

5 YEAR REPORT - 2010-2014

Selway - Middle Fork

Collaborative Forest
Landscape Restoration
Program

Prepared by:
Clearwater Basin Collaborative

In partnership with
US Forest Service, Dept. of Agriculture

A Letter from the Partners

Dear Reader:

It is with a great sense of pride that we share the story of the Selway-Middle Fork Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) project as a testimony to what can be accomplished when people work together to achieve a common goal.

In 2009 Congress provided the opportunity for the Forest Service to implement ten large-scale restoration projects throughout the nation. It further specified that the projects be "...developed and implemented through a collaborative process...."

The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests, Clearwater Basin Collaborative and other partners came together to develop a comprehensive restoration strategy for the 1.4-million-acre Selway-Middle Fork ecosystem. Why the Selway-Middle Fork?

- Through a variety of assessments, the area had been identified as a high priority for restoration.
- Restoration work could begin immediately because many activities had already been cleared through National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses.
- The infrastructure and workforce to accomplish restoration activities was intact.
- The Forest Service had a history of working collaboratively with the Clearwater Basin Collaborative and many other diverse partners within the area.

Since receiving CFLR funds, the Forests have made significant progress implementing NEPA-cleared activities to reduce fuels, improve watersheds and restore forest health. As these smaller-scale vegetative treatments are being completed, and the Forests are on the verge of completing environmental analyses that will result in significant landscape-scale restoration activities that will occur over the next five years.

The partners who have worked to make this proposal a reality are proud to share these accomplishments with you and look forward to many more successes as collaboration paves the way for restoration activities that will benefit the land and people.

Sincerely,

Alex Irby Cheryl Probert Joe Hudson Dale Harris



Alex Irby
Clearwater Basin
Collaborative
Co-Chair



Cheryl Probert
Nez Perce-Clearwater
National Forest
Supervisor



Joe Hudson
Moose Creek
District Ranger



Dale Harris
Clearwater Basin
Collaborative
Co-Chair

Program Highlights - Fiscal years 2010-2014

- 6** years of collaboration
- 15** culverts replaced
- 22** diverse interests
- 63** miles of stream habitat improved
- 66** miles of road decommissioned
- 417** direct jobs created or maintained
- 653** total jobs created or maintained
- 729** miles of road maintained
- 942** acres treated using timber sales
- 1,915** acres of forest vegetation improved
- 3,564** miles of trail maintained and improved
- 13,810** cubic feet of timber harvested
- 16,000** acres of wildlife habitat improved
- 16,812** acres of weed treated
- 40,325** cubic feet of timber sold
- 61,241** acres of hazardous fuel reduced
- 1,400,000** acre landscape
- \$13,200,000** in leveraged match
- \$16,100,000** appropriated funds
- \$29,300,000** to accomplish restoration work in Selway-Middle Fork area

Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program

The Act—Omnibus 2009, Title IV

SECTION 4001. This title **encourages a collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration** of priority forest landscapes through a process that: (1) encourages **ecological, economic, and social sustainability**; (2) **leverages local resources** with national and private resources; (3) **facilitates the reduction of wildfire management costs**, including **through reestablishing natural fire regimes** and **reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire**; and, (4) demonstrates the degree to which-- (A) various ecological restoration techniques-- **(i) achieve ecological and watershed health objectives**; and (ii) affect wildfire activity and management costs; and (B) **the use of forest restoration byproducts can offset treatment costs while benefitting local rural economies and improving forest health**.



Purpose of the Act

On March 30, 2009, President Barack Obama signed the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 into law. Embedded within the bill was Title IV, titled Forest Landscape Restoration, the purpose of which was to "...encourage the collaborative science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes...."

The law authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) to treat "priority" landscapes that were covered by a restoration strategy that was

substantially complete and identified and prioritized restoration treatments for a ten year period for a landscape that was: 1) at least 50,000 acres; 2) comprised primarily of National Forest System lands; 3) in need of active ecosystem restoration; and 4) in proximity to appropriate existing or proposed wood-processing infrastructure.

To be eligible for funding in accordance with the Act, Congress required that landscape proposals: incorporate the best available science; reduce hazardous fuels by

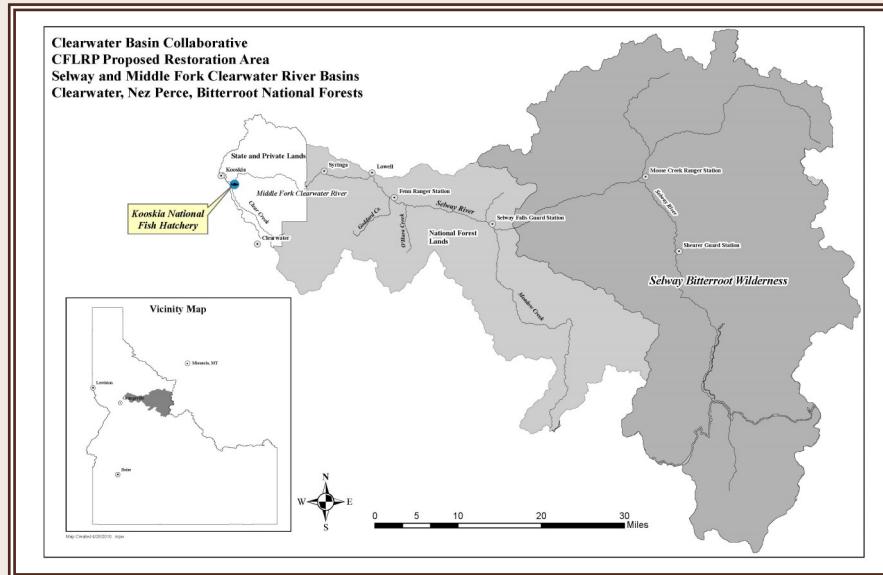
focusing on small diameter trees while maximizing the retention of large trees; and implement treatments without the establishment of permanent roads.

As the name of the program implies, the Act encouraged collaboration, requiring all proposals to be developed and implemented through a collaborative process that included multiple interested persons representing diverse interests and a transparent, nonexclusive process.

Funding for the Act

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	TOTALS
Program Award	\$1,000,000	\$3,400,000	\$4,000,000	\$3,760,000	\$4,000,000	\$16,160,000
Forest Service Match	\$426,633	\$1,520,718	\$761,435	\$1,651,418	\$946,393	\$5,306,597
Partner Match Agreements & In-Kind	\$1,048,920	\$1,250,019	\$1,920,032	\$1,986,022	\$1,368,918	\$7,573,911
Product Value Match			\$18,628	\$47,090	\$225,670	\$291,388
Totals	\$2,475,553	\$6, 170,737	\$6,700,095	\$7,444,530	\$6,540,981	\$13,171,896

Selway-Middle Fork CFLR Project



The Selway-Middle Fork Clearwater project area is located within the 6-million-acre Clearwater Basin. The Basin is characterized by a high percentage of federal land—3.9 million acres (65%), with more than 3.8 million acres managed by the Forest Service. Another 770,000 acres are included in the Nez Perce Tribe's reservation.

Nestled within the Basin are 1.4 million acres within the Selway and Middle Fork Clearwater River drainages that comprise the project area. National Forest System (NFS) lands across the Nez Perce, Clearwater and Bitterroot National Forests make up the bulk (94%) of the acres in the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR project area. The Idaho Department of Lands owns 1% of the acres; the Nez Perce Tribe owns less than 1%; and 4% of the acres are privately owned.

The unique Selway-Middle Fork ecosystem was chosen because this area is nationally renowned for its clear pristine water, anadromous and resident fisheries, big game species, vast wild landscapes and scenic vistas. Specifically, the Selway River system is a world class westslope cutthroat trout fishery and one of the last remaining bastions of wild "B" run steelhead in the Clearwater Basin. Also included in the project area is the Selway Bitter-

root Wilderness, one of the country's oldest and largest designated Wilderness areas and home to the country's oldest fire-use program. In yet another "first," the area is the site of the first river system designated under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. It includes one of the largest Research Natural Areas in the country. This area is also the traditional homeland of the Nez Perce Tribe and was traversed by the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery.

The ecological restoration needs in the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR area are great. While there are large expanses of wildland across this landscape, there are also intensely managed lands. Past management, fire suppression, invasion of exotic species, and increasing human settlement in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) have altered the landscape and threaten the unique ecological values of this area.

The socio-economic needs in this area are also evident. Local economies have been hit hard by the national economic downturn, particularly because of their dependence upon the wood products industry. All seven counties in the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR project's area of impact have experienced extremely high unemployment rates since 2002, particularly

Clearwater and Idaho County. In 2009, unemployment rates soared to 16% in Clearwater County with Idaho County not far behind at over 11%. Recreation is an emerging business sector, driven in part by the fisheries values within the project area. Additionally, people, homes, and property within the WUI face increasing threats from wildfire.

The Nez Perce - Clearwater National Forests and the Clearwater Basin Collaborative are committed to achieving the goals and objectives of the restoration strategy for the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR as well as increasing management capacity into the future.

These goals are consistent with Forest Plan direction and support national, regional, statewide, and local priorities.

Ultimately, the desired outcome of this project is a measurable shift toward terrestrial and aquatic restoration that achieves the desired future conditions on a landscape scale while generating forest products and other opportunities that benefit local economies.



Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program

The Act—Sec 4001 & 4003, Collaboration

Sec. 4001. The purpose of this title is to *encourage the collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration* of priority forest landscapes through a process that—*encourages ecological, economic, and social sustainability*...

