

Welcome to the Eldorado National Forest

The Eldorado National Forest is part of an overall community which contributes to the quality of life. Everyone who shares in its benefits, shares in its welfare.





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Introduction

Since it was first established by an act of Congress in 1910, the Eldorado National Forest has been inextricably linked with the lives of many people – from those who live and work on the Forest, to those who come to the Forest for recreational purposes. This business plan tells the story of the Eldorado National Forest by describing its connection with these stakeholders. It also describes the range of operational activities performed within the Forest, the resources currently used, and the resources required to perform activities to an optimal standard. This business plan provides a number of carefully considered strategies and investment priorities aimed at closing current funding gaps. It gives strategic direction to the Forest in meeting its mission and motto - Caring for the Land, and Serving People.

The Business Plan Initiative is a partnership between the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region. Under this initiative, which began in 2003, business plans have been written for all 18 business units within the region.

The business planning initiative adopts a common methodology that uses an activity-based approach to analyzing all forest operations. These operations are divided into six functional areas, which are further subdivided into 34 program areas, to give a meaningful ‘snap-shot’ of the 2005 resource position. The resource requirements for each program area are assessed and strategies formulated and prioritized to address funding gaps. The business plan includes an analysis of historical funding and expenditures that highlights important changes over time. The business plan also highlights the important role of Forest partners, who play a valuable role in the operation of the Forest.

The completion of this business plan provides the Eldorado National Forest with important tools to better communicate the business of the Forest to a range of stakeholders, and to help steer its future strategic direction.

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Forest Supervisor's Foreword



Forest Supervisor Ramiro Villalvazo

Welcome to the Business Plan for the Eldorado National Forest in the Sierra Nevada of California! I invite you to be part of those “vast possibilities of our great future” visualized by the first Chief of the Forest Service. The vision continues 100 years later, but we need your help to make it reality.

The history of the Eldorado National Forest, in the Mother Lode where gold was discovered in 1848 is, quite literally, rich. The variety of ecosystems encompassed by the forest provides a setting for a myriad of human needs ranging from solitude to commodity production. More than two million people live within an hour's drive of the forest. Demand for goods and services from the forest environment increases every day as a result of people utilizing their public lands.

We were thinking of all stakeholders, internal and external, when we developed this plan. I hope you will find your place in the plan as you read through it. National Forest management has always been a partnership between the Forest Service and the people who enjoy the benefits. It is a truly shared responsibility for conservation of our resources.

As you read through the Business Plan, you will realize the diversity and complexity of work performed and the people served within the Forest. The charts, graphs and text will give you a quick idea of where funds come from to implement forest programs. You will discover the downward trend in overall funding for most National Forest program areas, with the exception of wildfire fighting capability and hazardous fuels management.

Internally, the Forest Service has been redeeming our ongoing responsibility for the future by continually reviewing and improving our business processes. Externally, we see our situation as an opportunity to explore new ways of working together with partners in caring for the environment and serving diverse people and communities. The Eldorado National Forest has always had supporters who have helped us accomplish Forest

programs in many ways. For that, we thank you. This Business Plan presents the seeds for growing new ideas for carrying out our mutual goals.

Our collective challenge is to find ways to close significant resource gaps. The Business Plan identifies some strategies and investments we can implement in the next few years to narrow those gaps. You are welcome to use the plan as a starting point to help us collaboratively shape the future of the Eldorado National Forest.

Ramiro Villalvazo
Forest Supervisor, Eldorado National Forest

“The vast possibilities of our great future will become realities only if we make ourselves responsible for that future.”

Gifford Pinchot
Conservationist

Executive Summary

This Business Plan provides a “snapshot” of the financial and operational position of the Eldorado National Forest (Eldorado NF) in FY2005, based on current and historical data. It compares the Eldorado NF’s current financial resources with the funding levels required to achieve optimal operational standards, and proposes strategies to address the gap between available and necessary resources. As a communication tool, the business plan allows the Forest to highlight its financial position and future strategic direction to a wide range of stakeholders.

Over the previous decade the Forest budget has declined, to a point where funding for non-fire activities is now less than any other time in the last 10 years. The major source of funding for the budget comes from Congressional appropriations, used to fund both fire and non-fire activities. In addition to the funding decrease, the affect of inflation further reduces the purchasing power of available funds.

The functional areas with the greatest amount of expenditure funded by appropriations are Management and Administration (99% of total expenditure), Fire and Aviation Management (98% of total expenditure), and Facilities, Operations and Maintenance (72% of total expenditure). These areas will be most affected by the expected continuing decrease in this fund source.

The Forest required \$6.61 million in additional funding in FY2005 for all program areas to achieve operational standards, a 28% increase in the level of current expenditure. Approximately 73% of the additional funding is needed to pay for extra personnel resources. In addition to the extra recurring expenditure needs, a total of \$38 million is also required in one-time investments for all program areas to meet operational standards.

Forest Budget

The Forest budget comes from three sources: appropriations, revenue, and reimbursements. In the period between FY1995 and FY2005 the total budget available to the Forest from all fund sources declined from \$21.98 million to \$18.46 million, a decrease of 16%. This budget is used for both fire

(pre-suppression and hazardous fuels reduction) and non-fire activities. Over this period, the non-fire budget decreased from \$10.81 million to \$7.29 million (49% to 39.5% of the total budget), while the budget for fire activities increased. Funding from revenue declined by 61%, from \$6.84 million to \$2.66 million (31% to 14% of the total budget), due mainly to the declining commercial timber receipts.

After adjustment for inflation, funding from appropriations, including those for fire activities, decreased from \$14.02 million in 1995 to \$10.6 million in 2005, a decrease of 24%. Importantly, total appropriations excluding those for fire decreased by 47% over the same period.

Operational expenditure¹

The total operational expenditure for the Eldorado NF in FY2005 was \$23.76 million. Of the six functional areas Fire & Aviation Management at \$8.27 million (35% of total expenditure) and Facilities, Operations and Maintenance at \$4.22 million (18% of total expenditure) had the largest expenditure.

The individual program areas with the largest expenditure were Fire Pre-Suppression and Preparedness at \$3.60 million, followed by Hazardous Fuels Reduction at \$3.23 million and Timber at \$2.83 million. Together these program areas account for over 41% of total expenditure on the Forest.

Additional funding needs & investments

The functional areas with the largest additional funding requirements were Facilities, Operations and Maintenance at \$1.98 million (47% of current expenditure in this area), followed by Fire and Aviation Management at \$1.62 million (20% of current expenditure in this area). The program areas with the largest additional funding requirements were Hazardous Fuels Reduction at \$1.1 million (34% of current program expenditure) and Buildings, Grounds and Utilities at \$833,165 (44% of current program expenditure).

The program areas with the largest additional funding needs, as a percentage of their current expenditure, were Land Ownership

¹Expenditure in the Wildfire Suppression and National Fire and Disaster Support programs has been excluded from the analysis of expenditure and additional funding requirements.



Loon Lake. The Eldorado has 11 major reservoirs that provide domestic water, hydroelectric power, and numerous recreation opportunities.

and Adjustment (403% or \$456,370) and Law Enforcement at (230% or \$719,172). In both instances the additional funds are needed to pay for significant increases in personnel resources to meet operational standards.

Of the \$38 million required for total investments, \$35.4 million is needed by the Facilities, Operations and Maintenance functional area to pay for much needed deferred maintenance and for improvements to buildings, Forest roads and trails.

Goals & strategies

To address the identified shortfalls in funding, and the required investments, four broad strategic goals were established. These goals included reducing the reliance on appropriated funding, and reducing fixed costs. To address areas most affected by funding shortfalls, strategies were developed that were aligned with these goals.

- The Business Plan identified that a large portion of expenditure on the Forest is related to fixed costs. The Forest needs to reduce fixed costs to provide flexibility when faced with a decreasing appropriated budget. A strategy was developed to review fixed costs across business units on the Forest, and to identify opportunities for fixed cost reduction and operating efficiencies through possible consolidation.
- A strategy was also developed to address the large deferred maintenance needs on the Forest. If these needs are not addressed critical components of the Forest infrastructure will be affected. This deferred maintenance will limit public access to the Forest, increase the cost of other work, and affect the facilities available for public enjoyment.
- A range of other strategies were developed to reduce costs, increase revenue and improve communication with the public. These strategies include: broadening the use of Stewardship Contracts; making further use of existing authorities to implement user fees and recover costs; developing a Forest-wide communications plan; better managing volunteer resources; improving the use of partnerships; and establishing a Forest Association.

Forest Overview

Located in the Central Sierra Nevada region, the Eldorado National Forest is classified as an Urban National Forest. It is located one hour from the metropolitan area of Sacramento which has a population of over one million people, and two to three hours driving time from the San Francisco Bay area, with a population of over six million. The Forest therefore plays a vital role in the environment, health and well being of over seven million people.

The Eldorado National Forest is an ideal place for people seeking to escape from busy urban lifestyles. Its climate and topography offer a wide range of recreational opportunities, including hiking, fishing, camping and cross-country and downhill skiing.

The Forest is bordered to the north by the Tahoe National Forest, to the east by the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, and to the south by the Stanislaus National Forest. The western boundary interfaces with private lands in a complex pattern of ownership.

Physical Setting

The Forest encompasses a total of 798,279 gross acres, which includes 193,027 acres of private ownership. The Forest ranges in elevation from 1,000 feet in the foothills to more than 10,000 feet above sea level along the Sierra Crest. The mountainous topography is broken by the steep canyons of the Mokelumne, Cosumnes, American, and Rubicon Rivers. Plateaus of generally moderate relief are located between these steep canyons. A Mediterranean type climate extends over most of the Forest with warm, dry summers and cold wet winters.

Natural Resources

The Eldorado National Forest has two popular wilderness areas: Desolation Wilderness (63,960 acres) and the Mokelumne Wilderness (104,500 acres). Wilderness areas are designated by Congress to be as free as possible from the impact of human use. The Forest also manages eight Geological and/or Botanical Special Interest Areas, three Research Natural Areas, and a 12,500 acre archaeological district. The Forest provides habitat for 340 species of birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. Vegetation cover consists of chaparral, conifer, fir, and sub-alpine trees.

Water is a major resource on the Eldorado National Forest. The average acre on the forest receives about 56 inches of precipitation annually. The surface water of Eldorado National Forest is of excellent quality year-round and yields approximately 1.4 million acre-feet annually. Numerous streams, natural lakes, and man-made reservoirs provide key features for a substantial share of recreation activities. The forest has about 611 miles of fishable streams in four major drainage systems. Water flowing from the forest is used for hydroelectric power production as well as municipal, industrial, and agricultural purposes. There are six major hydroelectric operations in the forest.

Recreation

The Eldorado National Forest is divided into four Ranger districts: Amador, Georgetown, Pacific and Placerville. A range of developed sites includes campgrounds, picnic grounds, trailer sanitation disposal sites, boat ramps, ski areas, observation and interpretive sites. There are a number of privately developed facilities such as winter sport sites, recreation residences, lodges, resorts and clubs that are entirely or partially in the Forest. The Eldorado National Forest is also situated near the original California gold discovery site on the American River at Coloma, and still boasts numerous gold-bearing rivers and streams. Visitors to the Forest can still pan for gold!

One of the most popular spots in the Eldorado National Forest is the Desolation Wilderness. Because of its beauty and accessibility, Desolation Wilderness is one of the most heavily-used wilderness areas in the United States. Lover's Leap near Twin Bridges on Highway 50, is a massive rock outcrop, famous for some of the finest rock climbing in the Sierra Nevada. The Forest also offers the spectacular scenery of the Carson Pass National Scenic Byway, a system of off-highway vehicle trails, and winter recreation with impressive backcountry ski trails.

Special Resources

The Eldorado NF also supports activities related to forest health management through the Institute of Forest Genetics and the Placerville Nursery. The Institute of Forest Genetics conducts

research in genetic diversity to aid overall ecosystem management, and features the Eddy Arboretum, containing one of the largest collections of conifers from around the world.

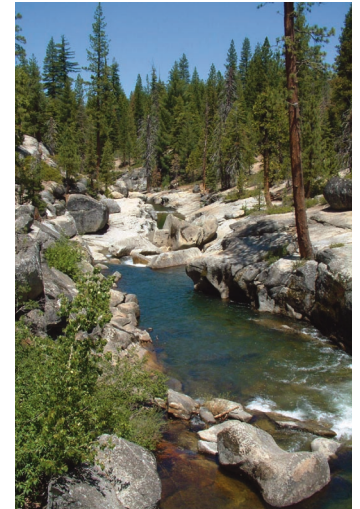
The Placerville Nursery is one of the few seedling Forest Service nurseries in the nation, and produces seedlings for re-forestation after fires and for other ecological restoration.

Placerville Nursery

The Placerville Nursery, located on the Eldorado National Forest, is one of six nurseries operated nationally by the Forest Service. Established in 1957, the Nursery is administered by the Eldorado National Forest, and directed by the Pacific Southwest Regional Office to supply seedlings to all the National Forests in California and for other government agencies. The Nursery has the production capacity to produce approximately 15 million bare root seedlings and 1 million container seedlings, annually. Current production levels are about 1 million bare root and 1 million container seedlings.

The Nursery also manages the Regional seedbank, which includes processing cones to remove seed; cleaning and testing the seed; and storing seed for future use. Cones are collected by National Forests to meet their anticipated future planting needs. The underlying principles of genetic diversity and adaptation to local conditions drive all steps in the process, from cone collection to seedling production. Nursery clients place orders for seedlings one to two years in advance of anticipated reforestation projects. The Nursery has twelve permanent staff and relies on contracts to accomplish annually occurring, labor-intensive work, such as hand weeding and packing seedlings. Financially, the Nursery operates in a Working Capital Fund which requires that it recover expenses by charging the National Forests and other clients for their seedlings and seed.

The Pacific Southwest Region's Central Zone Genetic Resources and Disease Resistance programs are also located at the Nursery.



Silver Fork of the American River. Residents of El Dorado County, Sacramento and the East Bay Area rely on water from the Eldorado National Forest.



Getting the Next Generation Involved. Students from local schools help care for seedlings at the Placerville Nursery.

Eldorado National Forest Inventory

General

Elevation Range (feet)	1,000 to 10,000
Acres of land (gross)	798,279
Acres of land (national forest)	605,249
Acres of land (private, state, etc)	193,027
Districts:	
Amador, Placerville, Pacific, Georgetown	
Counties:	
El Dorado, Amador, Alpine, Placer	
Permanent Employees (August 2005)	272
Temporary Employees (August 2005)	125
Volunteer Hours (FY2005)	9,979
Roads (miles)	2,653
Administrative sites/buildings	471

Natural Resources

Desolation Wilderness:	
Acres on ENF	41,958
Total Wilderness Acres	63,960
Mokelumne Wilderness:	
Acres on ENF	60,700
Total Wilderness Acres	104,500
Special Interest Areas (SIA) & Research	
Natural Areas (RNA) in acres:	
Big Crater Geological (SIA)	122
Leonardi Falls Botanical (SIA)	215
Little Crater Geological (SIA)	212
Rock Cr. Geo/Botanical (SIA)	413

Round Top Geo/Botanical (SIA)	887
Traverse Cr. Botanical (SIA)	224
Pyramid Cr. Geological (SIA)	950
Wrights Lake Bog Geo/Botanical (SIA)	65
Peavine Point (RNA)	1,098
Snow Canyon (RNA)	889
Station Creek (RNA)	746
Inventoried Roadless Area (acres)	102,600
Lakes, Reservoirs, Ponds (quantity)	888
(11 large reservoirs)	
Lakes, Reservoirs, Ponds (surface acres)	12,405
Streams and Rivers - perennial (miles)	2,853
Streams and Rivers - seasonal (miles)	2,367

Recreation

Campgrounds	57
Picnic & Day Use Areas	24
Rental Cabins	4
Boat Launches	7
Information Stations	4
Administrative/Information Offices	5
Recreation Residences	965
Ski Areas	2
Organization Camps	14
Snow Parks	5
Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (miles)	21
Trailheads	20
Trails - system (miles):	
Non-motorized (wilderness)	141

Non-motorized (general)	231
Motorized	250
Snowmobile	62.3
Cross-country Skiing	98
(55 miles also used by snowmobiles)	

Wildlife & Plant Species

Birds	202
Mammals	79
Reptiles	24
Amphibians	15
Fish	20
Wildlife Species Total	340
Plant Species Total	1,136
Threatened/Endangered Species	3
Sensitive Bird Species	5
Sensitive Mammal Species	7
Sensitive Reptile Species	1
Sensitive Amphibian Species	4
Sensitive Fish Species	1
Sensitive Plant Species (as at Feb '06)	17

