

FFI: What it is and what it can do for you

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A new monitoring tool called FFI (FEAT/FIREMON Integrated) has been developed to assist managers with collection, storage and analysis of ecological information. The tool was developed through the complementary integration of two fire effects monitoring systems commonly used in the United States: FIREMON and the Fire Ecology Assessment Tool (FEAT). FFI provides software components for: data entry, data storage, summary reports, analysis tools, data queries, geographic information systems, and personal digital assistant use. In addition to a large set of standard FFI protocols, the Protocol Manager lets users define their own data entry forms when custom sampling protocols are needed. The standard FFI protocols and Protocol Manager allow FFI to be used for monitoring in a broad range of ecosystems for a variety of purposes. FFI is designed to help managers fulfill monitoring mandates set forth in land management policy. It supports scalable (project- to landscape-scale) monitoring at the field and research level, and encourages cooperative, interagency data management, information sharing, and regional data analysis. FFI is currently being used by the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and a number of other federal and non-federal users. Though developed for application in the U.S., FFI can potentially be used to meet monitoring needs internationally. The FFI software, manuals, training schedule and other information are available on the FFI-FRAMES Website (www.frames.gov/ffi).

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