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March 2001

2000 Annual Program Performance Report

FOREST SERVICE



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U.S. Department
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Forest Service

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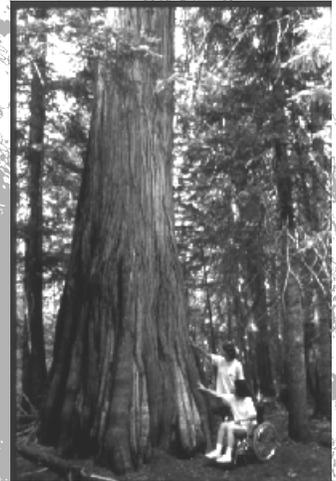


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About This Document

This document presents the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service Annual Performance Report for fiscal year (FY) 2000. It is the second Annual Performance Report that the Forest Service has presented to the Congress and the public as required by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. Only Federal employees were involved in the preparation of this report.

This report presents accomplishments for all of the performance goals and targets set forth in the FY 2000/2001 Annual Performance Plan. The Annual Performance Plan for FY 2000/2001 was organized according to the Forest Service's 1997 Strategic Plan. Although the agency revised its strategic plan during FY 2000, this document is still organized according to the 1997 Strategic Plan structure. However, it also provides references to the new structure of strategic goals and objectives from the USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision). A crosswalk is presented in appendix C to show the linkages between the structure of the 1997 Strategic Plan and the 2000 Revision and to show how these relate to the USDA Strategic Plan.

Executive Summary

For more than a century, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service has served as a national and world leader in the management, protection, and use of forest, rangeland, and aquatic ecosystems. Despite grave challenges, fiscal year (FY) 2000 was no exception. With dozens of major wildfires burning in several States last summer, the agency mobilized to the full extent of its fire-fighting capacity and redeployed staff from other programs to support the fire-fighting effort. Because program staffs were short-handed for several months during the height of the fire season, it was difficult or impossible for them to perform many of their planned project activities related to the agency's performance measurements.

Nonetheless, the Forest Service achieved or exceeded 42 percent of its performance targets in FY 2000. With some indicators such as noxious weed treatment and lake habitat treatment, the agency substantially exceeded its performance targets. The Forest Service treated 121,946 acres of noxious weeds, 117 percent more than planned. Over 17,140 acres of lake habitat were treated to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species. State and Private Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) program assisted 10,547 communities. The Research and Development program also had a successful year, developing 6,719 research products, tools, and technologies for transfer to users. To improve financial accountability, the agency implemented its Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS) and continues to improve its financial management policies and simplify its budget structure.

In response to the wildfires of 2000, the Forest Service and the U.S. Department of the Interior developed the National Fire Plan, which contains both short- and long-term goals for reducing catastrophic wildfire threats. The FY 2001 Interior appropriation contained additional Forest Service funds for projects and activities identified in the National Fire Plan. With the additional funding, the agency will increase its efforts in fighting wildfires, restoring landscapes and rehabilitating burned areas, reducing the risk of fire, and assisting communities. In addition to reducing fire risk and restoring natural ecological systems, the National Fire Plan will create new jobs in the private and public sectors and improve the capabilities of State and volunteer fire organizations.

FY 2000 was also a year of revising strategic directions and reengineering management processes to improve efficiency and accountability. The agency completed and published the first revision of its strategic plan, adding greater clarity of vision to its long-term direction. The Forest Service responded to criticisms of its performance data reliability by developing new data bases for tracking, verifying, and communicating performance information. The agency also improved two fundamental information management data base-INFRA and NRIS. The continued development and implementation of the agency's Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) will provide a solid decision-making foundation, and provide data exchange capability with external partners. The infrastructure data base (INFRA) added several new management applications to improve the quality of inventory data. In addition, special teams are rethinking the agency's performance measurement and budget formulation systems. Clear linkages are being developed among the budget structure, program activities and outputs, annual goals and measures, and long-term strategic outcomes and measures. The Forest Service has now developed a comprehensive set of financial performance measures for assessing its financial performance against identified standards and goals. The agency is also developing a new Activity Based Costing/Management (ABC) system that will help provide the reports needed for performance indicator costs. A new data warehouse being developed by contractors will

enhance the completeness, accuracy, and usefulness of data across the agency. Finally, the agency is studying how to develop a system for making real time obligations during fire-fighting operations.

Many areas for improvement still remain. Program evaluations and customer satisfaction surveys performed during FY 2000 revealed a need to strengthen internal management practices and to improve coordination internally among programs and externally with other agencies. The Forest Service is committed to using the lessons learned from this performance assessment to provide even greater service and leadership in the future.

FY 2000 Performance at a Glance

1. Ensure Sustainable Ecosystems

Performance Measures	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
# acres of land treatments to protect and improve watershed conditions on NFS lands	26,608	29,899
# miles of roads decommissioned	2,500	2,545
# acres of lands restored by reforestation	234,503	217,125
# acres of treatment of harvest related woody fuels—brush disposal	107,200	93,459
# acres of noxious weed treatment to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands	56,000	121,946
# acres of rangelands treated to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands	5,000,000	4,074,880
# acres of timber sales to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands	520,000	340,148
# acres of forest lands maintained or enhanced by stand improvement	235,365	223,634
# acres of hazardous fuels reduction	1,320,000	772,375
percent of most efficient level for firefighter production capability	74	74
# acres of landownership consolidated through acquisition and exchange to facilitate restoration and protection	116,550	214,740
# acres of nonindustrial private forest (NIPF) lands under approved Stewardship Management Plans	1,905,000	1,437,360
# acres of multiresource practices implemented on NIPF lands	0	0
# acres of Legacy Project Acquisition	157,632	29,614
# million acres of forest health surveys and evaluations on Federal and cooperative lands	788	737
# miles of inland stream improved for fish habitat	1,275	883
# miles of stream improved for anadromous fish habitat	545	601
# miles of aquatic TES stream improved for fish habitat	215	203
# acres of inland lake to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	8,010	11,321
# acres of lake to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and anadromous fish species	5,120	6,748
# acres of aquatic TES lake habitat to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	80	78
# acres of terrestrial wildlife habitat restored or enhanced to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	174,500	132,580
# acres of terrestrial TES habitat restored to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	107,000	59,793
# signed conservation agreements, strategies, and recovery plans	347	314
# of research products, tools, and technologies transferred to users	5,011	6,719
percent of forest land covered by the Annual FIA and FHM Programs	47.5	47.5
# million acres of above-project inventory completed	12.9	4.5
# assessments completed	148	87
# acres of wilderness meeting forest plan standards for physical and social conditions	31,300	NA

NA = Data not available due to lack of clear guidance for field reporting.

2. Ensure Multiple Benefits for People within Capabilities of Ecosystems

Performance Measures	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
# annual education contacts	551,000	568,658
# permits administered for recreation special uses	23,700	24,541
# heritage sites preserved/ protected	3,200	4,430
# heritage sites interpreted	550	674
# participating communities	10,000	10,547
# communities and volunteer fire departments assisted	3,250	2,990*
# communities working under broad-based local strategic plans	775	928
# million cubic feet of timber volume offered	699	322
# thousand animal unit months of livestock forage	8,903	7,970
# minerals non-energy/energy operations processed	12,250	11,171
# minerals non-energy/energy operations administered to standard	6,450	NA-1
# forests and grasslands initiating or completing new LRMP's or revisions	6	5
# scheduled monitoring reports	133	88
# patrol days of enforcement capacity ❖	†	NA-2
# investigations conducted ❖	2,780	2,080
# miles of boundary line located and maintained	3,195	2,880
# cases resolved to provide and protect public access	350	263
# special use permits administered to standard	6,502	12,108
Road Condition Index rating	330	305
percent roads without critical deferred maintenance needs	40	42
percent roads open to intended traffic	90	96
accident frequency on roads managed and maintained for passenger cars	40	40
percent bridges inspected as scheduled	100	67
average bridge sufficiency rating	60	60
percent facilities maintained to meet standard	NA	NA-2
# capital improvement projects accomplished	73	73
# million PAOT days of seasonal recreation capacity available	210	198
# miles of trails maintained and improved	34,049	25,575

* Estimate based on 8 of 9 Regions reporting.

† No target was established in the FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, published in March 2000.

❖ Measurement will be discontinued or modified in FY 2001.

NA-1 = Data not available due to lack of clear guidance for field reporting.

NA-2 = Data not available due to a change in performance measurement methodology.

3. Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

Performance Measures	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
percent of total workforce who are minorities, women, and persons with disabilities	48.9	48.8
percent of leadership positions (GS-13 and above) held by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities	35.6	35.6
# persons served in Youth Conservation Corps	650	705
# persons served in Job Corps	8,800	8,818
# persons served in Senior Community Service Employment Program	5,500	5,410
percent of related indicators for implementation of USDA civil rights initiative	80	80
percent of employees in workforce participating in CIP survey	†	†
Offer to all customers, contractors, suppliers, and vendors opportunity to conduct electronic financial transactions	Electronic submittal of key transactions initiated	Electronic funds transfer primary method of payment
Establish internal enterprise teams to improve management efficiency of national forests in California	Expansion of teams based on evaluation	Corrective action taken based upon evaluations
Offer toll-free telephone, World Wide Web, and automated applications of most frequently requested special use permits to all permittees and applicants	New applications added as they are reengineered	One new web-based application added
Improve service to public land users by providing one-stop shopping for information, permits, and other frequently requested over-the-counter products and services at BLM and Forest Service facilities	Continue to implement plans based on local situations & opportunities	“Service first” plans implemented on a local basis
# customer satisfaction surveys completed	9	3
# followup analyses	†	0
percent of employees who are IBM system users ❖	100	100
percent of total mission critical systems tested and found to be Y2K compliant ❖	100	100
FFIS implemented	Agency -wide	Agency- wide
Real Property Inventory completed	Yes	Yes, partially*
Timber Sale Accounting system implemented	Yes	No
Financial management reports developed	Completed agency-wide	Partially completed*
Unqualified audit opinion	Yes	Audit not completed
Audit items from the Secretary’s Management Report eliminated	Yes	Yes, partially*
percent delinquent debts referred to Treasury for offset and cross-servicing	50	NA

† No target was established in the FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, published in March 2000.

❖ Measurement will be discontinued in FY 2001.

* See text in Section 3 for full explanation.

NA = Data not available due to lack of reporting methodology.

Overview

This annual performance report of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service presents information required by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). Through the performance highlights and statistics, this report displays agency accomplishments for fiscal year (FY) 2000.

Mission and Organization

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is “To sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.”

Based upon the USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision), the current strategic goals of the USDA Forest Service are to: (1) promote ecosystem health, (2) provide multiple benefits to people, (3) deliver scientific technical assistance, and (4) ensure effective public service.

To accomplish its mission, the Forest Service employs about 36,000 people. In the National Forest System, the agency manages approximately 192 million acres of public land that is administered through 155 national forests and 20 national grasslands. State, Private, and International Forestry provides technical and financial support to non-Federal forest landowners—including private landowners, communities, State forestry agencies, and tribal governments—and assists them in protecting their lands from fire, insects, disease, and noxious weeds; monitoring forest health; and managing their lands. Through cooperation with other research agencies and universities, Forest Service Research and Development provides the scientific foundation for sustainable forest management and the information and technology needed to assure the health, diversity, and productivity of forest and rangeland ecosystems.

Strategic Management

The Forest Service seeks to continuously improve its strategic management, consistent with the intent and requirements of the GPRA. The agency’s long-term vision is published as its strategic plan, which is revised every 3 to 5 years. An Annual Performance Plan, derived from the strategic plan, sets performance targets each fiscal year and articulates the means and strategies to achieve them. In an Annual Performance Report at the conclusion of each fiscal year, the agency discusses its accomplishments in relation to its performance targets. The Forest Service has established clear links between these documents, as well as between its strategic plan and the USDA Strategic Plan. Several transition efforts, discussed in this section, will improve the agency’s performance planning and strategic management efforts even further.

Adjustments to the Strategic Plan and Linkage to the Department of Agriculture Goals

The USDA Forest Service prepared its first strategic plan as required by GPRA in 1997 and its first Annual Performance Plan in 1999. During FY 2000, the agency published a Strategic Plan Revision to reflect consideration of science-based information from recent source assessments, ideas and

suggestions from the public, and professional judgments of how to best serve the needs of the American people, now and for generations to come. The four goals of the 2000 Revision address ecosystem health, multiple benefits for people, scientific and technical assistance, and effective public service. These strategic goals and their corresponding long-term objectives are aligned and support the Department of Agriculture's broader agency goals. The table in appendix C shows this relationship.

Administrative Operation Reforms

The Forest Service is reviewing and starting to implement streamlining and efficiency-enhancing measures for the Forest Service's field structure, workforce, and administrative operation to get more resources for "on-the-ground" activities.

GAO Management Challenges

The General Accounting Office (GAO) has found that the Forest Service faces three significant management challenges. The Forest Service has given, and continues to give, these issues its utmost attention.

Financial Accountability

In January 1999, the Forest Service was named on the GAO High-Risk list because of severe weaknesses in accounting and financial reporting. To be removed from the list, the Forest Service must demonstrate sustained financial accountability. It must implement a system of internal controls that are in line with the Chief Financial Officers Act and include field level actions where the financial transactions start. The agency must, at a minimum, receive an unqualified audit opinion on financial statements for 2 consecutive years.

Being included on the GAO list intensified the agency's actions to correct financial weaknesses. The agency continues to perform an annual risk assessment, prioritizing line items that need corrective action, so it can make strides toward obtaining a favorable audit opinion. In FY 2000, the agency made significant progress that improved the documentation for capitalized real property values. In addition, the Forest Service developed a set of 34 financial performance measures that have been implemented in FY 2001. Performance measures are focused in three areas: 1) progress toward a clean opinion, 2) financial operations, and 3) financial systems operations.

In addition to financial management reforms, the Forest Service is implementing a new budget formulation process in order to provide more realistic budgets and accurate reports. The new budget process started in January 2001 to support the FY 2003 budget cycle. This new system will develop budgets at the field-level and will be based on field unit capability. Forest capability will be defined as the amount of outputs that each forest is able to deliver for a given dollar. Furthermore, the process will be driven by a performance plan that articulates annual performance goals that support the Forest Service long-term goals and objectives set forth in its strategic plan. This new system is intended on developing more realistic budgets tiered to the strategic plan, integrating data from the Land and Resource Management Planning process. The new system will allow the Forest Service to provide timely, credible information, showing the impact various funding alternatives will have with regard to on-the-ground work. To provide the reports needed for performance indicator costs, the

agency is developing a new Activity Based Costing/Management (ABC) system. The agency's new accounting system, the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS), will also be used to support the budget formulation process. Finally, the agency is studying how to develop a system for making real time obligations during fire-fighting operations.

Performance Accomplishments

Some have stated that the Forest Service has failed to implement GPRA because it lacks effective performance measures and performance management systems. Those who have raised these issues include Congress, GAO, and the USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG). In response, and taking the opportunity of its newly revised strategic plan, the Forest Service is implementing a new process and a new approach to GPRA, including the following:

- The FY 2003 performance plan is being developed prior to the FY 2003 budget formulation.
- Each deputy area was responsible for developing annual performance goals and outcome-based measures with program directors. These goals have become the foundation of the draft FY 2003 performance plan.
- The draft FY 2003 performance plan will be used to set priorities and to decide the appropriate sequence of milestones and goals.
- Clear linkages are being developed among the budget structure, program activities and outputs, annual goals and measures, and long-term strategic outcomes and measures.

The Forest Service believes that these fundamental changes to a new, outcome-oriented budget and planning structure will allow it to provide Congress and the public with a clear understanding of what it accomplished with its appropriated funds.

Human Capital Challenges

The GAO has also cited the Forest Service as one of the many agencies with human capital challenges. Specifically, GAO found that the Forest Service has difficulty replacing experienced fire personnel, thereby threatening firefighting capability during catastrophic events.

The Forest Service has long recognized the human capital challenge it faces. In 1999, the agency asked the National Academy of Public Administration and the Center for Human Resources Management to prepare the *U.S. Forest Service Workforce Plan*. Based on findings in the workforce plan, the agency developed its *Recruitment Strategy 2001-2005* and began implementation in November 2000. The Service-wide recruitment strategy is designed to meet the short- and long-term workforce needs of the agency.

In addition, the Forest Service has prepared a workforce strategy in conjunction with the National Fire Plan to specifically address its need to replace experienced fire personnel. At a time of increased fire complexity and increased demand for firefighter capability, the cadre of available personnel is decreasing for initial and extended attack and large fire support. There are many causes of this decrease, including overall reduction of personnel at field locations; competing workforce priorities; lifestyle changes; an aging workforce; and changes in economic, family, and career track norms. Fire

management plans are in place to achieve increased capability and will be updated and expanded when appropriate to continue to meet changing needs.

Improvements in Data Collection

In response to OIG reviews, the Forest Service made several improvements to its data collection processes during FY 2000. With significant field input, the agency developed a new data base to collect its Management Attainment Report (MAR) performance data. A new Web-based system for the Performance Measures Accountability System (PMAS) also improves data collection from the regions and State partners. These data base improvements and other data collection issues are discussed further in appendix A.

FY 2000 Accomplishments Reported

Forest Service accomplishments presented in this report represent key performance measures that, for the most part, are funded with appropriated dollars. In addition to these accomplishments, the Forest Service also conducts activities and achieves additional accomplishments by using permanent and trust fund dollars and by relying on efforts of other partners, such as, State and local governments, other organizations, or individual volunteers. In many cases, performance targets are set only for accomplishments resulting from appropriated funds and not for contributor efforts or trust fund activities because Forest Service program managers have less control over these resources. These additional accomplishments are not reported here, to ensure a fair comparison with targets; since accomplishments are only set for appropriated dollars, only activities accomplished with appropriated dollars are shown. Any exceptions to this are noted in the report.

Data Validation and Quality Review

On-site reviews of organizational units and resource programs are the primary means of monitoring progress in meeting annual targets and moving towards strategic plan goals and objectives. A variety of reviews are conducted each fiscal year, with the level of detail depending on where they originate. For example, Washington Office reviews conducted by deputy chiefs concentrate on overall program operations while reviews initiated by forest supervisors tend to be much more detailed and can focus on a single activity within a program on a single ranger district. Threatened or endangered species (TES) habitat improvement within the broader program area of Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plants is an example of an activity that might be reviewed at the forest supervisor level. Activity reviews can be initiated at all levels of the organization and are the most common because they examine the detailed operations that use personnel, capital, and information.

The Forest Service reviewed data in this report by checking it against other sources and having program leaders in the Washington Office review data for possible errors. As part of this review, several errors were identified and corrected. Data displayed in this report represent the best currently available given the limited time for us to conduct this review.

FY 2000 Performance Report

Goal 1: Ensure Sustainable Ecosystems

Objective 1.1—Healthy, biologically diverse and resilient aquatic ecosystems restored and protected to maintain a variety of ecological conditions and benefits.¹

Annual Performance Goal 1.1.1—Improve and protect wetland, riparian, and aquatic functions, processes, and associated values by restoring impaired soil and water conditions and improving inland and anadromous fish habitat in unsatisfactory condition.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# acres of land treatments to protect and improve watershed conditions on NFS lands	MAR	38,497	35,562	26,608	29,899	25,233	23,946
# miles of roads decommissioned †	RAR	2,099	2,907	2,500	2,545	2,500	2,560

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

† Accomplished with appropriated, contributed, and K-V funds.

Overview

Land treatment and road decommissioning projects contribute to improving aquatic ecosystems. Through restoration of National Forest System (NFS) lakes and streams, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service improves aquatic and riparian ecosystems in the immediate project area, as well as downstream. Runoff control structures and reshaped and revegetated areas help improve water quality, control erosion, and generally result in healthier, more diverse aquatic ecosystems.

By returning unnecessary roads to forest through decommissioning, the Forest Service lessens adverse impacts to other forest resources such as water quality and fish habitat. The FY 2000 appropriation for road maintenance was insufficient to meet critical road maintenance needs. If critical needs are not met, there are immediate threats to public health and safety, natural resources, or accomplishment of the agency mission. However, local managers generally give higher priority to addressing critical maintenance needs than to road decommissioning projects.

¹ Objective 1.1 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 1.a in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision), “Improve and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and the soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial water uses,” and to Objective 1.b in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS)/focal species.”

The difficulty of decommissioning roads has intensified with recent allocations of Federal land for wilderness, wilderness study, and roadless areas. The FY 2000 appropriations bill required that an opportunity be given for public comment prior to any decision to decommission a road. The cost of public comment and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) involved with decommissioning a road now often exceeds the cost of work on the ground. As a result, the miles of road decommissioned in FY 2000 was 12 percent less than the FY 1999 figure.

FY 2000 Performance

Exceeding its target by roughly 10 percent, the Forest Service significantly increased treatments on NFS lands to protect and improve watershed conditions. This accomplishment was due, in part, to an increase in emergency fire restoration projects. The NFS regions also succeeded in identifying priority watersheds on which to focus 10 percent of the total funding for roads and trails, abandoned mine land, and the Clean Water Action Plan. The National Riparian Service Team continues its outreach to the public and private sectors, building public support and understanding for the purpose and value of riparian resources.

Although decommissioning roads was more difficult in FY 2000 than in any prior fiscal year, the agency still exceeded its target by 45 miles (2 percent). Much of the work was started in prior years and was finally completed, and thus counted, in FY 2000.

