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Business Plan for the Plumas National Forest



A Window of Opportunity

Welcome to the Plumas National Forest

The Plumas National Forest is the link between the Sierra Nevada and the Cascade Range; an area rich in biological and geographic diversity. Via the Feather River, forest streams contribute much of California's water. Providing opportunities for family livelihoods and spiritual renewal, the Forest is a legacy for future generations.



Canoe on Gold Lake.

Photo by Carl Raymond Photography

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Introduction

The Business Plan Initiative (BPI) is an extension of a process initiated by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and the National Park Service (NPS) in 1998. Since the National Parks Business Plan Initiative began, more than 50 national parks and 9 national forests have participated in the business planning process.

Business planning within the USDA Forest Service is used to improve the abilities of national forests to clearly communicate their financial status to principal stakeholders. This business plan describes the functional responsibilities, operational standards, and financial position of the Plumas National Forest. The business plan responds to several critical questions, including:

- What is the business of the Plumas National Forest?
- What critical functions do not get accomplished due to a lack of funding?
- How much money does the Plumas National Forest need to operate at appropriate standards?

The business planning process is undertaken to accomplish three main tasks. First, it provides a synopsis of the Forest's funding history. Second, it presents a clear, detailed picture of the state of current Forest operations and funding. Finally, it outlines the Forest's priorities for funding and operational strategies.

A common methodology is used to develop national forest business plans. Forest activities are organized into six functional areas, which describe all business elements for which the forest is responsible. The functional areas are then broken into 31 sub-programs. This approach moves beyond the traditional Forest Service framework of reporting expenditures by fund sources. Instead, it reports expenditures in terms of activities. As a result, the forest can communicate its financial and operational situation more clearly. In addition, using the same business planning methodology for each national forest provides a needed measure of comparability, both regionally and nationally.

This business plan provides a powerful communication and tactical management tool. Forest management staff can use the financial and operational baseline information presented here to inform future strategic decision-making. In addition, the plan serves as a vehicle to clearly articulate the Forest's needs and investment opportunities to external audiences.

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Forest Supervisor's Foreword



Forest Supervisor James M. Peña

The Plumas National Forest is a source of people's livelihood, spiritual renewal, and a legacy for future generations.

The Plumas National Forest represents unlimited opportunity. We are the link between the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Cascade Range, rich in biologic and geographic diversity. Via the Feather River, our streams provide much of California's water. We are partners with private industry in recreation and power generation. We are a critical piece of the economic sector for Plumas and other neighboring counties. We are a source of people's livelihood, spiritual renewal, and a legacy for future generations. We are a highly skilled natural resource organization. As employees, we are committed to professional resource stewardship of the public's land entrusted to our care for today, as well as for future generations.

Envision a management program that fully integrates the unique social, biological and physical characteristics that combine to form the Plumas National Forest. This business plan provides the strategy for employees and citizens interested in the opportunities of the Plumas to reach this vision. I look to this document to be used as any \$30 million per year enterprise would use a business plan – to guide our strategic decisions and help the leadership on the Plumas National Forest make the best use of its workforce, capital, and natural resources. We will share our vision with private citizens, local, State, and tribal governments and other conservation organizations interested in investing in our future. This vision is reflective of the laws, regulations, and policies guiding management of the National Forest, blended with the specific opportunities that face us locally. This plan sets out the vision of where the Plumas could go and how we might work together to make this vision a reality.

By fiscal year 2009, external funding and partnerships will comprise 25 percent of our operating budget. We will acquire partnership expertise and build the necessary relationships through the strategies defined in this plan. This goal is mindful of larger Federal budget trends and increasing demands placed on the Plumas National Forest by a growing population. This plan will aid agency employees and potential partners by clearly identifying opportunities to increase our capacity to provide services to meet the needs of the future. I envision our role to be strategic and more facilitative in nature, making full use of the resources of our partners. The focus this brings will allow us to become more efficient and effective in delivering the mix of services, use opportunities, and environmental restoration uniquely suited to the ecosystem of the Plumas.

I sincerely hope that you can join us in making this strategic vision a reality. The Plumas National Forest is a beautiful and productive place. Together, we will work to keep it that way for generations to come.

Executive Summary

In the spring of 2003, Plumas National Forest managers, working with external consultants, embarked on developing a business plan, which focused on needs to:

- manage the impact of dramatic shifts in the region's economy;
- address the growing threat of fire to urban areas in and around national forest lands;
- responsibly steward precious ecological resources, some of which extend beyond national forest boundaries, in the face of shrinking funds; and
- balance the ways in which the Forest serves its many, often competing stakeholders.

The Plumas operates in a context of increasing pressures from all directions, while meeting rigid mandates for regional and national performance standards, complying with environmental standards, and responding to growing demands on forest resources from a variety of public uses. The business planning process yields a detailed operational analysis of activities across the Forest. The business plan also identifies, for the first-time, quantified needs that currently have no available funding. The business plan proposes methods to reduce operational costs and identifies strategies to diversify and increase funding sources to ensure the financial health, stability, and longevity of the Plumas National Forest today and for future generations.

Underpinning the need for business plan development is authorization of a significant funded earmark through the Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act (HFQLG) Pilot Project. Created in 1998, HFQLG provides management direction and funding for hazardous fuels reduction and vegetation management over a 10-year period. However, once the earmark authorization expires in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, the Plumas will potentially experience a major vacuum in resources, leaving vital fuels and vegetation management programs vulnerable.



Greater Sandhill Crane

Carl Raymond Photography

The Plumas National Forest budget exceeded \$37 million in FY 2003 (the most recent year for which complete financial data are available). This business plan identifies a Forest-wide funding gap of \$7.8 million, which, in part, is based on a need to recruit and hire 99 new Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) to maintain operational standards for all Forest activities. Plumas leadership has significantly increased its personnel resources in FY 2004 to meet HFQLG program requirements. Contributions from the HFQLG Pilot Project earmark will account for 85 percent of the staffing needs (identified in FY 2003) for HFQLG Pilot Project-funded programs. Program areas not related to the HFQLG Pilot Project or fire management activities experienced an effective budget cut of 17 percent (when adjusted for

Vital fuels & vegetation management programs, along with other important community projects, are especially vulnerable to declining regional & national budgets.

inflation) from FY 2002 to FY 2003. Since the first significant year of HFQLG Pilot Project operations in FY 1999, these programs have experienced a 57 percent decrease in funding. Investment opportunities, amounting to \$14.8 million in first year funding and \$21.8 million in total (non-personnel) funding, have also been identified through the business planning process. These investments are identified and discussed in the “Investment Opportunities” section to lay the groundwork for enhancing the existing partnership base on the Plumas National Forest.

In an effort to mitigate the dramatic vulnerability associated with earmark funding, the Plumas goal is to attain 25 percent partnership funding from external sources, such as “friends of” groups and public institutions (local, county, State, and Federal agencies) that share operational burdens for various Forest activities. This innovative, entrepreneurial solution requires an impressive level of community and interagency collaboration, as well as unprecedented efforts to enhance the agency’s transparency, credibility, and accountability. To this end, the business plan introduces a formal assessment of the Forest’s capacity to initiate and maintain partnerships at the proposed level. In addition, it introduces new management methods and proposed organizational changes to accommodate the administrative demands of this fundamental shift in strategic alignment and operational focus. Partnership pilot projects in vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and watershed management are currently underway on the Plumas to begin testing these concepts. These pilot projects will serve as models for best practices that can be applied to other program areas and activities that have significant partnership potential. Details regarding partnership pilot projects can be found in the “Proposed Strategies” section.



Permits allow railroads right-of-way across the forest

Carl Raymond Photography

Forest Overview

The Plumas National Forest occupies nearly 1.2 million acres of scenic mountain lands in the Sierra Nevada Range. The Forest Service manages these public lands to provide recreational opportunities; sustainable supplies of wood, water, hydropower, and forage; habitat for fish and wildlife; and diverse plant communities. The Forest Service has been responsible for managing the Plumas National Forest since its establishment by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1905. The lands administered by the Plumas National Forest are located in five northeastern California counties, including Butte, Lassen, Plumas, Sierra, and Yuba. Approximately 75 percent of the Forest lies within Plumas County.

Situated in the northern Sierra Nevada Range, south of the Cascade Range, the Plumas has diverse land features with a pleasant climate. Outdoor enthusiasts are attracted year-round to its many streams and lakes, beautiful deep canyons, rich mountain valleys, meadows, and rocky peaks. Beginning in the foothill country near Lake Oroville in the southwest, the Forest extends north through heavily timbered slopes and into the rugged high country near U.S. Highway 395 in the northeast. State Highway 70, which runs between Oroville and U.S. Highway 395, provides year round access, while State Highway 89 provides convenient connections to Lassen County to the north and Lake Tahoe to the south. Picturesque mountain communities dot the landscape and provide visitors and residents with necessary services.

Humans have used the land presently known as the Plumas National Forest for at least 8,000 years. It was the homeland of the Mountain and Konkow Maidu Indians. Washoe and Paiute also lived along the Plumas' current eastern boundaries. Spanish exploration in the early 1800s was limited to the Sacramento Valley to the south. The Hudson Bay Fur Company, however, had entered the Plumas region by the early 1830s.

Although local Indian tribes had known about the Sierra's lowest pass for centuries, James Beckwourth, an African-American settler, formally discovered the Feather River Canyon pass in 1851. Immigrants and miners soon began moving through the pass and into the region. Camps and towns sprang-up overnight as miners searched for the elusive promise of gold. A favorite winter activity of miners was competitive skiing on 12- to 14-foot "longboards," the name first given to skis. Originally developed near the gold towns of Johnsville, La Porte, and Onion Valley, longboarding competitions have been documented as the first competitive skiing events in the United States. Longboarding competitions continue today.

The Middle Fork of the Feather River was one of the first nationally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. The river runs southwest from its headwaters in the central part of the Plumas National Forest (near Beckwourth Ranger District) toward Lake Oroville. The river has three zones: recreation, scenic, and wild. Many parts of the river in this designated canyon are rugged and difficult to access. In the wild zone, precipitous cliffs, waterfalls, and huge boulders discourage rafters and hikers. While the scenic zones are less rugged, travel in these areas still requires preparation and caution. The Middle Fork includes the Bald Rock Canyon Wild River Zone, Milsap Bar Scenic River Zone, Upper Canyon Wild River Zone, and English Bar Scenic River Zone (ending at Devil's Gulch). The Recreational River Zone includes the area from the Spring Garden railroad tunnel (4,000-foot elevation) upstream for 50.4 miles past the communities of Sloat, Mohawk, Blairsden, Graeagle, Clio, and Portola to Beckwourth.



The Plumas National Forest creates a desirable backdrop for numerous championship golf courses and adds value to other private land

The Feather River National Scenic Byway is a national treasure. This 130-mile route (three and one-half hours drive) features incomparable natural beauty and diversity in terrain, landscape, and wildlife habitats. Starting at the west end near Lake Oroville, Highway 70 takes travelers up the Feather River Canyon, a sinuous gorge carved by the river through granite, blanketed with conifer trees and high mountain meadows. The highway, railroad, powerhouses, and tunnels along the river canyon are technologically complex feats of engineering. At the east end of the byway, the route winds through the Sierra Valley (the western edge of the Great Basin). Known as an all-weather route because of its relatively low elevation, the Feather River Scenic Byway can be enjoyed throughout the year. Each season presents a unique view of the route. In the spring, there are no less than 100 waterfalls, brilliant displays of wildflowers, and kayakers enjoying the river whitewater. In the summer, swimmers, fishing enthusiasts, and expeditionists panning for gold enjoy the river. In autumn, the fall colors steep the mountain slopes with spectacular color. In the winter, the river rush and snow-capped mountains contrast sharply with the granite and slate at river level.

Located in the northwestern portion of Plumas National Forest, the 20,000-acre Bucks Lake Wilderness has a broad diversity of plant life, trees, and landscape features. A few small lakes and ponds dot the wilderness, which offers limited but difficult access. A permit is not necessary to visit the wilderness area, but fire permits are required. Elevations in the Bucks Lake Wilderness range from 2,000 feet in the Feather River Canyon to 7,017 feet at Spanish Peak. The terrain includes gentle slopes,



Headwaters of the California State Water Project begin on the Plumas National Forest

steep canyons, and sheer cliffs. There are bare rock slopes and cliffs along with a mix of shrubs, conifers, and oaks; pure stands of red fir; shrub fields; and small mountain meadows. The Pacific Crest Trail traverses the wilderness, and, on clear days, Mt. Lassen (located 40 miles to the north in Lassen Volcanic National Park) is visible.

