



Forest
Service

Washington
Office

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Route To:

Subject: Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Ecological Indicator

To: Regional Foresters

Title IV of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (the Act), which established the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) program, requires a 5-year report to Congress that assesses whether, and to what extent, the program is fulfilling the purposes of the title. In June 2011, Forest Service Washington Office, Regional, and Forest personnel met with partners to develop a suite of national indicators for this 5-year report to Congress.

The result of this meeting was five draft indicators covering the purposes of the Act. These indicators covered topics including: collaboration, leveraged funds, fire costs, ecology and jobs/economic impacts. The leveraged funds and job/economic impacts indicators have been folded into the CFLR Annual Reporting requirements for fiscal year (FY)2012. The fire cost indicator, a tool called R-CAT, must be run in conjunction with a team of specialized modelers and economists in Region 1. This team is working on running the R-CAT tool for each CFLR and High Priority Restoration Project (HPRP), and this task will likely be completed in 2 to 3 years. The Forest Service will not be implementing the collaboration indicator but is committed to continuing to gather information about community and project successes through our CFLR Annual Reports. Partner groups interested in collaboration may carry this topic forward independently.

The purpose of this letter is to release the guidance for the ecological indicator. This indicator assesses the ecological outcomes of CFLR or HPRP landscapes in a way that is relevant to the individual collaborative groups and their specific desired conditions, while also allowing for national summary for the 5-year report to Congress. Collaborative groups and interested parties can learn more about how to develop desired condition statements and indicators at a Webinar being held by the Forest Service and National Forest Foundation on August 9, 2012.

At this time, CFLR and HPRP projects do not need to submit any information on the ecological indicator. Instead, they should work to set their desired conditions and indicators as outlined in the attached guidance. A separate letter with a reply due date will be sent when the 5-year report to Congress is being drafted in FY2014.



If you have any questions regarding the National Indicators, please contact Lauren Marshall at (202) 205-1218 or lemarshall@fs.fed.us. Thank you for your continued energy and enthusiasm in implementing and supporting CFLR and HPRP projects.

/s/ Leslie A. C. Weldon
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FY 14 CFLR Ecological Indicator Progress Report

Project Name: Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative

State: Idaho

Landscape-Scale Scoring - Initial Landscape-scale Desired Conditions defined by the Collaborative

Ecological Outcome Measure 1: Fire Regime Restoration

1. Desired Conditions Target for Fire Regime Restoration at Landscape-scale: 50% change (relative to the desired condition) occurs across 9.4 % of the landscape area by the end of FY 2019. There are 800,000 acres within the CFLRP landscape and 413,000 of those acres are NFS lands.

Project Goal: To reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire, by reestablishing and maintaining natural fire regimes across the lower Kootenai River watershed.

Desired Conditions Statement – 8-yr: Move fire regimes toward historic conditions across 9.4% of the CFLR landscape (39,000 acres)

Expected Progress toward Desired Condition in first 3 years: (based on 8 year planned accomplishment of 39,000 acres)

- Good = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across at least **30 %** (11,700 acres) or more of the CFLR area.
- Fair = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **10 %** (3,900 acres) or more of the CFLR area.
- Poor = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across less than **10 %** (3,899 acres) of the CFLR area.

Assumptions:

- Restoring historically resilient species such as western larch and white pine on the landscape will be used to indicate success in moving fire regimes toward a historic condition.
- 9.4% of the landscape is calculated based on the treatment of 39,000 acres on a 413,000 acre CFLR landscape.

Ecological Outcome Measure 2: Fish and Wildlife Habitat Condition

Wildlife

2a. Desired Condition Target for Wildlife Habitat Condition at Landscape-scale: 50% change (relative to the desired condition) occurs across 11.4 % of the landscape area by the end of FY 2019.

Project Goals: Improve habitat for threatened and endangered species by promoting a forest landscape composition that is diverse and resilient to wildfire, insects, disease and the effects of climate change.

Desired Condition Statement (8 year): Priority habitat has been improved and/or maintained for wildlife across 11.4% of the NFS lands in the landscape. Expected progress requires that the project:

- Restore historically resilient species such as western larch and white pine to appropriate locations,
- Increase shrub diversity, forested vegetation types, and openings to benefit grizzly bears and flammulated owls,
- Reduce disturbances and improve security by reducing motorized routes,

Expected Progress toward Desired Condition in 3 years: (based on 8 year planned accomplishment of 47,320 acres)

- Good = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **30%** (14,196) or more of the CFLR landscape area.
- Fair = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **10%** (4,732 acres) or more of the CFLR landscape area.
- Poor = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across less than **10%** (4,731 acres) of the CFLR landscape area.

