



## Southern Fire Exchange: Third Year Report (June, 2013)

- The Southern Fire Exchange (SFE) began in mid 2010 as a Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) Regional Consortium covering Coastal Plain and Piedmont ecosystems in 11 states. It has two primary goals:
  - **A technology transfer system** that uses multiple venues to ensure that fire managers and landowners efficiently access and apply fire research results.
  - **An assessment process** for moving research questions from fire managers to the scientific community.
  - **Third year summary:** SFE continues to provide a first-stop system for fire managers to access fire science-based information, regularly adding to its existing products and enhancing/updating the online Resource Center. Several of JFSP's new research lines include questions important to the South, specifically understanding fuel treatment effects and economics, and smoke modeling/effects. We have also initiated a bimonthly 'Spotlight Series' to focus activities and products on key fire topics and research.
  
- **Technology transfer occurs through four primary venues:**
  - Our "first-stop" **SFE Resource Center** ([www.southernfireexchange.org](http://www.southernfireexchange.org)) was regularly updated and refined, and new products and features were added. The Resource Center includes:
    - "What's New", a constantly revised listing of products, events, and special features;
    - SFE products such as fact sheets, *Fire Lines* newsletter, presentations and research summaries, as well as reports prepared by SFE team members;
    - Fire science libraries grouped on a single page, including the Tall Timbers Fire Ecology Database (<http://www.talltimbers.org/.fedb-intro.html>, which is also searched by the FRAMES website), JFSP Fire Science Briefs and the Encyclopedia of Southern Fire Science;
    - A calendar of fire-related events and professional development activities such as webinars, workshops, field days and training opportunities;
    - Fire models and tools grouped on a single page for ease of access;
    - Information to facilitate the process of planning prescribed fire, including burn permits by state, fire weather information and fire data maps;
    - Discussion and "Ask an Expert" forums for fire researchers and practitioners;
    - A new "Spotlight Series" page that links to all products in each bimonthly theme.
  - **SFE publications** are prepared by researchers as volunteers or through a mini-grant process and/or SFE staff. Since June 2012, we have published 12 documents.
    - Six issues of our monthly **Fire Lines newsletter** containing information about new and existing resources, new research or publication highlights, partners, and upcoming events.
    - Five **factsheets** covering fire in cypress swamps, human health effects of smoke, costs of large wildfires, and frequently asked questions about prescribed burning; the last 4 factsheets are intended to provide science-based information for **public education programs**.
    - One technical report on smoldering combustion in organic soils.
  - **Public Education** – provide science backstop for ongoing state & other agency PE programs.

- **Direct communication between the research and fire management communities** occurs at Prescribed Fire Council meetings across the South, through webinars and field demonstrations, and at training academies and conferences.
  - Science application and SFE update talks were presented at the AL, AR, NC, SC, TN and all three FL PFC meetings in the past year.
  - Two webinars focused on fire in wetlands; previous archived webinars were used by several federal agencies for recertification training for personnel who missed regional opportunities because of Hurricane Sandy detail assignments.
  - We organized pre-meeting technical workshops and a field tour for the IAWF International Fire Behavior and Fuels Conference in Raleigh in February.
  - We have a standing offer to provide science application and highlight talks at all PFC meetings and training academies in the South and have initiated planning to conduct field tours of research studies and/or management applications in collaboration with those meetings. JFSP has challenged SFE and other consortia to be very proactive in increasing these opportunities for direct interaction between the fire research and management communities.
  
- **Marketing** the SFE is ongoing through a brochure, poster, and presentations at biannual Southern Group of State Foresters and PFC meetings; other presentations in the past year were at the national Association of Consulting Foresters meeting and the IAWF Conference. Our email list was reduced to about 700 people this year as we followed new BMPs for such lists. That list is constantly increasing as people subscribe to SFE, and is enhanced by SGSF and PFC support as they forward SFE emails.
  
- **Summary:** SFE has become a key partner in fire science delivery and application in the South. Our efforts are enhanced by ongoing collaboration with neighboring consortia in the Appalachians and oak woodlands in the Midwest. In recognition of our success so far, JFSP extended our funding to 2015.

**SFE Team:**

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