

Part 1 – Agency Profile

Agency Overview

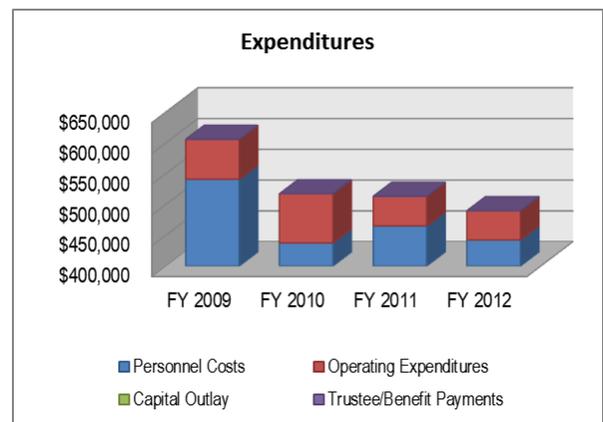
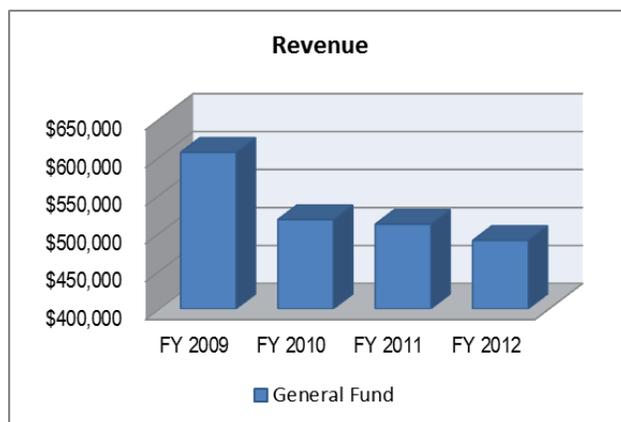
Research mission – investigation into forestry and rangeland resource management problems, forest nursery production, and related areas. Part of the College of Natural Resources, Forest Utilization Research also includes the Rangeland Center with a legislative mandate for interdisciplinary research, education and outreach as suggested by a partner advisory council to fulfill the University’s land grant mission (Idaho Code § 38-715), and the Policy Analysis Group with a legislative mandate to provide objective data and analysis pertinent to natural resource and land-use issues as suggested by an advisory committee of Idaho’s natural resource leaders (Idaho Code § 38-714).

Core Functions/Idaho Code

The duty of the Experiment Station of the University of Idaho’s College of Natural Resources is to institute and conduct investigations and research into the forestry, wildlife and range problems of the lands within the state. Such problems specifically include forest and timber growing, timber products marketing, seed and nursery stock production, game and other wildlife, and forage and rangeland resources. Information resulting from cooperative investigation and research, including continuing inquiry into public policy issues pertinent to resource and land use questions of general interest to the people of Idaho, is to be published and distributed to affected industries and interests. (Idaho Code §§ 38-701, 38-703, 38-706, 38-707, 38-708, 38-709, 38-710, 38-711, 38-714, 38-715)

Revenue and Expenditures:

Revenue	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
General Fund	\$ 605,900	\$ 517,500	\$511,400	\$490,000
Total	\$ 605,900	\$ 517,500	\$511,400	\$490,000
Expenditure	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Personnel Costs	\$541,100	\$ 437,700	\$465,244	\$442,430
Operating Expenditures	64,800	79,800	48,156	47,570
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0
Trustee/Benefit Payments	0	0	0	0
Total	\$ 605,900	\$ 517,500	\$511,400	\$490,000



Profile of Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided:

Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY2012
Number of Private Landowners Assisted: Pitkin Forest Nursery	1600	1300	1300	1400
Number of Seedling Industry Research Projects: Pitkin Forest Nursery	2	2	3	3
Number of:				
• Research Projects:				
Experimental Forest	13	8	7	13
Policy Analysis Group	9	6	6	8
Pitkin Forest Nursery	11	10	12	10
Rangeland Center	*	*	2	4
• Teaching Projects:				
Experimental Forest	28	30	21	24
Policy Analysis Group	25	26	20	24
Pitkin Forest Nursery	5	5	5	5
Rangeland Center	*	*	2	9
• Service Projects:				
Experimental Forest	7	2	5	9
Policy Analysis Group	19	14	14	15
Pitkin Forest Nursery	12	15	15	12
Rangeland Center	*	*	2	4

*The Rangeland Center was initiated in FY2011.

