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Forest Service

Southwestern
Region

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Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands Fiscal Year 2011 Monitoring and Evaluation Report



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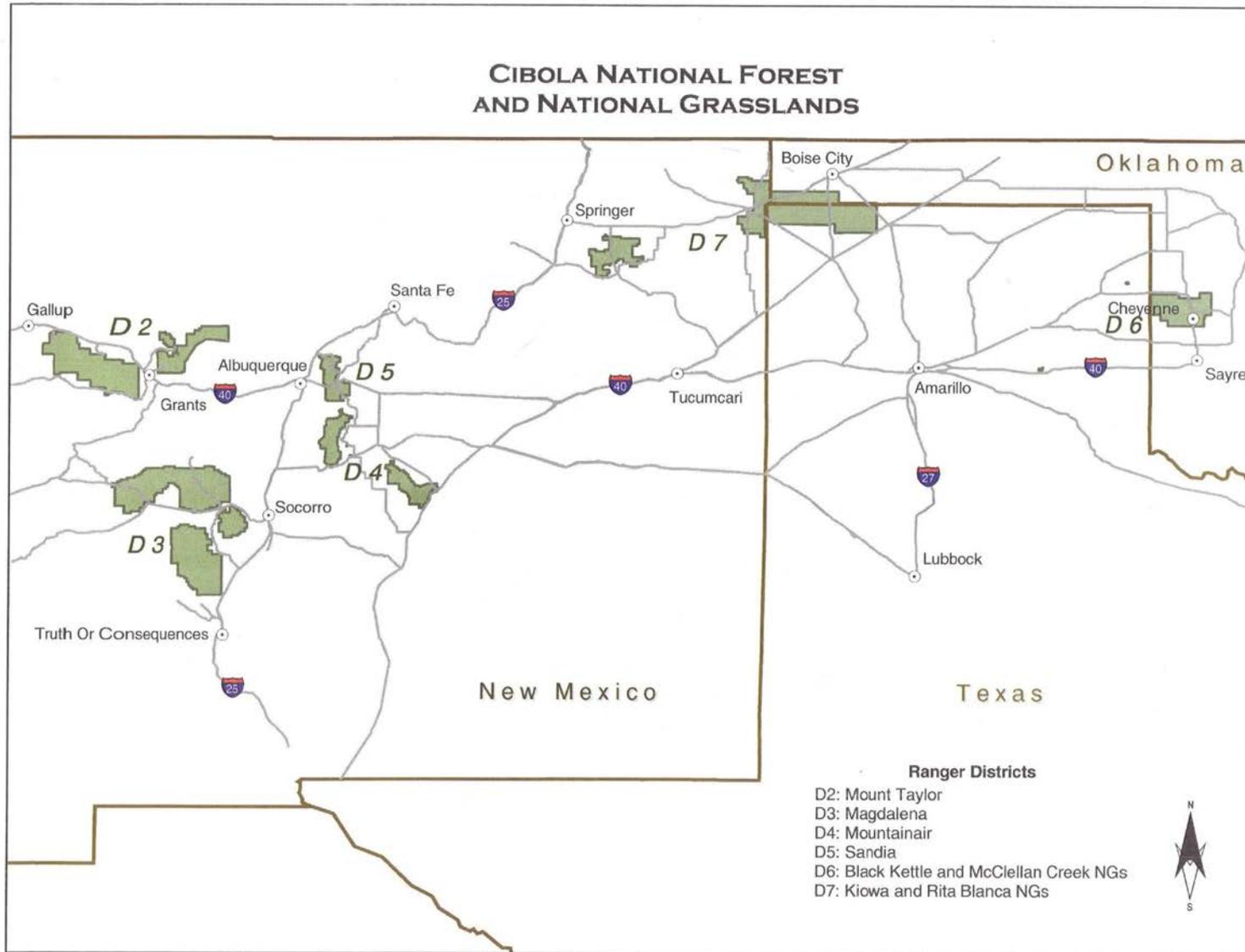
Forest Supervisor Certification

I certify that the Cibola National Forest Plan (Forest Plan) as amended is sufficient to guide future management of the Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands until the plan revision process is completed.

This Monitoring and Evaluation Report meets regulatory requirements for completing an annual report for the fiscal year of 2011, based on Section 219 of the 1982 planning rule provisions.

Susan S. Hill
For Nancy Rose, Forest Supervisor

30 August 2012
Date



Executive Summary

This report presents fiscal year (FY) 2011 monitoring results of land and resource management activities important to achieving Forest-wide goals stated in the 1985 Cibola National Forest Plan and other, more recent initiatives and mandates.

This section summarizes the monitoring table found on pages 8 thru 30. It reports monitoring results and inferences that are anticipated to be relevant to future management.

Cultural resources monitoring in FY 2011 consisted of 19 heritage resource sites that were determined to be eligible for the National Registry. Seventy-seven surveys were conducted for Section 106 clearances, and 56 sites were inspected to satisfy deferred maintenance requirements or were opportunistic inspections (non-project related).

Monitoring by the engineering program shows that no new roads were constructed, and 11.4 miles of existing systems roads were reconstructed on the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands in FY 2011. Approximately 275 miles of Forest Service roads were maintained, and no roads were obliterated. Emphasis for FY 2012 and beyond will be working with the Magdalena Ranger District on Travel Management planning and developing an inventory of all roads on FS lands.

The fire and fuels program conducted and monitored prescribed burns on approximately 4,900 acres in FY 2011. There were approximately 5,673 acres of unplanned fire on the Cibola, but approximately 1,200 acres were managed to accomplish resource benefits.

