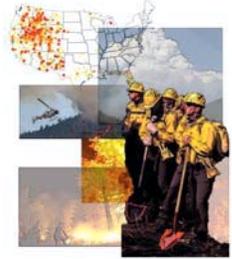


# National Fire Plan

Providing Current Fire Information With Satellite

Technology Nationwide

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Funding from the National Fire Plan is helping scientists at the Fire Science Laboratory's Fire Chemistry Unit in Missoula, Mont. develop a "real-time" national fire monitoring system that will use satellites to provide the data needed to monitor active fires, fire severity, smoke concentrations, and smoke dispersion.

This space-age technology provides the fastest near real-time information on wildland fires that has been available thus far. Fire managers, coordination centers, county officials, and others can plan strategies and allocate resources more effectively. It will also give community leaders current information when they plan health services for people with respiratory illnesses or evaluate the need for evacuations.

The requests for current, reliable fire information are growing steadily among land managers, firefighters, community leaders, and the general public. Currently, fire intelligence is limited to ground surveys and paper systems and is unavailable until the next day, when the fire situation has likely changed.

One of the most important aspects of the monitoring system is the satellite receiver that will be installed at the Fire Sciences Laboratory. This receiver will be able to collect near real-time data from the NASA Terra and Aqua satellites and the NOAA (National Oceanic & Aeronautic Administration) AVHRR satellite. Once the data are received, it will be processed by the Fire Chemistry Unit and distributed to incident or area command centers for strategic and tactical planning.

The Fire Chemistry Unit is collaborating with several scientific organizations to develop separate aspects of the monitoring system. The University of Maryland is developing a MODIS satellite data application to support the USDA Forest Service's fire management and rehabilitation efforts, and NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center is developing software to be used with MODIS products.

Scientists plan to install the satellite receiver in the next few months, with direct broadcast capability for the western states available by early 2002. The project is scheduled for completion in 2005.

For additional information on the National Fire Plan, visit [www.fireplan.gov](http://www.fireplan.gov)