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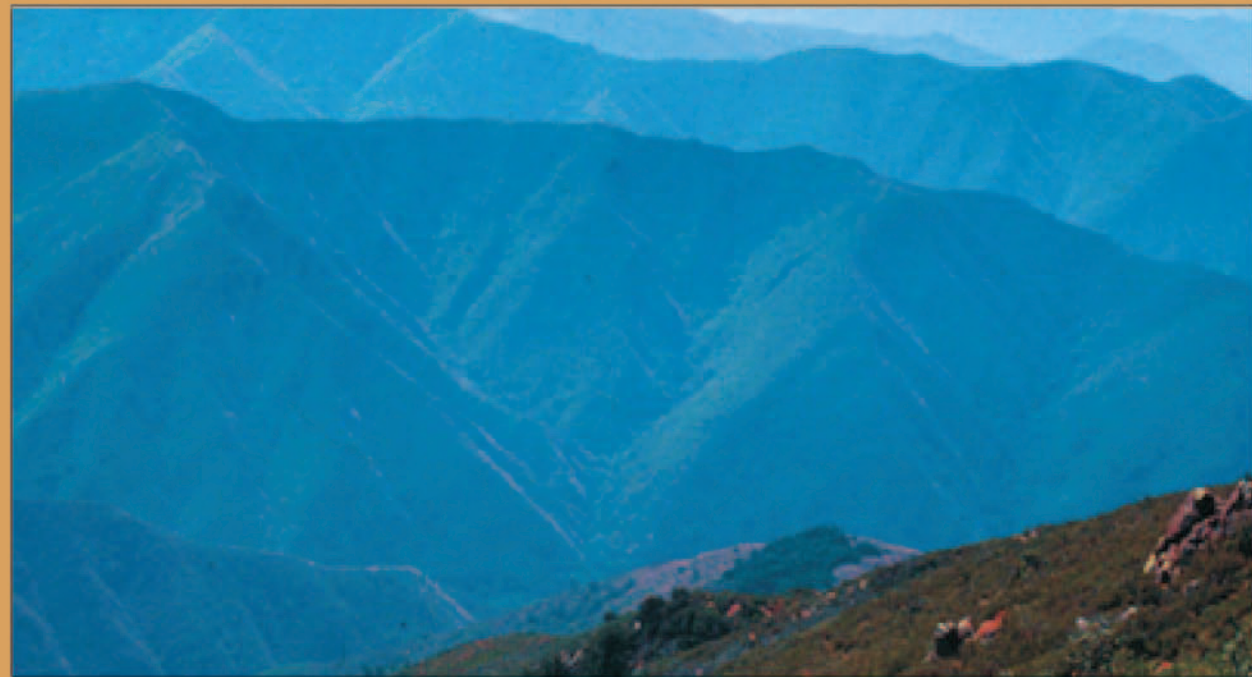
**Forest  
Service**

Pacific  
Southwest  
Region

R5-MB-021  
November 2003



# Business Plan for the Cleveland National Forest



## *A Window of Opportunity*

# Welcome to the Cleveland National Forest

There is much more to the Cleveland National Forest than special places and beautiful landscapes. There are many assets, activities, and services that are managed in caring for the land and serving people.





# Contact Information

COVER PHOTO: View over the San Mateo Canyon Wilderness, Trabuco Ranger District.  
Photo by Anne Fege.

SIDEBAR PHOTO: View from Laguna Mountain, Descanso Ranger District.

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# Introduction

In the spring of 2003, the four forests of the Forest Service's southern California province began a pilot program to develop business plans. This project is an extension of a process initiated by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and the National Park Service (NPS) in 1998. Since this National Parks Business Plan Initiative began, more than fifty national parks have participated in the business planning process.

The purpose of the Forest Service Business Plan Initiative (BPI) is to improve the abilities of forests to more clearly communicate their financial condition and operational capabilities with principal stakeholders. A business plan answers such questions as: What is the business of this forest? How much money does this forest need to operate within appropriate standards? What are the functional responsibilities and operational standards of the organization? What is the forest's financial situation?

Forests are undertaking the business planning process to accomplish three key tasks. First, the business plan provides the forest with a synopsis of its funding history. Secondly, it presents a clear, detailed picture of current forest operations and funding. Finally, it outlines forest priorities and funding strategies.

The four national forests of southern California – the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres and San Bernardino National Forests – applied a common methodology to develop their business plans. Forest activities were organized into six functional areas, which describe all areas of operations that the forests perform. The functional areas were then separated into 35 programs. This allowed each forest to report expenditures in terms of activities rather than funding sources. As a result, each forest can communicate its financial situation more clearly to internal and external audiences. Furthermore, using the same 35-program structure for all forests provides a needed measure of comparability across forest units.

Completion of this business plan has provided forest managers with a powerful tool to communicate the current and future work of their organizations.

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## Forest Supervisor's Foreword



Forest Supervisor Anne Fege.

Look east from Desert View Overlook. Watch hawks soaring over Lake Henshaw. Marvel at the millions of stars above Laguna Meadow. Feel the absolute silence and solitude in the San Mateo Canyon Wilderness. That's how I know my favorite places on the Cleveland National Forest—and thousands of other visitors know their own special places at the Forest.

The Cleveland National Forest is also much more than these special places. There are many assets—the land, roads, trails, recreation sites, and buildings. There are many activities—resource management, recreation, fire protection and suppression, maintenance, administration, and more. There are many services—watershed protection, habitats for common and rare species, recreation opportunities, telecommunication sites, community fire protection, and more.

Actually, managing the Cleveland National Forest is like managing a small business, although the 460,000 acres of land are managed to provide public values instead of profits. We have many of the same activities as any business that has more than 400 employees and an annual cash flow of approximately \$20 million.

About a year ago, we started talking with our Regional Office staff and the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) about creating business plans for the four national forests in southern California. The NPCA has worked with more than 50 national parks to write business plans, and we agreed to be the first national forests to develop business plans cooperatively with NPCA.

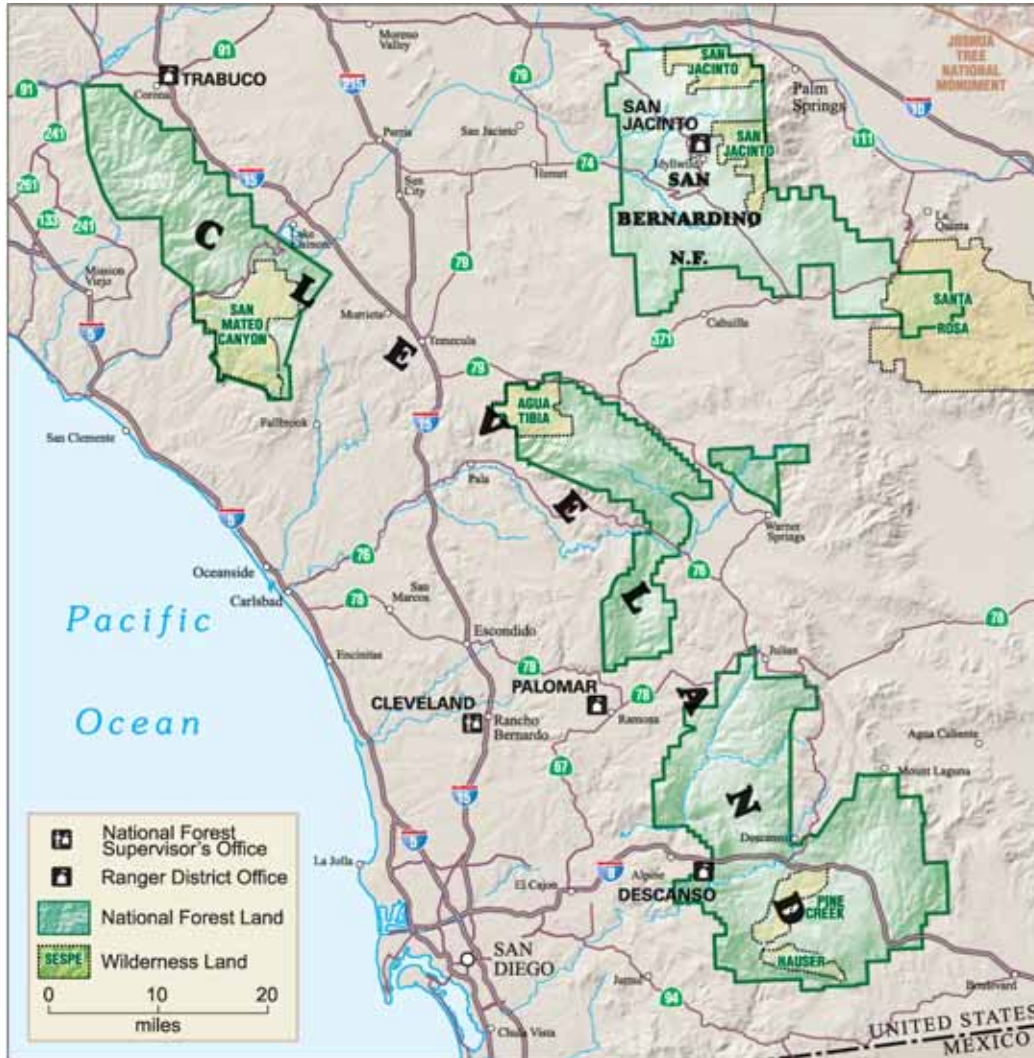
We have learned a lot in writing this business plan. We understand our business model better, and we know that our programs are much more interconnected than we ever thought. We recognize that we have many revenue sources and opportunities, and that our work for other national forests and agencies totals millions of dollars each year. We see more clearly how work is integrated locally, such as firefighters completing resource projects during the winter, staff from many program areas supporting wildland fire suppression teams, and specialists contributing to the design of recreation and engineering projects. We recognize how our resources have been reduced and our maintenance has been deferred over the past decade.

With this business plan we can explain what it takes to manage an urban National Forest. Based on what we've learned, we will look to leveraging creative strategies to fill program and funding gaps. We will invite individuals and organizations to make investments, enter into partnerships, contribute volunteer time, learn about natural history, enjoy outdoor recreation activities, and advocate for protecting open spaces and natural environments in the face of increasing development all around the forest.

*Anne S. Fege, Ph.D.*

Forest Supervisor

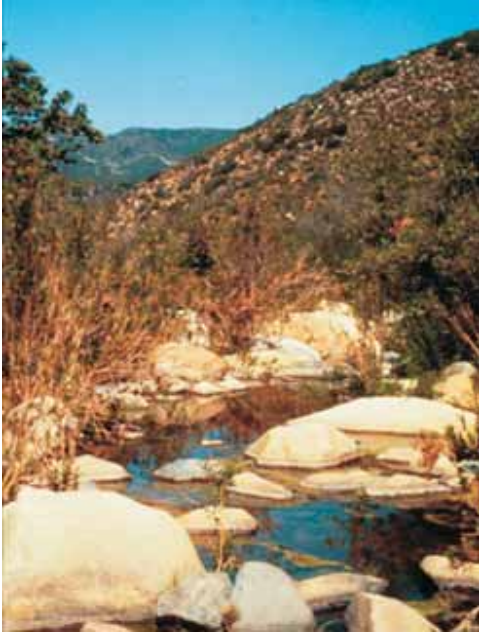
# Cleveland National Forest Map



Cleveland National Forest is divided into three Ranger Districts: Trabuco, Palomar and Descanso.

Riverside, Orange, Imperial and San Diego Counties, as well as Mexico, surround its borders.

## Executive Summary



Cottonwood Creek, Descanso Ranger District

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“May we touch the earth with kind  
and gentle hands.”

*Carmen Lucas  
Kayaaymii Indian, Laguna Mountain*

This business plan is designed to identify and document the gap between the current funding of the Cleveland National Forest operations and the funds necessary to fulfill the goals and mission of the Forest Service. The following analysis summarizes some of the key findings of the Business Plan Initiative at the forest. It is based upon the forest's fiscal year (FY) 2002 budget and staffing levels.

### **The Cleveland National Forest is an “Urban Forest.”**

As an “urban forest,” several factors contribute to the forest's growing operational needs. At almost 460,000 acres in size, the forest protects a variety of unique chaparral, riparian, and forest ecosystems. It neighbors 18 Native American reservations, and its southern border lies within five miles of Mexico. The large Fire and Aviation Management program protects forest habitat and urban communities. And, it is surrounded by a growing diverse population that places increasing demands on the forest for recreation and special uses.

### **Operational costs increased significantly over the past decade.**

High inflation rates, increased costs of living, growing demands for services, and increased fire management costs are only a few of the factors that drive up the cost of operations at the forest.

### **Total expenditures at the forest nearly doubled within seven years.**

Between FY96 and FY02, the overall expenditures at the forest increased from a little more than \$10 million to nearly \$20 million. This increase is attributed primarily to a growing fire program budget.

### **The non-fire base budget decreased over an eight year period, when adjusted for inflation.**

Even as costs to the forest and demands for its services increased, the non-fire budget actually decreased by \$750,000

between FY95 and FY02, when adjusted for inflation.

### **The forest funds the majority of its programs primarily through appropriated dollars.**

In FY02, approximately 97 percent of the forest's funding came from annually recurring appropriated funding from Congress. The remaining 3 percent was derived from non-recurring revenue income (2 percent) and reimbursable accounts (1 percent).

### **The Resource Management program identified the largest shortfall to its programs.**

The Cleveland identified a total staffing and financial shortfall of 76.6 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) and \$3.6 million to meet its required operational standards. The largest shortfall from non-fire programs, on both an absolute and percentage basis, was identified in the area of Resource Management where 17.9 FTE and \$835,035 were needed. In addition to its financial and staffing shortfalls, the Cleveland had a number of unfunded annual operations and maintenance needs totaling \$715,000 annually.

### **A total of more than \$170 million dollars in investments are needed over the next decade.**

As costs increase, yearly investment projects are deferred in order to pay for operational expenses. The forest needs to invest approximately \$170.9 million over the next 10 years to address deferred maintenance costs, capital investment priorities, resource projects, outreach efforts, and community development.

### **The Cleveland National Forest will actively pursue strategies to increase operational efficiencies and non-appropriated funds.**

The forest identified several strategies to address its current challenges and to improve its business operations. Such strategies include an improved recreational fee project, special use fee retention programs, partnerships and community protection plans.



## Forest Overview

Almost 460,000 acres in size, the Cleveland National Forest is the southern-most national forest in California. The land was originally set aside in 1893 to protect the health of watersheds from erosion damage and flooding that followed forest wildfires. It was designated a national forest in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt, and named in honor of President Grover Cleveland.

The forest extends approximately 130 miles—from Orange County to within 5 miles of the Mexican border. It has three Districts: the Trabuco to the north, Descanso to the south, and Palomar in the center. The forest includes three mountain ranges: Santa Ana, Palomar, and Laguna (Cuyamaca) Mountains. Mount Palomar, home of Palomar Observatory and the world's largest reflecting telescope, is one of the viewpoints along the Cleveland's mountain crestline. Desert and coastal views can be enjoyed on a clear day.

