

Abstracts submitted Dec 16, 2011 for conference presentations describing the Front Range CFLRP monitoring study funded by the Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative

1. Southwestern Association of Fire Ecology (AFE) conference, Feb 28-Mar 2 2012

Special Session on CFLRP projects, monitoring programs, and collaborative processes.

Requested emphasis: Please describe the Front Range CFLRP monitoring program. How were monitoring metrics identified? How were external funds sought and applied to conduct monitoring?

Abstract:

In 2010, Colorado Front Range National Forests were awarded a Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) grant to facilitate the implementation of restoration treatments across 32,000 acres of ponderosa pine-dominated forests. A multi-party monitoring plan was developed in 2010-11 by the Front Range Roundtable, an interagency collaborative with representation from 50+ stakeholder groups, to assess the effectiveness of CFLR treatments. To supplement the limited monitoring budget, Roundtable members successfully applied for funding from the Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative in May 2011. We used this funding to expand the scope of the CFLR monitoring effort in 5 key ways: (1) to conduct monitoring in restoration treatments implemented on partner agency lands; (2) to conduct monitoring in adjacent areas not planned for treatment (controls); (3) to evaluate changes in within-stand structural heterogeneity due to treatments; (4) to measure the use of treated areas by a diverse suite of wildlife species; and (5) to investigate the effects of treatments on understory plant communities. In the summer of 2011, we collected data on 79 plots and transects divided among 8 treatment units and 8 nearby control areas across the Front Range. When possible, our plot locations overlapped with previously established CFLR monitoring plots. We will re-survey all plots following treatment in 2012, and at 1-5 yr intervals thereafter. Our results will be used to quantify short-term treatment effects, to help refine the long-term CFLR monitoring strategy, and to inform the adaptive management process for future treatment planning.

2. International Association of Landscape Ecology (IALE) conference, April 8-12, 2012.

Special Session on Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs).

Requested emphasis: Describe the purpose and progress to date of the first set of scientific studies funded by LCCs across the nation. Conference theme: "Informing decisions in a changing world".

Abstract:

Within the Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative (SRLCC), lower montane forests of the Colorado Front Range are threatened by multiple severe disturbances. In 2010, this landscape was one of 10 awarded funding by the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) program to conduct restoration treatments on National Forest (NF) lands. However, the budget for monitoring treatment effectiveness was limited. As members of the interagency Front Range Roundtable, we recognized the complementary objectives of the CFLR and LCC programs and sought SRLCC funding to expand the scope of CFLR monitoring efforts. Our study is (1) monitoring restoration treatments implemented on partner agency lands as well as NF sites; (2) monitoring areas not planned for treatment

(controls); (3) evaluating changes in within-stand structural heterogeneity due to treatments; (4) measuring the use of treated areas by a diverse suite of wildlife species; and (5) investigating the effects of treatments on understory plant communities. In 2011, we collected data on 79 plots divided among 8 treatment units and 8 nearby controls across the Front Range. We will re-survey all plots following treatment in 2012, and at 1-5 yr intervals thereafter. Our results will help quantify landscape-scale effects of site-specific treatments and inform the adaptive management process for future treatment planning.

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