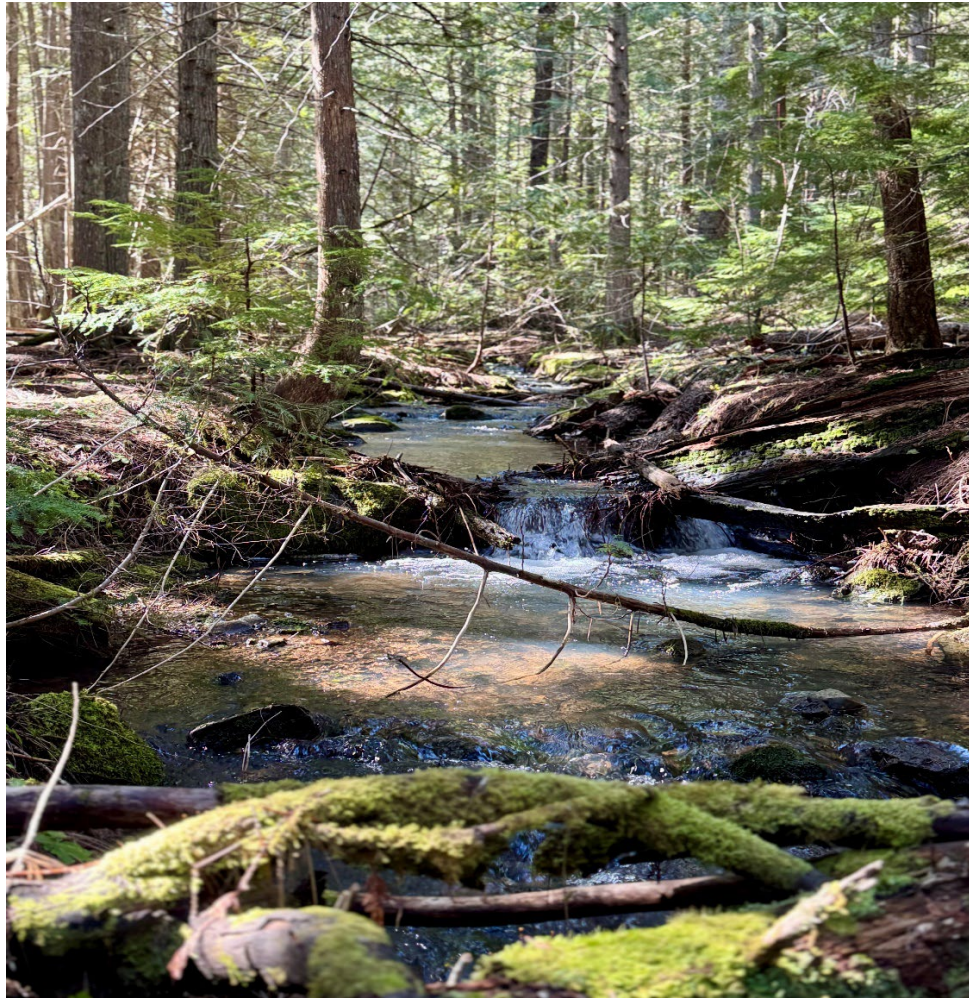


2024

# Idaho Department of Lands Forest Practices Year-End Report



Developed and Submitted By: Jeanne Bradley

Forest Practices Program within the Forestry Assistance Bureau

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## Acknowledgements



**Spring 2025 Private Forestry Specialist Meeting, Moscow:** (Pictured: left to right) Back row: Levi Hunt—Roads Specialist, Hailey Frank-Bennett—Private Forestry Specialist (PFS) Mica, Chris Tretter—Ponderosa Area Manager, Isabella Prichard—Grant Project Coordinator, John Gaddess—PFS Pend Oreille Lake, Colton Finch—Biologist, Rodney Cochrane—PFS Supervisor Central, Chris Gerhart—PFS Clearwater, Matt Perkins—Urban & Community Forestry Program Manager, Trask Hodgson—PFS Southwest, Scott Sievers—PFS Supervisor South, Chris Town—Idaho NRCS State Forester. Middle row: Joel Clark—Interdisciplinary Team Program Manager, Madeline Goebel—U of Idaho Extension, McKenna Smith—PFS St. Joe, Ashley Kirk—PFS St. Joe, Jay Clark—Stewardship Specialist, Robin Dunn—GIS Program Manager, Archie Gray—Forestry Assistance Bureau Chief, Sam Wittell—PFS Payette Lakes, Robbie Easley—PFS Ponderosa, David Thorton—Fire Warden Priest Lake, Abby Shagena—Resource Specialist Ponderosa, Emily Spet—Resource Specialist Maggie Creek. Front row: Randell Brooks—Professor and Extension Forestry Specialist, Dave Luther—PFS Maggie Creek. (Not Pictured: Laurie Stone—Resource Specialist Eastern, Retired Chris Remsen—PFS Pend Oreille Lake, Ken Homik—PFS Supervisor North, Jason Wilkerson—PFS Kootenai Valley, John Cook—Assistant Fire Warden Priest Lake. Photo taken by Jeanne Bradley—FPA Program Manager.)

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed to the success of the Idaho Forest Practices Program and the continued implementation of the Idaho Forest Practices Act (FPA). The collaboration and dedication of many individuals and organizations, along with the sound science supporting the rulemaking, have been pivotal in achieving high levels of compliance and sustainable forestry practices in Idaho.

Special thanks to the ongoing support from University of Idaho Extension and the Idaho Associated Logging Contractors in delivering the Logger Education to Advance Professionalism (LEAP) training sessions. These sessions have played a crucial role in educating loggers on the FPA Rules and best management practices (BMPs), ensuring compliance with forest practices regulations.

We also acknowledge the significant contributions of Idaho's larger industrial forestland owners and lumber mills, whose participation in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certification has positively influenced compliance rates. Similarly,

the commitment of state endowment land managers and the American Tree Farm System in promoting sustainable practices on nonindustrial lands is deeply appreciated. IDL Regulatory & Stewardship Program staff wish to acknowledge the hard-working Private Forestry Specialists in each of the Supervisory Areas whose diligent efforts produce the data in this report. We acknowledge the hard work and assistance of the IDL GIS Program in advancing our interactive, centralized database. Their expertise—providing critical spatial datasets, application support, and GIS infrastructure—has been instrumental in developing our new inspection report tracking system.

## **Introduction**

### **Policies**

The Idaho Forest Practices Act (FPA)—Idaho Code § 38-1301 through § 38-1313—and the FPA administrative rules (FPA 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 FPA Rules are designed to protect air and water quality, wildlife habitat, and forest health while enhancing tree growth and vigor. They provide assurance to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency that Idaho is meeting the water quality standards prescribed for *forest practices* such as harvesting, burning, planting, and the transporting of forest products. Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) is statutorily charged with administering the Forest Practices Program and ensuring the associated FPA Rules implementation.

### **Policy Updates**

There have been no new changes to the Rules Pertaining to the Idaho Forest Practices Act since the 2022 legislative session. There was a change in the inspection rate matrix starting in the 2024 calendar year. We are still working within the new database to determine the tracking percentage for these new priorities.

## New FPA Inspection Priorities

Characteristics of Notification	Target Inspection Rate
FPA Complaint (Resolved)	100%
Variance Request (pre-op. required)	100%
Site Specific Riparian Plan	100%
Stream Channel Alteration Project on Class 1	80%
Harvest within Class 1 Stream Protection Zone	80%
Stream Channel Alteration Project on Class 2	60%
Steep Slopes/Erodible Soils	60%
Options 2, 3, 4 and 5	50%
Questionable or New Contractor/Operator	80%
Request for Pre-operational Visit	100%

Before 2024, the targeting inspection rate was 50% of the compliance/notifications submitted to the Area Offices. Starting in 2024, operations with specific characteristics have been given a higher inspection rate goal

When inspecting operations, Private Forestry Specialists (PFSs) and Fire Wardens should still conduct visits as follows:

1. Before operations begin, if an operator has requested a pre-operational visit, to discuss potential problems and sensitive areas.
2. During operations, to see that all phases correctly implement the FPA Rules and BMPs.
3. After completion of operations, to see that all harvesting and slash-management requirements have been met satisfactorily.

