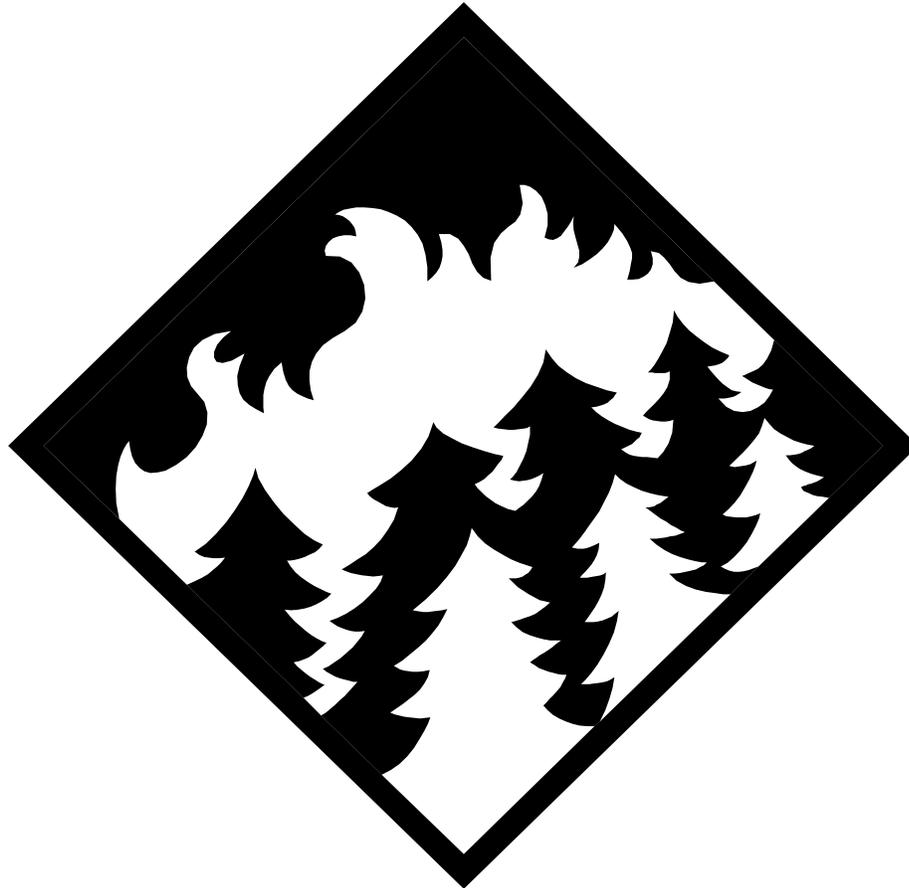


2012 Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report
National Forests in Florida



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Message from the Forest Supervisor

Monitoring, evaluation, and research are the heart of adaptive management and are the quality control mechanisms for the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the National Forests in Florida (Forest Plan). Fiscal year 2012 (Oct. 1, 2011 – Sept. 30, 2012) was the thirteenth year of Forest Plan implementation. Each year, we examine trends in monitoring data and outputs to assess whether we are achieving the goals and objectives laid out in the Forest Plan. These trends are evaluated to determine if there is a need to adjust our management strategies or amend the plan's goals, objectives, or standards and guidelines to achieve the desired future conditions of the land we manage. Alternatively, as we learn about the effects of our activities and management priorities shift, some monitoring questions may no longer be needed to assure that the overall goals of the Forest Plan are effectively implemented.

Findings in this report indicate there is no immediate need to revise or amend the Forest Plan based on monitoring trends. However, changes in the monitoring program will be required beginning in FY 2014 to ensure that future monitoring efforts are consistent with the recently finalized regulations guiding the content of Forest Plans (i.e., the "2012 Planning Rule") and related directives for monitoring in the Forest Service Handbook (section 1909.12, chapter 30).

The FY 2012 report differs from previous reports in three important ways: 1. Questions or indicators for which we have no new information have been mostly omitted. General information about these items may be found in past monitoring reports, which are available on the National Forests in Florida website (<http://goo.gl/iWdR3w>) or upon request (contact Matthew Trager at mdtrager@fs.fed.us or 850-523-8582). 2. Where applicable, anticipated future changes to the monitoring program are noted. In particular, incorporation of ecological condition models and changes to assure compliance with new Forest Service planning regulations will result in development of new monitoring questions and new items to measure that will be incorporated from FY 2013 to FY 2015. 3. There are no action plans. Expected future actions (if any) are noted for each monitoring question. Additionally, the Forest Plan objectives and goals related to each question have not been repeated unless directly relevant for the evaluation of results; these may be found in previous monitoring reports or in Table 5.1 of the Forest Plan.

Certification Statement

I have evaluated the monitoring results and evaluations in this report. I have directed the National Forests in Florida staff to consider these findings in the development of site-specific projects, particularly for accomplishing forest strategic priorities in areas have not met Forest Plan objectives. I have considered funding requirements in the budget necessary to implement these actions. Both the trends in monitoring data and the current and upcoming changes in the monitoring program demonstrate that the Forest Plan remains a relevant framework for forest management activities.

This report is approved.

SUSAN JEHEBER-MATTHEWS
Forest Supervisor

Date

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Section 1. Monitoring questions related to ecosystem conditions and individual species

1.1 Is the health of natural forest communities being maintained or improved?

Item to Measure: Management indicator species

The Forest Plan includes multiple questions related to the health of forest plant and animal communities, including consideration of Management Indicator Species (MIS) that are monitored because their population changes are believed to indicate the effects of management activities. Forest Plan Amendment 10 was finalized in 2011 and revised the list of MIS to include only species that are more closely linked to the quality of managed habitats and that are amenable to study.

The monitoring program in the Forest Plan prescribes that this item be reported on a five-year frequency to discern trends in how Management Indicator Species (MIS) respond to forest management activities. In FYs 2009-2012, long-term plots and new survey protocols were initiated to better assess population trends of the new MIS plant species, and annual monitoring of a subset of plots will continue with reports on trends made available at least every five years.

The 2012 Planning Rule removed Forest Plan requirements for MIS from planning regulations and replaced them with plan components addressing ecosystem health and species-specific plan components for focal species (36 CFR 219.12). In future reports, it is likely that species currently considered as MIS will be referred to as “focal species” that indicate ecological conditions.

Results: None for FY 2012. This question will be addressed upon completion of multiple years of monitoring data and in compliance with the new planning regulations regarding Forest Plan monitoring. The population statuses of several MIS are reported elsewhere in this report (e.g., red-cockaded woodpecker, Florida scrub-jay) but are not directly linked to the associated habitats that are the focus of monitoring question 1.1.

1.2 What are the habitat conditions of the major habitat associations?

Item to Measure: Acres of each habitat association by major forest type age class.

The monitoring program in the Forest Plan prescribes that this item be reported on a five-year frequency. In the past, the population trends of red-cockaded woodpeckers (RCW) were used to address this question, but RCW do not occur in all major forest types and there are areas of appropriate habitat that are not occupied by RCWs.

The National Forests in Florida has recently generated or will soon generate Ecological Condition Models for major forest types that will more directly address this question. These models include age class as well as tree density, vegetation structure, fire history and ground-truthing of remotely sensed data to evaluate the managed terrestrial habitats (flatwoods, wet prairie, sandhills and scrub) within the National Forests in Florida. Preliminary but very detailed data for the flatwoods of the Osceola National Forest and the sandhills and flatwoods of the Ocala National Forest are available upon request. Evaluation of the flatwoods, wet prairies sandhills of the Apalachicola National Forest is ongoing and ecological conditions for the scrub

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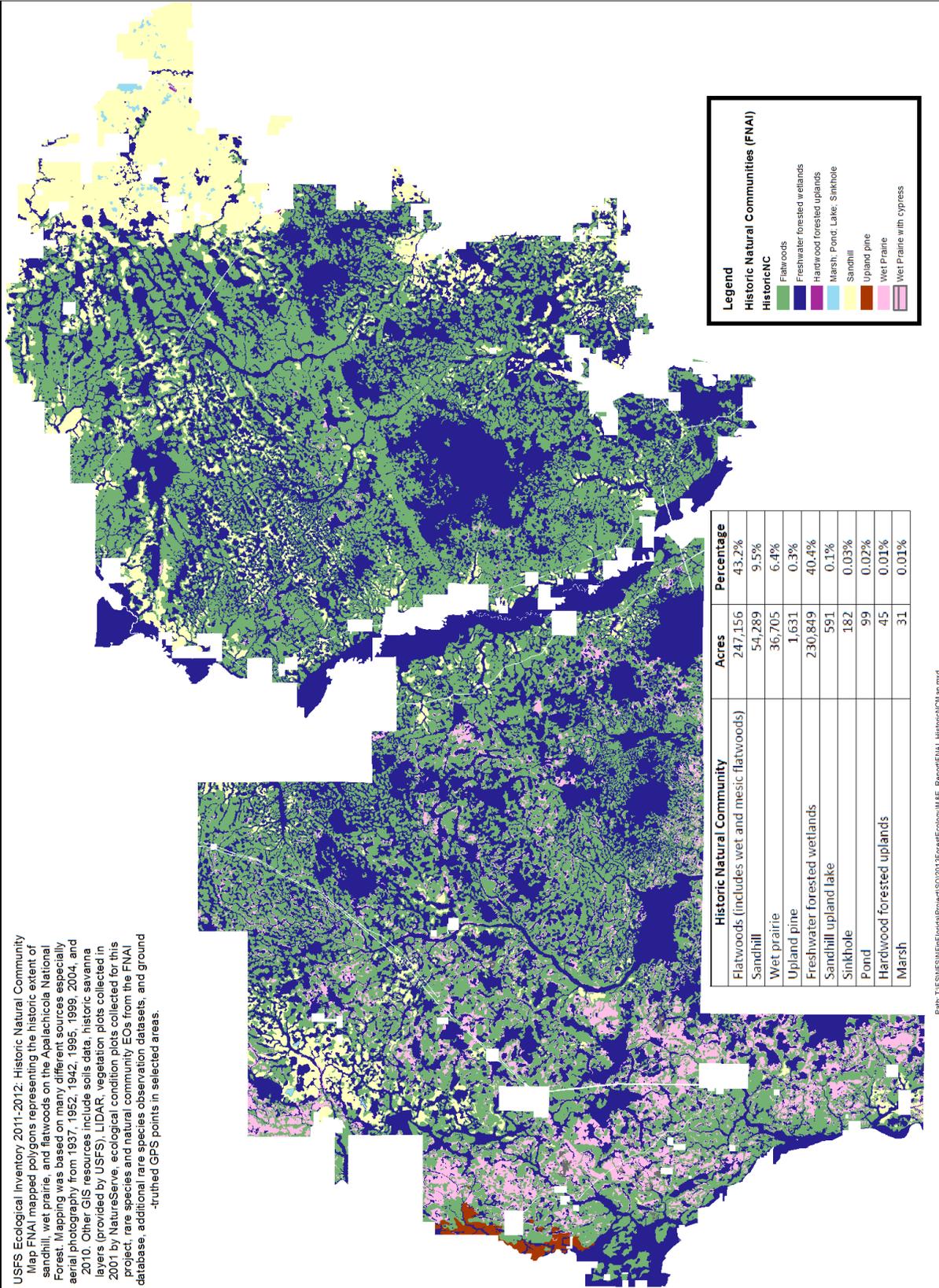
habitat on the Ocala National Forest are addressed in other monitoring questions (1.4, 1.16, 1.17).

One of the critical components of developing an ecological condition model is defining the spatial arrangement of natural communities across the National Forests in Florida. The Natural Areas Inventory developed a map of the historic natural communities for the Apalachicola National Forest that will be used as reference conditions in the spatially-explicit evaluation of ecological condition. For example, in an area that was historically wet prairie or savanna (a habitat with high grass cover and very few trees) a tree density and age structure appropriate for a good condition in flatwoods would actually indicate a degraded ecological condition. The map of natural communities is below.

Results: None for 2012. This question has been partially addressed in Landscape Scale Assessments based on ecological condition models completed for the Osceola National Forest flatwoods and the Ocala National Forest flatwoods and sandhills. These reports are available upon request and, along with data on the new MIS, will be the basis for future evaluation of trends in habitat conditions.

ANF- Historic Natural Communities

USFS Ecological Inventory 2011-2012: Historic Natural Community Map FNAI mapped polygons representing the historic extent of sandhill, wet prairie, and flatwoods on the Appalachian National Forest. Mapping was based on many different sources especially aerial photography from 1937, 1952, 1942, 1995, 1999, 2004, and 2010. Other GIS resources include soils data, historic savanna layers (provided by USFS), LIDAR, vegetation plots collected in 2001 by NatureServe, ecological condition plots collected for this project, rare species and natural community EOs from the FNAI database, additional rare species observation datasets, and ground-truthed GPS points in selected areas.



Path: F:\GIS\USFS\ANF\Ecological\Projects\SD2012\ForestEcology\MSE_Report\FNAI_HistoricNatCom.mxd

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1.3 Are we maintaining RCW populations on the National Forests in Florida?

Item to Measure: Number of effective groups; number of active clusters, compartment group survey.

Results: All three forests are continuing their long-standing monitoring of red-cockaded woodpeckers, with more detailed monitoring of a subset of clusters on the Apalachicola, Wakulla and Osceola populations that contribute to the translocation program for the species.

Table 1. Number of active red-cockaded woodpecker clusters

Year	Apalachicola RD	Wakulla RD	Osceola NF	Ocala NF
1991	503	186	44	12
1992	503	182	43	11
1993	494	150	43	13
1994	500	Incomplete	45	10
1995	504	150	51	15
1996	504	154	53	10
1997	505	157	51	10
1998	505	125	Incomplete	13
1999	486	125	66	18
2000	486	138	Incomplete	22
2001	488	140	Incomplete	30
2002	486	140	Incomplete	29
2003	485	134	77	37
2004	473	137	84	44
2005	473	104	88	53
2006	489	120	91	53
2007	494	130	100	55
2008	513*	140	112	65
2009	533*	146	124	65
2010	546*	147	139	67
2011	545*	151	140	75
2012	556*	162	145	92

* The Apalachicola District's number of active clusters for these years was estimated from a 40% survey of the population annually, with 1/3 of the remaining population surveyed annually. Thus 60% of the District's population is surveyed annually with the remaining 40% survey data being less than 3 years old.

The Apalachicola District population is stable to slightly increasing; the Wakulla District has shown a gradual increase, and the Osceola and Ocala populations are increasing.

