Threats, Challenges, and Opportunities
Taking the Long-Term Perspective for Wildland Fire Management
Purpose of Today’s Session

- Begin to think in strategic, long run (20-30 years) terms
- Understand some of the forces that will drive the wildland fire program and community
- Explore and challenge the assumptions underlying our current program
- Assess rates of change, as well as direction of change
- Begin to chart a new strategic direction
How We Got to Today

- Vigorous fire exclusion policies of the 20th Century
- Late 20th Century: understanding of the role of fire in resources management; consequences of vigorous suppression
- Into the 21st Century: National Fire Plan
  - Fuels
  - Growing urbanization
  - Federal-Nonfederal partnerships
- The future....???
The 2005 Quadrennial Fire Review

- Defense Department’s QDR as model; envisioned as a 4th year assessment by the federal wildland fire management agencies and their partners of current capabilities and future needs.
- Used regional panels of researchers & experts that reviewed current assumptions about the fuels and fire environment and identified significant demographic, environmental, technology, and social/economic issues and trends.
- Four major “driving forces” for the future were analyzed using future projections: Drought & Climate Variation, Fuel Conditions, Demographics in the WUI, and Public Expectations.
The 2009 QFR

☐ 2007 Research Phase

- “New Assumptions” Papers on Enterprise/Technology Future Strategies
- Posting of Background Papers and Presentations for field comment and discussion
- Fire Research Forum to assess findings and implications
- Research Summary Report
2009 QFR

- 2008
  - Working Panels (5 planned)
  - Integration Panel Review and preparation of Final Draft Report
  - Review and approval through governance process
  - December: Final Approval

- 2009
  - January 20, 2009 – QFR Final Report Released
Plan for the Day

In the Morning....
- Presentations on four key strategic drivers:
  - Drought and Climate Variation
  - Vegetation Changes and Fuel Conditions
  - Demographics
  - Public Expectations

After Lunch...
- Discussion of the strategic drivers
- Developing an approach for a long-run strategy for wildland fire management
- Ranking Priorities in terms of risk and strategic importance in WFLC’s view?
What We Need From You

- Critically assess the presentations
- Be prepared to discuss and answer:
  - What are our current assumptions about long-term drivers?
  - What might be new assumptions?
  - What are the risks or threats to our ability to deliver an effective and efficient wildland fire management program?
  - What priority should be placed on the risks or threats?
  - What is the role of the WFLC with respect to responding to long term drivers?
■ Developing an approach for a long-run (20-30 year) strategy to address each of these high priority threats and opportunities
  ■ What strengths exist to build on?
  ■ What weaknesses or barriers have to be mitigated in order to be successful?
  ■ What additional information or analysis is needed?

■ Discuss next steps, including October 2007 meeting