

FIA National Newsletter

June 2022

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-Jeff Turner

"Ditto what Jeff said"

-Mark Majewsky

For more comments on the new National Change Management Process, see section ***National Issues, Decisions & Projects*** Section

Historical Photos: The Good Ol' Days

Check out these old FIA photos! A few more old FIA photos were dug up and placed on Pinyon. If you know who may be pictured, what they are doing, or would like to view some of the other photos, please reach out to Summer Dunn! In the meantime, an educated guess is located in the captions!



Figure 1: Working on plot write-ups or breaking the Watergate story?



Figure 2: Beer or banana break?



Figure 3: Those forest/non-forest calls can really stress a person out...



Figure 4: Protocol training is stressful too...

FIA FY20 Business Report

“This annual business report, the program’s 23rd, tells taxpayers, partners, and clients the program results accomplished with the provided financial resources and forecasts the outcomes for the coming year with budgeted financial resources. This relationship with taxpayers, partners, and clients is integral to FIA’s continued success because accountability demonstrates our commitment to transparently delivering the best value, quality, and array of products expected by the communities we serve.

In fiscal year (FY) 2020, the program faced unprecedented difficult circumstances caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, hazardous conditions and poor air quality induced by a devastating wildfire season, and staff shortages due to hiring limitations. These challenges directly impacted field operations, especially in the West, and it is anticipated that these impacts will cascade through the program in future plot data collection and subsequent data analysis”

Figure 7. Partner contributions by FIA region and type, FY 2020.

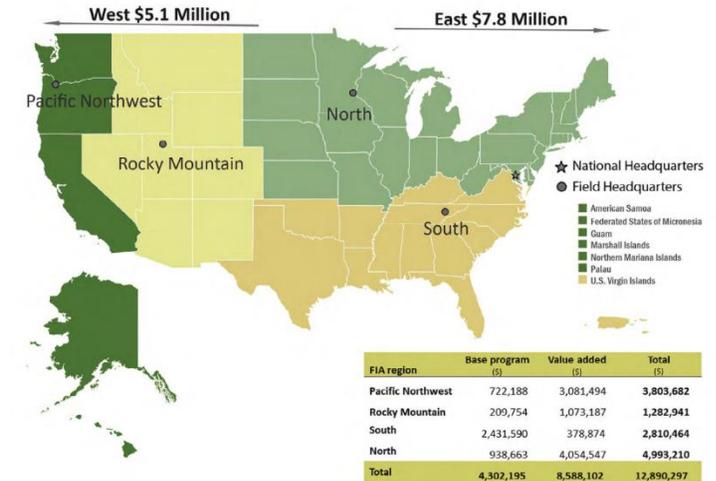


Figure 5: from the FY20 Business Report, graphic illustrating partner contributions by region and type.

Follow the Pinyon link below to access the wealth of information concerning FIA operations made available through FY20 Business Report. The FY20 Business Report will be posted on the national website soon

<https://usfs.box.com/s/gyu0ddbknpg3l769ch3j8y0kkxy3x3hh>

National Issues, Decisions & Project Updates

Current national issues that require attention to resolve are moving through the Program’s “new” change management process. A standard operating procedure (SOP) document was created to outline the process. The SOP is a “living” document that is updated quarterly based on After Action Review feedback (garnered from participants of the process) and other updates/improvements that are recognized. The SOP can be accessed through the FIA Resource Center [here](#).

The following issues are “active” and are in various stages of the process. A new issue should be entering Phase 2 of the process soon, which issue chosen next (that is currently in the queue) will be dependent on the priority set by Program Managers and Bands.

GRM Tree Status Codes

GRM Tree Status is at the end of Phase 2 of the change management process. A group of subject matter experts (representing all units and all bands), identified via Band Leader requests for interest, participated in biweekly meetings that began in February. The team thoroughly articulated the “Problem Statement” to promote shared understanding of the issue and then identified multiple courses-of-action (COA) to address the problem. Screening criteria were developed, and COA’s had to “pass” the screening criteria in order to be consider a valid solution. An example of screening criteria included the ability of the solution to determine how a tree was utilized (e.g., commercial or non-commercial) if it’s not currently standing.

