



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Pacific  
Southwest  
Region

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February 2004



# Business Plan for the San Bernardino National Forest



## A Window of Opportunity



# Welcome to the San Bernardino National Forest

How do we care  
for the land and  
serve people?

“We” is all  
of us — the  
Forest Service  
employees,  
volunteers,  
non-profit  
partners,  
business  
partners, and  
wider local, state,  
national, and  
international  
communities.



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Cover photo: Dry Lake is on the north side of 11,502' San Geronio Peak, the highest mountain in Southern California.  
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# Introduction

The San Bernardino National Forest is a special place. It has unique resources, and provides a haven for the soul in an urban environment. Many of Southern California's children have their first real experience with nature at a summer camp on the San Bernardino National Forest and there are countless recreation opportunities for the 24 million people who live here.

Each of us in Southern California has dreams of what the Forest can be. This Business Plan helps us to capture those dreams by bringing together the resources of both the community and the Forest Service in that effort. The plan is part of a continuing effort by the San Bernardino National Forest to become a model in public-private partnerships promoting the stewardship of our shared natural resources.

This Business Plan provides the outline for how we will achieve our mission of **Caring for the Land and Serving People**. It begins with an introduction to the forest, including an explanation of the diverse and ever changing array of forest uses. It next examines the opportunities for the community to share in the stewardship of the forest by answering the following questions:

- What work is required to manage the forest effectively?
- Where does the money come from, and what does the Forest do with it?
- How can I help?

Finally, the plan explores the forest's priorities for the future, including current and planned strategies for achieving its mission. By harnessing additional human energy and creativity, as well as untapped financial resources, the forest leadership aims to manage this forest in a manner worthy of its breathtaking natural beauty.

We welcome you to our growing circle of friends. We look forward to working with you!

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## Supervisor's Foreword



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Forest Supervisor Gene Zimmerman

The San Bernardino National Forest provides open space and recreational opportunities for the 24 million residents of Southern California. It also provides habitat for numerous species of threatened or endangered plants and animals. As we look to the future, the paramount question is, How do we care for the land and still serve all those people?

We do that by working together. “We” is all of us – the employees of the Forest Service, volunteers, non-profit partners, business partners, and wider local, state, national, and international communities. We are faced with a daunting task. It will take all of us and our collective resources to achieve the potential of the San Bernardino National Forest.

We currently face an unprecedented disaster of dead and dying trees, which creates the most serious catastrophic wildfire risk in the San Bernardino National Forest’s history – with all the risks to public safety and species habitat that this implies. The wildfires of 2003 did not reduce this risk, but added new challenges in revegetation and flood prevention. As a result, restoration of the forest will be our top priority work for years to come.

Over the longer term, the population of Southern California is expected to increase by 500,000 people per year for the next 20 years. Privately-owned open space is rapidly being converted to roads, subdivisions, and new communities. More and more people are turning to the forest, looking for solitude and outdoor recreational opportunities. How do we manage the use while ensuring the sustainability of the resources? Do we continue to close off portions of the forest to the public? Or do we – again, the we is all of us – look for more creative ways to manage the forest, care for the land, and serve so many people?

The San Bernardino National Forest Business Plan is intended to outline the operation of the forest in a format that is consistent with how the business world communicates. Its objective is to outline how financial and human resources are used and needed, today and in the future. It looks at the entirety of the work before us, and describes the gap between

the capacity of the forest’s human and financial resources and the entirety of the workload.

Many of you have helped manage the forest, and understand the daunting challenges we face. Your help has turned many of these challenges into opportunities – opportunities for us all to work together and make the forest a better place. You have helped by providing your muscle, your enthusiasm, your knowledge, and your wisdom. The future of this forest depends on your continuing to do so.

One thing is certain – the challenges of managing the San Bernardino National Forest will not get any easier. We need help, and I believe this business plan will be a great tool as we continue to reach out to the broader community in our collective efforts to bring more resources to bear on the many opportunities we face in the years ahead.

I would like to thank the National Parks Conservation Association for their leadership and hard work in putting this business plan together. They brought new ideas, perspectives, and energy to the dialogue, and as a result, we have made a bold step forward.

I welcome your thoughts and questions.

Gene Zimmerman  
Forest Supervisor



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Cross country skiing, one of many winter activities at Big Bear Lake

## Executive Summary

The San Bernardino National Forest is within a two-hour drive of most of the Los Angeles to San Diego corridor. Proximity to 24 million people creates an urban forest that results in management challenges in public safety, resource protection, forest health, and recreation – as well as a growing tax base and source of volunteers. Constructive collaboration between the public and Forest Service managers is critical for preserving a healthy public forest for future generations.

### Vegetation Mortality Crisis

Large stands of trees are dying in the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains due to a four-year drought – the worst in recorded history. The affected area, as of September 2003, was a shocking 474,000 acres (over 58% of the forest including inholdings), and growing rapidly. This crisis presents a severe threat to public safety and species habitat, as demonstrated by the wildfires of 2003.

### Budget History

The forest's budget allocations increased, even on an inflation-adjusted basis, from 1995 to 2002. But a closer analysis reveals that nearly all of the increase was for Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Fire Pre-Suppression & Preparedness under the National Fire Plan implemented in 2000. Non-fire budgets have increased at roughly the rate of inflation. Excluding expenditures for Wildfire Suppression and National Fire & Disaster Support (these expenditures are paid when incurred by the Forest Service's national organization), the total budget was slightly over \$27 million for 2002.

### Current Forest Operations

Actual expenditures paid for by the forest exceeded \$24 million (Wildfire Suppression and National Fire & Disaster Support expenditures paid for by the Forest Service's national organization were an

additional \$17 million). The difference between budget and actual expenditures of over \$3 million is accounted for by the fact that nationally, the Forest Service spent more money fighting fires than it had budgeted, requiring that it pull money from the other five functional areas' accounts to cover the deficit.

This business plan divides the SBNF's operations into six functional areas. The actual expenditures and shortfalls for the functional areas are displayed in the graph. In addition to the required funds shown in the graph, deferred maintenance and vegetation mortality response need substantial funding. Deferred road, trails and facilities maintenance totaled \$29.4 million. Estimates of the cost for a comprehensive response to the epidemic of dead trees approach \$300 million over the next ten years.

### Volunteers

During 2002, 1,900 volunteers contributed 79,000 hours of work worth an estimated \$1.2 million. One big peripheral benefit to the Forest is that volunteers

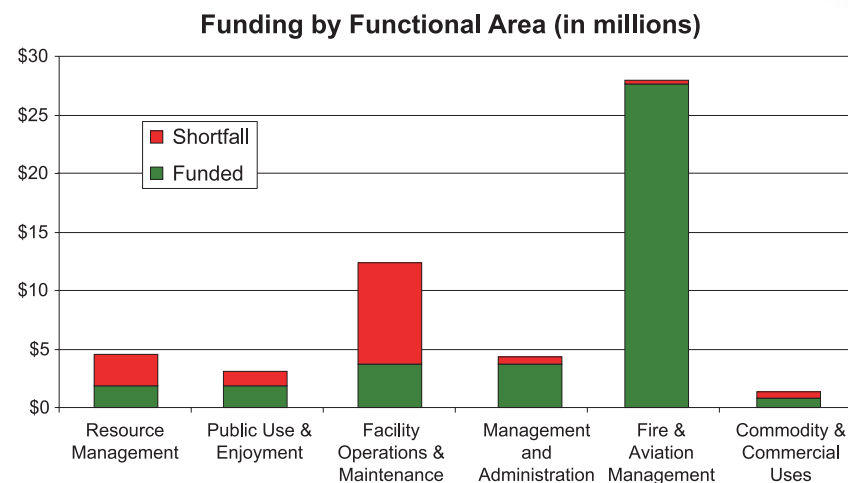
act as forest liaisons to the greater community. The forest has the strongest non-profit partnership program in the National Forest system.

### Investments

In the Investment Opportunities section, this plan describes unfunded potential investments for such projects as land acquisition, threatened and endangered species inventories, and facilities for public use and enjoyment.

### Shortfalls

Shortfalls shown in the graph at right are determined by measuring work performed in a functional area against a set of measurements – generally expressed as compliance with legal and policy mandates or the frequency with which an acceptable work standard is satisfied.





## Forest Overview



Bighorn Sheep in San Jacinto/Santa Rosa Mountains



Minnelusa Creek's year round flow results from a healthy forest.

It is rare that people understand the unique and often paradoxical role the Forest Service plays, and nowhere is that more true than in the San Bernardino National Forest.

Sometimes, the paradoxes are located right next to one another for all to see. On one side of a ridge near Big Bear Lake lies the volunteer-run Children's Forest; a short distance east lies a pharmaceutical-grade limestone mining operation. The Cajon Pass slices right through the forest, carrying cars and trucks, railroad freight cars, power transmission lines, and natural gas and jet fuel pipelines – as well as the geologically unique San Andreas Fault and the popular Pacific Crest Trail. The San Jacinto region of the forest shares tribal lands of the Cahuilla, Morongo, Santa Rosa, Soboba, Ramona and Agua Caliente Native Americans. Near the rapidly developing privately-owned communities of Lake Arrowhead and Big Bear Lake (called “inholdings” since they are completely within forest boundaries), one group of volunteers responsibly patrols a network of Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) trails on National Forest land, while another volunteer group helps preserve the solitude of the San Gorgonio Wilderness.

The San Bernardino National Forest provides many things for people who live or visit there. But those entrusted with its management must also constantly be aware that numerous wildlife and plant species, and natural processes – the very things responsible for the magic of the forest – call this home and must be preserved and protected.

Amidst the contrast, however, one thing is clear: with the startling growth of the inland coastal basins over the latter part of the 20th century, the San Bernardino National Forest is valued by the public more than ever as a recreational forest – and the operating infrastructure must evolve quickly to manage this reality.

Originally, the forest was home to Native Americans, since long before recorded history. Mexican and European settlements occurred sporadically for the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the chain of events that led to the creation of the National Forest in 1893 really began after California became part of the United States in 1848 (it had been part of Mexico since 1822).

In 1855, gold was discovered in the San Bernardino mountains. Over the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, mining, timber, and grazing grew quickly, taking a heavy toll on the land. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, significant sectors of the forest had been felled and overgrazed. Streams and rivers were silting in and water quality was declining. Meanwhile a growing population and a thriving citrus industry made increasing demands for clean drinking and irrigation water. A pioneering populace, who had conquered what seemed like an endless frontier, began to realize that it now must manage the land much more thoughtfully.



Managing lands for wildlife includes habitat for the Rosy boa.

## Enabling Legislation

A Board of Forestry report in 1886 found that “the necessity of the hour is an intelligent supervision of the forest and brush lands of California, with a view to their preservation.”

The Forest Reserve Act was passed in 1891, giving the president authority to “set apart and reserve, in any state or territory having public land bearing forests . . . as public reservations.”

From this act was born the San Bernardino Forest Reserve, which became the San Bernardino National Forest in 1907.

### San Bernardino National Forest Inventory

#### Natural Features

Total Acreage (SBNF land)	671,686
Inholding Acreage	147,313

#### Wilderness Acreage

Bighorn Mountain Acres	11,800
Cucamonga Acres	8,581
San Geronio Acres	56,722
San Jacinto Acres	32,248
Santa Rosa Acres	13,787
Sheep Mountain Acres	2,401

#### Threatened, Endangered & Sensitive

Animal Species	71
Plant Species	85

#### Roads and Trail Mileage

Wilderness Trails	150
Motorized Trails	36
Hiking/Equestrian/Biking Trails	352
Paved Roads	60
Unpaved Roads	1,178

#### Cultural and Historic Features

Prehistoric Archaeological Sites	616
Historical Archaeological Sites	330
Multi-Component Sites	43

#### Facilities

Visitor Centers	3
Family Campgrounds	23
Group Campgrounds	21
Primitive Campsites	100+
Picnic Areas	13
Equestrian Campgrounds	5
Accessible Fishing Piers	2
Staging Areas For Motorized Trails	2
Trailer Sites For Motorized Trails	8

#### Special Uses

Recreation Residences	786
Water / Irrigation Pipelines	98
Powerlines	30
Organization Camps	27
Oil and Gas Pipelines	14
Motion Picture / TV Locations	13
Recreation Events	13
Dams	7
Winter Recreation Resorts	7
Target Ranges	3
Airports / Heliports	2
Military Training Area	1
Other Special Uses	475



