

# Southeast Coast Network

National Park Service  
Inventory & Monitoring Program



## Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) #1.4.24

### Fire Fuels Monitoring Training Procedures

Please cite this as:

Byrne, M. W. 2012. Fire fuels monitoring training procedures. Southeast Coast Network Standard Operating Procedure NPS/SECN/SOP-1.4.24. National Park Service, Athens, Georgia.

### Summary

This Standard Operating Procedure describes the training process for fire fuels monitoring. The goal of the training is to ensure the field-staff identify aspects of fire fuels accurately and consistently and to eliminate or minimize the introduction of this form of non-sampling error into the dataset. All methods, definitions, and rules regarding fire-fuels monitoring are presented in SOP 1.4.12 Fire Fuels Monitoring Methodology. All field personnel should review SOP 1.4.12 prior to training activities. The training procedure for fire fuels monitoring consists of all field personnel familiarizing themselves with the methods, definitions, and rules presented in SOP 1.4.12.

### Revision Log

| Previous Version # | Revision Date | Author | Changes Made | Reason for Change | New Version # |
|--------------------|---------------|--------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
|                    |               |        |              |                   |               |
|                    |               |        |              |                   |               |
|                    |               |        |              |                   |               |
|                    |               |        |              |                   |               |
|                    |               |        |              |                   |               |

## **Training Materials**

All information necessary is included in SOP 1.4.12 Fire Fuels Monitoring Methodology. This should be read and referenced throughout the training processes.

## **Trainer**

The Botanist and Wildlife Biologist oversee all training activities.

## **Procedures**

Fire fuels consist of coarse woody debris (CWD), fine woody debris (FWD), duff, and litter. Duff and litter combined compose the fuelbed, although this is compiled in the data management system and not necessary for data-collection procedures.

Training occurs two months prior to the beginning of the field season, and is part of the field-personnel training activities for all terrestrial protocols. The training consists of familiarization with the methods, definitions, and rules regarding fire fuels monitoring detailed in SOP 1.4.12 Fire Fuels Monitoring Methodology. Once this is completed, training moves to the field where examples of each fuel type are presented to field personnel for proper identification and classification. Field training begins with characterizing the sampling location, then differentiating between FWD and CWD, moves on to the different classes of FWD, then to identifying the different decay classes of CWD, and finally to identifying the fuelbed. Several examples of each of these groups are presented to field personnel for identification. The number of examples of each fuel type presented to the trainee is at trainer discretion given the experience and aptitude of the field personnel. Several test holes, that extend only to mineral soil, are dug in more than one vegetation community type to demonstrate the difference between duff and litter. All field personnel are also trained in using the fuel key and required to apply the key independently. Finally, field staff conduct at least two test plots where all measures are collected.

## **Proficiency Evaluation**

Prior to each field season, the Botanist and Wildlife Biologist conduct an oral examination to evaluate the fire-fuels identification and implementation of the methodology of all field staff prior to conducting fieldwork. The evaluation process consists of presenting personnel with specific examples of fuels and requiring their identification. The Botanist and Wildlife Biologist identify any areas where the members of the field crew need improvement and provide additional training as necessary. The Botanist makes the final determination of competency prior to data collection, and only field staff deemed fully competent will undertake data collection.