CFLR Project (Name/Number): <u>Ozark Highlands Ecosystem Restoration/CFLR022</u> National Forest(s): <u>Ozark-St. Francis National Forests</u>

Responses to the prompts in this annual report should be typed directly into the template. Example information is included in red below. Please delete red text before submitting the final version.

1. Match and Leveraged funds:

#### a. FY15 Matching Funds Documentation

| Fund Source – (CFLN/CFLR Funds Expended <sup>1</sup> ) | Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015(\$) |  |
|--|--|--|
| CFLN14   | \$99,002.07                                  |  |
| CFLN15   | \$1,237,679.87                               |  |

| Fund Source – (Funds expended from Washington<br>Office funds (in addition to CFLR/CFLN) <sup>2</sup> (please<br>include a new row for each BLI)) | Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015(\$) |
|---|--|
| NFVW13  | \$857,531.77                                 |

| Fund Source – (FS Matching Funds<br>(please include a new row for each BLI) <sup>3)</sup> | Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015(\$) |
|---|--|
| CMRD15  | \$42,023.08                                  |
| CMTL15  | \$7,173.05                                   |
| CWKV13  | \$245,245.51                                 |
| NFTM15  | \$255,819.93                                 |
| NFVW15  | \$120,982.32                                 |
| NFWF15  | \$233,782.00                                 |
| RTRT14  | \$13,801.42                                  |
| WFHF15  | \$197,244.41                                 |

| <b>Fund Source</b> – (Funds contributed through agreements <sup>4</sup> ) | Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015(\$) |
|---|--|
| Arkansas Game and Fish Commission   | \$22250                                      |
| Searcy County   | \$21750                                      |
| Searcy County   | \$16500                                      |
| Van Buren County  | \$27000                                      |
| Van Buren County  | \$20500                                      |

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This amount should match the amount of CFLR/CFLN dollars obligated in the PAS expenditure report. Include prior year CFLN dollars expended in this Fiscal Year.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This value (aka carryover funds or WO unobligated funds) should reflect the amount expended of the allocated funds as indicated in the FY15 program direction, but does not necessarily need to be in the same BLIs or budget fiscal year as indicated in the program direction.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This amount should match the amount of matching funds obligated in the PAS expenditure report. These funds plus the Washington Office funds (unobligated funds) listed above should total the matching funds obligated in the PAS report.
<sup>4</sup> Please document any partner contributions to implementation and monitoring of the CFLR project through an income funds agreement (this should only include funds that weren't already captured through the PAS job code structure for CFLR matching

funds). Please list the partner organizations involved in the agreement.

| Fund Source – (Partner In-Kind Contributions <sup>5</sup> ) | Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015(\$) |
|---|--|
| Arkansas Game and Fish Commission                           | \$25,000                                     |
| Arkansas Wildlife Federation                                | \$5,000                                      |
| Turner Bend   | \$7,050                                      |
| Ozark Highlands Trail Association                           | \$3000                                       |

#### For Contracts Awarded in FY15

| Service work accomplishment through goods-for services funding within a stewardship contract     | Totals   |
|--|----------|
| Total amount of stewardship <u>credits charged</u> for<br>contracts awarded in FY15 <sup>6</sup> | \$0      |
| Total revised credit limit for contracts awarded in FY157  | \$39,952 |

### For Contracts Awarded Prior to FY15

| Service work accomplishment through goods-for services funding within a stewardship contract                               | Totals    |
|--|-----------|
| Total amount of stewardship credits charged in FY158   | \$451,968 |
| Total <u>revised credit limit</u> for open and closed contracts awarded and previously reported prior to FY15 <sup>9</sup> | \$752,685 |

# **b.** Please provide a narrative or table describing leveraged funds in your landscape in FY2015 (one page maximum).

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Arkansas and the Arkansas Forestry Commission submitted a proposal for the Chief's Joint Partnership Initiative. Other partners involved with this project include the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the Nature Conservancy. The project landscape included the following Arkansas Counties in the CFLR landscape: Benton, Conway, Crawford, Franklin, Johnson, Madison, Newton, Pope, Searcy, Van Buren, and Washington. NRCS funded conservation practices in the amount of \$639,774. The project landscape also includes the Ouachita CFLR project area.

