
**Forest Health Monitoring Program
January Monthly Update
January 14, 2008**

Recent Happenings

The Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) is pleased to announce the addition of Mr. Tom Eckberg (teckberg@idl.idaho.gov) to the Forest health program. Tom holds a masters degree in entomology and brings a wealth of forest health and general forestry experience to the program. Tom will be leading the forest health outreach program of IDL. (by J. Fidgen, Forest Health Program Manager)

Upcoming Events (items beginning with * indicate a new listing or new information added)

*February 11 – February 14, 2008. San Antonio, TX. The 14th Annual Forest Health Monitoring Work Group Meeting will be held at the St. Anthony Hotel, in downtown San Antonio. The San Antonio Forest Health Monitoring Meeting is fast approaching! We have an exciting agenda planned around the forest health issues of oak woodlands. This year’s focus groups are very important and timely; the results of the focus groups will help shape how FHM addresses the challenges of climate change, ground survey, and aerial survey/disturbance tracking. Abstracts for the focus groups are attached at the end of this Update. The Thursday field tour through the Hill Country of Central Texas will showcase the fight to manage oak wilt (the good, the bad, and the ugly). **JUST ADDED:** The last stop on the tour will include a catered Texas barbecue by the famous Salt Lick BBQ, a stop that will help to heal “what ails you.” You’re fixin’ to see a Texas that was, is, and can be. The cost of the BBQ will depend on attendance but should be between \$15-20. Money will be collected on Tuesday, Feb. 12 in San Antonio. Similar to previous workshops, a poster session will include status and results of FHM-funded Evaluation Monitoring (EM) projects and other topics of interest. All recipients of EM funding are expected to present a poster at this workshop. Poster abstracts and registration forms were due by **Jan. 12, 2008**. Meeting registration is due **Jan. 25, 2008**. A block of rooms is being held at the St. Anthony Hotel (tel. no. 210-227-4392) at the workshop rate of \$112 per night until **Jan. 18, 2008**. **This is an extension, so please make your reservation right away.** Complete information about the workshop, including the agenda, hotel information, and registration forms, is posted on the FHM website (www.fhm.fs.fed.us). The Chair of this year's Meeting Planning Committee is Michael Bohne (USDA Forest Service, Forest Health Protection, R5) (mbohne@fs.fed.us). A copy of the meeting information should accompany this Update.

April 15-17, 2008. Salt Lake City, UT. The Twelfth Biennial Remote Sensing Applications Conference. The theme for the conference is “Supporting Resource Management with Technology.” The conference will emphasize applications of remote sensing technologies that benefit the resource management community. Papers and posters for all phases of remote sensing and related geospatial technologies used in resource management activities will be presented. As in the past, the conference is national in scope, and all projects are welcome as abstract submittals. For more information about the conference and specifics about submitting abstracts, please visit the conference website at www.fs.fed.us/eng/rsac/RS2008.

November 17-20, 2008. Hot Springs, AR. The 15th Biennial Southern Silvicultural Research Conference. The conference will consist of concurrent technical sessions, a poster session, and an optional field trip. Abstracts for offered papers and posters currently are being accepted. For more information about the conference and specifics about submitting abstracts, please visit the conference website at <http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/bssrc2008/index.htm>.

Publications of Interest

Barnard, E. 2007. Coping with loss: Part I - Old age and insects are just some of the contributing factors to dying oak trees in Florida. Ornamental Outlook, November 2007: 26-27.

Barnard, E. 2007. Coping with loss: Part II – Diseases play varying roles in the death of oak trees in the

Sunshine State. Ornamental Outlook, December 2007: 24-25.

The first quarterly newsletter of the Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center (EFETAC), the *Forest ThreatNet*, is available on EFETAC's web site: www.forestthreats.org.

