

WESTERN WILDLAND ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

Location of Center

Ochoco National Forest Headquarters, Prineville, Oregon

Background

Wildlands (forest and rangelands) of the western United States are vulnerable to environmental stresses such as insect infestation, disease epidemics, invasive species, fire drought, and urban development. Oftentimes, the disturbances caused by these stresses, alone or in combination, are uncharacteristically severe and result in significant and lasting effects on ecological and socioeconomic values.

Wildlands supply a variety of services such as a consistent supply of high quality water for human consumption (including irrigation and generation of electricity), suitable habitat for both terrestrial and aquatic species, forest products, recreation, and grazing.

Key Points

The Western Wildland Environmental Threat Assessment Center, was established to complement the direction provided in Title VI of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003 and will:

- Serve the needs of land managers in the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Tribes, state agencies, industry, and the public at large.
- Support the development of science-based policy to protect wildlands in the West from severe disturbance agents such as invasive plants, insects and diseases, fire, and weather including drought.
- Generate and integrate knowledge and information to provide credible prediction, early detection, and quantitative assessment of environmental threats in the western United States.
- Develop effective policy for and management of potential and existing environmental threats to western wildlands with the following desired outcomes:
 - Reduced likelihood of severe impacts caused by insects, diseases, fire, weather and other agents through better informed management strategies.
 - Improved treatment priorities to optimize results from FS capital investments.

Primary Participating Units of the Forest Service

- Research and Development (R&D): Pacific Northwest Research Station (PNW - lead)
- State and Private Forestry (S&PF): Forest Health Protection (FHP), Fire and Aviation Management (F&AM)
- National Forest Systems (NFS): Forest and Rangeland Management (FRM), Ochoco National Forest (NFS Region 6)