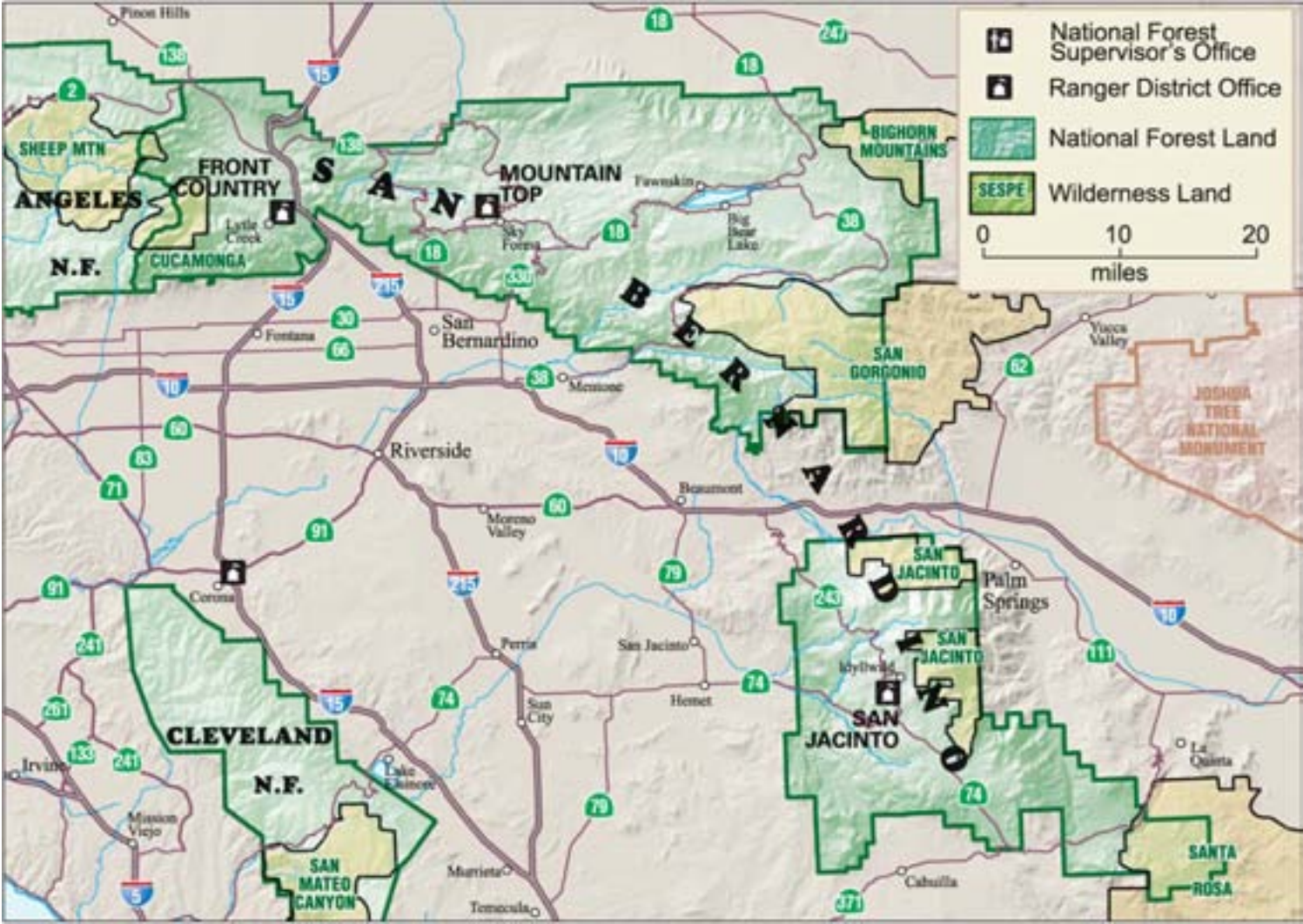
10,804' San Jacinto Peak in 1898

### Mission Statement

“Caring for the land and serving people.”



# San Bernardino National Forest Map



# Historical Context

## Fund Source Analysis

Appropriations, reimbursements, and revenue are the three major sources of the San Bernardino National Forest's financial resources.

### Appropriations

Two years prior to the beginning of a fiscal year, the forest prepares a budget request which is combined with others to make up the budget for the entire Forest Service. This is then submitted to the US Department of Agriculture, which in turn submits it to Congress as part of the president's budget request. Congress makes appropriations to the Forest Service, which divides its appropriation among its administrative regions. The regional offices then divide appropriated funds among the national forests. In 2002 appropriations accounted for 92 percent of the SBNF's total budget.

### Reimbursements

Over the last several years, the forest has entered into mutually beneficial, cooperative agreements with other federal, state, county and local governments, such as the

Bureau of Land Management, San Bernardino County, and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The forest is reimbursed for expenses when it performs work on behalf of these other organizations.

### Revenues

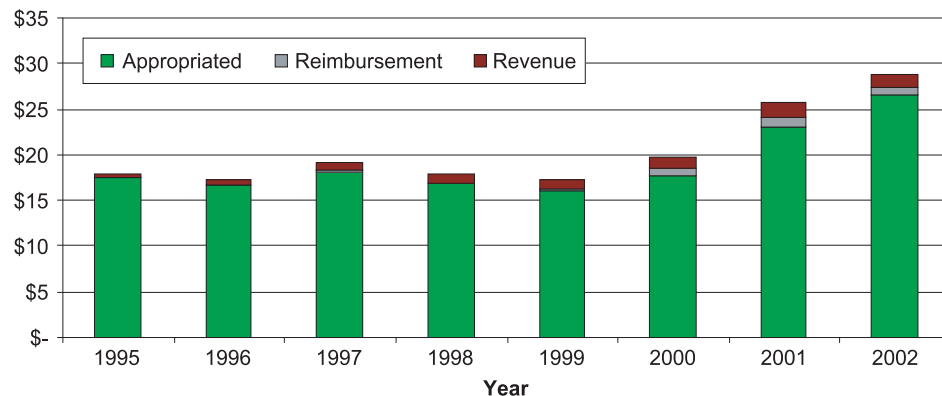
Nearly all of the growth in revenues since 1997 is the result of the Recreation Fee Demonstration (fee demo) program. In 1996, Congress authorized this program for the Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The intent of the program is to test the application of recreation fees that are reinvested in federal lands and used to improve natural resources, recreation facilities, and services. The program includes the National Forest Adventure Pass (a parking permit), High Cost Recovery (fees charged for high cost developed recreation sites), and the Golden Eagle Program (similar to the Adventure Pass, including admission to National Parks).

The other significant source of revenue is from a variety of special use permits. These funds are returned to the US treasury and local county governments, and thus are not part of the budget.

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From 1995 to 2002 appropriations decreased from 97% to 92% of the forest's budget, while reimbursements and revenue both increased as a percentage of the budget. In other words, the forest is producing new revenues and entering new cooperative agreements that complement its Congressional appropriations.

Funding Sources (in millions)



### A Note about the Chart

Wildfire Suppression and National Fire & Disaster Support are not included in the chart because the amount is not a part of San Bernardino National Forest's budget. Expenses for the two programs are paid for by the Forest Service's national organization when fires occur. Wildfire Suppression in the forest cost \$11 million, and National Fire & Disaster Support cost \$5.9 million during 2002.



## Adjusted Base Budget

The composition of the San Bernardino National Forest's budget allocations are changing to reflect two realities: One, more frequent and intense wildfires that threaten property and lives in increasingly developed areas near the forest and within its boundaries; and two, the realization that development leads to more recreation and more special uses of some types, such as telecommunications sites, while reducing the desirability of other uses, like mining.

### A Note About the Charts

Wildfire Suppression and National Fire & Disaster Support are not included in the Inflation Adjusted Budget chart because the amount is not a part of the San Bernardino National Forest's budget.

Expenses for these two programs are paid for by the Forest Service's national fire fighting fund when incidents occur. During 2002, Wildfire Suppression cost \$11 million, and National Fire & Disaster Support cost \$5.9 million.

Fire Pre-Suppression & Preparedness and Hazardous Fuels Reduction allocations are displayed separately from the rest of the budget items to highlight the increase in such allocations, and to permit insight into the other allocations that have experienced smaller increases over the same time period.

Adjusting budget dollars for inflation involves converting 1996 through 2002 dollars of purchasing power into 1995 dollars of purchasing power. Adjusted dollars are referred to as 1995 dollars, while non-adjusted dollars are referred to as nominal dollars.

Measured in inflation-adjusted 1995 dollars, the San Bernardino National Forest's total budget, excluding money spent for Wildfire Suppression and National Fire & Disaster Support, trended down to a low of \$15.7 million in 1999, and then increased dramatically from 2000 to 2002. In 1995 dollars, the total 2002 budget allocation was \$24.4 million.

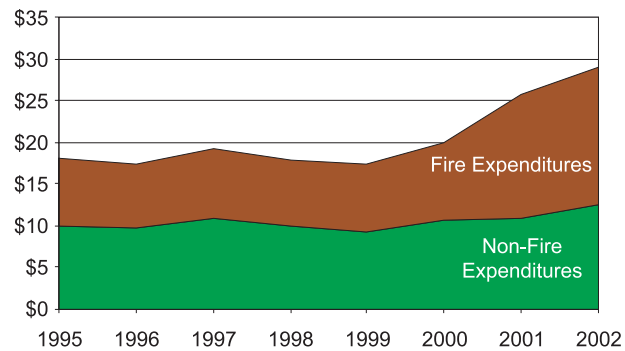
Specific items that affected budget allocations from 1995 through 2002 were:

1. An increase in 1997 for one-time land acquisitions; the 1997 increase was counter to the prevailing downward trend.

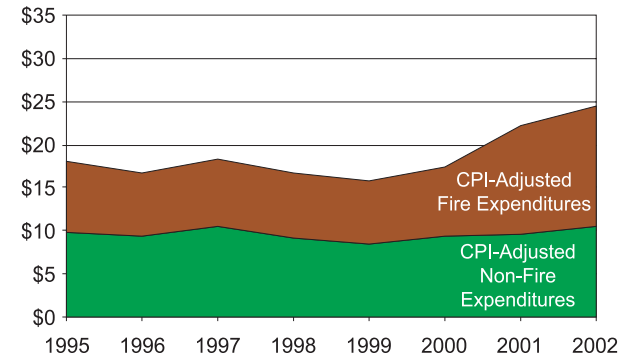
2. Beginning in 1999, Congress allocated more money for recreation to all of the nation's forests. Increases in nominal dollars were \$385,000, \$418,000 and \$899,000 for 1999, 2000, and 2002, respectively.
3. Dry weather in 2000, extending from the Pacific Northwest to Florida during 2000 led to a difficult fire season, which convinced Congress to increase funding for Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Fire Pre-Suppression & Preparedness under the National Fire Plan framework. The combined allocation for these two programs increased from \$9.2 million in 2000 to \$16.4 million in 2002 (in nominal dollars).

With the transition to a more healthy, sustainable forest and the rapidly increasing population, funding will have to shift from the current distribution toward higher proportions in Public Use & Enjoyment, Facilities Operations & Maintenance, and Resource Management.

Nominal Expenditures (in millions)



Expenditures in 1995 Dollars (in millions)



## Visitation

The San Bernardino National Forest is adjacent to one of the great metropolitan areas in North America, the Los Angeles megalopolis. The 2000 census showed that nearly 16 million people lived in just the four neighboring counties of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Orange and Riverside, with 24 million within a two hour drive of the forest. Recreational visitors and residents alike find the draw of the forest irresistible.

Visitors from the local communities, the greater metropolitan area, and farther flung communities expect to see a well maintained forest when they visit. San Bernardino County estimates that visitation exceeds 100,000 people on popular weekends during the summer and winter. Some seek the vistas of the San Geronio Wilderness Area, some seek the thrills of skiing at one of the mountain resorts, some seek to walk the famous Pacific Crest Trail, some seek to spend time with friends away from the hustle-and-bustle of their regular routines, and others want to learn about the

cultural and natural history of the forest by stopping at visitor centers to speak with volunteer and Forest Service interpreters.

Unlike most other national forests, visitors come from within the SBNF's boundaries, too. Approximately 100,000 people live within the San Bernardino and San Jacinto mountains. Living within forest boundaries permits easy access to numerous recreation opportunities.

In order to maintain forest health, all of this recreation must be managed with resource protection in mind. Threats to ecosystems originate from car and truck exhaust, fires started by nature or people, uninformed visitors recreating in fragile habitats, unauthorized off-road travel, and numerous other sources.

It is the goal of the San Bernardino National Forest to keep recreational opportunities abundant while closely monitoring and preserving the forest for future generations.

The explosive population growth of the nearby counties hints at the changing issues faced by the Forest.



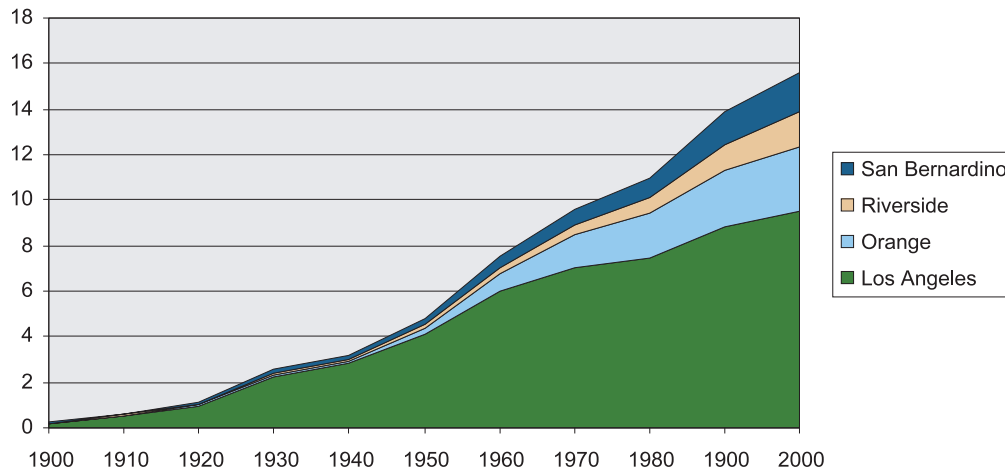
Copyright by Roy Murphy

Community growth puts pressure on open space.



Dogwood Campground, Lake Arrowhead

Population Growth of Neighboring Counties (in millions)





## Vegetation Mortality Crisis:

As of September 2003, over 474,000 acres of San Bernardino National Forests 819,000 gross acres display significant vegetation mortality.



Sometimes it's difficult for the public to tell the difference between dead trees and fall colors.



Marking hazardous insect-killed tree

### Public Safety, Forest Health and Resource Protection

Sustained lower-than-average rainfall during the last four years, and the thick low-lying vegetation and abnormally dense tree stands from a century of successful wildfire suppression have combined to reduce the ability of the forest's vegetation to resist pests, and ultimately death from any number of causes. People not familiar with the forest have been quick to blame the western bark beetle, but this insect has only become so abundant because of the root cause of the vegetation mortality – drought and vegetation densification.

As of September 2003, over 474,000 acres of the San Bernardino National Forest's 819,000 gross acres display significant vegetation mortality. Although over 140,000 acres burned in 2003, this had little effect on overall mortality. Vegetation impacted includes mixed conifer, oak woodlands, and chaparral. Mortality is near both developed and wilderness areas. In other words, the entire landscape, not just the developed areas near Lake Arrowhead, Big Bear and Idyllwild, is experiencing rapid vegetation mortality.