## Executive Summary

This year-end report presents information that describes the overall picture of forest practice activities on *private* and *state* forestland. Private forestland includes industrial and non-industrial forestland and may include county or municipal forestland. State forestland includes all state trust lands and other state-owned lands.

Compliance with Forest Practices Act (FPA) rules has steadily increased from 85% in 1974 to over 95% in recent decades, reaching 98% compliance in 2024 for inspected operations on state and private forestland. Factors like rural residential development, new forest owners, demographic shifts, and changing weather patterns make 100% compliance unrealistic.

Inspections in 2024 show continued high stewardship by Idaho forest managers and loggers, with compliance rates fluctuating between 98-99% in recent years. Detailed data on these achievements are provided in the report.

### **1.1 Forest Practice Notifications on Private and State Forestlands**

Accepted for operations on both state and private forestland, Forest Practice Notifications decreased by 2% from the previous year, with 1,526 accepted Notifications. Of these, 173 were Notification Only (non-commercial operations). Of the remaining 1,353 commercial harvest operations, 1,225 were on private land and 128 on state.

### **1.2 Frequency and Location of Inspections**

A total of 974 inspections occurred in 2024, across each of the ten IDL Supervisory Areas.

### **1.3 Individual Operations Inspected**

In 2024, 868 operations were inspected across 1,526 notifications, a 57% inspection rate—down from 60% in 2023. For timber harvest-specific notifications, the inspection rate was 63%. Private forestland saw 1,363 notifications, with 784 inspections, leading to a private commercial inspection rate of 58%. The PFSs conducted 84 inspections on 163 notifications on State administered lands, a 52% inspection rate.

<b>Characteristics of Notification</b>	<b>Target Inspection Rate</b>	<b>2024 Inspection Rate</b>
FPA Complaint (Resolved)	100%	100%
Variance Request (pre-op. required)	100%	100%
Site Specific Riparian Plan	100%	100%
Stream Channel Alteration Project on Class 1	80%	82%
Harvest within Class 1 Stream Protection Zone	80%	95%
Stream Channel Alteration Project on Class 2	60%	62%
Steep Slopes/Erodible Soils	60%	69%
Options 2, 3, 4 and 5	50%	80%
Questionable or New Contractor/Operator	80%	N/A
Request for Pre-operational Visit	100%	N/A

### **1.4 Attributes of Inspection Reports**

Of the operational areas, 23% had at least one Class I stream, and 48% had a Class II stream. From 2023 to 2024, the percentage of operations inspected with a classified stream stayed consistent, with such operations remaining a high inspection priority.

## **1.5 Rule Compliance**

In 2024, 98% of all inspections found compliance with FPA Rules, including follow-up inspections after remediation. Out of 974 total inspections (which include multiple inspections of the same operation), 23 inspections reported at least one unsatisfactory condition. Compliance rates were 96% for state operations and 98% for private timberland.

There were 123 rule infractions cited across 23 reports on 18 operations. The most common infractions were stream protection rules (35%), location of trails and landings (15%), waste material (8%), and drainage systems (7%), with road maintenance and soil protection each making up less than 6%. Infractions related to waste material treatment increased after the previous year's decline.

## **1.6 Notices of Violation**

In 2024, three Notices of Violation (NOVs) were issued, consistent with the typical yearly number. Two NOVs involved equipment use near Class I and Class II streams, drainage issues, and road maintenance. The other NOV was issued due to the Class I Stream Protection Zone (SPZ) below minimum relative stocking.

## **1.7 Complaints Made to IDL Regarding Forestry Practices**

In 2024, IDL received 14 FPA-related complaints, down 26% from 2023. 100% of the complaints were resolved. Some of the complaints could be resolved by phone or in person but many required a site visit.

## **1.8 Variances**

In 2024, 67 variances were issued for forest harvest operations, an increase of 18% from 2023. Variances were granted in less than 4.4% of the 1,526 notifications issued in 2024. There were 10 variances issued for state notifications and 57 variances issued for private notifications.

## **1.9 Stream Channel Alteration Projects Approved by IDL**

In 2024, IDL approved 81 stream channel alteration projects, 51 fewer than in 2023.

## Data Tables

### 2.1 Notification of Forest Practice on Private and State Forestland

**Table 1.** 2024 Notifications of Forestry Practice/Certificate of Compliance-Fire Hazard Management Agreement on both state and private forestland

Forest Protective District	2021	2022	2023	2024
Priest Lake	60	24	48	41
Kootenai Valley	191	153	150	132
Mica	377	283	193	198
Pend Oreille	638	522	384	381
Cataldo	148	86	68	70
St. Joe	313	295	261	251
Ponderosa	129	148	83	149
Maggie Creek	37	40	37	48
Craig Mtn.	45	30	46	33
Southwest	17	11	6	14
Eastern Idaho	8	13	9	14
SITPA	71	45	42	55
CPTPA	316	266	235	140
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2350</b>	<b>1916</b>	<b>1562</b>	<b>1526</b>

**Table 1** shows the number of Notifications accepted in 2024. This includes all forest practices IDL was notified of in 2024; 173 of these did not involve commercial timber harvest. A total of **1,526 Forest Practice Notifications** were accepted statewide in **2024** for operations on **private and state forestland**. This is a decrease from the 1,562 Notifications submitted in 2023.

**Table 2.** 2024 Notifications without commercial harvest on state and private forestland

Forest Protective District	2024 Notification Only
Priest Lake	1
Kootenai Valley	13
Mica	17
Pend Oreille	38
Cataldo	20
St. Joe	33
Ponderosa	26
Maggie Creek	5
Craig Mtn.	1
Southwest	1
Eastern Idaho	0
SITPA	12
CPTPA	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>173</b>



**Table 2** displays the 2024 *Notification Only* by Forest Protective District. IDL's Notification/Compliance management system and hazard withholding database supports reporting of harvest operations separate from "Notification Only" operations which have no associated Certificate of Compliance.

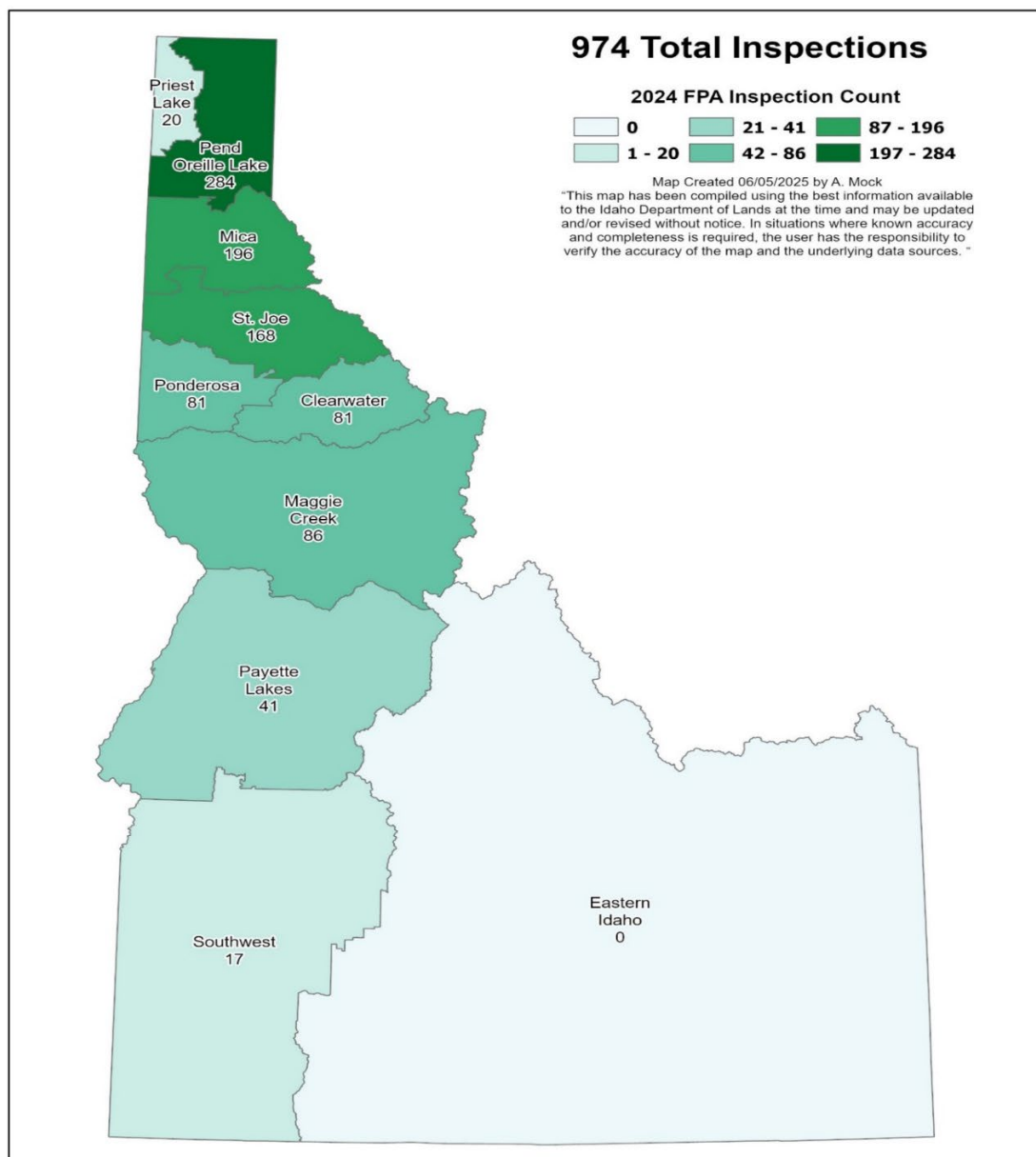
**Table 3.** *State and Private Forestland - Certificate of Compliance/Fire Hazard Management Agreements*

