CFLR Project (Name/Number): Shortleaf-Bluestem Community/CFLR018

National Forest(s): Ouachita National Forest

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[1])	Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015($)
CFLN14	141,439
CFLN15	1,269,216

Fund Source – (Funds expended from Washington Office funds (in addition to CFLR/CFLN)[2] (please include a new row for each BLI))	Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015($)
NFTM	912,339

Fund Source – (FS Matching Funds (please include a new row for each BLI)[3])	Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015($)
CMRD	75,051
CWKV	389,408
NFTM	926,911
NFVW	74,268
NFWF	121,404
WFHF	357,886

Fund Source – (Partner In-Kind Contributions[4])	Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015($)
Arkansas State University (Turkey monitoring)	17,475
National Wild Turkey Federation (Turkey monitoring)	2,500
University of Arkansas, Monticello (Economic monitoring)	9,975
USFS Northern Research (Bird monitoring)	8,000
Central Hardwoods Joint Venture (Bird monitoring)	250
Gulf Coastal Plains & Ozarks LCC (Bird monitoring)	250
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	3,000
Native Expeditions (Environmental education)	21,700
Monarch Watch, University of Kansas	2,000
Buffalo River National Park Service (Prescribed burning)	47,500

1 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.
2 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.
3 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.
4 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.

Fund Source – (Partner In-Kind Contributions[4])	Total Funds Expended in Fiscal Year 2015($)
The Nature Conservancy (Vegetative monitoring)	24,253
Southern Research Station (Soft mast monitoring)	8,000
Natural Resource Conservation Service	3,500
TOTAL	**148,403**

Service work accomplishment through goods-for services funding within a stewardship contract (For Contracts Awarded in FY15)	Totals($)
Total amount of stewardship credits charged for contracts awarded in FY15[5]	0.00
Total revised credit limit for contracts awarded in FY15[6] Use	12,500

Service work accomplishment through goods-for services funding within a stewardship contract (For Contracts Awarded Prior to FY15)	Totals($)
Total amount of stewardship credits charged in FY15[7]	12,500
Total revised credit limit for open and closed contracts awarded and previously reported prior to FY15[8]	147,065

b. Please provide a narrative or table describing leveraged funds in your landscape in FY2015 (one page maximum). Leveraged funds refer to funds or in-kind services that help the project achieve proposed objectives but do not meet match qualifications. Examples include but are not limited to: investments within landscape on non-NFS lands, investments in restoration equipment, worker training for implementation and monitoring, and purchase of equipment for wood processing that will use restoration by-products from CFLR projects. See "Instructions" document for additional information.

Suggested Format:

Description of item	Where activity/item is located or impacted area	Estimated total amount($)	Forest Service or Partner Funds?	Source of funds
Red-cockaded Woodpecker habitat improvement and prescribed burning	McCurtain County Wilderness Area (MCWA)	117,760	X Partner Funds	Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

[5] This should be the amount in the "stewardship credits charged" column at the end of the fiscal year in the TSA report TSA90R-01.
[6] 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.
[7] This should be the amount in the "stewardship credits charged" column at the end of the fiscal year in the TSA report TSA90R-01.
[8] 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 located or impacted area	Estimated total amount($)	Forest Service or Partner Funds?	Source of funds
NEPA Planning – includes inventories for cultural resources; biological resources, roads, CSE; analysis and documentation; GIS support; support services; and fuels	West Haw Creek, Nella, Fourche Mountain, East Fork, White Oak Mountain P-Burn DM, Broken Bow P-Burn EA, Buffalo Creek and Walker Mtn. MSR, Rock Creek, 2015 Farm Bill, WSI, Old Growth RX Fire Vanderslice	301,716	X Forest Service funds	NFTM NFWF WFHF NFVW
Stevens Prescribed Burning (AR)	885 acres	44,250	X Partner Funds	Arkansas Forestry Commission
Stevens Prescribed Burning (OK)	1500 acres	75,000	X Partner Funds	OK Dept of Agriculture, Division of Forestry
NRCS Western AR Woodland Restoration	Shortleaf-Bluestem Impact Area counties within 10 miles of CFLRP	346,988	X Partner Funds	USDA / Natural Resources Conservation Service

(Optional) Additional narrative about leverage on the landscape if needed:

Habitat improvement work was conducted on the MCWA by ODWC consisting of 323 acres of thinning, as well as several new inserts in existing recruitment and active cluster sites, and cooperatively prescribed burning over 4,000 acres. ODWC leveraged funds were $68,260 for burning, $48,500 for thinning acres and $1,000 for inserts, banding and monitoring. Total leverage from ODWC is $117,760.

NEPA projects within the CFLRP project area within MA 21 (Old Growth Restoration), MA 22 (Renewal of the Shortleaf Pine-Bluestem Grass Ecosystem and Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) Habitat) and ABBA (American Burying Beetle Areas), were completed at a cost of approximately $301,716.

Roughly $30,000 was contributed for technical assistance (TA) to support the administration of WAWRP for NRCS. This is leveraged salaries towards the work of expanding the CFLRP efforts on private lands. This additional $30,000 is combined with the $316,988 for practices on private lands surrounding the CFLRP area for a total of $346,988.

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 fire-adapted 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 respons**e (please limit answer to one page).

On the afternoon of February 12 a wildfire was located in the vicinity of Wolf Mountain on the Caddo-Womble Ranger District. District personnel were igniting a prescribed fire on the west end of district over 20 miles from the new start. Resources on the adjacent Mena-Oden Ranger served as a contingency element for the Caddo-Womble and were dispatched for the suppression effort on the new ignition. Before these resources arrived, discussions with the Caddo-Womble DFMO revealed that the fuels in the area of the new start were a 3-year old rough and could be easily ignited and burned with no detrimental effect on the natural resources in the area. As a result, the Mena-Oden resources were relayed instructions on where to construct fire line to confine the fire against the Ouachita and the resulting 960 acre enclosure was routinely and successfully burned out. The entire site sustained post fire effects that were indicative of a

successful prescribed burning operation. The work was safe, routine, and all resources returned to their respective home bases shortly after sundown. The almost entire 960 acre site fell within CFLRP project lands on the Caddo-Womble Ranger District.

