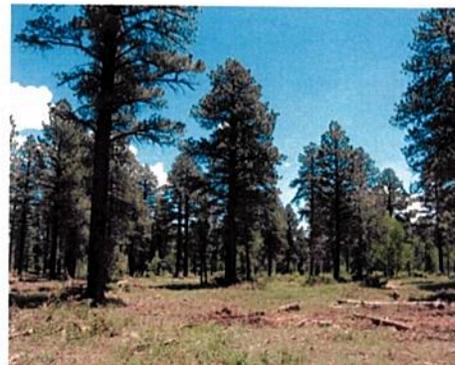


## Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLRP): 2013 Accomplishments

Public Law 111-11, Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, Title IV-Forest Landscape Restoration, Section 4003 (f) (1) established the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP), which initiated projects on National Forest lands in 2010. The intent of the Act is to implement treatments to reduce uncharacteristic wildfire and Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fire hazards; address ecological restoration; improve wildlife and fish habitat; improve hydrologic function and water quality; manage invasive species; maintain, decommission, and rehabilitate roads and trails; and utilize resulting wood by-product materials. This document is an interim update on progress completed in 2013. An in-depth 5-year report to Congress is currently being developed and will be submitted in 2015 to assess to what extent the program is fulfilling the purposes of the Act, and to present a more comprehensive analysis of program outcomes.



The CFLRP funded 23 projects in fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014 with funding provided through the National Forest System (NFS) appropriation. Partner and collaborative engagement have been integral to project development and implementation. Collaborative groups remain engaged in how projects are progressing, in many cases providing pre-National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) community outreach and scientific analysis around potential restoration projects and serving as key partners and reviewers in proposed changes to project proposals.

Below is a summary of the accomplishments in FY 2013, and cumulative progress to date by the program. Detailed information about project-specific accomplishments follows.

### CFLRP Accomplishments: FY 2013 and Lifetime

Accomplishments	FY 2013 Accomplishments (23 projects)	Cumulative Accomplishments <sup>1</sup> (FY 2010-2013)
Acres of forest vegetation established	15,539	50,003
Acres of forest vegetation improved	67,511	141,035
Manage noxious weeds and invasive plants (acres)	18,180	60,333
Miles of stream habitat restored or enhanced	111	502
Acres of terrestrial habitat restored or enhanced	398,231	936,048
Volume of timber sold (million board feet)	379	838
Green tons of woody biomass from hazardous fuel reduction and restoration treatments on Federal land made available for bio-energy production	756,882	1,915,054
Acres of WUI high-priority hazardous fuels treated to reduce wildland fire risk	277,966	661,207
Acres of hazardous fuels treated outside the WUI to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildland fire	141,912	371,070
Miles of road decommissioned	152	407

<sup>1</sup> Please note that these accomplishments include projects funded as High Priority Restoration Projects in FY 2012.

## **Region 1**

### ***Selway-Middle Fork***

In FY 2013, the Selway-Middle Fork Collaborative project, supported by the Clearwater Basin Collaborative, made strides toward creating a more resilient and functioning landscape in Idaho. Activities included treatment of hazardous fuels on 23,917 acres of NFS lands, maintenance of more than 165 miles of roads, and management of noxious weeds and invasive plants on 3,594 acres. The project also helped attract funds to the broader landscape, assisting Idaho County in winning a State and Private Forestry Western Competitive Resource Allocation Grant for restoration on private lands. These funds will go toward stream habitat restoration and forest health improvements.