The average costs of stand-alone decommissioning projects are currently over \$3,000 per mile. Fortunately, the widespread practice of using contributed funds and including decommissioning as a small part of larger resource projects allows significant accomplishment without such expense. The entire FY 2000 authorization of \$15 million would only have been sufficient to decommission 500 miles at the stand-alone cost. Because it requires significant amounts of time for NEPA, public comment, and resolution of appeals, decommissioning roads is now a multiyear program with individual projects passing through the pipeline at various stages each year.

Program Evaluation

Although no formal program evaluations regarding land treatments were performed, a national team conducted site visits within eight regions and gathered information in order to determine how to manage roads most effectively within riparian areas. The team will provide national training in the spring of 2001.

There were no formal program evaluations of the road decommissioning program in FY 2000, but the Washington Office Engineering Staff sponsored monitoring trips to Regions 5, 6, 8, and 9. The staff found that road decommissioning has become more controversial in recent years and is thus more difficult and costly to implement. The monitoring trips also reconfirmed that there remain tens of thousands of miles of unneeded roads that should be decommissioned and that current road maintenance appropriations fall far short of the total amount necessary to meet critical needs.

Conclusions and Challenges

The steady increase in emergency land restoration projects is taxing staffs at all levels. The agency needs to be able to consistently assess and report the miles of riparian areas and acres of wetlands and their respective conditions, including changes from baseline information. The agency needs to be able to coordinate this information with other conservation agencies. It will work in a cross-cutting manner to strategically concentrate work that improves watershed conditions. Opportunities exist for the agency to focus on wetlands management as a unifying effort. The agency should capitalize on these opportunities to be more visible in management activities on national forests, especially in relation to how they affect coastal estuary resources.

Future road decommissioning accomplishments will probably be lower than in FY 2000. This is primarily because the simple, less controversial roads/access issues have been resolved. Now the agency must address the potentially more complex road/access issues that will take more resources and time to address on the ground.

Research Contribution *Clean Water*

The Forest Service Research organization demonstrated that low-cost, fiber-based water filtering technology can remove organic and inorganic toxic materials, pesticides, and herbicides from both point and non-point sources. The Wayne National Forest in Ohio and the Catskill Watershed Corporation, which supplies water to New York City, have initiated field research trials in an effort to clean up contaminated water from old, abandoned mines.

Objective 1.2—Ecological integrity of forest and rangeland ecosystems restored or protected to maintain biological and physical components, functions and interrelationships, and the capability for self-renewal.²

Annual Performance Goal 1.2.1—Restore forest lands identified as needing restoration, use a variety of treatments to maintain, improve, and restore forest lands to ensure ecological integrity and aggressively treat noxious weed infestations that pose a threat to rangeland health.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# acres of lands restored by reforestation	MAR	287,905	267,013	234,503	217,125	220,304	185,002 †
# acres of treatment of harvest-related woody fuels - brush disposal	MAR	115,503	108,896	107,200	93,459	110,035	109,982
# acres of noxious weed treatment to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands	MAR	75,138	87,000	56,000	121,946	85,000	85,000
# acres of rangelands treated to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands	MAR	NA	5,000,000	5,000,000	4,074,880	5,000,000	5,000,000
# acres of timber sales to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands	TSA	525,755	448,746	520,000	340,148	448,500	400,000
# acres of forest lands maintained or enhanced by stand improvement†	SILVA	296,951	262,786	235,365	223,634	224,505	205,721
# acres of hazardous fuels reduction	MAR	1,489,293	1,412,281	1,320,000	772,375	1,345,000	1,800,000
percent of most efficient level for firefighter production capability	MEL	NA	69	74	74	72	100
# acres of landownership	MAR	177,513	488,835	116,550	214,740	100,906	129,686

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

† Accomplished with appropriated and K-V funds.

† Target set prior to additional fire appropriation for FY 2001. Actual accomplishment should be greater due to increased funding.

² Objective 1.2 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 1.b in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS)/focal species.”

Overview

Forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands are protected and restored through various land treatment efforts. Timber stand improvement and reforestation provide watershed improvement benefits by preventing unnecessary stream sedimentation, providing cover for wildlife, and improving the resilience of ecosystems. Timber stand improvements also benefit forest health by reducing stand density, thereby allowing the remaining stand to grow more vigorously while reducing the potential for insect and disease outbreaks and high-intensity fire. Historically, timber sale receipts under the Knutson-Vandenburg (K-V) fund support these timber stand improvement activities. The K-V fund is used to reforest timber sale areas, to improve timber growth and product quality on timber sales areas. However, K-V funding is declining as timber sales decline, and consequently, timber stand improvements and reforestation are declining. The challenge is to find other sources of funding so that these critical programs can be continued at the levels necessary to meet agency priorities for reforestation and timber stand improvements. Noxious weed treatment returns the vegetative community to a more natural state and restores land productivity by treating invasive weeds that threaten native plant communities. Other activities that protect and restore ecosystems include implementing direction found in forest plans, project plans, and biological opinions. Implementation is tracked as acres where new management is applied.

Prescribed fire and other fuel reduction treatments enhance forest and range health by reducing the intensity of wildfires, protecting vulnerable urban-wildland interface areas, promoting forage production, and maintaining fire-dependent ecosystems. Finally, firefighting capability is necessary to ensure that fires are controlled for safety, for property and resource protection, and to minimize large wildfire suppression costs.

The consolidation of landownerships within or adjacent to NFS boundaries allows the agency to better manage those lands and focus its efforts on improving the aquatic, forest, and rangeland ecosystems. The land acquisition program is focused on acquisitions that will improve outdoor recreation, protect critical wildlife habitat, and preserve cultural resources. Many of the lands acquired are private inholdings within congressionally designated areas such as wilderness, Wild and Scenic River corridors, and National Recreation Areas.

FY 2000 Performance

Nationally, reforestation attainment was slightly less than planned due to the impacts of a severe fire year and a slowdown in regeneration harvest activity in selected NFS regions. Most reforestation not accomplished in a given year will be carried forward as a continuing reforestation need until it is accomplished.

The genetic resource improvement program does not have a performance indicator. However, it contributes to forest health by identifying and conserving genetic traits that control resistance to major pests and also produces improved seed to support the nursery production and reforestation programs. Forest Service nursery production has been declining for several years, which reflects reduced timber harvests, a shift in emphasis to intermediate treatments rather than regeneration harvests, and increased reliance on natural regeneration rather than planting to achieve reforestation objectives. In addition, more emphasis is being placed on the production of a more diverse mix of species to meet multiple project needs.

Brush disposal was below target in FY 2000. A nationwide burning moratorium in response to the Cerro Grande wildfire in New Mexico prevented several regions from completing prescribed fires in the spring. Dry fall weather also restricted operations.

Noxious weed treatment exceeded the target by 117 percent for two reasons. First, more funding was available for actual treatment work because the personnel who would normally have used the funding for NEPA processing of future years' weed treatment projects were assigned to fire duty. Second, weather conditions were generally favorable for weed treatment.

Rangeland restored and protected was below target because this was the first full year the measurement has been in effect and targets were assigned without the benefit of any historical data. Due to the limited funding available, there is an inability to implement recently completed NEPA-based decisions on schedule. With personnel assigned to fire duties, planned implementation could not take place. The target level of 5,000,000 acres will be maintained for FY 2001 since the agency now has more experience with implementing this target and also because it does not anticipate a fire season as severe as 2000.

Timber stand improvement accomplishments were also less than planned largely due to the commitment of a substantial proportion of the Forest Service workforce to fire suppression activities resulting from a severe fire season. Most timber stand improvement not accomplished in a given year will be carried forward as a continuing need until it is accomplished.

The number of acres treated using timber sales declined because timber sale harvest levels declined. This reflects the lower market prices available for logs, as well as decisions in the marketplace to delay harvesting until it may be possible to obtain higher prices for logs in the future. These market factors cannot be predicted with a large degree of reliability. The target for acres treated using timber sales was based upon historical accomplishments rather than FY 2000 capabilities. Actual accomplishments were expected to be different because this is a relatively new measure for which the agency has little experience. It will not be until FY 2002 that the agency can begin to use out-year timber sale acres treated estimates as part of the budget process, and where actual accomplishments can be retrospectively compared to prior estimates.

Hazardous fuels reduction was below target primarily due to the extreme fire season, requiring personnel to concentrate efforts on wildland fire suppression rather than reducing hazardous fuels. In response to the Cerro Grande fire in New Mexico, permits for prescribed burning were also temporarily suspended. An unusually dry fall further reduced the time available for burning. However, several of the wildfires accomplished beneficial burns in areas that were scheduled for hazardous fuels reduction this year.

The agency achieved its target for firefighter production capability at 74 percent of its most efficient level (MEL). This accomplishment equates to an availability of 7,691 firefighters, 777 engines, 323 prevention units, 53 Type I Hot Shot crews, 39 air tankers, 39 Type II helicopters, and 277 smokejumpers.

For landownership consolidated through land acquisition and exchange, the agency exceeded its target.

Program Evaluation

There were no program evaluations of the land adjustment program in FY 2000. An evaluation in FY 2001 will be completed by each region to give assurance that there is an understanding of the target goals and method of accomplishment on same target acres.

The Washington Office conducted a program review of the nursery program in FY 2000. The main finding of this review was that anticipated Forest Service reforestation needs for the next 3 to 5 years would be insufficient to provide for economically viable nursery operations. The review explored a number of management options to overcome this situation and final management decisions on these options are anticipated sometime in FY 2001.

Conclusions and Challenges

As a result of the severe fire season in FY 2000, the FY 2001 Interior appropriation increased the agency's funding to combat wildland fires, to hire additional firefighters, and to proactively reduce the risk of catastrophic damage. In FY 2001, the Forest Service will attempt to increase its firefighting capability to 100 percent MEL. An extensive hazardous fuels reduction program on NFS lands will increase the effort to reduce hazards in the wildland-urban interface in FY 2001 and beyond.

Reforestation performance was largely in line with the planned program of work. Reforestation work arising from wildfires occurring during the summer of 2000 has created additional demands. A challenge the agency faces is in completing the required analysis and planning steps and consultation with other agencies in a timely manner in order to promptly reforest areas in need. Where it is necessary to remove dead and damaged timber, the timely removal of this material represents an additional challenge to achieving reforestation goals. Revised reforestation, timber stand improvement, and acres treated using timber sales expectations for FY 2001 reflect updated field capabilities for the funding provided, along with a reduction in funding in the final budget available for lower priority timber stand improvement work.

One of the primary challenges for the timber stand improvement (TSI) program is to secure a significant amount of additional funding to stabilize or reduce the currently growing amount of acres in need of thinning or release treatments. At present, there is in excess 10 years' worth of this type of work at present rates of accomplishment and, with each passing year, the number of acres in need of TSI treatment continues to grow.

A significant increase in noxious weeds acreage is expected in FY 2001 on lands that burned in FY 2000. The fires have exposed mineral soils that either presently contain weed seeds in the soils or are conducive to noxious weed infestations as a result of wind- or animal-borne seed spread. These new infestations may need to be evaluated through NEPA prior to decisions being made on how to treat them. For those regions and forests with burned areas to rehabilitate, the potential for new weed infestations is high.

The purpose of making landownership changes is to facilitate management of the system or reduce administrative costs by obtaining an optimum pattern of landownership and resources to meet the public's present and future needs. The agency accomplished the desired objectives in FY 2000, but the challenge is for each region to tighten its target/goal ratio by understanding and properly scheduling its land adjustment programs.

Annual Performance Goal 1.2.2—The Forest Service will encourage restoration efforts on non-industrial private forest (NIPF) lands through Stewardship Management Plans, stewardship practices, and watershed restoration activities.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# acres of NIPF lands under approved Stewardship Management Plans	PMAS	1,158,772	1,866,000	1,905,000	1,437,360	✚	1,579,600
# acres of multiresource practices implemented on NIPF lands	Program Staff	125,000	0	0	0	53,185	0
# acres of Legacy Project Acquisition	PMAS	NA	19,281	157,632	29,614	183,112	200,000
# million acres of forest health surveys and evaluations on Federal and cooperative lands	FHP A&E	787.5	788	788	737	788	788

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

✚ No target was established in the FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, published in March 2000.

Overview

The 9.9 million NIPF landowners control 48 percent of the Nation’s forests, but less than 10 percent of them have written forest management plans. Stewardship management plans and multiresource practices on these non-Federal forest lands help enhance forest and rangeland health across the entire landscape. Stewardship planning efforts are critical to this objective, but they also contribute to objectives 1.1, 2.1, and 2.4.

Acquisitions under the Forest Legacy Program help conserve open space and preserve special forest and coastal areas. The Forest Legacy Program deliverables result from real estate transactions that typically run 12 to 24 months from initiation to closing. Due to the voluntary nature of the program, there is a margin of uncertainty in acreage goal estimates. If transactions are delayed or fail, there are fewer acres accomplished in that year.

Forest health surveys and evaluations generate important information on both Federal and cooperative lands. This information allows treatment priorities to be refined to address critical needs, such as reducing buildup of fuels on NFS and private lands; reducing insect, disease, and invasive species threats; replanting and improving forest stands; and preventing soil erosion. The biggest challenges facing the forest health protection program are the identification of acres at risk to insects, diseases, and exotic plants.

FY 2000 Performance

The actual acreage covered by Forest Stewardship Plans prepared in FY 2000 was lower than projected (1,437,360 as opposed to 1,905,000). This reflects a continuation in the downward trend of acres under plans each year due to a number of factors. Some States are opting to focus less on the preparation of stewardship plans and more on the delivery of other, less intensive forms of technical assistance, so that they can reach more landowners and thus expose them to technical forestry expertise. Some States are focusing on producing more plans on smaller acreages; the 19,063 plans prepared in FY 2000 exceeded the Forest Service target of 17,440. In the early years of the program plans were prepared for the most accessible ownerships; ownerships assisted now may be less accessible and more costly to assist.

The Stewardship Incentive Program, which funds the implementation of multiresource practices on NIPF lands, was not funded for FY 2000. There were some accomplishments, funded with carryover dollars from previous years. These figures are not yet available from the USDA Farm Service Agency (contracted by the Forest Service to maintain accomplishments records).

Forest Legacy Program acquisition fell far short of its target in FY 2000 as a result of a late budget allocation to the field and inherent uncertainty in completing real estate transactions with voluntary participants. The agency believes that the program continues to meet its objective. By purchasing conservation easements and fee simple titles from willing owners, the program fosters protection and better use of forested lands threatened with conversion to nonforest uses. This goal is met annually and through cumulative accomplishments. There are also other significant accomplishments not related to this performance indicator. The Forest Legacy Program results in new and enhanced partnerships with State agencies and nongovernment organizations. Furthermore, many State lead agencies that participate in the program have improved their capacity to conserve important and sensitive forests.

The Forest Health Protection (FHP) program surveyed 94 percent of its targeted acres. Wildfires prevented the agency from reaching its target because it had to use survey planes for firefighting and some survey flights were cancelled due to smoke. However, there were other accomplishments in forest health. During its first operational year of the gypsy moth "Slow-the-Spread" program, the agency successfully surveyed 89,544,000 acres and treated 177,840 acres. An emergency suppression of Douglas-fir tussock moth in Oregon prevented damage to critical fish and wildlife habitat. In California, FHP supported initial investigations to determine that the primary cause of Sudden Oak Death is *Phytophthora*, a new species of fungus. FHP is coordinating State, Federal, and local response efforts to limit the harm caused by this disease.

Program Evaluation

The FHP program conducted a genetics review in cooperation with other Forest Service areas and programs. FHP will complete the report during FY 2001.

An interdisciplinary team made up of State foresters and Forest Service regional staff, Washington Office staff, and executive leadership participated in a week-long review of the Northeastern Area's Forest Legacy Program. They found a high level of professionalism, skill in program implementation, and excellent communication between the Washington Office, the States, and the Northeastern

Area. Participating States have demonstrated outstanding results. For example, Massachusetts protected forests that serve a range of critical functions and pursued multistate or regional projects.

A genetics review was conducted by FHP in cooperation with Vegetative Management and Protection Research and Timber Management. The report on this review has yet to be completed.

Conclusions and Challenges

A major challenge for the NIPF program is to continue to provide high-quality assistance to NIPF landowners, while at the same time reaching far more landowners than have been reached in the past. NIPF lands provide over 60 percent of the Nation's timber supply, yet are generally managed without the benefit of technical assistance and knowledge. Increasing pressure on these lands heightens our responsibility to ensure knowledgeable stewardship. Another challenge is to focus the scarce resources for this program on high-priority areas. The Forest Service has been working with State forestry agencies to focus technical assistance on landowners with high-priority areas and will continue this trend in the future.

Due to delays in providing funding advice, Forest Legacy Program accomplishments proposed or expected in FY 2000 will be carried forward to FY 2001. Annual tallies vary greatly on this target, but program performance can be improved by expanding the capacity of field units and providing additional and consistent funding. Funding for the Forest Legacy Program doubled in FY 2001 to \$60 million, up from \$30 million in FY 2000. Ultimately, the FY 2001 funding will enable the program to accomplish over 700,000 acres, but not all of these acres can be completed in FY 2001. Due to the multi-year nature of these projects, the remainder of the acres funded with 2001 dollars will be incorporated into targets for FY 2002 and FY 2003. The FY 2001 target has been adjusted upward to 200,000 acres to reflect the anticipated completion of projects begun in FY 1999 and FY 2000, as well as those projects that can be both initiated and completed in FY 2001.

The agency accomplished several important forest health investigations and insect suppression efforts. However, it was unable to rapidly respond to emergency outbreaks of southern pine beetle in the South and bark beetles in the West. The current performance measure of "acres surveyed" must also be replaced because it is not sensitive to budget fluctuations and does not capture a large portion of the FHP program. In FY 2002, FHP will begin a new performance measure of "acres protected," which includes acres receiving preventive, maintenance, and suppression treatments for insects, disease, and exotic plants.

The Forest Service will continue to support the preparation of Forest Stewardship plans. It will also continue to support other forms of technical assistance, such as more focused practice plans, workshops/courses, and publications. The new Forest Service accomplishment reporting systems planned for 2003 allow for more detailed reporting of these other accomplishments. Milestones for 2001 will include the production of a Forest Stewardship Planning Desk Guide that provides advice to landowners on how to prepare a sound Forest Stewardship plan. A Civil Rights tool kit will also be produced to advise program managers on how to assure that the diversity of participants in the program mirrors the diversity of potential participants.

Overall this year the FHP program was successful in providing financial assistance to support Sudden Oak Death investigations in California, conducting a successful suppression of Douglas-fir tussock moth in Oregon, and implementing the “Slow-The-Spread” Program. However, FHP was unable to rapidly respond to emergency outbreaks of southern pine beetle in the South and bark beetles in the West.

A challenge facing FHP is the implementation of budget-sensitive annual performance measures in FY 2001 and finalizing in FY 2002. Moving the measure from “acres surveyed” to “acres protected” will be more sensitive to changing budgets and will more effectively capture the FHP program.

Research Contribution
Prescribed Fire Models

There was continued collaboration among State and Private Forestry, universities, and Forest Service Research and Development on the 4-year Joint Fire Sciences Program. This collaborative effort has developed fuel consumption models for prescribed fires and wildfires, such as the award-winning CONSUME software, now in widespread use by fire and air resource managers for determining the effects of fire on the landscape.

Research Contribution
Economic Forest Restoration and Fuel Reduction

Forest Service research and technical assistance provided technologies to produce value-added products from material removed to reduce forest fuels and restore healthy forests. These technologies assisted over 70 rural communities across the Nation.

The Wildland Fires of 2000

The 2000 fire season was historic in many regards. Nearly 92,000 wildland fires burned, with up to 86 major fires burning at one time. Over 6.6 million acres burned across the United States, the second highest amount in the last 40 years. The La Niña weather pattern dominated the winter of 1999-2000, causing drought in the southern half of the country. The combination of hot weather, dry fuels, and little rainfall produced one of the most severe wildland fire seasons in U.S. history. Fire activity began in February and March of 2000 with large grass fires in New Mexico. By the end of March, fires had been reported in Virginia, Texas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Ohio, Minnesota, and Indiana. The season began in earnest with an escaped prescribed fire on the Bandelier National Monument near Los Alamos, New Mexico. Hundreds of firefighters helped suppress the fire and rehabilitate the burned hillsides. Warm, dry conditions worsened in June and became extreme in July. Lightning-caused fires erupted in Nevada, Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana. Dozens of new fires were reported every day in August, and the season did not peak and decline until September.

The Forest Service demonstrated that it was up to the challenge. The agency mobilized up to 28,460 fire personnel at a time, including a total of 1,500 crews, 17,900 overhead personnel, and 6 military battalions. Fire managers also requested and received assistance from several international partners, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico.

The agency lost no time in beginning massive rehabilitation of the burned areas at the end of the fire season. As of mid-October, rehabilitation plans for 85 fires had been developed, 78,000 acres had been seeded, 85 miles of stream beds had been protected, 25,500 acres had been treated for weeds, and 19,000 acres of intensive erosion control had been put in place. Rehabilitation efforts will continue for several years.

In response to the wildfires of 2000, the Forest Service developed the National Fire Plan, which contains both short- and long-term goals for reducing catastrophic wildfire threats. The FY 2001 Interior appropriations provided additional funds for projects and activities identified in the National Fire Plan. With the additional funding, the agency will increase its efforts in wildland fire suppression, restoring landscapes and rehabilitating burned areas, reducing the risk of wildfire, and assisting communities. In addition to reducing wildland risk and restoring natural ecological systems, the National Fire Plan will create new jobs in the private and public sectors and improve the capabilities of State and volunteer fire organizations.