Sec. 4003. Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall—...be *developed through a collaborative process that—includes multiple interested persons representing diverse interests; and is transparent and nonexclusive....*



col·lab·o·rate

verb \kə-ˈla-bə-, rāt

:to work with another person or group in order to achieve or do something

origin

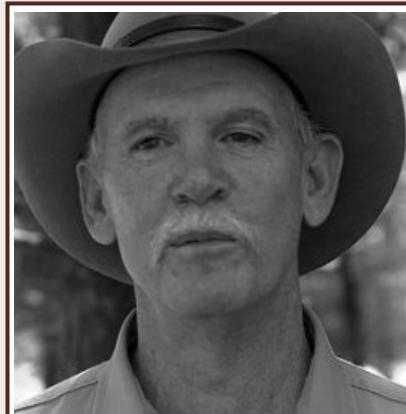
Late Latin *collaboratus*, past participle of *collaborare* to labor together, from Latin *com-* + *laborare* to labor. First known use: 1871.

Collaboration. Working together. It's a seemingly simple concept, but it's extraordinarily difficult to do. The Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC) has been successful due to several very distinct elements.

Individuals who comprise the CBC are **diverse** in their thoughts, interests and experiences. While diversity can be divisive, **collaborative**

attitudes bring the interests together to develop durable **consensus-based solutions** that meet the collective needs of all. Collaborative members also share a **common goal**: *enhance and protect the ecological and economic health of the forests, rivers and communities within the Clearwater Basin by working across a diversity of interests*. **Leadership** is elected, and guides the actions of the

group. **Operating protocols** define the rules for collaboration. **Time** is allocated to ensure ongoing **learning** occurs and **relationships** are developed and maintained. Finally, the Forest Service is viewed as a valued **partner**, and a **Memorandum of Understanding** defines expectations of both the CBC and the Forests.



Joe Hudson, Moose Creek Ranger District

"This proposal is a product of collaboration. It is based on sound science and restoration strategies developed at the forest, county, state, regional and national levels. All outputs are a product of ecological restoration activities."

Our Proposal

The proposal is the product of collaboration between the Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC) and Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests. It was also shaped by many other landowners, interest groups, institutions and agencies.

The six-million-acre Clearwater Basin is a national treasure characterized by vast tracts of public lands. Traditional homeland of the Nez Perce Tribe, and playground and work place for many of the area's residents, these lands are nationally renowned for their remote and relatively undeveloped character.

The Selway-Middle Fork area is massive by most standards—1.4 million acres. And talk about diverse! It includes lands that have been intensively managed by people, through the spectrum of intensive management practices, to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, an area where natural processes reign.

The environmental consequences of human settlement in the wildland urban interface, past management activities, fire suppression and the invasion of exotic species are well documented. When coupled with the Forests' commitment to collaboration, the Selway-Middle

Fork was a logical choice for a Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) project.

The program is a difference maker! Critical restoration projects are being accomplished with CFLR funds. Money and in-kind contributions are being leveraged. Wood products are being generated. People are working in resource-related jobs.

The program is good for the environment and creating benefits for people.

People

The key to the success of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program is collaboration. The key to collaboration is people.

After discussions with local citizens, elected officials, agencies and groups, the Selway-Middle Fork Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration proposal was developed primarily by Forest Service employees and members of the Clearwater Basin Collaborative, a group convened by Idaho Senator Mike Crapo in 2008 to "...work together toward a better future for the residents and resources of north-central Idaho."

The Clearwater Basin Collaborative is a diverse group of individuals dedicated to working collaboratively to find solutions and provide recommendations regarding natural resource management issues. Their collective vision is to enhance and protect the ecological and economic health of the forests, rivers and communities within the Clearwater Basin.



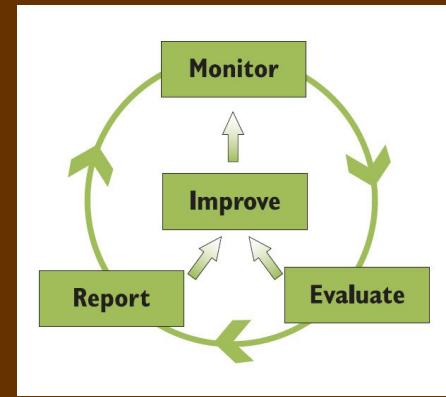
The Selway-Middle Fork CFLR project continues to be the foundation of the relationship between the CBC and Forest Service from which many other successes have grown. The program has been identified by many CBC members and others as an exemplary model of public land management - where collaborative engagement has led to increased

outputs without resorting to the divisive solutions being pursued in other areas. To date the project has brought in over \$12 million in CFLR funds. This funding represents more than just critical work being accomplished across the Forests; it has created opportunities, enhanced relationships and attracted partnerships.

Monitoring

The Act—Sec 4003, Monitoring

Sec. 4003. **Multiparty Monitoring** – The Secretary shall, *in collaboration with* the Secretary of the Interior and *interested persons*, *use a multiparty monitoring, evaluation, and accountability process to assess the positive or negative ecological, social, and economic effects of projects implementing a selected proposal* for not less than 15 years after project implementation commences.



Our Proposal

Third party monitoring is a joint effort between the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests, the Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC), and the Monitoring Advisory Group (MAC). In 2012, a CFLRP Coordinator was hired to oversee the monitoring component of the project. Together, these entities evaluate current monitoring activities on the Forests, assist with field trips and public outreach, and develop project and landscape-scale monitoring tasks that measure the effectiveness of CFLRP treat-

ments. The MAC currently consists of nearly 60 representatives from the local communities, contractors, the University of Idaho, interest groups, Idaho Fish and Game, the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests, the Nez Perce Tribe, local and regional Forest Service offices.

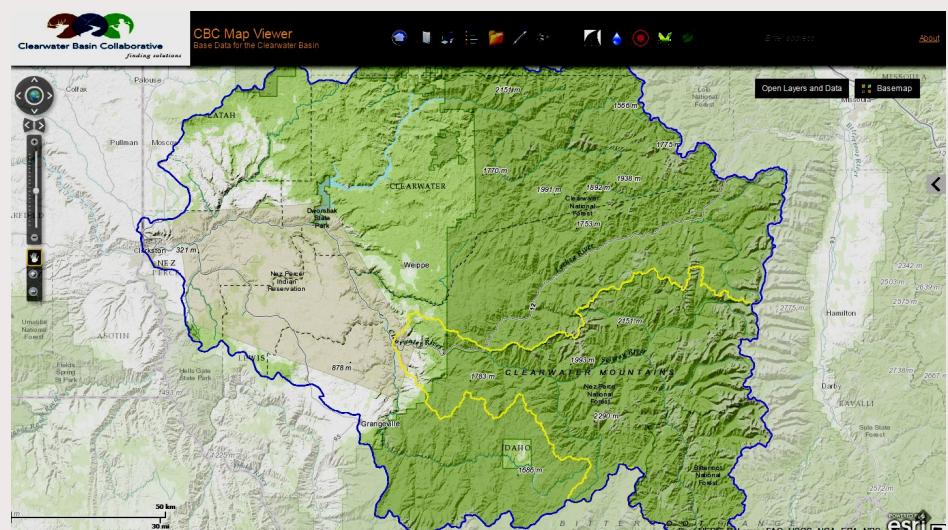
The foundation and framework for a sound effectiveness monitoring program has been established and is continuing to mature as more information becomes available and additional part-

ners are leveraged. In addition to the baseline ecological and socio-economic assessments completed in 2013, the MAC had previously monumented permanent photo plots in several pre-treatment vegetation management units within the CFLRP. These efforts combined with the monitoring projects currently underway will set the stage for evaluating positive and negative ecological, social, and economic shifts as CFLRP treatments are implemented.

CFLRP Geo-Portal

A contractor was hired to work with the MAC on developing a web tool to help portray CFLRP treatments and monitoring projects spatially as well as provide a mechanism for public outreach.

The CFLRP Geoportal was officially launched in 2013 and includes information about the CFLRP project, treatments, and accomplishments; a GIS-based web viewer for developing and printing maps; interpretive “stories” about hot button public issues such as road decommissioning; and GIS layers showing the location and prescriptions for vegetation management units within the CFLRP project.



http://50.22.146.10/flexviewer_CBC/

Additive Benefits to Forest Service

The term “additive” has been often used by some CBC members as a measure of success for our Selway-Middle Fork project citing that more dollars should equate to more work. However, the relative degree of “additive” is difficult to measure particularly against declining budgets.

We offered that additive would be more in the form of “growth around the edges” than a strict 1:1 relationship of dollars in vs. CFLR work accomplished. That is, our project continues to be the foundation from which relationships have grown between the CBC and the Forests as well as the lessons we have learned together are truly the additive measures of having this project. Because of this new working relationship, some other efforts have grown from around the edge or as an offshoot of the CFLR program.

Other landscape scale projects being developed across the Forests (outside the CFLR area) are using the same methodology as the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR project.

Partnerships continue to increase our capacity to accomplish work on

the Forests and within the Clearwater Basin. We are partnering with nearly 20 organizations, Universities and individuals to accomplish restoration work within the CFLR area.

