



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

2017

Idaho Forest Practices Year-End Report



Developed and Submitted by

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Preface

The Idaho Forest Practices Act (Idaho Code §§ 38-1301 through 38-1313) and the Idaho Forest Practices Act administrative rules: (Rules Pertaining to the Idaho Forest Practices Act, IDAPA 20.02.01) were developed and are modified to promote active forest management, enhance the ecological and social benefits derived from Idaho forestland, and maintain and protect vital forest resources. The Best Management Practices (BMPs) defined within the administrative rules (FPA Rules) are designed to protect water quality, wildlife habitat and forest health while enhancing tree growth and vigor. These rules are the approved forestry BMP's for meeting Idaho Water Quality Standards (IDAPA 58.01.02, paragraph 350.03.a). They provide assurance to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that Idaho is meeting the water quality standards prescribed for *forest practices* such as; harvesting, burning, planting, and the transporting of forest products.

IDL is statutorily charged with administering the Forest Practices Program and ensuring the associated FPA Rules implementation. The IDL Forestry Assistance Bureau administers the program.

At the beginning of each year, the IDL Forest Practices Program Manager compiles and analyzes data from the previous calendar year. These data are then translated into actionable information and made available to land managers, forestry professionals and other interested parties. This information describes the overall picture of forest practice activities on *private* and *state* forestland. For this report, private forestland includes industrial and nonindustrial forestland and may include county or municipal forestland. State forestland includes all endowment and other state owned land where forest practices are administered by IDL.

IDL has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) regarding stream channel alterations. This MOU grants IDL the authority to permit and inspect specific stream-channel crossing structures installed as part of a defined forest practice. Each year the IDL Technical Services Bureau consolidates details of Stream Channel Alteration Permit (SCAP) activities on private and state land. This activity is reported to IDWR in accordance with the MOU.

The Idaho Forest Practices Act Advisory Committee (FPAAC) is the body of professionals and concerned citizens charged with providing direction and leadership for new and revised FPA administrative rules. FPAAC is comprised of nine voting members from across the state of Idaho that represent family and industrial forest owners, fisheries biologists, citizens at large, and logging operators. There are also a number of ex officio members representing IDEQ, the US Forest Service and various technical specialties.



IDL spent the year 2017 working with FPAAC to improve language in the Forest Practice Rules as well as comprehensively studying Idaho's and surrounding state's laws and regulations regarding beneficial use of surface water. IDL Forest Practices Program Manager, Gary Hess, wishes to express his gratitude to the Shade Effectiveness and Operational Monitoring Study Teams (Hawk Stone and Stephanie Jenkins (DEQ), Dr. Robert Keefe (University of Idaho) and the IDL Technical Services Bureau) for their continued work evaluating implementation of the 2014 Class I Tree Retention Rule.



Introduction

Forest practice inspections are conducted by IDL Private Forestry Specialists (PFSs) and part-time inspectors who assist the PFSs. During inspections, detailed, comprehensive, inspection observations are recorded and then submitted to the Forest Practices Program Manager (FPA PM) for entry in the Forest Practice Inspections Database. The database provides most of the data and information contained in this report along with summaries of inspections completed during a given month. The FPA PM distributes a monthly Forest Practices Report. This monthly report identifies unsatisfactory findings from inspections of commercial harvest operations.

Before commencing any rule-defined forest practice (commercial or non-commercial), an *Operator* who is responsible for forest practice implementation must file a Forest Practice *Notification* with IDL. When harvested wood will be used *solely* for the landowner's/harvester's *personal use*, a Notification is *not* required. If a commercial operation has the potential to generate a slash hazard, a *Fire Hazard Management Agreement (Compliance)* must also be submitted and signed by the *Contractor*. The Contractor is responsible for slash management rule compliance. Slash hazard mitigation on commercial operations must be inspected and a *Clearance* issued following harvest and site-preparation operations. The Notification and the Compliance are on a double-sided, single-page form that requires signatures from both the Operator and the Contractor. Copies of the signed document are sent to the landowner listed in county tax records, the County Assessor's office in the county in which the operation occurs and the purchaser. Because all forest practices require a Notification regardless of hazard management implications, this report refers to the form as a Notification.

Once the Forest Practices Notification is accepted by the local IDL Office, the PFS begins the process of scheduling on-site inspections. Inspections may be performed multiple times on the same operation, depending on the observed site conditions or upon request of the Operator or Landowner. To ensure that IDL places the greatest emphasis on protecting water quality, the IDL PFSs prioritize inspections based in part on a concise risk assessment. Higher priority is given to operations containing Class I (fish-bearing or domestic use) streams, followed by operations containing Class II streams. Notifications that indicate presence or adjacency of a Class I stream will prompt the PFS to conduct inspections at a higher frequency. Depending on the characteristics of any particular operation, PFSs may use other site-specific attributes to prioritize inspections. These attributes include unstable or highly erodible soils and slopes greater than 45% in gradient. PFSs place the highest inspection priority on notifications with the highest potential for FPA related issues. The objective of the Idaho Forest Practices Act is to protect water quality.

In late 2014 IDL introduced a new process for issuing notifications and for FPA inspections on IDL-managed, state-owned forestland in a manner consistent with inspection methodology on private land. Previously only state timber sale activities were issued Notifications, but starting with the fourth quarter of 2014 IDL transitioned to a process where all state forest management activities are issued Notifications for defined forest practice activities (e.g. spraying, pre-commercial thinning, etc.). PFSs are to conduct inspections on state forestland with the same



frequency and methodology used to inspect operations on private forestland. This report provides data on inspections conducted by PFSs on state-managed Forest Practice operations. Similar to private forest industry, contractual inspections conducted by IDL forest managers on IDL sales are tracked separately by the IDL Forest Management Bureau. IDL's intention is to collect and report on Forest Practices inspection data on state forestland consistent with the way it is accomplished for private forestland.

Under the FPA Rules, IDL may grant a *variance* when an Operator demonstrates that variance from a Forest Practices Rule will result in no additional resource degradation and the variant action is necessary to successfully complete the forest practice. A variance is only granted when it is shown the non-compliant activity and potential mitigation will result in equal or better resource protection than operating within full compliance with the rules. Each variance request is carefully analyzed by an IDL PFS. A final decision regarding the granting of a variance is made by the IDL Area Manager after consulting with the PFS. Some requests for a variance are denied and others are withdrawn by the applicant after they learn that additional practices, which may be required by the IDL in order to provide greater resource protection, may make the variance less attractive than full compliance with the rule.

This report provides detailed data on:

- Forest Practices Notifications on Private and State Forestland
- Individual Operations Inspected
- Frequency and Location of Inspections
- Rule Compliance
- Attributes of Inspected Operations
- Notices of Violation
- Complaints Made to IDL
- Variances
- Stream Channel Alteration Projects

Highlights of the above items and conclusions are presented in the following Executive Summary. Bar charts by category are presented in the body of the report.

Executive Summary

Operations inspected on state and private forestland in 2017 are **98.4%** compliant with administrative rules (FPA Rules). The Idaho Forest Practices Act (1974) encourages sustainable forest management on Idaho forestland. Inspections demonstrate a continued high level of care and stewardship by Idaho forest managers and loggers during harvesting operations. Data regarding these achievements in 2017 are provided in comprehensive detail in this report.

Forest Practices Notifications on Private and State Forestland

The number of Forest Practices Notifications accepted for operations on both state and private forestland show that timber-management activity declined in 2017 with **2,273** accepted notifications. This is a 9% decrease from 2016. There were **2,164** private Notifications and **109** state Notifications. The BMP implementation rate of 98.4% across all inspected **operations** this year is similar to the 2016 rate of 97.8%. The BMP implementation rate across all forest practice **inspections** this year is 97.8%. Often one operation will receive multiple inspections.

Individual Operations Inspected

This past year (2017) saw **1,311** inspections on **1,077** operations. This is a decrease in distinct operations inspected (47.4% of Notifications) over calendar year 2016 (49% of Notifications) and 2.6% below the IDL goal of inspecting 50% of active Notifications each calendar year. In 2015, this rate was 54.7%, so it has declined for two consecutive years. This rate, in fact, is a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for each Supervisory Area, but it is important to recognize that several Private Forestry positions were vacant for portions of each of those years due to retirements or departures. IDL found at least one unsatisfactory condition (or misdemeanor violation) on **17** distinct operations (1.6%) vs. 27 operations (2.0%) in 2016. FPA personnel inspected **47** of **109** operations on state forestland for an inspection ratio of 44%. This is a notable increase over the 38% of state operations inspected in 2016. All Private Forester conducted inspections on state operations were satisfactory.

Frequency and Location of Inspections

Inspections occurred in every IDL Supervisory Area with Eastern Idaho and Southwest having the fewest (5 and 16 respectively) and Pend Oreille Lake, Mica and St Joe with the most (423, 239, and 236 respectively).

Notices of Violation

A Notice of Violation (NOV) is issued when repeated unsatisfactory conditions and/or severe resource degradation are observed during an inspection. An NOV can also be issued if an operator fails to perform the prescribed mitigation for an unsatisfactory condition within the time frame given by IDL. In 2015 seven NOV's were issued. **In 2017 two NOV's were issued.** This number is more consistent with past years than that in 2015 (See *Figure 9*). One of these did not have a previous unsatisfactory, but was for failure to address several resource concerns identified in 2017 when a 2015 operation re-started. That operation had previous unsatisfactory findings



and an NOV. The second NOV was an elevated unsatisfactory finding for significant damage to a Class I Stream Protection Zone and channel.