Forest Protective Districts	2024 Private	2024 State	2024 Total
Priest Lake	26	14	40
Kootenai Valley	115	4	119
Mica	173	8	181
Pend Oreille	338	5	343
Cataldo	48	2	50
St. Joe	181	37	218
Ponderosa	118	5	123
Maggie Creek	34	9	43
Craig Mtn.	26	6	32
Southwest	11	2	13
Eastern Idaho	3	11	14
SITPA	37	6	43
CPTPA	115	19	134
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1225</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>1353</b>

**Table 3** shows the number of Notification/Compliance agreements granted for state and private entities by Forest Protective District. In 2024, **128** were granted for operations on state land, **1,225** on private land, for a total of **1,353 commercial harvest operations**. The **1,225** on private land include operations conducted on industrial and non-industrial private ownerships.

## 2.2 Frequency and Location of Inspections

**Figure 1.** Map of all Forest Practices inspections performed in 2024 by IDL Supervisory Area



During 2024, IDL PFSs and assistants performed **974** total Forest Practices inspections across **1,526** notifications of state and private forestland. Inspections were proportionate to the active operations covered in every IDL Supervisory Area.

*(Note: Many inspections are performed on sites with Notifications submitted in previous years and many late-year Notifications may not receive inspections until the next calendar year. This year-to-year carryover remains relatively constant over time. IDL consistently reports on the number of inspected operations compared to the total number of forestland Notifications accepted in a given calendar year, as well as a breakout of harvest operations.)*

## 2.3 Individual Operations Inspected

**Figure 2.** Comparison of Yearly Inspected Operations on State and Private Forestland 2021–2024



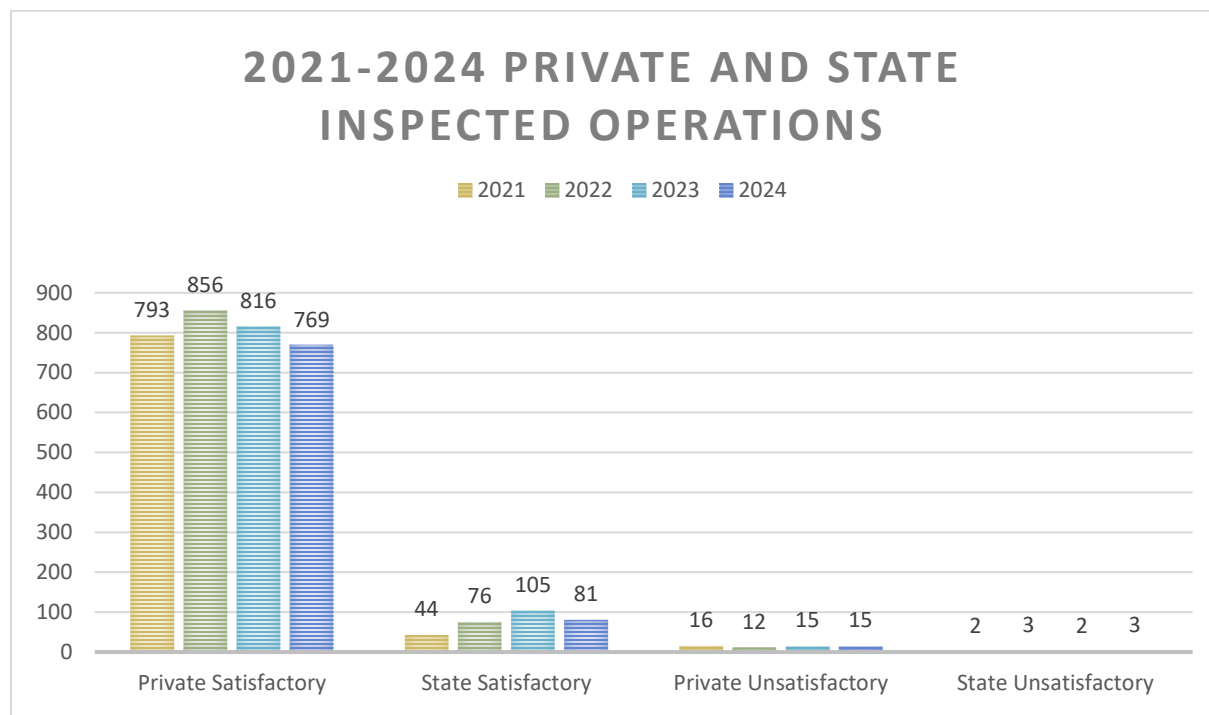
Inspected Operations	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Inspection Operations	855	947	937	868
Total Satisfactory Operations	837	932	920	850
Total Unsatisfactory Operations	18	15	17	18

Of the 1,526 accepted Notifications in 2024, there were 974 inspections on 868 operations. There was a 57% inspection rate—down from 60% in 2023. Many operations required double or more inspections based on complexity of the operation. Although IDL has changed the inspection matrix, a per operation inspection rate above 50% has been met.

Private harvest operations in 2024 received an inspection rate of **58%**. On state forestland, a **52%** inspection rate includes all compliances issued for operations on state forestland. These data do not include contract inspections conducted by the forester-in-charge of state managed sales. Most, if not all, notified private operations are active in the year the compliance is issued and can be active for up to two years beyond the issue date. On state sales, harvest activity may not commence for up to a year after the issuance of the compliance; expiration is typically three years after the issue date.

Of the inspected operations, **98%** demonstrated satisfactory BMP implementation (in compliance with the FPA Rules). Compared with 2023, compliance increased slightly. On average over the past five years, 97-99% of inspected operations demonstrate satisfactory implementation of the FPA Rules. Class I and Class II streams were present at nearly the same rate of inspected operations in 2024 compared to 2023.

