File Code: 5100
Route To:

Date: June 20, 2011

Subject: LANDFIRE Data Draw

To: Regional Foresters

The Forest Service (FS) has made significant progress over the years improving its data collection, data management, sharing its data, and archival of key work. Data management is central to its planning, decision making, implementation, and stewardship of natural and cultural resources. This memorandum will strengthen its decision support capability and improve its data archives.

The FS, with the Department of the Interior (DOI), is issuing this memorandum to inform and provide spatial data attributes by November 15 of each year (or link corporate databases) to the LANDFIRE program (see enclosure for more information about the data requirements).

The information is part of an information framework where nationally consistent data sets are accessed by multiple parties operating at multiple scales to support several business needs and practices. This process is fully coordinated across the enterprise applications and models that use these data. Some of the initiatives and applications that are now using these data include: A National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, Wildland Fire Decision Support System, Fire Program Analysis, Hazardous Fuels Prioritization and Allocation System, and many aspects of other natural resources management and planning programs.

It is important the FS collaborates with its partners in coordinating and sharing data. Authoritative data sources are an important part of this coordination as well as agency data that may be managed at the local, regional, or national level. Continued partnerships with communities, state governments, tribes, and other stakeholders are a priority for the Agency as it takes an all lands, all data approach.

We strongly encourage line officers to provide data to help our managers make informed, science-based decisions. Acquiring and incorporating data across the Agency's programs are fundamental to the continual enhancement of data assets and resources.

Please direct any questions to Rich Lasko, Assistant Director, FAM Fuels and Fire Ecology at rlasko@fs.fed.us or (202) 205-0888 or Frank Fay, LANDFIRE Business Lead, at ffay@fs.fed.us or (202) 205-1129.

/s/ **James E. Hubbard**

JAMES E. HUBBARD
Deputy Chief, National Forest System

Enclosure

cc: pdl wo spf fam leadership

Dear Colleague,   May 2011

Many of you may have heard about LANDFIRE but may not realize how the data are being used or how it can benefit your organization. LANDFIRE supports and informs natural resource management, as well as applications such as the: Cohesive Strategy, Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS), Fire Program Analysis (FPA), and Hazardous Fuels Prioritization and Allocation System (HFPAS). LANDFIRE is a cooperative program between the United States Department of the Interior (DOI) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service,

What is this letter about and what has changed?
LANDFIRE has produced consistent, comprehensive maps and data describing vegetation, fire, and fuel characteristics across the nation. However, to further enhance and improve the LANDFIRE data products, continued support is needed to acquire geospatial or point data. The LANDFIRE program is updating data products to reflect existing changes from a variety of disturbances and vegetation management. This is your opportunity to provide data to improve the LANDFIRE products which serve as a key data set in many decision support applications.

In the past, LANDFIRE has requested data in a sequential fashion as we worked geographically across the country. The sequential approach involved "due dates" for data submission by geo area. Not only did this lead to scheduling conflicts, but some field units were also split into multiple geographic areas, requiring them to submit data in different chunks at different times. Consequently, LANDFIRE is changing the way data will be collected. Rather than a rolling data call changing from year to year and region to region across the country, LANDFIRE will collect data annually. ***Data can now be submitted at any time of the year convenient to the contributor.*** LANDFIRE will draw all available data on ***November 15 of each year***. Data submitted before November 15 will be evaluated for incorporation into the next appropriate LANDFIRE update. Data submitted after November 15 will be evaluated for subsequent LANDFIRE updates.

What types of data are needed and why is your data important?
Your data are needed to improve and update LANDFIRE spatial layers. Point and polygon data are used to improve layers depicting vegetation and fuels (e.g., improved mapping of exotic vegetation and burnable fuel classes). LANDFIRE uses recent natural disturbances and management treatments to update layers in areas where vegetation and fuel have changed, thereby keeping the data as current as possible. Examples of these data along with relevant attributes are listed in Table 1. At a minimum, the disturbance / management treatment polygons must be attributed by disturbance type and year of occurrence. *Our primary focus for the next data draw is to collect disturbance and treatment activity data that occurred during 2008-2010.* However, if you have data outside this time frame you would like to contribute, LANDFIRE will archive the data for potential use in future mapping improvements, updates, or comprehensive remaps. In addition to spatial polygon data, LANDFIRE also benefits from contributions of any point or polygon vegetation or fuel plot data along with any associated digital photos, project descriptions, or final reports. Examples of the types of vegetation and fuels data needed for LANDFIRE can be found in Table 2.