Plumas National Forest Inventory

GENERAL

Acres of National Forest Land:	1,204,230
Private but Administered Acres of Land:	44,500
Bucks Lake Wilderness:	23,738
Trails:	224 miles
Roads:	7,355 miles
(combined Forest Service & other)	
Permanent Employees:	312
Temporary/Seasonal:	206
Firefighter Apprentices:	12
Cooperative Education Students:	15
Volunteers:	2,000 hours service

VISITOR RESOURCES

Annual Visitors:	more than 900,000
Picnic Areas:	11
Campsites:	776
Information Stations:	
(information & interpretive)	7 kiosks

TRAILS AND ROADS

Trailheads:	120
Designated Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV):	47 trails

NATURAL RESOURCES

Wildlife:	
species of birds	224
species of mammals	84
species of reptiles & amphibians	26
species of fish	30

Threatened & Endangered Species:

Bald Eagle
Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle
California Red-Legged Frog

Livestock/Grazing Allotments: 66 total
44 active

Wild & Scenic Rivers:

(Feather River, Middle Fork) 36 miles wild
(Feather River, Middle Fork) 10 miles scenic

HISTORIC

Historic & Cultural Sites: 4,427 sites total
National Register Sites: 2 sites
Archeological Artifacts: 16,949

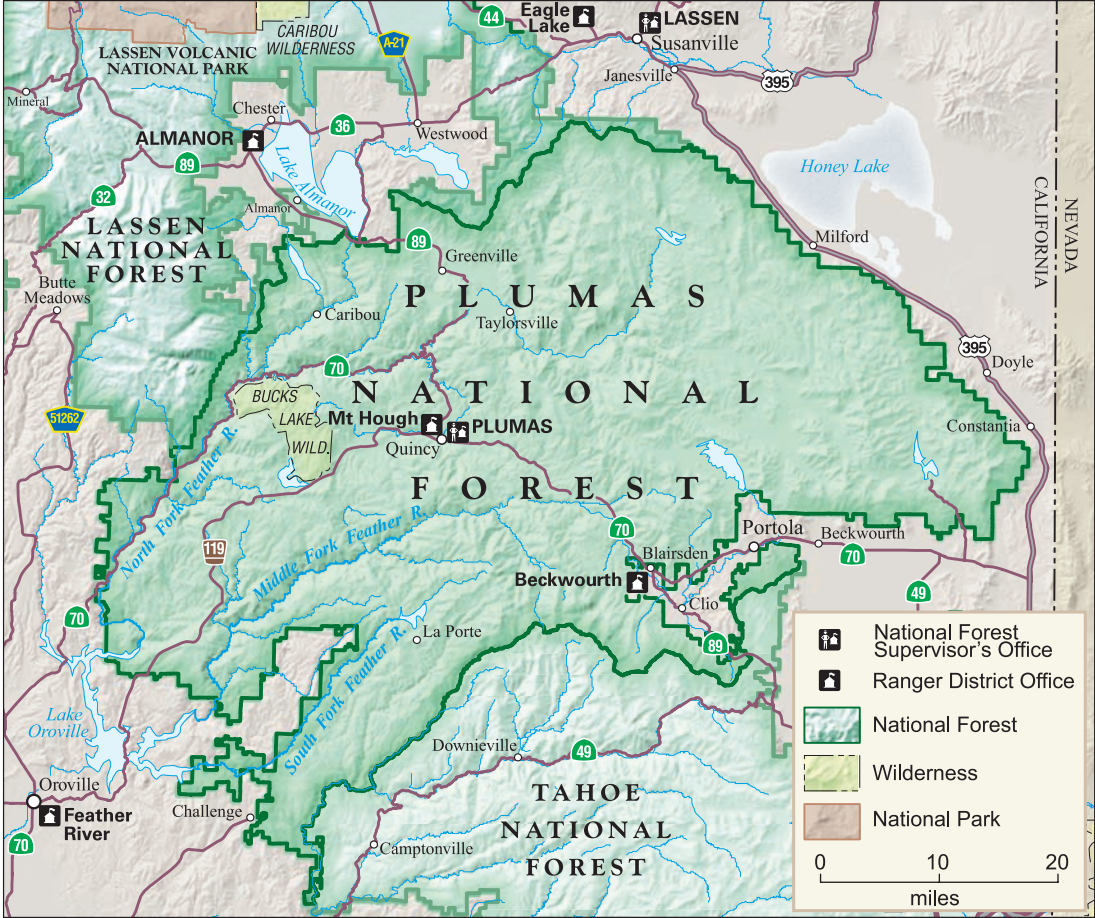
INFRASTRUCTURE

Administrative Offices: 19
Fire Lookout Stations: 5
Ranger Barracks/Residences: 16
Utility/Maintenance Buildings: 12
Storage Facilities: 32
Public toilets: 227 service units

OTHER ASSETS

Fire Engines: 17 engines
3 swing engines
Water Tenders: 2 (contracted)
Chippers: 2
Slip-on Pumps: 11 "wet units"
Helicopter: Contract

Plumas National Forest Map



Historical Financial Context

Fund Source Analysis

National forests receive funding from three primary sources: appropriations from Congress, reimbursable income, and revenue.

Congressional appropriations vary from year to year, depending on the national budget set by Congress. These funds are allocated to the regions, and the regions in turn allocate funds to each individual national forest. Earmarks are special allocations from Congress targeted at specific projects or regions.

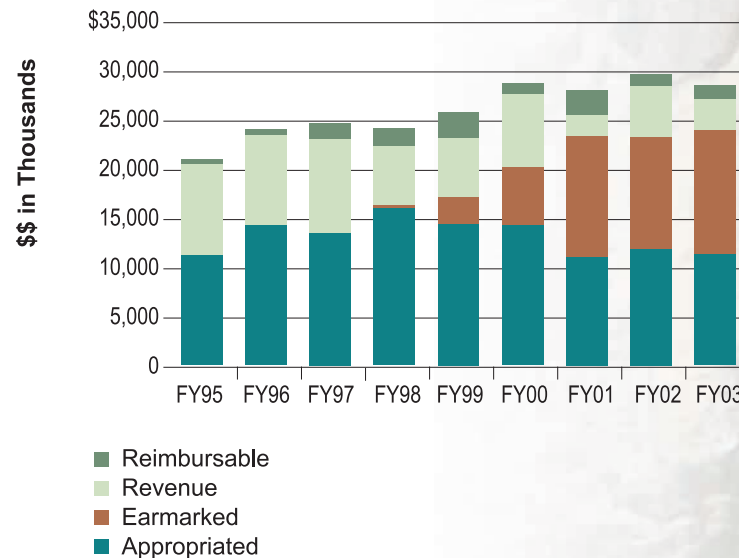
Reimbursable income is defined as expenses incurred by a national forest and reimbursed by other entities. These entities can range from the Federal government to private and non-profit organizations with specified service contract obligations. Instances of reimbursable funding include deferred road maintenance and projects completed with third-party funding.

Revenue is income generated from various national forest goods and services, for example recreation fees, special use permits, minerals, and timber sales. National forests do not retain the majority of the revenue generated by commercial outputs and services. These proceeds are deposited in the United States Treasury in accordance with existing law.

While the total budget for the Plumas National Forest increased at a constant rate of 4 percent in the period from FY 1995 through FY 2003, funding from revenues and earmark appropriations accounted for the majority of growth. The actual Plumas National Forest appropriated base budget, primarily used to fund general Forest operations, steadily decreased beginning in FY 1998.

The Forest's appropriated base budget grew 43 percent, from \$11.2 million in FY 1995 to \$16 million in FY 1998 on a nominal basis. This trend was reversed with the introduction of HFQLG Pilot Project earmark fund in FY 1999. The Plumas' appropriated base experienced a \$3 million decline from FY 1999 levels to the appropriated base in FY 2003. As a result, Forest programs that

Fund Source Analysis
(excluding Wildfire Suppression & National Fire Plan)



were not part of the HFQLG Pilot Project experienced a shortfall of an estimated 57 percent of funding. (See "Current Forest Operations" for details.)

Earmarked HFQLG Pilot Project funds totaled \$12.6 million in FY 2003. When indirect and administrative costs were excluded, the HFQLG Pilot Project earmark for FY 2003 amounted to \$9.6 million. These funds enabled Plumas National Forest employees to complete a large scope of work related to vegetation management and hazardous fuels reduction. However, due to the limited timeframe for this earmark, the Plumas will potentially be left vulnerable to considerable loss of funding when the earmark expires in FY 2009.



Watching wildlife and driving for pleasure are some of the major recreation uses of national forests, creating economic returns for local communities



The positive economic impact of winter recreation is an incentive to expand recreation programs

In accordance with existing laws, the United States Treasury receives most revenue generated from Plumas National Forest commercial activities, licenses, and special use permits. In specific and limited instances, the Forest is permitted to retain revenues from these activities. Trust funds, in the form of Knutsen-Vandenburg (KV) funds and revenues from timber salvage sales, are retained in trust for specific resource enhancement purposes. Both types of trust funds are tied to Plumas National Forest timber operations (see “Analysis of Revenues” section), and these funds accounted for the majority of revenues for the Forest. Revenues accounted for 45 percent of total Plumas National Forest funding in FY1995; however, this funding source steadily decreased as timber operations declined in the region. During the period from FY 1995 through FY 2003, revenues as a source of funding for the Plumas National Forest dramatically declined from \$9.3 million in FY 1995 to \$3 million in FY 2003, representing a 67 percent total decrease. In FY 2003, revenues accounted for only 11 percent of the Forest’s total funding.

Note: This analysis does not include funding for certain pooled administrative functions.

Tourism is a driver in a growing service employment sector.



The demand for timber continues but with more dependence on foreign supplies because of cost

Analysis of Revenues

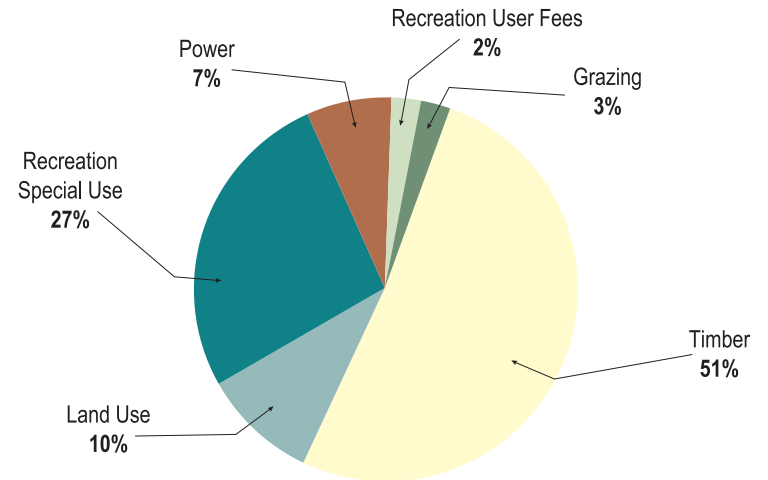
Revenue is income generated from various national forest operations, including recreation fees, special use permits, and timber sales. Pursuant to public law, revenues generated from national forest operations are deposited into the National Forest Fund (NFF) of the United States Treasury, with certain specific exceptions.

Timber sales have consistently been the largest source of revenue for the Plumas National Forest; however, sharp reductions in timber harvest levels in the early 1990s resulted in a corresponding decline in timber sale revenues. NFF contributions declined 99 percent, from a high of \$21.5 million in FY 1992 to \$500,000 in FY 2003. The Forest is permitted to retain a portion of the timber value in the form of salvage sale receipts, Knutsen-Vandenburg (KV) funds, and purchaser credits. KV funds are used for conducting specific natural resource enhancement activities in the timber sale area where the funds are generated. KV funds are strictly monitored and used to pay for activities related to ecosystem restoration, re-forestation, hazardous fuels reduction, and road maintenance. As timber sale receipts dropped, the total value from all three sources (salvage sale receipts, KV funds, and purchaser credits) declined 89 percent, from a high of \$15.1 million in FY 1992 to \$1.6 million in FY 2003. While implementation of the HFQLG Pilot Project will increase timber harvest levels through group selection and individual tree selection, timber sales from these types of treatments are not expected to generate significant revenues.

