SAWTOOTH NATIONAL FOREST
LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

2013 MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT
FY 2014

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I. INTRODUCTION

In September 2003, the Sawtooth National Forest (NF) began implementing its revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The revised Forest Plan defines a strategy that manages Forest resources to attain a set of desired resource and social and economic conditions by emphasizing the maintenance or restoration of watershed conditions, species viability, terrestrial and aquatic habitats, and healthy, functioning ecosystems. Monitoring and evaluation are critical to determining if we are attaining desired goals. In accordance with the regulations at 36 CFR 219.12(k): "At intervals established in the plan, implementation shall be evaluated on a sample basis to determine how well objectives have been met and how closely management standards and guidelines have been applied. Based upon this evaluation, the interdisciplinary team shall recommend to the Forest Supervisor such changes in management direction, revisions, or amendments to the Forest Plan as are deemed necessary."

Chapter IV of the 2003 Forest Plan establishes that formal evaluation and reporting will occur every 5 years. 2008 marked completion of the first five years of implementation under the 2003 revised Forest Plan, triggering a formal review. The Forest completed the formal evaluation of the first five years of Forest Plan implementation and published the results of that evaluation in 2011.

As a result of the 5-year evaluation, several changes were made to the monitoring elements described in Chapter IV of the Forest Plan. These changes are reflected in this monitoring report. In addition to completion of the 5-year evaluation, the Forest completed an amendment of the Forest Plan to adopt a forested biological community Wildlife Conservation Strategy (WCS) in 2012. The 2012 (WCS) Forest Plan amendment included several changes to the monitoring elements described in Chapter IV of the Forest Plan as well as added, deleted or modified several management objectives. The changes identified in the 2012 WCS Forest Plan amendment are reflected in this report. This document reflects the final monitoring report for fiscal year 2013.

II. 2013 FOREST PLAN MONITORING and EVALUATION REPORT ORGANIZATION

As previously stated, monitoring and evaluation provide knowledge and information to keep the Land and Resource Management Plan viable. Appropriate selection of indicators, and monitoring and evaluation of key results helps us determine if we are meeting the desired conditions identified in the Plan. Chapter IV of the Revised Forest Plan provides the list of activities, practices and/or effects to be monitored and the various indicators to be used as measures. While most of the monitoring elements require that some level of data be gathered each year, the majority of elements are designed to evaluate the effects of management over time. Therefore, results of monitoring efforts for most elements are reported after evaluation of data that has been gathered for multiple years.

Chapter IV, Table IV-1 of the Forest Plan identifies elements related to National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and other pertinent laws and regulations that are reported on either an annual basis or every 5 years. Elements that are not reported each year are typically those that require the collection of information over multiple years before a meaningful evaluation is possible. In this second year under the 2012 amended Forest Plan, only the elements identified in Table IV-1 with a "yes" in the "Annual Posting of Results" column will be discussed in Section III-A below.

Table IV-2 of the Forest Plan identifies questions and indicators that will be monitored to determine the success of the Forest Plan management strategy in progressing toward desired conditions. Similar to Table IV-1, information pertaining to many of the indicators requires multiple years of collection before any meaningful evaluation of an element and its related question can be made. Therefore, only the monitoring questions and their related indicators with "annually" in the "Report Period" column will be addressed in Section III-B below.

III. SUMMARY OF MONITORING RESULTS:

III-A. Annual Monitoring Requirements – Table IV-1:

Monitoring requirements identified in the Forest Plan shall provide for:
1. A quantitative estimate of performance comparing outputs and services with those projected by the Forest Plan.

As defined in the Forest Plan, Objectives are "concise time-specific statements of actions or results designed to help achieve goals". As such, objectives provide the best projection of outputs and services to be provided through implementation of the Forest Plan. Forest Plan objectives are found under the various Forest-wide Resources sections in Chapter III of the Forest Plan. Following is a summary of the Forest's accomplishments for those objectives designed to provide for specific services on an annual basis, and/or projected outputs resulting from management actions. Other objectives found in the various sections of the Forest Plan do not require an annual accomplishment and are *not* discussed in this monitoring report. These objectives are discussed only in those cases where activities have been implemented that substantially contribute toward or fully accomplish the objective.

The objectives addressed below are organized by resource section as they are found in the Forest Plan. Those resource sections in the Plan that do not contain objectives that are reported on an annual basis or require an annual accomplishment will be noted below.

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, PROPOSED, AND CANDIDATE SPECIES OBJECTIVES (FLRMP pages III-8 to III-11)

Objective TEOB01 - *Continue to map and update locations of species occurrence and habitat for TEPC species during fine- or site/project-scale analyses. Incorporate information into a coordinated GIS database and coordinate with the Idaho Conservation Data Center.*

Accomplishment: Wildlife TEPC and sensitive species information was collected from project analyses (refer to BABEs below), field inventories, and ongoing annual monitoring (refer to Tables 5-7) in 2013. This information was used to inform project and program level analyses and decision making. Data from these inventories is currently stored at the District level and is awaiting input into NRIS Wildlife database. TEPC and sensitive plant species information from project analyses, field inventories, and monitoring were entered into NRIS in 2013. This information was used to refine rare plant element occurrences on the forest. Data has been shared with the Idaho Conservation Data Center via CDC rare plant element occurrence report forms.

TEPC and sensitive aquatic organism information from project analyses, field inventories, and monitoring were entered into the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) in 2013. This information was used to refine spatial coverages that display species distribution for Wood River sculpin, northern leatherside chub, westslope and Yellowstone cutthroat trout, bull trout, Chinook salmon, and steelhead trout. Data has been shared with the Idaho Conservation Data Center via Idaho Fish and Game collection permits.

Objective TEOB03 - *Identify and reduce road-related effects on TEPC species and their habitats using the Watershed and Aquatic Recovery Strategy (WARS), the Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat Restoration Strategy and Source Environment Restoration Strategy, and other appropriate methodologies.*

Accomplishment: In addition to annual road maintenance, Pole Creek Travel Management and Cabin Creek Road removal were completed on the Sawtooth NRA for a total of 1,135 acres of improved habitat in the Upper Salmon HUC5 2012 WCS Priority Watershed. Non-system route decommissioning on Minidoka was completed for a total of 8,544 acres of habitat improved/enhanced in the Shoshone Creek (Cassia Division) and the Johnson and Wildcat (Raft River) drainages. Specific projects include the following:

Beaver Creek Ford Restoration and Closure of Unauthorized Routes. The Sawtooth National Recreation Area rehabilitated and eliminated the ford on Beaver Creek and approximately 0.3 miles of unauthorized routes leading to the ford. The ford was replaced on Beaver Creek with a bridge suitable for ATV's. Approximately 0.5 miles of a user created road from HWY 75 to Forest Service Road 70428 were designated as open to all motorized and non-motorized vehicles. Approximately 0.4 miles of new trail from the newly designated road were constructed to Beaver Creek road (FS70204) open to ATV'S.

Pole Creek Travel Management and Culvert Replacement - A decision was made to designate a suitable and sustainable trail system, with emphasis on ATV opportunities within the Pole Creek drainage near Sawtooth City, Idaho. The prior condition included an extensive network of user-created, unauthorized routes that where inappropriately situated in many locations, with unacceptable resource impacts. The routes being established and designated allowed the removal of the former routes and rehabilitation of productive resource conditions. For FY 2013, two barrier culverts were replaced with bridges and 10 fords were closed and rehabilitated where these former routes cross Pole or Rainbow Creeks.

Cabin Creek – In 2013, the Sawtooth NRA removed an existing segment (0.6 miles) of Road 207 between its junctions with Road 205 (Alturas Lake) and the Road 438 (Cabin Creek Camp). At the same time Cabin Creek, as well as the wetland and upland habitats formerly occupied by the road, will be restored to natural conditions from a lengthy crossing of the extensive wetland associated with lower Cabin Creek, north and west of Alturas and Perkins Lakes. With these changes, the existing segment of Road 207 between its junctions with the Alturas Road 205 and the Road 438 (Cabin Creek Camp) was removed as were 6 culverts – four of which were barriers to fish migration. Cabin Creek, as well as the wetland and upland habitats the roadway formerly occupied, were restored to natural conditions.

Coal Pit Creek Ford Improvement - A vehicle stream crossing on Coal Pit Creek was identified as contributing to elevated sedimentation and turbidity in the stream, which is occupied by Yellowstone cutthroat trout and rainbow trout. The existing ford was erosive and needed to be stabilized to reduce water quality impacts downstream. The project involved installing cement mats in the creek at the ford to create a stable, hardened stream ford.

South Fork Johnson Creek Ford Improvements - Two vehicle stream crossings on South Fork Johnson Creek were contributing to elevated sedimentation and turbidity in the stream, which is occupied by Yellowstone cutthroat trout. The existing fords were erosive and needed to be stabilized to reduce water quality impacts downstream. The project involved installing hardened crossings in the creek at the fords to create a stable stream fords.