The forestry program continues to need greater law enforcement presence on some districts to facilitate fuelwood permit and contract compliance. Resource damage is occurring in some areas due to insufficient law enforcement and the lack of qualified Forest Protection Officers to enforce permit and contract requirements. This is primarily a function of reduced budgets and zoning in law enforcement, and their inability to adequately staff for the complexity of law enforcement issues occurring on the Forest and within their Zone.

Mortality continues by Douglas-fir tussock moth in the Sandia District, but levels are less than in previous years. On the Sandia Ranger District, high mortality from tussock moth infestation has left many hazard trees in and around recreation sites. Hazard trees are felled by Forest Service volunteers and can be bucked and gathered under fuelwood permits. Monitoring in 2011 continues to reveal that it is almost impossible to cut and remove dead, hazardous trees in relation to the rate of mortality.

Monitoring forest and watershed health across the Forest has shown that at the current funding levels, the Forest does not have the ability to accomplish activities at a scale large enough to address all issues. However, strategic placements of treatments accomplished jointly by Forestry, Watershed, Wildlife, and Fuels programs do assist in treating the areas prioritized as having the most values at risk, which would include

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natural, cultural and community resources. Over 830 acres of timber stand improvement projects were accomplished in FY11.

Lands adjustments monitoring indicates the acquisition of title to Trigo Canyon Road accessing the west side of the Manzano Mountains. Through travel management analysis, rights-of-way are being identified and opportunities explored. A decision was made not to permit establishment of a new communication site on Microwave Ridge.

Minerals monitoring activities indicated significant uranium interests exist on Mt. Taylor and Magdalena Districts and other mining exploration interest on the Mountainair District. NEPA analyses proceeded for two mine proposals and an exploration proposal on Mt. Taylor District.

Range monitoring has shown that drought continues to be the most frequent reason for adjusting grazing strategies through adaptive management processes. On the Kiowa and Rita Blanca National Grasslands, drought in FY 2011 combined with cumulative effects of below normal rainfall in preceding years resulted in lower forage production. Annual planning, cooperative strategizing, and adaptive management (reducing stocking levels or shortening grazing seasons) have enhanced permittee compliance and is helping to meet management goals and objectives. All monitored allotments were in compliance with the Annual Operation Instructions for FY 2011.

In the recreation program, budgets only allowed districts to complete the minimum requirements for trail maintenance. The condition of wilderness trails on Mountainair and Sandia Districts are not to standard as a result. The National Visitor Use Monitoring assessment on the Forest and Grasslands was completed, but data will not be available until July 2012. The priority of travel management analyses on the Forest precluded visual resource monitoring for the year.

Soil and water monitoring on the Forest included a watershed condition assessment. The assessment found:

- 161 watersheds rated as ‘good’ meaning the watershed processes are functioning properly.
- 50 watersheds rated as ‘fair’ meaning the watershed is functioning at risk
- 1 watershed rated as ‘poor’ meaning the watershed is not functioning properly.

Two priority watersheds have been identified, Bluewater and Las Huertas. A watershed improvement action plan has been prepared for the Bluewater watersheds. Implementation of projects in Bluewater began in 2011.

The Cibola worked with the University of New Mexico to inventory springs across the forest and grasslands. This inventory provides basic information about springs and their associated surface and ground waters, using protocols developed by the U.S. Forest Service and other researchers. Location, flow, chemistry and management status are some of the attributes collected. In FY 2011, 13 springs on the mountain districts were inventoried for characteristics and condition.

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Opportunities for watershed improvement are being identified through an integrated approach and by assessing the effectiveness of best management practices. The wildlife program is communicating with watershed resources to improve riparian and watershed conditions for both resources. Range is working with watershed to improve springs where these features are used as water sources for livestock. Engineering provides assistance with improving roads or trails, and as needed, removal, to reduce impacts to water resources. By combining resources, 600 acres of watershed were improved in FY 2011. This includes soil improvements through targeted vegetation management on the Mountainair and Sandia Ranger Districts and stream and riparian restoration projects on the Sandia and Magdalena Ranger Districts.

Monitoring of special use permits shows that permits issued for longer terms reduce the burden of re-issuance. Monitoring for NEPA compliance is occurring when permits are reissued. However, compliance inspections in the interim are reduced due to limited personnel.

Monitoring of projects for wildlife habitat improvement has led to the following observations about their effectiveness: 1) on-going drought conditions have resulted in lack of herbaceous or browse species response on most treatment areas; 2) inspection of fences surrounding wildlife waterers needs to be done annually to prevent livestock entry; 3) nine metal platforms constructed for Ferruginous Hawk are not being used on the Rita Blanca and would be better used by relocating to the Kiowa; and 4) areas treated to improve browse productivity and availability should receive rest from grazing following the treatment. Prescribed burning for wildlife habitat improvement declined on some districts in FY 2011 because of drought conditions.

Budget deficiencies resulted in some usual monitoring activities not being conducted during FY 2011, including monitoring of number of quality snags per acre and roost group trees left in forest product sale areas. Limited Northern Goshawk monitoring of known territories was accomplished in FY 2011, and only one pair was documented as successful with two young. Six of the 20 known Peregrine Falcon eyries were monitored in FY 2011, with 3 having young. No take of Peregrine Falcons occurred in FY 2011. Less than the usual number of protected activity centers for Mexican Spotted Owl were monitored as well, due to shortage of funding to execute a contract to conduct the monitoring, and limited Forest staff and time to otherwise compensate. Population trends of management indicator species monitored on the Forest tended to be either up or stable. Raptor and passerine monitoring on the Mountainair District showed stable upward trends for some species but below average for others. For some raptor species, immature to adult ratios were documented as being below average. For raptors, median passage date was significantly later than that of the period 1985-2010.

