EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | A message from the Forest Supervisor

I hope you enjoy the annual report video and executive summary. In an effort to be a more sustainable organization, we created a digital version of our annual report located on our website and this three-page highlight of our 2015 accomplishments.

2015 was another great year filled with both challenges and successes. Despite significant budget reductions and decreased staffing, we accomplished most everything we set out to do . At the same time, the White River National Forest saw record breaking visitation at most of our iconic locations. It has never been more obvious that people love the White River National Forest and all it has to offer.

As I look toward 2016, I envision a different year. It will be a year that requires us to be thoughtful and deliberate about the projects we choose to take on. It will require strategic work with partners and communities to identify creative solutions to meet the challenges ahead. We remain and will continue to be committed to the stewardship of these incredible lands for current and future generations.

Sincerely,

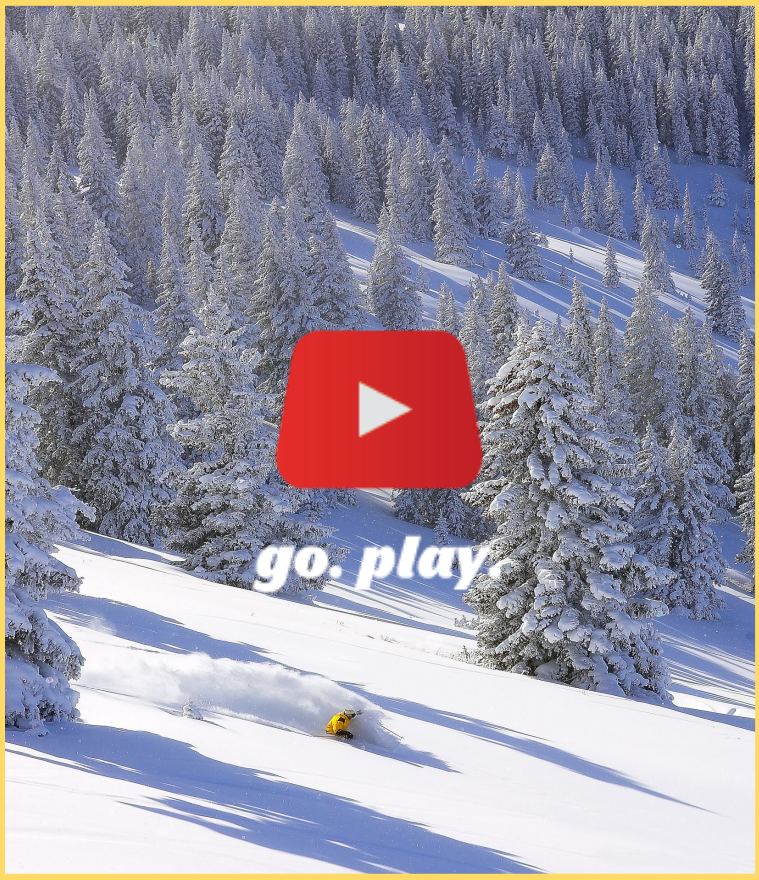
Scott Fitzwilliams

Water, Soils and Restoration | The Forest continued efforts in landscape restoration and 2015 was a busy year! The Crooked Creek wetlands restoration project created 1,700 feet of new stream channel and 4 acres of restored wetlands from 4 fishing ponds that were previously acquired through land exchange. The project was entirely funded through money from a local municipality. In West Brush Creek on the Eagle-Holy Cross RD, two aquatic organism passages were installed resulting in 4.7 miles of stream connectivity restored. The Forest also continues to progress on an Environmental Impact Statement for a wetland and stream channel restoration project at Camp Hale, while also developing an In-lieu fund program with the National Forest Foundation that will pay for the restoration project.

Wildlife | Prescribed burning continues to be implemented across the forest to improve wildlife habitat conditions in places near Aspen, Carbondale and Rifle. The multi-year South Rifle Habitat Enhancement Partnership Project resulted in 3,700 acres of habitat improvement. In 2015, the project cost $260k and was funded 20% by FS dollars and 80% from partnership dollars from Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, National Forest Foundation, Laramie Energy, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Grazing | The WRNF treated 5,342 acres of noxious invasive plants in 2015 through treatments achieved with the help of many partners . The WRNF successfully managed 86 allotments with over 41,00 sheep and 20,000 cattle grazing on public lands. The White River maintains good working relationships with the local ranching community.

Fuels Mitigation | The forest awarded three task orders under the 10-year Stewardship Contract ,resulting in 969 acres of forest restoration treatments. The Forest also sold 28.45 million board feet of timber through a combination of stewardship contracts, traditional timber sales, and small sales. Fuels work such as prescribed fire and mechanical treatments resulted in 6,875 acres of treatments across the forest. The WRNF reforestation program was able to plant 86,300 trees in 2015 amounting in 263 acres of reforestation.