An example of how the partners are contributing towards accomplishments:

- Our longstanding partnerships with the Nez Perce Tribe have played a crucial role in our increased capacity. The Tribe contributes a considerable amount of technical expertise in watershed restoration and weed management as well as considerable financial resources.
- Three partners, The Montana Conservation Corps, Selway Bitterroot Foundation and the Back Country Horsemen contributed nearly 10,000 hours of in-kind and volunteer work on a number of projects in and adjacent to the Selway Bitterroot Wilderness. Work in the Wilderness is logistically challenging and these partners have the knowledge, equipment and training to safely accomplish important projects.

Partnerships with the Idaho Fish and Game and several Universities are contributing towards important wildlife monitoring. Wildlife and wildlife habitat is perhaps the number one concern brought up in project litigation in USFS Region One. Furthering monitoring knowledge through these efforts will pay dividends in the form of improvements to future management projects across this landscape.

Monitoring Projects:

- Ecological Conditions (Baseline Report)
- Landscape Assessment of Restoration Needs
- Aquatic Habitat Assessment & Fish Population Monitoring
- Socio-Economic, Baseline Report and Annual Monitoring
- Socio-Economic, Evaluation of Indirect impacts
- Weed Management Program Assessment
- National Indicators Modeling
- Monumented Photo Plots
- Geoportal Web Viewer
- Clearwater Basin Youth Conservation Corps

Monitoring Advisory Committee Members

Alex Irby, Clearwater Basin Collaborative
 Barry Bollenbacher, US Forest Service
 Bill Higgins, Idaho Forest Group
 Bill Warren, University of Idaho
 Bo Wilmer, Critigen
 Clay Hayes, Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game
 Dale Harris, Great Burn Study Group
 Debbie Evans, Local Economics
 Elayne Murphy, Citizen Liaison
 Glen Gill, US Forest Service
 Greg Danly, Empire Lumber
 Heidi McRoberts, Nez Perce Tribe
 Jim White, Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game
 Joe Hudson, US Forest Service
 Joel Sauder, Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game
 Jonathan Oppenheimer, Idaho Conservation League

Joyce Dearstyne, Framing Our Community
 Kahne Blyth, Citizen Liaison
 Karen A. Smith, US Forest Service
 Keith Stockmann, US Forest Service
 Kelli Rosellini, Clearwater Basin Collaborative
 Kerey Barnowe-Meyer, Nez Perce Tribe
 Lena Le, University of Idaho
 Marcie Carter, Nez Perce Tribe
 Mary Rowland, US Forest Service
 Megan D. Lucas, US Forest Service
 Michael P. Ward, US Forest Service
 Michele Vachon, University of Idaho
 Michelle Roberts, US Forest Service
 Mike Hanna, US Senator Jim Risch's Office
 Mike Hoffman, Clearwater Soil and Water Conservation District
 Mike Wisdom, US Forest Service

Mitch Silvers, US Senator Mike Crapo
 Nathaniel Davis, Arborist
 Rema Sadak, US Forest Service
 Renate Bush, US Forest Service
 Robyn Miller, The Nature Conservancy
 Ryan Haugo, The Nature Conservancy
 Scott Carlton, US Representative
 Raúl Labrador's Office
 Susan Graves, US Forest Service
 Tammi Laninga, University of Idaho
 Tera King, Northwest Management Inc.
 Terrie Jain, US Forest Service



How to Read this Report

Each section of the report is color coded to reference restoration focus areas.

The top left hand corner color-coded box will cite the portion of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Act for which the section is based. Text from the Act is cited and highlighted to draw your attention to where importance was placed and how that particular section of the Act was interpreted or implemented.

The following sections highlight how the US Forest Service and the Clearwater Basin Collaborative proposed to accomplish work in 2010. The remainder focuses on project accomplishments through 2014, outputs and the status of goals.

Fire

People and Communities

Forest Restoration

Aquatic Restoration

Regional, National & Tribal Involvement

National CFLR Information



For all Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program funded projects, the Regional Forester will prepare an annual report on the accomplishments of each selected proposal beginning in the fiscal year that Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program funding is first received and annually thereafter for the life of the project.

The annual report shall include:

- a description of all acres (or other appropriate unit) treated and restored through projects implementing the strategy;
- an evaluation of progress, including performance measures and how prior year evaluations have contributed to improved project performance;
- a description of community benefits achieved, including any local economic benefits;
- the results of the multiparty monitoring, evaluation, and accountability process; and,
- a summary of the costs of treatments; and relevant fire management activities.

The annual report shall be kept on file by the Regional Forester and made available to the Secretary upon request. Accomplishments and expenditures should match the numbers in the databases of record.

Online Information:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLRP/guidance>



Ranger Adolph Weholt after 1910 fires, from the collection of Don and Esther Morrow

Fire—Reducing size, cost and effect

The Act—Sec 4001 (c), Fire

Sec. 4001. The purpose of this title is to encourage the collaborative, **science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes through a process that—facilitates the reduction of wildfire management costs**, including through reestablishing **natural fire regimes** and **reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire**; and demonstrates the degree to which—various ecological restoration techniques---**affect wildfire activity and management costs....**

Sec. 4003. Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall—be **based on a landscape restoration strategy** that---would carry out forest restoration treatments that **reduce hazardous fuels** by—focusing on **small diameter trees, thinning strategic fuel breaks, and fire use to modify fire behavior**, as measured by the projected **reduction of uncharacteristically severe wildfire effects** for the forest type....



Our Proposal

Reduce Fire Costs

Reduce fuels in order to minimize the risk of high severity fire, especially in the wildland urban interface areas. Reduce the potential scale and severity of wildfire to reduce firefighting costs. Allow natural fire

on the landscape where risks to life, property and other values can be reduced. Ensure adequate protection of rural communities, private land and Wild and Scenic River values from uncharacteristic wildland

fire. Re-establish and perpetuate a landscape that has a diversity of vegetation communities that are resilient in the presence of wildfire

Fire

A retired Forest Service fire management officer used to quip that fire was born on the Nez Perce National Forest. That may have been an exaggeration, but there can be no doubt fire was the primary natural process that shaped the Selway-Middle Fork ecosystems prior to human settlement and continues today.

With human settlement came human intervention. For most of the 20th century firefighting personnel engaged quickly to suppress any form of fire. In land managers' minds, fire was a destructive force that had to be stopped, and by 1935 Forest Service policy dictated that all wildfires were to be suppressed by 10:00 a.m. the morning after they were spotted.

In the 1960s, land managers began to realize this policy was having unintended consequences. A watershed moment occurred in 1964 when The Wilderness Act passed. It encouraged a return to natural processes, including fire. Policy has progressed, giving today's fire managers much more latitude in making decisions about where fires are allowed to burn and where and how they are extinguished.

The Selway-Middle Fork area has been at the forefront of national fire history. The Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness was created in 1964, and the Forest implemented one of the first "prescribed natural fire" programs in the nation. By the 1980s fire managers realized areas adjacent to the Wilderness had higher

fuel loads, different vegetative species and more areas of mature forest. They developed cutting-edge fire management plans that allowed remote non-wilderness fires to burn under very specific conditions in areas where communities were not at risk.

Today, consistent with The Act, the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR area has varied and complex strategies for managing the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, Inventoried Roadless Areas, lands suitable for timber harvest, and the wildland urban interface (WUI) within the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR area.

Johnson Bar Fire

Communities need fire protection



Johnson Bar Fire

On August 3, 2014, a lightning strike near the Fenn Ranger Station ignited the Johnson Bar Fire. It spread quickly, escaping “initial attack” firefighting efforts as it burned through heavy fuels in rugged terrain with limited access. The blaze spread quickly, threatening homes in the Selway corridor and communities of Lowell and Syringa, prompting evacuations and covering the Clearwater Valley in a blanket of thick smoke.

The cost of the fire was great in both ecological and socio-economic terms. While the fire created pockets of burned and unburned vegetation, a vegetative “mosaic,” it also burned “very hot” in certain areas, leaving very little but exposed and scorched soil. These areas will be prone to erosion. While no homes or outbuildings were lost, people’s lives were disrupted, and taxpayers are footing a hefty fire suppression bill.

This Johnson Bar Fire illustrates the need for accelerated restoration treatments like those funded through the CFLR program. The entire area had been identified as a high risk for fire, and in need of restoration activities. It was on the CFLR schedule for future analysis and treatment.

Land managers are re-evaluating CFLR projects and priorities, moving the Lowell WUI project to the forefront. That proposed project would reduce fuels and create a

fuel break on approximately 250 acres near the community of Lowell, Idaho.

While the Johnson Bar Fire still smoldered, land managers released a proposal to salvage dead and dying trees within the fire’s perimeter. The proposal is consistent with CFLR objectives to: (1) use the best available science to restore the structure and composition of forest stands; and (2) to use forest restoration byproducts to offset treatment costs while benefitting local rural economies and improving forest health .

Accomplishments

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Hazardous Fuel Treatments outside the Wildland Urban Interface (acres)	40	16,700	13,389	23,917	665	61,241
Priority hazardous fuels treated in the Wildland Urban Interface (acres)	298	3,404	1,094	0	25	4,281
Prescribed Fire (acres)	317	3,373	496	*0	**0	4,186
Mechanical Thinning (acres)	21	245	1,214	490	0	1,970

*Due to changes in fire policy due to 2012 Fire Season, no prescribed fire was permitted in 2013.

**In 2014, prescribed fire was precluded by the Johnson Bar Fire

Selway-Middle Fork – A Rich Fire History

The Selway-Middle Fork is a landscape shaped by fire. As depicted in the timeline, approaches to fire management have evolved with the major events that have shaped national fire management policy.