Objective TEOB11: *Update appropriate NRIS database modules for TEPC species and their habitats on a biennially basis to incorporate latest field data.*

Accomplishment: In 2013, all data from rare plant surveys was entered into NRIS-TESP.

AIR QUALITY AND SMOKE MANAGEMENT Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-16)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements. All data from biological surveys in the Upper Salmon, S.F. Boise, and Raft River subbasins where TES species are present were entered into NRIS database.

SOIL, WATER, RIPARIAN AND AQUATIC RESOURCES Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-19 to III-21)

Objective SWOB11: *Coordinate with state and local agencies and tribal governments annually to limit or reduce degrading effects from stocking programs on native and desired non-native fish and aquatic species.*

Accomplishment: No coordination meetings relative to fish stocking occurred in 2013. However, an ongoing agreement exists that coordination will occur for any changes to the existing stocking plan.

Objective SWOB15: *Maintain and update species occurrence and habitat maps for Forest species (e.g., MIS and Region 4 Sensitive species) during fine and site/project-scale analyses.*

Accomplishment: In 2013, all data from biological surveys in the Upper Salmon, S.F. Boise, MF Boise, NF Boise, SF Payette, and Raft River subbasins where TES species are present were entered into NRIS water. Information is also obtained from Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and Fish and Game, and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. This information is used to maintain and update occurrence and habitat aquatic MIS and sensitive species.

Objective SWOB17: Biennially, maintain and update the Watershed and Aquatic Recovery Strategy (WARS) using the Watershed and Aquatic Recovery Strategy prioritization process, or other appropriate methodologies.

Accomplishment: The WARS priority process will be updated in FY2015.

WILDLIFE RESOURCES Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-25 to III-26)

Objective WIOB07: *Focus source habitat maintenance and restoration activities in wildlife priority watersheds identified in the WCS and displayed on the combined Vegetative and Wildlife Habitat Restoration Strategy Map. Within these priority watersheds, emphasize the maintenance and restoration of old forest habitat in nonlethal and mixed-1 fire regimes (PVGs 1-4) and whitebark pine restoration in PVG 11.*

Accomplishment: Planning was completed on the Deer Creek Watershed Project (Ketchum RD), which lies within the Deer-Quigley HUC5 2012 WCS Priority Watershed. Implementation of this project, which included habitat restoration objectives to reduce stand density and promote large tree growth in lower elevation Douglas fir stands and enhance aspen and whitebark pine stands, was scheduled to begin in late summer early/fall 2013. Unfortunately, a significant portion of the project area burned in the Beaver Creek Fire making the majority of projects no longer viable.

Habitat restoration work did occur on the Sawtooth NRA in the Pole Creek drainage, which lies within the Upper Salmon HUC5 2012 WCS Priority Watershed. For this project, 1,515 acres of whitebark pine restoration was completed. On the Fairfield Ranger District initial planning began on the Salt-Bowns Integrated Restoration Project and understory burning to maintain low elevation ponderosa pine forest occurred on 70 acres in the Westside Ponderosa Pine Restoration Project. Both of these projects occur in the Willow-Boardman HUC5 2012 WCS Priority Watershed.

Objective WIOB08: *Continue to map locations of species occurrence and habitat for MIS and Region 4 Sensitive species during fine- and site/project scale analyses. Incorporate information into a coordinated GIS database, including FAUNA, and coordinate with the Idaho Conservation Data Center.*

Accomplishment: On the Forest species occurrence surveys (TES and MIS) were completed for 8 Project level BABEs and MIS reports:

- Sawtooth NRA- Galena Summer Trails
    - SB-8 Private Road Special Use Permit Renewal
    - Cabin Creek Road 207 Reconstruction

    - Salmon River Headwaters Road 215 with Trail
- Ketchum- Deer Creek Watershed Project
    - Livestock Grazing on the Limekiln, Shaw Mountain and Greenhorn /Kelly
    - Mountain Allotments
    - Bald Mountain Summer Bike Trail and Timber Stand Thinning
    - Wood River Zinc Mill Site Remediation and Reclamation Project (CERLCA)
    - ESA Section 7 "No Effect" Determination Sheet
- Minidoka- Martindale Thinning Project (Cassia Division)

Additionally, MIS surveys were completed for northern goshawk, pileated woodpecker, and sage-grouse (Tables 3-5). Monitoring and winter surveys for wolverine were also completed on Sawtooth NRA, and on the Fairfield and Ketchum RD.

VEGETATION RESOURCES Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-30)

Objective VEOB07: *Update mid and fine-scale inventories of vegetation conditions developed during the forest plan revision process at least every 10 years to assist in identifying needs to change vegetation treatment priorities due to changed resource conditions and/or Agency management priorities.*

Accomplishment: The Forest continued to inventory both forested and non-forested vegetative communities across the Forest. Fires in 2012 and 2013 caused delays in completing the inventory. In light of the fires, some additional sites will be sampled during field season 2014 with the intent of having a new vegetation layer and associated maps available to the Forest in 2015.

Objective VEOB08: *Schedule and complete treatments designed to maintain or restore desired vegetative and associated wildlife source habitat conditions. Focus treatments in vegetative and wildlife habitat priority watersheds displayed on the combined Vegetative and Wildlife Habitat Restoration Strategy Map. Within these watersheds, emphasize treatments in the non-lethal and mixed-1 fire regime able to attain the range of desired conditions for the large tree size class or old forest habitat within the short-term (≤15years). In PVG1,1 emphasize whitebark pine restoration treatments.*

Accomplishment: Due to the very active fire season on the Forest (particularly the Fairfield and Ketchum Ranger Districts) habitat restoration work did not occur in the Upper Little Wood or in the Liberal-Willow project areas in 2013. Planning was completed in the Deer Creek Watershed Project, which included habitat restoration objectives to reduce stand density and promote large tree growth in lower elevation Douglas fir stands and enhance aspen and whitebark pine stands. In August, 2013, the 111,500 acre Beaver Creek Fire burned through most of the Deer Creek project area making it unlikely that many of the proposed treatments can be implemented. The Beaver Creek Fire also burned through much of the Liberal-Willow project area (planning completed in 2012), and many of the proposed vegetation treatments will not occur in this project area as well. Projects completed include:

- On the Sawtooth NRA, whitebark pine planting and restoration work was completed on 1515 acres in the Pole Creek drainage.

- On the Fairfield RD, 70 acres of understory burning was completed in the South Fork Boise River drainage in order to maintain large tree ponderosa pine stand conditions.

Other Vegetation Improvement Projects:

- Fairfield RD:
  - Beaver Release, 22 beavers in 4 locations- 560 acres total
  - *Wardrop Creek* (Camas Creek drainage) (8 beavers) = 1 mile stream and 140 acres wildlife habitat enhanced;
  - *West Fork Three-Mile* Creek (Camas Creek drainage) (2 beavers) = 1 mile stream and 140 acres wildlife habitat enhanced;
  - *Five Points Creek* (Little Smoky-South Fork Boise watershed) (5 beavers) = 1 mile stream and 140 acres wildlife habitat enhanced;
  - *Elk Creek* (Camas Creek drainage) (9 beavers) = 1 mile stream and 140 acres wildlife habitat enhanced.
- Sawtooth NRA:
  - Pole Creek Travel Management (non-systems road removal) and Cabin Creek Road Removal- 1135 acres total.
- Minidoka RD:
  - Non-system route removal in Shoshone Creek (Cassia Division) and in the Johnson and Wildcat drainages (Raft River Division) - 8544 acres total.

BOTANICAL RESOURCES Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-32 to III-33)

Objective BTOB01: *Continue to map locations of suitable occupied habitat for Region 4 Sensitive plant species, Forest Watch plants, and globally rare plant communities. Incorporate information into a GIS database and coordinate with the Idaho Conservation Data Center.*

Accomplishment: In FY13 rare plant occupied habitat was surveyed during monitoring and field inventories. No forest GIS database exists, but NRIS-TESP was updated as appropriate. Data has been shared with the Idaho Conservation Data Center via CDC rare plant element occurrence report forms.

Objective BTOB04: *Maintain annually a list of Forest Watch plants that identify species of concern (see Appendix C for list of species).*

Accomplishment: In FY13, no species were added to or deleted from the Forest Watch list

NON-NATIVE PLANTS Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-35 to III-36)

Objective NPOB01: *Maintain, and use current field data to update, the Forest-wide database and map library of current status of noxious weed infestations, treatment activities, and locations of newly established infestations.*

Accomplishment: In FY13, the Forest reported noxious weed infestation treatments through the NRIS TESP/IS process for recording noxious weed accomplishments. This is the second year reporting under the NRIS TESP/IS system. All data gathered in FY13 was entered into the database.

