

Malheur National Forest

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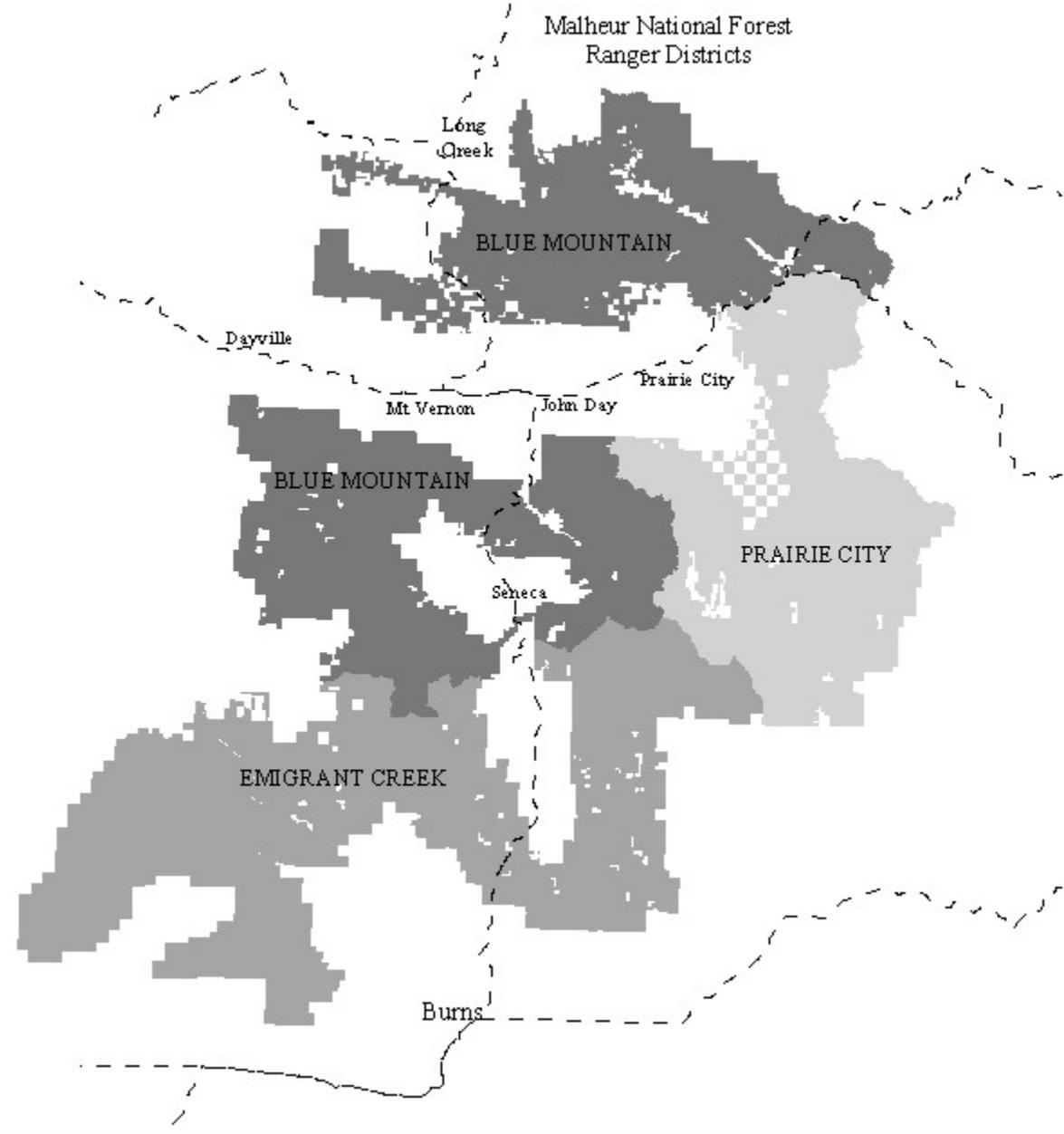
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SECTION M

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MONITORING ITEMS NOT REPORTED FOR FY2001

A number of Monitoring Items from the Malheur Forest's 1995 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan were not reported in FY2001. Some items only need to be reported every few years in order to detect trends. Other items were purposely deferred pending updated monitoring protocols or direction, and some were deferred due to lack of funding. Some items not found in this section were reported in Section C, the coordinated monitoring items.