Looking Forward

There were 109 Notifications issued for state operations (27% decrease) in 2017; 47 state operations inspected results in a rate of 43%, which is an improvement over 38% in 2016. The ratio of inspected state operations is closer to the 47.4% overall operations inspected. IDL's goal is to inspect private and state operations in a consistent manner (50% of all operations). Discussions in several meetings with Private Forestry Specialists about improving the rate of inspected state sales may have contributed to this increase.

In 2017, the Idaho Forest Practices Act Advisory Committee (FPAAC) continued to review the Streamside Shade Retention Rule assessment activities conducted by IDL and IDEQ. The IDL Technical Services Bureau will monitor Class I Stream Protection Zone (SPZ) harvests again in 2018 to assess how landowners are implementing the rule adopted in 2014. IDEQ will continue the Streamside Shade Effectiveness Study with the assistance of the University of Idaho to determine the degree of shade reduction that occurs when SPZs are precisely harvested to the rule limits. These activities are part of the adaptive management strategy of IDL in advising the FPAAC in their decision-making and a testament to the commitment of IDL to pursue science-based regulatory actions. Preliminary results indicate many of the Class I Stream Protection Zone prescriptions, that required strictly harvesting to the minimum Relative Stocking allowed by the rule, retained greater than 90% of the pre-harvest shade.

The success achieved in implementing the Idaho Forest Practices Act rests with the collaboration and dedication of many individuals, organizations and the sound science supporting the rulemaking. Idaho's high level of forest practice BMP implementation is achieved and maintained as the result of many contributing factors. The participation of most of Idaho's larger industrial forestland owners in forest certification systems (either *Sustainable Forestry Initiative* (SFI) or *Forest Stewardship Council* (FSC)) has a very positive influence on compliance rates. These industrial forest landowners strive to remain in full compliance with both the FPA Rules and the standards set forth by their certification organizations. They also depend heavily on the data in this report for added third party documentation. Programs like the *American Tree Farm System* provide a similar role on the nonindustrial side. IDL strives to fully inform state land managers, as well as report their successes, to ensure they have a basis for comparison and receive credit for their stewardship ethic. The dedication shown to resource protection by Idaho's state, industrial and nonindustrial stewardship forestland managers while practicing sustainable timber harvest is remarkable and encouraging. Our challenge is to improve outreach to nonindustrial members of our communities involved in timber production to better educate themselves and/or their operators on the importance of Idaho's BMPs to maintaining and enhancing Idaho's water quality.

Forest Practices Notifications on Private and State Forestland

A total of **2,273 Notifications** were accepted statewide in **2017** for operations on **private and state forestland**. This is a 9% decrease from the 2,506 Notifications submitted in 2016, but 2017 was still the 4th highest year out of the last ten. *Table 1* below shows the number of Notifications accepted from 2008 through 2017. The Notifications data are listed by IDL **Fire Protection Districts** (not by IDL Supervisory Areas). All districts except Kootenai Valley, Ponderosa, Craig Mountain and SITPA had a reduced number of Notifications.

Table 1.

2008 to 2017										
Forest Practices Notifications/Hazard Management Agreements (Compliances)										
Fire Prot. District	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Priest Lake	75	39	49	42	40	43	39	33	43	41
Kootenai Valley	295	111	152	149	168	244	233	207	214	233
Mica	377	195	262	260	216	267	284	279	307	264
Pend Oreille	578	295	408	380	438	521	649	673	706	631
Cataldo	89	60	70	65	81	106	97	132	136	130
St. Joe	321	210	263	340	333	356	452	368	445	407
Ponderosa	157	71	120	121	99	120	141	114	129	133
Maggie Creek	62	27	59	47	41	50	84	184	132	46
Craig Mountain	61	49	72	59	74	50	62	82	36	39
Southwest	21	25	30	30	45	61	41	26	19	12
Eastern Idaho	9	3	7	6	4	5	10	14	6	6
SITPA	46	35	65	63	94	80	78	84	63	80
CPTPA	<u>175</u>	<u>162</u>	<u>233</u>	<u>259</u>	<u>226</u>	<u>257</u>	<u>257</u>	<u>250</u>	<u>270</u>	<u>251</u>
TOTAL	2266	1282	1790	1821	1859	2160	2427	2446	2506	2273

2008-2017 operations conducted on both state and private forestland.

Table 2 shows the number of Notifications accepted for both state and private entities by fire protection district. In 2017 **109** Notifications were accepted for activities on state land.

Table 2.

2017			
Notifications/Hazard Management Agreements			
(Compliances)			
By Type			
Fire Prot. District	2017 Private	2017 State	2017 Total
Priest Lake	28	13	41
Kootenai Valley	229	4	233
Mica	260	4	264
Pend Oreille	623	8	631
Cataldo	129	1	130
St. Joe	385	22	407
Ponderosa	129	4	133
Maggie Creek	44	2	46
Craig Mountain	38	1	39
Southwest	10	2	12
Eastern Idaho	2	4	6
SITPA	74	6	80
CPTPA	<u>213</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>251</u>
TOTAL	2164	109	2273

State and Private Forestland—Notification and Compliance Submissions

A total of **2,164** Notifications were accepted for **private land** for **2017**. These include all *commercial operations, non-commercial operations which generate slash, and cost-shared activities* which constitute a forest practice. Notifications totaled in this private land category include operations conducted on industrial and nonindustrial forestland.

Individual Operations Inspected

Figure 1 shows a comparison of operations inspected from 2015 through 2017. There were **1,077 distinct operations** (forest practices) inspected in 2017. Of those 1,077 distinct operations, 1,060 **operations** demonstrated satisfactory BMP implementation (in compliance with the FPA Rules). This is a **98%** compliance rate. Of the total number of operations, **17** had at least one inspection report in which at least one unsatisfactory condition (rule infraction) was observed. One 2015 operation received a NOV in 2017 because of unresolved mitigation from 2016. Only **one** of the 17 unsatisfactory operations in 2017 occurred on industrial forestland. All inspections conducted by PFSs on state forestland in 2017 demonstrated satisfactory compliance. Of the **2,273** accepted notifications in 2017, **1,077** of those operations received at least one inspection, so **47%** of all operations received an inspection in 2017. This is the second consecutive year IDL has not met the statewide goal of inspecting 50% of the operations with a Notification on file. The lower rate in 2017 is, again, likely due to several PFS positions being open for several months in more than one Supervisory Area.

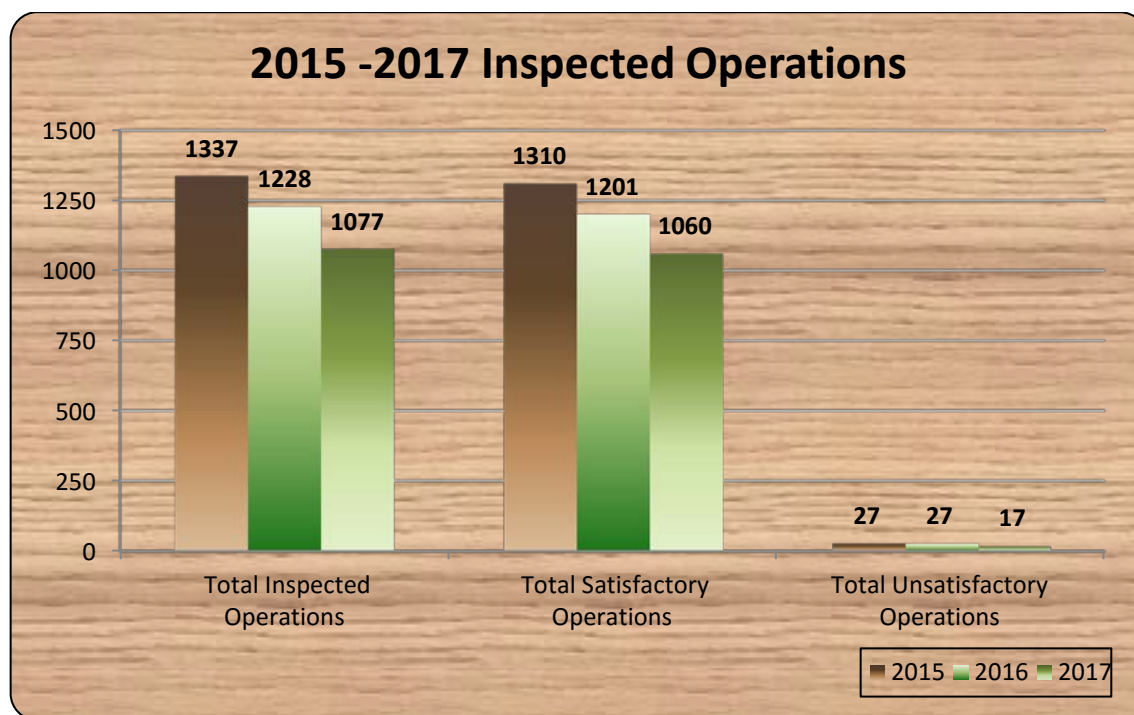


Figure 1 Comparison of Yearly Inspected Operations on State and Private Forestland 2015–2017.

On state forestland (See Figure 2), **47** of **109** operations received an inspection, for a ratio of **43%**. These data do not include contract inspections conducted by the forester-in-charge of state managed sales. They might be skewed by Notification-only situations involving herbicide treatment or planting which, unlike private industry, often are conducted outside the harvest Compliance. This is an improvement over 2016.

For private Notification operations, **1,030** out of **2,164** operations received an inspection, for a ratio of **48%**. This is a decrease from 2016.