Objective NPOB03: *Develop strategic noxious weed management plans for Coordinated Weed Management Areas. Cooperate on a regular basis with federal agencies, tribal governments, the State of Idaho, county weed organizations, state and local highway departments, and private individuals in establishing Coordinated Weed Management Area strategic priorities, and locating and treating noxious weed species.*

Accomplishment: The administrative boundary of the Forest falls within seven Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs): Camas Creek, Blaine County, Shoshone Basin, Goose Creek, South Fork Boise, Custer County and Raft River. Coordinated accomplishments for CWMAs are reported in the winter following the field season of work. The Forest alone, and in conjunction with the CWMAs treated a total of 5,628.6 acres of noxious weed across the Forest in FY13. Table 1 shows the total number of acres treated by treatment method.

Table 1: Acres of Noxious Weed Treated by Method

Method	Minidoka	Ketchum	SNRA	Fairfield	Forest
Chemical	3,512	35	1,380	647	5,574
Biological	0	0	50	0	50
Mechanical	0	0	4.6	0	4.6
Total	**3,512**	**35**	**1,434.6**	**647**	**5,628.6**

FIRE MANAGEMENT Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-38 to III-39)

Objective FMOB04: *Schedule and complete hazardous fuel reduction and maintenance treatments within the wildland urban interface.*

Accomplishment: In FY13 the Sawtooth mechanically treated 1,518 acres, the vast majority of this acreage in the wildland urban interface. In terms of acreage burned and number of incident management teams hosted, 2013 was the busiest fire season the Sawtooth has ever had. This did impede planned prescribed fires, yet the majority of naturally caused wildfires met both fuels reduction and restoration objectives. Approximately 87,778 acres were deemed to be beneficial in that the burn patterns were consistent with the fire regimes, notably in high elevation lodgepole and subalpine fir dominated vegetation groups (PVG 7, 10, 11).

TIMBERLAND RESOURCES Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-42 to III-43)

Objective TROB01: *On a decadal basis:*

a) Harvest timber, other than by salvage, on at least 20,000 acres,
b) Reforest at least 500 acres, and
c) Complete timber stand improvement activities on at least 3,000 acres.

This objective contributes to the accomplishment of VEOB08 and FMOB04

Accomplishment:

a) Harvested timber, other than by salvage, on 40 acres;
b) Reforestation on 5 acres and;
c) Timber stand improvement activities were completed on 404 acres

Objective TROB02: *On a decadal basis, make available an estimated 54 million board feet of timber which will contribute to Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ).*

Accomplishment: In 2013, the Forest made available 1.6 million board feet (MMBF) of timber (0.9 MMBF of salvage and 0.7 MMBF of green) which contributed to the Allowable Sale Quantity.

Objective TROB03: *Utilize wood products (e.g., fuelwood, posts, poles, house logs, etc.) generated from vegetation treatment activities, on both suited and not suited timberlands, to produce an estimated 25 million board feet of volume on a decadal basis. This volume, when combined with ASQ, is the Total Sale Program Quantity (TSPQ). On a decadal basis, the TSPQ is estimated to be 80 million board feet.*

Accomplishment: In 2013, the Forest made available 3.6 million board feet (MMBF) of wood products (.07MMBF in post and poles and 3.53 MMBF in personal use firewood). When combined with the 1.6 MMBF contributing to ASQ (i.e. TROB02), the Sawtooth National Forest made available 5.2 MMBF that contributed to the Total Sale Program Quantity (TSPQ).

RANGELAND RESOURCES Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-44)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements.

MINERALS AND GEOLOGY RESOURCES Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-48 to III-49)

Objective MIOB01: *Continue to inventory known abandoned mines and prepare restoration plans to address biological and physical resource concerns, chemical stability, and human health and safety.*

Accomplishment: Contract for restoration of the Wood River Zinc millsite was awarded for work to commence in late-summer, however this was delayed due to the 2013 Deer Creek Fire. Site restoration will commence August 2014. A restoration plan for the Ontario Millsite is in the preliminary stage of development with the Forest to initiate consultation on the proposed action for remediation in late 2014. In 2013 the Wolftone AML site was identified for restoration under the Regional ECAP earmark. The Forest service coordinated with IDEQ in 2013 to develop a preliminary assessment for site restoration.

LANDS AND SPECIAL USES Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-53)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements.

FACILITIES AND ROADS Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-58 to III-59)

Objective FROB01: *Analyze road system needs and associated resource effects in accordance with the established agency policy direction for roads analysis.*

Accomplishment: Subpart A of the rule requires each unit of the National Forest System to:

- Identify the minimum road system needed for safe and efficient travel and for administration, utilization, and protection of NFS lands; and
- Identify the roads on lands under Forest Service jurisdiction that are no longer needed to meet forest recreation and resource management objectives and reflect long-term funding expectations.

The travel analysis process is complete for all Maintenance Level 3, 4, and 5 roads on the Sawtooth National Forest. All maintenance level 1 and 2 roads on the Minidoka Ranger District were analyzed in FY 2013.

Objective FROB06: *Identify roads and facilities that are not needed for land and resource management, and evaluate for disposal or decommissioning.*

Accomplishment: An active route decommissioning program continued during 2013 with 44.6 miles of unauthorized routes being decommissioned on the Minidoka Ranger District, 2.8 miles on the Ketchum Ranger District, .5 miles on the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and 3.9 miles on the Fairfield Ranger District.

Objective FROB11: *In the Forest's annual program of work, prioritize and schedule improvements to existing culverts, bridges, and other stream crossings to accommodate fish passage, 100-year flood flow, and bedload and debris transport. Include accomplishments in the biennial update of the Watershed and Aquatic Recovery Strategy (WARS) database.*

Accomplishment: In 2013, a culvert was replaced with a bridge on Road 70194 across Pole Creek. The culvert presented a barrier to some fish species during their migratory periods. Installation of the bridge improved fish passage to the upper 3.3 miles of Pole Creek and complements other watershed restoration work taking place in Pole Creek.

RECREATION RESOURCES Objectives (Forest Plan, pages III-62 to III-64)

Objective REOB12: *Annually update recreation databases for developed sites, dispersed areas, and trails.*

Accomplishment: Condition and deferred maintenance surveys were conducted for developed recreation sites, recreation buildings, and trails according to schedule. The direction for these inspections is that there should be no condition surveys that are older than 5 years for those recreation sites that have a building, water system or wastewater system listed in IFRA or Class 5 trails. All class 5 trails were surveyed in 2010 and will be resurveyed in 2015.

In accordance with Trails Deferred Maintenance Protocols, data entry for national core data relative to trails is randomly selected and condition surveys were completed in 2013. National Core data includes data elements such as completed condition survey dates, trail jurisdiction, trail status, and length. In addition, Trail Management Objectives (TMO's) were completed or updated across the Forest.

Objective REOB17: *Initiate a process of phased, site-specific travel management planning as soon as practicable. Prioritize planning based on areas where the most significant user conflicts and resource*

concerns are occurring. Identify and address inconsistent access management of roads, trails, and areas across Forest, Ranger District, and interagency boundaries.

Accomplishment: The Forest completed Travel Management in 2008, focusing on areas with unrestricted cross-country motorized travel on the Minidoka, Ketchum and Fairfield Districts. These three Districts implemented approximately 5.5 miles of trail improvements in 2013 based on resource conditions and priorities identified in 2008. The Forest decommissioned 43.9 miles of unauthorized roads on the Minidoka Ranger District. Because of numerous fires, no roads were decommissioned on the Ketchum or Fairfield Districts in 2013.

In 2013 the Sawtooth NRA implemented projects in both the Cabin Creek and Pole Creek areas where .6 miles of roadway were removed and 2.3 miles of existing unauthorized routes were designated and incorporated into the managed travel system. In addition, the Sawtooth NRA completed NEPA for the Galena Summer Trails in 2013 and initiated a project to begin phased travel management within the Big Wood River Travel Management Area.

SCENIC ENVIRONMENT Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-68)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements.

HERITAGE PROGRAM Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-70)

Objective HPOB05: *Maintain an ongoing inventory to locate and identify historic properties on National Forest System lands.*

Accomplishment: In 2013, the Forest continued to focus on updating heritage legacy data in INFRA and GIS. The Forest Heritage Program utilized volunteers to help meet the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 110 objectives. Boise State University and Idaho State University both conducted archaeological field schools in 2013. Several large wild land fires occurred on the forest in 2013 that exposed historic properties requiring mitigation measures.