Vegetation mortality and threat of wildfire creates several risks. First, and foremost on the minds of

the Forest Service is the risk of death or injury to the people living in the forest or the urban interface if a wildfire starts.

Another risk is to the \$7 billion in residential and commercial property within the forest. Property value along the increasingly dense urban interface is not included in the \$7 billion. A third major risk is the destruction of threatened and endangered species and their habitats, watershed destabilization and the accompanying silting of streams, mudslides, and spoiling of recreation enjoyment.

The San Bernardino National Forest and other concerned agencies are not idly standing by. An estimate of \$300 million over ten years is needed for wildfire prevention, hazardous fuels treatments, and future thinning and vegetation management in order to tackle this issue. On the surface this seems like an enormous sum, but the risks outlined in the previous paragraph show that the costs of not being proactive may far exceed this.

The condition of the forest over the next decade will be defined by how the vegetation mortality issue is addressed.

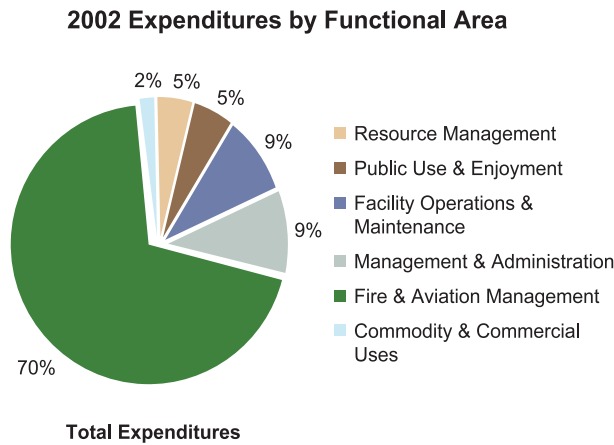
# Current Forest Operations

Some people believe that the Forest Service is a fire organization that performs other activities when it has extra time and resources. There is some truth to that – during 2002, Fire & Aviation Management accounted for 67% of all expenditures. In addition, unfunded firefighting expenses from the 2002 fires season pulled \$3 million from other forest programs.

The San Bernardino National Forest’s journey to becoming a healthy public forest still has a long way to go. This journey is guided by the expertise found in Resource Management, Public Use & Enjoyment, and Facility Operations & Maintenance functional areas. For example, experts from these functions know how and where to route an off-highway vehicle trail around a Threatened & Endangered Species habitat. Unfortunately, these experts often lack resources to accomplish many of the projects essential to managing the wildland effectively.

When reviewing the current forest operations, take time to reflect on how the six functional areas interact, and how a shortfall in one area affects performance in another. To achieve the vision of a healthy public forest, it is essential to ensure that required resources are available and directed toward the correct tasks.

Details on each functional area can be found in the pages that follow.



**Total Expenditures**

Resource Management	\$1,904,311
Public Use & Enjoyment	\$1,903,161
Facility Operations & Maintenance	\$3,683,951
Management & Administration	\$3,737,166
Fire & Aviation Management	\$27,591,824
Commodity & Commercial Uses	\$789,749
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$39,610,162</b>

Wildfire Suppression	(\$10,999,047)
National Fire & Disaster Support	(\$5,899,405)
<b>Expenditures Paid by Forest</b>	<b>\$22,711,709</b>

**Fulltime Equivalent (“FTE”)** is used throughout the Current Forest Operations section of the business plan. A full work year is 2,088 hours; so one FTE is equal to a person working 2,088 hours.

## Functional Areas

### Resource Management

Encompasses activities related to the management, preservation and protection of the Forest’s cultural and natural resources.

### Public Use & Enjoyment

Includes activities directly related to providing visitors with a safe, enjoyable and educational experience.

### Facility Operations & Maintenance

Includes activities required to manage and operate the Forest’s infrastructure on a daily basis.

### Management & Administration

Encompasses leadership, management and administrative support activities, including communications, external affairs, planning, human resources, information technology, and financial management.

### Fire & Aviation Management

Includes wildfire prevention through education, hazardous fuels reduction, and proactive preparation. Also includes on-forest, national and international wildfire and emergency incident response.

### Commodity & Commercial Uses

Includes management of grazing, harvesting of forest products, timber production, mineral extraction, and non-recreation uses – such as telecommunications sites and utility corridors.



## Resource Management (5% of budget)



Archeologists sifting for artifacts at a site on the San Bernardino National Forest.

### Invasive Species

Noxious weeds and non-native invasive species threaten ecosystem health and productivity. The effects of these weeds include reduction of biological diversity, impacts to threatened and endangered species and wildlife habitat, changing of fire and nutrient cycles, and degradation of soil structure. The goal of invasive species management is to prevent, detect, and control these weed species.

Critical to the success of this program are education and cooperation with adjacent landowners and with other agencies, especially as development intensifies on the forest boundary. Invasive species inventories have indicated that weeds are a concern in many areas of the forest. The 2002 earmark for weed management is \$12,000, but is increasing every year with the increasing national emphasis on addressing noxious weeds and non-native invasive species.

Concisely, Resource Management sees to the health and sustainability of what is under, on, and above the land. Resource Management manages the health of the vegetation on the land, the quality of set aside wilderness areas, the boundaries and ownership of the land, the cultural heritage that resides on the land, the quality of the water running on and under the land, the air quality above the land, and the wildlife roaming the land.

In order to carry out the responsibilities of Resource Management, staff must be technically proficient in ecology, fish and wildlife biology, botany, entomology, archeology, geology, hydrology, silviculture, and other natural sciences. In addition to technical proficiency, Resource Management professionals must understand the matrix of Federal and State laws, as well as Executive Orders and Agency Regulations. Frequently cited are: The National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”), Small Tracts Act, Educational Land Grant Act, Townsite Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Archeological Resources

Protection Act, Programmatic Agreement with the California State Historic Preservation Office, Wilderness Act and Clean Air and Water Act. On the San Bernardino National Forest, all of the other Functional Areas depend on Resource Management for natural science expertise and help complying with regulations when planning, executing, and monitoring a project.

Resource Management oversees the Wildlife Management, Vegetation Management, Heritage Resources, Data Management, Watershed, Air & Geologic Management, Land Ownership & Adjustment, and Specially Designated Areas Management Programs.

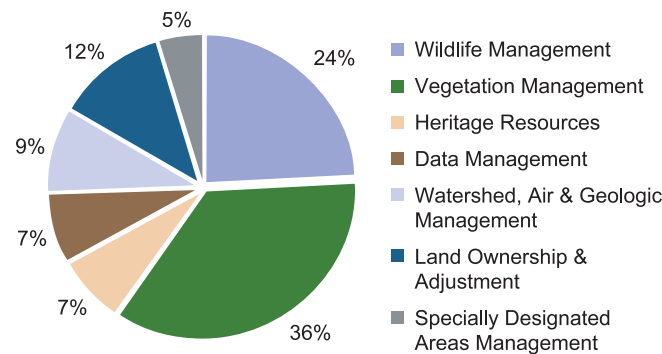
### Wildlife Management

Personnel in this area, in cooperation with other Federal and State agencies, manage species or their habitats to maintain viable populations of existing native and desired non-native plants, fish, and wildlife. In addition, fish and wildlife are managed to provide for viewing, hunting, and fishing. During 2002 this program spent \$464,397 and employed 7.2 FTEs (full time equivalents) on projects, with the need for an additional \$847,000 to support forest health, and inventory and monitor Threatened & Endangered Species.

### Vegetation Management

The goal of Vegetation Management is to preserve and enhance the overall condition of the forest’s native vegetation, including the health of trees. Due to drought, insects, and an over-abundance of conifers, severe mortality is occurring on many landscapes. Vegetation management also contributes to the protection of critical wildlife habitat, the incidental production of vegetation-related forest products, the optimization of fire control,

Resource Management  
2002 Expenditures by Program



Total Required	Available		Shortfall
Funds	FTE	Funds	Funds
\$4,538,350	21.9	\$1,904,311	\$2,634,039

and the enjoyment of recreation. \$667,514 and 4.7 FTEs were applied to Vegetation Management projects during 2002, but the program needs an additional appropriation of \$757,000 to support environmental permitting, NEPA, survey requests and timber stand improvement.

### Heritage Resources

The primary focus of this program is on the management and protection of heritage resources, which are archaeological, historical, cultural or ethnographical in nature. Heritage Resources spent \$137,111 on projects during 2002, and it needs an additional \$543,000 to meet the legal mandates of Executive Orders 11593, 13005, and 13287, and the targets set in the Section 110 Plan of the Programmatic Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The Forest Service is required to comply with these legal mandates, but is not given the budget to do so.

### Data Management

Decisions made without good data jeopardize the success of projects on the forest. Data management is responsible for storing, creating, converting, and analyzing geo-spatial, physical, biologic, social, and asset data for Forest Service personnel and external people. During 2002, \$142,397 and 1.8 FTEs were applied to this program. An additional \$96,000 would enable this program to schedule routine data integrity monitoring/improvement, and build tools to permit easier public access to the forest's data through the Internet and other channels.

### Watershed, Air & Geologic Management

Given Southern California's water, air and geologic challenges, it is surprising to learn that a forest of over 800,000 acres and that produces 250,000 acre-feet of water spent only \$174,577 and employed 2.1 FTEs. The

program provides input into the activities of other programs, trains Forest Service staff on watershed management, surveys watersheds and geology for planning and decision making, and monitors water rights and air quality. Following the 2003 wildfires, the program must also monitor the effectiveness of treatments and respond to flood events.

An additional \$226,000 is needed to adequately support special use permitting, to plan and execute riparian and watershed restoration projects, to ensure that recreation is not taking place on sensitive areas, and to champion watershed, air and geologic components of the forest's Fire Plan.

### Land Ownership & Adjustment

The San Bernardino National Forest administers federally owned lands for the public interest through a program of acquisition, disposal, adjustment, title protection and boundary management. Land Ownership & Adjustment spent \$226,722 and 2.3 FTEs on its 2002 projects. The forest has a number of undeveloped, potentially resource rich acquisitions, and there are a large number of encroachments along the urban interface. Acquisition and resolution of encroachments could be resolved more effectively with \$103,000 added to the budget.

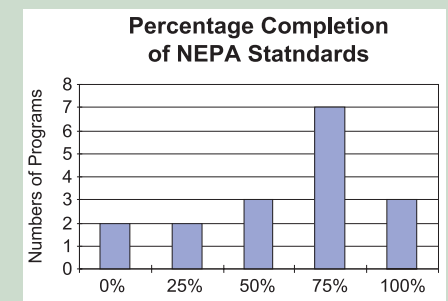
### Specially Designated Areas Management

This program employed 1.7 FTEs and spent \$91,592 during 2002 inventorying and monitoring resource conditions, prioritizing and scheduling restoration projects, developing and implementing wilderness education programs, maintaining trails, and patrolling the wilderness areas. An additional \$63,000 would be used to inventory and monitor resource conditions. Improved visitor systems and a comprehensive wilderness Fire Management Plan would be prepared using the newly acquired information.

## The National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") of 1969

Congress enacted NEPA to require agencies to evaluate the environmental consequences of their actions. Complying with NEPA is a prerequisite for most projects that the forest implements.

As part of this business plan process, representatives from each program prepared standards of operation describing their work. 17 of 35 programs included NEPA assessments in their standards. Programs also reported the extent to which they were able to satisfy their NEPA standards in 2002. Only 3 of 17 programs listing such a standard were able to complete their assessments, meaning that many assessments (and projects) are taking longer than expected. Since input into NEPA comes from Resource Management, additional staff should improve NEPA completion.





## Public Use & Enjoyment (5% of budget)

### Volunteer Accomplishments:

Administered and Operated by Volunteer Organizations

- 3 major visitor centers
- 5 minor interpretive sites
- 7 fire lookouts
- An arboretum
- The Children's Forest, providing curriculum-based environmental education for 3000 kids per year
- The Off-Highway Volunteers, providing patrols, road and trail maintenance, extinguishing campfires
- The Fire Education Program

### Recreation Revenue Accomplishments:

Directly Funded by 2002 Adventure Pass Receipts

- 258 miles of maintained or improved trails
- More and better-maintained restroom facilities
- Removal of nearly 14,800 cubic feet of trash
- Extinguishing 100 illegal campfires that could have resulted in destructive forest fires
- Creation and distribution of 50,000 copies of a visitor guide that educates visitors on recreation opportunities and fire prevention
- More ranger patrols resulting in 239 emergency assists in the front

Operating with a budget that has gradually dwindled to less than half what it was in the late 70's, this is the story of an extremely resourceful and lean organization – but it is too lean in some areas to fully leverage the tremendous energy and skills of the nearby population.

This section demonstrates what can be accomplished by creative, collaborative efforts to create a healthy public forest. A fee program helps fund visitor education, volunteer programs, and forest protection. Forest employees work with volunteers to leverage their own time. Professional volunteer organizations use fee money to hire managers for several large volunteer programs. It is important to note that without the fee program, ALL the programs listed here would suffer dramatically.

### Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretive Services & Education

Informing and educating the visitor is a critical component of the Forest Service mission: *Caring for the Land and Serving People*. Successful management of this program

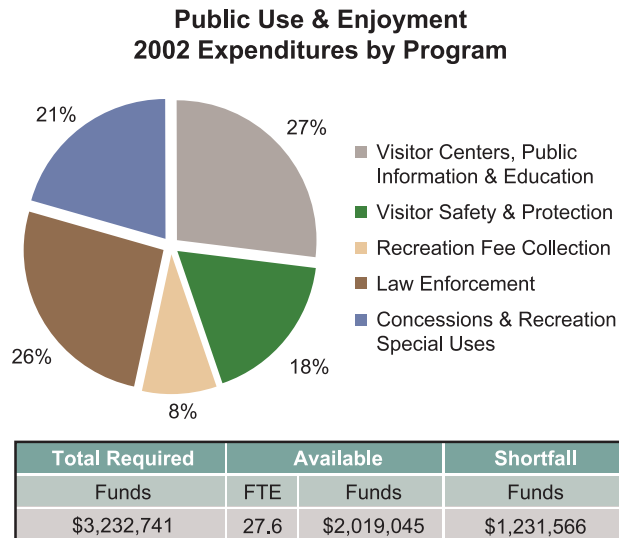
helps the public to appreciate and take good care of the forest. With personnel expenses of under \$220,000, it is impressive what has been accomplished via partnerships and volunteer associations. It is interesting to note that the forest has no interpretive staff at all. Total 2002 spending on this program was \$544,000, with 6.3 FTEs.

