LF National Marks Western Milestone Completion

The LANDFIRE National team has completed mapping all areas included in the project's western milestone – a substantial portion of the western United States. Data products for these mapping zones are available on the USGS *National Map LANDFIRE* website (http://gisdata.usgs.net/website/landfire/) or via DVD by request through the Contact Us link on www.landfire.gov. (Note that certain layers are currently being revised – see *Improvements to Map Layers in Interior West*, page 2.)

Mapping continues to progress across the country. The LANDFIRE team is currently mapping zones immediately east of the completed western portion, along with two mapping zones encompassing most of Florida.

Map of Existing Vegetation for the western U.S.

On December 18, 2006, a demonstration and press event was held in Washington, D.C. to highlight the LANDFIRE Project and mark the completion of LANDFIRE National's western milestone. Interior Deputy Secretary Lynn Scarlett hosted this demonstration, along with Dave Tenny, Agriculture Department Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment.

The demonstration addressed project status and provided examples of LANDFIRE data use in multiple natural resource applications, such as hazardous fuel reduction, wildlife management, and wildland fire support.

SCA Eastern Traveling Team

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) formed a five-person data collection team with the primary objective of collecting plot data to support the LANDFIRE Project. The SCA Eastern Traveling Team has been collecting data from various sites in Michigan, Florida, and North Carolina, with an emphasis on wetland habitat types. Field-sampled data are integral to the development of LANDFIRE map products, such as Environmental Site Potential, Existing Vegetation Type/Height/Cover, Forest Canopy Base Height, Forest Canopy Bulk Density, and Fuel Loading Models. Standard FIREMON measurement protocol is being followed. For details on the activities of the SCA Eastern Traveling Team, please contact Darren Johnson at Darren_Johnson@tnc.org or Joey Ruehrwein at JRuehrwein@thesca.org.

Members of the SCA Traveling Team

LANDFIRE Product Quality Working Team

The LANDFIRE Product Quality Working Team (PQWT) was commissioned by the LANDFIRE Business Lead Team and is responsible for developing, coordinating, and implementing project plans and processes relating to product quality. The team consists of members from each of the project's partner agencies or organizations and three external relevant experts not involved in the project. Team members include:

Tom Bobbe	USDA Forest Service, Remote Sensing Applications Center
Greg Dillon	USDA Forest Service, Fire Sciences Laboratory, RMRS
Don Ohlen	USGS EROS Data Center
Stephen Prisley	Department of Forestry, Virginia Tech
Matt Reeves	USDA Forest Service, Fire Sciences Laboratory, RMRS
James L. Smith	The Nature Conservancy (2006-2007 Chair)
Stephen Stehman	SUNY-Environmental Science and Forestry
Zhiliang Zhu	USGS EROS Data Center

The PQWT has developed a Product Quality Assurance and Assessment plan, which includes specific actions to be taken to evaluate and report on the quality of LANDFIRE data products. The plan further includes quantitative assessment techniques, such as goodness-of-fit metrics, contingency table analyses with holdout samples, as well as more qualitative reviews of data products.

This plan has been approved by project management and is currently in the implementation stage. The PQWT expects to complete assessment of the western mapping zones in 2007 and will post reports on www.landfire.gov.

Upcoming LANDFIRE Fuel Layers Update

As part of LANDFIRE's quality control, external review, and customer satisfaction efforts, an update to the LANDFIRE suite of fuel data will begin April 2nd and wrap-up May 5th of 2007. The data are being updated to make improvements to the canopy fuel layers and ensure that fuel data in all western mapping zones have been calibrated according to the opinions of at least 200 fire and fuel professionals from the western United States.

Canopy fuel data changes include: 1) developing equations to lower the canopy base height estimates; 2) incorporating new sets of predictor variables to facilitate landscape extrapolation of plot-based canopy fuel estimates; 3) integrating key deciduous (broadleaf) species in the formulation of canopy base height and bulk density for each plot; 4) constructing a revised canopy cover data set in which stand-level canopy cover values are significantly smaller than those in the current LANDFIRE canopy cover data set;

Continued...

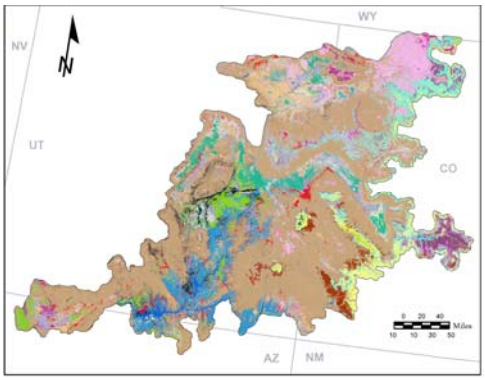
and 5) modifying the canopy bulk density data set so that it conforms to recently quantified relationships between canopy bulk density and canopy cover.

