

Appendix C: Data Import

Many sampling sites added to the NFMD have a long history of data collection. This data is invaluable for making comparisons and evaluating how current conditions correlate to historical fire conditions. To facilitate adding this data to the NFMD, a data import feature was created. This will simplify the process of entering historical data into the NFMD, eliminating transcription errors and ensuring that all historical data is preserved.

Preparing the data for import

Before historical data can be imported, it must be formatted properly. The only data required for import are:

- Sampling Site Name
- Fuel Name
- Date (of sampling)
- Fuel Moisture (in whole, non-negative percent)

Each of these elements is called a **field** and each collection of these for fields is called a **record**. Each record must be in a tab-delimited text file formatted as follows:

Sampling Site Name

Fuel Name

Date

Fuel Moisture

Each line in the text file must contain only one record. The simplest way of creating the text file is to use an Excel spreadsheet. Format the first four columns as above. Do not use column labels. See Figure C-1.

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|--------------|-------------------|------------|-----|---|
| 1 | Skihill | Pine, Ponderosa | 07/07/2009 | 85 | |
| 2 | Skihill | Pine, Ponderosa | 07/15/2009 | 80 | |
| 3 | Weiser River | Sage, Wyoming Big | 07/07/2009 | 120 | |
| 4 | Weiser River | Sage, Wyoming Big | 07/15/2009 | 110 | |
| 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | |

Figure C-1. Excel spreadsheet format for creating text file for import.

It is important that the following conditions are met:

1. The Sampling Site must already exist in the NFMD and must have assigned to it the fuel types to be imported.
2. The Sampling Site Name must be spelled exactly as it is in the NFMD.
3. The Fuel Name must be spelled exactly as it is in the database.
4. The Date must be formatted as mm/dd/yyyy. Excel does not default to or offer this option. A custom date format must be created in the Format function in Excel.

Once the spreadsheet is complete, you must save it as a tab delimited text file. NOTE: Excel sometimes adds double-quotes (") to some of the fields, usually those that have other punctuation marks, such as the Fuel Name field (Figure C-2).

| | | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|-----|--|
| Skihill | "Pine, Ponderosa" | 07/07/2009 | 85 | |
| Skihill | "Pine, Ponderosa" | 07/15/2009 | 80 | |
| Weiser River | "Sage, Wyoming Big" | 07/07/2009 | 120 | |
| Weiser River | "Sage, Wyoming Big" | 07/07/2009 | 110 | |

Figure C-2. Text file from Excel with double-quotes (") added.

You must edit the file to remove these.

Open the file in a text editor (Notepad, Word, etc.) and find-and-replace the double-quotes (") with nothing (not even a space). Your final text file should look like Figure C-3.

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------|-----|--|
| Skihill | Pine, Ponderosa | 07/07/2009 | 85 | |
| Skihill | Pine, Ponderosa | 07/15/2009 | 80 | |
| Weiser River | Sage, Wyoming Big | 07/07/2009 | 120 | |
| Weiser River | Sage, Wyoming Big | 07/07/2009 | 110 | |

Figure C-3. Text file from Excel after removing the double-quotes (").