A warm, dry Mediterranean climate prevails over the Cleveland National Forest – hot in summer, mild in winter. In the fall, hot “Santa Ana” winds blow across the Cleveland from the east. These winds, combined with the Cleveland's dry climate, can give rise to fires that often burn vast acreage and are difficult to control.

Chaparral vegetation dominates the landscape, predominantly coastal sage, chamise, manzanita and ceonothus. However, magnificent oaks exist in the forest's meadows, and 200 year-old Jeffrey pine, Coulter pine, and big-cone Douglas-fir stands can be found in the forest's higher elevations.

Diverse ecosystems within the Cleveland National Forest provide habitat for many wildlife species, including mountain lion, bobcat, mule deer, coyote, gray fox, ringtail cat, blacktail jackrabbit, and California ground squirrel. Over 200 resident and migratory bird species can be found in the forest.

The Cleveland National Forest is also home to 61 sensitive and 24 threatened or endangered plant and animal species. These species include the southwestern willow flycatcher, the coastal California gnatcatcher, the least Bell's vireo, the arroyo southwestern toad, and the Laguna Mountain skipper. Due to the loss of habitat to nearby residential and commercial development, forest lands are becoming even more important to species survival.

The Cleveland National Forest is an important recreation resource for the people of southern California. An estimated 10 million people live within an hour's drive of the forest.

The increasing population of Southern California and the rapidly expanding development surrounding much of the Cleveland National Forest has resulted in increased demand from the general public and local residents for a diverse range of recreational activities. The most popular activities are hiking, camping, mountain biking, horseback riding, picnicking, and scenic driving. Most of the forest's hiking trails, camping facilities and picnic areas are open year round.

Additionally, the Cleveland contains four congressionally designated Wilderness Areas that are managed to conserve their natural wildland state.



Love Valley in the spring, Palomar Ranger District.



View from Laguna Mountain, Descanso Ranger District.



## Forest Inventory

### General

Acres of Land	460,000
Miles of Roads	426
Miles of Trails	356
Off-Highway Vehicle Acres	2160
Permanent Employees	259
Firefighter Apprentices	29
Temp/Seasonal Employees	181

### Visitor Resources

Recreation Visitor Days/Year	834,000
Picnic Areas	7
Campgrounds	22
Information Stations	2

### Historic Sites and Artifacts

Archeological Sites	900 (approx.)
Archeological Artifacts	130 cubic feet

### Natural Resources

Plant Species	1400
Amphibians	12
Reptiles	37
Birds	206
Mammals	59
Sensitive Species	56
Threatened/Endangered Species	24

### Infrastructure and Equipment

Fire Stations	23
Administrative Offices	4
Fire Engines	28
Vehicle Fleet	138

## Mission Statement

As the stewards of public land, the Cleveland National Forest recognizes five principal values it provides for the public:

- The forest provides a quality of life for those who live in surrounding counties. There is open space, quiet and solitude.
- There are unique, irreplaceable habitats on the Cleveland National Forest. The land is a haven for wildlife, offers protection for threatened and endangered species, and preserves biodiversity.
- The forest continues to provide watershed protection as it did over 100 years ago when first set aside as a Forest Reserve.
- The forest produces commodities and commercial values, including recreation and forest products.
- The forest is a large outdoor laboratory, a place for environmental research and education.

## Enabling Legislation

Named for President Grover Cleveland, the **Cleveland National Forest** was established when President Theodore Roosevelt issued an executive order on July 3, 1908 (effective retroactively to July 1).

In 1893 President Harrison had created the **Trabuco Canyon Forest Reserve**, which was named for a canyon within its boundaries. In 1897 President Cleveland had created the **San Jacinto Forest Reserve**, named after the most northerly mountains in the Peninsular Ranges that it encompasses, and extending all the way from the San Gorgonio Pass to the international boundary with Mexico.

The Trabuco Canyon and San Jacinto Reserves were combined to create the **Cleveland National Forest**. In 1915, by Executive Order 1310, the Cleveland was reduced in size by 700,000 acres and opened for public entry (homesteading and private land purchase). In 1925, the San Jacinto unit was transferred to the San Bernardino National Forest. There are currently 566,850 acres within the Congressionally-designated Cleveland National Forest boundary, of which 433,958 acres are Federally-owned land and managed by the Forest.

# Historical Context

## Fund Source Analysis

National forests acquire funds from three principal sources. The majority of the budget is appropriated annually by Congress, and the forest uses these funds primarily to pay for operational needs. The second source is reimbursable income, collected from services that the forest renders. The third source is revenue.

From Fiscal Year (FY) 1995 to FY02, overall funding to the Cleveland National Forest increased, nearly doubling over the past decade. However, this increase was primarily in the Fire and Aviation Management functional area.

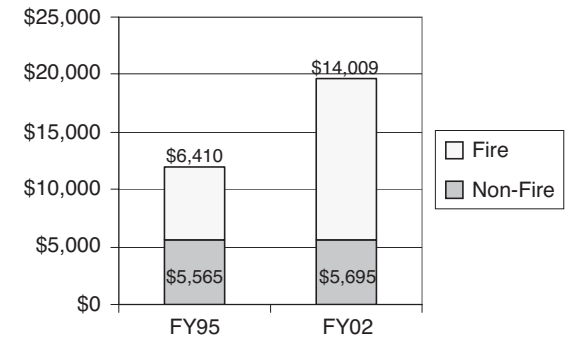
The appropriated base budget of the Cleveland National Forest provides the largest portion of the forest's total annual budget. In FY02, nearly 97 percent of total spending was supported by the appropriated base. While the base budget for the fire program more than doubled in size, funding for all other forest programs over the same period actually decreased. In FY95 the appropriated base

of non-fire programs was \$5.565 million; whereas in FY02 the appropriated base of non-fire programs had only increased to \$5.695 million.

Revenue sources are attributed to recreation and non-recreational special uses, such as energy transmission, infrastructure and communication sites. Additional revenues are also collected through a relatively new program called the "Adventure Pass." As these funds are collected and held for forest unit operations, they help address such standard operational needs as maintenance of frequently used trails and campsites. The forest is actively developing new ways to increase Adventure Pass sales and create new revenue streams to pay for forest operations.

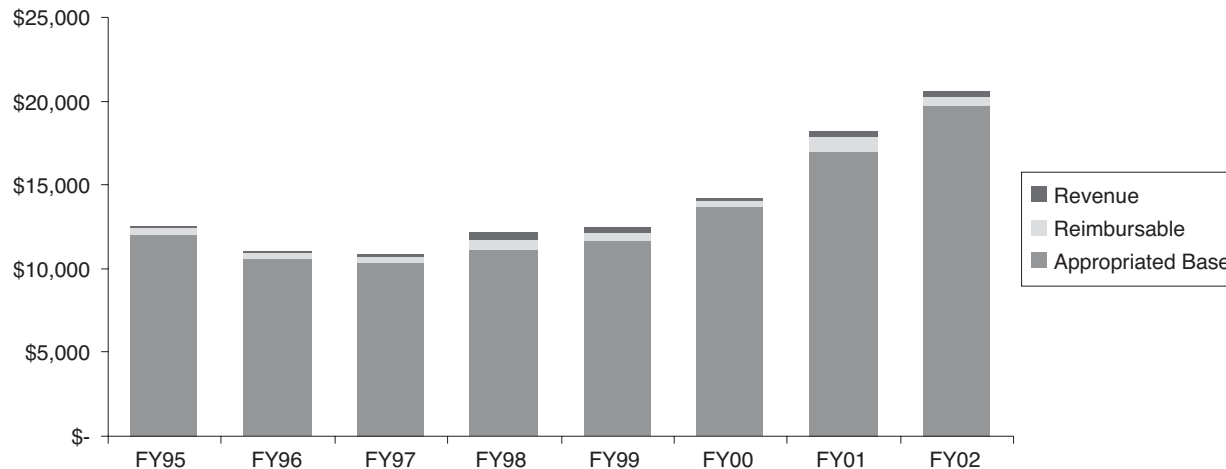
Reimbursable funds primarily represent rent collections from barracks that house firefighters throughout the fire season. These funds are typically used toward regular upkeep of these facilities.

**Appropriated Base Growth Trend**



While total funding at the Cleveland National forest has nearly doubled in real dollars since Fiscal Year 1995, funding to non-fire programs increased by less than 2%.

**Historical Allocations by Fund Source**



**“Eating Away at the Forests.”  
Editorial, *Los Angeles Times*,  
March 28, 2003.**

“...the Cleveland forest...has been whittled down over the years and segmented into three island-like areas. It’s the smallest national forest in California, yet 20 million people live within a few hours’ drive. It is home to 22 endangered species...The nonstop growth surrounding the Cleveland will bring ever more creative proposals on behalf of suburban needs. If the Forest Service doesn’t decisively concentrate now on wildlife and recreation, the Cleveland will not survive development demands.”

## Adjusted Base Budget

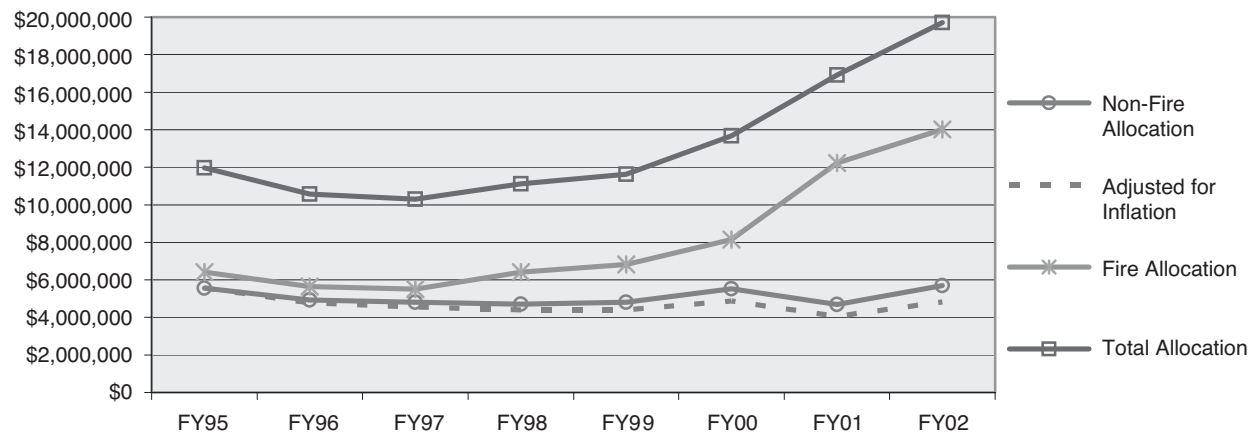
The graph provided below shows how the Cleveland National Forest’s appropriated budget—the operational funds received from Congress—changed when adjusted for inflation. Using 1995 as the base year, the forest’s non-fire operations decreased by 13 percent (or \$750,000) over an 8-year period. During this same time period, costs to the forest increased exponentially as a result of the growing neighboring populations of Orange, Riverside, Imperial and San Diego counties, along with other changing conditions.

These two factors—flat budgets and increased costs—present new challenges to the forest as it tries to serve public and resource management needs. In order to meet wage increases and other operational requirements, maintenance, special use permits monitoring and administration backlogs are accumulating.

Additionally, even though fire program funding increased significantly over the past decade, so did costs. The program remains short of required funds to meet maximum efficiency levels.

To meet rising demand and operational standards, the forest actively explores alternative funding sources through partnerships, new revenue streams and increased efficiencies. Some of these strategies provided the forest with new opportunities to address rising costs. Additional strategies are discussed in detail in the Priorities and Strategies section of this document.

**Non-Fire Allocation, Adjusted for Inflation**



While forest needs have grown significantly due to increased recreation, resource protection, and wage inflation requirements, the forest’s non-fire real budget has decreased by approximately \$750,000 since FY95 according to national inflation figures. The forest estimates this decrease to be even greater using local county rates.



## Increased Cost Analysis

The impact of a declining budget is further exacerbated by increasing costs. Each year it is increasingly difficult to manage operations up to legal, regulatory and professional standards. Forest operations are challenged by increased cost drivers as explained below.

### Increasing Cost of Living

San Diego's inflation rate, measured by the Consumer Price Index in 2000 at an annual rate of 5.8 percent, was the highest reported in the nation. Wages, rents, utilities, fuel costs and more all continue to escalate.

### Population Growth

Year-round warm climates, diverse cultures and intriguing lands continue to draw new inhabitants to sunny southern California. From 1990 to 2001, San Diego County experienced a 12.6% population increase. Increased forest visitation and urban influences heighten the need for infrastructure upgrades, recreation improvements and resource protection.

### Development Within or Adjacent to Forest Boundaries

Public requests for easements, trails, and urban infrastructure continue to increase with the demand for land use.

### Bi-national Relations and Immigration.

Immigration, increased border crossings for recreation and trade, as well as other cross-border relations with neighboring Mexico necessitate greater outreach efforts to embrace surrounding communities and ensure safety within forest boundaries.

### Biological Opinion Terms and Conditions

There is a growing emphasis and increasing workload on species and habitat surveys and protections in southern California resulting from the increasing development pressures on off-forest habitation for listed species and from a lawsuit settlement agreement.

### Agency-wide changes

Updates in electronic systems, increased oversight and documentation needs, retirement system changeovers and other agency-wide changes generate increased staff training and transition costs.

### Technological Changes and Needs

Replacement costs of obsolete hardware and software to meet minimal public service needs increase as technological advances continue.

### Increased Deferred Maintenance

As the forest's budget decreases and costs rise, deferred maintenance adds to the already substantial backlog.

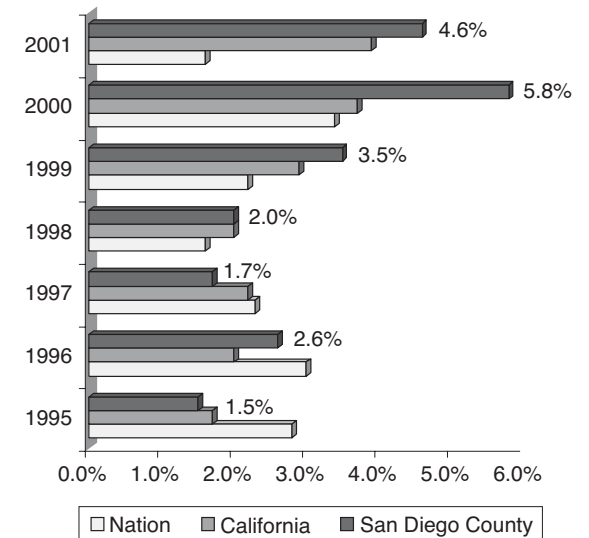
### Severe Fire Conditions

Unpredictable droughts cause severe fire seasons and increase year-round fire protection costs. Greater emphasis on fire safety requires additional training. Expanding residential development within and around forest borders require additional protection and education.