**Figure 3.** Comparison of Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Inspections on Private and State Operations

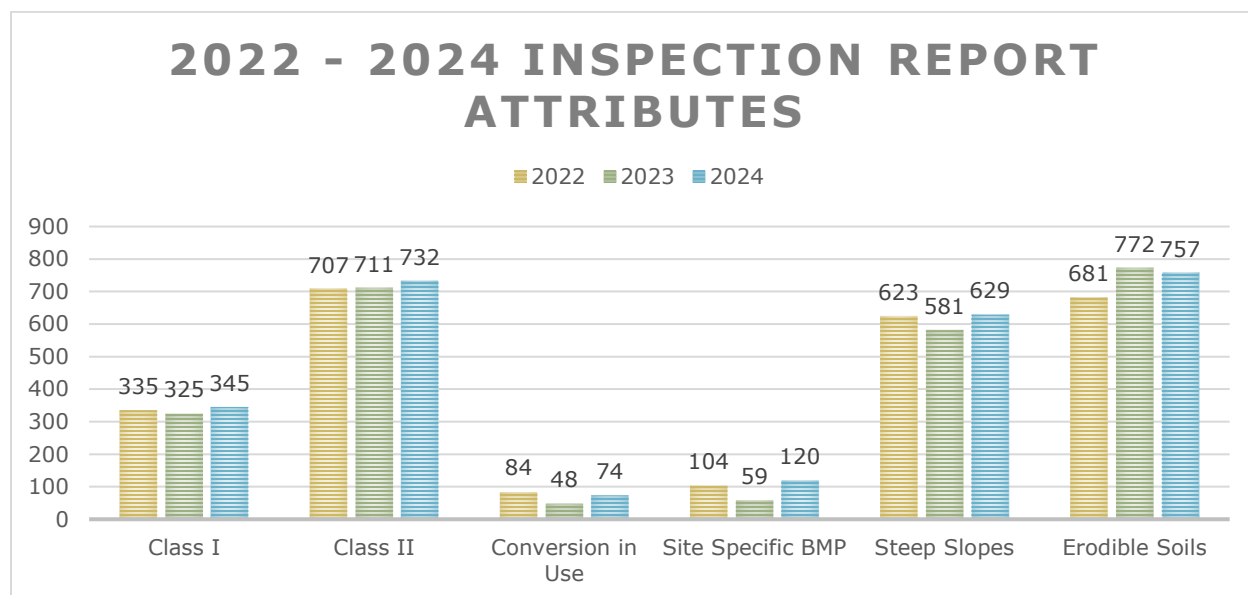


Private and State Inspected Operations	2021	2022	2023	2024
Private Satisfactory	793	856	816	769
State Satisfactory	44	76	105	81
Private Unsatisfactory	16	12	15	15
State Unsatisfactory	2	3	2	3

**Figure 3** is a comparison of state and private inspections in 2021 through 2024. **Three** of the 18 unsatisfactory operations reported in 2024 were on state owned land and **15** were on private forestland. The unsatisfactory inspections occurred on all types of ownership, but the majority were on non-industrial private forests. Private operations demonstrated **98%** satisfactory rule implementation. Inspections conducted by PFSs on state forestland in 2024 demonstrated **96%** satisfactory compliance.

## 2.4 Attributes of Inspected Operations

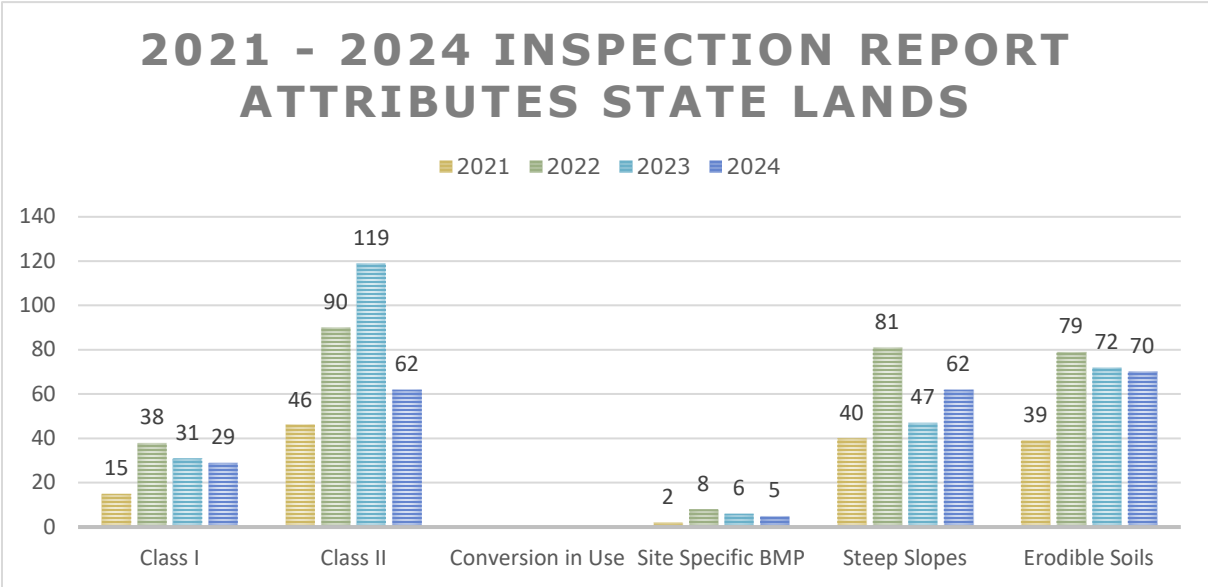
**Figure 4.** Comparison of Attributes of all Inspected Operations in 2022–2024



Inspection Report Attributes	2022	2023	2024
Class I	335	325	345
Class II	707	711	732
Conversion in Use	84	48	74
Site Specific BMP	104	59	120
Steep Slopes	623	581	629
Erodible Soils	681	772	757

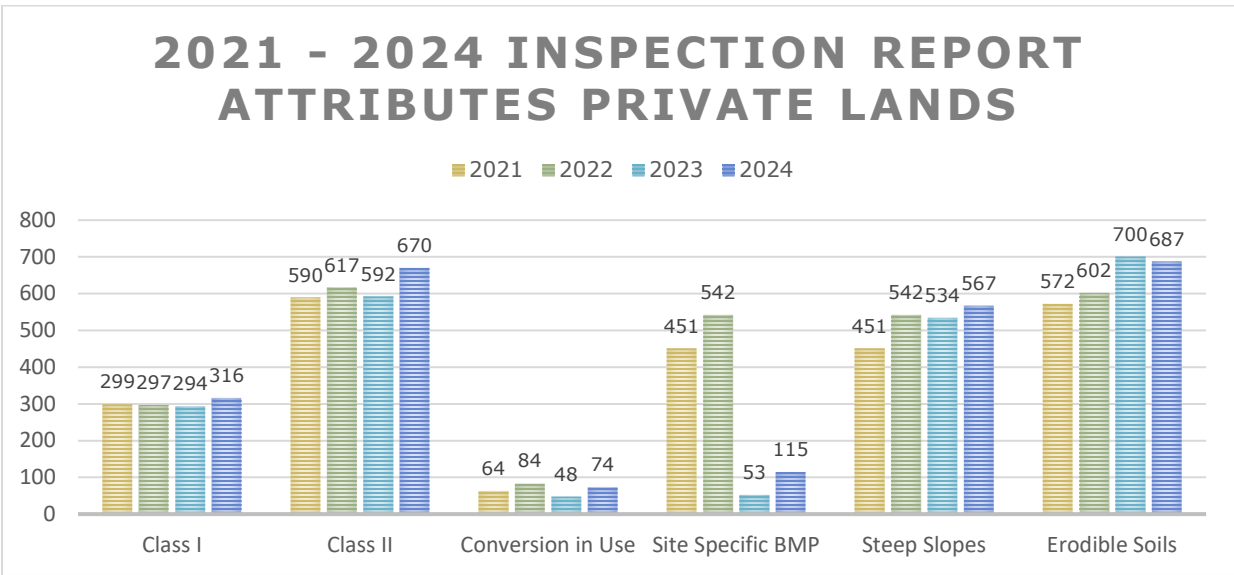
**Figure 4** shows that often one operational area includes both Class I and Class II streams, as well as other attributes.