Several monitoring items scheduled for monitoring in FY2001 were not reported for a variety of reasons, such as personnel turnover or other work priorities.

Monitoring Items that were not reported are as follows:

- Item 9 Visual Resources
- Item 12 Dead and Defective Tree Habitat
- Item 19 Range Allotment Status
- Item 20 Range Improvements
- Item 21 Range AUMs, Utilization, and Condition
- Item 22 Managing Competing and Unwanted Vegetation
- Item 34 Road Mileage and Open Road Density
- Item 35 Administrative Facilities
- Item 37 Program Budgets, Expenditures, and Accomplishments
- Item 38 Costs and Values
- Item 39 Local Income
- Item 40 Local Employment
- Item 41 Payments to Counties

FOREST PLAN AMENDMENTS

There were three nonsignificant Forest Plan amendments prepared in FY2001.

<u>Amendment Number</u>	<u>Summary and Comments</u>
52	Triangle Land Exchange. Relocated two dedicated old growth blocks outside of lands legislated to be exchanged.
53	Olmstead Vegetative and Road Management Project. Allows reduction of big game cover, loss of visual retention characteristics along Hwy 26, and adjusts dedicated old growth boundaries.
54	PARASOL Vegetation and Watershed Management Project. Relocation of designated old growth and designation of replacement old growth within project area.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The Summary of Recommended Actions, beginning on page M-6, lists all Malheur Monitoring Items and whether they were deferred, consolidated with the other Blue Mountain Forests (Section C), or reported in this section (M). The table summarizes the key findings and the recommended actions to be taken because of this year's monitoring for the Malheur National Forest. A more complete analysis of reported monitoring items can be found later in this section (M) or in the Coordinated Monitoring Section (C).

Categories of recommended actions are identified in the table as follows:

Change Practices (CP) - Indicates that the results of current practices are outside the thresholds of variability and/or are not meeting specific direction set by the Forest Plan. A change in practice or procedure may be needed.

Further Evaluation (FE) - Indicates that results may or may not have exceeded the threshold of variability, but additional information or evaluation is needed to better identify the cause of the concern and/or determine future actions.

Amend Forest Plan (AP) - Indicates that results are inconsistent with the Forest Plan, or the Forest Plan direction was not clear. The Forest Plan may need to be changed or clarified through the amendment or revision process.

Continue Monitoring (CM) - Indicates we will continue with the current protocol.

Not Evaluated (NE) – The monitoring item was not evaluated this year.

Summary of Recommended Action
 ♦ **2001 Monitoring Report** ♦
 Malheur National Forest

Report Section*	MI#	Monitoring Item (MI)	2000 Action	2001 Recommended Action		Remarks**
				Change Practice	Further Eval.	
COORD	1	Developed Recreation	CM			Majority of facilities accommodating recreation demand. Accessibility Transition Plan should be implemented, and comments regarding fee demo campgrounds addressed. Continue to monitor.
---	2	Dispersed Recreation	NE			Dropped in 95 Monitoring Plan.
MAL	3	Trail System	CM			429 miles of trail maintained. 21% of winter and mountain bike trails maintained. Backlog of trail reconstruction needs continues. Continue to monitor.
---	4	Semi-Primitive Recreation Setting	NE			Dropped in 95 Monitoring Plan.
COORD	5	Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Use	CM		X	Generally, existing OHV trails don't meet use standards. Current direction allows uncontrolled cross-country use. Trails strategy should be completed.
COORD	6	Wilderness	CM			Monitoring limited to social aspects. Minimal violations, social Forest Plan standards maintained. Continue to monitor.
COORD	7	Wild and Scenic Rivers	CM			Wild and Scenic river standards met. Continue to monitor.
COORD	8	Cultural and Historic Site Protection	FE			76 sites monitored, only 3 impacted by management activities (grazing). Work with range and recreation staffs to reduce impacts. Continue to monitor.
DEF	9	Visual Resources	NE			Not evaluated in FY2001.
MAL	10/11	Resident and Anadromous Fish Habitat	FE			Standards and guidelines were applied and implemented. Stronger project level monitoring is needed. Continue to monitor.
DEF	12	Dead and Defective Tree Habitat	FE			Not evaluated in FY2001.

* Report section where additional information can be found: MAL = Malheur; COORD = Coordinated; ACCOM RPT = Accomplishment Report Table. DEF= Deferred (not evaluated for FY2001).

** Items in quotation marks note title of items in the Coordinated Section if different from the Forest monitoring title.