Another benefit of the project has been that it has served as a catalyst for leveraging partnerships and pulling in local knowledge to support restoration work. The Idaho Youth Conservation Corps program provided educational and work opportunities for 13 local youth. Participants reported that they gained self-confidence and learned how to work cooperatively to solve problems while gaining life skills, making friends, and having fun. Through a longstanding partnership, the Nez Perce Tribe provided technical expertise in watershed restoration and weed

management, as well as considerable financial resources. In addition, three partners, the Montana Conservation Corps, Selway Bitterroot Foundation, and the Back Country Horsemen, contributed nearly 10,000 hours of in-kind and volunteer work on a number of projects in and adjacent to the Selway Bitterroot Wilderness. Work in the Wilderness is logistically challenging, and these partners have the knowledge, equipment, and training to safely accomplish important projects. Finally, partnerships with the the Idaho Fish and Game and several Universities are contributing toward important wildlife monitoring. Wildlife and wildlife habitat is perhaps the number one concern brought up in project litigation in Region 1. Furthering knowledge through monitoring efforts will help expedite future projects.

### ***Southwestern Crown of the Continent***

The Southwestern Crown of the Continent (SWCC) project accomplished an array of diverse restoration goals in FY 2013. By building upon a successful thinning project in FY 2010 and FY 2011, the project completed an under-burn prescription in April 2013. This project restored natural ecosystems to minimize uncharacteristic, intense fires and reduced the threat of catastrophic wildfire to life and property. In all, the project treated hazardous fuels on 3,894 acres within the project landscape in FY 2013.

In FY 2013, the project maintained nearly 400 miles of trails and continues to outpace annual projections. The Montana Wilderness Association (MWA) is partnering with the Forest Service to maintain a portion of the Continental Divide National Trail, and MWA contributed 27 percent of the cost of the restoration effort. Additionally, the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council has enlisted the help of local motorized groups, including the Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association and Great Falls Trail Bike Riders Association, to implement a

trail realignment and resource protection project. Ultimately, 45 percent of the restoration costs will be contributed by the groups.

The project is also protecting watersheds. The Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited has undertaken 12 priority projects with the Forest Service to restore native fish habitat on the Seeley Lake and Lincoln Ranger Districts in the Blackfoot River watershed. The projects include removing undersized culverts that are barriers to aquatic species, removing unnecessary or resource-impacting roads, restoring stream channels, and restoring vegetation along stream banks to provide shade and cover that are critical to the survival of native aquatic species.

### ***Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative***

In FY 2013, the Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) project on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest (NF) supported ecosystem services for local communities through the treatment of more than 720 acres of hazardous fuel, the improvement or establishment of more than 1,141 acres of forest, and the restoration of 1.5 miles of stream habitat on NFS lands. Through this work, the project created or maintained nearly 70 jobs and \$2.9 million in labor income.

In addition to job creation and income for local communities, implementation of the KVRI project has resulted in improved understanding of local resource issues among the community, and real improvements to the community's watershed. Numerous public meetings have been conducted within the KVRI area to explain the need for restoration across the landscape and the specifics of how proposed projects will accomplish this restoration. Field trips to discuss the current CFLRP project areas were conducted this past field season. Participants on these trips included members of the KVRI Forestry Subcommittee and other interested individuals from throughout Boundary County. The field trips provided the opportunity to share information about the benefits of the projects, as well as a chance to exchange thoughts and ideas with groups that share a common interest in restoration.

## **Region 2**

### ***Colorado Front Range***

The Colorado Front Range project explored mechanisms to support and engage local communities while simultaneously pursuing treatments to protect them. In FY 2013, the project treated more than 9,600 acres of hazardous fuels near communities, and protected, maintained, or improved water and soil resources on more than 3,000 acres. Some of these treatments were in response to the Waldo Wildfire that occurred in 2012 and subsequently led to flash floods during the summer of 2013. On July 1, 2013, more than .5 inches of rain fell in 20 minutes. In the past, this would have been a normal summer thunderstorm. But, following the Waldo Canyon Fire, this rain turned into a torrent, resulting in an 8-foot wall of debris with boulders and burned trees that flowed through Manitou Springs. The worst flood occurred August 9, 2013, when 1.5 inches of rain fell quickly, causing another large wall of debris to come off the Waldo Canyon Fire burn scar.