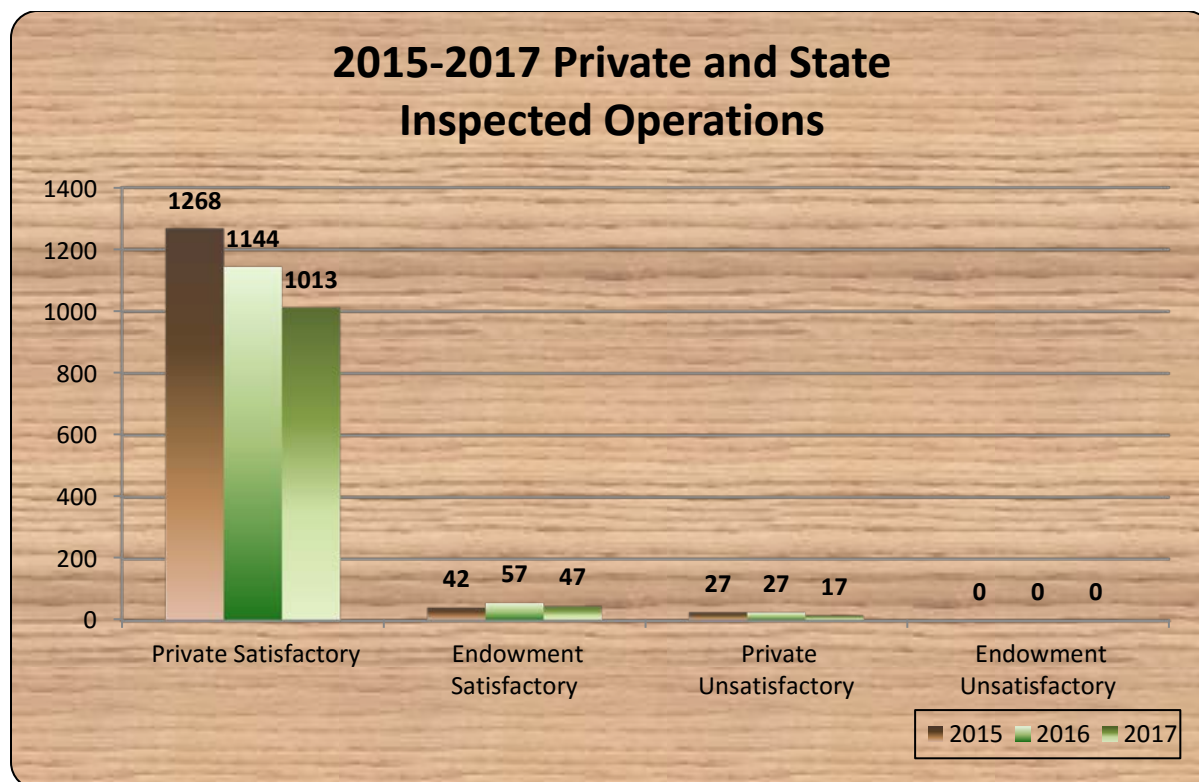


Figure 2 Comparison of Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Inspections on Private and State Operations.

Frequency and Location of Inspections

During 2017, IDL PFSs and assistants performed **1,311** total Forest Practices inspections on **1,077** distinct operations of state and private forestland. *Figure 3* shows a spatial representation of all Forest Practices inspections performed in 2017 by IDL Supervisory Area. The total number of inspection reports includes follow-up inspections on the same operation; this results in more inspection reports than operations.

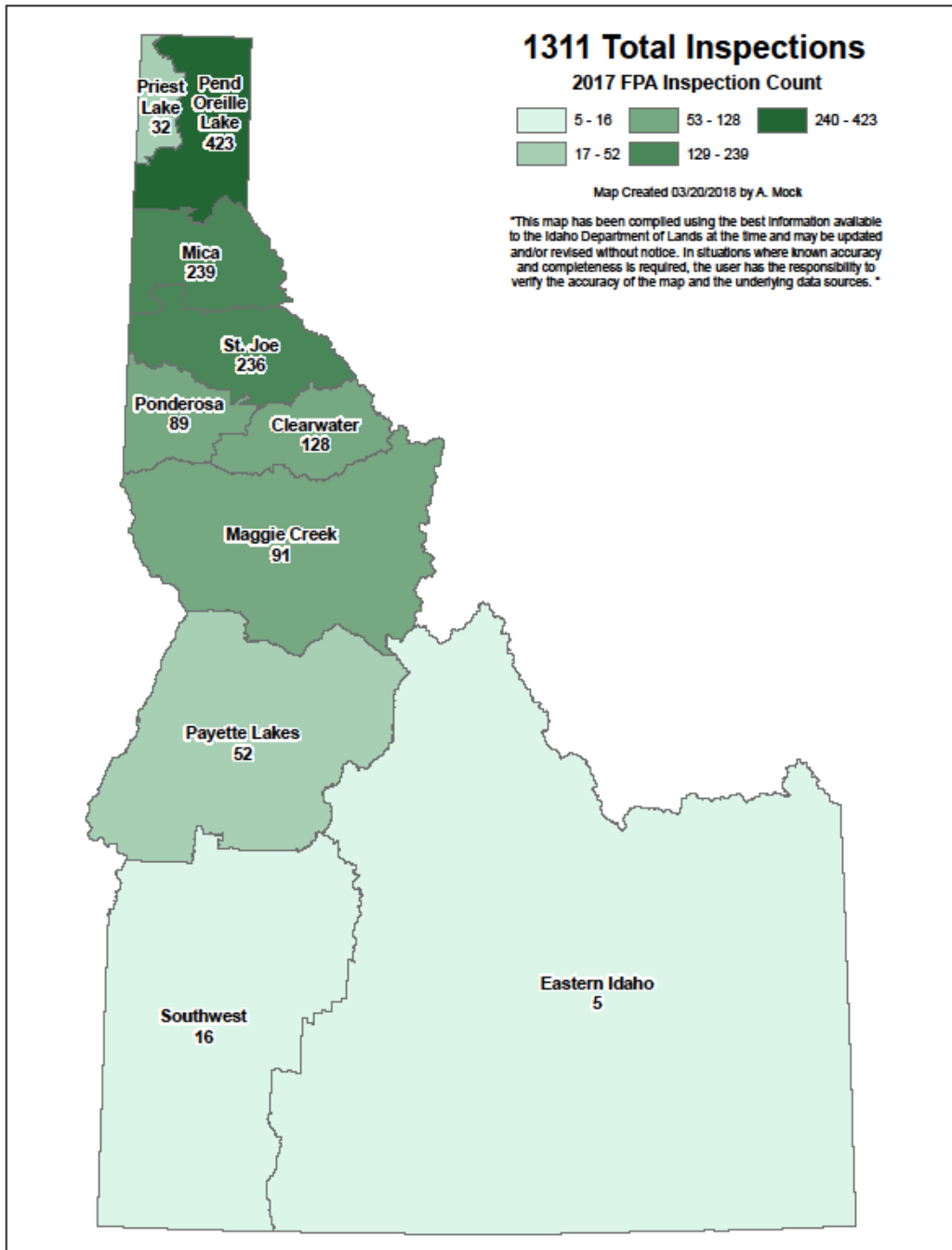


Figure 3 Map of inspections by Supervisory Area.

(Note: Many of the 2017 inspections were performed on sites with Notifications submitted in previous years and many of the late-year Notifications did not receive inspections until after the start of 2017. This year-to-year carry-over remains relatively constant over time. IDL consistently reports on the number of inspected operations compared to the total number of private-forestland Notifications accepted in a given calendar year.)

Rule Compliance

Figure 4 shows a comparison of the **total** number of 2016 and 2017 Forest Practices **inspections** performed on state and private forestland and the breakdown of those inspections into satisfactory reports (inspection reports indicating compliance with all rules inspected) and unsatisfactory reports (inspection reports indicating an infraction of at least one rule).

The data show, out of the **1,311** total inspections performed in 2017, the number of inspection reports containing all-satisfactory conditions was **1,283** (*Total Satisfactory Inspections*); this demonstrates that over **98%** of all **inspections** performed in 2017 found compliance with the FPA Rules (including sites that were found satisfactory in post-unsatisfactory inspections after they were brought into compliance through remediation). This total number of inspections (1,311) encompasses all inspections, including multiple inspections of the same operation. Within these 1,311 performed inspections, the number of inspections that resulted in reports indicating at least one unsatisfactory condition totaled 28 or only about 2% of the total inspections performed.

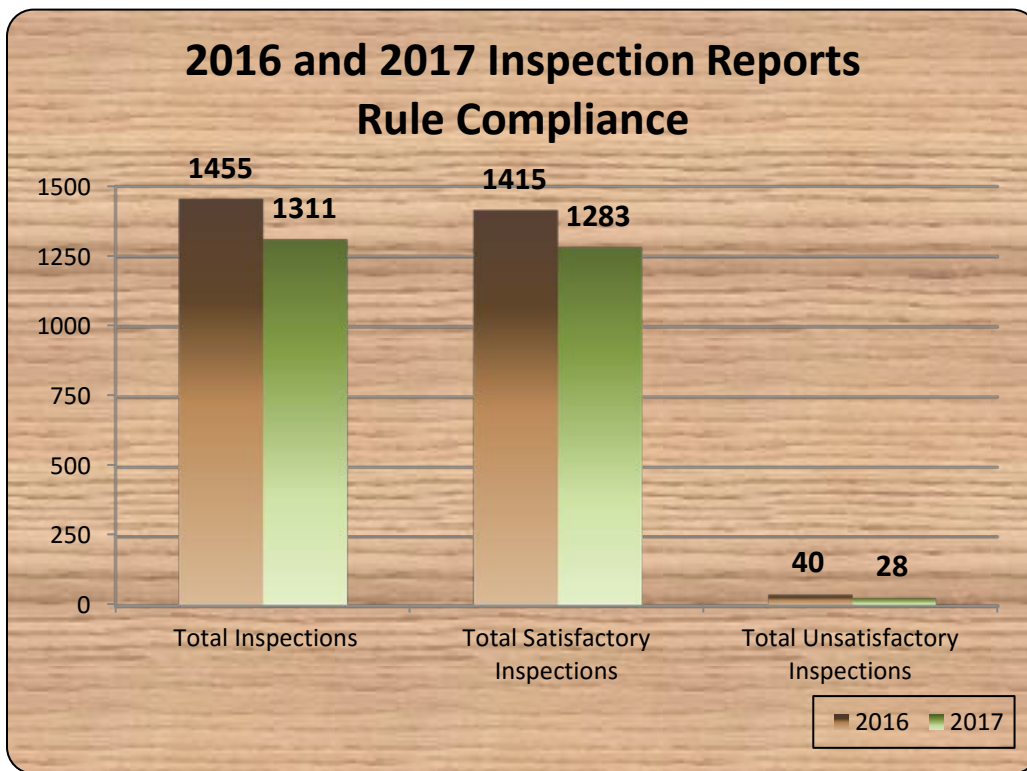


Figure 4 Comparison of 2016 and 2017 total inspections.