### Increased Fire Management Costs

The most significant cost increase to the fire management program can be attributed to increased wages. These include a special cost of living pay increase for southern California firefighters, conversion to a more expensive retirement system, pay grade increase requirements to improve retention rates, and the addition of a new hand crew. Additional costs include new safety requirements such as self-contained breathing apparatus on all vehicles, urban protection needs and administrative cost increases. The Cleveland also added an additional six engines to its fleet over the past decade, and the cost to operate each rose from nearly \$190,000 to more than \$250,000 per engine on a yearly basis. These costs alone total a half million dollars a year.

**Consumer Price Index  
Inflation Rate**



Source: San Diego Workforce Partnership—  
Labor Market Information, May 31, 2002.

San Diego County reports one of the highest inflation rates in the state of California and in the nation. Housing prices have surged to record breaking levels.



Children learn about the forest environment from botanist Linh Davis.

## Analysis of Expenditures

The analysis of expenditures chart shown below takes into account funds from all sources, including base appropriations, reimbursements and revenues.

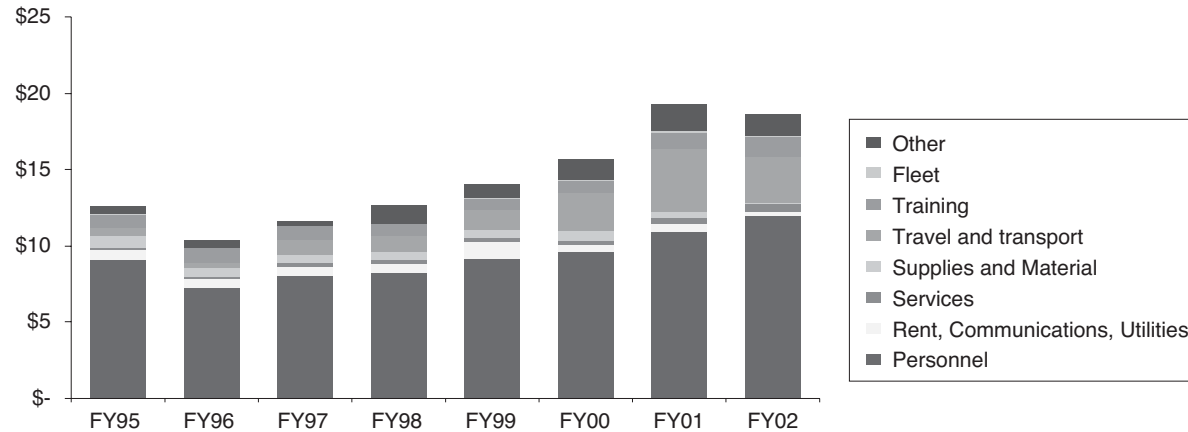
The forest's total expenditures increased more than \$7 million dollars between 1995 and 2002. The past eight years show a fluctuating upward trend attributable primarily to the growing fire budget.

On average, personnel expenditures were 63 percent of total expenditures over the past eight years, and increased

by nearly \$2.8 million. Travel and transportation expenditures more than quadrupled during this period, from less than \$500,000 in FY95 to more than \$3 million by FY02. Rent, communications and utility expenditures remained relatively constant, as did training costs. An average of \$900,000 each year was spent on the forest's non-fire fleet.

While expenditures increased, declining budgets and severe fire seasons required the forest to defer maintenance, discontinue research projects, and decrease community outreach and education. The forest expects demand for its services to continue and is planning strategically to meet this demand.

Historical Expenditures by Category (in million)



Expenditures nearly doubled in less than a decade.

# Current Forest Operations

This business plan differentiates between two types of expenditures: those for operations and maintenance, and those for investments. Operations and maintenance requirements are those funds needed to carry out everyday operations at the forest. Some examples include annual payroll costs, janitorial operations, and managing a telecommunications network.

Investments, on the other hand, are significant one-time costs that the forest incurs in order to fix current problems or provide for future forest development. Investments may create extensive inventories and surveys of forest resources before beginning forest health treatment projects, as well as constructing a new building.

This section of the plan focuses on the operation and maintenance activities of the forest. In order to describe forest operations for this business plan, activities were divided into six functional areas, which describe the six areas of business for which the forest is responsible.

These functional areas are then further divided into 35 programs that more precisely describe forest operations.

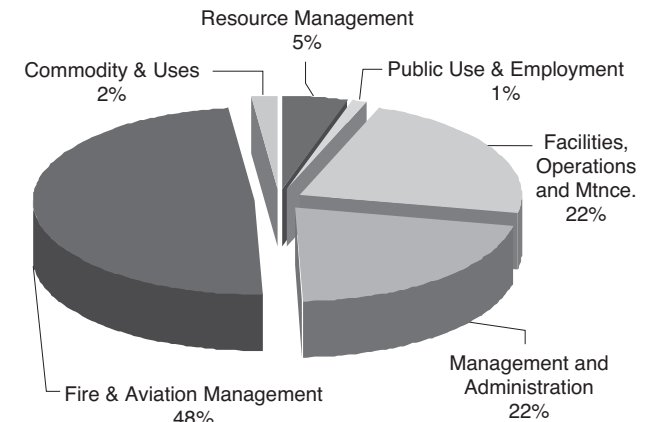
Programs are general in nature in order to cover a broad suite of activities that occur in the forest. The six functional areas are described below.

The next component of the business planning process is the completion of a detail sheet for each program. These forms describe the day-to-day activities performed in the forest and the totality of financial need associated with them.

Statements of work are developed to describe the suite of activities encompassed by each program. Operational standards are then generated to describe the duties and responsibilities required to meet the critical functions of the program as stated in the statements of work. These standards are then used to determine the total financial resources required to perform the standard tasks of the program. The final step compares current forest activities with the operational standards to identify the gaps between required and available resources.

The following pages discuss each of the functional areas in detail.

**FY02 Expenditures by Funded Area**



Note: Fire & Aviation Management in the pie chart above does not include Wildfire Suppression and National Fire Support funds.

## Functional Areas

**Resource Management** encompasses all activities related to the management, monitoring, and protection of the forest's natural, cultural, and informational resources, including: wildlife and vegetation management, watershed, air and geologic management, specially designated areas management, data management, and land ownership and adjustment.

**Public Use and Enjoyment** encompasses all activities directed at providing visitors a safe, educational and recreational experience while at the forest, including: recreational special use,

concessions management, visitor center, interpretation, education, fee collection, and visitor safety services.

**Facilities Operations and Maintenance** includes all activities required to manage the forest's infrastructure on a daily basis: campgrounds, developed recreation sites and trails maintenance; concentrated use area management; road maintenance and repair; and transportation and fleet management.

**Management and Administration** includes all forest-wide management and administrative support activities: general and District manage-

ment, financial management, general administration, public affairs, and planning activities.

**Fire and Aviation Management** encompasses the forest's fire organization activities and programs, which include administration, pre-suppression and preparedness, hazardous fuels reduction, and national fire and emergency support.

**Commodity and Commercial Uses** includes the production and management of a wide variety of commodities and commercial products. Programs include: non-recreational special use management; grazing; minerals; and forest product and timber management.



## Resource Management (5% of expenditures)



Pine Creek, Descanso Ranger District. Freshwater aquatic habitats are uncommon in coastal southern California and most have been substantially modified by altered stream flow changes.

Resource Management at the Cleveland National Forest encompasses activities related to the management, monitoring, and protection of the Forest's natural, cultural, and informational resources. This functional area is comprised of seven program areas:

- Wildlife Management
- Vegetation Management
- Watershed, Air and Geologic Resource Management
- Specially Designated Areas Management
- Heritage Resources Management
- Data Management
- Land Ownership and Adjustment

In FY02, the Cleveland National Forest spent \$865,069 on its Resource Management Programs with an available 10.7 FTE. The Forest identified a funding need of \$1,700,104 and 28.6 FTE to meet essential natural, cultural and informational resource needs – leaving a program area shortfall of 17.9 FTE and \$835,035.

### Wildlife Management

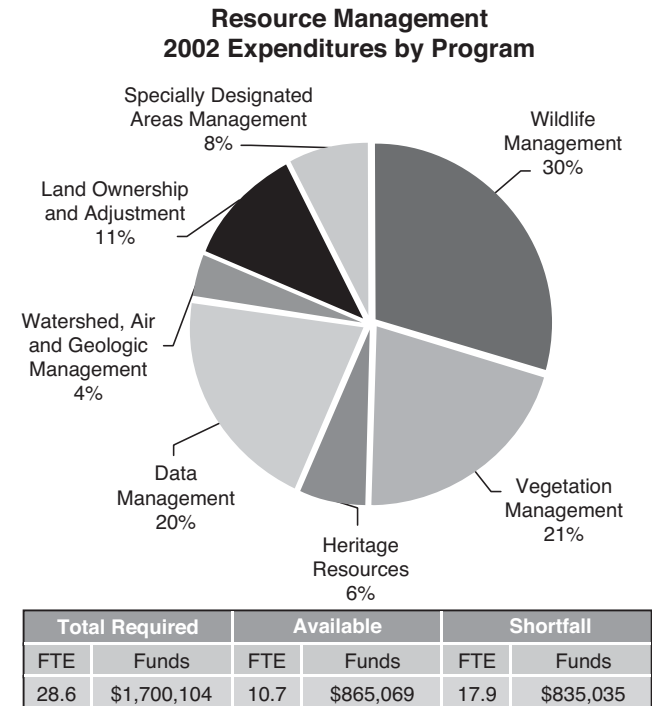
The focus of the Wildlife Management program is the management and protection of plant and animal habitats and species. Emphasis is given to the management of federally-listed threatened and endangered species, as well as Forest Service-designated sensitive plants and animals. Activities in this program include: the development and maintenance of partnerships with national, state and local agencies to establish and maintain species habitat goals; the integration of habitat planning into land management and project plans; and the improvement and maintenance of wildlife and fish habitat.

Currently, forest wildlife species and habitats are negatively affected by a number of natural and urban stresses, including private land development, invasive non-native species, and low water supplies. In order to effectively manage against these

stresses, the Wildlife Management program identified a staffing need of 5.0 FTE. Comprised of a Botanist, a Biological Technician, an Aquatic Biologist, and four Science Co-Op students, these unfunded positions would work primarily on the planning and implementation of wildlife enhancement and protection projects.

### Vegetation Management

Vegetation Management is the maintenance and improvement of healthy and productive stands of native trees in forested areas and plant species. Specific maintenance and improvement activities include the initiation of reforestation projects, the continued promotion of vegetation growth and survival, and the protection of desired vegetation from animal damage, human damage, and plant competition. Insect



infestations and regional drought conditions have significantly and adversely impacted forest health in the past three years. However, the extent of these impacts on forest resources is uncertain due to a lack of funds and personnel to implement forest-wide area surveys and remediation plans.

Additional funding would go towards 0.5 FTE of a Silviculturalist to develop vegetation management project plans, 0.5 FTE of a Range Conservationist to work on range vegetation analysis, and 3.0 FTE Resource Technicians to implement vegetation management projects.

### **Watershed, Air and Geologic Resource Management**

This program encompasses all activities associated with the

management of water quality and supply, soil productivity and stability, air quality management, hazardous materials mitigation, and geologic and paleontologic resource management on forest lands. The objective of this program is to identify the health of the forest's air, water, and soil resources, and implement measures to protect and enhance their natural properties.

This program recognized a need of 4.0 FTE for Watershed and Physical Science Technicians to maintain and improve watershed stability through erosion and sediment control and the natural management of peak water discharges. These personnel would also implement projects to increase the productivity of riparian areas.



An example of a native wildflower, the Bush Monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*).

### **Threatened and Endangered Species**

The wild shrub- and tree-covered mountains of southern California are remnants of a landscape that once covered most of this region. With the settling of missions, towns, cities, and suburbs, populated areas now surround the mountains. Natural areas for plants and animals have become smaller and, in some cases, have disappeared. As a result, 24 plant and animal species found in the Cleveland National Forest are federally listed as threatened or endangered, or have been proposed for listing.

For some listed species, "critical habitat" has been designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Critical habitat refers to specific areas that are essential to the conservation of federally listed species, and that may require special management. Nationwide, critical habitat has been designated for only about 10% of the listed species. Within the Cleveland National Forest, critical habitat has been designated for eight listed species, including the California red-legged frog, the arroyo southwestern toad, and the California gnatcatcher.

Most of the Cleveland National Forest's listed species depend on stream (or riparian) habitats to survive. With water in short supply in southern California, riparian protection is a political, as well as, a biological problem. Changing the water flow in any stream can cause a radical change to the habitat of the arroyo southwestern toad, the least Bell's vireo, and the southwestern willow flycatcher. Riparian protection is also a recreational problem – people love to play in streams. With so few riparian areas, a little damage by humans can cause a lot of problems for wildlife.

Coastal sage scrub is important to the California gnatcatcher. This plant community has been fragmented by home, business, and road construction, and changed by human-caused wildfires.

Two of the Cleveland's listed species migrate to Central and South America every winter. The least Bell's vireo and the willow flycatcher spend almost one half of the year in other countries.



The Cleveland is home to a number of sensitive, threatened and endangered species, including, at far left: the arroyo toad (endangered), the California spotted owl (sensitive), and the California gnatcatcher (threatened).

### **Specially Designated Areas Management**

Congress has designated four Wilderness Areas on the Cleveland National Forest: the Aqua Tibia, San Mateo Canyon, Hauser, and Pine Creek Wilderness Areas.

These Wilderness Areas are managed for three values: to protect and restore the areas' natural ecological values and wilderness character; to promote understanding of wilderness benefits; and to provide primitive recreational opportunities. In addition, the Forest has three established Research Natural Areas (RNAs), which are set aside for non-manipulative observation, research and ecological study. An additional 1.0 FTE of a Forestry Technician is needed in this program to develop and maintain Wilderness Area management plans and to monitor the recreational use of Wilderness Areas.

### **Heritage Resource Management**

The Heritage Resource Management program on the Cleveland National Forest includes the protection and interpretation of archeologic and historic sites, ethnography (the study of social interactions and community behaviors), and the fostering of relationships with local Native American tribal organizations and their members.

In FY02, the Heritage Management program did not have a full-time staff, and activities were performed either by regional or Forest employees on a part-time basis. As a result, the program was staffed by only 0.3 FTE, and a majority of its standards were not fulfilled. While a full-time Senior Archeologist and Archaeological Technician were funded for FY03, additional funding is required for a 1.0 FTE Native American Coordinator to coordinate and consult with regional American Indian tribal governments, 0.5 FTE Historic Archeologist to evaluate and consult on historic sites within the Cleveland, and 0.75 FTE Archaeological Technician to work on the inventory and evaluation of prehistoric and historic sites.

### **Data Management**

Data Management is the collection and management of the forest's corporate databases. Forest data includes the physical, biologic, social, and economic resource information of the forest. Additionally, Data Management includes the implementation and effectiveness monitoring of the forest's Land Management Plan.