### Leveraged funds in landscape for FY2015

| Description of item | Where activity/item is<br>located or impacted area | Estimated total<br>amount | Forest Service or<br>Partner Funds? | Source of<br>funds |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Conservation Cover  | 14 acres of private lands<br>within CFLR landscape | \$2,331                   | Partner Funds                       | NRCS               |
| Diversion           | 424 feet of private land within<br>CFLR landscape  | \$625                     | Partner Funds                       | NRCS               |
| Firebreak           | 189,715 feet of private land within CFLR landscape | \$293,107                 | Partner Funds                       | NRCS               |

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Total partner in-kind contributions for implementation and monitoring of a CFLR project. Partner contributions for Fish, Wildlife, Watershed work can be found in WIT database. Please list the partner organizations that provided in-kind contributions. <sup>6</sup> This should be the amount in the "stewardship credits charged" column at the end of the fiscal year in the TSA report TSA90R-01.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> This should be the amount in contract's "Progress Report for Stewardship Contracts, Integrated Resources Contracts or Agreements" in cell J46, the "Revised Credit Limit," *as of September 30*. Additional information on the Progress Reports is available in CFLR Annual Report Instructions document.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> This should be the amount in the "stewardship credits charged" column at the end of the fiscal year in the TSA report TSA90R-01.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> This should be the amount in each contract's "Progress Report for Stewardship Contracts, Integrated Resources Contracts or Agreements" in cell J46, the "Revised Credit Limit." *For open contracts*, this should be as of September 30. *For closed contracts*, this should be at the time of contract closure.

| Description of item         | Where activity/item is<br>located or impacted area   | Estimated total amount | Forest Service or<br>Partner Funds? | Source of<br>funds |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Forest Stand<br>Improvement | 193 acres of private land within CFLR landscape      | \$19,984               | Partner Funds                       | NRCS               |
| Pasture Planting            | 2 acres of private land within<br>CFLR landscape     |                        |                                     | NRCS               |
| Pond                        | 1 unit of private land within<br>CFLR landscape      | \$3,540                | Partner Funds                       | NRCS               |
| Prescribed Burning          | 4,199 acres of private land within CFLR landscape    | \$155,552              | Partner Funds                       | NRCS               |
| Stream Crossing             | 3 crossings on private land<br>within CFLR landscape | \$7,194                | Partner Funds                       | NRCS               |
| Tree Establishment          | 27 acres of private land within CFLR landscape       |                        |                                     | NRCS               |

2a. Discuss how the CLFR project contributes to accomplishment of the wildland fire goals in the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan and describe the progress to date on restoring a more fireadapted ecosystem, as identified in the project's desired conditions. This may also include a description of the current fire year (fire activity that occurred in the project area) as a backdrop to your response (please limit answer to one page).

During fiscal year 2015 we treated 14,539 acres of the landscape in the project area with prescribed fires. Acres of treatment in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) account for 63% of the burning (9,122 and the rest 36% (5,237) Non WUI. No wildfires occurred in, or burned into areas having received fuels treatment activities in the project area. As activities continue and the footprint of treatment areas within the project boundaries increase, we anticipate seeing changed conditions resulting in wildfires having lower fire behavior characteristics and being more easily controlled. All of the treatments are moving the project area towards the desired conditions.

**3.** What assumptions were used in generating the numbers and/or percentages you plugged into the **TREAT tool?** Information about Treatment for Restoration Economic Analysis Tool inputs and assumptions available here – http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/documents/cflrp/R-CAT/TREATUserGuide10112011.pdf.

| Type of projects                        | Direct part and<br>full-time jobs | Total part and<br>full-time jobs | Direct Labor<br>Income | Total Labor<br>Income10 |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Commercial Forest<br>Product Activities | 38                                | 78                               | \$1,820,879            | \$3,476,451             |
| Other Project Activities                | 13                                | 18                               | \$632,951              | \$781,769               |
| TOTALS:                                 | 51                                | 96                               | \$2,453,831            | \$4,258,221             |

#### FY 2015 Jobs Created/Maintained (FY15 CFLR/CFLN/ WO carryover funding

FY 2015 Jobs Created/Maintained (FY15 CFLR/CFLN/ WO carryover and matching funding):

| Type of projects                        | Direct part and full-time jobs | Total part and<br>full-time jobs | Direct Labor<br>Income | Total Labor<br>Income11 |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Commercial Forest<br>Product Activities | 38                             | 78                               | \$1,849,130            | \$3,476,451             |
| Other Project Activities                | 35                             | 44                               | \$1,448,058            | \$1,831,465             |
| TOTALS:                                 | 73                             | 122                              | \$3,308,938            | \$5,307,916             |