Figure 5 shows a comparison of the total number of inspections carried out by ownership category in 2017. In 2017 there were **59** inspections carried out by PFSs on IDL managed timberland. No inspection resulted in an unsatisfactory finding. The total number of inspections conducted on private forestland was **1,252**. Without considering the 59 satisfactory inspection reports conducted on IDL managed land, the report compliance rate on private timberland is nearly **98%**.

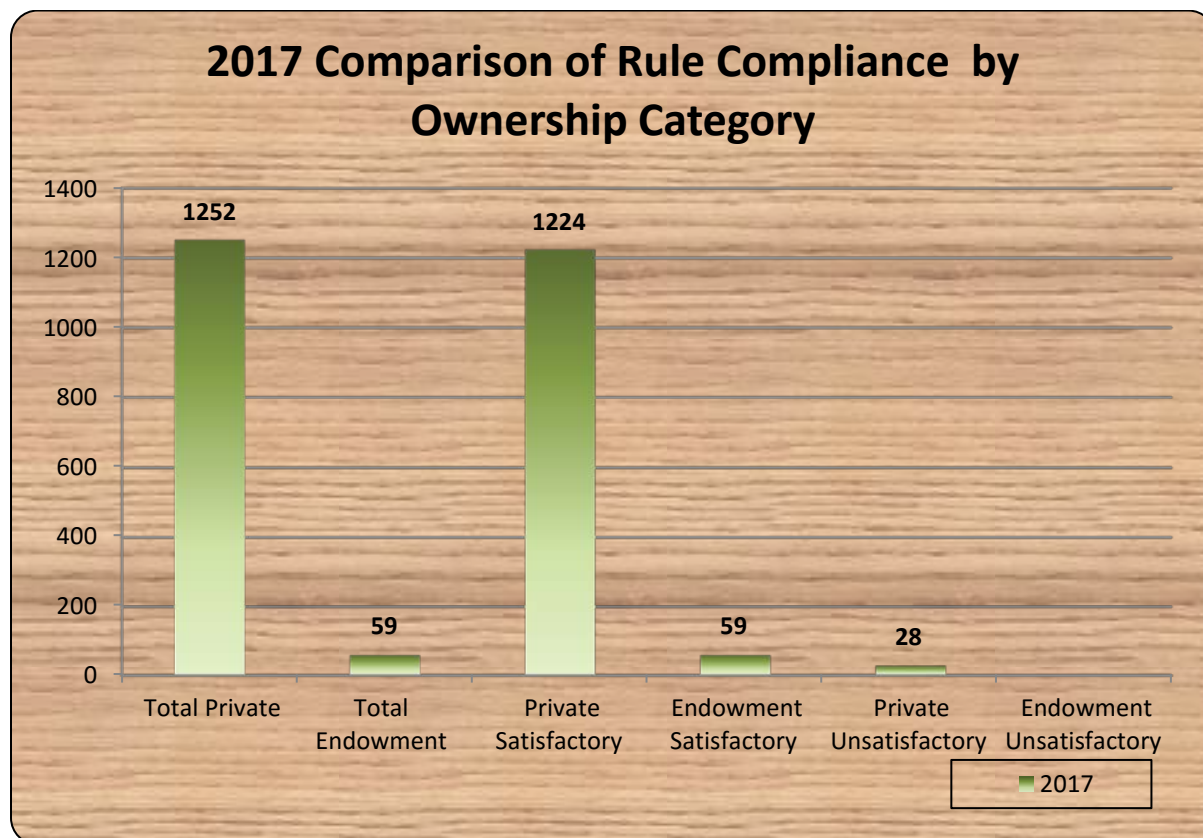


Figure 5 Comparison of Rule Compliance by Ownership Category in 2017.

State operations inspected by PFSs indicate **100%** compliance. Within a few years IDL anticipates rolling out a new enterprise database system that will enable the department to further stratify data and provide additional comparisons so we can better determine where compliance can be improved on all ownerships.

Figure 6 shows the frequency and types of individual rules that were violated in these *unsatisfactory* reports.

(FPA Rules available online at this link: <http://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current/20/0201.pdf>)

Within the **28** unsatisfactory inspection reports, there were **64** different rule infractions cited. The most frequently infringed rules were the *Stream Protection* rules (IDAPA 20.02.01.030.07 - 26% of infringed rules) and the *Location of Landings and Skid Trails* rules (IDAPA 20.02.01.030.04 - 17% of infringed rules). A notable increase is the 8% of infractions for petroleum waste (IDAPA

20.02.01.060.02) over 2016 when there were none. Private Forestry Specialists have responded to the DEQ request that more scrutiny be accorded to inorganic debris left at landings and in slash piles.

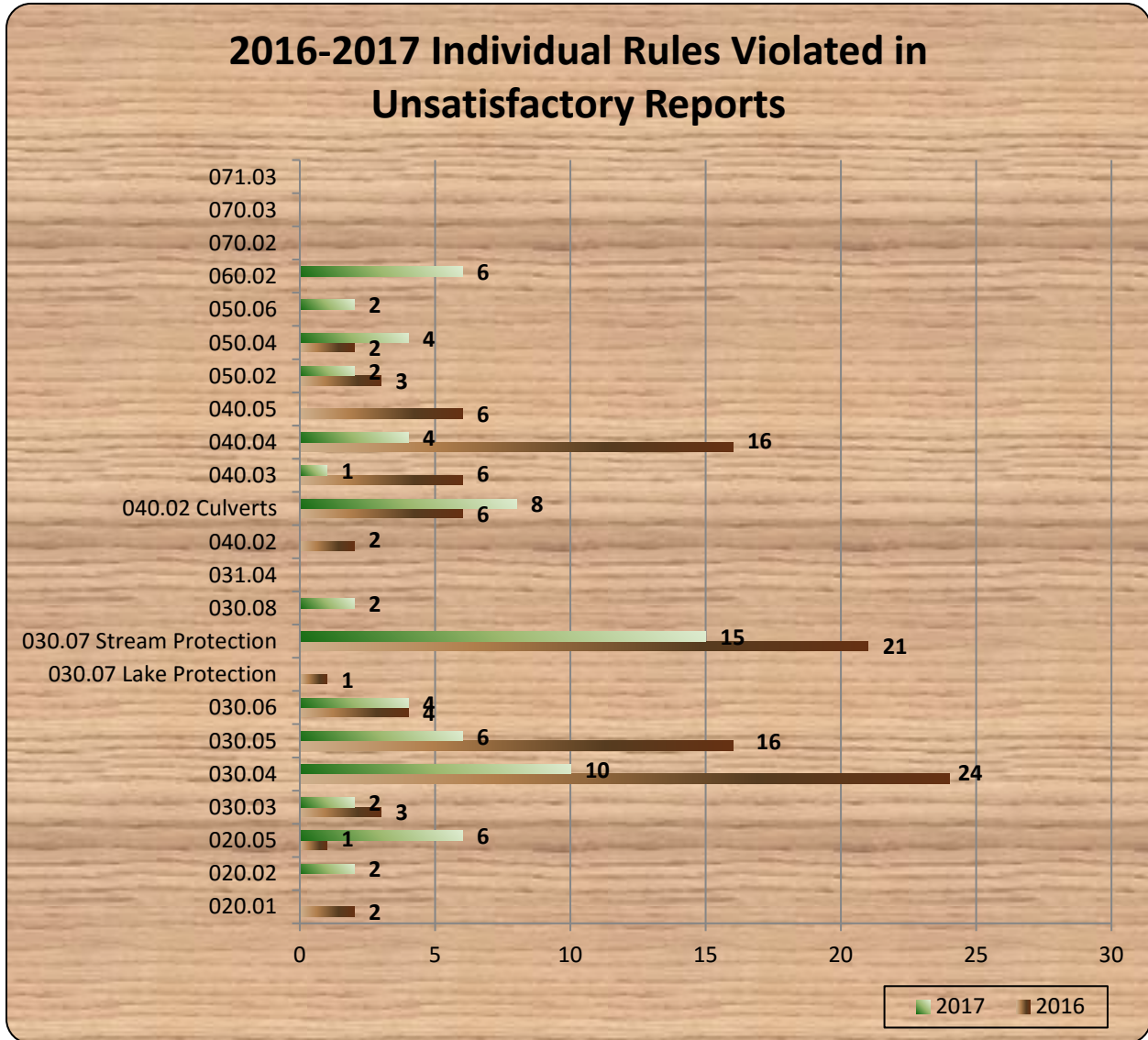


Figure 6 Comparison of Individual Rules Violated in 2016-2017.