Table 1. Categories of spatial data & attributes needed.

Category	Theme (polygon features only)	Attributes * (required)
Fire	Wildfires Prescribed Fires	Event ID Event type *
Disturbances	Insects & Disease Weather Damage	Event name Year of event *
Treatments	Harvest/Thinning Seeding/Planting Other Mechanical Chemical	Start date End date Event severity Reporting entity (e.g., FS, NPS, BLM, FWS)
Data / Information	Burnable Agricultural Lands Exotic Plants	Notes (e.g., effects on veg. or fuel)

How can you verify LANDFIRE has your data?
To aid contributors in understanding the extent of data already attained through national sources, LANDFIRE has created a "Data Contributor" spreadsheet to assist you (Available at www.landfire.gov, under How to Participate). By referencing the spreadsheet, you should be able to determine if LANDFIRE has collected your data. In addition, LANDFIRE obtains data from several web-based data clearing
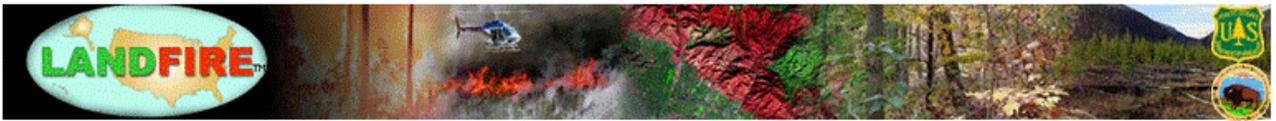
houses including the National Park Service (NPS) Data Store, U. S. Geological Service (USGS)/NPS Vegetation Characterization Website, and USDA Forest Service (USFS) Regional Data Clearing houses. LANDFIRE also acquires data from agency/corporate data base systems such as the USDA Forest Service, Forest Activity Tracking System (FACTS) and Natural Resource Information System (NRIS). If your data are currently stored in one of these systems, then there may be no need to resubmit the data directly to LANDFIRE. A complete list of websites or agency databases from which LANDFIRE collects data can be found in "Website_Agency" spreadsheet (Available at www.landfire.gov, under How to Participate) which contains information from websites, data portals, and agency data bases. If you store data on one of the websites or agency data bases listed, please take the time to verify that a current version of your data are posted to insure your data are included for the next LANDFIRE update.

Table 2. Examples of vegetation and fuel data useful for LANDFIRE.

Attribute
Geo-reference location
Sampling date
Vegetation community cover type
Estimates of canopy cover and/or height per plant taxon
Measurements of individual trees (may include diameters, height, crown base height, crown ratio, crown class, and/or density)
Counts of biomass of fine / coarse material
Depth or biomass of litter / duff layers

Why should I be involved?
If you are a person who values updated information which supports decision support applications with wall-to-wall data, this is your chance to participate. In some regions of the country like-minded individuals have collaborated to jointly develop and share information and facilitate regional data composites. Please share this letter with others who work with, or manage data or vegetation.

How do I submit data to LANDFIRE and/or who should I contact if I have questions?
The data draw date is *November 15* of each year for all areas of the United States. Please verify that LANDFIRE has your data. If not, submit your data by November 1. We encourage you to submit your data at your earliest convenience. If your organization manages data consistent with the requirements of LANDFIRE as detailed in this letter, please contact Brenda Lundberg, the LANDFIRE Reference Data Administrator, at blundberg@usgs.gov or at (406) 329-3405. For general information about LANDFIRE, please visit www.landfire.gov or email the help desk at helpdesk@landfire.gov . Additional information regarding LANDFIRE data needs and detailed instructions for data preparation and transfer are available from Brenda Lundberg, or from the LANDFIRE website.

Will I be contacted again in the future for my data given this annual change?
LANDFIRE will send email reminders to those individuals who have contributed in previous years. Ultimately, it is the local staffs' responsibility to provide data if there is an interest in having your information represented in the suite of data products to inform and improve decision support.

Isn't LANDFIRE focused on wildland fire?
While fire is a main component of the LANDFIRE program, program sponsors (Wildland Fire Leadership Council-WFLC) envisions its use for broader resource management applications. In fact, the official name is Landscape Fire and Resource Management Planning Tools, also known as LANDFIRE. For more information on how data are applied or could be used to enhance land and fire management within your organization, visit the LANDFIRE website at: http://www.landfire.gov/document_dataproducts.php.

Thank you,

Henry Bastian and Frank Fay
DOI & Forest Service LANDFIRE Business Leads