The Waldo Recovery Group was established in the fall of 2012 to address post-fire flooding following the Waldo Canyon Fire. This group includes more than 35 partners from Federal, State, and local governments; local and national non-profits; and private landowners. To date, this group has expended more than \$30 million on public and private lands to assess the flooding

risks, establish priorities, and develop a strategy to implement on-the-ground treatments to mitigate the impacts of flooding.

The project team also explored opportunities to best engage the public, holding four focus group meetings with forest management public outreach experts from across the Front Range. The participants identified a number of effective outreach approaches. In summary, participants emphasized the importance of using messages tailored to the local community, as well as the effectiveness of tying into existing community organizations to distribute information to the public. They also identified one-on-one outreach and interactive methods, using positive messages to explain what forest management consists of, as a much more effective method of communicating with the public.

### ***Uncompahgre Plateau Project***

Restoration activities associated with the Uncompahgre Plateau project are expanding restoration infrastructure and capacity in the surrounding communities. The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Native Seed Warehouse that opened in 2012, in cooperation with several Federal agencies and non-profit organizations, continues to expand their operations. Several species of native seed were collected and propagated by private growers and are being stored in the warehouse. The Uncompahgre Forest, and many other State and Federal agencies, are working with the Western Colorado Landscape Collaborative (formally the Uncompahgre Partnership) as a broker to purchase seed at bulk rates. The Uncompahgre Forest is also finalizing out-year native seed mixes and quantities.



Additional community benefits include wood products offered through stewardship contracts, salvage sales, and timber sales; the generation and maintenance of more than 181 full- and part-time jobs in the community, along with \$5.4 million in labor income; and support for learning opportunities for local students. The project also utilizes a 20-person veteran green crew to complete fire management and suppression activities that, in FY 2013, resulted in the sale of approximately 5 million board feet of timber, and the treatment of more than 10,000 acres for hazardous fuels reduction.

## **Region 3**

### ***Four Forest Restoration Initiative***

The goal of the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) is to achieve ecological restoration across ~2.4 million acres of contiguous ponderosa pine forest on NFS lands in northern Arizona. In order to accomplish this goal, the project is taking a multi-pronged approach, including the use of a 300,000-acre, 10-year stewardship contract. On May 4, 2013, the Ranch Task Order on the Apache-Sitgreaves NF was issued to Pioneer Forest Products. Work began on the Task Order in June, and by the end of the fiscal year, the task order was 90 percent complete. To date, there has been a positive value to the government on 9 of the 10 task orders, with an average per-acre payment to the government of \$47.65 per acre.

Under this stewardship contract, the White Mountain stewardship contract, and the normal program of work for the four forests, the 4FRI project was able to make a large impact on the landscape in fiscal year 2013. The project treated hazardous fuels near communities on more than 57,000 acres and generated nearly 13 million board feet of timber, 729,500 green tons of biomass, and maintained more than 720 miles of roads. Through this work, the project created or maintained 1,579 jobs and generated more than \$39 million in labor income.

### ***Southwest Jemez Mountains***

The Southwest Jemez Mountains project is protecting communities through treatment implementation and educational opportunities. In FY 2013, the Santa Fe NF awarded 720 acres of forest thinning high-profile areas adjacent to communities at risk, such as Thompson Ridge and Sierra De Los Pinos. Additionally, the project treated 8,326 acres with prescribed fire adjacent to communities.

In FY 2013, matching funds for the project included a Youth Conservation Corps grant that provided training and employment to 12 young adults (18-22 year-olds from Pojoaque and Jemez Pueblos). There was a 5-day formal training session (first-aid/cardiopulmonary resuscitation, safety, use of tools, backcountry driving, tree planting, fencing, field measurements, etc.). There were also opportunities to provide environmental training (ecology and biology). Hands-on environmental training included fish surveys (capture, electro-shocking, measuring, and marking) and rangeland vegetation surveys. A second grant has been received for 2014.

