



# **Monitoring and Evaluation Report Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area Fiscal Year 2008**



# Table of Contents

	Page
A. Certification	2
B. Introduction	4
C. Executive Summary	5
D. Monitoring Results and Evaluations	6-43
E. Action Plan	44
F. Appendix	47

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All program areas were consulted in the development of this report.

## A. Forest Supervisor's Certification

I have evaluated and endorsed the monitoring and evaluation results presented in this report. I have directed that the Action Plan developed to respond to these results be implemented according to the timeframes indicated, unless new information or changed resource conditions warrant otherwise. I have considered funding requirements in the budget necessary to implement these actions.

I find there are no recommended changes to the Land and Resource Management Plan (Area Plan) at this time, and therefore, it is considered sufficient to continue to guide land and resource management of Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area for the foreseeable future.

/s/ William P. Lisowsky  
WILLIAM P. LISOWSKY  
Area Supervisor

August 21, 2009  
Date



*Land Between The Lakes undeveloped shoreline.*

## B. Introduction

This Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) report presents a summary and analysis of results accomplished at the Land Between The Lakes (LBL) National Recreation Area (NRA) during Fiscal Year (FY) 2008.

The report emphasizes the findings and conclusions that have been compiled from various monitoring activities and data sources available on the unit. As stated in Section 2 of the Area Plan, the monitoring and evaluation program is designed to serve as an important link between Plan implementation and on-the-ground accomplishments. Evaluations in this report serve as a springboard to any needed changes within the Area Plan or its implementation. The M&E program determines and informs the Area Supervisor on whether:

- ❖ Goals and Objectives are being achieved;
- ❖ Design Criteria are being followed;
- ❖ Implementation effects are occurring as predicted;
- ❖ Emerging or unanticipated issues are arising.

No major comments were received about last year's report format so most sections of this year's report remain the same. For continuity, we continued discussion of the relevant pieces from last year's report. Section D is broken up into eight pieces, one for each of the Area Plan's goals.

Each goal has a table that combines in one location the desired condition and trend statements, and relevance discussed in the Area Plan. In an effort to make this a meaningful and usable document while still being a manageable size, we have attempted to summarize only the key conclusions within the body of a "monitoring results and evaluations narrative" following each goal's table.

The heart of the report is the narrative in Section D focusing on the significant items that have driven the conclusions presented. It is also important to note that obviously, there is much more information that has been looked at in development of this report. The supporting data is available from the Area Planner.

Citizens have a stake in understanding management effects and effectiveness at LBL. Only by hearing from you, our stakeholders and owners of the public land, can we know whether we are providing the information and program benefits you desire. Comments about LBL can always be provided by mail to the Area Supervisor, 100 Van Morgan Drive, Golden Pond, KY, 42211; by electronic mail to [comments-southern-land-between-lakes@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-southern-land-between-lakes@fs.fed.us); or by phone to Barbara Wysock, Area Planner, at 270-924-2131. We welcome your thoughts and comments about this report or any aspect of LBL management at any time.

## **C. Executive Summary**

The FY2008 M&E report again demonstrates visibly that there are many new initiatives underway and a good number of accomplishments have been achieved at LBL as a result of the Area Plan. The full effect and resulting conditions of some projects and their corresponding programs cannot be measured until a longer period of time has passed. Still, this report has not identified any major deficiencies or significant changes to the Area Plan that are needed at this time.

The weather patterns in Kentucky and Tennessee this fiscal year were as strange as FY07, but in different ways. The late winter period and early spring were particularly wet, to the point that some localized flooding occurred and resulted in numerous reports of road and trail damage. Then, drought conditions returned for the second summer in a row only to be followed by a significant wind event, spawned by the remnants of Hurricane Ike. According to the National Weather service, Ike encountered a cold front as it moved north and east, and for several hours, sustained winds of over 75 miles an hour blew across the northern two thirds of LBL, knocking out power for four days, and leaving downed trees everywhere in its path. About half the roads and half the trails were blocked, and a number of facilities were damaged.

Some of the highlights of this third M&E report include:

- ❖ LBL remains on target with the Area Plan objective for acres of fuels reduction/prescribed fire program.
- ❖ The Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Ginger Bay tornado salvage project was completed, including removal of 1,516 CCF of damaged timber, rehabilitation of 306 acres of habitat and 75 acres of wildlife habitat thinning.
- ❖ Visitation was down 9% over the past year, a comparable figure to the surrounding region. No doubt this was aided by the downturn in the economy and high fuel prices.
- ❖ Partnership efforts have supported several key accomplishments, and the volunteer program continues to be a strong part of the public service at LBL. The new stewardship agreement with the National Wild Turkey Federation provides tremendous support in maintaining over 5500 acres of LBL open lands.
- ❖ The public was consulted on a variety of very important areas, including the future of lake access areas, fee increases, heritage program implementation, and hunting program changes.
- ❖ For at least the fourth year in a row, the Turkey Bay Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area has continued its dramatic restoration. Designated trails are signed and mapped, and needed restoration projects continue to be supported by grant dollars.

## D. Monitoring Results and Evaluations

<b>Goal 1:</b>	<b>Prioritize projects to provide the greatest recreation, Environmental Education (EE), and resource stewardship benefits.</b>
<b>Sub-element NFS Generic Desired Condition</b>	“LBL will play a pivotal role in supplying and supporting the recreational and EE experiences people seek.” “All vegetation management activities will be designed to sustain or improve wildlife habitats, forest health, recreation opportunities, or EE experiences.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Example Area Plan Desired Condition Statement</b>	“The responsibility for meeting this (recreational and environmental education) increasing demand will fall to those areas and entities capable of providing outdoor recreational opportunities while sustaining natural environments.” “Vegetation management activities will incorporate environmental education messages, themes, and information in programs and projects as much as practical.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Desired Trend Statement</b>	“Eighty percent of all special projects will have identified and demonstrated benefits to recreation, EE, and resource stewardship.” [Objective 1a]
<b>Monitoring Questions</b>	1. Has the Forest Service (FS) made progress toward providing satisfactory recreational and EE experiences to visitors while providing for resource stewardship? 2. Have resource management projects been integrated?
<b>Area Plan Performance Measures</b>	1. Trends in segmented visitation in comparison to numbers of related resource stewardship projects completed 2. Number of integrated projects being completed
<b>Data Sources Utilized</b>	--Summary of visitor satisfaction surveys or personal letters and notes received; visitation; and focused area accomplishments --Objective accomplishments, summary of integrated projects completed
<b>Importance</b>	This goal contains key emphases of the LBL Protection Act and reinforces the key purposes described for LBL when created in 1963. Optimizing efficiency and integration of resources are also primary objectives of both LBL and the agency.
<b>What It Tells Us</b>	The results related to this goal will provide key information about whether LBL is meeting its legislated objectives and tiering to national strategic goals.

### Goal 1, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative

LBL has a primary mission to provide recreation and EE, but has been working hard to integrate as many program emphases into the specific events or projects that are undertaken. As we work to provide the optimum yield of recreation, EE, and resource stewardship benefits, our aim is to provide at least one significant environmental message to each LBL guest during their visit regardless of what activity they undertake. This tactic engages the citizen in the midst of whatever they may be enjoying, with what we intend to be a positive-impact, environmental message that will translate into life-long resource stewardship benefits.

LBL has completed our third full fiscal year using the Area Plan. The list of integrated projects being implemented under the 2004 Plan continues to grow and supports the key emphases of the Protection Act. The recreation and environmental education opportunities continue to draw people to LBL. Open lands management, thinning of the forest through timber sales, and prescribed fire are expanding these opportunities for visitors through hiking, camping, programs, scenic viewing, and understanding the role of vegetation management.

The following examples of our integrated efforts are discussed in later narrative.

- An exciting project endeavor to restore the native shortleaf pine community in the Devils Backbone State Natural Area in LBL began to take shape this year. An interdisciplinary team began the environmental assessment process and the state natural area agreement with the State of Tennessee was updated.
- Implementation of the prior year decisions related to the Continued Maintenance of Open Lands and the Prior Creek began this fiscal year.
- Restoration efforts in the Oak Grassland Demonstration Area were expanded through the Prior Creek Project implementation. This restoration is described under Goal 5 of this report. Visitors are learning about the restoration efforts that are being implemented through programs at campgrounds, Nature Station, Golden Pond, and Homeplace.
- More progress has been made toward improving the conditions in Turkey Bay OHV Area (<http://www.lbl.org/OHVTrails.html>) and is described in Goal 4. EE messages are being communicated to natural resource, recreation, and interpreter professionals who have visited LBL. These visitors either seek us out or we hear of their visit to the area and invite them on field trips to demonstrate what is being accomplished.

Key accomplishments for the year are found in the table at the end of the Goal 8 narrative. In looking over this list, it is clear that LBL is continuing to provide a high level of recreation and environmental activity. As in past years, customer feedback from a variety of sources, including formal surveys, personal letters, comment cards, user feedback to individual program managers, and the general consensus from communities' key contacts are predominantly positive. It is thus very reasonable to conclude that the projects we have prioritized and areas, in which we are currently putting significant focus, are indeed providing for significant recreation, EE, and resource stewardship benefits.

<b>Goal 2:</b>	<b>Emphasize partnerships and cooperation with citizen groups, community businesses, private corporations, tourism organizations, and government agencies.</b>
<b>Sub-element NFS Generic Desired Condition</b>	“LBL will continue to be a destination point for visitors throughout the region and nation, thereby contributing to the local and regional economy.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Example Area Plan Desired Condition Statement</b>	“Maintaining and developing partnerships will be important to keeping LBL positioned as a premiere recreation/EE destination.” “The public will continue to play an important role in project-level actions and decisions.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Desired Trend Statement</b>	“Establish at least one local partnership for tourism, economic development, or EE; and at least one new cooperative with a regional, state, and federal agency or organization annually in support of the LBL mission.” [Objective 2a] “Increase visitation to more than 2 million visitors per year by the end of 2015 to support local and regional economies. [Objective 2b]
<b>Monitoring Questions</b>	3. Has the FS made progress toward supporting vitality of gateway communities and maintaining/enhancing relationships with its neighbors and regional organizations?
<b>Area Plan Performance Measures</b>	3. Trends in visitation, levels of community participation
<b>Data Sources Utilized</b>	--Summary of visitation results, community participation in meetings, programs provided, grants sponsored, cooperative gateway projects, feedback from elected officials and business leaders, and visitation --Number of MOUs, partnership agreements, and challenge cost share agreements with local, regional, and state agencies
<b>Importance</b>	This goal contains important strategies for the collaborative delivery of goods and services at LBL. It also reinforces several of the key purposes described for LBL when created in 1963, namely to work cooperatively with the gateway communities in support of their strategic direction.
<b>What It Tells Us</b>	The results related to this goal will provide key information about whether LBL is meeting its stated objectives to work closely with partners and communities and developing strong relationships with local, state, and regional organizations and publics.

## Goal 2, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative

### Community Participation

LBL continues to focus efforts towards supporting the vitality of gateway communities and maintaining relationships with neighbors and regional organizations. LBL’s gateway communities have come to depend on tourism as a primary industry. The region looks to LBL

as the centerpiece for this tourism industry. The importance of tourism partnerships is recognized by the FS as critical in order for LBL to continue to be a destination of choice for visitors throughout the region and nation. Kentucky and Tennessee statistics for 2007-2008 indicate that LBL continues to be the center of a \$650 million tourism industry.

