



Regional Efforts to Promote Forestry BMPs

A Southern Region Success Story



Regional Approach

The Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF) has long recognized the connection between forests and clean water. Since 2001, state BMP program managers from Virginia to Texas, as part of the Water Resources Committee (WRC), have met annually to coordinate efforts, share information, provide training, and improve programs throughout the region.



Program Effectiveness

In 2003, SGSF established a BMP program review process to evaluate state programs and provide recommendations for continual improvement. The review team, consisting of two state BMP managers and one U.S. Forest Service representative, assessed states against nine indicators of an effective state program:

- Lead Forester
- Education and Training
- Complaint / Conflict Resolution
- Cooperation with Pertinent Agencies
- Compliance with Framework
- Institutional Arrangements
- Funding Initiatives
- Effectiveness Monitoring
- Follow Up Monitoring

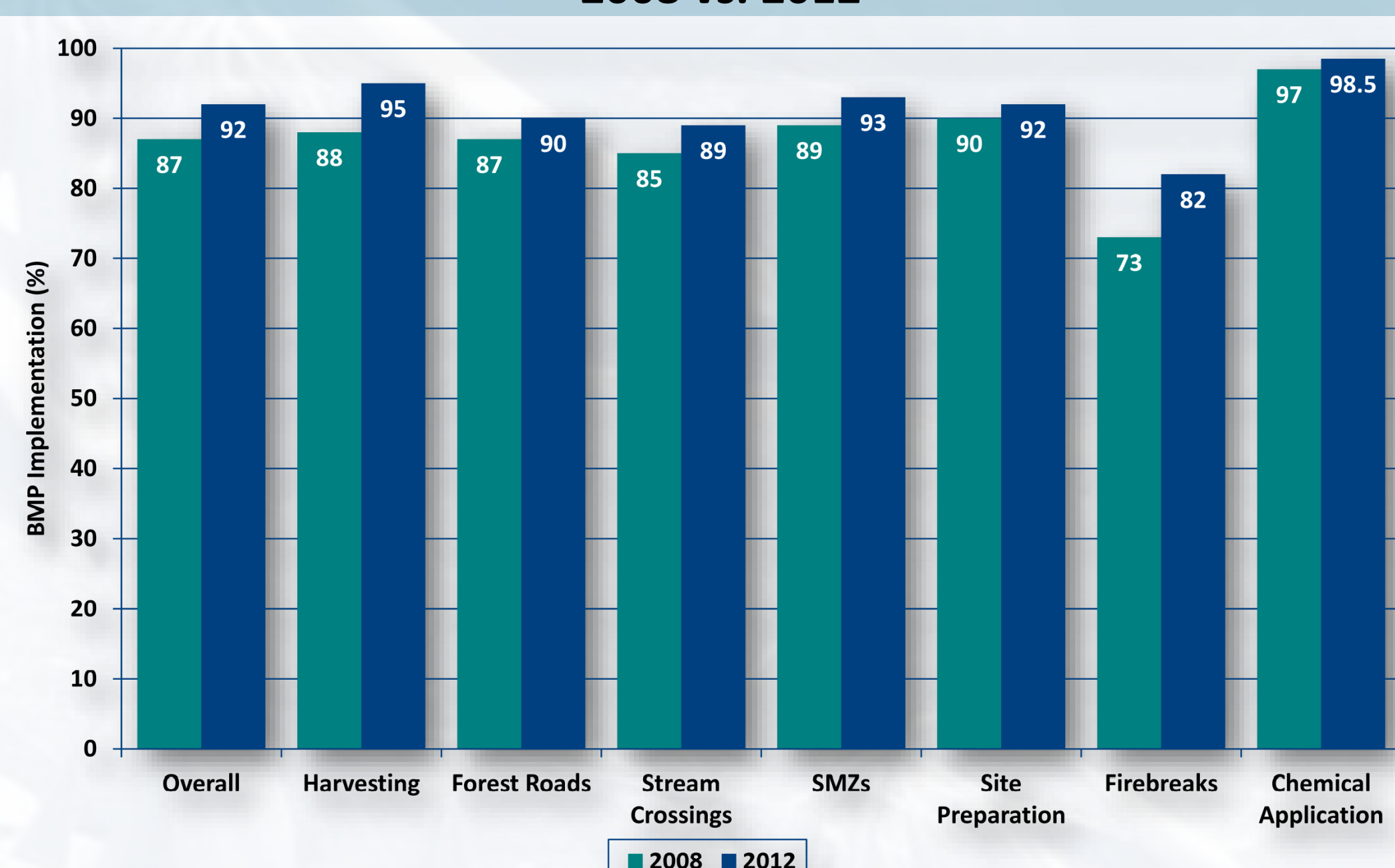


The state review process was not only beneficial to the host state, but also to the review team. Numerous ideas have been shared and implemented across the region as a result of this process.

In 2006, states were reviewed again to assess progress made since the initial review.