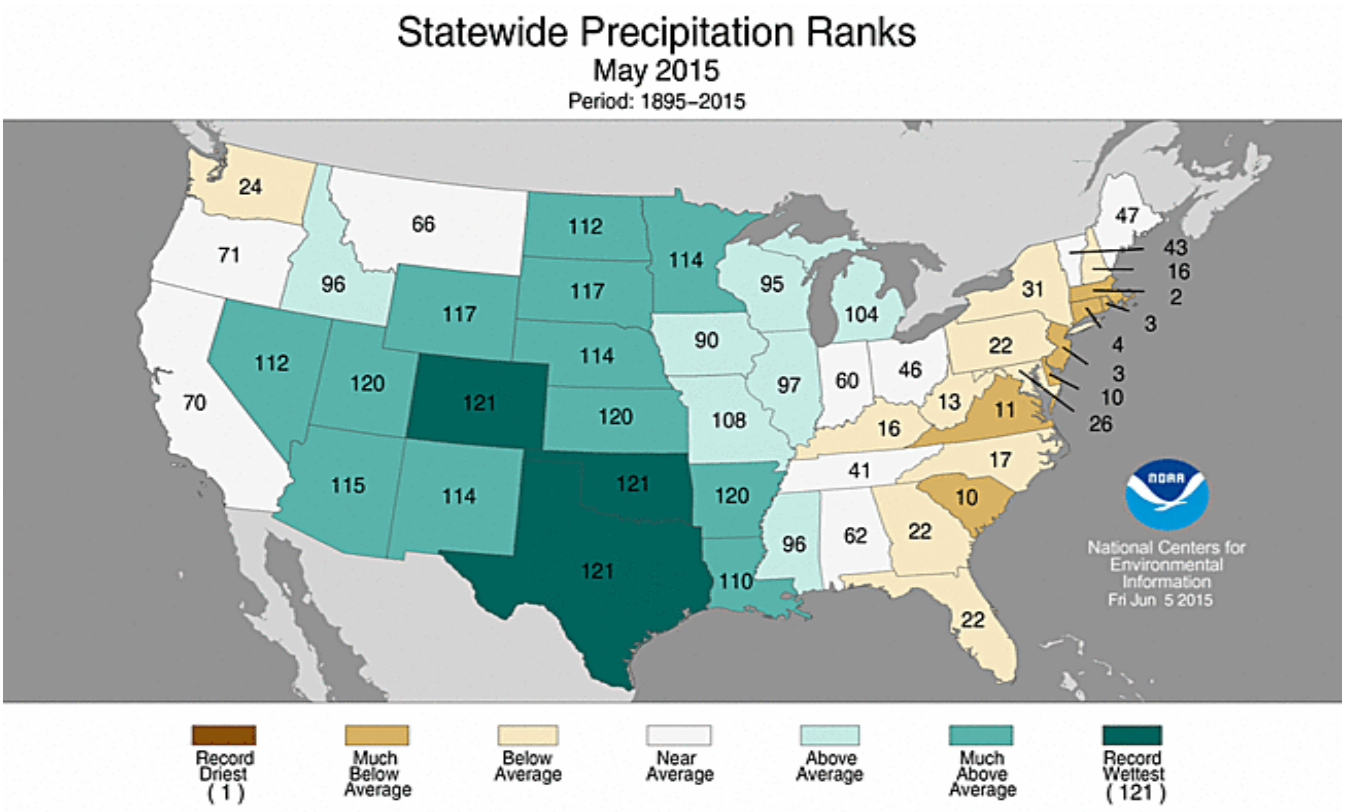
The Ouachita NF sustained a late summer-early fall wildfire season in 2015. Local KBDI increased to index values in the 700-750 range. The forest sustained about 30 individual wildfires during this time. Of these, the largest was contained at 202 acres, one was 122 acres, there were two in the 30-40 acre range and the balance were all less than 10 acre in size. Control efforts were routine in all cases and all of these wildfires caused very little actual resource damage. There were approximately 54 wildfires for 1,992 acre that occurred on the Ouachita NF this fiscal year.

2b. In no more than two pages (large landscapes or very active fire seasons may need more space), describe other relevant fire management activities within the project area (hazardous fuel treatments will be documented in Question #6:)

Preparedness funding on the forest approximates $1.5 MM/year for the Ouachita NF.

Of the wildfires on record for the fiscal year, only one, the Rock Pile fire on the Oklahoma Ranger District was the single fire that failed to be contained within the first or second operational following discovery. This wildfire was eventually contained and controlled at 202 acres.

Weather for 2015:



In the picture: Statewide precipitation ranks in May, 2015. The "120" in Arkansas means 120th driest (2nd wettest). The graphic is courtesy of the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC).

The headline of 2015 through the first ten months was all of the rain in May. According to the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC), the May precipitation total for the country was 4.36 inches (1.45 inches above normal). This was the wettest May on record, and the wettest month of any month in the 121-years of record keeping.

In Arkansas, the statewide average of 10.35 inches (5.20 inches above normal) of liquid made it the second wettest May. This was a mere 0.68 inch behind the record set in 2009 (the wettest year on record locally).

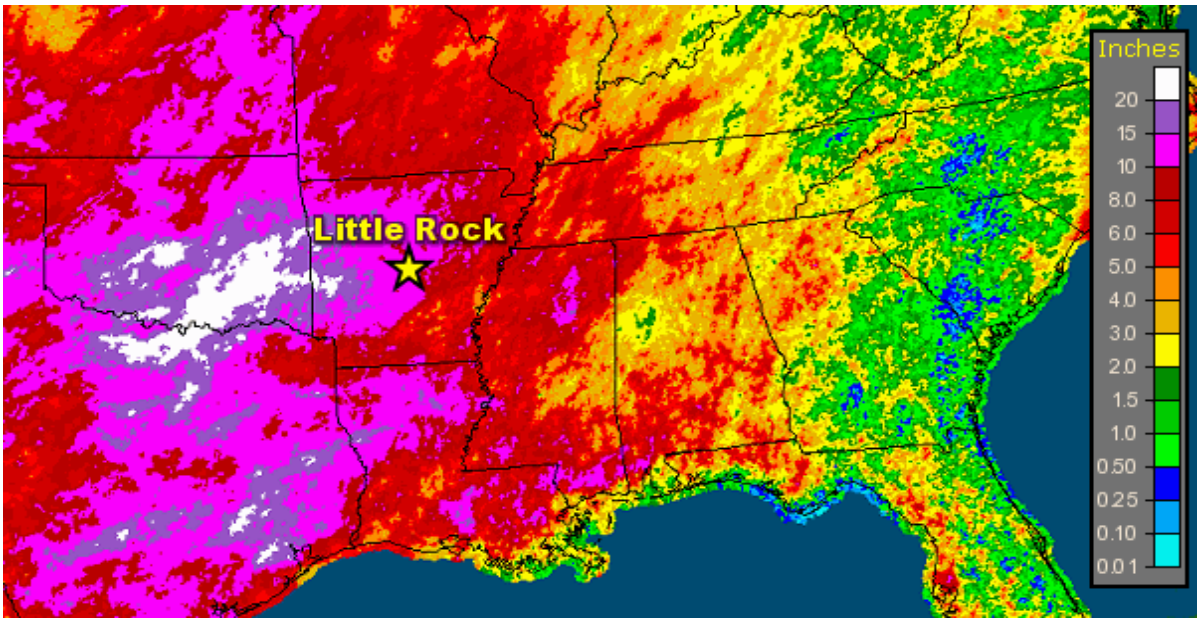
Year	Rain (Inches)	Year	Rain (Inches)	Year	Rain (Inches)
2009	11.03	2009	11.03	2009	11.03
2015	10.35	2015	10.35	2015	10.35
1930	10.12	1930	10.12	1930	10.12
1968	9.75	1968	9.75	1968	9.75
1907	9.58	1907	9.58	1907	9.58

Note: The statewide average precipitation in May is 5.15 inches.

The worst of the high water problems were along the Arkansas River. There were top 10 crests in the middle of the month and also during the last week. The latter crests were the highest since 1990 (at most forecast sites).

Location	Crest (ft)	Flood Stage (ft)	Date/Time	Rank
Ozark L & D (Franklin Co)	367.71	357	05/27 (1 pm CDT)	4
Dardanelle (Yell Co)	37.70	32	05/28 (10 am CDT)	9
Morrilton (Conway Co)	38.50	30	05/29 (1230 am CDT)	9
Little Rock (Pulaski Co)	22.20	23	05/31 (6 am CDT)	11
Pine Bluff (Jefferson Co)	45.80	42	05/31 (7 pm CDT)	5

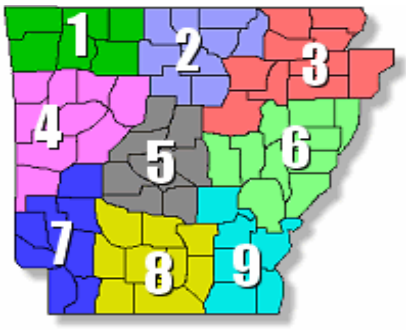
The Red River in southwest sections of the state also got out of hand. Thousands of acres of farmland were flooded and livestock was evacuated. Bank erosion was extreme in Little River, Hempstead, Lafayette and Miller Counties. Bridges crossing the river along Highways 8, 71 and 259 were closed.