LBL is a member and active partner with regional tourism organizations such as Kentucky Western Waterland (KWW) (<http://www.kentuckylakebarkley.org>), the Kentucky Federal Agency Tourism Council (KFATC) (<http://federal.tourism.ky.gov/>), and the recently formed Lakes Region Tourism Coalition. Again this year, LBL provided staff support for KWW's marketing booth at the Kentucky State Fair. In addition, LBL works actively with KWW on cross promotions through website links, electronic publications, and distribution of printed materials. In 2008, LBL attended the KFATC session at the Kentucky Tourism Council Conference. LBL staff assisted the Lakes Tourism Coalition by attending a group tour marketplace conference and developing a marketing DVD to showcase the region.

LBL initiated identifying a new promotion partnership for 2008. As a result, the Paducah Visitor and Convention Bureau (PVCB) presented an opportunity to partner in their marketing strategies based on Kentucky's theme for Adventure Tourism. The partnership brought benefits to both LBL and PVBC. Both were presented with an honorable mention award at the Kentucky Tourism Council Conference for the print advertisements developed for this partnership promotion.

LBL's gateway state resort parks (<http://state.tn.us/environment/parks/index.shtml> and <http://parks.ky.gov/>) are another key partner. LBL works closely with each of the four resorts to provide visitors and potential visitors information for trip planning, including in-room promotional items, updated maps, and information sources. This year LBL partnered with Lake Barkley State Resort Park (SRP) to offer backpacking and hiking programs that provide learning opportunities and cultivate repeat visits for both Lake Barkley SRP and LBL.

Another level of tourism promotion efforts are facilitated on the state level, including all major visitor centers in the region. LBL has periodically hosted tours for state visitor centers' staff to increase awareness of the recreational opportunities available. LBL works with both the state of Kentucky and Tennessee tourism programs to provide accurate and timely representation of the recreation and EE opportunities available at LBL. In 2008, LBL attended two regional tourism gatherings focused on collecting input on the local needs of the tourism industry.

A new tourism partnership initiative was tested in 2006/2007 and continued this year to provide promotion benefits for LBL and surrounding communities. The partnership was established with the regional radio station, WKDZ (<http://www.wkdzradio.com/home.php>), in the Murray, Cadiz, Hopkinsville, and Ft. Campbell area. This model for media coverage is a more collaborative effort in support of regional tourism. Initial results, though only rough estimates by conversations with elected officials, tourism partners, and through increase in visitation, do indicate the partnership is resulting in increased community awareness and involvement in LBL's recreation and EE facilities. LBL will also continue participating in the support of WKMS (<http://www.wkms.org/>) public radio, a key source of information on activities in the region.

In regards to maintaining and enhancing relationships with neighboring communities, LBL continued traditional avenues and maintained links with community members and business leaders. LBL currently holds a membership with each of 10 surrounding community chambers of commerce and frequently provides speakers for Chamber and local organizational meetings. In addition, LBL staff spoke at other community and business organizational meetings. During FY08, approximately 125 presentations and contacts were made with local, state, federal, and other organized groups. The FS continues to maintain a high priority on keeping surrounding communities informed on and engaged with the implementation of projects identified in the Area Plan. The FS diligently seeks input from the public on projects by holding public meetings, comment period, meeting with local officials, and talking with visitors. In FY08, a new “call in” public comment technique was tested for public convenience and making better use of staff expertise. The “Business Leaders Focus Group,” has become a more informal network but continues to provide valuable input and perspective on needs within the community and feedback on how LBL business decisions affect their communities.

Another wide variety of constituencies, the 17-person LBL Advisory Board (<http://www.lbl.org/LRMPAdvisoryBoard.html>), is now in its eighth year and continues to provide tremendous assistance to the FS. In 2008, they explored educator attitudes, opinions and suggestions for school programs at LBL and also gave input on dispersed education after exploring LBL with that in mind.

Although the US Fish & Wildlife decided not to offer Earth Camp in Stewart County, the EE staff continued to partner with that agency at Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge by participating on their core planning team for their new Land Management Plan.

EE staff also contributed to National Park Service’s planning efforts by participating on their planning team for the new Interpretive Plan for Fort Donelson National Historic Battlefield. EE staff continued working together with partners in special events at LBL (such as Nature Arts Day, 1850 Wedding, Independence Day at the Homeplace, Hummingbird Festival, and others). As we work on implementing the EE Master Plan’s Goal 3 (increase and enhance EE partnerships in order to enrich audiences, programs and funding), we are working closely with Friends of LBL and non-government organizations, clubs, churches, and other partners to assist in accomplishing mutual EE goals.

New EE partnerships for FY 2008 included Girl Scouts of Tennessee. EE staff worked with their council to successfully apply for (and receive) a \$5,000 “Linking Girls to the Land” grant. We will work together with them to help them establish EE programs at their Camp Sycamore Hills during FY 2009.

Another developing partnership is with the Stewart County Unified School District in Dover, Tennessee. We will be working to create a long term agreement that will lead to meaningful High School field trips to study and monitor our emerging short leaf pine restoration project. EE staff is also collaborating with an interagency team in Kentucky to help get more children outside and onto public lands.

During previous years, after listening to many LBL users, community members, former residents, stakeholders, and other people, the heritage program manager confirmed the need to develop a meaningful heritage program. By the end of FY09, a draft Programmatic Agreement and the LBL Heritage Implementation Plan will be completed and sent out for review by community members, former residents, stakeholders, oversight agencies, partners, professional community, and other interested parties.

In 2008, LBL staff has emphasized conferring with former resident organizations and individuals “early and often” to get their input on proposed resource management work in locations they are familiar with, such as a trail relocation and storm damaged timber clean-up. This has been done by a wide variety of methods, including conducting field trips (by request and by invitation) to proposed project areas to assist with identifying heritage resources. Staff has also visited various group meetings to outline upcoming projects and present details about specific projects. Face-to-face two-way communication has improved LBL’s understanding about the potential impacts implementation of projects might have on the heritage resources in project areas while helping interested parties to be involved in our decision making. Communications and working relationships have improved but will need continuing effort.

In FY08, a partnership with a group of LBL special interest users and other volunteers resulted in a historical cabin (aka Will Flora cabin) stabilization project. This cabin is visited often by horseback riders and is now a new destination point.

The Highway 68/80 improvement project is ongoing and is impacting the LBL east/west corridor (<http://www.us68lbl.com/>). This design/build project, managed by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, is viewed by the FS as a critical priority to ensure it will meet the future needs of regional commerce and tourism while protecting resources and blending with the natural environment. The Transportation Cabinet supported, and the Federal Highway Administration selected, the context sensitive design alternative that addresses these concerns. Impacts to tourism during the construction phases are being mitigated as much as possible. Some reduced visitation and travel delays can be expected at times, but this has been minimal.

The forest management staff has continued to engage members of the local forest products community this year. LBL staff also attended the Wood Expo in Madisonville, KY, this year. This contact has resulted in several new inquiries and interest in our vegetation management program. In addition, LBL and the TN State Natural Area Commission mutually agreed to renew the registration of the two TN State Natural Areas. The Devil's Backbone Area was expanded in size as a result of this agreement, and currently, analysis is underway to promote shortleaf pine restoration in the area.

### **Partnerships, Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)**

Partnerships, agreements, and MOUs provide critical resources that augment LBL facilities and services provided for recreation, natural resource management, and EE. While they have always been a part of how LBL operates, the Area Plan places added emphasis on the value they bring to LBL and the surrounding region.

The cooperative partnership between the Forest Service and Land Between The Lakes Association (aka “Friends of LBL”) ([www.friendoflbl.org](http://www.friendoflbl.org)) continues to secure grants and provide critical services to help accomplish the LBL mission. Some of the FY08 “Friends of LBL” accomplishments are discussed under other goals, and others include:

- Presented numerous presentations to civic, school, and interested groups in order to share the mission, education, and recreational opportunities which are available to those visiting LBL.
- Developed 30-minute radio promotion opportunity on local radio station weekly to highlight activities and opportunities at Land Between The Lakes.
- Represented LBL at the LBL Regional Tourism Coalition, Paducah & Murray Chambers of Commerce, and Kentucky Western Waterlands (KWW).
- Participated in regional committees and organizations pertaining to transportation issues, tourism, and economic development.
- Organized and managed volunteers and volunteer activity that produced over 112,000 hours of volunteer service to LBL with a value of over \$165,000.

The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) partnered with LBL again this past year, though in a much more substantial way. As in recent years, the NWTf continues to provide support funding for the successful development of the OGRDA. (<http://www.lbl.org/NRMOakGrassland.html>)

In FY08, NWTf also entered into a huge expansion of their efforts at LBL through a Stewardship Agreement. LBL implemented the first year of a 10-year Challenge Cost Share Stewardship Agreement with the National Wild Turkey Federation to restore, enhance, and maintain wildlife habitat on LBL to benefit wildlife, recreation, and environmental education. In this first year of the agreement, the NWTf managed approximately 4,500 acres of wildlife openings, croplands, and hayfields on LBL. Management of these lands resulted in improved habitat for a variety of wildlife species, and enhanced outdoor recreation and environmental education opportunities. Annual operating plans for 2009 include continued management of approximately 4,361 acres of wildlife openings, croplands, and hayfields, and about 255 hours on projects such as developing partnerships for utility rights-of-way, environmental education, riparian corridor management, and monitoring. The NWTf will be establishing about 30 acres in native warm season grasses and forbs in Tennessee adjacent to the South Welcome Station and in the northwest corner of the Brandon Springs Group Camp Facility boundary. This landmark partnership agreement will dramatically increase the benefits available to the visiting public.

Between the Rivers, Inc. extended their cooperative maintenance agreement with the FS for St. Stephen’s Church.

Murray State University (MSU) continues to provide valuable Geographical Information System (GIS) services under a cost reimbursement agreement. The work they produce under this agreement enhances LBL productivity throughout all departments and provides valuable experience to their GIS department. MSU and LBL are participating in a Cooperative Agreement Field School project focused on a long-term archaeological investigation on the historic Center Furnace community.

### **LBL Visitation**

LBL still continues to host a significant number of “regional events” and weekend programs (<http://www.lbl.org/CALGate.html>) that contribute greatly to area visitation. Visitation to these events and programs continues to grow annually and contribute economically to the local area.

Overall visitation for LBL was down by 9% in FY08 compared to FY07, while campground visitation is holding steady. Visitation losses can be contributed to many factors. Some of those factors include increasing unemployment rates, fuel prices, and economic fears. The annual decrease is similar to that of many public lands. LBL’s springtime visitation was down substantially this year due to the weather, as there were no rain-free weekends until mid-May. It may be important to note that regional and state visitation has had very little to no growth in recent years.