Fire behavior fuel model changes include 1) modifying existing fire behavior fuel model products to account for the presence of herbaceous annual species believed to radically change potential fire behavior and 2) incorporating commentary and substantive changes suggested during the LANDFIRE fuel calibration workshops.

In May of 2007, the updated fuel layers for the western mapping zones will be posted to LANDFIRE's data dissemination site, the *National Map LANDFIRE* (located at http://gisdata.usgs.net/website/landfire/).

Improvements to Map Layers in Interior West

Also as part of LANDFIRE's quality control, external review, and customer satisfaction efforts, the LANDFIRE National team is in the process of revising the biophysical settings (BpS), existing vegetation, fuel, and fire regime map layers for the following eight mapping zones in the interior West: 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, and 28. Internal and external reviews of the BpS layers indicated that pinyon-juniper communities were over-represented on the landscape relative to shrub and herb communities that may have been replaced by pinyon-juniper over the last century. The reviews also revealed that exotic vegetation types were underestimated in the succession classes (SClass) maps for several mapping zones in the interior West – a result of the Existing Vegetation Type layer's focus on mapping of the dominant overstory vegetation to identify exotic communities. BpS, SClass, and existing vegetation data are used to model and map fire regimes and/or fuel.



LANDFIRE Biophysical Settings map for Mapping Zone 23.

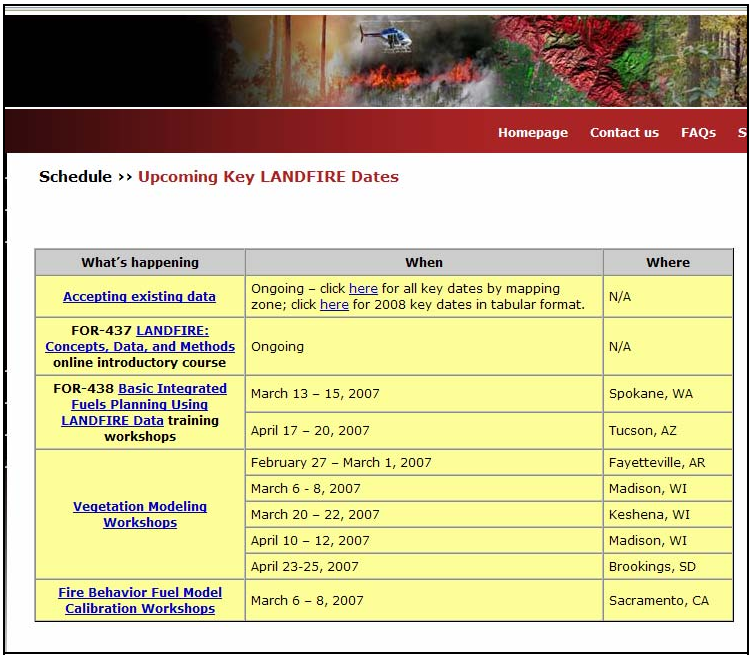
The new product versions for these mapping zones are scheduled for completion by April 1, 2007, with the exception of the fuel layers, which, as mentioned in the previous section, are planned for completion in May of this year. We anticipate that these updates will better reflect the vegetation, fuel, and fire regimes of the interior West.

"Key LANDFIRE Dates" Page on Website

A new page on www.landfire.gov provides all important dates for the various LANDFIRE activities in one easy-to-find location. This "Key LANDFIRE Dates" page contains the following information:

- ►Dates of approaching training workshops on using LANDFIRE data
- ►Dates of upcoming vegetation modeling workshops
- ►Dates of future fuel model calibration workshops
- ►Links to submission target dates for sharing your existing vegetation & fuel data
- ►Links to registration information for the online LANDFIRE introductory course

You'll find this new page on the LANDFIRE website in both the *Schedule* and *How to Participate* sections. Your valuable participation the LANDFIRE Project is encouraged and appreciated.



What's happening	When	Where
Accepting existing data	Ongoing – click here for all key dates by mapping zone; click here for 2008 key dates in tabular format.	N/A
FOR-437 LANDFIRE: Concepts, Data, and Methods online introductory course	Ongoing	N/A
FOR-438 Basic Integrated Fuels Planning Using LANDFIRE Data training workshops	March 13 – 15, 2007	Spokane, WA
	April 17 – 20, 2007	Tucson, AZ
Vegetation Modeling Workshops	February 27 – March 1, 2007	Fayetteville, AR
	March 6 - 8, 2007	Madison, WI
	March 20 – 22, 2007	Keshena, WI
	April 10 – 12, 2007	Madison, WI
	April 23-25, 2007	Brookings, SD
Fire Behavior Fuel Model Calibration Workshops	March 6 – 8, 2007	Sacramento, CA

Please visit the various sections of www.landfire.gov for project details and LANDFIRE data products or communicate with the LANDFIRE team through the Contact Us link on the website's homepage.