On the Kiowa and Rita Blanca National Grasslands, black-tailed prairie dogs were monitored by Kansas State Univ. and other partners, and colony area substantially expanded from 2010.

Forest Plan Background and Amendments

The Forest Plan and associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were published in 1985. Preliminary Forest staff recommendations for updating the Forest Plan were developed in 1996-1999 and are contained in the Geographic Area Assessments produced by the Interdisciplinary Team.

The following amendments have been made to the 1985 Forest Plan:

Amendment Number	Decision Date	Amendment Description
Amendment #1	01/09/87	Clarified language throughout all five chapters
Amendment #2	05/25/89	Added electronic site near Boise City, OK for the Coast Guard's Long-Range Aid to Navigation (LORAN-C)
Amendment #3	06/30/89	Changed timber projections based on projects in Las Huertas Canyon near Placitas, NM
Amendment #4	05/29/90	Revised the 10-year timber sale schedule, amended fire management Standards & Guidelines (S&Gs), added black bear and curlew to the MIS list, changed ROS for MAs 8 and 13, RATM
Amendment #5	06/27/90	Designated Oso Ridge Lookout as an electronic site
Amendment #6	09/06/91	Established S&Gs for capital investment priorities and Sandia winter use; added the grasshopper sparrow to the MIS list; and established S&Gs for Aberts squirrel
Amendment #7	09/09/96	Added Regional direction for management of Mexican spotted owl, northern goshawk, grazing, old growth
Amendment #8	12/20/96	Returned federal lands near Kirkland Air Force Base from DOE back to the National Forest System
Amendment #9	09/18/97	Established Bernalillo Watershed Research Natural Area
Amendment #10	10/17/02	Identified eligible wild and scenic rivers and added direction for protecting their values
Amendment #11	07/10/08	Changes to Sandia RD direction required by Travel Management decision
Amendment #12	08/26/08	Changes to Grasslands (Management Areas 4 and 5) oil and gas leasing stipulations
Amendment #13	05/07/12	Travel Management on the Mountainair District
Amendment #14	06/19/12	Deleted plan standards related to Casa Loma summer homes, Sandia District

Table of Monitoring Activities, Results, and Relevant Comments for FY 2010, Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN TABLE

ARRA – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

AUM – Animal Unit Month

BBS – Breeding bird survey

BLM – Bureau of Land Management

CCF – 100 cubic feet

CFRP – Collaborative Forest Restoration Program

D2 – Mount Taylor Ranger District

D3 – Magdalena Ranger District

D4 – Mountainair Ranger District

D5 – Sandia Ranger District

D6 – Black Kettle and McClellan Creek Ranger District

D7 – Kiowa and Rita Blanca Ranger District

EIS – Environmental Impact Statement

EMIFPA – East Mountain Interagency Fire Protection Assoc.

FACTS – Forest Service Activity Tracking System

FARSITE - Fire behavior and growth simulator

FS – Forest Service

FSveg – Field Sampled Vegetation database

GIS – Geographic Information System

IDIQ – Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity Contract

INFRA – Infrastructure database

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act

NMDGF – New Mexico Dept. of Game & Fish

NMSU – New Mexico State University

NWI – National Wetlands Inventory

ODWC – Okla. Dept. of Wildlife Conservation

PAC – Protected Activity Center

PAOT- People at one time

PTSAR – Periodic Timber Sale Accomplishment Report

RAR – Roads Accomplishment Report

RD – Ranger District

RO – Regional Office

RX – Prescribed burn

SO – Forest Supervisor's Office

TDPW – Texas Dept. of Parks and Wildlife

TEUI – Terrestrial Ecological Unit Inventory

TIM – Timber Information Manager Software Application

USGS – U.S. Geological Survey

WUI – Wildland urban interface

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
Cultural Resources	Cultural Resources listed in or eligible to the National Register of Historic Places	SO	All	19 heritage resource sites determined eligible to the National Register in 2011. Five sites are currently listed on the National Register.	Total number of sites documented in FY-2011: 56.
Cultural Resources	Clearance Surveys for Cultural Resources	SO	All	77 surveys, totaling 8,540 acres for Section 106 clearances.	Total acres cleared for undertakings, based on previous and new surveys: 9,548.
Engineering	Miles of road construction/reconstruction	RAR-SO	D2	11.4 miles	Work was reconstruction of segments of NFS road 447 (Bonita Canyon), which consisted of reroute segments around heritage resources and returning other segments to their original alignment.
Engineering	Miles of level 3, 4, and 5 road maintenance	RAR-SO	D2, D3, D4, D5, D7	275 miles	
Engineering	Miles of road obliterated	RAR-SO	N/A	0	No obliteration in FY11
Fire/Fuels	Monitored during- and after-treatment conditions including smoke, weather, fire behavior, fire effects on residual vegetation and other resources.	District files burn plan file, FACTS	Forestwide	Wildland fires in FY 2011 totaled 5,673 acres. Approximately 1200 of these acres were wildland fire for resource benefit on (D3). Approximately 4900 acres of prescribed burning and thinning were completed	