Implementation Monitoring

Comparison of Average Regional BMP Implementation by Category 2008 vs. 2012



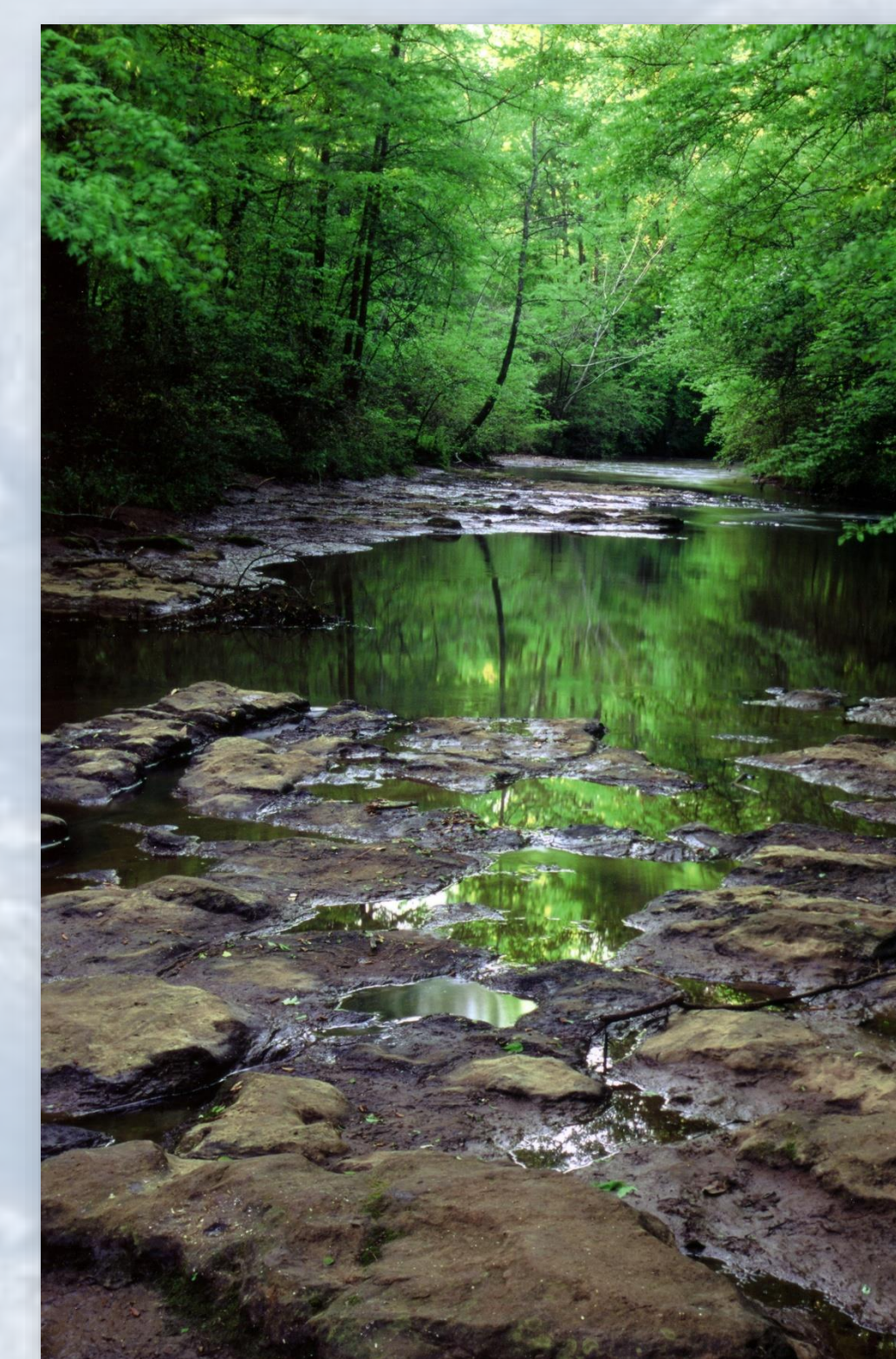
In 1996, SGSF directed the WRC to improve and maximize the integrity of forestry BMP implementation monitoring in the southeast. This "Framework", released in 1997, outlined procedures that were:

- Statistically sound
- Objective
- Technically defensible
- Able to produce results comparable among the states



In addition to developing the Framework and providing internal training, the WRC routinely provides guidance and technical assistance to other organizations. Recent and ongoing efforts include:

- Forest Roads NPDES
- Clean Water Act Section 404 Jurisdiction Guidance
- National Wetlands Inventory
- BMP Effectiveness Research
- Forest Roads and Section 404
- Determination of "On-going Silviculture" Guidance
- Southeastern Partnership for Forestry and Water Quality
- NASF BMP Assessment
- Farm Bill – Watershed Forestry Assistance
- U.S. Forest Service National Core BMP Monitoring Technical Guide



This was the first ever effort to develop a consistent, regional monitoring approach, and currently, all states are in conformance.

The WRC published regional BMP implementation monitoring reports in 2008 and 2012. Substantial progress in BMP implementation throughout the South has been noted since the establishment of the WRC.

Changes in Overall BMP Implementation by State

