

SOUTHERN FIRE PORTAL: AN INTERNET-BASED PORTAL FOR FIRE SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN REGION

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ABSTRACT

The Southern Fire Portal (SFP), <http://frames.nbii.gov/southernfire>, aims to improve communication and collaboration between scientists and natural resource managers. The SFP proposes to achieve this goal by synthesizing vast, scattered, and difficult-to-locate fire-related information, and by providing efficient, free access to the syntheses on a single website. Envisioned as more than a website, SFP will be a gateway for ongoing information and technology transfer between the fire management and research communities, and their publics. Portal users can obtain, compare, and evaluate tools and information for wildland fire and fuels management. Users will be encouraged to give input on the performance and value of tools and information supplied through the portal. The southern region is geographically defined by the 13 states covered by the Southern Area Coordination Center (SACC), one of 11 geographic centers established to manage collaboratively wildland fire and other incident management activities. The SFP supports SACC by providing access to consolidated and organized fire research deliverables and other services necessary for effective fire and fuels management within this region. The SFP unifies several sources of fire information including 1) Fire Research and Management Exchange System; 2) Encyclopedia of Southern Fire Science; 3) Tall Timbers Research Station's E.V. Komarek Fire Ecology Database; 4) content being identified and collected from the Joint Fire Science Program and the National Fire Plan project by The Nature Conservancy Fire Network; 5) existing information through the U.S. Geological Survey's National Biological Information Infrastructure; and 6) key regional products and tools from state agencies, universities, and nongovernmental organizations. The SFP will provide single point access to fire-related publications, data sets, databases, decision-support tools, models, glossaries, interactive CD-ROMs, videos, and state-of-the-knowledge literature syntheses in support of fire and natural resource management for the southern United States. An advanced search engine and fire thesaurus enables users to quickly find the information they need.

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