With continued emphasis management activities that improve RCW habitat (e.g., thinning pines, hardwood midstory removal, prescribed burning, groundcover improvement) as well as installation of artificial nest structures and translocation, the viability of the red-cockaded

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woodpecker is ensured on the National Forests in Florida. Currently, three of the populations have met the population objectives described in Forest Plan Objective 8 (Apalachicola, Osceola and Ocala), and the two districts currently not meeting them (Wakulla and Osceola) are growing at an acceptable pace.

1.4 What are the population trends of scrub jay? How is management affecting scrub jay? How many acres are suitable for scrub jay?

Items to Measure: Scrub jay population demographics, reproduction, dispersion, number of acres in 3-12 year age class in sand pine.

The Ocala National Forest is continuing work with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and researchers associated with the US Geological Survey unit at the University of Florida to develop and refine survey methods for Florida scrub-jays. The history of these efforts is described in the FY 2011 Monitoring and Evaluation Report. The population data for FY 2012 were derived from sampling methods that were determined to best balance accuracy and efficiency, but may be further refined in the future.

Results: The population estimate for Florida scrub-jays in FY 2012 shows a substantial increase from the last year that data are available. It is not clear how much of this change is due to actual population differences rather than differences in survey methods, so multiple years of data collected with consistent methodology will be required to discern any trends. However, it is clear that the Ocala National Forest continues to support a large scrub-jay population that meets Forest Plan Objective 9's target population size of 742-907 groups.

Table 2. Florida scrub-jay population and habitat trends

Year	Number of groups/birds		Acres of suitable habitat
	Lake George RD	Seminole RD	
1994	454/no count	245/no count	ND
1995	460/1313	247/694	ND
1996	466/1398	249/693	ND
1997	468/1336	259/774	ND
1998	473/893	272/799	ND
1999	333/893	413/1050	52,089
2000	351/1020	412/1048	47,188
2001	384/1120	401/969	45,508
2002	421/1258	394/955	42,895
2003	425/1251	355/881	36,775
2004	426/1253	354/868	33,854
2005	790/2,136		30,523
2006	786/2,129		30,633
2007	803/2,313		29,454
2008	ND		30,022
2009	ND		29,578
2010	ND		31,870
2011	ND		31,990
2012	1100/2,970		40,729

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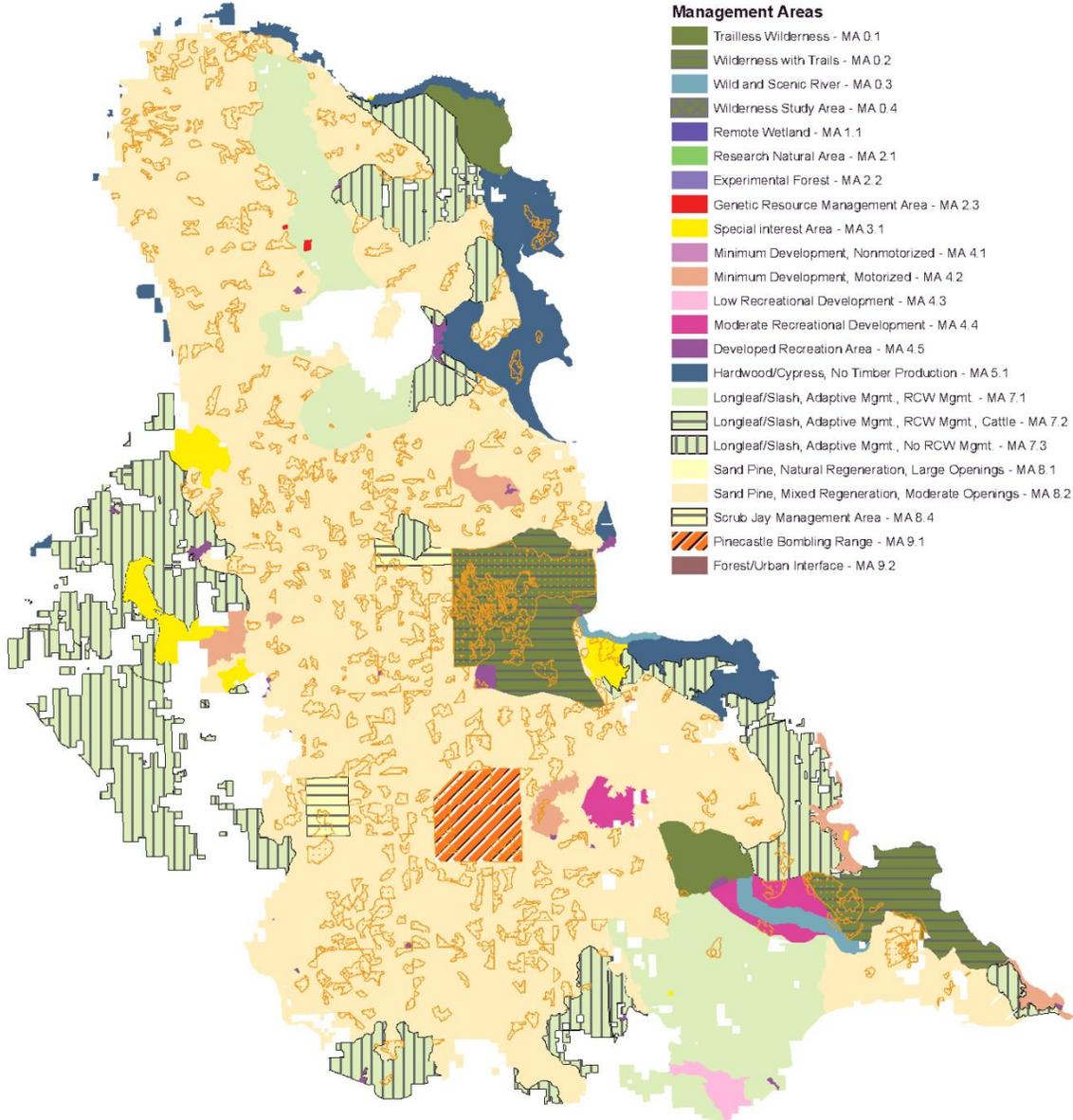
Due to an administrative consolidation, the two Districts are reported as a single unit from 2005 forward.

In FY 2012, there were approximately 40,700 acres of appropriate Florida scrub-jay habitat (scrub with 3-12 years of regrowth following fire, harvest or chopping) on the Ocala National Forest. This value is less than the habitat goal of 45,000-55,000 acres in Forest Plan Objective 9 but is higher than recent years due to a large wildfire in the Juniper Prairie Wilderness in 2009 that generated large areas of high-quality scrub-jay habitat. Efforts are underway to create more and larger areas of early successional scrub habitat through a variety of management activities, including some that are not dependent on traditional harvest of mature sand pines.

See also monitoring questions 1.16 and 1.17. The current habitat is shown in the map below.

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2012 Scrub Jay Openings



Legend

Scrub Jay Openings (3-12 years)

Management Areas

- Trailless Wilderness - MA 0.1
- Wilderness with Trails - MA 0.2
- Wild and Scenic River - MA 0.3
- Wilderness Study Area - MA 0.4
- Remote Wetland - MA 1.1
- Research Natural Area - MA 2.1
- Experimental Forest - MA 2.2
- Genetic Resource Management Area - MA 2.3
- Special Interest Area - MA 3.1
- Minimum Development, Nonmotorized - MA 4.1
- Minimum Development, Motorized - MA 4.2
- Low Recreational Development - MA 4.3
- Moderate Recreational Development - MA 4.4
- Developed Recreation Area - MA 4.5
- Hardwood/Cypress, No Timber Production - MA 5.1
- Longleaf/Slash, Adaptive Mgmt., RCW Mgmt. - MA 7.1
- Longleaf/Slash, Adaptive Mgmt., RCW Mgmt., Cattle - MA 7.2
- Longleaf/Slash, Adaptive Mgmt., No RCW Mgmt. - MA 7.3
- Sand Pine, Natural Regeneration, Large Openings - MA 8.1
- Sand Pine, Mixed Regeneration, Moderate Openings - MA 8.2
- Scrub Jay Management Area - MA 8.4
- Pinecastle Bombing Range - MA 9.1
- Forest/Urban Interface - MA 9.2

Management Area	Acres of Scrub Jay Openings
Developed Recreation Area - MA 4.5	72
Hardwood/Cypress, No Timber Production - MA 5.1	470
Longleaf/Slash, Adaptive Mgmt., No RCW Mgmt. - MA 7.3	238
Longleaf/Slash, Adaptive Mgmt., RCW Mgmt. - MA 7.1	158
Minimum Development, Motorized - MA 4.2	68
Moderate Recreational Development - MA 4.4	374
Pinecastle Bombing Range - MA 9.1	1813
Sand Pine, Mixed Regeneration, Moderate Openings - MA 8.2	27815
Scrub Jay Management Area - MA 8.4	302
Special Interest Area - MA 3.1	215
Trailless Wilderness - MA 0.1	32
Wild and Scenic River - MA 0.3	89
Wilderness with Trails - MA 0.2	8571
TOTAL	40217



Kilometers

10

Miles

10

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1.5 Are we maintaining viable populations of PETS animal species and habitats to support them?

Item to Measure: Number of PETS animals or acres of suitable habitat.

This question has been addressed in past reports with a list of federally listed or sensitive animal species accompanied by any information regarding their natural history or presence on the National Forests in Florida. Population size or trends were available for very few species, so the data presented were not appropriate for answering the question. Given the large number of federally listed or sensitive species, the rarity of many of them and the logistical challenges of monitoring populations that are often small, widely-dispersed or difficult to detect, it is unlikely that future monitoring will generate data for all species or habitats. Instead, a combination of intensive monitoring on some important species (e.g., MIS including the federally listed red-cockaded woodpecker and Florida scrub-jay) and ecological conditions will likely be used to address this question in the future.

Results: For this report we focus on notable observations or management activities related to PETS animal species that occurred during FY 2012:

- Initiated agreement with the Florida Natural Areas Inventory to map suitable gopher tortoise habitat throughout the National Forests in Florida and begin surveying populations on the Apalachicola National Forest. This work will help meet the new monitoring questions from Forest Plan Amendment 8.
- A wood stork colony in the southeastern corner of the Osceola National Forest was detected through aerial imagery. At least 10 storks were present at the same location in 2011 and 2012 and is currently the only known breeding colony on National Forests in Florida land.
- The Apalachicola National Forest was awarded a \$400,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Project Orianna Ltd. that will assist the Forest with habitat conservation, land management and restoration, with potential for captive breeding and propagation, and inventory and monitoring of indigo snakes. During FY 2012, 1,605 acres of high-priority sandhill habitat for the indigo snake and gopher tortoise were improved by removing hardwood midstory and application of prescribed fire.
- During FY 2012, hardwoods and woody shrubs were removed from 14 ponds in the western Apalachicola National Forest that are known or potential flatwoods salamander breeding sites.
- The Coastal Plains Institute is continuing research on the population status and potential repatriation of striped newts to the Munson sandhills area of the Apalachicola National Forest. No newts were found.

1.7 Are we maintaining viable populations of PETS plant species and habitats to support them?

Item to Measure: Locations and numbers of PETS plant populations.

Relatively little systematically collected data has been presented in recent Monitoring and Evaluation Reports. However, since 2011, the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) and National Forests in Florida staff have continued censuses of some permanent plots for federally listed plant species collected occurrence data for many other species from plots used to develop the ecological condition models and historical natural communities maps discussed above. This

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report summarizes new data from FYs 2011 and 2012 and incorporates it into population trends for some species or presents it as baseline information for future monitoring of other species.

Results: In FYs 2011 and 2012, at least 411 acres were intensively surveyed for rare plants across 1,447 sample locations. This sampling included targeted surveys of sites where rare plants had been previously reported as well as opportunistic discovery of new locations coincident with plots used in the development of the ecological condition models or historical natural communities. These efforts focused on the Apalachicola National Forest because it has the largest number of PETS plant species, including some that are known from few other locations.

Table 3. Total number of locations where PETS plant species were identified in FYs 2011 and 2012 on the Apalachicola National Forest