In 2014, 71 fires occurred within the project area. They spread across nearly 17,000 acres. Of those ignitions 19 were managed for their resource benefits, including habitat improvement and 665 acres of fuels reduction.



1910

The Great Fire of 1910 burned about three million acres in NE Washington, northern Idaho and western

Montana. 87 people—mostly firefighters—perished in the conflagration.



1910 Fire, credit R.H. McKay
US Forest Archives



U.S Forest Service,
Circa 1941

1919

Another year of severe fire activity which transformed forested landscapes into "...a sea of snags."

1908

President Theodore Roosevelt signed executive orders creating the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests

1910



Smokejumping: Forest Service officials first began to think about dropping fire fighters by parachutes to fires in the 1930's, but the idea was discarded as being too dangerous and impractical. It wasn't long until the Forest Service decided to give it a try and in 1939 parachute-jumping experiments began. Before any live jumps were done, dummy drops were made into timbered areas to determine what problems the jumpers might encounter. Soon the stage was set for the first operational use of smokejumpers.

1920



Smokejumper
Rufus Robinson
Moose Creek
Ranger Station,
Nez Perce NF—July
12, 1940

1930

In land managers' minds, fire was a destructive force that had to be stopped. By 1935 Forest Service policy dictated all wildfires be suppressed by 10:00 a.m. the morning after they were spotted.

1935

The Forest Service began the Smokey Bear campaign. The living symbol of Smokey Bear was an American black bear cub who was caught in the Capitan Gap Fire in New Mexico in the spring of 1950.



1940

This became the fire exclusion era with firefighting and detection infrastructure in place. Trails, aerial patrols, lookouts and the use of Smokejumpers for the first time occurred on a fire burning within the Nez Perce National Forest.



Indian Hill Lookout, circa 1953

Lookouts: After the fires of 1910, forest managers realized the need to improve fire detection and control programs. Much of Idaho was timbered and remote with few trails providing access. An impressive system was developed that involved building thousands of miles of trails, hundreds of fire lookout towers, and establishing a line of communication between the remote backcountry lookout towers and dispatch centers.

Smoke: While carefully planned and executed prescribed burns can have important ecological and social benefits, they also create an undesired byproduct: smoke. Today's fire managers must consider the impacts of smoke when designing prescribed burns, and coordinate with agencies within an airshed before igniting them. Undesired impacts can be mitigated but they can't be totally eliminated. It is important to note that periodic prescribed burns are a tool to prevent heavy fuel accumulation that would send a larger amount of smoke into the air for longer duration should an uncontrolled wildland fire occur.

Wildland Urban Interfaces: Urban development is pushing farther out of cities and into the wilderness for both primary and secondary residences. In the western states alone, 38% of the new development is taking place in the urban interface.



1964

The Wilderness Act is passed, designating the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness (within the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forest) where "...the earth and the community of life are untrammeled by man....," untrammeled meaning the forces of nature operate.

Concurrently, the awareness of the need for change relative to fire and its use begins to emerge.

1987

Clearwater and Nez Perce Forests approve Forest Plans that allow some non-wilderness fires to be managed as prescribed natural fires. Specific fire management plans were required for implementation.

1988

Fires in Yellowstone National Park capture the world's attention. National fire policy is debated.

2014

The Johnson Bar Fire burned 13,000 acres within the CFLR project area, much of which was being analyzed for a large-scale restoration project that would have reduced fuel loads and generated forest products for local businesses. If these treatments had been implemented, it is likely the Johnson Bar Fire could have been quickly extinguished, saving the taxpayers \$12 million in fire suppression costs, and the undesired ecological consequences. The intent of the CFLR program is to prevent events like the Johnson Bar Fire.

1960

1970

1980

1990

2000

2010

2014

1972

Local fire managers develop fire management plans that allow some natural fires within Wilderness to burn. Known as prescribed fires and later prescribed natural fires, the public often described them as "let burn."

1989

Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior convene a fire policy review team which reaffirms the importance of fire's natural role, but recommends that fire management plans be strengthened.

1999

The beginning of fire management and fire use as a tool begins on the forest.

Fire management plans were approved that authorized the forests to allow some non-wilderness fires to burn under very specific conditions.

2010

The Selway-Middle Fork Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration proposal is submitted and funded as one of ten in the nation. Among its purposes: "...facilitates the reduction of wildfire management costs, including through reestablishing natural fire regimes and reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire...."



Prescribed Burning: By safely reducing excessive amounts of brush, shrubs, and trees, encouraging the new growth of native vegetation, and maintaining the many plant and animal species whose habitats depend on periodic fire, prescribed burning helps reduce the catastrophic damage of wildfire on our lands and surrounding communities.

People and Communities—Jobs

The Act—Sec 4003, (c), 2—Jobs

Sec. 4001. The purpose of this title is to encourage the **collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes** through a process that— encourages ecological, economic, and social sustainability. . . .

Sec. 4003. Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall—...**benefit local economies by providing local employment or training opportunities through contracts grants or agreements for restoration planning, design, implementation, or monitoring....**



Our Proposal

With the exception of prescribed fire and management of naturally occurring fire, project implementation and monitoring will be heavily reliant on contract labor and other methods

that result in increased economic development and job creation.

Job creation was modeled using the Treatment for Restoration Economic

Analysis Tool (TREAT). The impacts analysis calculated that on an annual basis, approximately 389 jobs would be maintained or created through implementation of this proposal.

Accomplishments

Socio-economic needs in the Clearwater Basin are great as local communities have struggled to deal with the national economic downturn and its adverse impacts to the wood products industry. Local unemployment

rates were an astounding 11.8% in Idaho County and 19.8% in Clearwater County in March of 2010 when the CFLR project proposal was being developed. Currently unemployment rates have dropped below double-

digits in both counties. While many factors influence unemployment rates, the CFLR project has clearly created jobs and generated income in an area with great economic needs.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Commercial Forest Products Activities					
Direct Jobs	20.3	36.8	24.2	33.5	*3.2
Indirect and Induced Jobs	19.6	43.0	28.3	37.3	3.5
Total Commercial Forest Products Activities	39.9	79.8	52.5	70.8	6.7
Other Project Activities					
Direct Jobs	47.6	69.4	60.0	93.9	60.7
Indirect and Induced Jobs	20.4	14.0	14.3	28.2	15.3
Total Other Project Activities	68.0	83.4	74.3	122.0	76.0

* Commercial Forest Product Activities jobs dropped from 33.5 in 2013 to 3.2 in 2014 is associated with the drop in volume harvested (7425 acres in 2013 down to 953 acres in 2014). This number will likely rise in the future since the volume sold in 2013 rose from 230 CCF to 14,659 CCF in 2014, and large-scale analyses are being completed that will contribute to significant vegetative restoration projects in the future.

A Closer Look at the Numbers

The following numbers were generated using the Treatment for Restoration Economic Analysis Tool (TREAT) and reflect the number of part- and full-time jobs created or maintained through the expenditure of CFLR and matching funds.

Results of the TREAT model outputs cannot be analyzed cumulatively because many jobs are redundant from year to year (i.e., job numbers are not double counted). Nonetheless, the results from the most recent reporting year available (2013) suggest that the Selway-

Middle Fork CFLRP will far exceed its targets for job maintenance and creation by year 10, especially as more timber is not only sold, but harvested through projects such as Clear Creek and Lodgepoint.

Job Type	2010 Proposal Target Outputs			Snapshot of Outputs from Single Year—2013		
	Employment (# of Part and Full-time Jobs)			Employment (# of Part and Full-time Jobs)		
	Direct	Indirect & Induced	Total	Direct	Indirect & Induced	Total
Commercial Forest Products						
Logging				13.7	7.5	21.2
Sawmills	57.3	78.6	135.9	16.7	24.9	41.6
Mills Processing Roundwood/Pulp Wood	5.4	19.7	25	0	0	0
Facilities Processing Sawmill Residue	23.9	71.8	95.7	3.1	4.8	8
Total	86.6	170.1	256.7	33.5	37.3	70.7
Other Project Activities						
Facilities, Watershed, Roads, and Trails	25.4	14.8	40.2	11.7	11.8	23.5
Ecosystem Restoration, Hazardous Fuels, and Forest Health	29.9	7	36.9	46.6	6.2	52.9
Thinning and Biomass	9.2	3.9	13.1			
Contract Monitoring	4.5	3.7	8.2	3.3	1.3	4.6
FS Implementation and Monitoring	21.3	15.8	37	32.3	8.8	41.1
Total	90.3	45.3	135.6	93.9	28.2	122
Total All Inputs	176.9	215.3	392.2	127.3	65.5	192.8



People and Communities—Youth

The Act—Sec 4003, (c), 2—Jobs

Sec. 4001. *The purpose of this title is to encourage the collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes through a process that—encourages ecological, economic, and social sustainability. . . .*

Sec. 4003. *Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall—. . .benefit local economies by providing local employment or training opportunities with—. . . Youth Conservation Corps crews or related partnerships with State, local, and non-profit groups. . . .*



Clearwater Basin Youth Conservation Corps

Investing in the future of natural resource management

Embedded within the Forest Landscape Restoration Title of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 is a statement of Congress' interest in providing opportunities and training for local youth through the CFLR program.

This statement piqued the interest of the Forest Service and the Clearwater Basin Collaborative who are now working together with the Idaho Department of Labor to re-establish the agency's premier youth corps program.