Recreation | The White River continues to have the largest ski program in the nation with over seven million visits to the 11 downhill and 3 cross country ski areas permitted on the Forest. Income to the Federal treasury from these permits is in excess of $22 million for 2015. In partnership with the Vail Valley Foundation, Vail Associates and others the Forest hosted competitors and visitors from around the world at the Alpine World Ski Championships. The Forest continued to support large recreation events including the Pro Cycle Challenge, Go Pro Games and the winter X-Games. The first Alpine Coaster was constructed on the Forest at Vail .

After several years of public involvement, a determination was made that Deep Creek is suitable for inclusion into the nation's wild and scenic rivers system under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. If enacted by Congress, Deep Creek could become only the second river in Colorado to receive this designation since the Act was passed in 1968. Further, the Forest made a decision to support and work with a stakeholder group representing numerous water providers, environmental concerns and others to protect the recreational and scenic values on and along the Colorado River in Glenwood Canyon now and into the future.

Engineering & Facilities | The Forest continued efforts to 'rightsize' and establish a sustainable facility footprint in 2015. Completion of the renovation of the 100-year old WRNF Supervisor's Office is a large accomplishment. The project included asbestos removal; the installation of a new HVAC system; installation of new, historically-accurate and energy-efficient windows; installation of solar panels; installation of upgraded controls and LED lighting; installation and commissioning of dedicated smart meters for utility monitoring; and installation of updated interior finishes and furniture. The renovations and associated office furniture provide sufficient office space for the entire Supervisor's Office staff which allowed the Forest to eliminate a 3,000 SF/$160,000 annual lease. While no single system provided substantial energy savings, the fact that occupancy was nearly doubled means that gross square footage per-person and utility usage per person is down about 25%.

Dollars & Cents| How Taxpayer Money was Spent

Each year Congress allocates funding to the Forest Service to accomplish a variety of goals. The funds come to the Forest Service in the form of Budget Line Items, or "BLIs". Funding for each BLI is allocated by Congress to achieve certain goals outlined in the budget direction. In other words, congress tells us what to do with the appropriated money.

In addition, the Forest Service collects a variety of fees for use on the national forest that in some cases is retained by the local unit to accomplish certain goals. Although Congress still must authorize the spending of these fees, they are collected on the forest for use on the forest. Conversely, some fees are collected by the Forest Service but are deposited to the U.S. Treasury general fund.

In 2015, the White River National Forest collected about $10 million more than was spent managing the Forest, this money mostly came from recreation. Not every program on the forest generates a "return" in dollar amounts. In many cases, we spend funds to improve the health of the forest or protect it from wildfire. Although we don't collect any fees for these activities, they are still very beneficial to the public at large.

Line Item	Amount
Forest Watershed Restoration and Fuels Reduction	$2,594,487
Recreation Management (includes fees collected)	$3,689,078
General Administration	$2,675,947
Road & Trail Maintenance & Construction	$1,346,834
Energy/Minerals & Mining Management	$902,134
Fire Preparedness	$1,408,997
Wildfire Suppression	$70,953
Forest Products (Timber Sales, Biomass, Christmas Tree, Firewood)	$1,781,041
Fleet/Vehicles/Fuel/Maintenance	$834,245
Facilities Maintenance & Construction	$523,221
Lands, Water & Communication Site Management	$553,426
Wildlife, Fish & Botany Management	$686,265
Range/Livestock Grazing Administration	$501,594
Planning, Inventory & Monitoring	$424,224
Abandoned Mine Reclamation	$412,546
TOTALS	**$18,404,992**

Trends | The majority of the revenue generated by the White River National Forest is returned to the general fund of the US Treasury. About $1,400,000 was retained on the forest in fees for 2015.

	2003	2015
Total Budget (Actual Dollars/does not include inflation/cost of living adjustments)	$20,398,000	$18,404,992
Fee Revenue (most returned to the U.S. Treasury)	$8,938,000	$28,497,656
Visitation	9 million/year	13 million/year
Timber Accomplishments	4,000 CCF	54,000 CCF
Fuels Accomplishments	<1,000 acres	4,400 + acres
Special Use Permits Issued	250	500+
Volunteer and Partner Contributions	$1.1 million	$3.2 million
Permanent Employees	178	116
Temporary Employees	210	113

BUDGET Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
TOTALS	**$30,392,208**	**$30,373,316**	**$22,541,700**	**$21,284,100**	**$22,612,800**	**$20,670,299**	**$18,404, 992**