While this function is a model of the kind of partnerships essential to managing the forest with limited funds, it still does not come close to reaching the potential offered by an active, interested, and growing community. Each dollar invested in this area comes back many times over – as money, donated services, and the goodwill of community leaders working closely with the forest to collaboratively solve problems together. This program would benefit from \$591,000 in additional funding to pay for: Forest Service liaisons to manage relationships and keep volunteer organizations focused on forest priorities; grant writers to pursue substantial sums of available money; appreciation programs for volunteer staff; and expert input from resources staff for training, program development, and exhibit and program design.

### Concessions & Recreation Special Uses

This activity requires management of concession relationships with a high degree of efficiency and responsiveness, while ensuring that the public's interests are well served. During 2002 expenditures were \$414,000, with 6 FTEs. Concessions include, for example, ski areas, shooting ranges, outfitter guide permits, recreation residences, campgrounds, trailheads, snowplay areas, picnic areas, bike trails, and recreation events. This is a very high leverage function – they are managing outsource agreements, and an additional \$233,000 for oversight of these agreements would ensure that concessionaires comply with the terms of their permits.

Concessionaires run many of the recreation facilities in the forest. It is important to note, however, that management responsibility falls to the Forest Service when no



concessionaire wishes to run a recreational area. Examples include concentrated use areas, unprofitable campgrounds, small dispersed sites, or even profitable campgrounds in the off season.

### Recreation Revenue Collection and Investment

Recreation revenue collection on the four national forests in southern California is a highly successful component of the national Recreation Fee Demonstration Program. Fees are collected from forest visitors who park a vehicle and use the forest for recreation purposes. The fees are collected using two primary methods – distributed sales of the National Forest Adventure Pass (a parking fee) for “basic” benefits and services; and on-site sales of Recreation Permits for “expanded” benefits and services, such as highly developed over-night campgrounds or special tours.

At the SBNF, adventure pass fees contributed over \$635,000 in 2002 – money that is leveraged far beyond what one might imagine, as a result of creative partnering. The Adventure Pass revenue is used to provide maintenance and repairs, visitor information and education, new and improved facilities, law enforcement, resource protection, and wildlife habitat enhancement. Locally incurred collection expenses were \$53,000 for San Bernardino. Additional expenses incurred at the regional level are not included in this figure.

While these are impressive accomplishments, many feel they pale in comparison to the less obvious benefits. The Adventure Pass program *allows contact with most forest visitors*, which has proven to be very effective at improving visitor behavior on the forest – greatly reducing the forest’s exposure to risk of fire, tragic accidents, and criminal behavior.

### Public Safety

The Patrol Division of the Law Enforcement and Investigation (“LEI”) organization is responsible for the prevention of crimes and for enforcement of federal laws

and regulations on National Forest and adjacent lands. 2002 expenditures were \$531,000 using 6.0 FTEs. A budget increase of \$284,000 would pay for more officers, enabling increased patrols and increased investigative capacity. LEI leadership provides supervision and program oversight of all law enforcement operations involving Law Enforcement Officers and Forest Protection Officers, including:

- Eradicating illegal drugs (over 47,000 marijuana plants in 2002 removed from the forest; found an estimated 20,000 harvested plant stalks)
- Criminal investigations
- Detecting and responding to crime
- Security for Agency personnel and facilities
- Collaborating with other federal, state and municipal law enforcement agencies, sheriff’s departments and the California Highway Patrol

The Forest Service also uses Forest Protection Officers (FPOs). These officers are Forest Service employees with additional part time duties. 2002 expenditure were \$362,000 with 6.5 FTEs. An additional \$106,000 would provide greater FPO field presence:

- Observing and reporting violations relating to forest lands and resources
- Attempting to gain voluntary compliance
- Issuing warning and violation notices to persons violating regulations
- Initiating search and rescue, and emergency medical services
- Enforcing Off Highway Vehicle (“OHV”) regulations



Forest Volunteers at Forest Fest 2002



Barton Flats organization campers enjoy Jenks Lake.

## Facility Operations & Maintenance (9% of budget)



A trail maintenance crew at work



This trail meanders through High Country's weathered limber pine.

### Campgrounds and Developed Sites

There are 9 picnic areas, 25 trailheads, and 46 campgrounds with the capacity to accommodate 4,350 campers.

Maintenance includes two major categories: routine and deferred maintenance. Routine maintenance work includes cleaning and repairing restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings and grills, signs, renting portable toilets, pumping vault toilets, removing graffiti from facilities and natural features, testing and maintaining water systems, posting kiosks with current information, and picking up and hauling trash. Deferred maintenance includes small projects that do not qualify as Capital Improvement projects, such as the replacement of a toilet that is past its useful life.

Expenditures in 2002 were \$783,000 using 13.5 FTEs. An additional \$244,000 would be used to finish project planning and National Environmental Policy Act work, enabling the forest to be competitive for capital improvement funds and grants.

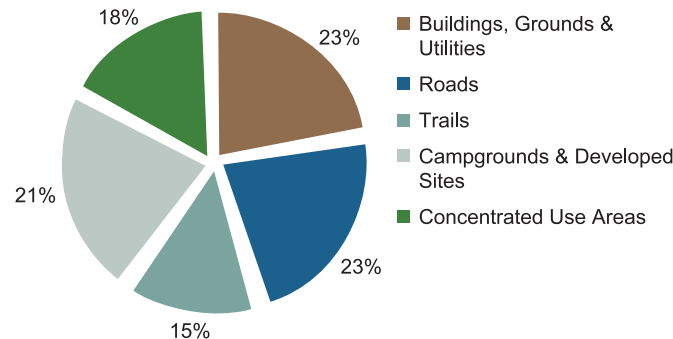
### Concentrated Use Areas ("CUA")

Population growth of the metropolitan area around the San Bernardino National Forest has turned the entire forest into a high impact recreation area, where maintenance and management time and money must be invested because recreation use is heavy and leaves evident impacts, such as litter, vandalism, or soil compaction. Within the forest, numerous undeveloped areas have been specifically identified where usage is particularly high. Activities at such sites include hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, scenery viewing, picnicking, camping, snow play, and water play. Facilities are limited to portable toilets, minimal parking, trash cans, signs and kiosks. These facilities require cleaning, pumping, trash and litter removal at least weekly, as well as graffiti removal and vandalism repair.

These sites usually will remain undeveloped, because they typically provide an undeveloped recreation experience that continues in high demand. It is unlikely that they could be run as fee-charging developed sites at a break-even level, even if the investments were made to construct them. Many visitors to these areas would simply "move-down-the-road" to other areas of the forest, spreading the use impacts and maintenance obligations to an ever-increasing proportion of the landscape.

Critical needs for this program include evaluation and analysis by hydrologists, archaeologists, botanists, and wildlife biologists. Law enforcement professionals and field rangers are needed as well. An additional \$497,000 would allow SBNF to keep up with the workload. Deferred maintenance totals \$4,079,000, with additional annual maintenance of \$784,000 needed to prevent any increase in the backlog. 2002 expenditures totaled \$651,000, and 14.7 FTEs.

Facility O&M  
2002 Expenditures by Program



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE
\$12,373,834	56	\$3,683,951		\$8,689,883	



## Buildings, Grounds & Utilities

This program focuses on the operations and maintenance of Forest Service owned and leased Fire and Administrative buildings, and other associated buildings and infrastructure. 2002 expenditures were \$838,000, with 3.2 FTEs. The forest has 222 non-recreation buildings and 3 Visitor Centers located on 43 administrative sites. The facilities include administrative offices, fire stations, communication and utility buildings, barracks, storage buildings, shop buildings, and an air tanker base. This work includes the operation and maintenance of numerous gas and electrical utility systems, 25 water systems and 53 sewer systems. Work involves annual (routine) maintenance and deferred/heavy maintenance as well as facility upgrades and improvements to buildings, utilities and grounds.

Grounds maintenance includes ongoing exterior upkeep, such as snow removal, grounds cleaning, maintaining sprinkler systems, the mowing, edging, and fertilization of all lawn area, and tree pruning and flower bed maintenance. The deferred maintenance backlog is \$3.2 million. Additional annual maintenance needs are \$327,751 to prevent any increase in the backlog.

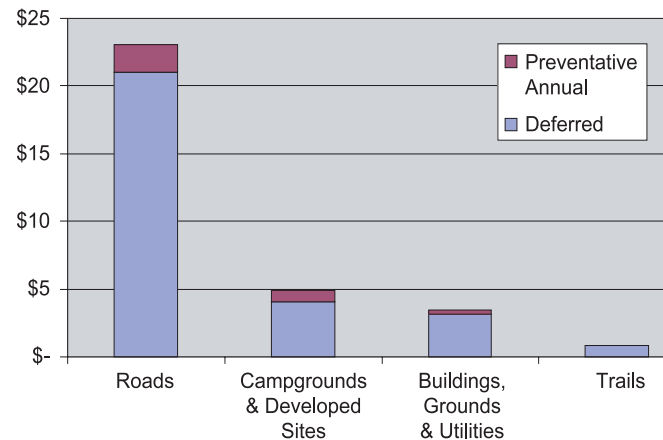
## Roads

This work area focuses on the operations and maintenance of the San Bernardino National Forest road system. The road system consists of 1,178 miles of dirt roads and 56 miles of paved roads. Other paved roads are maintained and operated by other entities, including Caltrans, counties, and the private sector. Maintenance activities include grading, paving, striping, repairing potholes, cleaning and installing drainage control structures, removal of rocks and landslides, repairing washouts, and bridge repairs. Management of the transportation system is coordinated with state and local public road officials to integrate transportation needs and information. Roads are maintained to provide for user safety and to establish road maintenance management objectives. Operations for Roads program include managing road closures, road restrictions, road use permits, road maintenance agreements, and road rights-of-way use agreements. 2002 expenditures were \$852,000, using 10.5 FTEs. Critical needs include stabilizing roads where there is excessive erosion in sensitive habitat areas by key watersheds. The deferred maintenance backlog is \$21 million, with additional annual maintenance needs of \$2,055,000.



Deferred maintenance replaces features to accommodate diverse users.

Preventative Annual and Deferred Maintenance  
(in millions)



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The Trails program consists of maintenance, construction, and reconstruction of the trail system and related facilities such as trailheads, bulletin boards, signage, and parking areas.



Hiking along the headwaters of the Santa Ana River

### **Trails**

The San Bernardino National Forest provides a shrinking network of 535 miles of non-motorized trails and 36 miles of motorized trails for hiking, mountain biking, equestrian use and off-highway vehicle use. A few forest and non-profit employees work together with a large volunteer workforce to patrol trails, perform trail maintenance, and inform the public of proper land ethics in the backcountry.

The Trails program consists of maintenance, construction, and reconstruction of the trail system and related facilities such as trailheads, bulletin boards, signage, and parking areas. Also integral are use monitoring, use types, and impacts to the natural resources. Lack of maintenance funds has resulted in many less used trails becoming overgrown or impassable. 2002 expenses were \$560,000 using 9.4 FTEs. An additional \$1,978,000 would allow SBNF to maintain the trails applying national standards of quality.

### **Transportation & Fleet**

Transportation & Fleet's role is to analyze, administer and manage the forest's fleet and equipment to effectively support forest work. This work area consists of five elements: acquisition, operation, utilization, maintenance and eventual disposal of the forest's mechanized equipment. Commercial vendors with Forest Service contracts perform most maintenance and repairs for light vehicles. For specialized equipment, such as fire engines, water tenders, and pumps, about half of maintenance and repairs are performed in-house because services are not readily available elsewhere. 2002 expenditures were \$1.33 million, and 4.7 FTEs worked in the program. This program does not show up as a Facilities O & M expenditure, because it is paid for out of working capital funds provided by other program areas. Some facilities repairs and upgrades are needed, but otherwise this program is able to function adequately under current budgeting.

### **Deferred Maintenance**

Deferred maintenance is maintenance necessary to protect an asset that the forest was unable to protect. In 2002, the forest had a backlog of \$4.1 million in Campgrounds & Developed Sites, \$3.2 million for in Buildings, Grounds & Utilities, \$0.8 million in Trails, and \$21 million in Roads.

### **Preventative Maintenance**

Preventative maintenance programs are intended to prevent major unplanned repairs, unscheduled reconditioning, or unplanned replacement of buildings and their components. Preventative maintenance reduces replacement and rehabilitation costs, and also improves the service level to visitors and staff.



Proper management requires planning with partners.



## Management & Administration (9% of forest budget)

Today's complex web of federal, state, county, local, partnership, not-for-profit, and private relationships require broad and deep skills and experiences in order to effectively manage the forest. Tomorrow's challenge of proactively organizing the transformation into a healthy public forest requires more than just management – it requires the leadership of everyone who might be affected by that change.

Organizationally, the forest is divided into three Districts – Mountaintop, Front Country, and San Jacinto – managed by three District Rangers. Operations, such as hazardous fuels reduction, archeological surveying, and special use permitting, must go through the appropriate District Ranger prior to implementation. From the Supervisor's Office in San Bernardino, human resources, engineering, recreation, resources, public relations, information technology and other staff functions provide technical and administrative support to the Districts. Finally, the Supervisor and Deputy Supervisor generate and communicate the vision, interact with external stakeholders, and prioritize forest-wide initiatives.

