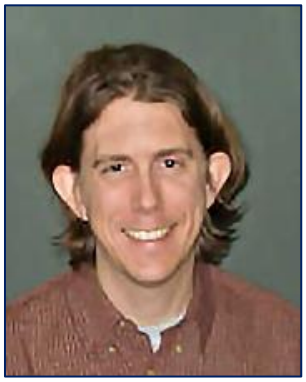
Improving LANDFIRE products
LANDFIRE Interview with Josh Picotte



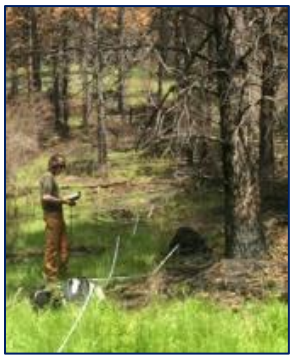
Josh Picotte is a fire specialist with Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) Federal-InuTeq, Science Support Services Contract (SSSC) to the USGS at the Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Center in Sioux Falls, SD. As a member of the LANDFIRE Remap Strategy Team, Josh is currently working to create a new LANDFIRE base map data suite that represents contemporary conditions. *Contact Josh.*

How did you become involved in LANDFIRE?

I came to the EROS Center in January 2011 and began working on Monitoring Trends in Burn Severity (MTBS). In June that same year, I was tasked with providing MTBS data to LANDFIRE, which led to my working on LANDFIRE Update 2008.

What do you think users want most from LANDFIRE data?

I believe that they want consistent data products that accurately characterize the current vegetation and fuels conditions. Our goal is to continuously improve LANDFIRE products so that more people trust and use them.



How will the Remap team's work affect LANDFIRE products?

Our work will improve Existing Vegetation Type (EVT), Existing Vegetation Cover (EVC), and Existing Vegetation Height (EVH) products by incorporating new data sources, e.g. lidar, and improving production techniques, e.g. Machine Learning. To speed up the rate at which products can be completed, we have automated many of the production procedures, which should allow more time for LANDFIRE personnel to further improve the products.

What improvements might enhance LANDFIRE's usefulness?

Currently, our biggest challenge is to improve the EVT product. There are more than 400 vegetation types represented in the U.S., which makes this is a time-consuming process. Once the majority of the vegetation identification procedures are automated, the LANDFIRE team will be able to spend most of our time focusing on problematic vegetation types.

More of Josh's work …

Picotte, J. J., Peterson, B., Meier, G., & Howard, S. M. (2016). 1984–2010 trends in fire burn severity and area for the conterminous US. *International Journal of Wildland Fire* 25(4): 413-420.

Nelson, K. J., Connot, J., Peterson, B., & Picotte, J. J. (2013). LANDFIRE 2010–Updated Data to Support Wildfire and Ecological Management. *Earthzine.* 15 Sept 2013.