**Figure 5.** Inspected Operations Attributes on State (IDL managed) Land



Inspection Report Attributes State Lands	2021	2022	2023	2024
Class I	15	38	31	29
Class II	46	90	119	62
Conversion in Use	0	0	0	0
Site Specific BMP	2	8	6	5
Steep Slopes	40	81	47	62
Eroderible Soils	39	79	72	70

**Figure 6.** Inspected Operations Attributes on Private Land



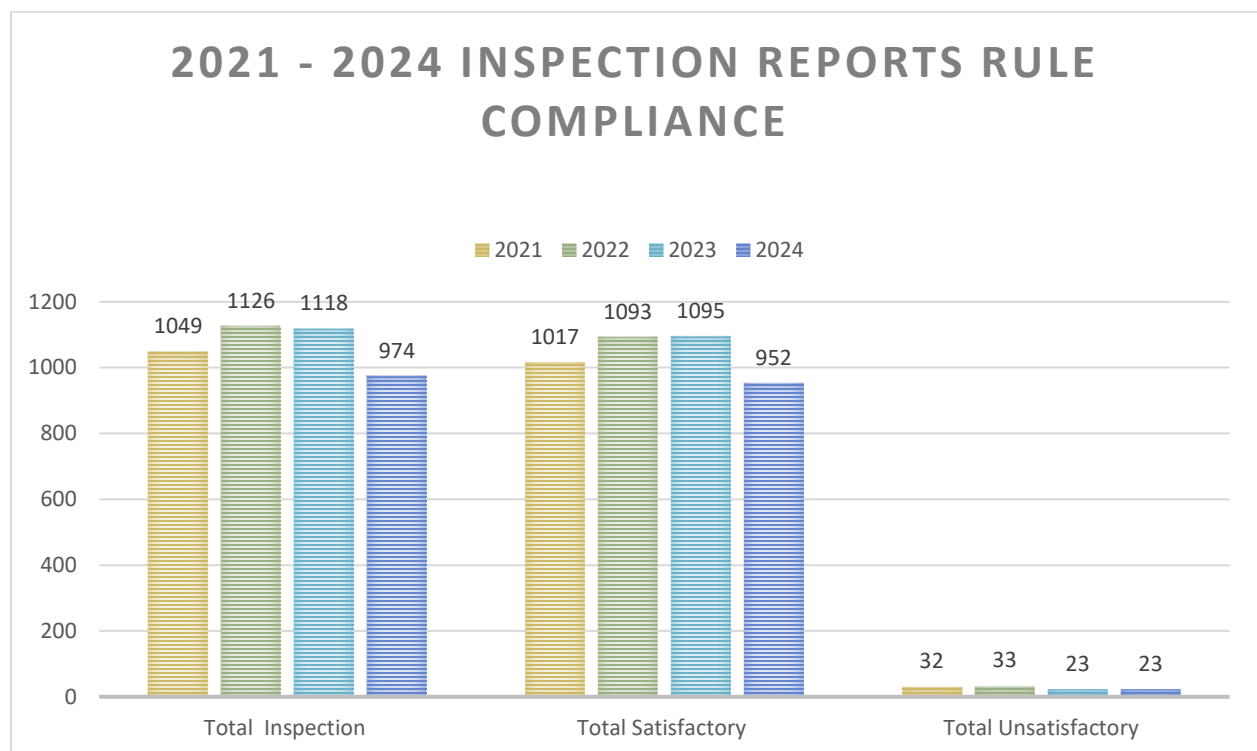


Inspection Report Attributes Private Lands	2021	2022	2023	2024
Class I	299	297	294	316
Class II	590	617	592	670
Conversion in Use	64	84	48	74
Site Specific BMP	451	542	53	115
Steep Slopes	451	542	534	567
Erodible Soils	572	602	700	687

**Figures 5 and 6** depict the Inspected Operations Attributes of the inspections conducted on operations on state land and private land, respectively. Harvest operations on all state lands, including endowment lands, are conducted by PFSs and listed as state operations. In 2024, there was an increase in inspections associated with conversions of land use from 2023 but less than 2022.

## 2.5 Rule Compliance

**Figure 7.** Comparison of 2021 to 2024 Total Inspections

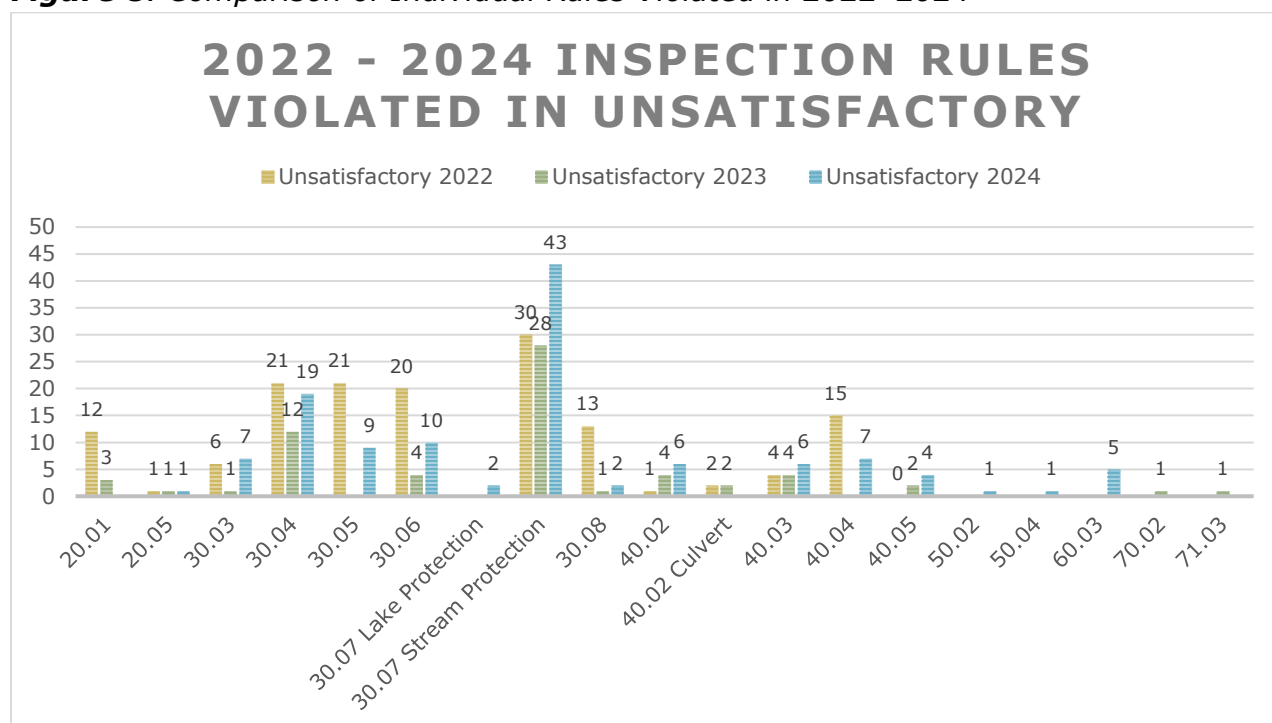


Inspection Reports Rule Compliance	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Inspection	1049	1126	1118	974
Total Satisfactory	1017	1093	1095	952
Total Unsatisfactory	32	33	23	23

**Figure 7** shows a comparison of the **total** number of 2021 through 2024 Forest Practices **inspections** performed on state and private forestland and the breakdown of those inspections into satisfactory reports and unsatisfactory reports.

The data show **98%** of all **inspections** performed in 2024 found compliance with the FPA Rules. This includes sites that were found satisfactory in post-unsatisfactory inspections after they were brought into compliance through remediation. This total number of inspections encompasses all inspections, including multiple inspections of the same operation. Within these 974 performed inspections, the number of inspections that resulted in reports indicating at least one unsatisfactory condition totaled 23.

