



LANDFIRE General Management Evaluation

A General Management Evaluation (GME) was completed in 2009 to evaluate the effectiveness of the LANDFIRE Project and to recommend improvements for future program efforts. The GME was prepared by an independent third-party review team that conducted 110 interviews and reviewed program documents as the foundation for its report. The GME focused on four primary areas:

- Awareness and understanding of LANDFIRE and its data products
- Utility of the data products within wildland fire management and other resource areas
- Organizational and operational improvements needed within the LANDFIRE Program
- Organization and management of the overall collection of federal wildland fire management data and applications

The GME team developed six broad recommendations to improve the future of the LANDFIRE Program:

1. Develop a contemporary vision and program strategy
2. Assess coordinated governance and organization design
3. Establish LANDFIRE National data as a base federal program
4. Improve coordination and marketing
5. Establish a coordinated technology transfer program
6. Plan and execute an effective organizational transition

The complete summaries and reports can be found in the Documents section of www.landfire.gov.

These recommendations will be discussed at a series of forums in November 2010. Executives and leaders from agencies, states, counties, and programs will be invited to a “futures forum” to discuss LANDFIRE Program strategies and intentions, which will be followed by a technical and user forum. Stay tuned for developments.

LANDFIRE National Project Close-out

The initial LANDFIRE Project successfully closed-out in the spring of 2010, with a Final Summary Report submitted to the LANDFIRE Executive Oversight Committee (EOC). That report documented the following project aspects: the LANDFIRE Charter, Scope, Deliverables, Schedule, Cost, Quality, Organization and Roles, and Future Program. The report indicated that the LANDFIRE Executive Charter of May 2004 was fulfilled, no new funding was required nor new activities conducted, and deliverables were accepted. The EOC reported to the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) that deliverables were accepted and provided to project customers, successfully closing-out the project. Subsequently, the LANDFIRE Executive Oversight Committee was dissolved. Former members may continue to provide transition advice regarding future program efforts.

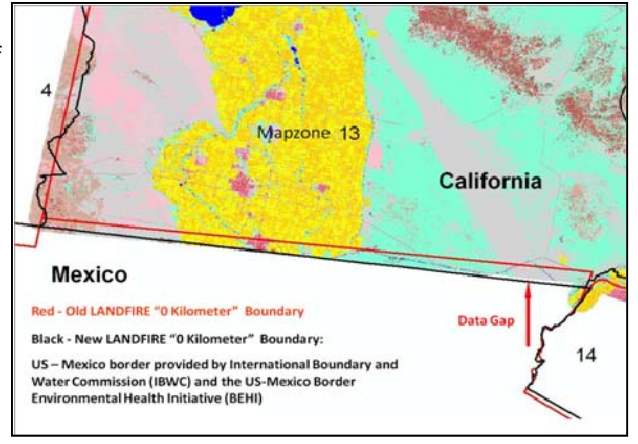
Transition from Project to Program

The USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior are working together to ensure that LANDFIRE continues to support landscape-scale land management activities in the future. To achieve this continuity, the LANDFIRE Project is transitioning into the *LANDFIRE Program*. At the recommendation of the recent General Management Evaluation (GME), we are working with leadership and stakeholders to develop a strategic plan to increase and broaden partnerships and collaboration in the Program.

LANDFIRE Improvements Project

As the LANDFIRE National data products were released throughout 2009 and the project was closing out, stakeholders identified several areas for improvement. The recommendations would benefit multiple users and affect the majority of mapping zones. LANDFIRE leadership provided funding to implement these recommendations for the conterminous states. Improvements included filling data gaps along the international borders with Canada and Mexico as well as synchronizing the mapping of land-use classes and non-land-use classes, such as herbaceous wetlands data with the final National Land Cover Database. In some cases, these improvements also filtered out narrow riparian vegetation types, remapped urban and agricultural land-use classes to burnable fuel models, and mapped additional areas to non-burnable barren and water classes. Surface and canopy fuel assignments were

derived for all of the new existing vegetation types using existing fuel model mapping rules gathered from



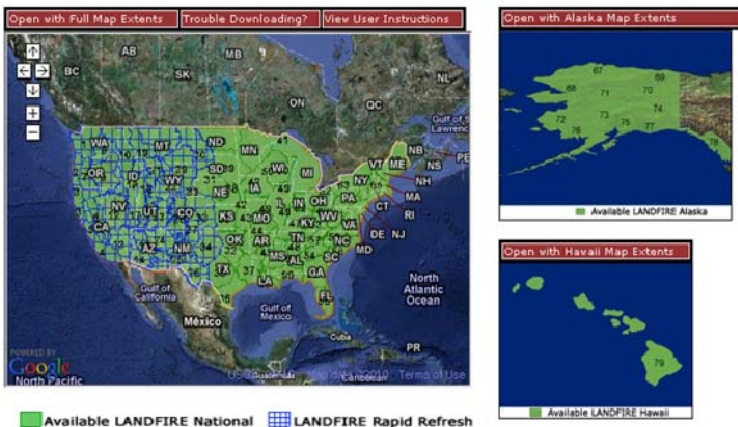
LANDFIRE Improvements: filling data gaps along the U.S. / Mexico border.

calibration workshops. Final vegetation and fuels layers were created using a hierarchical merge process, which imbedded updated pixels over the original values. For more on LANDFIRE Improvements, visit www.landfire.gov > Documents > Presentations. For more on the National Land Cover Database (NLCD01), go to www.mrlc.gov.