Objective 1.3—An increased amount of habitat capable of supporting viable populations of all native species and support desirable levels of selected species.³

Annual Performance Goal 1.3.1—The Forest Service will work with regulatory agencies and others to conserve species listed as threatened or endangered or identified as sensitive.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# miles of inland stream improved for fish habitat	MAR	911	1,164	1,275	883	1,405	1,492
# miles of anadromous stream improved for fish habitat	MAR	689	715	545	601	605	623
# miles of aquatic TES stream improved for fish habitat	MAR	243	315	215	203	275	240
# acres of inland lake to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	MAR	8,452	11,362	8,010	11,321	8,800	9,361
# acres of anadromous lake to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	MAR	1,086	4,939	5,120	6,748	5,630	5,729
# acres of aquatic TES lake habitat to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	MAR	134	45	80	78	110	90
# acres of terrestrial wildlife habitat restored or enhanced to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	MAR	167,217	184,527	174,500	132,580	272,750	155,860
# acres of terrestrial TES habitat restored to improve forest, rangeland, and lake habitat for wildlife and fish species	MAR	201,966	82,247	107,000	59,793	143,000	90,690

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

³ Objective 1.3 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 1.b in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS)/focal species.”

Overview

Performance measures focus on wildlife, fisheries, and rare plants habitat protection, improvement, and restoration. Stream and lake improvements are designed to restore and improve habitats for inland, anadromous, and TES aquatic species. Terrestrial wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement efforts focus on TES, management indicator, and focal species. These programs help restore and improve habitats to maintain the diversity, viability, and productivity of fish, wildlife, and botanical resources, and thus provide for their use and enjoyment by current and future generations.

Conservation and recovery of TES species and their habitats continues to be a major challenge, both on NFS lands and jointly through partnerships with other land managers. Greatly increased development and implementation of conservation and recovery strategies for TES species and their habitats, based on sound assessments and analysis, are needed.

Challenges in achieving wildlife and fish conservation goals include identification of important habitats for non-TES species and maintaining, improving, or restoring these habitats to keep common species common.

Wildlife, fish, and rare plant program needs and goals need to be improved in some national forest Land and Resource Management Plans. A lack of focus and clarity can hamper the development of vibrant wildlife, fish, and rare plants programs.

One challenge facing the Forest Service is to fill vacant field biologist positions necessary for completing basic district, forest, and regional programs of work.

FY 2000 Performance

The Forest Service accomplished only 68 percent of its goal related to acres of terrestrial habitat improvement for wildlife (including TES species). A large percentage of habitat improvement for wildlife is achieved through the use of prescribed fire. Due to prolonged severe wildfire conditions, much of this type of habitat improvement planned for FY 2000 was curtailed.

Aquatic performance indicators were generally on track. A slight deviation from initial targets occurred as a trade-off of treated stream miles for lake acres.

The development of a science report, a multiagency conservation assessment and conservation strategy, and initial implementation of the Canada Lynx Conservation and Strategy and Agreement were major accomplishments in FY 2000. Some 56 national forests manage habitat for this threatened species.

Program Evaluation

A program evaluation was conducted to address predator management in the Southwest Region, with Wildlife, Recreation, State & Private Forestry, and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service participating. The principal finding was that agreements made under the 1995 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) were not always being addressed and improved clarification is needed in the roles of the Forest Service and APHIS in conducting NEPA associated with predator management in wilderness.

Several programmatic evaluations specifically addressed regional or national fisheries activities. The Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plant Program reviewed the Eastern Region in January 1999, finding that many factors are impeding the region from implementing wildlife and TES programs. These factors include declining allocations, higher overhead and fixed costs, declining general administration funds, and needs associated with forest and National Environmental Policy Act planning. Additionally, a similar review of the Pacific Southwest Region revealed workforce planning issues. The current biological workforce, while of outstanding professional and technical quality, is not at a staffing level adequate to meet the work that the agency is required and committed to do.

Conclusions and Challenges

The agency is challenged with providing more resources (funding and qualified personnel) to ensure the viability and diversity of sustainable wildlife, fish, and rare plant species. For example, NFS lands are currently home to 415 listed species and 2,900 sensitive species. The Forest Service needs to increase knowledge of management needs, develop and adopt conservation and recovery strategies, and then implement needed management to achieve recovery objectives, as well as to meet appropriate statutory, regulatory, and policy requirements that apply to these species. The agency will continue to work well with its State, Federal, and nongovernmental partners, who are cornerstones of these programs.

There is concern about agency performance in providing ecological conditions, habitats, and desirable trends for non-TES terrestrial and aquatic species. If priorities for protecting, restoring, and maintaining important habitats are not accomplished, more population declines may occur, resulting in additional species becoming listed as threatened, endangered, or sensitive.

Annual Performance Goal 1.3.2—Prepare conservation agreements or strategies to guide resource management efforts for a portion of the approximately 2,100 identified sensitive species.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# signed conservation agreements, strategies, and recovery plans [◊]	WFRP	100	269	347	314	419	375

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

◊ Includes the number of sensitive species agreements and listed species recovery plans accomplished with both appropriated and contributed dollars. Figures are cumulative.

Overview

Conservation agreements and strategies to stabilize and increase TES populations will be emphasized in FY 2001. Improving conditions for these species, including the reintroduction of natural patterns of disturbance and other ecological processes, also benefits a wide variety of other wildlife and plant species.

FY 2000 Performance

The agency did not achieve its goal of 347 signed conservation agreements, strategies, and recovery plans. Of the 314 it did accomplish, 196 were for sensitive species and 123 were for threatened and endangered species. Due to the extreme fire season, staff that would normally work on conservation agreements, strategies, and recovery plans were required to fight fires instead.

Program Evaluation

Although no program evaluations were done regarding conservation agreements, a report highlighted the important economic contributions of the agency’s Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plants program. The report, “The Economic Impacts of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Viewing on National Forest lands,” demonstrates that forest users who visit national forests for fishing, hunting, or wildlife viewing also purchase goods and services that contribute significantly to the local economies.

Conclusions and Challenges

A key milestone for the future is the successful implementation of conservation and recovery strategies for TES species and their habitats at a rate greater than the rate at which new species are determined to need the protection of the Endangered Species Act to prevent their extinction.

Over the next 2 to 3 years the Forest Service plans that all national forests and grasslands will have identified desired ecological conditions and trends for selected non-TES terrestrial and aquatic species. Priority management actions should be identified for each of these species, including

management needs for essential seasonal habitats. Information management data base modules will facilitate identification of such priorities at landscape and bioregional scales.

If the Forest Service is able to add biological field staff as expected, it should achieve a renewed ability to inventory and treat the backlog of identified habitat needs for both terrestrial and aquatic species. Moreover, the Forest Service should be able to redirect some of its efforts towards units of performance accomplishment that are more expensive and harder to accomplish, but which will have longer term benefits.

Research Contribution
Forest Plants and the Animals

A Forest Service scientist coauthored *Forest Plants of the Southeast and Their Wildlife Uses*, a field-durable manual describing 330 plant species and summarizing wildlife uses for each plant genus. The book was published by the Southern Weed Science Society, and received the Printing Industry Association of the South's award for best 4-color book in 1999.

Research Contribution
Threatened and Endangered Species

Forest Service Research and Development scientists developed recommendations for designing and implementing monitoring protocols for Mexican spotted owls, developed a national survey protocol for lynx, and provided leadership for the national scientific assessment team for lynx.

Objective 1.4—Better ecosystem management decisions based on the best available scientific and management information.⁴

Annual Performance Goal 1.4.1 - Develop and provide to managers the scientific and technical information needed to manage and sustain the forests and rangelands of the Nation.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# of research products, tools, and technologies transferred to users	RBAIS	NA	5,715	5,011	6,719	5,807	5,704

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

Management of natural resources has become more complex as resource demands increase. Natural resource information, developed by agency research scientists, is crucial to maintaining healthy and productive ecosystems as well as to informing Forest Service policy and programs. The mission of Forest Service Research and Development (R&D) is to develop, demonstrate, and disseminate scientific information and new technologies to protect, manage, and use renewable resources in rural, suburban, and urban areas. R&D provides scientific information and new technologies that increase our knowledge of the composition, structure, and function of forest, rangeland, and aquatic ecosystems. With an ever-expanding knowledge base, the agency continuously improves land management practices. These programs extend across all 50 States and U.S. territories, covering both non-Federal and Federal lands.

FY 2000 Performance

R&D surpassed its target, producing 6,719 research products, tools, and technologies transferred to users. Tracking the number of research products does not tell the full story of the R&D program, however. Several accomplishments are highlighted below, while others are featured throughout this report to demonstrate how they contribute to the achievement of other objectives.

- **Urbanization and wildfire risk.** A full-scale economic analysis of the 1998 Florida wildfires was completed to assess the degree to which vegetation management can reduce economic losses from wildfires. The research findings are informing public debate on the costs of wildfire and helping to develop more effective wildfire risk mitigation strategies.

⁴ Objective 1.4 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 4.b in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees.”

- New wildland fire software technology. The agency distributed a revised software package to firefighting agencies throughout the United States to help them assess the relative merits of options for fighting wildfires.
- Best Management Practices (BMP's). The agency upgraded forest harvesting BMP's to help land managers better manage forest riparian areas and published these BMP's in a new desktop reference.
- Neotropical migrants. Research discovered that coffee plantations with an overstory of shade trees provide valuable overwintering habitat in the Tropics for both resident and migratory birds. The research identified habitat characteristics that promote avian diversity. The results are being used in several locations to conserve neotropical migrants and to formulate management guidelines for coffee growers. Increasing the overwintering population helps assure higher nesting populations in the United States during the summertime.
- Riparian management in U.S. forests. The Southern, Northeastern, and North Central Research Stations and Regions 8 and 9 jointly published *Riparian Management in Forests of the Continental Eastern United States*. This document is a compendium that is serving as a desktop reference for natural resource administrators, educators, and resource managers who routinely face the challenges of protecting riparian areas.
- The Coastal Landscape Analysis and Modeling Study (CLAMS). The CLAMS models show how forest landscapes might change in the Oregon Coast Range under current and alternate policy scenarios. People using these models can now project how landscapes might change for the next 100 years across the Oregon Coast Range under recently enacted forest policies.

Program Evaluation

To assure the relevance and quality of the research information, technologies, and products, the agency reviewed the missions and charters of approximately 20 percent of the research work units during FY 2000 to determine their continued relevance. Most units will proceed with modifications, including the initiation or elimination of problem analyses, which describe a five year program of work. A few units were terminated in FY 2000, with scientists reassigned to other units.

In FY 2000, the Deputy Chief for R&D reestablished and developed a new streamlined process for Deputy Chief Reviews of the Research Stations, the Forest Products Laboratory, and the International Institute of Tropical Forestry. Five station reviews will occur in FY 2001. Program and operation improvements will evolve from the reviews.

Conclusions and Challenges

The virtually instantaneous public knowledge of current issues and events increases the public's expectation of an immediate Government response to requests for information and assistance. The complexity of ecosystems and gaps in information about their components and processes necessitate long-term studies to discover new knowledge that responds to issues. Where knowledge and technologies are already available, R&D is accelerating dissemination of results. The long-term nature of forestry research, often requiring decades for clear responses to emerge, means that unmet needs will continue to exist where studies are not yet completed.

A variety of new technology transfer tools provide timely, relevant, quality information to customers. Through INTERNET-based products, technical assistance, and presentations to customers, R&D scientists reach an extensive, expanding audience. To efficiently investigate research problems, Forest Service R&D scientists are partnering with universities, States, industry, and other scientists. Parallel to the complexity of problems being researched is the increasing variety of questions, particularly addressing social and economic relationships to ecosystems. To respond to the new demands for research, R&D has committed resources to acquire and develop new social and economics research skills. As limited resources are spread among the escalating diversity of research problems and projects, the traditional ecosystem problems receive less attention.

Additional competition for scarce research funding and personnel occurs as the agency improves the integration of science into the decision-making processes. Researchers are being assigned to new roles in broad geographic-scale assessments, planning, and monitoring. The time committed to these assignments detracts from researchers' capability to conduct additional research to improve and expand the knowledge base to enhance scientific understanding of ecosystems, and to support sustainable management of the Nation's forests and grasslands.

Forest Service R&D is responding to the higher public expectations, the growing complexity and variety of issues, and the increased participation in integrating science into the decision-making processes. Innovative management, state-of-the-art technology, and collaborative efforts have leveraged human and capital resources to allow delivery of a quality research program. Continued commitment of these resources will be necessary to sustain the improvements in the knowledge base provided through the research, inventory, and monitoring programs. This will serve to enhance scientific understanding of ecosystems, including human uses, while the ability to support decisionmaking and sustainable management of the Nation's forests and grasslands will require a continued commitment of adequate capital and human resources.

R&D has established the following milestones regarding research products, tools, and technologies transferred to users:

- Increase understanding of the basic biology and ecology of forests.
- Design and implement landscape-level and other large-scale, long-term experiments, and continue to support those installed over the previous decades.
- Understand the economic and policy-making processes that affect private and public forest landowners, users, and managers.
- Develop systems of forest management that simultaneously produce commodities and maintain and improve forest health and environmental values.
- Integrate the social component into research on forest ecosystems.
- Develop harvest systems that recover timber values without degrading other values.
- Help offset the cost of forest management by overcoming the technical barriers to use of small-diameter timber from fire-prone forests.

Annual Performance Goal 1.4.2 - Provide forest land integrated inventory on a 10-year cycle. Conduct resource assessments at several scales on and affecting NFS lands, to support formulation of policy and programs, and to support forest-level and project-level decisionmaking.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
percent of forest land covered by the Annual FIA and FHM Programs	Program Staff	NA	NA	47.5	47.5	47.5	62
# million acres of above-project inventory completed	MAR	NA	10.4	12.9	4.5	15.2	15.1
# assessments completed	MAR	123	190	148	87	172	191

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

The Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program, now in its 70th year of continuous operation, conducts the Nation’s forest census. FIA monitors the extent, condition, uses, impacts of management, and health of forests across all ownerships in the United States. The program’s long-term monitoring effort maintains an ecological “family album” of the Nation’s forests, providing snapshots over time that show how forests are growing and changing. The album reveals that—after aggressive clearing and cutting of our forests from settlement through the late 19th century—the total area of forest has recovered and stabilized at about 747 million acres.

The location, composition, and health of our forests are changing dramatically in response to current human and environmental impacts. Assuring sustainable management of forests requires consistent, comprehensive information on forest extent, condition, and trends across the landscape. To rapidly track forest information at the local level and incorporate that information into resource policy and management decisions, Federal, State, local, and private landowners need a complete inventory on a 5-year national cycle. As a result, the FIA program is rapidly transitioning to innovative, annual inventories.

The other two performance measures, integrated inventories and assessments completed, relate to the Ecosystems Management program. Integrated inventories meet multiple information needs required for national forest and grassland management by collecting data on the status or conditions of resources, including vegetative and physical characteristics as well as the human dimensions of natural resources. Inventories occur at multiple scales and use different methods. The consolidated performance indicator for above project-level inventories is an approximation of total acres inventoried across these scales adjusted to avoid counting the same acre more than once.

Assessments also occur at multiple scales and provide information relevant to a broad range of resource management activities. Broad-scale assessments are used to evaluate ecosystem composition, structure, and processes and evaluate indices of ecological, social, and economic sustainability.

Watershed assessments provide the contextual information necessary to focus and prioritize restoration and management. Findings associated with assessments are used to identify topics of general interest or concern to be addressed in land and resource management plans (see Objective 2.5).

FY 2000 Performance

The agency met its goal of having 47.5 percent of forest land covered by the Annual FIA and Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) programs. Sixteen States, comprising 41 percent of the Nation according to forest land area, were fully transitioned in 2000 under the FIA program. Annual survey results are available through the development of the FIA National Presentation Data Base and National Data Distribution tools.

The Forest Service did not meet its target for above-project inventory, primarily due to mid-year changes in priorities. Program managers shifted component measures of the above-project inventory target in order to support Land and Resource Management Plan revisions and watershed assessments. “Terrestrial Ecological Unit Inventories Acres Inventoried” was shifted among eco-sub region, landscape, and land unit scales. This change enabled the program to prepare basic inventories and complete core GIS coverage. However, the program accomplished additional acres of inventory through cooperative efforts with tribes and other agencies.

The number of assessments completed was also well below target, again because of mid-year changes in program priorities. Broad-scale assessments are generally conducted for specific purposes within a defined region. Because these purposes and sizes vary considerably, flexibility is necessary for planning, developing, implementing, and reporting on the results of these assessments. Each successive broad-scale assessment benefits from lessons learned from previous efforts. The Southern Appalachian Assessment was recently completed in 2 years at relatively low cost, and the results have been shared by a number of Federal and State agencies and have proved invaluable in support of land and resource management planning for the region.

Program Evaluation

The FIA program conducted continuous program evaluation through annual FIA User Group meetings at the regional and national level, presentations and participation in national professional meetings, and production of an Annual Business Report, which documents program finances, staffing, outputs, and outcomes. In 2001, the program will implement an online customer survey mechanism to help guide continuous improvement in program delivery.

Several USDA OIG and GAO audits and evaluations are currently being conducted to review inventory and land management planning efforts. During FY 2000, the Forest Service developed a response to a 1999 GAO report titled *Ecosystem planning—Northwest Forest and Interior Columbia River Basin Plans Demonstrate Improvements in Land Use Planning*. This report recommended, among other things, paying more attention to ecological and socioeconomic trade-offs and providing land managers with clear direction for implementation, combined with performance standards to improve accountability. The Forest Service began to implement the GAO recommendations in FY 2000.

Conclusions and Challenges

The FIA program has completed 2 years of a 5-year transition plan and is on track for full program implementation as planned by 2003. The growing challenge facing the program is to ensure that agency budget requests incorporate the funding needed to fully implement the FIA program. These funding needs are documented in the February 2000 Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. To achieve further progress, the program will develop protocols for implementation of the Inventory and Monitoring Framework by September 30, 2002. Additionally, the complete annualized inventory methodology will be initiated in all 50 States by September 2003, with State analytical reports produced not more than 5 years after a State has implemented the methodology, and every 5 years thereafter.

In FY 2001, the agency will revise the definitions of its inventory indicators and maintain a 10-year inventory cycle. The longer the inventory cycle length, the more outdated and less reliable the information, and therefore, the greater the resource management and legal risks for the Forest Service programs and services. With a 10-year inventory cycle, the agency can maintain high-quality resource information.

Objective 1.5—Naturally functioning wilderness ecosystems where conditions are determined primarily by natural forces.⁵

Annual Performance Goal 1.5.1 - Ensure that Congressionally designated wilderness areas and their associated ecosystems are influenced by natural processes and protected from human-caused degradation.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# acres of wilderness meeting forest plan standards for physical and social conditions	MAR	45,000	31,300	31,300	NA	22,000	31,450

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

With almost 20 percent of the NFS designated as wilderness, the National Wilderness Preservation System plays a key role under Goal 1. Wilderness provides a benchmark for comparison with developed landscapes and offers society the associated benefits of clean water, clean air, and open spaces.

The major purpose of the congressional wilderness designation is to protect and preserve the natural, “wilderness” character of the designated area while allowing opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined outdoor recreation (see Objective 2.1). As much as possible, natural ecological processes are allowed to operate without intervention. As such, wilderness areas provide a basis for assessing the effects of changes induced by land management practices, pollution episodes, and other human-induced events.

FY 2000 Performance

Accurate data for this measure is not available for FY 2000. Based upon the field submissions for this Management Attainment Report (MAR) indicator, there appears to be a lack of understanding in interpreting and applying the measurement definition. Program staff will remedy this situation in FY 2001 by issuing clarifying guidance. Additionally, the program is developing new performance measures to provide a more meaningful reflection of its work.

⁵ Objective 1.5 from the FY_2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 23.5e in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve the capability of wilderness and protected areas to sustain a desired range of benefits and values.”

Despite this measurement shortcoming, the agency achieved significant accomplishments in its Wilderness program. Most of the remote acres protected as Wilderness remain unchanged by human influence. Wilderness fire use programs will allow natural processes to operate more freely, and the effects of air pollution are being monitored in Class I areas. Noxious weed monitoring, prevention, and treatment are resulting in positive effects on native plant communities. However, many wildernesses do not have a field presence or active monitoring program.

Program Evaluation

There were no on-site program evaluations specific to wilderness; however, the Washington Office conducted a general recreation program review of Region 6, which contained cursory evaluations of the wilderness program.

Conclusions and Challenges

Over the last 35 years, the focus of wilderness management has been on recreation. Today's wilderness system provides both the benefits of recreation and an environmental baseline. Wilderness provides incredible opportunities to connect with nature and to experience its raw power and beauty. The key challenge is to preserve these wild landscapes for generations to come. An active monitoring program conducted by a trained field staff is the key to long-term success.

The overall strategy for the wilderness program is detailed in the Forest Service document "Thinking Like A Mountain" (TLAM). Because the current performance measures do not adequately identify or measure the accomplishments of the program, the program is proposing to use several new performance measures.

Goal 2: Provide multiple benefits for people within the capabilities of ecosystems.

Objective 2.1—Quality recreation experiences with minimal impacts to ecosystem stability and condition.⁶

Annual Performance Goal 2.1.1—Offer outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive or unconfined outdoor recreation.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# annual education contact	MAR	500,000	551,000	551,000	568,658	500,000	555,000

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

Providing quality outdoor recreation opportunities depends upon a number of factors that must all come together at the national forest and ranger district level. One of these factors that contribute to the quality of the recreation experience is face-to-face contact with the public where information on recreation opportunities, proper land ethics, and other matters is communicated.

