

My name is Andy Hudak, I'm a research forester at the Moscow Forestry Sciences Lab of the Rocky Mountain Research Station.

Well, I thought I would talk about a project we recently finished doing some prescribed burns

at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida.

And we worked with fire managers there to measure the fuels before the fire, to measure the fire behavior during the fire, and even to look at fire effects afterwards.

And we wanted to relate all of these different measurements to try to get a better fundamental understanding of how fuels affect fire behavior.

And we know from being in the field in any kind of vegetation condition that the grass and the shrubs and the trees vary a lot spatially.

I'm the remote sensing geek of this project.

I spent a lot of time taking remote sensing data from airborne or even satellite measurements.

And then relating that to the field data.

So, for example, if we measure the amount of vegetation that's going to burn, that would be the fuel and we call that the fuel load.

And if we can make those kinds of measurements and then relate it to remote sensing data,

we can actually map spatial variability and its fuels and then have a better understanding

of how that affects the spatial variability and fire behavior that we observe.

What I think excites me about this project is no one's ever taken lidar data.

And by lidar, I mean it's a remote sensing technology where you use lasers to measure the distances to objects.

This is what we use to map fuels in this landscape.

And no one has ever done that with lidar.

This kind of research gets us past the assumption of fuel homogeneity.

So it gets us a step closer to understanding fuels as they actually vary in space.