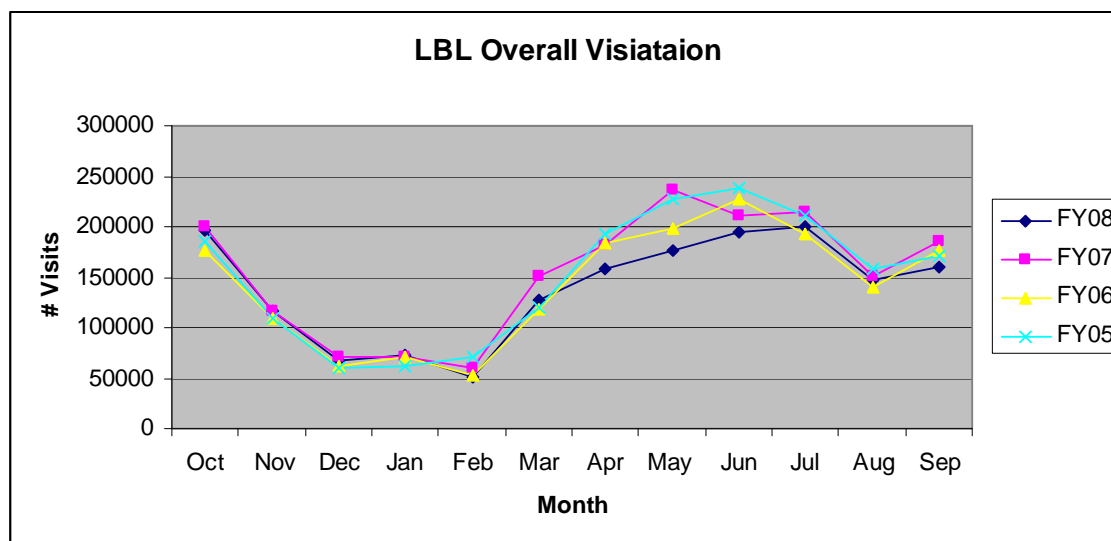
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Visits</b>
FY08	1,667,513
FY07	1,847,420
FY06	1,705,409

**Figure 1. LBL Visitation**

While some progress has been made, it is too early in the process to quantify any significant market segment visitation trends in comparison to numbers of related resource stewardship projects completed. Early signs indicate initial efforts are being met with reasonable success. In targeted LBL recreational facilities where EE is deeply rooted, as in the case of the day-use facilities (The Homeplace and Woodlands Nature Station), participation has increased by 7-10% or stayed steady each fiscal year since our Area Plan-inspired focus (Figure 2).

Participation/Visitation	% Change from Previous Year		
	FY06 (% change)	FY07 (% change)	FY08 (% change)
The Homeplace (Admissions)	+7	+9	-2
Woodlands Nature Station (Admissions)	+8	+10	0
Brandon Spring Group Center (Overnights)	+9	+2	-6
Overall Visitation	-6	+8	-9

**Figure 2. Facility Participation in Programs<sup>1</sup>**



**Figure 3. LBL Overall Visitation<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Visitation for The Homeplace and Nature Station are based on the point-of-sale or retail management system. Brandon Springs Group Center visitation is provided by the Center's housing reports.

<sup>2</sup> Overall visitation is derived from traffic counts.

<b>Goal 3:</b>	<b>Utilize a variety of methods and opportunities to provide an EE message to every visitor.</b>
<b>Sub-element NFS Generic Desired Condition</b>	“EE messages, information and principles will be incorporated into all projects on LBL through diverse cooperative, interdisciplinary efforts designed to potentially reach every visitor to LBL.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Example Area Plan Desired Condition Statement</b>	<p>“EE will emphasize more non-facility-based messages, programs, and projects. The current EE facilities will remain hubs for expansion of the reach and effect of the EE programs and projects. EE programs will be integrated with recreation activities and will provide messages and information to recreational visitors that make them more aware of the importance of sustaining their environmental surroundings while participating in their desired activity.”</p> <p>“Self-guided loop trails, road pull-offs, viewing blinds, and EE messages in these areas (Nature Watch Demonstration Areas) will engage visitors with the natural environment. “EE will be an integral component of activities in the Oak-Grassland Demonstration Areas. Visitors will be able to watch and learn about the application of various vegetation management practices used to restore native ecological communities.” [Area Plan, Vision]</p>
<b>Desired Trend Statement</b>	<p>“Ensure that 80% of LBL communications, programs, and activities have an interwoven EE message.” [Objective 3a]</p> <p>“An average of one to two user impact challenges will be addressed annually through EE.” [Objective 3b]</p>
<b>Monitoring Questions</b>	4. Has the FS made progress toward successfully changing behaviors as a result of EE experiences to visitors?
<b>Area Plan Performance Measures</b>	4. Trends in on-site visitor behaviors and visitor comment surveys.
<b>Data Sources Utilized</b>	--Summary of visitor information surveys or personal letters and notes received, project accomplishments, annual monitoring results, programs, and communication products completed
<b>Importance</b>	This goal contains one of the key emphases of the LBL Protection Act and reinforces the key purposes described for LBL when created in 1963. Effective delivery of conservation education messages is also a primary objective of both LBL and the agency.
<b>What It Tells Us</b>	The results related to this goal will provide key information about whether LBL is meeting its legislated objectives.

### Goal 3, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative

The EE Master Plan provides a framework to deliver EE messages using a variety of methods. It lays out goals and objectives that will lead to effective education at LBL.

LBL increased the recycling program (started in 2007) as another phase to the “Respect the Resource” program. Recycling containers were installed and our visitors and employees came through. Glass that was collected from intern village, the Visitor Center, and Wranglers

Campground was pulverized as an experiment with a borrowed glass crusher with interesting results. The difference in the amount of space taken up by pulverized glass versus whole containers is impressive. The end product can be used as a craft supply or road fill. Future plans aren't set, but will involve using it again. Completing the cycle, new counters were installed in the Golden Pond Visitor Center's restrooms that were made from recycled sinks & toilets (porcelain), mirrors, bottle glass, and plate glass. This is another opportunity to educate visitors about re-using and recycling materials.

The EE staff has continued to provide diverse and regularly updated and new programs at the developed campgrounds, Brandon Spring Group Center, and the day-use facilities. Of course, the most popular programs like The Homeplace Wedding and the Hummingbird Festival are offered each year, but staff works hard to add variety to their programs. In the past year, the public was invited to take night hikes, participate in bird counts, iron furnace tours that tied with those in the surrounding areas, canoe trips, hikes to Civil War sites and a variety of eagle tours. Over 60,000 visitors participated in programs during FY2008; in addition, over 20,000 students made field trips and residential visits. Interpreters provided programs to approximately 1,025 people at off-site locations (see Figure 4 for break down of a total of 357,860 EE contacts in FY 2008.)

**Figure 4. Environmental Education Program Attendance**

<u>Facility</u>	<u>FY 07</u>	<u>FY 08</u>
<u>Brandon Spring Group Center</u>		
# attended	7,972	7,683
Groups	124	113
Programs	470	508
 <u>Woodlands Nature Station</u>		
# attended	44,124	33,489
# at off site	2,117	525
Students	6,739	6,540
 <u>Golden Pond Planetarium &amp; Visitor Center</u>		
Visitors	114,613	94,975
# attended shows		15117
Students		5376
 <u>Homeplace 1850 Farm</u>		
# attended	43,747	34,046
# at off site	1,457	500
Students	6,710	5682
 <u>Elk &amp; Bison Prairie</u>		
# visitors	123,129	93,026

<u>North Welcome Station</u>		
# visitors	39,469	30,004
<u>South Welcome Station</u>		
# visitors	35,875	26,155
<u>Piney Campground Programs</u>		
# attending		595
<u>Hillman Ferry Campground Programs</u>		
# attending		3,526
<b>Total Contacts for FY:</b>	<b>426,546</b>	<b>357,860</b>

Special events at Woodlands Nature Station occur nearly once a month including Campfire Tales, Wolf Awareness Week, Fall Frolic, Junior Explorer Days, Spring Wildflower Weekend, Migration Celebration, Nature Arts Day, and Cool & Crawly Critters Day (<http://www.lbl.org/CAL97TDNatureStation.html>).

The Homeplace 1850 Farm continues to offer daily programs and special events (also, nearly once a month). Approximately 34,000 visitors learned about life in the 1850's, organic farming, and oak grassland restoration at The Homeplace. (<http://www.lbl.org/CAL97TDHomeplace.html>).

Many first time visitors stop at the North and South Welcome Stations to discover the many types of activities available at LBL. Staff also provides explanation of the regulations, many in the context of environmental education and natural resource sustainability.

The Golden Pond Planetarium serves visitors in the central part of LBL, providing shows for most of the year. Over 15,000 visitors and almost 5,400 students attended shows.



**Figure 5. Children enjoy helping out during River Days at Woodlands Nature Station**

More than 74,000 visitors to Turkey Bay OHV Area (<http://www.lbl.org/OHVTrails.html>) receive educational messages through “Respect the Resource” and Ride for Keeps program materials and signs. Another important form of education is in the quarterly Turkey Bay OHV Area newsletter. This has been a vital and effective way of communicating with user groups to emphasize stewardship and ethical behavior. A new educational development at Turkey Bay this year is the Children’s Learning Trail, or Turkey Trot. This area, specifically for kids with low powered vehicles is designed to teach safe and ethical riding behavior. It is very popular with families.

Campground visitors have the opportunity to attend educational programs presented by summer interns, mostly on weekends. In 2008, 4,122 people attended campground programs put on by interns at Hillman Ferry and Piney Campgrounds.

In the summer, the Heritage program had a volunteer day to work on a priority site, the Will Flora Cabin. Twenty-five people came to work on some stabilization and learn about the history of this site. Other opportunities for people to learn about the rich heritage at LBL came during spring break for University of Transylvania student volunteers. Fifteen (15) students learned how to identify and record historic sites. Not only did they help with program data, but they had a wonderful learning experience about heritage and LBL history in particular.

Over 2,470 students visited LBL through the Field Trip Grant program. Friends of LBL coordinated this effort. \$20,511 was awarded to 33 groups. Over 60% of the groups had 60% or more students on the free and reduced lunch program.

A diverse array of interpretive panels exists in LBL at remote and dispersed locations for the visitors to less developed sites (Iron Furnaces, St. Stephen's Church, South Bison Range, etc.). Over 100 educational brochures and hand outs are available on such subjects as ticks, deer, elk, oak-grasslands, and other favorite topics. The website, [www.lbl.org](http://www.lbl.org), contains educational messages throughout. We cannot say we reach 100% of the visitors here at LBL, but these diverse methods and media show we continue to reach out to everyone.