The project is also preparing for future success. Currently, the Santa Fe NF is working on its Environmental Impact Statement, which will cover the 110,000-acre project area for 32,000 acres of thinning and 77,000 acres of prescribed fire, in addition to a variety of restoration treatments across the project area.

### ***Zuni Mountain Project***

In FY 2013, the Cibola NF and its project partners had a measurable impact on the resources, as well as the communities that rely on the resources for recreation, fuelwood, and clean water. The project treated more than 15,700 acres to sustain or restore watershed function and resiliency, sold nearly 6 million board feet of timber, and treated hazardous fuels on more than 3,400 acres.

The project also had measurable economic and social impacts in Cibola and McKinley Counties, primarily through the award of an additional 1,351 acres under the National Wild Turkey Federation Stewardship agreement for the harvest and removal of forest products. The increased supply has enabled a local fledgling sawmill to expand operations to two shifts. Mt. Taylor Manufacturing, the wood processing and implementation partner, invested \$595,165 in their wood processing and waste capturing capacity. These investments increased their efficiency by 400 percent. This capacity investment now directly supports 15 wood processing positions, many of which are filled with skilled members of the Navajo Nation.

## **Region 4**

### ***Weiser-Little Salmon Headwaters***

In FY 2013, the Weiser-Little Salmon Headwaters project, supported by the Payette Forest Coalition (PFC), enhanced community safety by treating hazardous fuels on more than 20,236 acres of NFS land. The project also supported rural economies through the generation of more than 10,639 green tons of biomass for energy production, and the sale of nearly 12 million board feet of timber. Restoration activities on the forest created or maintained 140 jobs and \$6.024 million in labor income.

With the help of the PFC, a major Record of Decision was issued in April 2012 for the Mill-Creek Council Mountain (MCCM) project within the CFLR boundary. A part of the MCCM project, the Shingle Hall Integrated Service Contract, was implemented to do the following: 1) restore forest stands toward historical range of variability, 2) contribute to the economic vitality of the communities adjacent to the Forest, 3) reduce wildland fire hazard and reduce risk in the WUI, and 4) improve recreational opportunities in the project area.

## **Region 5**

### ***Dinkey Landscape Restoration Project***

The Dinkey Landscape Restoration Project impacted landscape resilience and supported local communities in FY 2013. On the ground, the project treated more than 2,850 acres of hazardous fuels in the WUI, enhanced terrestrial habitat on more than 4,800 acres, and generated nearly 3 million board feet of timber volume for sale. Through this work, the project created or maintained more than 80 jobs and generated \$3.25 million in labor income.

The program also created educational opportunities. This year, the Environmental Adventures Program had 14 local youth and 2 crew leaders for 15 days to accomplish different tasks for silviculture, special uses, and botany. The purpose of the program is to engage students in working with the Forest Service, Southern California Edison, and the Bureau of Land Management. The youth learned about different natural resources, jobs that are in the different groups, and field work that is accomplished.

### ***Amador Calaveras Consensus Group Cornerstone***

The Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG) Cornerstone project is supporting local communities through innovative partnerships. For example, the local national forests signed and implemented a participating agreement with Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS), a local nonprofit organization. This agreement, which requires a match from CHIPS toward project cost, provides the Forest Service with trained workers to implement restoration activities. In turn, CHIPS receives on-the-job training experience for local workers and payment for work completed, helping integrate ecological restoration with opportunities for local employment and improved community well-being. In addition to the CHIPS employment, the project also created or maintained 152 jobs and generated more than \$7.3 million in labor income through restoration treatment implementation.

In FY 2013, the Eldorado NF implemented its first full project under ACCG oversight—the Callegat Ecological Restoration project. The environmental analysis was signed, and a portion of the project was sold under a stewardship contract, helping meet a key forest target.

Collaboration with the ACCG provided significant improvement to the final decision, resulting from several meetings and field trips. An additional benefit is that one frequent appellant group now regularly joins ACCG on field trips, seeing it as an effective method of participation. The Stanislaus NF is working closely with ACCG on the Hemlock Landscape Restoration project to develop a jointly supported proposed action.