**Figure 8.** Comparison of Individual Rules Violated in 2022–2024

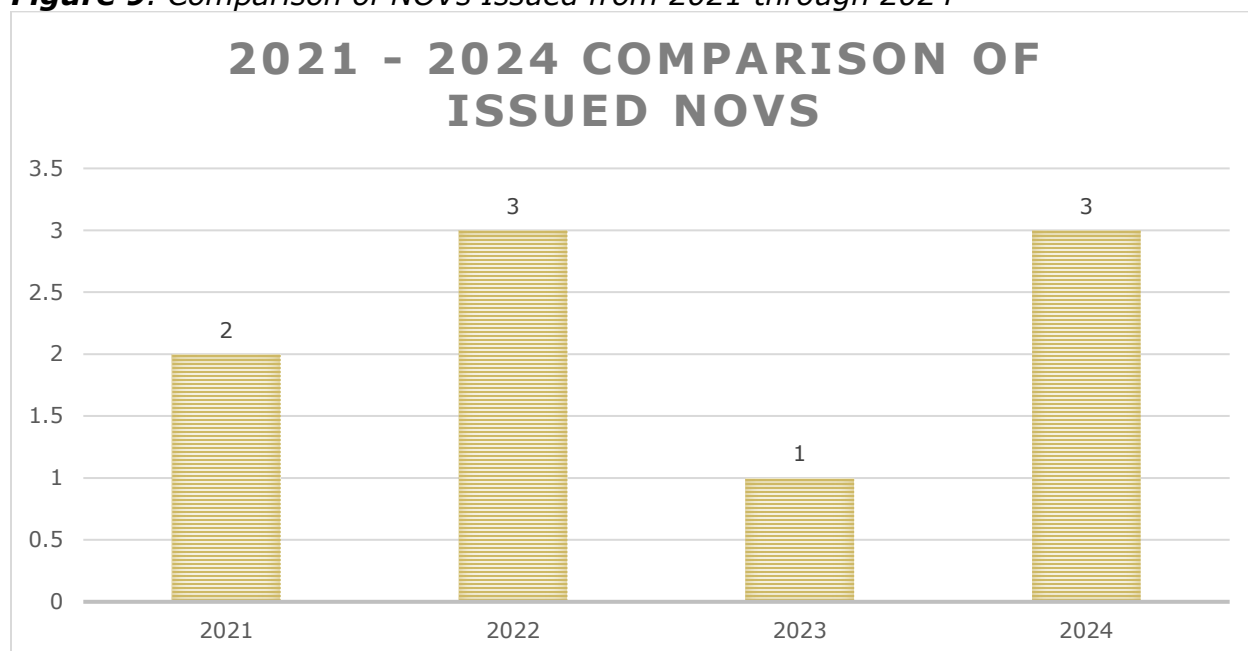


Rules Violated Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory 2022	Unsatisfactory 2023	Unsatisfactory 2024
20.01	12	3	0
20.05	1	1	1
30.03	6	1	7
30.04	21	12	19
30.05	21	0	9
30.06	20	4	10
30.07 Lake Protection	0	0	2
30.07 Stream Protection	30	28	43
30.08	13	1	2
40.02	1	4	6
40.02 Culvert	2	2	0
40.03	4	4	6
40.04	15	0	7
40.05	0	2	4
50.02	0	0	1
50.04	0	0	1
60.03	0	0	5
70.02	0	1	0
71.03	0	1	0

**Figure 8:** The most frequently infringed rules were the *Stream Protection* rules (IDAPA 030.07), location of trails and landings (030.04), treatment of waste materials (030.06), and drainage systems, which comprised 35%, 15%, 8% and 7% of infractions, respectively. Road Maintenance and Soil Protection each comprised less than 6% of the infringed rules. There was a noticeable increase in infractions for treatment of waste material (030.06). There was a decrease again this year in the violation of rules pertaining to taking out a notification and variances (020.01). Rule 030.07 has the greatest number of subparagraphs of all the Harvesting Rules and often when 040.03, 040.04 or 030.04 are cited, 030.07.c will be cited as well for operating ground-based equipment inside the SPZ without a variance. In addition, multiple 030.07 subparagraphs are often cited for a single instance of resource damage. This has the effect of amplifying the weight of the *Stream Protection* rule infractions.

## 2.6 Notices of Violation

**Figure 9.** Comparison of NOVs Issued from 2021 through 2024



Comparison of Issued NOVs	2021	2022	2023	2024
Notice of Violation	2	3	1	3

In 2024, three NOVs were issued. The number of NOVs each year is typically three or less.

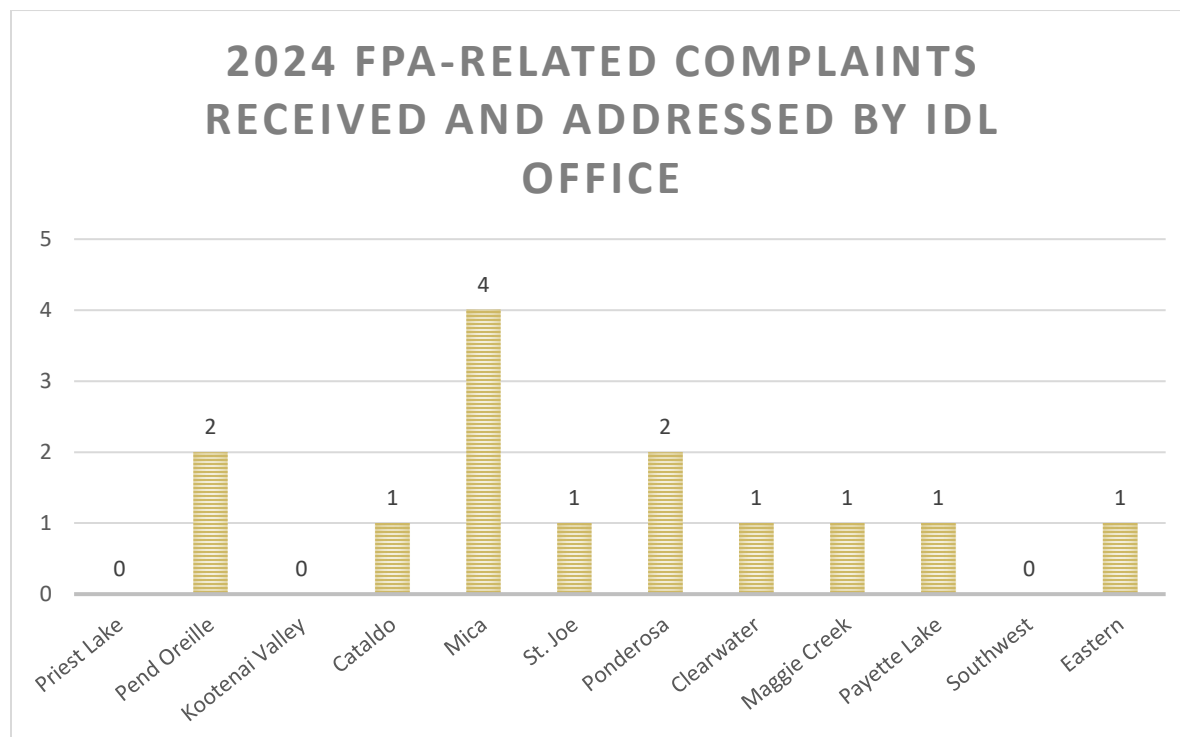
The first NOV was issued to an operation with multiple skid trails inside Class I SPZs, no drainage structures with actively running water, slash within the stream causing water to divert, and multiple other violations. The remediation work was completed, and the NOV was cleared.

The second NOV was issued due to multiple inspection reports where the Class I SPZ relative stocking was below minimums. The operator had multiple chances including multiple windows to reforest the Class I SPZ.

The third NOV was issued for multiple unsatisfactory conditions: ground-based operation in Class I and Class II SPZs, variance term not followed, compliance legal description not covering all lands being harvested, and poor road maintenance with sediment and rock build up. The remediation work was completed, and the NOV was cleared.

## 2.7 Complaints Made to IDL Regarding Forestry Practices

**Figure 10.** FPA Related Complaints received in 2024 by Forest Protective Districts.

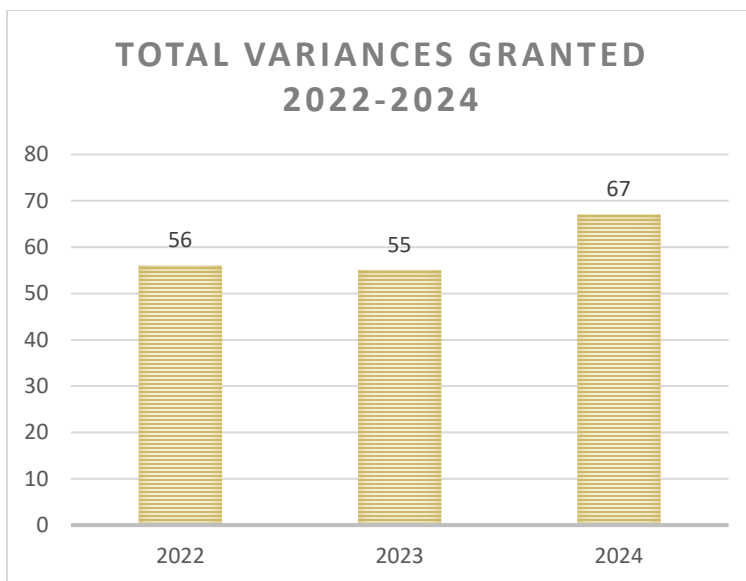


Complaints by IDL Office	2024
Priest Lake	0
Pend Oreille	2
Kootenai Valley	0
Cataldo	1
Mica	4
St. Joe	1
Ponderosa	2
Clearwater	1
Maggie Creek	1
Payette Lake	1
Southwest	0
Eastern	1

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. Complaints range from perceptions of resource degradation and resource damage, to concerns over aesthetics. IDL Private Forestry Specialists or Operations Foresters address these complaints by analyzing each complaint and deciding whether the complaint can be addressed by checking compliance with the FPA Rules. If so, a site visit is performed.