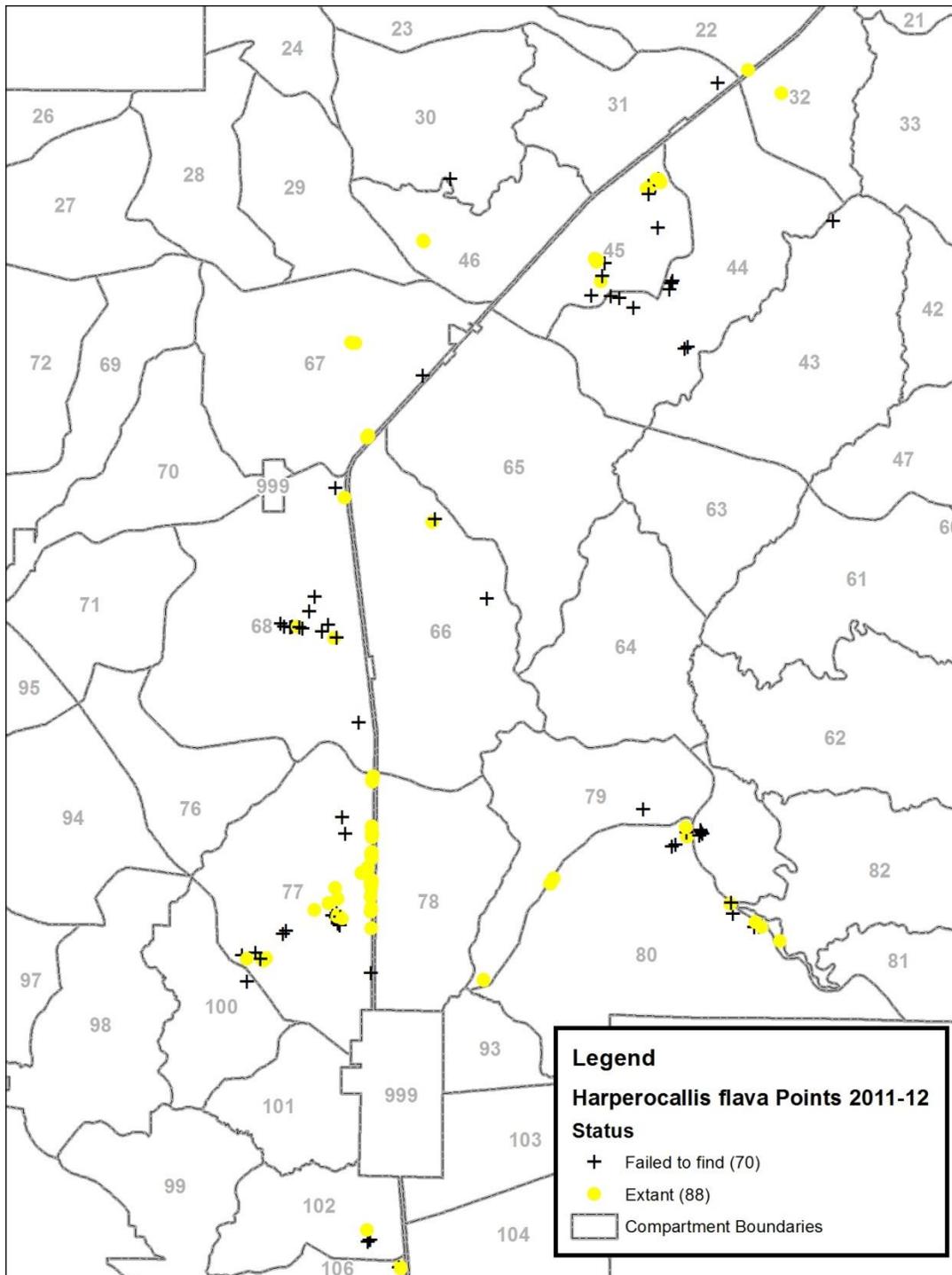
Species	Locations Mapped	Federal Status ¹	State Status ²
<i>Baptisia simplicifolia</i>	10	N	LT
<i>Calapogon multiflorus</i>	3	N	LE
<i>Epidendrum conopseum</i>	1	N	CE
<i>Gentiana pennelliana</i>	24	N	LE
<i>Harperocallis flava</i>	88	LE	LE
<i>Hymenocallis henryae</i>	62	N	LE
<i>Litsea aestivalis</i>	1	N	LE
<i>Macbridea alba</i>	17	LT	LE
<i>Nolina atopocarpa</i>	3	N	LT
<i>Nyssa ursina</i>	11	N	N
<i>Phoebanthus tenuifolius</i>	1	N	LT
<i>Physostegia godfreyi</i>	2	N	LT
<i>Pinguicula caerulea</i>	2	N	LT
<i>Pinguicula ionantha</i>	69	LT	LE
<i>Pinguicula lutea</i>	1	N	LT
<i>Platanthera ciliaris</i>	1	N	LT
<i>Polygala lewtonii</i>	18	LE	LE
<i>Rhexia parviflora</i>	1	N	LE
<i>Ruellia noctiflora</i>	1	N	LE
<i>Sarracenia minor</i>	11	N	LT
<i>Scutellaria floridana</i>	16	LT	LE
<i>Stachydeoma graveolens</i>	2	N	LE
<i>Verbesina chapmanii</i>	27	N	LT

¹ N = None, LE = listed as endangered, LT = listed as threatened

² N = None, LE = listed as endangered, LT = listed as threatened, CE = candidate for listing as endangered

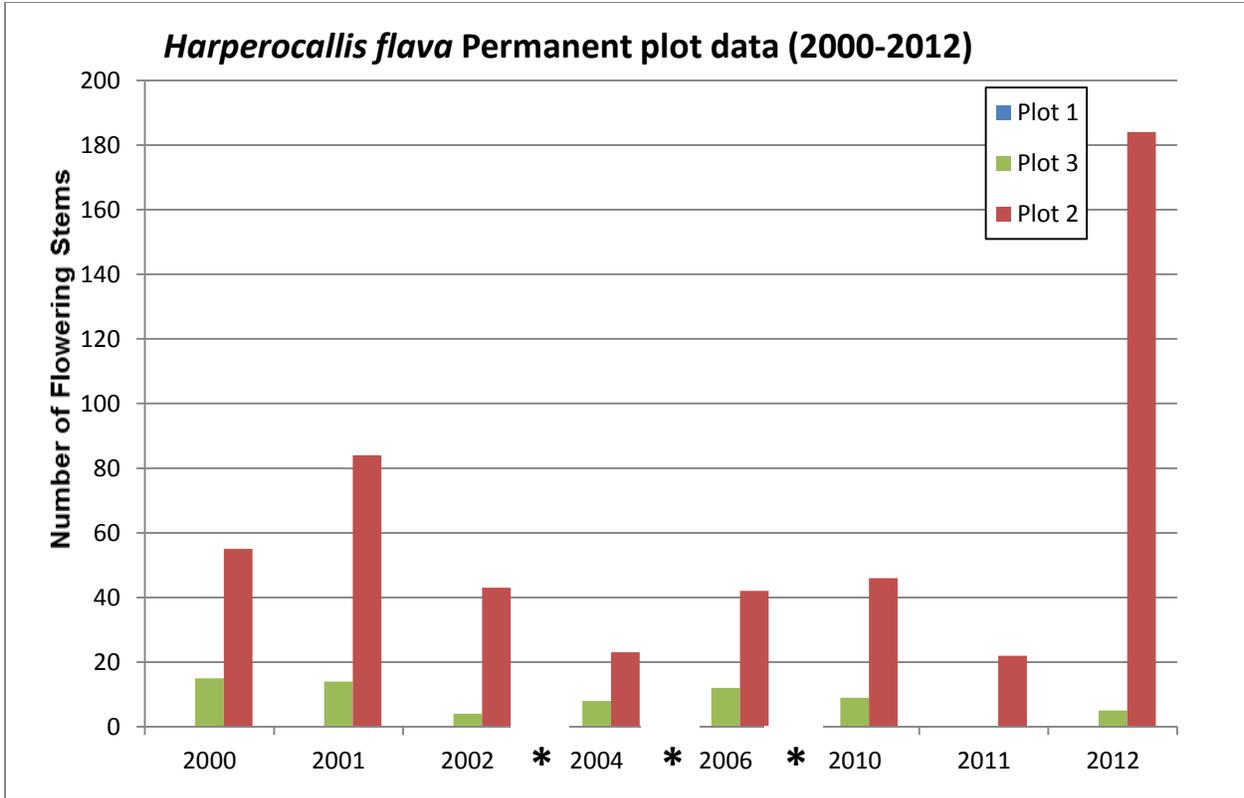
All previously reported sites for *Harperocallis flava* on the Apalachicola National Forest were visited between FYs 2011 and 2012. The sites visited are shown below, with presence or absence of flowering plants during the survey indicated.

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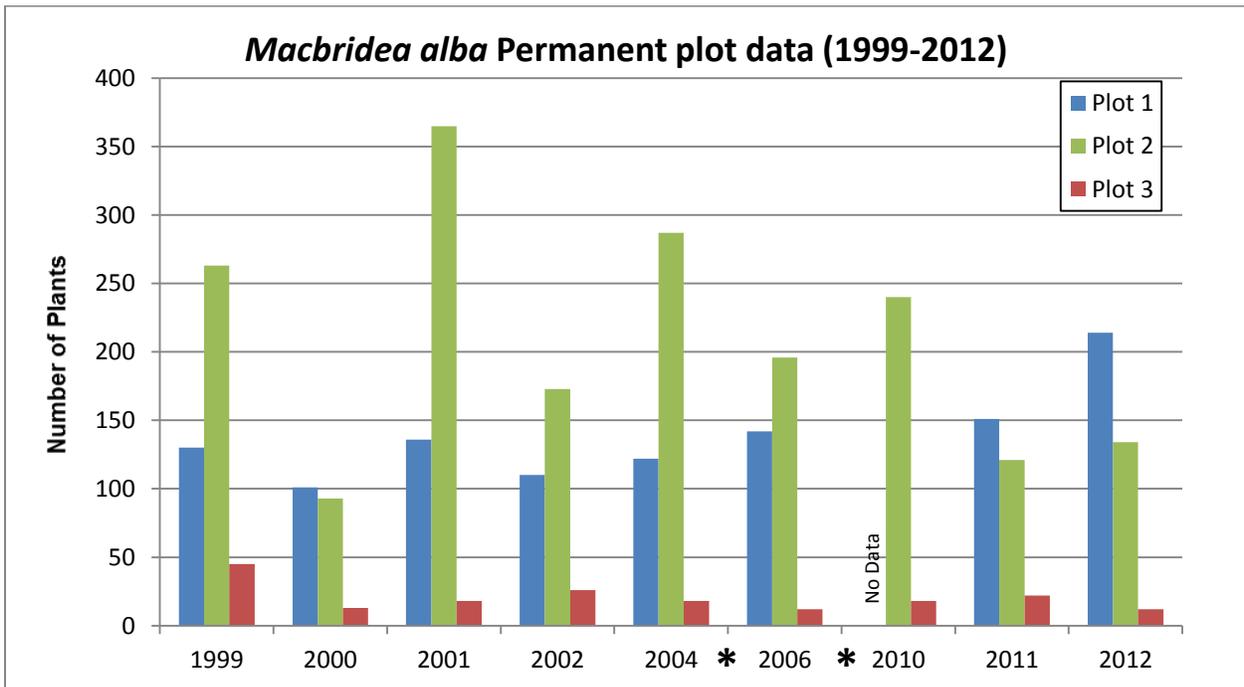
In addition to occurrence sampling, more intensive sampling of *H. flava* was conducted at many sites, including three long-term monitoring plots.

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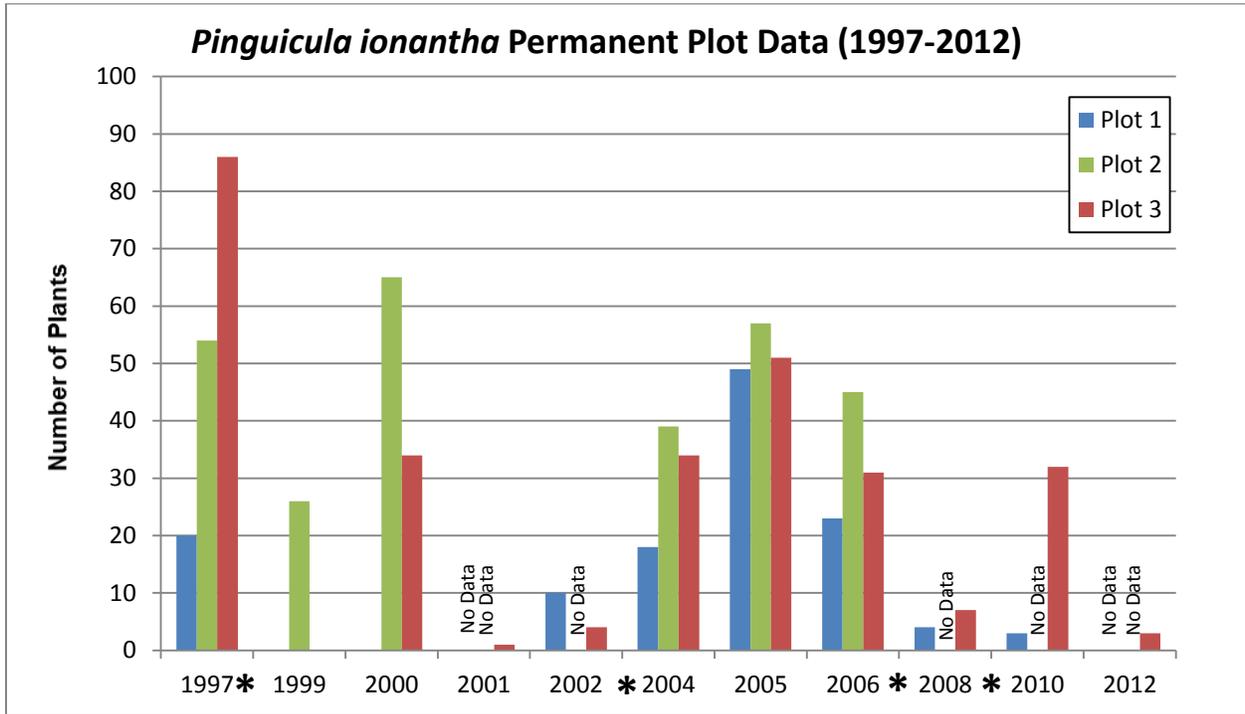
Asterisks indicate years that sampling did not occur.

Similar data were collected from three long-term monitoring plots for *Macbridea alba* and *Pinguicula ionantha*, which also occur on the western side of the Apalachicola National Forest.



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Asterisks indicate years that sampling did not occur. "No Data" indicates plots that were not sampled in a given year.



Asterisks indicate years that sampling did not occur. "No Data" indicates plots that were not sampled in a given year.

Additionally, 31 plots were established and sampled for *Polygala lewtonii* on the sandhill "pine islands" of the Ocala National Forest and 2,506 plants were counted. These plots will be revisited to further evaluate habitat conditions and population status of *P. lewtonii*.

1.8 What is the burn interval of upland pine acres? In what months have upland pine been burned?

Items to Measure: Acres of upland pine burned. Acres by month.

Results: Total acres burned on the National Forests in Florida in the last 3 years are shown in Table 4 and broken down for FY 2012 by individual forest in Table 5 and by month in Table 6.

Table 4. Area burned in the past three years

Year	Acres
2010	195,726
2011	112,334
2012	87,739
Total	395,799

Based on the upland pine Management Area 7.1 of 507,740 acres, 78% of the upland pine type was burned in the last 3 years.

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Table 5. Area burned by forest in FY 2012

Forest	Acres burned	Total Acres of Upland Pine Habitat (MA 7.1)
Apalachicola	35,110	375,311
Osceola	17,395	93,480
Ocala	35,234	35,792
Total	87,739	504,583

Table 6. Percent of upland pine burned each month of FY 2012

Month	Percent
October	1
November	2
December	6
January	22
February	7
March	6
April	0
May	1
June	33
July	19
August	3
September	0
Total	100

Forest Plan Objective 4 states that an average of 150,000 acres a year should be burned to maintain the upland pines. The Forest should strive to burn 50% of those acres (75,000 acres) between March 15 and September 30, and 20% (30,000 acres) between May 1 and July 31.

Based on the upland pine Management Area 7.1 acres of 507,740, 78% of this type (395,799 acres) were burned in the last 3 years (2010, 2011, 2012). For 2012, 54% of the total burned between May 1 and July 31. The Forest burned 60% of total acres in the period from March 15 thru September with 40% during the dormant season between October and February. Average yearly acreage burned over the past three years is 131,933.

