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Long-term Monitoring of Vegetation Change Following Tundra Fires in Noatak National Preserve, Alaska

By National Park Service

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ire is an important driver of change at the local and landscape levels in the tundra ecosystems of Noatak National Preserve. In July 2005, with support from the National Park Service Arctic Network Inventory and Monitoring program, we relocated and remeasured fire plots established in 198182 at eight sites in Noatak National Preserve to evaluate the long-term (25 to 30 years) effects of tundra wildfire on vegetation and permafrost. The tussock-shrub and shrub tundra sites originally established by Racine and Dennis included one site burned in 1972, four sites burned in 1977, one site burned in 1982, and two unburned control sites. Stakes placed in the ground in 198182 to mark sample plots were relocated at four of the eight sites. At the remaining sites we used photos and field notes to relocate plots as close to the original as possible. Visual cover estimates were made for each species in each 1 m x 1 m plot (10 per site). Thaw depths were measured at five points in each plot. To provide for future monitoring, all sites were...



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