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
Forestry	Monitored compliance with silvicultural prescriptions including post-treatment basal areas, canopy cover, stand densities, snag retention, and implementation of mitigation measures in timber sale, personal use firewood programs, and CFRP thinning grants administered in FY11.	Forestry records located in individual District Project files and at SO	D2, D3, D4, SO	Inspections indicated compliance.	Timely inspections are key to achieving desired results when implementing. Designation by Description on commercial and service contracts (D2,D4). Monitoring has allowed the districts to make length of season adjustments in personal-use firewood (D2, D3). Monitoring has also allowed district to make area-wide designations for personal-use firewood (D3). Desired results are also achieved through interaction and collaboration with grant partners (D2, D3, D4).
Forestry	Monitored for insect or disease damage to forest stands through aerial survey (by RO) and ground sampling Monitored for insect activity within active timber Sales & thinning projects (D2,D3,D4)	Forestry files	Forest-wide	Mortality continues by Douglas-fir tussock moth in white fir and Douglas-fir, and by various other bark beetles (D5), but levels are less than in previous years.	Slash from mechanical thinning needs to be monitored more closely for insect infestations and outbreaks. (D2). Monitoring for insect activity within timber sales and thinning projects has allowed work to continue during the bark beetle season (January-June) (D2,D4).
Forestry	Monitored for hazard trees at all developed recreation sites, some undeveloped recreation sites, post-wildfire burn areas and roads	District recreation files	Forest-wide	There is continued mortality, mostly white fir, in Sandia Districts' developed recreation sites (D5). Little unauthorized off-road travel has occurred. (D5).	Coordinated with wildlife on the timing of hazard tree removal to reduce the impact on cavity nesters. Generally the fall is the best time of the year (D5, D4, D3, D2). Bucking of fallen trees is not necessary to ensure removal; fuelwood permittees do it and carry bucked sections over 100 feet to parking areas. It is very difficult to keep up with mortality and removal of hazard trees (D5). Volunteers have assisted in keeping

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
					up with removal of hazard trees in 2011, but the work is continuous.
Forestry	Monitored commercial and personal-use fuelwood areas for compliance with permits and contract requirements.	District forestry files	Forest-wide	Wood theft and timber trespass are occurring. Compliance with closure orders is not always occurring.	Due to lack of FPOs and law enforcement, the Forest has moved to load ticket system and NEPA designated fuelwood areas-forestwide. Law enforcement is not sufficient (D2, D3, D4). There continues to be inadequate funding of the Forest Protection Officer (FPO) program (D2, D4,D3). Resource damage is occurring and there is no repercussion. Law enforcement is insufficient in those areas incurring resource damage (D2, D4, D3).
Forestry	Acres of overstory and final removal harvest	TIM	RDs	In FY 2011 we accomplished 0 acres of this harvest system.	
Forestry	Acres of Intermediate Harvest	TIM and project files	RDs	In FY 2011 we accomplished 0 acres of this harvest system.	
Forestry	Acres in need of reforestation	FACTs	Forestwide	0 acres in FY 2011	
Forestry	Timber Stand Improvement Acres	FACTs	D2	In FY 2011 we accomplished 834 acres.	
Forestry	CCF of net sawtimber sold	PTSAR	Forestwide	4,791 CCF were sold in FY2011	
Forestry	Adequate restocking of regeneration harvest	FACTs	Forestwide	95 acres completed in FY2011	
Forestry	Stands and acres of forest lands identified and tracked in FSveg-Common Stand Exams.	FSVeg; Stand Exam Contracts	Forest-wide	14,770 acres completed and were added to FSVeg in FY2011	

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
Lands	Monitoring of availability of electronic site acres.	SO	D2, D3, D4, D5, D6	<p>Completed NEPA for the Riconada Communication Site proposal. Decision made to not permit establishment of communication site at this time - 2011.</p> <p>The US Custom and Border Protection was assisted in the establishment and/or co-location at communication sites within the forest to meet their Homeland Security obligations.</p> <p>The State of New Mexico DOIT has been assisted in meeting their time frames for communication site upgrade at three locations.</p>	There are approx. 310 acres designated as communication sites. These sites will accommodate either high or low power use, with one being mixed use. They are identified for commercial use or stipulated to accommodate governmental use only (federal agencies or military).
Lands	Effect of mgmt. practices conducted on adjacent non-NFS lands on goals and objectives of the Forest plan	SO	Forest wide	Continue to address boundary line issues and notification of individuals involved in encroachments.	Continue to work with property owners to develop and provide an understanding of the Forest goals and objectives.
Lands	Monitoring of right-of-way acquisition through private in holdings.	SO	Forest-wide	Acquired the title to the Trigo Canyon road. Acquired 6.3 Miles of road accessing the west side of the Manzano Mtns.	Through travel management analyses, ROW needs are being identified and opportunities explored.

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
Lands	Effect of goals, objectives and management activities of the Forest on Adjacent non-NFS lands	SO	Forest wide	Continue to identify property boundaries through property surveys.	Continue to pursue opportunistic and desirable land acquisitions.
Lands – Special Use Permits	Monitoring for compliance with permit terms and conditions, including environmental effects, during special use permit administration (includes land special use permits).	SO/Districts	Forest wide	Permits now being issued for longer term to reduce burden of permit issuance.	Electronic sites need more technical inspection. On-site inspections are reduced due to lack of personnel at District level. Monitoring continues for NEPA compliance with permit reissuance.
Minerals	Monitoring for compliance with Plans of Operations	SO	D2, D3,	There are current Uranium exploration interests and non-Uranium exploration interests.	NEPA is proceeding for two mine proposals on D2. NEPA proceeding on D2 for an exploration proposal.
Range	Monitored Allotments for Livestock Grazing Utilization	District	D2,D3,D4 D6, D7	Compliance obtained on 60 allotments monitored 396 units (allotments) monitored. Forage production reduced 75%	Majority of key areas within utilization guidelines Stocking levels reduced or season shortened.
Range	Structural Improvements	District	D2,D3,D4	100 structural range improvements	Condition was found to be satisfactory
Range	Permitted use and authorized use	District	D2,D3,D4	140,000 AU-permitted 95,000 AU permitted	Stocking reduced due to drought
Range	Grazing capacity and range condition	District	D2,D3,D4	Conditions found to be in static to slightly downward due to drought	Stocking levels reduced and or season shortened to adjust to reduced forage production