While it was very wet around here, drought stricken areas of Oklahoma and Texas were also inundated with water (all-time wettest month in both states). The rain bucket collected 19.48 inches at Oklahoma City, OK, with foot to foot and a half amounts at Dallas, TX, Houston, TX and Tulsa, OK. When there is this much falling out of the sky, something has got to give. There were stories of tragedy in the two-state area, with at least two dozen lives lost to flooding. The Blanco River at Wimberley, TX (near Austin, TX) rose almost 35 feet in three hours late on the 23rd/early on the 24th. A wall of water swept away dozens of homes. Outside of Tulsa, OK, a firefighter was killed while performing a high water rescue at an apartment complex.

On the flip side, there was not much rain at all in portions of the Carolinas and Georgia. Only 0.32 inch fell at Charlotte, NC, with 1.23 inches at Savannah, GA and 1.71 inches at Columbia, SC (1.70 inches fell in one day, with 0.01 inch the rest of the month). It was a Top 5 dry May in Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and South Carolina.

The dryness over the southeast United States became the theme in southern Arkansas this summer (June through August). A large ridge of high pressure shut off the rain, and triple digit heat was felt in late July and early August. The hottest day was August 10th. The mercury reached 107 degrees at De Queen (Sevier County), 106 degrees at Texarkana (Miller County), and 105 degrees at El Dorado (Union County).



Drought conditions developed and worsened heading into the fall. From July 20th through October 17th (90 days), climate districts 7, 8, and 9 (in the south) only got 2.75 to 3.75 inches of rain (normal is 9.50 to 11.00 inches). It was the driest for this time frame in roughly 130 years of records.

In the picture: There are nine climate districts in Arkansas. It was the driest September on record at Little Rock (Pulaski County) and Pine Bluff (Jefferson County) dating back to 1874 and 1883 respectively. At the former location, it was the 7th driest month overall (tied with June, 1953 and June, 1930). At the latter location, it was the 5th driest month ever (tied with July, 1893).

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE LITTLE ROCK AR 1125 AM CDT THU OCT 1 2015
RECORD DRIEST SEPTEMBERS AT LITTLE ROCK AND PINE BLUFF AT LITTLE ROCK.
IT WAS THE DRIEST SEPTEMBER SINCE 1917.AND THE DRIEST ON RECORD.
THE PREVIOUS RECORD WAS 0.27 INCHES IN 1917.

The Driest Septembers at Little Rock

Date (yr)	Amount (in.)
2015	0.12
1917	0.27
1956	0.28
1897	0.33
1874	0.35
1879	0.39
1983	0.41
1895	0.41
2004	0.51
1928	0.52

SEPTEMBER 2015 ALSO RANKS AS THE DRIEST MONTH AT LITTLE ROCK SINCE AUGUST 2000...AND TIES JUNE 1953 AND JUNE 1930 AS THE 7TH DRIEST MONTH OVER ALL.

The Driest Months at Little Rock have been

Amount (in.)	Date (yr)
TRACE	AUGUST 1995, JUNE 1952
0.01	OCTOBER 1944, JULY 1930, JUNE 1914
0.04	AUGUST 2000, OCTOBER 1874
0.06	OCTOBER 1924

Amount (in.)	Date (yr)
0.09	AUGUST 1874
0.10	OCTOBER 1963
0.12	SEPTEMBER 2015, JUNE 1953, JUNE 1930

PRECIPITATION RECORDS FOR LITTLE ROCK BEGAN IN JUNE 1874.
AT PINE BLUFF IT WAS THE DRIEST SEPTEMBER SINCE 2001. AND THE DRIEST ON RECORD.
THE PREVIOUS RECORD WAS 0.11 INCHES IN 2001.

The Driest Septembers at Pine Bluff have been

Amount (in.)	Date (yr)
0.03	2015
0.11	2001
0.14	1928
0.17	2004
0.21	1889
0.22	1897
0.26	1931
0.28	1891
0.31	1929
0.38	1922

SEPTEMBER 2015 ALSO RANKS AS THE DRIEST MONTH AT PINE BLUFF SINCE JULY 1930...AND TIES JULY 1893 AS THE 5TH DRIEST MONTH OVER ALL.

The Driest Months at Pine Bluff have been

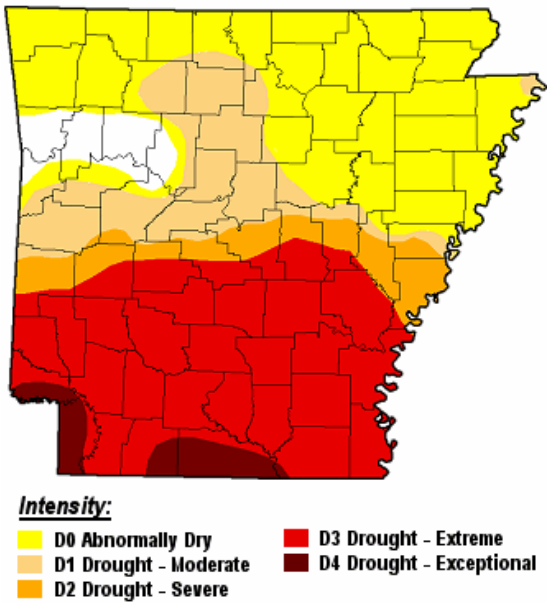
Amount (in.)	Date (yr)
0.00	OCTOBER 1924, AUGUST 1886, JULY 1886...MAY 1885
TRACE	AUGUST 1999, OCTOBER 1963
0.01	JULY 1930
0.02	NOVEMBER 1910
0.03	SEPTEMBER 2015, JULY 1893

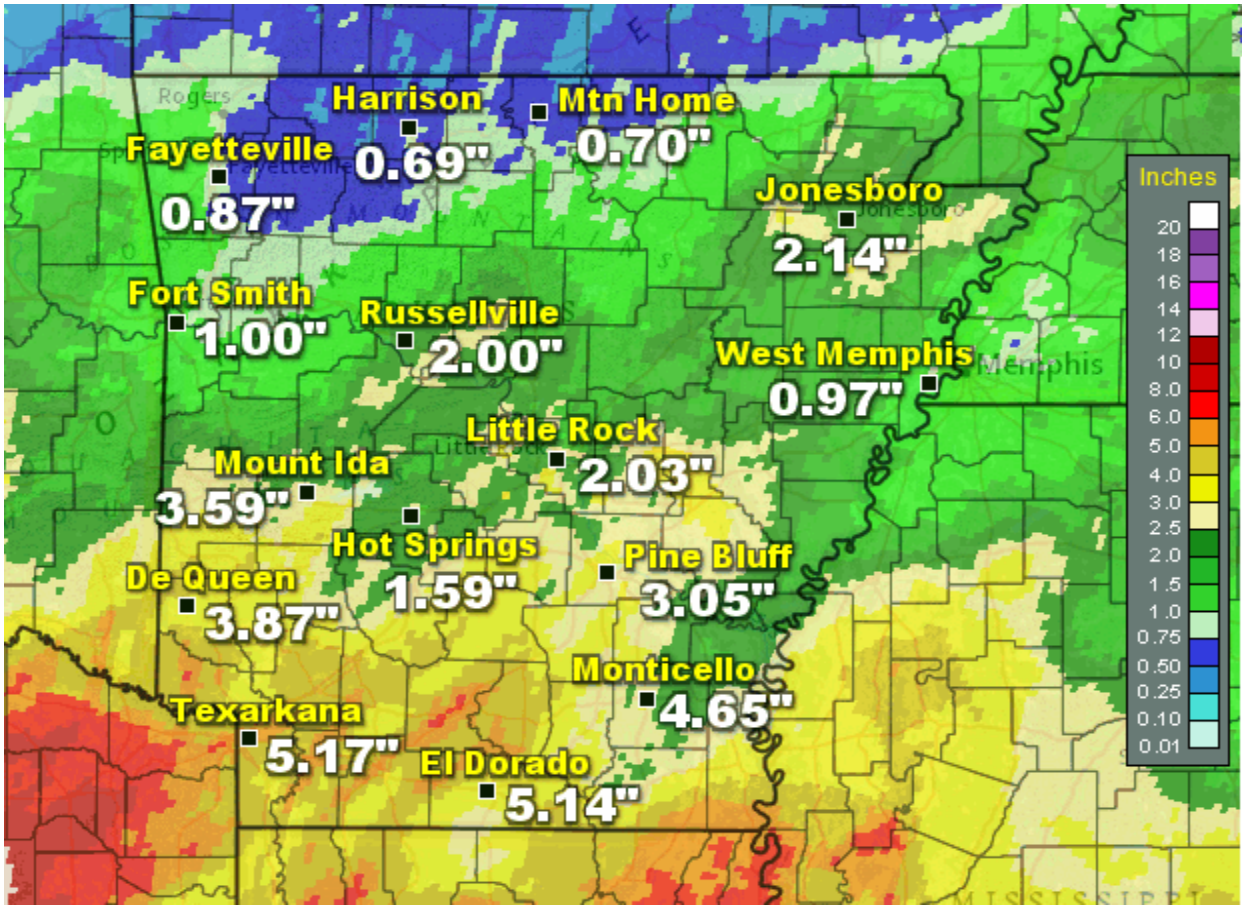
PRECIPITATION RECORDS FOR PINE BLUFF BEGAN IN DECEMBER 1883.

