



Evaluation Monitoring

The Evaluation Monitoring (EM) component of the Forest Health Monitoring program is designed to determine the extent, severity, and causes of undesirable changes in forest health identified through Detection Monitoring (DM) and other means. The need for EM projects arises when significant forest health changes or trends are found in DM. EM also provides additional information about forest health improvements such as improved plant vigor resulting from air pollution abatement.

Biological evaluations usually produced by Forest Health Protection (FHP) focus on the effects of insect and disease infestations and other forest disturbances. Although these surveys and reports serve well to detect and quantify the severity and extent of the disturbance, FHM focuses on the long-term, widespread, unexpected, and sometimes subtle changes resulting from the disturbance. EM provides the first follow-up to changes and trends of forest health concern due to the biotic and abiotic disturbance agents.

Projects funded through EM delve into the extent, severity, and/or causes of forest health problems. Project proposals are submitted through the FHM Regional Managers and selected through two separate competitions reflecting funding source: Base EM and Fire Plan EM. FHM Regional Managers and FHP Directors are encouraged to work together to organize and submit project proposals for EM projects.

Base EM Projects:

The purpose of a Base Evaluation Monitoring project is to investigate issues or concerns identified in the Detection Monitoring phase of FHM. Proposed projects are one to three years in duration and help explain the extent, severity, and/or cause of a phenomenon observed during Detection Monitoring.

Fire Plan EM Projects:

The purpose of a Fire Plan Evaluation Monitoring project is to investigate and explain the extent, severity, and/or cause of a fire-related phenomenon observed in Detection Monitoring. General target areas include: risk reduction, fuel loading, ecological

impacts of fires, invasive species, and restoration or fire-damaged ecosystems.

The FHM National Program Manager selects Base EM and Fire Plan EM Project proposals for funding based on the following criteria:

- Linkage to DM Surveys and FIA P2 and P3 plot data;
- Significance in terms of the geographic scale;
- Biological impact and/or political importance of the issue related to fire;
- Feasibility or probability that the project will be completed within 3 years.

Previously funded, multi-year proposals from prior years are given priority if the investigators report sufficient progress each year. The FHM Management Team requires that results and progress reports for all EM projects be summarized in posters presented at the annual FHM Working Group meeting. Upon project completion, investigators submit a final published report, and an executive summary to FHM.



Evaluation Monitoring of Swiss Needle Cast in Oregon.

Aerial detection survey results differ from year to year because symptoms change rapidly in response to weather conditions before and during the flight period (mid-April through May). Surveys flown later (close to the time of budburst) usually detect more areas with symptoms than those conducted earlier.

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