

Fire Interdisciplinary Research on Ecosystem Services: fire and climate change in UK moorlands and heaths (FIRES)

SEMINAR 2

The impact of wildfire on ecosystem services: relationships between wildfire, climate change and people

The University of Manchester, 24th June 2008

Session 3:

**How will a changed wildfire regime affect ecosystem services?
What are the research needs**

Access breakout group

Rapporteur's Report of Discussion

Simon Wright, National Trust High Peak and Longshaw Estate

- Currently access is withdrawn in 'exceptional' conditions – 'beyond the norm'. What is the norm? As climate change bites, how is the norm judged?
- Does withdrawal of access reduce risk of fire? Does not appear to at present.
- Public rights of way remain open even when Access Land is closed
- Could resources used for closure be better targeted, e.g. for education, encouraging responsibility and changing behaviour?
- Are closures only justified in the interests of public safety?
- There are examples of using patrols to observe behaviour and watch for fire.
- Has there been any research into the effectiveness of 'education'? Long time scale required to produce statistically sound results? Most work done with schools, but are there examples of work with other age groups?
- In Dorset after 3 years of 'education' programme there was a reduction of 62% in wildfire (statistical strength?). Experience in Wales is different. Cultural context seems to be important.
- Does frequency of fires reflect recent reduction/changes in smoking practices since smoking was banned in public spaces?
- Are there any trends in fire statistics in other countries where access is restricted?
- Develop research proposals which link climate change, access and fire drawing on the ideas above.