



Peer Review Plan

(Reference [Information Quality Act](#))

FS-1400-0003 (V.1.2) 5/16

Influential Scientific Information Peer Highly Influential Scientific Assessment Peer

Agency
Forest Service; Rocky Mountain Research Station

Agency Contact (name/ email/ phone)
Matthew Thompson; matthew.p.thompson@usda.gov; 970-498-1302

Title of Review
Potential COVID-19 Outbreak in Fire Camp: Modeling scenarios and interventions

Purpose of Review
Validate modeling and fire operations analysis

Type of Review

Panel Review Individual Review

Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):
Response to global pandemic has been dynamic and required adaptation. Initial drafts supported the Forest Service's Executive Leadership Team, responding to asks to examine implications for wildland fire management. Scope and impact of study evolved and expanded over time.

Timing of Review Start 3/10/20 3 or fewer

07/02/2020 End 7/2/20 Number of Reviewers 4 to 10

More than 10 or more

Primary Discipline/Types of Expertise Needed for Review

Fire operations
Infectious disease
Public health and epidemiology

Reviewer Names and Affiliations

Christopher Dunn, PhD, Oregon State University
James McCarthy, MD, University of Queensland
Jon Samet, MD, Colorado School of Public Health

Expected Publication Outlet (Science or Similar Peer Reviewed Journal)

Fire (<https://www.mdpi.com/journal/fire>)

Reviewers Selected by: Agency Designated Outside Organization

Organization's Name: _____

Opportunities for Public Comment? Yes No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:

How: Public facing RMRS project page offers lead author's email address to provide feedback

When: Project available as of May 15, 2020

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Commentary

 Yes No**Summary of Peer Reviewers' Comments**

Reviewers provided constructive comments, the resolution of which improved the clarity and readability of the paper. Reviewers also offered suggestions for future improvements, notably analysis of the systemic and longer-term impacts of disruptions to workforce capacity over the course of a fire season, which is beyond the scope of the current study but is the subject of future work. None of the reviewers expressed fundamental concerns regarding the basic study design, methods, or interpretation of results.

Requests for clarification included reducing fire jargon to better communicate the context with those outside the fire management community, explaining epidemiological terms and modeling to better communicate with those outside the epidemiology community, ensuring consistent differentiation of the virus (SARS-CoV-2) and the disease (COVID-19), clearly stating model assumptions (e.g., the number of infected individuals present at the beginning of each fire), and describing the breadth of possible interventions (e.g., wearing masks in addition to screening and social distancing).

Two reviewers recommended commenting on the general health status of firefighters and age distribution; in response we cited several studies addressing firefighter health, and added a paragraph in the discussion to note the uncertainty associated with COVID-19 symptoms in firefighters given their fairly unique health status. However we did not comment on the age distribution of firefighters as that data is sensitive and not available for general release.

Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel

 Yes No**Other Comments**

Earlier versions of the paper were also shared with members of the USDA Forest Service's Risk Management Council and the interagency Medical and Public Health Advisory Team; feedback was positive and supportive. Preliminary results have been briefed to the Forest Service Executive Leadership Team, as well as the Undersecretary (NRE), Deputy Secretary, and Secretary of USDA.