Report Section*	MI#	Monitoring Item (MI)	2000 Action	2001 Recommended Action	Remarks**
				Change Practice	
				Further Eval.	
				Amend Forest Plan	
COORD	13	Big Game Habitat	NE	X	"Elk/Deer Habitat". HEI guidelines are being met. Relationships between habitat factors used in the HEI model are not valid. New analysis techniques are needed to address big game habitat.
COORD	14	Old Growth Habitat	CM	X	Current Forest Plan standards are met during project planning and implementation. New research indicates current standards are inadequate to meet habitat requirements.
MAL	15	Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species	FE		Management of habitats is meeting Forest Plan standards. Continue to monitor.
MAL	16	Raptor nests	CM		Protective measures included in project development. Continue to monitor.
DEF	19	Range Allotment Status	FE		"Allotment Management Planning". Not evaluated in FY2001.
DEF	20	Range Improvements	FE		Not evaluated in FY2001.
DEF	21	Range AUMs, Utilization, and Condition	CM		"Forage Utilization". Not evaluated in FY2001.
DEF	22	Managing Competing and Unwanted Vegetation	CM		"Vegetation Management and Noxious Weeds". Not evaluated in FY2001.
COORD	23	Timber Suitability	NE		No lands reclassified. Continue to monitor.
COORD	24	Silvicultural Practices	NE		"Reforestation". Artificial regeneration above Forest Plan level primarily due to fires. Forest is meeting NFMA reforestation requirement. Continue to monitor.
COORD	25	Reforestation	NE		Combined with item 24.
COORD	26	Timber Harvest	NE	X	"Harvest Methods and Acres". Harvest acres far below Forest Plan projections.
COORD	27	Timber Offered	NE	X	"Timber Offered for Sale". Offered volume only 7% of Forest Plan projection.
COORD	28	Opening Size	NE		"Harvest Methods and Acres". Combined with item 26.
COORD	29	Insects and Disease	CM		Only very light defoliation from Western spruce budworm. Armillaria, annosus in fir, and blackstain root diseases are intensifying. Continue to monitor.
MAL	30	Water Resources	CM		Forest Plan standards related to water resources were met. Continue to Monitor.
COORD	31	Air Quality	CM		"Air Quality and Smoke Management". Forest Plan standards and MOU agreements were met. Continue to monitor.

Report Section*	MI#	Monitoring Item (MI)	2000 Action	2001 Recommended Action	Remarks**
				Change Practice	
				Further Eval.	
				Amend Forest Plan	
COORD	32	Soils Resources	FE		BMP implementation generally effective in projects meeting Forest Plan standards. Over snow harvesting greatly reduced levels of detrimental soil disturbance. Continue to monitor.
COORD	33	Minerals	CM		All inspected claims met Forest Plan standards and guidelines. Continue to monitor.
DEF	34	Road Mileage and Open Road Density	CM		"Roads". Not evaluated in FY2001.
DEF	35	Administrative Facilities	FE		Not evaluated in FY2001.
COORD	36	Fire for Resource Benefits	AP	X	"Fire Managed for Resource Benefits". Fire Plan needs to be updated in the Forest Plan revision process.
DEF	37	Program Budgets, Expenditures, and Accomplishments	NE		"Socio-Economics". Not evaluated in FY2001.
DEF	38	Costs and Values	NE		"Socio-Economics". Not evaluated in FY2001.
DEF	39	Local Income	FE AP		"Socio-Economics". Not evaluated in FY2001.
DEF	40	Local Employment	FE AP		"Socio-Economics". Not evaluated in FY2001.
DEF	41	Payments to Counties	FE AP		"Socio-Economics". Not evaluated in FY2001.

**Trail System
Item 3**

Question: How many miles of trail were maintained, constructed, and reconstructed for each type of trail that exists on the Forest?

Table M-1
TRAIL MAINTENANCE
Malheur National Forest

TYPE OF TRAIL	TOTAL MILES OF TRAIL	MILES MAINTAINED IN FY2001	MILES CONSTRUCTED/ RECONSTRUCTED IN FY2001
Wilderness	133.6	133.6	0
All-purpose (hiking, horse, mtn biking, and motorized use)	46.9	52.2	0
Non-motorized	95.9	78.9	0
Foot-only (non-wilderness)	10.9	3.8	0
Barrier-free (handicapped accessible)	2.5	2.5	0
Mountain bike	223.1	32.0	0
Snowmobile	502.5	125.0	0
Cross-country ski	17.0	1.2	0
TOTALS	1,032.4	429.2	0

Evaluation and Recommended Action:

Inventory of existing trails, which would include verification of trail type, mileage, and trail conditions, needs to be accomplished. A Trails Strategy to determine priorities for yearly maintenance needs and scheduling to accomplish deferred maintenance items also needs to be completed.