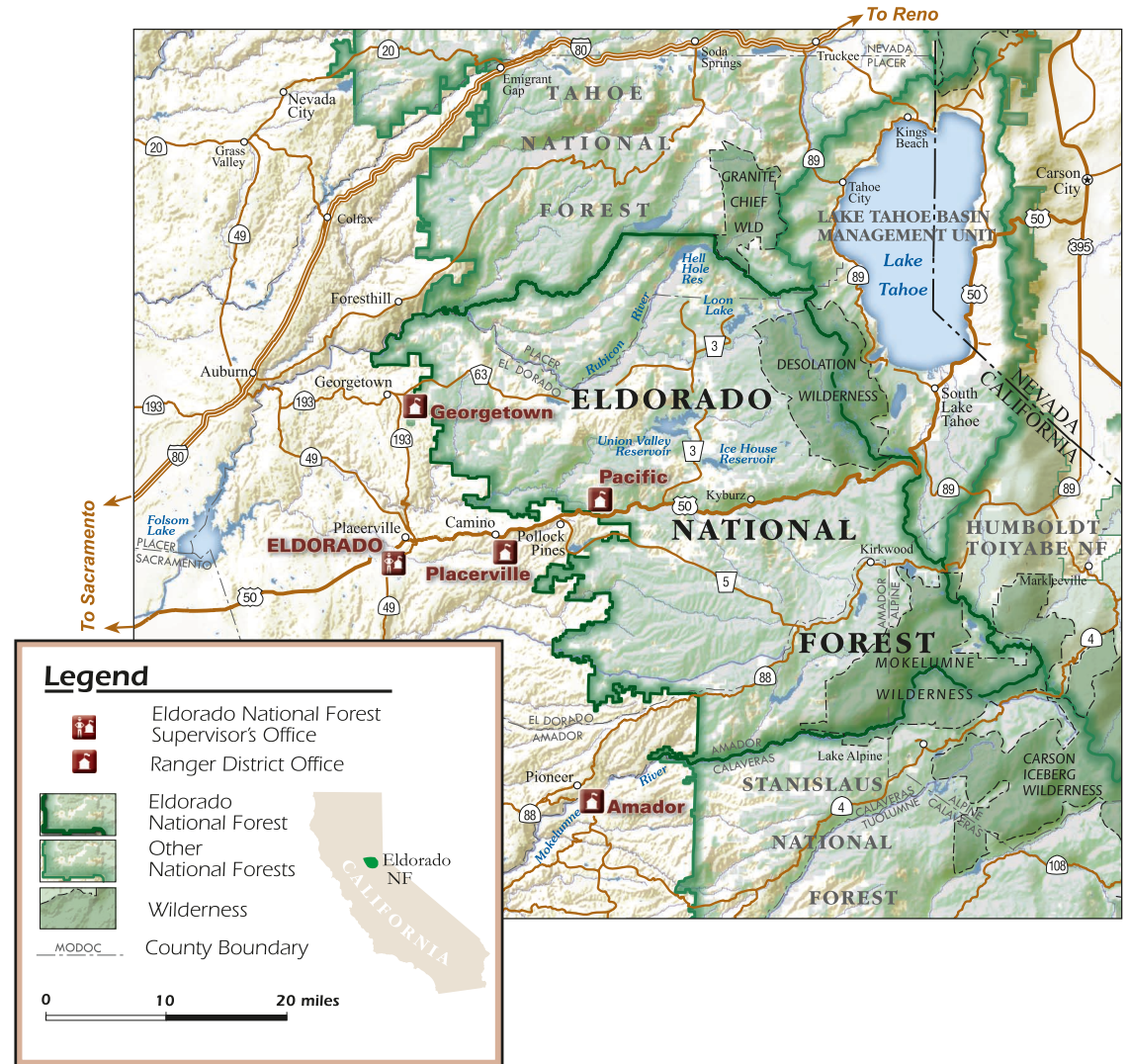
Heritage Resources

Prehistoric & Historic Sites	2,520
National Historic Trails:	
Carson Emigrant Trail, Pony Express Trail & Pacific Crest Trail	
Mokelumne Canyon National Register Archaeological District (acres)	12,500

Enabling Legislation

On July 28, 1910, President William Taft created by Proclamation 1070 (36 Statute 2729) the Eldorado National Forest, an area of 841,211 acres. The newly formed forest was created from 809,211 acres of the Tahoe National Forest and 31,301 of the Stanislaus National Forest. As a result of further Proclamations issued in 1928 and 1945, and an Administrative Order issued in 1949, additional lands were added to the Eldorado National Forest. By the 1930s a consolidation of forest boundaries had been made possible by the General Exchange Act of 1922, which allowed Forest staff to exchange forest land for private land of equal value situated within the forest boundary. In 1973 the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit was created from sections of Eldorado, Tahoe, and Humboldt Toiyabe National Forests.

Since the Eldorado National Forest was first created, many more pieces of enabling legislation, executive orders and government or Forest Service initiatives have affected the way the Forest operates and its role within the wider community. Some of the more noteworthy pieces of legislation include: The Healthy Forests Initiative and the associated Healthy Forests Restoration Act (2002), which contained a number of provisions designed to speed up hazardous fuel reduction and forest restoration projects; The Granger-Thye Act (1952) which gives authority for concessionaire fees to be used to offset maintenance costs; The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), which gives authority to Forests to retain recreation user fees for use in maintaining and improving the recreational resources and facilities; and The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (2000) which restored payments to rural US counties, previously funded by a proportion of Forest timber receipts.



Historical Financial Context

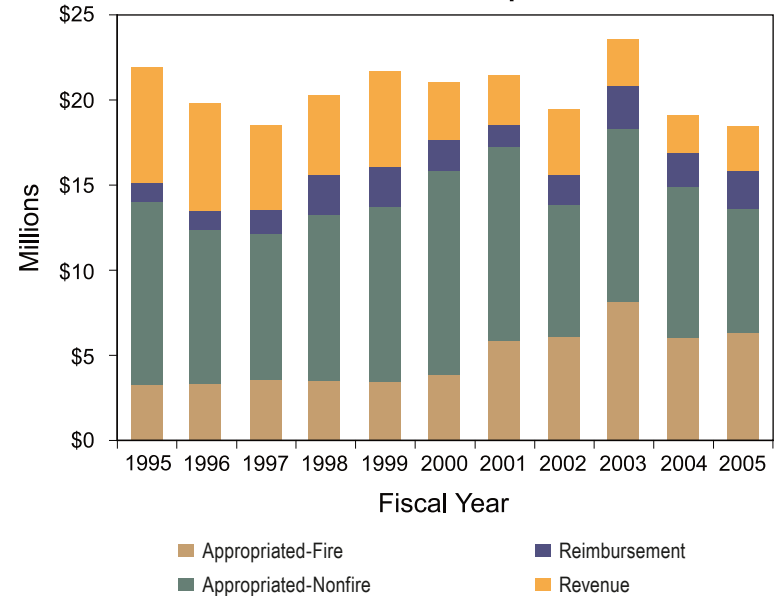
Fund Source Analysis

Like all Forests, the Eldorado National Forest derives its funds from three major sources; appropriations, reimbursements, and revenue.

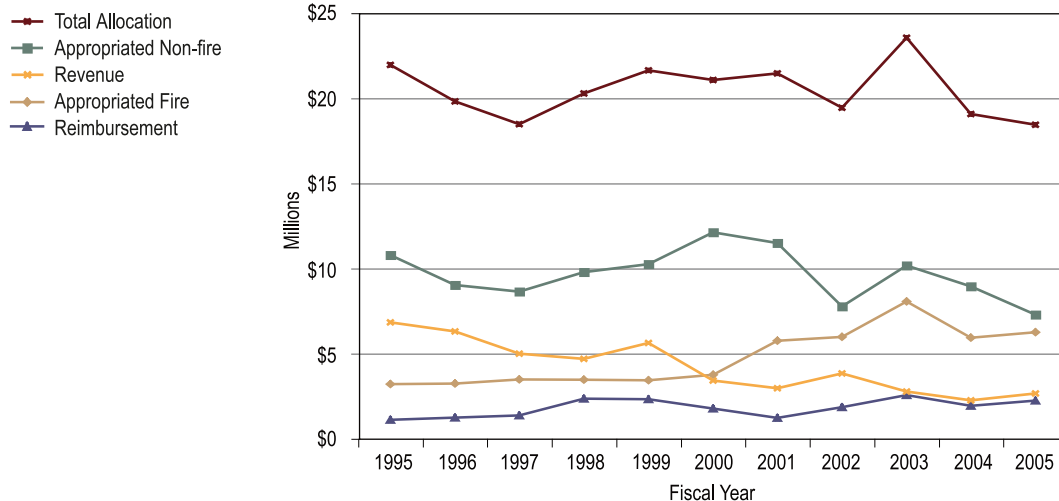
Historically, the main source of funding to National Forests was appropriations from Congress. The USDA Forest Service receives annual appropriated funds as part of the budget of the United States Government. The amount of this appropriation varies from year to year. These funds are dispersed from the National Office to each Regional Office of the Forest Service, and from there to individual forests. The appropriated base budget provides the largest portion of the Forest's total annual budget and is primarily used to cover operational expenses.

Forests also receive funds in the form of reimbursable income. These are funds that are collected from other organizations, particularly other government agencies, for services rendered by forest employees. Reimbursable income also comes from private and nonprofit organizations that fund activities on the Forest, for example funds received from energy companies, as part of license conditions, to pay for campground reconstruction.

Fund Source Composition



Historical Fund Source



The third fund source is revenue. The Forest receives revenue from a variety of sources including timber sale receipts, permits or fees. Revenue sources can be recreational and non-recreational in nature, for example special use fees for utility sites or commercial film making. In accordance with current legislation, the Forest does not retain the majority of the revenue generated by commercial activities as these proceeds are deposited with the US Treasury. The historical fund source graph shows the amount of revenue retained on the Forest and used to fund Forest operations.

Overall, total funding to the Eldorado National Forest, across all fund sources, has declined at an average annual compounded rate of almost 1.73%, from \$21.98 million in FY1995 to \$18.46 million in FY2005. The declining budget means that the Forest is increasingly under pressure to meet major ongoing costs, such as managing forest resources, facilities, and fire prevention and suppression activities.

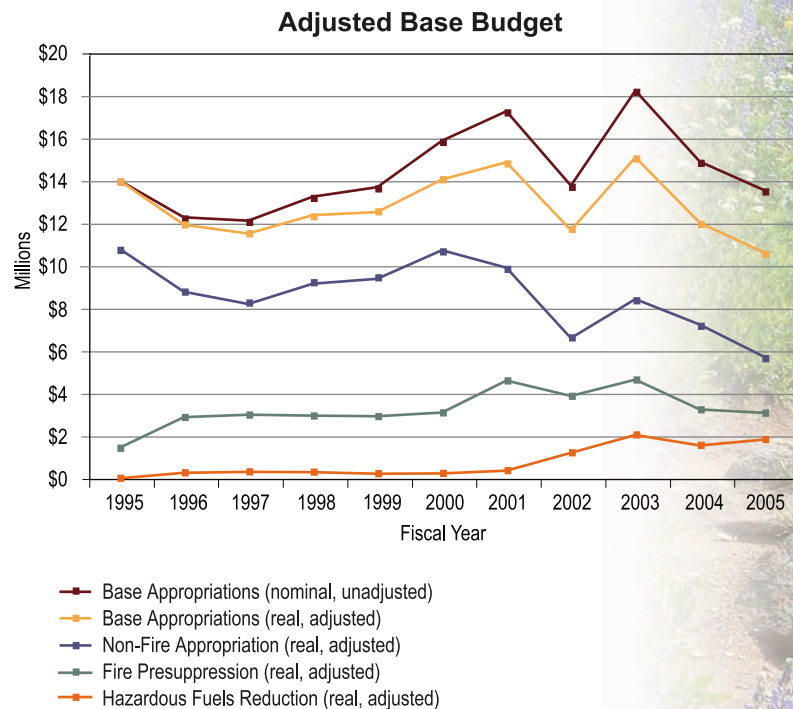
Adjusted Base Budget

The Forest relies heavily on appropriated funding for its annual operating budget. The reliance on appropriated funds as part of the annual budget has increased from 64% in FY1995 to 73% in FY2005. These appropriated funds are used for both fire and non-fire activities. In recent years fire appropriations have increased dramatically, beginning with the implementation of the National Fire Plan in 2001. This plan was written in response to the devastating fires of the 2000 fire season and proposed a significant and perpetual increase in funding for wildfire preparedness and hazardous fuels reduction. As a result of the plan, the appropriated fire budget has almost doubled over the past 10 years from \$3.22 million in FY1995 to \$6.26 million in FY2005. At the same time, the overall non-fire budget used to fund all other programs on the forest has declined by 32% from \$10.81 million in 1995 to \$7.29 million in FY2005. The growing number of residential neighborhoods close to forest boundaries increases the risk of fire and the need for wildfire preparedness.

Over the decade to FY2005, the contribution of revenue to the Forest's annual budget has declined by almost 60% from \$6.84 million in FY1995 to only \$2.66 million in FY2005. This decline is due to a major decrease in timber sales, once the main source of revenue funds. A large proportion of timber-related work, performed by contractors, is now managed under 'Stewardship Contracts'. Under these contracts contractors perform activities related to hazardous fuel reduction in return for the value of the timber harvested. Today most timber sales are designed to meet the goals of hazardous fuel reduction or to salvage timber following wildland fires.

Although reimbursement does not make a significant contribution to the overall budget, it has increased from \$1.12 million in FY1995 to \$2.24 million in FY2005. This increased contribution is due to increased collaboration and partnerships to meet the cost of operational activities.

Adjusting budget dollars for inflation illustrates the real purchasing power of the Forest budget. This adjustment involves converting funds received from 1995 through 2005 to the 1995 equivalent in terms of real purchasing power. When adjusted for inflation, the Eldorado National Forest's total appropriated budget (excluding money spent for Wildfire Suppression and National Fire & Disaster Support) fluctuated over the years but has decreased overall to a low of \$10.62 million in 2005. This level is 17% below the 10-year average of \$12.8 million, and represents a 22% reduction in purchasing power when compared to the unadjusted total appropriated budget of \$13.56 million in 2005.



Financials

The total appropriated dollars shown in the chart are those allocated for fire and non-fire related activities. Fire related activities include fire preparedness and hazardous fuel reduction. The implementation of the National Fire Plan beginning in 2001 led to a significant increase in the congressional appropriations directed towards fire-related activities. The adjusted hazardous fuels reduction portion of the appropriated budget has increased to \$1.82 million in FY2005, over five times the funding in FY2001.

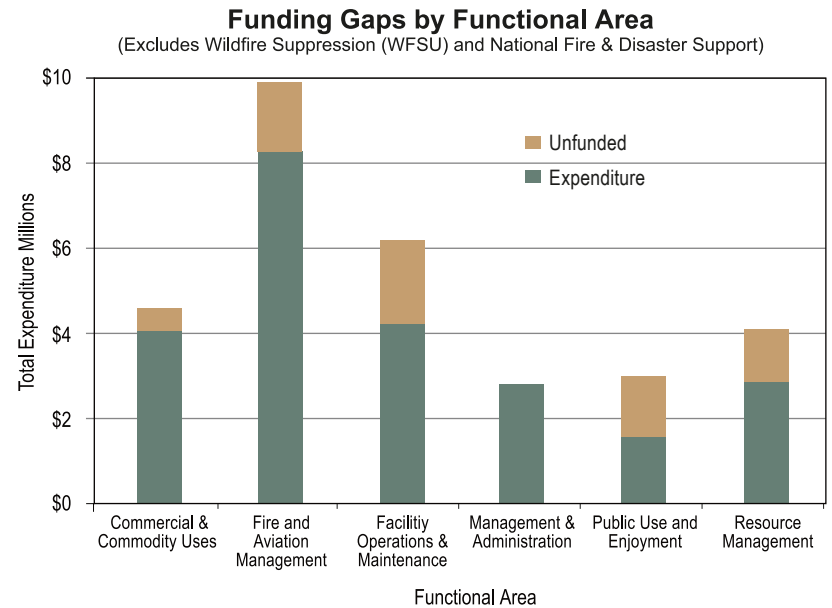
The chart illustrates a steep decline in the adjusted non-fire appropriated budget. When FY1995 is compared to FY2005, this decline represents a compounded rate of decrease of 6% percent per annum. In FY2005, the adjusted non-fire appropriated budget was \$5.71 million, 47% below FY1995 level and 66% below the ten year average of \$8.63 million. This chart highlights a critical challenge to the forest, as non-fire activities such as the management of vegetation, wildlife, watersheds, roads, trails, and developed sites are critical to the health of the Forest, and to public use and enjoyment. The forest actively explores alternative funding sources and services through partnerships, new revenue streams and increased efficiencies to supplement the decreasing non-fire appropriated budget.



Evan Kelley, First ENF Forest Supervisor 1910. Travel routes have been important to the Eldorado since before there was a national forest.

The Summary Financial Statement table provides a snapshot of fiscal year 2005 (FY2005) operational expenditures, and the additional funds that would have been required to operate each of the 34 program areas within the forest at an optimal standard.

The three major sections within the Summary Financial Statement are labeled “Available”, “Unfunded” and “Required”. The “Available” expenditure column describes the actual expenditure for FY2005 within each program area. This expenditure is further broken down into each of the three major sources of funding: “Appropriated”, “Reimbursement” and “Revenue”. The “Unfunded” section describes the additional personnel and non-personnel resources that would have been required for the program to operate at optimal operational standards. The “Required” column is the sum of the available and unfunded sections, and illustrates the total cost of Forest Operations if full funding had been available. Each section also contains a measure of the available, unfunded and required ‘Full-Time Equivalent’ (FTE) personnel for each program. The FTE measure is a percentage of a full-time position, calculated as 2080 work hours per year.