Weather patterns were not favorable for prescribed burning with drought influencing the area most of FY 2012. Growing season burns are critical to habitat enhancement, but if growing season burns cannot be achieved, the overall fire frequency is the highest priority. The Forests took advantage of burn opportunities in January, and again in June and July, when weather patterns provided for some relief from drought conditions. In addition to prescribed fire, wildfires provided 33,274 acres of beneficial ecological effects.

1.9 How many miles of firelines were plowed for prescribed fire and wildfires? How many miles were restored?

Item to Measure: Miles of plowed firelines for each purpose. Miles of plowed firelines restored.

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Results: 44 miles of firelines were plowed in response to wildfires and all but 7 miles were restored. Nine miles of firelines were plowed for prescribed fire, of which 2 miles were restored and 7 miles were retained adjacent to private land.

In FY 2012 the Forest did minimize the use of plowed firelines and also optimized the use of alternative firelines to the extent possible. Alternative firelines were used, such as existing roads, trails and wet lines. During prescribed burning alternative firelines (swamp, foam, water, existing roads, disked lines) are used to the greatest extent possible, with the majority of prescribed burns bordering on roads, swamps or the Forest boundary.

1.10 How much off-site slash pine has been restored to other types?

Item to Measure: Acres type-converted from slash pine to other species.

Results: In the first 10 years of the Forest Plan (FY1999-2009), 6960 acres (or 35% of the target) were restored to longleaf pine from off-site slash pine. In the second 10 years of the Forest Plan (FY2010 to 2012) another 3591 acres (or 60% of target) of slash pine removals were converted from slash pine to Longleaf ecosystems.

Evaluation: In order to meet the 10-year objective, efforts should be made to increase the acreage of restoration in future years. More effort should be made to schedule removal of slash pine from mixed stands on the Osceola National Forest.

Future biomass and stewardship contract projects may provide opportunities to treat more off-site slash pine. CFLRP will also accelerate the rate of conversion on the Osceola.

1.11 Are we collecting data on understory structure?

Item to Measure: CISC report data on understory field.

The CISC database has been replaced by the FSVeg database, which allows for collection of detailed understory vegetation information. Additionally, the plot data used to develop and ground-truth the ecological condition models includes extensive information on understory structure and composition.

Results: None for FY 2012. As the plots are revisited, we will present data on trends in understory structure and the response of understory species to management activities.

1.12 How many acres have been offered for thinning?

Item to Measure: Number of acres of thinning harvest offered.

Results: The annual target is to offer 5,200 acres of thinning. In FY 2012, there were 3,374 acres offered for thinning. The second 10 years of the Forest Plan, combining FY2010 and FY2012 acres of thinning offered indicates that we are currently 68% of the annual objective for the second 10-year period.

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A variety of efforts have been initiated to increase the acres of thinning offered in areas within Forest Service control. These include development of ecological condition and prioritization models and more efficient project planning. Limited funding is expected to continue to limit our ability to meet objectives.

1.13 How much off-site sand pine has been restored, and to what other types?

Item to Measure: Acres type-converted from off-site sand pine to other species.

Results: The Ocala NF planted 262 acres in FY 2012 of longleaf pine on previously off-site sand pine. A total of 4,362 acres of off-site sand pine have been restored to longleaf pine through FY 2012.

The Forests met the objective for acres type-converted from off-site sand pine during the first 10 year period of the Plan. Results from the first two years of the second 10-year period indicate that the forest is on track for meeting this objective over the next 10 year period.

1.14 On how many acres have we initiated uneven-aged management harvests? Is the group selection method producing the anticipated desired conditions in the longleaf pine ecosystem and what are the effects of group selection harvest in longleaf pine?

Item to Measure: Number of acres offered with uneven-aged harvest. Tree stem diameter and frequency, frequency of seed crops, longleaf pine regeneration establishment and survival, growth, and development of seedlings, pine midstory development and distribution, costs and return of implementation of harvesting, costs and effects of burning within harvest units, plant species frequency and distribution, PETS species population trends/habitat conditions, MIS plant/animal population trends/habitat conditions.

Results: In FY 2012, 0 acres of uneven-aged harvest were completed, bringing the total to 845 acres over the implementation period of the Forest Plan (FY2000 – FY2012). There was one study initiated in FY 2012. Areas that may be suitable for this work are being surveyed, examined, and assessed for inclusion in future years work scheduling. Group selection and uneven-aged management in longleaf stands may be important management tools in the future, but current emphasis is on thinning stands (which often encourages natural regeneration) and conversion of off-site slash or sand pine to longleaf pine.

In order to meet the objectives of the Forest Plan related to this question, efforts should be made to increase the acreage offered for uneven-aged harvest. Otherwise, it may be the case that these management methods have limited utility given current priorities.

1.15 How many acres have we initiated irregular shelterwood harvest? Is the irregular shelterwood method producing the anticipated desired conditions in the slash pine forest?

Item to Measure: Number of acres offered with uneven-aged harvest. Growth and development of seedlings, costs and returns of implementation of harvesting, costs and effects of burning within harvest units, plant species frequency and distribution, PETS species effects/population trends.

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Results: There were no acres of irregular shelterwood offered for harvest in FY 2012. Since approval of the 1999 LRMP, there have been no identified opportunities or proposals to implement irregular shelterwood harvest during site-specific project development. Use of irregular shelterwood remains a viable silvicultural tool, however it may not be an appropriate Forest Plan objective.

1.16 How many acres of sand pine have had a regeneration harvest?

Item to Measure: Number of acres offered with sand pine regeneration harvest.

Results: 892 acres of sand pine were harvested in FY 2012 and 1,006 acres of sand pine were offered for regeneration harvest through timber sales that will be implemented in future years.

The forest has consistently been below this objective. This shortfall has been primarily the result of reduced budgets and personnel limitations. A variety of efforts have been initiated to increase the acreage treated. A Landscape Scale Assessment was completed for scrub habitat in 2009 and included a programmatic effort to subdivide scrub habitat into manageable blocks to facilitate a more practical scheduling process. In addition, a variety of sale preparation procedures including use of weight scaling and combining sawtimber and pulpwood products are being utilized to streamline the sale process.

Table 7. Area of sand pine regeneration harvest per year

Year	Acres
2006	2,645
2007	1,341
2008	2,494
2009	2,369
2010	2,750
2011	2,091
2012	892

See related information and a map of current opening under monitoring question 1.4 and 1.17. In future monitoring reports it may be beneficial to combine these monitoring questions.

1.17 What is the size and distribution of openings in sand pine?

Item to Measure: Size of openings.

Results: The average size of sand pine openings created by timber harvest from 2000-2009 is 70 acres. Efforts have been undertaken to increase the size and connectivity of openings created by sand pine harvest, including revision of standards in Forest Plan Amendment 8. The average size of openings created by timber harvest in 2009 was 86 acres; this was increased to 138 acres in 2010. There were 5 openings greater than 100 acres created in 2011. In FY2012, there were 6 openings created from timber harvest greater than 100 acres, with the average size of 149 acres.

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See related information and a map of current opening under monitoring question 1.4 and 1.16. In future monitoring reports it may be beneficial to combine these monitoring questions.

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1.18 Have old-growth stands been designated in each community type?

Item to Measure: Acres of old growth by community type designated in CISC.

Table 8. Old growth objectives by plant community

Old-Growth Community	Acres
Upland Longleaf Pine Forest	10,200
Southern Wet Pine Forest, Woodland, and Savannah	11,000
Cypress/Tupelo Swamp Forest	17,700
River Floodplain Hardwood Forest	2,900
Hardwood Wetland Forest	24,200
Dry and Dry Mesic Oak/Pine Forest	2,200
Coastal Plain Upland Mesic Hardwood Forest	1,700
Dry and Xeric Oak Forest, Woodland, and Savannah	2,100
Total	72,000

Results: Old growth has only been designated on the Apalachicola NF and the table below shows the acres of each community designated.

Table 9. Old growth designations on the Apalachicola National Forest

Old-Growth Community	Acres
Upland Longleaf Pine Forest	6,836
Southern Wet Pine Forest, Woodland, and Savannah	9,944
Cypress/Tupelo Swamp Forest	6,120
River Floodplain Hardwood Forest	1,548
Hardwood Wetland Forest	8,423
Dry and Dry Mesic Oak/Pine Forest	1,686
Coastal Plain Upland Mesic Hardwood Forest	315
Dry and Xeric Oak Forest, Woodland, and Savannah	410
Total	35,282

Old growth should be designated on the Ocala and Osceola National Forests, though past designation of Management Areas that limit timber harvest may have effectively protected potential old growth stands.

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1.19 Have land purchases and exchanges met the objectives established in the Forest Plan?

Item to Measure: Itemized by map what has been gained and what has been exchanged; miles of landlines maintained.

Results: The National Forests in Florida is working with GSA to auction remaining Choctawhatchee lands that no longer exhibit national forest character. Funds generated will be used to acquire lands adjacent to or within the Apalachicola, Ocala, and Osceola National Forests. In FY 2012, two of these tracts were successfully auctioned generating \$173,000.

There were 55 miles of boundary lines marked/maintained of National Forest System lands in Florida in FY 2012. In addition, over 910 acres were acquired through completion of four land adjustment cases.

These newly acquired lands, particularly those pertaining to the Florida National Scenic Trail, present a challenge to the Forest in regards to landline location and maintenance as well as management. In addition, constraints on acquisition funding continue to impede our ability to fully meet our potential and expectations within the overall Land Adjustment Program. That being said, the National Forests in Florida made great progress over the last 10 years with completion of over 82 land adjustment cases resulting in a net gain of over 33,000 acres to the National Forest System in Florida. Addressing the challenges associated with newly acquired properties will be a Forest priority over the next 5 years.

The land adjustment program will continue to add lands to the National Forest System in Florida through purchase, exchange, and donation. With the influx of properties being put on the market by private landowners coupled with the decline in real estate prices, the Forest will have opportunity over the next 5 years to bring numerous properties into federal ownership through purchase, exchange, and donation.

1.20 Are aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems being impaired by acid deposition? Is water quality being maintained?

Item to Measure: Change in water chemistry regarding acid neutralization. Fecal-coliform in swim sites, drinking water, recreation areas, and administrative sites; chemistry of water in State well sites.

Results: Districts monitored water quality at developed swim sites and drinking water sites. In FY2012. The Apalachicola NF reported no swim sites exceeded water quality standards, and only one drinking water site, Whitehead Lake, tested positive and exceeded state standards on 6/7/2012. It was re-tested on 6/12/2012 and passed, with four samples taken and testing negative.

Water quality tests indicate that drinking water and swim sites on the three national forests continue to be of generally good quality. Infrequently, drinking water and swim sites have exceeded state water quality standards, but upon re-testing within a couple of days those same sites will test within standards. Negative tests can be due to a combination of environmental factors such as temperature, lake turnover rates, rainfall, drought, sediment loads, and visitors numbers among other things. No sites have a pattern or trend toward exceeding state standards.

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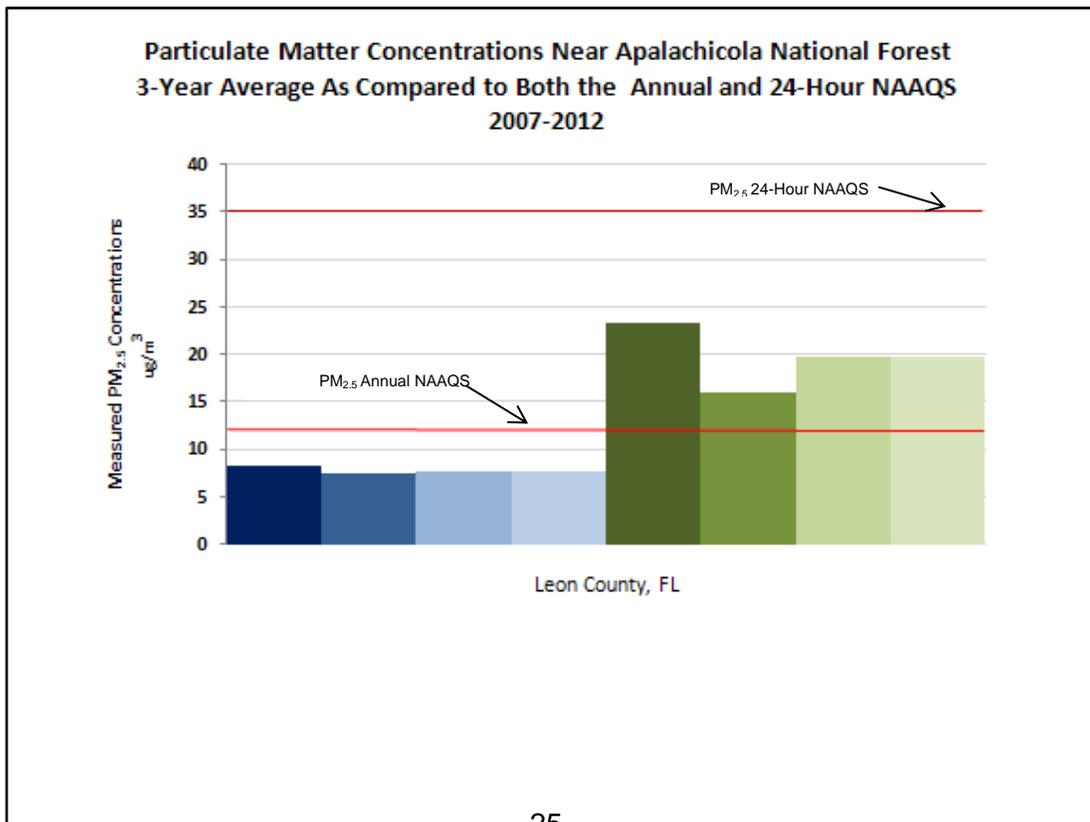
1.21 Is air quality being maintained?

Item to Measure: Particulate matter; Ozone; acidic deposition

Air pollution often has a subtle but critical impact on ecosystems and vistas, and can alter ecosystems by harming plants and animals, or changing soil or water chemistry. Ecosystems then become more vulnerable to damage from insects and diseases, drought, or invasive species. Additionally since many visitors to National Forests value pristine areas with magnificent vistas, air pollution can lessen their experience and enjoyment of National Forests.