Job Announcements

The USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station, Forest Inventory and Analysis Program plans to advertise for a Deputy Program Manager (Supervisory Biological Scientist GS-0401-14) to be located at the Portland Forestry Sciences Laboratory, Portland, OR. The Deputy Program manager shares the overall responsibility for, and participates fully in administrating all activities within the Program. The position will support the Program Manager in formulating and directing a complex research program designed to provide clear, comprehensive, and accurate analysis of the changing forest resource situation in the Pacific region, which includes the States of Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington, and the Pacific Islands. The incumbent also provides expert advice on resource inventory, monitoring, and evaluation concerns to the Program Manager as well as to the National FIA headquarters, National Forest Systems, other Federal land management agencies, State Forestry Organizations, forest industry and individuals. If you are interested in this position or would like more information, please contact Sue Willits at 503-808-2066 or swillits@fs.fed.us. When advertised, the vacancy announcement will be available at www.usajobs.gov. The United States Government does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, membership in an employee organization, or other non-merit factor.

FHM Homepage: : www.fhm.fs.fed.us
or access via the USDA Forest Service homepage at www.fs.fed.us

Focus Group for Ground Surveys

Leads: Jim Steinman (FHP, NA) and •Iral Ragenovich (FHP, R6)

Introduction

This focus group will meet for the second year to examine when and where ground-based surveys are used *in lieu of* aerial surveys to detect insect and disease pests and associated damages that can not be easily detected from the aerial methods. Our continuing discussion will present progress made on resolutions from the 2007 National FHM Working Group Meeting and propose future direction for how ground survey data can be utilized in national reporting efforts.

Although FHP survey funds and sometimes FHM Evaluation Monitoring funds are often used for State-level ground surveys, ground survey data are not well incorporated into regional and national FHP mapping and reporting efforts used as important communication tools. The goal of this session is to therefore determine the feasibility of utilizing ground survey data in regional and national reporting efforts.

Resolutions from the 2007 National FHM Working Group

Whereas: 1) ground surveys are a significant component of national insect and disease detection efforts, but few ground survey data are included in national survey maps and not easily accessed by state and federal partners; and 2) there is a particular need to include geo-spatial ground survey data for exotic-invasive insects and diseases in national maps and make the data readily available to state and federal partners so they can monitor rates of spread.

We resolve to: 1) request that the 5 FHM Regional Managers gather and compile the metadata for ongoing ground surveys used for exotic pests, and prepare a summary report describing what data are available (i.e., which pests, what states, what attributes are available); and 2) request that FHM Management and FHTET use the summary report to determine the utility and feasibility of including ground survey data into a national database that can be used to make national maps and provide access to state and federal partners to monitor exotic pest rates of spread.

Discussion Topics for the 2008 National FHM Working Group

1. Progress on Resolution 1: Review and discuss findings compiled from a questionnaire distributed to all State and Federal FHP partners
 - A. how often and why ground surveys are used as an alternative to aerial surveys
 - B. commonalities in ground survey protocols among pests
 - C. commonalities in collected data attributes among pests and among FHP partners
2. Progress on Resolution 2: Discuss potential application in reporting efforts led by FHTET
 - A. utilization of survey attributes into national databases, maps and pest condition reports.
 - B. utilization of ground survey data to enhance Risk Map models.

Also, we encourage discussion among focus group participants that will help further define how biological evaluations and site visits relate to ground surveys primarily designed to delineate detected pest problems and monitor their rate of spread. Finally, we hope the group's continuing discussion on the topic of ground surveys will lead to resolutions that will help provide future guidance on how we can improve the ability to better utilize ground survey data in national reporting and continue to support State-level needs to conduct ground surveys.

Aerial Detection Survey (ADS) / Disturbance Tracking Focus Group

**Leaders: Jeff Mai, FS, WO; Aviation Safety Manager FHP, Chair ASWG
Frank Sapio, FS, WO; Director FHTET
Gail Durham, Nevada Division of Forestry**

The Focus Group will briefly review and provide updates to FHM Resolutions and relevant Aerial Survey Working Group (ASWG) Key Issues from the January 2007 meetings. The remainder of the session will center on issues identified by the FHM management team.

