

## Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness – 2009 State of the Wilderness Report

The annual State of the Wilderness Report is developed to share information with the public regarding management activities in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness (SBW). This Report provides a summary of 2009 SBW management, visitor use, and campsite monitoring efforts that we hope meets public needs and interests. Please contact the managing National Forests (Bitterroot, Clearwater & Nez-Perce) with questions or comments.

### Status Reports

#### Noxious Weeds / Invasive Plants

The Final Environmental Impact Statement for Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Invasive Plant Management Project was completed in the winter / spring of 2009 and sent to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries section of NOAA for T, E, and S species review and concurrence. Concurrently, the FEIS package and Appendix of Responses to Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement were sent to the Regional Office for final review and comment. Regional Office suggestions along with the regulatory agency comments and conditions for implementation were received and incorporated into the Record of Decision and FEIS during the summer / fall of 2009 in preparation for release of the decision in early FY 2010.

#### Wildland Fire

There were 42 fires on the Clearwater, Nez Perce, and Bitterroot National Forests in the summer of 2009 which were managed as Wilderness fire events for a total of 6739.4 acres burned. In 2009, trail access was not limited for either the public or Forest Service crews due to fire activity.

#### 10-Year Wilderness Stewardship Challenge

<b>Accomplishment Level</b>	<b>Top Possible Score</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
Fire Plans	10	10	10	10
Noxious/Invasive Weeds	10	5	5	5
Air Quality	10	10	10	10
Education	10	10	10	10
Solitude	10	6	6	6
Recreation Site Inventories	10	6	6	6
Outfitter & Guide Operations	10	8	8	8
Adequate Forest Plan Direction	10	8	6	6
Information Needs	6	6	4	2
Workforce	10	8	8	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>67</b>

In 2009, the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness showed improvement in meeting the goals of the Stewardship Challenge, primarily due to the significant contribution of a dedicated and trained volunteer workforce. The score for adequate forest plan direction to prevent degradation of the

wilderness resource increased by two for completing data entry on time and for volunteers making a significant contribution to the workforce. This score is based on a combination of existing forest plan direction and having monitoring accomplished on schedule. Managers agree that monitoring for the standard related to protection of opportunities for solitude or primitive unconfined recreation (number of parties encountered and number of parties camped within sight or sound) is not being effectively met, and are looking at ways to better monitor existing public use.

## Wilderness Program Accomplishment Summary

Type of Activity	Unit of Measure	Bitterroot NF	Clearwater NF	Nez-Perce NF	2009 Total	2008 Total	2007 Total
<b>Field Presence</b>	Wilderness Rangers (include River Rangers)	4	3	3	10	10	8
	Wilderness Ranger Field Days	161	147	258	566	524	410
	Volunteers	35	22	50	107	69	74
	Volunteer Hours	2304	1949	5791	10,044	5787	5,946
<b>Education</b>	Formal Education Programs	19	9	8	36	29	36
	Audience Members Reached	507	232	236	975	1250	1,188
<b>Trails</b>	Miles of Trail Maintained	256.9	256.4	492	1005.3	924	617.4
	Total Wilderness Trail Miles	769	325.3	706.6	1800.9	1,801.9	1,490.7
<b>Known Use / Visitation (Unknown # visitors not contacted or registered)</b>	Individuals Contacted by Wilderness Rangers in the Field	617	161	796	1574	1532	788
	Trailhead Registration (people)	2,986	929	505	4420	4078	3,457
	Monitoring Days / Landings at Moose Cr. Airstrip	NA	NA	220/754	220/754	157/572	151/449
	Monitoring Days/ Landings at Shearer Airstrip	NA	NA	91/81	91/81	34/30	28/55
	Monitoring Days / Landings at Fish Lake Airstrip	NA	53/74	NA	53/74	52/70	56/88
<b>O/G use</b>	Outfitters	21	5	11	37	36	37
	Camps Used in the SBW	14	4	24	42	48	55
	Camps Inspected	18	6	32	56	61	52
<b>Violations</b>	Violations Recorded (incidents & citations combined)	42	2	8	52	45	38
<b>Campsites</b>	Total Existing Campsites/ Campsite Inventory Baseline Completed	367/367	328/328	384/384	1079/1079	1066/1066	1007/1002
	Campsites w/ Inventory Accomplished in 5 Year Cycle & (% of Total Campsites)	246 (67%)	297 (90%)	253 (65%)	796 (74%)	690 (65%)	588 (58%)
	Campsite Inventory Accomplished 2009 & (% of Total Campsites)	72 (20%)	92 (28%)	109 (28%)	273 (25%)	304 (28.5%)	199 (19%)
<b>Fire</b>	Wilderness Fire Events	11	24	7	42	26	59
	Wilderness Acres Burned	4283.4	1000.7	1456	6740.1	4603	104,879

<b>Authorizations</b>	Mechanical Use Authorizations	9	3	5	17		31
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The number of outfitters increased by one on the Bitterroot National Forest because a permit was split into two separate permits (Paradise Pack Station and World Class Outfitting Adventures).