Management & Administration is divided into General Management, Financial Management, General Administration, District Management, Planning, Public Affairs, and Information Technology programs.

### General Management

Vision, leadership, performance reporting, legislative contacts and priority setting are the tasks of the Supervisor, Deputy Supervisor, and their immediate support staff. General management spent \$398,322 and utilized 2.8 FTEs during 2002.

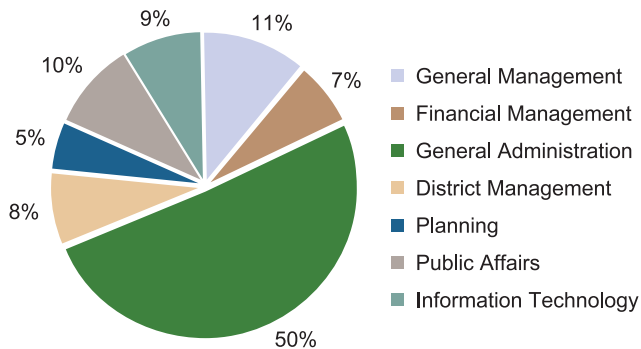
### Financial Management

This program lives in two worlds – the forest and the larger Forest Service. The CFO and staff facilitate the generation of yearly budgets and the tracking of actual expenditures on the forest. Edicts from the Forest Service regarding budget and expenditures flow through this program to the forest. For fiscal year 2002, this program spent \$236,496, utilized 4.1 FTEs, and is seeking an additional \$117,000 for providing necessary financial analysis support the forest.

### General Administration

Human Resources, Labor Relations, Safety, and Civil Rights reside within this program. Working in this area requires technical skills in each specialty, as well as the special ability to communicate technical information to non-experts. General Administration helps the work force stay safe, helps bring diversity to the organization, and provides an alternative communication channel for staff. Major non-personnel expenses, such as rent, supplies and materials flowed through this program, which accounts for its size relative to the other programs in Management & Administration. In 2002, \$1,771,438 was spent and 9.0 FTEs were employed. An additional \$125,000 is needed as a result of the increased size of the fire workforce.

**Management & Administration  
2002 Expenditures by Program**



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE
\$4,324,470	35.2	\$3,737,166		\$587,307	





The San Jacinto District is managed out of the Idyllwild Ranger Station.



Lily Rock high above the community of Idyllwild

### **District Management**

District Rangers are responsible for managing all aspects of their assigned Districts. This program spent \$288,990 and employed 2.7 FTEs during 2002. This program does not need additional resources.

### **Planning**

During 2002 Planning spent \$180,678 and required 2.4 FTEs in order to work on the Land Management Plan revision and other forest-wide planning projects. This program is not requesting additional resources.

### **Public Affairs**

Two activities are the responsibility of this program – managing and shaping public expectations and perceptions, and relations with local Native American tribes. \$342,883 was spent and 7.1 FTEs were needed to accomplish these tasks. An additional \$143,000 would go toward closer communication and collaboration with local communities, an increased web presence, and general communication.

### **Information Technology**

Alongside the rest of the world over the last decade, networking, wireless communication, and distributed computing permeated every nook-and-canny of San Bernardino National Forest. This program supports the technology infrastructure and training of staff so that work can be efficiently and effectively completed. During 2002 the forest spent \$518,360 and used 7.2 FTEs on this program. An additional \$202,000 would permit this program to provide much needed support to Public Affairs and Public Use & Enjoyment.



Smokey Bear and friends at Forest Fest 2002



Planning future uses after assessing current conditions

## Fire & Aviation Management (70% of forest budget)

San Bernardino National Forest's arid climate, highly flammable vegetation, and steep slopes create a fire environment requiring diligent and proactive management. Seasonal, dry "Santa Ana" winds, originating from the Great Basin of Utah and Nevada, extract moisture from the vegetation and humidity from the air. Once the trees and grasses covering the steep slopes are dry, fires are much more likely. Fires can be sparked by lightning, careless behavior, accidents or the deliberate actions of man. Fires range in size and frequency from small and many, which result in little damage, to large and infrequent, which can devastate communities and the viability of natural systems. In 2003, the Old and the Grand Prix fires burned over 140,000 of the national forest and adjacent lands.

Today there are over 90,000 residential and commercial structures worth approximately \$7.6 billion within the forest boundary. Not included in this figure are the increasingly dense urban interfaces with the communities of Hesperia, Hemet, Highland, Rancho Cucamonga,

Redlands, San Bernardino, San Jacinto, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, and Yucaipa. All of these communities are susceptible to a wildfire and the flooding that result from steep slopes devoid of plants.

The fire organization accounted for almost 70 percent of the forest's 2002 expenditures, making it the largest and most complex component of the San Bernardino National Forest. Besides carrying the primary responsibility for responding to fires on the forest, the organization often provides support for other types of emergencies across the United States, and occasionally around the world. The Space Shuttle recovery, the Exotic Newcastle bird disease, and earthquakes are examples of other types of incidents. Fire & Aviation Management is further divided into Management & Administration, Fire Pre-Suppression & Preparedness, Hazardous Fuels Reduction, Wildfire Suppression, and National Fire & Disaster Support programs.

### Management & Administration

This program carries out the management and supervision of fire strategy and operations. Close to \$2 million was spent and 21.3 FTEs worked on this program during 2002.

### Fire Pre-Suppression & Preparedness

Diligence, readiness, and in-force keenly describe the goals of this program. Training in advanced techniques, maintaining equipment to high standards, and all the other activities required to respond rapidly fit within this program. During 2002, the forest spent close to \$8 million and utilized 120.4 FTEs on this program.

### Hazardous Fuels Reduction

Proactive management of living and dead vegetative fuel is the primary objective of this program. Prescribed burns or mechanical treatments are the standard methods of accomplishing this task. This program used approximately \$720,000 and 12.0 FTEs during 2002. As drought and tree

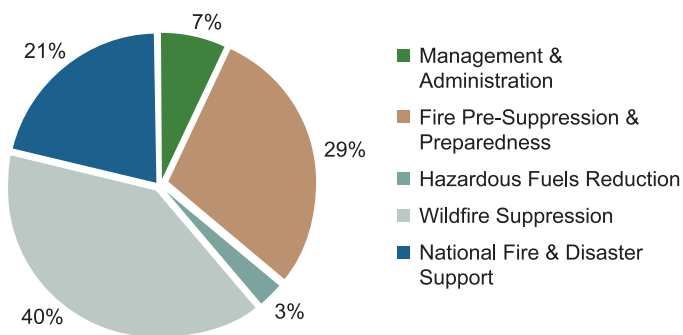
## Vegetation Mortality and Forest Health, Public Safety, and Resource Protection

According to Forest Supervisor Gene Zimmerman, public health, forest health, and resource protection are the forest's most important priorities.

Other than the large wildfire events of 2003, those three priorities are in the forefront because of sustained lower-than-average rainfall during the last four years, thick low-lying vegetation from a century of successful wildfire suppression, and record tree mortality. These factors are conspiring to create fire potential of catastrophic magnitude. During 2003 these factors reached a high point with mixed conifer, oak woodlands, and chaparral mortality ranging up to 80 percent on 300,000 of 819,000 forest acres.

In collaboration with San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, the San Bernardino National Forest is seeking an additional \$300 million in funding over the next ten years, with two-thirds of the total desired during the next three years, for hazardous fuels reduction, watershed protection, and strengthening of fuel breaks near the urban interface.

**Fire & Aviation Management  
2002 Expenditures by Program**



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE
\$27,910,526	333.2	\$27,591,824		\$318,702	

## Firefighting Assets

### Engines

- 25 Engines Type III (Wildland)
- 5 Water Tenders

### Hand Crews

- 4 Type I Hot Shot Crews
- 3 Type II Hand Crew

### Aircraft

- 2 Air Tanker Type II (Medium)
- 1 Helitanker Type I (Heavy Lift)
- 1 Type II helicopter with Rappel Crews
- 1 Type III Helicopter with Rappel Crew

### Other

- 1 Bulldozer Dozer Type II (Medium) with Transport
- 17 Fire Prevention Patrols
- Fire Cache/Logistics
- Training Center
- Air Tanker Base
- 17 Chief Officers

mortality continue to ravage the forest, funds for planning and implementation of fuels reduction projects are increased rapidly. Because of the magnitude of the tree mortality problem, involvement of the entire community is essential.

### Wildfire Suppression

When the winds, humidity, temperature, and vegetation work together to fuel a fire, and one actually starts, Wildfire Suppression “surges” in response. Approximately \$11 million above appropriations was spent fighting wildfires by 86.4 FTEs during 2002. This number was even higher during the fires of 2003. Since national budgets fund this activity “as needed” by the forest, no funding gap is identified.

### National Fire & Disaster Support

San Bernardino National Forest contributed 93 FTEs in 2002 to off-forest fires and disaster support. Forest management will continue to support sister agencies and off-forest incidents.



Vegetation mortality occurs near Vivian Creek in the San Gorgonio Wilderness. Fuel for wildfires has reached historic quantities on the San Bernardino National Forest.

### Wildfire Suppression’s “Surge”

The term “surge” vividly describes the rapid rise in staffing that the San Bernardino National Forest must attend to when responding to an incident. When “surging,” every forest employee, from the receptionist to the Forest Supervisor, has a vital role.

During 2002, SBNF non-fire personnel contributed 6.07 FTEs to Wildfire Suppression. When suppressing fires, these non-fire personnel are not working on their scheduled work. On a typical large fire, a person might spend several weeks away. When they return, the backlog of work may be so large that they are unable to catch up.

Source of Surge Resource	FTE
Management & Administration	2.22
Facilities Ops & Maintenance	1.67
Public Use & Enjoyment	0.34
Resource Management	<u>1.85</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.07</b>

Interestingly, the two Functional Areas with the largest shortfalls, Facilities Operations & Maintenance and Resource Management, contributed significant non-fire personnel time to Wildfire Suppression. This contribution further reduced their ability to complete their everyday tasks.



## Commodity & Commercial Uses (2% of forest budget)

This functional area covers a broad spectrum of commercial uses, including small gold mining operations and pipeline rights-of-way. The majority of cash receipts from these activities are sent to the U.S. Treasury, with 25 percent sent to county governments.

It is important to realize that the grazing, timber, and non-timber forest product program areas are *managed for non-commercial values*. Although products may result from an activity, the objective is forest health. The forest has not seen large-scale timber operations since the 1980s – in fact, the absence of a commercial logging infrastructure in the area now precludes large scale commercial logging. These activities are tools for vegetation management, critical for maintaining forest health and reducing the risk of wildfire.

### Timber

Since timber is extracted from the forest solely as an incidental outcome of managing for non-commercial values, coordination with other programs, especially Resource Management and Fire &

Aviation Management, is a large part of this program. This program includes all activities related to commercial timber extraction, both living (green) trees and salvage (dead or dying) trees. It includes planning sale areas, preparation and administration of timber sales, and collection and accounting for payments. Other tasks include environmental documentation, budget management, supervision, database management, public information, and inventory and monitoring. Any outputs are counted in the Management Attainment Reporting (MAR) system. A better accounting metric could be developed to help meet the forest's goal of using timber as a tool for vegetation management.

2002 expenditures were \$50,000, and 0.6 FTEs were employed. An additional \$57,000 would be spent administering this function, allowing better wildfire risk management.

### Forest Products

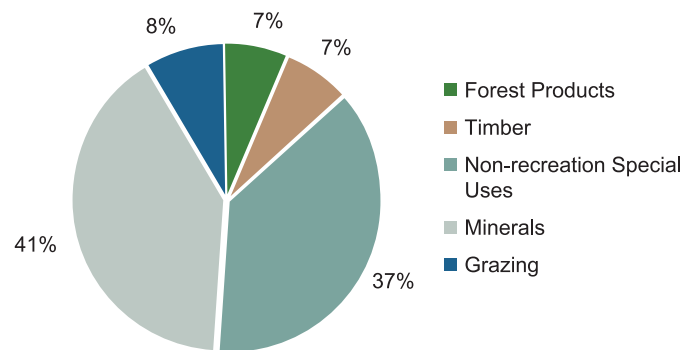
The major duties of this program are to ensure that the vegetative forest products (fuel wood and various trees, plants, and products used for decorative or medicinal purposes) removed from the Forest are within management guidelines. Forest Products work is undertaken to ensure that the public has access to these opportunities while simultaneously satisfying vegetation management criteria.

To provide this service, employees issue forest products permits at ranger stations, map sale areas, monitor compliance with permits and oversee field extraction efforts, and prepare forest products plans. 2002 expenditures were \$49,000 and employed 0.4 FTEs. An additional \$57,000 would be used to assess environmental impact and monitor compliance.

### Non-Recreational Special Uses

This program focuses on the permitting and monitoring of non-recreation special uses on National Forest System lands. Examples include sanitary systems (sewage pipeline and transfer stations); research facilities; still photography and motion pictures; power generation and transmission facilities; oil & gas pipelines; electric transmission lines; radio, television and cell phone towers; telephone lines; and water lines.

**Commodity & Commercial Uses  
2002 Expenditures by Program**



Total Required		Available		Shortfall	
Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE	Funds	FTE
\$1,869,713	9.2	\$735,063		\$1,134,650	



Minerals still provide products and jobs.



Copyright by Roy Murphy

Garner Ranch is an example of harmony between resource use and conservation.

The work includes: screening proposals; processing written requests and applications for permitting, repermitting, and amendments of special use permits; administering permits. The land staff calculates and collects appropriate land rents, develops and issues permits, and resolves non-compliance issues; terminates, revokes, and/or suspends permits; monitors the removal of facilities if the permit is terminated or revoked; and, assists in the resolution of litigation.

To accomplish these tasks, forest staff work directly with private citizens, public and private organizations, appraisers, local and statewide representatives, resource specialists, Forest Service representatives, and attorneys from the Office of General Council. 2002 expenditures were \$357,000, and used 4.6 FTEs. An additional \$228,000 is needed to respond to requests and to properly administer permits.

