

FREMONT – WINEMA NATIONAL FORESTS

TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE REPORT

FY 2002



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March 6, 2003

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OBJECTIVE

The objective of this report is to provide biologists and managers of the Fremont – Winema National Forests a tool to document terrestrial wildlife budgets and accomplishments, including various activity reports, over time.

BUDGET

The NFWF Working Budget plus carry over was: \$1,200,000
Fire suppression “borrowed”: 200,000
The unobligated balance was: 133,000
Total expenditures for NFWF in FY2002 were: \$ 867,000

Terrestrial Wildlife was planned at approximately 40% of the total allocation. Of this, 30% of the total was planned for terrestrial non-TES wildlife and 10% for terrestrial TES wildlife. Of the remaining NFWF funds, approximately 10% was planned for botany, 40% for fisheries, and 10% for TES fish.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Table 1. Accomplishment

Accomplishment	Fremont	Winema
Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species		
Structures	0	0
Acres	2	3
Other Wildlife		
Structures	0	0
Acres	708	2,515

ACTIVITIES

SPOTTED OWL DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY

The southern Cascades spotted owl demographic study conducted by Oregon State University continued in 2002. The study collects information on adult and juvenile survival rate, reproductive rates, annual rate of population change, and other characteristics of spotted owl in the southern Cascades, including the Klamath Ranger District.

For 2002 on the Klamath District, forty-seven nest sites were visited (Anthony, R. and others, 2002). Twenty-six nests were occupied by spotted owl and thirteen of the sites produced twenty-five young. Of the forty-seven sites, fourteen were occupied by barred owl pairs or barred owl males.

YELLOW RAIL

Ken Popper, The Nature Conservancy, monitors yellow rails annually at sites on the Winema National Forest. At Fourmile Creek, a maximum of 11 male Yellow Rails were heard, which is the lowest number recorded since complete surveys began in 1996. The maximum number of yellow rails heard during a single survey at Fourmile Creek has ranged from 27 (in 2000) to 73 (in 1998). Lundsten and Popper (2002) suggest that the decline in numbers may be due to the low water year of 2001 which may have reduced nest attempts and nest success, resulting in lower numbers of adult males a year later.

Five males were heard at Mares Egg Spring. Three Yellow Rails were banded in this area.

CARNIVORE SURVEY

In 2002, 12,480 acres of the Fremont National Forest and 10,720 acres of Klamath Falls Resource Area BLM land were surveyed to determine the presence of carnivore species within the Gerber Watershed (Kellam 2002).

Camera systems, using standardized protocol methods, were placed in a variety of study units. Snow track surveys were performed within each study unit.

In 2002, 11,840 acres of Fremont NF and 1,120 acres of KFRA BLM land within the Goodlow Rim/Mountain Study Area were surveyed. American marten, spotted skunk, striped skunk, long-tailed weasel, common raccoon, gray fox, coyote, mountain lion, and bobcat were carnivores detected in this area.

BALD EAGLE MONITORING

Bald eagle census and productivity monitoring continues on the Forests through a cooperative effort with Oregon State University (Isaacs and Anthony 2002). Bald eagle populations continue to increase on the Forests. On the Winema there were thirty-nine active bald eagle nest sites of which twenty-three were productive, producing forty young. On the Fremont there were nineteen active nests of which eleven were productive, producing fifteen young. Four nests were destroyed by wildfire in the Grizzly, Winter, and Toolbox fires.

Table 2. Status of bald eagle nest sites on the Winema NF, 2002

Nest	Productivity	Comments
Lane Ranch	2	
Three Creeks	1	
Three Creeks N	1	
Military Crossing	F	Failed
Bloody Point	2	
Little Wocus Bay	F	Failed
Wocus Bay	F	Failed
Soloman Lake	2	
Sevenmile/Short Creeks	2	
Head of the Williamson	2	
Threemile Creek	2	
Crystal Spring	F	Failed
Steiger Butte N	2	
Cave Mountain	1	
Chiloquin Helipad	2	
Copeland Canyon	2	
Malone Spring N	3	
Rock Creek	F	Failed
Malone Spring S	1	
Recreation Creek	2	
Rocky Point	F	Failed
Modoc Rim	1	
Lobert Draw	1	
Lobert Telephone	F	Failed
Telephone Flat	U	Not active
Skeen Ranch	2	
Pelican Bay	U	Not active
Odessa/Tomahawk	2	
Odessa Store	2	
Tomahawk	F	Failed
Odessa Dump	F	Failed
Varney Creek	1	
Odessa Dump S	F	Failed
Modoc Lookout	F	Failed
Modoc Point	O	Outcome not determined
Craigs Hole	F	Failed
Dams Canyon	F	Failed
Cline Flat	3	
Lake of the Woods	F	Failed
Moss Creek	GE	Nest occupied by golden eagles
Dry Lakes	F	Failed
Buck Lake	1	

Table 3. Status of bald eagle nest sites on the Fremont NF, 2002

Nest	Productivity	Comments
N Fork Sprague	F	Failed
Medicine Mountain	2	
Campbell Reservoir	NS	Not surveyed
Goodlow Mountain	1	
Tull Reservoir	F	Failed
Flat Top	2	
Oatman Flat	1	
Thompson Reservoir	F	Failed
West Island	1	
Brattain Ridge	Pvt	On private land alternate in '02
Winter Rim	F	Failed
Big Flat	2	
Bull Meadow	1	
Heart Lake	1	
Cottonwood Reservoir	2	
Drews Reservoir	F	Failed
South Arm Reservoir	O	Outcome not determined
Dog Lake	F	Failed
Drews Reservoir S	1	
Venator Creek	F	Failed
Crane Creek	1	

HERPETOLOGICAL SURVEY

A herpetological survey of the Goodlow Mountain/Gerber area was conducted by Klamath Falls Resource Area BLM in 2002.