**Figure 6. A Brownie troop enjoys discovering macro invertebrates during a Pond Prowl.**

<b>Goal 4:</b>	<b>Manage natural and physical resources, and authorized FS activities, to reduce erosion or deterioration of riparian areas and watershed conditions.</b>
<b>Sub-element NFS Generic Desired Condition</b>	“Restoration of riparian area functioning and improvements of priority watersheds will be another focus of the resource improvements.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Example Area Plan Desired Condition Statement</b>	<p>“Damage to natural resources caused by unmanaged recreation activities will be reduced...”</p> <p>“Roads will continue to be integral to many activities at LBL, but will be kept to the minimum number needed to meet the needs of multiple use management. The road system and its road segment maintenance levels will continue to be evaluated and modified, as appropriate. Evaluations will result in reconstruction or decommissioning of roads, when necessary, to improve watershed condition, facility and activity access, and wildlife habitat.” [Area Plan, Vision]</p>
<b>Desired Trend Statement</b>	<p>“Within a 10-year period, improve two watersheds by one condition class (see definition of watershed condition class in glossary).” [Objective 4a]</p> <p>“The 10-year trend will be to reconstruct 10 to 15 miles of trail annually.” [Objective 4b]</p> <p>“Unneeded roads will be decommissioned to improve watershed condition and wildlife habitat. The 10-year trend will be one to three miles per year.” [Objective 4c]</p> <p>“Maintain to objective maintenance level, 75% of system roads and 75% of trails annually.” [Objective 4d]</p>
<b>Monitoring Questions</b>	<p>5. Has the FS made progress in reducing erosion and improving watershed conditions and how was this accomplished?</p> <p>6. Has the FS established baseline data for channel classification of its major intermittent and perennial streams?</p>
<b>Area Plan Performance Measures</b>	<p>5. Sediment transport, stream bank stability, water quality parameters, properly functioning riparian areas, watershed condition class.</p> <p>6. Completion of stream classification and determination of channel function process.</p>
<b>Data Sources Utilized</b>	<p>Watershed Watch program, stream and riparian surveys, number of improved or relocated roads, and trails summary of watershed improvement projects; sample projects during program reviews to determine and document where riparian values, and soil and water resource considerations were implemented through BMPs and design criteria.</p> <p>--Stream inventory of substrate, Level II Rosgen channel type, average water flow (discharge), and stream bank vegetation.</p>
<b>Importance</b>	This goal emphasizes LBL legislated multiple use mission and the need to direct resources and policies to sustain critical soil and water resources.
<b>What It Tells Us</b>	The results related to this goal will provide key information about whether LBL is meeting its legislated objectives and tiering to national strategic goals.

## **Goal 4, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative**

As we have for several years, our emphasis areas for watershed projects have been improvements to the roads and trails systems, and the Turkey Bay Off-Highway Vehicle area in particular. The riparian corridors expansions associated with the management of Open Lands at LBL were implemented in FY06/07 and have been monitored in FY08. They appear to be working well and re-vegetation of these narrow additions is noticeable.

Some key examples of projects we have undertaken in the Trails Program to maintain or improve watershed conditions are described in the narrative of this report for Goal 7. These projects include trail maintenance, monitoring, trail reroutes, and inventories. As part of the Hurricane Ike recovery effort, LBL cleared 105 miles of non-motorized trails.

Many activities took place during 2008 to improve the natural resource conditions in the Turkey Bay OHV Area. Turkey Bay is located in one of the priority watersheds identified in the plan to improve the condition class. Forty percent (40%) of the designated trails were numbered and 300 yards of stream restoration work was completed. Five acres of hills restoration work was completed. Restoration work included the installation of five hardened creek crossings on the main trail. The State of KY installed a new aquatic passage friendly entrance bridge at Turkey Bay OHV Area. Several grants were received for future work, including a grant from the National Forest Foundation (NFF) for \$30,000 for stream restoration. The Forest Service received a KY State Grant for \$50,000 to complete annual trail maintenance and an additional \$200,000 in CMLG funds for restoration efforts and watershed improvement at Turner and Turkey Creek Watersheds. On three volunteer workdays, many volunteers helped to complete some of the restoration work in the Turkey Bay OHV Area.



**Figure 7. Spring storm damage that forces wet weather closures at Turkey Bay.**

Turkey Bay was closed for approximately 60 days for resource protection due to wet weather and cleanup from Hurricane Ike winds. The environmental education described in Goals 3 and 7 contributes to riders' understanding of the importance to ride responsibly relative to the environment. In addition, a program was presented to over 300 kids at the Marshall County Home and Farm Safety Day; and, 10 ATV Safety Classes were held at Turkey Bay this year. Safer riding contributes to riding to minimize damage to the natural resources.

During FY08, three miles of road were decommissioned in the Prior Creek project area. The roads program maintained about 230 miles of road. The Motor Vehicle Use Map, as described in Goal 7, may lead to less environmental damage occurring from use of illegal roads.

The final report for the survey work completed by the FS Center for Aquatic Technology Transfer (CATT) was issued. This report provides useful data about fish passages in LBL streams. The data will be used at the project level.



**Figure 8. Completed restoration work at Turkey Bay.**

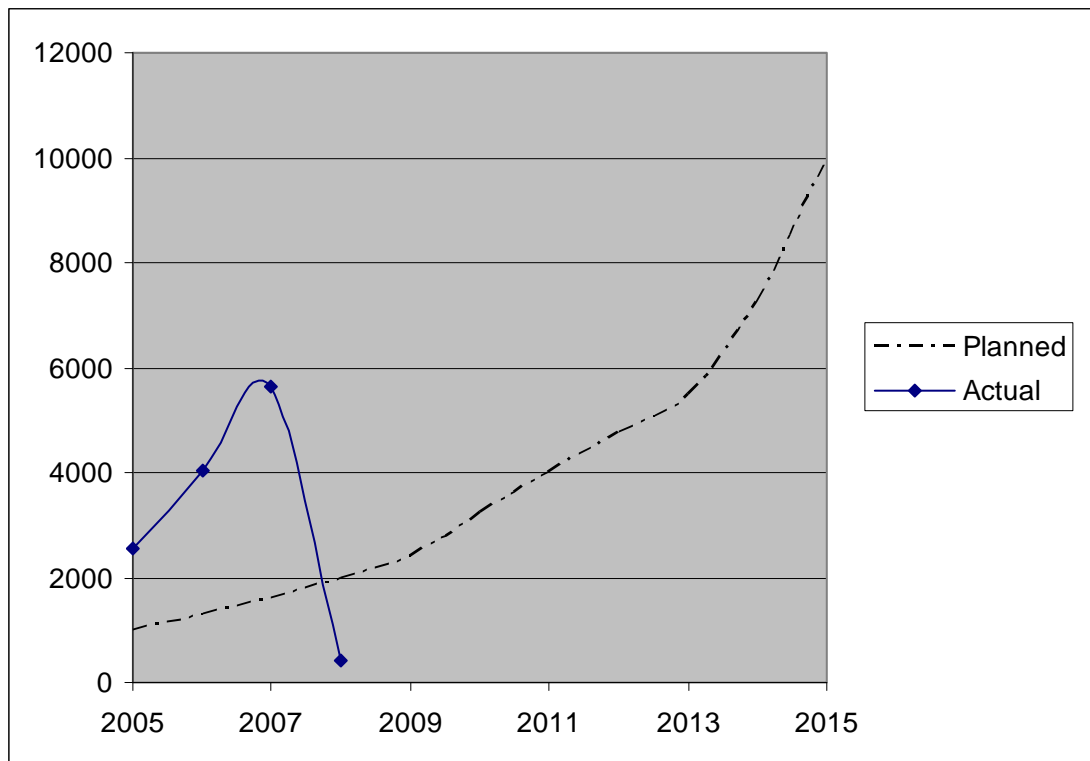
<b>Goal 5:</b>	<b>Use a collaborative approach to maintain and restore: 1) a diversity of plant and animal communities that support viability of associated plants, fish, and wildlife; and 2) sustainable levels of habitat and wildlife populations to support public demand for wildlife-related recreation.</b>
<b>Sub-element NFS Generic Desired Condition</b>	“Visitors to LBL will see active management of forests and other vegetation designed to support ecological needs for forest health and wildlife habitat, in addition to supporting recreational and EE goals.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Example Area Plan Desired Condition Statement</b>	<p>“Much of the vegetation management program will be aimed at restoring ecological conditions to those best suited for sustaining native wildlife species. Vegetation management will target restoration and maintenance of oak woodlands and open oak forests, native short-leaf pine forests, canebrakes, and diverse structures characteristic of old growth forests.”</p> <p>“Sustainable open land management will be demonstrated through ecological restoration of native grasslands, maintenance of hayfields, and rights-of-way, and continued agricultural practices. Open lands management is directed at providing habitat for wildlife, especially those species in demand for hunting and viewing. Open lands located on sites incompatible with sustaining other resources (such as in riparian corridors) will be allowed to revert to forest, or will be maintained in native grassland or canebrake.”</p> <p>“Active management techniques will include the increased use of prescribed fire, which is documented to sustain native ecological communities and improve habitat for many wildlife species.”</p> <p>“Habitats will be provided for native and desired non-native plants, fish, and wildlife. All vegetation management activities will be designed to sustain or improve wildlife habitats, forest health, recreation opportunities, or EE experiences. The public will continue to play an important role in project-level actions and decisions.” [Area Plan, Vision]</p>
<b>Desired Trend Statement</b>	<p>“In mature oak forests, provide open forest structure on approximately 19,000 acres by the end of the first decade with a long-term objective of 31,000 acres.” [Objective 5a]</p> <p>“In mature oak forests, provide woodland structure on approximately 6,000 acres by the end of the first decade with a long-term objective of 30,000 acres.” [Objective 5b]</p> <p>“Provide a sustained supply of regenerating forest habitats totaling approximately 5,400 acres at any point in time. Regenerating forest will be treated predominantly within oak forests although other forest types and natural disturbances will be included.” [Objective 5c]</p> <p>“Increase the abundance of mature forest habitats toward achieving the long-term objective of approximately 123,000 acres of mature forest, of which 52,000 acres will meet old growth criteria.” [Objective 5d]</p> <p>“In mature forests on moist sites, provide canopy gaps on a minimum of 1,600 acres by the end of the first decade with a long-term objective of a minimum of 9,000 acres.” [Objective 5e]</p> <p>“Create and maintain at least 250 acres of short-leaf pine forests by developing desired mature open forest and woodland structural conditions over the first decade with a long-term objective of 450 total acres of shortleaf</p>

	<p>pine forest.” [Objective 5f]</p> <p>“Restore 50 acres of canebrake over the first 10 years of Area Plan implementation, with a long-term objective of 240 total acres of canebrake.” [Objective 5g]</p> <p>“In addition to the approximately 600 acres of open lands currently in native grasses, restore native grasses and forbs to another 750 acres of current open lands within the first 10 years of Area Plan implementation, with a long-term (50-year) objective of 2,600 total acres of native grassland.” [Objective 5h]</p> <p>“Maintain approximately 10,600 acres in open lands-cultivated and grassland cover types to support game species, early successional species, and watchable wildlife. Approximately 1,100 acres of this 10,600 will be converted from cultivated field to grassland within riparian corridors over a 10-year period to improve riparian functions.” [Objective 5i]</p> <p>“Restore and maintain fire regimes and fire return intervals in fire dependent communities by prescribed burning an average of approximately 10,000 acres per year by the end of the first decade, with a long-term objective of 21,000 acres per year on average. Some acres will incur repeat fire application during the planning period.” [Objective 5j]</p>
<b>Monitoring Questions</b>	<p>7. How well are species of viability concern being maintained on LBL?</p> <p>8. How is management of LBL affecting recovery of threatened and endangered species? (Duplicate questions for Measures 9-10)</p> <p>11. How is management of LBL affecting demand for wildlife-related recreation? (Duplicate questions for Measures 12-14)</p> <p>15. How is management of LBL affecting special habitats and major biological communities? (Duplicate questions for Measures 15-25)</p> <p>26. Is the forest less likely to be affected by insects, disease, and wildfire? (Duplicate questions for Measures 26-28)</p> <p>29. Has the FS made progress towards identifying old growth stands on the ground?</p>
<b>Area Plan Performance Measures</b>	<p>7. Trends in key habitats and/or populations of viability concern species.</p> <p>8. Trends in highest risk species.</p> <p>9. Trends in Price’s potato bean populations in relationship to Threatened &amp; Endangered (T&amp;E) Recovery.</p> <p>10. Trends in bald eagle populations in relationship to T&amp;E Recovery.</p> <p>11. Trends in Eastern bluebird populations as a Non-game Demand species.</p> <p>12. Trends in white-tailed deer populations as a Demand Game species.</p> <p>13. Trends in Eastern wild turkey populations as a Demand Game species.</p> <p>14. Trends in Northern bobwhite quail populations as a Demand Game species.</p> <p>15. Trends in pileated woodpecker populations in relationship to Snags in Forested Situations.</p> <p>16. Trends in Eastern bluebird populations in relationship to Snags in Open Forested Situations.</p> <p>17. Trends in Acadian flycatcher populations in relationship to Mature Riparian Forests.</p> <p>18. Trends in Northern bobwhite quail populations in relationship to Grasslands.</p> <p>19. Trends in prairie warbler populations in relationship to Oak Woodlands.</p>