Summary Financial Statement Eldorado National Forest FY2005

FUNCTIONAL AREAS AND PROGRAMS	REQUIRED		AVAILABLE						UNFUNDED	
	FTE	Funds	APPROPRIATED	NON_APPROPRIATED		TOTAL		Funds	FTE	
			Base	Reimbursable	Revenue	FTE	Funds			
Commercial & Commodity Uses	41.55	\$4,581,751.30	\$1,186,944.17	\$79,366.79	\$2,799,206.27	34.85	\$4,065,517.23	\$516,234.07	6.70	
CCU Forest Products	1.12	\$48,977.78	\$48,977.78			1.12	\$48,977.78			
CCU Grazing	3.92	\$266,618.47	\$171,183.30		\$3,360.25	2.57	\$174,543.55	\$92,074.92	1.35	
CCU Minerals	5.93	\$640,894.95	\$619,954.35			5.68	\$619,954.35	\$20,940.60	0.25	
CCU Non-recreational special uses	7.79	\$668,919.32	\$346,828.74	\$42,056.22	\$2,027.73	4.69	\$390,912.69	\$278,006.63	3.10	
CCU Timber	22.80	\$2,956,340.77		\$37,310.57	\$2,793,818.29	20.80	\$2,831,128.86	\$125,211.91	2.00	
Fire & Aviation Management	130.66	\$9,893,866.09	\$8,072,805.36	\$200,582.80	\$0.00	112.21	\$8,273,388.16	\$1,620,477.93	18.45	
FAM Hazardous fuel reduction	55.39	\$4,331,044.27	\$3,026,754.35	\$200,762.77		43.89	\$3,227,517.12	\$1,103,527.15	11.50	
FAM Management & administration	18.34	\$1,965,901.39	\$1,449,130.58	-\$179.97		11.39	\$1,448,950.61	\$516,950.78	6.95	
FAM Pre-suppression & preparedness	56.93	\$3,596,920.42	\$3,596,920.42			56.93	\$3,596,920.42			
Facility Operations & Maintenance	70.36	\$6,195,034.28	\$3,034,010.05	\$1,057,915.63	\$127,235.48	53.36	\$4,219,161.16	\$1,975,873.12	17.00	
FOM Buildings, grounds, and utilities	5.43	\$2,717,705.43	\$1,789,479.37	\$7,166.44	\$87,894.55	3.43	\$1,884,540.36	\$833,165.08	2.00	
FOM Campgrounds & developed sites	22.45	\$1,287,114.69	\$275,504.49	\$596,439.77	\$39,340.93	18.46	\$911,285.19	\$375,829.51	3.99	
FOM Concentrated use areas	21.58	\$612,004.14	\$232,448.49	\$75,618.05		17.59	\$308,066.54	\$303,937.60	3.99	
FOM Roads	12.42	\$1,084,485.57	\$560,189.57	\$343,734.35		9.60	\$903,923.92	\$180,561.65	2.83	
FOM Trails	8.48	\$493,724.44	\$176,388.13	\$34,957.02		4.28	\$211,345.15	\$282,379.29	4.20	
Management & Administration	56.54	\$2,782,236.57	\$2,752,539.99	\$27,027.42	\$869.16	56.54	\$2,780,436.57	\$1,800.00	0.00	
MA District Management	10.11	\$682,076.70	\$682,076.70			10.11	\$682,076.70			
MA Financial management	11.44	\$359,308.73	\$359,308.73			11.44	\$359,308.73			
MA General administration	28.26	\$982,365.41	\$965,430.90	\$16,934.51		28.26	\$982,365.41			
MA General management	1.82	\$220,883.90	\$220,883.90			1.82	\$220,883.90			
MA Information technology	3.10	\$348,666.34	\$337,704.27	\$10,092.91	\$869.16	3.10	\$348,666.34			
MA Planning	0.02	\$5,188.81	\$3,388.81			0.02	\$3,388.81	\$1,800.00		
MA Public affairs	1.80	\$183,746.68	\$183,746.68			1.80	\$183,746.68			
Public Use & Enjoyment	73.02	\$2,968,411.02	\$1,007,233.57	\$94,742.78	\$454,077.13	53.89	\$1,556,053.47	\$1,412,357.54	19.13	
PUE Concessions & recreational special uses	19.76	\$846,449.83	\$429,872.83	\$47,583.14		12.78	\$477,455.97	\$368,993.86	6.98	
PUE Law Enforcement	9.00	\$1,031,996.80	\$312,824.00			3.00	\$312,824.00	\$719,172.80	6.00	
PUE Recreation fee collection	0.44	\$27,507.56	\$691.40		\$15,416.16	0.28	\$16,107.56	\$11,400.00	0.16	
PUE Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretation & Education	24.42	\$617,857.97	\$42,164.30	\$32.70	\$438,660.97	21.42	\$480,857.97	\$137,000.00	3.00	
PUE Visitor safety & protection	19.41	\$444,598.86	\$221,681.04	\$47,126.94		16.41	\$268,807.97	\$175,790.89	2.99	
Resource Management	53.17	\$4,077,625.84	\$1,902,846.08	\$26,317.11	\$931,373.56	35.82	\$2,860,536.75	\$1,217,089.09	17.36	
RM Data management	5.26	\$418,912.05	\$189,509.52			2.51	\$189,509.52	\$229,402.53	2.75	
RM Heritage resources	8.06	\$544,770.88	\$315,320.72	\$9,287.31	\$87,420.80	6.27	\$412,028.83	\$132,742.05	1.79	
RM Land ownership & adjustments	9.10	\$569,591.07	\$97,897.67	\$7,055.96	\$8,266.55	1.74	\$113,220.18	\$456,370.89	7.35	
RM Specially Designated Areas Management	16.09	\$315,217.35	\$69,055.32		\$74,240.10	13.69	\$143,295.42	\$171,921.92	2.39	
RM Vegetation management	8.23	\$1,671,373.85	\$808,905.22	\$3,918.84	\$761,446.11	7.03	\$1,574,270.17	\$97,103.68	1.20	
RM Watershed, air and geologic resources	4.40	\$395,992.85	\$294,051.63	\$6,055.00		3.20	\$300,106.63	\$95,886.22	1.20	
RM Wildlife management	2.04	\$161,767.80	\$128,106.00			1.37	\$128,106.00	\$33,661.80	0.67	
Sub-total: Forest Operations (Non-Suppression)	425.31	\$30,498,925.09	\$17,956,379.23	\$1,485,952.52	\$4,312,761.60	346.67	\$23,755,093.35	\$6,743,831.75	78.64	
FAM National Fire and Disaster Support	43.69	\$1,557,919.58	\$1,557,919.58			43.69	\$1,557,919.58			
FAM Wildfire Suppression	52.37	\$9,744,380.65	\$9,744,380.65			52.37	\$9,744,380.65			
Sub-total: Wildfire Suppression and Disaster Support	96.05	\$11,302,300.23	\$11,302,300.23	\$0.00	\$0.00	96.05	\$11,302,300.23	\$0.00	0.00	
Grand Total	521.36	\$41,801,225.32	\$29,258,679.46	\$1,485,952.52	\$4,312,761.60	442.72	\$35,057,393.58	\$6,743,831.75	78.64	

Current Forest Operations



Trading goods for services through stewardship contracting is becoming an efficient and cost effective tool contributing significantly to the 10,000 acres of hazardous fuels that are treated each year on average.

The large range of operational activities found on the Eldorado National Forest is a reflection of the complexity involved in operating and managing the Forest and all its resources. To facilitate the analysis of all forest operations in this business plan, these operations have been divided into six functional areas:

- Commodity and Commercial Uses
- Facilities, Operations & Maintenance
- Fire and Aviation Management
- Management and Administration
- Public Use and Enjoyment
- Resource Management

These functional areas are then further subdivided into 34 individual program areas that map the range of operational activities on the Forest.

An analysis was completed for all FY2005 expenditures associated with each program. This analysis was reviewed by program managers, who also identified the specific goals for each program together with the specific operational standards used to measure achievement towards those goals. In areas where optimal operational standards were not achieved in FY2005 program managers calculated the extra resources (personnel and non-personnel), and investments, that would have been required to achieve those standards. In many cases this 'gap' in funding meant that program managers were forced to prioritize only the most urgent work within the program, ongoing projects could not be completed, and important maintenance or restoration work was left undone.

For the purpose of this analysis, personnel time is allocated using the measurement 'full-time equivalent' (FTE). This measurement describes time worked as the percentage of a full-time position (one FTE), which is equivalent to 2080 annual hours. Expenditures associated with the Wildfire Suppression and National Fire and Disaster Support program areas have been excluded from this financial analysis.



PG&E and stakeholders received national recognition for working together on the Mokelumne FERC re-licensing project.

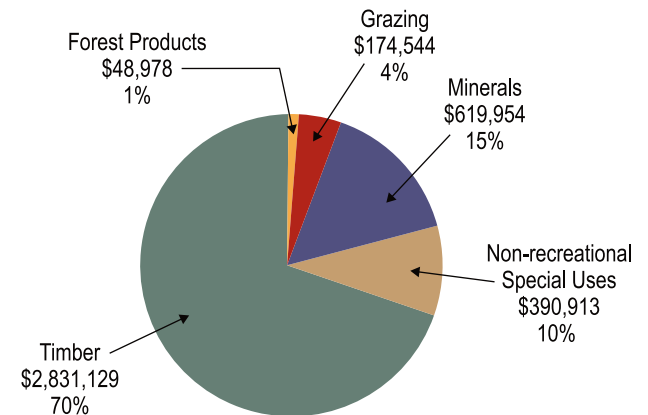
Commodity and Commercial Uses

The Commodity and Commercial Uses functional area includes all activities related to timber extraction and the harvest of other vegetative forest products, as well as all non-recreation special uses on the Forest, for example agriculture, power generation, and utility infrastructure. This functional area also includes extractive activities such as oil or gas and commercial grazing. Programs within this area include:

- Timber
- Forest Products
- Non-Recreational Special Uses
- Minerals
- Grazing

In FY2005, the Eldorado NF spent a total of \$4.07 million across all of the programs in the Commodity and Commercial Uses functional area, including the cost of 34.85 FTEs to support the programs within this area. The Forest identified that an additional \$516,234, including an additional 6.7 FTEs, would be required to enable these programs to achieve desired operational standards.

**Commodity & Commercial Uses
FY2005 Expenditure by Program**



Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
41.55	\$4,581,751	34.85	\$4,065,517	6.70	\$516,234

Timber

The Timber program encompasses all commercial timber extraction, and includes the planning of sale areas, preparation and administration of timber sales, and the accounting of timber payments.

On the Eldorado NF the timber management program is divided into two distinct areas, live tree thinning and the salvage of dead and dying trees. Green or live tree thinning has a primary purpose of achieving strategic fuels reduction, forest health, wildlife habitat, and watershed protection or restoration and is addressed in the Hazardous Fuels Reduction program area. The second area of the timber management program is the salvage harvest of dead, dying or hazardous trees. While salvage projects are also primarily driven by objectives other than timber production, it is an opportunistic program that cannot be planned years in advance. The needs driving salvage harvest are typically safety, fuel treatment, and commodity utilization. The program fluctuates broadly from year to year from a high in 2005 of 160 million board feet sold from 8,000 acres in response to two large wildland fires, to normal years of 5 to 10 million board feet from endemic levels of insect killed trees. The salvage program helps maintain a diversified wood product industry which in turn helps maintain the value of the public's natural resources.

In FY2005 the Timber program area spent a total of \$2.83 million, including \$1.36 million on personnel costs (20.8 FTEs) and \$1.47 million on non-personnel costs. An additional \$125,212 of personnel expenditure (2.0 FTEs) would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Forest Products

The Forest Products program includes all activities relating to the harvest of Forest vegetative products, other than commercial timber extraction.

On the Eldorado NF this operational area is related predominantly to the sale of firewood through permits issued by staff at

the four ranger district offices. A small number of permits are also issued for the seasonal collection of mushrooms, pine cones, manzanita, rock, and boughs.

In FY2005 the Forest Products program area spent a total of \$48,977 on personnel costs (1.12 FTEs). These were the costs associated with issuing permits. No further resources are required to meet the operational standards for this program.

Non-Recreational Special Uses

The Non-Recreational Special Uses program includes activities and operations related to permitting and monitoring a wide variety of uses across the Forest. These uses include activities relating to agriculture; water diversions; sanitary systems; surface uses such as schools and visitor centers run by other organizations; research facilities; commercial photography; power generation and transmission facilities; oil and gas pipelines; electric transmission lines; some transportation uses; radio, television and cell phone towers; telephone lines and non-power generating water transmission infrastructure. Staff within this program area screen new proposals for consistency with the laws, regulations, and policies of National Forest System lands. They process applications, evaluate environmental effects, and complete authorizations for use and occupancy. Existing uses are inspected for compliance, rental fees are collected, and checks are made to insure, when required, that insurance and bonding are current and adequate. When the use is no longer needed or consistent, program staff ensure that the site is restored.

On the Eldorado NF approximately three-quarters of the work of this program is associated with licensing, permitting, and administering hydroelectric projects licensed to Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Sacramento Municipal Utility District, El Dorado Irrigation District, and Placer County Water Agency. Another major component of the special use program is work associated with two trans-Sierra California State Department of Transportation Highways; Highway 50 and Highway 88. Together communication uses (microwave towers, cellular telephone towers, and telephone lines) and water uses (non-power generating) account for the majority of fees collected, followed by power line transmission and distribution



Caring for forest roads and trails with a declining budget will take a collaborative effort.

uses. The El Dorado Lake Tahoe Film and Media Office is active in bringing many commercial photography and filming projects to the Forest, creating revenue each year to administer film authorizations and promote these activities.

In FY2005 the Non-Recreational Special Uses program area spent a total of \$390,913, including \$371,213 on personnel costs (4.69 FTEs) and \$19,700 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$254,768 of personnel expenditure (3.1 FTEs) and \$23,238 non-personnel expenditure would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Minerals

The Minerals program area includes all activities related to mining and the extraction of oil and gas. The main work of the program is to process mining proposals submitted for exploration and the extraction of mineral resources, and to ensure that other resources are protected from any unwanted adverse impacts of mining, while allowing mining to proceed in accordance with laws and regulations. The program also includes leaseable mineral activity.

On the Eldorado NF, the Minerals program involves administration of the non-discretionary and discretionary activities related to mining, leasing, reclamation of mined lands, closure of abandoned mines, and any litigation associated with these activities.

In FY2005 the Minerals program area spent a total of \$619,954, including \$440,056 on personnel costs (5.68 FTEs) and \$179,898 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$20,941 of personnel expenditure (0.25 FTEs) would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Facilities, Operation and Maintenance

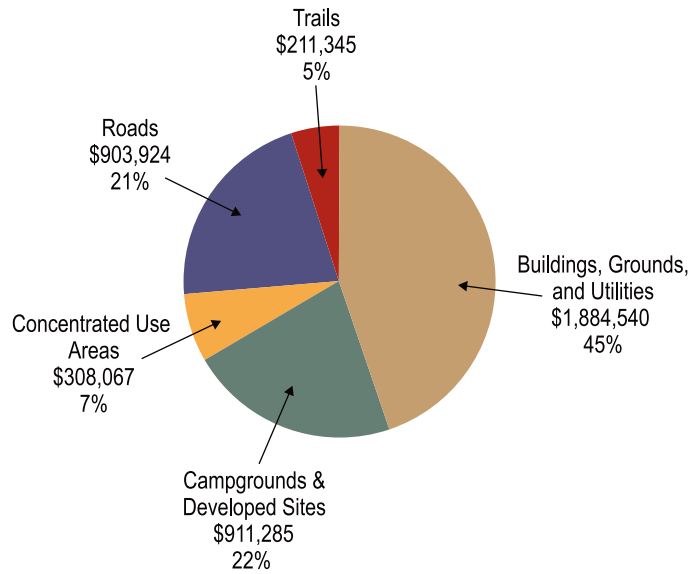
The Facilities, Operation and Maintenance functional area includes all activities required to manage and operate the Forest infrastructure. These activities are applied to a large range of resources such as roads, trails, buildings, utilities, campgrounds and other developed sites, and 'Concentrated Use Areas.' Through the work of this program the Forest ensures that its infrastructure and services are made available to the public and staff. The work of the program also serves to prolong the life of these Forest assets through regular maintenance and replacement activities. Programs within this area include:

- Roads
- Trails
- Campgrounds and Developed Sites
- Concentrated Use Areas

In FY2005, the Eldorado NF spent a total of \$4.22 million across all of the programs in the Facilities, Operation & Maintenance functional area, including the cost of 53.36 FTEs to support the programs within this area. An additional \$1.98 million of funding, including an additional 17 FTEs, would be required to enable these programs to achieve desired operational standards.

This additional funding amount does not include the significant investment required to cover deferred maintenance needs for building, roads, trails, campgrounds and other infrastructure across the Forest. It is estimated that a maintenance backlog of over \$13.5 million exists within the program areas Roads, Trails and Campgrounds and Developed Sites. This backlog includes much needed work such as critical water system upgrades to meet California state water regulations and road resurfacing. The deferred maintenance amount increases annually due to a lack of funding, staffing and other resources required to complete needed annual maintenance. In addition, heavy maintenance needs arise each year, some of which cannot be accomplished due to a lack of funding.