TRIBAL RIGHTS AND INTERESTS Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-72)

Objective TROB01: *Meet annually with designated tribal representatives to coordinate tribal uses of National Forest System lands as provided for through existing tribal rights with the U.S. Government*

Accomplishment: The Forest currently consults with four tribes in Idaho and Utah. Consultation occurs through notification letters which include invitations to meet with each tribe to discuss specific projects or other concerns associated with the Forest. Tribal relation on the Sawtooth National Forest is conducted by the Forest Archaeologist as a collateral duty. There are no tribal relations duties at the District level.

In 2013, the Forest continued to consult with affected tribes concerning adverse effects to four historic properties resulting from livestock grazing in the Black Pine Range. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe was provided cultural resource reports associated with this project.

The Forest continues the policy of non-participation with the Wings and Roots consultation program utilized by the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. The Tribe feels that the Forest is not meeting its legal requirements to consult by not participating in the program.

WILDERNESS, RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS and INVENTORIED ROADLESS AREA Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-74)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements.

WILD and SCENIC RIVERS Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-76)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements.

RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-77)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements.

SOCIAL and ECONOMIC Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-78)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements.

SAWTOOTH NATIONAL RECREATION AREA Objectives (Forest Plan, page III-79)

This section contains no annual accomplishment requirements.

2. Population trends of the management indicator species will be monitored and relationships to habitat changes determined.

Table 2 shows the Management Indicator Species (MIS) selected by the Sawtooth NF in the 2012 amended Forest Plan. The primary reason MIS are selected is because their populations are believed to indicate the effects of management activities. Other reasons are also considered (36 CFR 219.19(a)(1).

Table 2. Management Indicator Species for the Sawtooth NF, 2003 Forest Plan

Type	Common Name	Habitat	Management Concerns
Bird Species	Pileated Woodpecker	PVGs 2-9	Sufficient large trees, snags, and down logs
	Sage Grouse	Sagebrush/grassland	Habitat reduction and alteration
	Goshawk	PVGs 3,4,7 & 10, PVGS 1 & 2 in high canopy cover	Nest tree removal and habitat modification
Fish Species	Bull Trout	Perennial streams	Sediment in spawning and rearing areas, water temperature, habitat connectivity
	Yellowstone Cutthroat	Perennial streams	

Following is a summary of the monitoring completed for each MIS on the Forest in FY13:

Bull Trout and Yellowstone Cutthroat Monitoring:

Bull Trout and Yellowstone Cutthroat populations were monitored throughout the Forest in FY13. Bull Trout populations were sampled in the East Fork Salmon River, West Pass Creek, Fourth of July Creek, Champion Creek, Iron Creek and Big Boulder Creek in the Upper Salmon subbasin. We also sampled Boardman Creek, Skeleton Creek, Upper Big Smoky, Salt Creek and West Fork Big Smokey in the South Fork of the Boise subbasin. Yellowstone Cutthroat populations were sampled in Eightmile Creek, Sixmile Creek, Grape Creek, and Dry Creek. Because of post-fire restoration and monitoring as well as personnel changes, the annual report for the results of this monitoring has not yet been completed. The Bull Trout and Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout 2013 reports will be combined with the 2014 report and will be completed this winter.

Pileated Woodpecker Monitoring:

Table 3: Pileated Woodpecker Monitoring Results by District

District	Points Monitored/ Transects	Hits (observations)	Acres Inventoried
Fairfield Ranger District	100/10	8 (on 5 routes)	4,270
Ketchum Ranger District	90/9	0	4,450
Sawtooth NRA	180/18	7 (on 6 transects)	8,900

Sage Grouse Monitoring:

Table 4. Sage Grouse Monitoring Results by District

District	Division	Leks Inventoried	Males Counted	Acres Inventoried
Minidoka Ranger District	Cassia (Idaho)	7 (Cottonwood Ridge Route)	42 (maximum)	300
	Raft River (Utah)	1	11	30
Fairfield Ranger District	(adjacent to Forest on BLM and Private)	16	181	400

Goshawk Monitoring:

Table 5. Goshawk Monitoring Results by District

District	Territories Inventoried	New Territories Identified	Territories Occupied	Fledglings Produced	Acres Inventoried
Minidoka Ranger District	41	4	15	---	17,100
Fairfield Ranger District	10	1	4	5	1,650
Ketchum Ranger District	4	0	1	2	1,560
Sawtooth National Recreation Area	19	0	13	16	8,820

3. Accomplishment of Aquatic Conservation Stratgey (ACS) priority subwatershed restoration objectives.

Summary of findings: The Watershed Aquatic Recovery Strategy (WARS) is a process that identified restoration priorities (high, moderate, and low) and restoration type (passive, active, and conservation) among the 650 subwatersheds across the Southwest Idaho Ecogroup. This strategy provides the "blue print" for recovery and protection of aquatic (both physical and biological) resources across the Ecogroup. Table 6 displays a summary of the aquatic restoration that occurred in ACS priority subwatersheds on the Sawtooth NF in 2013.

Table 6 – Sawtooth NF 2013 Aquatic Restoration Projects by WARS priority

	Within ACS Priority Watersheds	Outside ACS Priority Watersheds			Total
		WARS *High* Priority Watershed	WARS *Mod* Priority Watershed	WARS *Low* Priority Watershed	
Miles of Stream Improved	19.5	2	1	1.5	24
Miles of Stream Inventoried	86	5	3		94
Acres of Lake Improved	2,765	180	0	0	2945
Miles of Road Decommissioned	17.3		27.1		44.3
Acres of Watershed Improved	1336	224	140	140.5	1840.5

4. Terms and conditions or reasonable and prudent measures that result from consultation under Section (a) of the Endangered Species Act.

A. Terms and Conditions - Summary of findings:
Both NOAA Fisheries and the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) issued Biological Opinions in response to the Federal Action (i.e. proposed action or management strategy) outlined in the 2003 Forest Plan. However, only NOAA Fisheries issued reasonable and prudent measures and related terms and conditions with their Biological Opinion.

Reasonable and Prudent Measures (RPMs) are non-discretionary measures to minimize take that may or may not already be part of the description of the proposed action. They must be implemented as binding conditions for the exemption in section 7(o)(2) to apply. The Forest Service has the continuing duty to regulate the activities covered in this incidental take statement. If the Forest Service fails to carry out required measures, fails to require applicants to adhere to the terms and conditions of the incidental take statement through enforceable terms that are added to the permit or grant document, or fails to retain the oversight to ensure compliance with these terms and conditions, the protective coverage of section 7(o)(2) that will become effective at the project level may lapse. To be eligible for an exemption from the prohibitions of Section 9 of the ESA, the Forest Service must comply with the following terms and conditions, which implement the reasonable and prudent measures described above for each category of activity. These terms and conditions are non-discretionary.

The terms and conditions related to two of the three RPMs in the NOAA Fisheries Biological Opinion apply to the Sawtooth and require annual reporting. These terms and conditions are identified below, along with the accomplishments related to them.

RPM #1: Minimize the likelihood of incidental take by clarifying local sideboards pertaining to:

Fire Management timelines for fire operational resource guidance:
Fire operational guidelines were originally developed in the spring of 2004. These guidelines included protective measures for wildlife, botanical, and aquatic resources. In 2006, the Boise NF and Sawtooth NF completed a Programmatic Biological Assessment (BA) for Wildfire Suppression and Wildland Fire Use activities that incorporated and improved upon the 2004 guidance. This BA was submitted for informal consultation, which concluded with letters of concurrence from the FWS and NOAA on 08-11-2006 and 08-30-2006, respectively. In 2012, the Forest finished new programmatic fire suppression guidance. This guidance was utilized in fire suppression activities in FY13.

RPM #2: Minimize the likelihood of incidental take by maintaining the necessary linkages between the Sawtooth NF Plan and broad-scale restoration/recovery strategies. To implement RPM #2 the Sawtooth NF is required to:

Provide an oversight and accountability body that links to IIT by continuing to work with the IIT and provide exchange of information regarding processes that are local in scope, but have broad-scale implications, such as subbasin planning, watershed analysis and monitoring.

The intent of the IIT implementation monitoring was to track implementation of management direction at the level of the FS Land and Resource Management Plan or BLM Resource Management Plan for the salmon, steelhead, and bull trout listed in the Upper Columbia and Snake River Basins. Specific objectives are to:

- Provide a reporting format for all Level 1 Team implementation monitoring requirements, and ensure a "feedback loop" for Level 1 Teams and Managers to accomplish agency adaptive management;
- Meet the broad-scale, mandatory requirements and commitments of the PACFISH/INFISH, the 1998 Biological Opinions, and the IIT Charter;
- Provide documentation to show that direction in PACFISH, INFISH and the 1998 Biological Opinions is being implemented on the ground; and
- Document status and trends in implementation of federal activities by land management agencies, including locations of non-compliance with the aquatic conservation direction.

It was hoped that data collected by the Implementation Monitoring Module in combination with data from the Effectiveness Monitoring Module, would provide information to help validate the basic assumptions under which the management direction was developed.