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Values obtained from Treatment for Restoration Economic Analysis Tool (TREAT) spreadsheet, "Impacts-Jobs and Income" tab. Spreadsheet and directions available at http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR/submittingproposals.shtml#tools.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Values obtained from Treatment for Restoration Economic Analysis Tool (TREAT) spreadsheet, "Impacts-Jobs and Income" tab. Spreadsheet and directions available at http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR/submittingproposals.shtml#tools.

4. Describe other community benefits achieved and the methods used to gather information about these benefits. How has CFLR and related activities benefitted your community from a social and/or economic standpoint? (Please limit answer to two pages).

The CFLR project contributes to the community in several ways. Some of the contracts are directly awarded to local contractors. Large and small purchases were made throughout the CFLR community area. These purchases should have helped the local economy. Volunteers involved in trapping efforts of feral hogs in the CFLR area benefitted through meat consumption or donated the meat to other community members. These efforts were monitored through volunteer agreements and monthly reporting.

5. Based on your project monitoring plan, describe the multiparty monitoring process. What parties (who) are involved in monitoring, and how? What is being monitored? Please briefly share key broad monitoring results and how results received to date are informing subsequent management activities (e.g. adaptive management), if at all. What are the current weaknesses or shortcomings of the monitoring process? (Please limit answer to two pages. Include a link to your monitoring plan if it is available).

Multiparty monitoring was accomplished through grants and agreements with Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC), Arkansas Wildlife Federation (AWF), National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), The University of Arkansas (UA), Arkansas Tech University (ATU) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Established Forest Service protocol is being used to conduct all monitoring and evaluation of the project area. Site preparation activities within the project area are having a positive effect on the overall forest health of the area, by reestablishing new growth in forest stands in place of the aging and overstocked stands. Timber harvest continues to have an overall positive effect on the local economy, by providing sources of employment and revenue to the local workforce.

Monitoring consisted of game camera placement in key CFLR treatment areas by our partner AGFC. Cameras monitored wildlife habitat utilization in some of the treatment areas. The USGS Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit monitored the effects of prescribed burning treatments to the movement and nesting of female Eastern wild turkeys in the CFLR area. The monitoring was completed August of 2014. The University of Arkansas has been monitoring the effects of prescribed burning and wildlife stand improvement treatments to wasps and dead and down old growth fossil chinquapin forests. Other monitoring activities have included vegetative photo points before and after wildlife stand improvement (WSI) treatments through force account. The University of Arkansas has been evaluating the colonization of macro invertebrates of area streams within the CFLR area through habitat improvements such as the addition of large woody debris additions. Photo points have indicated vegetative recovery of some of the areas in the Mill Creek OHV trail area where watershed improvement fencing was constructed three years ago. Aquatic monitoring by AGFC over time after several dredging treatments of Shores Lake will be able to evaluate the change to the fisheries in the lake. Volunteers are monitoring location areas of concentrated feral hog presence and will continue to focus trapping efforts in those areas.

Bearcat Bird Surveys were conducted by AWF and ATU consisting of 19 plots revisited in June 2015. We are seeing some increases in early successional species, but the monitoring program is just starting and should not draw much inference. Region 8 Bird Surveys were revisited in June by district personnel consisting of 49 total plots with 20 of them being within the CFLRP project area. We are seeing some changes species, but the monitoring program is still ongoing.

In 2015 we collected plant community monitoring data from 63 permanent macroplots on the Big Piney and Pleasant Hill Ranger Districts in the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest. These data, along with data from 64 macroplots sampled in 2014, will be included in the 2016 plant community monitoring report.

Analysis of 2011-2012 and 2014-2015 plant community monitoring data is currently underway. Preliminary results show that by 2014-2015 live tree cover (basal area) was reduced by 23% since the baseline (from 106 ft2/acre to

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82 ft2/acre, on average). Within the tree layer, the overstory (8"+ dbh) was less affected overall, decreasing from 83 ft2/acre to 72 ft2/acre (13% reduction), whereas midstory cover was reduced by 57%. This change represents a shift towards the desired tree layer structure. Shrub density was still much higher than desired in 2014-2015 and increased significantly since 2007-2009, from an average of 1095 stems/acre to 1721 stems/acre (57% increase). These results represent changes for the forest as a whole. Future analyses will assess progress towards the desired community composition within the forest.