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
Noxious Weeds	Previously treated areas monitored	District	D6,7	1724 acres monitored for effectiveness of treatment	
Recreation	Miles of Non-Wilderness trail construction or reconstruction and maintenance	INFRA/ARR A files	D3, D5	Majority of the trails maintained were due to ARRA funding. Sandia RD had one trail rerouted with legacy funds.	25 miles were maintained on D3 and 15 miles were constructed and maintained on D5
Recreation	Developed site use, public and private sector	District files, RO, WO	D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7	National Visitor Use Monitoring is currently in process and data will not be available until FY12	Results are pending
Recreation	Condition of developed sites in the public sector.	INFRA and Recreation Office, SO; Zone Silvicultu-rist; Contracting Office	D3,D4, D6	Deferred maintenance is needed	
Soil & Water	Watershed improvement acres. Watershed Condition Assessment	All Districts Offices WCATT (Watershed Condition Assessment Tracking Tool)	All Districts	Watershed condition improved on 600 acres. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 161 watersheds rated as ‘good’ • 50 watersheds rated as ‘fair’ • 1 watershed rated as ‘poor’ 	Largely accomplished through integrated projects with wildlife, recreation, engineering, vegetation, and range.

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
Soil & Water	Riparian acres treated to bring to satisfactory condition. Ongoing Spring monitoring through Cost Share Agreement with UNM – leads to appropriate prioritization and restoration	SO	D5 D3 D5 D3 D2	Restoration work in Cedro Creek (D5) and Limestone Canyon (D3) D5 – 5 springs; D3 – 3 springs; D2 – 5 springs. Springs characterized in term of chemistry, flow, risks, improvement needs, and other factors.	Continued restoration work in Cedro Creek and Limestone Canyon Most developed springs do not preserve ecosystem function. Groundwater withdrawals have impacted spring flows. Several springs were dry.
Soil & Water	Best Management Practices (BMPs) – Monitor projects to determine implementation and suitability of BMP recommendations.	SO	D2, D3, D4, D5	Additional practices identified to improve soil condition during vegetative treatments	Addressing factors which contribute to less than satisfactory soil condition, such as erosion and lack of woody material. National protocol is available and will be implemented in 2012.
Soil & Water	Closing and obliteration of temporary roads and trails. Obliterate non-designated routes.	SO Travel Mgmt. Records	D2; D3; D4; D7	High risk roads identified and not designated. NEPA initiated for obliteration of non-designated routes on Sandia Ranger District	Implementation of travel management decision may take awhile.
Visual Quality	No monitoring accomplished	n/a		No monitoring completed.	Travel Management priority precluded monitoring.
Wildlife	Acres of browse vegetation treated to improve availability and productivity.	District Offices	All	Acres D2=802 D3= 4358 D4=327 D5=500 D6=877 D7=1956	Districts document pre- and post-treatment as it occurs using standard vegetation analysis techniques. Informal monitoring shows that treatments generally do not receive grazing rest following treatments which limits forage

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
				Other=866	<p>response. On-going drought conditions also result in lack of herbaceous or browse species response on most treatment areas.</p> <p>D6 accomplished 840 acres of burning on 2 separate areas. The results from the burn will benefit wildlife species for approximately 4 to 7 years before the areas return to pre fire conditions. Normally the District accomplishes more acres however due to extreme drought conditions burning was stopped after just 2 burns.</p> <p>Unplanned ignitions of fire (that benefitted wildlife) occurred in higher elevation ponderosa pine habitat that held a decadent component of aspen. It is assumed that aspen will become more predominant in the stand as recovery progresses. The other fires will provide enhanced shrub, forb and grass forage with a reduction in overstory canopy.</p>
Wildlife	Monitored water developments.	District project or work records	All	Number of developments D2=2 D3=15 D4=2 D5=1 D6=15 D7=1	Fences surrounding wildlife waters need annual inspection to ensure condition prevents livestock entry. NM Dept. of Game and Fish is contributing pipe fence to replace wire fences.

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
Wildlife	Monitored number of quality snags per acre	Not monitored this period	All	Not monitored this period.	There is field review of forest product sale areas (on a sample basis)-every 3 years. Contract is in place to monitor this element within past treatment areas during FYs 12 and 13.
Wildlife	Monitored number of roost groups	Not monitored this period	All	Not monitored this period.	There is field review of forest product sale areas (on a sample basis)-every 3 years. Contract is in place to monitor this element within past treatment areas during FYs 12 and 13.
Wildlife	Monitored known Northern Goshawk PFAs.	SO and District wildlife files	D2, D3, D4, D5	Nine territories were monitored in FY 2011 with varying degrees of effort, but with at least one field visit. No visits were made on D2, which has half of all territories. Only one pair was successful, with two young. Four other territories had activity: at three, a single bird was seen and at another, incubation had started but was eventually aborted.	There are 31 known goshawk territories on the Cibola. Over the years, our surveys have shown that the goshawk is very uncommon and nesting success very rare, just like this year.
Wildlife	Monitored for reproductive success and occupancy of threatened and endangered animals.	District	D2, D4	Southwestern willow flycatcher (SWWF) territories monitored D2=1 D4=1 (potential habitat)	SWWF- D2-MONITORING VISIT TO BLUEWATER IN 2011 As required by protocol, three visits were made to lower Bluewater from FR 178 to Andrew’s cabin but no SWWF were detected. Visits occurred on 5-27, 6-21 and 7-6. Bluewater