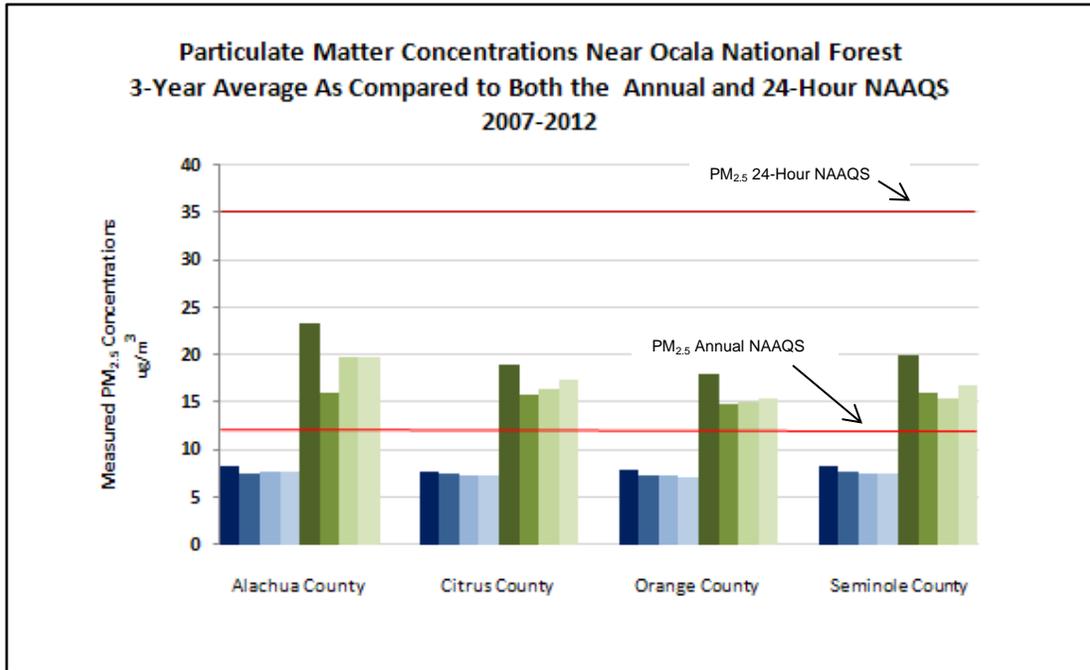
Within the National Forests in Florida, air pollutants such as ozone, fine particulate matter, and acidic deposition can cause negative impacts to flora, visibility and water. Ambient monitoring of fine particulate matter, ozone, and visibility-impairing pollutants occurs on or near the Forest to evaluate any potential affects. Additionally, monitoring of acidic deposition levels occurs nearby and is representative of conditions on the Forest.

Particulate Matter: Particulate matter is a mixture of extremely small particles made up of soil, dust, organic chemicals, metals, and sulfate and nitrate acids. The size of the particles is directly linked to health effects, with smaller particles causing the worst impacts to human health. As a result, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set a primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ultra-small (less than 2.5 microns in diameter) particulate matter on both a short-term (24-hour) and annual basis. The 24-hour fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) NAAQS is currently set at 35 µg/m³, while the annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS is 12 µg/m³. The EPA may set more stringent standards in the future if scientific research suggests that the current standards are not protective enough of sensitive populations. The graphic below shows the measured PM_{2.5} levels near the 3 National Forests in Florida. As shown, the 2012 levels are below the 24-hour and annual air quality standard.



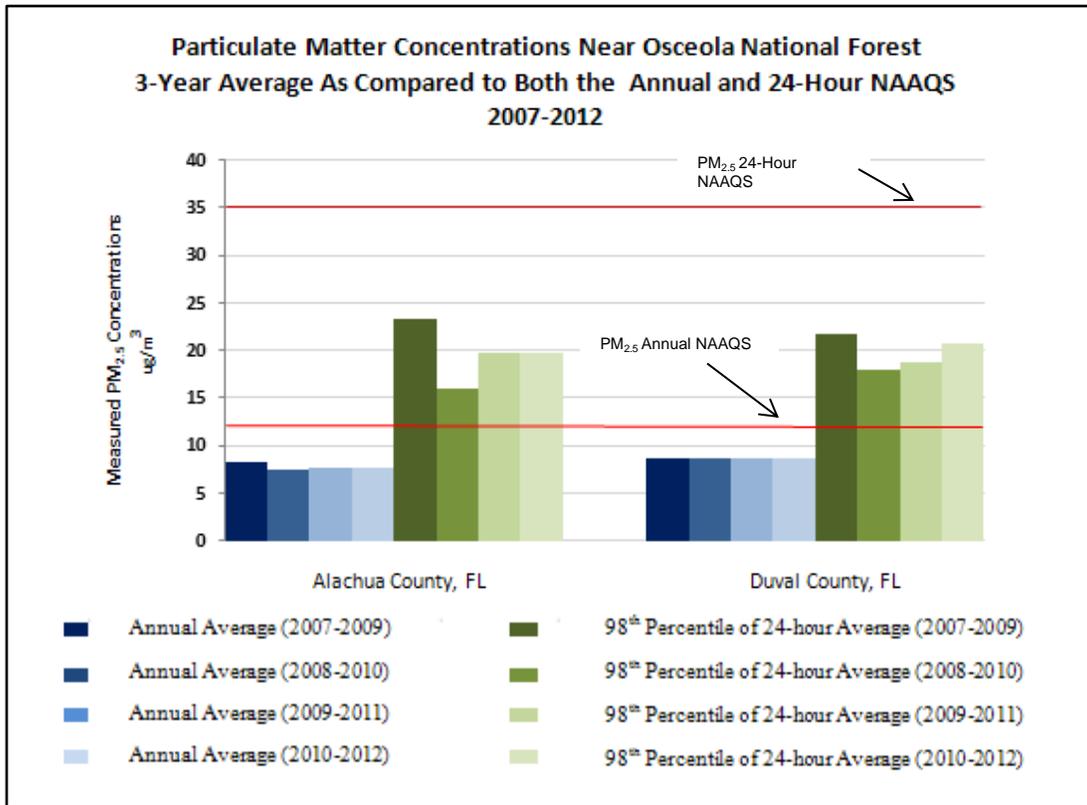
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- Annual Average (2007-2009)
- Annual Average (2008-2010)
- Annual Average (2009-2011)
- Annual Average (2010-2012)
- 98th Percentile of 24-hour Average (2007-2009)
- 98th Percentile of 24-hour Average (2008-2010)
- 98th Percentile of 24-hour Average (2009-2011)
- 98th Percentile of 24-hour Average (2010-2012)

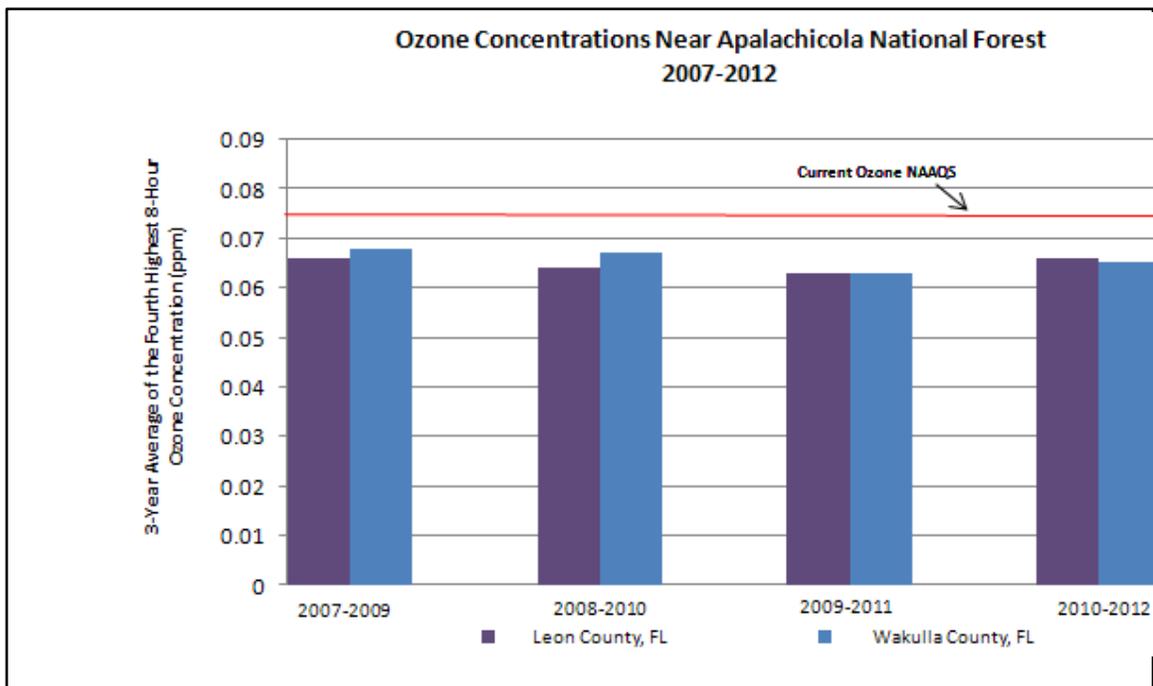


- Annual Average (2007-2009)
- Annual Average (2008-2010)
- Annual Average (2009-2011)
- Annual Average (2010-2012)
- 98th Percentile of 24-hour Average (2007-2009)
- 98th Percentile of 24-hour Average (2008-2010)
- 98th Percentile of 24-hour Average (2009-2011)
- 98th Percentile of 24-hour Average (2010-2012)

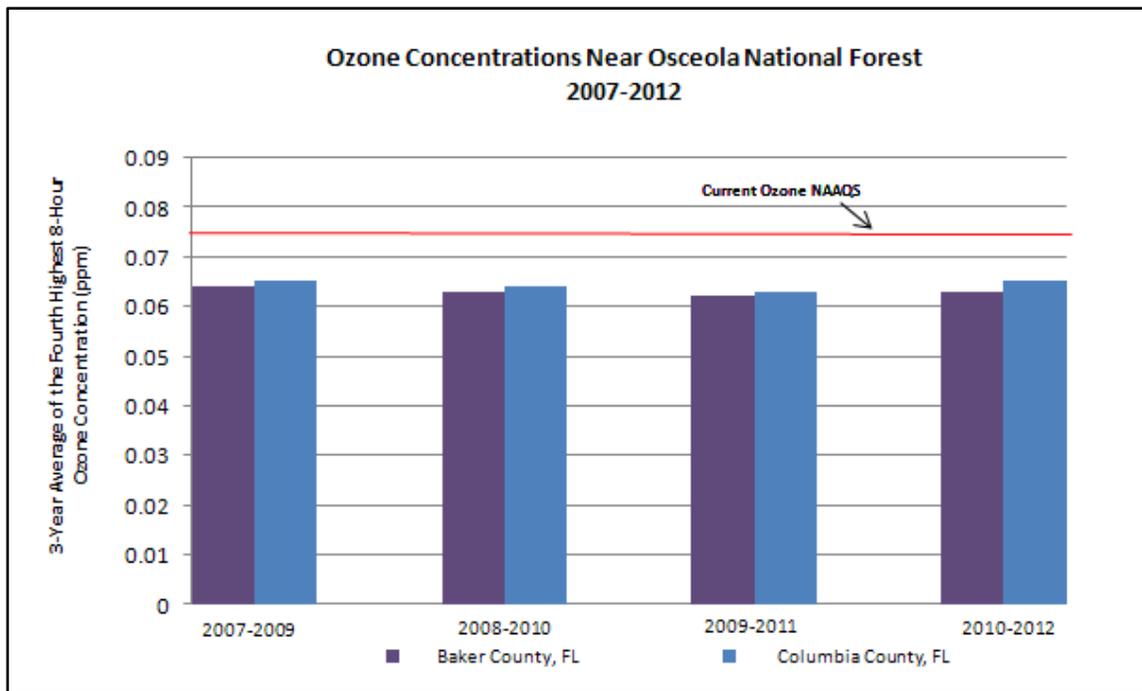
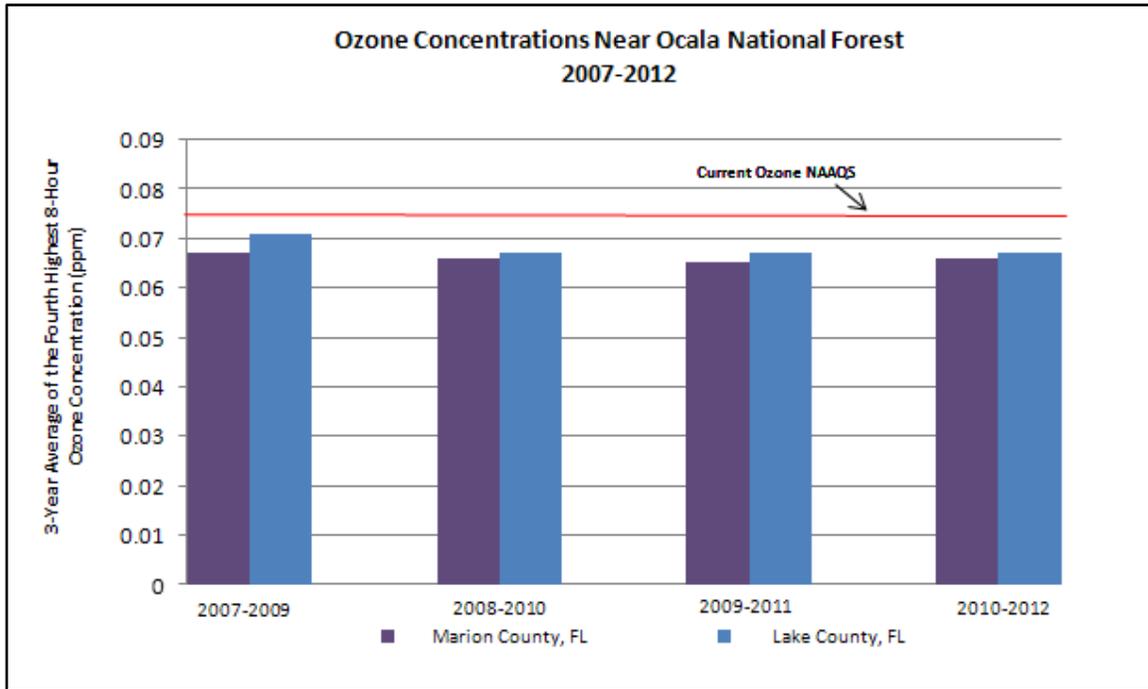
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Ozone: Ozone is a pollutant formed by emissions of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds in the presence of sunlight. At elevated concentrations, it causes human health concerns as well as negative impacts to vegetation. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as directed by Congress, has set a national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) of 0.075 parts per million (ppm) to protect both human health and the environment. However, EPA is required to reassess the standards every five years based on most recent scientific research, and as a result, more stringent standards may be proposed sometime in the future. The graphic below shows the measured concentrations of ozone near the 3 National Forests in Florida. As shown, all recorded values are below the NAAQS.