FY 2000 Performance

The number of public contacts is one of the MAR criteria that can be measured and is important to the wilderness program. Wilderness rangers are the primary point of contact for wilderness visitors. The Forest Service uses these brief contacts to educate the visitors about minimum impact camping through the “Leave No Trace” program. We have found this to be a successful experience for both the Agency and the visitor.

During FY 2000, the agency exceeded its target for education contacts. Wilderness Rangers provided “Leave No Trace” messages and wilderness contacts in the field and at public gatherings. With limited wilderness funds, managers continue to emphasize quality contacts to the public.

Program Evaluation

No on-site program evaluations were conducted specific to wilderness; however, the Washington Office conducted a general recreation program review of Region 6, which contained cursory evaluations of the wilderness program.

⁶ Objective 2.1 from the FY 2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 2.a in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve the capability of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to provide diverse, high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities.”

Conclusions and Challenges

The agency is doing well with its effort to provide meaningful education to the public about the importance of leaving no trace upon the landscape. However, future education efforts must involve the private sector and interagency cooperation with the public sector in order to achieve long-term progress. The Forest Service will continue to refine our conservation message and create efficient delivery systems.

Annual Performance Goal 2.1.2—Provide additional recreation opportunities, including special uses such as outfitter, guide, and concessionaire operations.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# permits administered for recreation special uses	MAR	23,000	23,792	23,700	24,541	23,000	23,700

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

In addition to recreation opportunities directly offered by the Forest Service, additional opportunities are provided by the private sector and are authorized and administered via recreation special use permits. Examples of opportunities might include organized horseback rides, mountain bike races, boat rentals on lakes, guided backpacking trips, overnight camping, and alpine snow skiing. Because they result in increased recreation opportunities, the number of recreation special use permits is tracked on an annual basis. While the number of permits is indicative of the number of opportunities available to the public, it is also indicative of the level of resources required to offer such a program.

FY 2000 Performance

The special uses program administered over 24,000 permits, exceeding the goal and generating approximately \$35 million in receipts to the Treasury in addition to numerous recreation opportunities for the public. This increase from the target reflects the implementation of a new special uses data system (SUDS). As old data is reconciled and transferred, the new system will provide information for program administration that will have a higher level of confidence. The agency released the draft Cost Recovery regulation, conducted numerous training programs around the NFS to improve permit administrator competencies, and began a relationship with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to create a program to educate agency administrators and permittees on the usefulness of business plans.

Program Evaluation

No on-site program evaluations were conducted specific to special uses; however, the Washington Office conducted a general recreation program review of Region 6, which contained cursory evaluations of the Special Uses program. Several regions identified key areas of concern and began to focus resources to address weaknesses. The agency continues to implement recommendations made by the Special Uses Reengineering Team. Recommendations focused on streamlining of administrative systems and improving permit administrator competencies with the overall goal of improving services to customers.

Conclusions and Challenges

Overall, the Special Uses program continues to suffer from lack of permit administration resources, which not only affects quality on the ground permit administration, but also stifles needed policy changes. Existing permit administrators continue to be asked to perform jobs not related to permit administration. A continued downward trend in resources, along with a focus on increasing involvement of the private sector in supplying recreation services will lead to increasing poor customer service, which in turn will lead to poor service to the public. The agency has recognized the need to develop additional resources.

Annual Performance Goal 2.1.3—Identify sites for future scientific evaluation, protection, and interpretation efforts, and maintain visitor satisfaction through awareness and participation in heritage site inventory, site evaluation, restoration, and protection from vandalism.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# heritage sites preserved/ protected	MAR	6,795	4,345	3,200	4,430	2,000	3,096
# heritage sites interpreted	MAR	538	593	550	674	400	421

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

Heritage resources provide numerous benefits to the American people, including key connections to the Nation’s historic and prehistoric past. Heritage resources cover a broad spectrum, including the physical remains of prehistoric and historic cultures, locations of cultural or religious significance, written records, and oral histories. Public interest in heritage tourism is increasing, and this interest is being addressed through public educational experiences and opportunities.

FY 2000 Performance

The decline in number of sites protected/preserved is partly the result of a flat program budget over the last several years. The western fire situation in FY 2000 also played a role in reducing the number of sites protected because of heritage personnel shifted to duties on fire details. The number of sites interpreted is steady, due in part to public demand for heritage information. In some cases, such as in Region 9, partnerships contributed heavily to some increases in sites evaluated and interpreted. Partnerships provide us with expanded abilities to accomplish our performance targets. The use of volunteers and partnerships has provided us with the means to keep at or near target levels. In certain locations, members of the public who volunteer as site stewards provide a pivotal role in protecting heritage sites. The Passport in Time (PIT) program has been instrumental in protecting sites by accomplishing as much as 25 percent of the preservation work in some regions.

Program Evaluation

No program evaluations were performed at the national or regional levels due to a mid-year budget shortfall. However, most regions performed one to two forest heritage program evaluations.

Conclusions and Challenges

The FY 2000 performance clearly shows a program trend of declining ability to protect heritage sites and resources. This problem deserves attention and must be reversed. Without heritage program increases, the agency will be challenged to utilize outside partnerships and assistance to even greater degrees, but there are limitations based on the number of heritage personnel to initiate these actions.

The Forest Service also faces a growing public demand for heritage/tourism types of activities and information. Catastrophic events such as the recent fires of FY 2000 leave a reduced heritage workforce, not only with great amounts of restoration work, but also with performing compliance work associated with all the fire related activities. New regulatory frameworks also place heightened work activities with Indian Tribes and consultation. Better agency integration and support are the key elements to improving performance.

By law, the agency is obligated to conduct inventories to survey all heritage-related resources and evaluate and manage those with significance to the American people. About 300,000 sites need to be inventoried. At the current rate of 3,200 inventories conducted per year, this task will take about 90 years to complete. The Forest Service is conducting research and developing costing tool factors to help prioritize sites for inventory work.

Objective 2.2—Improved urban environments and enhanced community livability through healthy landscapes.⁷

Annual Performance Goal 2.2.1—Increase assistance to eligible communities to increase local capacities to assess, expand, and improve urban environments.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# participating communities	PMAS	9,635	11,101	10,000	10,547	12,850	11,100

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

State and Private Forestry’s Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Program provides leadership in improving and expanding urban forest ecosystems. The U&CF Program assists local communities in recognizing the value of their forests, building capacity to manage community forest resources and supporting community vitality through public involvement, commitment, and action. Programs such as tree planting can help mitigate the effects of air, water, soil, and noise pollution; reduce energy use; and beautify communities. These efforts can also improve the economic climate by increasing real estate values and making communities attractive to prospective businesses.

The U&CF Program also leads communities to provide better stewardship of urban natural resources. The program offers expert advice, innovative technology, and focused financial assistance to ensure that there are healthy trees and forests where people live, work, and play. Metropolitan areas collectively support nearly one-quarter of the Nation’s total tree canopy cover. Program funding contributes to community economic stability, natural beauty, public health, and quality of life. U&CF works cooperatively with State foresters and other partners to effectively carry out the Federal role. Current program emphasis is on strengthening State and local capacity, reducing urban sprawl, assessing the condition of urban natural resources, and strengthening applied research and technology transfer.

FY 2000 Performance

The Forest Service exceeded its target of participating communities by 547. Progress continues to be made to increase the number of communities active in the U&CF Program. Nearly 25 percent of communities of all sizes across the country are currently receiving technical or financial assistance through the program. Focused efforts in large metropolitan areas have expanded outreach to under-

⁷ Objective 2.2 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 2 in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve delivery of services to urban communities.”

served communities and contributed to the revitalization of inner-city neighborhoods, including neighborhoods in Seattle; San Francisco; Los Angeles; Las Vegas; Denver; Chicago; Buffalo; Boston; New York; Philadelphia; Baltimore; Washington, DC; Atlanta; and South Florida. Several metropolitan-scale urban forest analyses have been completed—including Baltimore/Washington, Atlanta, Puget Sound, Houston Gulf Region, and Denver and the Front Range—to assess and respond to tree cover loss to urban development over time. A new urban technology transfer center has been established in Scranton, PA, along with existing centers in Davis, CA; Athens, GA; Amherst, MA; and St. Paul, MN. Significant new tools, publications, and training events were developed to improve the management of urban forests and strengthen public understanding of the resource.

Program Evaluations

No program evaluations were conducted in FY 2000.

Conclusions and Challenges

In its 10 years of funding, U&CF has shown tremendous accomplishments in terms of public awareness and participation in State and local urban and community forestry programs. Financial support to State and local programs has built a structural capacity leading to greater numbers of self-sustaining efforts; Federal funds are leveraged four to one by local public investments in tree planting and maintenance.

There continues to be a need for greater scientific understanding and applied research in urban forest health, structure, and function within the landscape in order to better monitor and sustain the long-term benefits provided by these forests. As urbanization spreads into less developed rural areas, a growing percentage of the Nation's natural resources—including key national forests—will become part of urban forest ecosystems. For this reason, it is critical that we begin to look at and influence vital connections on the landscape. From declining inner-city neighborhoods to increasingly fragmented rural forests, a new emphasis on the Nation's "green" infrastructure will enable the agency and the U&CF Program to work effectively across the landscape with other Federal, State, and local partners to contribute to and build more sustainable communities.

While the Forest Service will continue to track trends in participating communities, volunteerism, and sustainability of local programs, new data has been developed on urban tree canopy cover and green space. By 2006, the agency will achieve a milestone 5-percent increase in green space within targeted urban areas.

Research Contribution *Urban Forests*

A new computer model and sampling protocol, developed by Forest Service Research, is being used by various cities to help easily assess urban forest structure and various forest functions (e.g., air pollution removal, and carbon sequestration). These tools are being used to better manage urban forests and improve human health and environmental quality in cities. Forest Service scientists also published *Connecting People With Ecosystems in the 21st Century: An Assessment of Our Nation's Urban Forests*, the first nationwide urban forest assessment.

Objective 2.3 – Economically healthy and diversified rural communities operating under strategic plans for sustainable development.⁸

Annual Performance Goal 2.3.1—Increase assistance to rural communities.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# communities and volunteer fire departments assisted	Program Staff	NA	2,450	3,250	2,990	2,502	5,332
# communities working under broad-based local strategic plans	PMAS	690	740	775	928	800	1,000

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

† A change in data tracking methodology occurred between 2000 and 2001. Data from 1999 and 2000 did not distinguish between communities and volunteer fire departments assisted, thus leading to underreporting. Beginning in 2001, these items are being tracked separately and added together to produce this performance measure.

‡ Estimate based on 8 of 9 regions reporting.

Overview

Through the Economic Action Programs, the Forest Service provides technical and financial assistance to help economically disadvantaged rural communities strengthen, diversify, and expand their local economies; improve transportation networks; and increase access to technology. By helping to increase investments in sustainable forest management and compatible development, natural resource-dependent rural communities and natural resource-based businesses are stimulated to pursue self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Assistance to rural volunteer fire departments is a crucial activity that increases their ability to protect the natural resources that small communities rely on for their economic livelihood.

FY 2000 Performance

The Forest Service exceeded its goal for number of rural communities working under broad-based local strategic plans. Rural communities use these plans to develop local capacity to actively engage in sustainable development through the assistance of the agency’s Economic Action Programs. As communities begin to think and work more strategically, the Forest Service is trying to help them put in place “community-based outcome measurement” processes. In FY 2000, nearly 500 were working on measuring their progress; this is an increase of about 100 communities since FY 1999. In FY 2000, over 200 tribal and minority communities received direct financial or technical assistance via these programs; this is about the same as in FY 1999.

⁸ Objective 2.3 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 3.a in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Better assist in building the capacity of Tribal governments, rural communities, and private landowners to adapt to economic, environmental, and social change related to natural resources.”

The data for communities and volunteer fire departments assisted is an estimate based on 8 of 9 regions reporting. Delays in reporting this data occur because the States do not report until the end of the calendar year.

Program Evaluation

The Forest Service has made progress in helping rural communities establish and take actions to achieve their long-term goals. Some communities are starting to revise and update their strategic plans in order to keep them current and useful in managing the changes that they face. Progress is also being made in helping rural communities measure and evaluate their progress in achieving the goals in their strategic plans. Work with tribes and minority communities is occurring at about the same level as the previous year. Direct, continuous involvement by Forest Service employees continues to be cited by rural communities as the most effective aspect of the agency's rural community assistance efforts.

Conclusions and Challenges

Those rural communities choosing to revise or update their strategic plans have learned to use strategic planning as a tool for working on their own unique challenges and opportunities. Additional work on strategic plans or their revision will be needed FY 2001 in support of the National Fire Plan. Due to minimal staffing, the challenge will be getting the necessary assistance to those rural communities most heavily in need. Many more small, rural communities could benefit from effective strategic planning and outcome measurement tools; more face-to-face relationship building, training, and technical assistance are essential to building community capacity for the purpose of achieving a sustainable future. This capacity is needed in rural communities faced with changes in natural resource supply, management approaches, or policy decisions—especially in those communities directly associated with public lands.

Opportunities exist for integrated planning and collaborative stewardship of our Nation's forests and grasslands. One key challenge is having agency employees available to build relationships and work with rural communities as those communities develop and implement their strategic plans. Without good relationships between the Forest Service and local rural communities, landscape-level integrated, collaborative planning and management of lands or natural resources cannot succeed.

In FY 2001, the agency will establish a fully operational, national electronic data base as a management tool that can help document and track the community-based outcomes being measured and evaluated locally.

Research Contributions

Fiber Assessment for Standing Small-Diameter Timber

The Forest Products Laboratory, in cooperation with the Pacific Northwest Research Station, completed a series of studies that developed a field assessment technology for standing small-diameter timber. This research will improve field assessment technology for evaluating the economics of removing standing small-diameter timber and assist managers in evaluating options for improving forest ecosystem health.

Objective 2.4—An improved capability of the Nation’s forests and rangelands to sustain desired uses, values, products and services.⁹

Annual Performance Goal 2.4.1—Provide a sustainable supply of forest products and range forage from NFS lands and encourage and support other landowners to do the same.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# million cubic feet of timber volume offered	STARS	646	437	699	322	608	656
# thousand animal unit months of livestock forage	INFRA	8,903	8,903	8,903	7,970	8,903	8,000

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

+ New and salvage timber.

Overview

Within the context of maintaining and restoring healthy forests and rangelands, the agency provides a sustainable supply of values, products, and services from NFS lands and encourages and supports other landowners to do the same. The forest, range, and minerals management programs provide wood, livestock forage, energy, and minerals for American consumers; jobs and income to local communities; and revenues for the U.S. Treasury and the States.

The national forests are an important source of timber from Federal lands. Timber supplied from national forests has been instrumental in supplementing timber from private lands in order to meet our growing demand for timber and paper products derived from trees. Today, the majority of national forest timber sales are designed to incorporate multiple objectives, including insect and disease prevention and control, wildlife habitat improvement, and fuels reduction. Even so, there is continuing pressure on the agency to meet strict standards for planning, preparing, and administering these sales. The controversy surrounding meeting these standards results in appeals and litigation that increase sale costs and delay sale schedules. These challenges will not be resolved in the near future.

⁹ Objective 2.4 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 2.e in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve delivery of services to urban communities.”

FY 2000 Performance

The timber sale program achieved 48 percent of its volume offer target. The offer target established was the best case scenario given that no significant issues regarding planned sales would be raised. However, lawsuits and appeals of agency decisions were significant in FY 2000. Lawsuits were the most significant factor affecting the agency's ability to meet its offer target and resulted in the delay of 20 percent of the total program planned. The agency will focus on the accomplishment of this FY 2000 offer volume shortfall in FY 2001, along with accomplishment of the FY 2001 timber sale program.

While the target for animal unit months (AUM's) of livestock forage was 8,903,000, the agency only accomplished 7,970,000 (90 percent). The difference was due to a change in procedure for counting AUM's. In past years, the agency counted AUM's under 10-year permits. Now, AUM's are counted if they are authorized to graze and billed in the current year. The current method includes annual adjustments made for Biological Opinions and other changes. As more allotment management plans are reviewed and evaluated using the NEPA process and subsequent decisions are made, it is expected that AUM's under permit will decline. New livestock grazing permits will be issued which reflect the decisions that follow allotment analyses under NEPA. Other Grazing Management Program accomplishments include completing work on 495 NEPA-based decisions, although approximately 555 were originally planned, and managing approximately only 60 percent of all allotments to agency standards.

Program Evaluation

No program evaluations in FY 2000 involved timber volume offered for livestock forage.

Conclusions and Challenges

Environmental and species protection provisions are evolving faster than the agency can react to them. Timber sales being planned and prepared are affected by appeals and lawsuits on other sales, and the agency no longer has prepared sales in the pipeline to replace those sales that are delayed or withdrawn due to these challenges. A Congressional attempt to address the lack of a timber sale pipeline by establishing the Timber Sale Pipeline Restoration Fund still has potential, but has not yet helped increase the pipeline due to the delay in getting the timber sales sold that would provide the initial funding; and the constraint placed on the agency on how the fund can be used to develop new projects. In addition, sale preparation costs are increasing faster than outyear budget plans anticipate, thus field units have less ability to meet assigned targets during the implementation year. The increased expectation for million cubic feet of timber volume offered reflects Congressional direction to achieve approximately 3.6 billion board feet in FY 2001.

Considering the extreme fire season and the amount of monitoring required, the Grazing Management Program performed extremely well with its limited personnel and budget. The program's major challenge in FY 2001 will be to keep pace with the year schedule for performing NEPA on grazing allotments, as provided by Congress under the Rescissions Act of 1995. NEPA decisions are being issued at a slower rate than anticipated. When the program is fully funded, it will be able to increase the level of monitoring and the pace of NEPA-based decisions. If funding is not available, monitoring will not be achieved at the levels that have been prescribed either through Biological Opinions or

as mandated by the courts. The amount of AUM's authorized on NFS lands will drop as the courts become more involved with allotment management. The 15 year NEPA schedule may not be completed as planned, leaving some grazing allotments without updated plans for a period that crosses two planning cycles for forestland and resource management plans. Because of difficulty in getting NEPA decisions and because of the uncertainty inherent in setting a target for a new measure, the FY 2001 target has been adjusted down to 8,000 AUM's.

Starting in FY 2002, the agency plans to begin describing the results of planned timber sales using a range of volumes and land treatment acres associated with them. It is hoped that this will help focus more attention on the work that is accomplished on the ground and the range of timber sale preparation and administration work that is funded, rather than basing the entire success or failure of the program on the timber offer target.

Annual Performance Goal 2.4.2—Complete NEPA analysis on proposed mineral operations in a timely manner, monitor operations, and ensure that mineral activities are done in an ecologically acceptable manner.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# minerals nonenergy/energy operations processed	MAR	14,000	12,247	12,250	11,171	12,250	✘
# minerals nonenergy/energy	MAR	7,650	9,189	6,450	NA	9,200	✘

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

✘ This measurement is no longer a valid performance indicator and will be discontinued/modified in FY 2001.

Overview

When mineral operations are proposed on national forest land, the agency prepares site-specific NEPA documents for the proposed operations, determines if design or mitigation measures are necessary, and monitors and inspects the operations. By processing development proposals quickly, the agency ensures that mineral resources are available to meet demand.

FY 2000 Performance

During FY 2000, the Forest Service reviewed and processed 11,149 energy and mineral operations. This was down from 12,247 in FY 1999 because the operations being received for processing are fewer than anticipated. This continued the downtrend that began in the early 1990's. The Forest Service does not control the number of operations that may be proposed in any particular year, and thus there is nothing the agency can do to improve performance for this indicator. In the mid-1990's, the agency surveyed industries about their interest in developing energy and mineral projects on NFS and other Federal lands. There was an industry perception that such projects are poor financial risks because they often involve considerable controversy and lengthy delays. Since the agency is currently receiving bids only from small companies rather than large industrial firms, it is evident that this trend continues.

The other performance indicator for minerals, "operations administered to standard," was not reported by all offices as a result of misunderstanding of reporting standards and definitions and thus is not available for FY 2000. To correct this problem, the Minerals and Geology Staff will develop better guidance to distribute to field offices.

Program Evaluation

Although the Minerals and Geology Program did not have any program-specific evaluations conducted in FY 2000, evaluations of various regions in prior years did identify any serious problems. However, they concluded that greater funding was necessary for all regions. The Director of Minerals and Geology did lead a review using a new approach that evaluates programs on a

multidisciplinary, watershed basis. The review concluded certain improvements could be taken within the region involved to improve coordination between programs and with other agencies. However, FY 2000 was the first year of implementing and emphasizing a watershed approach in management activities.

Conclusions and Challenges

The decline in the number of energy and mineral operations processed will likely continue to decline unless there is a dramatic change in the supply/demand/price of individual commodities and/or a change in perception on the part of industry as to the availability of energy and minerals, without unnecessary controversy and delays, from NFS lands.

There is considerable potential for many commodities on NFS lands including oil and gas, coal, geothermal energy, precious and base metals, industrial minerals, and construction, landscaping, and ornamental mineral materials. The potential for production of natural gas methane from coal bed methane formations from Montana and North Dakota to New Mexico is particularly large, and technologically and economically ready.

During late FY 2000, the Forest Service adopted a policy of requiring all existing mineral and energy operations to be properly inspected, monitored, and bonded, before new operations are approved. This action should help to eliminate controversy and speed approval of new operations in the long term as a result of demonstrating that energy and mineral development does not mean dire consequences on other resources and uses. However, it is likely to cause substantial near-term delays in processing/reviewing new operations unless additional funds are made available to the program.