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
				<p>Mexican Spotted Owl territories monitored. D2=3 D3=21 D4=0 D5=0</p>	<p>is at its most verdant in July, but even then bird activity has slackened, and this year most of the strictly riparian species such as the Common Yellowthroat or the Virginia Rail, never came, probably due to the two year drought. The riparian enclosure fence was maintained by District personnel. Cattle were observed in the upper enclosure during the summer where it was noted that the cattleguard wings have enough space for livestock to walk between the grates and the wings so that the cattleguard doesn't function to keep livestock out of the riparian pasture.</p> <p>D4- TAJIQUE POTENTIAL HABITAT IN 2011: No formal SWWF monitoring was conducted but the SWWF habitat is within the Tajique BBS which was conducted. No SWWF were detected at or near Sun Valley in 2011.</p> <p>D2=MSO contract not awarded due to lack of funding. District was only able to monitor 3 PACs. Two were occupied.</p> <p>D3-Monitoring conducted by a contractor and USFS personnel. Of 21 PACs monitored, 16 PACs were occupied.</p> <p>D4-no monitoring occurred</p>

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
					D5-About 1200 acres were inventoried to protocol for the Sandia Landscape Fuels Reduction Project north of I-40.
Wildlife	Monitored Aplomado falcon prey species and population trend (Two one mile BBS transects conducted annually by volunteers).	District	D3	<p>No Aplomado Falcons have been observed.</p> <p>Deep Canyon Summer 2011 Results-- With New Mexico in the midst of an extreme drought event, the grassland condition between stops 1 and 3 where active cattle grazing is still ongoing, was extremely poor. After Stop 3 where it appeared that there was no cattle grazing, the grassland condition was noticeably better. The Eastern Meadowlark, a bird that depends on a certain amount of grass cover, for the first time on this survey was nowhere to be found. Summer 2011 also found the lowest number of individuals and tied for lowest species count with 2009. Despite this, the Ladder-backed Woodpecker and the Say's Phoebe were both added as new species for the summer survey. The Winter of 2011 was much like Winter 2008, which saw good weather but very few birds, with most stops having no birds present at all. The reason for this is unknown. While so</p>	D3-The District continues to establish baseline for prey species abundance and determines absence of Aplomado falcons in suitable habitat on three grazing allotments.

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
				<p>far a dry winter, there seemed to be adequate grass cover, with no real noticeable differences compared to previous winters. Stop 8 had two pipit-like birds, but unfortunately, a positive id was not possible.</p> <p>San Juan Canyon Summer 2011 Results-With New Mexico being in an extreme drought situation, it is unsurprising that the number of individual birds as well as species was at an all time low for the Summer 2011 survey. No new birds were added to the count this year. The Black-throated Sparrow remains the most numerous species on the survey. Just as was found with the Deep Canyon survey, for the first time not a single Eastern Meadowlark was found. A careful survey of trees and mesquite revealed no visible raven or hawk nests, which might be reused by the Aplomado Falcon. Winter Results- The grassland condition was better than the usual short stubble. The Red-tailed Hawk and the Chestnut-collared Longspur were added as new species for the winter survey. However, both the species count and the number of individual</p>	

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Program Area	Monitoring Accomplished	Record Location	Districts	Results	Comments
				birds were the second lowest of the survey, with 2010 being the lowest.	
Wildlife	Monitored Peregrine Falcon Eyrie occupancy and nest success (Random sample conducted by NMDGF contractors).	NMDGF, District Files	D2, D3,D4, D5	<p>Eyrie occupancy and nest success</p> <p>In 2011 five eyries were selected by lottery drawing, and Terry visited an additional one where a nestling was taken the previous year. No “take” occurred in 2011. Of the six eyries monitored, only three are known to have had young: Two eyries produced five young, and young were inferred at a third site. The remaining three eyries were occupied by adult pairs, but failed for unknown reasons.</p>	<p>The NM Department of Game and Fish administers the post-delisting monitoring in NM and the work is outsourced to Terry Johnson and Sandy Williams. Not all the eyries are checked every year—only those selected by a lottery drawing.</p> <p>The Cibola has 20 known eyries.</p>
Wildlife	Ferruginous Hawk Nest Monitoring – nest occupancy	SO, D7	D7	<p>On the Kiowa, Roy segment: There are seven territories in this sector, two of which were active with four-plus young.</p> <p>On the Kiowa, Clayton segment: Of the eleven known territories, two were active with six young. One of the active ones was “Santa Fe Trail,” which has been monitored since 1995 and has/had one of the largest nests ever seen—at least six feet tall.</p> <p>Even though there are at least 18 sites where the Ferruginous Hawk have</p>	<p>Annual monitoring by Cibola migratory bird specialist and/or District biologist.</p> <p>Timing: The best time to monitor the platforms is from about June 18 to June 25 because the young are close to fledging then, are readily visible and easy to count. Visits to the platforms in April are not particularly useful and may be detrimental to birds known for their propensity to abandon their clutch when disturbed early in the breeding season.</p> <p>On average ferruginous hawk egg incubation starts around April 18, hatching about May 11 and the young fledge about</p>