Trails were generally cleared of down and hazardous logs. It is likely that standards for trail maintenance have not been met for the trails system. Backlog reconstruction needs are evident on some trails, but time and funding are constraints. Not all snowmobile trails were maintained during the season due to scheduling problems with the two local snowmobile clubs and use of the snowmobile trail groomer.



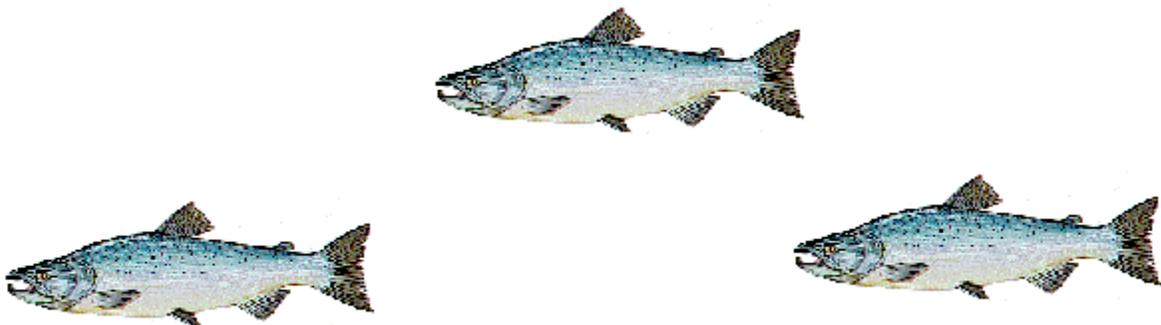
Resident and Anadromous Fish Habitat Items 10/11

Questions: Are Standards and Guidelines for Inland and Anadromous Riparian Areas and related BMPs being applied in MA 3A, 3B, and MA 14 as directed by the Forest Plan? Is the base line data being collected and analyzed for all proposed projects in MA 3A and MA 3B? Are site-specific desired future conditions being established for fish habitat?

Standards and guidelines for inland and anadromous riparian areas are being applied across the Forest for all land management areas as directed by the Forest Plan. Desired future conditions are being addressed in each project during the NEPA process through the identification of fish, habitat, and water related issues, the analysis of environmental consequences, and project design criteria. Baseline data are being collected and analyzed for each proposed action, especially those in consultation, which require a more detailed description of the effects to fish habitat and riparian ecosystems. Consultation baseline chapters are updated each year or as additional information is collected. Riparian Management Objectives (RMOs) are being addressed and met using INFISH and PACFISH Standards and Guidelines.

Evaluation and Recommended Action:

- A stronger monitoring and reporting element is needed in the follow-up monitoring of completed projects. This should include an evaluation of the effectiveness of conservation measures and to measure compliance with the Forest Plan standards and guides and management objectives.



Proposed, Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species Item 15

Questions: Are protection and enhancement measures for proposed, threatened and endangered (PETS) species prescribed in site-specific planning efforts implemented as described? Is management of proposed, threatened and endangered species across the Forest meeting Forest Plan Standards and Goals and objectives of recovery plans? What are the population and distribution status and trend for these species? Are Biological Evaluations (BEs) being prepared and are prescribed protection and enhancement numbers being implemented?

Aquatic species

Management of habitats for PETS is meeting all Forest Plan standards and objectives for recovery. This is being done through project analysis in the NEPA process and in Section 7 ESA consultation with the consultation agencies. BE documents are being prepared for each proposed action during the NEPA process for all Forest species as appropriate, and the analyses are being conducted to meet Forest Plan standards.

Population trends and distribution status are stable with some population distribution expansion being noted in field survey reports. General habitat condition is improving with increased awareness, and as effective protection measures and design criteria are implemented with field projects. PETS species and habitat conditions are stable with an upward trend.

Terrestrial species

Bald Eagles: Approximately 60 acres of precommercial thinning occurred on the Emigrant Creek Ranger District near a bald eagle nest site and winter roosting area. Final treatment of thinning has not yet occurred and may be completed in FY2002.