#### 6. FY 2015 accomplishments

| Performance<br>Measure  | Unit of<br>measure | Total Units<br>Accomplished <sup>12</sup> | Total Treatment<br>Cost (\$)         | Type of Funds (CFLR,<br>Specific FS BLI,<br>Partner Match) <sup>13</sup> |
|---|--------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Acres of forest<br>vegetation established<br>FOR-VEG-EST  | Acres              | 579                                       | \$190,454<br>\$13,801                | CWKV<br>RTRT   |
| Acres of forest<br>vegetation improved<br>FOR-VEG-IMP   | Acres              | 4,974                                     | \$63,127<br>\$26,280                 | CWKV<br>NFVW   |
| Manage noxious weeds<br>and invasive plants<br>INVPLT-NXWD-FED-<br>AC   | Acre               | 2,415.3                                   | \$210,375<br>\$95,393                | CFLN<br>NFVW   |
| Highest priority acres<br>treated for invasive<br>terrestrial and aquatic<br>species on NFS lands<br>INVSPE-TERR-FED-<br>AC             | Acres              | 22,000                                    | \$55,800<br>\$22,627                 | CFLN<br>NFWF   |
| Acres of water or soil<br>resources protected,<br>maintained or improved<br>to achieve desired<br>watershed conditions.<br>S&W-RSRC-IMP | Acres              | 1,163.16                                  | \$449,126<br>\$7,173.05<br>\$129,000 | NFVW<br>CMTL<br>CFLN   |
| Acres of lake habitat<br>restored or enhanced<br>HBT-ENH-LAK  | Acres              | 256.57                                    | \$72,744<br>\$200,000                | NFWF<br>CFLN   |
| Miles of stream habitat<br>restored or enhanced<br>HBT-ENH-STRM   | Miles              | 33  | \$17,450<br>\$47,103                 | NFWF<br>CFLN   |
| Acres of terrestrial<br>habitat restored or<br>enhanced<br>HBT-ENH-TERR   | Acres              | 24,784.3                                  | \$120,961<br>\$584,836<br>\$138,626  | NFWF<br>CFLN<br>NFVW   |
| Acres of rangeland<br>vegetation improved<br>RG-VEG-IMP   | Acres              | 473                                       | \$37,734                             | NFVW   |
| Miles of high clearance<br>system roads receiving<br>maintenance<br>RD-HC-MAIN  | Miles              | 33.1                                      | \$42,023<br>\$33,000                 | CMRD<br>NFVW   |

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Units accomplished should match the accomplishments recorded in the Databases of Record.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Please use a new line for each BLI or type of fund used. For example, you may have three lines with the same performance measure, but the type of funding might be two different BLIs and CFLR/CFLN.

| Performance<br>Measure   | Unit of<br>measure | Total Units<br>Accomplished <sup>12</sup> | Total Treatment<br>Cost (\$)       | Type of Funds (CFLR,<br>Specific FS BLI,<br>Partner Match) <sup>13</sup> |
|--|--------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Miles of passenger car<br>system roads receiving<br>maintenance<br>RD-PC-MAINT   | Miles              | 120                                       | \$75,143<br>\$56,400               | NFVW<br>CFLN   |
| Number of stream<br>crossings constructed<br>or reconstructed to<br>provide for aquatic<br>organism passage<br>STRM-CROS-MTG-<br>STD                               | Number             | 1   | \$36,168                           | CFLN   |
| Miles of system trail<br>maintained to standard<br>TL-MAINT-STD  | Miles              | 45.2                                      | \$17,000<br>\$73,500               | CFLN<br>NFVW   |
| Acres of forestlands<br>treated using timber<br>sales<br>TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC   | Acres              | 2,312                                     | \$63,955<br>\$63,955               | NFTM<br>CFLN   |
| Volume of Timber<br>Harvested<br>TMBR-VOL-HVST   | CCF                | 16,732.4                                  | \$63,955<br>\$63,955               | NFTM<br>CFLN   |
| Volume of timber sold<br>TMBR-VOL-SLD  | CCF                | 19,082.1                                  | \$127,910<br>\$127,910<br>\$70,446 | NFTM<br>CFLN<br>NFVW   |
| Acres of hazardous<br>fuels treated outside<br>the wildland/urban<br>interface (WUI) to<br>reduce the risk of<br>catastrophic wildland<br>fire<br>FP-FUELS-NON-WUI | Acre               | 5,237                                     | \$72980.43                         | WFHF   |
| Acres of wildland/urban<br>interface (WUI) high<br>priority hazardous fuels<br>treated to reduce the<br>risk of catastrophic<br>wildland fire<br>FP-FUELS-WUI      | Acres              | 9,122                                     | \$124,263.98                       | WFHF   |