## 2.8 Variances

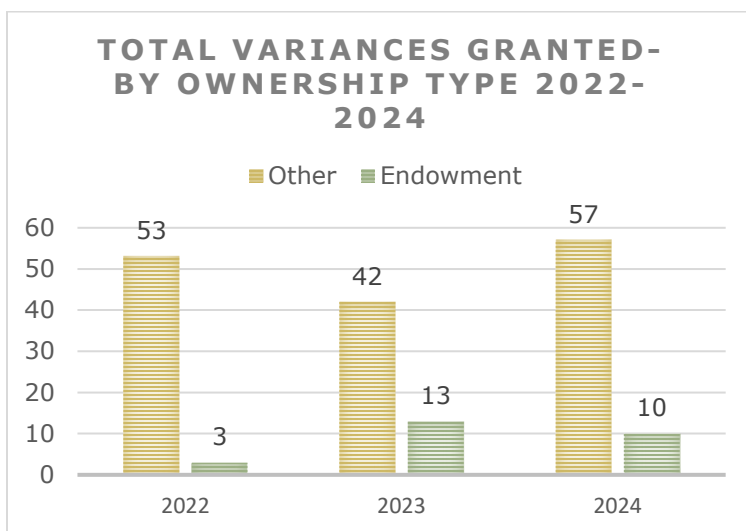
**Figure 11.** Comparison of Variances in 2022–2024 Statewide



Year	Total Variances Granted
2022	56
2023	55
2024	67

**Figure 11** shows during 2024, 67 variances were issued on all forestland harvest operations, an increase of 22% from 2023. Out of 1,526 Compliances, variances were granted to less than 4.4% of all harvest related operations.

**Figure 12.** Comparison of Variances Granted across Ownership Type

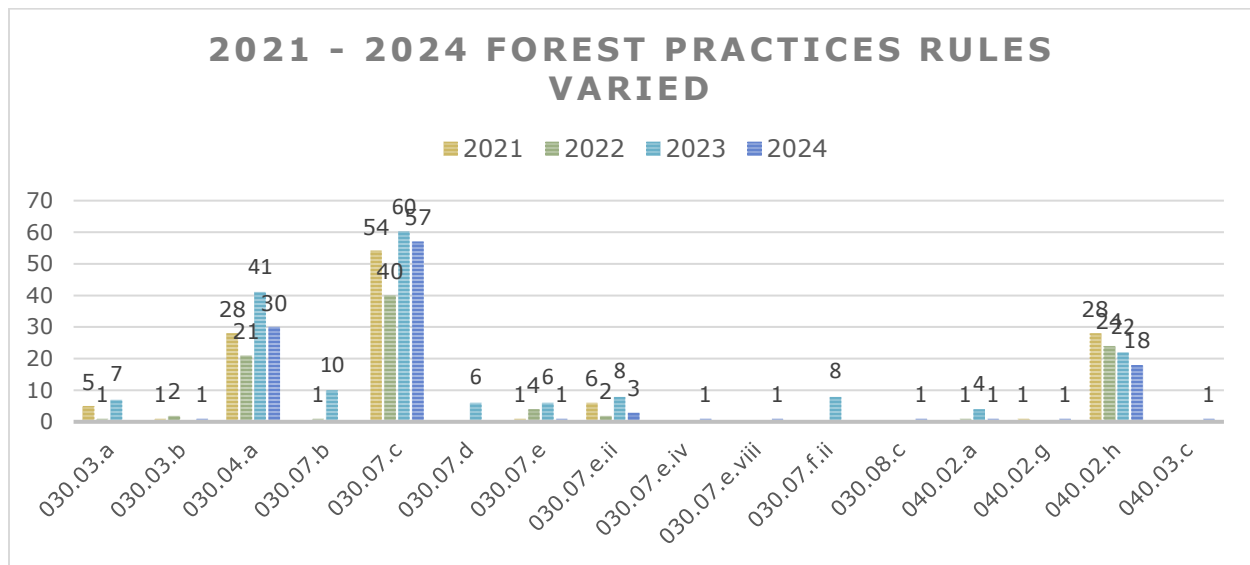




Year	Variances Granted – Other Ownership	Variances Granted – Endowment Ownership
2022	53	3
2023	42	13
2024	57	10

**Figure 12** shows variances were granted on 6.0% of state operations and 4.9% of private operations. All variances issued in a Supervisory Area are signed by the Area Manager or the Private Forestry Supervisor and must meet the “equal or better over the long-term” protection criterion.

**Figure 13.** Comparison of Variances for 2021 through 2024

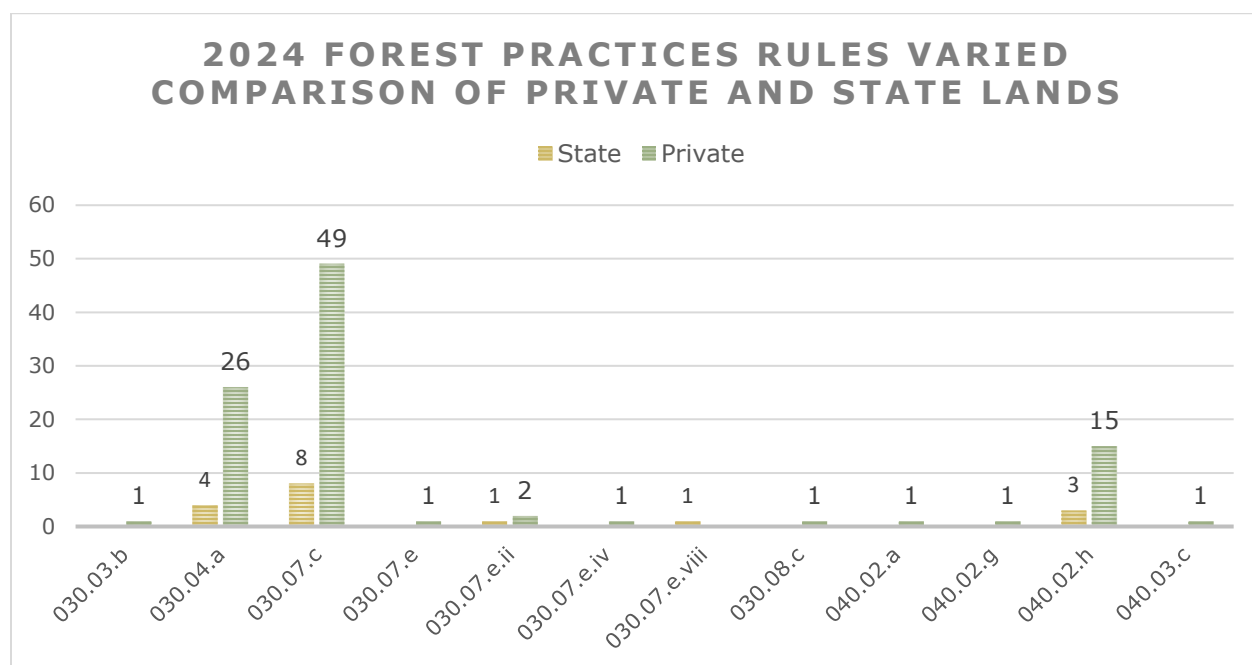


FPA Rules Varied	2021	2022	2023	2024
030.03.a	5	1	7	0
030.03.b	1	2	0	1
030.04.a	28	21	41	30
030.07.b	0	1	10	0
030.07.c	54	40	60	57
030.07.d	0	0	6	0
030.07.e	1	4	6	1
030.07.e.ii	6	2	8	3
030.07.e.iv	0	0	0	1
030.07.e.viii	0	0	0	1
030.07.f.ii	0	0	8	0
030.08.c	0	0	0	1
040.02.a	0	1	4	1
040.02.g	1	0	0	1
040.02.h	28	24	22	18
040.03.c	0	0	0	1

**Figure 13** illustrates the specific rules for which variances were granted. Most of the rules within the variances are associated with activity within an SPZ.

