

The importance of fire refugia in the northwestern US



6:30 pm PDT, Wednesday March 24, 2021

Join us via ZOOM: <https://uidaho.zoom.us/j/8281785557>

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Wildfires are common across the Pacific Northwest, however climate change is projected to cause increases in wildfire activity and severity. Wildfires create a heterogeneous pattern across the landscape from severely burned areas to unburned patches. Unburned areas that are associated with critical habitat where biota can persist (e.g., old growth forest) and/or can recolonize neighboring burned areas are defined as fire refugia. They provide shelter for a range of fauna post-fire and can reduce detrimental impacts on hydrology and erosion. Therefore, management actions focused on maintaining or promoting these ecologically important areas on the landscape will be critical in the future, particularly under rapid climate change.

Dr. Meddens is an assistant professor at the School of the Environment at Washington State University. Originally from The Netherlands, his research focuses on forest and rangeland ecology, remote sensing, carbon cycling, and forest disturbances. He uses satellite and other geospatial data for assessing forest dynamics and aims to both provide tools for professionals to improve management of our natural resources as well as to advance scientific knowledge about fundamental ecological processes.

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