Continuing Project

Density Management Strategies for Enhancing Carbon Sequestration in U.S. Working Forests

CAFS.23.100

Mike Premer (UMaine), Eric Turnblom (UW), Kim Littke (UW), Rachel Cook (NCSU), Mark Kimsey (UI), Bronson Bullock (UGA), Lila Beck (UMaine)

Lila Beck, University of Maine
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Density management will continue to be a method to achieve goals for a variety of objectives

PCT/CT are useful to have in our toolbox

Commodity production, Crop tree release, C sequestration, Stand composition, Forest health, Wildlife habitat, Aesthetics, Structure, etc.

Justification

Little is known about the causal factors of the magnitude and duration of response

f (tree size, light, water, nutrient availability, competition)

How much? What is the threshold?

Justification

Tree-ring isotopes* and Site Water Availability (light and water)

Novel tools of quantifying potential water use efficiency and a *promising solution* to site-specific density management regimes

*Atoms that do not decay, C^{13} and O^{18}

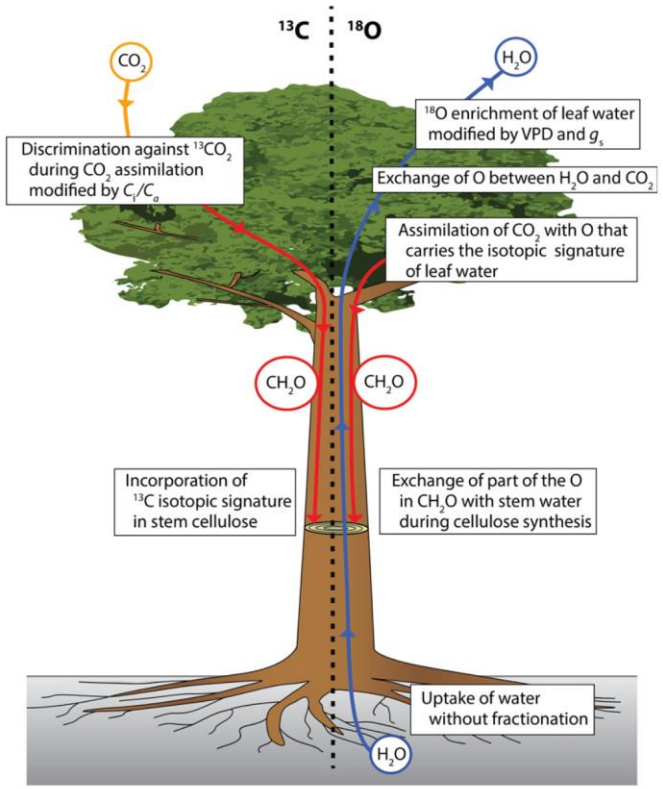
If resources are not limiting, trees are "picky" and don't utilize the heavier isotopes of C and O

As resources become limiting, trees will "use what is available"

If light limited, drop in ^{13}C, if water limited, drop in ^{18}O

This is recorded in the tree ring tissue each growing season

van der Sleen et al. (2017).



Site water availability, leaf area, and productivity

Continued success in application of SWA estimators (WD/WDI)

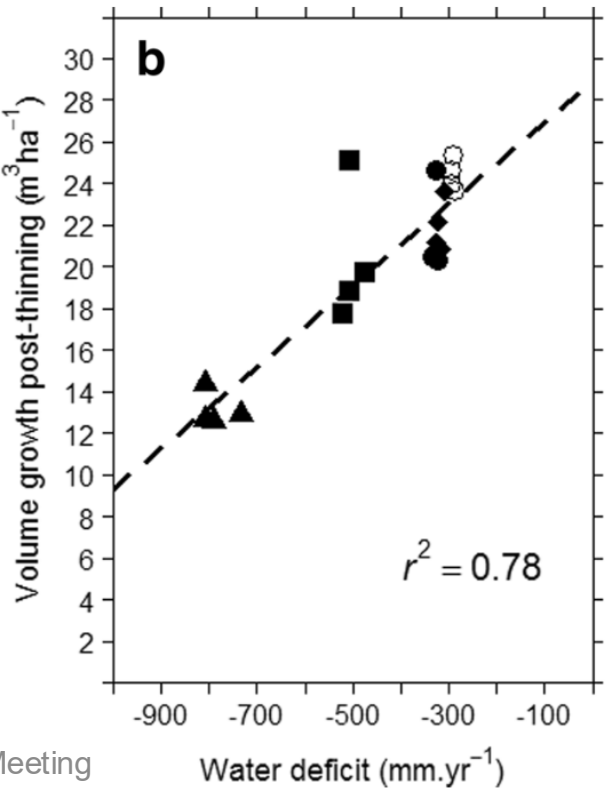
Predicting thinning response in Radiata pine in Chile
(Ojeda et al. 2018)

Dominant height and leaf area in loblolly pine in the SE
(Koirala et al. 2021; Kinane et al. 2022)

Diameter increment in white spruce in Maine
(Premer, unpublished)

Total volume of Eucalyptus in Brazil
(Scolforo et al. 2019)

A continuous composite variable that is compatible across regions



Objectives

1. Quantify **causal mechanisms** of stem growth response (or lack of) to variations in thinning **intensity**, **timing**, and **site variables** through sampling and analysis of tree ring **stable isotopes** ($\delta^{13}C$ and $\delta^{18}O$) with regional long-term datasets

2. Link remote sensing composite **estimates of productivity**, (e.g., cumulative monthly timesteps of water availability) with thresholds of **thinning response** across the hydrologic gradient of sites and patterns in stable isotopes

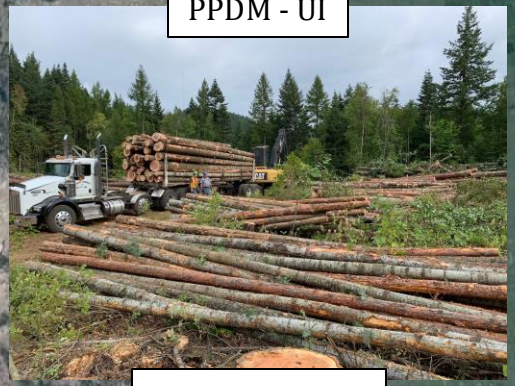
3. Develop cross-regional silvicultural **thinning guidelines** and **geospatial tools** to aid decision support in commercial forest operations.