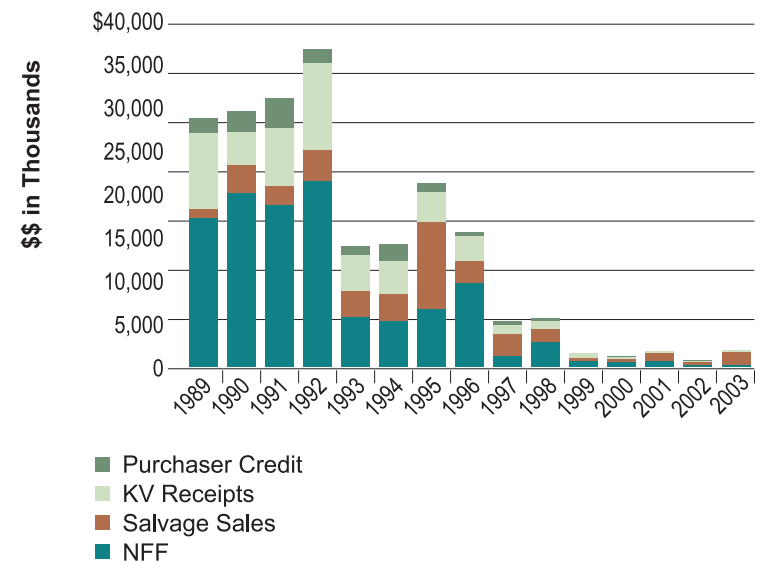
The decline in Plumas timber harvest levels contributed to a transition in the industry and employment base of Plumas County and adjacent counties. Its impact continues to play a role in the local economy. According to the Plumas-Sierra Counties Department of Agriculture, timber production values declined from \$54.4 million in 1999 to \$18.2 million in 2002. As the timber industry declined, recreation emerged as a growth opportunity for the County. Vision 2020, a collaborative view of Plumas County in the year 2020, credits tourism as a driver for growth in services employment.

This transition is an important strategic consideration for the Plumas National Forest. While NFF funds are not retained on the Forest, trends in sources of revenues reflect changes in broader priorities and Forest operations. The Plumas derived the majority of its revenue, or 51 percent of the total revenue contribution, from timber sales in FY 2003. Income related to recreation, including recreation special use and recreation user fees, was the second highest source, contributing roughly 29 percent of the Forest's total revenue in FY 2003.

PNF Source of Revenues to NFF in FY03
Total – \$515,900



Revenue & Credits from Timber Operations



Adjusted Base Budget

“Earmarked” budgets are for specific purposes and are not a permanent source of funding.

The adjusted base budget measures the funding available for national forest operations. To analyze changes in the adjusted base budget over time requires comparisons be made in constant dollars; hence, the appropriated base budget (including earmarks) for the period from FY 1995 through FY 2003 was converted to 1995 dollars of purchasing power using the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

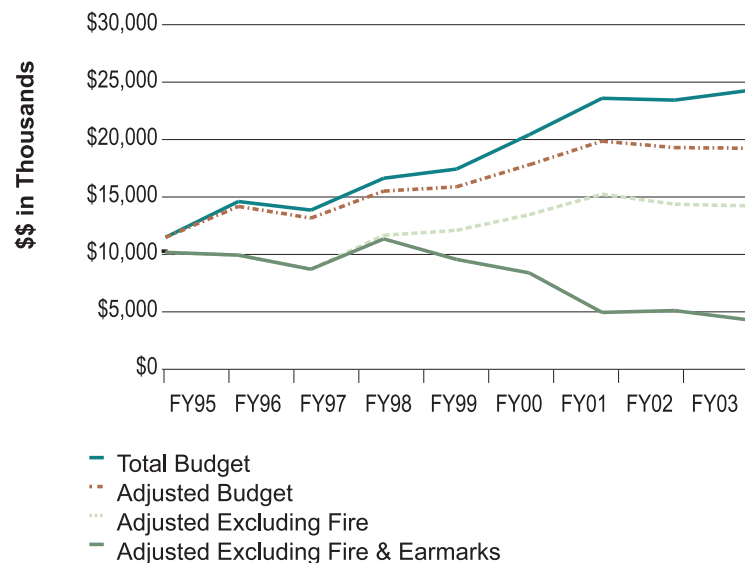
In nominal (or non-adjusted) dollars, the total appropriated base budget appeared to increase at a constant annual rate of 10 percent from FY 1995 to FY 2003 (the line labeled “Total Budget” in the graph). Further analysis demonstrates that inflation and specially designated funding was responsible for this gain. The growth is tempered when the appropriated base is adjusted for inflation (the line labeled “Adjusted Budget” in the



Carl Raymond Photography

Recreational vehicles offer a quick getaway but require upgraded campground facilities

CPI-Adjusted Base Budget
(excluding Wildfire Suppression & National Fire Plan)



graph) to provide historical comparison in constant dollars. Funding for fire pre-suppression and preparedness and fire suppression activities that were not part of HFQLG resource management activities was further excluded to present funding available for general Forest operations. The line labeled “Adjusted Excluding Fire” in the graph shows a more moderate annual growth rate of 4 percent on an adjusted basis.

Earmark funding is typically allocated for a specific purpose, which is to be completed within a defined timeframe. It is not a permanent source of funding and tends to distort the Plumas’ budget picture. If the impact of earmarks and fire spending are eliminated from the base budget, the Forest actually experienced a significant decline in inflation-adjusted funding (the line

Concessionaires

A Value-Added Benefit to the Plumas National Forest

Contracted concession operations help offset costs of maintaining and managing campgrounds and other developed recreation sites. Concession contracts require a percentage of the gross receipts collected by the concessionaire to be returned to the United States Treasury; however, 100 percent of these funds can be designated as a “fee offset,” to be spent by the concessionaire to improve campgrounds and other developed recreation sites, thereby maintaining and improving the Forest’s recreation facilities. The CPI-Adjusted Base Budget graph on page 14 illustrates the growing trend in the Plumas’ ability to capture and retain concessionaire “fee offsets” to benefit the Forest and the public it serves. “Fee offsets” help offset expenses for maintaining and improving campgrounds, thereby making resources that would have been used for campground maintenance and improvement available for other critical services and programs elsewhere on the Forest.



Lee Anne Schrammel

Historic structures add value to the landscape, in addition to providing a practical service

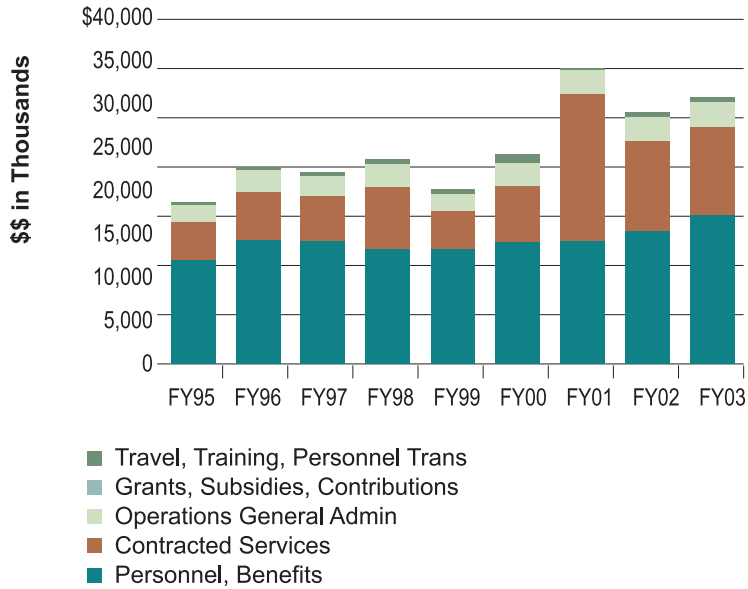
increase and all other program budgets decline, the Forest will experience future challenges in accomplishing the scope of work required to meet goals in areas not covered under the HFQLG Pilot Project.

Note: Revenues and reimbursables were excluded from this analysis due to their fluctuating nature and restrictive uses. The data presented does not include pooled administrative expenditures.

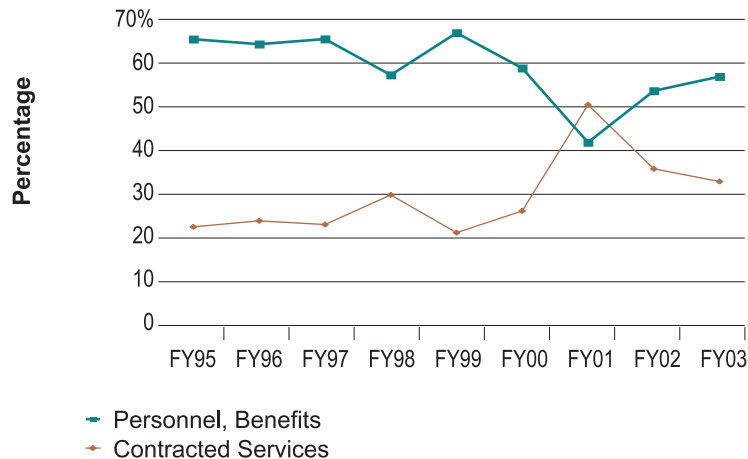
labeled “Adjusted Excluding Fire and Earmarks” in the graph). Based on this analysis, the Plumas’ budget for non-earmark and non-fire operations decreased 57 percent from FY 1999, the first significant year of the HFQLG Pilot Project, to FY 2003. Areas such as wildlife management, heritage resources, and visitor services reached resource capacity constraints, which limited the Forest’s ability to develop these programs and initiate partnerships. As the HFQLG Pilot Project earmark continues to

Historic Expenditures

PNF Historical Expenditures
(excluding Wildfire Suppression & National Fire Plan)



Personnel vs. Contracted Services Expenditures
as a % of Total Expenditures



From FY 1995 through FY 2003, operational administrative expenditures, as a pro-rata share per year, on the Plumas National Forest remained relatively constant. Peaks and dips in expenditures reflect major administrative changes on the Forest, including a reduction in timber operations and a focus on resource management activities under the HFQLG Pilot Project. The graphs displaying expenditures include all operations-related costs and exclude capital investments, non-capital equipment, and wildfire suppression (all of which can fluctuate independent of annual operations, distorting the picture of fiscal managerial competency). Included in the expenditures represented here are other fire-related activities, such as hazardous fuels reduction and fire preparedness and pre-suppression activities. The expenditures also include the proportion of the Plumas' contribution to certain Northern Sierra Cascade Province expenses.

“Personnel and benefits” and “contracted services” expenditures accounted for an average of 88 percent of the Plumas National Forest’s expenditures between FY 1995 and FY 2003. Prior to FY 1995, the Plumas experienced a significant staff downsizing due to a decline in timber operations and other budget cuts. The Forest leadership subsequently adopted a conservative hiring strategy and increased the use of contracted services. As a result, the ratio of “personnel and benefits” expenditures to “contracted services” expenditures dropped from approximately 3:1 in FY 1995 to less than 2:1 in FY 2003.

Contracted services have offered the Plumas staff a flexible, cost-effective alternative to accomplish the Forest’s changing scope of work. The HFQLG Pilot Project accounted for higher levels of contracted services in the most recent 5-year period: contractors assisted Forest staff in completing the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for the Pilot Project in FY 1999 and FY 2000, as well as limited implementation of defensive fuel profile zones and group selection harvests in FY 2001. While the Plumas primarily relied on existing permanent personnel to accomplish early HFQLG programs of work, the ramp-up of work in more recent years has required Forest staff to hire additional permanent employees. Forest leadership selectively increased its level of full time equivalents (FTEs) in FY 2003 to prepare for full implementation of the HFQLG Pilot Project in FY 2004 and beyond.

Contracting services offers a flexible, cost-effective alternative to accomplish a changing scope of work.

Impact of the Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act

The Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act (HFQLG) became law in 1998. The HFQLG required the Forest Service to conduct a pilot project on the Lassen and Plumas National Forests as well as the Sierraville Ranger District of the Tahoe National Forest. The Pilot Project is designed to demonstrate the effectiveness of specific resource management activities, including fuelbreaks, group selection, individual tree selection; avoidance or protection of specified areas; and implementation of a watershed restoration program. The Record of Decision (ROD) and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Pilot Project were released in 1999 and implementation of the Pilot Project began shortly thereafter.

Funding from HFQLG for the Plumas National Forest is significant: the earmark totaled \$9.6 million in FY 2003, which was approximately 34 percent (including indirect and administrative costs) of the FY 2003 Plumas budget.

The benefits of HFQLG have been immense for the Forest, allowing for aggressive vegetation treatments and hazardous fuels reduction work.



Mike Delasaux

Community involvement yielded increased funding for vegetative management programs through 2009



Mike Delasaux

Vegetative treatments have contributed to better forest health and to community vitality

Strategies

Business Plan Development

This business plan differentiates between two types of expenditures: (1) those for operations and maintenance and (2) those for investments. Operations and maintenance expenditures are those funds needed to carry out everyday operations on the Forest. Examples include annual payroll costs, rents and utilities, and management of the telecommunications network. Investments are significant one-time costs of limited duration aimed at solving current problems or adding to the Forest's physical or intellectual assets.

Operational and investment expenditures are made across the various programs on the Forest. To describe the entire scope of work on the Forest, activities have been grouped into the following six functional areas:

- Resource Management
- Public Use & Enjoyment
- Facility Operations & Maintenance
- Management & Administration
- Commodity & Commercial Uses
- Fire & Aviation Management

The six functional areas have been further divided into program elements (see “Business Plan Program Definitions”) that more precisely describe Forest operations.