In FY 2013, the project treated more than 2,700 acres near communities, enhanced stream habitat on two miles, and enhanced terrestrial habitat on more than 1,000 acres.

## **Region 6**

### ***Tapash***

The desired outcome of the Tapash project is a vegetative landscape that is more resilient to changing climates, fire, and insects, and also responds in a manner that maintains and restores natural processes, patterns, and functions. The reestablishment of natural vegetative processes, such as insect and disease and fire regimes, is also intended to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire and associated management costs. Accomplishments to date include 7,380 acres of hand piling, 217 acres of grapple piling, approximately 5,000 acres of grapple pile burning, 3,045 acres of hand-pile burning, 961 acres of prescribed burning, 5,691 acres of pre-commercial thinning, and a combined 843 acres of lop and scatter, ladder fuel reduction, and mastication.



Specifically, in FY 2013, the project sold more than 13 million board-feet of timber and treated more than 790 acres in the WUI. These fire treatments have elicited the praise of local landowners who are excited to see an increase in the safety of their property, as well as movement toward restoring ponderosa pine forests.

### ***Deschutes***

In FY 2013, the Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project accomplished thinning with 2,273.9 tons of biomass removal and sold more than 7 million board feet of timber. They saw an increase in fuels treatments of 11,570 acres in the WUI over the last several years of the project. Fuels treatments were accomplished through both mechanical and prescribed fire activities. In addition, the project completed two fish passage projects to replace undersized culverts and started design work on another culvert to be contracted in FY 2014. The team also accomplished 6.7 miles of stream restoration through planting trees, hand pulling noxious weeds, and closing and rehabilitating trails and user-created roads. Soil and water enhancement occurred on 876 acres, with an additional benefit of 2 miles of road decommissioning activities. The project accomplished 1,140 acres of invasive weed treatments, utilizing youth crews for hand treatments and contracting with local applicators for herbicide treatments. Most of this invasive weed work occurred through agreements with youth crews, which significantly increased the group's capacity.

Similar to last year, the collaborative group has taken an active role in NEPA planning efforts. The Forest Service is seeing increased engagement between the ranger district, the collaborative

group, and the community of Bend. In 2012, the Restoration and Planning committee developed recommendations for the management of ponderosa pine stands that will help to inform the NEPA processes that will feed the out-year CFLRP of work. Building upon that effort, the Districts are engaging in pre-implementation field trips with the collaborative group to see the management concepts translated into implementation. There were several successful field trips with the collaborative group to review and discuss their recommendations. Other partner groups this last year included the following: the Oregon Hunters Association, Oregon Trails Alliance, Central Oregon Running Club, High Cascade Forest Volunteers, Sisters Trail Alliance, Travel Oregon, Trout Unlimited, Central Oregon Community College Forestry Club, East Cascades Audubon Society, Sisters Schools, and various private citizens. Volunteers focused on fisheries, riparian, invasive weeds, and wildlife and trails work, all of which amounted to more than 14,000 hours.

### ***Lakeview***

The Forest Service is committed to maintaining focus on restoration work in the CFLRP landscape while also accomplishing the planning and preparation work for salvage of the Barry Point Fire and additional program work. This year, the focus was on moving forward with restoration in areas where the planning process had been completed and projects could be put on the ground and moved through contracting quickly. Projects that included partners also received priority for funding. Vegetative treatments occurring within the Lakeview Stewardship CFLRP landscape are aimed at promoting healthy forest conditions where fire can be allowed to take a more natural role in maintaining a sustainable ecosystem. Camp Creek Stewardship was awarded under the 10-year Stewardship Contract with the Collins Companies. The project sold approximately 1.5 million board feet of timber and treated 8,546 acres in non-WUI areas using prescribed burning. Fuel reduction-tree thinning occurred on another 4,159 acres. Integrated treatments of understory thinning, followed by prescribed fire, are changing the fuel strata, reducing the threat of severe fire across the landscape, and promoting healthy forest conditions.