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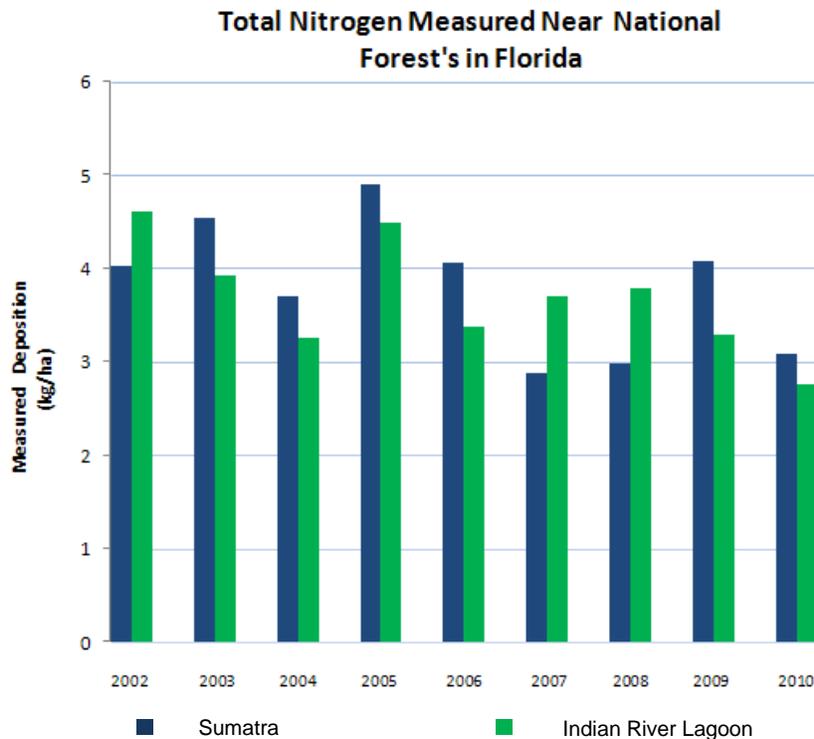


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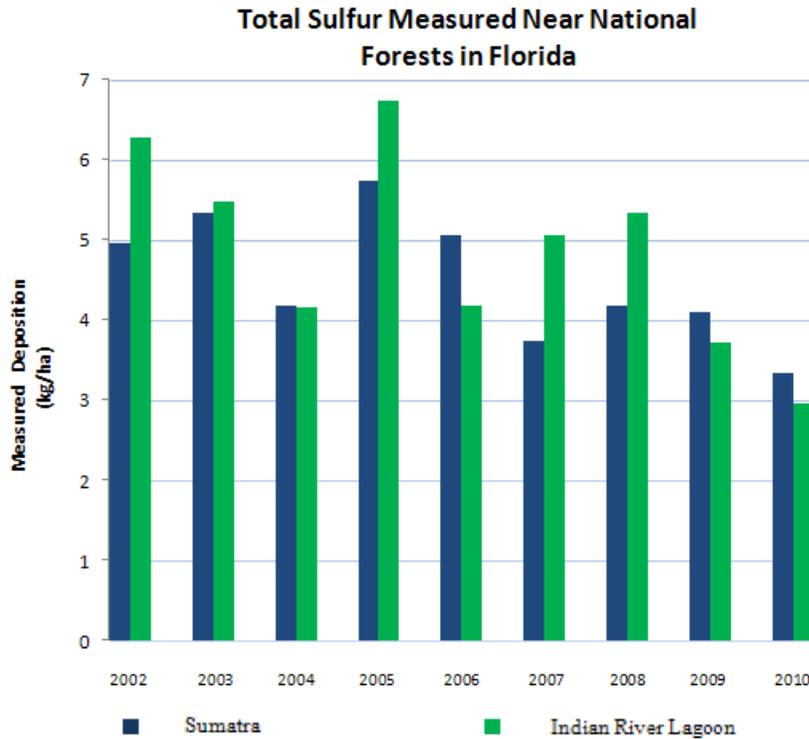
Acidic Deposition: Deposition of acidic compounds onto the Forest can cause harmful effects to both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Such deposition can occur in three forms: dry, wet and cloud. *Dry deposition is the direct fallout of fine particulates and gases from the atmosphere. Wet deposition occurs* when acidic pollutants combine with water in the atmosphere, which is then deposited in the form of rain, snow or hail. Both sulfur and nitrogen deposition can impact the water on the Forest by decreasing the acid neutralizing capacity (ANC) and decreasing the pH in perennial streams.

The National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP; <http://nadp.sws.uiuc.edu>) and Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNET; <http://epa.gov/castnet/javaweb/index.html>) operate two sites near the 3 National Forests in Florida. Neither of these locations are on the Forest, but the data collected represent a range of sites and are probably representative of conditions occurring on the Forest. Because small fluctuations do occur from year to year, trends over longer periods of time are more reliable.

The following graphs show the total sulfur and total nitrogen deposition trends for the Sumatra (Liberty County, FL) and Indian River Lagoon (Indian River County) monitoring locations as reported in the CASTNET database. From 2002 through 2010 both sulfur and nitrogen deposition rates indicate an overall decrease in acidic deposition. Total nitrogen deposition dropped over 23% at the Sumatra monitoring site and also dropped 41% at the Indian River Lagoon site. Total sulfur deposition decreased at these 2 monitoring sites also from 2002-2010; Sumatra site recorded a 33% decrease in total sulfur deposition and the Indian River Lagoon site fell 53%.



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1.22 Which water bodies were fertilized?

Item to measure: Report which water bodies were fertilized.

Results: No water bodies were fertilized in FY 2012.

No water bodies were fertilized in FY 2012 and it is not likely that the National Forests in Florida will regularly fertilize water bodies in the future.

1.23 Has soil disturbance been minimized in preparing longleaf and slash pine sites for tree regeneration?

Item to Measure: Percent of the area treated with soil displacement

Results: Ocala NF: 269 acres were roller chopped on the Lake George District for wildlife habitat and 3075 acres on the Seminole and Lake George District were site prepped for planting. Apalachicola NF, 269 acres were site prepped for planting .

Mechanical site preparation for planting or direct seeding occurred on a total of 3613 acres. Roller chopping for wildlife habitat occurred on 269 acres. The percent of soil displaced on all treated acres was less than 10 percent.

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Section 2. Sustainable Multiple Forest and Range Benefits

2.1 What percent of each type of recreation site (at least 1 swimming, 1 hiking, 1 fishing) is accessible? (Level 3 and above)

Item to Measure: Percent of accessible site by type of recreation site.

Results: Table 10 shows the percent of areas meeting ADA standards. Approximately 33 developed sites level 3 and above. This table shows the sites that meet some level of accessibility standards.

Table 10. Recreation sites meeting ADA standards

Location	Recreation Site
Apalachicola National Forest	Leon Sinks Trail Head – 100%
	Silver Lake Day Use (picnic and swim) – 80%
	Wright Lake Campground – 50%
	Hickory Landing Campground – 25%
	Whitehead Landing Campground – 25%
	Fort Gadsden Historic Site – 25%
	Camel Lake Day Use Area – 75%
Ocala National Forest	Juniper Springs Recreation Area – 70%
	Salt Springs Recreation Area – 85%
	Silver Glen Springs Day Use – 25%
	Fore Lake Recreation Area – 25%
	Salt Springs Marina – 50%
	Mill Dam Day Use (picnic and swim) – 25%
	Alexander Springs Recreation Area – 75%
	Doe Lake Group Camp – 50%
	Lake Dorr Cabin – 100%
	Wildcat Lake Day Use – 25%
	Lake Delancy East Campground – 100%
	Lake Delancy West Campground – 35%
	Hopkins Prairie Campground – 25%
	Juniper Wayside North Day-use – 100%
	Clearwater Lake Campground – 75%
	Big Scrub Campground – 75%
	Big Bass Campground – 100%
River Forest Group Campground – 100%	
Lake Shore Group Camp – 0%	
Sweetwater Cabin – 75%	
Lake Eaton Campground – 25%	
Osceola National Forest	Lake Dorr Campground – 25%
	Olustee Beach Day Use (picnic and swim) – 75%

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Location	Recreation Site
	Ocean Pond Campground – 75%
	Olustee Depot VIC – 100%
	The Landing Group Camp – 100%

Efforts are underway to achieve 100% accessibility at all recreation areas and trailhead, within the next five years depending on funding availability.

2.2 Are developed recreation facilities providing Meaningful Measures (MM) standards for safety, cleanliness, and service? Do they reflect quality and customer service?

Item to Measure: Evaluations of each facility component are defined by MM standards and customer survey forms.

Results: Accessible improvements in 2012 included a wash sink at River Forest Group Campground to help comply with visitor safety for bear protection; repaired numerous kiosks on all three forests; completed Lost Lake OHV new trailhead; and reconstructed several water systems to meet state compliance standards

In addition, 50 accessible picnic tables were purchased to replace old tables and 25 new grills were installed at Ocean Pond Campground. Damages from Tropical Storm Debbie were repaired to Wright Lake electrical system and several damaged bear-proof dumpsters were replaced.

2.3 What system of trails has been designated on the ground, and are they maintained at appropriate levels?

Table 11 displays the trail system for the National Forests in Florida by mileage and type. Inspections in 2012 on the Apalachicola NF, Ocala NF, and the Osceola NF estimate that 70% of trails are being maintained at applicable standards in INFRA Trails for quality of experience and customer service.

Table 11. Miles of trail by designated usage

Forest	Type of Trail	Mileage
Apalachicola	FNST	70
	Hiking	19
	Bicycle (GF&A	2.5
	Mtn Bike	19
	OHV	34
	Motorcycle	50
	Mixed Use Road	52
Ocala	FNST	96
	Hiking	23
	Horse	134
	Mtn Bike	22

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	OHV	138
	Motorcycle	12
	Mixed Use Road	107
Osceola	FNST	24
	Hiking	5
	Horse Trail	61
	Mixed Use Road	377

Budget limitations have greatly limited the ability to maintain trails at desired levels. Non-designated (user created) horse trails have shown continued growth in some areas of the forest; since these are non-system trails, they are not maintained. Repeated use of these trails is causing impacts to vegetation, soil, and water. The Apalachicola NF continues to analyze these impacts in an EA to establish designated horse trails. Motorized trails and two new trailheads for motorized trails benefited from federal grant money.

State and federal grant money for motorized trails will be curtailed after FY 2012, and funds will be hard to get. In addition, fees from use permits are inadequate for maintaining all motorized trails. Reductions in grant funds and funding code CMTL may result in evaluating the trail system to see which trails are most needed and possibly close some.

2.4 How many miles of the Florida National Scenic Trail have been certified for public use?

Item to Measure: Number of miles of the Florida National Scenic Trail certified.

Results: No new miles were added to the Florida National Scenic Trail in 2012. While completing the 1,300 mile planned corridor is still of high priority for the Florida National Scenic Trail program, the absence of available acquisition funds, and limited public lands alternatives in gap areas means that the program focus has shifted to management of existing trail.

In 2012, 1,074 miles of FNST were maintained and open for public use across 27 different land management agencies in including National Forest in Florida lands. 3 major structures were maintained, and over 5 acres of land inventoried for future protection. 8 new partnership agreements were written, and our partners contributed the value of over \$660,000 worth of volunteer labor. 2012 also saw the publication of the first State of the Trail Report which was unveiled at the FNST Symposium, co-hosted by the Florida Outdoor Recreation Coalition, which was well attended and to become an annual event for land managers, users and stewards of the FNST.

2.5 Have rivers been recommended as wild and scenic, and what is their status?

Item to Measure: Status of Record of Decision/Legislative EIS.

Results: No statewide or regional initiatives to move forward with a recommendation for the studied rivers occurred in FY 2012. Management of river corridors continues to be based on their ongoing status as proposed wild and scenic rivers.

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Over the past twelve years of the existing Forest Plan, there has been no interest expressed by the State of Florida to initiate a bill for Wild and Scenic designation for these four rivers. Direction from the Washington Office and Regional Offices continues to focus on strong local support for river designation before moving forward on recommendations

2.6 Have wilderness opportunities been increased and has Clear Lake been recommended for wilderness status?

Item to Measure: Status of Record of Decision/Legislative EIS.

Results: Clear Lake has not yet been recommended for wilderness designation and no Legislative EIS has gone forward. The area continues to be managed as a Wilderness Study Area to protect wilderness values.

No action has been taken on recommending Clear Lake for wilderness status in FY 2012. Per Regional Office direction, Legislative EISs for wilderness or wild and scenic river designation will not proceed unless there is expressed support from the state's congressional delegation.

2.7 Has wilderness character been protected?

Item to Measure: Percent of land in primitive and semi-primitive Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classes, trail-use data; Ecosystem plots.

Results: Despite continuing threats to wilderness from off-road vehicle incursions, wilderness character remains high, with remote wilderness areas experiencing little change over the planning horizon. Visitor use remains low in most wilderness areas. However, wildernesses on the Ocala NF have seen an increase in motor vehicle incursions, sign vandalism/theft, heavily-used primitive campsites, and impacts from illegal activities. In this sixth year of the Chief's 10-Year Wilderness Stewardship Challenge, the INFRA_Wild database indicates all wildernesses on the National Forests in Florida are being managed to standard.

Due to personnel shortages and a focus on developing ecosystem classification models for each forest, monitoring plots in wilderness have not been established. If such activities are not implemented, this monitoring question may be dropped or addressed by other measures of wilderness character.

2.8 Has Natural Area wilderness study area been recommended for release?

Item to Measure: Status of Record of Decision/Legislative EIS.

Results: Natural Area Wilderness Study Area has not been recommended for release.

No action has been taken to move forward on legislation action in FY 2012. Natural Area WSA continues to be managed as a Wilderness Study Area.

2.9 Is the access process having the desired effect of protecting the resources?

Item to Measure: Photo points at areas of resource concern.

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Results: Photo Monitoring was not accomplished in 2011 or 2012 based on the information from the previous 5-year photo monitoring that indicated non-designated routes are recovering well and compliance in general is good. Although some OHV routes receive heavy use, especially on the Ocala NF, the motorized trails are being maintained to standard.