The Goodlow Rim area was more diverse than the rest of the areas surveyed with sagebrush lizard, western fence lizard, skink, gopher snake, and garter snakes present. There is good amphibian habitat in the Upper Barnes Valley area, but many bullfrogs preclude occupancy by other amphibians.

Over the entire area the survey found sagebrush lizards, western fence lizards, skinks, both common garter snakes and western terrestrial garter snakes, gopher snakes, and one western rattlesnake dead on the road.

WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKER STUDY

A study of white-headed woodpeckers begun in 1997 continued on the Deschutes and Winema National Forests in 2002. Frenzel (2002) found 36 active nests on the Deschutes and 19 active nests on the Winema. Forty-three of the nests found in 2002 were in ponderosa pine, 4 were in mixed pine, and 8 were in dry mixed conifer. Seventy-three percent were in previously harvested areas. All but two of the 55 nests were in completely dead trees. The woodpeckers were found nesting in relatively open sites. Frenzel concludes that assuming a closed population,

the productivity and adult survivorship at the study areas from 1997 through 2002 are inadequate to maintain population replacement. He also concluded that further study is necessary.

“BIRDS IN BURNS” LANDBIRD RESEARCH

A research study began in 2002 to compare the ecological consequences of fire management for avifauna and their habitats in ponderosa pine forests across the Intermountain West. This study has been designed by the Rocky Mountain Research Station, and will compare three fire conditions located across the Intermountain West: (1) unburned forests (fires absent for at least 70 years), (2) prescribed understory fire, and (3) wildland fire, which represent a broad spectrum of burn severity and heterogeneity (Saab, Kotliar, and Block ,2001). The study is an experimental approach to compare terrestrial indicators before and after prescribed burns, and in unburned controls at multiple spatial scales. This research has three principal objectives:

- I.** Characterize and compare the following response variables among three fire conditions of ponderosa pine/mixed coniferous: (a) fuels and upland vegetation, (b) avian communities, and (c) landscape structure and function.
- II.** Develop methods for using remote sensing to evaluate fire-prone habitats at multiple spatial scales for cavity-nesting birds
- III.** Develop cost-effective, accurate, and efficient protocols for monitoring and evaluating nesting bird habitats in response to different fire conditions.

The study area located on the Fremont is in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Two study plots are located on USFS land, and two study plots are located on TNC land. In 2002, the following data was collected:

Preliminary Results and Discussion:

- 1) Number of nests monitored by species and the number of those nests that fledged at least one young.**

Table 4. Number of nests monitored

Species	Unit				Grand Total
	CN	CS	TN	TS	
Hairy woodpecker	1	1	4	3	9
Northern flicker	3	2	3	6	14
Pygmy nuthatch	3	1		3	7
Red-breasted sapsucker			3		3
White-headed woodpecker	1				1
Williamson’s sapsucker	6	2		3	11
Black-backed woodpecker	1				1
Grand Total	15	6	10	15	46

We monitored 47 nests. One black-backed woodpecker was more than 100 meters outside Treatment North. It was monitored to provide information to Fremont NF managers, but is not

included in the totals given below. Of the 46 nests monitored for this study, six failed. All six nest failures were Northern flickers.

Table 5. Number of nests that fledged at least 1 young

Species	Unit				Grand Total
	CN	CS	TN	TS	
Hairy woodpecker	1	1	4	3	9
Northern flicker	2	2	1	3	8
Pygmy nuthatch	3	1		3	7
Red-breasted sapsucker			3		3
White-headed woodpecker	1				1
Williamson's sapsucker	6	2		3	11
Black-backed woodpecker	1				1
Grand Total	14	6	8	12	40

Point counts were also conducted at 80 stations. We detected 56 species during point counts made 1279 detections in this first season. Vegetation plots were also conducted at the 46 nest site locations and at 31 of the random, point count stations.

Monitoring will continue in 2003. The treatment plots are scheduled for understory thinning in the fall of 2003, and prescribed fire is scheduled for the fall of 2004.

INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

The Forests conducted presentations to several schools and organizations in 2002. Notable among these was a presentation using pelts, skulls, and plaster track casts for students from Triad School of Klamath Falls at Mountain Lakes Bible Camp.



HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

One of the more dramatic habitat improvement projects was the restoration of Bullfrog Meadow. Evidence from aerial photography over several decades indicated significant encroachment of lodgepole pine into moist and wet meadow habitat. The project consisted of Oregon Hunter's Association partners cutting lodgepole as well as contracted cutting and piling of units, then a fall burn after cutting was completed.



REFERENCES

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