

**FOREST PLAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT
SALMON AND CHALLIS NATIONAL FORESTS
1997 - 2005**

INTRODUCTION TO THE FY 2004 FOREST PLAN MONITORING REPORT

The 2005 Forest Plan Monitoring Report is designed to be an extension of the existing monitoring report completed in 2003 that encompassed the years 1997 through 2003, rather than a one year stand alone document. The reason for this is because the multiple year report provided good background information, interpretation, analysis, and rationale for the recommendations described in Chapter 3 for the many monitoring items described in the two Forest Plans. Many monitoring items had no additional information to report for 2005 and, as such, are so stated. There are also a few monitoring items that although data was obtained it was not readily available or adequately compiled or summarized to include in the report. These situations were indicated as to be included in later monitoring reports once the data is available.

BACKGROUND

Forest Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plans) are part of the long-range direction process established by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA). Forest Plans provide guidance for balancing the physical, biological, social, political and organizational components of Forest management in the form of goals, objectives, standards and guidelines.

Monitoring provides the decision-maker, Forest Service employees, local customers, the Regional and Washington Offices of the Forest Service, and Congress, with information on our progress in implementing the Forest Plans and assessing whether they work as intended.

The Challis National Forest Plan was approved in 1987. The Salmon Plan followed in 1988. In 1995, the Salmon and Challis Forests were combined and administered as one unit. In 2000, the two Forests were formally integrated into the Salmon-Challis National Forest.

There have been a total of six previous monitoring reports since the two Forest Plans were approved. These reports took on a variety of different looks. The first report in 1995 was comprehensive in scope covering each resource area described in the two plans. Activities for the individual monitoring items were shown for each year and evaluated in narrative form. Any monitoring items recommended to be discontinued were dropped from further reporting. The second report followed in 1996 following the same format incorporating the 1996 information, only with much fewer monitoring items to report. The 1997 report was in a pamphlet format that described Forest accomplishments and news items organized by Ranger District. The years 1998 and 1999 were combined in the

next report with a different approach by focusing on six primary issues. This report made recommendations on how the two Forest Plans were rapidly becoming outdated and needing revision to capture new issues, new directions, and new public demands. The 2000/2001 report primarily focused on the fires of 2000 and the Forest's accomplishments in many rehabilitation efforts and the new National Fire Plan direction. A draft 2002 report was initiated in late 2003 and attempted to return to the original comprehensive report format discussing the monitoring items described for each resource area.

This report provides an account of the management activities specifically for Fiscal Years 1997 through 2003 and follows the same format as the last comprehensive report in 1996. Each monitoring item for the resource areas is described as stated in the Forest Plans. Those monitoring items that were discontinued in 1995 have been recaptured, to the extent possible, in this report. Each item has been evaluated and recommendations made as to the appropriateness in maintaining monitoring at the level described in the Forest Plans.

In addition to the two Land and Resource Management Plans there are three other management plans that are tiered to one or both of the two Forest Plans. These include: Salmon Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, Middle Fork of the Salmon Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, and the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness Management Plan. These plans have additional monitoring requirements that have never been incorporated into the previous Forest Plan Monitoring Reports but are included in this monitoring report with special identifiers indicating their source.

A close assessment and evaluation of the stated direction, goals, and objectives in the Forest Plans through this comprehensive monitoring report highlights the need for plan revision. The two Forest Plans are woefully out of date and it appears the likelihood of Forest Plan revision is not going to occur in the near future. The next step, therefore, would be a thorough review of recommendations and updating the Forest Plans through plan amendment.

TYPES OF FOREST PLAN MONITORING

Forest Plan monitoring involves gathering information and observing management activities to document actions and effects on the Forest. The three primary reasons for monitoring Forest Plans are **implementation**, **effectiveness** and **validation**. A brief description of each follows:

Implementation Monitoring – “Did we do what we said we were going to do?”

Within the framework of Forest planning, implementation monitoring can determine whether plans, prescriptions, projects, or activities were conducted as specified, and whether those actions were in compliance with Forest Plan or project plan direction, objectives, standards and guidelines.

In the absence of formal administrative review, implementation monitoring on the Salmon-Challis National Forest is most commonly conducted by designated specific project administrators such as a range conservationist or minerals specialist, who verify compliance with specified Best Management Practices and site-specific mitigation criteria through regular onsite project inspections. Additionally, a number of selected projects are scheduled for interdisciplinary team review every year, usually on major Forest activities such as timber sales, range allotments and mining.