**Facility Operations & Maintenance
FY2005 Expenditure by Program**



Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
70.36	\$6,195,034	53.36	\$4,219,161	17.00	\$1,975,873

Roads

The Roads program area is comprised of all activities related to the management of the roads infrastructure and associated signage. This program includes roads (paved and non-paved) that form part of the Forest system, and not other county or state managed roads. Activities include all aspects of road building; ad hoc maintenance; and programs designed to prolong the life of a road, including striping, grading, clearing landslides, sign replacement, drainage and chip sealing. The program also includes the repair and maintenance of bridges and some Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) roads.

On the Eldorado NF the Roads program ensures that a safe, efficient and affordable road system is provided to meet the needs of the public and Forest land managers, while minimizing negative impacts on the land. The Roads program staff works with others from a range of program areas to design and implement appropriate road templates and ensure appropriate maintenance levels and closures (open, seasonal or year-round closure) are established and documented. The Forest Transportation Manager works closely with each ranger district and associated stakeholders to provide a needs assessment and a plan to accomplish the road maintenance for the year.

In FY2005 the Roads program area spent \$903,924, including \$590,651 on personnel costs (9.6 FTEs) and \$313,272 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$180,562 of personnel expenditure (2.83 FTEs) would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Trails

The Trails program area includes responsibility for managing the network of trails across the Forest. The work of the program is comprised of all activities associated with trail-building, maintenance and signage, such as grading, vegetation removal, constructing boardwalks and drainage work.

The Eldorado NF Trails program provides an important component in the diverse recreation opportunity offered to Forest users, including hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, motorcycles, and 4-wheel-drive (4WD) vehicles. The trail system is comprised of approximately 622 miles of trails, including 231 miles of non-motorized trails, 250 miles of motorized trails, and 141 miles of wilderness trails within the Desolation and Mokolumne Wilderness areas. The Forest also has 105 miles of designated winter snow trails. Portions of three national recreation trails (Pacific Crest Trail, Pony Express Trail and Carson Emigrant Trail) also form part of the Eldorado NF trails network. The Forest is currently completing a project aimed at designating a motorized system of roads and trails, along with a Forest map of these trails and roads.





Outdoor recreation is increasingly important to nearby urban populations.

The annual program of work is developed by the Districts and Forest Engineering in conjunction with Regional direction. The amount of maintenance scheduled in any year is dependent on the level of appropriated funds available, and the level of volunteer work assistance and grant money received. The costs associated with managing uses on and off trails are included in several other functional areas within the Public Use and Enjoyment program area.

In FY2005, the Trails program area spent \$211,345, including \$133,819 on personnel costs (4.28 FTEs) and \$77,526 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$199,352 of personnel expenditure (4.2 FTEs) and \$83,026 of non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Campgrounds and Developed Sites

The Campgrounds and Developed Sites program includes the regular operations of campgrounds and other developed sites, including administrative duties, cleaning restrooms, maintaining camping pads and information stations, cleaning and policing the facilities, painting and repairing tables and other improvements, and collecting refuse.

The Eldorado NF Campgrounds and Developed Sites program includes management of a wide range of developed recreation sites with the goal of providing a quality experience for the recreating public. There are currently 57 family and group campgrounds on the Eldorado NF, of which 28 are operated by private operators under concession agreements and permits and 29 are operated by the Forest. Recreation sites on the Eldorado NF also include boat-launching facilities, developed fishing sites, some scenic overlooks, picnic areas, Sno-parks, information and interpretation sites and major trailheads. This program also includes capital improvement of developed recreation sites, including planning, design, and construction.

Sixteen of the campgrounds operated by the Forest collect fees under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (formerly know as the Fee Demonstration Program). Under the Act, 80

percent of the fees are returned to the site where the fee was collected and 15 percent are used for fee collection activities.

In FY2005 the Campgrounds and Developed Sites program area spent \$911,285, including \$394,749 on personnel costs (18.46 FTEs) and \$516,536 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$200,000 of personnel expenditure (3.99 FTEs) and \$175,830 non-personnel expenditure would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Concentrated Use Areas

Concentrated Use Areas (CUAs) are relatively undeveloped sites where recreation use leaves an impact on the environment, such as litter, vandalism or damage to natural resources. CUAs include a range of use types, for example, roadside pullouts, dispersed campsites, some OHV use areas or climbing areas.

These areas are distinguishable by the fact that they often require intensive activities for short periods of time. For example, litter control is often more labor intensive because it is not performed as regularly as at a developed site, and trash bins are not always available. Other activities necessary to meet resource needs include sanitation control, patrol by personnel due to heavy public use, revegetation, public contact, and erosion barriers. CUAs can include lakes, rivers, and backcountry hiking and fishing sites.

The Eldorado NF manages its CUAs to provide a quality recreation experience in a natural setting while protecting the environment. CUA sites include more than 45 dispersed camping and day-use areas and include activities such as fishing, hiking, picnicking, bird watching, hunting, boating and other day-use activities. CUAs are not managed within Desolation or Moke-lumne Wilderness Areas.

In FY2005 the Concentrated Use Areas program area spent \$308,066, including \$225,721 on personnel costs (17.59 FTEs) and \$82,346 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$200,000 of personnel expenditure (3.99 FTEs) and \$97,938 non-personnel expenditure would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.

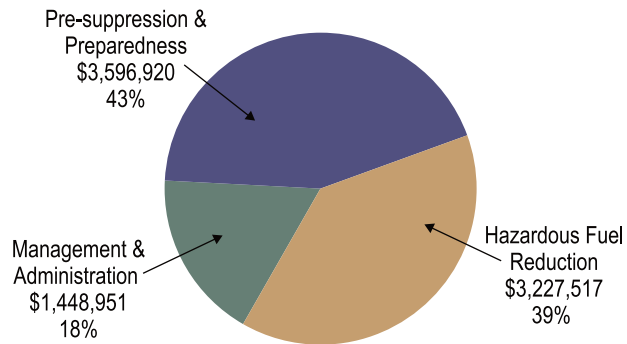
Fire and Aviation Management

The Fire and Aviation Management functional area includes all activities related to fire fighting, preparedness for firefighting, and managing the unwanted forest vegetation often responsible for exacerbating wildfires (hazardous fuels). The management and coordination of all fire-related activities is also included in this program. Programs within this area include:

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

In terms of expenditure, the Fire and Aviation Management functional area is the largest single component of all Eldorado NF operations. In FY2005 the Eldorado NF spent \$8.27

**Fire & Aviation Management
FY2005 Expenditure by Program**



Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
130.66	\$9,893,866	112.21	\$8,273,388	18.45	\$1,620,478

million within the Fire Pre-Suppression and Preparedness, Management and Administration and Hazardous Fuels Reduction programs. This sum included \$6.26 million in personnel expenditure (112.21 FTEs) and \$2.01 million in non-personnel expenditure. An additional \$1.62 million of funding, including an additional 18.45 FTEs, would be required to enable these programs to achieve desired operational standards. Funding for Wildfire Suppression and National Fire Plan came from national fire funds specifically appropriated for two major wildfire incidents; these funds have therefore been excluded from this analysis.

Fire Pre-Suppression and Preparedness

The Fire Pre-Suppression and Preparedness program includes all activities related to the preparation and availability of sufficient resources to fight wildfires and preventing the occurrence of wildfires. This program includes all activities related to staffing, training, dispatching, public fire prevention education, patrolling, facility and equipment readiness, crew cohesion, physical fitness, and the Incident Qualification Certification System (IQCS). Chief Officers ensure that all fire suppression personnel are available and ready as required by regional and national preparedness standards.

Activities in this program take place on both National Forest system lands and private lands under a cooperative protection agreement with the California Department of Forestry. The Eldorado NF protection boundary has been established to define these lands.

In FY2005 the Fire Pre-Suppression and Preparedness program area spent \$3.6 million, including \$3.01 million on personnel costs (56.93 FTEs) and \$584,884 on non-personnel costs. The program is staffed at 95% of the Most Efficient Level (MEL). As MEL appropriations do not completely fund the program to this level, additional funding comes from wildland fire suppression and other project work.



Prescribed burning under controlled conditions consumes the thick buildup of small diameter fuels such as brush, needles, and small trees resulting in a safer and healthier forest.



Through the Fire Safe Councils, the Eldorado works closely with the local communities to assist them in protecting their property from wildfire and seeks their input on forest projects.

Hazardous Fuels Reduction

The Hazardous Fuels Reduction program area includes all activities related to the removal of brush and small wood from the forest to prevent fire and interrupt the spread of fire. This work is directly related to the community protection and forest health elements of the National Fire Plan.

The Eldorado NF Hazardous Fuels Reduction program is inextricably linked to, and part of, the Forest Vegetation Management program. Together, the goal of these programs is to achieve firesafe communities and sustainable vegetation across the landscape by providing healthy, resilient forests and reducing the threat of catastrophic fires. Attaining this goal involves linking past and future fuel treatments across the landscape to take advantage of natural and human-made barriers, as well as collaborating with local partners in determining which areas to treat and the best methods to use.

Commercial timber sales are planned and designed with the primary purpose of achieving strategic fuels reduction, forest health, and wildlife habitat and watershed protection or restoration. Revenues generated from timber sales are returned directly to treatments on the project areas, either through the use of stewardship contracting or trust fund deposits.

In FY2005 the Hazardous Fuels Reduction program area spent \$3.23 million, including \$2.47 million on personnel costs (43.89 FTES) and \$757,877 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$837,020 of personnel expenditure (11.5 FTES) and \$266,508 non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Outstanding Fire Prevention recognized on the Eldorado National Forest

Barbara Rebiskie, Fire Prevention Officer on the Eldorado NF, recently received the prestigious Silver Smokey Award for her 20 years of outstanding service in wildland fire prevention and education.

The award "recognizes outstanding service with significant program impact in wildland fire prevention and to increase public recognition and awareness of the need for fire prevention efforts." This award is the highest award given in honor of fire prevention and education efforts at a Regional level. Only five Silver Smokey Awards are presented annually.

Barbara's many achievements include coordinating and teaching numerous fire prevention courses at firefighting academies, developing a two-week National Wildland Fire Prevention Academy and playing a key role in Camp Smokey,

a regular feature for children at the California State Fair.

This award is a great honor both to Barbara and the Forest in recognizing her outstanding achievements.



Eldorado NF Fire Prevention Specialist Barbara Rebiskie won the nation's second highest fire prevention award in 2005.

The True Cost of Fire

It is necessary for the Forest to commit a large number of resources to pre-suppression and preparedness activities, however when fires come unexpectedly they can cover large areas of Forest land and require a commitment of considerable Forest resources. In 2005 two such large fires occurred in October. The Power fire, on the Amador District, covered an area of 16,800 acres and the Fred's fire, on the Placerville and Pacific Districts, covered an area of 7,513 acres. Together, nearly \$8 million was spent suppressing these fires.

While the funding to cover the immediate suppression activities comes from nationally appropriated fire funds, the cost of fires continues long after the event due to timber salvage activities, watershed and other restoration activities, and reforestation activities. For the Fred's and Power fires, the Eldorado NF spent approximately \$2.79 million on post-fire activities, including completing environmental impact statements, the preparation and administration of salvage sales, and reforestation and fuels treatment.

Eldorado NF staff responded to 55 fires on the Forest in 2005.



DERRICK DODSON

On average, a large fire burns in the Eldorado NF every 10 years. Decades of fire suppression and fuel buildup has made the need for fuels treatment a high priority.

Wildfire Suppression

The Wildfire Suppression program includes all fire suppression activities performed by Eldorado NF staff (including non-firefighting roles) on fires occurring on the Eldorado NF. These activities can include initial short-term attack firefighting with the objective of minimizing suppression cost and damages, and preventing the escape of any wildland fire, and extended operations involving many personnel. Wildland and prescribed fire are also used, whenever appropriate, as tools to meet resource management objectives.

The Eldorado National Forest Wildland Fire Policy is to conduct wildland fire actions in a timely, effective, and efficient manner with a high regard for public and firefighter safety. Every wildland fire requires an appropriate management response based on management direction. The full range of fire suppression strategies is available for use on most of the Forest. The intensity of response may range from aggressive suppression action to multiple strategies to confine a fire.

Many vacancies exist in the fire management organization in part due to the high cost of living in El Dorado and Amador counties.

In FY2005 fire staff responded to 55 fires on the Eldorado NF, with a commitment of 52.37 FTE.

Fire Management and Administration

The Fire and Aviation Management functional area requires considerable management support to administer the activities of the program. This support is provided by the Management and Administration program area, which is responsible for the management, supervision, and oversight of all fire management operations. Oversight includes budgeting and planning, general supervision, scheduling, the formulation and administration of safety plans and material handling plans.



AMY L. REID

Late spring brings a colorful bounty of wildflowers and new growth to the forest.

Fire Assets

- 10 Type-3 Engines
- 2 Ten-person Crews
- 1 Hotshot Crew
- 1 Type-2 Helicopter with Helitack Crew
- 1 Fourteen-person Helishot Crew
- 6 Fire Prevention Officers
- 2 Water Tenders
- 1 Type-2 Bulldozer with transport
- 11 Chief Officers
- 4 Fuels Officers
- 4 Fuels Technicians
- 3 Fire Lookouts

In FY2005 the Fire Management and Administration program area spent \$1.45 million, including \$779,535 on personnel costs (11.39 FTEs) and \$669,416 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$516,951 of personnel expenditure (6.95 FTEs) would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

National Fire and Disaster Support

The National Fire and Disaster Support program includes a range of fire and disaster activities performed by Eldorado NF staff outside the Forest. This program includes activities funded by the USDA Forest Service national firefighting account and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operations. In FY2005 Eldorado NF staff provided support for 142 fires outside the Forest and several FEMA incidents.

Eldorado NF personnel often assist with fires and other disaster support activities outside the Forest boundaries, including Incident Command Teams and FEMA activities, such as the hurricane Katrina disaster relief effort in New Orleans. Funding for these activities is met by appropriated fire funds, however there is an indirect cost resulting from staff time away from their normal Forest duties.

The assistance offered by Eldorado NF staff in off-forest risk assignments includes both national and international incidents. International assignments of note have been to support wildfires in Australia, Mexico, and Canada. In addition, past FEMA assignments have included aid for earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, super typhoons, terrorist attacks, the Columbia Space Shuttle Recovery, management of Newcastle's Disease in poultry flocks in the Southwest and southern California, and food distribution in Guam, Saipan and American Samoa.

In FY2005 43.69 FTEs were committed within the National Fire and Disaster Support program area.

Management and Administration

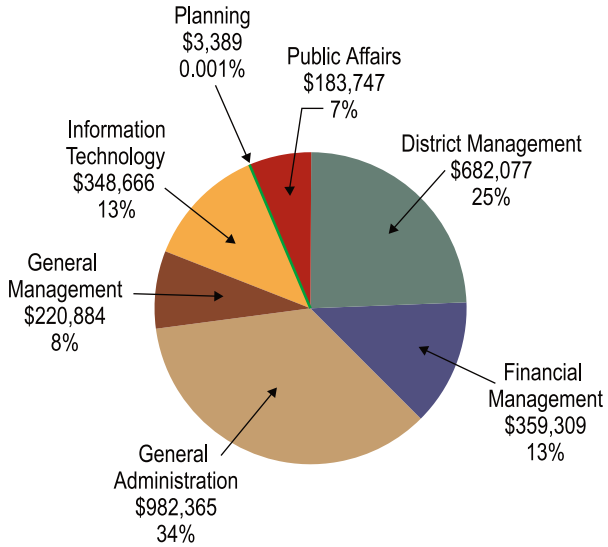
The large number of programs, projects, resources, personnel and technology that exist on the Eldorado NF means that the Management and Administration function plays a critical role in Forest-wide operations. For the purposes of this analysis, the Management and Administration functional area is subdivided into the following program areas:

- General Management
- Financial Management
- General Administration (including Human Resources, Safety and Civil Rights)
- District Management
- Planning
- Public Affairs
- Information Technology

The scope of this functional area does not include program-specific management and administration (such as administration of maintenance activities). Each functional area captures management and administrative costs directly related to programs under that functional area. Within the General Administration and Financial Management programs some resources associated with acquisitions, human resource and financial functions are shared between the Inyo, Eldorado and Tahoe National Forests and the Tahoe Basin Management Unit. In addition, in 2005, the Financial Management and Information Technology program areas were centralized to a national center in Albuquerque.

In FY2005 the Eldorado NF spent \$2.78 million across all of the programs in the Management and Administration functional area, including the cost of 56.54 FTEs to support the programs within this area. An additional \$1,800 of non-personnel funding would be required for these programs to achieve desired operational standards.

**Management & Administration
FY2005 Expenditure by Program**



Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
56.54	\$2,782,237	56.54	\$2,780,437	0.00	\$1,800

General Management

The general management program has the responsibility for the overall management, protection and conservation of Forest resources. On the Eldorado NF these activities are performed primarily by the Forest Supervisor and the District Rangers, together with their administrative support staff. This responsibility includes strategic planning, workforce management, directing operations and employees; promoting and retaining diversity in the workforce; employee and public safety; coordination of Forest activities with interested members of the public and communities, and integrating resource programs across the forest and bioregion.

The Forest Supervisor has the responsibility for high-level interactions with other agencies (State, Federal and Local), tribal governments, corporations, non-governmental organizations and the public. The Forest Supervisor is the person ultimately accountable, internally and externally, for the day-to-day workings of the Forest.