Because the previous 5 years of photo point monitoring from 2006-2010 showed good user compliance with the designated OHV trail system, this type of yearly monitoring will be dropped for 3 or 4 years. Districts will continue to monitor and report compliance and maintenance problems.

2012 Forest-specific Evaluation:

Ocala NF

Implementation: All OHV trails are marked on the ground, typically with carsonite posts every quarter mile. The Ocala NF continues to support a strong OHV volunteer program that conducts patrolling, maintenance, signing, and compliance checking.

Compliance: Photo point monitoring was not conducted in FY 2012 and will probably not be revisited for a couple of more years. The compliance on the Ocala OHV route system has improved every year since the implementation of the designated trail system.

Recovery: On the North trail system and the Centennial Trail, non-designated and closed roads have recovered vegetation well and are not being used by the public except in a few areas close to local communities.

Trail Conditions: District trails technicians and volunteers continue to maintain trails and keep non-designated roads blocked. The Longleaf Trail and Delancy Loops receive the heaviest use due to proximity to the Delancy Campground. The Forest focuses on identifying and remedying problem areas.

The OHV trail system is in place and maintained to standard, with compliance improving each year. OHV volunteers and District staff report visitor satisfaction is increasing because of MVUM maps and signage that make it easier to ride without getting lost.

Osceola NF

Implementation: Photo point monitoring did not occur in FY 2012 and will not be done for a couple of more years. The lower amount of OHV use on the Osceola, although increasing slightly in recent years, has allowed non-designated and closed roads to re-vegetate. Most non-designated roads have good ground cover; those that still show signs of vehicle use are generally those used by forest personnel in resource management activities.

Compliance: Compliance is fairly good, with non-designated roads having good ground cover and fairly high levels of re-vegetation occurring. Most use of non-designated roads occurs in the area around Cobb Camp and in the "priority 4" area west of Hog Pen Landing.

Recovery: Most non-designated and roads on the Osceola are recovering, with good litter layers and re-vegetation. However, several of the closed roads are used for resource management activities, such as access to RCW colonies and maintaining fire lines around plantations, and these roads remain apparent on the landscape although with good grass and herb coverage. Some OHV use continues to occur on these administrative roads, primarily in hunting season.

Trail Conditions: The Osceola does not have a large OHV volunteer program like the Ocala, but does have one dedicated OHV volunteer to assist Recreation staff in monitoring and identifying problem areas. Since all OHV routes are multiple-use roads, the Osceola does not have OHV-specific trails to maintain; however, 344 miles of these multiple-use roads are simply too many for the District to maintain given its resources and budget.

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Motorized trails on the Osceola indicate fairly good user compliance, with users for the most part staying on the multi-use roads designated for OHVs. The District has identified the area west of Hog Pen (termed “priority 4”) as a starting point to make loop connections and road crossings in order to make a more coherent, well designed OHV trail system.

Apalachicola NF

Implementation: The Forest works to maintain signage on designated trails and mixed-use roads. Users persist in going around barriers and gates; use of several non-designated roads and pit areas continue. Trailhead improvements at Lost Lake are in place.

Compliance: Although compliance is increasing overall as the public becomes more aware of the OHV trail system, there are increasing problems with full size trucks driving around gates, posts and barriers to access closed roads and borrow pit areas. Although the problems increase during the hunting season, it has become a year-round problem that is not limited to the hunting population. The District does not have the staff, resources, or budget to block all of these detours around gates.

Recovery: Closed roads are starting to recover on the Apalachicola. Closed roads in general have intact ground cover of pine needles and a litter layer, although some still show evidence of vehicle tracks.

Trail Conditions: Trail volunteers on the Apalachicola NF help patrol the trail, watch for signs of damage, and assist in trail maintenance. It is still a challenge to the small recreation staff and budget to maintain 86 miles of motorized trail (an additional 55 miles is mixed use roads) forcing the district to be selective in which trails get attention in any given year.

For the Apalachicola motorized trails, a positive trend in user compliance is emerging. With work completed at Lost Lake and Dog Lake, further refinements to the OHV trails can be made.

2.10 Are heritage resource sites being evaluated and protected?

Item to Measure: Number of sites evaluated. Annual report on protection efforts.

Results: The objective to evaluate five cultural resource sites in FY 2012 was met and exceeded by 115 additional evaluations. Site protection measures were within the Forest Plan objective. 148 new sites and forty-seven new events were documented bringing the cumulative total at the end of FY 2012 to 3,381 sites and 1,803 events entered in the INFRA database. Most projects were compliance-related, associated with timber sales (7), wildfire suppression (6), special uses (4), recreational developments (4), special uses (4), timber salvage (2) and lands (1).

Apalachicola NF: Twenty-six archeological sites were evaluated in FY2012. Five of these are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and twenty-one were ineligible. Nineteen of the evaluated sites were “backlog”, meeting a Heritage Program target, and the others were evaluated in support of proposed recreation and timber projects. Resource protection efforts included removing vegetation encroaching upon the NRHP-eligible historic Langston House as well as accumulated debris from inside the structure. One Special Use Permit was administered for archeological survey for proposed power pole replacement (contractor was Archaeological Consultants, Inc.).

Ocala NF: Eight archeological sites were evaluated in FY 2012 as part of surveys for proposed land sale and recreational activities as well as an assessment of damage caused by artificially elevated water levels at Rodman Reservoir. Six of the evaluated sites were eligible for NRHP

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listing and two were ineligible. Repair of the wheel at Juniper Mill House (8 Mr 799) was completed using contractors.

Osceola NF: Eighty-six archeological sites were evaluated in FY 2012. Most of the evaluations were conducted during work in support of Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration projects involving 4,059 acres of newly surveyed area, some were conducted while surveying areas damaged by wildfire and proposed for timber harvest and three were through general Heritage survey. Seventeen of the evaluated sites were determined eligible for NRHP listing and sixty-nine not eligible. Resource protection efforts included documentation of adverse effects at Olustee Battlefield during a battle re-enactment authorized by a recreational special use permit.

2.11 Are the scenic resources being protected, enhanced, and where necessary, restored?

Item to Measure: Implementation of the Scenery Management System (SMS) and management of scenery according to the recommendations of the SMS.

Results: This objective was to be accomplished by June 2002. Currently, the 2380 section of the Forest Service Manual continues to be revised to provide direction for implementation of the SMS, and modules are being developed to provide orientation level, working level, and technical level knowledge. Until forest personnel have received training in SMS, the visual management system (VMS) is still in place.

Previous direction for using the Visual Management System to coordinate with other resources will continue within the LMP until the SMS is fully implemented. Recommend deleting this Monitoring Question from the Plan.

2.12 Do forest visitors understand Forest Service practices and do they value and respect the resource being interpreted? QUESTION REMOVED BY AMENDMENT #2

2.13 How are we contributing to the socioeconomic well-being?

Item to Measure: Returns to counties, indirect benefits through timber, recreation, range allotments, status report on rural development programs.

Results: The following tables show the gross receipts by source for the National Forests in Florida, and the payments to counties containing national forest system land in FY2012.

Table 12. Gross receipts by source

Source	Apalachicola 121	Ocala 123	Osceola 124	TOTAL
Timber Products Cut	-104,718.11	6,728.51	180,969.69	82,980.09
Grazing Fees	0.00	0.00	20,453.12	20,453.12
Land Use Fees	110,260.09	414,919.61	71,956.07	597,135.77
Special Use Fees	0.00	275,526.05	14,116.03	289,642.08

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Power	108,860.16	0.00	0.00	108,860.16
Mineral Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Recreation User Fees				
Fee Demo	*	*	*	384124.64*
TOTAL				\$1,099,071.22

Table 13. Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act Receipts by county

Apalachicola	Ocala	Osceola	Choctawhatchee
Franklin \$ 34,928.19	Lake \$ 164,922.05	Baker \$316,979.73	Okaloosa \$ 270.46
Leon \$113,909.35	Marion \$ 531,680.43	Columbia \$223,888.01	Walton \$ 13.66*
Liberty \$616,075.77	Putnam \$ 63,818.78	Bradford \$21.14*	Santa Rosa \$ 2.83*
Wakulla \$272,419.32		Hamilton \$1,382.02	Bay \$118.50*
		Seminole \$295.22*	
Total \$1,037,332.63	\$ 760,421.26	\$542,566.12	\$405.45

*These counties opted to receive payments under the 25% Fund Act.

**The Forest Service has purchased lands outside proclaimed National Forest boundaries for the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) corridor. These counties received payments under Secure Rural Schools Act for Forest Service/FNST lands within their boundaries: Bay \$245.00, Hamilton \$1,366.00, Seminole \$275.00, and Bradford County received \$19.00 under the 25% Fund Act.

Table 14. Payments in lieu of taxes

Apalachicola	Ocala	Osceola	Choctawhatchee
Franklin \$ 29,957.00	Lake \$ 91,281.00	Baker \$ 127,441.00	Okaloosa \$8,877.00
Leon \$ 186,382.00	Marion \$340,846.00	Columbia \$ 91,840.00	Santa Rosa \$3,645.00
Liberty \$ 306,938.00	Putnam \$15,471.00	Hamilton \$ 580.00	Walton \$1,236.00
Wakulla \$ 241,528.00		Seminole \$ 1,062.00	Bay \$1,119.00
		Bradford \$ 0.00	
Total s	\$764,805.00	\$220,923.00	\$14,877.00

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced in January 2013 that over \$323 million will be paid to 41 states and Puerto Rico in two distributions to support local schools and roads as part of the Congressional one-year reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. Florida's portion of that total was \$2,340,725.46.

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"These payments are part of the Department of Agriculture's long-standing commitment to rural communities, schools and American youth," said Vilsack. "Our century-long support of America's public schools and roads is one of many ways in which the Forest Service, as a good neighbor and partner, contributes to rural communities becoming self-sustaining and prosperous."

In the 1980s, Forest Service revenues began to decline, largely as a result of changes in social values and diminished timber sales volume. The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 authorized enhanced and gradually declining payments to ease the transition to reduced federal revenues. Counties received more than \$2.5 billion over seven years until the Act expired in September 2007.

In 2008, the Congress extended the program four more years, through 2011. On July 6, 2012, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 was reauthorized for federal fiscal year (FY) 2012 as part of Public Law 112-141. This one-year reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools Act resulted in the payments to Florida counties shown above. Unless the Secure Rural Schools Act is reauthorized again, this will be the last payment received under this legislation and state/county payments would revert to the previous legislation known as 25%.

In addition to payments for schools and roads, the Secure Rural Schools Act supports Firewise Communities programs, reimburses counties for emergency services on national forests and funds development of community wildfire protection plans. "These projects were reviewed and recommended by resource advisory committees made up of local residents working together to improve the environment and help provide jobs in rural communities," Vilsack said. Since 2008, across the country, 118 resource advisory committees (RAC) recommended 4,100 projects valued at more than \$172 million in more than 300 counties. More information on the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act is on the web at www.fs.usda.gov/pts.

These RACs allow the Forest Service to work collaboratively with members of the RAC, their constituency as well as other member of the public. It is a mechanism for local community collaboration with federal land managers in recommending Title II projects on federal lands or that will benefit resources on federal lands.

Florida's RAC, consisting of 15 people, first met in August 2011. Their charter was to develop, monitor, and recommend projects that benefit National Forest lands in Florida. Under the law, the 15 committee members are divided into three groups, and each member represents a particular set of interests. All committee members are people with energy and commitment to the long-term benefit of our national forests, who also are interested in working with a diverse array of interests that will be represented on the committee. The committee developed and recommended projects that benefited national forest land in the affected counties. New projects were recommended and approved with the additional funding received from the one-year reauthorization (see projects with asterisk in chart below).

After the Forest Service distributed Secure Rural Schools Titles I and III and the 1908 Act (25%) funds to states, it was determined that all government funds apportioned in FY 2013 are subject to sequestration. Sequestration repayment is being conducted at the state level and it will be up to each Governor to determine how the money will be repaid. Governors have until April 19, 2013 to let the Forest Service know how they will pay the sequestration dollars back. Title II funding distributed to the Forest Service Regions can be used for repayment. Projects

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approved for that funding are currently on hold until a determination is made regarding the repayment. If subsequent legislation should reverse the sequester, the Forest Service will take prompt action to terminate this collection process. However, since sequestration is effective now, the Forest Service must take these actions now.

Table 15. Secure Rural Schools Act Title II Projects

2008 – 2012 Secure Rural Schools Title II Project Submissions National Forests in Florida				
Project Name	Total Project Cost	Actual Funding	Location	
			Forest	County
Osecola Safety and Education Awareness	\$120,000	\$120,000	Osceola NF	Columbia/Baker
Marion County	\$200,000	\$200,000	Ocala NF	Marion
Rehabilitate FSR 365	\$275,000	\$140,000	Apalachicola NF	Wakulla
Rehabilitation of FSR 104	\$180,000	\$145,000	Apalachicola NF	Liberty
Bridge No. 180A-0.7 Rehabilitation	\$192,500	\$115,000	Apalachicola NF	Liberty
Clay Pit Rehabilitation	\$20,000	\$17,300	Ocala NF	Marion
Co-op Road Maintenance (314A-5.7A1)	\$16,000	\$13,500	Ocala NF	Marion
St. Mary's Shoals Park Native Species Reestablishment	\$99,107	\$30,000	Osceola NF	Baker
ATV Crossings Safety*	\$6,500	6,500	Osceola NF	Columbia
Bridge Project – 180A*	\$60,000	\$60,000	Apalachicola NF	Liberty
Double Pit Access Repair*	\$16,000	\$16,000	Osceola NF	Columbia
FSR 262 Surfacing and Drainage*	\$23,000	\$23,000	Osceola NF	Columbia
Reconstruction of 24th Street Road*	\$45,000	\$45,000	Ocala NF	Marion
Rehabilitation FSR 365 - Phase II*	\$25,00	\$25,000	Apalachicola NF	Wakulla
Sand Hill Road (FSR200) Drainage Improvements*	\$24,000	\$24,000	Osceola NF	Baker

2.14 How much of each “special forest product” did we give permits to be collected and in what locations?

Item to Measure: Quantity of each type, ranger district and compartment.

Results: The following table summarizes the quantities of special forest products by forest for FY2012

Permits are usually issued on a broad area basis and specific locations are generally not recorded. 262 permits were issued with a value of \$ 12,400.

