

Collaboration For a Constructive Future in Idaho's Clearwater Basin

The Clearwater Basin Collaborative offers a path away from the historic “timber wars” towards a more constructive future by meeting the needs of local communities, conservationists, the timber industry, sportsmen, and the Nez Perce Tribe. The Selway-Middle Fork Clearwater Project—a joint effort between the Clearwater Basin Collaborative and the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests—provides Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) funds that enable the Collaborative and the U.S. Forest Service to take a strong step towards creating local jobs and restoring healthy forests.

Workflow Guide:

- ✔ Step 1: Risk Assessment and Areas in Need
- ✔ Step 2: Set Priorities and Select Key Project
- ✔ Step 3: Environmental Compliance Process
- ✔ Step 4: Take Action
- ✔ Step 5: Monitoring and Adaptive Management

Summary of Action and Outcome

Collaboration between conservation and community groups—with a focus on youth groups—allowed for the implementation of forest restoration. The removal of trees and prescribed burning has limited fire risk and led to a healthier environment. Monitoring will show the extent of species health improvement and socioeconomic benefit to the community.

Location

› Idaho

Clearwater Basin, Idaho: U.S. Forest Service-managed land (1,316,000 acres), state government (14,000 acres—1%), tribal government (less than 1%), private (56,000 acres—4%)

Asset

- › Wildlife habitat
- › Water quality

Elk, moose, mountain lion, salmon, steelhead and bull trout, and Snow and Canadian geese all depend on the forest as a habitat. The community relies on forest health for water quality and as part of the outdoor recreation that makes up their lifestyle.

Threat

- › Drought
- › Wildland fire

Drought conditions have increased in the area, creating greater frequency of wildfire.

Action

- › Mechanical treatment
- › Prescribed fire

Fuels reduction, replanting trees, eradicating invasive plants, and prescribed fire have all been used.

Funding Process

Congress authorized appropriation of up to \$40M annually for Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) project implementation and monitoring to cover up to 50 percent of these costs, with no more than \$4M going to any one project. The Forest Service funding shown here is the lifelong request for CFLRP funding. Forest Service and partner match funds, as well as goods for services through stewardship contracts, are leveraged to cover the remaining costs of the projects. Total annual expenditures are given in [project annual reports](#).

All CFLRP projects were selected by a Federal Advisory Committee. Details on project proposals can be found [here](#).

For up-to-date project information, see the annual reports on the “Results” page of the [USFS CFLRP website](#).

Monitoring Protocols

Third-party monitoring is a joint effort between the Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests and the Clearwater Basin Collaborative’s Monitoring Advisory Committee (MAC). MAC members represent a very diverse array of ecological and social expertise from multiple agencies, governmental entities, academic institutions, and private industry, and the Committee is beginning to function as a technical advisory panel for entities to provide peer review on proposed monitoring projects.

Successful Collaboration

One example of where collaboration has been most successful was with the Clearwater Basin Youth Conservation Corps (CBYCC). The CBYCC’s model fills a unique niche, utilizing an educational component paired with project work to provide youth an opportunity to develop their work ethic while accomplishing important and much-needed restoration work. The success of the program has drawn financial and in-kind support from other agencies, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Idaho Department of Labor, and the Bureau of Land Management. The program will expand in 2016 to include additional partner work in the Clearwater Basin. By setting goals in youth development, in addition to conservation the students saw personal benefit and were invested in the project.

Challenges

The Selway-Middle Fork landscape is fortunate to provide important habitat for a variety of listed species; however, the juxtaposition of habitat for threatened or endangered species against the areas most critically in need of restoration has proven to be a challenge for project development and planning.

Personnel turnover and capacity issues within each of the respective agencies has caused additional challenges and made it difficult to nurture the long-term relationships necessary for efficient consultation to occur.

Each of the agencies has been working diligently to better align their missions and working relationships, and significant progress has been made towards improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the process. As an example, the National Marine Fisheries Service assigned a hydrologist to the forest’s interdisciplinary team to help in the early stages of project design for the Johnson Bar Fire Salvage project so that subsequent consultation could be accomplished in a timely and well informed manner. To date, the process is working very well.

Project Timespan

› 2010 to 2019

Partners

- › [Associated Logging Contractors, Inc.](#)
- › [Backcountry Hunters & Anglers](#)
- › [Clearwater County Commissioners](#)
- › [Empire Lumber Company](#)
- › [Framing Our Community Inc.](#)
- › [Idaho Conservation League](#)
- › [Idaho County Commissioners](#)
- › [Idaho Department of Fish and Game](#)
- › [Idaho Forest Group](#)
- › [Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association](#)
- › [Nez Perce Tribe](#)
- › [Public Lands Access Year-Round \(PLAY\)](#)
- › [Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation](#)
- › [The Great Burn Study Group](#)
- › [The Nature Conservancy](#)
- › [The Wilderness Society](#)
- › [Trout Unlimited](#)
- › [University of Idaho Extension | Clearwater County](#)
- › [U.S. Forest Service](#)
- › [List of all partners \(PDF\)](#)

Funders

Main Funder
USFS (\$36,861,840)

Additional Funders
Matching funds (\$677,758)

Related Links

- › [Clearwater Basin Collaborative Website](#)
- › [Fact Sheet 2016 | Selway-Middle Fork Clearwater \(PDF\)](#)
- › [CFLRP Annual Report 2016 \(PDF\)](#)