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				<p>nested on the Kiowa in NM, the number of true territories would probably be half that since some of these sites might represent alternate sites for a single pair. We do know that in a given year 10 of the eighteen territories were occupied concurrently, so that 10 represents the minimum number of territories.</p> <p>On the Rita Blanca in Texas: Of the 13 territories, only two of the three metal platforms were active. If one assumes that alternate sites are included in the 13, the number of true territories would be closer to six.</p> <p>On the Rita Blanca in OK: We have 20 metal platforms in Oklahoma, but only eleven that are regularly used. The nine unused platforms located north of the Felt highway and east of Felt, are still used by the Chihuahuan Raven, but otherwise serve no useful purpose and should therefore be moved to NM, where currently there are none. The hawks probably avoid these areas because of their proximity to agricultural lands that are increasing year by year. Amazingly the platforms west of Felt are always active and now number consistently</p>	<p>June 26.</p>

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				<p>seven territories. These platforms are fully productive, even if traditional natural sites on the K/RB in trees and on windmills have utterly failed. These platforms are the single most important conservation tool for this hawk on the K/RB.</p>	
Wildlife	Black-tailed prairie dog monitoring	SO and District	D7	<p>Colony area expanded substantially from 2010, increasing from 1105.8 to 1520.3 ha., an overall increase of 37.4%. Between 2010 and 2011, as between 2009 and 2010, colony area increased on all portions of the grasslands by from 22-67%. Two medium to large colonies, RB21 and RB35, in the High Lonesome collapsed to near 0 ha. Both of these collapses are typical of the result of plague epizootics and both are of concern because of their proximity to other large colonies on the High Lonesome. RB35 is of special concern because of its central location within the colony complex. KSU swabbed approximately 30 burrows, but did not collect any fleas. The lack of fleas may have been because of the late date (fleas retreat deep into burrows during cold winter weather) or because Colony 35 was one of 10 colonies on High Lonesome that</p>	<p>Monitoring conducted in association with Kansas State University.</p> <p>Three goals for mapping prairie dog colonies on the Kiowa and Rita Blanca National Grasslands: 1, Inventory prairie dog populations, 2, Determine rates of colony growth on the Kiowa and Rita Blanca National Grasslands, and 3, identify the impacts and extent of plague activity on prairie dog colonies on the grasslands.</p>

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				<p>were dusted with Deltamethrin in summer 2011 to kill fleas. One colony on the Kiowa, K14, declined from 17.4 ha in 2010 to 1.5 ha in 2011. This colony also bears watching during 2012 to see if nearby colonies decline. No significant declines were seen on either RBNC or RBEast. Although the colony area grew during 2011, many colonies appeared to have less prairie dog activity than during the preceeding two years. The KRB has been in a severe drought during 2011, and it is possible that colonies grew in response to reduced vegetation out of proportion to population change. Colony area is a reasonable surrogate for population size if one looks for long-term trends, but probably not on a year-to-year basis, particularly in light of the great annual climate variation seen throughout the short-grass prairie (Cully et al. 2010).</p>	
Wildlife	Zuni bluehead sucker monitoring	D2, SO Wildlife Files	D2	<p>Species and habitat was monitored by NMDGF, but the report has not been finalized.</p> <p>Lands proposed for USFS acquisition include 1094 acres in a subdivision that is within the watershed occupied by the Zuni bluehead sucker.</p>	Habitat and population monitoring conducted by NMDGF is documented with an annual report.

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				Acquisition is in T13N, R16W, section 29 and a portion of section 28. McKinley County, NM.	
Wildlife	Threatened and Endangered / sensitive plants - Zuni fleabane.	SO and District Wildlife Files	D3	About 1200 acres of Forest Service Lands occupied by Zuni fleabane were proposed for mineral withdrawal.	Survey by Contractors during flowering season-bi-annually unless threatened by activities.
Wildlife	Monitored occurrence and population trend of migratory and resident birds on about 140 miles of transects to determine Habitat Trends-Habitat Diversity.	SO and District wildlife files. Annual Cibola Breeding Bird Survey Report	D2:2 two mile routes; D3:2 two mile routes; D4: 2 one mile routes; D5:1 one mile route; D6: 6 one mile route; D7: 3 one or two mile routes.	<p>Management Indicator Species (MIS): MIS Species Population trends on 1 and 2 mile Cibola routes can be used to compare trends at the state and National level.</p> <p>Juniper titmouse- statewide population trend down, Cibola habitat trend stable. This species is especially well suited to be an Indicator Species because it is so sedentary and disinclined to wander, even in winter. Species prefers juniper dominated P/J woodlands.</p> <p>Pygmy nuthatch- statewide population trend up, Cibola habitat trend up. This species is often seen in flocks, causing considerable variance from year to year, thus distorting the trend. The long term habitat trend is positive because considerable restoration is planned for ponderosa</p>	<p>USGS Breeding Bird Survey has accumulated enough data during the last forty years to delineate state level population trends.</p> <p>Number of Transects: 7 USGS BBS routes Cibola Habitat Surveys D2=2, two mile routes D4= 2 one mile route</p> <p>These 24.5-mile, randomly-selected surveys are conducted according to protocol. They begin one half hour before sunrise, with stops every half mile. At each of the 50 STOPS, birds seen and heard, are counted for three minutes. Conducted Annually</p> <p>These, mostly habitat-specific, fine-filter surveys are generally from one mile to two miles in length and either have six or</p>

