

Catalina-Rincon FireScape Agenda

Friday, March 4, 2011

9:30 am to noon at The Nature Conservancy, 1510 E Fort Lowell, Tucson

In attendance: Bob Casavant, Josh Conver, Cori Dolan, Angie Elam, Don Falk, Brooke Gebow, Miles Hemstrom, Kristy Lund, Steve Plevel, Jennifer Ruyle, Janine Salwasser, Chris Stetson, Jack Triepke, Ruben Weisz (notes by Cori Dolan and Brooke Gebow)

Brooke began with a history of the project for the ILAP guest. This project came out of the Huachuca plan and new, landscape-scale science objectives post Aspen/Bullock fires. We mapped logical boundaries for fire management across jurisdictions using 29 ecological units. For each we are describing existing conditions, desired conditions, fuel treatments, and predicting treatment effects. A departure analysis using locally corrected Landfire data is on the horizon. The planned Fire Regime Interval Departure map may morph into a map that includes fire severity (and would thus qualify the fires beyond when they happened). Steve and Cori will be bringing in private landowners as outreach is about to become more active.

Fuels analysis outreach

Steve and Cori reported that we have a new analysis area boundary based on input from State Lands, State Parks, and Tim Connor (USFS). Steve and Cori also met with Lindy Brigham of SABCC fame to discuss using her contacts with homeowners in the foothills. Lindy is open to a joint message regarding buffelgrass and FireScape, but would not be able to contribute any funds for materials, only her time. Brooke will make a plenary presentation on FireScape to the Sky Island Alliance Climate Workshop on April 13th. **Chris, Don and Josh C. will help Brooke prepare;** we will introduce the fuels map and show how it can be used to predict fire behavior under different climate scenarios. Don, Josh and Brooke will meet on Friday, March 11 to outline the talk. Bob Casavant also suggested Arizona State Parks as a venue for displaying FireScape information for the public.

MSO-related treatments

Representatives from Catalina-Rincon and Chiricahua projects met in February to discuss the need to treat in PACS and how to accomplish ecological objectives without treating in PACs. The Recovery Plan recommends not treating during the breeding season, but breeding season coincides with fire season. The group decided it was beneficial to use our resources to collect and analyze agency and other MSO data from the Sky Island region. Brooke recommends we look into TEAMS money and people to see if they can do that work (TEAMS biologist to analyze owl data from across mountain ranges and jurisdictions). This information could be put into a Monitoring Report. At the meeting, Mark Crites from FWS confirmed that the need is due to the fact that the Recovery Plan keys in on Mixed Conifer and Pine types, but we have different types here and need more specific information for our area. **Brooke will look into getting TEAMS help.** Don reported that we are also interested in gathering information about severity and patch size and what characteristics define the habitat that owls prefer to nest in. We have LIDAR coverage for this area that will help with MSO work.

Update on CWPP assignment

Stephanie and Cori went through the Oracle, Mt. Lemmon, Cascabel, and Catalina CWPPs to make sure FireScape is in line with their objectives. Cori reported everything seemed in line with our proposal. Steve reported that the Mt. Lemmon CWPP is currently being revised. They are redrawing the WUI boundary to be more defensible and strategic. The WUI boundary may go into the wilderness area.

ILAP Presentation and discussion

Miles presented background information on the Integrated Landscape Assessment Project (ILAP). This is a Recovery Act project to inform policies, land management planning, restoration and green economies. It includes an all-lands assessment across 4 states (wildlands, not urban) in all vegetation types. They are gathering already existing information and filling in holes, not creating new data. They use a modular approach to allow for updates and emerging interests. Using state and transition models for upland vegetation (not riparian because scale is too fine), they work with managers to come up with management scenarios to run through the model. Outputs can aid in prioritization. Finest scale output, however, is the patch size for modeled states within 1000-2000-acre veg-type blocks, likely too small for specific project use.

The major modules include: 1) Fuels methods -inventory plots connected to fuel characteristics [FCCS] fuel beds linked to VDDT to show change over time and future projections; 2) MTBS connection – models have fire probabilities built in using actual data as opposed to expert opinion to populate (in a certain modeling region, they overlay fire history data (fires over 1,000 acres) on PNVT to come up with a rotation of fire occurrence); 3)Wildlife habitats -MSO habitat included; 4)Fuel treatments economics module -cost /revenue analysis to track biomass, carbon, and timber; 5) Community impacts module – socioeconomic conditions in each HUC 5 watershed; 6) Climate Change – global and regional climate model hooked into State and Transition models to build connections between vegetation types.

Delivery dates for our region scheduled for May, June, July. The group then discussed the ILAP – FireScape connection. We can send them LIDAR data (plots) for the Pinalenos. We could also ask Jim Malusa to review the data sets. Don asked what would be involved in getting out of HUC5 and into HUC 6 for Sky Island region. Miles reported that if we have the data (could use LTAs) they can use it to do finer scale. It would add some processing time when you run the models. Miles suggests we do a first cut with what they have. Don also asked if we can model current management iteratively as a learning process. Miles reported that they could not do it all, but they could set up a group so we could do those runs ourselves.

Next steps

We will decide in the coming weeks whether we need an April meeting. The afternoon rather than morning of April 7th is proposed if we need one. **Cori will get with Angie and Brooke to set schedule.**