CFLRP funds are allowing the project to increase community capacity and educational opportunities. The Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) has been a local partner with the Forest Service for the past 7 years. Through an agreement made possible with CFLRP funds, a crew of 6 to 8 youth from low-income households in the Lakeview area, led by adult supervisors, accomplished a variety of resource enhancement projects at recreation sites and trails in the Lakeview Stewardship Unit. The COIC was able to use the CFLRP funds as leverage for additional funding to help sustain their program activities. In addition, through a Stewardship Agreement, a crew from the Northwest Youth Corp (NWYC) maintained 60 miles of recreation trails. CFLRP funds give the Fremont-Winema NF the ability to partner with NWYC to accomplish labor-intensive trail maintenance work across the Lakeview Stewardship CFLRP landscape, while providing young men and women with job skills and training.

### ***Southern Blues Restoration Coalition***

In September 2013, the Malheur NF awarded a 10-year stewardship contract to Iron Triangle LLC of John Day, Oregon. Shortly after, they awarded the first task order under that contract, which includes over 8,000 acres of restoration work, all of which is within the project boundary. The goal of this stewardship contract is to accomplish ecological restoration at a landscape scale, eventually treating between 180,000 and 500,000 acres. In addition to providing opportunities

for restoration work, the contract will provide jobs and materials for forest product processing in local communities. This is significant to local communities surrounding the Malheur NF, as the stewardship contract will include various types of work such as pre-commercial thinning, mechanical fuels reductions, road maintenance, and timber product removal. Approximately 500 million board feet of timber could be harvested over 10 years.

CFLRP funds were used to hire additional summer employees to help prepare the many large contracts awarded this year. Fire crews worked the off season in the project area, completing fuels reduction activities or preparing contracts. Collaborative Forest Landscape project and matching funds were also used to complete implementation monitoring of the many activities completed this year.

In addition to creating employment opportunities and pursuing long-term stewardship projects, the project also supported local communities through restoration treatments. In FY 2013, the project sold nearly 48 million board feet of timber and treated more than 30,000 acres of hazardous fuels.

### ***Northeast Washington Forest Vision 2020***

The 10-year priority of the Northeastern Washington (NEW) Forest Vision 2020 (NEW Forest Vision 2020) Project is to increase ecosystem resilience in light of disturbance, restore old growth structure and function, and reduce wildfire risk and fire management costs. The Colville NF plans to accomplish this through the thinning of small trees and reduction of ladder fuels; increasing the number of fire breaks throughout the project landscape; employing fire as a resource management tool; and establishing a low-fuels buffer on the northern boundary of the Colville Indian Reservation.

During the fiscal year 2013, 5,381 acres of fuels were treated within the NEW Forest Vision 2020 landscape. Of that, 672 acres were Non-WUI acres, and 4,709 acres were WUI. In addition, the project sold nearly 17 million board feet of timber, bringing them to 17 percent of the Vision 2020 project goals. The project also made progress toward restoring aquatic habitat. Fish passage barriers were replaced, opening up 4 miles of continuous habitat in the headwaters of Sherman Creek. This is a unique Westslope cutthroat trout population that will benefit from these barrier removals.

### **Region 8**

#### ***Accelerating Longleaf-Florida***

CFLRP dollars were used to increase timber sale preparation (cruising and marking contracts) and expand the current sales program. The Gator-Findley Stewardship project facilitated the sale and treatment of 1,760 acres through forest thinning and small conversion harvests. More than 5 million board feet of timber were sold; also, an additional 10 million board feet were harvested to reduce fuels, enhance native groundcover, and improve wildlife



habitat. A timber stand improvement project was completed on 741 additional acres to “release” young longleaf from surrounding competition.