Assumptions:

- Restoring historically resilient species such as western larch and white pine on the landscape will be used to indicate success in moving habitat towards an improved state relative to stand composition and resilience.
- 9.4% of the landscape is calculated based on the proposed improvement of 39,000 acres of habitat on a 413,000 acre CFLR landscape.
- Every mile of road decommissioned or stored results in 400 acres of grizzly bear security
- The project proposes to decommission or store 20.8 miles of road in the 8 year period (20.8 miles x 400 acres/mile = 8,320 acres)
- 8,320 acres represents 2% of the CFLR landscape area
- 9.4% + 2% = 11.4%

Fish

2b. Desired Conditions Target for Fish Habitat Condition at Landscape-scale: 50 % change (relative to the desired condition) occurs across 52 miles of the landscape area by the end of FY 2019.

The following quantifiable desired condition statement is what the above target is based on and it reflects the initial project goals as outlined in the WLSH project proposal.

Project Goal: Improve fish habitat conditions by restoring connectivity of stream course reaches.

Desired Condition Statement – 8-yr:

- Increase fish habitat by restoring the connectivity of stream reaches through the improvement and replacement of fish passages.
- Improve instream habitat through stabilization and addition of instream structure

Expected Progress toward Desired Condition in 3 years: (based on 8 year planned accomplishment of 52 miles)

- Good = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **30 %** (15.6 miles) or more of the area.
- Fair = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **10 %** (5.2 miles) or more of the CFLR landscape area.
- Poor = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across less than **10%** (5.1 miles) of the CFLR landscape area.

Assumptions:

- *There are 26 fish passages planned for replacement through the 8 year course of the project*
- *2 miles of stream enhancement occurs for each fish passage replaced (26 passages x 2 miles = 52 miles)*

Ecological Outcome Measure 3: Watershed Condition

3. Desired Conditions Target for Watershed Condition at Landscape-scale: 50 % change (relative to the desired condition) occurs across 9.4 % of the landscape area by the end of FY 2019.

The following quantifiable desired condition statement is what the above target is based on and it reflects the initial project goals as outlined in the WLSH project proposal.

Project Goal: To maintain and restore the productivity and resilience of watersheds and their associated aquatic systems on NFS lands.

Desired Condition Statement – 8-yr: Improve the proper function of Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic resources in all watersheds by restoring historically resilient ecosystems.

Expected Progress toward Desired Condition in 3 years: (based on 8 year planned accomplishment of 39,000 acres)

- Good = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **30 %** (11,700) or more of the CFLR landscape area.
- Fair = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **10 %** (3,900 acres) or more of the CFLR landscape area.
- Poor = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across less than **10 %** (3,899 acres) of the CFLR landscape area.

Assumptions:

- *Restoring historically resilient species such as western larch and white pine on the landscape will be used to indicate success in moving the overall watershed condition toward an improved condition.*
- *9.4% of the landscape is calculated based on the treatment of 39,000 acres on a 413,000 acre CFLR landscape.*

Ecological Outcome Measure 4: Invasive Species Severity

4. *Desired Conditions Target for Landscape Scale Invasive Species Severity at Landscape-scale: 10.5 % of the CFLR landscape area (relative to the desired condition) was restored by reducing invasive species severity (preventing, controlling, or eradicating targeted invasive species) to meet desired conditions by the end of FY 2019.*

Project Goal: To prevent the establishment of new noxious weed infestations and control or reduce the severity of existing populations at the project and landscape levels.

Desired Condition Statement 8-yr: Control invasive species by preventing establishment of new populations and reducing the severity of existing noxious weed and invasive plant populations. The severity of existing populations will be reduced on 1.1% of the landscape through direct weed treatments and new populations will be prevented by monitoring and treating any occurrences on the 9.4% of the landscape that is proposed for vegetative treatments throughout the course of the CFLR project.

Expected Progress toward Desired Condition in 3 years: (based on 8 year planned accomplishment of 4,400 acres)

- Good = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **30 %** (1,320 acres) or more of the CFLR landscape area.
- Fair = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across **10 %** to less than **30 %** (440 – 1,319 acres) of the CFLR landscape area.
- Poor = Expected progress is being made towards Desired Conditions across less than **10 %** (440 acres) of the CFLR landscape area.