One of the current performance indicators for minerals and geology, "operations processed," is no longer considered suitable for setting targets because the Forest Service does not control the number of operations that may be proposed in any particular year. The rise in gasoline, natural gas, and fuel oil prices during FY 2000 could have a substantial effect on the amount of oil and gas activity and increase the number of proposed operations by over 1,000. Thus, this indicator will be discontinued in FY 2001.

The other performance indicator for the Minerals and Geology Program, "operations administered to standard," which was not adequately reported for FY 2000, is considered valid for continued use. However, the target is now being set as a percentage rather than a specific number of operations. Because this indicator has been given highest priority, adequate funding is considered available to achieve the target of 100 percent for FY 2001.

Research Contribution ***Livestock Management***

The Rocky Mountain Research Station published *Livestock Management in the American Southwest: Ecology, Society, and Economics*. The book is the first attempt to present the ecological and human aspects of grazing in a single source; and reflects the interdisciplinary research aimed at resolving environmental challenges while sustaining livelihoods and improving the well-being of people in the Southwest.

Objective 2.5—Better resource management decisions based on the best available scientific and management information.¹⁰

Annual Performance Goal 2.5.1—Interpret monitoring results and collect and analyze information to develop new land and resource management plans or revisions.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# forests and grasslands initiating or completing new LRMP's or revisions	MAR	5	11	6	5	35	15

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

Land and resource management plans guide management decisions for all national forests and grasslands. Plans develop long-term strategies while recognizing the need to make short-term decisions and provide a framework for making future site-specific project decisions. Plans are dependent on data and information collected by inventories and assessments (see Objective 1.4).

The definition of the performance indicator for “forest plan revisions completed or underway” has been under development since FY 1997. The variance in performance levels displayed over time reflects the agency’s ongoing effort to account for the multi-year revision process as well as the FY 1998 Congressional limitation placed on funds that could be utilized for plan revision activities. The performance indicator has two parts: (1) revisions initiated in the budget year and (2) revisions completed in the budget year. Revisions started in a previous year and continuing throughout the budget year without being completed are not included in the performance data but represent a considerable portion of the annual workload and budget expenditures.

FY 2000 Performance

The Forest Service achieved five of its six target land management planning activities. In November 2000, the agency issued a new planning rule to improve the revision process and the quality of resulting plans. These regulations are designed to take advantage of lessons learned over the past 20 years of forest planning. Setting forth a process that makes sustainability the foundation of planning and decisionmaking, the new rule will engage the public in defining the future of NFS forests and create plans with a sound scientific basis.

¹⁰ Objective 2.5 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 3.a in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Better assist in building the capacity of Tribal governments, rural communities, and private landowners to adapt to economic, environmental, and social change related to natural resources.”

Program Evaluation

The agency did not perform any program evaluations for this indicator in FY 2000.

Conclusions and Challenges

During FY 2001, the agency will require all Forests and Regions to issue any uncompleted monitoring and evaluation reports for FY 1999 and FY 2000. A national meeting with regional monitoring and evaluation coordinators and monthly conference calls will stress compliance with this target. Additionally, the agency will strengthen the relationship between these reports with the strategic plan and the annual performance plan.

Annual Performance Goal 2.5.2—Acquire, analyze, and interpret information needed to evaluate implementation of land and resource management plans.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# scheduled monitoring reports	MAR	56	101	133	88	135	128

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

Monitoring and evaluation reporting occurs at two levels: (1) individual land and resource management plan and (2) NFS region. Plan reports describe the monitoring activities and associated evaluation results on how well the plans are being implemented, how effective management actions are in achieving desired results, and the validity of underlying assumptions made in the plans. Results are used in adaptive management to keep plans current and adjust decisions to correct or improve management of the national forests and grasslands. Regional reports aggregate plan reports and evaluate how respective regions are managing their composite national forests and grasslands. The performance indicator is the sum of the number of these two types of reports issued annually.

FY 2000 Performance

The agency did not meet its target for scheduled monitoring reports. Forty-six forests in Regions 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9 did not issue evaluation reports and five of the regions (1, 4, 5, 8, and 9) did not complete State of the Region reports. The agency missed this target because it had to fund emergency or higher priority work instead. The Ecosystems Management program has developed plans to complete these required reports during FY 2001.

Program Evaluation

There were no program evaluations during FY 2000.

Conclusions and Challenges

During FY 2001, the agency will require all forests and regions to issue any uncompleted monitoring and evaluation reports for FY 1999 and FY 2000. A national meeting with regional monitoring and evaluation coordinators and monthly conference calls will stress compliance with this target. Additionally, the agency will strengthen the relationship between these reports with the strategic plan and the annual performance plan.

Research Contribution *Guidelines for Science-based Decisionmaking*

The R&D Area developed guidelines for the application of cutting-edge science on contentious management issues. Forest Service and other land management agencies will use these guidelines to help defend land management decisions on millions of acres of public forest and rangelands.

Objective 2.6 – A safe environment for the public and employees on NFS lands.¹¹

Annual Performance Goal 2.6.1—Provide a safe environment for the public and employees on NFS lands.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# patrol days of enforcement capacity	Program Staff	NA	NA	✚	NA	✚	+
# investigations conducted	LEI CTS	3,549	2,783	2,780	2,080	2,780	+

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

✚ No target was established in the FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, published March 2000.

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Overview

Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) is charged with providing a safe environment for the public and Forest Service employees on NFS lands. It must also protect natural resources and other property under the agency’s jurisdiction. Law enforcement cooperates with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies to achieve these goals. LEI accomplishes its mission through three program elements: (1) enforcement activities, (2) investigative activities, and (3) drug enforcement.

Increased recreation on NFS lands has led to an increase in visitation and urban encroachment, causing significant impacts on NFS lands, thereby increasing risks to public and employee health and safety. Consequently, the demands on agency law enforcement personnel continue to increase significantly, but funding, personnel, and cooperative reimbursement dollars have not kept pace.

Increased visitation has also caused more criminality. Incidents against people and their property have increased and have become more severe. No longer are law enforcement personnel just handling minor infractions, petty offenses, and misdemeanors; they are asked to respond to:

- Unplanned incidents including environmental protests, threats to employees and Government property, large group events, rave parties, gang activity, and fire emergencies;
- Crimes such as rape, homicide, domestic disputes, assault, robbery, and other serious felony crimes; and
- Calls to assist in traffic accidents, search and rescue, medical/emergency assistance, hazardous materials spills, and other first responder incidents.

¹¹ Objective 2.6 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective b in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees.”

During the past 10 years, the number of incidents involving crimes against visitors and those perpetrated by visitors has increased to an alarming level. LEI responded to 285,146 incidents in FY 2000, up from 144,000 in FY 1996, a 50 percent increase in public safety, resource protection violations, and other incidents on NFS lands.

National forests have also become a haven for the production of controlled substances and other drug activity. The Forest Service has primary responsibility for drug enforcement on NFS lands. LEI personnel eradicate domestic marijuana plants, locate clandestine methamphetamine operations, and interdict illegal drug smuggling along both international borders:

In calendar year (CY) 2000, 733,427 marijuana plants were eradicated off NFS lands; in CY 1999, 490,304 plants were eradicated. These numbers represent large increases over prior years. In fact, from 1996-1998 the Forest Service eradicated more marijuana nationwide than the Border Patrol did between the ports of entry or the U.S. Customs Service did at the points of entry along the southwest border.;

Methamphetamine labs and dump sites increased from 28 in 1995 to 107 in 1999 to 488 in 2000.

Armed growers, booby-trapped sites, and toxic chemicals pose a tremendous risk to the public and employees. For example, a father and son were shot and seriously injured in the summer of 2000 while hunting within the boundaries of the Eldorado National Forest in California. Additionally, watersheds, vegetation, soils, and wildlife are also at great risk from toxic chemicals, fertilizers, and wildlife poisoning and poaching.

FY 2000 Performance

LEI is striving to develop a reliable method of collecting data to measure the number of patrol days, but no data exists for FY 2000. Due to the recent development of work activities and budget-based performance measures for LEI, the program is discontinuing this measure and utilizing “enforcement capability” as the measure for enforcement activities.

LEI did not reach its FY 2000 target for investigations conducted. This is due in part because there are fewer criminal investigators in the field. In addition, LEI has modified the criteria to determine which cases will be tracked in its Case Tracking System (CTS). This measure is being replaced in FY 2001 with “investigative capability” as a more realistic performance measure.

Program Evaluation

LEI conducted a review of its program performance measures during FY 2000 and made several significant changes to better reflect work activity. The three LEI primary program components will be designated as work activities for budget justification purposes, and new performance measures will ensure greater accountability.

The new performance measures will be defined as follows:

- 1) Enforcement Capability – the number of enforcement actions taken by officers, divided by number of incidents reported, and multiplied by 100. An enforcement action is defined as the issuance of a warning or violation notice. The number of enforcement actions is tracked in

the Law Enforcement Management Attainment Reporting System (LEMARS). The primary limitation to this system is the lack of personnel to input data. Thus, data is often either late or not recorded at all, leading to potential underreporting. In addition, the data base experiences continual technical problems.

- 2) Investigative Capability – the number of investigations closed, divided by the number of investigations opened, and multiplied by 100. The number of investigations is tracked in the CTS. Again, the primary limitation is lack of personnel for data input that can lead to underreporting.
- 3) Number of cannabis plants eradicated. The drug report (FSS 5300-2) captures all related drug enforcement information. The primary limitation is, again, lack of personnel to record and input data.

Conclusions and Challenges

LEI has discovered that existing law enforcement performance measures do not accurately represent program activities. The new LEI performance measures reflect the ability of LEI personnel to respond to illegal activity and service calls, leading to a safer forest environment and greater protection of natural resources.

The agency's goals are to achieve a 100 percent response rate for both enforcement and investigative capabilities and to accomplish the complete elimination of marijuana, methamphetamine, and drug trafficking (along both international borders) on and affecting NFS lands. However, LEI must obtain additional funding to achieve these challenging goals. LEI's base level of service is currently defined as a minimum of one law enforcement officer on each Forest Service unit. As of mid-year 2000, there were 233 units with no law enforcement officer assigned fulltime. LEI will prioritize enforcement and investigative actions, ultimately limiting response to crimes against persons and their property instead of natural resource-related crimes. Until the base level of service is reached, LEI's goal is to maintain, rather than lose, its current enforcement and investigational capabilities.

Objective 2.7 – NFS resources and land title are protected through conflict-free and legally defensible boundary lines and administration of special use authorizations.¹²

Annual Performance Goal 2.7.1—Survey, mark, and maintain agency boundary lines to standard.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# miles of boundary line located and maintained	MAR	NA	3,102	3,195	2,880	3,455	3,282
# cases resolved to provide and protect public access	MAR	277	332	350	263	350	440

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

Boundary lines established by legal surveys, which are clearly marked and posted on the ground, provide the land manager with defined perimeters for resource activities and development, while protecting the property rights of adjoining landowners and the public estate. These marked and maintained boundary lines help to prevent trespass, encroachment, and unauthorized use of the public estate. This program activity often uncovers previously unknown trespass and encroachments. Trespassing and encroachment on national forest land is a national problem that often requires costly legal action to resolve.

Providing necessary and appropriate administrative and public access to national forest land is an ongoing issue. While there are locations where access is adequate, there are also many locations where limited or no access prohibits the effective management of the land and/or prohibits the public from enjoying the opportunities that the land could provide.

FY 2000 Performance

Nearly 3,000 miles of national forest boundary lines were marked and/or maintained in FY 2000, but the agency did not meet its target. The shortfall was primarily due to the wildfires in several regions that prevented them from marking as many miles of new boundaries and maintaining current boundaries. Since this situation is not anticipated in FY 2001, no specific action is needed.

¹² Objective 2.7 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective c in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve the capability of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to provide desired sustainable levels of uses, values, products, and services.”

In resolving 263 trespass and encroachments, the Forest Service cleared and removed unauthorized use and occupation of public lands from private use or claim of ownership. However, the agency did not meet its target of 350 cases, again primarily due to the season's wildfires. Since this situation is not anticipated in FY 2001, no specific action is needed. Additionally, Region 10 reported that land conveyances from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) were slower than anticipated. The Land Management Staff will study whether BLM land conveyances can be expedited.

Conclusions and Challenges

Increasing labor and fixed costs are having a significant impact on the volume of work that can be accomplished from year to year. In addition, a shrinking workforce and the loss of skilled lands specialists is also contributing to declining outputs. However, continued evolution in surveying, mapping, and record keeping activities is off-setting some of the loss in workforce, but also demanding that land specialists have greater technical skills than in the past. In the next several years the agency will have to focus on recruiting and retaining lands specialists with requisite technical skills.

An increasing movement of the public into the rural locations, as well as exploding urban/forest interfaces, is significantly increasing the volume and frequency of encroachments and unauthorized trespasses on the public lands administered by the Forest Service. The greatest challenge in this program area is to ensure that boundary lines are marked and maintained in those areas where increased populations and public use and access will have the greatest impact on the public lands.

Nationwide implementation of the Boundary and Title Management Program in the Forest Service will focus on preventing trespass and encroachment before they occur, including extensive involvement with the land adjustment activities of the agency. This will require that each Forest Service field unit have access to the appropriate lands specialist on an as-need basis to ensure constant monitoring and protection of Forest Service boundaries and land title.

Annual Performance Goal 2.7.2—Administer special use authorizations to meet public health and safety standards.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# special use permits administered to standard	MAR	14,926	18,726	6,502	12,108	6,385	6,522

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

Special use authorizations, including communication sites, public and private roads, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license renewals, and energy-related transmission rights-of-way, are all a part of the goods and services that are attributable to NFS lands. These permits provide support to other Federal, State, and local agencies in fulfilling their missions, provide statutory rights of access and use, and contribute to local economies.

FY 2000 Performance

The FY 2000 accomplishment of 12,108 special use permits administered to standard represents a large increase over the target for the fiscal year. Based upon field and program reviews, the reported accomplishment indicates that field staff do not adequately understand the definition for this indicator. The Lands Staff will issue further guidance to provide clarification.

Program Evaluation

Beginning in FY 2000, the Lands Staff initiated internal examinations of the Boundary Management and Title Management programs of the Forest Service. Initial reviews indicate that boundary management and title management are so closely related and intertwined, and dependent upon the same staff specialist, that administratively these programs are being combined into a Boundary and Title Management Program. The Boundary and Title Management Program is currently under design, including measures of accomplishment and accountability. The Boundary and Title Management Program will be more focused on providing boundary lines that are free and clear of legal challenges of ownership and location. The program will also be less focused on producing high outputs (miles of line marked), which may not be representative of the actual program priorities.

An evaluation of the reporting standards being used by each region will be also be conducted during the course of FY 2001 to assure greater understanding and consistency in the criteria used to report accomplishments of cases administered to standard.

Conclusions and Challenges

A clearer definition of the tasks involved in administering a special use case to the minimum standards (for health and safety purposes) will be developed in FY 2001. This will help to assure that only those cases where such tasks have been performed will be reported in the future.

The agency will continue to emphasize full resource integration in permitting and administering all special uses necessary for public health, welfare safety, convenience, and national security, such as pipelines, highways, communications, and telephone lines. The goal is to have at least one-third of the highest priority nonrecreation (lands) special uses cases administered to a minimal health and safety standard annually, so that each of the highest priority cases addressed at least once every 3 years.

Objective 2.8 – An efficient and effective infrastructure that supports public and administrative uses of NFS lands.¹³

Annual Performance Goal 2.8.1—Maintain and restore existing infrastructure to protect capital investments where they provide safe, efficient, and environmentally suitable support for agency activities and public use.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
Road Condition Index rating	Program Staff	NA	NA	330	305	330	337
percent roads without critical deferred maintenance needs	INFRA	40	40	40	42	40	41
percent roads open to intended traffic	INFRA	90	90	90	96	90	96
accident frequency on roads managed and maintained for passenger cars	Program Staff	40	40	40	40	40	40
percent bridges inspected as scheduled	INFRA	NA	NA	100	67	100	100
average bridge sufficiency rating	INFRA	NA	NA	60	60	60	60
percent facilities maintained to meet standard	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	20	20
# capital improvement projects accomplished	Program Staff	NA	62	73	73	79	79
# million PAOT days of seasonal recreation capacity available	MAR	201	203	210	198	215	200

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

Facility and road maintenance ensures that legal and safety requirements are met as much as possible within funding constraints and helps provide for the safety of forest visitors and a healthy and safe work environment for employees. Maintenance results in higher employee productivity, improved public image, lower Worker’s Compensation costs, and improved customer service through better

¹³ Objective 2.8 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective c in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees.”

access. Adequate facilities also increase productivity in environmental resource development and use. At the same time, roads and facilities that are maintained to an acceptable standard help conserve resources and protect ecosystems by minimizing adverse environmental impacts.

Public use at developed recreation sites is increasing, but at the same time, the condition and associated capacity of these and other recreation facilities, measured under objective 2.8, is declining. A greater emphasis on reconstruction of existing sites along with higher levels of road maintenance, rather than new construction, will allow the agency to improve the quality of the recreation experience. However, seasonal capacity will continue to decline until the facility maintenance backlog is corrected. Reconstructing and repairing existing trail tread, bridges, cribbing, water bars and other components better serves the backcountry user and allows for increased user capacity.

FY 2000 Performance

The road condition index, which is the sum of the five subsequent performance indicators in the table above, was below target for FY 2000. This was the first year the agency attempted to calculate this index as well as the indicator for roads without critical deferred maintenance. Thus, there was some uncertainty in developing and applying the correct methodology for these new indicators. The Engineering Staff believes that both measurements will decrease in FY 2001. FY 2001 road maintenance funding, while increased over FY 2000, is still considerably less than necessary to meet critical annual maintenance needs. Roads will continue to deteriorate year to year. The percentage of roads without critical deferred maintenance needs will decrease, and the percentage of roads open to intended traffic will decrease.

The Forest Service exceeded its target for the percentage of roads without critical deferred maintenance needs.

For the third indicator, the percentage of roads open to intended traffic, it is likely that the actual accomplishment is lower than reported data indicate. Road system monitoring trips to Regions 3, 4, and 9 indicated that many national forests do not have good road management objectives to define the intended traffic for each road. Forests that do not have these objectives report operational maintenance levels equal to objective maintenance levels, as they have no basis to report otherwise. When forests develop management objectives as required by the new road policy (and prior policy), the agency expects that the current operational maintenance levels on many roads will be found to be less than objective levels for those roads. This will produce a lower percentage of roads reported open and to intended traffic.

The national average of bridges inspected on schedule is 67 percent, well below the target of 100 percent. There are two reasons for this shortfall: 1) personnel were diverted to fire duty during the field season, which impeded their ability to complete the inspections by the end of the fiscal year and 2) most inspection work is done in late summer and fall when water levels are low and these inspections cannot be processed into the INFRA data base (and thus counted as accomplished) by the close of the fiscal year. Bridge data for FY 1999 is still unavailable due to data base implementation issues. The agency will begin reporting bridge sufficiency data through INFRA in FY 2001 and fatal accident data will be added to INFRA in FY 2002. Data base reporting will improve the accuracy of these measures.

Data are not available for facilities maintained to standard. The agency has not been able to develop a satisfactory method to measure this indicator and will create a maintenance condition index in 2003 instead.

The Forest Service achieved its target for capital improvement projects accomplished.

Seasonal recreation capacity fell short of its target by approximately 12 million persons-at-one-time (PAOT) days as a result of a moratorium on new construction and a budget shortfall in recreation management. In FY 2000, recreation facility construction funds emphasized the reduction of deferred maintenance needs through repair, rehabilitation, alteration, replacement, or decommissioning. New construction and expansion only occurred where a high level of demand could be demonstrated and such activity helped to alleviate deferred maintenance needs at other sites. For recreation facilities construction or reconstruction, \$43 million was appropriated; approximately \$31 million was spent to reduce the recreation facility backlog. In addition, \$27 million was appropriated for recreation facility maintenance. The agency continues to target backlog maintenance and have a moratorium on new construction. A budget shortfall in recreation management also affected the agency's ability to open and operate recreation facilities. This shortfall of funding, and the resulting decrease in recreation seasonal employees hired, contributed to some early closures and shortened hours and work weeks at recreation facilities, thus reducing the PAOT day capacity available to the public. In addition, the severe fire season contributed to personnel shortages and, in some cases, facility closure due to fire proximity.

Program Evaluation

There were no program reviews for the recreation facility program, primarily due to the absence of a developed site program manager. The agency was also forced to postpone a facility condition survey due to the severe fire season.

The Engineering Staff conducted a roads deferred maintenance monitoring trip to Regions 5, 6, and 8 in August 2000. The evaluation revealed that many forests do not have adequate road management objectives. However, forests will be required to develop road management objectives by current as well as newly issued road policies.

Conclusions and Challenges

There is an \$880 million backlog in repair and maintenance for all buildings including \$350 million for existing recreation facilities. The Forest Service must prioritize facilities to be upgraded to meet health, sanitation, and accessibility standards. At the same time, the agency must be prepared to remove buildings and infrastructure that no longer meet our needs, are not in tune with the natural setting, present significant health and safety problems, or are too expensive to maintain. To protect and assure the proper care of natural settings, the agency will need to strengthen some heavily used and fragile sites. New construction should be limited and will need to focus only on resolving resource impacts, meeting identified demand, and helping to diversify local economies. Appropria-

tions are not sufficient to bring all existing facilities to an acceptable standard or to construct new facilities that meet changing customer demands or reduce environmental impacts. The Forest Service will partner with volunteers, nongovernmental organizations, other agencies, and private sector business partners to get the job done.