### Minerals

As required by law, the forest administers its mineral program to facilitate the orderly exploration, development, and production of mineral and energy resources to maintain a viable, healthy minerals industry in an environmentally sound manner. Pharmaceutical grade limestone worth approximately \$50 million is extracted from SBNF annually. No fees are collected for limestone mining, and total mining fees collected annually on the forest are less than \$1000.

The minerals staff administers the non-discretionary and discretionary activities related to mining, leasing, reclamation of mined lands, closure of abandoned mines, inventory of mineral potential for land management planning, identification and protection of threatened, endangered and sensitive plants and animals through mineral withdrawals, identification of geologic hazards, and other ecologic unit inventory on forest land.

Non-discretionary activities are sanctioned under the General Mining Act of 1872, as amended. These include all locatable hard rock minerals such as gold, silver, lead, zinc

and other minerals. The staff is required to process mining plans of operations in a timely manner. Discretionary activities, such as oil, gas, geothermal, sand, gravel, building stone, and common clay, are permitted under various minerals leasing acts. 2002 expenditures were \$301,000, with 3.8 FTEs employed. An additional \$75,000 would be spent on environmental assessments and geological surveying.

### Grazing

Forest plan direction for the grazing program is to use grazing as a method to meet vegetation and wildlife management goals. Currently the forest has five active cattle grazing allotments. The Forest Service concentrates its efforts on managing the vegetation resources across the range landscape to serve a multitude of resource needs, including habitat for a variety of plant and animal species, clean water, and sustainable grazing and browsing. The type of resource work that occurs on allotments includes inventory, classification, and monitoring of rangeland conditions to maintain or improve rangeland health.

The goal of the Grazing program is to have all rangelands progressing towards a healthier condition. Where there are unhealthy rangelands, SBNF personnel strive to restore rangeland ecosystem functions. Gaining the understanding and cooperation of everyone involved in grazing management improves the chances for a successful program. This includes landowners, land managers, users, universities, other agencies, and the public. 2002 expenditures were \$32,000, using 0.3 FTEs. An additional \$94,000 is needed for performing environmental assessments and monitoring.

# Financials, Investments & Strategies

## Summary Financial Statement

The following section of the SBNF business plan will show where money is spent, where it is needed, and how the forest plans to use it more effectively.

The “Available Funds” section is based on data from the Forest Service’s financial information systems, combined with an activity-based accounting project undertaken for each of the 35 program areas examined in this document.

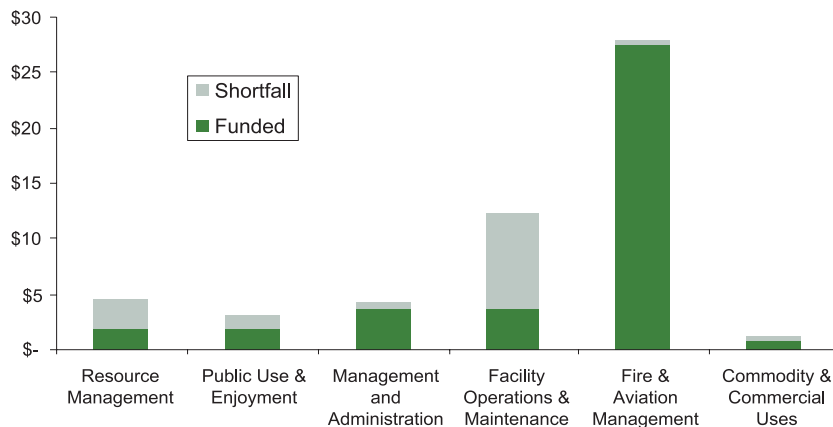
The “Required Funds” section is based on the standards of operation generated by the Forest Service program managers and the Business Plan Initiative consultants for each of the 35 programs. Each manager examined the work performed in a program, and the current level of performance against a set of measurements – generally expressed as percent compliance with mandates, and percent satisfaction of an acceptable work standard. Personnel and funding needs were developed by the program

managers based on the gap between the required state and the existing state, with an eye on the overall forest goal of creating a healthy public forest.

The “2002 Required Funds by Functional Area” chart shows funding required to close the gap. The following additional shortfalls have been identified:

- The forest and other impacted agencies estimate \$300 million is needed for wildfire prevention, forest health, public safety, and resource protection related to the record death of trees in the forest. These funds are needed to prevent catastrophic destruction of the forest, and human lives and property along with it.
- The forest has a \$29.4 million backlog of deferred maintenance work. This includes work needed on roads, buildings and grounds, campgrounds, and trails. The backlog for roads alone is \$21 million.

2002 Required Funds by Functional Area (in millions)



Forest staff plans work.



# Summary Financial Statement 2002

FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND PROGRAMS	REQUIRED	AVAILABLE					SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)
	Funds	APPROPRIATED	NON-APPROPRIATED		TOTAL	TOTAL	Funds
		Appropriated	Reimbursement	Revenue	FTE	Funds	
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>							
Wildlife Management	\$1,310,955	\$464,397	\$0	\$0	7.2	\$464,397	(\$846,557)
Vegetation Management	\$1,424,390	\$509,403	\$0	\$158,111	4.7	\$667,514	(\$756,876)
Heritage Resources	\$680,246	\$137,111	\$0	\$0	2.0	\$137,111	(\$543,135)
Data Management	\$237,968	\$142,397	\$0	\$0	1.8	\$142,397	(\$95,571)
Watershed, Air & Geologic Management	\$400,490	\$174,577	\$0	\$0	2.1	\$174,577	(\$225,913)
Land Ownership & Adjustment	\$329,484	\$226,722	\$0	\$0	2.3	\$226,722	(\$102,762)
Specially Designated Areas Management	\$154,817	\$91,592	\$0	\$0	1.7	\$91,592	(\$63,225)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$4,538,350</b>	<b>\$1,746,200</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$158,111</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>\$1,904,311</b>	<b>(\$2,634,039)</b>
<b>PUBLIC USE &amp; ENJOYMENT</b>							
Law Enforcement	\$814,927	\$523,407	\$7,406	\$0	6.0	\$530,813	(\$284,114)
Visitor Safety & Protection	\$467,638	\$361,774	\$0	\$0	6.5	\$361,774	(\$105,864)
Recreation Fee Collection	\$53,045	\$53,045	\$0	\$0	1.0	\$53,045	\$0
Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretation & Education	\$1,134,333	\$245,683	\$0	\$297,821	6.3	\$543,504	(\$590,829)
Concessions & Recreation Special Uses	\$646,914	\$357,039	\$0	\$56,985	6.0	\$414,024	(\$232,890)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$3,116,857</b>	<b>\$1,540,948</b>	<b>\$7,406</b>	<b>\$354,806</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>\$1,903,161</b>	<b>(\$1,213,696)</b>
<b>FACILITY OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>							
Buildings, Grounds & Utilities	\$1,481,208	\$797,554	\$0	\$39,979	3.2	\$837,534	(\$643,674)
Roads	\$5,007,340	\$842,118	\$9,636	\$0	10.5	\$851,754	(\$4,155,586)
Trails	\$2,538,246	\$402,453	\$149,584	\$7,829	9.4	\$559,866	(\$1,978,380)
Transportation & Fleet * (see footnote)	\$1,328,556*	\$1,328,556*	\$0	\$0	4.7	\$0	\$0
Campgrounds & Developed Sites	\$2,198,371	\$407,954	\$0	\$375,635	13.5	\$783,589	(\$1,414,782)
Concentrated Use Areas	\$1,148,669	\$651,207	\$0	\$0	14.7	\$651,207	(\$497,462)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$12,373,834</b>	<b>\$3,101,287</b>	<b>\$159,220</b>	<b>\$423,443</b>	<b>56.0</b>	<b>\$3,683,951</b>	<b>(\$8,689,883)</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION</b>							
General Management	\$398,322	\$398,322	\$0	\$0	2.8	\$398,322	\$0
Financial Management	\$353,845	\$236,496	\$0	\$0	4.1	\$236,496	(\$117,349)
General Administration	\$1,896,378	\$1,771,438	\$0	\$0	9.0	\$1,771,438	(\$124,940)
District Management	\$288,990	\$288,990	\$0	\$0	2.7	\$288,990	\$0
Planning	\$180,678	\$180,678	\$0	\$0	2.4	\$180,678	\$0
Public Affairs	\$486,239	\$342,883	\$0	\$0	7.1	\$342,883	(\$143,356)
Information Technology	\$720,018	\$306,098	\$212,262	\$0	7.2	\$518,360	(\$201,658)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$4,324,470</b>	<b>\$3,524,904</b>	<b>\$212,262</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>\$3,737,166</b>	<b>(\$587,304)</b>
<b>FIRE &amp; AVIATION MANAGEMENT</b>							
Management & Administration	\$1,982,141	\$1,997,516	-\$15,375	\$0	21.3	\$1,982,141	\$0
Fire Pre-Suppression & Preparedness	\$7,992,596	\$7,992,596	\$0	\$0	120.4	\$7,992,596	\$0
Hazardous Fuels Reduction	\$1,037,336	\$714,187	\$0	\$4,447	12.0	\$718,634	(\$318,702)
Wildfire Suppression ** (see footnote)	\$10,999,047	\$10,999,047	\$0	\$0	86.4	\$10,999,047	\$0
National Fire Support ** (see footnote)	\$5,899,405	\$5,899,405	\$0	\$0	93.1	\$5,899,405	\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$27,910,524</b>	<b>\$27,602,751</b>	<b>-\$15,375</b>	<b>\$4,447</b>	<b>333.2</b>	<b>\$27,591,824</b>	<b>(\$318,702)</b>
<b>COMMODITY &amp; COMMERCIAL USES</b>							
Forest Products	\$106,197	\$49,116	\$0	\$115	0.4	\$49,231	(\$56,966)
Timber	\$107,168	\$50,210	\$0	\$115	0.6	\$50,324	(\$56,843)
Non-recreation Special Uses *** (see footnote)	\$585,332	\$355,252	\$2,137	\$0	4.6	\$357,389	(\$227,943)
Minerals	\$376,550	\$299,595	\$0	\$1,473	3.8	\$301,068	(\$75,483)
Grazing	\$125,787	\$31,737	\$0	\$0	0.3	\$31,737	(\$94,050)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,301,034</b>	<b>\$785,909</b>	<b>\$2,137</b>	<b>\$1,703</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>\$789,749</b>	<b>(\$511,285)</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$53,565,070</b>	<b>\$38,302,001</b>	<b>\$365,650</b>	<b>\$942,510</b>	<b>481.7</b>	<b>\$39,610,161</b>	<b>(\$13,954,909)</b>

\* Funding for this activity comes from the Working Capital Fund (WCF), not directly from appropriations

\*\* Funds come from the National Fire Budget, paying expenses for actual unplanned events as they are incurred

\*\*\* As of end-of-year 2002, approximately 50% of the shortfall had been covered

## Investment Opportunities

San Bernardino National Forest's near-term, high-priority investment needs focus on improving ecosystem health, public safety, and resource protection related to the dead tree epidemic sweeping the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains. The following opportunities are offered here as a “starter” list where help is needed.

### Vegetation Mortality Crisis

A successful resolution of the current vegetation mortality crisis will require substantial investments over the next several years. Investments are needed to help with wildfire prevention; to reduce hazardous fuels; and to address the serious public safety threat from wildfires, such as creation of fire protection zones and prioritizing evacuation routes. Estimates of the need (made in summer 2003) total \$300 million for Forest health over the next ten years.

### Land Acquisition

Opportunity exists throughout the Forest to acquire undeveloped in-holdings valuable for their resources, recreation potential and successful program management. The most success will come with an assured multi-year stream of monies sufficient to enable the Forest to compete in the marketplace for those critical lands when they become available, whether through direct purchase, donation or exchange. Land acquisition is a multi-year process. It can be reasoned that the bulk of the sizeable and most important acquisitions must be in the short term as populations grow rapidly and ownerships mature. History shows that second and third generation owned lands, as well as those remote or recycled will become available further out. The Forest Land Adjustment Program must be prepared for both eventualities.

### Public Use and Enjoyment

Opportunities for improvements include maintaining and improving recreation sites, providing information and education to the public, improving signage, and maintaining public trails. One proposed project to automate revenue collection would reduce cost of

collection, quickly paying for itself and freeing more money for the other priorities.

### Resource Management

Resource management has many opportunities for improving such things as wildlife and vegetation habitat, and watershed protection. One investment opportunity would result in improvements to the Baldwin Lake wetland habitat. An investment in a threatened and endangered species inventory would tell the forest precisely what they have and where it is – critical for proactively managing these federally protected species.

### Buildings, Facilities, and Structures

Better-maintained facilities improve the experience for visitors to the National Forest. Additionally, much needed investments in preventive maintenance increase the lifespan of physical assets, reducing costs in the long run. A typical investment site includes an expansion of the popular Shady Cove campground to accommodate more campers.

### Earthquake Park

Establishment of an interpretive park to describe the unique, active geologic setting offered by the many faults of the Transverse range (San Andreas, Sierra-Madre, San Jacinto and Helen Dale faults) is needed. A Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted between the Forest Service, State of California Office of Emergency Services, California State University – San Bernardino and San Bernardino County Parks, Museum, Schools and Sheriff's Department to locate the park in the Cajon Pass region of the San Bernardino National Forest. An Earthquake Park will serve student groups and the general public by providing opportunities for multi-discipline education, on-site interpretation and earthquake preparedness through the understanding of the earth's dynamics and their influence on humanity.



Botanist Charity Hall's drawing of endangered species *Taraxacum californicum*, part of her work monitoring such species on the Mountaintop District.



Visitors view Big Falls at a safe distance.

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Red-tailed hawk chicks in Joshua Tree on high desert slopes

Copyright by Roy Murphy



Deep Creek is fed by snowmelt and hot springs as it flows through foothill country.

