Flathead National Forest Plan

Cultural Resources Monitoring Guide and Evaluation of Results (MON-CR)

Point of Contact

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Introduction

This document provides the instructions and information needed to address the forest plan monitoring items associated with cultural resources. Recognizing that multiple people may be involved in the forest plan monitoring task, monitoring items have been grouped into separate documents based on the main resource area and primary contact person. The monitoring items included in this document are listed below:

Monitoring Item and Question (Chapter 5 of Flathead Forest Plan)
MON-CR-01: To what extent are cultural resource objectives being met, and are they trending towards desired conditions to identify, evaluate, and nominate cultural resources for listing in the National Register of Historic Places?
MON-CR-02: To what extent are plan components ensuring treaty rights are preserved and trending towards desired conditions for consultation with each tribe?

Purpose and Outline of this Document

Each individual monitoring item in the Forest Plan monitoring program (Chapter 5 of the Plan) has been addressed in a document such as this one, which is intended to serve as the primary location for information needed to conduct the monitoring and to record the results. It is designed to aid in the tracking and preservation of monitoring methods, data and results over the life of the plan. It is anticipated that these documents would be revisited and used as a guide to conduct the monitoring for each biennial reporting; to see past results and record new results; and updated where needed based on recommendations for change in the previous biennial report.

This document is **NOT** the final Biennial Monitoring Evaluation Report (MER), but it should contain most if not all the information needed to prepare that report, and functions as project record material for the biennial MER.

Each monitoring item in this document is organized into five main sections:

- **Introduction:** Key information from the monitoring plan (i.e. indicators, plan component being monitored, data source/collection)
- **Methods**: Detailed information on how the monitoring will be accomplished, the intent of the selected indicators, data sources and confidence levels, etc.
- **Results:** Summary of the monitoring data used and the results for the current biennial monitoring report.
- **Discussion of Results**: A fact-based discussion of results. A list of general questions (see below) and in some cases more specific resource-based questions are provided to help guide this discussion.
- **Evaluation of Results for Adaptive Management Finding:** evaluation of what the results mean in terms of management decisions. This information is incorporated into the Biennial Monitoring Evaluation Report.

Discussion of Results for all monitoring items - General Questions to consider

Consider the following questions in your discussion of results section. Try not to interpret, just keep to the facts.

- What is new from the last report? Change in status from last report?
- General Trends? Up, down, maintained? Within desired range? Trends/values <u>not</u> anticipated? Rate of change?
- Is there an alert level (aka trigger, threshold), associated with the target that should be noted? Describe and cite sources.
- Any other monitoring data collected that might be relevant to the question, but wasn't originally included in the plan?
- Are there any other plan components (standards, guidelines, desired conditions) not already listed that might be directly related to addressing and evaluating the monitoring question?
- Is there any new science or information that is now relevant in helping understand and evaluate the monitoring question?
- Did any other events or unforeseen situations positively or negatively influence the monitoring results? For example, naturally occurring events like fire, or internal agency factors.

CULTURAL RESOURCES MONITORING (MON-CR)

MON-CR-01. To what extent are cultural resource objectives being met, and are they trending towards desired conditions to identify, evaluate, and nominate cultural resources for listing in the National Register of Historic Places?

Introduction

Desired conditions in the forest plan recognize the importance of protecting cultural resources. These resources (e.g., buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects) have scientific, cultural, or social values. Interpretation of the human history of the Forest promotes greater public understanding of the communities that have depended on this landscape for their livelihood, recreation, and spiritual well-being.

Forest plan objectives for cultural resources include:

FW-OBJ-CR-01 - Annually, complete an inventory of 50 to 100 acres containing, or predicted to contain, highly valuable, threatened, or vulnerable cultural resources (non-project acres).

FW-OBJ-CR-02 - Evaluate and nominate four to eight significant cultural resources to the National Register of Historic Places or develop five historic contexts, overviews, thematic studies, or cultural resources property preservation plans to help guide management and use of National Register eligible or listed properties, districts, traditional cultural properties, and cultural landscapes.

FW-OBJ-CR-03 - Annually, complete one public outreach or interpretive project that enhances public understanding and awareness of cultural resources and/or the history of the Forest.