The CFLR youth program had a humble beginning, starting as a conglomeration of individual youth programs offered by several CFLR partners.

In 2013, the individual efforts coalesced into an intensive four-week pilot program for one crew comprised of six north-central Idaho youth, ages 14-20. While participants exited the program with a basic understanding of ecological

principles and forest restoration practices and occupations, the Forest Service and Clearwater Basin Collaborative gained valuable experience from which to grow a better youth program.

In the summer of 2014, the Clearwater Basin Collaborative, Forest Service and Idaho Department of Labor joined forces to offer employment and training opportunities for 20 young people in three north-central Idaho communities. The program, which built on the familiar Youth Conservation Corps program, had a unique name—Clearwater Basin Youth Conservation Corps (CBYCC)—and its own logo.

The effort demonstrated the true power of collaboration. “Individually none of us could have pulled this together. It took a true group effort to make this happen,” explained Tera King, Clearwater Basin Collaborative coordinator for the effort. *Continued.....*

Mission



The CBYCC will expose youth to natural resource career opportunities and facilitate development of practical problem-solving skills while participants work alongside CBC and Forest Service specialists on projects that restore aquatic and terrestrial habitat and promote healthy rural communities.

A paid youth program offers local youth an opportunity to experience the forest in a workplace setting while also providing a fun learning environment and exposure to a variety of skills.

Youth *continued....*

Program participants were recruited in May. After an interview and selection process, they were assigned to one of four work crews—two in the Kooskia area and single crews in Elk City and Pierce.

In mid-June, crews began an intensive, 8-week training and work program designed to expose participants to an array of natural resource careers.

Work activities included sign cleanup and replacement, elk habitat research, road maintenance, aquatics and stream restoration, silviculture and forest

management, fuels reduction, wildlife management, weed inventories and treatments, campground cleanup, and trail maintenance.

The CBYCC program was administered by the Clearwater RC&D and Framing Our Community (FOC), an Elk City-based organization devoted to creating jobs, improving watershed conditions, and educating area youth. FOC Director Joyce Dearstyne said she is pleased with the way the program has paired a solid educational foundation with complementary and purposeful work.

What does the future hold for the program that evolved from the six-youth 2013 pilot to a 2014 program with four crews and 20 youth in three communities?

According to Coordinator Tera King, people really like the program. “Parents and youth appreciate the opportunity for employment and work-based natural resource education. The Clearwater Basin Collaborative appreciates the way it brings people together to work for the good of people and the environment.”



Experience Leads to Internship

Youth. They are the future of natural resource management. But attracting young people into the field is increasingly challenging as young people turn to electronic devices and away from the great outdoors.

The CBYCC youth program is about making connections. Connections to the outdoors. Connections to career options. And connections to potential employers.

Jocelyn, an alumni of the youth program, was able to leverage her connections into an internship at a native plant nursery where she gained hands-on experience sowing seeds, operating a greenhouse, and planting cuttings.

While this may not end up being Jocelyn’s chosen career, it was a valuable experience that builds her resume and teaches her to make better informed decisions regarding

a natural resource career in the future. That’s what the youth program is all about.

Use a QR Scanner to access our website and video:



People and Communities—Partnerships

The Act—Sec 4001—Local and Private Resources

Sec. 4001. The purpose of this title is to encourage the collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes through a process that—**leverages local resources with national and private resources....**

Sec. 4003. Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall--...estimate...the amount of new non-Federal investment for **carrying out the proposal that would be leveraged....**



Our Proposal

Create jobs and provide opportunities to promote emerging technology (e.g. biomass facilities, low impact harvest systems) and other economic opportunities to strengthen local

economies. Private partnerships and treatments on other land ownerships within the project area are a critical component of this proposal.

Over 1,200 miles of trails in the area, will be maintained through partnership agreements in order to provide continued recreational use.

Partnerships

In reviewing most definitions of the word partnerships there are three elements: people (individuals or groups), a cooperative relationship, and a mutual goal. Federal policy further defines partnerships as “arrangements that are voluntary,

mutually beneficial, and entered into for the purpose of mutually agreed upon objectives.”

Congress recognized the importance of partnerships in achieving CFLR goals by requiring forests to leverage

non-federal investments. These investments can be in the form of funding, in-kind match, or a combination of both, and require a formalized business agreement.

Type of Fund	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Program Award	\$1,000,000	\$3,400,000	\$4,000,000	\$3,760,000	These totals are still being compiled and were not available at the time of publishing
Obligated Funds	\$998,125	\$3,030,467	\$2,778,394	\$2,310,204	
Partner in Kind Contributions	\$1,048,920	\$1,250,019	\$1,218,629	\$1,314,865	
Partner Contributions through Agreements	\$374,700	\$584,400	\$397,659	\$671,157	
Forest Service Matching Funds	\$545,049	\$1,595,149	\$1,574,127	\$1,651,418	
Leveraged Funds	\$0	\$0	\$401,450	\$149,124	
Total for Use in TREAT—All Funds	\$2,592,094	\$5,875,635	\$5,968,809	\$5,947,644	

Our Partners

We appreciate our partners! The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests and Clearwater Basin Collaborative would like to recognize the partners that have contributed to the success of the CFLR effort. These contributions have made a positive difference for this special area and the people who live and work there.

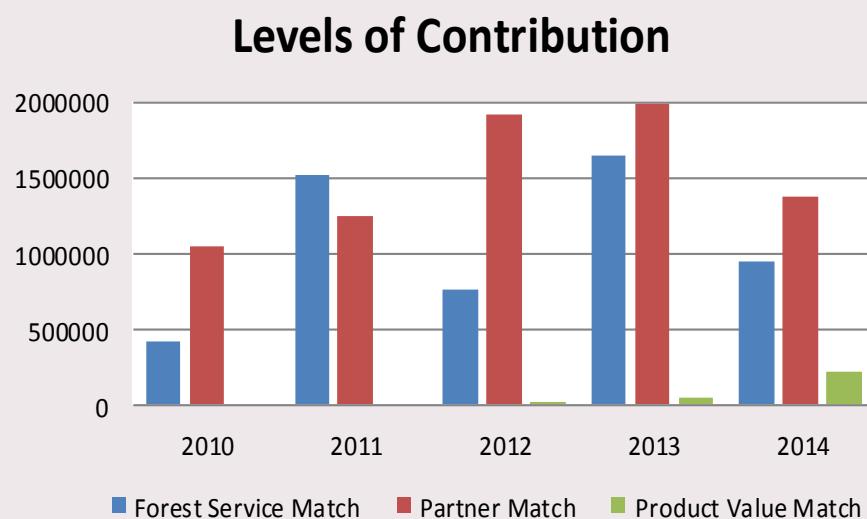
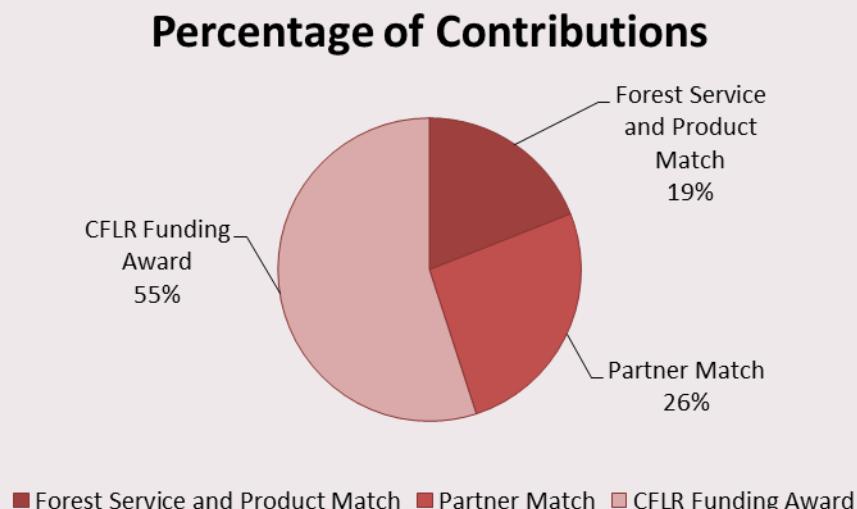
Back Country Horsemen of North Central Idaho
Clearwater Resource Conservation & Development Council
Idaho County, Weed Control

Idaho Department of Labor
Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Kidder Harris Highway District
Montana Conservation Corps, Inc.
The Nez Perce Tribe

Selway Bitterroot Foundation
Twin Rivers Back Country Horsemen
University of Idaho, the Regents
University of Montana—CPS
University of Wyoming

Accomplishments

These partners have made a significant contribution to the work accomplished in the CFLR area as depicted on the following chart:



Forest Restoration—Resilience and Diversity

The Act—Sec 4001 & 4003, Forest Management

Sec. 4001. The purpose of this title is to encourage the collaborative, *science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes through a process that—encourages ecological, economic, and social sustainability;....*

Sec. 4003. Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall—...be based on a landscape strategy that—is complete or substantially complete; *identifies and prioritizes ecological restoration treatments...; incorporates the best available science and scientific application tools in ecological restoration strategies;* fully maintains, or contributes toward the restoration of, the structure and composition of old growth stands *according to the pre-fire suppression old growth conditions characteristic of the forest type....*



Our Proposal

Re-establish and perpetuate a landscape that has a diversity of vegetation communities that are resilient in the presence of wildfire, invasive species, insects, disease and climate change.