	<p>20. Trends in Great-crested Flycatcher populations in relationship to Mature Open Oak Forest.</p> <p>21. Trends in wood thrush populations in relationship to Mesophytic and Riparian Forests with Canopy Gaps and Mature Forest Interior.</p> <p>22. Trends in Eastern meadowlark populations in relationship to Grassland.</p> <p>23. Trends in Yellow-breasted chat populations in relationship to All Forest Type Regeneration.</p> <p>24. Trends in composition of aquatic communities dependent on clear water and stable channels.</p> <p>25. Trends in bat population levels.</p> <p>26. Trends in early, mid-, and late-successional forests by prescription group.</p> <p>27. Trends in species diversity, structural diversity, age class, and stocking levels.</p> <p>28. Trends in native insect and disease effects.</p> <p>29. Completed inventory of old growth stands.</p>
<b>Data Sources Utilized</b>	<p>--Habitat trends for key factor indicators used in the species viability analysis assessed through ongoing inventory of vegetation cover and structure types; population status for selected species inventoried and monitored as appropriate for species or species group; species selected based on priorities identified and modified throughout plan implementation using improving information about threats and risks, and in cooperative efforts with conservation partners.</p> <p>--Periodic survey and assessment of highest risk species occurrences; project level survey information and accomplishments</p> <p>--Periodic assessment of status of known occurrences; new occurrence inventory</p> <p>--Breeding Bird Survey/Point counts occurrence trends for the bird communities</p> <p>--Summary of data received in deer surveys, harvest statistics; summary of comments related to recreational uses of white-tailed deer</p> <p>--Summary of data received in Breeding Bird Surveys/Point counts, harvest data, and poult summaries; summary of comments related to recreational uses of Eastern Wild Turkey</p> <p>--Surveys similar to those done by the CATT</p> <p>--Collection and analysis of area bat survey data-Map and update changes through routine inventories; monitor acres by successional stage and trend; fuel monitoring following Regional protocol and condition classes</p> <p>--Acres of hazardous fuels treated through wildland fire use, prescribed fire, and mechanical treatments</p> <p>--Sample for specific insects or disease as evidence of infestations occurs following established protocols for the organisms of concern; track Forest Health Monitoring results to identify emerging concerns</p> <p>--Collection and analysis of old growth characteristics data, locations, and patch size</p>
<b>Importance</b>	<p>This goal contains key emphases of the LBL Protection Act and reinforces the key purposes described for LBL when created in 1963, as well as those legislated for the FS in 1998. Managing LBL under a multiple use should lead to many on the ground accomplishments and support primary objectives of both LBL and the agency.</p>
<b>What it Tells Us</b>	<p>The results related to this goal will provide key information about whether LBL is meeting its legislated objectives, managing ecosystems in a healthy and sustainable way, and are tiering to national strategic goals.</p>

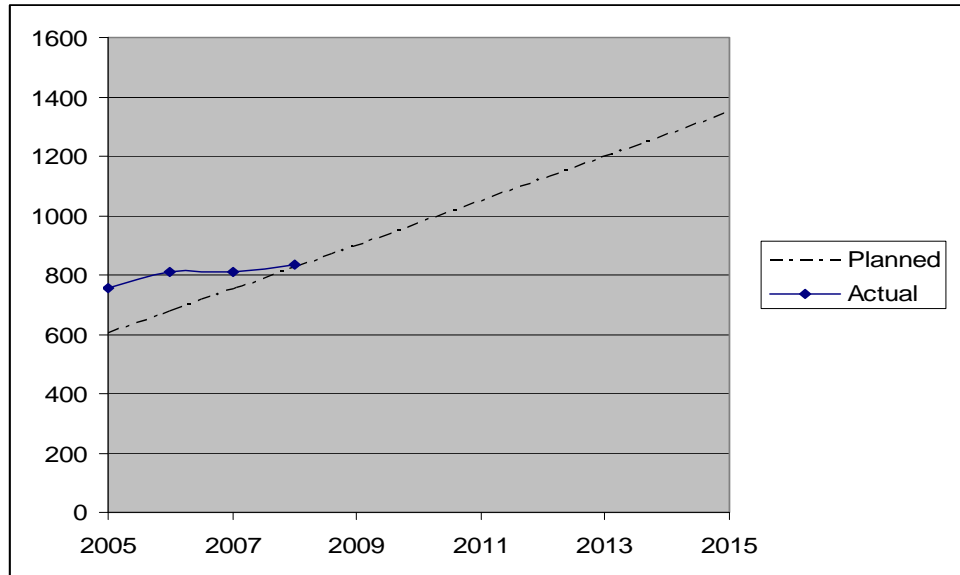
## Goal 5, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative

Fiscal Year 2008 was a slow year for prescribed fire on the NRA. Only around 423 acres were burned. The Willow Bay prescribed fire (378 acres) was burned as part of an integrated NNIS strategy. The native warm season grass wildlife viewing area at the Nature Station was burned to maintain the tall grasses. The campground and day-use areas of Cravens Bay were burned for debris removal and scenery improvement. The relatively light prescribed fire season was due in large part to a wetter than average spring burning season which greatly restricted available burning days. Conducting these projects within prescribed parameters is usually critical to meeting their objectives. The NRA took advantage of the slow burning season to conduct heritage resource surveys in other parts of LBL, support other units and completing additional training of its staff.



**Figure 9. Acres of Prescribed Fire Treatments**

Open land maintenance treatments were completed on 5,946 acres in 2008 (<http://www.lbl.org/lbl0809habitatmap.pdf>). LBL is on target with its projected trend for converting open lands to native warm season grasses; 25 acres were established in 2008. Since the Area Plan was implemented, approximately 230-250 acres of warm season grasses have been re-established on LBL.



**Figure 10. Acres of Native Grass Restoration**

Non-native invasive species (NNIS) are one of the Forest Service's Four Threats to the health of our forests' ecosystems. In 2008, 168 acres were treated to reduce invasive species; primarily with the use of approved pesticides. Acres treated since 2005 have included 587 acres in 2005, 465 acres in 2006, and 280 acres in 2007. Since 2005 there has been a reduction in the number of acres treated each year due to the increased costs of mechanical treatments in 2005-2006, drought conditions in 2007 and 2008, and the increased costs of pesticide applications in 2008. Monitoring and continued treatments will be required to reduce the occurrence of NNIS across LBL. An LBL NRA-wide non-native invasive species treatment strategy will be developed in Fiscal Year 2009 that will identify high priority invasive species and locations to be treated with available resource management funds. An extensive review and analysis of pesticides was conducted as part of the Open Lands EA, and will result in lower risk and more effective use of pesticides in LBL.

For the federally threatened Price's potato bean, surveys were conducted during field seasons of 2005 and 2006, establishing permanent monitoring plots at the five known locations of *Apios priceana* (Price's potato bean) on LBL. All sites were in relatively good condition with little change noted since the last site visit. The populations are mostly stagnant and not flourishing. During late May and early June visits to four of the five sites in 2008 plants were evident at each site. Shade problems from upper canopy and shrub competition are a concern at most sites. A plan to reduce shading at these sites has been drafted. Canopy reduction is planned to occur at two of the five sites in Fiscal Year 2009.

Due to successful population recovery, the bald eagle was removed from the endangered species list in 2007. However, the bald eagle continues to be protected under other laws and monitoring and protection of bald eagles will continue on LBL. Winter occurrence, nesting sites, and nesting success continue to be monitored. Monitoring of eagles is done in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) and volunteers through the Land Between The Lakes Association. During the 2008 January

midwinter survey, 87 eagles were counted along LBL's shoreline in Kentucky and Tennessee (66 adults and 21 immature). During an aerial survey in March, 14 nests were observed to be active with 10 chicks observed in the nests. By the end of the nesting season 14 eaglets were known to have fledged from 8 nests with 7 additional eaglets projected to have fledged from 7 other nests based on the aerial survey results and ground observations. Due to the high cost of gasoline during the spring and summer months, volunteer observations for eagle fledgling success were significantly reduced and therefore a portion of the nesting success was estimated.

Annual breeding bird point counts continue at LBL along 13 transects with 16 points each, plus four extra points in the southern Oak Grassland Restoration Demonstration Area, for a total of 213 points. In 2008, these were conducted in May and June. A regional analysis of bird population trends from 1992-2004 was conducted that included data from LBL surveys.<sup>3</sup> Evidence from this analysis indicated populations increased for some species, but decreased for others on Southern Region National Forests and LBL. Many species that declined in LBL during 1992-2004 were early successional species. Northern bobwhite quail, belted kingfisher, eastern phoebe, American robin, gray catbird, yellow warbler, and red-winged blackbird declined by more than 25%, while northern parula, black-and-white warbler, ovenbird, and blue grosbeak all increased by at least 10%. No species increased by over 20%. Habitat management, described in the Continued Maintenance of Open Lands EA, Prior Creek Project EA, and the proposed five burn and Devil's Backbone EAs will improve habitat for early successional at-risk species, and future surveys should reflect increases in these species as a result. The Southern Region of the Forest Service is currently organizing and compiling a database of bird survey results that will allow summaries of current reports to be easily compiled, and will enable easier future evaluations of bird population changes in LBL and other southern region forests.

In addition to the point count surveys, surveys of Eastern bluebird nest boxes on LBL have been conducted since 1989. In 2008, 165 Eastern bluebird nest boxes were monitored. There was an 82.2% fledging success rate from these boxes. Habitat management for early successional at-risk species will also improve habitat for Eastern bluebirds.

Bat surveys have been conducted on LBL since 1993. These surveys have detected a total of 10 bat species on LBL, with red bats being the most common species. From 1993-1995, the first area-wide survey was conducted using mist nets. Additional area-wide surveys were conducted in 2000 and 2005 using both mist nets and Anabats™. The next area-wide survey will be conducted in 2010 (5-year intervals). In addition, localized, project-specific bat surveys have been and continue to be conducted as needed. In 2008, one project-specific survey was conducted at the Ginger Bay area for the Ginger Bay Timber Salvage project; three species were detected, none of which was a Federal or Regional Forest species of concern.