## 7. FY 2015 accomplishment narrative – Summarize key accomplishments and evaluate project progress.

(Please limit answer to three pages.)

Timber management: On the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests timber is cut to balance ecosystem and to restore watersheds. Historical records show that most of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests was in oak/pine woodlands and pine/bluestem savannahs. The timber harvest along with prescribed burning helps to maintain these ecosystems. The combination of timber harvest and prescribed burning also helps to maintain early successional forest habitats and understory growth of wildflowers and native grasses that produce habitat for pollinators. Timber harvest improves ecosystem conditions by decreasing the number of stems per acre on the landscape and increasing native ground cover vegetation. Timber was harvested through sale contracts, stewardship contracts and stewardship agreements.

Prescribed Burning: Prescribed burning improves the overall conditions of the forest for species that need a grass understory. We do all of our prescribed burning not just for fuel reduction but in areas to improve wildlife habitat conditions. The prescribed burning is done utilizing hand crews and aerial ignition to accomplish burning on a landscape level. Burns are done with a mosaic pattern with different intensities in different areas of the burn. Some of these burns are used to establish and maintain native grass fields. These native grass fields are important habitat for some wildlife species. The prescribed burning is creating woodland conditions across the landscape. These conditions are important in the fire adapted ecosystems in the Ozarks to bring our native flowering plants that are utilized by native pollinators. In the areas were bats are found on the forest, fire is helping to create and maintain feeding areas for Indiana and gray bats.

Non-Native Invasive Species Control: The problem of increase feral swine herds has become very noticeable in the forest. Feral swine eat and kill native plants, predate ground nesting bird eggs including turkeys, complete for habitat with native mammal species, destroy riparian areas, increase sediment and erosion rates into area streams and can spread diseases to domestic swine and humans. Volunteers assisted with the eradication process. Forest Service (FS) personnel in cooperation with Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) also trapped feral swine with large open traps baited with corn and apples. Blood samples were taken from trapped hogs and sent to APHIS to test for diseases. Game cameras were set up to detect the presence and time of feral swine in areas. It is expected that there are still large herds in the forest, but this project helped to control some of the invasive population. The feral swine problem will continue to exist. However, cooperative projects and new technology will help maintain control of this invasive species.

Non-native invasive plant species treated in fiscal year 2014 include fescue, privet, serecia, thistle and tree of heaven. Treatments had the intended outcome of controlling the known infestations. Most of the work performed to date is on roadside and fields. However, the seed bank has not been depleted and further treatments are needed.

Lake Habitat Restoration: The purpose of this project is to improve the aquatic and recreational habitat at the 80 acre Shores Lake through sediment removal. The lake has an estimated silt deposition of 4-6 feet in depth, with an estimated 136,000 cubic yards of silty clay with course sand and some pebbles silt deposition. The lake has several extremely shallow areas with several silt islands that are now inaccessible to boaters, swimmers, fisherman, which also creates poor aquatic habitat as well. The swim beach area and the cove with the fishing launch pad are very shallow and almost dry. The damned area of the lake still has good depth. The project will be funded over multiple years utilizing the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project (CFLRP) funding initiative. A short term authorization permit from Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) was received for the project work. The silt sand material will be recycled for road and camp pad projects once it is completely dry. Although the project will take over 5 years to complete, it is expected that the recreational and fisheries habitat in the lake will be positively impacted by this project. Over 30 years of sediment inflow from the surrounding mountains has built up. Through the CFLRP program, this lake will be able to maintain its prized fisheries and recreational values.