Emulate natural disturbance patterns on the landscape through careful design and application prescribed fire and mechanical treatments. Promote variable aged stands across the land-

scape to improve forest resilience to insects, disease and wildfire. Maintain or promote forest structure that will enhance or protect old growth conditions.

Integrated Restoration

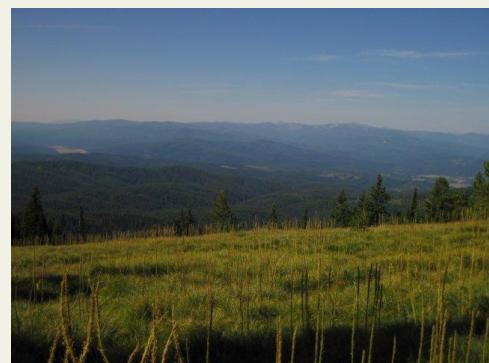
Clear Creek Project

The Forests have released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Clear Creek Integrated Restoration Project. This is the first “landscape-scale” project being analyzed within the Selway-Middle Fork CFLRP area. The project proposes a comprehensive program of restoration activities within the 44,000 acre Clear Creek drainage. When implemented, treatments, including commercial timber harvest and prescribed fire, are expected to make the landscape more resilient to fire, insects and disease, and climate change by ensuring there is a balance of vegetative

age classes , forest stands are healthy and productive, and that appropriate species are present on the landscape. Watershed restoration work completed will reduce the amount of sediment reaching streams. Commercial forest outputs associated with the project range from roughly 60 -85 Million board feet of timber and projected to sustain 1500-2100 jobs.

Due to the importance of the Clear Creek fish hatchery, a baseline habitat condition assessment and fish population survey will be conducted pre-treatment in 2015 in

order to accurately monitor potential watershed impacts from the Clear Creek Integrated Restoration Project and adapt management as necessary.



Forest Health

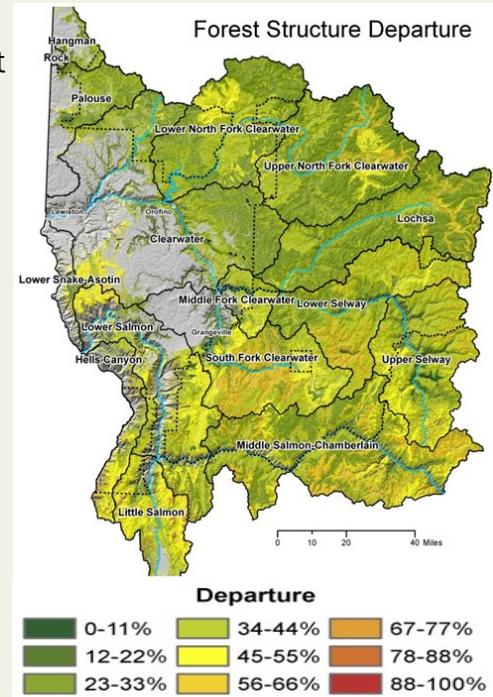
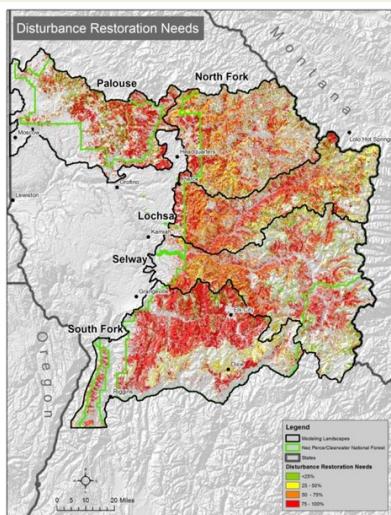
Departure from historic conditions

On behalf of the CBC, The Nature Conservancy completed a Landscape Assessment to evaluate ecological conditions and restoration needs of forests in the Clearwater Basin. The first phase of the assessment concluded that roughly 61% of coniferous forests across the entire Clearwater Basin are moderately to severely departed from historic conditions.

Within the Selway-Middle Fork specifically, the second phase of the assessment identified over 400,000 acres in which disturbances such as thinning or burning are currently needed in order to place the forests on a trajectory to restore historic conditions. These “disturbance restoration needs” were found within the both the dry and moist forests at low to mid elevations. While many of acres in need of disturbance were found in roadless and wilderness areas, lands on the Nez Perce – Clearwater

NF classified as “suitable for timber production” had highest proportional need for disturbance restoration.

All of these issues are indicators of declining forest health conditions that can increase the negative ecological and economic impacts from wildland fires.



Departure of current forest structure from historic conditions across the Clearwater Basin.

Relative disturbance restoration needs (thinning, prescribed burning, wildfire under correct conditions) across the Nez Perce – Clearwater Forest and adjacent forest ownerships.

Accomplishments

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Totals
Forest lands treated using timber sale (acres)	—	0	552	161	269	982
Volume of Timber sold (CCF)	—	15,763	9,673	230	14,659	40,325
Volume of Timber Harvested (CCF)	—	—	5,432	7,425	953	13,810
Green tons from small diameter and low value trees	—	938	1,217	15	860	3,030

Forest Restoration– Biomass and Fuels

The Act—Sec 4001 & 4003, Forest Management

Sec. 4001. The purpose of this title is to encourage the collaborative, *science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes through a process that—encourages ecological, economic, and social sustainability;....*

Sec. 4003. Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall—...be based on a landscape strategy that—is complete or substantially complete; *identifies and prioritizes ecological restoration treatments...; incorporates the best available science and scientific application tools in ecological restoration strategies*; fully maintains, or contributes toward the restoration of, the structure and composition of old growth stands *according to the pre-fire suppression old growth conditions characteristic of the forest type....*



Biomass—Iron Mountain Stewardship

Forest management activities often require the removal of large quantities of small diameter and low quality wood in the form of limbs, tree tops, needles, leaves, post fire salvage and low value species. These materials, which have little or no commercial value, are known as “woody biomass.”

Because this material has little commercial value it is often piled and burned onsite. The material can, however, be used for energy production and heating if it can be economically removed. Ongoing research is assessing methods for utilizing low grade biomass to meet

regional market demands for alternative fuels, power and heat. Preliminary indications are that these materials can be used for “feedstock” and mixed with plastics and paper to produce bio-diesel and home heating oil that can be used in vehicles and homes. Other methods of utilizing these low value materials include bundling it for firewood, using it to construct furniture and manufacturing it into products such as flooring and siding.

Some projects, depending upon markets as well as the location and distance from utilization facilities, lend themselves well towards the

removal of biomass. On some projects require large expenditures to remove the materials.

Opportunities for the full utilization of biomass are explored in all projects in an effort to increase the sustained use of biomass and improve forest health. The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), authorized under the 2014 Farm Bill is expected to result in increased biomass utilization on future projects within the Selway-Middle Fork area.

Prescribed Burning Project –O’Hara

Over 3300 acres of landscape level prescribed fire have been implemented in the O’Hara Forest Health Project. This was the largest prescribed fire ever implemented on the Moose Creek District and within the CFLR project area. The project reduced fuels in the urban interface and improved wildlife habitat while successfully restoring natural fire regimes. Timing of the burn (summer) was critical to meet the

objectives of a mixed severity fire and to create a “mosaic” forest structure. This burn is part of a multiyear project to restore fire and natural disturbance cycles while reducing fuels across an area that has been heavily impacted by fire suppression. The Moose Creek Ranger District has over 5,000 acres of prescribed fire ready to be implemented when treatment conditions allow.



Fuels Reduction in the WUI—*Interface Fuels*

The Interface Fuels project was the first vegetation management project implemented with the Selway Middle Fork CFLRP area. The project was designed to reduce fuels on over 500 acres of national forest lands surrounding the communities of Syringa and Lowell. The project produced approximately 8 million board feet of timber which was purchased by Blue North Forest Products, a local mill in Kamiah, Idaho. Blue North

specializes in processing small diameter trees into lumber and interestingly, products removed from the sale (pulp, cedar products, oversized trees, etc.) that could not be processed by Blue North supplied fiber for up to nine other local mills. This flow and exchange of wood products is essential for a vibrant economy in the Clearwater Basin.



Forest Health and Fuels Reduction—*Lodge Point Stewardship*

The Lodge Point Stewardship Project, purchased by Idaho Forest Group in Grangeville, Idaho in 2012, is a forest health improvement and fuel reduction project. When complete, over 600 acres will be treated, all within the wildland urban interface areas of the communities of Lowell, Syringa and Big Cedar. Interestingly, this project is thinning overstocked plantations from 1950's and 1960's era management. The

Lodge Point Project's biomass removal qualifies for the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), authorized under the 2014 Farm Bill.



Insect and Disease

The entire Selway-Middle Fork CFLRP project was submitted as a priority landscape area for designation by the Secretary, as requested by Governor Otter, as part of an insect and disease treatment program under the Agricultural Act of 2014, due declining forest health, risk of experiencing substantially increased tree mortality as a result of insect and disease infestation, and because hazard trees in the

project area pose an imminent threat to public infrastructure, health, and safety.



