

CGD/RAL Seminar Series

Climate Change and Simultaneous Megafires in the Western US

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NCAR

Date: Tuesday 1 March 2022

Time: 11am – 12pm

For Zoom information, please contact Tracy Baker tbaker@ucar.edu

For live stream information, visit the [CGD Seminar Webpage](#)

ABSTRACT

Simultaneous very large wildfires present a unique challenge to fire management and the allocation of firefighting resources. The effect of climate change on simultaneity in large wildfires varies considerably over North America, though most regions show an increase in simultaneity and a longer or later fire season.

We are investigating changes in the number of these simultaneous fires in the Western US based on climate change projected by the RCM simulations in the NA-CORDEX data archive. We fit statistical models of the number of simultaneous fires in a region as a function of average fire index, which we calculate from climate data. We build the models using data on fires from the MTBS dataset and climate data from the gridMET gridded observational dataset. We then apply the models to climate data from the RCMS.

This work is part of an effort funded by the NSF Growing Convergence Research to bring together researchers in wildfire, climate, ecology, and decision-making with fire management stakeholders to produce actionable science and bridge gaps between fields around the issue of synchronous megafires.

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