In FY2005 the General Management program area spent \$220,884, including \$166,082 on personnel costs (1.82 FTEs) and \$54,801 on non-personnel costs. There were no unfunded resource requirements within this program area.

Financial Management

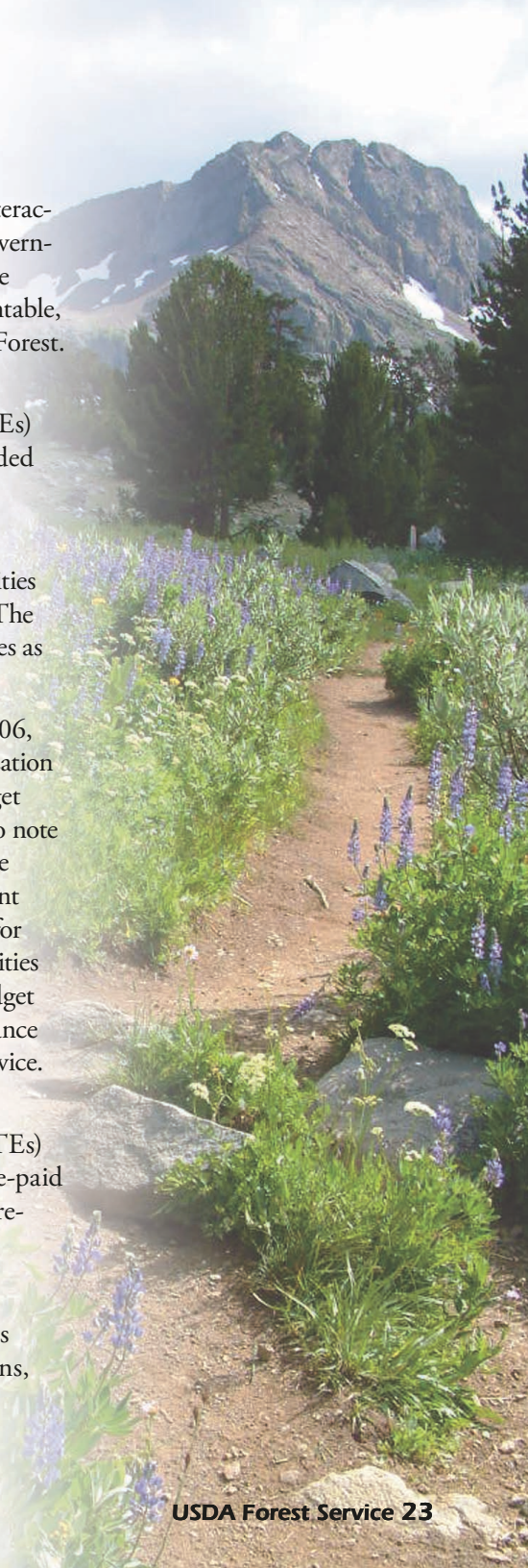
The Financial Management program includes all budget activities at the unit level including budget formulation and execution. The program is also responsible for accounting and analysis activities as well as all annual fiscal reporting requirements.

Beginning in February 2005 and continuing through early 2006, the Eldorado NF joined other National Forests in the centralization of many of the fiscal and accounting functions and some budget functions in the Albuquerque Service Center. It is important to note therefore that the expenditures captured in this analysis include this period of change. The Eldorado NF Financial Management program has retained two budget officers that are responsible for the residual budget-related activities for the Forest. These activities include budget formulation, program and budget analysis, budget execution, and reporting. The budget staff also provides assistance for financial audits and Incident Business coordination and advice.

In FY2005 the Financial Management program area spent \$359,308, including \$392,224 on personnel costs (11.44 FTEs) and -\$32,916 on non-personnel costs (due to a refund of pre-paid training expenses). There were no unfunded resource requirements within this program area.

General Administration

The General Administration program area encompasses this wide array of activities including procurement, labor relations, purchasing and acquisitions (advertise and award contracts,





The Mosquito community fire evacuation routes are safer thanks to Eldorado NF grants. More than \$600,000 in community fire grants have been awarded to local communities since 2002.

coordination of grants and agreements with other governmental agencies), human resource services, safety and civil rights. On the Eldorado NF, there are two human resources units; the Human Resources Office and the Inyo, Basin, Eldorado and Tahoe Operations Province (IBET). Both units provide leadership, coordination, execution, and evaluation of human resources programs in a range of different capacities.

In FY2005 the General Administration program area spent \$982,365, including \$840,892 on personnel costs (28.26 FTEs) and \$141,473 on non-personnel costs. This sum includes the Eldorado NF portion of expenditures associated with the IBET unit. There were no unfunded resource requirements within this program area.

District Management

The Eldorado National Forest is divided into four Ranger Districts: Georgetown, Pacific, Placerville and Amador. Each District is managed by a District Ranger, who provides professional, technical and administrative leadership to the management of the natural resources, goods and services within their designated area, and a support staff. District Rangers and their staff are responsible for the on-the-ground management and stewardship of the district's resources, including recreation, timber, wildlife and fish habitats, soil, forage, minerals, water, and wilderness areas. Other duties include collaboration, planning, managing the district workforce, and various business and office functions.

In FY2005 the District Management program area spent \$682,077, including \$670,218 on personnel costs (10.11 FTEs) and \$11,859 on non-personnel costs. There were no unfunded resource requirements within this program area.

Planning

The Planning program area includes all activities related to planning at the Forest level, including developing and updating the Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), coordination with other governmental

agencies on planning activities and large-scale planning or zoning development or review. The Planning program responds to legal complaints at the Forest level, provides programmatic multi-year strategic planning support, as well as Forest level coordination of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) activities to ensure that Forest environmental analysis processes meets the intent of NEPA and the National Forest Management Act (NFMA). Forest Plan monitoring is coordinated through the Forest Planner with the support of the appropriate resource and functional specialists.

In FY2005 the Planning program area spent \$3,389, including \$1,789 on personnel costs (0.02 FTEs) and \$1,600 on non-personnel costs. The remainder of the Forest Planner's time was working on NEPA documents and other project planning activities. An additional \$1,800 of non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Public Affairs

The Public Affairs program area is responsible for developing and maintaining positive relationships with a range of partners, including Regional Forest Service management, the USDA Forest Service National Office in Washington DC, Native American tribes, state and local government, and the visiting and non-visiting public. The specific objectives of the program include maintaining effective two-way communication with key stakeholders, designing and implementing measurable, effective communication programs, and maintaining a cohesive organization through effective internal communications. The program handles outreach activities such as public meetings, as well as all official releases of public information, including special reports, news briefs and statements to the press.

Responsibility for managing the overall Public Affairs program rests with the Public Affairs Officer, but responsibility for implementing public affairs activities are shared throughout the organization.

Public Use and Enjoyment

In FY2005 the Public Affairs program area spent \$183,747, including \$154,990 on personnel costs (1.80 FTEs) and \$28,757 on non-personnel costs. There were no unfunded resource requirements within this program area.

Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) program area includes any activities related to telecommunications, radios, networks, phones, dispatch, and alarm systems. This area includes any technical support, the management of communication systems, equipment maintenance, IT support, network administration, and website creation and maintenance.

The majority of responsibility for Eldorado NF IT program delivery was transferred from the Forest to the Information Solutions Organization (ISO) in March 2005. The expenditures described in this analysis include this period of transition. Even though many IT services were centralized, a number of residual IT responsibilities still reside on the Forest. These responsibilities include cell phone, fax machine and copy machine support; web design, development, and content management; installing and relocating desktop equipment; providing limited on-site contact for computer equipment maintenance calls; and computer, telephone, radio, and network property management activities.

In FY2005 the IT program area spent \$348,666, including \$193,748 on personnel costs (3.1 FTEs) and \$154,919 on non-personnel costs. There were no unfunded resource requirements within this program area.

With more than six million residents living within two hours driving time and well over two million visitors annually, the Eldorado NF provides a popular venue for a vast array of recreational and leisure activities. The Public Use and Enjoyment functional area includes all Forest activities directly related to providing visitors with a fun, safe and educational experience while on the forest.

The Public Use and Enjoyment functional area is subdivided into the following program areas:

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

Recreation – A Historical Perspective

As early as 1928, the importance of National Forests as places for recreation was beginning to be recognized:

“The importance of recreational use as a social force and influence must be recognized ...”

Forest Service Chief Robert Y. Stuart, 1928 – 1933

Today the increasing demand for recreation, particularly on Forests such as the Eldorado National Forest that are within close proximity of urban areas, brings a new set of management challenges. So much so that the current Chief of the USDA Forest Service, Dale Bosworth has named “unmanaged recreation” as one of the four threats facing the nation’s forests and grasslands:

“We’re seeing more erosion, water degradation, and habitat destruction. We’re seeing more conflicts between users. We have got to improve our management so we get responsible recreational use based on sound outdoor ethics.”

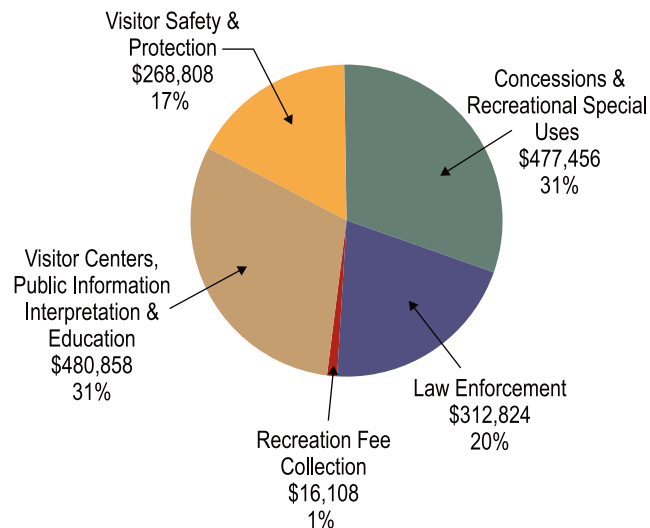
Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth, January 2004



Rangers patrol the forest providing for public safety and helping protect forest resources.

In FY2005 the Eldorado NF spent \$1.56 million across all programs in the Public Use and Enjoyment functional area, including the cost of 53.89 FTEs. An additional \$1.28 million of funding, including an additional 16.13 FTEs, would be required to enable these programs to achieve desired operational standards.

**Public Use & Enjoyment
FY2005 Expenditure by Program**



Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
73.02	\$2,968,411	53.89	\$1,556,053	19.13	\$1,412,357

Law Enforcement

The Law Enforcement program is responsible for the prevention of crimes and enforcement of Federal laws and regulations on National Forest and adjacent lands. This program includes general law enforcement efforts not directly related to visitor safety, such as drug eradication; criminal and fire investigations;

and detecting and responding to all serious crimes including felonies, serious misdemeanors, and threats to employees or government property. The personnel in this program are trained to handle arrests, serve warrants, and handle any incidents that have a high probability for violence, and they may initiate but are not responsible for search and rescue operations as well as emergency medical services. Law Enforcement leadership provides supervision and program oversight of all law enforcement operations involving Law Enforcement Officers and Forest Protection Officers.

In FY2005 the Law Enforcement program area spent \$312,824, including \$249,932 on personnel costs (3.0 FTEs) and \$62,892 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$434,656 of personnel expenditure (6.0 FTEs) and \$284,517 non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Currently law enforcement staff on the Eldorado NF consists of two Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs), and a Patrol Captain. In 2004, staffing within the Law Enforcement program included four LEOs. A 1998 staffing study indicated that, at the 1998 activity level, eight LEOs and a Patrol Captain were needed to meet the volume of law enforcement and public safety calls. This staffing level was determined to be the minimum. The six LEO positions shown as unfunded are based on these 1998 data. In addition, the level of visitation and illegal use of National Forest lands has increased each year since 1998.

Visitor Safety and Protection

The Visitor Safety and Protection program provides a broad range of activities designed to protect visitors, employees, and Forest resources. These activities are performed by USDA Forest Service non-law enforcement staff serving in collateral law enforcement roles, also known as Forest Protection Officers (FPO), who work closely with law enforcement staff. This program is integral to other Forest programs and duties including detecting and responding to minor incidents, enforcing wilderness permits, issuing recreation violations, monitoring

camping and campfires, and enforcing OHV regulations. Visitor Safety and Protection also includes patrolling lakes and high-use recreation areas, acting as a community liaison, investigating wildland fires, coordinating road closures, and patrolling during special events and holiday operations.

Eldorado NF staff also work closely with a range of volunteers and volunteer groups, such as those that host information stations along the Mormon Emigrant Trail and the Rubicon Trail. These volunteers are very effective in sharing information about Forest rules, appropriate use of public lands, safety and recreation opportunities.

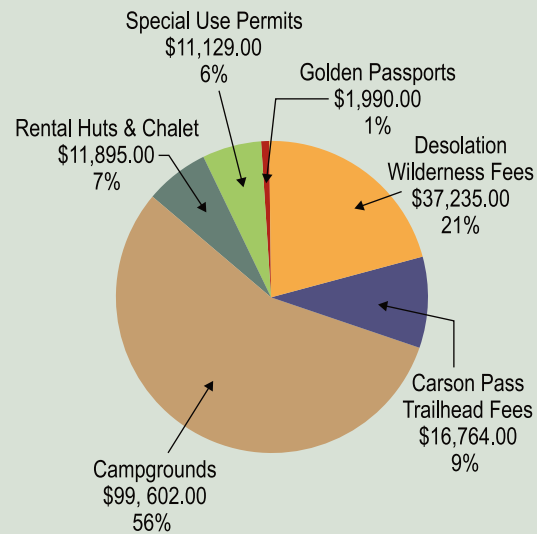
In FY2005 the Visitor Safety and Protection program area spent \$268,808, including \$237,180 on personnel costs (16.41 FTEs) and \$31,628 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$150,000 of personnel expenditure (3.0 FTEs) and \$25,791 non-personnel expenditure would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.



A partnership between Recreation Equipment Incorporated and the Forest Service converted the decommissioned Robbs Peak Lookout into the Robbs Hut recreation rental.

Recreation fees are reinvested on the Forest

FY2005 Recreation Fee Revenue



Under the Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), the Forest is able to retain fees collected at recreation sites. Most of those fees are reinvested on the Forest to further enhance recreation opportunities for the benefit of visitors to these sites. This investment covers maintenance work, improving facilities, and education programs. Sites benefiting from this reinvestment include the Desolation Wilderness Area, trailheads in the Carson Pass area, campgrounds on the Pacific and Georgetown Districts, recreation huts and chalets, and special use permits. Revenue is also reinvested from the sale of Golden Passports. This revenue is an important source of funds to supplement diminishing appropriated funding. The Forest uses up to 80% of the revenues from recreation fees to fund recreation site projects.

Up to 15% is used to cover the cost of fee collection, and 5% is deposited to the Regional Office, to be used on other recreation projects throughout the Region. In 2005, the Forest spent \$107,581 of recreation fee revenue on a variety of projects related to specific recreation sites. Some examples of how this money was used on the Forest includes:

- Projects in the Desolation Wilderness Area (in partnership with the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit), including the Desolation Wilderness Volunteer and Education Program, the Central Sierra Nevada Wilderness Education Project, wilderness monitoring work, and additional seasonal wilderness rangers to provide public contact, wilderness education and law enforcement.
- Campsite restoration at Lake of the Woods in the Desolation Wilderness, with the assistance of the Wilderness Volunteers. Planning work for upcoming restoration work at Avalanche Lake.
- Supporting a wilderness ranger in the Mokelumne Wilderness Area, maintenance of toilets and picnic tables and signage at trailheads in the Carson Pass area, and support for volunteer staff at Carson Pass Information Center.
- Weekly interpretive programs and routine maintenance work on developed sites at Wrights Lake and the Crystal Basin Campgrounds.
- Operating and maintaining Robbs Hut, Van Vleck Bunkhouse, Loon Lake Chalet, and Harvey West Cabin.



Eldorado National Forest Interpretive Association volunteers completely staff the Carson Pass Information Station providing visitors with valuable information.

Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretation & Education

This program provides accurate and timely information to the visiting public on Forest-related topics including: recreation opportunities, rules, conservation education, forest stewardship, interpretation, and permits. Staff make contact with the public in person either in the field or at a Visitor Station, by telephone, mail, email, or via the web. Activities include assisting visitors planning backcountry or extended camping trips; issuing permits; managing and staffing visitor centers; assisting visitors in the field, running interpretive and educational programs, designing and installing interpretive or informational signage, and developing communication materials responsive to the public's needs.

The Eldorado NF operates visitor stations at each of the District Ranger offices, in the Crystal Basin, and at Carson Pass. These stations are staffed by Forest personnel and invaluable volunteers from the Eldorado National Forest Interpretive Association (ENFIA). These centers offer information in a variety of formats: face-to-face interaction, interpretive signing, information brochures, delivering specific educational messages to the public.

Conservation education efforts are aimed at equipping targeted members of the public with the skills needed to make informed decisions about the environment. The program also assists educators in incorporating environmental education materials into their curricula. Activities are currently performed independently by staff from a range of Forest programs and are often carried out in partnership with other organizations. At this time the program has no central coordination and few resources for developing and delivering new programs focused on a planned educational effort.