Both the recreation facility infrastructure and our recreation customers are demanding more attention. To address these concerns, the Forest Service developed the Recreation Agenda. The agenda is a framework for defining principles, processes, and priorities for the long term. It provides a 5-point blueprint, which includes providing safe, natural, well-designed, accessible and well-maintained recreation opportunities for all visitors. The agency will begin implementation, based on available funding, in FY 2001.

Annual Performance Goal 2.8.2—Reduce the backlog of trail construction needs.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
# miles of trails maintained and improved	MAR	NA	33,049	34,049	25,575	34,050	42,045

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

Overview

A greater emphasis on trail reconstruction along with higher levels of trail maintenance, rather than new construction, will allow the agency to improve the quality of the recreation experience. Reconstructing and repairing existing trail tread, bridges, cribbing, water bars, and other components better serves the forest user and allows for increased user capacity.

FY 2000 Performance

The reported miles of trail maintenance and improvement is well below the original target and less than previously accomplished in recent years, primarily due to confusion over a new reporting requirement. Thus, the data does not necessarily reflect accurate program accomplishments on the ground. Due to time constraints, the agency was unable to perform a full field validation of this measure, but program staff will issue further clarification to the field.

The agency has emphasized reducing the backlog of trail construction/reconstruction and trail maintenance, as well as completing trails inventories to determine the existing situation and plan for the future. While project work was supplemented by volunteer assistance, staff shortages and personnel being assigned to other duties and fire emergencies resulted in lowered accomplishment. There was also concern that appropriated funding was not reaching the ground to accomplish on-site work, but rather supporting too many administrative activities, resulting in less miles of actual maintenance completed.

Additional inventory of trail resources and inclusion in the infrastructure data base will improve overall accountability. Program budgets were supplemented by a variety of partnerships and collaborative volunteer efforts to accomplish trails operation and maintenance needs, and that is expected to continue. Funding levels and other duties, such as fire emergencies, did not allow full staffing of trails positions at local levels, or completion of scheduled maintenance, but increased emphasis should result in improved accomplishment in FY 2001.

Program Evaluation

No on-site program evaluations were conducted specific to trails; however, the Washington Office conducted a general recreation program review of Region 6, which contained cursory evaluations of the trails program.

Conclusions and Challenges

The public is becoming increasingly interested in the trails program through a variety of activities. Funding support has remained constant or increased slightly in the recent past. However, additional funding is needed to accomplish inventory and maintenance needs, maintain and continue partnership outreach efforts, and provide volunteer support. Catastrophic events in some regions from recent fires of FY 2000 have added to trail and trail structures damage resulting in additional rehabilitation needs. Better internal agency and interagency coordination to provide improved effectiveness and efficiency are keys to better public service.

Goal 3: Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

Management Initiative 3.1— An innovative, people-oriented work environment and workforce that is representative of society as a whole and that services all customers equally.¹⁴

Annual Performance Goal 3.1.1—Promote an innovative, people-oriented work environment and workforce that is representative of society as a whole and that services all customers equally.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
percent of total workforce who are minorities, women, and persons with disabilities	DN-714	48.9	48.7	48.9	48.8	8.9	48.9
percent of leadership positions (GS-13 and above) held by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities	DN-714	33.2	34.5	35.6	35.6	37	37.2
# persons served in Youth Conservation Corps	SYVP	594	717	650	705	700	735
# persons served in Job Corps	SYVP	9,373	8,623	8,800	8,818	8,850	8,000
# persons served in Senior Community Service Employment Program	SYVP	5,484	5,221	5,500	5,410	5,500	5,000
percent of related indicators for implementation of USDA civil rights initiative	DN-714	NA	78.4	80	80	85	85
percent of employees in workforce participating in CIP survey	DN-714	65	46	✚	✚	50	50

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

✚ The CIP survey was not scheduled for FY 2000, so there is no target or accomplishment to report.

¹⁴ Objective 3.1 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 4.d in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision), “Improve the skills, diversity, and productivity of the workforce,” and Objective 4.e in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Ensure equal opportunity in employment practices.”

Overview

A key component of an effective Forest Service organization is a workforce that is representative of the agency's customers and American public. The Forest Service must be able to attract, retain, and provide career opportunities for employees of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, as well as those with disabilities. Building skills and cultural awareness for working with low-income, minority, historically underserved communities and tribal governments is also an area that needs to be emphasized.

Programs such as the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), Job Corps, and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) provide opportunities for work, training, and education for the unemployed, underemployed, young, elderly, and others with special needs. These performance measurements indicate the number of people served in each program, where a person year is equivalent to 1,800 hours. There are many challenges facing these programs. It is difficult for the Youth Conservation Corps to recruit and retain youth and then find forests or districts that are willing to host and supervise them. The Job Corps is seeking to recruit more female students to nontraditional trades; it must track the success of all graduates for 1 to 2 years. The SCSEP must implement the Workforce Investment Act and the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

Measuring the rate of implementing the USDA Civil Rights Action Team's recommendations is used for gauging progress toward an innovative, people-oriented work environment.

The internal Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) provides the venue for employees to participate in surveys to identify areas within the agency where relative strengths and weaknesses exist and to effect improvements. These improvements extend to providing better customer service.

FY 2000 Performance:

The Forest Service achieved its first two indicators relating to minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. The agency also developed a strategic Public Outreach Plan to increase program delivery and outreach to minorities and underserved populations.

SCSEP placed approximately 100 seniors in the agency's workforce during 1999. This accomplishment represents a 27 percent unsubsidized placement rate, the highest in the program's history. Because of the high placement rate in 1999, however, there were fewer seniors remaining in the program this year and it fell short of its FY 2000 target for number of persons served.

The Job Corps program slightly exceeded its target and achieved an \$8.02 hourly wage placement rate, which was 53 cents higher than the Department of Labor's (DOL's) national average wage rate per hour. Over 1,500 Job Corps students made a significant contribution in the agency's fire fighting efforts in the summer of 2000. All 18 Job Corps centers are coeducational for the first time. Three of the Job Corps centers achieved the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th highest DOL Performance Rankings.

The Youth Conservation Corps also exceeded its target by 55 persons. The program succeeded in serving more students for shorter amounts of time in the summer.

The agency met its target for implementation of the USDA Civil Rights initiative.

Program Evaluation

In FY 2000, a Washington Office Civil Rights team conducted a Title VI Compliance review. The reviewers found that shared resources will improve programs and that the agency needs to improve its interpretation of civil rights responsibilities.

The agency also conducted a formal evaluation of the CIP. International Computers and Telecommunications, Inc. (ICT) worked with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and Service-wide CIP Coordinators to evaluate all facets of the program. The evaluation revealed some concern with logistics and actual impact of the program. logistics, for the most part, rated relatively high. Changes, however, were needed to the areas such as timing of the survey, and adding separate questions for temporary employees. The evaluation showed that the impact of the program has improved since the CIP 1997 survey. Service-wide CIP Coordinators all reported varying levels of success throughout their units. An overall area of improvement was communication, especially at the lower levels.

Conclusions and Challenges

Overall, the agency witnessed increased employee morale, decreased employee complaints, increased organizational capacity to perform at a higher level, and fewer retention issues. There is a continuing challenge for the CIP program to provide information in the agency on how it can improve workplace performance.

The Senior, Youth, and Volunteer Programs were successful and made a difference in the lives of many people. The Forest Service has been operating Job Corps for over 35 years, YCC for 30 years, and the SCSEP for 28 years plans to continue these programs in the future since they play a significant role in achieving the Forest Service mission.

Management Initiative 3.2 – All customers receive better service.¹⁵

Annual Performance Goal 3.2.1 – Provide better service for all agency customers.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
Offer to all customers, contractors, suppliers and vendors opportunity to conduct electronic financial transactions	Program Staff	Some reference materials available	Electronic payments by agency available	Electronic submittal of key transactions initiated	Electronic funds transfer primary method of payment	❖	TBD
Establish internal enterprise teams to improve management efficiency of national forests in California	Program Staff	Several pilot teams now in place	Evaluations of initial efforts completed	Expansion of teams based on evaluation	Corrective action taken based upon evaluations	❖	25 new teams established
Offer toll-free telephone, World Wide Web, and automated applications to all permittees and applicants of most frequently requested special use permits	Program Staff	Joint Forest Service and BLM web page in place	All but toll-free telephone access is available	New applications added as they are reengineered	1 new web-based application added	❖	New web applications added as they are reengineered
Improve service to public land users by providing one-stop shopping for information, permits, and other frequently requested over-the-counter products and services at BLM and Forest Service facilities	Program Staff	“Service first” agreement signed by Forest Service Chief and BLM Director	“Service first” plans completed on a state-wide basis	Continue to implement plans based on local situations & opportunities	“Service first” plans implemented on a local basis	❖	All “Service first” locations adopt model for information delivery process
# customer satisfaction surveys completed	Program Staff	5	5	9	3	❖	TBD
# followup analyses	Program Staff	NA	24	❖	0	❖	TBD

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

❖ No target was established in the FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, published in March 2000.

¹⁵ Objective 3.2 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan does not have a direct correspondence to the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision) but has some correlation to Objective 4.c “Improve and integrate informational systems, data structures, and information management processes to support cost efficient program delivery.”

Overview

The first indicator measures progress toward offering all customers, contractors, suppliers, and vendors the opportunity to conduct electronic financial transactions as a means of providing better customer service.

The intent of the second indicator, establishment of enterprise teams on national forests in California, is to improve management efficiencies through use of independent, self-sufficient internal business units.

The third indicator tracks additional features for special use permittees and applicants to use when conducting business with the agency via the Internet.

Improving service for public land users by expanding one-stop shopping opportunities at both BLM and Forest Service facilities is intended to allow the public to conduct certain BLM or Forest Service business at one agency office. Another interagency effort, involving the National Park Service, BLM, and Forest Service, is aimed at operating and expanding the integrated, nationwide, outdoor recreation information system that gives all Americans quick and easy access for recreation use permits and reservations among the three agencies. The primary challenge is moving the Service First Program from a local application (primarily in central Colorado and central Oregon) to a national strategy.

Customer service surveys and follow-up analyses establish and track public opinions of numerous agency programs, highlight areas for improvement, and can foster subsequent changes

FY 2000 Performance

In large part, the first indicator has been accomplished because the Forest Service has implemented electronic funds transfer as payment for products and services received. Past agency payment practices primarily involved mailing paper checks, which took longer to receive and were more expensive, and less secure. In FY 2000, the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS) was implemented agencywide. Electronic funds transfer is now the primary method of making payments.

The second indicator was not achieved, but the agency made progress toward the goal of expanding internal enterprise teams to improve management efficiency of national forests in California. Based upon the evaluations performed in FY 1999, corrective actions were taken in FY 2000 to improve the program. The revised target for FY 2001 is to add 25 new enterprise teams.

The agency made progress on the third indicator by adopting a multi-agency application form (SF-299) for most special use application requests. It also made this form available to the public via the Forest Service's home page. The SF-299 is currently used by other Federal agencies, such as, the BLM and other Interior land management agencies. Adopting the SF-299 as the standard application form improves service to the public by providing consistency between the various Federal land management agencies. The agency plans to further integrate the IBM system and the application and permitting process by providing proponents the opportunity to file electronic applications with the agency for simple and routine requests to use NFS lands. This capability is expected to be available

in FY 2005. The measure to implement the use of toll-free telephone access will be indefinitely suspended due to the success of the more cost-effective Web-based medium for providing information about the special uses program to the public.

The agency met the target for the fourth indicator by implementing several Service First plans on a local basis. In FY 2000, the program focus shifted from administrative applications, such as collocating BLM and Forest Service offices, to resource management applications that include integrating plans, budgets, and personnel to more effectively accomplish work on the ground. The Central Oregon Initiative, for example, was a dramatic change toward shared management. Meeting the performance target for Service First is vital to the Forest Service and BLM being able to deliver their programs in the future.

For the sixth indicator, the Forest Service completed three customer satisfaction surveys during 2000. In one customer survey of special forest product permits, the agency learned that it needs to improve its internal management practices, especially with the communication of rules, regulations, policy changes, and resource decisions. Another survey of standard timber sale and stewardship customers revealed a need to improve internal management practices and to improve the contract design process.

The seventh indicator, follow-up analyses of customer surveys, is currently under management review to determine whether it is worthwhile to continue it as a management tool and performance indicator.

Program Evaluation

GAO did a program-wide audit and evaluation of the Service First Program in 2000. In a follow-up report, GAO recommended that the Forest Service and BLM move faster in office collocations across the country in order to provide one-stop shopping on an expanded basis.

Conclusions and Challenges

The agency plans a broader adoption of Service First in Regions 1, 3, 4, 5, and 10. In FY 2001, all Service First one-stop shopping locations will adopt the Region 2 Model for “Reinventing the Information Delivery Process.” The Region 2 model involves upgrading web sites, establishing better data bases and retrieval systems, and developing new “case-worker” frontline positions. Ultimately, Service First will become an integral agency-wide strategy for how it does business in terms of allocating resources and managing the land.

Management Initiative 3.3 – Integrated information systems, data structures and information management processes in place to support the agency’s mission.¹⁶

Annual Performance Goal 3.3.1 – Enhance agency information resource systems.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
percent of employees who are IBM system users	Program Staff	70	100	100	100	100	✚
percent of total mission critical systems tested and found to be Y2K compliant	Program Staff	30	100	100	100	100	✚

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

✚ Target will be discontinued since goal has been accomplished

Overview

The percent of agency employees using the IBM system measures availability of major information processes and applications. Ensuring Y2K system compliance and subsequent operation is essential.

FY 2000 Performance

The Forest Service achieved both of these goals again in FY 2000.

Program Evaluation

None.

Conclusions and Challenges

Since both of these goals were achieved in FY 1999 and 2000 and are no longer meaningful performance measures, they will be dropped in future performance plans.

¹⁶ Objective 3.3 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 4.c in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve and integrate informational systems, data structures, and information management processes to support cost efficient program delivery.”

Management Initiative 3.4 – A sound financial system that supports resource decisions with timely accurate information and financial expertise.¹⁷

Annual Performance Goal 3.4.1 – Develop a sound financial system supporting resource decisions.

Performance Measures	Data Source*	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Initial Target †	FY 2001 Revised Target ‡
FFIS implemented	Program Staff	3 pilot units	3 pilot units	Agency-wide	Agency-wide	Agency-wide	✚
Real Property Inventory completed	Program Staff	No	Yes, partially	Yes	Yes, partially	Yes	Yes
Timber Sale Accounting system implemented	Program Staff	No	No ¹⁸	Yes	No	Yes	No
Financial management reports developed	Program Staff	No	Prototype set partially	Completed agencywide	Partially completed	Completed agencywide	Completed agencywide
Unqualified audit opinion	Program Staff	No	No	Yes	Audit not completed	Yes	Yes
Audit items from the Secretary's Management Report eliminated	Program Staff	No	Yes, partially	Yes	Yes, partially	✚	TBD
percent delinquent debts referred to Treasury for offset and cross-servicing	Program Staff	NA	NA	50	NA	✚	TBD

* See Appendix A for information on the verification methods and limitations of the data sources listed below.

† As published in the Forest Service FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, March 2000.

‡ As published in the Forest Service FY 2001 Program Direction, or updated based upon FY 2000 performance results.

✚ Target will be discontinued since goal has been accomplished.

✚ No target was established in the FY 2000/01 Annual Performance Plan, published in March 2000.

¹⁷ Objective 3.4 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 4.a in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): "Improve financial management to achieve fiscal accountability."

¹⁸ This accomplishment was incorrectly reported as "Yes" in the FY 1999 Annual Performance Report. The business process reengineering for the Timber Sale Accounting system was deferred in FY 1999 until FFIS became fully functional.

Overview

The Forest Service achieved many important gains in FY 2000 to improve its financial accountability and reporting. The agency has responded to expectations and recommendations from Congress, General Accounting Office, and USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG) to provide accurate, reliable accounting information. In 1999, the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) conducted an independent professional assessment of Forest Service efforts to revitalize its business and fiscal functions and restructure its budget and planning processes. The NAPA report recommendations provided an integrated organizational, budget, and programmatic focus on necessary reforms. The agency's primary goal is to achieve a clean opinion on the agency's annual financial statements. Due to significant improvements in the accounting system, financial statement preparation, and cash management, the agency is in a much better position to attain this goal. In addition to the performance measures discussed in this section, the agency has developed several new financial performance measures during FY 2000 but they are not reported yet.

FY 2000 Performance

The Forest Service completed its first year of agency-wide operation of a U.S. Standard General Ledger (SGL) compliant financial management system, the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS). To improve accountability, the agency continues to stabilize and enhance FFIS. The agency is also aggressively working to eliminate antiquated USDA subsystems feeding data to FFIS. The Forest Service is revising and updating its financial management policies and procedures and simplifying its budget structure. Additionally, the Forest Service hired PriceWaterhouseCoopers to document the transaction flows for all material transactions to facilitate the identification and evaluation of internal controls. The Forest Service has now developed a comprehensive set of financial performance measures for assessing its financial performance against identified standards and goals.

The Forest Service is working cooperatively with the USDA Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) and the OIG to improve the reliability of its real and personal property accounting. It is anticipated that the Forest Service will provide timely and accurate property, plant, and equipment accounting information in 2001. Progress in FY 2000 included completing the physical verification of real and personal property. The agency also issued revised protocols for FY 2000 deferred maintenance, annual maintenance, and capital improvements, as well as protocols for determining the value of forest roads. While the FY 2000 audit is not yet complete, the OIG has noted that the documentation supporting personal property individual assets has improved significantly.

The agency did not achieve the third target, implementation of the Automated Timber Sale Accounting system, and it will continue to defer this objective until FFIS becomes fully functional. Thus, the target for achieving ATSA implementation will be adjusted to FY 2002 or beyond.

The Forest Service made significant progress toward developing a complete set of financial management reports. There are currently 43 financial management reports available to users showing obligations and direct/indirect costs. An additional 28 reports are being created separate from the new Activity Based Costing/Management (ABC) system currently under development. ABC will help provide the information needed for cost-based performance indicators.

The USDA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) indicated that its audit work will not be complete in time for the March 1 reporting date. The OIG plans to issue a disclaimer of opinion on Forest Service's FY 2000 financial statements on March 1, but will complete its field work by early May. At that time the OIG will, if appropriate, issue a revised audit opinion.

During FY 2000, the Forest Service closed 11 audits that had been initiated by the OIG. Several more audits are ongoing. This performance goal needs to be reexamined since it is common for new audits to be opened occasionally, and thus it is not realistic to expect all audit items to be eliminated from the Secretary's Report at any given time.

Although the Forest Service is referring eligible delinquent debts to Treasury, a reporting system that provides the necessary data with which to calculate the percentage of eligible debts referred does not currently exist. Existing reports, such as the Treasury Report on Receivables (TROR), will require formatting and content modifications to provide the required data. The agency is currently evaluating whether this is a useful measure to carry forward.

Program Evaluation

The agency did not conduct formal program evaluations based upon these indicators during FY 2000. Rather, staff effort focused on developing new financial performance measures that more accurately reflect the challenges and goal of the agency.

Conclusions and Challenges

The Forest Service made great strides in FY 2000 toward its goal of a clean financial statement audit. With a full year of experience implementing FFIS, the agency has identified areas for further improvement and remains confident that the goal can be achieved. Importantly, the OIG has noted the agency's progress on financial and performance reporting. The challenge in FY 2001 will be to resolve remaining issues and seek continuous improvement.

During FY 2001, a Quality Assurance Plan will be put in place to facilitate the internal assessment of compliance with laws and regulations, audit and review of financial activities, and the resolution of long-standing open audit recommendations.

Management Initiative 3.5 – An effective and efficient administrative organization that supports the Forest Service mission.¹⁹

Annual Performance Goal 3.5.1 – To be developed.

Overview

During FY 2000, the agency continued to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of its administrative organization supporting its mission. Performance indicators for this management initiative have not been developed. Availability of data, consistency of definitions, and utility for managers are factors that will determine whether indicators are used in annual performance measurement or longer term monitoring.

¹⁹ Objective 3.5 from the FY2000 Annual Performance Plan corresponds to Objective 4.b in the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision): “Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees.”

Appendix A

Data Sources, Issues, Validation Methods and Limitations

Due to its decentralized structure and wide scope of programs and activities, the USDA Forest Service maintains several systems to track performance and provide management information. These include the following:

- Management Attainment Reporting (MAR) system used mainly for the National Forest System (NFS) programs
- Performance Measures Accountability System (PMAS) used for State and Private Forestry to track cooperative forestry programs
- Research Budget Attainment Information System (RBAIS) used by Research and Development
- Wildlife, Fish, and Rare Plants (WFRP) used to track species and habitat programs
- Infrastructure data base (INFRA) used to maintain and track information on Forest Service infrastructure assets
- National Fire Management Analysis System (NFMAS) used to develop the Most Efficient Level of funding (MEL) for the national fire management organization
- Sales Tracking and Reporting System (STARS) used for the volume of timber offered for sale
- Silviculture (SILVA) data base used to record reforestation and timber stand improvement accomplishments
- Timber Sale Accounting (TSA) system to track the number of acres of timber sales to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands
- Forest Health Protection Accomplishment and Expenditure Report (FHP A&E) used to track forest health surveys and evaluations
- Roads Accomplishment Report (RAR) provides data for road decommissioning accomplishments
- Case Tracking System (CTS) used to record the number of law enforcement investigations.
- DN-714 Report used for civil rights indicators
- Senior, Youth and Volunteer Program (SYVP) provides accomplishment data for senior, youth, and volunteer participation
- Program staff provide information for all qualitative performance indicators

The section below provides a general description of the data and some general concerns regarding the quality of data from these various sources used by the Forest Service to track performance.