This business plan was developed in two phases. During phase one, a team of external consultants from NPCA worked closely

Investments can solve current problems or add to the Forest's assets.



Carl Raymond Photography

Many small ranching businesses stay viable because of permits to graze on national forests

with Plumas National Forest finance and program staff to assess the amount of staff time and money spent to operate each Forest program. The team used FY 2003 financial data to complete this assessment. In some instances, program operational standards were not met in FY 2003 due to a lack of required resources. This shortfall is identified as “unfunded needs” for each program.

The first phase yielded an exhaustive operational analysis, which was then used to shape and inform the second phase of the business plan. The second phase entailed strategic planning for the future and establishing priority investment needs.

Functional Areas & Associated Program Definitions

The resource management functional area encompasses all activities related to managing, monitoring, and protecting the Plumas' natural and cultural resources. This functional area includes programs in wildlife management; vegetation management; watershed, air and geology; data management; and land ownership issues.

Public use and enjoyment includes all activities aimed at providing visitors to the Plumas with a safe, educational, and enjoyable experience. This functional area includes programs in visitor information, interpretation, and recreation services; concessions management; visitor safety and law enforcement; and recreational special uses.

The facilities, operations, and maintenance functional area includes activities for managing and operating the Forest's infrastructure, including buildings, roads, trails, utilities, and campgrounds, on a daily basis.

The management and administration functional area encompasses Forest-wide management and administrative support activities. It includes programs in general and district administration, public affairs, planning, human resource management, information technology, leadership, and financial management. Administrative functional areas are in great flux. National centralization of human resource management, information technology, and financial management functions are currently being reconfigured resulting in shifts of people and jobs away from hundreds of decentralized locations, traditionally on individual Forests and Ranger Districts, to a few very centralized ones that will provide service nationally.



Carl Raymond Photography

Investments in habitat restoration improve the populations and health of many species of plants and animals

Fire and aviation management encompasses the Forest's fire management activities and programs, which include wildfire suppression, fire organization management and administration, wildfire pre-suppression and preparedness, hazardous fuels reduction, and national fire and emergency support.

The commodity and commercial uses functional area encompasses activities related to producing and managing a wide variety of commodities and commercial products on the Forest. This functional area includes programs dealing with non-recreational special use permits, grazing, minerals and mining activities, forest products, and timber.

Strategy

Creating and maintaining partnerships requires both a strategy and technical support.



Lee Anne Schramel

A growing number of community members are helping Forest Service employees with information and planning



Suzy Brakken

Without partners, an interpretive trail would not have been built

In developing this business plan, Plumas National Forest managers identified the need to provide stable funding as the greatest fiscal challenge facing the Forest. Cuts and fluctuations in appropriated funding, as well as reductions in revenues generated by the Forest, have led to increased instability and clouded the ability of Plumas staff to accomplish mandated and other critical work. (See “Fund Source Analysis” section.) Over the past 4 years, earmarked funds for the HFQLG Pilot Project have provided a substantial portion of the Forest’s funding. (See “Impact of HFQLG” section.) However, due to the limited timeframe for the HFQLG earmark, the Plumas will potentially be left vulnerable to considerable loss of funding when it expires in FY 2009.

In an effort to establish a stable funding base, Plumas National Forest leadership is focused on partnership development as an immediate imperative for the Forest. Partnership development cultivates and leverages the resources of external organizations, such as nonprofit foundations, “friends of...” groups, citizen resource boards, and other government agencies, to accomplish natural resource stewardship work on the Forest. The Forest’s leadership has established an aggressive goal of attaining 25 percent of its funding and resource contributions from partner organizations by FY 2009, when HFQLG funding is set to expire. Such a diversified funding base would diminish vulnerability from funding cuts or fluctuations, which, in turn, would ensure that Forest operations remained constant and flexible to respond to shifting demands.

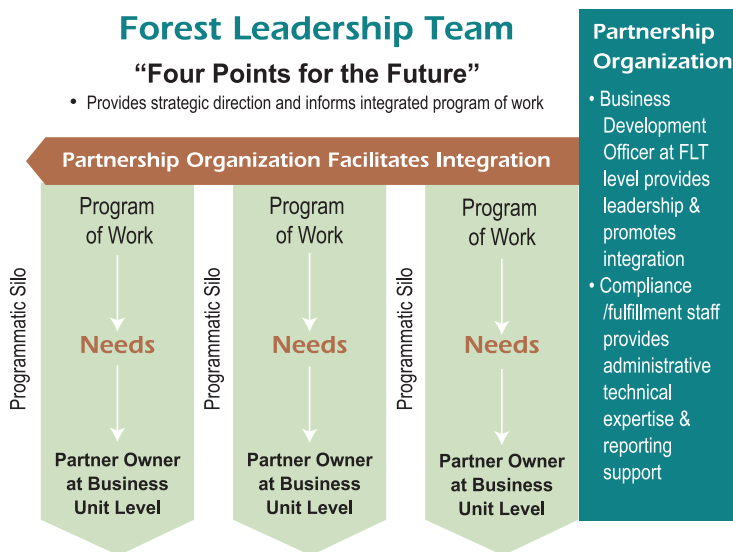
Strategic Vision

The Plumas leadership is currently developing an overarching strategic plan to guide all Forest activities by providing a methodical selection of priorities as they relate to broader Forest-scale management needs. This strategic plan is intended to integrate management of diverse programs across the Forest and reduce barriers between areas of operation, sometimes referred to as “functional silos.”

The Forest’s strategic vision focuses on developing partnerships to accomplish objectives in four key areas:

1. integrating fuels and vegetation management programs to reduce the threat of catastrophic fire and promote a healthy forest, especially adjacent to communities;
2. contributing to community leadership and economic development related to public land management;
3. responding to growing recreation and tourism needs; and
4. stewarding sustainable resources for the future.

The above “Four Points for the Future” will inform strategic priorities, filter investment opportunities, and help establish partnership objectives in a Forest-wide approach.



Organizing for Effective Partnerships

Preparedness for internal change

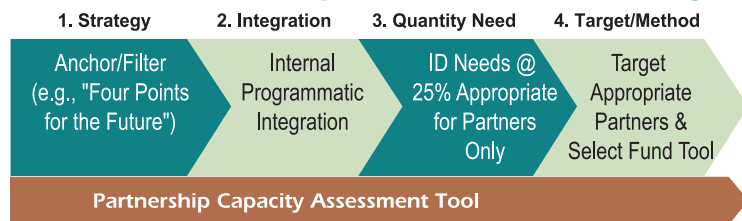
The Plumas is well-poised to meet the 25 percent partnership target and the demands such an undertaking will entail. This shift will require buy-in for fundamental operational changes from the entire Forest staff. The staff, as a whole, grasps the imperatives driving the 25 percent partnership development target. This cultural preparedness has been demonstrated by program managers who have identified specific partnership opportunities. Much of the groundwork for relationship building with potential partners has begun: a critical step towards realizing the 25 percent goal.

Staff Capacity & Incentives

Implicit in the partnership growth target will be an added burden in each program area: 25 percent external funding is administratively complex. The Forest leadership team has identified the need and has begun the process to provide adequate resources to support partnership goals, including appropriate guidance and incentives.

The demand for a high-degree of programmatic integration in managing and maintaining partnerships will require creation of a senior management-level strategic planning and coordination function on the Forest. The envisioned business development team will spearhead strategic coordination of program resource needs and help integrate the work and funding of different Forest operations.

Preparation Planning Assessment “Forethought”



Execution Implementation “Action” Initiate Partnership (business unit level)
Administer Partnership

Staff Skills

The depth of professional natural resource management and program administration skills within the Plumas National Forest staff is excellent. The skill set necessary to navigate complex bureaucratic mandates for grants and contracts administration, as well as cultivate, implement, and maintain partnerships, often extends beyond existing staff skill sets. The Forest is acquiring and developing skills needed to initiate and manage successful partnerships as the Plumas leadership undertakes a systematic analysis of partnership needs, including program cost projections.

Conceptual Framework for Developing Effective Partnerships

The Plumas staff recognizes the significant potential of partnership resources, given the current organizational infrastructure. They also recognize the work to be done to realize the full potential of partnership efforts. The diagram below, dubbed the “Pipeline of Preparedness,” displays a conceptual framework for efficiently developing and managing partnerships. Ideally, the pipeline analysis would be applied to a set of programs that fall under a partnership area (for example, vegetation management and hazardous fuels reduction).

The pipeline displays a flow of activities in two steps: (1) preparation and planning (“forethought”) followed by (2) implementation and ongoing administrative support (“action”). The first step is comprised of four discrete phases. When taken in order, each step should help shape and inform the subsequent phase, moving along a continuum.

Part One: “Forethought”

(1) “Strategy” requires applying the Plumas-wide strategy (currently under development) to the objectives of particular programs. The strategy anchors all decisions made during subsequent phases.

- (2) “Integration” seeks to ensure that potential partnership projects are assessed to leverage all possible resources to include needs elsewhere on the forest. (For example, a vegetation/fuels partnership project would consider possible resources that might overlap with watershed, wildlife, and other resource needs.)
- (3) “Quantify Need” defines the needed activities within an entire program area. Using the business plan analysis of funded and unfunded needs and investments, the cost of the program area can be identified by applying the 25 percent target established (\$1,000,000 cost at a 25 percent target translates to a \$250,000 partnership need). Partners are typically willing to fund only certain activities; therefore, it is critical to find the appropriate places to contribute the 25-percent. (For example, partners may not fund Forest Service staff needs, but will fund non-personnel needs for a collaborative education/interpretation project.)
- (4) “Target/ Method” identifies specific partners based on in-depth knowledge of the partner’s mission and objectives and their alignment with Forest needs. In addition, this phase includes deciding the method by which the partnership will take place (for example stewardship contract versus fee collection).

Part Two: Action

Upon completion of the “preparedness” phases above, the next element is to initiate the partnerships. A two-tiered method of management is envisioned. In the first tier, staff at the business unit level typically engage the partner and introduce the Forest’s need for support (referred to as “initiation”). However, the technical level of knowledge required to administer and support partnerships requires a second tier, called “administration,” where technical support is provided to ensure work proceeds smoothly.

Coordinated Resource Management

The Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group (CRM) is the largest Plumas National Forest partner in watershed management. The CRM is a consortium of public, private, local, and State and Federal entities that works to benefit the Feather River watershed, which is the headwaters of the California State Water Project. Plumas leadership recognizes that effective watershed management relies on the efforts of an array of constituencies, and provides staff resources to support this innovative effort.

The Plumas partnership with the CRM has resulted in significant watershed restoration on national forest lands, offsetting the need for additional appropriated funds. The CRM has completed over \$1.2 million of work in its four largest projects on the Plumas since 1995. The funding for these projects was raised by the CRM from Pacific Gas and Electric Company, various authorities of the State of California, and the Resource Advisory Committee.



Plumas Corporation

Clarks Creek.

Top photo: May 2004.

Above photo: July 2001.

Watershed restoration yields remarkable results such as water quality and increased streamside vegetation, in a very short time



Plumas Corporation

Eighteen different partners are part of the Feather River CRM

2003 Plumas National Forest Partners

Applied Forest Management
Bucks Lake Snow Drifters
Butte College
Cal Trans
California Deer Association, USDI Fish & Wildlife Service
California Department of Fish and Game
California Department of Forestry
California Indian Basketweavers Association
California Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)
Chamber of Commerce Chester & Lake Almanor
Chico State University
City of Portola
Collins Pine
California State University at Sacramento (CSUS)
Dawn Institute
Dobbins-Oregon House Action Committee
Dobbins-Oregon House Fire Protection District
Eastern Plumas Chamber of Commerce
Feather River College
Foothill Fire Protection Agency
Forestry Institute for Teachers
HFQLG Counties Forester
High Mountain Riders
High Sierra Resources Conservation & Development Council
Indian Valley Chamber of Commerce
Long Valley, Meadow Valley/Bucks Lake, Plumas Eureka,
Crescent Mills, Graeagle, C Road, Chester, Hamilton
Branch, Quincy, Lake Almanor Peninsula Volunteer
Fire Departments
Maidu Cultural Development Group
Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
Oregon California Trails
Pacific Crest Trail Association
Pacific Gas and Electric
Plumas Corporation Feather River Coordinated Resource
Management Group
Plumas County
Plumas County Fire Safe Council
Plumas County Fish and Game Commission

Plumas County Office of Education Plumas Unified
School District
Plumas County Resource Advisory Committee
Plumas County Visitors Bureau
Plumas County, Almanor Basin, Yuba County Fire Safe Councils
Plumas Pines
Plumas Sierra Noxious WEEDS Management Group
Plumas-Sierra Range Permittees
Quincy Chamber of Commerce
Quincy Library Group
Quincy, Greenhorn, Long Valley, Indian Valley, West Almanor,
Strawberry Valley, Camptonville Community
Service Districts
Redding California Conservation Corps (CCC)
Roseburg Lumber
Roundhouse Council
Rural Development & Economic Recovery
Sierra Pacific Industry
Trails West, Inc.
University of California Cooperative Extension
USDA National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
Yuba County Board of Supervisors, Agricultural Commissioner,
Fire Chiefs Association, Office of Emergency Services, Rural
Fire Joint Powers Agency



The Plumas County Fire Safe Council was awarded a national Chiefs (Forest Service) Award for their exemplary leadership

Volunteers

The Plumas relies on the time and effort contributed by local volunteers to complete its work. The Forest received more than 2,000 volunteer hours in FY 2003 to the benefit of numerous Forest programs, including improvement and maintenance projects for hiking trails, snowmobile trails, and off highway vehicle (OHV) areas. Volunteer hours benefit botany, range, and wilderness improvement projects as well. Volunteers typically come from local outdoor organizations, community groups, and students.