By October 20th, moderate to extreme drought (D2 to D4) conditions existed across much of central and southern Arkansas. Burn bans were posted in 61 of 75 counties.

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

Category	Coverage
None	4.30%
D0-D4	95.70%
D1-D4	60.38%
D2-D4	45.60%
D3-D4	38.22%
D4	3.59%





An emerging El Niño promised that rain would eventually hit across the southern United States as fall progressed. It happened on October 23rd through the 27th. An incoming storm system from the Plains combined with the remnants of Hurricane Patricia from the Pacific Ocean yielded two to more than five inches of liquid where it was needed the most (the south). Another two plus inches of rain was measured in the southwest on the 30th/31st.

There was more life threatening flooding in Texas. Near Corsicana, TX, at least 20 inches of rain was reported, and this was responsible for derailing a train. Sections of Interstate 45 were shut down between Dallas, TX and Houston, TX. More than a foot of liquid fell between Austin, TX and San Antonio, TX, which closed Interstate 35 for a time near Troy, TX. The Austin-Bergstrom International Airport was closed temporarily due to water in air traffic control. Dozens of high water rescues were performed (people pulled from stranded vehicles). Roads were also washed away. The deluge in Texas was responsible for at least six fatalities.

Even the dryness in South Carolina became a distant memory. A 1-in-1,000-year rain event unfolded during the first week of October. The 3rd was the rainiest day in recorded history at Charleston, SC (11.50 inches), and the same happened on the 4th at Columbia, SC (6.87 inches). Flooding was catastrophic, and evacuations were ordered as dams/levees failed.

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.

Assumptions used for generating the TREAT model numbers that contracts and timber sale dollars assumed to remain within the impact area, did indeed stay within the area. Contract costs, workplans and WPTR reports were used to estimate percentages and numbers plugged into the TREAT tool. Harvest volumes and products were based on historic and current utilization from timber contracts and sales.

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

Type of projects	**Direct part and full-time jobs**	**Total part and full-time jobs**	**Direct Labor Income($)**	**Total Labor Income[9]($)**
Commercial Forest Product Activities	65	131	3,148,460	4,851,452
Other Project Activities	22	27	909,948	1,088,530
TOTALS:	**87**	**158**	**4,058,409**	**5,939,982**

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 full-time jobs	Direct Labor Income($)	Total Labor Income[10]($)
Commercial Forest Product Activities	170	346	7,990,245	12,352,231
Other Project Activities	45	55	1,928,880	2,307,254
TOTALS:	**215**	**401**	**9,919,126**	**14,659,485**

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).

Agreements/Contracts and Monitoring for CFLRP increased hiring of locals workers.

- **Turkey monitoring with National Wild Turkey Federation, Arkansas State University and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission:** The Ouachita Mountains Shortleaf-Bluestem Alliance collaborative and the public voiced concerns of prescribed burning on the Eastern wild turkey. In 2015, the collaborative continues to support the

[9] 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.
[10] 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.

study and will be continuing with additional monitoring in 2016 and beyond within CFLRP.

- **Vegetative monitoring with The Nature Conservancy:** TNC completed plant community monitoring on 50 permanent micro-plots within the CFLRP area in Arkansas in FY15. During the actual monitoring time period, crews stayed local hotels and purchased numerous meals from local restaurants and stores, thus adding to the local economy.
- **Bird monitoring with USFS Northern Research Station and Central Hardwoods Joint Venture**: In 2015, bird monitoring was conducted by the USFS Northern Research Station in collaboration with the Central Hardwoods Joint Venture at 100 point locations. This work involved hiring a graduate research student to supervise the project and two technicians to assist with the surveys. These surveys also boost local economies with lodging and meals, etc. These bird points are located at the vegetation plots established by TNC. This coordination of survey points will allow comparison of flora and fauna changes over time at the same point on the landscape. To date bird point monitoring has occurred in FY13, FY14 and FY15will occur again in FY15. A report is expected in FY16. FY15 Funding: $16,000.
- **Economic monitoring with University of Arkansas:** Economic stimulation from agreements, contracts, partnerships and multi-party monitoring and the related benefits will be evaluated for impact by the University of Arkansas at Monticello.
- **Prescribed burning with Buffalo River National Park Service (NPS).** Without funding, the local Buffalo River NPS would have laid off 7 employees due to budget cuts. Instead under the agreement, the NPS retained these employees to outfit a 7 member wildland fire crew for FY15. NPS is attractive because of their close proximity to the project area, giving them the ability to travel back home when bad burning weather conditions are forecasted. Under the Reimbursement or Advance of Funds Agreement, funds will be transferred directly to NPS, resulting in no travel cap being charged to the Ouachita NF. FY 2015 Funding: $100,000.
- **Prescribed burning with the Oklahoma Native American Tribes**. There are approximately 70 people qualified for prescribed burning among the tribes in Oklahoma. Funding will support tribal members for prescribe burn efforts, including installing plow lines on the Forest: Funds obligated in FY15 were $75,000 for the Cherokee Tribe of Oklahoma and $40,000 for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Total for Native American Tribes in FY15: $115,000.
- **Prescribed burning with Bureau of Land Management:** In FY15, no funds were obligated to BLM to support their fire crew due to wet spring burning conditions.
- **Prescribed burning with The Nature Conservancy:** Local hires will occur by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to provide hand crews to accelerate burning. Annual Funds obligated to TNC are $100,000.
- **Additional helicopter for prescribed burning:** this helicopter (ship) and the associated crew will be used to burn additional acres. Obligated funds of supplying an additional ship, crew and plastic spheres: $97,000.
- **Environmental education with Native Expeditions:** See explanation in Question 5 below.
- **Monarch Watch, University of Kansas:** Contracted with Monarch Watch to grow out seed plugs from native milkweed seeds collected on Forest lands. Local students will plant plugs within the CFLRP area in FY16. Four hundred milkweed and other native seed packets were prepared for local students to plant in FY15 at schools within Ouachita National Forest. FY15 Cost $3,000.