Performance Highlights:**Experimental Forest:****Highlights:**

Research – 13 research projects include graduate and undergraduate student involvement to collect and analyze data.

Education – Classroom involvement – 9 faculty, 12 different class courses, 24 field trips, 20 follow up lab sessions, involving more than 300 students with hands-on experience.

Internships – 13 student intern workforce applies interdisciplinary academic learning that includes critical thinking and problem-solving experience. Student interns are exposed to a wide array of land management experiences involving multiple resources and the challenge of addressing regulatory policies with scientific information.

Outreach – 9 outreach and engagement activities include school teachers, loggers, professional foresters, non-industrial private forest land owners, and interested Idaho citizens. Hosted activities on a pair of active and completed harvest sites, where multiple objectives are achieved via management activities.

The centerpiece of the University of Idaho Experimental Forest (UIEF) is the 8,247 acres of forest land on Moscow Mountain that are adjacent to both industrial and non-industrial private forest lands surrounded by dry land farming in Latah County. Today all but 450 acres are managed as working forests, balancing education, research, and demonstration with production of timber, clean water, fire hazard mitigation, smoke particulate management, and wildlife and fisheries habitat. The UIEF also manages 398 acres in two parcels in Kootenai County, and has a life estate of 1,649 acres in Valley County that someday will come under UIEF management. As noted in the highlights above and details below, these lands provide many research, education and outreach opportunities.

Research conducted on the UIEF in FY2012 provided original data for seven projects conducted by College of Natural Resources faculty, as well as four more research projects conducted by College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and one partnering with USDA Forest Service (Rocky Mountain Research Station). Today's graduate students who collect and analyze these data become tomorrow's scientists and organization leaders.

Education involving hands-on experience to supplement classroom and laboratory exercises is a significant and valuable supplement to a college education in forest utilization. In FY2012 nine faculty members – College of Natural Resources (7), College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (1), and Washington State University (1) – used the UIEF for at least one field trip session during twelve different courses, ranging from an introductory freshman orientation to senior and graduate level courses demonstrating current research knowledge and land management practices. In total more than 300 university students visited the UIEF on 24 field trips, with an additional 20 follow-up laboratory sessions in which data collected during field trips were analyzed.

Internship opportunities for students have been offered by the UIEF since 1972. In FY2012 the UIEF employed 13 students as the multidisciplinary workforce of choice, successfully completing the 39th consecutive year of the Student Logging Crew Program, like previous season, without a single injury to report. Staff provide hands-on education as the students help accomplish the management objectives in the UIEF strategic plan, helping the College fulfill the duties of the Experiment Station as described in Idaho Code above. Student employee interns are required to think critically and solve problems on a daily basis, thus are acquiring job skills beyond just accomplishing the work-at-hand. These work assignments include technology transfer as students learn to employ state-of-the-art equipment and techniques, as well as incorporating their interdisciplinary academic learning in an operational and research forest setting. Upon graduation these student employee interns generally have little trouble finding employment.

Outreach and engagement conducted on the UIEF and by the staff attract Idaho citizens of all ages and all walks of life, from school teachers to loggers and foresters. Nine such activities were conducted in FY2012. For example, a Palouse/Snake River chapter of the Society of American Foresters (SAF) field trip included a stop at the UIEF for discussion of active timber sales as a means to achieve multiple objectives, including creating field research sites as well as opportunities for outdoor educational learning. One particular problem they focused on is reducing fuels that pose a wildfire hazard by removing woody biomass as well as conventional timber stumpage. These features were demonstrated by a harvest in progress and a completed harvest and its resultant site uses by researchers and faculty for educational purposes.