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<sup>3</sup> La Sorte et. al. 2007, Population Trends and Habitat Occurrence of Forest Birds on Southern National Forests, 1992-2004. United States Department of Agriculture, FS Northern Research Station, General Technical Report NRS-9). [http://nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr\\_nrs9.pdf](http://nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr_nrs9.pdf)

Two Federally-listed (F) and two Regional Forester (RF) listed bat species of concern may occur on LBL: gray bat (F), Indiana bat (F), Rafinesque's big-eared bat (RF), and Southeastern myotis (RF). Rafinesque's big-eared bats, Southeastern myotis, and Indiana bats have never been captured on LBL. One "potential" Indiana bat was detected in 2007 during an Anabat™ survey in the Prior Creek Area; however, a single sonogram is not sufficient to establish presence. Gray bats were captured regularly on LBL through 2003 (24 captures total); they have not been captured since then, possibly due to changes in conditions at the nearest hibernaculum and summer roost cave, which is not located on LBL. Consideration for bats will continue in all projects that could potentially affect them. Bat populations on LBL will benefit from expanded riparian corridors implemented as part of the Continued Maintenance of Open Lands project. Additional benefits will occur from implementation of riparian corridors and retention of at least six snags per acre in forest management projects, and providing for older, large trees to serve as roosting and maternity sites. Wildlife improvement projects within the Kentucky and Tennessee Oak Grassland Demonstration Areas, such as the Prior Creek Project and the prescribed burns proposed at Crooked Creek, Three Ponds, and Buffalo Trail, offer potential recruitment sites for bats over time. The Devil's Backbone project will also improve potential habitat for Rafinesque's big-eared bats and Indiana bats.

In 2008 steady progress has been made in improving habitat diversity to support viability of threatened and endangered species and major biological communities. Significant planning progress has been made in the promotion and regeneration of shortleaf pine in the Devil's Backbone State Natural Area in Tennessee. An assessment of the Panther Creek watershed, along with resource field surveys has moved LBL toward a proposed action for the Devil's Backbone Project Area. In 2008, LBL entered into an agreement with the Tennessee State Natural Area Commission to increase the size of the Devil's Backbone SNA from 160 to 1,386 acres.

An integrated assessment of the Panther Creek watershed was completed in 2008 to identify potential opportunities in that area. The team agreed that there were a number of important projects that should be undertaken to restore the area, treat invasive species and provide for recreational access. The lack of regenerating shortleaf pine around Devil's Backbone is especially concerning. An interdisciplinary team was formed to begin an environmental analysis. LBL proposed its first plan amendment as part of the initial proposed action for the Devil's Backbone area and seeks to increase the amount of shortleaf habitat above that listed in the plan and bring it closer to the optimum amount described in the plan FEIS. Analysis is underway for this project, which may include timber harvest, prescribed fire, and selective herbicide use to control non-native invasive species (NNIS) (<http://www.lbl.org/LRMPPlanning.html>).

Generally speaking, there is little to no shortleaf pine regeneration in the area due to fire suppression and little recent management. The mature shortleaf pine is starting to die out and is being replaced by xeric site oaks. The Area Plan calls for renewed management of this area to reach a maximum of 250 acres of short-leaf pine forests with mature open forest and woodland structural conditions. LBL has inventoried about 236 acres of possible shortleaf pine old growth within the Devil's Backbone State Natural Area. These stands are typically over 100

years of age and contain a considerable amount of mature shortleaf pine. These old growth stands will need to be thinned from below to maintain their vigor.



**Figure 11. Dead shortleaf that will eventually be replaced by younger hardwoods in Devil's Backbone.**

Forest management continues to push forward although an ailing timber market and high fuel costs have produced some setbacks. Timber was finally sold as part of the old Work Area 18 project. This was the first EA completed under USFS management at LBL. The sale included 656 CCF of timber in Trigg County and Lyon County, KY. The Prior Creek EA decision was completed in 2007 and included harvest of 1,145 acres and the use of “cut-and-leave” timber stand improvement (TSI) treatments on 650 acres. The 378-acre Crockett Creek Timber Sale, which is the first of three planned sales in that project area, was offered for sale twice in 2008 and received no bids either time. This sale has been re-packaged and is expected to be offered for sale in early calendar year 2009. About 80 acres of TSI were accomplished using USFS personnel. An external contract is currently advertised for 105 acres of this same midstory removal treatment to occur in 2009. On October 18, 2007, a tornado ripped across LBL just inside the state line in TN. Damage was observed from Ginger Bay all the way across to the south edge of Prior Bay. After the completion of a decision document, 1,517 CCF of timber was sold to a local sawmill owner in June 2008. This volume included about 243 acres of tornado damaged timber and 60 acres of oak grassland habitat analyzed in the Prior Creek EA.



**Figure 12. Damage in the Ginger Bay area from the October 18, 2007 tornado.**

Successional stages of forest have changed somewhat since the Area Plan. Ongoing monitoring of oak-grassland fire and mechanical treatments indicate a gradual increase in both early successional species (grasses and forbs) and oak-hickory regeneration. Forest inventory will begin in the north oak grassland area in early 2009. Forest Management needs to increase the supply of regenerating forest habitat and provide for more mid-age forest through thinning and shelterwood cuts. Prescribed fire is starting to reduce the midstory and develop an herb layer in the Prior Creek Project Area (in the southern OGRDA). Across LBL in general, mature late successional forest groups are increasing, meaning trees are getting older and bigger, with a closed canopy. There continues to be more white oaks than red oaks. The red oak group is approaching maturity.

Oak decline could be exacerbated as a result of the late spring freeze in April 2007 combined with a drought in the summer of 2007. Deciduous trees were forced to deplete their sugar reserves in order to re-sprout, leaving them with low vigor. The drought only added stress and left oaks more vulnerable to *armillaria* root rot, *hypoxylon* canker, and various insects including the two-lined chestnut and red oak borers. There are no overt signs of an oak decline breakout as of yet, although sporadic mortality of older trees is occurring. We may not see any significant effects for a few years. Twenty-five gypsy moth traps were put out in the forest, and no moths were found. Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service placed additional traps throughout LBL and did not find any gypsy moths either. None were located in surrounding counties, but two were caught along the Natchez Trace Parkway in southern Tennessee.

<b>Goal 6:</b>	<b>Demonstrate and widely export innovative, efficient, and effective management techniques that can benefit others.</b>
<b>Sub-element NFS Generic Desired Condition</b>	“Through the Demonstration Project role, the FS will continually seek to sharpen its management policies and techniques with an eye toward exporting these innovative and beneficial approaches to others locally, regionally, and nationally.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Example Area Plan Desired Condition Statement</b>	“In its demonstration role, LBL will develop and test the programs, methods, and systems by which recreation, EE, and vegetation are managed, with the intention of promoting those elements that would provide benefits to other public and private land managers and units.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Desired Trend Statement</b>	“Each year, export three to five demonstration products.” [Objective 6a]
<b>Monitoring Questions</b>	30. Has LBL produced measurable results from demonstration projects that have lead to positive changes on other units? 31. How many demonstration products have been exported?
<b>Area Plan Performance Measures</b>	30. Trends and annual summary of accomplishments and results 31. Trends and annual summary of accomplishments and results
<b>Data Sources Utilized</b>	--Annual summary of units supported, accomplishment reports, feedback, policies changed, results; tracking, by documenting the assistance provided, support to specific organizations and agencies --Track annual accomplishments with standard tracking system
<b>Importance</b>	This goal contains one of the key emphases of the LBL Protection Act and reinforces the key purposes described for LBL when created in 1963. Effective delivery of conservation education messages is also a primary objective of both LBL and the agency.
<b>What It Tells Us</b>	The results related to this goal will provide key information about whether LBL is meeting its legislated objectives.

## Goal 6, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative

In order to expand the types of demonstrations LBL undertakes, LBL established a request for proposals to all FS units in FY2007. Of the proposals received, the Demonstration Board and Regional Forester approved four proposals for LBL to take on, beginning in FY07. All four of those projects have now been completed, pointing to the need to re-engage field units next fiscal year by issuing another proposal request.

In FY 2008, Demonstration Lab focused on internal projects. For example, LBL has been working on its internal Financial System and customer delivery processes, which includes its Point of Sale and New Camping Reservation System which will go live early in 2009. LBL’s Financial System has been receiving a lot of national attention. LBL has also been providing a lot of feed back to the Forest Service in relation to setting up a Forest Service wide Point of Sale system.

The Area Plan set a target of serving between three and six customers each year, on average. In 2008, the LBL Demonstration Laboratory met this target by serving several units in a variety of ways, mainly in an advisor role on specific subject matter. No products were exported to other units in FY07 or 2008; however, LBL is currently working on internal projects that could be exported in the future. Projects that were completed in FY08 or are still underway are listed below:

- LBL Interpretive Association Guidebook – Develop a guidebook for units on how Interpretive Associations can be used to provide functions the FS cannot. Will also explain type of agreements that can be used. In the past five years, five different units have either visited or asked for our staff to visit their unit to discuss interpretive association processes and our particular approach. There seems to be a bona-fide need for this product.

*Status: On hold, waiting for national guidelines to be released.*

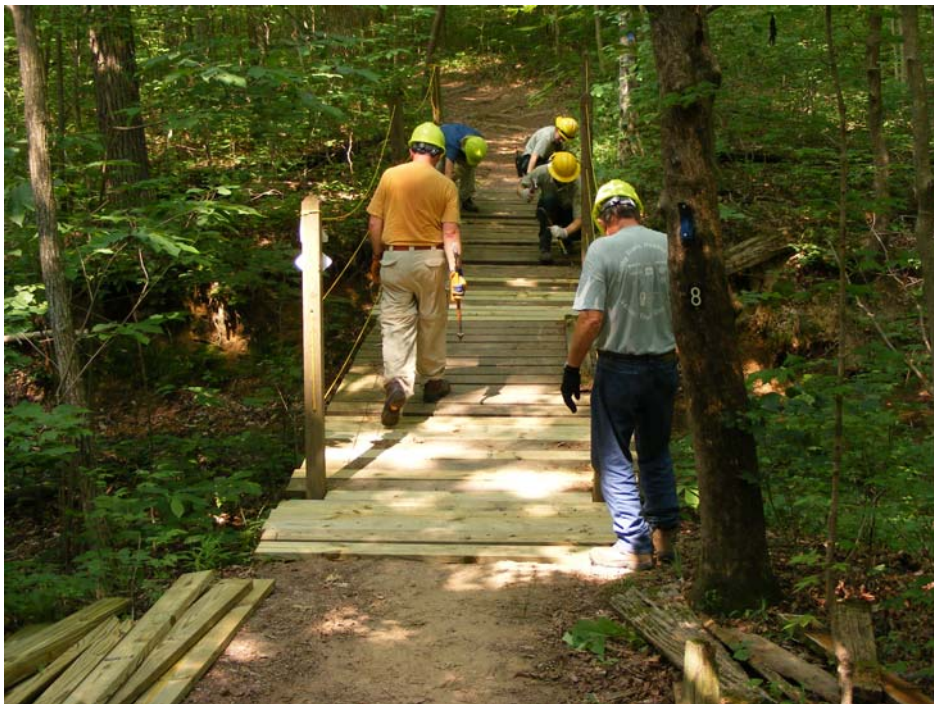
- San Dimas Test Sites for OHV – Testing new resource management techniques on multiple forests in cooperation with San Dimas Research Lab. Studied dust conditions and creating possible solutions to reduce effects.