On average, the forest has been able to prescribe burn an average of 25,000 acres of the forest annually prior to CFLRP, with most burns occurring in the dormant season. This equates to a fire return interval of 4–5 years (too long to achieve ecological restoration). The widely accepted fire return interval associated with healthy longleaf pine forests is a return interval of 2–3 years. To achieve this, the forest will double the annual prescribed fire acreage to 50,000 acres over the life of the project. In FY 2013, 29,308 acres were treated by prescribed burning. Heavy and frequent rainfall greatly reduced available burn days on the forest; however, increased water levels in swamps allowed for burns to occur in high-priority areas within the WUI. Also, many of these prescribed fires were conducted during the growing season, which is key to the establishment and maintenance of native herbaceous ground cover. Baker County completed its Community Wildfire Protection Plan during 2013, so now a greater percentage of the forest is labeled as WUI. This designation change resulted in a much greater percentage of fuel treatment within the WUI than anticipated.

An economic impact study conducted by Southwick and Associates and Responsive Management was conducted for the first 3 years of the Accelerating Longleaf Project. An excerpt from this study states

“This program has contributed over \$10 million to Gross Domestic Product, over \$1 million in State and local tax revenue, \$1.2 million in Federal tax revenues were returned to the Federal Government, and \$7 million in salaries and wages were generated. In economic output, which is the sum of all personal and business spending resulting from the CFLRP, over \$16.6 million in activity has been stimulated by this project over the past 3 years (2010-2012). For every \$1 invested in this program, \$0.20 is returned to the Federal Government in tax revenues, \$1.50 in gross domestic product is created, and \$2.40 in total economic activity is generated.”

#### ***Shortleaf-Bluestem Community***

In FY 2013, partnership contributions were almost doubled, from \$86,332 in FY 2012 to \$164,344 in FY 2013. The Ouachita Forest projects to even further exceed partnership efforts in FY 2014. Timber was sold on 4,673 acres, with 2,465 acres of timber with harvesting reported as completed within the CFLRP area. The acres of timber that have been sold (accomplished) represent 78 percent of the project proposal of 6,000 acres per year. The payment units reported as completed remains significantly below the proposed annual pace. This is indicative of a timber market still in the process of declining, where payment units purchased over the last 2 years have yet to be logged. Treatments designed to reduce the density of non-commercial trees within the forest CFLRP communities totaled 7,021 acres: 4,689 acres of Wildlife Stand Improvement; 965 acres of Timber Stand Improvement, and 1,367 acres of Pre-Commercial Thinning. This total of 7,021 exceeded our proposal of 5,000 acres. Prescribed burning totaled 54,461 acres, with an additional 7,141 acres of mechanical fuels treatments within the CFLRP area, totaling 61,602 acres.

The local communities benefited through an agreement that funded environmental educational training from a non-profit business, Native Expeditions. Over 1,000 students were taught within the CFLRP area about the importance of our local ecosystems, the flora and fauna, and the tools needed to restore these native landscapes. These students assisted the Forest Service in restoration efforts, with a graduate student from the University of Kansas in planting pollinator plants for school yard habitats and in re-establishing pollinator sites in the Forest. The seeds for these pollinator plants were collected within the Forest and were grown by Monarch Watch, a program based at the University of Kansas.

### ***Accelerating Longleaf–Mississippi***



Of the \$2.4 million appropriated to De Soto Ranger District for high-priority accelerated ecosystem restoration, over \$1.3 million went to job creation and the private sector workforce. The jobs created or maintained by the project in FY 2013 are mostly technical and manual labor positions utilized in new and existing contracts. Small and large businesses in our area have benefited from the implementation of the project. Almost all contractors are based in south Mississippi.

The project supported local communities through restoration treatments as well, generating 10 million board feet of timber and reducing hazardous fuels in nearly 86,000 acres. In addition to prescribed fire and wildfire, 6,150 acres of mechanical treatments, and herbicide treatments were completed within the project area. Mechanical treatments included 4,500 acres of forestry brush-hogging/mastication, which targeted areas of high-fire occurrence, fire-dependent threatened and endangered species such as red-cockaded woodpecker colonies, and road corridors utilized for effective prescribed fire and wildfire breaks. Another 320 acres of fireline preparation was accomplished in WUI areas.