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Table 16. Special products summary

	Apalachicola	Osceola	Ocala	Total
Fire-wood (CCF)	30	8	169	207
Palmetto Berries (lbs)	0	0	0	0
Palmetto Fronds (lbs)	0	0	56,500	56,500
Plants (lbs)	9	4,000	0	4,000
Plants (ea)	0	8,000	0	8,000
Boughs (lbs)	0	0	0	0
Pine Straw (bushel)	0	0	0	0
Christmas Trees (each)	0	0	160	160
Crooked Wood (lbs)	0	0	25,050	25,050
Poles (each)	0	0	0	0
Deer-Moss (lbs)	0	0	3200	3200
Southern Yellow Pine (CCF)	30	0		
Sand Pine (CCF)		0		

In the context of acres and amounts of the above resources present on each National Forest, the quantities of these special products removed does not appear to be significant.

2.15 How much timber was offered for sale?

Item to Measure: MMCF (million cubic feet) of timber offered annually by type, product, and forest.

Results: 8.285 MMCF was offered for sale in FY 2012; 2.117 MMCF on the Ocala, 4.555 MMCF on the Osceola, and 1.613 MMCF on the Apalachicola. The following table shows the products offered by National Forest in the second 10-year period of the Forest Plan. The amount offered in FY 2012 is 80% of the Allowable annual sale quantity. However, 2012 timber sale volume exceeded the Regional Target of 7.635 million cubic feet.

Table 17. Timber offered by year, product and National Forest in MMCF (million cubic feet) in the first three years of the second 10-year plan cycle

Fiscal Year	SAWTIMBER				PULPWOOD & Non-Saw				Grand Total
	Apalach	Osceola	Ocala	Total	Apalach	Osceola	Ocala	Total	
2010	.480	.405	.211	1.096	.932	.428	1.875	4.331	5.427
2011	.967	1.372	.089	2.429	.605	1.142	2.046	3.793	6.222
2012	.468	2.030	.177	2.675	1.145	2.525	1.940	5.610	8.285
Total	1.915	3.807	.477	6.199	2.682	4.093	5.861	13.734	19.934

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The standard in the Forest Plan related to timber production places a limit of selling no more than 103 MMCF of timber in the ten-year planning period. The total volumes offered for sale and actually sold are within the standard. The amount offered for sale in the first 10 years of the Forest Plan (2000-2009) was 53% of the maximum allowable

2.16 Are special use permits in compliance and if not, what actions are taken?

Item to Measure: Number of cases of noncompliance actions taken.

Results: The National Forests in Florida has an extremely active and complex special use program. The National Forests in Florida processes/administers approximately 600 special use permits each year. Compliance monitoring takes place throughout the year and it is estimated less than 1% of permits are in noncompliance.

An increasing volume of new applications to process are submitted annually to special use staff. This makes completing annual inspections more challenging from year to year. The Forest has found it problematic and not realistic to inform new special use applicants that new applications will not be accepted until all current uses have been inspected and brought up to standard. For this reason, there remains a backlog of needed inspections. The National Forests in Florida began addressing this mounting workload and has made substantial progress over the last few years.

In spite of the economic downturn, Florida remains one of the fastest growing large states in the Nation. Over the previous 5 years, Florida experienced tremendous growth. With a population of 18 million residents and 80 million tourists a year, the workload associated with our special use program continues to grow. Thousands of tourists and visitors vacation at the Forest's premier recreation areas, many of which are under concession special use permits. The National Forests in Florida recognizes these areas largely influence the opinion forest visitors place on the Forest and its management. Proper administration of these permits is crucial.

In addition, as the population in Florida increases, so does occupancy within and adjacent to the National Forest. This places an increasing workload on our special use administrators and staff to process associated land use proposals.

2.17 How many miles of roads have been converted to another use or otherwise closed?

Item to Measure: Miles of roads closed and deleted in transportation inventory system updates

Results: Correction of the databases for roads continued during FY 2012. Overall changes resulted in a decrease of total miles = 26.3 miles. 16 miles of unauthorized roads were decommissioned.

Road condition surveys utilizing electronic road logs (ERL) were accomplished on the assigned random sample of roads. Forests continued the work of annual fine-tuning of the Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUM) on all forests along with sign maintenance for access.

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Corrections to the roads database continued with a clarification of definitions of maintenance levels resulting in classification changes across each maintenance level. Other minor differences are attributed to actual field measurements. No new roads were constructed.

The forest received carryover Legacy Roads funding on the Apalachicola National Forests which was used for repairs to Sam Allen Road and FSR 380. The Osceola NF received CFLR funds which were used to decommission 16 miles of unauthorized roads. The rest of the total decommissioning target was accomplished through the self-closing of ML 2 roads on the Ocala and corrections for actual miles on the ground.

For the past few years the Forest Service has been working on meeting the requirements of the 2005 Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212.5). The first part resulted in the development of Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) which designates roads and trails that are open for use. The Transportation Analysis Process to determine the minimum road system needed was continued on the Osceola NF in FY 2012. This plan will be completed in FY 2013 along with the analysis for the Ocala NF. All three forest analyses will be combined for the final submission of the analysis next year.

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Section 3. Organizational Effectiveness

**3.1 Are people satisfied with service from the National Forests in Florida?
QUESTION REMOVED BY AMENDMENT #2**

3.2 How much public participation do we have? Have partnerships been strengthened? QUESTION REMOVED BY AMENDMENT #2

3.3 Did we do what we said we would?

Item to Measure: Decision documents and field review of implementation.

Results: All timber sale activities were monitored by certified timber sale administrators. These reviews identified a variety of minor administrative documentation inconsistencies with no long-term effects or chronic problems.

Monitoring indicates that all five route designations have been implemented as planned. All three forests have had to make minor corrections related to signing and, to some extent, re-routing trail locations to avoid persistently wet soils or deep sand.

No serious deviation in the implementation of planned projects has been identified. Monitoring and review of projects will be on-going.

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Section 4. Major findings and evaluation

Most of the monitoring items reflect expected outcomes and are progressing at the rate necessary to achieve the desired conditions, goals, and objectives of the Forest Plan within the 10-15 year planning period. There are some areas where monitoring indicates follow-up action is needed, but the extent to which some activities may be implemented is limited by a decreasing forest budget. The Forest Plan Objectives were developed given an average annual budget (in Appendix F of the Forest Plan), but the actual allocation of funds varies from year to year. Therefore, as noted in the Forest Plan (p. 5.14) “outputs and activities in any given year may be significantly different from planned or proposed.”

Vegetation Management

Based on the expected annual average of outcomes for the planning period, the vegetation management program through timber harvests needs some follow-up action. Table 18 below summarizes the situation concerning timber harvest objectives and accomplishments through fiscal year 2012.

Table 18. Timber harvest objectives and accomplishments

Clearcutting Sand Pine for Scrub Jay Habitat	
2012 Objective (Acres)	4,000
Accomplishment (Acres)	892
Difference (Acres)	-3108
Thinning Over-stocked Pine Stands	
2012 Objective (Acres)	5200
Accomplishment (Acres)	3374
Difference (Acres)	-1826
Uneven-aged Group Selection Regeneration Harvest	
2012 Objective (Acres)	3250
Accomplishment (Acres)	0
Difference (Acres)	-3250
Irregular Shelterwood Regeneration Harvest	
2012 Objective (Acres)	188
Accomplishment (Acres)	0
Difference (Acres)	-188
Longleaf Restoration removing off-site slash pine	
2012 Objective (Acres)	1180
Accomplishment (Acres)	1397
Difference (Acres)	+217
Removing Slash Pine from Longleaf Stands	
2012 Objective (Acres)	800
Accomplishment (Acres)	708
Difference (Acres)	-92
Allowable Sale Quantity	
2012 Objective (Million Cubic Feet)	10.3
Accomplishment (Million Cubic Feet)	8.29*
Difference (Million Cubic Feet)	-2.01

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*Note that the accomplishment of 8.29 Million CF. exceeds the target set by the Region 8 Regional Office of 7.63 Million CF for FY2012.

It is expected that some of the vegetation management objectives cannot be attained under current and anticipated budgets as well as workload conflicts with other forest priorities. Priorities need to be established for those treatments that are critical to habitat restoration and overall forest health.

The NFs in Florida have initiated a variety of actions to increase efficiencies and overall acres harvested:

- Ecological Condition and Prioritization models have been completed on the Osceola and Ocala NFs and will be developed for the Apalachicola NF. These models will help the forests evaluate and prioritize the effectiveness of treatments by identifying needs, treating areas in such a manner that good quality habitat conditions are maintained and areas that are in a transition stage can be treated to ensure habitat conditions do not diminish.
- On the Ocala NF, Forest Plan Amendment #8 increased the maximum opening size to 800 acres for sandhills/scrub habitat and the forest is currently exploring other ways to facilitate sale and harvest of sand pine (e.g. weight-scale harvests and harvesting younger trees for alternative markets such as biomass for energy production). These changes will increase layout efficiencies in future years.

Detailed discussion can be found under monitoring questions 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 1.16, 1.17, and 2.15.

Prescribed Burning and Integrated Fuels Management

One of the goals of the 1999 Land and Resource Management Plan for the National Forests in Florida was to emphasize seasonality of burns, conducting more growing season burns. Given staffing and resource levels, we have learned over the last 12 years that it is too difficult to burn every area of the forest in the right season. Emphasis has moved to burn frequency: burning areas more frequently appears to be more important for maintaining native ecosystems, and we should strive for a 2-3 year frequency wherever possible.

Forest Plan Amendment #9 was completed in FY10 and is expected to help increase burning accomplishments on the forests. This amendment updated Forest-wide Objective 4 describing prescribed burning frequency to clarify that while early to mid-growing season burning is critical, if growing season burns cannot be achieved, the overall fire frequency is the highest priority. It also updated wildland fire response terminology to incorporate current direction for Federal Wildland Fire Policy on all National Forest System lands to allow management of wildland fires for other management objectives in areas outside Wilderness.

Based on the upland pine Management Area 7.1 of 507,740 acres, 78% of this type was burned in the last 3 years (2010, 2011, 2012) for a total of 395,799 acres burned, a yearly average of 131,933 acres, below the average objective of 168,000 acres. The Forests burned 54% of the total acres between May1 and July 31, and burned 60% of total acres in the period from March 15 thru September. Dormant season burns (between October and February) comprised 40% of the total acres burned.

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Use of fire in the longleaf pine wiregrass ecosystem continues to be integral to the restoration of these systems and to recovery of the red-cockaded woodpecker. Both winter and growing season burns will continue to be used in these recovery efforts. Internal and external dialogue continues on the application and use of fire for these objectives.

The Forest was able to treat 4,289 acres mechanically to enhance burning opportunities in areas with high fuel concentrations. This was accomplished through the use of specialized equipment to create defensible fire lines especially near private property and adjacent to major highways. Detailed discussion can be found under monitoring questions 1.8.

Management Indicator and Proposed, Endangered, Threatened and Sensitive Species

Management Indicator Species (MIS) are selected during development of Forest Plans to indicate effects of management activities. In general, most populations of MIS for which we have adequate monitoring data are either stable or increasing.

All Monitoring Reports since 2001 have indicated that there was a need to re-evaluate the list of MIS since some of the former MIS were difficult to monitor and had limited utility to indicate effects of management activities. A Forest Plan Amendment was completed in FY 2011 that added Bachman's sparrow and the Florida scrub lizard as MIS and removed the following species from MIS status: bald eagle, bobwhite quail, large-mouth bass, pileated woodpecker, prothonotary warbler, sand skink, southeastern kestrel, white-tailed deer, and wild turkey. Trend data for those species therefore will no longer be included in this section of the report, and trends for current MIS will be included as we refine sampling methods and conduct surveys.

Proposed, Endangered and Threatened (PET) species are listed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Endangered Species Act requires us to consider the impacts of all federal actions on these species, and to conserve all populations to the extent possible. Sensitive (S) species are designated by the Forest Service, and receive this designation because of their local and/or global rarity. They receive additional consideration during all Forest Service actions, and we are committed to maintaining viable populations of all these species. This monitoring report shows that all PETS species for which we, or a partner organization, are capable of collecting population or occurrence data continue to maintain viable populations.

Plan implementation follows standards and guidelines to protect PETS species and these measures generally seem to be working as expected. Habitat improvement will result from increased frequency of prescribed fire and vegetation management. Detailed discussion can be found under monitoring questions 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, and 1.6.

Route Designation Process

The districts continue to make adjustments to the designated motorized trail system as necessary. Monitoring indicates generally good compliance and a reduction in user-created trails as the public grows accustomed to a designated system, and bulletin boards, trail signage and brochures deliver the message. Problems such as mud-bogging, users opening closed roads with chainsaws, driving around barrier/gates, and motorized incursions into wilderness still occur sporadically.

Detailed discussion can be found under monitoring question 2.9.

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Emerging Issues

The Southern Region of the Forest Service is currently undertaking an assessment of current knowledge about the influence of climate change on aquatic and terrestrial resources in the south and identifying assessment tools for monitoring climate change and measuring its effects. This assessment will not only expand our understanding of the effects of climate change on biological and physical resources, it will also help determine how this information is integrated into both long and short term planning efforts.

Research Needs

Monitoring efforts during 2012 did not disclose any immediate need for research efforts to support the implementation and monitoring of the National Forests in Florida Forest Plan. However, some research projects could contribute to understanding forest ecosystem interactions as well as impacts of management and public activities on forest systems. A better understanding of these interactions would allow managers to identify any changes needed in management activities or direction in the Forest Plan. Possible research needs include:

1. Research to determine how long T&E plant species are able to persist between disturbances in sand pine scrub habitat.
2. Research to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of management techniques for site preparation in Florida scrub habitat and potential impacts to rare plants. Primary techniques which should be evaluated are prescribed burning and mechanical roller chopping.
3. Research to determine habitat variables affecting movement of Florida scrub-jay over time. Emphasis may be on spatial constraints as well as potential barriers to movements.
4. Research to determine optimum burning intensities, frequencies and seasons required to return longleaf/palmetto flatwoods ecosystems to conditions existing prior to fire suppression management.
5. Research to determine upland use by adult and juvenile flatwoods salamanders.
6. Research to identify impacts of habitat fragmentation on flatwoods salamanders and striped newts.
7. Research to evaluate pond management strategies to optimize habitat for flatwoods salamanders and striped newts.
8. Research on harvest methods and other options for removal of small diameter wood for hazardous fuel reduction. Research would focus on overcoming barriers that hinder use of biomass and development of markets utilizing biomass for fuel or other purposes.
9. Research current issues related to forest management within the Wildland Urban Interface.
10. Evaluate potential for treating titi encroachment utilizing biomass harvest technology.