In FY2005 the Visitor Centers, Public Information, Interpretation and Education program area spent \$480,858, including \$473,182 on personnel costs (21.42 FTEs) and \$7,676 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$137,000 of personnel expenditure (3 FTEs) and \$8,000 of non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Recreation Fee Collection

The Recreation Fee Collection program includes all activities related to the collection and management of entrance fees, recreation passes, campground fees, etc. This activity includes collecting fees, preparing reports, performing audit functions, supervising and training, and the management of safes and cash collections.

In FY2005 the Recreation Fee Collection program area spent \$16,108, including \$14,764 on personnel costs (0.28 FTEs) and \$1,343 on non-personnel costs. A percentage of recreation fees collected were used to cover these costs, as authorized under the Recreation Fee Demonstration Legislation and the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. An additional \$8,000 of personnel expenditure (0.16 FTEs) and \$3,400 non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.



The Eldorado NF and other agencies annually reach out to urban populations through the Camp Smokey exhibit at the California State Fair.

Resource Management

The Resource Management functional area encompasses all activities related to the management, preservation and protection of the Forest's natural and cultural resources. The Resource Management functional area is subdivided into the following program areas:

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

In FY2005, the Eldorado NF spent \$2.87 million across all of the programs in the Resource Management functional area, including the cost of 35.82 FTEs to support the programs within this area. An additional \$1.22 million of funding, including 17.36 FTEs, would be required to enable these programs to achieve desired operational standards.



University researchers and the Forest Service work cooperatively on wildlife studies.

Concessions and Recreation Special Uses

This program area on the Eldorado NF is responsible for permit administration and product and service inspections; landlord maintenance; and accounting, billing, and auditing of permit fees. This program does not include maintenance of concession facilities, which is generally performed by concessionaires in collaboration with Forest staff. The Eldorado NF administers and manages a variety of recreation special use authorizations, including:

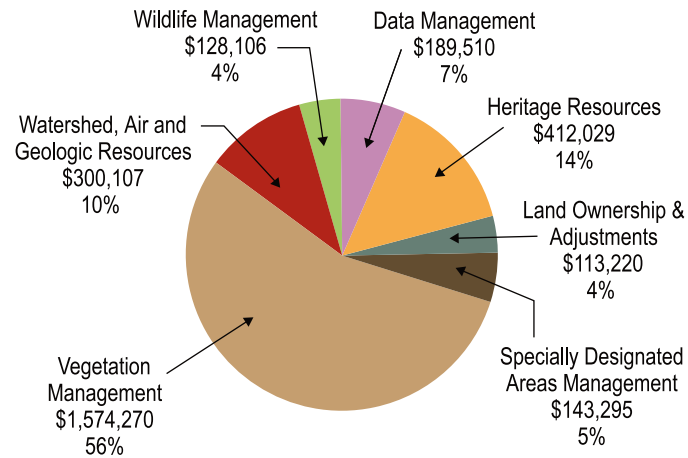
- 8 Campground Concessionaire Permits across all four Ranger Districts (including campgrounds, picnic areas, boat ramps, visitor information stations, etc.),
- 6 Organizational Camps,
- 2 Ski Area Permits,
- 2 Resort Permits,
- 3 Private Camp Permits,
- 975 Recreation Residences Permits in 36 tracts, and
A number of Outfitter-Guide Permits and Recreation Event Permits

In FY2005 the Concessions and Recreation Special Uses program area spent \$477,456, including \$384,883 on personnel costs (12.78 FTEs) and \$92,573 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$350,000 of personnel expenditure (6.98 FTEs) and \$18,994 non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.



The California Conservation Corps is among the partners working to eradicate invasive species from the Forest.

Resource Management FY2005 Expenditure by Program



Required		Available		Shortfall	
FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
53.17	\$4,077,626	35.82	\$2,860,536	17.36	\$1,217,089

Wildlife Management

The Wildlife Management program area incorporates all activities associated with the protection, restoration and enhancement of habitats for terrestrial and aquatic species, including rare plants. The overall mission of this program on the Eldorado NF, as required under the 1976 National Forest Management Act, is to provide for the diversity of plant and animal communities capable of occurring on the Forest. This work is accomplished by providing the quantity, quality and distribution of habitats needed to support healthy populations of native species throughout their geographic range. Particular emphasis is given to the management of Federally listed threatened and endangered species and Forest Service designated sensitive species, and to the protection and enhancement of high quality habitats that are



Continuing to care for the forest means caring for plantations.

limited in their distribution, such as meadows, riparian areas, aspen stands, old forest habitats, and oak woodlands. Work often involves coordination with other federal and state agencies involved in wildlife management, particularly the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game, as well as numerous non-governmental organizations that are eager to form partnerships to assist in accomplishing goals.

A large portion of the work involved in protecting wildlife, aquatic, and botanical resources occurs during the planning and implementing of other projects on the Eldorado NF, such as planning for campground developments, timber sales, or livestock grazing. Public education activities related to wildlife management also constitute an important part of this program.

In FY2005 the Wildlife Management program area spent \$128,106, including \$92,866 on personnel costs (1.37 FTEs) and \$35,335 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$33,662 of personnel expenditure (0.67 FTEs) would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Vegetation Management

On the Eldorado NF, vegetation management encompasses a large component of activities and Forest programs. It includes, but is not limited to, reforestation, timber stand improvement, maintenance of forest health, animal damage control, fuels treatment, rangeland restoration, and control of invasive weeds. Project proponents are responsible for all necessary oversight to ensure project objectives are being met, whether performed under contract or by Forest staff. Project-level monitoring is conducted to determine the effectiveness of all vegetation activities, and staff conduct analysis and inventory to support vegetation management and to assist managers in making decisions. The program includes activities designed to effectively prevent and control the establishment of invasive plant species, and to restore native plant communities where they have been displaced. The program involves coordination and cooperative efforts with local governments and private landowners in

developing coordinated control efforts and in increasing public awareness of the problems associated with invasive plant species.

In FY2005 the Vegetation Management program area spent \$1.57 million, including \$422,713 on personnel costs (7.03 FTEs) and \$1.15m on non-personnel costs. An additional \$91,320 of personnel expenditure (1.2 FTEs) and \$5,783 non-personnel expenditure would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Heritage Resources

The conservation of the Forest's heritage resources is the primary focus of the Heritage Resources program on the Eldorado NF. This work includes identifying, protecting and preserving values of significant archaeological and historical resources for the benefit and enjoyment of the American public and future generations. Program elements include strategies for inventory, evaluation, and management of historic properties to prevent their loss or damage, and activities that enhance heritage resources and their values through interpretation, scientific study, public education, public participation, partnerships, rehabilitation, and adaptive re-use.

Program staff manage a number of historic properties on the Forest, as required under the National Heritage Protection Act (NHPA), and ensure that these sites are not affected by the work of other Forest programs. In order to meet the goals and objectives of the Forest's NHPA Plan, and to increase the involvement of local Native American tribes in the Forest's management of historic properties, program staff work to enhance the historic resources found on the Forest and implement cooperative relations with a range of external stakeholders, including other agencies, universities, and Native American tribes. Program activities also include those designed to increase opportunities for the public to experience its cultural heritage through interpretation, public education and public participation.

In FY2005 the Heritage Resources program area spent \$412,029, including \$388,856 on personnel costs (6.27 FTEs) and \$23,172 on

non-personnel costs. An additional \$126,421 of personnel expenditure (1.79 FTEs) and \$6,321 non-personnel expenditure would be required for program to achieve desired operational standards.

Data Management

The Data Management program area includes a range of activities related to the collection, storage and analysis of natural resource data (physical, biological, social) in a geographically spatial and tabular environment for the purpose of sharing information with internal and external stakeholders and assisting in decision making. Digital data is stored using a variety of databases and application programs spanning many program areas of the Forest (for example, INFRA, NRIS, ALP, FACTS, BMPEP, etc.)

The Data Management program plays a crucial role on the Eldorado NF in enabling the work of a host of other program areas. For this reason Data Management program staff work to establish and maintain an integrated data management program. This work includes the installation and application of new databases; the implementation of new technology, processes and procedures; providing training and seamless coordination and support to internal customers for natural resource planning and management; and project analysis and support. It also includes maintaining the National Inventory and Monitoring Program Planning databases. The program includes interpretation, application of geospatial data and software, digital integration of base series cartographic information, and polygon resource data.

In FY2005 the Data Management program area spent \$189,510, including \$166,426 on personnel costs (2.51 FTEs) and \$23,083 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$218,479 of personnel expenditure (2.75 FTEs) and \$10,924 non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Watershed, Air and Geologic Resource Management

The Watershed, Air and Geologic Resource Management program includes activities relating to management of water





The Forest has a rich Maidu, Miwok, Nissenan, and Washoe heritage. Eldorado archeologists work directly with tribal members on forest projects both in the planning stages and as the projects progress.

quality, water supply, soil quality and productivity, water rights quantification and administration, mitigation of hazardous materials, and air quality management (including protection of Class I air quality) through management, monitoring, data collection, research, restoration and compliance activities.

On the Eldorado NF the watershed component of this program area includes the development and implementation of watershed restoration activities, providing inventory and analysis input to other forest program management, establishing baseline monitoring and assessment of hydrologic conditions, and providing data stewardship for geospatial and tabular data related to hydrology. Staff also administer the Best Management Practices (BMP) monitoring program and cooperate in the State's cooperative snow survey program. The soil program maintains a monitoring program (compaction, soil cover and disturbance) and conducts soil investigations and studies to increase soil knowledge as it relates to forest management activities. The geology program identifies, describes, and interprets the geologic components of the physical environment that contribute to human health and safety, and to the understanding of geological relationships and processes, and incorporates this information into project planning, implementation, and monitoring. The air quality program manages air quality for consistency with the Clean Air Act in cooperation with the California Air Resources Board. Across the program, staff develop and implement environmental education programs in watershed, soils, air and geology resource areas, and participate in the Burn Area Emergency Response following wildland fires.

In FY2005 the Watershed, Air & Geologic Resource Management program area spent \$300,107, including \$258,312 on personnel costs (3.2 FTEs) and \$41,795 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$91,320 of personnel expenditure (1.2 FTEs) and \$4,566 non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Land Ownership and Adjustment

Lands management on the Eldorado NF specifically includes boundary management, landownership adjustments, and the

securing and granting of linear rights-of-way. The overall mission of the program is to protect and enhance resources, seek efficiencies in the management of other resources through consolidation of land ownership, acquire sensitive lands, avoid trespass, establish and maintain clearly defined landlines, and provide access to National Forest system lands for both management and recreational purposes through the acquisition of rights-of-way.

The Land Ownership and Adjustment program area on the Eldorado NF has been severely affected by a lack of funding and as a result has been unable to assume the desired level of land ownership and boundary management workload. Simple projects (such as a Small Tracts Act adjustment) can take years to complete due to lack of skilled personnel and other factors. Many land adjustment opportunities are lost because the Forest is unable to react in a timely manner to land adjustment offers. Rising real estate values, along with lack of funds at the national level and tight competition for those funds, results in loss of purchase or exchange of many parcels. The Boundary Management group is financially unable to meet an increasing demand for services to the Forest for both planned project work and for crisis situations that can occur at anytime. Due to the loss of funding over the past nine years, the Forest has stopped planning routine work and only responds to crises as they arise. Much of the boundary line is reaching an age where it is often necessary to resurvey it instead of being able to maintain the lines. Without adequate resources the Forest is forfeiting opportunities for cost-sharing with private industry and individual landowners that would benefit both parties, and would reduce the cost of marking or maintaining boundary lines in half. Fire crews have not been available, as in the past, to perform boundary line maintenance, and lines that have been destroyed by fire have not been replaced.

In FY2005 the Land Ownership and Adjustment program area spent \$111,313, including \$109,378 on personnel costs (1.74 FTEs) and \$1,935 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$428,986 of personnel expenditure (7.35 FTEs) and \$27,385 non-personnel expenditure would be required for this program to achieve desired operational standards.

Investment Priorities

Specially Designated Areas Management

The Specially Designated Areas Management program area includes all activities and operations related to the management of special areas including Research Natural Areas (RNAs), Special Interest Areas (SIAs), Wild and Scenic Rivers (Designated and recommended), National Recreational Trails, National Historic Trails, and Wilderness (Designated and Proposed). The program works to identify, nominate, establish, and manage these special areas.

The Eldorado NF contains a number of specially designated areas, which are managed under this program. RNAs are established for the preservation and study of noteworthy examples of specific plant communities. The Eldorado NF has completed the establishment reports and developed management plans for three RNAs on the Forest. There are also nine SIAs identified in the Forest Plan, which includes associated management strategies. SIAs are established to protect scenic, historical, geological, botanical, zoological, or paleontological features and sites. The ENF manages portions of two existing Wilderness areas (Desolation Wilderness and Mokelumne Wilderness for a total of 102,059 acres), and 13,694 acres of the Caples Creek Proposed Wilderness. Portions of two rivers, the North Fork Mokelumne and the Rubicon, have been recommended to Congress for Wild and Scenic River designation. Three National Recreation or Historic Trails exist on the Forest (Pacific Crest Trail, Emigrant Summit Trail and Pony Express Trail) together with the Carson Pass National Scenic Byway.

In FY2005 the Specially Designated Areas Management program area spent \$143,295, including \$123,427 on personnel costs (13.69 FTEs) and \$19,868 on non-personnel costs. An additional \$120,000 of personnel expenditure (2.39 FTEs) and \$51,923 non-personnel expenditure would be required to enable this program to achieve desired operational standards.

In addition to a deficit in the appropriated funding used by the Forest to cover the operating expenditure of its programs, a large number of one-time investments are needed for Forest programs to meet required standards. During the business planning process, program managers identified the need for 89 investments totaling over \$38 million. Through a process of prioritization the Forest Leadership Team then selected ten investments that were of particularly high priority to the Forest. These investments focus on resource protection, reduction of maintenance costs, reducing fixed costs and the provision of safe, healthy recreational facilities for the public.

Of the ten prioritized investments, five investments have a direct relationship to strategies addressed in this business plan. These investments relate to the deferred maintenance needs of roads, trails and recreational facilities, and the construction and maintenance of administrative buildings in the Forest. The strategies section of the business plan contains strategy proposals that address these areas. While the investments in question have been listed below, it was considered more appropriate to implement the strategies, and then determine whether the proposed investments are still required. The remaining five priority investments, which are not addressed by strategies, are as follows:

Motor Vehicle Route Designation

Investment: \$80,000

By December 2007, all national forests are required to comply with National regulations concerning the designation and implementation of Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) routes. Currently the Eldorado National Forest is conducting the environmental analysis for the designation of OHV routes across the Forest. Once this work has been completed, and an environmental decision is reached, the Forest will need to implement the designation of OHV routes determined in this decision, including signs, kiosks, maps, education efforts, etc.

The Forest has been receiving funding through the Regional Office to accomplish the environmental analysis (along with a significant amount of Forest funding), but funds are not available



Closing an abandoned mine and installing a bat access screen was a partnership between the Office of Mine Reclamation and the Forest Service.

for implementation of the decision. This investment will enable the Forest to complete implementation within a reasonable timeframe. Successful and timely implementation of this project is critical if the Forest is to keep public trust and cooperation.

Hardening of Dispersed Areas

Investment: \$200,000

(10 projects per year @ \$20,000 per site)

Addressing unmanaged recreation is a critical issue on the Eldorado NF, as well as being one of the Forest Service Chief's 'Four Threats'. The current motor vehicle route designation project has highlighted a major concern on the Forest about public activities and patterns of use in dispersed areas. Appropriate sites for dispersed camping and parking need to be identified. Many of these sites require appropriate surface treatments, such as hardening, so that they can be used without causing damage to vegetation, water quality, or other resources. If this investment is not made, dispersed use areas will continue to degrade other resource values and will eventually need to be closed. This investment will also allow for the restoration of impacted dispersed areas, and for the installation of physical barriers to control vehicle travel while allowing for continued public use.

Training of Field Employees

Investment: \$40,000

As the Forest completes the required OHV route designation project and necessary work to establish appropriate places to camp or park for this and other activities, it is important to be able to communicate the rules and regulations to the public, and be consistent in enforcement and implementation. Field staff on the Eldorado NF serve as the primary interface that the Forest has with the visiting public. This investment will enable important training for field-going personnel so that they can effectively communicate with the public, explain Forest rules, enforce rules and respond to emergencies. A wide range of staff work in the field and have contact with the public, including those from the District and the Supervisors Office. Training therefore needs to be coordinated for all employees, and is critical for the successful implementation of the OHV route designation project.

Abandoned Mine Safety Abatement

Investment: \$300,000

(\$60,000 per year for five years)

Abandoned mines pose a serious safety hazard to both the public and Forest employees. The majority of abandoned mines are open, vertical shafts, usually overgrown with vegetation that a person could stumble into if not aware of the hazards. The funding will expedite closure of these dangerous abandoned mines, reducing or eliminating the risk to the public and Forest employees. The Forest has invested resources in locating and mapping abandoned mines to support an environmental analysis and initiating closure actions. The timely implementation of closure activities, funded by this investment, will ensure that these efforts do not become obsolete.

The investment will address multiple resource surveys that are not currently funded, including heritage, wildlife, hazardous waste, engineering/closure design, environmental analysis and decision documentation, researching mine ownership, spatial database management for abandoned mine locations, and project implementation. The funding will also be used to close the mine shafts appropriately so that the design and construction benefits bat habitat within the mines.

