



West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment Project Update – May 2009

This update provides a summary of the current status of the West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment (WWA) project being conducted on behalf of the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) and the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC). Links to more detailed information are listed at the end of this update.

Questions may be directed to Jim Wolf, WWA Coordinator, jamesawolf@gmail.com, 541-324-3446

Highlights – Recent News

- **Contract Status:** An **Intent to Award** was issued to *Sanborn Map Company, Inc* by the Oregon Dept of Forestry (ODF) for the WWA project. Two proposals were submitted. Sanborn's proposal received the highest score through the evaluation process conducted in April by ODF and the project steering committee. Contract negotiations have begun with Sanborn to finalize a contract, including a detailed work plan, statement of work, and costs.
- **Steering Committee update:** Vicki Christiansen, state forester for Arizona, joined the steering committee and is replacing Pete Anderson as the state forester representative. Dana Coelho, WFLC Program Manager, has replaced Jay Jensen on the steering committee, following his appointment to Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment at USDA. Ken McLean, CAL FIRE, is leaving the steering committee. A replacement will be announced soon. See WWA Steering Committee section below.
- **New web-page:** The WWA project now has a dedicated web-page online at <http://www.wflcweb.org/wwra/>. This is part of our communications plan for providing information to partners, stakeholders, and the public.
- Single Points of Contact and GIS contacts have been identified for each Partner State. See the Working Groups section below.

WWA Background

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), on behalf of the CWSF/WFLC, is conducting a wildfire risk assessment and report for the 17 western states and select Pacific Islands. At the highest level, this assessment is known as the "West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment, or "WWA". The WWA will generate the following:

Wildfire Risk Assessment: Working with Partner States, a contractor will produce a wildfire risk assessment to quantify the magnitude of the current wildland fire problem in the west and provide a baseline for quantifying mitigation activities and monitoring change over time. The methodology implemented will be replicable, quantifiable and provide results comparable across geographic areas. This assessment will leverage LANDFIRE data and a methodology similar to the Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment and Colorado Fire Risk Assessment System to minimize cost and maximize consistency. Since a significant part of the fire problem in the west is associated with federal land, and many of these fires affect state jurisdiction, the

Partner States

Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Hawaii
Idaho
Kansas
Montana
North Dakota
Nebraska
New Mexico
Nevada
Oregon
South Dakota
Utah
Washington
Wyoming
U.S. affiliated -
Pacific Islands

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assessment will include all lands. The assessment and summary reports will be developed to allow comprehensive comparisons between regional geographic areas, and to assist in quantifying risk and fire effects to aid in the mitigation of wildfire risks across the US.

Assessment Data and Model: Partner States will be provided risk assessment GIS data and tools, including training and support, to allow custom analysis.

Status Report: A summary of the risk assessment findings and a status report on the programs and processes in place to mitigate the risks will be included as companion documents.

WWA Steering Committee

Guiding this work is the WWA Steering Committee comprised of five state fire managers representing geographic areas of the west, a state forester, a federal liaison, a tribal representative, and a WLC representative. Members include Chair Mike Dondero (NV), Don Westover (NE), Tracy Dunford (UT), Marc Lee (AK), Vicki Christiansen (AZ state forester), Cathy Scofield (USFS), Jim Erickson (ITC), Dana Coelho (WFLC), and Morris Johnson (USFS alternate). Ken McLean, CAL FIRE, is leaving the steering committee; a replacement will be announced soon. The ODF is providing the grant administration, contract procurement and administration, and project management.

WWA Working Groups

In addition to the Steering Committee and ODF project and contract management, three working groups are anticipated to complete the project.

Partner State Point of Contact (POC): Each Partner State will provide a point of contact for providing fire ignition data, NFP accomplishments, input on weighting of *values at risk* and *suppression difficulty*, as well as review of key model inputs and outputs.

Partner State GIS Representative: Each Partner State will provide a point of contact (may be the Agency POC listed above) for GIS data acquisition and compilation, and support of the data and model transfer at the completion of the project.

Technical Committee(s): Some technical subcommittees and work groups will be required to support the development of key datasets and parameters. A subcommittee(s) will be required to define the rule sets and guidelines for updating of the LANDFIRE data products to best reflect observed fire behavior, recent disturbance (e.g. insect damage, wildfires) and fire behavior where LANDFIRE data are not available. Other subcommittees may be required to support the Status Report preparation. Existing committees and groups may be used to improve efficiency.

Points of Contact / GIS Contacts

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|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| AK | Marc Lee / Gordon Worum |
| AZ | Glen Buettner |
| CA | Wayne Mitchell |
| CO | Rich Homann / Skip Edel |
| HI | Wayne Ching |
| ID | Don Wagner |
| KS | Ross Hauck |
| MT | Will Wood |
| ND | David Geyer / Peter Oduor |
| NE | Don Westover / Joe Stansberry |
| NM | Don Greigo / Trent Botkin |
| NV | Mike Dondero / John Watermolen |
| OR | Teresa Vonn |
| SD | Steve Hasenohrl |
| UT | Tracy Dunford |
| WA | Darrel Johnston / Nicholene Eisfeldt |
| WY | Ron Graham |
| U.S. affiliated -Pacific Islands - TBD | |

Project Status

The project started early in 2008 and the following has been accomplished:

- Project funding has been secured in the form of a \$1.2 million State Fire Assistance grant off the top to ODF to work on behalf of CWSF/WLC.
- Governance and project management has been established for the project and a draft project charter developed. The steering committee has met three times via conference calls and corresponded via email to determine project scope and deliverables.
- An RFP was developed and is in the process of being implemented to determine a contractor to complete the assessment. A formal notice of Intent to Award was issued to *Sanborn Map Company, Inc.* on April 22nd following the evaluation of two proposals by the steering committee and ODF. Contract negotiations have begun with Sanborn to finalize a contract, including a detailed work plan, statement of work, and costs.

Timeline and Next Steps

The WWA is expected to be a two-year project – planned to be completed by June 30, 2011. The specific timeline of contract deliverables will be negotiated when the contract is awarded. The following timeline is expected:

June: Complete contract procurement process, including contract negotiation and final contract award; form working groups.

Conduct Assessment: Establish project management, 2) acquire, compile, and analyze data; and develop fire risk assessment and model development.

Final Report: Complete and review final report and summary statistics; complete technology transfer to Partner States; and complete Status Report documents.

Fire in the West Documents: A separate contract/agreement will be used to complete “Fire in the West” type documents to summarize the assessment results, as well as describe the magnitude and characteristics of the problem, actions being taken by states and partners, potential solutions, and future issues.

Helpful Links

The West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment project now has a dedicated web-page online at <http://www.wflcweb.org/wwra/>

Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment project website for methodology and reports www.southernwildfirerisk.com/

Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment <http://demo.dtsagile.com/cofire/>

LANDFIRE project www.landfire.gov

Oregon Procurement Information Network (ORPIN) orpin.oregon.gov

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