Policy Analysis Group:

Highlights:

Economic Contributions – The role of the forest products manufacturing industry in the Idaho economy was featured in publications prepared for the Idaho Legislature's Economic Outlook and Revenue Assessment Committee. Presented results of analyses of endowment lands, including their economic contributions, to the Idaho Legislature's Natural Resources Interim Committee. Presented results of analysis of economic contributions of federal timberlands in Idaho to Rep. Raúl Labrador's staff.

Director Involvement – Actively participated in each meeting of the Governor's Sage Grouse Task Force, providing information on strategies for mitigating effects of wildfire on sage-grouse habitat, and at the request of the Governor's Office, compiled the task force's recommendations report. Represented Idaho on the Western Governors' Forest Health Advisory Committee and played a leadership role. Chaired the Idaho Strategic Energy Alliance's Forestry/Biomass Task Force. The 2012 Idaho Energy Plan, prepared by the Legislature's Energy, Environment and Technology Interim Committee with the assistance of the Idaho Strategic Energy Alliance, included a section on bioenergy resources written by the PAG Director.

Publication highlights included an updated revision of a Policy Analysis Group report on Idaho's state endowment lands, which in August prompted an invitation to open the two-day hearings of the Natural Resources Interim Committee on endowment trust asset management issues with presentation of the report. Also in August, at the request of Rep. Raúl Labrador's staff, the Director published and presented an issue brief on the expiring Secure Rural Schools Act and the funding used for county roads and schools in rural Idaho in lieu of revenue-sharing from federal land timber sales; in September the Director was invited to accompany Rep. Labrador during his presentation on federal land management during the Idaho Association of Counties annual meeting. In January, the economic contributions of the state's natural resource-based industries were featured in publications made available for the Idaho Legislature's Economic Outlook and Revenue Assessment Committee meeting immediately before the 2012 legislative session began.

During engagement with the Governor's Sage Grouse Task Force from March through May, the Director gave three presentations on wildfire, one of the leading threats to sage-grouse habitat conservation and the focal point of a recent Policy Analysis Group report on rangeland fuel treatments published in December. The Director continues to chair the Forestry/Biomass Task Force for the Idaho Strategic Energy Alliance (ISEA), and in that role contributed to the 2012 Idaho Energy Plan as well as leading a biomass roundtable conducted by the Center for Advance Energy Studies (CAES) Energy Policy Institute (EPI) and with the EPI Director published the roundtable report in April.

The Director continues to be actively engaged in other state, regional and national task forces and committees dealing with policy issues of importance to Idaho. This includes a leadership role with the Western Governors' Association Forest Health Advisory Committee (WGA-FHAC), for which the Director drafted a policy resolution adopted by the WGA on the use of forest biomass as an energy feedstock. On behalf of the WGA-FHAC he gave a presentation in November to the Wildland Fire Leadership Council when it met in Denver on the importance of active management of federal forest lands as a wildfire management strategy. Other invited expense-paid presentations at regional and national meetings during the year included Restoring the West Conference on Sustaining Forests, Woodlands, and Communities Through Biomass Use (Logan, Utah); Watershed Moments – People, Forests and Water (Starker Lecture, Oregon State University); Rocky Mountain Forest Restoration and Biomass Summit (Denver); International Biomass Conference and Exposition (Denver); and Trust Management – A Viable Option for Public Forest Lands? (Portland, Oregon).

The Director also presented results of analysis projects at continuing education events conducted by the Idaho Forest Products Commission and the Inland Northwest Foresters' Forum as well as the Logger Education to Advance Professionalism workshops by the University of Idaho Forestry Extension program. In addition the Director was featured in four interviews (three radio and one newspaper). The Director also taught a graduate level policy analysis course, supervised completion of a PhD student in the University's Waters of the West program, advised 8 Master of Natural Resources students (two completed during the year), and served on three graduate student committees.