Attributes of Inspected Operations

Figure 7 shows the number of inspections conducted on operations performed in areas containing (or adjacent to) Class I or Class II streams as well as some of the other attributes used to determine inspection priorities. Of the 1,311 inspections, 402 (31%) of the operational areas contained at least one Class I stream, and 753 (57%) contained a Class II stream. As these data show, often one operational area includes both Class I and Class II streams, as well as other attributes. Figure 8 exhibits the specific site attributes of the inspected areas. The highest inspection priority is always given to requested pre-work meetings. IDL believes it is better to identify suitable alternatives to rule standards rather than subsequently observe unsatisfactory conditions in an inspection. IDL would like to conduct pre-operational collaboration with nonindustrial private forestland (NIPF) operators to the extent it does with industry and state operators. Those operators/landowners do not request such collaboration with similar frequency, but IDL offers it whenever possible.

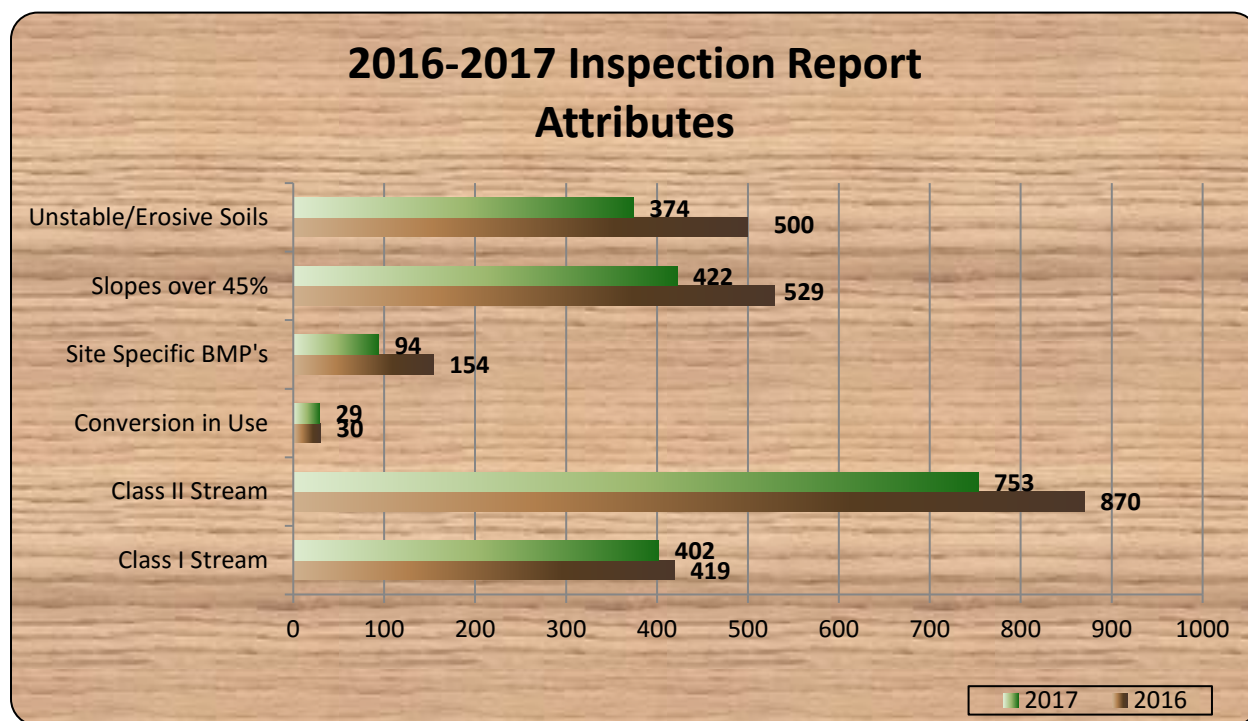


Figure 7 Comparison of the Attributes of all Inspected Operations in 2016 - 2017.

IDL's intent is to conduct FPA inspections on IDL managed state land as on private land. The first step in achieving that consistency is to select sites for inspection using the same decision process. Figures 8 and 9 depict the Inspected Operations Attributes of the inspections conducted on operations on private land and state land respectively. While the two data sets are very different in size, the distribution by attribute on state land is similar to that on private land in all but one respect. Compared to all operations, state operations in 2017 had a 50% smaller Class I to Class II stream ratio.

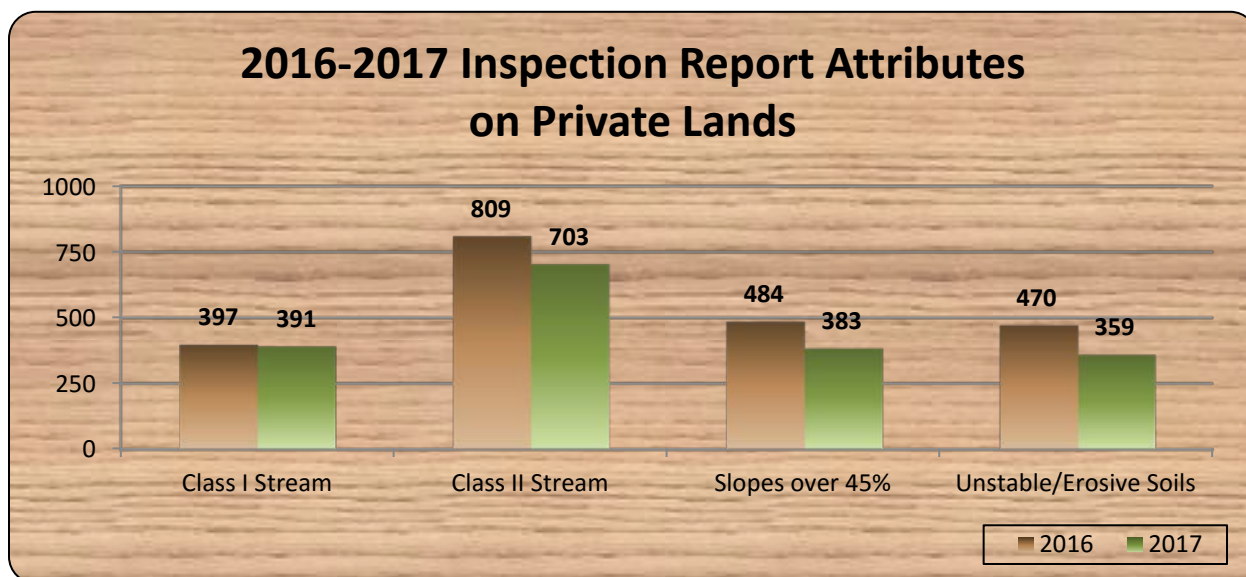


Figure 8 Inspected Operations Attributes on Private Land

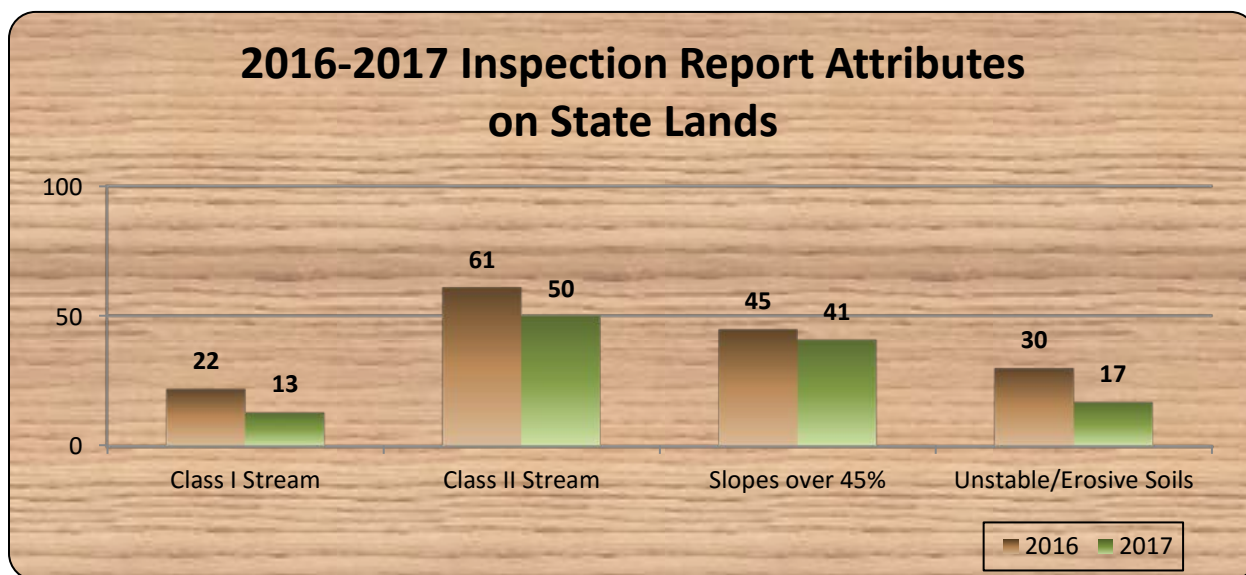


Figure 9 Inspected Operations Attributes on State (IDL managed) Land

Notices of Violation

A Notice of Violation (NOV) is issued when repeated unsatisfactory conditions and/or severe resource degradation are observed during an inspection. An NOV can also be issued if an operator fails to perform the prescribed mitigation for an unsatisfactory condition within the time frame given by IDL. In 2015 seven NOV's were issued. **In 2017 only two were issued.** This number of NOV's is consistent with the years 2008 through 2014. Figure 10 shows the number of NOV's issued per year since 2007.