The Forest coordinated with the PIBO program and provided them information on DMAs within the allotments scheduled to be surveyed. PIBO then used this information to collect annual indictor data at each site. This information was provided to the Forest the following winter.

B. Conservation Recommendations that resulted from consultation under Section (a) of the Endangered Species Act.

In addition to the RPMs, the following conservation recommendations resulted from consultation with USFWS and NOAA fisheries:

1. The USFS should evaluate and report to NOAA Fisheries the effectiveness of rehabilitation efforts in RCAs in response to fire suppression activities (use of heavy machinery, fire retardants, camp and base locations, etc.) that affected RCAs.

The Road 210 Fire located within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area, Idaho occurred on July 22, 2013 the junction of Highway 75 with the Redfish Lake Road (NESE, Section 26, T10N, R13E, BM, approximately 5 miles South of Stanley, Idaho). The fire spread very quickly to the southeast in dead and down, bug-infested, lodgepole pine from 0.5 acres initially to 75 acres within an hour. The fire was threatening structures near the Sawtooth Hatchery immediately downwind and the entire Redfish Recreation Complex and hundreds of visitors within the area. By 6:15 the fire moved a mile south of the ignition point, and had jumped to the east side of the Salmon River and was upon the Hatchery and adjacent summer homes, with spotting still further east across Highway 75 (Figure 1). Beyond these nearby risks were additional ranches to the east, and the Stanley Ranger Station, Sunny Gulch Campground, and the greater Stanley community to the north. To the credit of the fire commanders on site, the initial attack and overnight control strategies, recent forest thinning practices and with manageable weather the following day, this very energetic fire was kept to 197 acres with no structures and lives lost.

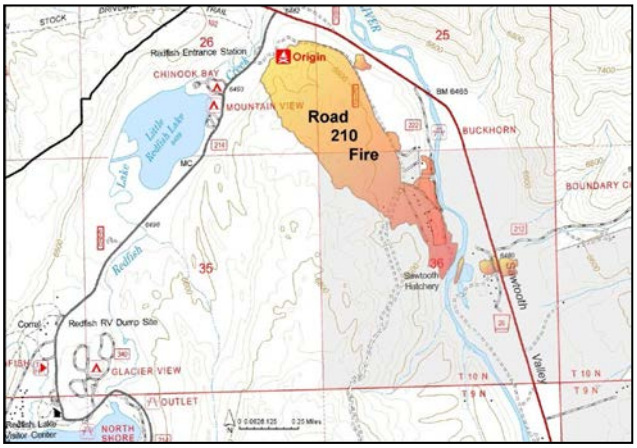

Figure 1

Given the very active spread of the fire initially, and the values immediately threatened in its apparent path, the use of retardant was approved at 3:10 pm. The first drop occurred at approximately 3:40 pm. Over the next 5 hours, 11 loads of retardant were utilized on the fire. As the fire advanced to the southeast towards the Salmon River and the Hatchery, documented communication between, and among, fire commanders, dispatch, and flight leaders routinely articulated the sensitivity of the river resource and requirements to avoid retardant entry into the river or riverside areas. While containment of the south-west flank of the fire was a priority for incident commanders, at no time was the avoidance area adjacent to the Salmon River discounted. Tactical instructions remained consistent with agency policy regarding the use of retardant. Nevertheless, at approximately 5:20 pm, a 2,066 gallon drop occurred along the southern extreme of the fire that compromised this objective. The southern tip of the drop reached the river. It remains unknown whether the resulting misapplication was a result of environmental variables or pilot error.

The approximate area of the Salmon River affected by the drop is shown in Figure 2. The Salmon River within the subject reach contains designated critical habitat for all four fish species currently protected under the Endangered Species Act within the Sawtooth NRA (Snake River sockeye salmon, *Oncorhynchus nerka*, endangered; Snake River sping/summer Chinook salmon *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, threatened; Snake River steelhead *Oncorhynchus mykiss*, threatened; Columbia River bull trout, *Salvelinus confluentus*, threatened).

Figure 2

The misapplication occurred essentially within the bounds of the Sawtooth Fish Hatchery, on non-NFS lands, just upstream of the main weir. Specifics of the misapplication:

- Approximately 1.5 acres of drift occurred within the river and riparian riverside habitats.
- Another 1.2 acres received drift upslope within 300 feet of the river to the northwest.
- It is estimated that approximately 0.6 acres of the river surface itself received retardant drift directly.

Initial investigations concluded that it was unlikely that any lethal effects to aquatic biota had resulted from the misapplication based on on-site monitoring results showing unaffected macro-invertebrate communities downstream of the misapplication site; observing no fish mortalities when walking the Salmon River on three separate occasions; and via conversations with personnel of the Sawtooth Hatchery reporting that they also did not observe any fish mortalities following the incident. However, modeling efforts suggest lethal and sublethal effects were likely including the possible take of ESA protected individuals. If the toxic plume indicated by the modeling truly passed down the affected reach, it is probable that adverse effects to these ESA protected species occurred.

Steps taken by USFS after misaplication was discovered: After the misapplication incident occurred, it remained unnoticed for approximately 24 hours before it was observed by commanders surveying the fire from the air. Resource advisors immediately visited the site and assessed the scope of the situation and initiated monitoring. These initial conclusions were reported to Forest program leaders, as well as to NOAA Fisheries and USFWS, per consultation requirements (NOAA 2011, USFWS 2011). Local USFS coordinated with the local NOAA office to develop emergency consultation to determine effects based on this single incident. Language within the Fire Suppression BO (pg 184) Item d. *"The USFS must reinitiate consultation with the appropriate local NMFS office and based on the new baseline following the intrusion, obtain a new Opinion analyzing the risk of future intrusions to the affected species and identifying any local mitigation measures that should be implemented."* Is further clarified here: *"The USFS must reinitiate consultation with the appropriate local NMFS office and based on the new baseline following the intrusion, obtain a new Opinion analyzing the risk of future intrusions to the affected species and identifying any local mitigation measures that should be implemented" (NOAA, 2013).* A biological assessment has been prepared and re-initiation is anticipated in FY15.

3. Over the planning period, the Forest Service objective for fish habitat restoration should be to move at least two ACS Priority Subwatersheds per subbasin into a "functioning appropriately" condition. The SWIE Matrix (LRMP Appendix B) should be used to assist in assessment of this objective. In addition, the Forest Service should initiate habitat improvements in the other ACS Priority Subwatersheds as identified by WARS. The strategy to achieve this objective should include steps to coordinate restoration activities, and should take advantage of opportunities to pool funding (within Forest Service, and among other sources including NOAA) across administrative boundaries to accomplish top priority restoration projects.

Pole Creek – Pole Creek, a tributary to the Salmon River, historically supported bull trout and currently supports ESA listed Chinook salmon and steelhead trout in the lower sections on private lands. Pole Creek also supports westslope cutthroat trout in the headwaters. Aquatic habitat was identified as "functioning at risk" in localized areas due to sedimentation and other impacts from roads, developed and dispersed recreation, livestock grazing, and past mining. Native fish and amphibian populations were identified as at risk due to the presence of non-native fish species. The Sawtooth NRA has implemented several travel management activities in the lower Pole Creek drainage to control resource damage. Over the last decade, the Pole Creek drainage has seen increased use by individuals seeking opportunities to recreate and in doing so they have resorted to riding ATVs and other mechanized vehicles on numerous user-created unauthorized routes. Those uses have resulted in resource concerns, including stream and wetland degradation, soil compaction, and wildlife habitat

fragmentation. In addition, the routes are creating scenic concerns and in some cases are negatively affecting the quality of recreational experiences on the Sawtooth NRA.

Planned projects for FY13 would designate an ATV trail on existing unauthorized routes/trail, construct several small sections of new ATV trail, construct and adopt approximately 1.1 miles of low standard road, replace and rehabilitate several vehicle fords with ATV bridges and decommission approximately ten miles of unauthorized routes within the Pole Creek drainage. In addition, approximately 5.35 miles of trail would be adopted into the Sawtooth NRA trail system. A short section (approximately .1 miles) of new trail construction would occur within the RCA of Rainbow Creek in order to avoid a ford which has currently captured the creek and is degrading instream habitat conditions. Several fords that have caused degraded instream and streamside habitat conditions are being closed and rehabilitated and replaced with a bridge.

Dispersed camping occurs extensively throughout the project area, mostly in dry upland sites. Several dispersed camp sites along Rainbow Creek and Pole Creek within the RCA, have been identified as causing resource damage. Many of these sites within the RCA are being relocated to upland sites. At the Pole Creek corrals, a log worm fence is being built along with a kiosk and trailhead to educate and inform users of the existing recreational opportunities in the Pole Creek drainage.

