

Aspen Delineation Project

A Collaborative Effort on Behalf of Aspen



The Aspen Delineation Project, a collaborative effort of the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Fish and Game, was created to assess the state of knowledge and management efforts regarding aspen on public lands in the Sierra Nevada, Southern Cascades, and Great Basin.

The project focuses on how agencies have identified, mapped, treated, monitored, and studied aspen habitats. It also explores challenges, issues, and roadblocks surrounding aspen management on public lands.

Active Management of Aspen Habitats May Be Critical

Aspen habitats are a highly valuable Sierra Nevada resource. Land managers and policy makers are exhibiting heightened interest in aspen issues because of the contribution of aspen to biological diversity in the Sierra. Researchers studying plant and animal associations concur that the unique value of aspen habitats warrants active management.

Directions in which governmental agencies develop and implement management plans may greatly affect the health, diversity, size, and significance of aspen habitats in California.



Summer Aspen Field Workshops



The Aspen Delineation Project has cosponsored nine aspen field workshops in the last two years in the Stanislaus, Inyo, Shasta-Trinity, Lassen, Tahoe, and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests and the Bishop and Eagle Lake Field Offices of the Bureau of Land Management. The workshops have been led by Dale Bartos and/or Wayne Shepperd of the Rocky Mountain Research Station.

The workshops are designed to assist wildlife biologists, botanists, hydrologists, silviculturists, fire control staff, archeologists, and line officers to better understand aspen issues and planning options for aspen restoration projects. Additional targeted participants are interested NGOs, local Fish and Game biologists, and County UC Agriculture Extension agents.

Establishing Ecological Condition of Aspen Stands



The Aspen Delineation Project has undertaken an effort to develop a consistent approach for collecting data about the location of aspen stands and their ecological condition.

As part of this effort, a stand assessment protocol was developed and field tested in 2002. To further assist Ranger District and Field Office resource managers, field crew training and data entry programs have been developed. To date, units from seven state and federal agencies have collected data using the same protocol and field form.

Region 5 Protocols for Monitoring Aspen Regeneration on Range Allotments

The Aspen Delineation Project is assisting the US Forest Service Region 5 Range Program in developing recommended protocols for monitoring aspen regeneration on range allotments.

At this point the goals of the project are (1) to establish consistent methods for identification of browse on aspen regeneration, (2) to develop protocols for implementation monitoring related to woody stem utilization, and (3) to establish effectiveness monitoring protocols for determining the relationship of management practices to aspen regeneration.

This year the Pacific Southwest Region will publish the implementation protocol: *Browsing Plant Method for Young Quaking Aspen*.



Riparian Habitat Restoration Study



The Aspen Delineation Project is one of the coordinators of a Riparian Habitat Restoration Study which has received startup funding from the US Forest Service. The study is designed to conduct long-term monitoring of stream and riparian conditions in aspen treatment areas. The principal investigator for this project is Kenneth Tate, Ph.D., Rangeland Watershed Specialist, University of California-Davis.

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