LANDFIRE Data Distribution

We thank the Forest Service Remote Sensing Applications Center (RSAC) for producing and distributing the final set of 81 DVDs in July 2010, which contained all final LANDFIRE National close-out data products for the entire United States. Over 13,000 DVDs were distributed. LANDFIRE will no longer be distributing data via DVD; however, the data will continue to be available through the LANDFIRE data distribution site (<http://landfire.cr.usgs.gov/viewer/>) as well as through agency points of contacts.

Also of note is that the LANDFIRE data distribution site for the LANDFIRE National data set has an updated viewer. It was recently modified to integrate new developments in viewer technology. With this update, you will notice a larger map interface and faster loading times. All of the functionality of the old viewer remains, but new capabilities for session bookmarks, an overview map, and annotations have been added. Use the "Help" icon for information on the functionality of this new viewer.



Updated viewer for the LANDFIRE data distribution site.

Data Product Versions

It was recently brought to our attention that the names and features of the various data sets – Rapid Assessment, National, Rapid Refresh, Improvements, Refresh – have become confusing to users of LANDFIRE products. The team has completed a matrix that describes the products and versions to help users understand the differences between data sets. It is critical that you evaluate the matrix to determine which set of products is the most relevant to your regional needs. You can access the matrix on www.landfire.gov under Data Products > Version Comparison.

FRCC Summarization Tool Now Available

The Vegetation Departure Calculator (VDC) – developed by The Nature Conservancy – is a spreadsheet-based tool for summarizing

FRCC results across the contiguous United States. VDC includes a pivot table, allowing users to interactively summarize, compare, and display (in tables or graphs) FRCC results in various ways using comprehensive LANDFIRE National data. Some of the options for summarizing vegetation departure are by Fire Regime, Dominant Lifeform, State, Federal Agency, and Wilderness Status. The tool is still being refined and enhanced but is currently available for download and distribution at <http://www.tncfire.org/AssessingVegetationConditions.htm>.

LANDFIRE Production & Refresh Schedule

We are in the process of updating or "refreshing" the LANDFIRE data products. Specifically, we are updating areas in which vegetation composition and structure have changed, such as from wild-land fire, prescribed fire, or fuel treatment activities. Production continues with staff support provided principally through the U.S. Geological Survey EROS contracting services. Progress is now being made after contractual delays caused revised scheduling. The scheduled release of Refresh data is described by geographic region.

LANDFIRE Refresh Product Delivery Schedule*	
Geographic Area	FY Quarter End
Southeast	4 th Qtr 2010
Pacific Northwest	1 st Qtr 2011
Pacific Southwest	2 nd Qtr 2011
Southwest	2 nd Qtr 2011
North Central	2 nd Qtr 2011
South Central	3 rd Qtr 2011
Northeast	3 rd Qtr 2011
Alaska & Hawaii	3 rd Qtr 2011
Southeast V2	TBD

**Subject to availability of program and contract resources.*

How do YOU use LANDFIRE Data?

Users of LANDFIRE data have a lot to share with other users, such as how they are applying data and user tips, and we want to feature your efforts in application briefing papers. Please contact Doug Oates, LANDFIRE Program Manager, dougoates@gmail.com. Also visit www.landfire.gov > Documents > Data Products & Applications.



Coordination & Collaboration

Several federal and state agencies and other entities are using LANDFIRE products for their projects, and our team continues to coordinate with these customers to fulfill their needs. Following are a few examples:

- **National Wildland Fire Cohesive Strategy** – LANDFIRE data products are serving as a critical and foundational data set in the development and analysis of this national assessment.
- **West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment** – LANDFIRE is sharing data and analysis techniques to facilitate strategic planning and quantify mitigation activities and monitoring changes over time.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service's Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)** – LANDFIRE and NRI are collaborating on a prototype project in Montana evaluating the incorporation of NRI data into the development of LANDFIRE data products.
- **National Vegetation Classification Standards (NVCS)** – With multiple partners, NatureServe continues to align the Ecological Systems vegetation classification with the new NVCS. Refinement is focused on the group, macro-group, and division vegetation levels within that hierarchy in the State of Alaska.



*Please visit the various sections of
www.landfire.gov
for project details and
LANDFIRE data products
or communicate with
the LANDFIRE team through
the Contact Us link
on the website's homepage.*