Additional important work involves replacing a fish migration barrier culvert with a vehicle bridge. This will open 7.0 miles of stream for bull trout, chinook salmon, steelhead and Westslope cutthroat trout.

Alturas Lake Creek – Alturas Lake contains some of the most important habitat for aquatic species in the upper Salmon. Alturas Lake inlet is designated critical spawning habitat of endangered Snake River sockeye salmon, threatened Snake River Chinook salmon, threatened Snake River steelhead and threatened Columbia River bull trout. Alturas Lake Creek and Alpine Creek support one of only two relatively strong populations of bull trout in the Salmon River headwaters. In addition, kokanee salmon and west slope cutthroat trout also utilize these habitats.

Many projects have been implemented to halt deteriorating conditions in the Alturas Lake Creek Watershed. One of these initiatives was to curtail damage that was occurring within the Alpine Creek ford on FSR 205. During the mid-1990s, FSR 205 captured the flow of Alturas Lake Creek just above the FSR 205 ford through Alpine Creek. As a consequence, Alturas Lake Creek quickly cut a deep gully into the road downstream to Alpine Creek, delivering tens of thousands of cubic yards of fine sediments into Alpine and Alturas Lake Creeks downstream. For several years, Alturas Lake Creek remained in this location, running within FSR 205 to the Alpine Creek ford, and the condition continued to deteriorate. Road users struggled to continue driving within the gully in parts of this segment, while abandoning it in others parts, repeatedly pioneering new routes around the impassable segments. Excess water (from Alturas Lake Creek) and sediment (from the gully) continued to overwhelm the capacity of the channel at the ford, forcing the high flows into new channels.

In order to halt these rapidly expanding and deteriorating conditions, in October 2000, the Sawtooth NRA implemented a decision to plug the inlet of the Alturas Lake Creek gully and return flow of to its natural channel. This project, along with several other recent projects implemented in the Alturas watershed, contributed to protection of one of the most important segments of aquatic habitat within the Sawtooth NRA. Aquatic habitat was functioning at risk in localized areas due to sedimentation, loss of vegetation and stream and floodplain alterations and other impacts from roads. The project eliminated the existing ford, reducing the imminent risk of channel change during a future flow event and remedied the situation before this mass change occurred.

Other projects aimed to move the Alturas Creek watershed from "functioning at risk" to "functioning appropriately" are listed in the table below.

Former Road 205 following capture of Alturas Lake Creek

Table 7: Alturas Lake Creek Watershed Improvement Projects

Project	Imp
Alturas Lake Creek ALC1 diversion screen	1990
Busterback Ranch purchased	1992
Sawtooth Valley Allotment Ditch Filling (large)	Oct 1995
Alturas Lake Creek Diversion Removal	Sep 1997
Road 206 Obliteration and Restoration	Oct 1999
Alturas Inlet Campsites Relocation/Restoration	1999
Sawtooth Valley Allotment Ditch Filling (small and medium)	Sep 2000
Alturas Lake Creek Historic Channel Restoration	Oct 2000
Perkins Lake Outlet Road Obliteration	2001
Upper Alturas and Eureka Gulch conversion to Trails	Sep 2005
Alturas Lake Trailhead relocation	Sep 2005
Cabin Creek drainage ditch fill and restore	Sept 2006
Cabin Creek non-system road obliteration and reconnect	Sept 2006
Cabin Creek diversion plug	Sept 2006
Alpine Creek new bridge and ford closure	2006
Vat Creek non-system road closures/restoration	Aug 2006
Blair Cabin road closures/restoration	Aug 2006
Alturas Unauthorized Road Obliteration	Sept 2007
Alturas Ski Bridge Replacement	2010
Alturas A Shoreline Rehab and Viewing Platform	2010
Cabin Creek Road 207 Removal	2013

4. Cooperate with the State of Idaho, tribes, and others to evaluate bull trout subpopulation status and distribution on a regular basis.

The Forest partnered with the Rocky Mountain Research Station to sample several streams in the S.F. Boise drainage with the intent of looking at stream temperature and bull trout distributions within each of the surveyed drainages.

5. Participate in and promote opportunities to study local populations of bull trout to gain a better understanding of conservation and recovery needs at a local scale.

The Sawtooth NF continues to gather information on the presence and vitality of bull trout for ESA and MIS purposes. More specifically, the current effort focuses on determining whether bull trout and/or reproducing bull trout populations exist in specific streams on the Fairfield Ranger District and Sawtooth NRA. A detailed description of bull trout monitoring can be will be completed until this winter.

6. Cooperate with others in efforts to reduce densities and distribution of brook trout, and to manage habitat to provide a competitive advantage to native salmonids, especially bull trout.

No work was completed in 2013 to reduce brook trout. In 2012, the Forest worked with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) to reduce brook trout populations in the headwaters of Johnson Creek in Raft River. UDWR is completing multiple pass electrofishing to remove all brook trout and give Yellowstone cutthroat a competitive advantage. A temporary fish barrier was also installed in 2011 to prevent brook trout from invading the treated stream.

7. Cooperate to increase the benefits for bull trout from work on Forest system lands and efforts by the State, counties, and other Federal agencies to conserve and recover the species. In particular, assist in identifying actions to remove barriers to bull trout movements in locations where the Forests is also doing work to resolve passage problems and improve habitat.

In 2013, two culverts were replaced with bridges in the Pole Creek basin. These culverts presented a barrier to some fish species during their migratory periods. Installation of the bridges will improve bull trout fish passage to 7.9 miles of Pole Creek. Four culverts were replaced in Cabin Creek, opening 2.0 miles of habitat to bull trout.

III - B. Monitoring Elements in Table IV-2 of the Forest Plan with Annual Reporting Requirements:

As described in Chapter IV of the Forest Plan, monitoring elements were designed around monitoring questions that need to be answered about Forest Plan implementation. These questions are key to determining if we are moving towards meeting the desired conditions identified in the Forest Plan. Following is a summary of the findings for those elements that we are required to monitor and evaluate on an annual or biennial basis:

- **Activity or Practiced to Be Monitored: 08. Safety of administrative facilities**

Monitoring Question: Are administrative sites, including drinking water sources, safe for visitors and employees?

Summary of findings: Sanitary surveys are required every 5 years at a minimum to assess the overall operational quality, function and maintenance of water systems. In accordance with the schedule, sanitary surveys were conducted on 9 water systems in FY13. In addition to the sanitary surveys, condition surveys were completed this year on approximately 20% of the total buildings.

Water systems are tested for bacteriological contamination on a monthly basis when they are open. Any systems that show bad results are re-tested according to FS direction and either closed or posted as non-potable if re-testing indicates a problem. The drinking water systems for all Forest administrative sites were opened in 2013. Monthly samples collected from these water systems during the months the systems were open for use determined that each of these systems was compliant with the Safe Drinking Water Act standards.

During FY13, the following projects improved administrative sites for employees:

- Big Smoky Bunkhouse – Move modular building from the Caribou-Targhee to replace substandard facilities at the Big Smoky Administrative Site. Project was initiated but not completed during the Fiscal year.
- Ketchum Work Center – Longtime water leak and resulting damage was repaired.

- **Activity or Practiced to Be Monitored: 09. Safety of developed recreation sites**

  Monitoring Question: Are developed recreation sites free of high-risk conditions? Do water systems meet Federal, State, and local requirements?

Summary of findings: Generally, all Forest developed recreation sites are inspected in the spring or early summer in conjunction with opening for the summer season. Any identified hazards are removed or mitigated at this time. Water systems are managed and tested in accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and Forest Service regulations.

The drinking water systems for the majority of the recreational facilities were open for use in 2013; however, fires severely impacted access to recreation sites. Monthly samples collected during the months the systems were open for use determined that each of these systems was compliant with the Safe Drinking Water Act standards. In 2013, most of the developed recreation water systems met all standards established under this act and agency regulations.

- **Activity or Practiced to Be Monitored: 19. Protection of historic properties during project implementation**

  Monitoring Question: Are historic properties being affected by project activities?

Summary of findings: In 2013, the Forest consulted with the Idaho and Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on all identified NHPA Section 106 undertakings. The Forest Heritage Program primarily focused on livestock grazing sufficiency reviews across the Forest. Adverse effects to historic properties were identified in the South Heglar Cattle and Horse Allotment. An archaeological assessment of these properties was planned for fiscal year 2014. A rock art panel in Trapper Creek on the Minidoka Ranger District was damaged by the addition of a new petroglyph. An Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA) investigation was opened concerning the damage. The investigation was ongoing at the end of fiscal year 2013.

In 2013, the Sawtooth NF Heritage Program met the "program managed to standard" national target. The Sawtooth NF met the target in several ways. The Forest utilized an archaeological crew from the Salmon-Challis National Forest to complete backlog assessments of archaeological sites in the Stanley Basin and along the Main Salmon River. The Forest also focused on updating heritage legacy data in INFRA and GIS. Volunteers were essential to the accomplishment of the NHPA, Section 110 target in 2013. The Boise State University and Idaho State University archaeological field schools conducted on the Forest also contributed to the program standards.