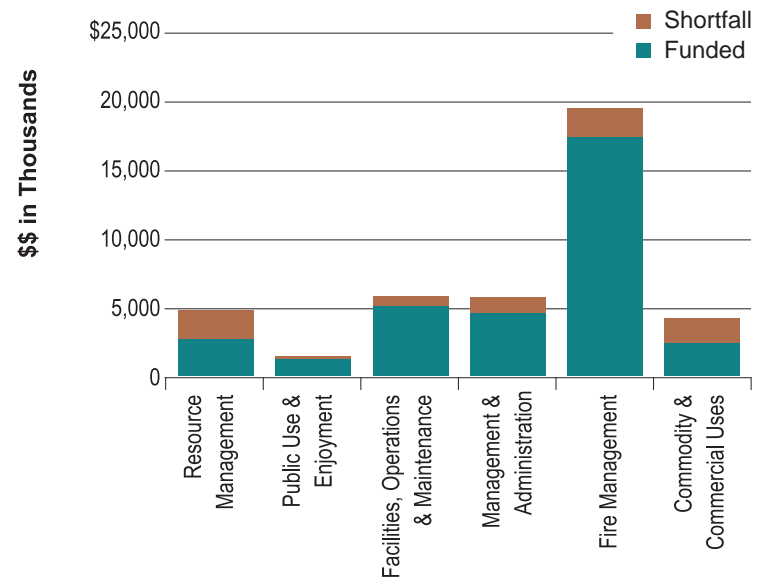
Financials

Summary Financial Statement

The Summary Financial Statement table displays Plumas National Forest program operational expenditures and program funding shortfalls identified for FY 2003. This financial statement does not include investment expenditures or shortfalls: investment needs are described in the “Investment Opportunities” section.

The “Available Funds” columns in the table are based on data from the Forest Service’s financial information systems. The “Required Funds” column quantifies the “funding gap,” in other words, the difference between the resources required to achieve standards of operation and available resources. Program managers were asked to define standards of operation for each of the Forest’s 31 programs. Personnel and funding needs were identified based on the gap between available and required resources. The “2003 Required Funds by Functional Area” chart depicts the operational shortfall in the six functional areas of the business plan. A breakdown of these figures is presented in detail in the “Summary Financial Statement” table on page 25.

2003 Required Funds by Functional Area



Summary Financial Statement 2003	REQUIRED		AVAILABLE				SURPLUS/(SHORTFALL)			
			APPROPRIATED		NON-APPROPRIATED		TOTAL			
	FTE	Funds	Non-LTRA	LTRA	Reimbursable	Revenue	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds
FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND PROGRAMS										
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT										
Wildlife Management	10.6	\$847,610	\$151,602	\$103,393	\$75,027	\$0	3.5	\$330,021	(7.1)	(\$517,589)
Vegetation Management	15.6	\$1,800,186	\$153,683	\$121,316	\$399,178	\$345,506	4.7	\$1,019,683	(10.9)	(\$780,503)
Heritage Resources	2.3	\$160,118	\$67,980	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.7	\$67,980	(1.6)	(\$92,138)
Data Management	5.0	\$297,310	\$168,532	\$0	\$0	\$0	3.0	\$168,532	(2.0)	(\$128,778)
Watershed, Air & Geologic Management	11.9	\$1,480,604	\$130,017	\$295,695	\$418,125	\$194,964	7.4	\$1,038,801	(4.6)	(\$441,803)
Land Ownership & Adjustment	2.0	\$160,579	\$82,353	\$0	\$0	\$0	1.0	\$82,353	(1.0)	(\$78,226)
Subtotal	47.5	\$4,746,407	\$754,167	\$520,404	\$892,330	\$540,470	20.4	\$2,707,371	(27.1)	(\$2,039,036)
PUBLIC USE & ENJOYMENT										
Law Enforcement & Visitor Safety	8.8	\$705,230	\$613,501	\$0	\$0	\$1,350	6.8	\$614,851	(2.0)	(\$90,380)
Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretation & Education	5.2	\$384,431	\$279,944	\$0	\$0	\$0	3.7	\$279,944	(1.5)	(\$104,486)
Concessions & Recreation Special Uses	7.8	\$349,580	\$324,579	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	7.7	\$344,579	(0.1)	(\$5,001)
Subtotal	21.8	\$1,439,241	\$1,218,024	\$0	\$0	\$21,350	18.2	\$1,239,374	(3.6)	(\$199,867)
FACILITY OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE										
Buildings, Grounds & Utilities	7.2	\$568,513	\$301,625	\$54,176	\$61,774	\$0	5.1	\$417,575	(2.1)	(\$150,938)
Roads	25.5	\$2,676,609	\$1,171,002	\$699,341	\$251,426	\$224,216	22.5	\$2,345,985	(3.0)	(\$330,624)
Trails	4.3	\$257,568	\$75,174	\$16,354	\$0	\$166,040	4.3	\$257,568	0.0	\$0
Transportation & Fleet	4.4	\$1,571,482	\$1,570,652	\$0	\$0	\$830	4.4	\$1,571,482	0.0	\$0
Campgrounds & Developed Sites	8.9	\$704,094	\$448,849	\$50,258	\$0	\$21,486	5.9	\$520,593	(3.0)	(\$183,501)
Subtotal	50.2	\$5,778,266	\$3,567,301	\$820,128	\$313,200	\$412,573	42.1	\$5,113,202	(8.1)	(\$665,064)
MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION										
General Management	3.0	\$360,907	\$360,907	\$0	\$0	\$0	3.0	\$360,907	0.0	\$0
Financial Management	8.3	\$512,139	\$306,851	\$0	\$0	\$0	4.9	\$306,851	(3.5)	(\$205,288)
General Administration	12.1	\$1,678,427	\$1,617,260	\$0	\$0	\$0	11.1	\$1,617,260	(1.0)	(\$61,167)
District Management	9.3	\$1,403,081	\$1,020,522	\$0	\$0	\$0	6.3	\$1,020,522	(3.0)	(\$382,558)
Planning	7.4	\$743,882	\$288,245	\$181,243	\$0	\$0	4.4	\$469,488	(3.0)	(\$274,394)
Public Affairs	3.1	\$265,420	\$265,420	\$0	\$0	\$0	3.1	\$265,420	0.0	\$0
Information Technology	8.5	\$688,618	\$517,911	\$0	\$0	\$0	6.2	\$517,911	(2.3)	(\$170,708)
Subtotal	51.8	\$5,652,475	\$4,377,117	\$181,243	\$0	\$0	39.0	\$4,558,360	(12.8)	(\$1,094,115)
COMMODITY & COMMERCIAL USES										
Forest Products	0.4	\$30,901	\$1,947	\$0	\$9,621	\$0	0.1	\$11,568	(0.3)	(\$19,332)
Timber	36.7	\$2,589,976	\$390,788	\$602,678	\$796,750	\$0	24.3	\$1,790,216	(12.4)	(\$799,760)
Non-recreation Special Uses	4.9	\$326,913	\$188,892	\$0	\$0	\$0	3.0	\$188,892	(1.9)	(\$138,020)
Minerals	4.7	\$731,495	\$180,964	\$0	\$0	\$0	2.5	\$180,964	(2.2)	(\$550,532)
Grazing	4.9	\$504,096	\$219,862	\$0	\$0	\$0	3.9	\$219,862	(1.0)	(\$284,234)
Subtotal	51.6	\$4,183,381	\$982,453	\$602,678	\$806,371	\$0	33.8	\$2,391,503	(17.8)	(\$1,791,878)
FIRE & AVIATION MANAGEMENT										
Management & Administration	9.0	\$794,109	\$794,109	\$0	\$0	\$0	9.0	\$794,109	0.0	\$0
Fire Pre-Suppression & Preparedness	95.3	\$5,302,310	\$5,302,310	\$0	\$0	\$0	65.4	\$5,302,310	(29.9)	\$0
Hazardous Fuels Reduction	91.3	\$13,260,946	\$383,634	\$10,424,350	\$259,826	\$149,012	91.3	\$11,216,822	0.0	(\$2,044,124)
Subtotal	195.5	\$19,357,365	\$6,480,053	\$10,424,350	\$259,826	\$149,012	165.6	\$17,313,241	(29.9)	(\$2,044,124)
Total (excluding Wildfire Suppression)	418.3	\$41,157,134	\$17,379,116	\$12,548,804	\$2,271,727	\$1,123,404	319.1	\$33,323,051	(99.3)	(\$7,834,083)
Wildfire Suppression	22.3	\$2,898,722	\$2,898,722	\$0	\$0	\$0	22.3	\$2,898,722	0.0	\$0
National Fire & Disaster Support	14.9	\$918,503	\$918,503	\$0	\$0	\$0	14.9	\$918,503	0.0	\$0
Grand Total	455.6	\$44,974,359	\$21,196,341	\$12,548,804	\$2,271,727	\$1,123,404	356.3	\$37,140,276	(99.3)	(\$7,834,083)

Investment Opportunities

The business plan analysis identified more than \$14.8 million total in unfunded investment needs for the Plumas National Forest. Because the Plumas business plan's strategic focus is on partnership development, the following list of needed investments represents projects best suited to funding by forest partners.

To maximize the effective use of partner resources, investment opportunities have been divided into two tiers of priority:

- (1) programmatic investments that primarily enhance macro-level programmatic capacity in an integrated strategic fashion; and
- (2) project-based investments designed to accomplish needed incremental work not explicitly tied to broader strategic planning.

This method of establishing priorities for investment opportunities incorporates the strategic anchors identified in the Forest leadership team's "Four Points for the Future."

The following investment opportunities are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all investment opportunities. Instead, the following list offers a sampling to suggest the scope and depth of unfunded needs where partnerships can contribute significantly to the future environment of the Plumas.

Programmatic Investment Opportunities:

- **Integrated Forest Strategy**
Cost: \$50,000
This project would build on the business plan to create a strategic springboard for developing future projects and partnerships critical to programs envisioned for the Plumas National Forest.

Potential investment opportunities exist across all forest program areas.



Carl Raymond Photography

Demand for cross country skiing opportunities is climbing as people seek peace in their busy lives

- **Plumas National Forest Interpretive Plan**
Cost: \$50,000 (over 2 years)
With a focus on developing its visitor services program, the Plumas would work with local community groups to develop a comprehensive interpretive strategy for the Forest. The plan would present an assessment of staffing needs, priorities for interpretive projects, and an implementation plan.
- **Baseline Inventories for Threatened, Endangered, & Sensitive Species**
Cost: \$750,000 (over 5 years)
This project would support needed inventories for Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) species within grazing allotments and grazing effects analyses. It would contribute to lowering the substantial costs associated with developing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents for allotment management plans, which must be completed by 2008 to comply with the Rescissions Act.



Spider on wildflowers

- **Every Species Counts – Collective Project**

Cost: \$325,000 (over 4 years)

This project would help the forest better manage the NEPA analysis process by establishing a complete inventory and definition program for TES animals and plants on the Forest. The project would include a Forest-wide TES amphibian inventory, rare plant conservation strategy, rare plant descriptions, rare plant species-specific inventory, serpentine outcrops inventory, TES plant database, native fish and TES animal habitat assessment, botanical investigation of forested areas, and inventory gaps for specific TES animals.

- **Spotted Owl & Goshawk Protected Activity Center Protection**

Cost: \$25,000

This project would entail designing a Defensible Fuel Profile Zone (DFPZ) network to maximize protection of protected activity centers (PACs), and implement thinning and/or underburning activities within California spotted owl and northern goshawk PACs to reduce fuel loads to create conditions for lower burn intensities.