Improvements in Concentrated Use Areas for Public Use

Investment: \$175,000

Concentrated use areas receive a significant amount of public use. In order to provide the public with recreation opportunities, while consistently protecting natural and cultural resources, it is essential to invest in the maintenance of these areas. This investment will fund the installation of toilets, signs, kiosks and other improvements necessary for resource protection and improved public use. These improvements will address also health and safety issues. Operating costs may increase as a result of the need to maintain the new improvements; however these costs will be more than offset by the decreased cost of cleaning-up unmanaged sites and mitigating other resource damage.

Strategies

Priority investments addressed by proposed strategies in the business plan:

- Build new offices to replace unsatisfactory, leased, Supervisor's Office and temporary Ranger Station buildings (Investment: \$10,000,000)
- Construct a new Georgetown Ranger District office building to correct critical structural, safety and accessibility problems (Investment: \$1,500,000)
- Improvements necessary to provide accessibility, security and energy efficiency at the Placerville Ranger District office building (Investment: \$150,000)
- Addressing the deferred annual maintenance needs of Forest roads, to meet safety and environmental protection needs (Investment: \$1,521,399)
- Addressing the deferred maintenance needs, including reconstruction and upgrade, of existing recreation sites (Investment: \$3,000,000)

As a means of setting direction in the strategy development process, four broad strategic goals were established in conjunction with the Forest Leadership Team. A number of strategies were then developed around these goals, to address some of the more significant funding gaps identified by the business plan. These goals included:

- Replace the shortfall in appropriated funding, caused by the decrease in non-fire appropriated funds, with other non-appropriated funds.
- Reduce fixed costs (personnel, facilities and fleet) by 10% to ensure that declining budgets are manageable, and make more effective use of human and financial resources.
- Effectively and efficiently manage the increasing demand for recreation to sustain Forest health and ecosystems.
- Use education and public awareness more effectively to reduce costs and improve understanding of Forest operations and ecosystems.

In total eight strategies were developed, including the partnerships strategy described in the Partnerships section of this business plan.

Deferred Maintenance

Strategy: To identify opportunities and the means to reduce the backlog of maintenance for recreation facilities, roads and trails.

Benefit: High

Investment Required: Moderate

Overview

A well maintained and safe system of roads, trails, recreational facilities and other utilities are a critical component in providing recreation opportunities and access to these opportunities across the Forest. It is through recreation that most people experience the Forest. The Eldorado NF, like many forests nationally, has

a large deferred maintenance backlog. Appropriated funding cannot resolve this backlog, therefore the Forest must look to more creative and innovative solutions to address this problem. This strategy focuses on the appropriate use of alternative funding sources within the 'toolbox' available.

The deferred maintenance needs on the Eldorado NF in the areas of roads, trails and recreational facilities amounts to over \$13 million. This includes maintenance catch-up work, critical maintenance work, reconstruction and upgrading of existing sites and facilities, and improving accessibility. In addition to the lack of appropriated funds to pay for these maintenance needs, a reduction in the personnel available to address this maintenance is a compounding problem. This lack of personnel includes those needed to complete road and trail condition surveys, and those needed for trail maintenance crews.

Roads

There are over 2,367 miles of roads on the Eldorado NF. For a number of years the forest has been faced with a generally decreasing budget, and the result is a steady deterioration of the conditions along these roads. This deterioration affects both the cost of work on the Forest, and public access and enjoyment. Deteriorating roads limit access to other projects, adversely impacting the safety of road users, increasing fleet maintenance costs and increasing travel times. Neglected maintenance increases investment costs over time.

Trails

The deferred maintenance needs for the trails program is a result of a decreasing trails budget and a decreasing workforce available to complete this work.

Recreational Facilities

Many of the recreation facilities on the Eldorado NF date back to the 1960s or 1970s and there is a large deferred maintenance backlog, which is increasing annually. In addition, specific heavy maintenance needs come up each year at various facilities, some of which cannot be accomplished due to lack of funding. If

deferred maintenance investments are not made, the facilities will continue to degrade and fail to meet public accessibility, health and safety needs.

Strategy Summary

A number of tools for addressing deferred maintenance needs already exist in the Forest. This strategy calls for an interdisciplinary team to look at these tools, as well as new funding opportunities to reduce the maintenance backlog. This interdisciplinary team would implement the strategy with the following guiding objectives:

- Identify those deferred maintenance needs within concessionaire operated campgrounds that can be accomplished through the offset of fees as allowed under the Granger-Thye Act.
- Work with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licensees to provide for deferred maintenance of recreation facilities and other recreation improvements within license boundaries.
- Seek Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funding, grants and other funding sources to address deferred maintenance.
- Recognize that some deferred maintenance work can be achieved with the assistance of volunteers.
- Develop an action plan to implement the Recreational Site Facility Master Plan.
- Coordinate road maintenance needs amongst various projects and management activities to meet multiple objectives, including public access.

Benefits

This strategy provides a means of accomplishing deferred maintenance and thereby maintaining the recreation opportunities that exist across the Forest. This includes the provision of quality facilities, roads and trails that serve as the infrastructure needed for visitors to enjoy the Eldorado NF. In addition, finding alternative funding solutions will reduce the burden on the exist-

ing appropriated budget, allowing greater emphasis on routine maintenance and ongoing operations. The use of volunteers to address deferred maintenance needs creates a sense of public ownership and responsibility for managing Forest lands.

Challenges

The greatest challenge to implementing this strategy is that the deferred maintenance backlog is large, and continues to grow. It is also difficult to find grants and other fund sources to address deferred maintenance. To assist in mitigating these factors it is recommended that the Forest prioritize maintenance projects that have a significant resource impact, or reduce the need for an even greater maintenance investment in the future (doing a small amount now so that future maintenance costs do not increase). In addition, some deferred maintenance can also be addressed through decommissioning. These opportunities will be identified through the Recreation Site Facility Master Plan.

Forest-Wide Management Study

Strategy: Initiate a Forest-wide management study aimed at decreasing fixed costs for personnel, facilities and fleet.

Benefit: High

Investment Required: High

Overview

Decreasing fixed costs is an important way of assuring organizational flexibility during uncertain budget times. A management study will be conducted to determine the fixed costs centers that can be reduced. This study will review the management units in the Forest, including the Supervisors Office. The study will consider the ways in which resources can be consolidated or rationalized for better efficiency and cost savings, and will make recommendations for future actions.

The management study proposed by this strategy is a study designed to investigate whether some consolidation, rationaliza-

tion or reorganization of resources across Forest units would bring about fixed cost reduction in the key areas of personnel, facilities and fleet. This business plan has identified that personnel, fleet and plant, property and equipment account for 77% of current expenses. A large percentage of these costs can be categorized as fixed costs.

The study will focus on those costs that can be reduced. This reduction will include, for example, the facilities and personnel located along the Highway 50 corridor within 20 miles of each other, including: the Supervisors Office, the Placerville Nursery, the Placerville Ranger District office, and the Pacific Ranger District office. In addition, the study will investigate ways in which units may operate more efficiently, including ways to better coordinate programs across districts or share resources.

This study would require some initial work to further define the scope, and the criteria to be used to evaluate alternative proposals. Once this work is completed the study will require sign-off from the Chief of the Forest Service.

Benefits

If the study is successful in identifying fixed cost reductions, the Forest would benefit in a number of ways, in addition to the obvious cost savings. The benefits could include the opportunity to better coordinate programs and activities, share personnel resources between units, streamline management processes and improve customer service.

Challenges

A number of challenges to the strategy have been identified, the most important of which will be resistance to organizational change, and apprehension and uncertainty among employees. To help reduce this resistance and apprehension it is recommended that employees share in the design and objectives of the review. Forest leadership would need to address the concerns of the workforce and share the results of the study openly.

If the study recommends some form of organizational restructuring, the lack of a local human resource function on the Forest could also be a challenge. The human resource team previously located on the Forest has now been centralized to a national function. Depending on the recommendations of the study and the scale of any reorganization, it may be necessary for the centralized human resource function to consider a short-term assignment to the Forest to assist with human resource planning.

Stewardship Contracting

Strategy: Investigate ways to broaden the use of the Stewardship End Result Contracting (Stewardship Contracting) facility on the Eldorado NF.

Benefit: High

Investment Required: Medium

Overview

Stewardship Contracting projects allow private persons or public or private entities, by contract or agreement, to perform services to achieve land management goals. They were first established in 1999 under a pilot program, and in 2003 the authority to enter into Stewardship Contracts was extended until 2013.

The Eldorado NF has been very successful in implementing the Stewardship Contracting ‘tool’ on the Forest to facilitate fuels reduction work. Stewardship Contracting provides a fast and efficient means of achieving these and other Forest health goals, while reducing reliance on appropriated funds to pay for this work. This strategy seeks to expand the use of Stewardship Contracts in the Forest for further fuels treatment work, and to extend the concept to other projects that meet land management goals.

The Stewardship Contracting concept includes all aspects of natural resources management in a broad range of activities that improve land conditions. This concept includes projects where

the value of the output timber or some other forest product can be used to offset the cost of work, including watershed restoration and maintenance, wildlife habitat improvement, timber stand improvements, or insect or disease protection.

This strategy seeks to exploit the current and future potential that the Stewardship Contract tool holds for the Forest by identifying other opportunities to use Stewardship Contracting to meet land management goals, and by expanding its use for further fuels treatment work on the Forest. As part of this initiative, the Forest will make recommendations where necessary to improve the sustainability of Stewardship Contracting.

An output from current Stewardship Contracting work is a strategy regarding a large amount of unutilized biomass. This strategy provides an opportunity for the Forest to find ways to better utilize this biomass output. The Forest currently monitors developments in the area of biomass utilization. This strategy recommends that the Forest also investigate solutions and be ready to implement once solutions are available. These solutions could involve the use of partnership arrangements or economic grants to improve the economic feasibility of projects.

Benefits

The benefits that the Forest and the public derive from the use of Stewardship Contracting have already been demonstrated on the Eldorado NF. These include:

- Appropriated funds are not needed to pay for work completed under goods-for-services agreements.
- Work is done quickly –projects can take several weeks rather than several months.
- Reducing hazardous fuels lowers the risk of wildfire impacting rural communities and communities within the Wildfire Urban Interface (WUI).
- Bundling timber sale contracts and service contracts into one integrated resource contract.

- Restoration projects improve access and public enjoyment of Forest lands.
- Stewardship Contracting provides an opportunity to improve community economic development.

In addition, staff on the Eldorado NF have already completed much of the necessary training and have accumulated a body of knowledge necessary to ensure proficient use of Stewardship Contracting.

Challenges

A number of challenges related to the expanding use of Stewardship Contracting have been identified:

- Most of the projects that can be accomplished by using Stewardship Contracting are subject to public notice, comment, and appeal, which can add several months to the planning process.
- Personnel with specialized knowledge are needed for Stewardship Contracting preparation and administration, including financial accounting. Cross-training is necessary for service and timber contract preparation and administration.
- The cost of preparing a Stewardship Contracting proposal may make the process prohibitive to small businesses and individual contractors.
- The proposal selection process is ‘closed,’ and thus there is no feedback for unsuccessful applicants.

In order to expedite Stewardship contracts through the public process, and avoid possible appeal, early communication and collaboration with potential appellants is necessary. Training is also needed in the Forest to broaden the base of knowledge about Stewardship Contracting. This strategy recommends increased Forest-based training to improve operational knowledge of the tool, and to assist personnel in identifying any potential opportunities offered by Stewardship Contracting. In order to make Stewardship Contracting more accessible to small contractors, and improve Stewardship Contracting as a tool for small scale

projects, it is suggested that the Forest make recommendations to the Region on possible process improvements. The Forest will continue to offer training to potential contractors to assist them in making productive use of Stewardship Contracting.

Success Story “Sun Dawg Stewardship Contract”

Stewardship Contracting enables the Forest to achieve land management goals in a fast and efficient manner while promoting the local economy. The Forest has emphasized the use of Stewardship projects to accomplish fuels reduction, silvicultural treatments, and road maintenance or reconstruction under the goods-for-service authority. Under the Stewardship contract, the Forest contracts land management activities to external contractors in exchange for the timber harvested for fuels reduction.

One of the early examples of a stewardship contract is the Sun Dawg Project. Under this project, in a little over a year the Forest successfully treated 950 acres of forest land for fuels reduction. The major activities included thinning of timber stands, removal of brush and undergrowth, and road improvements for preventing wildfire spread. The same project would have taken three years to complete if the Forest used the two-step traditional approach of selling the timber first and using that revenue for fuels reduction work. The success of this project can be attributed to the dedication of the Eldorado Forest staff and the availability of knowledgeable and skilled contractors to carry out the project.



User Fees



AMY L. REID

Desolation Wilderness use fees help pay for wilderness rangers, restrooms, signing, and restoration projects.

Strategy: To implement national direction to collect reasonable and appropriate fees from those that directly benefit from the associated activity or services, in contrast to those benefits provided to the general public.

Benefit: Medium

Investment Required: Low

Overview

As a means of providing services and recreation opportunities to the public, the Forest will leverage a range of current fee collection tools that have been authorized for use through various legislation. This policy follows the national direction towards collecting appropriate fees from those that directly benefit from an activity or service. This financial strategy advocates the use of these fee retention tools in order to recover administrative and management costs, and to apply appropriate use fees.

This business plan has highlighted the degree to which the level of appropriated non-fire funding available to the Forest is decreasing. As the Forest naturally looks for alternative funding, leveraging the current fee collection and retention 'tools' available to the Forest provides one such solution. Examples of the types of current legislation and regulations giving authority for fee collection include:

- USDA Forest Service Cost Recovery Regulations (2006)
- Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (2004)
- National Forest Organizational Camp Fee Improvement Act (2003)

Strategy Summary

This financial strategy focuses on further use of these and other appropriate acts and regulations. The following guiding objectives have been included in this strategy:

- Implementing the new Cost Recovery regulations in a coordinated manner. Ensure necessary training is completed, needed budget tracking and other financial structures are in place, and consistency for implementation on the Forest is provided.

- Continuing to review existing Recreation Enhancement Act fees and identify new fee opportunities.
- Collecting and utilizing fees from Organizational Camps, Outfitter Guides, recreation events, and other appropriate users.
- Continuing at the Forest level to include measures or conditions within new or renegotiated FERC licenses, to collect fees for the operation and maintenance of recreation facilities and services provided to the public as a result of hydroelectric projects.
- Communicating with affected members of the public about fee changes and reporting the benefits.

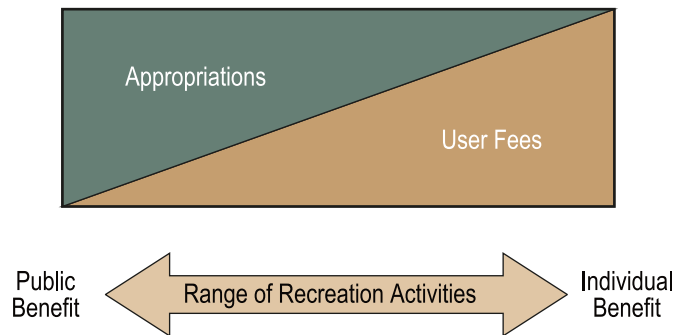
Cost Recovery Regulations (2006)

Recently the Forest Service implemented Cost Recovery Regulations for Special Use Management. These regulations allow for the recovery of management and administration fees to cover the cost of processing and monitoring compliance with special use authorizations. Recovering the administrative costs of providing these services targets those who benefit from the authorization. The Eldorado NF has initiated the necessary training to be able to integrate the Cost Recovery Regulations, and will begin the collection of fees in the near future.

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (2004)

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) is already utilized in the Forest for the collection of recreation fees and recreation special use fees. These fees include Wilderness permit fees, day use fees at trailhead parking areas, campgrounds, outfitter guide and recreation event permits, and golden passports. REA supports the philosophy that activities providing a highly individual or personal benefit should be funded to a greater extent by user fees rather than by appropriated funding.

Source & Mix of Funding



The Forest will continue to look at ways to utilize fee collection under REA as a means of improving the recreation opportunities and facilities available to the public.

National Organizational Camp Fee Improvement Act (2003)

The National Forest Organizational Camp Fee Improvement Act (2003) establishes the authority to collect user fees for occupancy and use by organizational camps on the Forest. To date fees are collected on the organizational camps in the Forest and the Forest will continue to implement this direction.

Benefits

In addition to reducing the burden on the existing appropriated budget, implementing user fees under this strategy provides a number of benefits to the Forest and to those paying the fees, including:

- Providing a means to manage and maintain certain recreation opportunities on the Forest.
- Allowing for maintenance and management of quality facilities, roads and trails that serve as the infrastructure for visitors to enjoy the Forest.
- Assuring that those who benefit from the public lands are assisting in the administrative costs of providing that benefit to them.

Challenges

In implementing this strategy, there is a need to inform, educate, and work with the public to assure support and understanding of the need for the fees and the associated benefits. This education could be accomplished by specific communication programs aimed at demonstrating the link between fee payment and benefits. An important aspect of most user-fee legislation is the requirement to track how funds are used and report back to the public or other specific parties. It is recommended that the Forest examine best practices and implement appropriate accounting processes for tracking and reporting fees. The design of tracking and reporting mechanisms needs to consider ways to avoid additional administrative costs.