Most of the above prescribed burning agreements had funds obligated in FY 2015. These agreements will allow the Forest to continue burning in early FY16 even if funding for FY16 is delayed.

The local communities benefitted through an agreement that funded environmental educational training from a non-profit business, Native Expeditions. Nearly 300 students were taught within the CFLRP area about the importance of our local ecosystems, the flora and fauna, and the tools needed to restore these native landscapes. These students assisted USFS in restoration efforts to plant native pollinator seeds (including milkweed) within school yard habitats. The seeds for these pollinator plants were collected on the Forest.

Native Expeditions is working with six EAST (Environmental and Spatial Technologies) Lab high schools in creating videos of the tools needed for restoration to showcase at the EAST conferences as well as share with other schools. These videos will encompass and give on-the-ground examples using subjects such as the endangered RCW recovery, prescribed burning, landscape history, pollinators and timber management, etc. The goal is to teach science standards and core curriculum, such as adaptation, biodiversity, human impacts, etc. with these on-the-ground examples of management. In addition, local educators along with the highly trained GIS staff at Native Expeditions are training EAST Lab high school students how to compile 20 years of fire history, commercial and non-commercial thinning. This huge project of creating GIS layers to display restoration efforts over a landscape scale will be used for competition at EAST Lab high school conferences and give the Forest a great management tool.

This same non-profit business hired 8 local high school students in FY15 to produce GIS layers of past burning and timber activity. High school students will be teaching environmental education at community events, additional schools, nursing homes and other venues.

In 2015, **approximately 30.5% of the timber sold off the Ouachita National Forest came off the CFLRP area**. This timber from the CFLRP area is valued at over $1,633,310.11 on the stump and equates to 55,237.07 ccf. Sawmills processing that timber hired more than 150 employees, have 80 loggers cutting the timber and another 20 people transporting the timber to the mills for a total of 250 families benefitting directly from the timber industry. In FY 2015, all timber sold within the CFLRP areas was bought by purchasers within the impact area.

Timber purchases in FY 2015 are shown below

Location of Purchaser	Volume of Timber Sold (ccf)	Sale Value ($)	Within CFLRP Impact Area?
Logan County, Arkansas	166	1,335.65	Yes
Pike County, Arkansas	9,654	313,454.54	Yes
Polk County, Arkansas	11,790	314,235.76	Yes
Pope County, Arkansas	2,554	62,337.30	Yes
Scott County, Arkansas	6,809	136,849.94	Yes
Yell County, AR	6,235.86	406,592.01	Yes
McCurtain County, Oklahoma	18,028.21	398,504.91	Yes
TOTAL	**55,237.07**	**1,633,310.11**	**n/a**

CFLR funding as well as matching funds provided funding for chainsaw treatments to move areas toward a restored condition. Contractors within the impact area of the project were awarded task orders as follows:

Funding Source	Location of Contractor	Amount of Contract	Within CFLRP Impact Area?
CFLN	Garland County, AR	115,889.17	Yes
CFWF	Garland County, AR	22,499.83	Yes
CFKV	Garland County, AR	22,509.00	Yes
CFLN	Scott County, AR	42,918.00	Yes
CFKV	Scott County, AR	17,250.00	Yes
CFVW	Scott County, AR	21,070.00	Yes
Total	**n/a**	**$242,136.00**	**n/a**

In addition, over $100,000 of contract work with heavy equipment was contracted to local contracts, all within the impact area.

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).

Desired condition of the shortleaf pine-bluestem woodland are open overstory canopies, mid-stories with little woody vegetation and native understory vegetation of grasses and forbs. These conditions can be achieved with timber harvesting, WSI/TSI, and effective prescribed burns. Long term perpetuation of the overstory shortleaf pine-bluestem community is accomplished by seedtree and shelterwood regeneration harvesting. Advanced stages of restoration (as represented by Fire Regime Condition Class 1 (FRCC1)) are characterized by an open mid-story and a grass understory with a fuel loading of 2-4 tons/acre.

In 2015 The Nature Conservancy (TNC) collected plant community monitoring data from 50 permanent macroplots on the Arkansas side of the CFLRP in the Ouachita National Forest. These data, along with data from 50 more macroplots in Oklahoma (to be collected in the summer of 2016), will be included in the 2016 plant community monitoring report. In addition, data from the baseline monitoring efforts (2012-2013) were analyzed and a draft report was submitted to the USFS for review. Analysis of the baseline data found that the percent of the landscape in woodland condition (basal area 35-70 ft2/acre) was 18%, much lower than the desired 80%+. Five percent of the landscape was in early seral stage, which met the forest objective. Tree density and cover varied widely between plots; dense plots having more hardwoods than desired. Within the sampling areas there was a scarcity of large overstory shortleaf pines (greater than 24" dbh). The overstory in Oklahoma was dominated by loblolly pine instead of the desired native shortleaf pine. Midstory stem density was much higher than desired across the landscape, regardless of covertype and topographic position. These results suggest that targeting treatments mainly at midstory trees would be the most effective and efficient way to transition the system to the desired 80%+ woodland coverage across the landscape. Species richness was generally high in the ground layer, but the dominant species indicated that it was generally of poor quality, containing too many woody species and few graminoids. Non-native species were present in some plots, but always at very low frequencies and low abundances.

The Ouachita National Forest collaborated with the Mark Twain NF (Missouri – Pine-Oak Woodlands Restoration CFLRP) and Ozark NF (Ozark Highlands Ecosystem Restoration CFLRP) to share techniques for vegetative and bird monitoring. Both Arkansas forests are conducting the same vegetation monitoring protocol with TNC and ANHC, with the Mark Twain NF doing similar vegetation monitoring with the addition of floristic data. Data will be collected at all points every year for 3 years (2013-2015), with 3 years of no data collection (2016-2018), followed by 3 more years of data collection (2019-2021). Central Hardwoods Joint Venture will be analyzing the bird data and submitting interim reports after each year, with more consolidated reporting after the first 3 years of data collection. This collaboration will allow comparison of landscape responses on multiple forests within different ecoregions within the shortleaf-pine range.

Northern Research Station (NRS), along with University of Missouri (UM) and Central Hardwoods Joint Venture (CHJV) implemented bird monitoring to 1) determine changes in abundance in response to restoration activities in the cooperative forest landscape restoration project (CFLR) and 2) determine relationships between bird abundance and vegetation structure, composition, and management. Objective 1 will require bird surveys spaced over the duration of the project. However, initial results from objective 2 will be available after 3 years based on the current variation in structure and management that has already taken place.

NRS completed diurnal point count bird surveys at 95 points throughout the ONF (46 points in Oklahoma and 49 in Arkansas) in June 2015. These were the same points surveyed in 2013 and 2014; however, we were unable to reach 5 points in Oklahoma this past summer due to road conditions. Field crews surveyed bird abundance using point counts designed to estimate bird densities as opposed to relative abundance by accounting for species detectability. Detectability will be estimated using distance and time of detection models. Any points that received management activity (e.g. burn or thinning) after the initial vegetation survey in 2013 were re-measured in 2015. Total detections by species for all three years are listed below. Similar numbers of birds across all three years with the exception of a noticeable increase in Summer Tanager detections in 2015.

Data is being analyzing to predict abundance of focal species in relation to key habitat parameters such as tree density, pine basal area, and fire history. A final report will be available in 2016 that explains results of this first phase of the bird monitoring for the cooperative forest landscape restoration project.