### ***Grandfather Restoration***

One of the primary goals of the Grandfather Restoration Project is to restore and maintain fire-adapted/dependent ecosystems. The project made great progress toward accomplishing this goal, treating 5,423 acres in FY 2013 despite 20-plus inches of rain above the normal average.



Partners in the collaborative have been engaged throughout the projects, hosting volunteer workdays, leading the monitoring committees, and completing treatments. The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission accomplished 323 acres of wildlife opening maintenance across the district, treated 4 acres of non-native invasive species, stocked 5,000 brown trout fingerlings, conducted 13 wildlife and aquatic surveys, and gathered bear data on 25 bears.

The project is impacting local communities. In FY 2013, the project created 43 jobs and generated more than \$1.8 million in labor income. In addition, they are bringing local land owners into the collaborative group with the aim of treating all lands together for non-native invasive species along the corridor.

### ***Ozark Highlands Ecosystem Restoration***

CFLR funds benefit wildlife habitat for game and non-game species, improve stream and lake habitat, contribute to timber harvest and sales, and improve forest visitors' experiences. As the project reaches desired forest conditions, they can improve visitors' experience. Lake Wedington received approximately 31, 000 visitors in FY 2013. The National Visitor Monitoring Results show that in the Ozark-St. Francis NF (on average) visiting parties spend \$198 per trip.

In FY 2013, the project sold nearly 18 million board feet of timber and treated hazardous fuels on more than 25,000 acres. On the Ozark-St. Francis NF, timber is cut to balance the ecosystem and to restore watersheds. Historical records show that most of the Ozark-St. Francis NF was in oak/pine woodlands and pine/bluestem savannahs. The timber harvest, along with prescribed burning, helps to maintain these ecosystems. The combination of timber harvest and prescribed burning also helps to maintain early successional forest habitats and the understory growth of wildflowers and native grasses that produce habitat for pollinators. Timber harvest improves ecosystem conditions by decreasing the number of stems per acre on the landscape and increasing native ground cover vegetation. Timber was harvested through sale contracts, stewardship contracts, and stewardship agreements. Prescribed burning improves the overall conditions of the forest for species that need a grass understory.

## **Region 9**

### ***Missouri Pine-Oak Woodlands***

The Missouri Pine-Oak Woodland Restoration remained on schedule to meet its goals in FY 2013. The multi-party effort to meet the various individual treatment and monitoring goals continues to build momentum. The partnership treated over 8,600 acres in 2013, which brought the total acres treated to date to nearly 25,000 acres. As part of the project, the Mark Twain NF sold nearly 13 million board feet of timber (primarily saw logs) in FY 2013, which are estimated to have generated 78.4 direct jobs in the 10-county area covered by the project. Fuel treatments in the area (9,621 acres) have begun to make a slight difference in the occurrence and severity of wildfire, which was down in FY 2013 from the usual activity. Multi-party monitoring of sensitive birds and the collection of data from the 151 Floristic Quality Assessment plots indicate continued movement toward the desired conditions.

The multi-part monitoring was initiated in FY 2013, with implementation of bird monitoring on the Mark Twain and Ouachita NF, Pine-Woodland Forest Landscape Restoration Projects. Each project is implementing bird monitoring to 1) determine change in abundance in response to restoration activities and 2) determine relationships between bird abundance and vegetation structure and composition. The first objective will require bird surveys spaced over the duration of the project. Results from the second objective will be available after 3 years.

The Northern Research Station received \$16,000 from the Ouachita NF and \$33,000 from the Mark Twain NF through in-service agreements to implement monitoring in 2013. A research

specialist with the University of Missouri was assigned to manage the project and hired three technicians to help complete surveys. The Missouri Department of Conservation and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission provided housing.

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