The team officially identified the best COA based on screening and evaluation criteria and that recommendation was presented to the Program Managers. The Program Managers approved the recommendation and Tree Status Code has moved into Phase 3 of the change management process: implementation.

Phase 3 efforts have entailed work on behalf of the DAB to create field manual language of the change and IM to code the change. All bands will be given the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the implementation of the chosen COA. Currently, Tree Status Code change is on track to be fully implemented in FY24 though this could change. Please recognize your role, responsibility and the engagement required in this part of the process. Timelines for review are roughly:

Present to Bands by: **8/1/2022**

Band Approval/Feedback/Incorporated Changes by: **10/1/2022**

PM Approval/Incorporated Changes by: **11/1/2022**

Pre-Field Guide Changes Implemented: **1/1/2023**

Field Guide/Field Implemented: **9/1/2023 (1/1/2024 for RMRS & PNW)**

Though the change management process runs outside the scope of field-guide timelines, pending when the change is complete and pending effects of the change, the change may require updates to the field-guide. If so, the change will adhere to the pre-field and field guide timelines illustrated [here](#).

An After Action Review will be conducted during Phase 3 so that participants can provide feedback on ways to improve the process. Some feedback received so far:

“As a new employee in FIA, this was my first experience with the change management process. I primarily sat in on the meetings regarding tree status codes. That said, I appreciated the structure to the meetings and the process as a whole as it allowed for discussion but kept the process moving forward. The timeframe for the process was laid out early on and seemed to be followed closely. As a casual observer, overall, it was a positive experience and should be helpful for me in the future.”

-Paul Klockow

“It wasn’t as bad as I thought it was going to be and better than the old process. It’s nice to have a third-party corral it through the process who doesn’t necessarily have a vested interest in the outcome. Participated in getting the issue through the process, and was impressed that it actually worked as intended”

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“As a volunteer on the subteam that participated in the ‘Change Management: Phase 2 – Problem Solving’ segment for the Tree Status Code issue, I was impressed by the professionalism demonstrated by the Operations Team staff. They did a great job facilitating the discussion, kept us on task, and created PowerPoints to capture our notes and decisions.”

Andrea DiTommaso

Volume and Biomass Equation Updates

Updated biomass equations have been in the works for many years and are in the final stages of implementation. New equations will be updated in UNIMS in May of 2022 and changes are anticipated to be reflected in FIA's National DataMart in July/August of 2022. Communicating this change internally and to our clients is part of the roll-out and a communication plan for sharing information about this change is currently underway. An informational bulletin was created and linked in the new "Urgent Notifications & Bulletins" section of the national website. The bulletin can be directly accessed [here](#).

Additionally, the WO is working on an FIA subpage, an off-shoot of the R&D website located [here](#), which will display the latest information pertaining to this change. As the WO is working to communicate this change, the has been named *National Scale Volume and Biomass Estimators with an acronym of (NSVB)*.

National Decision: High Precision GPS Coordinate Collections

In February of this year, FIA's Program Managers decided that high-precision GPS (HPGPS) coordinates would be collected nationally in an effort to meet congressional mandates to improve FIA's estimates. Some of the benefits of collecting HPGPS coordinates are:

- Integration of FIA measurements with Goddard Lidar-Hyperspectral-Thermal (G-LiHT) high-resolution airborne imagery acquired in interior Alaska (Andersen & Strunk, in press).
- Multi-scale (state, county, management unit) estimation and mapping of inventory attributes using FIA plots and 3D point clouds from Lidar, NAIP 3D, and/or derived from stereo digital aerial photography (Strunk et al., 2019).
- Individual tree-level analysis using FIA tree measurements and tree-approximate-objects derived from segmentation of high-resolution imagery and lidar.
- Detailed assessment of canopy fuels, tree canopy height, tree canopy cover, and structural characteristics for wildlife habitat assessments.

The decision paper on HPGPS can be accessed on the Pinyon site at the following link:

<https://usfs.box.com/s/n7d93rex3i1p87e8tsjrpxid9nzipfk5>

Project Updates: TPO by Daryl Lederle

The Resource Use Program, which includes Timber Products Output (TPO), is in the process of collecting data for the 2021 calendar year. Overall, each region is seeing similar responses to previous years' efforts.