MAR: MAR is used to set performance targets toward the start of the fiscal year and report on accomplishments at the end of each fiscal year. Each Forest Service region is assigned an accomplishment target for select MAR items after final appropriations and allocation decisions are made. Often, regions request mid-year adjustments to their MAR targets to reflect changes in priorities, needs, costs, or resources. These adjustments may occur after the final version of the Performance Plan is completed, which means MAR targets differ from Performance Plan targets included in this report. Forest Service field employees submit MAR data for district accomplishments through Forest Supervisors to their regional offices, where data are reviewed and aggregated for the region before being submitted to the Washington Office. Some indicators are only reported through MAR while others are included in other reports submitted by the fields or regions.

MAR data are submitted twice each year. In August, regions submit a 10-month report showing projected accomplishments. Then in November, regions submit a final report with actual accomplishments. The Washington Office usually receives final reports in mid to late November in both electronic and paper format. The electronic format consists of a spreadsheet with totals by region. These spreadsheets are fed into a data base to generate national totals.

MAR submissions go through several layers of review, starting at the forest supervisor level, then through regional managers, and finally Washington Office review. During our Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) report preparation process for FY 1999, the Forest Service identified several weaknesses in the MAR report process regarding the completeness, accuracy, and consistency of data. A USDA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audit of the FY 1999 Performance Report also found that we do not have sufficient checks in place to ensure that our performance data from MAR are complete, accurate, and consistent with other data sources. To address these concerns, we developed a new MAR data base that has improved the quality of our FY 2000 MAR data.

To improve the quality of data submitted by the field, the Forest Service has developed an automated process to collect MAR accomplishment data reported by field units. The new process takes advantage of our existing LotusNotes computer infrastructure by automatically distributing data entry sheets to the field and allowing for automated roll-ups to regions and the national office for review and analysis. The new process is intended to 1) minimize the risk of errors from manually consolidating data entry sheets; 2) improve data quality analysis, control, and validation efforts by checking for data outliers, incomplete submissions, or missing data; 3) reduce the amount of time required for data entry and tabulation to allow for more time devoted to data review and analysis; and 4) facilitate field review of accomplishment reports. The data base was developed in FY 2000 by IBM Global Services with extensive Washington Office and field involvement; it became operational in early October 2000 to facilitate FY 2000 reporting against MAR targets. Due to time constraints, it was not feasible this year for all forest-level managers to be trained on the new data base and submit forest-level MAR data reports in the data base. However, several regions were able to submit forest-level reports in the data base on a pilot basis. Regional managers reviewed all field data before submitting the regional reports to headquarters via the data base. Program and budget staff in headquarters also concurrently reviewed the data for accuracy, completeness, and reasonableness, and they corrected any deficiencies in consultation with the field. Due to the new MAR data base and review process, we believe that the MAR data is of higher quality in FY 2000 than in previous years.

A separate issue involves definitions, both for MAR and other items as well. MAR measures have standard definitions for each data element. These definitions are distributed throughout the agency at all organizational levels with instructions that they are to be used by all data providers and managers to promote consistency. These definitions appear in Appendix B of this report and in the FY 2000/FY 2001 Performance Plan. Questions on the definitions and measure may originate at all organizational levels, but ultimate responsibility for ensuring consistency in the interpretation of these definitions resides with the Washington Office. Despite these efforts, data quality problems can still occur. Sources contributing to data quality problems include a lack of understanding of MAR item definitions by data providers and/or reviewers, how MAR items should be measured, and when accomplishments should be recorded. The Forest Service is in the process of developing new annual performance measures and this review will include a study of which MAR measures are necessary and how they are defined.

PMAS: State and Private Forestry tracks performance measures related to its programs using the Performance Measures Accountability System (PMAS). PMAS data represents accomplishments for Cooperative Forestry programs throughout the United States. At the start of the fiscal year, Cooperative Forestry Regional Directors are provided with performance measures that require accomplishment reporting. Those indicators are shared with State foresters who have the responsibility of making sure the data are collected at the local level. Data undergo several layers of review, beginning at the local level, moving to the State, regional, and finally the national level. Accomplishment data are kept in local data bases and then provided to the regional and national level in hardcopy form. Accomplishment reports are due in the Washington Office by the second week of November.

A new web-based PMAS system was implemented for FY 2000 automated data collection. Previously, PMAS information was collected on paper forms and forwarded to the Washington Office where the information was entered into a national data base. There were numerous delays in receiving information and errors generated through inconsistent data entry. It was also difficult for the Washington Office to verify the information. There was no mechanism for States or regions to access the information once submitted. The new web-based system minimizes coding of the information and keeps the coding closest to the individuals with knowledge of the information. The information is also immediately available to the submitting State. Once all the States have submitted information and it has been aggregated and verified at the national level, the entire national data set is available to the regions and States. To reduce the possibility of discrepancies between the data set initially created by the State and the merged data set at the national level, a process is in place for discrepancies to be worked out between a State and a region. A region can return a data set to a State where the changes can be made. To secure the system, Cooperative Forestry assigns access names and passwords to system users.

RBAIS: Forest Service Research and Development program maintains the Research Budget Attainment Information System (RBAIS). RBAIS tracks funding and attainment at the Research Work Unit (RWU) level. At the beginning of the year, Research and Development funding is allocated to Research Stations based on Congressional direction. Each station then allocates funding to RWUs. Each RWU submits data on attainment to the research station budget coordinator. The data are reviewed by Station Assistant Directors and then forwarded to the National Budget Coordinator and the Research and Development Staffs in the Washington Office. The Research and Development Staffs review the data, prioritize accomplishments, and provide input to the budget coordinator on the annual RBAIS Report. The budget coordinator organizes the data into a final report that is incorporated into the USDA Forest Service annual report. Data quality problems occur infrequently, and when they do, they are centered on revisions made to RBAIS. The RBAIS measure for scientific papers includes books, papers in series, journal articles, dissertations and theses, and other similar peer-reviewed accomplishments that are primarily related to ecosystem sustainability (Objective 1.4).

WFRP: The Wildlife, Fish, and Rare Plants (WFRP) data base tracks, among other things, conservation agreements and number of listed species covered by recovery plans (Objective 1.3). At the end of each fiscal year, field employees submit program data and project narratives for items tracked in the WFRP data base to regional office program leaders for these programs. The data are reviewed and entered into an oracle data base. The data is then retrieved from each regional data base and merged into a national data base at the Washington Office. A final validation process is used at the Washington Office before the data is used to respond to Congress, administration, and partners.

Standard definitions for each data element are available to all field employees via the National WFRP Website. These definitions are provided to ensure consistency across organizational levels. Data are available from this data base about 4 months after the close of the fiscal year.

INFRA: The Infrastructure database (INFRA) is a nationally deployed application providing integrated inventory of constructed features, roads, trails, and land units while automating several related business functions in financial management, acquisition management, and permits. The application will deliver reports on inventories, real property, and detailed reports on Forest Service deferred maintenance needs. It also contains modules for billing, financial management, and other special uses. Separate modules of INFRA were released and installed on the IBM system during FY 1998 and 1999. Basic inventory data migrated from the earlier Data General system to the new IBM INFRA system as modules were developed and completed. INFRA 3.0, which contains data on several performance indicators, was released in July 1999. Since then, field units have been aggressively collecting deferred maintenance data, general inventory information, as well as other data used to manage all types of assets.

The Forest Service is now beginning the lengthy tasks associated with reviewing, validating, updating, and adding to existing information in INFRA. In some cases, field units have not fully populated some parts of INFRA. Field units have not yet entered certain data into the data base, making it difficult or impossible to report some non-MAR items at this time. The agency expects that over the next 1 to 2 years, data in INFRA will become more complete as field units enter specific information into the system. Management will provide additional guidance and impetus within targeted program areas in order for the Forest Service to provide better information about these various assets.

Further INFRA development and enhancements are ongoing with additional modules scheduled for implementation in FY 2000 and beyond. These new portions of the application will allow for expanded upward reporting of specific program data as well as providing ties to other systems such as the national reservation system and providing the field with business and inventory tools. Business function enhancements include interface with the Forest Service new financial information and accounting system for all real property transactions and permit billing, expanded Geographic Information System (GIS) interface, and new and improved reporting capabilities via standard reports and through ad hoc Microsoft tools.

NFMAS: The National Fire Management Analysis System (NFMAS) is an analytical model used to identify the most economically efficient fire management organization. The NFMAS model develops the Most Efficient Level of funding (MEL) for the national fire management organization based on minimizing the sum of suppression cost and natural resource value losses (see Objective 1.2). In order to ensure the validity and integrity of the MEL process, the agency conducted an exercise in FY 1996 and FY 1997 to certify the data and modeling employed in the application of the NFMAS model. The certification reaffirmed that the documentation and process standards required for fire planning and accomplishment reporting are accurate, current, and consistent with management objectives. Thus, there are no significant data limitations to report.

STARS: The Sales Tracking and Reporting System (STARS) is the data source for the volume of timber offered for sale (Objective 2.4). Timber volumes are determined based upon the priority silvicultural prescriptions that are evaluated and approved through the NEPA process. These volumes

are indicative of the agency's ability to prepare and offer timber sales, and they are entered into STARS as the sales begin to move through the timber sale preparation process. Field units enter the data that is then rolled up to the regional and national levels. The regions and Washington Office program staff verify the data for accuracy and correct any errors. There are no known data limitations. The data is published in the Periodic Timber Sale Accounting Report (PTAR).

SILVA, which is a component of the Timber Activity Control System (TRACS), is the data base of record for reforestation and timber stand improvement accomplishments (Objective 1.2). Field units enter data which is verified by regional and Washington Office staffs at year end. There are no significant data limitations for TRACS.

TSA: The agency uses its Timber Sale Accounting (TSA) system to track data for the number of acres of timber sales to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands (Objective 1.2). At the time of sale, field staff enter accomplishments which are then reviewed by regional and Washington Office staff. The agency sends quarterly reports on timber sales to Congress. Because this is an older data base, there are data limitations that require staff at all levels of the organization to spend considerable time verifying the results.

FHP A&E: The Forest Health Protection Accomplishment and Expenditure Report (FHP A&E) is the data source for acres of forest health surveys and evaluations (Objective 1.2). Field units keep track of the data from aerial and ground surveys and send accomplishment data to the regional office. At the regional level, the data is verified and stored in a data base. The only significant data limitation is that an overwhelming portion of the data is from aerial surveys, while ground survey acres contribute a much smaller portion.

RAR: The Roads Accomplishment Report (RAR) provides data on road decommissioning (Objective 1.1). Forests enter road decommissioning accomplishments in their roads data base as projects are completed. At year-end, the forests calculate the total accomplishment and enter it in an electronic spreadsheet form, designed specifically for the RAR. They send these spreadsheets to the regional office where data is verified and compiled. Regions send the accumulated accomplishments to the WO where the data is again checked for outliers and consistency. Any discrepancies are resolved at the regional or field level as necessary. Unlike most other reported data, road decommissioning includes accomplishments from all fund types. The agency has not verified whether forests are accurately reporting accomplishments by the correct fund type, but the combined accomplishments are accurate. Thus, there is no significant data limitation for RAR.

CTS: The Case Tracking System (CTS) is used to record the number of law enforcement investigations. The primary limitation to this system is lack of personnel to input data. Thus, data is often late or not recorded at all, leading to potential underreporting.

DN-714: The agency's National Finance Center produces the DN-714 report, an equal employment opportunity profile. This report includes data on the civil rights indicators found in Objective 3.1. Because the data is based upon the agency's national employment records, it is highly accurate. The data is based upon the number of permanent employees. Temporary employees are excluded because the data would be highly variable.

SYVP: The Senior, Youth, and Volunteer Program (SYVP) tracks data for Job Corps, Youth Conservation Corps, and Senior Community Service Employment Program accomplishments (Objective

3.1). Each field unit submits annual accomplishments for each program via an electronic form (FS 1800-16). The Job Corps and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) report on a program year basis from July 1 to June 30 due to funding reasons, while the Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) reports according to the agency's fiscal year. All data is compiled at an intermediate level and at the national level, and the data is verified for consistency and accuracy at each level. Although there is always a chance of human error in entering the initial data, automated calculation of the electronic forms has eliminated the risk of calculation errors. There is no significant data limitation to report.

Program Staff provide information for all qualitative performance measures (Objectives 2.3, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4). The quality of this information is based upon their expertise and in-depth knowledge of the programs in question. Thus, there are no indications of any data limitations for these qualitative measures.

Crosscutting Issues

The Forest Service is committed to collecting, reporting, and making decisions based on the best data possible. This means ensuring that data are accurate, reliable, complete, timely, and validly reflect the Forest Service's strategic goals and mission. As part of its GPRA performance planning and reporting efforts, the Forest Service has uncovered some potential problems that raise questions regarding how much confidence can be placed in data for certain performance indicators. These involve ensuring that data are collected in a timely fashion, data entry errors and missing sources are identified and corrected, and inconsistencies in data are resolved promptly and completely.

Data Warehouse: In addition to the new MAR data base discussed above, a new data warehouse being developed by contractors will also enhance the completeness, accuracy, and usefulness of data across the agency. With a single data warehouse, any data user in the agency will be able to access key performance data from numerous sources throughout the agency's computer network. By making a wide range of performance data readily available to all users, the data warehouse will strengthen our comparative analysis capability and improve our ability to pinpoint areas where data is missing. As part of this effort, contractors will conduct an assessment of existing data sources and make recommendations to improve the quality and completeness of our performance data over the long term. The pilot phase of the data warehouse project ended in February 2001. The project is being evaluated. Implementation on the enterprise-wide data warehouse will begin in FY 2002.

Management and Activity Reviews: On-site reviews of organizational units and resource programs are the primary means of monitoring the agency's progress in meeting annual outputs and in moving towards the goals and objectives identified in the strategic plan. A variety of reviews are conducted each fiscal year and the level of detail varies depending upon where it originates. For example, Washington Office reviews conducted by the Deputy Chiefs concentrate on overall program operation such as Research, State Private and International Forestry, and the National Forest System, whereas reviews initiated by forest supervisors tend to be much more detailed and can focus on a single activity within a program on a single ranger district. Threatened and endangered species habitat improvement within the broader program area of Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plants is an example of an activity that might be reviewed at the forest supervisor level. Activity reviews can be initiated at all levels of the organization and are the most common because they examine the detailed operations that use personnel, capital, and information.

Appendix B

FY 2000

Glossary of Performance Terms

The performance indicators in the FY 2000 Performance Report are presented by objective and are highlighted in bold. Units of measure are in parenthesis.

Objective 1.1

Land treatments to protect and improve watershed conditions on National Forest System (NFS) lands (acres treated):

Includes land treatments and structural improvements to increase the quality and quantity of water and maintain or improve soil productivity. Land treatments are designed to rehabilitate soils and plant cover to achieve reductions of erosion and sedimentation, reduce and prevent floods, conserve water, and increase productivity. Structural measures are used to control water within channels and gullies resulting from accelerated runoff and on slopes where a threat of accelerated erosion exists. Includes linear treatments for riparian areas, stream banks, and channels, which are converted to acres.

Roads decommissioned (miles):

The miles of road restored to natural resource management and the removal of the road from the Forest Service road system.

Objective 1.2

Lands restored by the reforestation (acres):

This includes activities of planting, seeding, and natural means, including site preparation for natural regeneration and certification of natural regeneration without site preparation.

Treatment of harvest-related woody fuels – brush disposal (acres):

The treatment of fuels generated from timber sales and timber stand improvement activities (i.e., brush disposal). Techniques can include lopping and scattering and hand or mechanical piling and burning.

Land treatments to protect and restore forest and grassland ecosystems on NFS lands (acres treated):

Includes land treatments designed to restore or maintain healthy conditions and reduce risk and damage from fire, insects, and diseases and invasive species (funded by discretionary appropriations). Types of land treatments include:

- Noxious Weed Treatments: initial and retreatment efforts aimed at managing infestations of noxious weeds and preventing further infestations
- Rangelands restored and protected
- Timber sales: acres of timber sales sold to achieve ecosystem stewardship objectives (only those formerly funded with NFTM)

Forest lands maintained or enhanced by stand improvement (acres treated):

Includes techniques such as release, weeding, thinning, fertilization, and pruning.

Hazardous fuels reduction (acres):

The acres of treated wildland fuel occurring naturally or not covered by activity fuel funding including acres directly affected by management-ignited prescribed fire, prescribed natural fire, and mechanical or chemical treatments that reduce fire hazard.

Firefighting production capability (% of Most Efficient Level (MEL)):

The National Fire Management Analysis System (NFMAS) model develops the Most Efficient Level (MEL) of funding for the national fire management organization based on minimizing the sum of suppression costs, natural resource value losses, and the cost of providing a firefighting organization. The availability of the specific mix of resources is tied directly to a unit's NFMAS analysis (MEL); this performance indicator measures the national percent of MEL that is achieved with the given funding level.

Land ownership consolidated through acquisition and exchange to facilitate restoration and protection (acres):

Fragmented land ownership is consolidated through fee and partial interest acquisition and exchange to facilitate conservation and stewardship objectives. Represents a combination of all land acquisition acres.

Nonindustrial private forest (NIPF) lands under approved Stewardship Management Plans (acres):

The Forest Stewardship Program assists nonindustrial private forest landowners on a voluntary, nonregulatory basis to develop long-term Forest Stewardship Plans for the management of their forests and related resources. The indicator measures the total acreage included in long-term Forest Stewardship Plans, which are developed to assist nonindustrial private forest landowners, on a voluntary, nonregulatory basis, manage their forests and related resources. These plans are developed with technical assistance delivered, in cooperation with the States, to interested NIPF landowners.

Multiresource practices implemented on NIPF lands (acres):

Forest Stewardship Management Plans can be implemented by landowners through approved, cost-shared, multiresource management practices. The indicator measures the acres of multi-resource practices implemented that advance the actual management of all resources such as soil and water, wildlife, recreation, agroforestry, and aesthetics, in a balance that reflects the landowners' goals.

Legacy Project Acquisition (acres):

The Forest Legacy Program conserves environmentally important forests threatened by conversion to nonforest uses through the acquisition of land or interests in land from willing landowners. The indicator measures acres protected, through conservation easements or fee simple acquisition, based on opportunities identified in statewide assessments developed under this program, as well as particular national opportunities and priorities.

Forest Health surveys and evaluations, Federal and cooperative lands (million acres):

Forest Health surveys and evaluations are a component of the State and Private Forestry Forest Health Management Program. These forest insect and disease detection surveys and evaluations,

conducted for all Federal forest lands including National Forest System, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Corps of Engineers, Smithsonian Institution, and Department of Defense lands. Additionally, these surveys and evaluations assure the early detection of forest insect and disease issues for non-Federal lands. Early detection facilitates delivery of professional forest health assistance through cooperation with State governments to private landowners. Assistance is also provided to tribal governments.

Objective 1.3

Streams improved for fish habitat (miles):

This measures miles of rivers and streams that were restored or enhanced for fisheries or threatened and endangered (TES) species habitat using structural or nonstructural improvements accomplished with appropriated funds. Examples of stream or river improvements include the placement of large woody debris and the placement of boulders to provide spawning habitat.

Forest, rangeland, and lake habitat improved for wildlife and fish species (acres treated):

Includes the total number of acres restored or enhanced to achieve desired future condition of wildlife, fish, and TES species habitat using appropriated funds. Restoration and enhancement is accomplished using appropriated funds through application of a variety of management practices such as prescribed burns, seeding to improve foraging habitat for game birds, or manipulating vegetation to obtain the desired habitat condition.

Conservation agreements and strategies and recovery plans (signed agreements):

Report the number of recovery and conservation tasks that were completed in the fiscal year for sensitive aquatic and terrestrial species. Recovery plans and conservation strategies include assignment of specific tasks to agencies. For those federally listed species having either U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) approved recovery plans or conservation strategies or sensitive species having a conservation strategy approved by forest supervisors or regional foresters, those tasks required of the Forest Service in the given year that were accomplished are reported.

Objective 1.4

Number of research products, tools, and technologies transferred to users:

Includes information that is provided to public and private land managers and policymakers to enhance scientific understanding of ecosystems, assist in effectively managing the Nation's forests and rangelands, and meet existing legal and regulatory requirements. Includes books, papers in series, journal articles, proceedings, general technical reports, special reports, patents, videos, computer programs, dissertations and theses, and other similar technology transfer accomplishments.

Percent of forest land covered by annual Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) / Forest Health Monitoring (FHM):

Information provided to public and private land managers and policymakers that characterizes resource status, conditions, and trends. The FIA program provides the only continuous inventory that periodically quantifies the status of forest ecosystems, including timber and nontimber information, across all land ownerships in the United States. FIA strives to maintain current State inventories on the shortest cycle possible. The Forest Health Monitoring plot system identifies and tests environmental indicators and provides data to evaluate the health of all of the Nation's forests.

Above-project inventory completed (million acres):

Integrated inventories are designed to meet multiple needs for information at various scales above the project level and consist of data collection activities to provide information for analysis of the status and/or conditions of natural resources (physical, biological, and human dimensions) required for national forest and grassland management.

Assessments completed (number):

Assessments are characterizations of ecosystems above the project level (e.g., ecoregional, ecosubregional, river basin, landscape, and watershed) that provide information to support formulation of policy, programs, and forest/grassland plans as well as provide context for project scheduling and subsequent project analysis.

Objective 1.5

Wilderness meeting forest plan standards for physical and social conditions (acres):

Includes providing wilderness stewardship that “protects and/or restores” wilderness characteristics to units of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Requirements include having adequate and appropriate forest plan standards and guidelines for wilderness, monitoring wilderness condition to assess compliance, and determining whether standards are met or exceeded.