Results from the winter/early spring Harney basin eagle roost monitoring indicated roughly a 30 percent increase in bald eagles using National Forest and adjoining land eagle roosts. Five bald eagle winter roosts on the Malheur National Forest have been monitored over ten years. Two winter bald eagle roost sites on the former Snow Mountain RD have not been used recently by bald eagles. These two roosts were located in an old burn and the roost trees most likely have fallen.

Biological Evaluation for a 65,000-acre planning area in Silvies Canyon was prepared and the draft was submitted in February 2001. Fuels treatment adjacent to an occupied bald eagle nest was planned with seasonal restrictions to protect the birds during the nesting season. Two potential bald eagle roost sites were identified, and precommercial thinning was proposed in the Silvies Roadless Area to maintain and protect the sites from stand replacement fires and diseases.

On the Blue Mountain Ranger District no management activities occurred in bald eagle habitat in 2001. The Grant County Bird Club reported a new nest along the Middle Fork John Day River in spring 2001. Blue Mountain Ranger District monitored this nest, but no activity was seen at the nest after its discovery.

Wolverines and Fishers (forest carnivores): Even though the Emigrant Creek RD does not contain denning habitat for the above sensitive carnivore species, habitat enhancement for transitory animals was improved in FY2001 with various road closures and road decommissioning. Approximately 30 miles of road were closed to vehicular traffic, which will reduce harassment and disturbance to most wildlife species. Roads were closed for watershed and wildlife concerns.

Canada Lynx: An analysis on the Blue Mountain RD for one environmental assessment (Crawford) was done in 2001, but the decision was not completed until FY2002. The Lynx Conservation and Assessment Strategy (Ruediger et al. 2000) was implemented for the project. Consultation was completed in FY2001. Consultation for ongoing projects, such as timber sales and silviculture projects that were sold or planned prior to the lynx listing, and grazing, was completed using a forest wide Biological Assessment. Lynx surveys were conducted using the R-6 protocol in identified lynx habitat on the Blue Mountain and Prairie City Ranger Districts. No lynx sightings were documented.

Biological evaluations are prepared for threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species for all projects, but projects have not been monitored to confirm that the prescribed protection and enhancement activities have been implemented, nor is monitoring planned.

Evaluation and Recommended Action:

- Watershed level surveys are recommended for documenting the current conditions relative to PETS habitats and population trends.
- A greater effort is needed to develop survey methods to identify and protect migratory birds and nesting habitat in compliance with migratory bird treaty act.



Raptor Nest Sites

Item 16

Questions: Are prescriptions for raptors nest site protection and associated fledgling areas or similar measures identified in site-specific planning efforts and are these measures implemented as described following management activities? Were the protection measures implemented successful in meeting Forest Plan Objectives?

Goshawk: On the Emigrant Creek RD one goshawk post fledgling area (PFA) was marked for commercial thinning. This area was also inventoried for goshawks but none were found. Marking implementation was evaluated and leaving more wildlife tree clumps was recommended. Protection measures are pending the outcome of an appeal on the proposed activity. Elsewhere on the district two new goshawk nests were found during surveys. Protection measures will be implemented in future planning activities.

One goshawk PFA was established while planning the Crawford project on the Blue Mountain RD. This project has not been implemented; however, protective measures were included in the implementation plan and are being included in the timber sale contract. Protective measures for all other known nest sites were also included in the implementation plan and contract. Measures to protect nests found during implementation were included in the implementation plan and are planned to be in the contract.

Sharp-shinned hawk: One sharp-shinned hawk was found at the edge of a RHCA on the Emigrant Creek RD. Protective measures will be evaluated pending nest site selection in FY 2002. Since this site is located on the former Snow Mountain RD portion of the Emigrant RD, Ochoco Forest Plan standards will be implemented. There will be a five chain no cut area around the nest tree with seasonal restrictions on the log haul route near the nest site.

On the Blue Mountain RD one sharp-shinned hawk nest was found on the boundary of a timber sale (Parish) harvest unit that was under contract. Through negotiations with the contractor, the nest was protected by identifying a 15-acre nest site, including about 3 acres inside the harvest unit; the remainder of the habitat was outside the harvest unit. This nest site was not known during project planning and protective measures were not specified in the planning or implementation document. The nest site has not been monitored since harvest occurred.

