

Ghana – Fire Management Plan Project

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Purpose:

To travel to Ghana to complete a fire management plan as well as a fire prevention communication plan and fire prevention materials. Tom Wordell International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) Fire Management Project Coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service's International Forestry Program (USFS/IF), also participated in this project and was responsible for completing a Fire Management Plan (called the Manual of Procedures). The Forest Service paid for Ms. McCaffrey's travel and per diem.

Report:

Over the past three years the Forest Reserve Institute of Ghana (FORIG) and the USFS/IF have participated in a multi-year project funded by ITTO to develop a fire management program for suppressing wildfires and reducing the current rates of human-caused wildfires, which are destroying the natural tropical forests.

The specific fire prevention and education objectives developed for this trip were to:

- 1) Meet key personnel in Ghana involved with the ITTO project, particularly key fire prevention/education contacts in Ghana, to provide advice and recommendations for the development of a forest fire prevention program.
- 2) Assist in the development of a Forest Fire Prevention Communication Plan to provide the basis for ongoing fire prevention and education planning.

I accomplished the first objective through ongoing contact with many of the key personnel involved with fire management and fire prevention. Tom and I met with key managers of the project to outline the objectives and deliverables for the trip, as well as to determine the scope and purpose of the two documents to be developed: the Manual of Procedures and the Forest Fire Prevention Communication Plan. To further familiarize me with some of the unique concerns with fire management in Ghana, Tom and I accompanied one of the fire managers on a field trip to Afram Headwaters Reserve to observe a green fuel break. Throughout my visit, I also worked closely with specialists who are, and will continue to be, instrumental in developing a national fire prevention program in Ghana.

To accomplish the primary objective of my visit, which was to provide consultation and assistance in developing a Forest Fire Prevention Communication Plan, I facilitated a series of meetings over three days for a group of fire specialists from FORIG and the Resources Management Support Center, which is under the Forest Services Division. In these meetings, we developed inputs for the Plan, which I used to develop a draft Forest Fire Prevention Communication Plan. Some local fire prevention efforts have already been initiated in Ghana. This Plan will provide the basis for standardizing and institutionalizing prevention programs throughout the Ghana National Fire

Services (GNFS). A great deal of progress was made toward completing the Plan. However, the final draft will still need to be reviewed and adopted.

To complete this phase of the project, both Tom and I prepared and delivered power point presentations at the closeout meeting with key fire personnel, and we participated in the ensuing discussion of the Plan's implementation strategies. We also submitted trip reports with observations and recommendations for instituting our respective Plans. While in Ghana, I also developed some prevention materials, which I presented at the closeout as samples. Since returning from Ghana, I have gathered sample materials, such as prevention plans and Smokey Bear materials, which I am sending to the fire managers at FORIG to use as samples to develop and further refine their prevention plans and develop prevention materials.



[Participants involved with creating the Forest Fire Prevention Communication Plan]