West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment
Partner Update – 01/30/2012

This update provides a summary of the current status of the West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment (WWA) project being conducted on behalf of the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) and the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC).

Project Deliverables

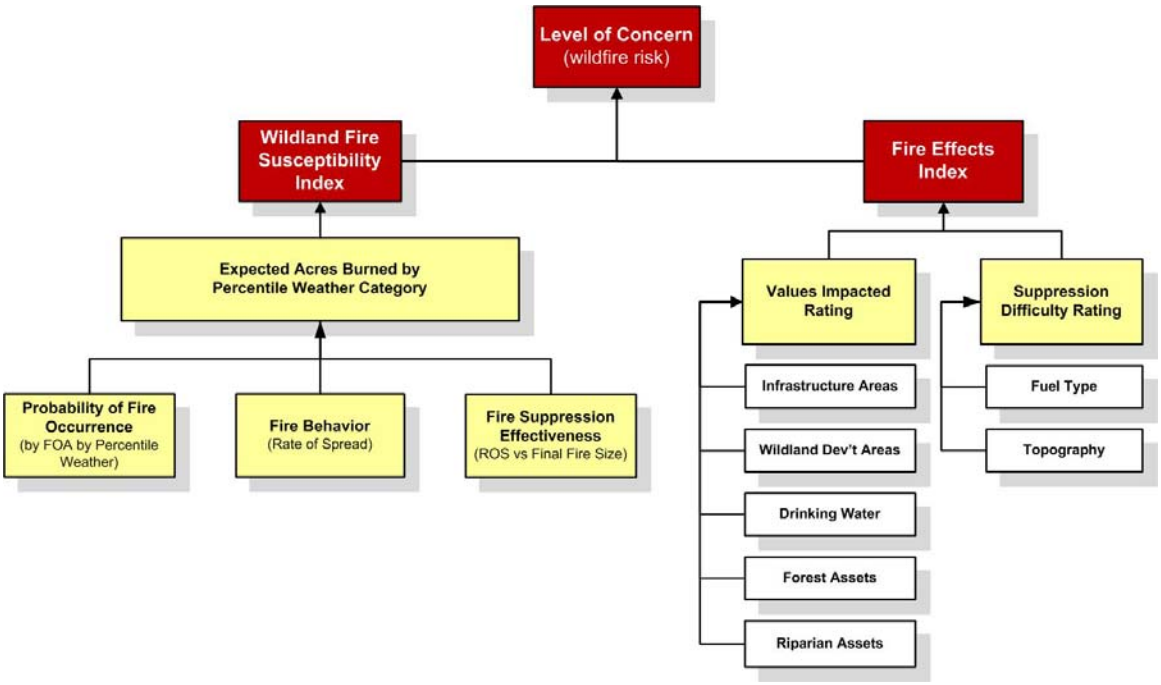
Wildfire risk in the western U.S. is a complex problem that warrants coordinated assessment, planning and response. The WWA results will provide a foundation for coordinating policy and baseline data for state and county level planning in the West, especially for those states with limited resources. Specific project deliverables that will be available shortly to project partners and the public include:

Deliverable	Description	Available
Phase 1		
Comprehensive Wildfire Database	A comprehensive GIS data repository reflecting current wildfire related conditions. This GIS database will leverage existing federal mapping programs combined with state, tribal, and local data. The database will not only be used to derive the assessment outputs but will also be delivered to support on-going fire protection planning efforts such as the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (www.forestsandrangelands.gov) and updates to Forest Action Plans (www.forestactionplans.org).	Mar 2012
Wildfire Risk Assessment	The assessment will model wildfire threat, fire effects, and wildfire risk. This information can be used to summarize wildfire risk to communities and other areas of concern at regional, state, and local scales.	Mar 2012
Final Report	The final report will include a summary of the risk assessment methods and findings as well as state and regional statistics. The report will facilitate comparisons between regional geographic areas, states, and user defined areas of concern.	Mar 2012
Phase 2		
"Fire in the West" Report	A readable and accessible report summarizing the assessment results for partners, stakeholders, and the public.	Apr 2012
Technology Transfer	Delivering the assessment data and results for use by multiple partners has been and continues to be a critical element of the WWA project. A team of technical experts and potential users is developing ideas for data hosting, analysis software tools, and training.	Nov 2012

Technical Update

The WWA documents the risk from wildfire by quantifying the magnitude of the current wildland fire problem in the West. To do so, it is using regionally consistent data and methods to determine a "wildfire risk level of concern" that captures both fire susceptibility and fire effects (Figure 1).

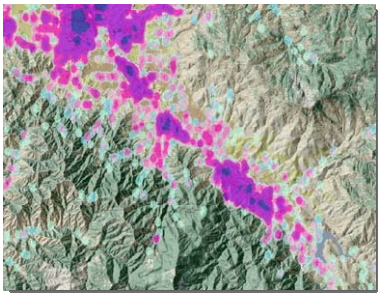
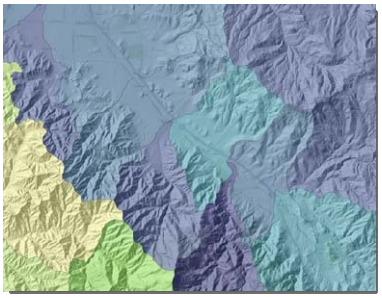
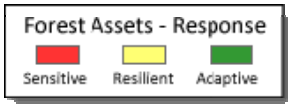
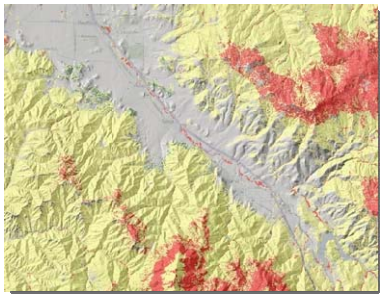
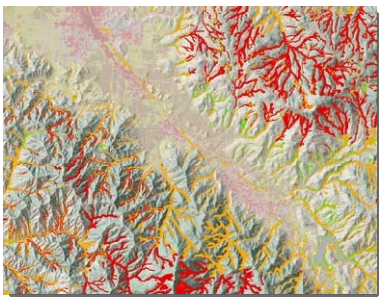
Figure 1 – The WWA Risk Assessment Model



The **Wildland Fire Susceptibility Index (WFSI)** integrates the probability of fire occurrence, expected fire behavior, and historical fire suppression effectiveness to derive the relative likelihood of an acre burning. WFSI is a relative index that affords comparison across geographic areas. The **Fire Effects Index** integrates multiple resource values and assets, suppression difficulty, and fire intensity to estimate potential impacts of a wildland fire. The values impacted layers included in the final model were decided upon after many months of discussion with stakeholders and technical experts involved with the project (Table 1). Table 1 provides a brief description and example of each values impacted dataset.

Table 1 – Values Impacted Input Datasets

Value Impacted	Description	Sample Data
Infrastructure	Reflects corridors around hospitals, schools, airports and major transportation routes	

Value Impacted	Description	Sample Data
Wildland Development Areas	Reflects housing density depicting where people live in the wildland 	
Drinking Water	Measure of quality and quantity of public surface drinking water categorized by watershed 	
Forest Assets	Forests categorized by its height, cover, and susceptibility/response to fire 	
Riparian Assets	Forested riparian areas characterized by functions of water quantity and quality, and ecology 	

Input data required to complete the GIS database and conduct the assessment has been acquired and is undergoing final review by state partners.

For More Information

Visit the WWA project website at www.westwideriskassessment.com

Questions may be directed to Jim Wolf, WWA Project Manager at jwolf@westwideriskassessment.com