The sheer size and amount of the forest's database administration and reporting requirements make management of this program challenging and time consuming. Additional funding would go towards 0.75 FTE Natural Resource Information Officer to provide program leadership and coordinate data collection, mapping, and resource application use.

### **Land Ownership and Adjustment**

Land Ownership and Adjustment includes all activities related to the management of the forest's real estate functions. Program activities include land acquisition to improve public access of forest lands and enhance resource values, the maintenance of forest boundary lines, and the processing of title documents. There is a 0.93 FTE need in this program to process proposed land acquisitions and design a strategic Forest Acquisition Plan. This need would be fulfilled by 0.1 FTE of a Recreation Land Staff Officer, 0.1 FTE of a Lands Program Leader, 0.1 FTE of a Lands Specialist, and an additional 0.63 FTE of an existing Realty Officer.



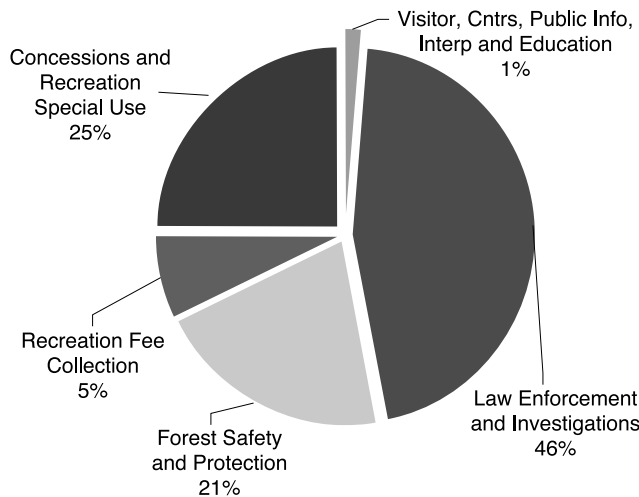
## Public Use and Enjoyment (1% of expenditures)

The Public Use and Enjoyment functional area at the Cleveland National Forest is comprised of five areas of responsibility:

- Concessions and Recreational Special Uses
- Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretation and Education
- Recreation Fee Collection
- Law Enforcement and Investigations
- Visitor Safety and Protection

The primary functions of this area are to engage forest visitors in a variety of recreational, educational and informational opportunities, as well as protect forest resources and ensure visitor safety.

**Public Uses and Enjoyment  
FY02 Expenditures by Program**



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds
18.3	\$1,323,351	12.4	\$840,996	5.8	\$432,355

In FY02, the Cleveland National Forest spent \$890,996 on its Public Use and Enjoyment programs with 12.4 FTE in staffing. The forest identified a funding need of \$1,323,351 and 18.3 FTE to meet functional area needs – a shortfall of \$432,355 and 5.8 FTE.

### Concessions and Recreational Special Uses

This program incorporates the management and monitoring of all concession and recreational special use permits on Forest land. The Cleveland National Forest manages over 340 recreational special use authorizations, including 2 concession campground complexes and over 300 summer homes. This program is the second largest program in the Public Use and Enjoyment functional area, with FY02 expenditures of about \$229,300, or 25% of total area expenditures. Due to a recreational special use permit backlog and an increasing volume of new permit applications, this program recognized a need of 0.75 FTE. These personnel would work to alleviate the existing backlog and support current permit administration.

### Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretation and Education

The overall mission of this program area is to build intellectual and personal connections between people and their natural and cultural heritage. The program focuses on public service information regarding recreational opportunities, stewardship responsibilities, and resources education. At \$12,498 and 0.2 FTE, this program area is the least funded in Public Use and Enjoyment. A 1.0 FTE need was identified for an Interpretive Specialist to design, implement, and manage forest-wide interpretive education programs, as well as coordinate existing programs.

### Recreation Fee Collection

Recreation Fee Collection includes all forest activities related to the collection and management of recreational



Time to smell the flowers! A Forest visitor enjoys the native flora at the Trabuco Ranger District.



Mountain bicycling is one of the most popular recreational activities within the Cleveland National Forest.

activity fees, including the sale of recreational passes and the monitoring of permit compliance. At the Cleveland National Forest, the majority of fees collected are through the Adventure Pass program (see sidebar).

Total unmet staffing and fund needs of 0.75 FTE and \$30,431, respectively, were identified. The FTE need would be fulfilled by a Forestry Technician who would aid in the administration of recreational fees and fee collection activities.

### **Law Enforcement and Visitor Safety and Protection**

The Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) organization is an integral part of the National Forest System, and is primarily responsible for the prevention of crimes and the enforcement of federal laws and regulations on forest lands. Specifically, Law Enforcement Officers detect and respond to criminal incidents against people, property and forest resources; provide security for forest personnel and facilities; and work closely with other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. This organization recognized an additional 3.0 FTE need for Law Enforcement Officers. The increased staff would better allow the Cleveland National Forest to respond to 98 percent of the crimes reported on forest lands. Law enforcement personnel are funded nationally, while assigned to individual forests.

Visitor Safety and Protection includes a broad range of activities designed to enhance the safety of forest visitors. Staffed by forest employees called Forest Protection Officers (FPOs), this program's responsibilities include observing and reporting violations, and issuing warnings and violation notices. FPOs have collateral (concurrent) duties within the forest, and only spend a percentage of their time fulfilling program duties. Full-time FPO positions are needed to bring this program to 100% compliance of standards.

### **Adventure Pass**

In 1996, Congress passed legislation authorizing the National Forests to test the feasibility of charging fees for recreational use. This was a welcome development for the four southern California National Forests, whose appropriated recreation "operation and maintenance" funding could not keep pace with demands. The four forests presented a unique idea: a pass for recreational use designed to meet the special needs of the extraordinary geography of the region and address the specific challenges they face with heavy recreation use.

Unlike national or state parks, where vehicles enter through controlled access points, the southern California Forests are accessed round-the-clock via hundreds of different roads. Complicating the management picture is the presence of private parcels, communities and towns, and other agency lands inside the forest boundaries. Consequently, entry kiosks on roads leading into the forests (thus traditional "entry fees") are not feasible. A vehicle pass, which can be purchased in advance of the trip and displayed on the windshield, seemed the best way to collect a recreational use fee.

The pass is required for vehicles parked on national forest land for recreation. Bicyclists, visitors walking onto the forests from adjacent lands, and sightseers driving through the forests without parking, may all enjoy their visit without purchasing a pass.

The Adventure Pass concept was developed based on information from surveys conducted with forest visitors from 1996 to 1997. Seventy-seven percent of the people surveyed stated they were willing to pay a fee if the money was returned to the forests and used to improve recreational opportunities. The Adventure Pass program was launched during the summer of 1997 for the national forests of southern California.

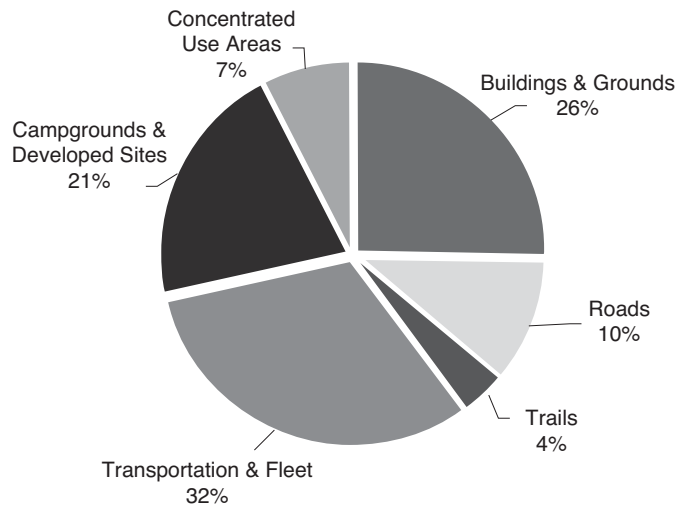
## Facility Operations and Maintenance (22% of expenditures)

The Facility Operations and Maintenance functional area at the Cleveland National Forest includes six areas of responsibility:

- Campgrounds and Developed Sites
- Trails
- Concentrated Use Areas
- Roads
- Transportation and Fleet
- Buildings and Grounds

Facilities are in high demand by the large population surrounding the forest and require continual rehabilitation.

**Facility Operations and Maintenance  
FY02 Expenditures by Program**



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds
37.6	\$4,623,687	26.2	\$4,160,648	11.4	\$463,039

Additionally, vandalism and other harmful activities have led to increased maintenance needs. Forest facilities encompass both extensive fire-management resources and recreational sites including more than 650 campsites in 22 campgrounds, 7 picnic areas, and 10 trailheads.

In FY02, the Facilities, Operations and Management program on the forest expended nearly \$4.2 million dollars with 26 FTE. To fully meet operational standards, the Forest needs to increase its workforce by 11.4 FTE and more than \$463,000. This would begin to address the increasing maintenance backlog of more than \$43 million and provide more funding for the repair, rehabilitation, replacement, and decommissioning of forest facilities. Additional funding is also needed to implement capital improvement projects. This is further addressed in the Investment Priorities section of the business plan.

### Campgrounds, Developed Sites and Trails

Currently, none of the forest's campgrounds and trails meet operational standards. There is a shortfall of 2.0 FTE and \$72,000 to meet yearly operational standards for these programs. Negligible funding and staff, aging facilities and increased resource use have contributed to outdated campgrounds. Daily use requirements of trails continue to grow as the population of neighboring communities increase. In an effort to reduce costs, the majority of the forest's 350 miles of trails are maintained through volunteers and partnership groups. No additional operation needs were identified for this program but significant investment needs are addressed in the Investment Priorities section of this plan.

### Concentrated Use Areas

Concentrated Use Areas (CUAs) are undeveloped sites or areas where recreation use leaves costly impacts, such as litter, vandalism, or soil compaction. A CUA may be as small as a single pullout along a road or dispersed camp-



Laguna Campground, Meadow Loop, in the Descanso Ranger District, offers a serene escape from the neighboring expanding cities.



## Buildings & Grounds

- 4 Administrative Offices
- 23 Fire Stations
  - 1 Active Fire Look-Out
- 39 Barracks/Residences/Trailer Pads
- 18 Offices (including trailers)
- 75 Storage Units (carports, garages, etc.)
- 165 Miscellaneous Units
- 35 Water Systems—ranging from single handpumps at trailheads to complete systems containing wells, storage tanks and distribution lines
- 38 Sewer Systems—ranging from septic tank/leach fields to collection systems feeding into municipal systems.
- 18 Abandoned Laguna Air Force Base structures

## Transportation & Fleet (184 total)

- 127 Vehicle Fleet (Sedans, pickups and utility vehicles)
  - 3 Station Wagons
- 28 Engines
  - 3 Water Tenders
  - 7 Crew Carriers
  - 2 Helitack Crew Carriers
  - 3 All-Terrain Vehicles
  - 3 Wood Chippers
  - 5 Portable Water Pumper Units
- 426 miles of road
- 356 miles of trail

site, or as large as a climbing area for all-terrain, hill climbing vehicles. Any amenities at CUA sites are placed and managed primarily for resource protection rather than user convenience.

Due to the sporadic nature of CUA activity, services are needed on a large scale for a short duration of time. These services include informational contacts, law enforcement patrols, and traffic control. After high use periods, sanitation pumping, trash pick-up and hauling are required to meet resource standards.

CUA areas are in need of greater protection. Concentrated use typically occurs in areas important for water supply and riparian-dependent threatened and endangered species. Educational programs, including bilingual environmental projects, can be utilized to protect the value of CUAs. The Cleveland needs an additional 3.0 FTE and nearly \$90,000 to implement such projects and better maintain its Concentrated Use Areas.

## Roads

Many of the Cleveland's roads are in hazardous condition due to increased urban use, storm damage, crossing needs at creeks, and diminishing funds to maintain them. While

many roads were shut down to minimize risk, demand for their use increases. An additional 3.4 FTE and nearly \$164,000 are needed to manage the roads program. One FTE would devote time to supervising and providing expert help to engineering personnel for the expanding program. The remaining engineers and engineering technicians would spend their time administering road maintenance contracts and design work. Planning efforts (sign plans, accident plans, etc.) would be contracted to non-Forest personnel.

## Transportation and Fleet

Commercial vendors perform approximately 50% of the maintenance and repairs for light vehicles at the forest. For specialized equipment, such as fire engines and water tenders, about 75% of maintenance and repairs are performed in-house, as this type of maintenance is not readily available commercially. Contract work tends to be more costly than in-house work. In years with severe fire season, there is more fleet maintenance work, and more work must be contracted out creating a greater cost to the forest unit. An additional FTE need was identified for Transportation and Fleet in order to meet growing demands for this program's services.



It cost Cleveland National Forest \$1,000 to care for "Graffiti Rock" in FY02. Adventure Pass revenues were utilized to remove this destruction.



## Management and Administration (22% of expenditures)

The Management and Administration functional area at the Cleveland National Forest is comprised of seven areas of responsibility:

- General Management
- District Management
- Planning
- Public Affairs
- General Administration
- Financial Management
- Information Technology

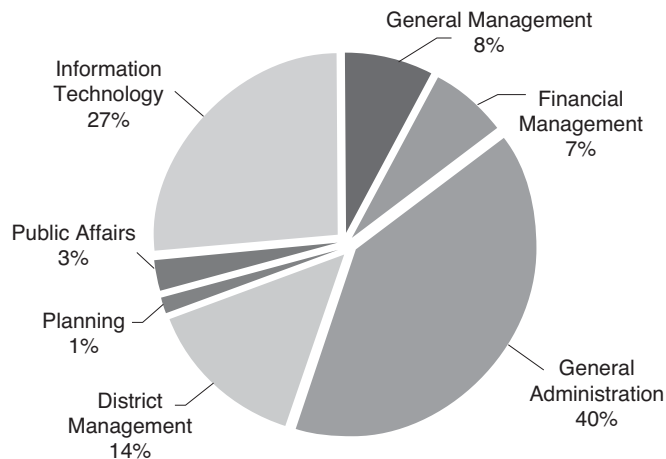
Management and Administration at the Cleveland National Forest includes supervision of 259 permanent employees, 29 firefighter apprentices, 181 temporary/seasonal employees, and individuals from a variety of other employment programs and volunteer initiatives. It also includes administration of three Ranger Districts—Trabuco, Palomar and Descanso—and a Supervisor’s Office. The proximity of the Forest to large and expanding urban populations and the U.S.-Mexico border adds complexity to the range of management issues, public pressures and demands for forest resources, goods and services. It requires working with a variety of internal and external customers, cooperators and organizations to balance diverse and often competing interests.



View from Elsinore Front on the Trabuco Ranger District

Overall, the shortfall in Management and Administration is almost \$336,000 and 7.4 FTEs. In FY02, the Cleveland National Forest spent approximately \$4 million on these M&A programs with a total of approximately 26 FTEs.