Wildlife Habitat Improvement: The AGFC and the NWTF worked to maintain early successional habitat in wildlife openings and fields in the White Rock & Wedington Wildlife Management Areas. The forest has less than 5% of this type of habitat and the Boston Mountain Ranger District has less than 2% of this type of critical wildlife habitat. All liming, fertilizing, disking and seeding work was completed either by USFS and AGFC personnel or through contracts. The AGFC funded fertilizer, lime and portion of the seed. The USFS funded the seed, a brush hogging contract and a hydro-axe contract. Some of the openings or fields needed hydro-axing or brush hogging due to woody encroachment. The NWTF provided cooperator signs and some gates through the Arkansas State Superfund program. The areas provide early successional habitat for a variety of wildlife species, such as: deer, turkey, quail, bear, bats, neotropical migratory birds and small game. These areas also provide native pollinator habitat. These areas provide key open habitat in overall closed canopy forest conditions.

Wildlife habitat improvement was also accomplished at the Wedington unit using stewardship contracting. The

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purpose of this project is to improve the hardwood and mixed hardwood/shortleaf pine woodland forest conditions on the Wedington unit. Open woodlands create habitat diversity in an overcrowded, closed canopy forest. This will enhance wildlife species diversity as well. The objective will be to eventually reach an open, oak-woodland condition with a park like setting, as called for in the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests Revised Land and Resource Management Plan. These areas are the main public land in northwest Arkansas and serve a population of over 350,000. The area is highly used for recreational activities such as hunting, horseback riding, bike riding, hiking and nature viewing. The wildlife stand improvement project was completed and will continue to be completed through multiple tools-through stewardship contracts and regular contracts. Work will be with chainsaws. All trees less than 10 inch diameter at breast high (DBH) will be cut except preferred wildlife trees, such as: serviceberry, dogwood, black cherry. The preferred leave trees will be white oak, hickory and red oak. Trees will be left down and the area will be burned in two to three years. Through utilizing stewardship contracting, the Wedington unit will be receiving much needed watershed, forest health and wildlife habitat improvement treatments that trade goods for services. This allows more funding to stay within the project area to accomplish more work on the ground. It is expected that once the work proceeds, there will be many benefits. We anticipate an increase in wildlife use and availability of habitat, especially for early successional species. Opportunities such as nature viewing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, etc. will also increase as the area will have more open habitat. Before treatment the fire class condition was III, after treatment it will be moved toward a class II and after prescribed burning, it will be in a condition class I and will be maintained in that condition. It is expected that different species of wildlife will increase the use of the areas (deer, turkey, neotropical migratory birds). It is expected that the open woodland conditions will increase wildlife species diversity through time as there is very little of this type of habitat in the area. It is expected that a flush of herbaceous forbs will return where there was little to none prior to the project.

Woodland Restoration: Past forest management practices have resulted in overstocked stands, altered species composition and increase in canopy closure in areas that support fire tolerant habitat such as woodlands. These changes have affected the resiliency of the forest and have caused a decline in species richness and diversity. The desired condition is an open, oak-woodland condition with a park-like setting, as called for in the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests Revised Land and Resource Management Plan. Woodland restoration was accomplished by prescribing wildlife stand improvement treatment. The work included cutting all trees less than 10 inch DBH, except trees preferred for wildlife such as serviceberry, dogwood, and black cherry. The preferred leave trees were white oak, hickory and red oak. Trees were left on site to be burned in two to three years.

The Arkansas Wildlife Federation and volunteers from National Wild Turkey Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Yell County Wildlife Federation, Arkansas Tech University Fisheries & Wildlife Society, University of the Ozark's Planet Club, and Little Rock Air Force Base participated in a work day at Bearcat Hollow project area. The group worked on installing six new gates, picked up fields to be planted, cleaned up Richland Creek camp ground and the creek itself.



**8.** Describe the total acres treated in the course of the CFLR project (cumulative footprint acres; not a cumulative total of performance accomplishments). What was the total number of acres treated?<sup>14</sup>

| Fiscal Year  | Total number of acres treated (treatment footprint)              |
|--|--|
| Cumulative Total in FY15   | FY15 – 218,167   |
| FY10, FY11, FY12, FY13, FY14, and FY15 (as<br>applicable- projects selected in FY2012 may will not<br>have data for FY10 and FY11; projects that were<br>HPRP projects in FY12, please include one number for<br>FY12 and one number for FY13 (same as above)) | FY12 – 48,528<br>FY13 – 64,917<br>FY14 – 62,305<br>FY15 – 42,417 |

# Please briefly describe how you arrived at the total number of footprint acres: what approach did you use to calculate the footprint?

