

Abstract
Climate Change and Forest Health Focus Group
National Forest Health Monitoring Work Group Meeting
San Antonio, Texas, February 13, 2008

Purpose

Global climate change is a topic of intense international concern with many implications for forest health. It is one of the top three priorities of the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service. The Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) program (<http://fhm.fs.fed.us/>) wants to explore its potential role in this evolving arena. This Focus Group will establish a forum whereby members of the forestry community working on climate change issues can interact with the Forest Health Monitoring Program.

Objectives

1. To describe what climate change is and is not (including which physical indicators are useful for measuring climate change at various levels— global, national, regional, and local).
2. To describe the potential problems and issues posed by climate change to forest ecosystems (i.e., describe the threats to forest health).
3. To describe current research, information gaps, and opportunities for further research on the effects to forest ecosystems.
4. To identify ways that FHM might advance the understanding of climate change and its implications. Discussions will include:
 - identifying which forest health indicators are important and sensitive enough to monitor with respect to climate change (including current indicators, indicators that can be developed from existing data, and new indicators to consider for future implementation);
 - ways to best establish correlations between physical indicators and key forest health indicators (i.e., how, when, and where to measure the effects of climate change on forest health);
 - useful and enlightening ways to predict the effects of climate change on key forest health indicators.
5. To identify opportunities for the FHM Program to collaborate with others working in this arena.
6. To explore how climate change might change the business of FHM (e.g., should the Program give priority to Evaluation Monitoring & Intensive Site Monitoring Proposals that deal with climate change topics?).

Activities

1. Listen to presentations by researchers and policy makers to provide participants with necessary background and context of climate change issues relative to forest health. This will achieve objectives 1-3.
2. Engage participants in group discussion focusing on objectives 4-6.
3. Develop a list of specific resolutions that FHM can pursue to advance the understanding of climate change and collaborate with others working on this issue.

Agenda
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8:45-9:35

Part 1. Introduction

- 10 minutes Focus Group Organization and Goals: **Alison Nelson** (West Coast FHM Coordinator)
- 30 minutes Description of Climate Change and Related FS Policy
Speaker: **Al Solomon** (National Program Leader for Global Change Research, USFS, Arlington VA)
- 10 minutes Questions/Discussion

9:35-10:00

Part 2: Threats to Forest Health (potential problems and issues posed by climate change to forest ecosystems)

Panel: Specific Threats to Forest Health

- 10 minutes Fire
Panelist: **Don McKenzie** (Research Landscape Ecologist, Pacific Northwest Research Station, USFS, Seattle WA)
- 10 minutes Tree Species Range Shift
Panelist: **Bill Hargrove** (Ecologist, Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center, USFS, Asheville NC)

10:00-10:20

Break

10:20-11:05

Part 2 Panel Continued.

- 10 minutes Weather
Panelist: **Steve McNulty** (Southern Global Change Team Leader, Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center, USFS, Raleigh NC)
- 15 minutes Forest Pest Dynamics (insects and disease)
Panelist: **Susan Frankel** (Sudden Oak Death Program Manager, Pacific Southwest Research Station, USFS, Albany CA)
- 10 minutes Genetic Response
Panelist: **Kevin Potter** (Research Assistant Professor, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC)
- 10 minutes Phenology Effects
Panelist: **Mark Losleben** (Assistant Director, National Phenology Network, Tucson, AZ)

11:05-12:00

Group Discussion (Discussion of Panel Topics and their relationship to Focus Group Objectives 4-6)

12:00-1:00

Lunch

1:00-2:00

Part 3: Perspectives of FHM partners working on climate-change issues (in terms of current research, information gaps, and opportunities for further research on the effects to forest ecosystems)

Panel: Partner Organizations

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|------------|---|
| 10 minutes | Western Threat Center Perspective
Panelist: Jerry Beatty (Director, Western Wildland Environmental Threat Assessment Center, USFS, Prineville OR) |
| 10 minutes | Eastern Threat Center Perspective
Panelist: Danny Lee (Director, Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center, USFS, Asheville NC) |
| 10 minutes | FS Research Perspective
Panelist: John Hom (Deputy Program Manager, USFS, Northern Global Change Research Unit, Newtown Square PA) |
| 10 minutes | FHP Perspective
Panelist: Rob Mangold (Director, Forest Health Protection, USFS, Arlington VA) |
| 10 minutes | FHM Perspective
Panelist: Borys Tkacz (Program Manager, Forest Health Monitoring, USFS, Arlington VA) |
| 10 minutes | State Perspective
Panelist: Mark Tjoelker (Associate Professor, Forest Ecology, Texas A&M University, College Station TX) |

2:00-3:00

Group Discussion (Discussion of Panel Topics and their relationship to Focus Group Objectives 4-6)

3:00-3:20

Break

3:20-4:30

Part 4. Formulate Results of Panel Input and Discussion into FHM Program Resolutions