**Management and Administration  
FY02 Expenditures by Program**



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds
32.9	\$4,404,130	25.5	\$4,068,232	7.4	\$335,898

### General and District Management

The General Management program identified a need for a Deputy Forest Supervisor to better manage internal and external programs and meet the increasing demands of the Cleveland’s urban setting. For the District Management program, two additional information assistants are needed to receive and respond to public inquiries at District Offices, and sell maps and Adventure Passes. An additional 0.5 FTE of administrative support is also needed at the Descanso Ranger District to manage recreation pass sales and respond to public inquiries.

### Planning

As the landscape around the forest continues to change, land management planning is essential to future success. Such planning includes the annual preparation of national reporting requirements as well as managing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), appeals programs, the

“El bosque nos es prestado; que lo entregemos con intereses.”

**Miguel Martinez**

*Equal Opportunity Officer*

*Translation: The Forest is lent to us; let us return it with interest.*

## Urban National Forests —The Management Complexities

The Cleveland serves diverse communities with changing demographics. Around the boundaries of the Forest there are 18 Native American governments. The Mexican border is within 5 miles of the forest's southern tip. Shifts are occurring as traditional agrarian communities disappear and the upper middle class "escape" from suburbia. And, according to the 2000 census, 33% of persons in San Diego County speak a language other than English at home.

Community-generated demands are on the rise as nearby populations increase. These include requests for private access, utility corridors, water and power development facilities, electronic sites, transportation systems, landfills and expansion of existing authorized uses.

Traditional forest commodities such as grazing and mineral extraction are declining.

Recreation programs are not meeting the needs of urban populations or the objectives of ecosystem management. Recreation use on the forest frequently looks more like "urban parks," and the forest often does not provide the desired level of services.

Ecosystem health, vitality of threatened and endangered species, and ecological areas are difficult to maintain.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), periodic reviews and assessments, and updates to the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. This program was fully funded in FY02.

### Public Affairs

The Public Affairs program entails developing positive external relationships with numerous stakeholders including, but not limited to, elected officials, news media, and the general public. Public Affairs staff also maintains a website and produces informational publications. Because the forest serves diverse communities, it is important to provide targeted messages in different languages such as Spanish, Phillipine, and Vietnamese. This adds complexity and expenses for translation and distribution. The Public Affairs program was managed by less than 1.5 FTE in FY02 and requires an additional 2 FTE to better serve the growing communities surrounding the forest and requesting its services.

### General Administration

This program provides overall leadership for general administrative activities including civil rights, labor relations, contract execution and human resource management. For a fully functioning program and greater cost savings to the Forest, 0.5 FTE for a Manpower Development Specialist or a Human Resource Specialist is needed. An additional full-time Support Services Supervisor is needed to assist in providing advice, counsel, technical support and oversight for all of the Human Resource hosted programs. The General Administration program also identified the need for a Customer Service Liaison to provide the technical and clerical support for administrative functions of the Supervisor's Office. This position would be similar to the current Customer Service Liaison position at each District. Finally, consideration may be given in the future to increasing an additional information assistant position at the

Supervisor's office to provide better assistance to public inquiries.

### Financial Management

During FY2002, Financial Management was only able to meet 10 percent of its standards related to real and personal property duties. Due to this gap, management recognized the importance of ensuring that the Real and Personal Property Accounting position is filled. The forest filled this position in FY03, and expects 80 percent completion of these standards as it addresses its backlogs.

### Information Technology

The Information and Management Technology (IMT) program provides technical support to the forest by using and maintaining the best, most cost-effective technology to meet on-going demands. IMT manages information, provides planning and design expertise, and directs onsite assistance to all users. It is also a point of contact for the Regional Office and Washington Office. No operational shortfall was identified for this program.



Forest Supervisor Anne Fege talks with local Girl Scouts about natural resource management issues.

## Fire and Aviation Management (48% of expenditures)

On January 13, 2002, as the local Santa Ana winds swept San Diego County, the Gavilan Fire initiated one of the most severe fire seasons in San Diego County history. Already one of the driest climates in the U.S., 2002 also recorded the lowest precipitation levels in history. During the summer months, the flames of Troy, Bobcat, Garnet and Peak Fires burned onto or from the Cleveland. And on July 29, a military helicopter cut through power lines triggering the Pines Fire, which consumed 150 structures, scorched more than 900 acres of the forest and 62,000 acres in total, and endangered the neighboring towns of Julian and Ranchita.

The Cleveland National Forest fire organization is the largest and most complex component of the Forest and

the primary management focus. It is comprised of five areas of responsibility:

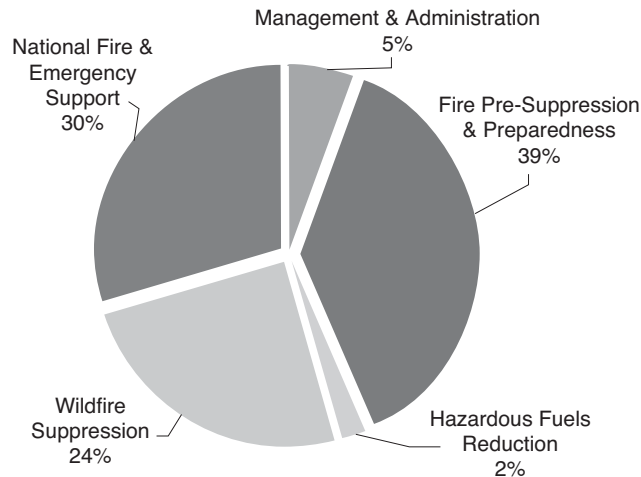
- Management and Administration
- Fire Pre-Suppression and Preparedness
- Hazardous Fuels Reduction
- Wildfire Suppression
- National Fire and Emergency Support

In addition to preventing and suppressing fires on the Cleveland, Forest employees serve on Incident Command teams that are called to assist the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on non-fire disasters, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, terrorist attacks, and other natural or human-caused disasters.



One ember from a campfire, one spark from an exhaust pipe—one careless moment and fire in the chaparral bursts into flames threatening the homes of more than 10 million people living near the national forests of southern California.

**Fire and Aviation Management  
FY02 Expenditures by Program**



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds
237	\$21,336,790	209	\$19,976,523	28.1	\$1,360,267

### Management and Administration

Management and Administration provides for direction and oversight of all fire management activities including fighting forest fires, adherence to approved employee safety practices, community protection and forest health projects, as well as dealing with public education and inquiries. Unlike other fire programs, this program is nearly fully funded with a shortfall of only 3.8 FTE.

### Pre-Suppression and Preparedness

Primary pre-suppression activities include fire prevention, maintenance of fire suppression equipment, fire suppression training and first aid training. Fire prevention activities focus on three primary areas: education, community preparedness and enforcement. This fire program identified the greatest shortfall of nearly 20 FTE and \$938,000. Currently, seasonal firefighters are funded for just over half the year when the fire season in this region is often 8-12 months in length. An additional two months per year of funding for employees would greatly enhance

### Fire Assets

- 28 Fire Engine Crews
- 3 Water Tenders
- 1 Helicopter (Type 2)
- 1 Helitanker (Type 1)
- 1 Airtanker
- 1 Emergency Coordination Center
- 1 Air Attack Base
- 1 Look-Out Tower
- 2 Hot Shot Crews (national)
- 1 Hand Crew (local)
- 1 Fire Cache
- 9 Fire Prevention Technicians
- 2 Border Fire Prevention Crews
- 16 Chief Fire Officers

## Program Commitments to Emergencies

Fire suppression required the assistance of about 50 employees outside the fire program. For example, one non-fire program director spent more than 430 base hours (nearly 11 weeks) working on fire and emergencies. Nearly one-third of the entire fire program budget was spent in support of large fire management and other emergencies away from the home unit.

Because of the unprecedented high costs of fire suppression across the country in FY02, \$665,000 of appropriated funds were withdrawn from other program areas to finance large wildland fires nationally.

The Forest may be required to cover base salaries of Forest employees reporting to all-risk incidents.

Incident Management Team assignments may impact program operations and accomplishments through lost work capacity; increased backlogs; inexperienced substitute staff; increased inefficiencies; missed contract deadlines for facility maintenance and roads; failure to complete planned operations; and unmet standards.

One solution that has been proposed region-wide would ensure minimal loss to program activities by asking each forest to identify a “draw down level”—a requirement to maintain staffing levels, support personnel and equipment.

seasonal fire staffing capability. Additional fire prevention personnel are needed to implement public education programs, community protection projects, hazard inspections and other prevention work. (See *Community Protection and Urban Interface Strategy*)

## Hazardous Fuels Reduction

To safely reintroduce fire into the ecosystem, land managers conduct prescribed burns—fires that are intentionally lit by experts under carefully monitored weather and fuel conditions. Prescribed fires clear dead, dry plant and chaparral material and improve conditions for wildlife by encouraging new plant generation. This provides better wildlife food sources and protects water sources from the disastrous erosion caused by wildfire. Finally, prescribed fire results in better protection of National Forest facilities and communities within and along their boundaries.



This Incident Base Camp shows the complexity of operations needed to fight a fire upon demand. Each tent represents a function from Financial Management to Transport and Fleet. In FY02, more than 7 FTE across programs gave time to support national emergencies.

The funding shortfall in hazardous fuels relates to how projects are funded. High per-acre costs discourage implementation of the most expensive projects—often the most critical acres for either community protection or forest health. Projects are routinely funded at \$205 per acre, but some of the most important acres on the forest may cost over \$1000 per acre due to extensive tree thinning and removal needs.

## Wildfire Suppression

Fire Management personnel respond primarily to wildland fire incidents on the Forest. Initial attack firefighting can involve hundreds of firefighters. Extended attack operations (more than 2 days) involve the leadership and coordination of up to several thousand firefighters and support personnel in a complex interagency environment with substantial urban interface. The 2002 fires on the Cleveland National Forest cost \$1.9 million in personnel costs, the equivalent of 36 FTE.

## National Fire and Emergency Support

During the 2002 fire season, the Forest's firefighters and other employees fought large wildland fires in Colorado, Arizona, Oregon and California, and provided famine relief to Guam and other islands in the vicinity. In FY02, 76.5 FTE from the Cleveland National Forest supported fires on other jurisdictions totaling \$5,221,245 in personnel expenditures.



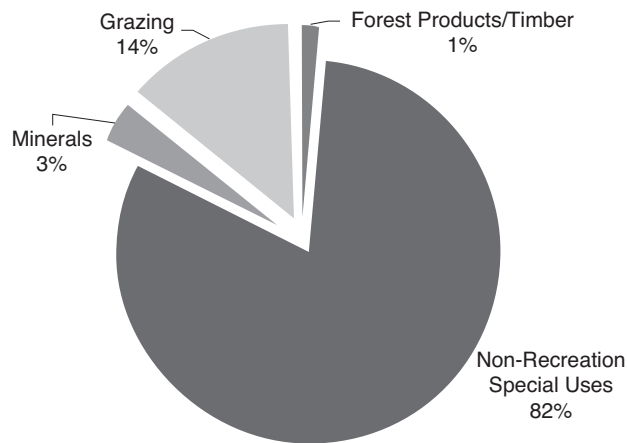
## Commodity and Commercial Uses (2% of expenditures)

The Cleveland National Forest produces a wide variety of commodities and commercial products. These include livestock grazing, mineral development, and forest products such as firewood and botanic materials. The forest also manages a variety of non-recreational special uses on its land, ranging from agricultural uses (such as apiaries, or bee hives) to electrical power lines and roads.

The Commodity and Commercial Uses functional area at the Cleveland National Forest is comprised of four areas of responsibility:

- Non-Recreational Special Uses
- Grazing
- Minerals
- Forest Product and Timber Management

**Commodity & Commercial Uses  
FY02 Expenditures by Program**



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds
10.3	\$598,557	4.1	\$344,146	6.2	\$254,411

In FY02, the Cleveland National Forest spent approximately \$344,000 on its Commodity and Commercial Uses programs, with 4.1 FTEs. The business planning process identified a total funding need of \$598,557 and 10.3 FTE to meet functional area needs. Overall, there is a shortfall of 6.2 FTE and \$254,411. This shortfall is primarily needed to manage and monitor program activities, and to reduce the program-related administrative backlogs.

### Non-Recreational Special Uses

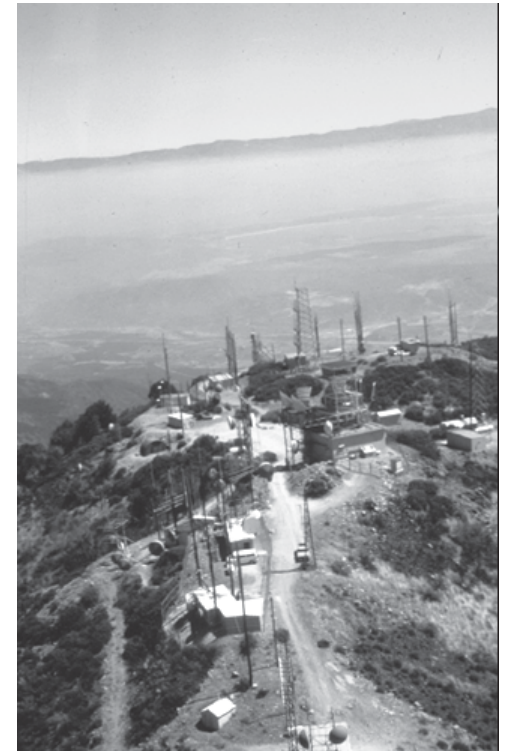
Non-Recreational Special Uses include activities related to the permitting, monitoring, and processing of a wide variety of commercial and private uses. The growth in residential, commercial, and industrial development in southern California put pressure on the forest to expand its scope of special use operations. Currently, the forest is reviewing applications for large-scale infrastructure projects on forest lands that include utility corridors, multi-lane roads, and tunnels. The amount and complexity of existing and proposed special use permits necessitates extensive permit processing and monitoring operations. These program demands account for 82 percent of this functional area's expenditures.

This program needs 4.0 FTE of Forest Technicians and Natural Resource Specialists to assist in the administration of special use permits, and support current permit monitoring activities.

### Grazing

Grazing encompasses activities associated with livestock grazing on national forest lands. These include issuing and administering grazing permits, as well as monitoring permit compliance.

In FY02, the grazing program only met 50 percent of its standards for permit monitoring. An extra 0.5 FTE of a Forestry Technician would fulfill these standards by reviewing grazing allotments for forage availability and capacity.



Special use telecommunications site at Santiago Peak, Trabuco Ranger District.



California Institute of Technology's 18-inch Schmidt camera, located on Mount Palomar.

## Minerals

The Minerals program involves processing and monitoring all operations on national forest lands related to mineral development. These activities include processing mineral applications and reclaiming lands affected by mineral activities, including former mines. There is a need for 0.5 FTE for a Geologist or Groundwater Specialist to initiate and manage all groundwater studies associated with mineral applications, and monitor the impacts of mineral operations on the health of Cleveland land and water resources.

## Forest Product and Timber Management

This program consists of planning, preparing, and administering special forest product sales (including personal fuelwood sales), as well as issuing botanic research permits and tracking the collection of such ethnobotanic products as ferns and basket weaving materials.