*Status: Complete*

<b>Goal 7:</b>	<b>Enhance dispersed recreational and EE opportunities throughout LBL.</b>
<b>Sub-element NFS Generic Desired Condition</b>	<p>“...management will also promote and increase support for dispersed day-use and extended-stay activities in anticipation of increased demand in dispersed recreational and educational activities and experiences.</p> <p>“Hunting and fishing will continue to be important dispersed recreation opportunities at LBL.” [Area Plan, Vision]</p>
<b>Example Area Plan Desired Condition Statement</b>	<p>“Dispersed activities and opportunities will become an extension of the developed Rec/EE facilities and sites that currently exist.”</p> <p>“Program and project efforts will be directed toward improving and developing self-guided trail systems for nature viewing, hiking, biking, and horseback riding. Scenic lake vistas will be opened up, and the road system will support scenic driving, access to cemeteries, and access to dispersed recreational opportunities.” [Area Plan, Vision]</p>
<b>Desired Trend Statement</b>	<p>“Rehabilitate one to two areas contributing to dispersed recreation opportunities (e.g. backcountry, lake access, etc.) annually as determined by the realignment process, based on meeting present and anticipated user needs, providing resource protection, reducing maintenance costs, and reducing infrastructure.” [Objective 7a]</p> <p>“An average of one to two miles of trail will be constructed annually.” [Objective 7b]</p> <p>“Complete an average of one interpretive project annually within the Nature Watch Demonstration Areas and Oak-Grassland Demonstration Areas.” [Objective 7c]</p>
<b>Monitoring Questions</b>	32. Have dispersed recreational and EE opportunities at LBL been enhanced? (Duplicate question for Measures 32-35)
<b>Area Plan Performance Measures</b>	<p>32. Trends and annual summary of accomplishments and results</p> <p>33. Backlog of facility and trail maintenance needs and trends</p> <p>34. Results and trends in user satisfaction ratings</p> <p>35. Trends in financial resources needed and available to provide recreation opportunities</p>
<b>Data Sources Utilized</b>	<p>--Objective accomplishments, percentage of visitation utilizing dispersed Rec/EE opportunities.</p> <p>--Analysis of Infra Deferred Maintenance Report and reporting of percent change in backlog.</p> <p>--Summary of visitor satisfaction surveys or personal letters and notes received; objective accomplishments, integrated projects completed.</p> <p>--Analysis of incoming funds-traditional budgets and fee collections-and costs of operations, in view of needs; reports using standard tracking systems.</p>
<b>Importance</b>	This goal contains one of the key program changes displayed in the LBL Area Plan and responds to concerns voiced by the visiting public during the planning process that LBL was not meeting changing customer demands through existing services.
<b>What It Tells Us</b>	The results related to this goal will provide key information whether LBL is meeting its stated objectives in the Plan and is responding to public feedback.

## Goal 7, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative

There have been few specific “on-the-ground” activities completed to significantly change dispersed recreation and EE activities within the past year. Five SST accessible toilets were installed to replace nine porta-johns at four facilities that provide dispersed recreation opportunities (Wranglers, Redd Hollow, Sugar Bay, and Turkey Bay). Two trail bridges were replaced on the Honker Trail complex. The old bridges were damaged beyond repair by high water events. During 5 workdays, volunteers helped to install 50 yards of armored block, decommissioned a hiking trail bridge, and replaced Center Furnace stairs. The Homeplace trail head was decommissioned. A local mountain bike club donated 1000 hours of volunteer trail maintenance, as they have contributed significantly in the past.



**Figure 13. Volunteer Trail workday repairing bridge decking.**

Several on the ground 2008 accomplishments can be documented at Turkey Bay OHV Area. The Forest Service installed an OHV Turkey Trot (Kids) Learning Trail (6 miles) with an environmental educational theme of responsible and safe riding techniques. The collaboration between departments led to this innovative way to deliver environmental stewardship messages. Five hardened creek crossings were installed on main trail system. A new three-panel information kiosk and a two-panel kids trail kiosk were also installed. Trail improvements and restoration efforts in the Turner and Turkey Creek Watersheds are described in the narrative in Goal 4.



**Figure 14. “Turkey Trot” OHV Kids Learning Trail**

Planning on several watersheds has incorporated trail projects that will increase dispersed recreation opportunities in LBL. The Devils Backbone Watershed planning was begun in 2008. This was the first watershed planning effort that incorporated the recently completed backcountry campsite inventory and made recommendations for their future management. The planning process also reviewed the current trail system and made recommendations for needed trail relocations to provide a more sustainable trail system and reduce trail maintenance costs. There could be trail relocations, a trail closure, and a new trailhead for the Fort Henry Trail system.

A team completed planning efforts for a relocation of the multiple use trail, Model. This relocation was needed due to a section of the trail closed by a tornado in 2007. The Forest Service used this storm event to move the trail from a riparian zone to a more sustainable location that also provides a safer crossing of the Trace than the old trail location. Planning efforts was completed on a relocation of the North/South Trail near Moss Creek Day Use and construction as begun. This relocation was needed to reduce a safety hazard by removing the trail from a section of paved road with poor visibility.



**Figure 15. Moss Creek reroute implementation with volunteers.**

Work continued in our cooperative effort with the State of Kentucky in the 68/80 improvement project in mitigating disturbance to the dispersed and developed recreation facilities located in the right-of-way. This includes the future relocation of three miles of equestrian trail from a legal road into a more natural setting and the future construction of a nine mile trail between the two bridges that will include a hike and bike pathway. The contract with Trails Unlimited to design and layout the hike and bike pathway is now in place. Revisions to the Fenton Lake Access Area and Devils Elbow Backcountry Area began due to highway construction activities.

Several planning projects continued in 2008; projects will incorporate dispersed recreation and EE activities. Development of the Trace Corridor Management Plan continued in 2008 with a goal on achieving scenic byway designation. This designation will allow LBL to compete for grants to enhance recreation and EE opportunities along the Trace, along with highlighting its scenic significance to the traveling public.

LBL completed implementation of a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) in 2008 as part of a FS national initiative. The map identifies to the general public all roads that are open for any type of motor vehicle use. This map is available for the public free on line and in hard copy at the two welcome stations and the Golden Pond Visitor Center. This map will be updated annually to reflect on the ground changes. An additional color visitor map is envisioned, similar to those typically found on other Forest Service units. The new map will be developed in the next year, perhaps replacing several of the existing maps.

LBL continued planning with Lake Barkley, Kenlake, and Kentucky Dam State Resorts Parks to develop a complex of mountain bikes trails on state park land. This would provide a variety of mountain bike trails in the region.

Monitoring efforts continued across LBL trails:

- Completed Canal Loop 10-year trail photo monitoring.
- Completed condition inventory surveys on 100% of the LBL hiking and biking trail bridges and the Hillman Ferry, Piney Campgrounds hike/bike trails. Priorities were set based for trail bridge replacement and maintenance based on public safety.
- Completed trail impact monitoring for the LBL 200 Special Use OHV recreation event.

Thousands of users remain interested in quota hunts on LBL, as indicated by the receipt of almost 12,000 applications for deer and 2,600 applications for turkey hunts. (See Figure 16.) The numbers of deer and turkey harvested in FY2008 are consistent with the numbers harvested in the past few years. Deer were somewhat smaller than usual because the young deer's development was slightly impacted by the drought in FY2007.

<b>Species and Year</b>	<b>Quota Hunt Applications</b>	<b>Number Harvested During Quota Hunts</b>
<b>Deer</b>		
2005	12,421	711
2006	12,312	843
2007	12,414	731
2008	11,965	796
<b>Turkey</b>		
2005	2907	111
2006	2724	164
2007	2583	117
2008	2629	113

**Figure 16. Quota Hunt Results**

LBL participates in a number of regional partnership programs that have increased EE activities in the area. The annual Teacher's Appreciation Weekend was held during October 2007. (Also see narrative for Goal 2.)

Dispersed programs within the northern Nature Watch Demonstration Area expanded beyond the previous year's offerings. A simple map and handout was developed by the Woodlands Nature Station staff that gives birding enthusiasts some suggested locations to visit, along with likely birds and other wildlife that might be encountered. This is in line with the new

philosophy of making Nature Station a hub for viewing activities, rather than simply a destination. (Also see narrative for Goal 3.)

The EE Master Plan that was drafted in FY07 was finalized this year. Of note, is the key objective to “develop at least one new method of presenting dispersed educational messages based on environmental stewardship, recreation or heritage issues each year.” The new method implemented this year was implementation of the Turkey Trot Trail described above. The trail provides a safe, controlled environment for kids to learn not only riding skills, but also the ethical behavior that will allow them and their family to “Ride 4 Keeps.”

<b>Goal 8:</b>	<b>The LBL Area Plan will remain effective and usable and lead to accomplishments that support National Strategic Goals.</b>
<b>Sub-element NFS Generic Desired Condition</b>	“...as a unit of the FS, LBL will actively fulfill its role in support of the FS’s National Strategic Goals.” [Area Plan, Mission]
<b>Example Area Plan Desired Condition Statement</b>	“The programs and methods used at LBL will be in a constant state of evaluation for improvement and refinement, assuring that LBL will maintain a cutting-edge management focus in all disciplines.” [Area Plan, Vision]
<b>Desired Trend Statement</b>	“A user-friendly and informative Area Plan monitoring and evaluation report will be produced annually and include comparison of LBL accomplishments and National Strategic Goals.” [Objective 8a]
<b>Monitoring Questions</b>	36. Are the goals of the LBL Plan leading to accomplishments that support national objectives? (Duplicate question for Measures 36-39)
<b>Area Plan Performance Measures</b>	36. Trends and annual summary of accomplishments and results. 37. Determine whether standards, guidelines, and management requirements are being met and are effective in achieving expected results. 38. Determine if planning information or physical conditions have changed and provisions remain scientifically valid. 39. Comparison of estimated and actual costs of plan implementation.
<b>Data Sources Utilized</b>	--Comparison of projects and recent accomplishments to the National Strategic Plan goals and objectives; public comments; standard tracking systems --Interdisciplinary review; sample projects to observe effectiveness of implemented standards --Interdisciplinary review of Area Plan for needed changes as new information becomes available and/or significant changes in conditions are observed --Compare trends in operating budgets to the estimated costs of implementing the Area Plan
<b>Importance</b>	Ensures that the Plan stays usable and is working to support not only LBL goals, but those of the agency. Aids in communication with stakeholders.
<b>What It Tells Us</b>	By reviewing the accomplishments, we are able to find trends that indicate if the Plan is moving towards desired conditions, and should emerging issues begin to occupy more time and resources than the objectives in the Plan, indications for a “need for change” can be identified.

## Goal 8, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative

LBL boasts an Area Plan that is consistently aligned with the national strategic goals of the FS. <http://www.fs.fed.us/publications/strategic/fs-sp-fy07-12.pdf>. We have reviewed the FY 2007-2012 USDA FS Strategic Plan again and feel LBL continues to be well aligned in many of its focus areas.

