



Dear Colleague:

I am writing to ask for your help in acquiring existing field data for a national fire regime and fuel mapping project. The project, called LANDFIRE, integrates field-sampled data, satellite imagery, and models of fire and vegetation dynamics to generate consistent ecosystem, fire regime, and fuel maps that can inform fire and land management throughout the US. Examples of these end-products are maps of historical fire regimes and of fire regime condition classes (indices of departure from historical fire regimes), which are needed to prioritize and evaluate the restoration of forests and rangelands as directed by the National Fire Plan and the Healthy Forests legislation. Partners in this effort include the USDA Forest Service's Fire Sciences Laboratory in Missoula, Montana, the USGS Center for Earth Resources Observation and Science in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and The Nature Conservancy in Boulder, Colorado.

At the heart of LANDFIRE is a database containing geo-referenced field data that characterize fuel and vegetation composition and structure. The project relies heavily upon existing inventory, monitoring, and research programs for these reference data, which is why I have contacted you for help. The LANDFIRE team would like to incorporate into the database any vegetation or fuel-loading data that you have collected. Examples of these data are listed in table 1. Descriptions of physical plot characteristics, disturbance histories, and data collection procedures are also valuable and likewise appreciated. The only requirement for inclusion of data in the LANDFIRE reference database (LFRDB) is a geo-reference for each sampling unit, preferably as determined with a Global Positioning System device in the field.

Table 1. Examples of data needed for the LANDFIRE reference database.

Data type	Attribute
Plot	Geo-reference Sampling date
Vegetation	Cover type Full or partial list of plant taxa present Canopy cover of each taxon Height of each taxon Diameters of individual trees Heights of individual trees Crown ratios of individual trees <i>OR</i> Crown base heights of individual trees Crown classes of individual trees Tree densities
Fuel	Counts or biomass of fine material Counts or biomass of coarse material Depth or biomass of litter layer Depth or biomass of duff layer

If you have (or know of) geo-referenced plot data that should meet LFRDB needs, please contact Karen Short, the LANDFIRE reference data administrator, at (406) 549-7478 (kshort@landfire.org). If you would like to learn more about LANDFIRE or to see examples of anticipated end-products, please contact Kris Lee at (406) 829-6977 (kristinelee@fs.fed.us). You can also visit the LANDFIRE website at www.landfire.gov.

Thank you,

Kevin Ryan, Ph.D.
Acting LANDFIRE Program Manager