The Forest Products and Timber Management program identified a need for a Forestry Technician (1 FTE) to assist in the administration of forest product sales. Additionally, 0.25 FTE of a part-time Resource Accounting Technician would assist in managing the program's databases and financial reporting requirements.

A number of the Commodity and Commercial Uses needs that were identified in this business plan process can be addressed through single or multi-year investments over and above unfunded FTE needs. While these investments are not captured in the previous graph, they total approximately \$1.49 million and are outlined in the Investments section of the business plan. These investments include \$250,000 to close abandoned mines and reclaim mining sites on forest property, \$500,000 over five years for NEPA documentation of grazing allotments, \$250,000 for environmental compliance documentation of forest vegetation products, and \$375,000 over three years for special use administrator and resource specialist contracts for updating a special use permit backlog and supporting permit monitoring activities.

## Non-Recreational Special Uses

The Forest Service manages 191.6 million acres of forests and grasslands that comprise the National Forest System (NFS) nationally. The growing population and mobile society have created a demand for a variety of uses of these federal lands. The Forest Service's special uses program authorizes uses on NFS land that 1) provide a benefit to the general public and protect public and natural resources values, and 2) support private uses, such as road access to private property. Currently, there are more than 72,000 authorizations on national forests and grasslands for over 200 types of use.

In FY02, the Cleveland National Forest administered **221 non-recreational special use permits**. These permits included:

- 14 Agricultural Use:** Cultivation, apiaries, orchards, and livestock areas
- 4 Community Use:** Community Service Buildings
- 2 Research, Training, Cultural Use:** Observatories
- 1 Industrial Use:** Construction camps
- 70 Energy Generation and Transmission:** Powerlines and utility improvements
- 43 Transportation Uses:** Road easements and permits
- 56 Communications:** Microwave sites, private and commercial mobile radio infrastructure, passive reflectors, cable television sites, facility management sites, telephone and telegraph lines, fiber optic cable lines
- 31 Water Infrastructure:** Water pipelines, diversions, wells, springs, windmills, storage tanks, treatment plants

# Financials

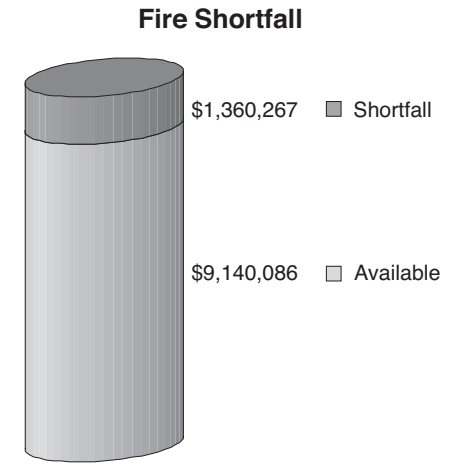
## Summary Financial Statement

The Cleveland National Forest identified a total shortfall of more than \$3.6 million in FY02. More than \$2 million of this amount was spread across four of the six functional areas: Resource Management, Public Use and Enjoyment, Facility Operations and Maintenance, and Management and Administration.

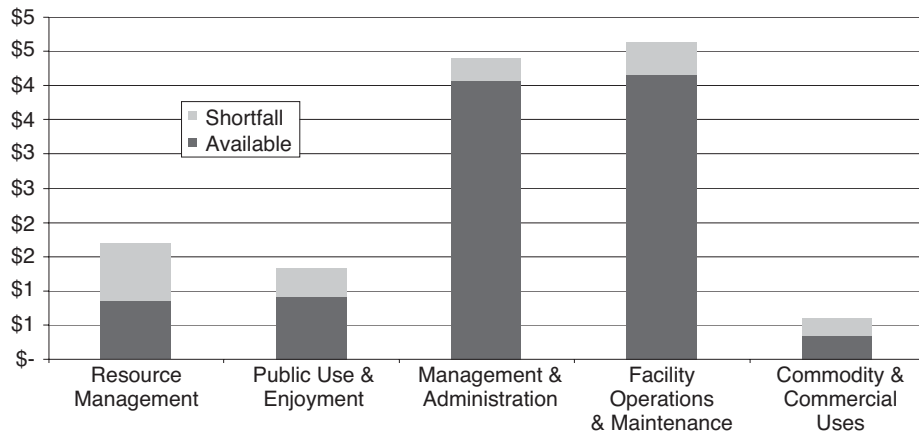
While all programs experienced financial strains, the Resource Management functional area identified the greatest gap on both an absolute and percentage basis. In order to design and implement inventory and monitoring projects, this program needs to nearly double its funding base, an increase of more than \$800,000. This gap is the result of continued drought and its effect on forest health.

Across the other functional areas, increased community activities and deferred maintenance resulted in the greatest operational shortages. Priorities include hiring a Deputy Forest Supervisor and other additional staff across programs to meet increased contractual agreements and partnerships with local constituents.

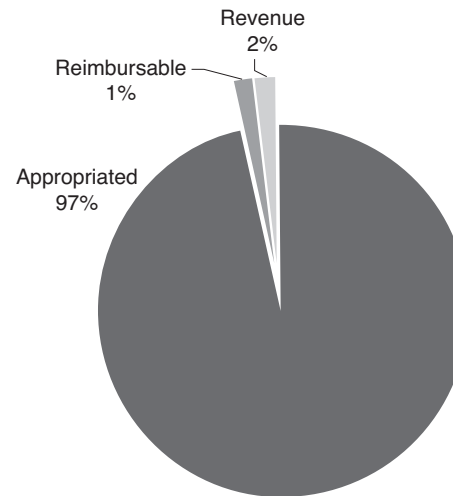
Finally, the shortfalls identified in this section do not reflect the millions of investment dollars required to bring the Forest to standard operations and meet health and safety requirements over the next 10 years. These investment needs are discussed further in the next section.



**FY02 Required Funds by Functional Area (in Millions)**



**FY02 Expenditures by Fund Source**



Fire and Aviation management experienced a total shortfall of more than \$1.3 million dollars. This was primarily in pre-suppression and preparedness, as well as hazardous fuels. These funds are needed in order to better protect the homes within and around the Forest's borders.

**Note:**

This analysis does not include some non-Cleveland personnel costs from other forest units.

Wildfire Suppression (on the Cleveland National Forest) and National Fire and Emergency (assistance to off-forest units) were accounted for separately, as they are funded through a national fire account—not through Cleveland's base budget.

Law Enforcement personnel base salaries (\$268,670.74) are funded through national appropriations. Currently they are not directly funded by the Cleveland National Forest.

Planning does not include Southern California Conservation Strategy funds attributed to a province-wide initiative and not directed solely to Cleveland National Forest operations.

FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND PROGRAMS	REQUIRED		AVAILABLE				SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		
	FTE	Funds	APPROPRIATED	NON-APPROPRIATED		TOTAL		FTE	Funds
			Base	Reimbursable	Revenue	FTE	Funds		
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>									
Wildlife Management	8.1	\$488,123	\$252,549	\$1,013	\$0	3.1	\$253,561	(5.0)	(\$234,562)
Vegetation Management	5.8	\$374,476	\$180,623	\$1,811	\$0	1.8	\$182,434	(4.0)	(\$192,042)
Heritage Resources	2.6	\$158,656	\$55,282	\$0	\$0	0.4	\$55,282	(2.3)	(\$103,374)
Data Management	2.8	\$210,074	\$177,073	\$0	\$0	2.0	\$177,073	(0.8)	(\$33,001)
Watershed, Air and Geologic Resource Management	4.4	\$214,841	\$34,258	\$92	\$0	0.4	\$34,350	(4.0)	(\$180,491)
Land Ownership & Adjustment	2.9	\$145,444	\$94,015	\$0	\$0	1.9	\$94,015	(0.9)	(\$51,430)
Specialty Designated Areas Management	2.0	\$108,490	\$68,354	\$0	\$0	1.0	\$68,354	(1.0)	(\$40,136)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>\$1,700,104</b>	<b>\$862,153</b>	<b>\$2,916</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>\$865,069</b>	<b>(17.9)</b>	<b>(\$835,035)</b>
<b>PUBLIC USE &amp; ENJOYMENT</b>									
Vis.Cntrs., Public Info., Interpretation and Education	1.2	\$65,868	\$4,200	\$0	\$8,267	0.2	\$12,468	(1.0)	(\$53,401)
Law Enforcement and Investigations	7.0	\$708,629	\$119,085	\$26,215	\$270,130	4.0	\$415,429	(3.0)	(\$293,200)
Visitor Safety and Protection	3.7	\$191,834	\$191,834	\$0	\$0	3.7	\$191,834	0.0	\$0
Recreation Revenue Collection	2.0	\$94,734	\$0	\$0	\$41,981	0.9	\$41,981	(1.1)	(\$52,753)
Concessions & Recreation Special Uses	4.3	\$262,286	\$229,285	\$0	\$0	3.6	\$229,285	(0.8)	(\$33,001)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>\$1,323,351</b>	<b>\$544,404</b>	<b>\$26,215</b>	<b>\$320,378</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>\$890,996</b>	<b>(5.8)</b>	<b>(\$432,355)</b>
<b>FACILITY OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>									
Buildings & Grounds	6.8	\$1,175,775	\$978,152	\$38,172	\$49,215	4.7	\$1,065,538	(2.1)	(\$110,237)
Roads	6.7	\$595,591	\$431,863	\$0	\$0	3.3	\$431,863	(3.4)	(\$163,728)
Trails	2.5	\$156,403	\$156,403	\$0	\$0	2.5	\$156,403	0.0	\$0
Transportation & Fleet	4.5	\$1,344,338	\$1,314,338	\$0	\$0	3.5	\$1,314,338	(1.0)	(\$30,000)
Campgrounds & Developed Sites	11.3	\$955,991	\$652,096	\$157,725	\$74,222	9.3	\$884,043	(2.0)	(\$71,948)
Concentrated Use Areas	5.8	\$395,588	\$88,436	\$220,027	\$0	2.8	\$308,462	(3.0)	(\$87,126)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>\$4,623,686</b>	<b>\$3,621,288</b>	<b>\$415,924</b>	<b>\$123,436</b>	<b>26.22</b>	<b>\$4,160,648</b>	<b>(11.4)</b>	<b>(\$463,038)</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION</b>									
General Management	2.5	\$402,819	\$292,149	\$0	\$0	1.5	\$292,149	(1.0)	(\$110,670)
Financial Management	3.8	\$262,056	\$262,056	\$0	\$0	3.8	\$262,056	0.0	\$0
General Administration	3.7	\$1,586,160	\$1,517,686	\$0	\$0	2.2	\$1,517,686	(1.5)	(\$68,474)
District Management	12.6	\$621,588	\$537,680	\$0	\$0	9.6	\$537,680	(3.0)	(\$83,909)
Planning	0.8	\$352,845	\$352,845	\$0	\$0	0.8	\$352,845	0.0	\$0
Public Affairs	3.4	\$177,164	\$104,318	\$0	\$0	1.4	\$104,318	(2.0)	(\$72,846)
Information Technology	6.1	\$1,001,498	\$1,001,498	\$0	\$0	6.2	\$1,001,498	0.1	\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>\$4,404,130</b>	<b>\$4,068,232</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>25.45</b>	<b>\$4,068,232</b>	<b>(7.4)</b>	<b>(\$335,899)</b>
<b>COMMODITY &amp; COMMERCIAL USES</b>									
Forest Products/Timber Management	1.3	\$54,566	\$4,778	\$96	\$0	0.1	\$4,874	(1.3)	(\$49,692)
Non-Recreational Special Uses	7.2	\$432,058	\$280,295	\$0	\$0	3.2	\$280,295	(4.0)	(\$151,762)
Minerals	0.7	\$42,218	\$11,424	\$0	\$0	0.2	\$11,424	(0.5)	(\$30,795)
Grazing	1.1	\$69,715	\$47,553	\$0	\$0	0.6	\$47,553	(0.5)	(\$22,162)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>\$598,557</b>	<b>\$344,050</b>	<b>\$96</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>\$344,146</b>	<b>(6.3)</b>	<b>(\$254,411)</b>
<b>FIRE AND AVIATION MANAGEMENT</b>									
Management and Administration	13.3	\$1,261,953	\$1,050,090	\$0	\$0	9.5	\$1,050,090	(3.8)	(\$211,863)
Fire Presuppression & Preparedness	11.0	\$8,660,929	\$7,723,367	\$0	\$0	6.1	\$7,723,367	(4.9)	(\$937,562)
Hazardous Fuels Reduction	100.3	\$577,471	\$366,629	\$0	\$0	81.0	\$366,629	(19.4)	(\$210,842)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>124.6</b>	<b>\$10,500,353</b>	<b>\$9,140,086</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>96.5</b>	<b>\$9,140,086</b>	<b>(28.1)</b>	<b>(\$1,360,267)</b>
<b>Total w/out Wildfire Suppression</b>	<b>252.3</b>	<b>\$23,150,181</b>	<b>\$18,580,212</b>	<b>\$445,151</b>	<b>\$443,814</b>	<b>175.3</b>	<b>\$19,469,177</b>	<b>(76.9)</b>	<b>(\$3,681,004)</b>
Wildfire Suppression	36.0	\$4,875,378	\$4,875,378	\$0	\$0	36.0	\$4,875,378	0.0	\$0
National Fire and Emergency	76.5	\$5,961,059	\$5,961,059	\$0	\$0	76.5	\$5,961,059	0.0	\$0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>364.8</b>	<b>\$33,986,617</b>	<b>\$29,416,648</b>	<b>\$445,151</b>	<b>\$443,814</b>	<b>287.8</b>	<b>\$30,305,613</b>	<b>(76.9)</b>	<b>(\$3,681,004)</b>



## Volunteer and Employment Programs

Volunteers play a valuable role in the operation of the Cleveland National Forest programs. The Forest's volunteers contribute as individuals and through a number of local, regional, and national programs, including the Pacific Crest Trail Association, the San Diego Mountain Bike Association, the Laguna Mountain Volunteer Association, Warrior Society, Sierra Club and the Orange County Astronomers, to name a few.

Volunteers assist in virtually all aspects of the Forest's operations: they staff information desks, assist with facility maintenance, provide visitor services, and support research efforts, to name a few. As seen below, the majority of volunteer efforts (82 percent) are directed to recreation and forest management activities. These activities include trail maintenance, interpretive programs, and forest protection efforts through mountain bike, foot, and horse patrols.

The Forest's volunteers worked 15,944 hours in FY02, or the equivalent of 7.7 FTE. The business plan process valued this work at \$12.47 per hour (the hourly wage of a GS-4, step 5 government employee), resulting in total benefits of \$198,818.

