



Webinar Brief for Resource Managers

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Biophysical settings review in the Great Basin: What it is. How it works. Why it matters.

Presented on 27 September 2016 by Kori Blankenship, Fire Ecologist, The Nature Conservancy

Project Summary:

The LANDFIRE Program is requesting review of its library of ecosystem models and description. The models and descriptions are used in a variety of land management applications including setting reference conditions, measuring change over time and testing alternative management strategies. Collaborators with expertise in ecology, forestry, fire and other fields are needed to help improve this resource.

Abstract:

All ecosystems are dynamic and changing due to growth, succession and disturbances. Between 2005-2009, in collaboration with hundreds of colleagues, LANDFIRE produced more than 1,000 unique pre-European state-and-transitions models and descriptions, one for every major ecosystem (called [Biophysical Settings or BpS](#)) mapped by the Program. The BpS models and descriptions have been used in many land management applications from setting reference conditions and measuring change to modeling alternative management scenarios.

LANDFIRE launched the current [BpS Review project](#) to ask for expert assistance in bringing the models and descriptions up-to-date. Of particular interest to individuals working in the Great Basin or in sagebrush habitats across the West is the big sage "Macro Review." The Macro Review provides an opportunity to look at how the [Intermountain Basin Big Sagebrush Shrubland](#) and [Intermountain Basin Big Sagebrush Steppe](#) ecosystems function across their entire range. These systems cover over 90 million acres in the western U.S. and provide critical habitat for the greater sage-grouse. Improving the models helps LANDFIRE more accurately map fire regimes and vegetation departure, and it enables us to provide a more current and robust product for use in land management planning activities.

Management Implications

- LANDFIRE's models and descriptions provide information about ecosystem composition, structure and function prior to Euro-American Settlement.
- The models provide a relatively easy platform for testing management strategies.
- Keeping the LANDFIRE models and descriptions current and relevant requires the collective knowledge of people in a variety of natural resource fields.

Most Relevant References:

www.landfirereview.org

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