Pitkin Forest Nursery:

Highlights:

Research – improve the quality of plant material available for reforestation and restoration throughout Idaho. In collaboration with Potlatch Corp., developed a long-term research project to identify methods of improving tree seedling cost effectiveness throughout the establishment period. Provided plant propagation protocols for use in Idaho's nursery industry, including a much anticipated one for mountain huckleberry.

Education – support of 6 graduate students through research at Pitkin Forest Nursery including understanding of tree germination for several Idaho tree and shrub species, problems of stocktype selection. This will facilitate efficiency of seed use in forest management, prediction of natural regeneration and post-fire restoration activities, as well as restoration of degraded forests and rangelands.

Outreach – several workshops and training sessions aimed at improving forest management practices in Idaho, including the Inland Empire Reforestation Council and the Intermountain Container Seedling Growers Association. Activities for children, land management professions and layperson provide further instruction and education.

Teaching – provided research and teaching facility for several UI courses which require hands-on nursery experience. This provides experience which is sought by forest tree seedling nurseries throughout the United States.

The Pitkin Forest Nursery continues to actively engage with Idaho landowners, natural resource industries, and citizens. An ever-popular seedling growing program in partnership with the Idaho Forest Products Commission was documented in a web-clip for promoting the University of Idaho and Idaho's Forest Industry. Ongoing research into improved forest management practices included studying the effects of stocktype (the method of production of nursery stock for reforestation and restoration) selection on seedling development. This research topic will provide information and decision support across the state that is anticipated to streamline nursery production practices with the site-specific reforestation needs; a second layer of complexity (managing competing vegetation in the field) will further develop the utility of this information for Idaho. Similar research with rangeland species is also underway. An additional study on seed germination will allow for field foresters to better understand the opportunities for natural regeneration of stands following timber harvesting. In FY2012, six graduate students were working towards degrees through research conducted at the nursery, and many other students are using the facilities at the Pitkin Forest Nursery as a component of their graduate research on forest nutrition and soil management, fire modeling, and post-fire regeneration. The Pitkin Forest Nursery also provided the base facility to be selected by the US Forest Service to develop training materials and conduct research to improve reforestation practices in Lebanon. This fully-funded project created two new research scientist positions based out of Moscow.

Through actively seeking to be a recognized leader in seedling research and technology transfer, we partnered extensively to have our facility serve as the base of training for American and International Students. Activities for children, land management professionals, and laypersons have helped increase understanding of the importance of forestry and natural resource management in Idaho. For example, in March our organization resumed the treasurer/planner role in the Inland Empire Reforestation Council (~200 attendees, Coeur d'Alene) while in October 2011, the 32nd Intermountain Container Seedling Growers Association Meeting was held in Moscow and attracted participants from across the state. On the teaching side, several University of Idaho courses used the nursery facilities for hands-on education. Forest tree seedling nurseries throughout the United States are seeking graduates with experience such as that gained at the Pitkin Forest Nursery (4 graduates began career-track positions last year).

Rangeland Center:

Highlights:

Research – 5 research projects can be specifically tied to the collaborative efforts of the Rangeland Center. Researchers in the Rangeland Center were also involved in over 100 related research projects that contribute to our understanding of rangelands and the communities that rely on them.

Teaching – 9 university courses taught by 4 faculty members are directly related to rangeland ecology and management research project of the Rangeland Center.

Service – 4 important projects of the Rangeland Center were designed for service and outreach for a general audience in the past year

The University's Rangeland Center strives to create insight and foster understanding for the stewardship of rangelands. Rangelands cover half of Idaho, half the West, and half the earth's land surface. Therefore, rangelands affect the ecological health and economic livelihood of our state and region. The

innovative design of the Rangeland Center promotes active partnerships with individuals, organizations and communities who work and live on the vast landscapes known as rangelands. The Rangeland Center is a group of 23 researchers and outreach specialists in the College of Natural Resources and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Our expertise cover several disciplines that affect rangeland management and conservation including grazing, rangeland ecology, entomology, soil science, economics, rural sociology, fish and wildlife resources, invasive plants, forage production, animal science, wildland fire, restoration and the use of spatial technologies to understand rangelands. Our research and outreach efforts are aimed at creating science and solutions for the range.