- **Activity or Practiced to Be Monitored: 35. Watershed restoration and conservation activities**

  Monitoring Question: Have restoration and conservation activities been focused in priority watersheds identified by the WARS process?

Summary of findings: The Watershed Aquatic Recovery Strategy (WARS) is a process that identified restoration priorities (high, moderate, and low) and restoration type (passive, active, and conservation) among the 650 subwatersheds across the Southwest Idaho Ecogroup. This strategy provides the "blue print" for recovery and protection of aquatic (both physical and biological) resources across the Ecogroup. The intent of the WARS strategy is the movement of subwatershed functions, ecological processes, and structures toward desired conditions. The intent of WARS is also to: (1) secure existing habitats that support the strongest populations of wide-ranging aquatic species and the highest native diversity and geomorphic and water quality integrities; (2) extend favorable conditions into adjacent subwatersheds to create a larger and more contiguous network of suitable and productive habitats; and (3) restore soil-hydrologic processes to ensure favorable water quality conditions for aquatic, riparian, and municipal beneficial uses that will fully support beneficial uses and contribute to the de-listing of fish species and 303(d) water quality limited water bodies.

WARS identified subwatersheds with high aquatic integrity (strong populations of listed fish species and native cutthroat trout), high geomorphic integrity, and high water quality integrity. These subwatersheds received the highest priority for restoration, specifically a conservation strategy that maintains and protects their high quality with minimal short-term risk from other management actions. High priority subwatersheds were further prioritized to focus recovery efforts and provide a "blue print" as to which should be the highest priority for restoration or conservation during the planning period (next 10-15 years). ACS priority subwatersheds were identified for each subbasin to represent the "highest of the high" in terms of applying management direction and restoration prioritization, especially for short-term recovery objectives. This process is designed to focus management direction and restoration prioritization for the recovery of listed fish species, their habitats, and 303(d) impaired water bodies, and other SWRA resources.

Aquatic restoration can be measured by (1) How many projects were implemented; (2) How many acres or miles were accomplished; and (3) How many dollars were spent. In FY13, 18 projects were completed (Table 8) that protected, maintained, improved or restored water resources, soil resources, stream habitats, and lake habitats and associated desirable species. These projects improved 24 miles of stream, 1840.5 acres of riparian and upland areas, 2,945 acres of lake, decommissioned 44.3 miles of roads/trails, and inventoried 94 miles stream for sensitive species. Approximately $592,998 was spent on these projects with an additional $25,344 of in-kind funds spent by partners. Projects focused in ACS and WARS high priority subwatersheds accomplished 21.5 miles (90%) of stream miles improved, 17 miles of road decommissioning (100%), 2,945 acres (100%) of lake, and 1,560 acres (91%) of riparian and upland improvements on the forest (Tables 6 and 8).

Although ACS and WARS high subwatersheds are the highest priority for restoration, not all restoration projects implemented or dollars spent in FY13 occurred in these subwatersheds. This is due to several reasons. First, some projects were not planned with forest-wide, management area objectives or WARS emphasis in mind. Second, some restoration projects are driven by specific resource issues that must be addressed immediately or additional degradation may occur (i.e. sediment coming from a storm damaged road). Finally, restoration projects may be driven by outside groups that have a specific interest in an issue or aquatic resource that falls outside of ACS priority subwatersheds. Even with these considerations, the projects implemented in FY13 still addressed many key forest wide or management area objectives in ACS or high priority subwatersheds (Table 8).

Table 8 - FY 13 aquatic restoration accomplishments on the Sawtooth National Forest

Project Name	Subwatershed (s) in which restoration occurred	Summary of accomplished work	Target Accomplished	WARS Restoration Strategy and Priority	ACS priority
Beaver Program	**Wardrop Creek (Soldier Ck – Camas)** **Five Points Creek (Little Smoke SF Boise)** **West Fork 3 Mile Ck (Camas Creek)** **Elk Creek (Camas Ck)**	Through the Wood River RCD Interagency Beaver Committee the Sawtooth National Forest relocated beavers for the purpose of improving wildlife habitat. Accomplished: 22 beavers were released on the Fairfield Ranger District at four pre-approved sites	1 mile of stream and 140 acre 1 mile of stream and 140 acres 1 miles of stream and 140 acres 1 mile/stream and 140 acres	High/Active Moderate/Active Low/Passive High/Active	Yes No No No
Adams Gulch Streambank Restoration	**Adams Gulch**	The objective is to restore streambank stability, riparian vegetation and in-stream habitat function for native fish and riparian plant communities in an area where a historic water diversion and recreational impacts have been actively resolved/removed. The project will improve channel integrity, reduce streambank erosion and improve instream habitat and late season flows for rainbow trout and native redband trout and will provide benefits by increasing streambank stability, bank vegetative cover and shading, and reducing sedimentation.	0.5 acres of terrestrial (riparian) habitat and 0.5 miles stream improved	Low/Active	No
Wood River Sculpin Surveys 2013	**Lake Creek Corral Creek (Big Wood River 4th HUC)**	Inventory and monitoring of Wood River sculpin presence/absence on three streams, including one stream that has had habitat enhancements completed and one stream where habitat enhancements are being planned for FY15.	5.0 miles of stream inventoried	High/Active	No
Coal Pit Creek Ford Improvement	**Coal Pit Creek**	A vehicle stream crossing on Coal Pit Creek is contributing to elevated sedimentation and turbidity in the stream, which is occupied by Yellowstone cutthroat trout and rainbow trout. The ford is erosive and needed to be stabilized to reduce water quality impacts downstream. This project was planned using NFRR	1 mile of stream	Active/High	Yes

Project Name	Subwatershed (s) in which restoration occurred	Summary of accomplished work	Target Accomplished	WARS Restoration Strategy and Priority	ACS priority
		funds in FY2012 and implementation was funded by a RAC grant award.			
South Fork Johnson Creek Ford Improve-ments	**South Fork Johnson Creek**	Two vehicle stream crossings on South Fork Johnson Creek are contributing to elevated sedimentation and turbidity in the stream, which is occupied by Yellowstone cutthroat trout. These fords are erosive and needed to be stabilized to reduce impacts downstream.	2.0 miles of stream habitat improved	Active/High	Yes
Non System Road/Trail Decommis-sioning	**Cottonwood Creek, Hopper Gulch – Shoshone Ck, Pole Camp Ck – Shoshone Ck, Headwaters Rock Ck, Fifth Fk Rock Ck, Fourth Fk Rock Ck** **Johnson Creek, Wildcat Creek**	Obliteration of non-system roads and motorized trails on Minidoka Ranger District to improve watershed hydrology, reduce sedimentation and soil erosion, and restore wildlife habitat by removing vehicle access to nesting habitats for sage grouse, migratory birds and reducing visual/noise disturbance in mule deer habitat. Decommissioning/obliteration of 26.7 miles of roads resulting in 1 mile of rainbow trout habitat improvement and 2136 acres of riparian/wetland acres restored.	27.1 miles of decom. and 82 acres of watershed improved 16.8 miles of decom. and 51 acres of watershed improved	Active/ Moderate Active/High	No Yes
Eight Mile Creek Juniper Removal	**Eight Mile Creek**	Cut juniper trees and shrubs in riparian zones to allow passive restoration with native deciduous species; constructed in-stream LWD fish structures with cut juniper to benefit Yellowstone cutthroat trout.	2 acres terrestrial (riparian) and 1 mile stream	Active/High	Yes
Raft River Dispersed Recreation Planning and Implementati on	**One Mile Creek** **Johnson Creek** **Wildcat Creek**	Dispersed camping and associated uses have impacted a number of streams and riparian areas within the Raft River division on the Minidoka Ranger District. The project designated dispersed campsites within riparian zones in Onemile Creek, Johnson Creek, and Wildcat drainages to restrict impacts to designated areas and facilitate passive restoration of streambanks and riparian corridors. The project has resulted in reduced impacts to stream corridors that provide habitat for amphibians and Yellowstone cutthroat trout.	5.0 acres terrestrial (riparian) restored for amphibians and 2.5 acres terrestrial (riparian) and 2.0 miles improved for Yellowstone cutthroat trout	Active/High Active/High Active/High	Yes Yes Yes
Onemile Creek Headcut Restoration	**One Mile Creek**	To restore and maintain migration corridor for Yellowstone cutthroat trout by reducing stream channel headcutting	1.0 mile stream restoration for Yellowstone cutthroat trout	Active/High	Yes
Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout Surveys	**Eightmile Creek** **Sixmile Creek** **Grape Creek** **Dry Creek**	An interagency group comprising the Sawtooth NF, BLM, and Idaho Fish and Game surveyed for Yellowstone cutthroat trout in key drainages on the Sawtooth National Forest. Data is compared to previous surveys in each drainage to determine changes in density and	12.0 miles stream inventoried for Yellowstone cutthroat trout	Active/High Active/Medium Passive/High Active/High	Yes No Yes Yes