The total number of footprint acres was estimated from geospatial data. Each of the CFLR activities include tabular and geospatial data. The data is stored in various database of record and tagged as CFLR. Each year the GIS specialist prepares a report that includes a map showing where activities were implemented. The map also includes the unit accomplished per activity type.

9. Describe any reasons that the FY 2015 annual report does not reflect your project proposal, previously reported planned accomplishments, or work plan. Did you face any unexpected challenges this year that caused you to change what was outlined in your proposal? (please limit answer to two pages).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> This metric is separate from the annual performance measurement reporting as recorded in the databases of record. Please see the instructions document for further clarification.

#### 10. Planned FY 2017 Accomplishments<sup>15</sup>

| Performance Measure Code <sup>16</sup>  | Unit of measure | Planned<br>Accomplishment | Amount<br>(\$) |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Acres treated annually to sustain or restore watershed<br>function and resilience WTRSHD-RSTR-ANN   | Acres           | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Acres of forest vegetation established FOR-VEG-EST  | Acres           | 100                       | \$13,500       |
| Acres of forest vegetation improved FOR-VEG-IMP   | Acres           | 700                       | \$163,548      |
| Manage noxious weeds and invasive plants<br>INVPLT-NXWD-FED-AC  | Acre            | 1013                      | \$235,895      |
| Highest priority acres treated for invasive terrestrial and<br>aquatic species on NFS lands<br>INVSPE-TERR-FED-AC                             | Acres           | 29000                     | \$59,200       |
| Acres of water or soil resources protected, maintained or<br>improved to achieve desired watershed conditions.<br>S&W-RSRC-IMP                | Acres           | 82                        | \$219,343      |
| Acres of lake habitat restored or enhanced HBT-ENH-LAK  | Acres           | 20                        | \$200,000      |
| Miles of stream habitat restored or enhanced HBT-ENH-<br>STRM   | Miles           | 1                         | \$1,500        |
| Acres of terrestrial habitat restored or enhanced<br>HBT-ENH-TERR   | Acres           | 4223                      | \$456,314      |
| Acres of rangeland vegetation improved RG-VEG-IMP   | Acres           | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Miles of high clearance system roads receiving maintenance<br>RD-HC-MAIN  | Miles           | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Miles of passenger car system roads receiving maintenance<br>RD-PC-MAINT  | Miles           | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Miles of road decommissioned RD-DECOM   | Miles           | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Miles of passenger car system roads improve RD-PC-IMP   | Miles           | 150                       | \$56,400       |
| Miles of high clearance system road improved RD-HC-IMP  | Miles           | 50                        | \$18,800       |
| Number of stream crossings constructed or reconstructed to provide for aquatic organism passage STRM-CROS-MTG-STD                             | Number          | 1                         | \$55,000       |
| Miles of system trail maintained to standard TL-MAINT-STD   | Miles           | 20                        | \$30,000       |
| Miles of system trail improved to standard TL-IMP-STD   | Miles           | 2.1                       | \$20,000       |
| Miles of property line marked/maintained to standard LND-BL-MRK-MAINT   | Miles           | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Acres of forestlands treated using timber sales<br>TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC  | Acres           | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Volume of Timber Harvested TMBR-VOL-HVST  | CCF             | 3500                      | \$52,500       |
| Volume of timber sold TMBR-VOL-SLD  | CCF             | 5000                      | \$165800       |
| Green tons from small diameter and low value trees<br>removed from NFS lands and made available for bio-energy<br>production BIO-NRG          | Green tons      | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Acres of hazardous fuels treated outside the wildland/urban interface (WUI) to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire FP-FUELS-NON-WUI | Acre            | n/a                       | n/a            |

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Please note that planned accomplishments are aggregated across the projects to determine the proposed goals for the program's outyear budget justification. These numbers should reflect what is in the CFLRP work plan, with deviations described in question 12. <sup>16</sup> Please include all relevant planned accomplishments, assuming that funding specified in the CFLRP project proposal for FY

<sup>2017</sup> is available. Use actual planned funding if quantity is less than specified in CFLRP project work plan.