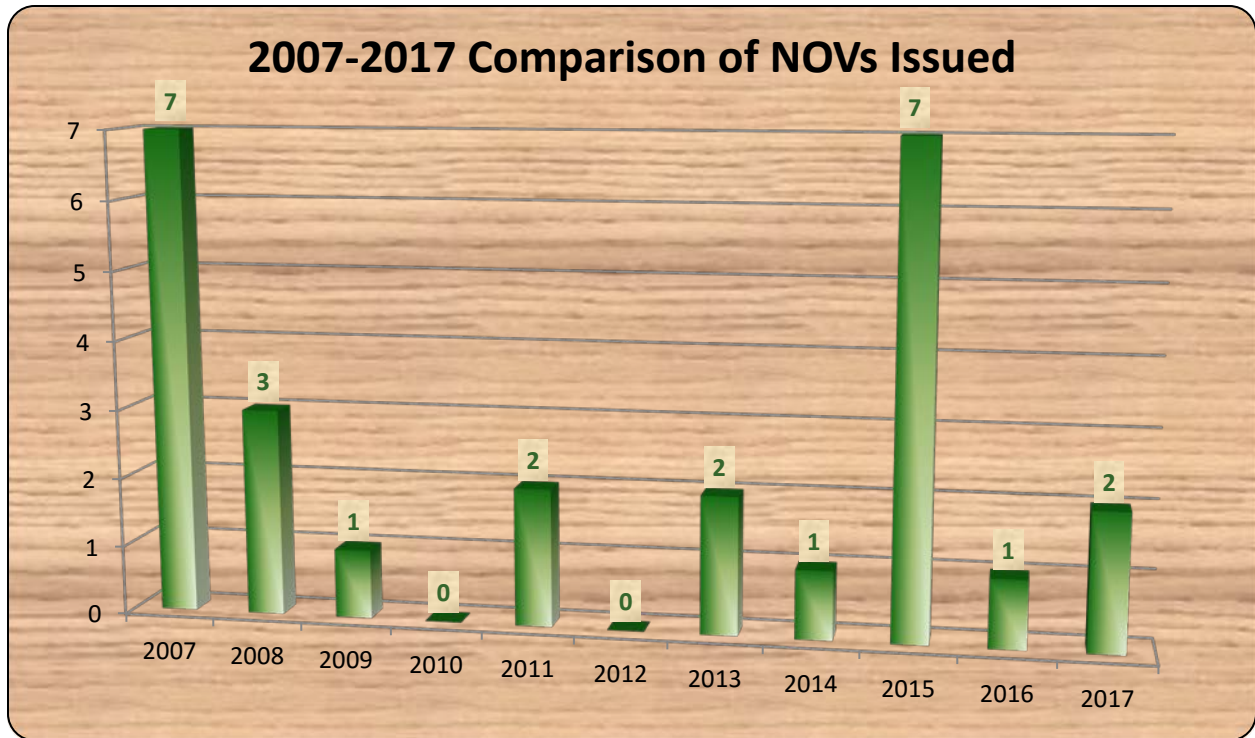


Figure 10 Comparison of NOVs Issued from 2007 through 2017.

There were 15 unsatisfactory operations without NOVs; only 1 was industrial the remainder were nonindustrial private forest operations. Most unsatisfactory reports (including industrial) were associated with typical infractions such as ground equipment in the SPZ, locations of landings and trails in SPZs, road maintenance and/or road and trail drainage control and winter operations. Additionally nonindustrial operations had unsatisfactory findings for streamside shade retention (1), violations during mining (1), improper Notification of Forest Practice (1), reforestation (3), culvert installation and petroleum debris (6).

Complaints Made to IDL

When operations commence on private and state forestland, neighboring landowners, individuals from nearby communities or interested organizations occasionally voice concerns or complaints to their local IDL Offices. IDL Private Forestry Specialists or Operations Foresters usually address these complaints. Complaints range from perceptions of resource degradation to concerns over aesthetics.

The PFSs analyze each complaint and decide whether the complaint can be addressed by checking compliance with the FPA Rules; if so, a site visit is usually performed. **Fifty-eight** (58) FPA-related complaints were received by IDL Offices (mostly by PFSs) in 2017. **Thirty-six** (36) of these complaints were addressed with an in-office explanation (on the phone or in-person); the remainder required a field, site-visit. The number of FPA-related complaints received by each IDL Supervisory Area is shown in *Figure 11*.

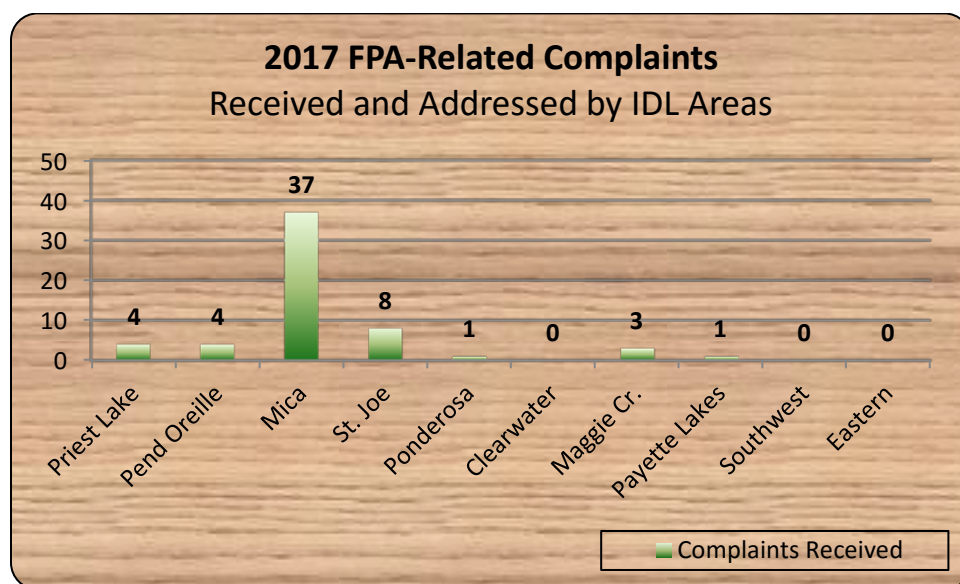


Figure 11 FPA Related Complaints received in 2017 by Area.

While each Area does not track complaints in the same way, there is consistency in year-to-year reporting among the areas. The overall number of complaints fell somewhat from 77 in 2016 to 58 in 2017. Most of the decrease was the 80% decrease in the Priest Lake Area (from 20 to 4). The Mica Area has the highest number of complaints of all areas.

Variations

Figure 12 shows a 2016-2017 comparison of the number of variances granted statewide. For 2017, 82 variances were issued on all forestland operations (nearly the same as 2016). Out of 2,273 Notifications, variances were granted to only 3.6% of all Forest Practice Operations.

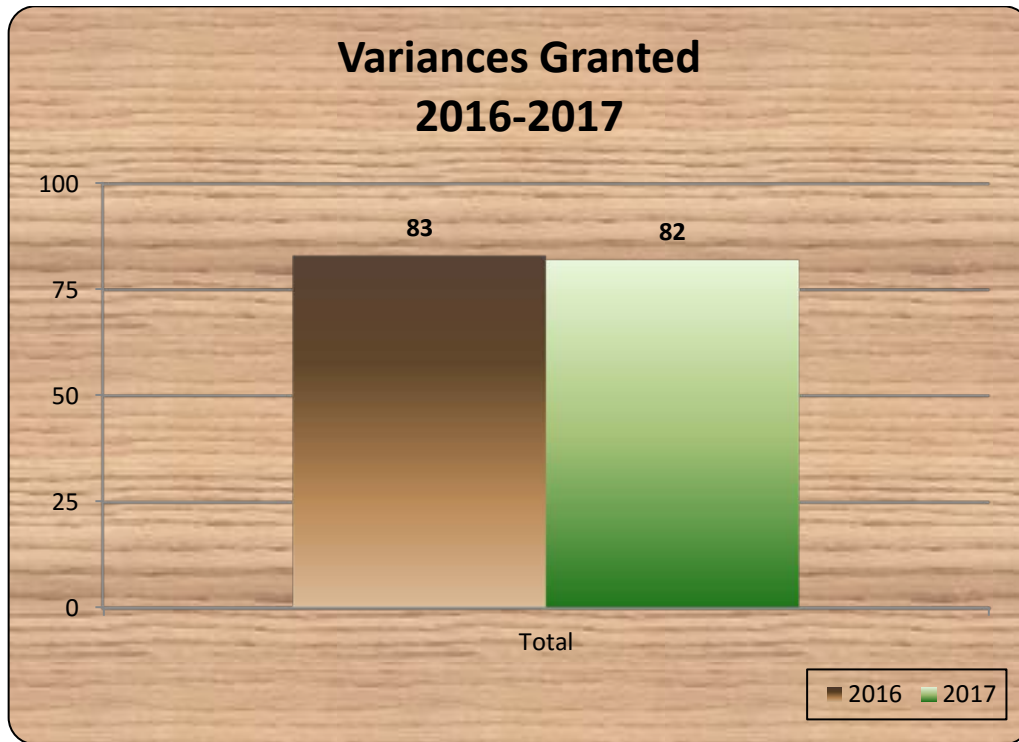


Figure 12 Comparison of Variations in 2016 and 2017.