Number of Detections

Species	2013	2014	2015
Acadian flycatcher	1	5	0
Bachman's Sparrow	2	1	1
Black-and-white warbler	3	8	8
Brown-headed Nuthatch	17	4	5
Eastern towhee	5	10	10
Eastern wood-pewee	23	29	21
Kentucky warbler	10	21	17
Northern Bobwhite	2	11	12
Ovenbird	6	7	7
Pine warbler	121	185	153
Prairie warbler	48	40	32
Red-cockaded woodpecker	0	1	0
Red-headed woodpecker	6	4	2
Summer tanager	78	70	111
White-eyed vireo	21	13	13
Worm-eating warbler	7	3	5
Wood thrush	0	1	0
Yellow-breasted chat	52	82	54

The Ouachita National Forest in cooperation with the National Wild Turkey Federation and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission worked with Arkansas State University to ensure that the analysis and final reporting for the wild turkey research and monitoring was completed. Currently, Arkansas State University is actively analyzing the data that has been collected over the last three years and a final report is expected by March, 2016. This project is designed to study the bird's demography and habitat use in the shortleaf pine – bluestem grass communities. In 2012 – 2014, turkeys were captured and outfitted with GPS and VHF transmitters and released at trap sites.

As a part of CFLRP, economic impacts of restoration activities are being modeled by a graduate student at the University of Arkansas, Monticello using Impact Analysis for Planning (IMPLAN), a regional economic simulation model. IMPLAN was designed by the US Forest Service to estimate regional economic impacts for National Forests. It estimates local economic impacts based on the input-output model (Nielsen-Pincus and Moseley 2013). Work focuses on economic impacts from FY 2014 work. Preliminary modeling findings include:

- In 2014, the Shortleaf-Bluestem Community Restoration Project (SBCR) created a total of 68 and 82 jobs at the regional and state levels (Arkansas and Oklahoma), respectively.
- At the national level, the SBCR project created a total of 111 jobs of which 19 jobs were in the Agriculture and Forestry sector. Total value added and output generated were $10.2 and $15.2 million, respectively. Total value added and output generated in the Agriculture and Forestry sectors were $409,311 and $744,691, respectively.
- The services sector received most of the impacts with 49 total jobs, $4 million of total value added and $6.4 million of output.

6. FY 2015 accomplishments

Performance Measure	Unit of measure	Total Units Accomplished[11]	Total Treatment Cost ($)	Type of Funds (CFLR, Specific FS BLI, Partner Match)[12]
Acres of forest vegetation established FOR-VEG-EST	Acres	25	1825	CFLN
FOR-VEG-EST	Acres	397	37,152	CWKV
FOR-VEG-EST	Acres	961	16,589	NFVW
FOR-VEG-EST	Acres	391	50,715	RTRT
FOR-VEG-EST	Acres	72	1,825	WFHF
Acres of forest vegetation improved FOR-VEG-IMP	Acres	495	59,425	CFLN
FOR-VEG-IMP	Acres	159	25,500	CWKV
FOR-VEG-IMP	Acres	1169	142,672	NFVW
Manage noxious weeds and invasive plants INVPLT-NXWD-FED-AC	Acre	3.3	214.15	CFLN
INVPLT-NXWD-FED-AC	Acre	3.3	76.65	NFVW PAS only reported 3.3 acres, however a total of 47 acres were accomplished within project area. The additional 43.2 ac was tagged as WAWPR Joint Chiefs project, but was also within CFLRP
Acres of water or soil resources protected, maintained or improved to achieve desired watershed conditions. S&W-RSRC-IMP	Acres	16.95	5,000	n/a
S&W-RSRC-IMP	Acres	60.6	275	n/a
S&W-RSRC-IMP	Acres	16.95	5,000	n/a
Acres of terrestrial habitat restored or enhanced HBT-ENH-TERR	Acres	17132.8	n/a	n/a
BT-ENH-TERR	Acres	5372.6	886,444	CFLN
BT-ENH-TERR	Acres	2240.5	295,419	CWKV

[11] Units accomplished should match the accomplishments recorded in the Databases of Record.
[12] 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 Measure	Unit of measure	Total Units Accomplished11	Total Treatment Cost ($)	Type of Funds (CFLR, Specific FS BLI, Partner Match)12
BT-ENH-TERR	Acres	2207	502,475	NFTM
BT-ENH-TERR	Acres	2428	$235,800	NFVW
BT-ENH-TERR	Acres	2438	6,826	NFWF
BT-ENH-TERR	Acres	11657	68,260	PTNR
BT-ENH-TERR	Acres	n/a	327,408	WFHF
Miles of passenger car system roads improved RD-PC-IMP	Miles	10.87	45,031	CMRD
Miles of high clearance system road improved RD-HC-IMP	Miles	5.59	30,020	CMRD
Acres of forestlands treated using timber sales TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC	Acres	2082.3	104,115	NFTM
TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC	Acres	360	16,050	CFLN
TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC	Acres	420	000	SPFH
TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC	Acres	124	6,200	SSSS
TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC	Acres	151	7,550	CWK2
Volume of Timber Harvested TMBR-VOL-HVST	CCF	46073.6	(included in treatment costs above in TMBR-VOL-SLD)	n/a
Volume of timber sold TMBR-VOL-SLD	CCF	55,237.07	602,456	CFLN*Includes supplemental NFTM funds
TMBR-VOL-SLD	n/a	n/a	910,861	NFTM 55237.07 ccf were completed; not the 80988.1 ccf pulled from PAS Report, due to TIM inaccuracies within reported payment units and rounding.
Green tons from small diameter and low value trees removed from NFS lands and made available for bio-energy production BIO-NRG	Green tons	7379.2*	Treatment cost for this measure included with TMBR-VOL-SLD (above)	*Actual amount is 4,897.70 due to the Mitchell Creek Timber Sale only being partially within the CFLR project area (cannot be distinguished within databases)

Performance Measure	Unit of measure	Total Units Accomplished11	Total Treatment Cost ($)	Type of Funds (CFLR, Specific FS BLI, Partner Match)12
Acres of hazardous fuels treated outside the wildland/urban interface (WUI) to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire FP-FUELS-NON-WUI	Acre	2406	201,584	CFLN
FP-FUELS-NON-WUI	Acre	1962.3	182,223	CWKV
FP-FUELS-NON-WUI	Acre	3889	166,544	NFVW
FP-FUELS-NON-WUI	Acre	2,725	33,893	WFHF
Acres of wildland/urban interface (WUI) high priority hazardous fuels treated to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire FP-FUELS-WUI	Acres	15054.1	420,096	CFLN
FP-FUELS-WUI	Acres	946	35,252	CWKV
FP-FUELS-WUI	Acres	94	6,580	NFVW

7. FY 2015 accomplishment narrative – Summarize key accomplishments and evaluate project progress.
(Please limit answer to three pages.)

What accomplishments are you and your partners most proud of in the last year? *Example* questions to think about:

- How have integrated project activities enhanced the resiliency of the forest and watershed landscape to stressors, including those that may be exacerbated by climate change, such as wildfire, drought, insects and disease?
- How have activities within the CFLRP landscape informed subsequent work?
- What innovations are being implemented on the landscape (e.g. use of new technologies, partnerships, etc. that other efforts can learn from?)
- Are there new or different partners engaged at the table in new ways?
- What projects are members of your community most excited about? New infrastructure for utilization of restoration byproducts? Enhanced habitat for a particular plant or animal species? Improved access to recreation sites?
- How has the CFLR project resulted in less controversy over management of the landscape?

Accomplishments in FY15 directly related to the three main restoration treatments aligned with proposed project progress with the exception of prescribed burning:

- Timber was sold on 4,456 acres, with timber harvesting completed on 3,137 acres within the CFLRP area. The acres of timber that have been sold (accomplished) is 65% of our project proposal of 6,000 acres per year. The payment units reported as completed remains significantly below the proposed annual pace. This is indicative of a timber market still in the process of bottoming out, where payment units purchased over the last two years have

yet to be logged.