Project Name	Subwatershed (s) in which restoration occurred	Summary of accomplished work	Target Accomplished	WARS Restoration Strategy and Priority	ACS priority
		distribution. Information is also collected on changes to riparian and stream habitat. This information is used to determine restoration opportunities and assess the species status.			
Beaver Creek Ford Conversion to ATV Bridge	**Beaver Creek**	An existing ford and the unauthorized route leading to and from the ford has impacted stream and habitat conditions of Beaver Creek for many years. Closure and rehabilitation of the ford required construction of new trail, designation of some existing trail and rehabilitation of 2 acres of streamside dispersed campsites and replacement of the ford with a bridge suitable for ATV's. This project resulted in improving riparian and stream function, upland habitats, and greater instream security for TES fish (steelhead, chinook salmon, bull trout and Westslope cutthroat trout).	1 miles of stream	Active/High	No
Pole Creek Travel Management Implementation	**Pole Creek**	As a result of community collaboration facilitated by the Sawtooth Society, travel appropriate travel objectives were identified within the Pole Creek drainage. This project constructed new trails and trail bridge crossings; closed and obliterated former routes, and restored associated wetland and upland habitats restoring 1.0 mile of stream habitat for steelhead, chinook salmon, bull trout and Westslope cutthroat trout.	1.0 miles of stream, 1120 acres riparian restored	Active/High	Yes
Pole Creek Culvert Replacements	**Pole Creek**	Replace one road culvert with a vehicle bridge. Replace one road culvert with a ATV suitable trail bridge. Tied directly to several other travel network changes, and indirectly tied to misc. other restoration objectives within the watershed. Seven miles of upstream fish access secured.	7.0 miles of stream restored for bull trout, chinook salmon, steelhead and Westslope cutthroat trout	Active/High	Yes
Pole Creek Riparian Fence Maintenance	**Pole Creek**	Maintenance of existing Pole Creek riparian exclusion fence per USA easement on private lands to protect 2.0 miles of steelhead, chinook salmon, bull trout and Westslope cutthroat trout.	2.0 miles of steelhead, chinook salmon, bull trout and Westslope cutthroat trout	Active/High	Yes
Cabin Creek Road 207 Removal and Habitat Rehabilitation	**Cabin Creek**	Removed an existing segment (0.6 miles) of Road 207 through wetlands adjacent to channels of Cabin Creek between its junctions with Road 205 (Alturas Lake) and the Road 438 (Cabin Creek Camp). Restored the associated wetland and upland habitats formerly occupied by the road. Removed 6 culverts within the segment, 4 of which were barriers to TES fish (steelhead, chinook salmon, bull trout, and Westslope cutthroat trout).	0.5 miles of stream, 15 acres riparian/wetland0.5 miles of decom.	Active/High	Yes

Project Name	Subwatershed (s) in which restoration occurred	Summary of accomplished work	Target Accomplished	WARS Restoration Strategy and Priority	ACS priority
Aquatic Invasive Education Program and Management Strategy	**Lower Redfish Lake Cr.** **Upper Alturas Lake** **Lower Alturas Lake** **Stanley Lake Creek**	The Sawtooth National Recreational Area has several lakes that are popular boating destinations and are vulnerable to aquatic invasive species. To help protect aquatic resources within these lakes the Forest Service partnered with Idaho Department of Agriculture to establish a boat inspection station on Redfish Lake and monitoring in several of our large glacial lakes. Forest Service also completed spot boat inspections on Pettit, Alturas, and Stanley Lakes in 2013. Protected vital habitat for bull trout, chinook salmon, sockeye salmon, steelhead and Westslope cutthroat trout.	1,530 acres lake 837 acres lake 398 acres lake 180 acres lake	Passive/High Active/High Passive/High Active/High	Yes Yes Yes No
Travel Plan Maintenance	**Sawtooth NRA**	Implement vehicle control and site and route rehabilitation measures within the Sawtooth NRA where actively expanding recreation use or travel is not appropriate or desired.	5.0 acres wetland and riparian area restored	Active/High	Yes
MIS Bull Trout Monitoring	**<u>Fairfield</u>:** **Boardman Creek** **Skeleton Creek** **Upper Big Smoky** **W.F. Big Smoky** **Salt Creek** **<u>SNRA</u>:** **E F Salmon River** **West Pass** **Fourth of July Creek** **Big Boulder** **Champion Creek**	Completed surveys on eight streams on Fairfield Ranger District and six streams on the Sawtooth NRA. Documented presence/absence of bull trout populations across 77 miles of stream on the forest.	77 miles of stream inventories for Bull Trout	varies	yes

- **Activity or Practiced to Be Monitored: 39. Water quality and beneficial use status**

  Monitoring Question: Are management actions maintaining or restoring water quality to fully support beneficial uses, and native and desired non-native fish species and their habitats over multiple spatial scales?

Summary of findings: The Clean Water Act of 1972 (Public Law 92-500), as amended in 1977 (Public Law 95-217) and 1987 (Public Law 100-4), was intended by Congress to provide a means to protect and improve the quality of the water resources and maintain their beneficial uses. The Clean Water Act (Sections 208 and 319) recognized the need for control strategies for nonpoint source pollution. To provide environmental protection and improvement emphasis for water and soil resources and water-related beneficial uses, the National Nonpoint Source Policy (December 12, 1984), the Forest Service Nonpoint Strategy (January 29, 1985), and the USDA Nonpoint Source Water Quality Policy (December 5, 1986) were developed. Soil and water conservation practices were recognized as the primary control mechanisms for nonpoint sources of pollution on National Forest

System lands. This perspective is supported by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in their guidance, "Nonpoint Source Controls and Water Quality Standards" (August 19, 1987).

As part of its land stewardship policy, the Forest Service's management actions must be carried out in a manner which protects soil and water resources. The Clean Water Act directs the Secretary of Agriculture to establish and administer a program…of installing and maintaining measures incorporating best management practices (FSM 2532) to control nonpoint source pollution for improved water quality…" Best Management Practices (BMPs) become the primary mechanism for meeting water quality standards. BMPs are defined as "A practice or a combination of practices, that is determined by a State (or designated area-wide planning agency) after problem assessment, examination of alternative practices, and appropriate public participation to be the most effective, practical (including technological, economic, and institutional considerations) means of preventing or reducing the amount of pollution generated by nonpoint sources to a level compatible with water quality goals (40 CFR 130.2(q))." Implementation of BMPs and a consistent monitoring approach allows evaluation and modification of practices designed to protect water quality.

The State of Idaho has identified a number of BMPs pertaining to Forest Practices Rules and Regulations, Stream Channel Alterations, Roads, etc. that the Forest must follow. The Forest Service in Idaho has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Idaho Department of State Lands and Environmental Quality on implementing the nonpoint source water quality program. The Forest Service is responsible for (1) implementing nonpoint source pollution controls, and (2) meeting Idaho Water Quality Standards. A primary tool used for mitigating nonpoint pollution is through implementation of BMPs.

In addition to these, the Forest has many standards and guidelines in the Forest Plan that are intended to minimize impacts to water quality. Standards are typically action restrictions designed to prevent degradation of resource conditions, or exceeding a threshold of unacceptable effects, so that conditions can be maintained or restored over time. Guidelines represent a preferred or advisable course of action generally expected to be carried out. Guidelines often indicate measures that should be taken to help maintain or restore resource conditions, or prevent resource degradation.

To assess how well the Sawtooth National Forest's management activities are maintaining or restoring water quality, the Forest conducts project implementation reviews of select projects each year. The assumption is that if projects have implemented Forest Plan requirements, project specific mitigation measures, and relevant Idaho BMPs, then most impacts to water quality and beneficial uses have been minimized.

Two Sites were monitored in 2013 both of which were on the Fairfield Ranger District in the Lower Big Smokey HUC. The first was the Recreation F BMP for Riding and Stock Use Areas. The findings were that no problems occurred during the operating season that affected or potentially may have affected water, aquatic, or riparian resources and no corrective actions were needed to be taken to reduce or eliminate the problems. Recommendations to improve implementation were made for a waste disposal area and better water supply. There was no evidence of erosion or sedimentation present along the waterbody transect. However, several horse trails and access points were found outside of the transect at Big Smoky Creek. The second BMP monitoring was Rec D. Motorized and Non-Motorized Trail Operation and Use. The findings were that corrective actions were needed and implemented for problems that affected water, aquatic, or riparian resources.