

VEGETATION DEPARTURE CALCULATOR

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I label the graph axes?

Currently the graph axes are unlabeled and a technical solution to the issue is being sought. Until a solution is found, the following work around will allow the user to label the axes: copy the table into a new spreadsheet and recreate the graph. Click on the graph. Under Chart Tools on the menu bar, click on the Options tab and the Axis Titles button. Select axis option.

How do I change the units from acres to percent?

The Calculator defaults to displaying units in acres. To change to percent, click on the Sum of Acres drop down field in the Pivot Table Field List – Values section. Select Value Field Settings and click on the Show Values As tab. On the Show Values As drop down menu, select Percent of Row and click OK. For percents to display properly, make sure you have a variable in the Pivot Table Field List - Column Labels section.

How do I change the number formatting?

To change the number formatting, click on the Sum of Acres drop down field in the Pivot Table Field List – Values section. Select Value Field Settings and click on the Number Format button. The Format Cells dialogue allows the user to adjust the number of significant digits, insert or remove 1000 separator (,), etc. It is strongly recommended that users display numbers without significant digits as it implies a level of precision that is not supported by the source data. Users are encouraged to round numbers (copy the data into a new spreadsheet to round) and to display percents rather than acres whenever possible. See the metadata for more information on the accuracy of the input data.

How do I edit the table or graph?

The Calculator has been protected to ensure its integrity and therefore cannot be edited directly. Users who want to edit a table or graph need to copy the table into a new workbook and manipulate the data from there including building graphs as needed.

How do I get a map of Vegetation Departure for my area?

To create a Vegetation Departure Map, users must download the spatial data from the internet. For an overview of the tools available for downloading LANDFIRE products, visit the LANDFIRE website (http://www.landfire.gov/dataproduct_overview.php). To make a web based map or download spatial data to build your own map go LANDFIRE Viewer (<http://landfire.cr.usgs.gov/viewer/>) and review the viewer user instructions to learn more about viewing options (<http://landfire.cr.usgs.gov/viewer/help.html>).

How do I obtain the spatial data used to build the Calculator?

The raw datasets used to build the Calculator are all publicly available and source information for them is provided in the metadata. The processed spatial data are not currently available for distribution. The data sets are very large, and complex. The TNC-LANDFIRE team is currently working on a plan to make the processed spatial data available. If there is an urgent need, please send an email to:

landfire@tnc.org.

How do I get more information on the reference conditions used as a baseline to calculate Vegetation Departure?

General information on the reference conditions, reference condition descriptions and associated vegetation dynamics models are available from the LANDFIRE website (<http://www.landfire.gov/NationalProductDescriptions24.php>). The link entitled "Using the LANDFIRE Biophysical Settings Model Descriptions," on this webpage, opens a paper which provides an overview of the reference conditions (called Biophysical Settings Models or Vegetation Dynamics Models by LANDFIRE), instructions on obtaining the reference condition descriptions for each vegetation type and an explanation of the description fields.

Is there a relationship between the Vegetation Departure and Fire Regime Group variables in the Calculator?

Not directly—the data sets are different products. LANDFIRE Vegetation Departure (officially known as Fire Regime Condition Class) is a measure of the difference between current and historic vegetation conditions. The difference in vegetation conditions may be the result of one or more factors including human disturbances (such as harvesting) and alteration of natural disturbances (such as fire). However, given the strong relationship between vegetation structure and composition and fire frequency and severity, an inference often can be made regarding the Vegetation Departure and the status of fire regimes. For example, an area with high departure is more likely to experience fires outside the natural range of variability, whereas an area with low departure is more likely to experience fires within the natural range of variability.