

**FOREST PLAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT
SALMON AND CHALLIS NATIONAL FORESTS
1997 - 2003****BACKGROUND**

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

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

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

Six monitoring reports have been completed since the two Forest Plans were approved. The first report in 1995 was comprehensive in scope, covering each resource area described in the two plans. Activities for the individual monitoring items were shown for each year and evaluated in narrative form. Any monitoring items recommended to be discontinued were dropped from further reporting. The 1996 report followed the same format but with fewer monitoring items to report. The 1997 report was in a pamphlet format that described Forest accomplishments and news items organized by Ranger District. The report for the years 1998 and 1999 were combined and focused on six primary issues. This report noted that the two Forest Plans were rapidly becoming outdated and needed revision to capture new issues, new directions, and differing public demands. The 2000/2001 report primarily focused on the fires of 2000, the Forest's accomplishments in many rehabilitation efforts, and the new National Fire Plan direction. A draft 2002 report was initiated in late 2003 and attempted to return to the original comprehensive report format, discussing the monitoring items described for each resource area.

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

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

A close assessment and evaluation of the stated direction, goals, and objectives in the Forest Plans through this comprehensive monitoring report highlights the need for plan revision. The two Forest Plans are woefully out of date and it appears that Forest Plan revision will not occur in the near future. The next step, therefore, would be a thorough review of recommendations and updating the Forest Plans through plan amendments, or other means as appropriate.

TYPES OF FOREST PLAN MONITORING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ADDITIONAL MONITORING

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

Baseline Monitoring

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

Tracking

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

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

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

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

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

Format and Instructions for Displaying Monitoring Information

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

Monitoring Types:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM

| Resource | Responsible Individual |
|------------------------|--|
| Air Quality | Gary Jackson, Soil Scientist |
| Budget | Peggy Jackson, Budget Analyst |
| External Effects | Gail Baer, Public Affairs Officer |
| Fire | Lynn Bennett, Fire Ecologist |
| Fish | Bill Baer, Fisheries Biologist |
| FOIA | Mardi Gooby, Management Analyst |
| Heritage | Steve Matz, Archaeologist |
| Insect and Disease | Doug Basford, Silviculturist |
| Lands | Tim Jones, Lands Specialist |
| Minerals | Ray Henderson, Minerals Specialist |
| Planning | Karryl Kreiger, Planning |
| Range | Bill Diage, Ecologist |
| Recreation/Wilderness | Ken Stauffer, Landscape Architect |
| Research/Natural Areas | Gary Jackson, Soil Scientist |
| Soils | Karen Gallogly, Soil Scientist Gary Jackson, Soil Scientist |
| Timber | Doug Basford, Silviculturist |
| Visual Resource | Ken Stauffer, Landscape Architect |
| Water | Dave Deschaine, Hydrologist |
| Wildlife | Richard Larsen, Wildlife Biologist |

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter III lists each reporting item and summarizes recommendations on whether to continue to monitor or report each item.

FUTURE MONITORING REPORTS

The next comprehensive monitoring and evaluation report is scheduled for fiscal year 2008.

