

### **Breakout Sessions (3) on concrete next steps**

leads: **Anita Rose**/Caspar Ammann, Andy Dolloff/Rich Mackenzie, Frank McCormick /John Rothlisberger

Given the charge from the Deputy Chief for National Forests and Grasslands to “review the WCC to see if there are new approaches for collecting consistent watershed condition information and determine how these new approaches can be implemented”, please address all the questions below:

1. **What are the existing/cutting edge approaches** (tools/processes/techniques) available now or within the next year to respond to the charge?
  - a. New data
    - i. “10”: new approach using shrub data layers
    - ii. evaluate existing vegetation data from the regions
    - iii. Forest cover data from different sources
    - iv. MTBS Monitoring Trends and Burn Severity
    - v. Tsengdar Lee, R&A Earth Science Division
    - vi.
  - b. Tools
    - i. Critical loads mapper, EPA
    - ii. Web-Map Viewers ... wms services
    - iii. Google Earth engine as a computing and data integration tool
    - iv. NEX NASA Earth Exchange / Ames ARC
  
2. **a) What WCC variables lend themselves to new approaches and which do not?**  
**b) What WCC attributes and indicators should be considered for addition/replacement?**
  - *Might need glossary about terms: for consistent application of definitions*
  - *Challenge: local / regional / national dataset coverage but local implementation*
  - a. Variables
    - i. Key is updates on essential data layers in central database: EDW (authorative)
    - ii. “11”: invasive species are assessed at State level
    - iii. “10”: new approach using shrub data layers
    - iv. evaluate existing vegetation data from the regions
    - v. Forest cover data from different sources
    - vi. “2”: modernize approach? Use of indicators of hydrologic alteration (IHA)
    - vii. Soil: maybe contamination not needed
  - b. Attributes / Indicators
    - i. Encroachment
    - ii. “7.3” could McNulty dataset offer info at state level
    - iii. AirQuality tool for accessing data and information on air quality
    - iv. ...

3. What are some game-changing or grand-challenges here? For example
- How to assess watershed condition at much higher spatial/temporal resolutions (daily at 1m)?
  - Can/should we fully automated some/all WCC collection?
  - How might/could/should we take the current condition assessment and project future conditions to help inform management decisions today?

**Assessment organization:** Framing this iterative process into layers: management, science, operation

**Automating / Supporting Assessment/Scoring:** Portal that integrates tools and datasets as a one-stop place

**Nation-wide, consistent assessment approach:**

- broad brush assessment with near-automation,
- combined with a strategic selection of priority watersheds and processes / attributes to validate (using Ecological Regions – make use of multi-scale information)
- implement DSS on a broad scale
- potentially add information on transient events
  - understand past processes
  - anticipate where challenges are evolving faster,
  - plan targeted actions, plan towards an anticipated future

**Improving of the watershed prioritization process:** Pilot watersheds selected through broader group (managers / scientists / diff. levels to represent rich suite of criteria to get full range of issues / questions)

4. Who (individuals/entities) should be at the next meeting to address the charge?
- a. Data experience:
    - i. Remote sensing (e.g. GTEC)
    - ii. DSS Modeling: Keith
    - iii. GIS (Dave, Rob)
  - b. Forest Health – FAHST (Frank Sapio)
  - c. FIA (Greg Reams)
  - d. NFS management reps
    - i. Natural resource directors – point to key expertise
    - ii. Fish / wildlife expertise
  - e. Hydrologic System / Watershed / Landscape / Ecosystem modeling (Jason Lynch)
  - f. Some local experts in priority watersheds (focus / pilot watersheds ... based on smart selection)
  - g. Cross-agency information on activities, data, models, standards: Program managers can identify key people,
    - i. EPA : water quality monitoring
    - ii. USGS (Mike McHale / Reference watersheds database)
    - iii. CUAHSI / National Water Center : Klein?