North

The 2021 data collection is ongoing. The region is transitioning to calling mills we have not heard from this season. The 2021 annual data collection efforts are roughly 25 percent of all mills across the region, but we have not heard from all the States that are collecting data for us. Many of our State partners are helping in this latest outreach to mills. We are also ramping up utilization studies across the Northern Region. The 2018 data set will be loaded to the public TPO website very soon. We are working on finishing up the mill data load and processing for 2019 and then will turn our attention on loading the 2020 mill data set.

West

In the West, TPO annual data collection is progressing according to schedule, with mail surveying being wrapped up in April and follow-up phone efforts currently being underway. Response rates vary widely among states but overall, the Intermountain Region is showing a 30 percent response rate, while the Pacific Northwest Region stands at 29 percent. Region-wise, these response rates are slightly ahead of what was seen this time last year.

South

Several states in the Southern region are complete, with the entire region sitting at 70% complete. Our deadline for getting the surveys complete is the end of June. That will keep the region on schedule to post the 2021 data by October 2022. The current data collection effort is very similar to past annual sample years. Utilization studies are ongoing, and the region is working with Larry Royer to ensure all that data is processing and feeding the TPO process correctly. Continuing to work on tool development while updating/revamping existing tools and products.

Announcements & Meetings

GitHub Update by Bryan Lanier

Don't lose your work and back up your code!

If you are writing code for an FIA project and are not already backing everything up to GitHub, let us show you how! Contact Bryan Lanier for a demonstration. Code for web, desktop, database and related projects can and should get backed up. USDA has multiple systems for managing data, see below for explanations of those systems and how they are used.

There are currently two Forest Service (FS) filing systems:

1. T drive
2. Pinyon

T Drive Use and Accessibility

- The T Drive is the filing system for the Active Geospatial Information System (GIS) data, maps, products; the GIS Reference Library (GIS Library)
- The T drive is most commonly accessed using Citrix.

Pinyon

The Forest Service has moved to Pinyon - an efficient, secure and reliable cloud-based Enterprise Content Management (ECM) solution powered by Box software. Pinyon enables employees to store and share data in a way that's easily searchable and accessible to mobile devices. Pinyon stores active unstructured content (documents, photos, and videos) and closed records.

GitHub

[GITHUB](#) is the source code hosting platform for version control/collaboration in the Forest Service. Staff can work together from anywhere.

The [GitHub website](#) is available for sharing code. Staff can request access using the "Gain Access" tab at the top of the page. The "Familiarize with [GitHub](#)" links to training resources, helpdesk information, an overview video, and several FAQs.

SharePoint

This is the agency site for information on all things relating to SharePoint. We use SharePoint to create collaboration websites for teams and groups of people. You can use SharePoint as a secure place to store, organize, share, and access information from any device. All you need is a web browser, such as Microsoft Edge, Chrome, or Firefox.

Links to CIO webpages describing above systems.

T: Drive Link -> <https://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/cio/operations-and-service-delivery/hosting-services-support/t-drive>

Pinyon Link -> <https://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/cio/operations-and-service-delivery/cloud-services-delivery/pinyon-enterprise-content-management-box>

GitHub Link -> <https://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/cio/mission-support-systems/enterprise-application-development-ead/source-code-management-github-0>

SharePoint Link -> <https://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/cio/operations-and-service-delivery/ediscovery-enterprise-content-management/sharepoint>

Annual FIA Planning Meeting: Save the Date October 17th-21st

This year's FIA Annual Planning Meeting will be hosted by SRS with a location to be determined. However, the dates have been chosen and will take place October 17th-21st. For those that will be attending, please mark your calendars.

Science Stakeholder Meeting & Deadlines (November 15th-17th)

The 2022 Science Stakeholder meeting will take place November 15-17th and will be hosted in Minneapolis/St. Paul Minnesota (tentatively held in-person). This year's theme is "Grow. Adapt. Regenerate: Monitoring and responding to global change to promote resilient and productive forests."

Special issue abstracts were due for submission on April 30 and proposals for organized sessions were due on May 6th, but oral presentations and digital engagement demonstration abstracts will be accepted through June 10th. For more information, visit the FIA Science Stakeholder Meeting page [here](#).

For more information on the FIA National Newsletter, please contact:



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