

Develop a Landscape-Scale Framework for Interagency Wildland Fuels Management Planning

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INTRODUCTION

This project is focused on developing and testing an approach to incorporate wildland fuels information management into an interagency, landscape-scale planning framework. The project area includes six major watersheds (Kaweah, Kern, Kings, Caliente, Mojave, and Tule watersheds) covering an area of about 4.7 million acres. A spatial and attribute information system is being created for coordinated fuels management planning within an integrated Geographic Information System (GIS) framework. The primary goals are to reduce fiscal costs to both government agencies and the public and to improve attainment of ecological and hazard reduction goals across jurisdictional boundaries. The project focuses on utilizing geographic information and related technologies including the Internet to overcome institutional and organizational barriers to interagency fuels management within very large, diverse ecosystems. The proposed framework will be both consistent and dynamic to meet the varied long-range ecological, fire hazard, and risk reduction goals of all impacted agencies. Common geographic data is being developed including comprehensive planning maps and analyses that prioritize areas for treatment based on value, hazard, and risk criteria. This framework will develop and test procedures to manage and update complex spatial information and to institutionalize the coordinated planning efforts. This is a funded two-year project by the Joint Fire Sciences Program.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- The project meets the requirements of the Joint Fire Sciences Program.
- Interagency GIS and information sharing in the Southern Sierra is effectively and efficiently managed.
- The most important seamless GIS data is developed, including development of compliant metadata.
- GIS data is readily accessible and available.
- Data utilization tools enhance and optimize use of data and analysis models.
- Appropriate analysis models have been defined, developed, and evaluated.

SUMMARY OF METHODS

A Cooperative Agreement will be developed and signed by all major stakeholder agencies – these agencies include: Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Sequoia National Forest, Bureau of Land Management – Bakersfield District, California Department of Forestry – Tulare Ranger Unit, and Kern County Fire Department. A project plan will be developed that describes specific goals and links specific tasks/strategies to achieve individual goals. The project plan will contain a detailed budget strategy for accomplishing individual goals.

A Web-based File Transfer Protocol (FTP) data clearinghouse will be established including deployment of host hardware/software at a designated clearinghouse location. A detailed long-term Web strategy will be developed and implemented. Project management strategies, including use of Internet technologies,

will be evaluated and implemented in the most effective manner. Long-term business processes for optimizing interagency GIS coordination will be established by the end of the project.

Data development priorities will be established, prioritized, and developed. Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) compliant metadata will be completed for all major data. Data utilization tools will be developed, as needed, to optimize use and management of data. Interagency GIS analysis models (e.g. Hazard, Value, and Risk) will be defined and implemented. Interagency Fuels Management Plans will be developed based on completed analysis.

WORK ACCOMPLISHED IN 1999

A project proposal was submitted and approved by the Joint Fire Sciences Committee with final funding authorization being completed near the end of FY1999. Only two kickoff interagency project planning meetings were completed in 1999; one was completed in October and another in December 1999.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

N/A

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

As anticipated, interagency coordination does require significant effort and commitment by agency stakeholders in order for this project to be successful. Coordinating activities and meetings is difficult and requires significantly more effort than traditional single agency meetings. It is not yet known how different agency missions will impact a consensus process and development of joint burn plans.

2000 WORKPLAN

The following projects will be either initiated or completed in 2000: a) Deploy FTP Data Clearinghouse, b) Develop data development priorities and initiate data development including hiring a term GIS Technician, c) Develop interagency analysis models and begin model development, d) Develop formal project plan and budget strategy, e) Write a Cooperative Agreement and all major stakeholder agencies sign agreement, f) Develop long-term Internet-Web strategies, and g) Develop a strategy for optimizing interagency business processes.