LANDFIRE

LESSONS LEARNED at Memphis

2006 RAPID ASSESSMENT ROLLOUT CONFERENCE A SUCCESSFUL "FIRST"

The FIRST National Rapid Assessment Rollout Conference convened in Memphis, TN on February 28 and March 1, 2006. Ninety-three participants from 29 states and Canada met to learn about the data products produced by the Rapid Assessment (RA), the first phase of activities in the five-year LANDFIRE project. Participants were evenly split between non-federal and federal agency representatives.

The first day featured presentations about the history and purpose of the LANDFIRE project and the development of the RA spatial products,

and offered demonstrations of how the data may be used. The speaker mix reflected the collaborative nature of the project, with Federal partners, private consultants and The Nature Conservancy staff sharing their knowledge and expertise.

On the second day, three concurrent sessions featured RA spatial data analyses and live, interactive data demonstrations. The data used in these sessions were from the Great Basin, Southwest, and Southeast map and model zones.

PRODUCTS

The conference represented the culmination of over a year's worth of work developing the RA products and was the first time the user community had a chance to assess them. RA project deliverables state-and-transition vegetation models, National maps of succession class, potential natural vegetation groups, reference fire regimes and fire regime condition class. RA products should be available on www.landfire.gov by mid-April.

RESULTS

RA data can be useful for a variety of national and regional level applications including fire management planning, prioritization and communication. Furthermore, data represent a significant step forward and considerable refinement from the Coarse Scale data set released several years ago (Schmidt et. al, 2002). With its coverage of the conterminous U.S., the RA data will fill critical data gaps until the finer scale LANDFIRE products become available. Although RA data were not designed for local or project scale use, it can be refined for finer scale applications.

A CD of conference proceedings is being sent to attendees and is available by request to jpatton@tnc.org.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Participants agreed that the completion of the Rapid Assessment was a landmark achievement, representing the first time moderate resolution, consistent, "wall to wall" data related to fire and fuels had ever been compiled for the lower 48 states. LANDFIRE Rapid Assessment project staff acknowledged that the data needs further work in some areas, and that other, finer-scale information was available for many places. However, prior to LANDFIRE, available data have varied considerably across administrative and political boundaries, which hindered objective, science-based decision-making and resource allocation at national and regional levels.

For more information:

Ayn Shlisky	Jim Menakis	Jim Smith
ashlisky@tnc.org	jmenakis@fs.fed.us	jim_smith@tnc.org
720-974-7063	406-329-4958	904-327-0055