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				<p>habitat, i.e., it is being thinned and burned, allowing for the growth of fewer, but larger, healthier trees.</p> <p>Hairy woodpecker-statewide population trend slightly up, Cibola habitat trend stable. While generally this species seems to be undercounted, sometimes the opposite is true, when the bird appears in clusters, as after a forest fire when trees often become infested with bugs and grubs. Such fluctuations tend to throw off the trend estimates, as can be seen in Claunch and Claunch2 BBS where the trend oscillates wildly between extremes.</p> <p>Red-breasted nuthatch-statewide population trend slightly up, habitat trend stable. This species is a nomad resident occurring abundantly one year and perhaps not at all the next, a phenomenon mostly linked to the availability of food supplies, i.e., a good cone crop.</p> <p>Red-naped sapsucker- statewide population trend up, habitat trend declining due to loss of aspen</p>	<p>eleven points, spaced .2 miles apart. Birds are counted for ten minutes at each point. Transects are rotated at 1-5 yr. intervals</p> <p>Population trends on 1 and 2 mile Cibola routes can be used to compare trends at the state and National level.</p>

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				<p>throughout the SW. This species is difficult to detect, but has high site fidelity so can indicate habitat quality over the long-term in areas where it is known to occur.</p> <p>House wren- statewide population trend down, Cibola habitat trend stable to improving. Appropriate indicator for lower elevation riparian habitat.</p>	
Wildlife	<p>Monitored Game - Management Indicator Species: Merriam's Turkey Rocky Mountain Elk Mule Deer Black Bear Rio Grande Turkey</p>	<p>So and District Wildlife Files, NMDGF, ODWC, TDPW</p>	All	<p>Monitoring in conjunction with NMGF on D3 for black bear, mule deer, elk shows continuing upward trend in populations. Habitat trend for mule deer shows decline in all but p-j and mountain shrub habitats as shown by declining observations of mule deer in other habitat types. Unknown if this trend is due to actual decline in habitat quality or competition with elk in these habitats on D3.</p> <p>Rio Grande turkey population is slowly increasing, all available habitat has high numbers at this time.</p>	<p>Data collected by New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Texas Parks and Wildlife and Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation on some Game Management Units.</p> <p>Population trend data is not consistent from year to year because NM units 8, 14 and 38 are low priority monitoring units for NMDGF.</p>
Wildlife	<p>Monitored trends of migrating raptor populations on the Sandia and Manzano Mountains.</p>	<p>SO and D4, D5 wildlife files</p>	D4, D5	<p>Fall Migration on the Manzano Mountains was continued in 2011. 4,790 raptors comprised of 18 species were observed. 40% Buteos, 34%</p>	<p>Number of sites Monitored D4=1 D5=1</p>

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	<p>Monitored Fall Passerine bird species by trapping at Capilla Peak.</p>			<p>Accipiters, 14% Vultures, 8% falcons 3% eagles, <1% harriers. Record high for zone-tailed hawks (4) and Mississippi kites (first record).</p> <p>Adjusted passage rates were significantly above average for the Peregrine Falcon and Turkey Vulture, but were significantly below average for Osprey, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper’s Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, and Prairie Falcon.</p> <p>Among 10 species with data suited to comparisons, immature : adult ratios were not significantly above average for any species, but were <u>significantly below</u> average for Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper’s Hawks, and Northern Goshawks.</p> <p>The 2011 combined-species median passage date of 1 October was <u>significantly later</u> than the 1985–2010 long-term median date of 26 September. The overall seasonal distribution of activity differed from the average pattern, in showing significantly below-average proportional activity levels during the</p>	<p>Spring Raptor migration-count was discontinued in 2010 on the Sandias and is unlikely to be continued in the future again due to funding limitations at HawkWatch International.</p> <p>Method =standardized counts and trapping/banding. The Cibola has a Challenge Cost Share (CCS) agreement with HawkWatch International for raptor monitoring.</p> <p>The Cibola has a CCS Agreement with Rio Grande Bird Research for passerine monitoring in the Manzano Mountains.</p>

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				<p>first half of the season (1 – 30 September), followed by a huge spike in seasonal passage (26 September – 3 October), above average counts through 20 October, and then tapering to near average passage rates for the remainder of the count. The spike in passage was driven by significant flights of Sharpshinned, Cooper’s, and Swainson’s Hawks. At the species level, all species showed significantly late timing.</p> <p>Capture-Banding--The 2011 capture total of 320 birds included 9 species, 1 recapture of birds previously banded at the site. The 2011 effort raises the total number of birds captured since project inception to 19,105, including 39 recaptures of Manzano-banded birds and 24 foreign recaptures (i.e., birds originally banded elsewhere and subsequently recaptured in the Manzanos). Sharpshinned and Cooper’s Hawks accounted for 53% and 33% of the total captures, respectively, with Red-tailed Hawks (8%), American Kestrels (3%), and all other species each comprising less than 1% of the total. The overall combined-species</p>	

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				<p>capture total was 66% below average, the overall capture rate of 80.6 birds per 100 station hours was a significant 29% below average, and the overall capture success of 11% was 47% below average, again largely reflecting reduced crew size, experience levels, and effort.</p> <p>2011 Fall Passerine bird trapping at Capilla Peak---- new record for olive-sided flycatcher. Peak record for evening grosbeak and Williamson’s sapsucker. Most common birds are Townsend’s warbler, MacGillivray’s Warbler, Wilson’s warbler, chipping sparrow, Oregon junco, gray-headed junco.</p>	