Table 1. MON-CR-01 plan components, indicators, data source, data collection interval and point of contact

Plan Component(s)	Indicator	Data Source / Partner	Data collection interval	Point of Contact
FW-OBJ-CR-01 through 03	IND-CR- 01. Number of submitted cultural resource nominations to the State Historic Preservation Officer and number of completed historic contexts, overviews, thematic studies, or cultural resources property preservation plans for significant cultural resources identified through inventory 02. Number of completed public outreaches or interpretive projects	Annual accomplishment reporting for heritage program	Annually	Heritage program manager

Methods

Review of annual cultural resource accomplishments on the forest over the monitoring period (the two years since the previous forest plan monitoring report).

Results

Table 2: Monitoring results for MON-CR-01. Meeting of cultural resource objectives and desired conditions

Indicator(s)	Monitoring date 2021 (reporting for years 2019 and 2020)	Monitoring date 20XX (reporting for years XX)	
IND-CR-01 part 1. Number of submitted cultural resource nominations to the State Historic Preservation Officer	0		
IND-CR-01 part 2. Number of completed historic contexts, overviews, thematic studies, or cultural resources property preservation plans for significant cultural resources identified through inventory.	3		
IND-CR-02. Number of completed public outreaches or interpretive projects	5		

Discussion of Results

During the last two years of operation, the Flathead NF Heritage Program has continued to become acquainted with the numerous cultural resources and partners available on our forest. The Heritage Program staff is new to this forest (just over 2 years in place) and becoming familiar with a host of resources and opportunities takes some time. This monitoring report is the first time that these indicators are being monitored for Cultural Resources program of the Flathead NF summarizing work completed in the last two years. Despite our unfamiliarity with all our cultural resources on forest, the Flathead NF Heritage Program is working hard to maintain a high level of performance in meeting the standards identified in the Forest Plan.

Since beginning work on the Flathead NF, our program has been on an upward trend regarding developing the components identified in MON-CR-01. This has included numerous thematic studies associated with Priority Heritage Assets such as the Spotted Bear Ranger Station, Ford Schoolhouse, and China Basin Trappers Cabin. These Thematic studies often lead into development of a National Register nomination, which will be the case with Ford Schoolhouse, and Property Preservation Plans, which is planned for China Basin Cabin.

The cultural resources program on the Flathead NF continues to comply with longstanding monitoring and condition assessment efforts of Priority Heritage Assets (PHA) on forest completing monitoring on six PHA's in 2019 and 15 in 2020 indicating an upward trend. This work also included adding 3 new archaeological sites to the PHA list. Our internal PHA monitoring strategy of requiring site visits at least once every five years ensures that those cultural resources that we deem the most significant on our forest remain in the forefront of our planned management activities.

The Flathead NF Heritage Program has actively pursued public outreach opportunities and interpretive projects. These opportunities include projects that involve local youth such as the Montana Forestry Expo and presentations to local historical societies including the Columbia Falls Historical Society and Flathead County Posse of Westerners. Interpretive efforts include the creation of an interpretive plan for the National Register

listed Spotted Bear Ranger Station. We have engaged numerous volunteer partnership efforts such as Passport In Time, the Northwestern Firefighter Lookout Association, and the local North Fork Homeowners Association to encourage cooperation and work in preserving important local cultural resources. Due the onset of the Covid Pandemic, these opportunities were drastically limited in 2020, but reporting in the last two years shows that volunteer work, partnerships, public outreach, and interpretation opportunities are on an upward trend.

Evaluation of Results for Adaptive Management Finding

Results of this monitoring report will feed directly into our planned program of work for the next two years. The program of work will guide our management decisions on significant cultural resources on the forest in which we hope to build upon the foundation information we have accumulated in the last two years.

The following findings and recommendations resulted from the evaluation of monitoring results as documented above.

Table 3. Summary of Findings for Monitoring Item MON-CR-01. Cultural resources

1. **Plan Monitoring Results**: Does the monitoring question and indicator(s) provide the information necessary to understand the status of the associated plan component listed above?
YES
Recommendations –
2. **Plan Implementation Status** [1]**:** Do monitoring results demonstrate progress of the associated plan components for with this monitoring item?
YES – Monitoring data has shown that trends are progressing towards the desired conditions expressed in the Forest Plan, as shown by the progress in metrics IND-CR-01 and IND-CR-02.
Recommendation –
3. **Type of change under consideration** [2]**:** If corrective action/change was indicated under either #1 or #2, <u>where</u> might that change might be needed?
na

[1] **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STATUS: (A) Uncertain –** Availability of data or Interval of data collection beyond this reporting cycle (*indicate date of next time this monitoring item will be evaluated*); **(B) Uncertain -** More time/data are needed to understand status or progress of the plan component(s); **(C) Uncertain -** Methods inadequate to assess the status or progress toward achieving plan component(s).**(D) NO -** Implementation of plan component(s) ARE NOT trending, progressing, and/or conducted as desired; **(E) YES -** Implementation of plan component(s) ARE trending, progressing, and/or conducted as desired

[2]**CHOICES for** <u>where</u> **change may be needed include**: Monitoring program, plan component, management activity, plan assessment, program strategy or approaches documents, public engagement strategy.

