

THE NATIONAL FOREST HEALTH MONITORING PROGRAM

The national Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service is designed to determine the status, changes, and trends in indicators of forest condition on an annual basis and covers all forested lands through a partnership encompassing the Forest Service, State foresters, and other State and Federal agencies and academic groups (Potter and Conkling 2023). The FHM Program utilizes data from a wide variety of data sources, both inside and outside the Forest Service, and develops analytical approaches for addressing forest health issues that affect the sustainability of forest ecosystems.

The FHM Program has three major approaches (fig. 1.1), which are interlinked and provide feedback to each other:

- **Survey and Detection**—identifying forest health challenges at local and landscape scales through nationally standardized aerial and ground surveys
- **Monitoring and Analysis**—tracking the status and trends of forest health challenges and assessing impacts on forest resources and their benefits through synthesis and evaluation of information from various data sources within and external to the Forest Service
- **Communications**—supporting decision making and communicating regional, long-term forest health trends and their implications to forest resources and their benefits

EVALUATION MONITORING PROJECT SUMMARIES

Beginning in 2008, the annual “Forest Health Monitoring: National Status, Trends, and Analysis” report included a section comprising summaries of completed Evaluation Monitoring (EM) projects (e.g., Potter and Conkling 2023). Each summary included an overview of the project and results, citations for products and other relevant information, and a contact for questions or further information. The summaries introduced the kinds of monitoring projects supported by FHM and included enough information for readers to pursue specific interests.

The EM projects are funded by the FHM Program annually and are intended to determine the extent, severity, and causes of changes in forest health identified through Detection Monitoring (see the FHM website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/forest-health-protection/monitoring/>). The EM project proposals are submitted, reviewed, and selected through a process established by the FHM Management Team. Each year, the FHM Management Team reviews the EM proposal guidelines, application instructions, and priorities, culminating in updated proposal instructions and guidelines, new project proposal form, and progress and final reporting responsibilities being posted on the Forest Health Protection Funding Opportunities (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/forest-health-protection/funding-opportunities/>).

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

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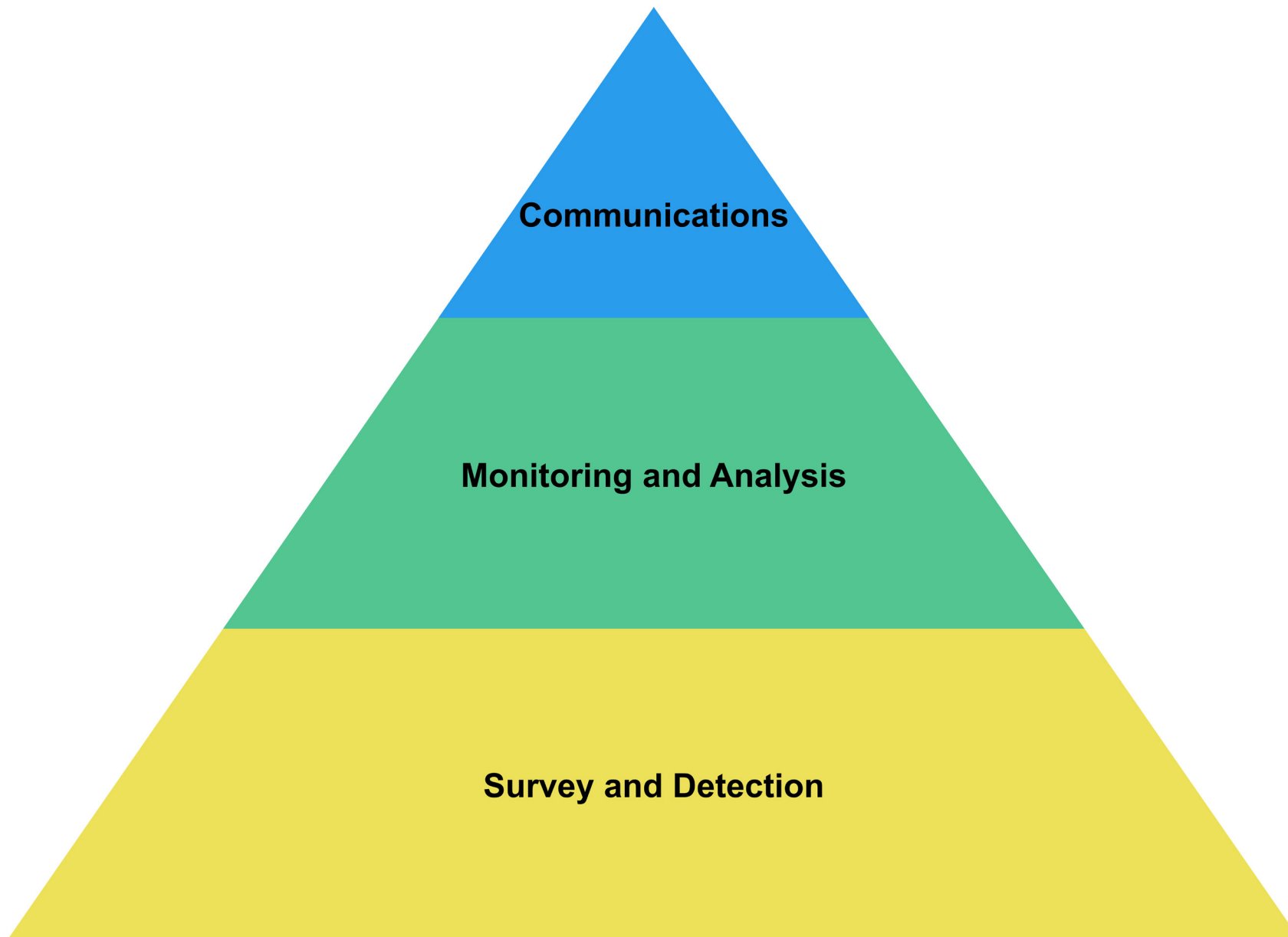


Figure 1.1—The design of the Forest Health Monitoring Program.

In 2023, the FHM Management Team decided to begin compiling the EM summaries each year into a report separate from the annual “Forest Health Monitoring: National Status, Trends, and Analysis” report. This allows FHM to continue documenting and highlighting results from the EM projects and provides an easier way to locate information about the EM component of the program. The EM project summaries will continue to be searchable on the FHM website reporting page (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/forest-health-protection/publications-reports/forest-health-monitoring-publications/forest-health-highlights>).

This EM project summaries report is produced by FHM researchers at the Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center (EFETAC) and EM project principal investigators across the United States in collaboration with North Carolina State University cooperators in the Forest Health Monitoring Research Group (<https://research.cnr.ncsu.edu/foresthealthmonitoring/>). A unit of the Southern Research Station of the Forest Service, EFETAC was established under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to generate the knowledge and tools needed to anticipate and respond to environmental threats. For more information about the research team and about threats to U.S. forests, please visit the EFETAC website (<https://forestthreats.org/about>).

LITERATURE CITED

Potter, K.M.; Conkling, B.L., eds. 2023. Forest Health Monitoring: national status, trends, and analysis, 2022. Gen. Tech. Rep. SRS-273. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 180 p. <https://doi.org/10.2737/SRS-GTR-273>.

