

## Costs

### Introduction

This is a required monitoring item under the National Forest Management Act (NFMA). The “costs” refer to the costs required to manage the Forest, which in large part are the costs needed to implement the Forest Plan and its various resource programs. Certain costs, like those needed to produce an allowable sale quantity of timber, are projected during Forest Plan development or revision, but these costs are sometimes associated with maximum potential outputs rather than what a Forest can accomplish based on annual funding, personnel, or work plans. Such variables tend to fluctuate on an annual basis. Therefore, this report will focus on the budget funding projected to accomplish the 2007 annual program of work, and how close the Forest actually came to using that projected funding to achieve work related to Forest Plan implementation.

### 2007 Accomplishments

There are no accomplishments to report for costs, although budget funding and spending were used to achieve the accomplishments described in the Outputs and Services section of this report. Budget funding and spending are displayed in Table C-1, below.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

#### FOREST PLAN MONITORING FOR COSTS

The 2006 Forest Plan includes one monitoring question for costs on page IV-6:

*2. How close are projected costs to actual costs?*

Despite what this monitoring question implies, there are no specific management costs listed in the Forest Plan, nor is there any specific Forest Plan direction for costs. The costs considered in this report are for Forest Plan implementation. Forest Plan implementation costs must be calculated on an annual basis, as they are influenced by annual variables such as budget, personnel, materials and supplies, vehicle use, and inflation rates. The Final EIS for Forest Plan Revision (2006) conducted an economic analysis that looked at several key resource-related costs for Plan implementation, but this analysis did not come close to including all the costs that are involved in operating a Forest and its many program areas on an annual basis. Perhaps the best way to show these operating costs, both projected and actual, is to look at the annual budget allocations and expenditures for the Forest.

**Monitoring Question 2. How close are projected costs to actual costs?**

Table C-1 shows both the budget allocations and expenditures for 24 program area funding codes that are used on the MNF. These program areas cover most of the annual operations on the MNF, and most of these operations are related to specific management goals and objectives in the Forest Plan. For example, the program code CMTL (Capital Improvement/Maintenance – Trails) helps pay for the improvement or maintenance of recreation trails on the Forest, which ties directly back to Objective RC04 in the Forest Plan: “Provide an annual average of 75 miles of trail maintenance/reconstruction in wilderness, and 350 miles in non-wilderness areas” (page II-33). Other Forest Plan ties are not so obvious, but they do exist. For instance, the program codes NFTM, TPPS, NFVW, NFWF, and WFPR could all help fund tree-harvesting activities for a variety of vegetation, habitat, or fuel reduction objectives in the Plan.

Although Table C-1 does not account for the entire budget—it is missing project earmarks, line officer cost pools, and some other administrative costs—it does address most of the resource-related work that was done to help accomplish or support implementation of the Forest Plan.

**Table C-1. Budget Funding Versus Management Costs for Fiscal Year 2007**

Program Code	Program Name	\$\$ Allocated in Budget	Budget \$\$ Spent	Balance in \$\$	Percent of Budget \$\$ Spent	R9 Percent of Budget \$\$ Spent
CMFC	Capital Improvement/Maintenance - Facilities	245,073	242,498	2,575	99%	97%
CMII	Infrastructure Improvement/Deferred Maintenance	75,000	75,000	0	100%	91%
CMRD	Capital Improvement/Maintenance - Roads	1,974,220	1,974,475	-255	100%	99%
CMTL	Capital Improvement/Maintenance - Trails	215,500	216,831	-1,331	101%	98%
CP09	Facilities Maintenance Cost Pool	185,000	182,552	2,448	99%	99%
CWK2	K-V Regional Projects	394,000	392,679	1,321	100%	98%
CWKV	K-V Sale Area Projects	260,000	210,031	49,969	81%	77%
HTAE	Federal Highway Admin. Expense	12,500	12,404	96	99%	91%
HTAP	Federal Highway Aquatic Passage	19,000	19,104	-104	101%	97%
HTFB	Federal Highway Scenic Byway	1,000	852	148	85%	95%
LALW	Land Acquisition L&WCF	354,000	357,157	-3,157	101%	98%
NFIM	Inventory and Monitoring	673,800	673,800	0	100%	103%
NFLM	Landownership Management	292,000	281,636	10,364	96%	99%
NFMG	Minerals Management	340,913	341,869	-956	100%	103%
NFPN	Land Management Planning	206,000	210,608	-4,608	102%	106%
NFRW	Recreation/Heritage/Wilderness	1,514,319	1,523,376	-9,057	101%	101%
NFTM	Forest Products	671,198	667,300	3,898	99%	98%
NFVW	Vegetation & Watershed Management	523,193	525,476	-1,563	100%	100%
NFWF	Wildlife/Fish Habitat Management	173,998	173,998	0	100%	101%
RTRT	Reforestation Trust Fund	55,000	53,777	1,223	98%	89%
TPPS	Timber Pipeline – Sale Preparation	212,000	210,555	1,445	99%	89%
TRTR	10% Roads and Trails Fund	200,000	198,496	1,504	99%	92%
WFHF	Hazardous Fuel Reduction	61,000	55,644	5,356	91%	102%
WFPR	Pre-suppression and Fuels	444,000	443,935	65	100%	100%
24 BLIs	Monongahela NF Totals	9,102,714	9,044,053	58,661	99.4%	Unknown

**Monitoring Question 2. Evaluation, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

Overall, the Forest spent 99.4 percent of its program code budget allocations in FY 2007. This rate of expenditure would indicate that the Forest projected funding was adequate to accomplish its program of work related to Forest Plan implementation.

Of the 24 program funding codes above, 18 had spending results that were within 1 percent, plus or minus, of their budget allocation, and 21 spent within 5 percent, plus or minus, of their budget allocation. Only four program codes had spending that exceeded the budget allocation, but no program code had total expenditures that were more than 2 percent above its allocation.

Region-wide, only 7 of the program codes were within 1 percent of their allocation, and 17 were within 5 percent, as seen in the last column of Table C-1. These numbers would seem to indicate that the Monongahela National Forest did very well compared to all of Region 9 in aligning program-specific expenditures with budget.

The three funding codes that spent well below their allocation were CWKV (81%), HTFB (85%), and WFHF (91%). The shortfall in CWKV (K-V Sale Area Projects) spending was largely influenced by an herbicide project that could not be completed due to other higher priorities. However, because K-V is a spending authority rather than a specific allocation, we will likely be able to use that authority to complete the project in the upcoming year(s).

The shortfall in HTFB (Federal Highway Scenic Byway) was 15 percent, but that amount only represented \$148, as the entire allocation was only \$1,000.

The shortfall in WFHF (Hazardous Fuel Reduction) was associated with prescribed burning. The Forest has a relatively narrow window for completing prescribed burns each year because burning conditions (temperature, fuel moisture, fuel breaks, winds, etc.) have to align within a fairly narrow range during a time when we have enough people available to complete the burns. So we do as much as we can, when we can, until the window closes, and if all the burning is not done at that time, we have to return the unspent money we would have used to do it. Such was the case in 2007, but we still burned more acres than we ever had before, so the year was considered a success in terms of plan implementation.

**Recommendations:** Continue to track projected vs. actual Forest Plan implementation costs to help ensure cost efficiency in current and future operations.



Figure ID-1. Predatory Beetle and Larvae Feeding on Hemlock Woolly Adelgid



Figure ID-2. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Infestation (white substance along needle twigs)