### Senior Community Service Employment Program

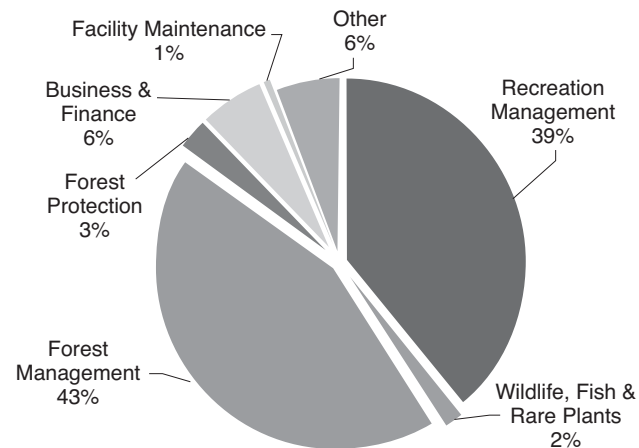
The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is designed to provide part-time employment and job training opportunities for low-income persons who are 55 years or older. Operated and funded through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor, the SCSEP program is based on the principles of personal responsibility, life-long learning, and service to the community. Enrollees receive training, learn new skills, and develop job-searching skills while enrolled in the program.

The goal is to assist enrollees in securing permanent employment in the public and private sector. Program enrollees receive on-the-job training for about 20 hours per week. Positions available include those involved with recreational programs, visitor centers, land management, interpretive services, and clerical support.

The SCSEP program is invaluable to the Forest, and many administrative duties are done by enrollees, including data management and visitor desk services. In FY02, 37 SCSEP enrollees worked 12.6 FTE, valued at \$218,393. These contributions to the Forest's workforce are an excellent example of work ethic and commitment for full-time employees who work side-by-side with them.

Volunteers assist in virtually all aspects of the Forest's operations: they staff information desks, assist with facility maintenance, provide visitor services, and support research efforts, to name a few.

FY02 Volunteer Hours by Category



# Priorities and Strategies

## Operations and Maintenance Priorities



Volunteers planting willows to restore the Pine Creek riparian area.

The Operations and Maintenance Priorities are the top priorities among the Cleveland National Forest's currently unfunded annual operations. These priorities display significant shortfalls within many of the Forest's current programs resulting from underfunding of appropriations and an increased cost of doing business. The costs associated with each priority represent annual Forest funding needs that are in addition to unfunded personnel needs. The priorities are grouped by program area to reflect distinct needs.

### Resource Management

#### Aquatic and Stream Habitat Protection

\$300,000 Annual Cost

The spread of non-native species that displace or harm native species is an ongoing problem at the Cleveland. Invasive species have greatly affected the ability of habitats to support native species, which in turn has affected the survival and reproductive rates of these species. This additional funding would be used for the planning and implementation of projects to remove non-native plants and animals from threatened and endangered species-occupied habitat, and to annually treat noxious weeds affecting aquatic habitat in approximately two miles of designated critical areas.

#### Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat Improvement

\$150,000 Annual Cost

The design, implementation, monitoring, and maintenance of improved terrestrial habitats are core to the forest's mission. However, less than 20 percent of terrestrial habitat improvements have been completed, due to a lack of funding. This priority represents the annual improvement of approximately 500 acres of terrestrial Forest habitat and upland water sources. These projects would

emphasize improving habitat for deer and quail. Projects will be accomplished through the use of prescribed fire and mechanical manipulation of brush.

#### Infrared Aerial Photography

\$100,000 Annual Cost

The Forest's resources are impacted by a multitude of natural and man-made influences: drought, invasive species infestations, point and non-point pollution, etc. However, the Forest-wide effect of these influences is difficult to assess over time due to the sheer size of Forest lands. An annual infrared aerial photography program, enhanced with change detection analysis technology, would be utilized to monitor and track changes in the Forest's watershed and vegetation resources, forest health, and trespass incidents.

#### Species Monitoring Protocols

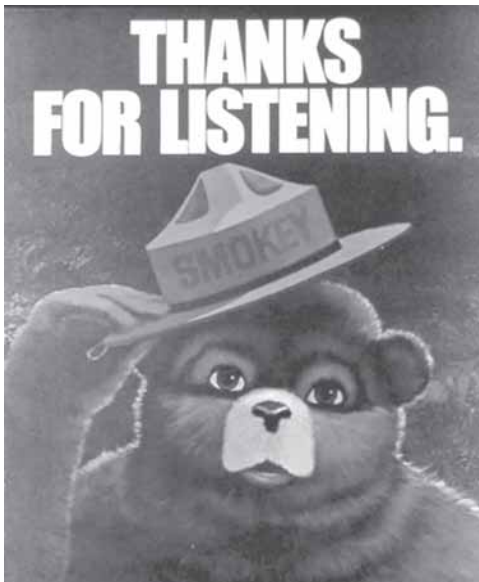
\$50,000 Annual Cost

When monitoring and inventorying the status of specific Forest species, certain processes and procedures must be followed to ensure the accuracy of data over time. A majority of necessary species monitoring protocols have not been designed and implemented due to a lack of funds in Data Management. The \$50,000 increase in allocated funding would go towards the development of these protocols.

#### Smoke Management

\$30,000 Capital Cost/\$18,000 Annual Cost

Due to current forest vegetative conditions and the heightened fire risk resulting from these conditions, there has been an increase in the use of prescribed fire activities within the Cleveland National Forest. In addition, new state and federal regulations have been implemented requiring detailed monitoring of the smoke and particulate



"Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires." As one of the Forest Service's most successful educational campaigns, Smokey's motto is remembered by generations of Honorary Junior Fire Fighters.

emissions resulting from these prescribed fire activities. Additional fire management funding would be used to implement and report smoke and particulate emissions from prescribed burning activities for state and federal regulatory compliance.

### **Management and Administration**

#### **Interactive Outreach Campaign**

\$70,000 Annual Cost

The Cleveland National Forest currently has a broad public relations and marketing outreach program to educate the general public on forest resources and issues. However, this program should be expanded to reach currently untargeted non-traditional groups in southern and central California. A yearly increase of \$70,000 for the public relations program would be used for the creation of an informational outreach campaign to serve inner-city youth and ethnic minorities. The campaign would cover a variety of forest management and environmental interest areas, and its focus would alternate annually to ensure that a variety of subjects were explored. Informational materials would be targeted to schools and community outlets, and would include the development and distribution of bilingual materials and the hosting of special events within the forest and surrounding urban areas.

#### **Website Partnership Funding**

\$5,000 Annual Cost

The Internet is becoming an important tool for the Forest Service and similar agencies to distribute information quickly, easily, and with minimal overhead. However, the

maintenance and upkeep of webpages is necessary to utilize this medium most efficiently. While the Cleveland National Forest does have a webpage, there are no full-time personnel to regularly update information and content, and redesign the page in response to changing Forest issues and priorities. Annual funds of \$5,000 would provide for the forest's webpage upkeep.

#### **Public Use and Enjoyment**

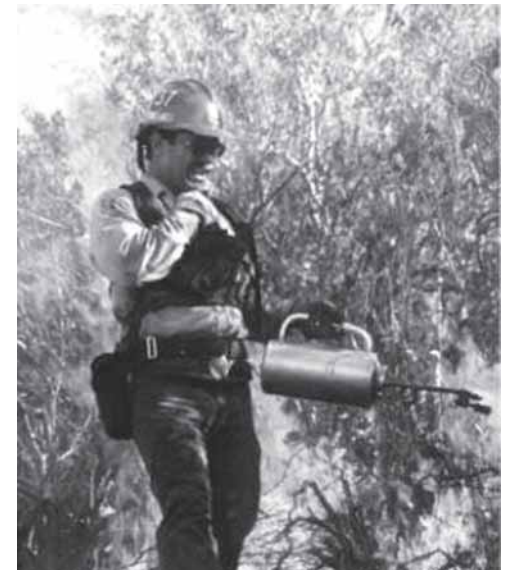
#### **Interpretive Trails Program**

\$10,000 Annual Cost

The Cleveland National Forest is comprised of a number of "key places" – areas and sites of unique ecological and historical integrity. However, the interpretation of these key places for forest visitors is largely unaddressed. An additional funding of \$10,000 annually would be utilized for the development and maintenance of interpretive trails on each of the forest's three districts. These trails would highlight the forest's unique natural, geographical and historic attributes, and greatly enhance the experience of forest guests.



At Little Laguna Lake, on Descanso District, fences and other structures are used to restrict visitor usage of protected meadow areas.



A firefighter uses a drip torch for prescribed burning.



## Investment Priorities



Built around 1935, this Series E Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) administrative building is located at Oak Grove on the Palomar Ranger District.



Laguna Meadow, Descanso Ranger District.

In addition to the operational needs identified in this document, the Cleveland National Forest has many strategic investment opportunities that can address specific, unfunded needs of the forest. These investments can be funded and utilized in a single year or over multiple years. The Cleveland National Forest has identified its priority investments according to three defined criteria: 1) investments that bring the forest to compliance with public health and safety standards, 2) investments that preserve and protect the forest's natural resources, and 3) investments that increase the forest's public communications and cooperative efforts.

The investment needs listed below have arisen for a variety of reasons, including strains on forest resources from increased visitation, regulatory requirements, and aging infrastructure. The Cleveland's highest priority investments, ranging from \$10,000 to \$110 million, total approximately \$170.86 million if fully funded. The first year cost of investment priorities would total \$22.64 million. The investments cover a broad range of activities, including facility and road maintenance, mine reclamation, wildlife and vegetation inventories, and community outreach campaigns.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY: \$130.5 million total Facilities and Grounds Maintenance**

\$1.35 million per year for 10 years  
Rehabilitate or replace existing forest facilities that do not meet current operational standards. This investment includes eliminating a \$13 million deferred maintenance backlog. Maintenance would consist of repairing and replacing electrical and plumbing systems in aging facilities. Additional work to repair and replace roofs, siding, and windows on facilities would be included.

### **Campground Reconstruction and Maintenance**

\$500,000 per year for 5 years  
Over a 5-year period, reconstruct and repair existing campgrounds and campground facilities to meet operational standards. Work would include repairing and restoring campground water systems, road structures, and parking spurs. This investment would also modify sites to allow greater access for people with disabilities.

### **Road Maintenance and Improvement**

\$11 million per year for 10 years  
Over a 10-year period, rehabilitate current road infrastructure to meet applicable safety requirements (including Highway Safety Act standards) and reduce impacts on Forest ecosystems. Upgrade existing infrastructure, and construct new roads to meet increasing volumes of forest traffic. This investment represents eliminating a \$30 million deferred road maintenance backlog.

### **Rehabilitate Forest Trails System**

\$450,000 per year for 5 years  
Rehabilitate and expand the 356-mile forest trail system, as well as restore currently unmaintained trails. Trail reconstruction and rehabilitation would occur on 20 percent of trails each year for five years. Additionally, this investment represents new trail construction to meet partnership obligations for county-wide trail systems.

### **Mine Reclamation**

\$50,000 per year for 5 years  
Close off and secure abandoned mines. This investment would include reclamation of lands damaged by abandoned mineral activities, including former gold mines.



### **Hazardous Materials Abatement and Safety Mitigation**

\$1.1 million for 1 year and \$450,000 per year for 2 years  
Remove friable and non-friable asbestos from abandoned structures and steam pipes on the abandoned Air Force facility at Laguna. This facility contains approximately two miles of above-ground, exposed asbestos-lined steam pipes and 18 structures. Work would include building demolition, and land restoration and remediation activities.

### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: \$39.2 million total**

#### **Forest Vegetation Health Inventory and Treatment**

\$3 million per year for 5 years  
Conduct a complete inventory of forest vegetation health. Develop and implement project plans to treat and re-treat forest stands affected by drought, insects and disease.

#### **Natural Resource Surveys and Analysis**

\$850,000 per year for 10 years  
Conduct extensive inventories and surveys on the forest's natural resources. Complete groundwater aquifer evaluations, a riparian resources inventory, macro-invertebrate surveys to monitor riparian health, and upland terrestrial ecosystem assessments.

#### **Land Acquisition Funds**

\$3.1 million per year for 5 years  
Acquire critical habitat and rights-of-way land near the Cleveland National Forest. Emphasis will be put towards lands that augment the ecological values of the forest (including wildlife habitat connectivity) and increase land management efficiency.

### **Wilderness Plan Preparation**

\$50,000 per contract (\$200,000)  
Design and prepare a Wilderness Area Management Plan for each of the forest's four designated Wilderness Areas.

### **COMMUNICATIONS: \$1.16 million total** **Forest Information Distribution**

\$525,000 for 1 year  
Expand and update communication avenues for distributing information on Forest activities. Specific results would include the design, fabrication and installation of 21 information kiosks throughout the Forest.

### **Sister Forest Outreach**

\$30,000 per year for 5 years  
Initiate outreach program with parallel Mexico natural resource agencies targeted at forest health and fuels management. The investment funding would be used for program staffing and technical material development.

### **Information Technology Upgrades**

\$485,000 for 1 year  
Introduce high-speed data connections at all remote forest locations. Initiate voice-over technology (voice over computer networks) between the Supervisor's Office and District Offices. Upgrade aged forest telephone switches. Replace forest radio systems.



Local students assist in inventorying Forest vegetation.



View from East Grade Road over Lake Henshaw, in the Palomar Ranger District.

## Strategies for Reducing Costs



The Cleveland National Forest holds a wealth of natural resources that are used by the public and by permittees.

Strategies are opportunities to reshape the way that the Cleveland's staff approaches forest activities. One strategy to increase available funds and buffer the forest's funding shortfall is to identify operating efficiencies within current forest operations. By reducing the costs of current operational services, the Cleveland National Forest should be able to redirect savings to currently unfunded programs and investments. The costs associated with these strategies are not estimated, and will depend upon future staffing, resources, the local business climate, and national public priorities.

### **Sustainable Development Practices**

Develop a baseline sustainability evaluation for the major resource flows and impacts of the forest as an organizational system.

Globally, the awareness of environmental impacts of business processes and the application of environmental management technologies have been increasing in every industry. The forest will adopt these technologies, and set an example locally and nationally. Operating costs can be lowered by reducing natural resource inputs and wastes, by adopting business practices that support the reuse, reduction and recycling of materials.

### **Quantification of Natural Values**

Undertake empirical/scientific-based studies to determine the intrinsic values people place on natural forest qualities, and their willingness to pay to retain them.

Natural areas revitalize the body and soul through connection with nature. As the last vestiges of open space are removed or greatly reduced in the Orange, Riverside and San Diego Counties surrounding the Cleveland National Forest, the value of the natural attributes within the forest boundary is increasing. By undertaking scientifically-based studies to determine the value of natural forest qualities (i.e. open space, dark skies, undeveloped wilderness) and

the willingness of local populations to pay to retain them, the forest will be able to make informed decisions regarding land management planning and development, and target opportunities to increase fees or appropriations.

### **Mexico Partnering Opportunities**

Enhance bi-national relations with Mexico, establish new programs, and expand existing programs that share and reduce costs.

The border area between the United States and Mexico comprises a unique geographic, cultural, natural resource, economic and political interface of two nations. Working collaboratively with parallel Mexican agencies, the Cleveland National Forest can share fire-fighting resources across the border, as well as increase training and information exchange in fire and resource management.



