

Lake States Fire Science Consortium

A JFSP KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE CONSORTIUM

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Volume 1, Issue 1

The Lake States Fire Science Leaflet

Wildland Fire A Regional Headline Again

2010 marks a new effort to bring a wildland fire management focus to land management across Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

We all know that fires were common across the region even before European settlers arrived. The logging era of the late 1800's and early 1900's resulted in fires that burned intensely across the landscape. Subsequent efforts to aggressively suppress fires have increased fuel loadings, altered succession patterns, and impacted the habitats of many plants and animals.

Management principles and priorities have evolved in the last 30 years. Silvicultural systems are emphasizing natural disturbance patterns and frequencies in the design of treatments and practices on public and private lands.

To foster these developments, to ensure that important questions are studied and that meaningful results are applied, the Joint Fire Sciences Program funded this collaborative effort to bring together researchers and practitioners with a variety of skills and expertise. We hope that

together we can combine our passion, experiences and ideas, increase the contacts among us and encourage new collaborations.

We will produce newsletters, coordinate webinars, and maintain a website to get important news out. We intend to sponsor regional conferences to promote new science and practices. We hope to capture knowledge and experience from oral histories, site visits and demonstration sites. A "Gaps in Knowledge" analysis should pose new questions. And we hope to support publication of guidebooks, research briefs, and reports. [Sign up](#). Stay tuned.

Introducing Consortium Managers

Over the next few issues, we will introduce all of the Principal Investigators, beginning with the lead consortium managers.

Charles Goebel, an Associate Professor in the School of Environment and Natural Resources at OARDC, is the lead PI for the project. He received his PhD in Forest Science from Michigan Technological University in 2001.

Recognized as a national expert in the fields of forest ecosystem restoration and ecology, his work on fire-prone communities of the Laurentian Mixed Forests with the US Fish & Wildlife Service emphasizes implications for resource management.

Goebel.11@osu.edu



Dr. P. Charles Goebel,
Principal Investigator



Robert Ziel,
Program Coordinator

Robert Ziel, or "Zeke", signed on as the Program Coordinator for the Consortium after a 34 year career as a Forester, Resource Planner, and Wildland Fire Manager.

Nationally and here in the Lake States, his interests are fire use and fire effects, fire weather and climatology, fire behavior assessment, and applied training in technical skills.

He has served as Co-Chair of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's (NWCG) Fire Behavior Committee and maintains qualification as Fire Behavior and Long Term Fire Analyst.

Ziel.4@osu.edu

Lake States Links: (click on them)

- > [OARDC in Wooster recovers from recent Tornado \(YouTube video\)](#)
- > [Share your contact information with the Consortium](#)
- > [JFSP Announces 2011 Request for Applications, Closing Dates Nov 19, 2010](#)
- > [IAWF Scholarships Awarded. Be ready for 2011 announcement.](#)
- > [Wildland Fire Canada 2010, Oct 5-7, Kitchener](#)
- > [3rd Fire Behavior and Fuels Conference Oct 25-29, 2010 Spokane](#)

[Sign up here to receive future mailings and notices](#)

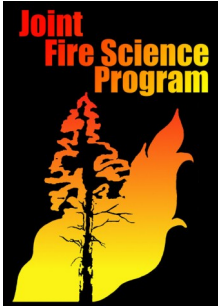
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Inside this issue:

JFSP Science Delivery

Soils and Habitats

The Human Element



Established Fire Science Consortia



The Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) was initiated in 1998 and since then has funded nearly 400 projects in the areas of “Direct Fire Science”, “Remote Sensing Technology”, “Fuels, Fire Management, and Environmental Resources”, and “Science Delivery.”

Deliver projects have included Technology Transfer (databases, training, and technical guides), Synthesis & Symposium (workshops, conferences), and Decision Support (IFT-DSS).

The 10 Year Program Review, completed in 2009 identified several areas of concern. Among them were:

1. Social Sciences Emphasis
2. Science Delivery/Adoption
3. Input from Stakeholders
4. Track and Report Outcomes
5. Broaden RFA Announcements
6. More Peer-Reviewers
7. Track “Deliverable” quality

To help address these needs, JFSP funded eight regional con-

sortia. Our effort begins with members from The Ohio State University, US Fish & Wildlife Service and US Forest Service.

Essential elements include practitioner involvement, translation of scientific and technical information into tools and resources usable by field managers, continuous feedback loops, and accountability.

Ultimately their success (and ours) will be measured by yours.

The Drainage Index, or DI, leverages the detail and field work of the SSURGO soil surveys to produce detailed depictions of your landscape.

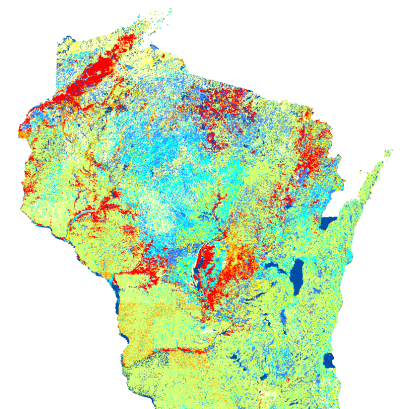
Soil taxonomy can provide a great deal of information about ecosystems and landscapes. However, for many of us, terms such as “Andic Glossoboralfs” are difficult to understand and use.

The Drainage Index, however, is an attempt to represent the “quantity...of water that a soil contains and makes available to plants under normal, long-term climatic conditions. It ranks soils ordinally from 0-99.

It allows users to compare soils qualitatively, though the values should not be used as quantities.

Its power is quickly understood when the DI is applied to the SSURGO soils as GIS data.. The map to the right shows the detail available.

A companion index, the Forest Productivity Index (FPI) is under study and should become available here in the lake states soon.



The Human Element: Overcoming Dysfunctional Momentum

Dr. Kathleen M. Sutcliffe attended the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact Meeting as the Banquet Speaker on Wednesday, September 22nd. Leading off with “High Reliability Organizing”, she wanted to reinforce the day’s staff ride at the Mack Lake Fire.

Dr. Sutcliffe highlighted ongoing research where she is examining why decision-makers often fail to change their course of action

until the critical event is upon them. Each year stories like these are detailed in near-misses and accident reports. However, early findings from her study may surprise.

It is not surprising that early cues, or warning signs, are frequently subtle and not easily recognized. Most people feel that missing these cues is responsible for the problem.

Instead, in most cases these early cues aren’t missed. Rather they aren’t acted on unless the leader is interrupted and forced to consider their importance. She found that confident leaders encourage input and feedback. And its just such feedback that can serve as the necessary “interruption.” Remember, “if you see something, say something.”



Kathleen M. Sutcliffe, Associate Dean of the Ross School of Business, University of Michigan