### Devil's Canyon

As a cooperative effort of California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB) and the San Bernardino National Forest, the Devil's Canyon Conservation Center could focus on providing environmental education to economically-disadvantaged youth in the Inland Empire area of western San Bernardino and Riverside counties, as well as facilitating research studies in the San Bernardino National Forest. Located approximately 5 miles from the campus of CSUSB, the center is the former site of the Devil Canyon Nursery and Forest Experiment Station. The center's education programs for youth could include: historical use of the property and the nearby area; importance of watershed; fire ecology; local plant and animal communities and the importance of biodiversity; management of resources in the San Bernardino National Forest; and career information

### Front Country Trail

A low elevation trail running along the base of the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Ranges from Cucamonga Canyon to Yucaipa would have many benefits. It would be usable year round, especially from September through May. There are no trails in this area, and the large nearby population is generating a huge demand for local trails for hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use. Private development along the Forest-urban interface through most of that area severely limits public access to the Forest, and property owners are creating illegal trails onto the Forest that cannot be monitored or patrolled by Forest Service personnel. The proposed trail would provide a better-managed alternative. The trail would also serve as a fuel break and would provide access for fire fighting hand crews.

### Idyllwild District Office

The Palms to Pines Scenic Highway runs through Idyllwild, where the office is located right off the highway. What better opportunity than to convert this

office into the Idyllwild Discovery Center? We would interpret forest health, the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (this is the northern portal to the Monument), wilderness, heritage, plants and animals, and a myriad of other subjects. A typical visitor to Idyllwild drives for pleasure, goes out to lunch and goes shopping. This would be a fantastic opportunity to interpret the natural resources, especially since so many visitors are from the surrounding urban area and are disconnected from natural processes. It also offers a collaborative opportunity to partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and Mt. San Jacinto State Park.

### Pine Cove/Idyllwild Trail

The community is in need of a walking/mountain bike trail connecting the two towns. Right now, there is no way of walking from one town to the other without walking on the highway! It is very dangerous for pedestrians and bikers alike. This is an effort that would most likely gain tremendous community support and partnerships. Gaining right of ways from several homeowners could be part of the volunteer effort. This is a safety project, as well as a quality of life project for the community.



Copyright by Roy Murphy

Sandstone formations known as Mormon Rocks jut up alongside the San Andreas Fault.



### **Idyllwild Interpretive Loop trail**

The average visitor to Idyllwild spends a good part of their day shopping and eating at local restaurants. The Ernie Maxwell Trail is the only trail suitable to use by the beginner and families. However, it is over-used, is not a loop, and is still too strenuous for many visitors. There is a need to provide another trail that is an interpretive loop trail and even wheelchair accessible.

### **South Ridge Picnic Area/ Trailhead**

This is a Capital Improvement Program proposal that we are beginning to formulate. It involves developing a small picnic area on South Ridge (5 family sites and 1 or 2 group sites with picnic tables, cooking grills, possibly one or two shelters, a toilet, and water), a parking lot, reconfiguring the trailhead, providing an area for horse trailer parking, and improving the road. The purpose of this proposal is to offer a quality day-use area close to Idyllwild, to take some of the pressure off of Humber Park, and to reduce illegal activity in the South Ridge area. On this ridge, there may be the opportunity to also develop a short loop (or loops) trail as described above. There is a demand for this type of area close to Idyllwild and it would complement the Idyllwild business / shopping offerings to the day-use Idyllwild visitor / shopper / family who wants to round out their visit with a taste of nature.

### **Rock Camp Cultural Education Center**

Working in partnership with the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, develop a Native American cultural education center could be developed at Rock Camp. This center would utilize both the existing ancient village site as well as construction of a cultural education facility to teach Serrano and Native American culture to current and future generations of native children as well as provide interpretive opportunities to the public at large. Traditional uses of the surrounding forest would be highlighted, as well as year-round activities and celebrations to build appreciation of both the natural and cultural resources of the San Bernardino Mountains and its bountiful history.

### **Alpine Pedal Path**

The Alpine Pedal Path currently extends nearly 3 miles along the north shore of Big Bear Lake within the San Bernardino National Forest. The community as well as recreating public has expressed its desire that the trail encircle the entire lake, which would require a cooperative effort from the City of Big Bear Lake, Municipal Water District and numerous private landowners. The existing Alpine Pedal Path serves tens of thousands of visitors every year. If it were expanded to circle the lake it would become a “destination” recreational opportunity to hikers, bikers, dog-walkers, and runners. The Alpine Pedal Path is more than just a nice walk around the lake. Numerous interpretive kiosks strategically positioned around the lake would provide informative displays on the natural history components of the Big Bear Valley such as: fire in the ecosystem, aquatic habitat, resident wildlife and plant species and geology.

### **Rim of the World Trail Network**

The San Bernardino National Forest is currently in the planning stages of the Rim of the World Trail. This 46-mile non-motorized “backbone” trail is planned to extend from Lake Silverwood to Big Bear Lake exclusively within the National Forest. It is intended to serve hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians. Numerous mountaintop communities and user groups have expressed desire for the development of “feeder” trails to access each of communities along the route such as is enjoyed in Europe. Partnerships would be necessary to develop the network of trails because of the checkerboard mix of public and private land ownership.

### **Forest Restoration**

The Forest needs help to increase its capacity to coordinate and supervise partners and volunteers who will help us restore forest health and other natural resources damaged by fire.



Partnerships will create rim trails to connect communities and make these views available to hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians.



Ski slopes are seen from the Alpine Pedal Path.



Native American bedrock mortar for cracking and milling pinyon nuts and acorns

The San Bernardino National Forest would benefit from implementing the recommendations in “A Look at Partnerships in the Pacific Southwest Region.”



The Children's Forest is the fruit of the San Bernardino National Forest Association's partnership with the Forest.



## Strategies: Improved Forest Management

The prior pages discuss the financial condition and investment priorities of the forest. The following sections focus on ways to close the resource shortfalls identified in the previous section. A variety of strategies are proposed, including cost reductions, partnerships, new management techniques, new revenue sources, and public relations.

### Partnerships

Success depends on relationships developed at the field level and the organizational culture as defined by leadership. The forest leadership stresses the value of partnerships – what remains to be done is acquire the budget and train field employees to focus on partnership coordination, and create meaningful performance measurements that are reflected in the jobs of field personnel.

The San Bernardino National Forest would benefit from implementing the recommendations in “A Look at Partnerships in the Pacific Southwest Region.” From this report, the critical ingredients for successful partnering include training programs, a grant program, and a regional coordinator to provide monitoring, training, and information networking.

There are many benefits from integrating partnerships into the daily operations of the forest such as advocacy, revitalized employees, more work done, improved stewardship and improved visitor facilities.

### So. Calif. Take Pride Campaign

Fires burned 100's of thousands of acres in southern California in 2003. Take Pride in America is a campaign designed to combine outdoor fun with family and friends with community volunteer service in 2004 by pledging at least 10 hours to help.

The public is being asked to join tens of thousands of other volunteers as we gather seed, plant trees and rebuild sites, reduce the risk of future catastrophic fire, improve wildlife habitat, help explain the impacts of the fires to visitors and remove invasive weeds.

### Volunteer Coordination

In addition to seeking new partnerships, it is critical that the forest fully support existing partnerships by:

- assigning Forest Service liaison personnel;
- hiring a grant writer to pursue additional funding;
- providing expert assistance in the development of volunteer programs – especially resources;
- budgeting specifically for partnership support so that personnel do not get called away for other duties;
- designing metrics for success and put this into employees' objectives.



Heaps Peak Arboretum is staffed by volunteers.



## Permit Fee Retention

Managing recreation special uses in the forest is costly. Costs are driven primarily by permit administration and monitoring, and ensuring compliance with resource protection goals. If fees were retained by the forest, funds would be available to manage recreation special uses in a more environmentally sound manner.

Fee retention for other functions is not significant enough to warrant creation of a fee retention demo program currently. A significant volume of mining does occur in the forest – pharmaceutical grade limestone worth approximately \$50 million is extracted from SBNF land every year. However, under current regulations, no fees are collected for common minerals such as limestone – total fees from mining on the San Bernardino National Forest are less than a thousand dollars annually.

Creating a significant revenue stream from mining requires two key enablers: legislation allowing royalty charges on common minerals, and congressional approval of a pilot fee retention project.

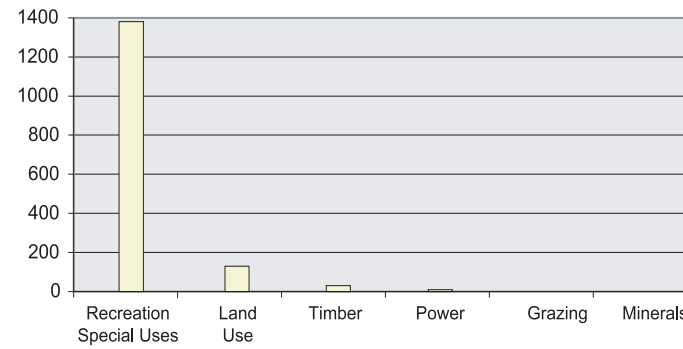
## Greater Public Participation in Problem Solving and Decision Making

Here is a success story: in the early 1990's the forest was actively involved in a land-exchange program. In order to consolidate holdings, the forest was acquiring desired private land within the forest boundary, offering isolated parcels of public land in exchange. If the forest had the money, it would simply purchase the desired parcels.

Because many of these isolated parcels were located within local communities and the land involved was perceived as being “somebody's backyard,” the program was highly controversial and appeals were common.

The forest pulled together a group of community members who represented a cross-section of interests, and encouraged them to develop a land adjustment plan. The group determined that while there were many lands they wished to acquire, there were few that they felt should be traded away. Instead, they formed a group to raise the money to purchase land for the forest. By involving the

FY02 Fee Receipts by Category (in thousands)



public in the decision, the forest acquired their active participation in implementing the solution.

In order to create more success stories like the above, the forest needs to define the desired process for involving the public in decision making, train the appropriate personnel, hire additional public relations personnel to manage the program, create performance metrics for this activity, and build these metrics into individual employee goals.

## Proactive Management of New Developments on the Forest Boundary

One of the unique issues of an urban forest is new development directly on the forest border. The impact of development extends far beyond the boundary of the developed area – thus it is critical for the forest to be current and involved in city and community planning. Examples of planning improvements that benefit everyone include greenbelts around developments with fire resistant plants to prevent the spread of wildfire, and fire resistant construction requirements.

A defined process exists for this activity. Needs include training and funding for lands planning and a right of way specialist to keep the forest safer and more accessible.



## Strategies: Improved Public Safety and Forest Health

The current removal of dead and dying trees is difficult and expensive, a problem complicated by the limited market for timber products in Southern California.

Large stands of trees in 474,000 acres (September 2003 data) of vegetation in the San Bernardino and San Jacinto mountains are dying due to a record-breaking four-year drought that has weakened trees and made them vulnerable to rapidly increasing bark beetle populations and pathogens. The dead and dying trees pose a severe fire threat to communities in the area – approximately 100,000 people live within the San Bernardino and San Jacinto mountains. According to the San Bernardino County Tax Assessor, within San Bernardino County alone, the mountain communities within the National Forest have \$7.6 billion in assessed valuation of residential and commercial property.

Over 100 years of fire suppression has resulted in overly dense stands of trees. This, followed by a four-year drought, has resulted in too many trees competing for too little moisture. As a result, the trees are highly susceptible to bark beetle attack. Beetles are now at epidemic proportions.

The current removal of dead and dying trees is difficult and expensive, a problem complicated by the limited market for timber products in Southern California. There are no lumber mills in Southern California and the Forest Service has not had an active timber harvest program for

nearly 10 years. Prescribed fire has been historically difficult to do in this area because of the high percentage of urban interface communities within Forest boundaries.

SBNF has been attacking this problem in a variety of ways. The following is a partial list:

- 1) The Forest has also been approved for large increases in budget for hazardous fuels treatments for FY03 to remove dead and dying trees and underbrush from 13,184 acres of federal lands surrounding communities, including high priority evacuation routes.
- 2) The Forest Service, in cooperation with other state and municipal government agencies, has formed the Mountain Area Safety Task Force (MAST) to resolve the public safety threat caused by the vegetation mortality. In addition, MAST is seeking ways to expedite the removal and disposal of dead trees and other hazardous fuels in and around the National Forest, prioritizing evacuation routes, infrastructure protection, wildland-urban-interface fire protection zones, and protection of public use and administration facilities.
- 3) The Forest Service is successfully expediting environmental documentation for projects on the San Bernardino National Forest involving time sensitive fuels reduction needs.
- 4) On a “first alarm,” the Forest Service will respond 6-12 engines, 2 helicopters, 2 air tankers, 1 dozer, 2 prevention units and 1 Chief Officer. CDF will respond 3 engines. San Bernardino County Fire Department will respond with 6 local government engines for structure protection. The County Sheriff and California Highway Patrol will also respond on all first alarms and an inter-agency public information officer will respond to interact with the concerned public.



Santa Ana wind-driven fire storm



Suppression crew removing brush ahead of the fire

## Strategies: Nurturing Volunteer Relationships

“Becoming a volunteer helped me to change my perspective of taking care of the earth. Instead of complaining, criticizing, and blaming, I feel more like I am a part of the solution.” **Janelle Kotzin**

The public expects the forest to serve more and more visitors, and protect and restore our natural resources and recreational facilities. In 1972, the Volunteers in the National Forests Act authorized the recruitment, training, and acceptance of volunteer services. Without volunteers, the forest could not begin to meet the expectations of the public.