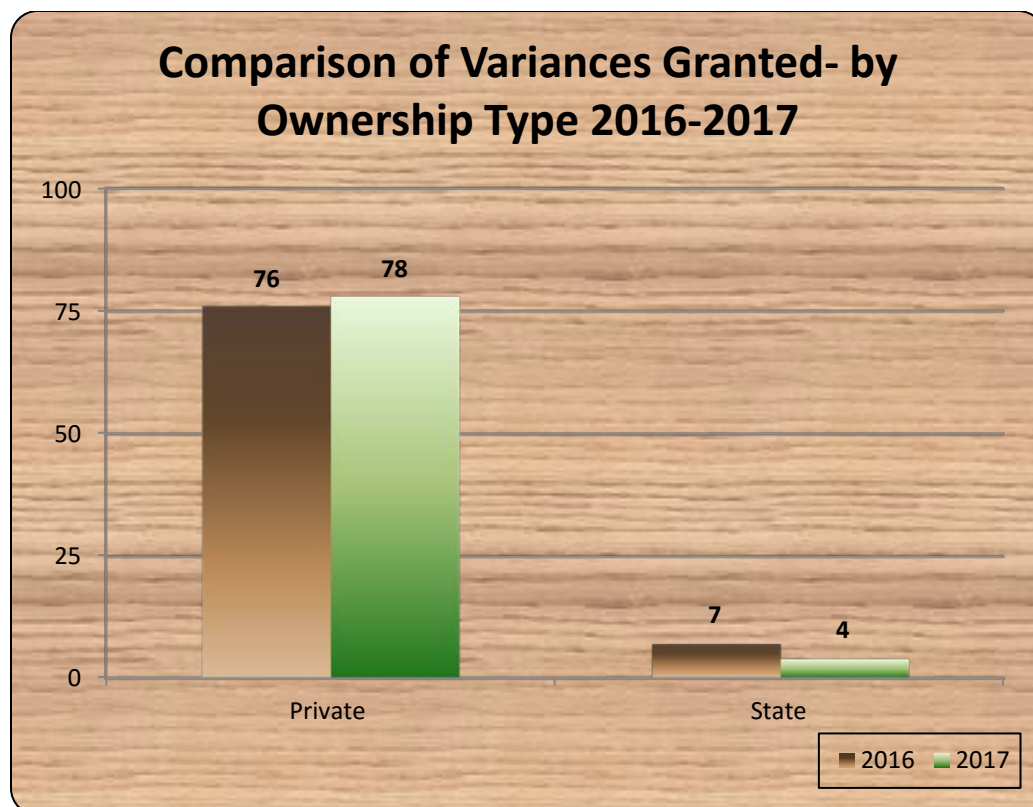


Figure 13 Comparison of Variances Granted across ownership type.

Figure 13 shows the distribution of variances by ownership in 2017. Both state and private operations were about 4% of their respective number of notifications. All variances issued in a Supervisory Area are signed by the Area Manager and must meet the “equal or better over the long-term,” protection-criterion. It is the Area Manager’s responsibility and objective to ensure the criterion is applied consistently across state, industrial and nonindustrial private ownership.

Figure 14 illustrates the types of rules for which variances were granted (See Table 3 for textual rule descriptions). Most requests for variances deal with the use of existing trails or roads within a SPZ. Variances of this nature are only granted if the operator can demonstrate to IDL that use of existing roads or skid trails (within the protected riparian area) are necessary to carry out the operation. Additionally, use of ground equipment inside the SPZ must not result in added degradation to the soils, water quality and fish habitat within the watershed and result in less sediment delivery to streams than that from construction of new transportation systems outside the SPZ. From year to year, there is very little difference in which rules variances are granted for.

(Note: When an activity falls under more than one rule, a variance is granted for each rule where it is appropriate. For example to reopen a road that lies partially within an SPZ the operator will need to request a variance from IDAPA 20.02.01.030.07.c (operation of ground based equipment within an SPZ) and from IDAPA 20.02.01.040.02.h (reconstruction of existing roads located in SPZs) for the single activity. The result is a difference in the number of rules varied being greater than the total number of variances granted.)

Table 3. FPA Rule Paraphrased Textual Descriptions for Figures 13 and 14.

Rule Title	Rule Number	Rule Paraphrase
030. TIMBER HARVESTING	030.03.a.	No ground-based equipment on slopes >45% threat to stream
	030.03.b.	Grade of constructed skid trails < 30%
	030.04.a.	Landings, skid trails, and fires trails outside SPZ
	030.06.c.	Waste material deposited outside SPZ
	030.07.b.	Temporary stream crossings used
	030.07.c.	Ground-based equipment outside SPZ
	030.07.e.	Streamside shade retention adequate
040. ROAD CONSTRUCTION	030.07.f.ii.	Mechanical piling of slash outside SPZ
	040.02.a.	Road construction outside SPZ
	040.02.g.	Stream crossings minimized and properly installed
	040.02.h.	Road reconstruction outside SPZ

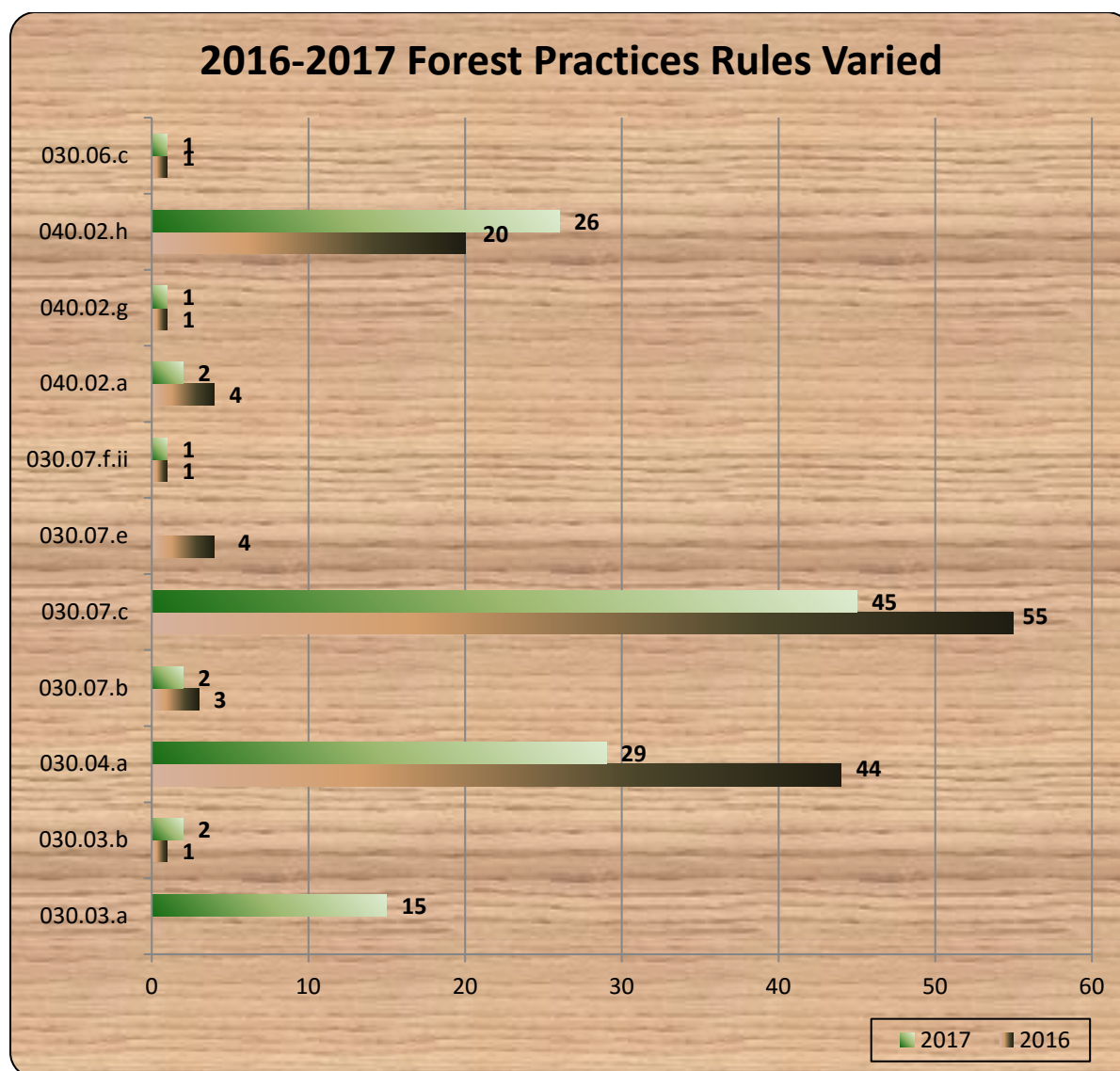


Figure 14 Comparison of Variances for 2016 and 2017.

Rule 030.03.a. Soil Protection contains a clause that prohibits operating ground equipment on slopes exceeding 45% immediately adjacent to a stream. In 2014, only 3 variances were granted for this rule and there were none in 2015 and 2016; in 2017, there were 15 variances for 030.03.a. This rule is typically varied for fire trails to protect adjacent uncut timber. The large number of variances in 2017 was due in part to a departmental decision to require a variance for all cable-assisted, mechanized-harvesting operations near streams, while we study the impact of this emerging technology. Results to date indicate there have not been noticeable increases of sediment delivery to streams from these operations. There were 18 cable-assisted operations in 2017.

Figure 15 provides a comparison of variances issued on state land with those issued on private land. Even though the number of variances issued on state land was low, it is clear the largest number of variances on all ownerships is for trail or landing use in an SPZ. Note there was one variance 030.03.a. for a cable-assisted operation on state land in 2017.