The over-arching strategic goals of the FS are manifest in the specific Performance Attainment Reporting (PAR) targets assigned to each field organization. Most of these are very directly aligned to objectives listed in the Plan. Figure 17 displays key accomplishments of FY05 through FY08. This year LBL has accomplished most of the assigned PAR targets. LBL fell significantly below the expectations of the FY08 fire targets. There are two major factors responsible for this result. First, the weather did not allow completion of all assigned projects. Secondly, there was a need to temporarily increase staff to complete the environmental review and heritage survey requirements of several projects, which time did not allow, and thus the projects were deferred to FY09.

In addition to contracted work, LBL also began completing stewardship acres through the successful agreement with the NWTF. The restoration work accomplished in the Turkey Bay OHV Area contributed the acres accomplished under improvement of soil and water resources.

The planning information, assumptions, and provisions of the Area Plan remain scientifically valid.

The budget for LBL in FY08 compares well with the projections in the Area Plan and indicates we remain on track with our projections. LBL's annual operating budget remains approximately \$12.2 million: \$8.5 million in federal appropriations and \$3.7 million in revenue. Almost half of the budget was applied to the Recreation, EE, and Heritage programs at LBL. Approximately 30% was allocated to facilities, roads, and trails maintenance to support and provide the array of opportunities. The appropriated budget for LBL has been essentially flat for the past nine years, which is excellent, particularly when inflation and rising costs are considered. In particular, the price of fuel and activities which use it increased dramatically in FY08.

In FY08, LBL volunteers contributed over 120,000 hours of volunteer service, which correlates to over 57 people-years of service. Partnership with the LBL Association provides an additional in-kind assistance valued at \$350,000 (plus direct cash contributions of another \$350,000). When volunteer hours are combined with all other in-kind assistance and cash contributions from partners, the value of total savings to the taxpayer in FY08 was over \$3,000,000.

LBL is making steady progress toward Area Plan implementation while supporting the agency's strategic plan.

**Figure 17. LBL Key Accomplishments**

<b>Specific National Objective (Target)</b>	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>FY05 Accomp.</b>	<b>FY06 Accomp.</b>	<b>FY07 Accomp.</b>	<b>FY08 Accomp.</b>
Miles of high clearance system roads receiving maintenance	Mile	41	30	0	0
Miles of passenger car system roads receiving maintenance	Mile	192	210	220	231
Miles of road decommissioned	Mile	5	1	0	3
Total trail system miles meeting standard	Mile	57	60	--	--
Miles of system trail improved to standard	Mile	8	15	15	18
Miles of system trail receiving maintenance to standard	Mile	20	30	20	13
Number of recreation, interpretive, and conservation education products provided to standard	Product	880	535	--	--
Number of interpretive and conservation education plans implemented	Plan	--	--	1	1
Priority Heritage assets managed to standard	Asset	0	3	1	2
Recreation site capacity (number of People At One Time) operated to standard	PAOT	2,100,555	2,100,000	2,500,000	2,500,000
Number of wildlife interpretation and education products	Product	41	42	44	44
Acres of inland lake habitat enhanced	Acre	101	121	86	61
Acres of inventory data collected or acquired meeting corporate standards	Acre	0	14,000	3000	14,500
Acres of non-threatened/endangered terrestrial habitat enhanced	Acre	6,598	6,690	5370	6964
Soil and water resource acres improved	Acre	20	20	19	879
Volume of Regular Timber Sold(*05=offered)	CCF	917	474	2638	2173
Number of forest special projects permits issued	Permit	219	9	23	21
Annual monitoring requirements completed	Number	0	8	12	12
Landscape scale or Ecosystem assessments completed	Assessment	0	1	0	1
Highest priority acres treated annually for noxious weeds and invasive plants on NF lands	Acre	587	465	264	354
Land use authorizations administered to standard	Authorization	20	7	29	49

<b>Number of non-wildland/urban interface acres treated</b>	<b>Acre</b>	<b>2,219</b>	<b>2,625</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Number of acres treated to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire</b>	<b>Acre</b>	<b>2,517</b>	<b>3,340</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Total Acres Treated with Fire</b>	<b>Acre</b>			<b>5278</b>	<b>291</b>
<b>HF Acres Treated</b>	<b>Acre</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>4858</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>FN Other Acres Treated</b>	<b>Acre</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>226</b>
<b>Number of land use proposals and applications processed</b>	<b>Application</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Recreation Special use Authorizations Administered to Standard</b>	<b>Authorization</b>		<b>228</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>330</b>
<b>T&amp;E and non-T&amp;E Habitat Enhanced</b>	<b>Acre</b>			<b>1383</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Stewardship</b>	<b>Acre</b>				<b>1310</b>

## **E. Action Plan**

LBL monitoring results did not establish the need for any major actions or changes at this time. There are a number of minor actions listed below to aid in implementation of several program initiatives outlined in the Area Plan, have some level of public expectation, or have had limited progress towards the desired conditions. These action items are drawn from the prior year's M&E Reports and have been updated. No new action items have been identified from the information provided in this report. In addition, this report has not identified the need for any Area Plan amendments at this time.

### **Action Items and Status**

1. Action: Collaborate with the public to review, identify, and determine backcountry or boat ramp facilities that are obsolete, excessively expensive to maintain, and can be consolidated to fewer but better-maintained facilities meeting today's public service needs. (FY05/06)

Responsibility: Customer Service Department Staff

Completion Date: Ongoing; Complete by December 1, 2009

Status: This effort will most likely continue into FY10. Public input was gathered during FY07, crafted during FY08; Public involvement will begin in FY09 and the recommendation of proposed actions is expected by December 1, 2009.

2. Action: Expand use of the "Respect the Resource" program to littering, perhaps along The Trace or Highway 68/80. Collaborate with users to find creative ways that will lead to a noticeable improvement in the scenic quality of LBL. The upcoming Trace Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan and the reconstruction of US 68/80 may offer the opportunity to begin this initiative. (FY05/06)

Responsibility: Customer Service Department Staff

Completion Date: January 1, 2008

Status: During FY07, the littering focus was changed to recycling. The recycling program has been implemented at major facilities within LBL in two phases. Other facilities may be added and additional products may be collected, however for purposes of this report, this item is now viewed as complete.

3. Action: Implement the Plan strategies associated with major blocks of wildlife habitat. Collaborate with the public and complete environmental analyses of the 10,000 acres of open lands maintenance and 8,800 acres of Prior Creek projects. Ensure EE aspects of the project are highlighted in the decision. (FY05/06)

Responsibility: Environmental Stewardship Department Staff

Completion Date: Ongoing

Status: Environmental analyses complete; implementation began in FY08 and as other funds become available, other items will be completed. For purposes of this report, this item is now viewed as complete.

4. Action: Collaborate with the public to revise the Heritage Resource Management Plan and gather information about former area residents. (FY05/06)

Responsibility: Customer Service Department Staff

Completion Date: Ongoing

Status: Effort has been changed to development of the Heritage Implementation Plan to support an effective and meaningful heritage program. This plan is anticipated to be complete during FY09.

5. Action: Implement the Area Plan strategies associated with the State Natural Area in the Devils Backbone area in Tennessee by completing an EA to promote shortleaf pine regeneration. (FY07)

Responsibility: Environmental Stewardship Department Staff

Completion Date: December 31, 2009 (Decision date)

Status: IDT began preliminary data gathering work on this project in FY08; EA will be developed in FY09.

6. Action: Implement the first phase of the Prior Creek project. Offer the Crockett Creek Timber Sale Unit and begin harvest on this unit. Develop EE materials to interpret the Prior Creek project. (FY07)

Responsibility: Environmental Stewardship (timber) and EE (interpretation)

Completion Date: September 30, 2009

Status: Timber sale (Crockett Creek) offered but did not sell in 2008. Will be re-offered in FY09. EE materials will be developed in FY09 as well.

7. Action: Develop Northern Nature Watch master plan. (FY07)

Responsibility: Environmental Education

Completion Date: September 30, 2010.

Status: Staff began preliminary layout work and data gathering on this project in FY08. Master Plan proposals are expected to be ready for public discussions in late FY09 or FY10.

8. Action: Provide support to the 68/80 highway improvement project. Re-route equestrian trail impacted by the new highway. Look at changing demands for Golden Pond Visitor Center (GPVC). (FY07)

Responsibility: Customer Service (trail) and Environmental Stewardship (support)

Completion Date: Trail re-route September 30, 2010; Support September 2010; Golden Pond Visitor Center master plan January 1, 2010

Status: Trail re-route will be designed in the fall of 2009 and implemented during FY10. Planning for GPVC site modifications and services will begin in FY09. Support to highway improvement will continue into FY10.

9. Action: Address emerging challenges of those small Core Areas adjacent to General Forest areas scheduled for management activities. (FY07)

Responsibility: Environmental Stewardship

Completion Date: September 30, 2010

Status: No significant progress was made on this item during FY08.

10. Action: Develop in coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service a plan to improve habitat for Price's Potato Bean. (FY07)

Responsibility: Environmental Stewardship

Completion Date: September 30, 2010

Status: Though preliminary discussions were held, no significant progress was made on this item during FY08. Site visits and monitoring will continue in FY09.

## **F. Appendix**

### **Appendix 1**

*The following section is excerpted directly from Section 2 of the Area Plan. It clearly articulates both the reasons to develop this report and the methodologies being employed.*

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring constitutes an important link between the goals of the Area Plan and annual program accomplishments. The planning process has identified key monitoring questions that address each of the priority goals and objectives; they are listed in Part 1 of the document (*2004 Area Plan*) under Area Wide Goals. The monitoring program will focus on some risks mentioned previously while addressing suitable uses, use strategies, and design criteria.

Monitoring will track the wide variety of components of the Area Plan. Roles and contributions identified include the LBL interdisciplinary program specialist who will complete data gathering and evaluation of the Area Plan's implementation. Additionally, both the general public and stakeholders will be involved to capture the perceptions of how successfully LBL achieves the area wide goals and objectives. Monitoring will track how well implementation of the Area Plan's goals and objectives is bringing the conditions of LBL to the desired conditions specified by the Area Plan.

Because this Area Plan also supports the FS National Strategic Goals, the monitoring program will also weigh the Area Plan's progress and achievements in supporting these national goals. However, as these national goals are likely to change over time as national issues and special initiatives dictate, they were not included as formal goals of the Area Plan. This monitoring program, therefore, will include a comparison of this Area Plan's goals, annual LBL program accomplishments, and current or future national goals as part of the monitoring process.

By applying the evaluation questions and measures for each area goal, results and trends will provide a clearer picture of progress toward the vision. The evaluation of monitoring information will measure how close LBL is to reaching desired conditions identified in the Area Plan, including goals, objectives, and susceptibility to emerging issues.

An important concept incorporated in this Area Plan is the continuing use of some evaluation factors used in the analyses of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) alternatives. This approach allows for those EIS evaluation factors to serve as benchmarks from which original assumptions can be tested, and progress toward desired conditions can be measured.

Evaluations will serve as the springboard from which the resource specialist can identify changes needed in the Area Plan or its implementation, or research needed to clarify and address management issues. Results will also be used to help set shorter-term (three-to-five-year) strategic direction, as well as annual work plans. Existing strategies will be updated as needed, based on these evaluations. Results will be in the Area Plan M&E annual report. The Monitoring Summary Table in the Appendix (*of the Area Plan*) includes a complete list of questions, measures, method of collection, frequency, and responsible staff.

Note: items in italics are clarifications to the original section in the Area Plan, intended to aid the reader.