- Treatments designed to reduce the density of non-commercial trees within the forest CFLRP communities totaled 4,947acres: 2,469 Wildlife Stand Improvement (WSI); 1,728 acres of Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) and 750 acres of Pre-Commercial Thinning (PCT). This total of 5,416 exceeded our proposal of 5,000 acres per year, however for the life of the project to date we are still ahead of projected proposal.
- Prescribed burning totaled 25,678 acres, with an additional 17,798 acres of mechanical fuels treatments within the CFLRP area, totaling 41,089 acres. This is well short of the proposed 100,000 acres.

Restoration treatments produced 55,237 ccf volume of timber sold, most of which is high value southern yellow pine sawtimber, all sold to local mills within the impact area of the project.

With our partners, we continue to monitor the effects of our management on the project area associated with the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW). We continue to see a rise in RCW population numbers from 13 active clusters in 1990 to approximately 60 active clusters in 2015.

Progress on Three Key Treatments for Shortleaf Pine – Bluestem Grass Restoration (Acres Accomplished and proposed**)**

Treatment	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Accomplished Cumulative Total	Proposed Accomplish-ment total at Year 4	% of Proposed 4-yr Total
Prescribed Burning (Acres)	44,805	54,461	43,532	25,678	168,476	355,000	47%
Non-commercial thinning (WSI, TSI)	3,660	7,021	5,416	4,947	21,044	18,000	117%
Volume of timber sales sold	69,206	71,700	79,828	55,237	275,971	158,000	175%

Timber harvest area (acres):

Treatment	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Cumulative Total	Proposed Accomplishment total at Year 4	% of Proposed 4-yr Total
Accomplished	n/a	4,966	7,033	4,456	21,128	22,000	96%
Completed	n/a	160	4,195	3,137	9,957	22,000	45%

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?**[13]

Fiscal Year	Total number of acres treated (treatment footprint)
Total in FY15	206,392 acres
FY10, FY11, FY12, FY13, FY14, and FY15 (as applicable- projects selected in FY2012 may will not have data for FY10 and FY11; projects that were HPRP projects in FY12, please include one number for FY12 and one number for FY13 (same as above))	FY12 – 48,625 acres FY13 – 63,947 acres FY14 – 53,143 acres FY15 – 45,658 acres

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

During FY 2012 through 2014, no treated acres accomplished were previously treated, so all acres were accumulated as

[13] 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.

treatments were implemented. In FY 2015, 45,658 were accomplished between prescribed burning, commercial timber sales and non-commercial stand treatments. Of these acres treated in FY 15, 4,981 acres were treated in previous years, and were deducted from the total treatment acreage.

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).

The forest experienced unusual weather and other events that frustrated prescribed burning expectations for the year. For a narrative description of weather highlights, please refer to the weather summary on question 2b. The year began with promise because we experienced good prescribed fire weather as early as mid-January extending to about Valentine's Day. Most of the FY 2015 prescribe burn 70,000+ acres of accomplishment occurred during that time period. The forest then experienced an extended spell of wet and cold weather that prohibited burning until late March. As the program was on the verge of resuming in large scale, a helicopter accident with fatalities occurred on the Nationals Forests of Mississippi. This unfortunate event necessitated a safety stand down for an extended period region-wide. On the Ouachita, prescribed burning did not resume until after the end of the forest's stand down in late June. Prescribed burning of small tracts continued from that time up to when the area became too dry for prescribed burning in early September. This small scale burning did not contribute significant accomplishment to the year's overall program production.

Overall matching amounts throughout the life of the project are shown below:

FY	Matching Contribution($)	Direct CFLR Funding($)
2012	720,474	316,319
2013	2,600,223	2,099,632
2014	2,143,051	2,112,377
2015	1,944,928	2,322,994
Totals…	**7,408,676**	**6,851,322**

10. Planned FY 2017 Accomplishments[14]

Performance Measure Code15	Unit of measure	Planned Accomplishment	Amount ($)
Acres of forest vegetation improved FOR-VEG-EST	Acres	320	620,000
Manage noxious weeds and invasive plants INVPLT-NXWD-FED-AC	Acre	30	4,500
Acres of terrestrial habitat restored or enhanced HBT-ENH-TERR	Acres	99,900	2,952,200
Miles of high clearance system roads receiving maintenance RD-HC-MAIN	Miles	88	40,000

[14] 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.
[15] Please include all relevant planned accomplishments, assuming that funding specified in the CFLRP project proposal for FY 2017 is available. Use actual planned funding if quantity is less than specified in CFLRP project work plan.

Performance Measure Code15	Unit of measure	Planned Accomplishment	Amount ($)
Miles of passenger car system roads receiving maintenance RD-PC-MAINT	Miles	178	35,000
Miles of road decommissioned RD-DECOM	Miles	2	6,000
Miles of passenger car system roads improved RD-PC-IMP	Miles	3	180,000
Miles of high clearance system road improved RD-HC-IMP	Miles	18	900,000
Acres of forestlands treated using timber sales TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC	Acres	5,800	1,160,000
Volume of timber sold TMBR-VOL-SLD	CCF	44,250	1,125,000
Green tons from small diameter and low value trees removed from NFS lands and made available for bio-energy production BIO-NRG	Green tons	5,000	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	35,000	980,000
Acres of wildland/urban interface (WUI) high priority hazardous fuels treated to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire FP-FUELS-WUI	Acres	65,000	1,820,000

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

The SBC Project FY17 program of work is projected to achieve our grant proposed planned activities. In order to achieve these goals, several ongoing NEPA projects will need to be accomplished in FY16. Planned projects for FY17 (and FY16) include 100,000 acres of prescribed burning, 6,000 acres commercially thinned, sale of over 40,000 CCF and 5,000 acres of WSI/TSI, funded both with CFLN and matching funds.

In addition, herbicide treatment of invasive species, road decommissioning, re-establishment of milkweed and other

native plant species, environmental education efforts, continuation of turkey research are planned for FY17. Also in FY17, RCW habitat improvement work will consist of providing artificial inserts for nesting and roosting, improving nesting and foraging habitat by commercially thinning stands and accomplishing mid-story removal through contracts and stewardship work, removing flying squirrels from cavities for this endangered species. Habitat restoration will continue on the ABB sites to increase population numbers of this endangered species.

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):

The Ouachita National Forest has no plans to deviate for planned accomplishments and/or funding levels as outlined in our CFLRP proposal and work plans. However, if funding is reduced either in grant or appropriated funds, the accomplishments projected for FY16/17 will need to be adjusted. The most intense accomplishment is prescribed burning. This accomplishment is primarily weather dependent. If prescribed burning activities are not conducive due to weather conditions, then accomplishments may be increased in other areas to achieve restoration goals.

The majority of our improved roads and maintenance of high clearance roads has been accomplished through timber sale purchases during FY15. With roads funding being reduced over the last few years, these accomplishments continue to be funded through this source. However, with the cost of road maintenance and improvement greatly increasing over the past few years, the cost of maintaining and improving our roads associated with timber sales may be at a cost approaching or exceeding the cost of the sale. This has resulted in fewer dollars available for Knutson-Vandenburg Trust Fund (KV) work planned within the project. With this reduction in KV funds, we would need to look at other sources (appropriated funds) to accomplish our planned work. If appropriated funding is not available, the Forest may have to deviate from planned activities. Also, the high cost of road work within a timber sale could exceed the cost of the sale, resulting in the timber sale not being sold, which in turn would greatly affect our planned accomplishments.

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.