In 2002, San Bernardino Volunteers staffed the Arboretum at Heaps Peak, cleaned up Deep Creek stream channels, repaired the Pacific Crest Trail, and rebuilt the Barton Flats Visitor Center deck, among other activities. The average volunteer contributed 41 hours of work in 2002, which suggests that San Bernardino’s volunteers represent an unusually active and committed group. The contribution totaled:

- **1,900 volunteers** (nearly four times the San Bernardino National Forest’s total permanent workforce)



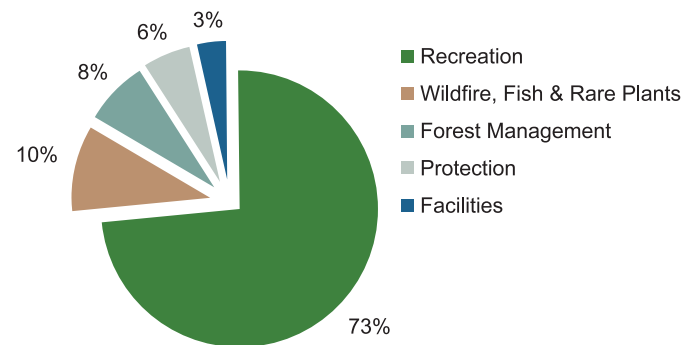
Forest volunteers are essential.

- **79,000 hours** of indispensable work worth over \$1,200,000

Recruiting members of the community to volunteer as stewards of the land has unexpected benefits. Because these people tend to be active in their communities, as well as having numerous contacts through their work, they reach a large and diverse audience that Forest Service employees cannot. Volunteers become ambassadors for the forest, not only when they are working with the Forest, but in their daily lives as well.

While the rapid increase in population adjacent to the forest increases the workload, it also increases the potential volunteer labor force. In order to maximize the value of that resource, it is essential that the forest have sufficient liaison personnel to manage volunteer programs. It is also important to the volunteers to see that they are appreciated. The best way to send the message that the forest cares about what volunteers are doing is to have forest employees working side by side with them.

2002 Volunteer Hours by Category



**Selected Volunteer Organizations Active in the San Bernardino National Forest**

- San Bernardino National Forest Association
- National Children’s Forest Volunteers
- Big Bear Discovery Center Volunteers
- Off Highway Vehicle Volunteers
- Cucamonga Wilderness Hosts
- Fire Lookout Hosts
- Fire Education Volunteers
- Rim of the World Interpretive Association
- Fisheries Resource Volunteer Corps
- Deep Creek Fly Fishers
- Sierra Club
- Pacific Crest Trail Association
- San Gorgonio Wilderness Association
- Front Country Volunteers
- Back Country Horseman
- Boy and Girl Scouts
- Big Bear High School
- Forest Service Volunteer Organization

## A Success Story: San Bernardino National Forest Association



A volunteer provides much needed repair to the Butler Peak Lookout, bringing its rail hight to OSHA standards and ensuring the safety of over 7,500 visitors each year.



Lead Discovery Center Naturalist explains to a young visitor how wildflowers help regenerate the forest after a fire.

The San Bernardino National Forest Association (SBNFA) illustrates the success possible from creating partnerships and nurturing volunteer relationships. SBNFA, managing several volunteer groups, is a new model for connecting people to the land, and the Forest Service to people – bringing in people and money that the Forest Service either doesn't have access to, or lacks the capacity to acquire and manage. The SBNFA is one of the many successful organizations whose contributions are critical to the operation of the forest.

The Association was born through connections not only with the Forest Service, but also with the private sector. There are three primary goals considered when bringing new partners to the forest:

- broaden the scope of ideas and talent used to create new forest programs;
- attract new resources;
- encourage and promote investment in the forest as a way of supporting local community development.

The SBNFA manages five distinct programs, to help ensure that all the forest's visitors and residents become good stewards of public lands.

**The National Children's Forest** – Approximately 3,000 children participate in curriculum-based environmental education. Half are from urban communities and may never have visited a forest before. Forty-five dedicated youth volunteers lead interpretive programs and tours at the Visitors Information Center. They also conduct evening programs at nearby campgrounds and resorts. In addition to learning about the forest, these Youth Leaders develop life skills such as public speaking, project management, researching information, and the value of giving their time to a worthy cause.

**The Big Bear Discovery Center** – The Center hosts 160,000 visitors every year, and serves 80,000 more by

phone, providing valuable information, exhibits, weekly programming, eco-tours, Earth Month festival, and special events. Discovery staff and volunteers have created valuable links to the Big Bear community, which benefits the Forest Service.

**Fire Lookout Hosts** – Nearly 250 volunteers restore, maintain, and staff seven operating fire lookouts. Yearly they educate 14,000 visitors, have made first reports of seven wildfires, and have assisted fire agencies in verifying and locating many more.

**Off-Highway Vehicle volunteers** – The “eyes and ears” of the forest, these 130 volunteers log 19,000 miles patrolling every year. In addition to maintaining roads and trails, they assist lost and stranded visitors, remove tons of trash, and extinguish many abandoned campfires.

**Fire Education Volunteers** – This new program already has over 50 volunteers in training. Their goal is to educate Southern Californians – both within the forest and Los Angeles basin communities – about wildfire. Volunteers choose to “specialize” in different roles including educator, public information supporting fires and major incidents, partnership building, tour guides of an air tanker base, or logistics support for fires. The program is being evaluated for introduction to other national forests.

### SBNFA Mission

The SBNFA is a nonprofit organization committed to the success of the San Bernardino National Forest as it works to fulfill its mission of “caring for the land and serving people.” The SBNFA exists to complement and add to the skills and resources of the Forest, involving other partners – other public lands agencies, individuals, non-profits, private foundations, and corporate partners – and fostering citizen involvement in decision making.



# A Success Story: Recreation Revenue Collection and Investment

California's southern forests are unique in the Forest Service because they border dense urban areas and have growing populations within forest boundaries. As the urban areas have rapidly grown, visitation to the forests has also grown, while recreation budgets have stayed flat, after adjusting for inflation.

Before the Adventure Pass (AP) was introduced, the four forests in Southern California were unable to meet basic health and safety obligations with appropriated funds. Of perhaps even greater importance was the problem of communicating with millions of spontaneous visitors, entering through 160 different uncontrolled access points, for an average visit of only 5 hours. There was no effective way to deliver health and safety messages to them, such as fire danger, or to explain basic behavioral expectations such as the prohibition against open fires and the need to pack out trash. There was also no way of subtly communicating that this apparent wild land was being managed, and that there were consequences to destructive behavior in the forest. With this in mind, the Adventure Pass was launched in 1997 to raise funds and increase public awareness.

"... Several years ago our National Forest lands in the Forest Falls, Angeles Oaks and Mountain Home Village were a disgrace. The local picnic grounds were dirty with poor maintenance, little oversight and increasing graffiti and gang activity from the valley below. I was frankly embarrassed of the area..."

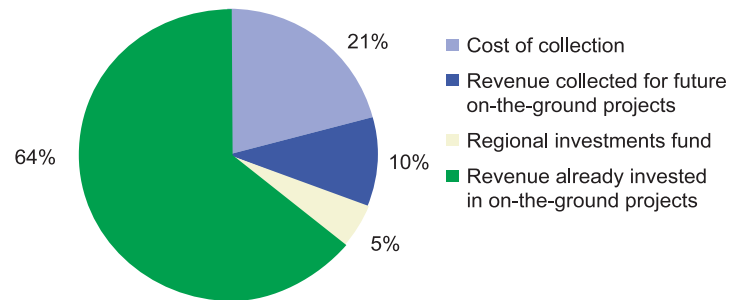
**Tom McIntosh, Forest Falls, CA**

The Adventure Pass is essentially a parking pass that allows the visitor access to forest lands. Day passes are \$5, and a pass valid for one calendar year is \$30. With this program, San Bernardino has been able to make significant contributions to its mission of *Caring for the Land and Serving People* in the San Bernardino National Forest during 2002. Examples include:

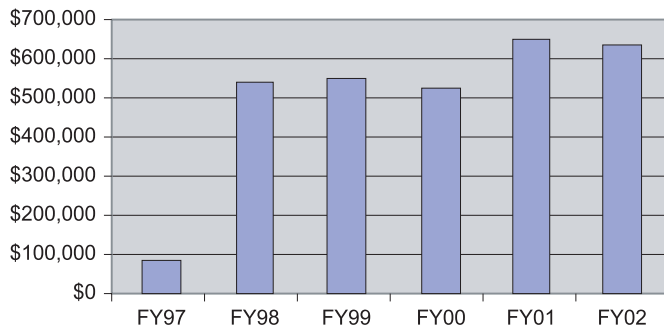
### Maintenance and Repairs

- 223 miles of maintained and improved trails
- 23 portable restrooms at high impact recreation areas
- Increased frequency of trash removal
- Improvements to infrastructure of recreation sites, such as fire hazard reduction and painting picnic tables
- Graffiti removed from 120 sites

**Use of Adventure Pass Revenues  
June 1997 to September 2002  
(Total: \$13,454,000)**



**Adventure Pass Fund Allocations for SBNF**



## Crime Prevention and the Adventure Pass

“One time in history I never want to repeat is life in Lytle Creek before the Adventure Pass . . .”

**Anna Sorum, Lytle Creek, CA**

The Adventure Pass has proven to be an effective crime deterrent. Non-compliance notices placed on cars pinpoint the time, date, and location where a car was parked, which can be traced back to the owner. This is a strong deterrent to committing crimes in the area.

Extra rangers make areas less appealing as a place to commit crime.

The presence of graffiti drives away many visitors, conveys a sense of neglect, and leads to more serious destruction. Removing graffiti reverses the trend.

“When the bad guys have to pay, they go away.”

**Helen Hansen, Mt. Baldy**

“The Adventure Pass has made a big difference in crime in my patrol area. Criminals just don’t want to come to an area where they’re likely to be contacted by officers in the field.”

## Improved Visitor Information and Education

- Expanded visitor center office hours
- Provided full time staffing and volunteer support for Big Bear Discovery Center and the Children’s Forest, helping support 180 volunteers
- Two new information kiosks constructed
- Created and distributed over 50,000 visitor guides

## New and Improved Facilities

- Added toilets, campfire rings, stoves, picnic grills, bear proof trash containers and drinking fountains to recreation areas
- 60 campsites refurbished

## Law Enforcement and Field Operations

- Hired 11 new field rangers
- Faster response to graffiti and vandalism
- Burglary, aggravated assaults, auto theft, and petty theft are all down in the forest according to official reports

## Resource Protection

- Nearly 1240 cubic yards of litter removed
- Habitat restoration for the yellow-legged frog and the willow flycatcher
- Reduced fire danger by extinguishing campfires and hazardous fuel reduction
- Built holding pens for feral dogs

## Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

- Repaired and maintained 42 wildlife watering facilities
- Collaborated with Fisheries Volunteer Corp to conduct public information patrols and survey work

## Volunteer Partnerships

- The AP funds equipment, supplies, and supervision for the San Geronio Wilderness Association, the San Bernardino National Forest Association, the California Environmental Project, the Forest Service Volunteer Association.

## The Adventure Pass Mission

The Adventure Pass program is not about making money – it is about restoring public contact, ensuring public safety, providing public services, and taking care of resources entrusted to Forest Service management.

## Fire Prevention and the Adventure Pass

In August of 1997, a group in neighboring Angeles National Forest was attempting to burn their toilet paper from a week-long camping trip. They had had no contact with any Forest Service people to inform them that the fire danger was extremely high, and the result of their well-intended act was the Narrows Fire – a fire that ended up costing the taxpayer \$26 million, more than 10 times the forest’s annual recreation budget at the time.

The Adventure Pass (AP) helps prevent fires that can cost \$1 million per day to fight. The AP program allows the Forest Service to educate visitors on potential dangers to themselves and to the forest. The program also pays for 11 field rangers in the San Bernardino National Forest, who extinguished or removed 5,658 illegal or abandoned campfires in 2002.

## Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains National Monument

On Oct. 24, 2000, the President signed Public Law 106-351 creating the Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains National Monument. The legislation is the result of a local, grass-roots effort to provide national recognition to this unique public resource. The statute requires the two federal agencies involved, the BLM and the Forest Service to develop a management plan in cooperation with the other agencies and public interests involved within three years of enactment. The plan is built upon the existing strong cooperative efforts of the Santa Rosa Mountains National Scenic Area, which was designated by the Secretary of the Interior in 1990. The goal of these grass-roots' efforts is to protect the area's outstanding biological, cultural, recreational, geological, educational, scientific, and scenic, values, including the recently listed threatened Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep.

The Santa Rosa National Monument covers 272,000 acres, including 60,000 acres within the San Jacinto District of the San Bernardino National Forest and 86,000 acres within the Bureau of Land Management California Desert Conservation Area. The remaining land within the boundary of the National Monument is managed by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, California Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Fish and Game, the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Riverside county, local cities and private landowners.



Roadrunner on eastern slope of Santa Rosa Mountain

The monument includes land in three Wilderness Areas: the BLM's 64,000-acre Santa Rosa Mountains Wilderness and the Forest Service's Santa Rosa Wilderness (13,800 acres) and portions of the Forest Service's San Jacinto Wilderness (19,390 acres).

The Agua Caliente Tribe owns substantial acreage within the area and has historic cultural interests throughout the mountains. An agreement between the tribe and BLM was signed October 13, 1999 and included plans for land exchanges, cultural inventories and other cooperative efforts in conjunction with other interests in the mountains. The Tribe testified in support of the monument legislation and hosted the formal dedication in December 2000. The National Monument Management Plan provides guidance for the continued protection and management of the cultural resources found within the National Monument.

An acquisition partnership made up of the managing partners as well the Wildlife Conservation Board, Riverside County, the Friends of the Desert Mountains, and Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, the tribes and the cities within the Coachella Valley, all contribute toward acquiring private lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains from willing sellers.

The Monument Advisory Committee (MAC), a group of citizens representing a variety of private and governmental interest groups, was established in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Members to the committee were appointed by the Secretary in October 2001. The BLM and Forest Service are working in collaboration with the MAC to prepare the management plan required by the statute to be completed by October 2003. The draft was released for public comment on March 21, 2003, for a 90-day comment period. A Proposed Management Plan is expected in Fall 2003.



The omnivorous coyote rests after a night in the forest.



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San Bernardino National Forest is a land of many opportunities.