Objective 2.1

Annual education contacts (number):

The number of individual wilderness and “Leave No Trace” contacts of at least 5 minutes in duration that are made annually in which specific information on wilderness is transmitted with a high likelihood of understanding by the participant.

Recreation special uses administered (permits):

The total number of special use permits in existence at the end of the fiscal year. This includes permits administered to standard and those not administered to standard but on the books.

Heritage sites preserved and protected (number):

Includes the number of heritage sites protected this fiscal year. Protection refers to any deliberate, planned activity that shields a site or its information potential from natural or human-caused damage or destruction. This includes indirectly protecting properties by fencing, removing impacting activities and facilities, preventing or controlling access, and monitoring site conditions. Preservation includes restoring, repairing, or rehabilitating heritage properties in order to make them last longer or serve the public better. Sites are afforded protection through project planning; redesign and implementation (site avoidance) are not counted in this category.

Heritage sites interpreted (number):

The number of heritage sites that are newly developed for on-site or off-site public interpretation. Includes interpretive displays, guided tours, trails, interpretive brochures, and interpretive signs.

Objective 2.2

Participating communities (number):

Includes the number of communities that have qualified for base program support and are actively engaged in program activities.

Objective 2.3

Communities and volunteer fire departments assisted (number):

The number of communities and local volunteer fire departments assisted through grants or other cooperative agreements, that provide technical and financial assistance directly to communities, through the States, to effectively and adequately protect State lands and improve firefighting coordination across jurisdictions and to local volunteer fire departments to effectively and adequately protect private lands.

Communities working under broad-based local strategic plans (number):

Includes the number of rural communities that have developed strategic plans to achieve sustainable development in cooperation with capacity building skills delivered through the Economic Action Programs.

Objective 2.4

Timber volume offered (million cubic feet):

The preparation and advertisement for sale (Gate 4 completed) of timber, including all convertible products, which have not been previously advertised for sale.

Livestock forage (thousand animal unit months):

The amount of sheep, goat, cattle, and horse grazing use billed in the current fiscal year.

Minerals nonenergy/energy operations processed (operations)

The processing of all minerals nonenergy and energy operations including:

- Bonded nonenergy operations: the number processed for which reclamation bonds were required.
- Nonbonded nonenergy operations: the number processed that did not require a reclamation bond, such as Plans of Operations under 36 CFR 228.A for which bond requirements were waived, Notices of Intent, or free use mineral material permits for the public.
- New energy operations, including those conducted under reserved and outstanding rights, that require environmental analysis.

Minerals nonenergy/energy operations administered to standard (operations):

The administration of all minerals nonenergy and energy operations, including bonded nonenergy operations to a level that ensures compliance with operating plans and energy operations and including those conducted under reserved and outstanding rights to a level that ensures compliance with operating plans.

Objective 2.5

Forests and grasslands initiating or completing new land and resource management plan (LRMP's) or revisions (number):

New plans or plan revision activities are initiated or completed through integrated interdisciplinary planning and are guided by regulations for the National Forest Management Act (NFMA). The need to change an existing LRMP is determined by an evaluation of the effectiveness of current direction and consideration of desired future conditions of national forests and grasslands.

Scheduled monitoring reports completed (number):

Monitoring and evaluation reports document the monitoring activities and evaluate their significance at two organizational levels: national forest/grassland and region. Monitoring activities are categorized as (a) implementation monitoring to determine if LRMP decisions were implemented as designed, (b) effectiveness monitoring to determine if prescribed measures functioned as envisioned, and (c) validation monitoring to determine if the assumptions used in planning or decision making, above the project level, are valid. Monitoring activities include those specified in LRMP monitoring plans, in addition to monitoring of ecosystem conditions consistent with the Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management.

Objective 2.6

Enforcement Capability (number of patrol days):

Routine patrols of NFS lands ensure a safe environment for the public and employees and the protection of natural resources. Patrols are conducted by agency law enforcement personnel and are enhanced by implementation of 547 cooperative agreements with State and local law enforcement agencies.

Investigations conducted (number):

Includes internal and external investigations related to the use and management of NFS lands and property conducted in compliance with applicable guidelines set forth in the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency "Quality Standards for Investigations."

Objective 2.7

Boundary line located and maintained (miles):

Boundary lines that are located and marked, as well as maintained to agency standard, for all NFS property lines, including boundaries of all special management areas located on NFS lands.

Cases resolved to provide and protect public access (number):

Includes the number of rights-of-way acquisitions, trespass, encroachment, and other actions resolved. Rights-of-way cases include the number of road and trail right-of-way easements acquired or resolved through other lands activities or by cooperative effort. These activities coincide with Categories I, II, and III on the existing annual Rights-of-Way Acquisition Report (FS-5400-25 4/92).

Special use permits administered to standard (number):

Special use authorizations administered to standard are in compliance with the terms and conditions of the authorization and Forest Service policy. At a minimum, the use must be under current authorization; must be in compliance with applicable health and safety laws, regulations, and Forest Service policy; and must have fees that have been determined and collected.

Objective 2.8**Road Condition Rating Index (change):**

Includes the amount of change in a composite index consisting of the following indicators:

- Roads without critical deferred maintenance needs (percent)
- Roads open to all intended traffic (percent)
- Accident frequency on roads managed and maintained for passenger cars
- Bridges inspected as scheduled (percent)
- Average Bridge Sufficiency Rating

The change in road condition rating index will be planned for and measured against a baseline established for FY 2000.

Facilities maintained to standard (number):

Forest Service facilities used for recreation, research, fire, administrative, and other purposes require annual and deferred maintenance to meet health and safety requirements. Refer to section 8 of the FY 2001 budget justification for further details.

Capital improvements completed (number):

Facilities capital improvements include new construction, alteration of an existing facility to change the function, and expansion to change the facility's capacity to serve needs different from what was originally intended.

Seasonal capacity available (million PAOT days):

The cumulative total persons-at-one-time (PAOT) days of developed facility capacity that are made available during the recreation season. This includes the capacity available to standard and the capacity available not to standard.

Trails maintained and improved (miles):

Maintenance and improvement (i.e., reconstruction/construction) work on year-round system trails on NFS lands.

Appendix C
STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES CROSSWALK
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND THE
USDA FOREST SERVICE (1997 and 2000 Revision)

2000 Revision USDA's Mission	2000 Forest Service Mission	1997 Forest Service Mission
<p>To enhance the quality of life for the American people by supporting production agriculture; ensuring a safe, affordable, nutritious, and accessible food supply; caring for public lands and helping people care for private lands; supporting sound sustainable development of rural communities; providing economic opportunities for farm and rural residents; expanding global markets for agricultural and forest products and services; and working to reduce hunger in America and throughout the world.</p>	<p>The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.</p>	<p>To sustain the health, productivity and diversity of the land to meet the needs of present and future generations. The phrase "Caring for the Land and Serving People" expresses the spirit of this mission. Implicit in this statement is the agency's collaboration with partners as stewards of the Nation's forest and rangelands.</p>
<p>Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Key Outcome Measures</p>	<p>2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives</p>	<p>1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives</p>
	<p>2000 Forest Service Goals Summary Goal 1: Ecosystem Health. Promote ecosystem health and conservation using a collaborative approach to sustain the Nation's forests, grasslands and watersheds. Goal 2: Multiple Benefits to People. Provide a variety of uses, values, products, and services for present and future generations by managing within the capability of sustainable ecosystems. Goal 3: Scientific and Technical Assistance. Develop and use the best scientific information available to deliver technical and community assistance and to support ecological, economic, and social sustainability. Goal 4: Effective Public Service. Ensure the acquisition and use of an appropriate corporate infrastructure to enable the efficient delivery of a variety of uses. (Numbers in Forest Service objectives refer to the goals. Letters refer to the objectives related to the goals)</p>	<p>1997 Forest Service Goals Summary Goal I: Ensure Sustainable Ecosystems. This goal focuses on achieving ecosystem health and sustainability through conserving and restoring ecosystem structure, composition and processes, or ecological integrity. Goal II: Provide Multiple Benefits for People within the Capabilities of Ecosystems. Within the limitations of maintaining ecosystem health and conserving biological diversity, forests and rangelands will be managed to meet people's needs for uses, values, products, and services. Goal III: Ensure Organizational Effectiveness. An effective organization is needed to achieve the agency's mission. (Includes programmatic objectives and management initiatives.)</p>

Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Key Outcome Measures

2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives

1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal 3:

Maintain and enhance the Nation's natural resources and environment.

Objective 3.1:

Maintain the productive capacity of the natural resource base for future generations.

Key Outcome Measures:

- Manage land sustainably

Baseline: In 1999, 40% of cropland, 40% of pastureland, 30% of non-Federal rangeland, and 56% of non-Federal forest land were managed sustainably. **Target: In 2005, 45% of cropland, 45% of pasture land, 35% of non-Federal rangeland, and 57% of non-Federal forest land will be managed sustainably.**

- Prevent erosion damage on cropland

Baseline: In 1997, 112 million acres of cropland were eroding at rates that, if continued, will reduce the quality and productive capacity of the soil. **Target: In 2005, the acreage of cropland eroding at damaging rates will be reduced to 105 million acres.**

- Reduce risk of fire

Baseline: 67 million acres of national forests and grasslands today face extreme risk of fire-related losses. **Target: In 2006, the acreage of national forests and grasslands facing extreme risk of fire-related losses will be reduced by 20%.**

Objective 3.2:

Protect the quality of the environment.

Key Outcome Measures:

- Protect water quality and watershed health

Baseline: In 1998, the Environmental Protection Agency reported that 20% of rivers and streams and 14% of

Objective 1.c: Increase the amount of forests and grasslands restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from fires.

Objective 1.a: Improve and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and the soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial water uses.

Objective 1.1: Aquatic Ecosystems – Healthy, diverse, and resilient aquatic ecosystems restored and protected to maintain a variety of ecological conditions and benefits and conserve biological diversity.

Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Key Outcome Measures

understanding of the overall health of the Nation's environment. By 2006, improve trends for selected wildlife and plant populations.

- Enhance urban environments .
Baseline: In 1999, percentage of urban areas with forest cover and green space was 27.1%.

Target: By 2006, attain a 5% increase in forest cover and green space.

- Prevent loss of wetlands .
Baseline: Between 1992 and 1997, net wetland losses declined from 27,000 to 24,000 acres annually.

Target: By 2002, no net loss of wetlands.

- Cleanup contaminated sites on USDA-managed facilities and lands and restore affected ecosystems and watersheds. .

Baseline: In 1998, USDA had over 2,000 sites contaminated from the release of hazardous substances and materials.

Target: In 2006, clean up 10% of the USDA-managed facilities and lands that have been contaminated by hazardous materials.

Objective 3.3:
Provide multiple benefits to people from the Nation's natural resources.

Key Outcome Measures:

- Provide sustainable production levels of the wide variety of goods and services being provided by the national forests and grasslands. .

Baseline: There currently are significant gaps in the data necessary to set long-term performance measures related to providing multiple benefits to people from the national forests and grasslands.

2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Objective 3.c: Improve the knowledge base provided through research, inventory, and monitoring to enhance scientific understanding of ecosystems, including human uses, and to support decisionmaking and sustainable management of the Nation's forest and grasslands.

Objective 2.e: Improve delivery of services to urban communities.

Objective 4.b: Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees.

Objective 3.b: Increase the effectiveness of scientific and technical assistance delivered to domestic and international interests.

1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives

conditions and benefits and conserve biological diversity.

Objective 1.2: Forested Ecosystems – Ecological Integrity of forested ecosystems restored or protected to maintain biological and physical components, functions and interrelationships, and the capability for self-renewal.

Objective 1.3: Rangeland Ecosystems – Healthy, diverse, and resilient rangeland ecosystems restored and protected to maintain robust riparian systems, a variety of ecological conditions and benefits, and biodiversity.

Objective 1.5: TE&S Species Recovery – Populations of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species will be conserved through recovery and management efforts.

Objective 2.4: Urban Forests – Improved urban environments and enhanced community livability through healthy landscapes.

Objective 1.4: Hazardous Substances Sites – Healthy, diverse, and resilient aquatic and terrestrial resources restored and protect through hazardous substances site response.

Objective 3.1: Scientific Information – Better resource management decisions based on the best available scientific information and knowledge.

Objective 2.2: Wilderness – Healthy

Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Key Outcome Measures

Target: In 2001, establish baseline data for the range of goods and services provided by the national forests and grasslands. By 2006, determine sustainable production levels, based on timely and valid scientific data.

- Improve the satisfaction of visitors to national forests and grasslands. .

Baseline: In 1999, user satisfaction with recreation programs and facilities was 84%.

Target: By 2006, attain a 5% increase in user satisfaction.

- Ensure that the stream of benefits from watershed protection infrastructure is maintained. .

Baseline: Nearly 2,000 small watershed areas that cover a total of 140 million acres have been developed to help prevent flooding and provide benefits of water supply and recreational opportunities. Continuation of these benefits depends on rehabilitation of the 10,000 small earthen dams that are a central feature of the watershed management infrastructure. Of these 2,200 urgently need attention.

Target: By 2010, rehabilitation will be completed on 2200 dams.

**Goal 4:
Enhance the capacity of all rural residents, communities, and businesses to prosper.**

Objective 4.1:
Expand job opportunities and improve the standard of living in rural communities.

Key Outcome Measures:

- Create or save jobs in rural areas. .

Baseline: In 1999, nonmetro unemployment was 4.4%, which was

2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Objective 2.b: Improve the capability of wilderness and protected areas to sustain a desired range of benefits and values.

Objective 1.c: Improve the capability of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to provide desired sustainable levels of uses, values, products, and services.

Objective 2.a: Improve the capability of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to provide diverse, high quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Objective 2.1: Recreation – Quality recreation experiences with minimal impacts to ecosystem stability and condition.

Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Key Outcome Measures

2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives

1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives

.2% higher than metro unemployment.

Target: By 2005, the spread between nonmetro and metro unemployment will be cut in half.

Baseline: In 1999, 74,379 jobs were created or saved through USDA financing of businesses in rural areas.

Target: In 2005, create or save 93,000 rural jobs.

- Increase homeownership in rural areas.

Baseline: In 1999, 75.4% of rural residents owned their home.

Target: In 2005, homeownership among rural residents will be 76%.

Baseline: In 1999, 55,941 rural residents received USDA financial assistance to purchase a home of their own.

Target: In 2005, provide credit for a home purchase to 68,000 rural residents.

- Provide safe, drinking water to rural residents.

Baseline: In 1997, 7% of rural households had drinking water reported as not safe to drink.

Target: By 2005, the percentage of rural households with unsafe drinking water will be reduced to 6.5%.

Baseline: In 1999, 748,000 rural people were connected to public water for the first time.

Target: By 2005, connect 843,000 rural people to public water for the first time.

Objective 3.a: Better assist in building the capacity of Tribal governments, rural communities, and private landowners to adapt to economic, environmental, and social change related to natural resources.

(2.3, 2.5) →

Objective 2.3: Heritage Resources – Protected and restored heritage resources that are available for the education and use of current and future generations.

Objective 2.5: Economically healthy and diversified rural communities operating under strategic plans for sustainable development.

**Strategic Goals, Objectives, and
Key Outcome Measures**

Objective 4.2:
Ensure the neediest rural residents and communities have equal access to the USDA programs that will help them succeed.

Key Outcome Measures:

- Assist the neediest rural communities.

Baseline: In 1999, 612 assisted communities successfully applied for non-USDA financial assistance.

Target: In 2005, the number of communities assisted with non-USDA financial assistance will be 800.

Baseline: In 1999, 247 communities located in persistent-poverty rural counties received financial assistance to establish or improve a system for drinking water or waste disposal.

Target: In 2005, the number of communities assisted in persistent-poverty counties will be 278.

Baseline: In 1999, 72 cooperatives serving persistent-poverty counties received financial assistance to establish or improve the local electric service.

Target: For 2005, the number of cooperatives assisted in persistent-poverty counties will be maintained.

Baseline: In 1999, 83 cooperatives serving the 700 counties experiencing out-migration received financial assistance to establish or improve the local electric service.

Target: For 2005, the number of cooperatives assisted in counties experiencing out-migration will be maintained.

2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives

1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Objective 2.d: Increase accessibility to a diversity of people and members of underserved and low-income communities to the full range of uses, values, products, and services.

Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Key Outcome Measures

2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives

1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal 5: Operate an efficient, effective and discrimination-free organization.

Objective 5.1: Ensure that USDA provides fair and equitable service to all customers and upholds the civil rights of its employees.

Key Outcome Measures:

- Conduct civil rights impact analyses of all USDA regulations to assess disparate impacts on underserved customers. .

Baseline: In 2000, civil rights impact analyses were conducted on all regulations.

Target: Maintain 100% civil rights impact analyses of all USDA regulations.

- Provide full and equal access to USDA programs in a discrimination-free environment. .

Baseline: In 2001, 20 percent of USDA programs underwent civil rights compliance reviews.

Target: Every major USDA program is reviewed no less than every 5 years.

- Establish in every agency effective outreach programs that target underserved customers. .

Baseline: In 1999, each USDA agency created a plan to reach out to underserved customers.

Target: In 2001, each agency will have acted on their outreach plan and experienced a substantial increase in minority participation in USDA programs.

- Ensure timely resolution of program and equal employment civil rights complaints. .

Objective 2.d: Increase accessibility to a diversity of people and members of underserved and low-income communities to the full range of uses, values, products, and services.

Objective 4.d: Improve the skills, diversity, and productivity of the workforce.

Objective 4.e: Ensure equal opportunity in employment practices.

Objective 4.f: Provide appropriate access to NFS and ensure nondiscrimination in the delivery of all USDA Forest Service programs.

Objective 3.d: Broaden the participation of less traditional research groups in research and technical assistance programs. .

Management Initiative 1: Workforce Management—An innovative, people-oriented work environment and workforce that is representative of society as a whole. **(4.d, 4.e)**

Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Key Outcome Measures

Baseline: In 1998, processing times were 243 days for program complaints and 348 days for employment complaints.

Target: By 2001, reduce processing time to 180 days or less for both program and employment complaints.

Objective 5.2: Improve organizational productivity, accountability and performance.

Key Outcome Measures:

- USDA will have the information systems needed to allow customers to securely and confidently share data and receive services electronically. .

Baseline: Although USDA agencies presently make many documents available on-line, customers, for the most part, cannot file or submit information to USDA electronically.

Target: USDA will have a secure electronic filing and retrieval system for the Risk Management Agency (by the end of 2001) and the Farm Services Agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Rural Development (by the end of 2002) that will enable customers to file all required paperwork electronically and access all current publications over the Internet. All USDA agencies will make products and services available online, as practicable, by the end of 2003.

- USDA will have a financial information system that can produce auditable financial statements and provide reliable and useful information for decisionmaking. .

Baseline: In 1999, the Department could not provide a set of financial statements that passed the scrutiny of an independent audit, meaning its financial data systems could not provide reliable data for decisionmaking.

2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Objective 4.a: Improve financial management to achieve fiscal accountability.

Objective 4.a—Improve financial management to achieve fiscal accountability.

1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Management Initiative 4: Financial Management—A sound financial system that supports resource decisions with timely, accurate information and financial expertise.

Management Initiative 4: Financial Management —A sound financial system that supports resource decisions with timely, accurate information and financial expertise.

Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Key Outcome Measures

Target: In 2003, the Department will receive a clean audit of its financial statements and have a financial information system in place to provide reliable and useful information for decisionmaking.

- USDA will have a skilled, satisfied workforce and strong prospects for retention of its best employees. .

Baseline: In 1999, 68% of USDA employees said that they were satisfied with their work.

Target: By 2005, 87% of USDA employees are satisfied with their work.

- *USDA will have an environmental management system that can produce reliable data on our environmental performance.* .

Baseline: In 1999, internal USDA facility inspections and program reviews do not produce consistent data on environmental performance.

Target: By 2003, all USDA agencies will implement environmental management systems and publish reliable reports on the environmental performance of their facilities.

2000 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Objective 4.b: Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees. **(3.2, 3.4,3.5)→**

Objective 4.c. Improve and integrate informational systems, data structures, and information management processes to support cost efficient program delivery.

1997 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Objective 3.2: Public Safety – A safer environment for the public and employees on NFS lands

Objective 3.4: Boundary and Title Management – NFS resources and land title are protected through conflict-free and legally defensible boundary lines.

Objective 3.5: An efficient and effective infrastructure that supports public and administrative uses of NFS lands.

Management Initiative 3: Information Management – Integrated information system, data structures, and information management processes in place to support the agency’s mission.

Management Initiative 2: Customer Service – All customers receive better service.

Appendix D

Performance Measures Discontinued or Modified

This appendix shows how performance indicators in the FY 2000 Annual Performance Report have been modified or discontinued as a result of program evaluations and improvements in the performance measurement process. It shows the indicators as they are organized in the FY 2000 Report.

Objective 2.4

The following performance measure has been discontinued:

- Number of minerals nonenergy/energy operations processed

The following performance measure has been modified:

- Number of minerals nonenergy/energy operations administered to standard

It has been replaced with:

- Percent of minerals nonenergy/energy operations administered to standard

Objective 2.6

The following performance measures have been modified:

- Number of patrol days of enforcement capability

- Number of investigations completed

They have been replaced with:

- Enforcement capability

- Investigative capability

- Number of cannabis plants eradicated

Management Initiative 3.3

The following performance measures have been discontinued:

- Percent of employees who are IBM system users

- Percent of total mission critical systems tested and found to be Y2K compliant

Management Initiative 3.4

The following performance measure has been discontinued:

- Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS) implemented