- **Archaeological Site Inventory, Monitoring, & Evaluation/Curation of Artifacts and Inventory Records**

Cost: \$375,000 (over 5 years)

The heritage program is required to demonstrate sound management of the Forest's heritage resources through meeting the standards of several mandates, including Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The proposed inventory, monitoring and evaluation project would help the Forest comply with these standards and would contribute to more effective management of heritage resources on the Plumas. The project would include monitoring known sites to assess their condition, completing one-time inventories to identify archaeological sites in areas not covered by inventories associated with resource management projects, and evaluating prehistoric and historic sites to contribute toward accomplishing the Forest's overall program of work. Because curating artifacts to Federally mandated requirements is critical, this project would also include maintaining on-Forest curation facilities.

- **Noxious Weeds Inventory**

Cost: \$40,000 (over 5 years)

To better target potential noxious weed problems, an inventory of noxious weeds would identify key locations of weed infestations on the Forest and provide the information needed to complete the Forest-wide geographical information systems (GIS) weed layer.

Project Opportunities:

- **Pacific Crest Trail Maintenance**
Cost: \$50,000
This project would expand recreation opportunities by maintaining the Pacific Crest Trail on the Plumas National Forest.
- **Watershed Restoration Projects**
Cost: \$725,000 (over 3 years)
The Plumas' watershed program staff ranked the Forest's watersheds based on scientific data to identify needs for restoration work. Based on this extensive study, priority watersheds, for restoration projects include Last Chance, Red Clover and Middle Fork of the Feather River.
- **Enhancement of National Historic Trail: James Beckwourth Trail**
Cost: \$120,000
This project would include work related to protecting, interpreting, and enhancing the historic Beckwourth Trail. It would serve to build both the recreation and heritage resources program areas.
- **Aquatic Species Passage**
Cost: \$175,000 (over 4 years)
Aimed at enhancing the natural resource management program, the aquatic species passage project would inventory culvert barriers both within streams occupied by yellow-legged frogs and their tributaries. The project would also entail removing identified barriers to culvert passage and then re-vegetating these aquatic passage project sites using collected seeds propagated at the nursery, and subsequently planting the seedlings.
- **OHV Route Improvement**
Cost: \$255,000 (over 3 years)
Area designations and signing would be expanded along OHV routes to provide improved recreational information to visitors.



Scott Abrams

An increased number of fuel breaks will help protect communities from uncontrolled wildfire

- **Interpretive Information for Wildlife, Fish, & Rare Plants**
Cost: \$17,500
This project would include producing interpretive materials and signs to enhance the visitor experience on the Plumas National Forest. Information pamphlets would be produced for the Butterfly Botanical Area and species lists would be developed for Bucks Lake Wilderness, Little Grass Valley, and Lakes Basin locations. Interpretive signs for Bucks Lake Kokanee would also be produced and put in place.
- **Interpretation of Highway 70 in the Feather River Canyon**
Cost: \$50,000 (over 5 years)
Intended to expand recreational services, this project would provide interpretation of the Feather River Canyon through brochures, interpretive sites, and audio auto-tour CDs and tapes.
- **Noxious Weed Education**
Cost: \$10,000
This project would include development and distribution of educational information regarding noxious weed problems and control efforts on the Forest.

Forest Operations

Current Forest Operations

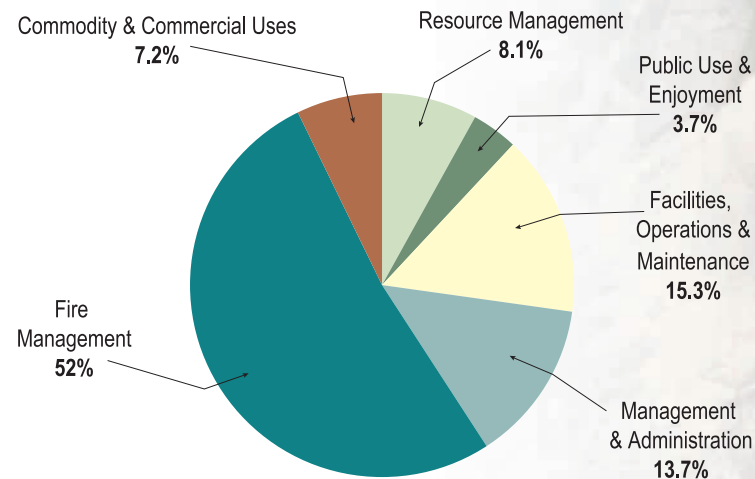
To describe current operations on the Plumas National Forest, activities were grouped into six functional areas that describe the areas of business for which the Forest is responsible. The six functional areas are:

- Resource Management
- Public Use & Enjoyment
- Facility Operations & Maintenance
- Management & Administration
- Commodity & Commercial Uses
- Fire & Aviation Management

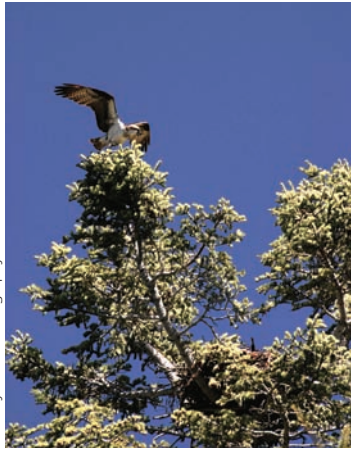
The following sections of the business plan present key issues, potential challenges, funding shortfalls, and the strategic role of investment opportunities for each functional area. In these sections, program area needs include both operational shortfalls and investment opportunities. Such investments would provide for meeting mandated program obligations as well as enhance program growth through strategic funding initiatives. Many of these investment opportunities offer sound potential for partnerships.

The graphic depicts FY 2003 expenditures by functional area across the Forest. Each of the following six functional area sections concludes with a table that displays headings titled “Funded” and “Shortfall” The “Funded” values use FY 2003 operational expenditures. Funding shortfalls related to personnel and administrative resources are totaled under the “Shortfall” column.

PNF Expenditures by Functional Area in FY 03



Resource Management (8.1 percent of the Forest Budget)



Carl Raymond Photography

Large birds have different nesting tree requirements than small birds

Sustaining natural and cultural resources for future generations.

The resource management program area encompasses all activities related to managing, monitoring, and protecting the Plumas' natural and cultural resources. This functional area includes programs in wildlife management; vegetation management; watershed, air and geology; data management; and land ownership and adjustment. In addition to stewardship and natural resources management, this functional area provides support for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance, which typically precedes implementation of projects or issuance of permits.

The resource management program channeled a significant amount of staff time in FY 2003 to accomplish the NEPA documentation required to implement activities related to the HFQLG Pilot Project. As a result, this functional area experienced a shortage of resources for developing existing programs. The Forest leadership plans to hire additional personnel in this functional area, not only to support HFQLG activities, but also to equip the programs with sufficient resources to pursue strategic funding and work initiatives, such as establishing and building partnerships.

Heritage Resource Management

Heritage resource management staff works to preserve, protect and interpret archaeological, historical, cultural, ethnographical and paleontological resources on the Forest. The program develops and maintains relationships with Native American tribal governments, universities, and regulatory agencies. During FY 2003, the heritage staff primarily supported HFQLG Pilot Project activities and was unable to pursue projects related to site restoration, site monitoring, inventory surveys, interpretive work, and archeological site evaluation. Many of these projects would satisfy legally mandated targets for historic preservation on the Forest; however, they were not specifically funded. Based on FY 2003 operations, heritage resources program managers identified the need for one archeologist to be fully dedicated to the program as well as HFQLG Pilot Project support staff of 0.6 FTEs.

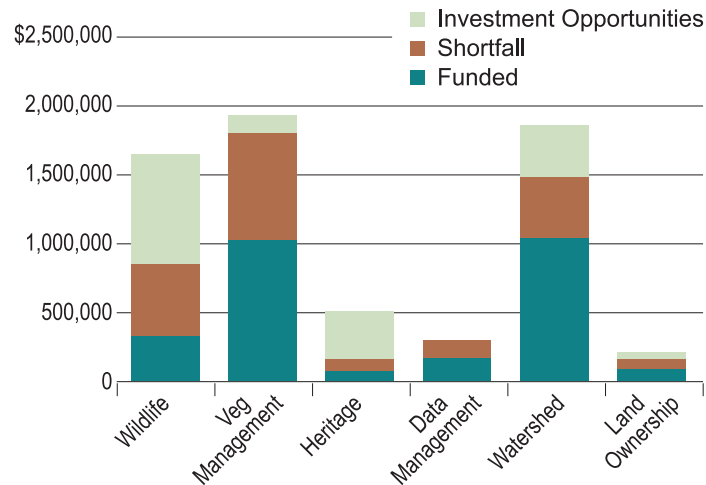
Wildlife Management

The wildlife management program is aimed at maintaining ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native species and desired non-native species of wildlife, fish, and rare plants. The program emphasizes habitat planning, management, evaluation, and interpretation for Federally listed threatened, endangered and sensitive species. Additional program functions include habitat and wildlife inventories and monitoring, administrative support, public information and education, and internal and external partnership coordination. Due to HFQLG Pilot Project activities, the program had insufficient resources to address out-year project planning, partnership development, or habitat improvement during FY 2003. The shortfall in this area included 7.1 FTEs, including a program manager and HFQLG support staff. The Forest's current staffing plan addresses 54 percent of this need. Investment opportunities in the wildlife management program include habitat improvement, inventory and definition programs, interpretive education, and habitat restoration.

Watershed, Air & Geologic Resource Management

The watershed, air, and geologic resource management program provides protection and enhancement of water, soil, and air resources on the Plumas National Forest, including monitoring, inventory, research, restoration, and compliance activities. Watershed management staff is involved with interagency, multidisciplinary partnerships required to effectively manage hydrologic resources. With activities concentrated in planning and implementing HFQLG Pilot Project activities in FY 2003, the program was unable to fully focus on its strategic priorities. Investment opportunities include restoration projects in the Last Chance, Red Clover and Middle Fork of the Feather River watersheds. Program managers identified a shortfall of 2.8 FTEs of watershed staff in addition to a need for HFQLG Pilot Project support staff of 1.8 FTEs. The Forest's current staffing plan provides for 60 percent of this need.

Resource Management



2003 FUNDED		SHORTFALL		REQUIRED	
FTE	COST	FTE	COST	FTE	COST
20.37	\$2,707,371	27.11	\$2,039,036	47.48	\$4,746,407

Vegetation Management

The focus of the vegetation management program is on maintaining and improving healthy and productive forest stands and a diversity of plant species. The program also deals with controlling exotic, invasive plant species (or noxious weeds). During FY 2003, program activities focused on accomplishing HFQLG Pilot Project goals. The identified shortfall of 10.9 FTEs in the vegetation management program area consists of HFQLG support staff: 85 percent of this need is supported by the Forest's current staffing plan. Investment opportunities in this program include projects related to re-vegetation, noxious weed control, and inventory.

Data Management

The data management program includes work related to geographic information systems (GIS) and global positioning systems (GPS). This program supports information sharing both within and beyond the Forest via electronic, up-to-date, and accurate geographic databases. Program managers have identified staffing needs to develop new applications for project analyses and web-based tools and to convert legacy data to nationally-mandated standards. An investment of \$225,000 for 1 year is needed for mapping vegetation to meet national standards.

Land Ownership & Adjustment

The land ownership and adjustment program includes the following activities: acquiring lands to improve public access to national forest lands; consolidating ownerships for ease of management and administration; acquiring partial interests in lands for easements and rights-of-way; acquiring and/or conveying interests to resolve title claims or unauthorized occupancy; and surveying property boundary lines, compiling encroachments, and processing Small Tracts Act cases and criminal trespass. The Forest receives roughly two requests per month from individuals for specific land adjustments. The Forest has been unable to fund a lands staff officer to provide Forest-wide oversight of this program since FY 2002. The program also has an investment need to upgrade cadastral surveyor equipment at a cost of \$50,000 (one year); however, no funding is available to fill this need.

NOTE: Unlike some other national forests, the Plumas does not have a separate Specially Designated Areas Management program.

Public Use & Enjoyment (3.7 percent of the Forest budget)



Carl Raymond Photography

Hikers desire a different experience than motorized sport enthusiasts

Expanding recreational programs is a key strategic goal.



Carl Raymond Photography

Recreationists are using old timber hauling roads to reach their destinations

The public use and enjoyment functional area encompasses all activities aimed at providing Forest visitors with a safe, educational, and enjoyable experience. It includes the following program areas: visitor information, interpretation, recreation services, concessions management, visitor safety and law enforcement, and recreational special uses. Tourism has been identified as an area of economic growth for Plumas County, and the Forest leadership team has identified expanding the Plumas’ recreational program as a key strategic goal. However, the public use and enjoyment functional area has the least expenditures of the Forest’s six functional areas. If appropriated funding for public use and enjoyment programs continues to decrease (see “Adjusted Base Budget” section), partnerships will play a critical role in achieving this strategic goal.

