



Southern Sierra Geographic Information Cooperative

Management Perspectives on Interagency Collaboration

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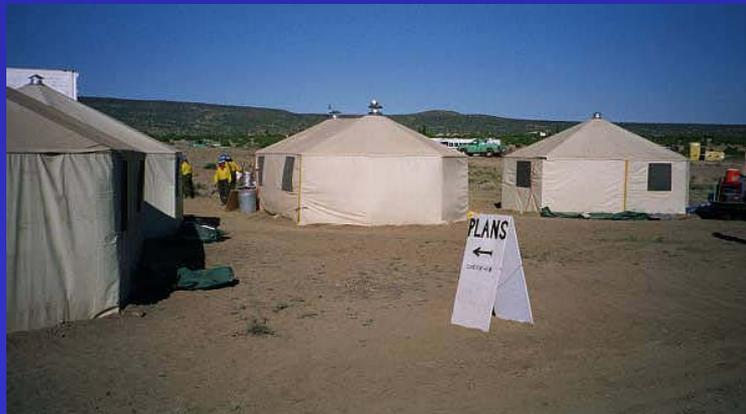
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- Why Collaborate?
- Challenges
- Overcoming Obstacles
- Implementation...



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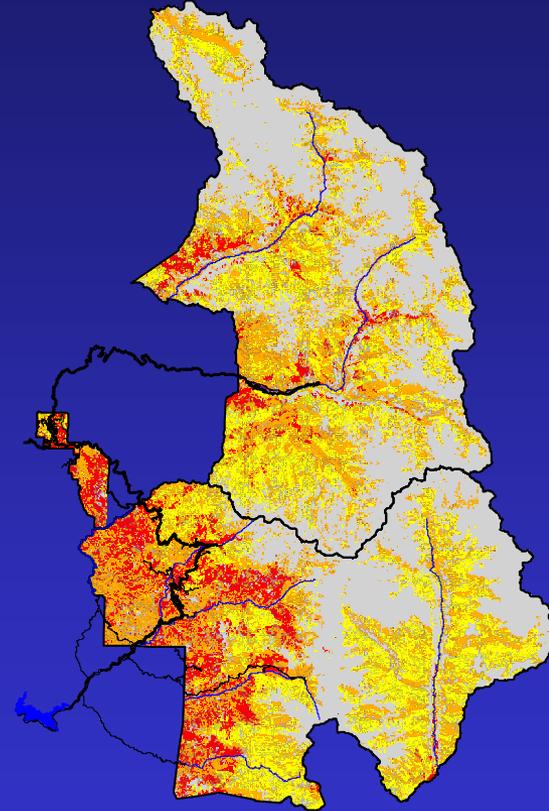
- Traditionally - on the ground fire management *activities* have been implemented on an interagency basis – especially for suppression activities





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- In contrast, long term fire management *planning* has tended to be agency/unit specific





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- Why Collaborate on Planning?



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More Complex Fire Management Programs

- Past Focus...
 - Hazard fuels
 - Activity fuels
- Current Issues...
 - Ecosystem restoration and maintenance
 - Wildland Urban Interface protection
 - Program constraints (air quality, etc.)
 - Cost containment



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Benefits of *Methodical* Fuels Planning

- Makes use of best available technology & data
 - Advanced analysis tools
 - GIS – Spatially explicit analysis
 - Shared data
 - Incorporate up-to-date information and research
- Responds to agency objectives
 - Agency specific mission
 - Describe on the ground conditions
- Defines magnitude of problem
 - How much needs treatment now and in the future?
 - Where is it on the ground?