*(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.)*

**Figure 14.** Comparison of Rules for which Variances were Granted by Ownership Type



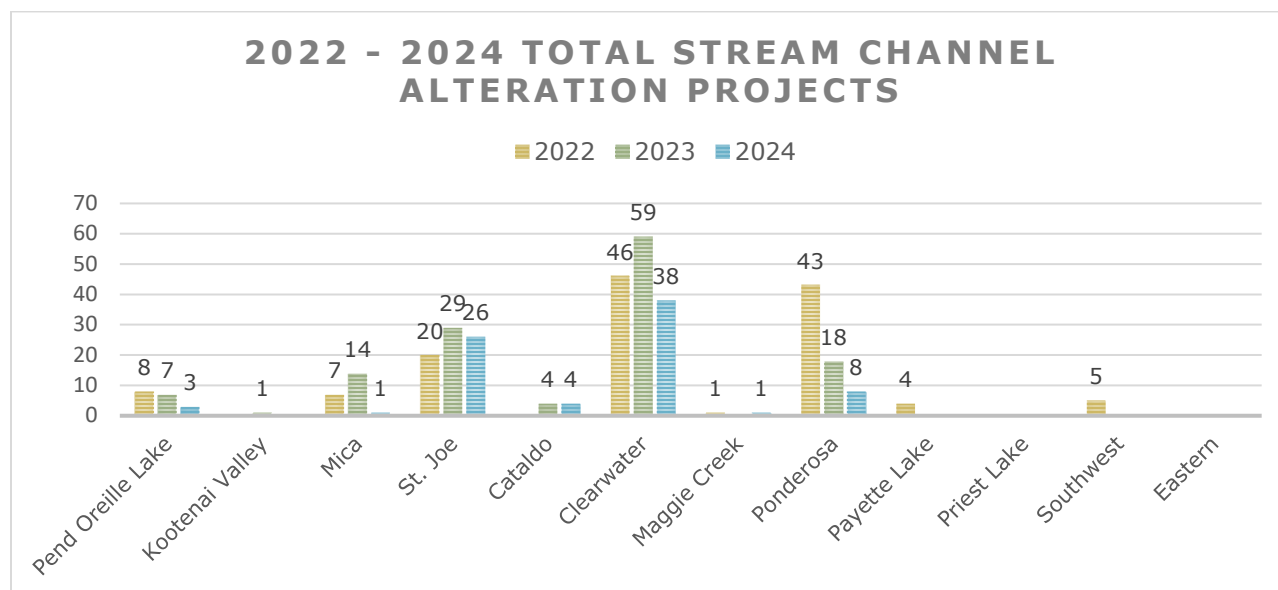
FPA Rules Varied	State	Private
030.03.b	0	1
030.04.a	4	26
030.07.c	8	49
030.07.e	0	1
030.07.e.ii	1	2
030.07.e.iv	0	1
030.07.e.viii	1	0
030.08.c	0	1
040.02.a	0	1
040.02.g	0	1
040.02.h	3	15
040.03.c	0	1

**Figure 14** 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 lower, it is clear the largest number of variances on all ownerships is for trail or landing use or construction in an SPZ and associated use of ground-based equipment in the SPZ.

## 2.9 Stream Channel Alteration Projects Approved 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. To meet the conditions under which IDL has this authority, the stream channel alteration projects must be part of a defined forest practice, the stream must be perennial, and the stream-crossing structures must meet certain size limitations and installation criteria.

**Figure 15.** Stream Channel Alteration Projects Reviewed by PFS



Total Stream Channel Alteration Projects	2022	2023	2024
Pend Oreille Lake	8	7	3
Kootenai Valley	0	1	0
Mica	7	14	1
St. Joe	20	29	26
Cataldo	0	4	4
Clearwater	46	59	38
Maggie Creek	1	0	1
Ponderosa	43	18	8
Payette Lake	4	0	0
Priest Lake	0	0	0
Southwest	5	0	0
Eastern	0	0	0

**Figure 15** shows the number of stream channel alteration projects reviewed and administered by IDL in 2022 to 2024. Compared to 2023, there were 51 fewer projects statewide. **Eighty-one** (81) total stream channel alteration installations/removals were received and approved by IDL statewide in 2024. Some of these crossings were temporary in nature and were removed at the end of the operation. Many others involved the removal and/or replacement of older crossing structures with bridges, culverts, and fords. In many cases, the installation improved fish passage for upstream migration by removing barriers. The decrease in stream channel alteration projects has no reflection of the process or work being done, and there could be multiple reasons for the decrease in installations across private lands. Some of those reasons could be a decrease in large road construction projects, overlay of stream channel supplemental notifications across multiple years or the decrease in activities/notification, and many other reasons.

## Conclusion

### Final Summary

**Rule Development:** The effectiveness of the Class I SPZ retention rule that was implemented in 2022 will continue to be assessed through ongoing field monitoring.

**Increased Public Data Access:** IDL has improved public access to key data, such as stream classifications, perennial streams, and site-specific impacts. This allows landowners and operators to better plan operations, with additional data being made available as needs arise.

**Inspection Priorities and Staffing:** The inspection rate target has been 50% of the notifications submitted to the Area Offices. That guideline hasn't changed and neither did the prioritizing of the notifications. What changed is the layout of the prioritized operations with a direct inspection rate goal. In 2024 there was a complete reform of the reporting system within FPA. Although there have been delays due to training and revising of the new system, it should make reporting more efficient in the future. Maintaining staffing levels has been difficult in the last couple of years, and unfortunately that may be the issue in the future as well.

**Alternative Solutions to Rule Standards:** IDL prioritizes identifying suitable alternatives to rule standards to prevent unsatisfactory conditions from arising during inspections. Pre-operational meetings are emphasized and prioritized for inspection, especially for non-industrial private forestland operators.

**Concerns over Land Conversion:** There is concern about the increased number of inspections needed for operations on land being converted to non-forest land uses, especially as housing markets grow in forested areas near population centers.

**Concerns over Mastication Projects:** There is concern about the increased number of mastication projects and where they fall within the FPA Rules.

## **Operational Suggestions**

**Improve Communication Between Specialists:** Enhance communication between PFSs, Office Specialists, Administrative Assistants, and Fire Wardens to ensure that compliance/notification documentation is filed correctly. Also ensure that extensions and cancellations are completed within the Regulatory database.

**Standardization:** There needs to be an increase in standardization across all programs associated with notifications and compliances.

**Increase Focus on Operators with Poor Performance:** Give more attention to operators with a history of poor performance by ensuring thorough inspections, follow-ups, and re-inspections to ensure compliance.

**Ensure Timely Reporting by Mills:** Mills should be diligent in reporting their month-end volumes promptly and monitor operators with outstanding NOVs to prevent non-compliant operators from delivering logs.

## Appendix

### Link to FPA Rules

#### [Rules Pertaining to the Idaho Forest Practices Act](https://www.idl.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/07/Web-Rulebook-2022.pdf)

(<https://www.idl.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/07/Web-Rulebook-2022.pdf>)

### Key Terms

**Best Management Practices (BMPs):** Approved methods to protect forest resources like water quality, wildlife habitat, and forest health during forestry operations.

**Compliance:** Formal acknowledgement of wildfire risk, hazards, and FPA Rules associated with a planned forest practice; always attached with a Notification.

**Idaho Forest Practices Advisory Committee (FPAC):** The body of professionals and informed citizens charged with providing direction and leadership for new and revised FPA Rules.

**Notice of Violation (NOV):** 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. NOV's are serious violations and do not occur often.

**Notification:** A formal acknowledgement of planned Forest Practices by responsible party planning forest activity and the FPA program.

**Satisfactory Report:** Inspection report indicating compliance with all rules inspected.

**Unsatisfactory Report:** Inspection report indicating an infraction of at least one rule.

**Variance:** An approved, site-specific exception to the standard FPA Rules, allowing alternative practices when unique conditions make strict compliance impractical while ensuring equivalent or improved forest resources.