All known goshawk territories were monitored, and all recently active other raptor nest sites, such as red-tailed hawks, great gray owl, and osprey nest sites, were monitored for occupancy and productivity. Only the sites mentioned above had management activities.

Water Resources

Item 30

Question: Is the Forest complying with the Clean Water Act and the MOU with the State of Oregon by properly implementing Forest Plan Standards for the protection of water resources? (Forest-wide Standards 117-120 and applicable Management Area specific standards)

Federal actions across the Forest followed Forest Plan standards for the protection of water resources. These standards comply with the Clean Water Act and the MOU with the State of Oregon. Site-specific BMP's and design criteria, as well as monitoring, were identified during environmental analysis for various projects including timber sales, road maintenance, road decommissioning, culvert removal, etc., in conformance with the Clean Water Act (see Item 32 Soil Resources for BMP monitoring results). Also, long-term water quality (stream temperature), riparian planting, and riparian hardwood protection sites were monitored.

In FY2001, the Forest was involved in several efforts to address water quality limited water bodies. In the Upper Middle Fork John Day River (5th field watershed) initial mid-scale (photo interpretation) riparian delineation, channel characterization and riparian cover mapping was finalized on roughly 250 miles of streams and 2,766 acres of riparian areas. During this past field season, numerous riparian delineations were field verified, and stream shade information was collected along various perennial stream reaches. All of this information is vital to the development of a WQRP by the Forest, and coincides with the States TMDL efforts underway within the watershed. Furthermore, the Forest completed the Silvies Canyon and Upper Silvies River Watershed Assessments, both of which address water quality limited streams and provide recommendations for water quality improvement.

Evaluation and Recommended Actions:

- Schedule site visits to timber sales and/or other projects (slash treatment, culvert replacement, road decommissioning, riparian hardwood planting, etc.) on all Districts in 2002.
- Place emphasis on reporting results from project level monitoring – this involves various personnel at both the District and Forest offices.
- In the Upper Middle Fork John Day River Watershed, complete further field verification, as well as data gathering at sites thought to be near their potential, in order to finalize a WQRP for the watershed. Continue working cooperatively with the States TMDL efforts in the watershed.

Table M-2
FOREST ACCOMPLISHMENTS – FISCAL YEAR 2001
 Malheur National Forest

The following table provides a summary of selected Forest accomplishments and resource outputs for FY2001 from all funding sources, including trust funds and partnership efforts. Where possible, these are compared to Forest Plan estimates, but in some cases the unit of measure has changed since the Forest Plan was completed and direct comparison is no longer possible.

RESOURCE ACTIVITY/OUTPUT	UNIT OF MEASURE	FOREST PLAN PROJECTION (avg/year)	ACTUAL FY2001 FOREST OUTPUT	% ACTUAL TO FOREST PLAN
<u>FIRE</u>				
Natural Fuel Treatment	Acres	2,000	19,624	981
Activity Fuel Treatment	Acres	10,000	5,376	54
<u>FISH</u>				
Anadromous Stream Restored/Enhanced	Miles	Not Specified	23.1	NA
Inland Stream Restored/Enhanced	Miles	Not Specified	20.0	NA
<u>RANGE</u>				
Permitted Grazing	AUMs	110,000	--	--
Non-structural Improvements	Acres	4,800	0	0
Structural Improvements	Structures	250	17	7
Noxious Weed Treatment	Acres	200	45	23
<u>RECREATION</u>				
Trail Construction/Reconstruction	Miles	50	0	0
Developed Recreation Capacity	PAOTs	371,000	332,485	90
<u>ROADS</u>				
Construction	Miles	220	0	0
Reconstruction	Miles	Not Specified		NA
Decommissioned	Miles	Not Specified		NA
Closed	Miles	Not Specified		NA
<u>THREATENED, ENDANGERED, and SENSITIVE SPECIES</u>				
Aquatic Habitat Restored/Enhanced	Miles	Not Specified	0	NA
Terrestrial Habitat Restored/Enhanced	Acres	4	62	1,550
<u>TIMBER</u>				
Total Program Sale Quantity	MMBF	211	15	7
Reforestation	Acres	12,672	6,920	55
Timber Stand Improvement	Acres	10,800	5,877	54
<u>WILDLIFE</u>				
Habitat Restored/Enhanced	Acres	750	833	111
Habitat Structures	Structures	300	0	0
<u>WATER</u>				
Watershed Improvements	Acres	172	75	44