AES Shady Point, LLC – Lundy Kiger, http://aes.com/
Arkansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society - Ben Batten, President, http://sdafs.org/arkafs/Home.html
Arkansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society – Allison Fowler, President, http://drupal.wildlife.org/arkansas/
Arkansas Forestry Commission-Joe Fox, State Forester, http://forestry.arkansas.gov/Pages/default.aspx
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission-Mike Knoedl, Director, http://www.agfc.com
Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission - Chris Colclasure, Director, http://www.naturalheritage.com/
Arkansas State University - Tom Risch, Chair Department of Biological Science, http://www.astate.edu/
Arkansas Tech University – Chris Kellner, Professor of Wildlife Science, http://www.atu.edu/
Arkansas Wildlife Federation-Wayne Shewmake, President, http://www.arkwildlifefederation.org/
Audubon Arkansas – Brett Kincaid, VP and Executive Director, http://ar.audubon.org/
Bureau of Land Management, http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en.html
Caddo Nation of Oklahoma, http://urlm.co/www.caddonation-nsn.gov
Central Arkansas Water –Raven Lawson, Watershed Protection Manager, http://www.carkw.com/
Central Hardwoods Joint Venture – Jane Fitzgerald, Coordinator, http://chjv.org/
Cherokee Nation, http://www.cherokee.org/
Choctaw Nation, http://www.choctawnation.com/
Gulf Coastal Plains & Ozarks LCC - D. Todd Jones-Farrand, Science Coordinator, http://gcpolcc.org/
Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture, Doyle Shock, http://www.lmvjv.org/
Monarch Joint Venture - Priya Shahani, Program Coordinator, http://www.monarchjointventure.org/
Monarch Watch – Orely "Chip" Taylor, Director, http://www.monarchwatch.org/
National Park Service- Kevin Cheri, Superintendent, http://www.nps.gov/buff/index.htm
National Wild Turkey Federation-Jeremy Everitts, Regional Biologist, http://www.nwtf.org/
Native Expeditions – Robin Gregory, Director, http://www.nativeexpeditions.org/

Natural Resources Conservation Service, George Rheinhardt, NRCS State Forester, http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/
Oklahoma Biological Survey – Caryn Vaughn, Director, http://www.biosurvey.ou.edu/
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation – Joe Hemphill, SE Region Wildlife Supervisor, http://wildlifedepartment.com/
Oklahoma Forestry Services – George Geissler, State Forester, http://www.forestry.ok.gov/
Oklahoma State University – Ronald Van Den Sussche, Associate Dean of Research, http://www.research.okstate.edu/
Ozark Chinquapin Foundation, http://ozarkchinquapin.com/
Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation – Nick Prough
Scott County - James Forbes, County Judge, http://scottcountyar.com/
Shortleaf Pine Initiative – Mike Black, http://shortleafpine.org/
Tall Timber Research, Inc. – Ron Masters, Director of Research, http://talltimbers.org/
The Nature Conservancy AR – Scott Simon, Director, http://www.nature.org
The Nature Conservancy OK – Mike Fuhr, Director, http://www.nature.org
West Fraser Lumber Company – Mark Travis, http://www.westfraser.com/company/locations/mansfield-sawmill
US Fish and Wildlife Service-Melvin Tobin, Field Supervisor, http://www.fws.gov/arkansas-es/
US Forest Service Northern Research Station – Frank Thompson, Project Leader, Shortleaf-Bluestm-com-FY15-508.docx
US Forest Service Southern Research Station – Jim Guldin, Project Leader, http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/index.php
US Geological Survey- David Freiwald, Deputy Director, http://ar.water.usgs.gov/
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville – James Rankin, Vice Provost for Research & Economic Development, http://provost.uark.edu/staff/james-rankin.php
University of Arkansas, Cooperative Extension Service, Tamara Walkingstick, http://uaex.edu/
University of Arkansas, Monticello – Sayeed Mehmood, Ass Prof, School of Forest Resources
University of Missouri, Dept. of Forestry, Michael C. Stambaughm

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

Examples **to think through:**

- **Have you brought on a partnership coordinator or worked more closely with a regional partnership coordinator?**
- **Have you conducted outreach events in the community to bring in volunteers for project implementation or monitoring?**
- **Have you formed new or enhanced relationships with local schools or universities?**

Collaboration with our partners included consideration of commercial thinning of pine stands within insect and disease treatment areas designated by the Chief of the Forest Service after requests were sent in by both the Arkansas and Oklahoma governors. The designation process was outlined in the 2014 Farm Bill that amended the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, allowing the use of a categorical exclusion for up to 3,000 acres of area to be treated for insect and disease concerns. A wide array of partners urged the Ouachita National Forest to "accelerate management actions within insect and disease treatment areas designated in 2014 … to reduce the risk of bark beetle infestations, especially the southern pine beetle and species of Ips…" The Forest responded by implementing two categorical exclusions, including thinning of dense shortleaf pine within the CFLRP boundaries on the Ouachita NF. Partners included the Arkansas Forestry Commission, The Nature Conservancy, NRCS, National Wild Turkey Federation, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Shortleaf Pine Initiative, Lower Mississippi Joint Venture, Central Hardwoods Joint Venture and the Ozark – St. Francis National Forests.

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.

As a part of involving youth in the activities of the Forest, the Forest held its usual fishing derbies:

http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/ouachita/news-events/?cid=STELPRD3839337

As a part of collaborative work with Milkweed for Monarchs, 8 schools and 605 students were involved in planting seeds to restore native habitat for monarch butterflies during August and September.

In October, 2014 at the beginning of the FY, a webpage was created with the help of Native Expeditions:

Habitat Restoration: http://www.nativeexpeditions.org/habitat-restoration.html
Milkweed Flyer - Seed pod collection

During FY 15, staff of the Poteau/ Cold Springs Ranger District led approximately 9 tours of the Shortleaf Bluestem Restoration area. In the Photo to the left, a tour is offered to personnel from the University of Arkansas Monticello school of forestry.

This tour is illustrated in “The Buffalo Road Tour” a Brochure developed cooperatively with High School students studying GIS at Dardanelle High School and a former USFS employee.

During April and May 2015, the Forest Service, along with collaborators hosted 2 “Welcome to the Woods” and demonstrated benefits of forest management, use of fire and related events. These events were held at the Charlton Recreation Area (185 students) and at the Little Pines Recreation Area (280 students). Students received environmental

education to understand the benefits of the restoration efforts of how thinning the basal area, prescribed burning, reducing woody midstory, and specific species habitat management for wildlife like the Red cockaded woodpecker.

CFLRP, March 30, 2015 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zM_zF_K0Y-Y
Habitat Heroes of the Ouachita National Forest, August 31, 2015 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuhHBOE5amo
Habitat Heroes of the Ouachita NF, September 16, 2015 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNH0W_5bieQ

The Forest worked with the Southern Regional Extension Forestry at the University of Georgia to craft a brief passage on the shortleaf pine – bluestem grass program on the Ouachita National Forest for the Shortleaf Pine Conference held in September at Knoxville, Tennessee. This 200-word write up included the history of the program, treatment regime, and the current partners within the CFLRP.

Three monitoring projects are underway that will likely result in dissertations and peer-reviewed publications. These include:

1) Wild turkey research is in the analysis phase at Arkansas State University. A final report and a likely PhD dissertation are expected in March of 2016 on wild turkey behavior in and around treatment areas in the ***Shortleaf – Bluestem Community*** CFLRP project.
2) Soft mast effects from repeated landscape-level prescribed burning is being examined by the Southern Research Station, with expected monitoring results in 2016.
3) Economic monitoring by the University of Arkansas – Monticello resulted in a poster presentation at the Society of American Foresters National Convention in Baton Rouge, LA recently. This monitoring is being completed on FY 2014 data and will be reported in FY 2016.

Signatures:

Recommended by (Project Coordinator(s)): /s/ ***Steven N. Cole***

Approved by (Forest Supervisor(s))[16]: /s/ ***Norman L. Wagoner***

[16] If your project includes more than one National Forest, please include an additional line for each Forest Supervisor signature.