Research projects conducted by the Rangeland Center in the past year include a project in collaboration with land owners on the use of grazing to reduce wildland fuel loads. Results of this were presented to the Governor's Sage Grouse Task Force. We also worked collaboratively to assess the effects of livestock impacts on slickspot peppergrass (an endangered plant) and the relationship between livestock grazing and the abundance and diversity of insects that provide food for sage-grouse chicks. A project in Lemhi county is quantifying changes in vegetation after exclusion of grazing from riparian areas. Several teams of students are working in a state-wide project to assess rangelands as part of the National Resource Inventory program directed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Several members of the Rangeland Center are involved in teaching university courses that focus on rangeland ecology and management. Five of 9 rangeland courses include extensive field trips where students engage in rangeland examinations and interact with land managers. Three rangeland courses are offered in an on-line format and are accessible to students and professionals who are unable to attend courses delivered only on campus. Two summer courses were offered in a workshop-format designed for high school teacher seeking continuing education courses for teacher certification. The Rangeland Principles course was also offered in cooperation with 4 Idaho high school teachers as a dual credit course where high school student simultaneously gain credit for high school and college credit. Rangeland faculty members also gave dozens of guest presentations to advance the understanding of rangelands in courses throughout campus.

Service and outreach projects in the Rangeland Center this year include development of the Range Science Information System (www.rangescience.info) which provides ready access to scientific research papers for ranchers and land managers. We also worked with high school Future Farmers of America (FFA) programs to conduct the Idaho FFA Rangeland Assessment Career Development Event for high school students in Idaho and the Western National Rangeland Assessment event for high school students in Idaho, Nevada, and Utah. A summer workshop was also conducted for land owners and managers focused on plant identification and monitoring.

Other Activities:

In February, Governor Otter convened a meeting during which the concept of a Sage Grouse Task Force was conceived as a way for the State of Idaho to follow the invitation of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior and develop a conservation strategy that could perhaps preclude the need to list Idaho populations under the Endangered Species Act. College of Natural Resources (CNR) Dean Kurt Pregitzer attended the meeting, during which the Governor asked the University to help with this effort. Since then the Rangeland Center and the Policy Analysis Group have both made substantial contributions to help the Governor's Office develop a sage-grouse conservation strategy. These contributions are identified above.

Part II – Performance Measures

Performance Measure	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY2012	Bench- mark
Number of New Research Projects Per Year:					
Experimental Forest	6	5	5	10	4
Policy Analysis Group	2	2	1	2	2
Pitkin Forest Nursery	5	5	8	5	5
Rangeland Center	*	*	2	3	2
Goal 2, Objective A, Strategy 1, 2, 3 Goal 3, Objective A, Strategy 2					
Number of Research Studies Completed/Published Per Year:					
Experimental Forest	1	2	3	3	4
Policy Analysis Group	3	2	1	3	2
Pitkin Forest Nursery	5	8	8	5	5
Rangeland Center	*	*	0	1	2
Goal 3, Objective A, Strategy 1					
Number of Publications:					
Experimental Forest	2	2	3	3	3
Policy Analysis Group	19	14	14	15	10
Pitkin Forest Nursery	12	7	10	12	10
Rangeland Center	*	*	2	8	8
Goal 1, Objective B, Strategy 1					
Number of Workshops Conducted:					
Experimental Forest	6	4	9	6	12
Goal 3, Objective A, Strategy 1					
Policy Analysis Group	25	26	20	24	12
Goal 1, Objective B, Strategy 2					
Pitkin Forest Nursery	21	20	20	20	20
Goal 1, Objective A, Strategy 2					
Goal 3, Objective A, Strategy 2					
Rangeland Center	*	*	2	2	2
Goal 1, Objective A, Strategy 2					

*The Rangeland Center was initiated in FY2011; its benchmarks were established during FY2012.

For More Information Contact

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