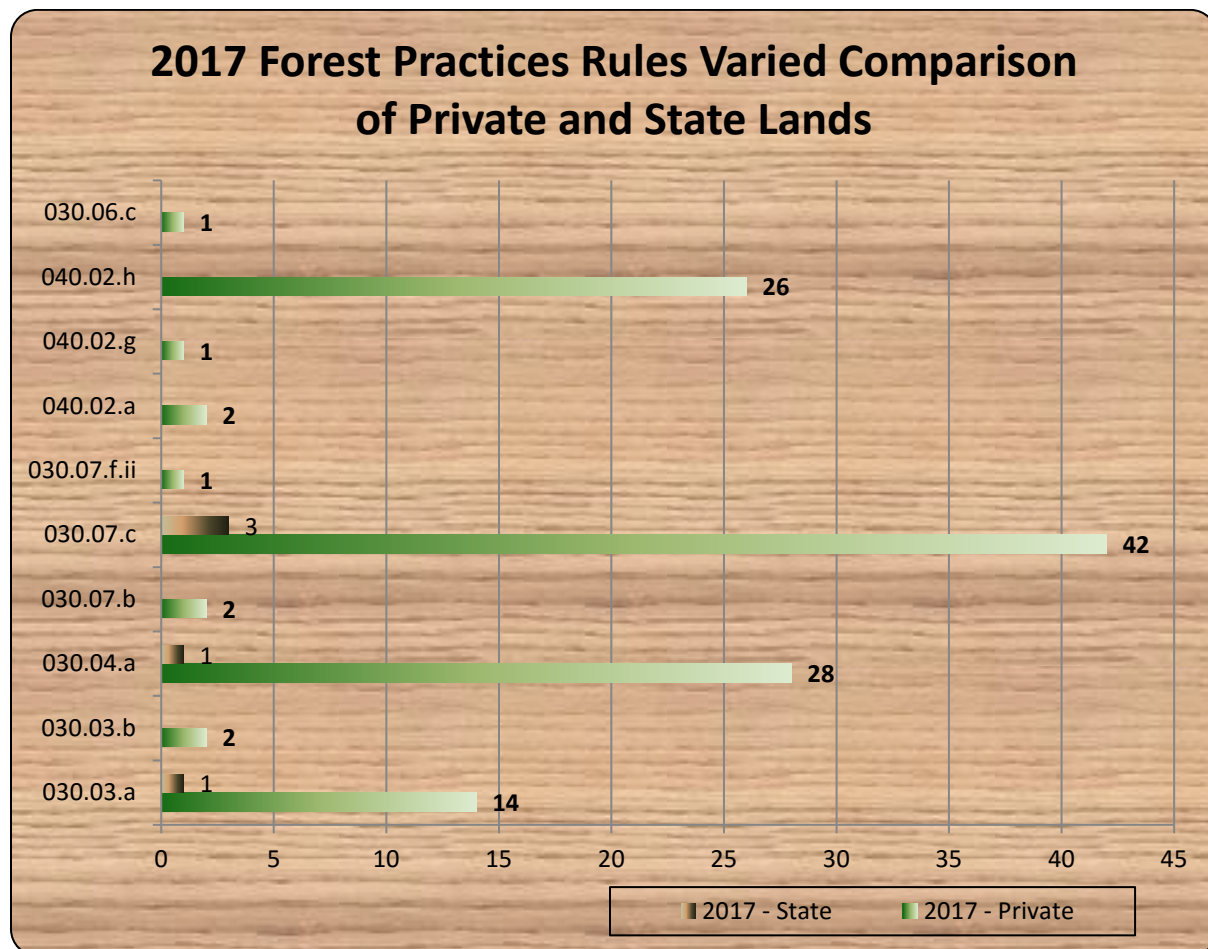


Figure 15 Comparison of Rules for which Variances were Granted Between Ownership Types.

Stream Channel Alteration Projects Administered by IDL

In accordance with an MOU between IDL and the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR), IDL Private Forestry Specialists have the conditional authority to approve applications for culvert, bridge and ford installations, re-installations and removals on private land. The conditions under which IDL has this authority are: the stream-channel alteration projects are part of a defined forest practice, the stream is perennial, and the stream-crossing structures meet certain size limitations and installation criteria.

Ninety-eight (98) total stream channel alteration installations/removals were received and approved by IDL statewide in 2017. A project application, submitted to IDL on a supplemental notification form, may contain multiple installations in close proximity to each other (e.g., three culvert installations on one stream segment within one operational unit). The supplemental notifications accepted in 2017 referenced activity at 98 crossings. Many of these crossings were temporary in nature and were removed at the end of the operation. Several others involved the removal or replacement of older crossing structures. *Figure 16* shows the number of stream-channel-alteration projects reviewed and administered by each IDL Area Office in 2017.

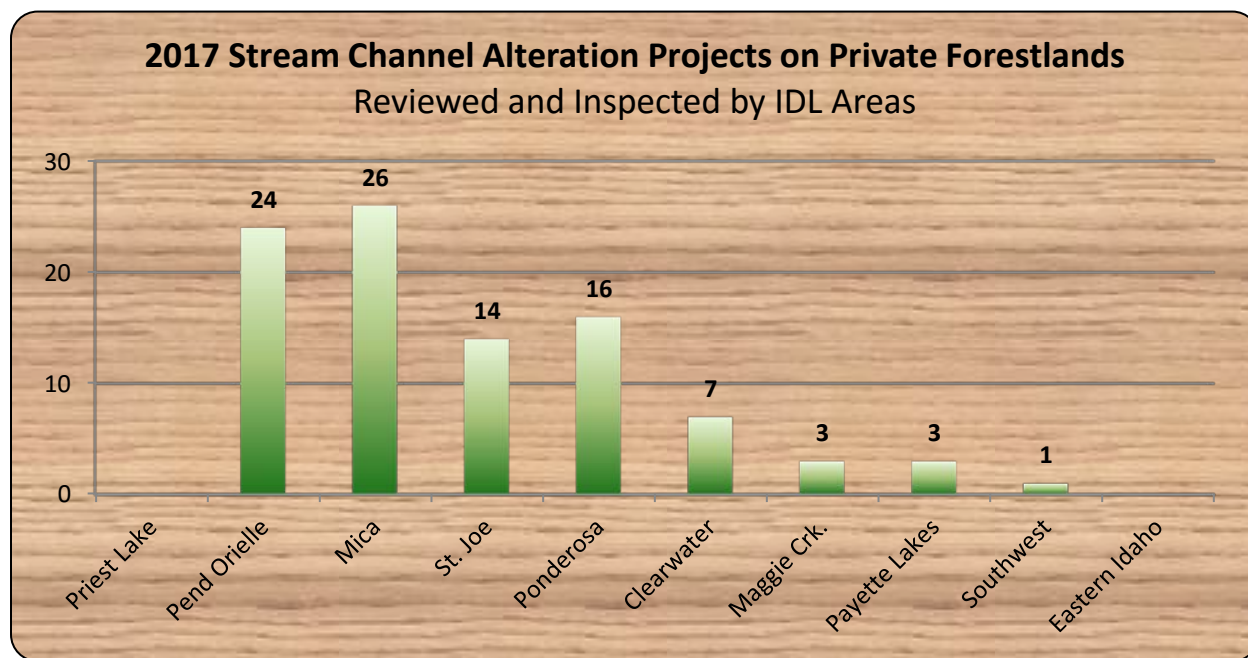


Figure 16 Stream Channel Alteration Permits on Private Forestland by Area.

Conclusion

In 2014 IDL began development of an updated form for use by *Operators* to provide a *Notification of Forest Practices*. After several iterations and reviews the new forms were implemented in early 2017. The changes largely centered on clarifying roles and responsibilities of parties under the FPA and slash hazard management rules, but much effort was devoted to developing an electronic form with drop down menus to increase efficiency. Due to the current numbering scheme and the need for an acceptance signature from an authorized representative of the IDL Director, production of an accepted Notification is only possible at IDL Supervisory Area offices. IDL continues to make progress toward an enterprise data management system that will speed up the notification development process and reduce the amount of time devoted to data entry.

Having an educated workforce contributes to sustaining the high levels of compliance we see today. The IDL Forest Practices Program continues to assist University of Idaho Extension and Idaho Associated Logging Contractors with their *Logger Education to Advance Professionalism* (LEAP) training sessions. These sessions provide targeted education to loggers which enhances awareness of the FPA Rules and needed compliance with these BMPs. The classes continue to be well-attended and up-to-date in addressing current forest practices issues and rule changes that affect loggers.

During 2018 IDL will continue to present programs explaining the FPA rules and annual results at events geared toward IDL personnel, foresters, landowners, and loggers. PFSs will prioritize training and assistance with implementation of the 2014 Class I Streamside Shade Retention rule in their activities.

The updated Idaho Forestry BMP Field Guide developed by the University of Idaho with IDL assistance is complete and widely distributed. This update includes an award winning educational companion video and a new BMP website. The Idaho Forest Products Commission is providing additional BMP educational opportunities throughout the state and developing and hosting BMP education via electronic media.

The success achieved in implementing the Idaho Forest Practices Act rests with the collaboration and dedication of many individuals, organizations and the sound science supporting the rulemaking. Idaho's high level of forest practice BMP implementation is achieved and maintained as the result of many contributing factors. The participation of most of Idaho's larger industrial forestland owners in forest certification systems (either *Sustainable Forestry Initiative* (SFI) or *Forest Stewardship Council* (FSC)) has had a very positive influence on compliance rates. These industrial forestland owners strive to remain in full compliance with both the FPA Rules and the standards set forth by their certification organizations. The same can be said for the state endowment land managers. Programs like the *American Tree Farm System* provide a similar role on the nonindustrial side. The dedication shown to resource protection by Idaho's state, industrial and nonindustrial stewardship forestland managers while practicing sustainable timber harvest is remarkable and encouraging. Our challenge is to improve outreach to nonindustrial



members of our community involved in timber production to better educate them and their operators on the importance of Idaho's BMPs to maintaining and enhancing Idaho's water quality.