MON-CR-02. To what extent are plan components ensuring treaty rights are preserved and trending towards desired conditions for consultation with each tribe?

Introduction

Cultural resources include significant areas identified by tribes. Desired conditions in the plan is to ensure that protection of these resources occurs through consultation with tribes, traditional cultural practitioners, consulting parties, and project design. In addition, forest plan objectives state that traditional cultural properties would be managed through the development of two to five management plans, in consultation with the tribes, over the life of the plan (15 years). (FW-OBJ-TRIB-01).

Table 4. MON-CR-02 plan components, indicators, data source, data collection interval and point of contact

Plan Component(s)	Indicator	Data Source / Partner	Data collection interval	Point of Contact
FW-DC-CR-02 FW-OBJ-TRIB-01, 02	IND-CR- 03. Completion of a cooperatively established tribal consultation protocol 04. Number of completed consultations under the tribal consultation protocol	Heritage program accomplishment records	Annually	Heritage program manager

Methods

Review of annual accomplishment reports of the forest heritage program and summarizing over the monitoring period (the 2 years since the previous forest plan monitoring report).

Results

Table 5: Monitoring results for MON-CR-02. Meeting of tribal consultation cultural resource objectives and desired conditions.

Indicator(s)	Monitoring date 2021 (report for years 2019 and 2020)	Monitoring date 20XX (report for years XX)	
IND-CR-03. Completion of a cooperatively established tribal consultation protocol	2 (one per year)		
IND-CR-04. Number of completed consultations under the tribal consultation protocol	51		

Discussion of Results

Informal Tribal consultation protocols have been developed with applicable Native American tribes who have ancestral ties to lands managed by the Flathead NF. Protocols include routine open communication regarding all proposed activities that have a potential to impact native archaeological sites and natural resources protected by treaty rights. Consultation protocols include an annual face-to-face meeting with the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. We also directly correspond annually with the THPO of the Blackfeet Nation. During the last two years of consultation, 51 projects have been discussed for any

potential tribal concerns form these tribes. As a program, we cooperate routinely with tribal partners for help with educational outreach opportunities and archaeological monitoring work around Hungry Horse Reservoir.

Due to the onset of the Covid Pandemic, we were unfortunately not able to have a face-to-face consultation meeting with tribal partners in 2020. A formal consultation plan is being developed with those tribes we routinely consult with. A formal consultation plan would enhance the existing processes we go through to communicate with local tribal entities. Existing consultation over the last two years has been engaging and positive and our program works to continue building strong relationships with our tribal partners.

Evaluation of Results for Adaptive Management Finding

The following findings and recommendations resulted from the evaluation of monitoring results as documented above.

Table 6. Summary of Findings for Monitoring Item MON-CR-02. Tribal consultation.

1. **Plan Monitoring Results**: Does the monitoring question and indicator(s) provide the information necessary to understand the status of the associated plan component listed above?
YES
Recommendations –
2. **Plan Implementation Status** [1]**:** Do monitoring results demonstrate progress of the associated plan components for with this monitoring item?
YES (E) Monitoring data has shown that trends are progressing towards the desired conditions expressed in the Forest Plan, as shown by the completed consultations.
Recommendation –
3. **Type of change under consideration** [2]**:** If corrective action/change was indicated under either #1 or #2, <u>where</u> might that change might be needed?
na

[1] **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STATUS: (A) Uncertain –** Availability of data or Interval of data collection beyond this reporting cycle (*indicate date of next time this monitoring item will be evaluated*)**; (B) Uncertain -** More time/data are needed to understand status or progress of the plan component(s)**; (C) Uncertain -** Methods inadequate to assess the status or progress toward achieving plan component(s) (**D**) **NO** - Implementation of plan component(s) ARE NOT trending, progressing, and/or conducted as desired**; (E) YES -** Implementation of plan component(s) ARE trending, progressing, and/or conducted as desired

[2]**CHOICES for <u>where</u> change may be needed include**: Monitoring program, plan component, management activity, plan assessment, program strategy or approaches documents, public engagement strategy.