

The USDA Forest Service's National Best Management Practice Program

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Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Techniques applied to, or methods incorporated into management activities to control nonpoint source pollution

Includes:

- Planning measures
- Physical or structural techniques
- Operational or maintenance procedures



Why the Forest Service Needs a National BMP Program

- Clean Water Act and Amendments state that BMPs should be used to control nonpoint source pollution
- Forest Service policy and Code of Federal Regulations direct the agency to use BMPs to control nonpoint source pollution
- Forest Plans require the use of BMPs



Why the Forest Service Needs a National BMP Program

- Forests currently use Regional BMP guidance, State BMPs, and Forest Plan Standards & Guidelines to control NPS
- Monitoring of BMPs varies by Region and by Forest
- The Agency lacks a consistent process for demonstrating BMP implementation and effectiveness
- The National BMP Program is intended to improve agency accountability

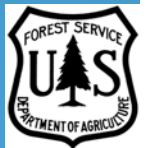
Why the Forest Service Needs a National BMP Program

- BMP use has allowed waterbodies to be placed in a “4b” category rather than on 303(d) lists requiring TDMLs
- BMP monitoring provides documented support of Findings of No Significant Impact in NEPA analyses
- Compliance with Endangered Species Act



Why the Forest Service Needs a National BMP Program

- Strengthen the Agency against lawsuits
- Forest Service has told EPA and Office of Management and Budget it will develop a National BMP Program
- Lack of BMP monitoring for many Forest Service land management activities
- Monitoring emphasizes implementation OR effectiveness



National BMP Program

Program Objectives:

- Establish a set of National Core BMPs for application on National Forest System lands for major land management activities
- Develop a consistent, repeatable approach for monitoring BMP implementation and effectiveness of those activities



National BMP Program

Two Parts:

- Document describing the National Core BMPs
- Monitoring program to evaluate BMP implementation and effectiveness



Forest Service National Core BMPs – Nonpoint Source Pollution Control for Water Quality Management

The Forest Service National Core Best Management Practices

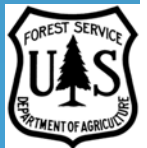
Nonpoint Source Pollution Control
for Water Quality Management
on National Forest System Lands

Internal Review Draft
August 28, 2009



Ten Land Management Activities

- Aquatic Ecosystems Activities
 - Chemical Use Activities
 - Facilities and Nonrecreation Special Use Activities
 - Wildland Fire Management Activities
 - Minerals Activities
 - Rangeland Management Activities
 - Recreation Activities
 - Road Management Activities
 - Vegetation Harvest and Regeneration Activities
 - Water Uses Activities
- And a General Planning BMP



Core BMPs

- Nonprescriptive
- Identify a primary feature or type of activity to consider to control NPS

e.g., Core BMPs in vegetation harvesting and regeneration are:

- Vegetation management planning
- Erosion prevention and control
- Streamside management zones
- Ground-based skidding and yarding
- Suspended yarding
- Landings
- Site preparation



Core BMPS

- General Techniques are given for each BMP within an activity
- State BMPs, Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines and/or other local direction will be used to customize the applicable Core BMP techniques to site conditions at the project level



BMP Monitoring Program

- Includes “good parts” of other BMP monitoring programs
- Objective questions, repeatable responses
- Questions to capture information on corrective actions
- Questions to capture information on adaptive management
- Questions/responses would be useful at the local level



BMP Monitoring Program

- Monitoring forms
 - Developed by teams of resources specialists
 - Usually 1 form for each core BMP, except planning

Each form has 4 sections:

 - Header
 - Implementation
 - Effectiveness
 - General Comments
- Supporting documentation
 - Population development
 - Sample selection
 - How to monitor
 - Question-by-question instructions for each form



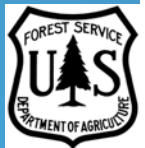
BMP Monitoring Program

- Header (general and site information; sorting)
- Implementation (did we do what we said we'd do)
 - Was NPS considered during planning (NEPA)
 - Did NPS considerations in NEPA decision make it into contract or plan
 - Were NPS-related BMPs fully implemented
 - Corrective management actions needed
 - Adaptive management actions needed



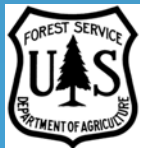
BMP Monitoring Program

- Effectiveness (did implemented BMPs control NPS)
 - Tiered back to implementation
 - Were BMPs effective at controlling NPS pollution
 - Causes and sources of NPS pollution
 - Corrective management actions needed
 - Adaptive management actions needed
- General Comments



Monitoring Form Status

- Vegetation Management and Rangeland Management forms field tested and revised
- Minerals, Fire, Roads forms ready for field testing
- Recreation, Water Uses, and Aquatic Ecosystems forms will be ready for field testing this summer
- Chemical Uses, and Facilities and Nonrecreation Special Uses forms will be developed this summer



Future Planned Activities

- Convert paper forms to electronic format – San Dimas Technology & Development Center
- Create database in USFS national data center – Natural Resource Information System (NRIS)
- Software to create reports for local, regional, and national reporting of BMP implementation and effectiveness