Forest Restoration—Invasive Species

The Act—Sec 4001 & 4003, Forest Management

Sec. 4001. The purpose of this title is to encourage the collaborative, **science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes through a process that—encourages ecological, economic, and social sustainability....**

Sec. 4003. Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall...be based on a landscape strategy that—is complete or substantially complete; **identifies and prioritizes ecological restoration treatments...: incorporates the best available science and scientific application tools in ecological restoration strategies**; fully maintains, or contributes toward the restoration of, the structure and composition of old growth stands **according to the pre-fire suppression old growth conditions characteristic of the forest type....**



The Silent Invader

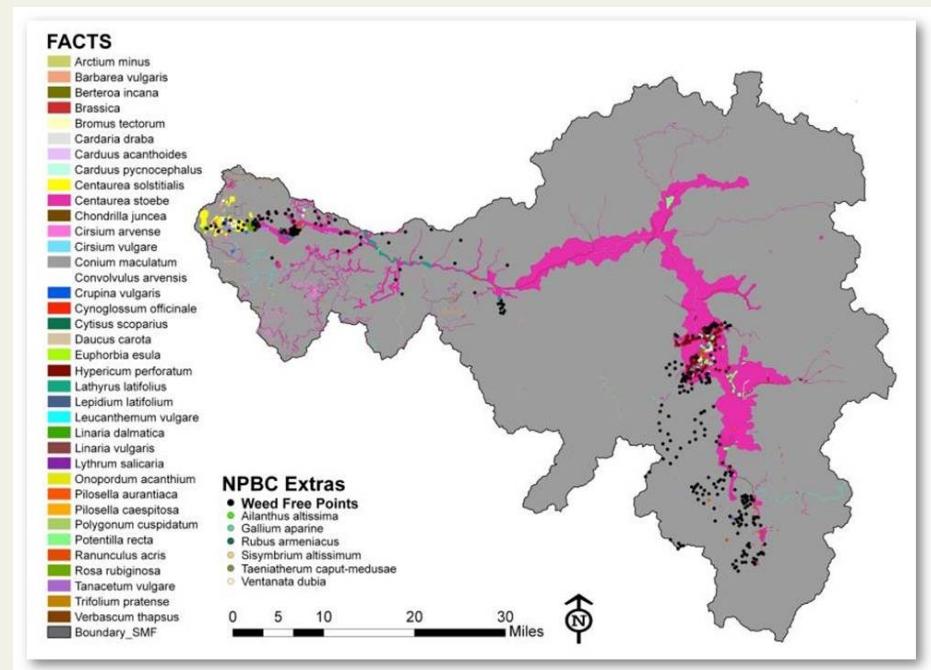
Invasive plants have long posed a challenge for maintaining the ecological integrity of the Clearwater Basin. Weed management in the Selway-Middle Fork CFLRP has been implemented collaboratively since 1995 and continues as such today under the auspices of the Upper Clearwater Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) and the Frank Church-River of No Return CWMA.

The Forest Service is the largest weed management stakeholder in the CFLRP project area, managing 95% of the total land. For perspective on the difficulty of implementing a comprehensive weed management strategy, the CFLRP project area spans two National Forests, including two federally designated wilderness areas and four ranger districts. Weed management differs according to these boundaries and also differs according to the four general management categories most affiliated with weed treatment and monitoring for the Forest Service: designated weed crews, timber harvest, road decommissioning/restoration, and fire management. Additional stakeholders include Idaho County Weed Control, the Nez Perce Tribe, private contractors, the Back Country Horsemen of North Central Idaho, the Montana Conservation Corps, outfitters

and guides, the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation, and private landowners and volunteers. Despite most stakeholders being members of the two CWMA's, the goals, activities, and accomplishments of individual stakeholders can vary tremendously from each other, as well as from those of the CWMA's in which they operate.

To date, nearly \$2 million in CFLR funding has been allocated to weed inventory, prevention, treatment, and monitoring within the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR project. In an effort to not

only understand, but increase the effectiveness of weed management activities in the Selway-Middle Fork CFLRP area, the Monitoring Advisory Committee conducted a thorough Weed Management Assessment of all the various stakeholders' inventory, treatment, monitoring, training, and outreach efforts. Completed in 2014, this assessment will help the MAC and the National Forests by assisting stakeholders in the development of recommendations for continued weed identification, treatment, and monitoring as well as improve overall weed management efficiency and effectiveness.



The Weed Management Assessment will serve as the baseline documentation for comprehensive weeds-related adaptive management within the Selway-Middle Fork CFLRP project area.

Spotted knapweed. Sulfur cinquefoil. St. Johnswort. Oxeye daisy. To many casual forest visitors, these plants are pretty wildflowers. To forest managers, they are invasive weeds that aggressively compete with surrounding desirable plants for moisture, nutrients, space and sunlight.

Most weeds are non-native plants that crowd out native vegetation. The ecological results can include displacement of native plants that wildlife and fish depend on, increased soil erosion, and increased frequency and risk of wildfires.

Recognizing the ecological threat posed by weeds in the Selway-Bitterroot ecosystem, forest managers on the Bitterroot, Clearwater, Lolo and Nez Perce National Forests signed the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Invasive Plants Management Project Record of Decision in November 2009.

The plan included an ambitious strategy for dealing with noxious weeds and non-native plant infestations within a 1.4 million-acre-area that included the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness and adjacent roadless lands. Much of this land is within the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR project area.

The project authorized an integrated program consisting of continued mechanical

and manual weed treatments; selective, ground-based application of herbicides; and the distribution of biocontrol agents (insects). The plan emphasized weed prevention, early detection and quick eradication of new “invaders,” and containment and reductions of established infestations.

While the ambitious project was approved, it was unclear how much funding could be dedicated to the project given Forest Service budget constraints.



LEAFY SPURGE



ORANGE HAWKWEED



TANSY RAGWORT

“The weeds program in the Selway-Middle Fork area has suffered from fluctuating and often decreasing funding, making it difficult to develop and maintain an effective weed treatment program, so the arrival of CFLR funds was perfectly timed,” explained Steve Hiebert, Range Specialist and acting Invasive Plants Program Leader for the Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest.

According to Gil Gale, Invasive Plants Program Leader with the Bitterroot National Forest, these funds were used to accomplish critical restoration work that likely couldn’t have been accomplished without the support of the CFLR program.

As an outcome of the 2014 Weed Management Assessment, the Forest Service will be working with all partners to implement the report recommendations and improve the strategic management of the invasive plants program and CFLR funds over the entire landscape.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Totals
FOREST VEGETATION IMPROVED/ESTABLISHED (ACRES)	167	616	616	498	18	1,915
Weed Treatments (acres)	2,602	3,404	4,110	3,595	3,101	16,812

Aquatic Restoration

The Act—Sec 4001 & 4003, Watershed Function

Sec. 4001. The purpose of this title is to **encourage the collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes** through a process that—demonstrates the degree to which various ecological restoration techniques—**achieve ecological and watershed health objectives....**

Sec. 4003. Eligibility Criteria- To be eligible for nomination under subsection (c), a collaborative forest landscape restoration proposal shall—be **based on a landscape restoration strategy that...incorporates the best available science and** scientific application tools in ecological restoration strategies;...shall describe **plans to—maintain or improve water quality and watershed function;....**



Our Proposal

Restore/maintain forest structure, function and ecologic processes that promote aquatic health and diverse aquatic native species habitat including bull trout, steelhead and westslope cutthroat trout. Re-

duce chronic sediment delivery to streams by improving road drainage and surface features and decommissioning problem or unnecessary roads.

Fisheries

Anadromous fish, like salmon and steelhead, begin their lives in the gravel of freshwater streams, migrate to the ocean to live, then return to the same freshwater streams to spawn. Protection and restoration of aquatic habitat is essential to the long term viability of these species.

Hundreds of miles of excess and unneeded roads on the landscape (remnants of bygone management) carry sediment into streams; and dozens of undersized and aging culverts risk failure and in some cases impede upstream fish passage. In partnership with the Nez Perce Tribe, and with the addition of the CFLR program, a significant amount of restoration work benefiting these important species has

been achieved. The name Selway-Middle Fork is taken from the special rivers that dissect the CFLR area—the Selway River and the Middle Fork Clearwater River. Both are nationally renowned for clear, pristine water and populations of resident and anadromous fish.

These species are significant to the culture of the Nez Perce Tribe, and to local communities who derive economic benefits from the robust sports fishery that has developed in conjunction with these fish runs.

Protection and restoration of aquatic habitat is essential to the long-term viability of these anadromous species. The CFLR project has provided a golden opportunity to accomplish critical aquatic restoration



work by the agency and in partnership with the Nez Perce Tribe

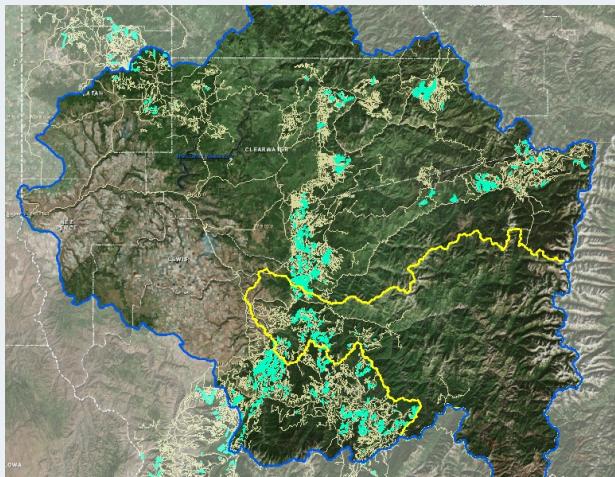
While aquatic conditions within the CFLR area are generally good, there is definite need for improvement, particularly in lands that have been intensively managed.