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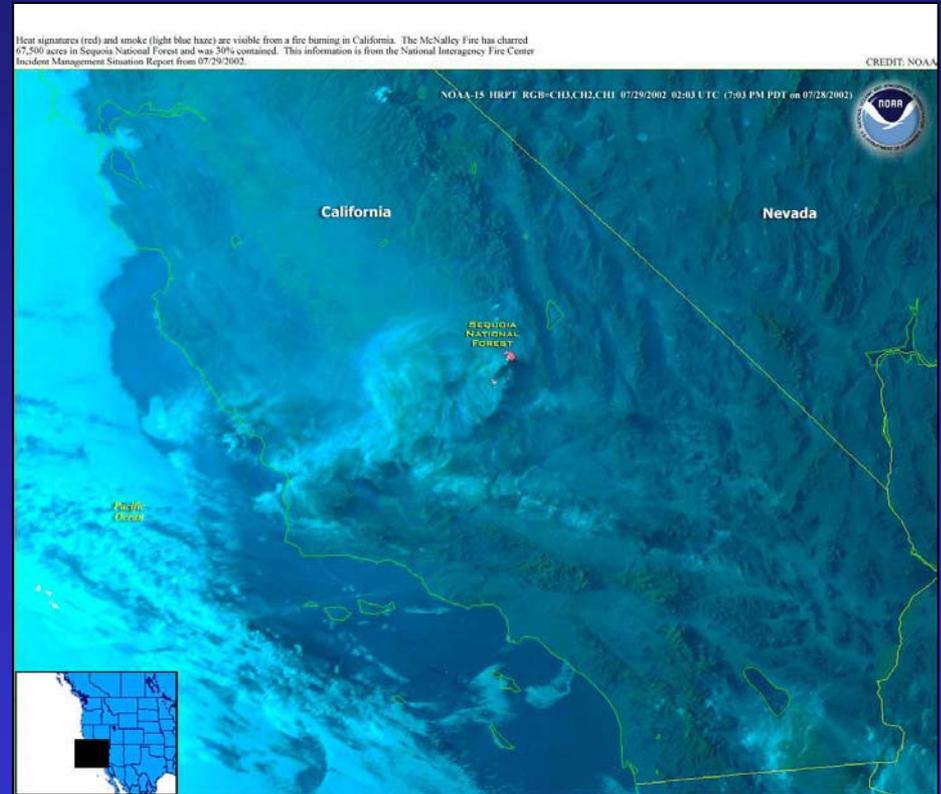
- Drives development of budgets
 - How much will it cost to treat each year
- Helps evaluate & defend priority setting
 - Why treat one location, community or resource over another?
- Measures progress towards objectives
 - How much was accomplished?
 - Were objectives achieved?



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Benefits of *Interagency* Fuels Planning

- Evaluate needs and priorities across landscapes and boundaries
 - Maximize effectiveness
- Share resources
 - Increase efficiency, effectiveness, at lower cost
- Coordinate implementation
 - Instead of conflict and competition
- Deal with scarcity
 - Regional burn days
 - Limited funding
 - Competition for fire fighting resources





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National Direction

- *1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review*
 - “Fire management planning will be conducted on an *interagency* basis...”
 - “Fire ... will be integrated into land and resource management plans and activities on a *landscape scale*
 - *...across agency boundaries*”
 - *...and will be based on best available science.*”
- Echoed and reaffirmed in
 - 2001 National Fire Policy Review
 - National Fire Plan
 - Western Governors 10 Year Strategy
 - ...other reports and documents



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Upcoming Initiative/Direction



- *Fire Program Analysis System:*
 - Develop a **common, interagency fire preparedness planning**/budgeting system
 - Integrate fire preparedness planning with **goals and objectives of land & resource management plans**
 - Standardize preparedness planning **policies and procedures** among the five federal wildland fire management agencies.
 - Establish a **foundation for future modeling** of the entire wildland fire program
- *Implement a preparedness module by **September 2004***



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- SSGIC borne out of convergence of a number of events/issues
 - South Canyon
 - 1995 Federal Fire Policy Review
 - Need to provide better firefighter safety
 - Need to consider role of fire in ecosystems
 - Move to landscape/ecosystem scale projects
 - Mineral King Risk Reduction (Sequoia National Park)



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- Post Cerro Grande
 - Review of 1995 Policy
 - Reaffirmed need for interagency fuels planning and treatments
 - Reaffirmed role of fire as ecosystem process across landscapes
 - ***Highlighted need for community and interface protection***





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- Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)
 - Requirement to establish firm goals and objectives
 - Results oriented
 - Provide accountability
- Fiscal Constraints
 - Large fire costs exceed \$1 billion/year
 - Congress to agencies
 - » *“Reduce Costs!!”*



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- Challenges
 - If it were easy....
 - Agency cultures
 - Turf
 - Loss of control
 - Different budget and planning cycles
 - Agency specific objectives
 - Differing priorities



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- Overcoming Obstacles
 - Find common ground
 - Literally and figuratively
 - Where interests coincide
 - Use commonly agreed on vocabulary, analysis tools, and comparable data sets
 - Respect and preserve each agencies' mission, objectives, values
 - Agree on common business practices



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Conclusions

1. Interagency fuels planning is required of all Federal agencies.
2. Interagency fuels planning can help make best use of limited resources.
3. Standardized fuels analysis methodology and practices are needed to fulfill local management needs as well as national direction.
4. Analysis tools must provide reasoned and defensible decision support.
5. Analysis must be driven by the best available research and monitoring data.
6. Analysis should support budget requests.
7. Programs and managers will be accountable to produce results.



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- Implementation...



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