Forest-Wide Communications Plan

Strategy: To develop a Forest-wide external communications plan

Benefit: High

Investment Required: Moderate

Overview

This strategy is designed to strengthen and improve the overall effectiveness of external Forest communication activities. External communications occur across the Forest with a wide range of audiences, using many different channels, for many different reasons. This organizational strategy calls for a consistent, streamlined approach to external communication. This streamlining will strengthen the message being communicated, ensure that the right audiences are targeted, and assist Forest staff in performing communication activities.

Managing the Forest is a shared responsibility between the Forest Service, those who live in or near the Forest, and those who enjoy the benefits of Forest natural resources. Good communication with those who share in this responsibility makes managing public lands more effective and efficient. In addition, a number of factors now make effective communication with external audiences increasingly important:



Our quality of life depends on the Forest. Those who share its benefits, share in its welfare. Volunteerism is expanding on the Eldorado, providing much needed assistance to the forest and visitors.

- Increasing urbanization around, and recreation in, the Forest results in conservation challenges. These challenges call for increased attention to effective communication activities. Conservation education activities can be improved with effective communication designed to affect behavioral change.
- There is now greater emphasis on the use of partnerships as an important part of Forest management. The Forest has a wide range of mutually beneficial relationships. These and future partnerships are strengthened with the use of effective communication. In addition, partnerships themselves provide a channel for communicating with the public.
- There is increasing emphasis on user fees as a mechanism to fund those Forest services and facilities that create an individual benefit. Implementing new fees and fee changes requires effective communication to ensure public acceptance and support.
- There is greater public scrutiny directed toward Forest management and decision-making processes. Effective communication creates transparency in decision making and helps diffuse possible conflict.

Public involvement plays an important role in some Forest decision making. A number of formal decision activities, for example NEPA processes, require public participation. The path to successful implementation of these decisions is greatly improved by effective communication.

As the demand for recreation grows, so too will the need for effective customer service. Effective communication is an important element of good customer service. It is therefore more important than ever that the Forest have a consistent, structured and planned approach to managing external communication to ensure that communication is targeted, efficient and effective. This strategy, and the resulting Forest-wide communication plan, is designed to meet these goals. A strong plan will guide communication efforts and target a range of audiences resulting in clear, coordinated, memorable, and effective messaging.

Objectives

The communications plan would be designed to meet a number of key objectives, including:

- Creating a strategic approach to identify key groups, channels, and effective communication messages and processes.
- Creating consistency in the key messages the Forest wishes to communicate externally.
- Standardizing communications and streamlining communication campaign planning within existing programs and projects; for example, resource protection including fire prevention, OHV management or wilderness protection.
- Improving conservation education efforts, including program design in Forest educational activities.
- Improving public involvement, where relevant in Forest decision making.
- Allowing the Forest to implement a Forest-wide communication policy.
- Aligning communication activities to current partnerships.

Benefits

If the communication plan is successful in meeting these objectives, the Forest and the public would benefit in a number of ways. Some of these benefits would include:

- A greater level of awareness, and shared responsibility between the Forest and the wider community in caring for public lands.
- Increased success in implementing environmental decisions, with more informed public involvement.
- More effective relationships with identified Forest partners.
- A reduction in impacts to natural resources of the Forest through targeted and structured conservation education.
- Streamlined communication within Forest projects.

- Improved customer service.
- Improved recruitment efforts.
- Increased public awareness of Forest activities and management processes.
- Reduced destructive public behavior, improved public safety, and mitigated exposure to litigation.

Challenges

Several challenges have been identified as impeding the implementation of this strategy: it will be necessary to gather accurate information about the people involved in communication; those involved in creating and implementing the plan will need to find coordination time in already busy schedules; and the investment required to create and implement a communication plan has no automatic or transparent return on investment.

In order to mitigate these factors, it is recommended that the communication plan seek to identify the range of people involved in all Forest activities, based on historical communication activities. The planning stage of the communications plan will require the Forest leadership team to commit to investing the time required to complete the plan. In addition, it is important to recognize that this investment is long-term, in response to a changing operating environment in which there is now greater importance for effective external communication.

Volunteer Services

Strategy: To build the capacity to better manage volunteer services of the Forest.

Benefit: Medium

Investment Required: Low

Overview

The role of volunteers, and the valuable work they perform, is becoming increasingly important to the Forest in an environment

where the appropriated funding available for routine Forest work is declining. To make more effective use of volunteer resources, and to increase volunteering for the Forest, this strategy seeks to establish more effective volunteer coordination and management.

Many people find volunteering for a National Forest satisfying and rewarding. Currently volunteers perform activities such as maintaining trails, cleaning up the Forest, assisting in winter search and rescue efforts, and providing visitor information and interpretive services. In 2005 volunteers gave 9,979 hours of service to the Eldorado NF. The role of volunteers on the Forest becomes increasingly important as budgets decline for Forest Service staff to complete these tasks.

Strategy Summary

This strategy examines possible solutions for better managing volunteer services on the Forest, and increasing the amount of volunteer assistance. The strategy contains the following objectives:

- Establishing a design group to identify the best option for more effective volunteer coordination on the Forest, and implementing the resulting decision.
- Matching volunteer resources to current and future Forest projects.
- Providing volunteers with the necessary resources and training.
- Creating efficiency by reducing Forest resources required to manage volunteer activities.
- Increasing the overall amount of volunteer work performed on the Forest.
- Creating opportunities for volunteers to share the responsibility for managing Forest resources.
- Communicating volunteer success stories.

Any volunteer coordinator, or coordination function would ideally:

- Have knowledge of current and forthcoming projects on the Forest, and the areas in which volunteers may be able to assist.

- Match volunteers to available projects, with consideration of the skills and experience of the volunteers, and the resources available.
- Be responsible for training and safety considerations.
- Promote further volunteer activities through outreach activities and raising the public profile of successful volunteer activities.
- Manage relationships with volunteer groups that provide consistent assistance to the Forest.
- Create advocacy for further volunteer services in the Forest.
- Seek grants to support further volunteer activities.

Currently, Eldorado NF staff manage their own volunteer activities, without the benefit of Forest-wide coordination or support. This situation creates a number of issues for those performing these tasks:

- It takes time and energy (generally unfunded) to coordinate volunteers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the resulting benefit in terms of work done is a net loss to the Forest.
- The use of volunteers requires many of the same safety considerations as Forest Service employees.
- Projects are not always available leading to the impression that volunteers are not needed.
- Projects within some resource areas (e.g. trails) will always be more attractive to volunteers than others.

Benefits

- In addition to reducing the burden on appropriated Forest budgets, improving the management and coordination of volunteer services would have the following benefits:
- Increasing the Forest's capacity to serve the public and accomplish needed work,
- Providing for Forest-wide volunteer coordination efforts,

- Building a body of advocates for the Forest and its resources,
- Offering people meaningful opportunities to care for the National Forest,
- Offering prestige and recognition to volunteers for their services.

Challenges

In order for this strategy to be successful, the Forest would need to identify and implement the best solution for coordinating volunteer services, organize both internally and externally to better utilize volunteers, and find the resources necessary to build capacity. While difficult in the short-term, investing the resources necessary to better coordinate volunteer services should be viewed as an investment in the future. Past experience has also shown that the longevity of volunteer partnerships is often dependent on the drive and enthusiasm of individuals within a partner organization, and on key Forest employees. This strategy seeks to ensure that all of these individuals are supported and that long-term volunteer relationships are maintained and preserved.

Forest Association

Strategy: Develop and implement a non-profit Forest Association.

Benefit: High

Investment Required: Medium

Overview

Many non-profit organizations rely on funding through corporate and private giving, and private-sector grants. Accessing funds from these sources requires very specific and specialized skills. Through this strategy the Forest seeks to enter into a cooperative relationship with a non-profit organization that will assist the Forest by raising funds from these sources. This fund raising will provide a valuable new fund source to help offset the decline in appropriated non-fire funding. On its own the Forest does not have the skills

or resources to undertake this role, and is prevented from acting directly because of legislative rules governing the types of funds it can accept. This non-profit organization will be known as the 'Forest Association' and will focus on a range of funding solutions including attracting and managing grants, corporate sponsorship, philanthropic giving and other community fund-raising activities.

Nationally there are many excellent examples of associations, including friends associations and interpretive associations, who assist National Forests and other land management agencies by providing a range of support services, including fund-raising activities. Within the Forest Service two such notable examples are the Sedona Forest Association and the San Bernardino Friends Association. These organizations provide invaluable assistance while also serving to raise the public profile of the Forest in their community.

This strategy is specifically directed at forging a cooperative agreement with a non-profit organization (the Forest Association) that has the capacity to act as a fund raising entity in the private sector, gifting money and other support to the Forest. This Forest Association would have the specific skills necessary for this type of work, and would be responsible for administering funds raised.

Having establishing a non-profit Forest Association as an external fund-raising body, the mission of the Association would be to:

Access private sector funding that the Forest cannot access.

- Solicit corporate sponsorship for specific projects.
- Access and administer grants that are within it capability to manage.
- Target philanthropic money.
- Organize fund-raising activities on and off the Forest.

Benefits

In addition to the benefit of additional funding and support for the Forest, the Forest association would provide a number of additional benefits:

- Through the Association the Forest will expand its ability to successfully compete for grants.
- The work of the Forest Association will serve to raise the public profile of the Forest.
- The Forest Association will create stronger links between individuals and organizations in the community and the Forest.
- Members of the Forest Association will share in the pride gained from aiding in the conservation and management of a National Forest.

Challenges

Several challenges will have to be addressed in order for this strategy to succeed. These challenges include forming the core organization, constructing a suitable cooperative agreement, building capacity within the Association, and coordinating with existing volunteer and other non-governmental organizations working with the Eldorado NF. In order to address these challenges it is recommended that the Forest convene a design team made up of Forest and non-Forest personnel responsible for creating the core organization and the governing cooperative agreement. Forest personnel can assist within the new organization to provide support and help build organizational capacity. Once established, the Forest can assist the Association by coordinating its activities with those of other Forest partners, where there is a benefit in bringing these partners together. In the longer-term the Association will have the capacity to undertake these roles.

Partnering For Success – A Strategy



Each year, high school students from throughout California participate with the Forest Service in the Youth Environmental Leadership Conference sponsored by the American Legion.



Watershed volunteers measuring stream width. The health of the forest can be read in the quality of its water.

Partnerships are the relationships the Forest builds and maintains with individuals, groups, agencies, organizations and other entities to achieve mutually beneficial objectives. Partnerships provide support, shared knowledge, skills, and other resources to the Forest. In return, the Forest assists organizations to meet mutually beneficial goals, and supports communities with economic development as well as resources and support for community initiatives. Recently, despite declining budgets and growing demands on resources, the Forest has been able, with the assistance, support and commitment of its partners, to maintain a wide range of programs that protect forest health and provide for public enjoyment.

This strategy is aimed at increasing the Forest's ability to optimize its use of partnerships to fulfill both short-term operational needs and the long-term mission of caring for the land and serving people. Faced with diminishing resources, it is now more important than ever to improve existing partnerships and develop new ones that will assist the Forest in managing public lands. Maintaining existing partnerships and developing new partnerships and volunteer programs requires commitment and investment by all parties.

There are three parts to this strategy: 1) strengthen relationships with existing partners; 2) identify additional partners; and 3) integrate partnership capacity with internal capacity to provide better service and land stewardship.

Currently the Forest works with a variety of partners to achieve multiple and mutually beneficial outcomes. Just a few of these partnerships are highlighted below to illustrate both the diversity of the partnerships that currently exist on the Forest, and the immense opportunity that exists for combining resources to achieve common goals.

Eldorado National Forest Interpretive Association

The Eldorado National Forest Interpretive Association (ENFIA) is a nonprofit organization that has been dedicated since 1998 to helping the Eldorado National Forest serve the public. Working in partnership with Forest staff, ENFIA volunteers accomplish

their mission by educating visitors about the history of the Forest, providing interpretive services, and distributing advice to Forest visitors. Through their retail outlets they sell Forest-oriented books and other unique Forest-related merchandise. The profits help fund interpretive, educational, and restoration projects on the Forest.

One of ENFIA's many accomplishments is the Carson Pass Information Station. This station, staffed entirely by ENFIA volunteers, serves thousands of forest visitors each year and is situated at a popular trailhead into the Mokelumne Wilderness Area. ENFIA volunteers contribute around 5,000 hours a year staffing this information station and other volunteer activities.

Desolation Wilderness Volunteer Program

The Desolation Wilderness volunteer program began in 2004 in a cooperative effort between the Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Its goals include increasing community involvement in wilderness management and enhancing the experience of Desolation visitors. Volunteers act as stewards of the Wilderness Area and assist the Forest by filling the funding gap for wilderness management. Volunteers are often active community members with a wide network of contacts, helping to foster wide support for the program. Their work includes trail maintenance, visitor education, emergency assistance, impact monitoring, and restoration.

Watershed Monitoring Volunteer Program

The Watershed Monitoring Volunteer Program is a successful partnership with local colleges and middle schools that has existed for over ten years. Students, teachers and parents provide the Forest Service with useful aquatic monitoring data through volunteer activities, which in return provide conservation education opportunities for students and exposure to natural science in the field. Many teachers have successfully acquired grants to pay for monitoring equipment and staff expenses. The program has encouraged a number of students to focus their careers in the natural resources field.

Around 200 people contribute roughly 2000 volunteer hours annually, saving the Forest an estimated \$20,000. This savings

does not include equipment maintenance and others costs borne by the El Dorado County Resource Conservation District and others. Despite no funding in the Forest budget, the program provides a benefit to all involved.

PLINK – Please Keep It NRA (National Rifle Association) Clean

PLINK is an organization comprised of volunteers who are mostly NRA members from the counties surrounding the Eldorado NF, who also share the goal of keeping the forest areas where they recreate clean. For over eleven years, PLINK volunteers have served as one of the primary clean-up groups on the Forest, collecting tons of garbage, including dumped appliances and abandoned vehicles. The Forest is extremely grateful for the volunteer support it receives from organizations like PLINK, whose services alone are estimated to save the Forest over \$25,000 per year.

California State Parks

The Forest provides a variety of off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation opportunities. OHV use on the Forest continues to increase while trail management funding decreases. The Forest frequently has been unable to fill critical positions due to funding shortfalls in the trails management program. The Forest is unable to provide adequate trail maintenance or the associated resource protection. The Forest has invested in developing proposals for OHV funding to accomplish a variety of trail program needs.

By receiving grants to fund a variety of projects including trail restoration, OHV trail designation planning, and law enforcement, the Forest has benefited from its partnership with the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division of the California State Parks.

Sierra Economic Development District (SEDD)

SEDD is a non-profit organization that attracts and manages grants aimed at enhancing local economies. The Forest Service, through its State and Private Forestry branch, often receives

funds which are then used to provide rural economic development assistance to local communities. SEDD has successfully managed many Eldorado National Forest awarded grants that helped build local economic capacity. Recently the Forest initiated discussions with the SEDD, which proposes to assist the Forest in applying for and administering large-scale grants. These grants are made available for a wide range of resource projects, for example watershed improvement, habitat improvement, and forest restoration projects.

The Strategy

This strategy recommends developing a structured process to evaluate, prioritize and implement partnership opportunities, enabling the Eldorado NF to greatly expand the number of partner relationships, such as those described above. These partnerships are particularly beneficial to the Eldorado NF given its limited financial and personnel resources.

Proposed Actions

Dedicate management time to establish the Forest partnership strategy, with the following considerations:

- Fund one additional FTE to coordinate partnerships on the Forest.
- Identify potential new partners and possible candidates for the partnership coordinator position.
- Re-evaluate capacity, interests, priorities, and opportunities with existing partnerships.
- Enhance communication processes with partners (as part of the proposed Forest-wide communications plan).
- Develop priorities, by program, for cooperative efforts with partners.
- Implement a centralized system to track partnership organizations, volunteer contributions and on-going projects.
- Establish a model for evaluating partnerships, to ensure they are mutually beneficial and economically viable to the Forest.

- Establish performance measures to evaluate the Forest's partnership strategy.
- Conduct partnership forum to allow forest and partners to share success stories and advice for effective partnership relationships.

Benefits

The Forest's partnership strategy is expected to:

- Build advocacy for the Forest, creating further partnership opportunities.
- Increase the awareness and benefits of the urban forest for continued public support, and shared responsibility in managing the public lands.
- Improve visitor facilities and services.
- Support mutual interests and achieve mutual benefits with partners.
- Aid in community development initiatives.
- Assist the Forest to offset decreasing levels of appropriated funding.
- Increase managerial and administrative capacity among partners, to assist the Forest in program management.

Implementation Challenges

Several challenges are anticipated in implementing the Forest's partnership strategy, including:

- Leadership – making partnerships part of mainstream management thinking amongst Forest leadership.
- Policies – developing more efficient processes for partnering with State and Federal agencies.
- Capacity – developing sufficient liaison personnel to manage partnerships and volunteer programs. The primary obstacle to making partnerships a more substantial part of the Forest's operations is the additional management and

administration workload, including funding for a Forest partnership coordinator.

- Organizational - creating an organizational structure that allows for increased use of partnerships, shifting Forest Personnel perspectives from 'doing' to 'facilitating' work, allowing flexibility for employees to pursue and manage partnerships (one of the critical reasons for the success of existing partnerships is the passion and commitment of individual employees).

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