Decommissioned Roads and Trails

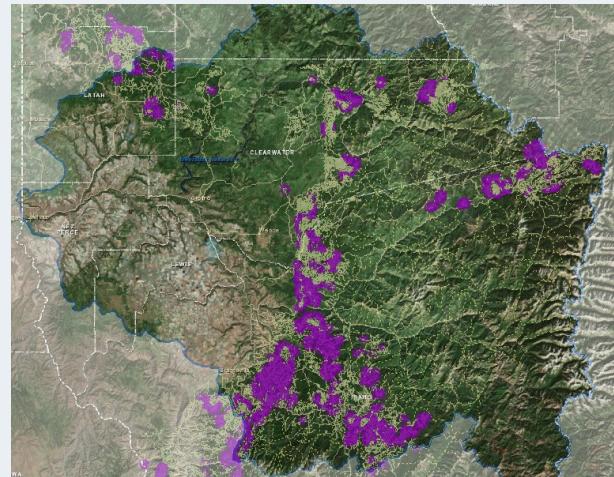
The network of roads within the Selway – Middle Fork CFLRP project is extensive. Many of these routes provide access for forest management activities or to high value recreational destinations while others are unused or redundant. Road maintenance is expensive and unmaintained roads are subject to erosion that can affect fish populations and alter watershed hydrology. Roads have been found to spread noxious weeds, increase fire ignitions, and fragment habitat for terrestrial species; thus, it is important that we maintain the fewest road miles necessary to achieve our multi-use management objectives.

Every vegetation management project proposed within the CFLRP project area considers a long-term strategy to maintain existing permanent roads, construct temporary roads where necessary, and decommission redundant and/or improperly located roads that allows for the economical implementation of restoration treatments with the least impact. The analysis considers long-term management needs in order to minimize the negative ecological and economic impacts of roads, maintenance, and illegal motorized traffic, while not forego future vegetation management opportunities.

Restoration activities in the CFLRP have also been focusing on replacing undersized culverts and other known barriers to fish passage as well as relocating trails away from streams and restoring degraded wetlands, banks, and crossings. Density, or the miles of road per square mile, is one tool that helps prioritize decommissioning activities. This graphic from the GeoPortal shows that decommissioning activities across the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests have been focused on the areas of highest road density (purple).



Where we've decommissioned roads



Resulting habitat improvements by decommissioning

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Totals
Stream Habitat Improvements (miles)	0	4	31.7	19.1	8.6	63.4
Culverts Replaced	0	3	5	3	4	15
Road Decommissioning (miles)	0	8.42	27.3	24.38	5.91	66.01
Road Improvements (miles)	1.25	25.6	7.2	4	8.76	46.81
Road Maintenance (miles)	131	61.7	248.9	164.65	122.79	729.04
Trails Maintained and Improved (miles)	838	428.23	740.4	704.8	852.5	3,563.93

Regional, National and Tribal Involvement

The Nez Perce Tribe

A National Leader and Valued Partner

From its inception, the Clearwater Basin Collaborative has had the distinct honor of working with the Nez Perce Tribe on a variety of projects and initiatives, including the CFLR program. Nationally recognized as a leader for its watershed restora-

tion program, the Tribe has made major contributions to watershed restoration and weed treatment activities within the Selway-Middle Fork CFLR project area. The Collaborative would like to publically recognize the Tribe for its contribution,

and offers the following story to provide insight into tribal history, philosophy and impressive aquatic and watershed restoration accomplishments.

Water as Medicine: The Nez Perce Tribe is Honored for Restoring Watersheds with the Forest Service

By Christine Bradbury,
Tribal Liaison for The Nez
Perce-Clearwater National
Forests

For thousands of years, the Nez Perce Tribe has occupied Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana. After settlers moved westward and encroached on their lands, the Tribe entered into the Treaty of 1855 with the federal government. In that treaty, the Tribe reserved their rights to hunt, fish, gather and pasture on “open and unclaimed” lands, of which about 9 million acres are now Forest Service managed.

With this ancient connection to the land, the Nez Perce Tribe is passionate about assisting the agency in maintaining outstanding aquatic habitat. Levi Holt, a Nez Perce member, explains that “the tribes have always treated water as a

medicine because it nourishes the life of the earth, flushing poisons out of humans, other creatures, and the land. We know that to be productive, water must be kept clean. When water is kept cold and clean, it takes care of the salmon.” This sentiment is also reflected in the Forest Service’s mission: *“to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.”*

Tribal communities whose spiritual and physical well-being were closely linked to salmon were shaken by the establishment of the Columbia and Snake Rivers’ hydropower systems. A desire to improve their communities by improving salmon conditions prompted the Nez Perce Tribe to seek creative solutions.

It wasn’t long before the Tribe and the Forest Service realized far more could be accomplished to preserve and improve aquatic habitats together than apart. The agency began partnering with the Tribe’s Department of Fisheries Resource Management, which comprises seven divisions including Watershed,

Research, Production, Harvest, Conservation Enforcement, and Administration. Together, the parties identify priorities, collect field data, fund projects from a variety of sources, and monitor project implementation. Benefits include improved resource condition, local economies, threatened species recovery, conditions for the Tribe’s cultural practices, and increased harvest opportunities.

From 1997 through 2013, the Forest Service-Nez Perce partnership has implemented over \$40 million in projects. In 2013, the Tribe implemented a watershed restoration program of \$6,176,777 in partnerships with Forests in



Nez Perce Tribe—Heart of the Monster, courtesy National Park Service

(continued ...)

Regions 1, 4, and 6. The Forest Service matched \$1,545,923.

In addition to these projects, the Tribe works with the Forest Service to implement research projects as well as operate weirs, acclimation facilities, and hatcheries on agency lands. In 2013, the Tribe produced and/or released on adjacent to those public lands 2.2 million spring Chinook salmon, 100,000 summer Chinook

salmon, 600,000 Coho salmon, and 750,000 fall Chinook salmon.

Some restoration projects, like road decommissioning, can be controversial. The Nez Perce Tribe tirelessly reaches out to diverse stakeholders to raise awareness of, and build support for, restoration efforts. With the Tribe's help on data collection, research, monitoring, field trips, and public presentations, negative public perception of restoration efforts have changed dramatically. Tribal staff also host

and/or volunteer at dozens of Forest Service conservation education programs annually, raising awareness with area youth.

The Nez Perce Tribe demonstrates true leadership in the fisheries field, and was recognized for its accomplishments in a 2013 Forest Service Rise to the Future Award. Their passion and commitment in helping the Forest Service provide some of the highest quality fish habitat in the nation.

Washington D.C Visit

The Nez Perce – Clearwater Forests and Clearwater Basin Collaborative were excited to be the first CFLR project visited by Associate Deputy Chief Jim Pena; National Restoration Planning Group Lead John Crockett and other representatives from the Washington and Regional Offices in July of 2013. The trip was well attended by Forest Staff and members of the Clearwater Basin Collaborative.

Over the course of several days we had the opportunity to showcase numerous sites where restoration work has been completed or being planned. Conversations were engaging and refreshingly candid, with an

atmosphere of two-way information sharing – what's working, opportunities for improvement and future. We spent a good deal of time discussing the intent of the legislation and how our project is meeting that "vision". The site visit provided our project a great opportunity to offer constructive feedback towards national CFLR program management as well as learn what we could do to improve our project over the course of the program.

Key messages we heard were:

- ◆ Make the legislation work for us. Restoration, in our case may in-

volve regenerating portions of forested landscapes areas to create early successional conditions and restore more resilient species.

- ◆ The importance of partnerships in future land management because of both financial resources they can offer as well as local problem solving.
- ◆ Commitment by Line Officers and partners, the relationships and trust built will continue to be key in future land management planning at all scales.



U.S. Senator Mike Crapo

*"Collaboration breaks barriers.
Collaboration brings people
together to find common solutions.
I salute the hard work of the Forest
Service and members of the
Collaborative work group that
have brought us to the point we
are today."*



Citizens at Large



Clearwater Basin Collaborative
finding solutions



Aaron Miles, Nez Perce Tribe
Alex Irby, PLAY
Bill Higgins, Idaho Forest Group
Bill Warren, U of I, Clearwater Co Extension
Brad Brooks, The Wilderness Society
Cheryl Probert, US Forest Service Supervisor
Dale Harris, Great Burn Study Group
David Galantuomini, PLAY and Lewiston OHV Club
David Cadwallader, Citizen at large
Don Ebert, Clearwater County Commissioner
Drew Blankenbaker, Clearwater Resource Conservation and Development Council

Greg Danly, Empire Lumber
Holly Endersby, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Jerome Hanson, Idaho Fish and Game
Joe Hudson, US Forest Service District Ranger
Jonathan Oppenheimer, Idaho Conservation League
Joyce Dearstyne, Framing our Community
Larry Jakub, Citizen at large
Leo Crane, Lake & Leather Outfitters
Michael Ward, US Forest Service Coordinator
Mike Hanna, US Senator Jim Risch's Office
Mitch Silvers, US Senator Mike Crapo's Office

Norm Tomlinson, Associated Logging Contractors
Orville Daniels, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Randy Doman, Citizen at Large
Robyn Miller, The Nature Conservancy
Ron Aldrich, Citizen at Large
Scott Stouder, Trout Unlimited
Scott Carlton, US Representative Raúl Labrador's Office
Skip Brandt, Idaho County Commissioners
Tera King, Northwest Management Inc.



Credit: Mitchel Silvers Photography