Assumptions:

- 1.1% represents the 4,400 acres of existing invasive species populations proposed for treatment over the course of the project on the 413,000 acre CFLR landscape. $4,400/413,000 = 1.1\%$
- 10.5% represents the 1.1% of the landscape treated that has existing populations and the 9.4% of the landscape that is proposed for vegetative treatments throughout the course of the CFLR project. $39,000/413,000 = 9.4\%$ (**9.4% + 1.1% = 10.5%**)
- Existing populations will be controlled or reduced through annual spray program
- New populations will be prevented in the 39,000 acre treatment footprint through careful monitoring and spraying

Current Landscape-Scale Evaluation

Ecological Indicators	Datasets and/or records used	Good, Fair, Poor and (%) landscape across which progress is being made towards desired conditions	Are you achieving your CFLRP objectives? (Y/N)	If NO, briefly explain...
Fire Regime Restoration	FACTS	Fair (15%)	Yes	
Wildlife and Fish Habitat Condition	Fish – INFRA Wildlife – FACTS, WIT, WFRP, INFRA	Fair (23%) - Fish Fair (24%) - Wildlife	Yes - Fish Yes - Wildlife	
Watershed Condition	FACTS and documented monitoring results	Fair (46%)	Yes	
Invasive Species Severity	FACTS	Fair (40%)	No	Noxious weeds are treated on all major transportation routes within the CFLRP. The assumption is that noxious weeds are effectively being prevented from spreading into the remainder of the CFLRP landscape via these treatments along major transportation routes and treatments within project areas.

Project-Scale Scoring

Each management action funded through CFLR will have its own project-level objectives that are designed to contribute to achieving Desired Conditions at larger scales. Project-scale scoring should reflect how well the results of an individual management activity met the objectives for that project. Individual projects may not meet every desired condition of the CFLRP project. Project-scale scoring is conducted following completed management activities by the multi-party monitoring group at each Landscape.

- Good = 75% or more of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual **project-level** objectives.
- Fair = 26% - 74% of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual **project-level** objectives.
- Poor = 25% or less of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual **project-level** objectives.

Ecological Outcome Measure 1: Fire Regime Restoration

1. Desired Conditions Target for Fire Regime Restoration at Project-scale:

Desired Conditions Statement: Move fire regimes toward historic conditions.

Score:

- Good = Greater than 75% or more of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Fair = 26-74% or more of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Poor = 0 – 25% or more of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.

Ecological Outcome Measure 2: Fish and Wildlife Habitat Condition

Wildlife

2a. Desired Conditions Target for Wildlife Habitat Condition at Project-scale:

Desired Conditions Statement: Projects must meet the following to qualify as wildlife improvement projects with measurable progress: 1) treated forest stands should move the landscape towards a more resilient condition, 2) treated forested stands should increase shrub diversity and patchiness of the landscape, 3) activities should increase wildlife security across the landscape.

Score:

- Good = Greater than 75% or more of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Fair = 26-74% of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Poor = 0 – 25% of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.

Fish

2b. Desired Conditions Target for Fish Habitat Condition at Project-scale:

Desired Condition Statement:

- Increase fish habitat by restoring the connectivity of stream reaches through the improvement and replacement of fish passages.
- Improve instream habitat through stabilization and addition of instream structure

Score:

- Good = Greater than 75% or more of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Fair = 26-74% of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Poor = 0 – 25% of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.

Ecological Outcome Measure 3: Watershed Condition

3. Desired Conditions Target for Watershed Condition at Project-scale:

Desired Condition Statement: Improve the proper function of Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic resources in all watersheds by restoring historically resilient ecosystems.

Score:

- Good = 75% or more of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Fair = 26% - 74% of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Poor = 25% or less of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.

Ecological Outcome Measure 4: Invasive Species Severity

4. Desired Conditions Target for Landscape Scale Invasive Species Severity at Project-scale:

Desired Condition Statement: Control invasive species by preventing establishment of new populations and reducing the severity of existing noxious weed and invasive plant populations. The severity of existing populations will be reduced on 1.1% of the landscape through direct weed treatments and new populations will be prevented by monitoring and treating any occurrences on the 9.4% of the landscape that is proposed for vegetative treatments throughout the course of the CFLR project.

Score:

- Good = 75% or more of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Fair= 26% - 74% of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.
- Poor= 25% or less of implemented treatments result in measurable progress towards individual project-level Desired Conditions.

Current Project-scale Evaluation

Ecological Indicators	Datasets and/or databases of records used	Project Level: Good, Fair, Poor and (%) treatments resulting in measurable progress as defined above	Are you achieving your CFLRP objectives? (Y/N)	If NO, briefly explain...
Fire Regime Restoration	FACTS	Good (79%)	Yes	79% represents effectiveness of treatments in aggregate across all projects
Wildlife and Fish Habitat Condition	Fish – INFRA Wildlife – FACTS, WIT, WFRP, INFRA	Good (95%) - Fish Fair (70%) - Wildlife	Yes - Fish Yes - Wildlife	AOPs completed is the primary measure of success for Fish habitat. Acres treated and roads decommissioned are the measures of success for Wildlife habitat.
Watershed Condition	FACTS	Good – (80%)	Yes	
Invasive Species Severity	FACTS	Poor (30%)	Yes	Treatment of existing populations has proven very effective. Pre- and post- weed inventories have been inconsistent within activity areas with completed treatments. Inventories of populations on roads have been completed.