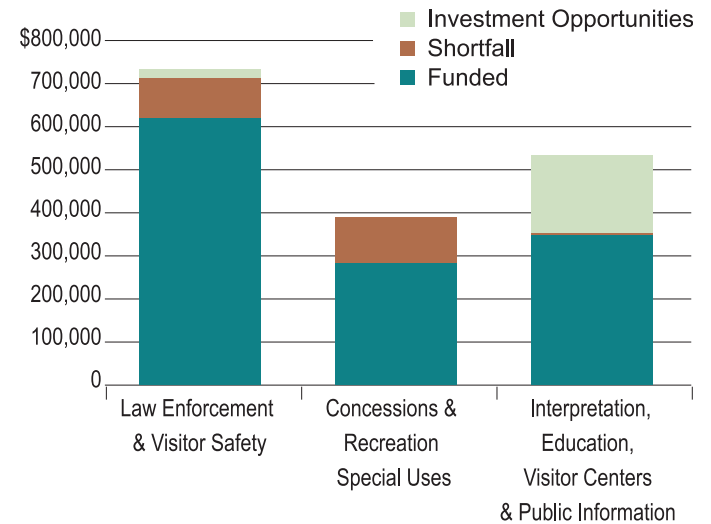
Concessions & Recreational Special Uses

Concessions and recreational special uses program staff administer, manage, and monitor recreation special uses, including recreation residences, lodges, and outfitter guide permits, and the Forest’s concessions program. The concessions program has benefited Plumas National Forest operations through “fee offset” arrangements (see “Concessionaries” section). Current staffing levels are not adequate to fully service existing contracts and permits. Program managers have identified a need of 1.5 FTEs to provide the capacity required to meet management and monitoring standards.

Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretation & Education

This program promotes effective dissemination of information to the visiting public related to recreational opportunities, forest stewardship, and site interpretation. Specific program responsibilities include providing staffing at visitor centers and information desks, developing communication materials to

Public Use & Enjoyment



2003 FUNDED		SHORTFALL		REQUIRED	
FTE	COST	FTE	COST	FTE	COST
18.15	\$1,239,374	3.60	\$399,367	21.75	\$1,439,241

enhance recreational visits, issuing special permits, and coordinating volunteer resources. Plumas National Forest staff work in partnership with the Plumas National Forest Interpretive Association to provide meaningful interpretive programs, signage, and literature. This program area needs personnel to support and develop this partnership. It also has investment opportunities for developing an interpretive strategy and enhancing visitor services through information upgrades.

Law Enforcement & Visitor Safety

This program area combines law enforcement and visitor safety under a broad range of activities designed to protect Forest visitors as well as employees and forest resources. Program staff provide collateral law enforcement, detect and respond to misdemeanors and petty incidents, write notices and citations,



Enjoying nature when young can lead to a lifetime of interest in the outdoors

and patrol recreational areas. Population within 50 miles of the Forest boundary has increased by 20 percent in the last 10 years, resulting in more visitors and more law enforcement problems. At this time, the program needs one additional law enforcement officer position. The addition of an administrative clerk position would alleviate burdens on current staff and increase law enforcement staff time significantly. Program managers have identified an investment need of \$20,500 for staff training and communications equipment upgrades.

NOTE: The Plumas National Forest has not been granted authority for a recreation fee collection program.

Facilities, Operations & Maintenance (15.3 percent of the Forest budget)

The facilities, operations, and maintenance functional area includes activities required to manage and operate the Forest's infrastructure (buildings, roads, trails, utilities, and campgrounds) on a daily basis.

Buildings, Grounds & Utilities

This program focuses on providing safe and efficient facilities for Plumas National Forest employees and visitors. The program also emphasizes prolonging the life of all utility systems through maintenance activities, such as generator rebuilding, water pumping station maintenance, waterline replacement, and so forth. The program currently needs a civil engineer, technician, and accountant to ensure compliance with operational standards as well as perform project planning and ongoing program support. Program managers have identified over \$5 million in investment opportunities to improve, replace, or add facilities and infrastructure systems.

Campgrounds & Developed Sites

The Plumas National Forest has 32 campgrounds with a total of 455 campsites; a number of undeveloped campsites with restroom facilities that serve hunters and trekkers; and 5 Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) camps with minimal facilities. All developed campgrounds are managed by concessionaires under permit. The campgrounds and developed sites program is responsible for maintaining these sites, which includes cleaning and repairing restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings and grills, and signs; renting portable toilets; pumping vault toilets; testing and maintaining water systems; posting kiosks with current information; picking up and hauling trash; collecting fees; providing interpretative services; and maintaining trails. Adding three additional Recreation Planners is crucial for the Forest to expand and manage its recreation program. While these positions will have responsibilities beyond campground needs, they will be placed within this program area. Program managers have identified approximately \$3.4 million in priority investment needs (non-personnel) related to campgrounds.

Concentrated Use Areas

The Plumas National Forest does not currently have an active concentrated use area program due to low usage volumes. However, given the trend of increasing recreational use, concentrated use is expected to become an active program on the Forest, with potentially significant future resource needs.

Roads

Roads program staff assess and provide for the minimum forest transportation system that best serves current and anticipated uses as directed by various local and national forest land use plans, coordinated with public and private transportation agencies, and balanced with land health and



Infrastructure in many campgrounds was built decades ago and desperately needs maintenance



Maintained roads support a variety of users



Lee Anne Schramel

Local groups are a big help with maintenance in smaller recreation developments

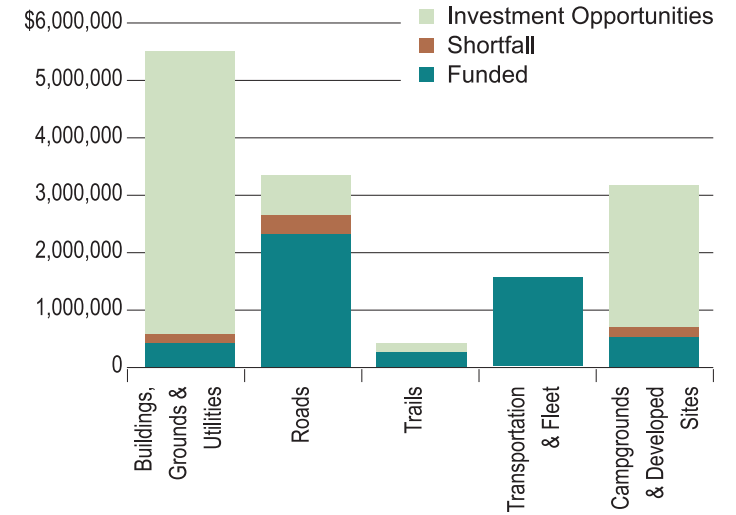
water quality concerns. Roads program managers have identified adequate personnel needs to ensure compliance with operational standards as well as to conduct project planning and ongoing program coordination. Approximately \$20 million for roads projects is expected to be funded by Capital Investment Project monies, Forest Service appropriations, Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1976 “3R” (resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation) Program, and the Highway Transportation Bill for Public Forest Service Roads.

Trails

The trails program staff manages the 243 miles of non-motorized hiking trails on the Plumas National Forest as well as the Forest’s trail system for summer and winter motorized use. The winter OHV program (snowmobiling) is managed primarily through volunteer support. While no additional personnel needs have been identified for this program area, there are concerns regarding the Forest’s ability to comply with operational standards due to the seasonal nature of the work.

Deferred maintenance is a national issue.

Facilities, Operations, & Maintenance



2003 FUNDED		SHORTFALL		REQUIRED	
FTE	COST	FTE	COST	FTE	COST
42.05	\$5,113,202	8.10	\$9,022,064	50.15	\$5,778,266

Opportunities for improved program coordination (with such programs as fire suppression and hazardous fuels reduction) should be explored.

Transportation & Fleet

The Plumas’ transportation and fleet program is centrally administered through the Lassen National Forest. Responsibilities include acquiring, operating, using, maintaining, and disposing of equipment. The fleet maintenance program has been transitioned to a private service provider. No additional personnel needs have been identified for this program area.

Management & Administration (13.7 percent of the Forest budget)

The management and administration functional area encompasses Forest-wide management and administrative support activities. It includes programs in general and district administration, public affairs, planning, human resource management, and leadership and financial management.

General Management

The general management program includes the office of the forest supervisor and deputy forest supervisor. The forest supervisor is responsible for overall management, protection and development of the Plumas' resources. Activities include short and long range planning; overseeing all operations and people; coordinating on-going activities; and integrating resource programs across the Forest. This program area also has responsibility for high-level interactions with other government agencies as well as corporate, nonprofit, and public institutions. This program area is adequately staffed to execute these functions.

General Administration

The general administration program area includes activities related to civil rights, labor relations and human resource management. This program area also covers certain non-personnel overhead costs for general Forest operations, primarily related to contracted services, utilities, rent, and supplies. The human resources group will be important in hiring the positions identified in this business plan. An additional FTE is needed to support this function.

Financial Management

The financial management program provides the Forest's budget and accounting functions. In addition to forest-level finance activities, the Plumas' financial management program staff is responsible for managing financial operations for the Sierra Cascade Province. This program needs to add 2.1 FTEs to support both unit- and province-level financial operations. In addition, the financial management program will expand as the Forest continues to develop new partnerships. To build this resource, the Forest

leadership team has identified the need for one FTE to focus on partnership initiatives, and is planning to hire a Presidential Fellow in 2004 to provide leadership in this area.

District Management

The Plumas National Forest is divided into three ranger districts: Feather River, Mt. Hough, and Beckwourth. A district ranger leads each district office with the assistance of a support staff. District rangers and their staffs are responsible for on-the-ground management of the district's resources, including soil, land, water, wildlife and fish habitats, minerals, forage, wilderness and visual areas, and outdoor recreation. This requires extensive planning, including collaboration and coordination with other public and private institutions. The district ranger and administrative support staff are also responsible for managing the district workforce, housing, business and office functions. In addition, the Mt. Hough Ranger District has identified an investment priority of \$240,000 (over a one-year period) to build a 180-person conference facility that would be used by all ranger districts.

Planning

The planning staff provides leadership and support for environmental review and planning efforts, including compliance of the National Environmental Policy Act. This program area is also responsible for stewardship of the Plumas National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and re-licensing of hydroelectric projects. The planning staff has identified a need for additional personnel to establish a core Forest-level interdisciplinary team. The team would be responsible for revising the Plumas' Land and Resource Management Plan as well as monitoring Forest Plan implementation and producing the Forest's annual monitoring report.



Different perspectives create better land management decisions

Managers are responsible for the overall management and protection of the Plumas' resources.



Land Management encompasses more than natural resources

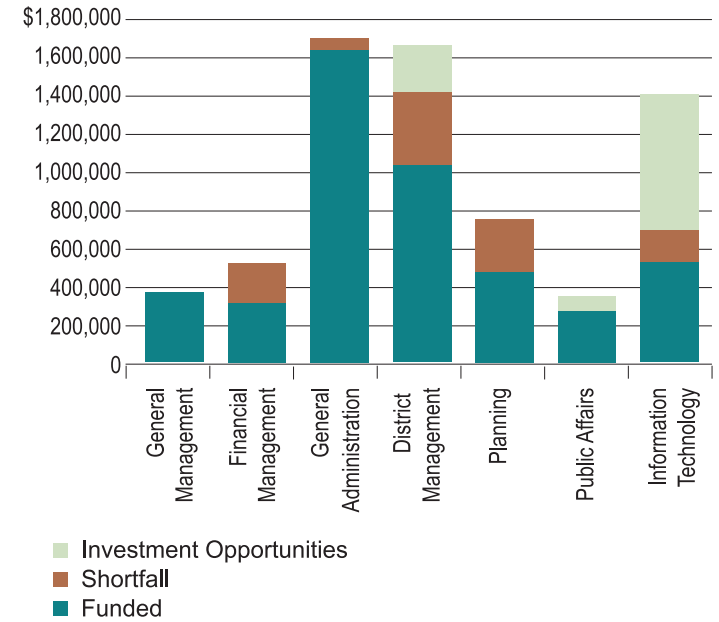
Public Affairs

The public affairs program area provides leadership, strategic planning, and staff support for developing and maintaining external relationships and partnerships. Additionally, this program supports internal relations between Forest personnel, the Sierra Cascade Province, the Pacific Southwest Regional Office, and the Forest Service's Washington Office. Responsibilities include maintaining the Forest's website and developing and producing informational publications. While current staffing levels are adequate, program managers have identified investment opportunities to support strategic initiatives in the areas of partnerships and conservation education.

Information Technology

In the past, the information and management technology (IMT) program was a Forest-level program. However, based on the results of a 2004 competitive sourcing study, this program has

Management & Administration



2003 FUNDED		SHORTFALL		REQUIRED	
FTE	COST	FTE	COST	FTE	COST
39.02	\$4,558,360	12.76	\$1,094,115	51.78	\$5,652,475

been centralized for the entire agency, with the goal of providing the highest quality, most cost-effective technology to meet on-going, Forest Service-wide demands. A national help-desk available by telephone and internet provide customer service in addition to strategically placed field representatives.

