Road Construct/Reconstr</b> (Miles)					
Forest Road Program	22	3	-	12	
Timber Purchaser Roads	31	0	156	0	
<b>Total Road System</b> (Miles)	5,517	6,089	-	6,778	
<b>Road Access Mgmt</b> (Miles)					
Open for Use	-	4,783	-	4,882	
Closed to Use	-	1,500	-	1,868	
<b>Road Access Type</b> (Miles)					
Passenger Car	510	483	-	954	
High Clearance Vehicle	2,120	2,401	-	3,871	
Intermittant Access	2,887	3,205	-	1,933	
<b>Developed Rec Construction</b> (PAOT)	695	0	-	0	
<b>Trail Construct/Reconst</b> (Miles)	124	3	-	25	Maidu/Miller Lake Trail, Dead Horse Rim Lakes Loop Trail
<b>Permitted Livestock</b> (AUM)	13,000	7,743	70,100	69,883	Non-Use for resource protection was granted for approximately 100 head, due to drought concerns.
<b>Range Improvement</b>					Fences were constructed to implement allotment management plans. Two springs were developed.
Structures	-	0	-	12	
Acres	-	0	-	0	
<b>Habitat Improvements</b>					* These outputs are no longer separated by Forest. Structures are no longer tracked. Outputs in this category are: Habitat Restored/Enhanced Fish: 17 miles of stream, 12 acres of lake T&E Fish: 7 miles of stream Wildlife: 4,097 acres T&E Wildlife: 10 acres
<u>T&amp;E Species</u>					
Structures	-	*	-	*	
Miles	-	*	-	*	
<u>Other Species</u>					
Structures	-	*	1,450	*	
Acres	-	*	1,100	*	
<b>Watershed Improvements</b>					40 acres of road removal on the Klamath District (Winema) plus 20 acres of instream work, 45 acres of road decommissioning, and 29 acres of riparian enhancements on the Fremont
Structures	-	0	-	0	
Acres	10	40	250	94	

**Other wildlife** populations continue to be affected by habitat changes. Lack of timber harvest activity, fire, blow-down or other natural disturbance continues to allow canopy cover to increase thus continuing the reduction of forage for mule deer and possibly adversely affecting mule deer populations. Partnerships for neotropical migratory bird monitoring continue. Surveys in planned activity areas continue for goshawk, great gray owl and aspen habitat.

**The Forest's timber program** includes vegetation management projects designed to restore sustainable forest conditions and watershed health in landscapes where risk of catastrophic fire or insect loss is high. Some of these projects use timber sales and provide commercial products that will help sustain local communities economically, though this is not their primary purpose. These projects are designed to sustain old growth conditions; protect spotted owl habitat connectivity between Late Successional Reserves and Crater Lake National Park; rehabilitate meadows, hardwoods, and riparian habitats; reduce the risks of fire, tussock moth, budworm, and root rots; and allow the reintroduction of fire's function in the system. These projects also include road closures, obliteration, and relocation. The 85,000-acre Toolbox Fire Complex was ignited by lightning on July 12, 2002. All legal hurdles were cleared in 2004 and commercial salvage of dead trees on 10,214 acres (36 mmbf) began. Even with salvage harvest at this scale, a small fraction of planned timber harvest has occurred during the life of the Forest Plans. Regional Foresters' Amendment 2 (eastside screens) limited the types of live trees that can be harvested, but did not adjust the allowable sale quantity for the Forests accordingly. Timber harvest within the range of the northern spotted owl has been very limited due to the cost and difficulty in developing adequate compliance with legal requirements. This situation continues to depress economic activity in the area and compounds problems with other sectors in the economy. The Fremont -Winema National Forests are currently scheduled to begin development of a Forest Plan revision in 2006, but that may be delayed for budgetary reasons. The revision process will re-address the relationships between timber management, wildlife habitat, and socio-economics, as recommended over the last several years by the Forest's interdisciplinary team.

**Forest health** concerns are related primarily to the effects of too many trees on the landscape caused by decades of fire suppression and limited stocking control. This overcrowding results in too little water and too few nutrients getting to each tree to maintain good tree health. With the trees stressed, they are more susceptible to attacks by mountain pine beetle on the pine trees, and fir engraver on the white fir trees. The drought in 2001, 2002, and 2003 added additional stress that has led to increased mortality in lodgepole pine on the Paisley District, white and Douglas fir on the Klamath District, and Ponderosa pine on all districts. Past mortality in the white fir will continue to be a problem due to the increased fire danger those dead trees present. Management of the stocking levels in the forest is ongoing, but we will continue to have overstocked stands due the financial and procedural limitations on the amount of work we can accomplish in a year. The outbreak of the Pandora Moth that commenced in 1999 continued into 2004, with heavy defoliation occurring on about 90,000 acres. There were additional reports of caterpillars in areas that did not exhibit heavy defoliation, so the epidemic is expected to continue, with further defoliation expected in 2006. The defoliation reduces growth, but seldom results in mortality unless the trees are also stressed by drought, as they have been in this area.

**Outputs of goods and services** shows, numerically, what the Forest has produced in comparison to what was planned. Since implementation of the Forest Plans, the Forests have produced well below planned levels in all categories that involve ground-disturbing work, except reforestation and watershed improvements. This highlights the major emphasis on ecosystem restoration. The timber related outputs are low for the reasons discussed above. The recreation related outputs are generally low due to insufficient funding to do the planned work. Permitted livestock use is low due to low demand from potential permittees.

**From the social and economic aspect**, Forest Service activities have been well below planned levels, thus the associated activity in the local economy has been much less than originally anticipated. Unemployment rates are still well above the national (5.4%) and state (7.4%) averages with Klamath and Lake Counties at 7.9 and 7.6% respectively in August of 2004. The "Secure Rural Schools and Community self-Determination Act of 2000" has eliminated the linkage between National Forest receipts and payments to the states. Thus, National Forest activities no longer directly affect county budgets. During 2003 funds provided under that Act were used for ecosystem restoration activities on the Forests and contributed to increased economic activity. Sectors of the economy other than agriculture and those directly affected by Forest Service programs have displayed mixed performance.

For more information about forest monitoring see: [www.fs.fed.us/r6/winema/management/monitoring.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/winema/management/monitoring.shtml)

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