

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.

Discussion Timeline for Ground Survey Focus Group

8:30 – 10:30

- Background introduction on “Why are we talking about Ground Surveys?” – 30 min
- 2007 Resolutions – 30 min
- Discussion of Findings from Ground Survey Questionnaire ('07 Resolution #1) - 60 min
 - What is the scope of ongoing efforts for insects and diseases?
 - What is the variability between states and regions?
 - Is there significant information not being captured from aerial surveys?

10:30 – 11:00 - Break

11:00 – 12:00

- Potential Use of Ground Survey Info. in National Reporting ('07 Resolution #2) – 60 min
 - What did we learn?
 - How does this all fit with the new template for pest condition reporting?
 - Do results suggest any further opportunities for national reporting / risk mapping?
 - What are the group concerns and issues?
 - Other questions?

12:00 – 1:30 - Lunch

1:30 – 3:00

- Continued Open Discussion of questions, opportunities, concerns, issues
- Possible Resolutions

3:00 – 3:30 - Break

3:30 – 4:30

- Resolutions related to the use of Ground Survey Information – 1hr