Focus Group attendees should come prepared to discuss progress on last year's resolutions and topics for 2008 (Digital Aerial Mapping System, field checks, ADS as it relates to Criterion and Indicators of Sustainability, metadata, and disturbance tracking). Specific issues include:

1. How do we improve the consistency, quality, and coverage of disturbance tracking and reporting Nationally?
2. What is the real cost of aerial survey? Who benefits from this cost?
3. What are the obstacles to "complete" National Reporting?

Evaluating successes and continuing to improve upon existing methods of data collection and reporting will be the focus. Advances in mapping technology and guidelines for ground checks hone aerial sketchmapper skills and increase the reliability and accuracy of data collected. Missions Metadata and standards via DASM may assist users in assessing the conditions under which aerial survey data is collected, facilitating determination of appropriate data use. Perseverance in these endeavors is necessary to best meet the needs of forest health professionals and the public concerned with forest planning and management at all levels. Utilizing these data in related studies and reports, such as the Roundtable for Sustainable Forestry, Criterion and Indicators and pest event reporting, continues to be explored and enhanced where applicable. Near Real Time Disturbance mapping using MODIS will be discussed as a tool to aid identifying areas of mortality and Disturbance immediately prior to surveys being flown to potentially augment flight planning and increase data utility and efficiency. Further development of tools and technology to facilitate cost-effective, safe operations remains a recurring theme in this year's focus group.

Hours Allotted	Topic	Discussion Leader
1.5	Progress Report on Last Year's Resolutions & Pertinent ASWG Key Issues. Carryover Resolutions.	Jeff Mai – WO
1.5	MODIS Disturbance Tracking. Discuss Resolutions.	Everett Hinkley (Mark Finco or Eric Nielsen) – WO
1	Cost of Aerial Survey. Discuss Resolutions.	Jeff Mai - WO
1.5	Obstacles to National Reporting. Discuss Resolutions.	Frank Krist – WO
1	Wrap-up, Refine New Resolutions.	Frank Sapio – WO

Abstract
Climate Change and Forest Health Focus Group
National Forest Health Monitoring Work Group Meeting
San Antonio, Texas February 13, 2008

Purpose

Global climate change is a topic of intense international concern with many implications for forest health. It is one of the top three priorities of the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service. The Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) program wants to explore its potential role in this evolving arena. This Focus Group will establish a forum whereby members of the forestry community working on climate change issues can interact with the Forest Health Monitoring Program.

Objectives

1. To describe what climate change is and is not (including which physical indicators are useful for measuring climate change at various levels— global, national, regional, and local).
2. To describe the potential problems and issues posed by climate change to forest ecosystems (i.e., describe the threats to forest health).
3. To describe current research, information gaps, and opportunities for further research on the effects to forest ecosystems.
4. To identify ways that FHM might advance the understanding of climate change and its implications. Discussions will include:
 - identifying which forest health indicators are important and sensitive enough to monitor with respect to climate change (including current indicators, indicators that can be developed from existing data, and new indicators to consider for future implementation);
 - ways to best establish correlations between physical indicators and key forest health indicators (i.e., how, when, and where to measure the effects of climate change on forest health);
 - useful and enlightening ways to predict the effects of climate change on key forest health indicators.
5. To identify opportunities for the FHM Program to collaborate with others working in this arena.
6. To explore how climate change might change the business of FHM (e.g., should the Program give priority to Evaluation Monitoring & Intensive Site Monitoring Proposals that deal with climate change topics?).

Activities

1. Listen to presentations by researchers and policy makers to provide participants with necessary background and context of climate change issues relative to forest health. This will achieve objectives 1-3. Presenters will include scientists from the Eastern and Western Forest Threat centers (EFETAC and WWETAC).
2. Engage participants in group discussion focusing on objectives 4-6.
3. Develop a list of specific resolutions that FHM can pursue to advance the understanding of climate change and collaborate with others working on this issue.