

Wildlife Responses to Alternative Fire Management Treatments: The National Fire/Fire Surrogate Study Approach

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The National Fire/Fire Surrogate Study involves parallel studies with common treatments and research protocols at 13 sites across the country, with most sites in the West in ponderosa pine dominated forests. All sites are applying three replicates each of three treatments (prescribed fire alone, thinning then fire, and thinning alone [the “fire surrogate”] plus a control (continued fire suppression). The wildlife study we are directing of this effort emphasizes understanding the responses of songbirds, woodpeckers, and small mammals to these treatments. Particular emphasis is placed on evaluating the foraging response to fire treatments of woodpeckers and other “bark-gleaner” (nuthatches, creepers, etc.) birds. General hypotheses of predicted wildlife responses have been developed and will be tested with a national meta-analysis of results. Early results from our NE Oregon site will be presented, and the context and constraints of this novel, national effort will be presented.

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