Fire & Aviation Management (52 percent of the Forest budget)

The fire management organization is responsible for protecting natural resources, forest assets, and human lives from wildfires. The fire and aviation management functional area encompasses all activities related to wildfire pre-suppression, suppression, and preparedness. It also includes the hazardous fuels reduction program as well as national support for large fires and other emergencies.

Fire Management & Administration

The fire management and administration program involves management, supervision, and oversight of all fire management operations. Responsibilities include budgeting, planning, scheduling, general supervision, and developing and monitoring safety plans. Chief officers and dispatch personnel are responsible for developing, implementing, and maintaining interagency agreements and associated payments for interagency assistance related to fighting forest fires. Fire-fighting is often a cooperative effort involving multiple agencies. Current staffing is adequate for this program area.

Fire Preparedness & Pre-Suppression

The fire preparedness and pre-suppression program provides protection for both natural resources and improvements in the Forest from the adverse effects of wildfires. Program activities include fire prevention, fire detection (lookout tower and air reconnaissance), maintenance of fire suppression equipment and apparatus, and training of personnel. The program currently has sufficient staffing. Program managers have identified a need for approximately \$3.15 million in investment funds to upgrade or replace fire preparedness and pre-suppression facilities and equipment, which will support increased suppression resources needed to implement the National Fire Plan.

Hazardous Fuels Reduction

The hazardous fuels reduction program is linked to the vegetation management program. Together, the goal of these programs is to protect communities and provide for sustainable wildland



Strategy and interagency communications are key components of community fire planning

ecosystems by managing for healthy, resilient forests and reducing the threat of catastrophic fires. Program activities are designed to implement HFQLG Pilot Project resource management activities; reduce fuels in wildland-urban interfaces (WUIs); reduce fire hazards to key community infrastructure (power, water, communication systems, and watersheds); reduce the threat of catastrophic fire to habitat for designated threatened, endangered, and sensitive species; and address forest health problems (insects and disease infestations). Additional staff resources (to be funded primarily by the HFQLG earmark) will provide the foundation for an interdisciplinary team to plan and implement projects on each ranger district. (These positions will be shared with the vegetation management program.) Currently, hazardous fuels reduction program investment priorities are fully funded.

Reducing hazardous fuels protects communities & restores forest health.



Lee Anne Schramel

Fuel-breaks increase survivability of homes next to forested landscapes

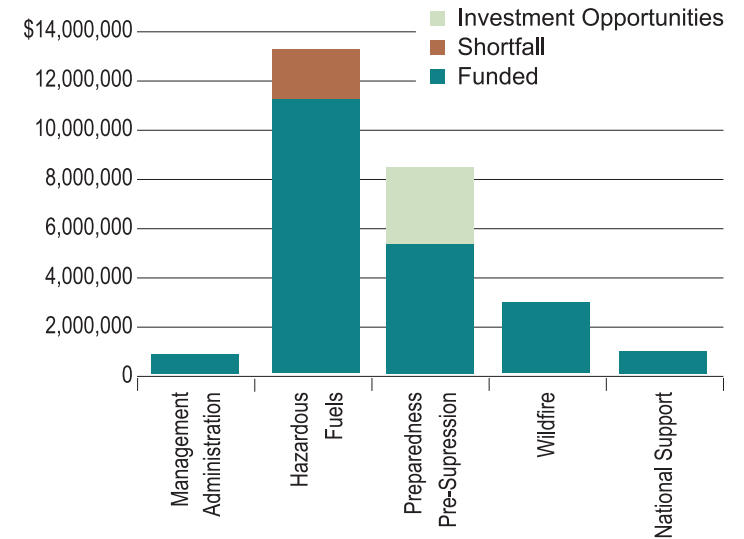
Wildfire Suppression

Fire management personnel respond to all risk incidents on the Plumas National Forest. Risk incidents include wildfires, structure fires, vehicle fires, hazardous material spills, medical aids, traffic accidents, and false alarms. The wildfire suppression program is fully staffed, and has no additional personnel needs at this time.

National Fire & Disaster Relief Support

National fire and disaster support includes all risk assignments for Plumas employees helping other jurisdictions throughout the United States and occasionally in foreign countries. Most of these assignments relate to fighting large wildland fires elsewhere in the United States, while a smaller proportion relate to non-fire disaster response. The national fire and disaster support program has no additional personnel needs beyond current staffing.

Fire Management



2003 FUNDED		SHORTFALL		REQUIRED	
FTE	COST	FTE	COST	FTE	COST
202.9	\$21,130,466	29.92	\$2,044,124	232.8	\$23,174,590

Commodities & Commercial Uses (7.2 percent of the Forest budget)

The commodity and commercial uses functional area encompasses activities related to producing and managing a wide variety of commodities and commercial products from the Forest. Program areas include non-recreational special use permits, grazing, minerals and mining activities, forest products, and timber. Most of the expenditures in this functional area have resided in the timber program and have been associated with activities tied to the HFQLG Pilot Project program of work. While earmark funding has been allocated for this purpose, other programs in the commodities and commercial uses functional area have experienced a lack of resources, substantial reclamation obligations, and mandates with no associated funding.

Forest Products

The forest products program provides oversight related to harvest of forest vegetative products other than commercial timber. Such harvests include fuel wood, Christmas trees, boughs, posts, poles, cones, seeds, and various plants for research purposes. Program staff work to ensure public access to these resources while minimizing the impact of harvesting activities on forest resources and managing compliance with regulations. Program managers have identified the need for additional staff to fully administer the fuel wood program. There is an investment opportunity for developing a gathering area for selected native plants.

Timber

The timber management program staff manages the treatment of both live and dead trees that have commercial value. Activities include the planning, preparation, and administration of timber sales. This program area also provides support for the salvage sale fund, a program intended to reduce fuel loads resulting from wildfire, insects, disease or other causes of

significant forest mortality. The HFQLG Pilot Project requires an increased program of work for timber management from FY 2004 through FY 2009, corresponding to an increase in group selection and individual tree selection treatment levels. This effort will require an additional 12.4 FTEs in support staff. The Forest's current staffing plan addresses 86 percent of this need.

Non-Recreation Special Uses

This program includes activities related to permitting and monitoring a wide variety of special uses, such as water diversions for domestic and agricultural uses, power facilities, outfitter and guiding organizations, private and county road easements, and transmission communication towers and lines on the Forest. The Forest has been unable to fund a lands staff officer since FY 2002 to oversee this program. (This position would be shared with the land ownership and adjustment and minerals programs). In addition, a need for 1.5 FTEs has been identified to capture the backlog of administration and compliance work for non-recreation special use permits on each ranger district. (These positions would also administer recreation special use permits.)

Minerals

The minerals program involves administration of current mineral operations in accordance with legal and regulatory authority and policy. Minerals program staff process applications, permits and other use authorizations; administer access to mineral resource activities on the Forest; and develop reclamation plans for mined lands and geologic hazards to protect endangered and sensitive plants and animals. The Plumas has been unable to fund a lands staff officer since FY 2002 to oversee this program. (This position would be shared with the land ownership and adjustment and non-recreation special uses programs). An additional 2 FTEs are needed to address the oversight of abandoned mines and related lands: an estimated 600 abandoned mines are planned for reclamation over a 10-year period at an estimated cost of \$4,200,000.



Reservoirs on national forest lands were created to secure supplies of water for communities, many located hundreds of miles downstream



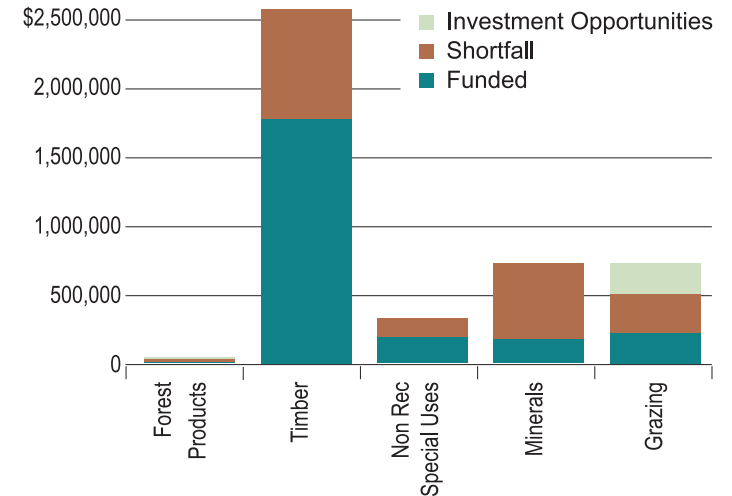
National Forests have a "multiple-use" mission, different than National Parks

National Forest Management includes commodity & commercial uses.

Grazing

The grazing program staff is responsible for authorizing, managing, and monitoring livestock grazing applications and permits on the Plumas. The Forest is pursuing compliance with the Recission Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-19, section 504), which requires national forests to adhere to a schedule for completing NEPA analyses and decisions on grazing allotments

Commodity & Commercial Uses



2003 FUNDED		SHORTFALL		REQUIRED	
FTE	COST	FTE	COST	FTE	COST
33.85	\$2,391,503	17.79	\$2,026,878	51.64	\$4,183,381

within a 15-year period, ending in 2010. The Plumas has 66 allotments, 44 of which require NEPA compliance. While NEPA analysis and documentation has been completed on 18 allotments, revisions will be required for 14 of them within 2 to 3 years for permit re-issuance. An amendment to the Recission Act requires all work to be completed by 2008. Shortfalls in the grazing program area include the resources required to comply with this mandate. Investment opportunities include a baseline inventory process to assist with NEPA analyses and an irrigation ditch restoration project.

Founding Legislation & Administration

Authorized by Congress in the Creative Act of 1891, forest reserves were established by Presidential Proclamation throughout the nation in response to public outcry against rampant deforestation in the eastern part of the United States. The focus of the Act extended beyond timber preservation, however, as people believed that timber at the headwaters of streams should be protected to prevent devastating floods and ensure a consistent water supply for irrigation in the more arid western states and territories. The Act also supported reserves for animals, fish, and vegetation, and to provide a place for people to relax, recreate, and learn. The Organic Act of 1897 mandated further protection for these areas to “protect the forests,” secure “favorable conditions of water flows,” and “furnish a continuous supply of timber.”

The U.S. Department of the Interior initially administered the reserves with technical assistance from foresters working under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In 1905, the reserves were transferred to the USDA for management by the Forest Service under Gifford Pinchot. In 1907, the forest reserves were renamed national forests.

The area that was to become the Plumas National Forest was originally designated as the Plumas and Diamond Mountain Forest Reserves in 1905. Both were established by executive orders issued by President Theodore Roosevelt on March 27 and July 14, 1905, respectively. On July 1, 1908, President Roosevelt signed an executive order officially combining the Plumas and Diamond Mountain Forest Reserves into the newly created Plumas National Forest. Subsequent land transfers between the Lassen, Plumas, and Tahoe National Forests resulted in the present day Plumas National Forest boundary.

A Spanish explorer scouting the region in 1820 discovered “Rio de las Plumas” (now known as the Feather River) when he saw what looked like bird feathers floating on the water. “Plumas,” Spanish for “feathers,” was also used to name the largest county currently within Plumas National Forest boundaries, and eventually became the name of the national forest as well.

In 1904, J. H. Tompkins conducted a study of the area. To adequately staff the reserves that would shortly become the Plumas National Forest, he recommended the following administration:

“...one supervisor, who would be stationed at Quincy, and five rangers. One ranger should be in charge of the territory south of the Middle Fork of the Feather River, one in the region between the Middle and North Forks, and one north of the North Fork. These three are to guard the roads and should be required to stick closely to this part of the work, keeping in close touch with the supervisor by frequent reports. The two rangers at large are detailed to work other than the road patrol. These men are to regularly exchange duties with the road guards so that all may be familiar with ... reserve work. The object of having road guards is to prevent fires ... (Tompkins 1904:21).”

As recommended, the Supervisor's Office was centrally located in Quincy. The three areas of administration recommended, however, underwent a cycle of expansion and contraction,



Lee Anne Schramel

Passion for land stewardship remains strong in present day employees

eventually solidifying into six ranger districts. In the 1960s, these ranger districts included the La Porte and Oroville Districts on the west side of the Forest, Quincy and Greenville Ranger Districts in the central area, and Beckwourth and Milford Ranger Districts to the east. In 1996, the six ranger districts were consolidated into the present-day three ranger districts, which include the Beckwourth District in the east, the Mt. Hough District in the central area, and the Feather River District on the western side of the Forest.



Gordon Keller

Employee expertise helps in Boliva and elsewhere around the globe

Acknowledgments



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