Effectiveness Monitoring – “Did the management practice do what we wanted it to do?”

Effectiveness monitoring determines whether or not management practices, as designed and executed, are effective in meeting Forest Plan standards, goals and objectives.

Examples of effectiveness monitoring operations conducted on the Salmon-Challis National Forest includes both short and long-term water quality sampling and analysis; long-term streambank stability; soil compaction and riparian vegetation monitoring.

Validation Monitoring – “Are the goals and objectives set by the Forest Plan valid?”

Validation monitoring determines whether the data and assumptions used in the development of the Forest Plan are correct. Examples include dollar returns to the U.S. Treasury and receipt shares to the counties.

ADDITIONAL MONITORING

In addition to the three major types of Forest Plan monitoring described above, two other reasons to monitor are to provide **baseline** information and for general **tracking** purposes.

Baseline Monitoring

Baseline monitoring is conducted to fill in the gaps of existing knowledge and establish a data base for planning or future comparisons. This type of monitoring typically has a low frequency of measurement, a short to medium duration of operation, and a low to moderate intensity of data analysis. On the Salmon-Challis National Forest, we have identified baseline monitoring items for Air Quality and Fisheries.

Tracking

Tracking of some information, although not identified by the Forest Plans, is included in this report because we feel that managers, employees and the public would like a progress report on our additional activities. Some information included in this report that we intend to track in future reports are the number of Freedom of Information Act requests, External Effects, Heritage, Budget, Research Natural Areas, and the number, types and dispositions of appeals received.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

We have labeled our monitoring results for this report into three categories. Each monitoring item has a number and a prefix which indicates in which category it belongs. The categories are:

1. **Forest Plan** requirement items are prefixed with “**FP**”;
2. **Baseline** items are prefixed with “**BL**”; and
3. Additional items which we feel are worthy of **tracking** are prefixed with “**TR**”.

All monitoring items follow the same report format. Below is a sample of the general format, explaining the information provided for each item.

Format and Instructions for Displaying Monitoring Information

Monitoring Item	Activity to be Measured	Monitoring Frequency	Conditions Which Initiate Further Evaluations
Item #	Specific activity that was measured	How often monitoring is done	When adjustments should be proposed

Monitoring Types:

- Implementation** – “Did we do what we said we were going to do?”
- Effectiveness** – “Did the management practice do what we wanted it to do?”
- Validation** – “Are the goals and objectives set by the Forest Plan valid?”
- Baseline** – “What is the basis for future comparisons?”
- Tracking** – “What additional activities are we performing?”

Data Source: List specific report or method of data compilation.

Unit of Measure: (e.g., MMBF, acres, parts per million, etc.)

Findings: Data includes narrative, table and/or graphs.

Variability: Compare predicted performance with actual performance. Were limits exceeded? Where? How far? State reasons for variability, if known.

Evaluation: Evaluation of the data. Explain how new information and changes in conditions could be incorporated into planning. Discuss direction and trends if a five-year report is presented. Note corrections to existing Plan. Identify the need to change management practices, implementation strategies, goals, standards and guidelines.

Appropriateness: Express the need to continue monitoring this item and determine the level of need (mandatory, high, medium, low or discontinue monitoring).

If any errors or misinterpretations were discovered during the review process corrections were made where appropriate and an explanation is provided. Most commonly this situation occurred in describing the Units of Measure or Data Source.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM

Resource	Responsible Individual
Air Quality	vacant
Budget	Judy Sommerfeld, Budget Analyst
Facilities	Tony Beke, Engineer
Fire	Lynn Bennett, Fire Ecologist
Fisheries	Bruce Smith, Fisheries Biologist
FOIA	Mardi Gooby, Management Analyst
Heritage	Steve Matz, Archaeologist
Insect and Disease	Doug Basford, Silviculturist
Lands	vacant
Minerals	Ray Henderson, Minerals Specialist
Range	Bill Diage, Ecologist
Recreation/Wilderness	vacant
Research/Natural Areas	vacant
Soils	Karen Gallogly, Soil Scientist
Timber	Doug Basford, Silviculturist
Visual Resource	vacant
Water	Dave Deschaine, Hydrologist
Wildlife	Bruce Smith, Fisheries Biologist

Project Coordinator – Gail Baer, NEPA, Appeals and Litigation Specialist

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Not available as of September 30, 2006.

FUTURE MONITORING REPORTS

The fiscal year 2006 monitoring and evaluation annual report is scheduled to be available for review in December 2006.