



Triggers and Thresholds Committee Meeting

Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Program (SNAMP)

October 29, 2007

DANR Building, Davis, CA

Attendees

Susan Clark
Mike Skuja
Rich Gresham
Brett Storey
Marie Davis
David Schmidt
Shasta Ferranto

Maggi Kelly
Richard Rypinski
Amy Fesnock
Chris Keithley
Anne Lombardo
Kim Rodrigues
Adriana Sulak

Abbreviations

Adaptive Management (AM)
Ecosystem Management Decision Support System (EMDS)
Fire and Forest Health (FFEH)
Memorandum of Understanding Partners (MOUP)
Principal Investigator (PI)
Record of Decision (ROD)
Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project (SNAMP)
Triggers and Thresholds (T/T)
University of California Science Team (UCST)
United States Forest Service (USFS)

Ecosystem Management Decision Support System (EMDS)

Decision Support Model for Environmental Assessments in Northern CA Watersheds.
Presentation by Chris Keithley

EMDS was proposed as an analytical framework for the Triggers and Thresholds discussion.

EMDS was reported to be successful at several things. These included that EMDS:

- 1) Was effective at getting public input on conceptual model.
- 2) Was good at getting people to focus on environmental issues.
- 3) Helped make the process more transparent

Shared understandings from the EMDS discussion included:

- 1) EMDS has similar strengths and weaknesses to other models
- 2) A strength is that it can address multiple scales geographically
- 3) It is able to integrate local input as part of the process – SNAMP may want to review his process further
- 4) EMDS appears to be able to share complex data in a relatively simple format
- 5) Difficult to explain how EMDS works so this may limit its effectiveness for SNAMP

- 6) EMDS was not used with a public review process, only peer review. From this perspective, this might be a good tool to engage the public.
- 7) The discussion recognized the potential for each UCST lead PI to identify the system(s) that work for their individual data needs
- 8) In addition, UCST may need separate approaches. The challenge then might be to integrate the scope and scales for all teams.

Shared Understandings about the Triggers and Threshold discussion

- 1) An important concern for the group that a better timeline was needed for upcoming meetings associated with T/T, with clear agendas.
- 2) Kim presented ideas for how the T/T group could be related to the current Adaptive Management process (the middle of the AM cycle) and will work with the UCST and MOUP to further develop this definition. This will then be reviewed by the T/T.
- 3) Need to define terms to be certain we are sharing similar understandings before trying to seek any agreement(s). It was pointed out that many disagreements can be linked to individuals and groups using different definitions. For instance, we need to define the measurements being gathered and share definitions for these. An example would be defining canopy cover and how it is measured may bring shared understanding to discussions related to forest health, wildlife habitat, etc...
- 4) Need to define “triggers” and “thresholds” as applied in AM (refer to USFS guiding documents within ROD as starting point).
 - a. It may be important to separate “trigger” discussions from “threshold” discussions. The implication is that it may be easier to start this discussion with the researchers by focusing on scientific data that are linked to triggers.
 - b. Feedback from the group (Amy, specifically) is an expectation that the UCST should be willing/able to share any/all triggers as they are identified from a scientific perspective, recognizing that thresholds may not be readily apparent based on lack of scientific information available – but the expectation is that the UCST will share information as it becomes available working towards the goal of identifying potential triggers and potentially establishing scientifically based thresholds to guide future management options.
- 5) It would be good to have other UCST members engaged in this group discussion – especially the PI’s – as a means to link theory to practice and inform the discussion of existing constraints. The T/T group may want/need individual PIs to work with the T/T group as needed – start with FFEH and/or water team since they have been collecting data in the field.