| Performance Measure Code <sup>16</sup>  | Unit of<br>measure | Planned<br>Accomplishment | Amount<br>(\$) |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Acres of wildland/urban interface (WUI) high priority<br>hazardous fuels treated to reduce the risk of catastrophic<br>wildland fire FP-FUELS-WUI | Acres              | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Number of priority acres treated annually for invasive species on Federal lands SP-INVSPE-FED-AC  | Acres              | n/a                       | n/a            |
| Number of priority acres treated annually for native pests on Federal lands SP-NATIVE-FED-AC  | Acres              | n/a                       | n/a            |

### 11. Planned FY 2017 accomplishment narrative (no more than 1 page).

Restoration will continue to be accomplished through timber harvest, prescribe burning, NNIS control, lake habitat improvement, watershed rehabilitation, stream habitat improvement, and wildlife habitat improvement projects. Woodland restoration will progress as in past year using silvilcultural prescriptions and prescribe burning. Treatment for the control of non-native plant species will continue to take place along road ways, in open land management, and in lakes. The Forest will continue a management program for feral hogs within the CFLR area. There will also continue to be a program for establishing early successional habitat to benefit wildlife and also for improve habitat for threatened and endangered species like Indiana bat. Road stream crossing will be improved to provide for aquatic organism passage along with other project like the addition of large wood to streams to improve aquatic habitats. Lake habitat will be improved by the addition of structure and removal of sediment loading. Watershed improvements will be completed to improve the conditions of the soils and the hydrology like maintenance and reconstruction of trail systems that are causing sedimentation issues, maintenance of roads that are causing sedimentation issues, maintenance of roads that are causing sedimentation issues, and re-establishing native cane. All these activities will help to improve the ecosystems and make them more resilient to changing climates.

# **12.** Describe and provide narrative justification if planned FY 2016/17 accomplishments and/or funding differs from CFLRP project work plan (no more than 1 page):

We do not anticipate any deviation from the proposed workplan.

**13. Please include an up to date list of the members of your collaborative** (name and affiliation, if there is one). If the information is available online, you can simply include the hyperlink here. If you have engaged new collaborative members this year, please provide a brief description of their engagement.

| Affiliation                              | Name                   | Title                           |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Arkansas Canoe Club                      | Chris Handley          | President                       |
| Arkansas Forestry<br>Commission          | Joe Fox                | State Forester                  |
| Arkansas Game and Fish<br>Commission     | Mike Knoedl            | Director                        |
| Arkansas Natural Heritage<br>Commission  | Chris Colclasure       | Director                        |
| Arkansas Wildlife Federation             | Wayne<br>Shewmake      | President                       |
| National Fish and Wildlife<br>Foundation | Donn Waage             | Director                        |
| National Forest Foundation               | Mark Shelley           | Director Eastern Field Program  |
| National Park Service                    | Kevin Cheri            | Superintendent                  |
| National Wild Turkey<br>Federation       | James Earl<br>Kennamer | Ph.D Chief Conservation Officer |

| Affiliation                             | Name                 | Title   |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Rocky Mountain Elk<br>Foundation        | Brian Dale Gray      | Regional Director   |
| The Nature Conservancy                  | Doug Zolner          | Director of Conservation Science Arkansas<br>Field Office             |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife<br>Service       | Melvin Tobin         | Field Supervisor  |
| U.S. Geological Survey                  | David Freiwald       | Deputy Director   |
| Arkansas Tech University                | Dr. Charlie Gagen    | Department Head and Professor Department of<br>Fisheries and Wildlife |
| University of Arkansas at<br>Monticello | Sayeed R.<br>Mehmood | Associate Professor of Forest Econ. & Policy.                         |
| Arkansas Canoe Club                     | Chris Handley        | President   |

**14.** How has your project increased support from partners in terms of in-kind contributions and funding? (no more than one page):

The amount of funding we received from partners is reflective of that submitted in the proposal.

**15. Media recap.** Please share with us any hyperlinks to videos, newspaper articles, press releases, scholarly works, and photos of your project in the media that you have available.

| Signatures:  | 8201               |
|--|--------------------|
| Recommended by (Project Coordinator(s)):           | p K. The           |
| Approved by (Forest Supervisor(s)) <sup>17</sup> : | AILL               |
| (OPTIONAL) Reviewed by (collaborative chair of     | r representative): |