Smokey enjoys the Celebrate the Forest Day with his Mexican counterpart, Mapy.

### **Reduction of Administrative Processes**

Review the full scope of forest data reporting requirements, and determine ways to integrate, minimize or streamline responses to data requests.

Currently, the forest has several dozen automated reporting systems for a variety of programs. Collectively, the management and administration of these systems requires large time, training, and resource commitments. A program will be developed to identify the full breadth of reporting requirements, and determine ways to minimize, streamline or integrate reporting systems.

### **Reduction of Administrative Facilities**

Determine ways to 1) reduce forest administrative facilities through condensing and sharing space; and, 2) expand current forest operations with minimal facility requirements.

Current administrative facilities on the Cleveland National Forest include a mix of rented and owned buildings. Due to fluctuating staffing levels, and growing infrastructure degradation, the management and upkeep of existing facilities is not cost effective. The forest will identify its most efficient space needs and associated costs. It will implement co-location opportunities between forest programs and other agencies to save or share costs. Additionally, the forest will explore multiple tactics to

expand current operations that do not require additional space needs, including informational kiosks and traveling exhibits.

### **Information Management Partnering**

Identify natural resource data collection and management programs that can be co-managed and implemented with national, state and local partners.

Conservation biologists and land managers have long recognized the need to work together to build plant and animal collections, survey and map population distributions, establish baselines for future comparisons, and understand local ecosystems so that program management can be based upon sound scientific information. The forest will develop programs with other natural resource entities to share the program and labor costs associated with resource inventory and monitoring activities.



The Forest Service and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) dedicate the Interagency Emergency Communications Center.



A forest visitor enjoys the open space and view atop Garnet Peak in the Descanso Ranger District.



## Strategies for Increasing Non-Appropriated Funding



Forest employee, Fred Coe, shares his knowledge of the universe at an Orange County Astronomers' sponsored "Explore the Stars" party at Palomar Mountain, in the Palomar Ranger District.

In addition to current funding sources, the Cleveland National Forest should continue to explore ways to increase funding from non-appropriated sources. The forest's management team has identified a number of strategies that may increase the amount and range of potential funding sources.

### **Volunteer and Friends Association Partnerships**

Create partnerships and strengthen current relationships with local volunteer and friends associations. Partnerships with outside non-governmental organizations and private companies can be utilized to develop a continual funding base for forest programs and operations. The forest will identify areas and programs where local, regional or national organizations may contribute funds, equipment or personnel, and actively seek out partnership opportunities. Specific examples include the designation of volunteer coordinators on each of the forest's three Districts, and partnerships with local hiking, mountain biking, and off-highway vehicle organizations to maintain and patrol trails.

### **Internal Grants and Partnering Opportunities**

Identify and utilize interagency grant and agreement opportunities. In the past, the Cleveland National Forest dedicated personnel to the identification and coordination of grant and partnership opportunities. On a number of occasions, the additional funds were not utilized due to time, administrative and personnel constraints. The forest will reestablish a grants or interagency affairs program to identify and leverage funding from existing internal grant and agreement opportunities. The forest will apply for project-specific grants and participate in interagency partnership agreements. Additionally, the forest will work to adjust program and project management and flexibility so that additional funding can be utilized.

### **Recreational Pass Sales**

Work to increase the sales and collection efficiency of the Adventure Pass Program.

Over the last several years, the forest's Adventure Pass program has been a great source of income for new projects, restoration projects, and visitor contact programs on the forest. However, opportunities for increasing the sale of Adventure Passes are being neglected due to a lack of personnel and sales locations.

The primary focus of this strategy would be to make it easier and more convenient for the public to buy passes. The forest will identify high visitor use areas and locations where Adventure Pass sales sites could be introduced, and review sales plans to identify low-efficiency operation activities. Specific implementation tactics may include the utilization of "iron rangers" (stationary collection boxes), automated vendor machines, credit card available sites, and the establishment of temporary sales sites during high visitor volume periods.



The 25-agency Border Agency Fire Council celebrates its National Golden Smokey Award for saving lives and preventing fires.



## Forest Outreach Campaign

Create and implement a comprehensive forest marketing campaign to educate the public and other stakeholders about forest resources, activities, and issues. The Cleveland National Forest contributes to the physical, spiritual, and mental health of its surrounding urban population. By implementing a comprehensive marketing and public relations campaign that encourages these contributions, the Cleveland may increase recreational visitation and foster stewardship education. The forest would develop marketing programs directed towards diverse populations, and strengthen relationships with local media and government contacts to increase awareness of the forest and its resources. Overall financial benefits would include increased fee collection, lower resource protection and management costs, and increased donation and partnership opportunities.

## Land Adjustment Plan

Create a long-term land adjustment plan that identifies land acquisition and exchange priorities and strategies. The landownership pattern of the Cleveland National Forest is an intermix of federal, tribal, state, county and private lands. This adds significant complexity to the management and conservation of natural resources and ecosystems. The successful application of a Land Adjustment Plan would reduce the administrative and legal costs associated with current real estate practices. Tactics targeted in the completed land adjustment plan may include: the identification and implementation of land purchase, exchange, and donation opportunities; the acquisition of easements and rights-of ways for roads and trails; and the acquisition of interests in specially-managed lands, including conservation and scenic easements.



Forest Service employee leads an interpretation program at a national Girl Scout opportunity called Earth Matters.



Big-cone Douglas fir within a cottonwood drainage, in Palomar Ranger District.

## Strategy: Community Protection and Urban Interface



Community education can help minimize the risk of fire.



Defensible space with vegetation buffers around structures protected these homes from ruin.

Catastrophic wildfires threaten the sustainability of communities and ecosystems within southern California. The Cleveland National Forest is responsible for protecting more than 525,000 acres of land as well as thousands of structures within and around its perimeter—over 10 million people live within a one hour drive, 24 endangered species dwell within its borders. Current management under the Land and Resource Management Plan developed in the mid-1980s does not emphasize community protection and defensible space.

The goals of this strategy are to enhance community and ecosystem sustainability and to restore fire-adapted ecosystems through identification of hazardous fuels treatment projects. The strategy is long-term and emphasizes treating areas with multiple risks—homes, watersheds, threatened or endangered species habitat. This strategy responds to the National Fire Plan of 1996 (amended in 2001) and includes the following objectives:

**Create defensible space with vegetation buffers around structures:** this activity will better protect public and permitted facilities on the Cleveland Forest.

**Maximize community defense efforts:** the forest will work with groups of landowners to form FireSafe Councils and enter into agreements related to forest vegetation management projects.

**Collaborate with other agencies and organizations:** the forest will coordinate with adjoining fire protection jurisdictions, and partner with other agencies to learn from their initiatives and share strategies.

**Increase efforts in public education:** the forest will create and implement educational programs that empower communities to proactively guard their property and lives against wildfire risks.

**Increase hazardous fuels reduction:** land managers will safely reintroduce fire into the ecosystem by conducting prescribed fires. The forest estimates that 7,000 acres a year, at \$230 an acre, is required to meet this objective.

**Determine new cost-benefit models for hazardous fuels reduction:** to determine funding levels for hazardous fuels reduction, current models consider only the value of forest commodities such as timber and non-recreational special use permits. These models do not assess natural and human resource values, such as the value of threatened and endangered species habitat and potential losses to urban communities. The forest will determine new cost/benefit models for hazardous fuels reduction that consider these factors.



Fire outbreak threatens local communities of more than one million residents within a one hour drive of the forest. This photo by John Newman.

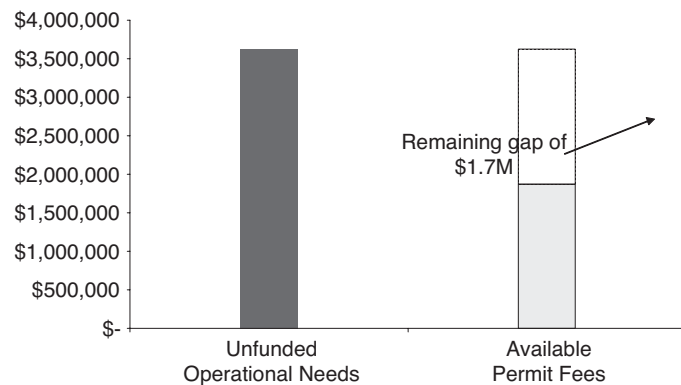
## Strategy: Fee Retention

Situated within a one-hour drive of over 10 million people, the Cleveland National Forest is extremely valuable property. The forest contains many assets not found elsewhere in southern California – mountain peaks for communications sites, winter snow for recreation, and allocated grazing areas, to name a few. As described earlier in this plan, the Cleveland issues a variety of permits that allow individuals and other entities to use forest land for a variety of uses. In return, permit holders comply with specific permit conditions and, typically, pay use fees.

In FY02, the Cleveland generated \$1,870,284 in permit fees, as shown below. However, these fees do not directly benefit the Cleveland. Agency policy and federal laws require that the collected funds be sent directly to the U.S. Treasury. Ultimately, the forest retains only a small fraction of fees it collects.

There are several benefits to retaining these fees at the local level. The reality is that a significant operational unfunded need exists at the Cleveland. As shown in previous sections, the forest requires an additional \$3.63 million in

### Comparison of Unfunded Need to Permit Fees in FY02



funding to adequately support its core programs. Any reductions in appropriations will only increase this gap.

Retention of permit fees, coupled with a stable or increasing appropriated base budget, would allow the Cleveland to address \$1.87 million of its unfunded operational needs

### Proposed Actions

In order for the Cleveland National Forest to benefit from permit fee retention, a number of changes would first have to be made in the legislation that governs the National Forest System. These include the following:

- Gain approval from Congress for a 5-year lands and special use fee retention project within southern California (Angeles, Los Padres, San Bernardino, and Cleveland National Forests).
- Develop a plan for implementing a fee retention pilot program.
- Utilize processes and infrastructure developed for the Recreational Fee Demonstration Project to support the pilot program.

The Cleveland National Forest will work with regional and national management of the Forest Service, in cooperation with the other three National Forests in southern California, to address this potential opportunity. This fee retention strategy does not address the need also to assess the fair market values of special use permits on the forest, since the fees currently charged for many uses of this public land are substantially below the revenues charges for similar uses on private land.

### Permit Fees Generated in FY02

Timber and Forest	\$8,251
Land Use	\$1,473,479
Rec. Special Uses	\$349,510
Power	\$31,518
Grazing	\$7,086
Minerals	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,869,844</b>



## Highlight: Places in the Cleveland National Forest



Laguna Mountain, Descanso Ranger District.



Tenaja Canyon, Trabuco Ranger District.

The Cleveland National Forest has many geographic areas that have distinctive ecological and social characteristics. These have been named Places, and are the planning units for the current Forest Plan Revision. Places have distinct values and issues, and public involvement and support are needed to resolve conflicts about them and to retain their values. Places are easily identified on the ground and on a map. People may have strong emotional ties to specific places, as well as strongly felt values.

Eleven such Places have been identified for the forest:

### **Palomar Ranger District**

**Aguanga:** Rural environment surrounded by rapidly developing urban interface

**Black Mountain:** Open space parkway and wildlife habitat link

**Palomar:** Recreation destination with unique opportunities for stargazing and scenic drives

**Upper San Diego River:** Scenic river canyons and extended vistas next to expanding urban development

### **Trabuco Ranger District**

**Elsinore:** Open space setting for neighboring communities and commuters

**San Mateo:** Remote undeveloped backcountry and day-use retreat

**Silverado:** Scenic canyonlands backdrop to Orange and Los Angeles Counties

### **Descanso Ranger District**

**Interstate 8 Corridor:** Transition between the southwestern deserts and urbanized southern California seacoast

**Laguna:** Mile-high picturesque forest crest and year-round recreation destination

**Morena:** Chaparral- and oak-covered desert gateway and highway corridor with dispersed recreation and off-highway vehicle opportunities

**Pine Creek:** Undeveloped, remote canyon landscape and wilderness



## Partnerships

The work of the Cleveland National Forest is done with the support of countless organizations and individuals. Partners help the Cleveland National Forest:

- Work across boundaries and agencies to get work done
- Accomplish work through volunteers
- Expand resources for fire and emergency protection
- Educate the public about conservation
- Enhance recreational opportunities
- Acquire land and restore habitats
- Gather information about forest resources
- Meet regulatory requirements
- Provide training and work experience
- And much more.

A partial listing of current partners is offered here, with apologies for those who are not listed and invitations to other groups to join the Cleveland National Forest in the future as partners.

Air Quality Management Districts

BackCountry Horsemen

Botanical Gardens

Border Agency Fire Council

Boy Scouts

California Conservation Corps

California Department of Fish and Game

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

California Department of Parks and Recreation

California Department of Transportation

California Native Plant Society

California Regional Water Quality Board

California State Office of Historic Preservation

California Institute of Technology

City of San Diego Water Department

Cleveland National Forest Foundation

Community Colleges

CONAFOR—Comission Nacional Forestal

Conservation Biology Institute

County Sheriffs' Departments

Elected Officials

Endangered Habitats League

FireSafe Councils

Girl Scouts of San Diego-Imperial

Girl Scouts of Spanish Trails

Hispanic Environmental Coalition

Laguna Mountain Volunteer Association

Local Fire Departments

Local Police Departments

Mountain Bicycle Groups

National Wildlife Federation

Newspapers

Off-highway Vehicle Groups

Orange County Astronomers

Pacific Crest Trail Association

Quail Unlimited

Resource Conservation Districts

Riverside County Department of Planning

Rural Fire Departments

San Diegito River Park

San Diegito River Valley Park

San Diego County Airports

San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use

San Diego County Department of Roads

San Diego County Hang Gliding Association

San Diego Gas and Electric Company

San Diego Natural History Museum

San Diego Schools

San Diego State University

San Diego Zoological Society

Save Our Forests and Ranchlands

Sierra Club Chapters

Television and Radio Stations

The Nature Conservancy

Tribal Governments

Trout Unlimited

Trust for Public Lands

University of San Diego

US Border Patrol

US Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base

US Department of Labor Senior Community

Service Employment Program

US Environmental Protection Agency

US Federal Highway Administration

US Miramar Marine Air Station

US National Marine Fisheries Service

US National Weather Service

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station

USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs

USDI Bureau of Land Management

USDI Cabrillo National Monument

USDI Fish and Wildlife Service

USDI Geological Survey

University of California at San Diego

Water Authorities

## Focus on the Cleveland



Big Laguna Lake, Descanso Ranger District



Cottonwood Creek, Descanso Ranger District



View from Ortega Highway, Trabuco Ranger District

Visit our web site at:

**[www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland)**

- Road and trails conditions
- Forest map information
- Campground information

- Back country information
- Photo gallery
- Forest history
- Wildfire updates
- Press releases
- ...and more

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Sharon Soper



Not only does President Grover Cleveland have a National Forest named after him, but his portrait adorns the front of the \$1000 bill.