Each working forest region has an intact experimental thinning network

Type I - UW

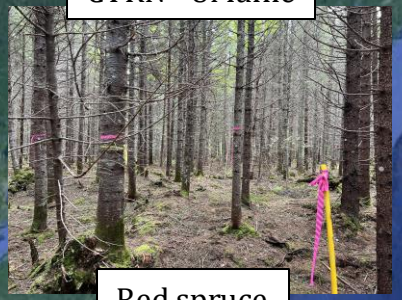
Douglas fir

PPDM - UI



Ponderosa pine

CTRN - UMaine



Red spruce

RW-19 – NCSU and VPI

C x D - UGA

Loblolly pine

Project approach – three pronged

Tree physiologic processes

Tree-ring isotopes

Stand dynamics

Competitive metrics
stem maps

Remote sensing data, soil samples

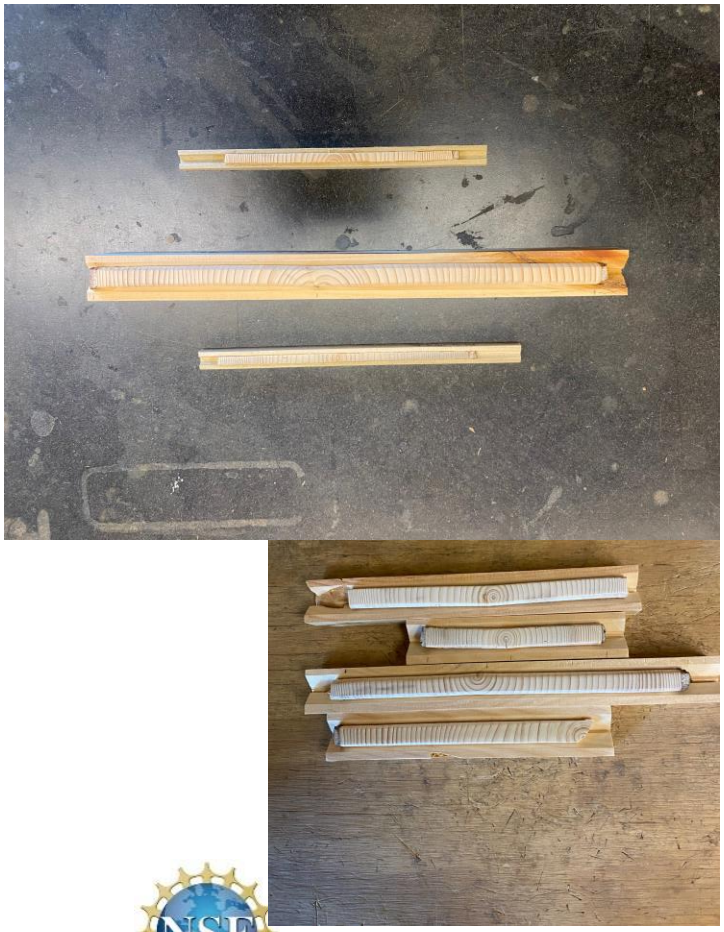
Site productivity and hydrologic flux

Methods

Project approach – three pronged

Tree physiologic processes

Tree-ring isotopes



2025 6 SMC Type I (UW)

- 1 Thinned Plot and 1 Control Plot per installation
  - Core 20 trees per installation, 1 per diameter distribution quintile

2026 6 RW-19 (NCSU)

- 1 Thinned Plot and 1 Control Plot per installation
  - Core 20 trees per installation, 1 per diameter distribution quintile

2027 6 C x D (UGA), 6 PPDM (UI)

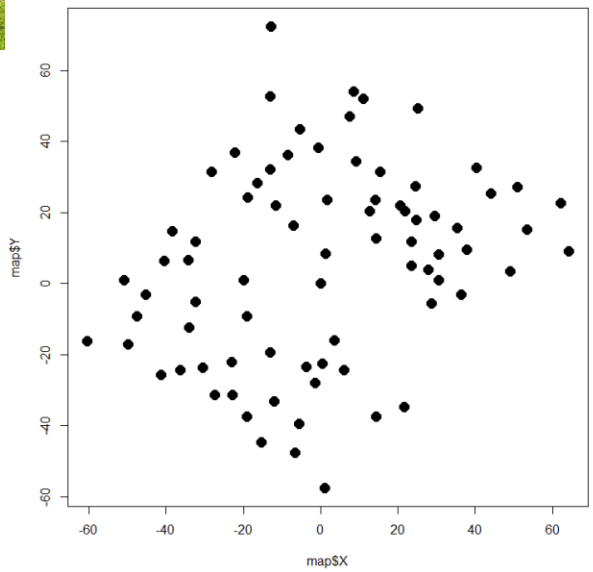
- 1 Thinned Plot and 1 Control Plot per installation
  - Core 20 trees per installation, 1 per diameter distribution quintile

Project approach – three pronged

Stand dynamics

Integrate records from long-term databases

- Stand structure
- Competitive metrics
  (spatially explicit tree neighborhoods)



Preliminary Findings

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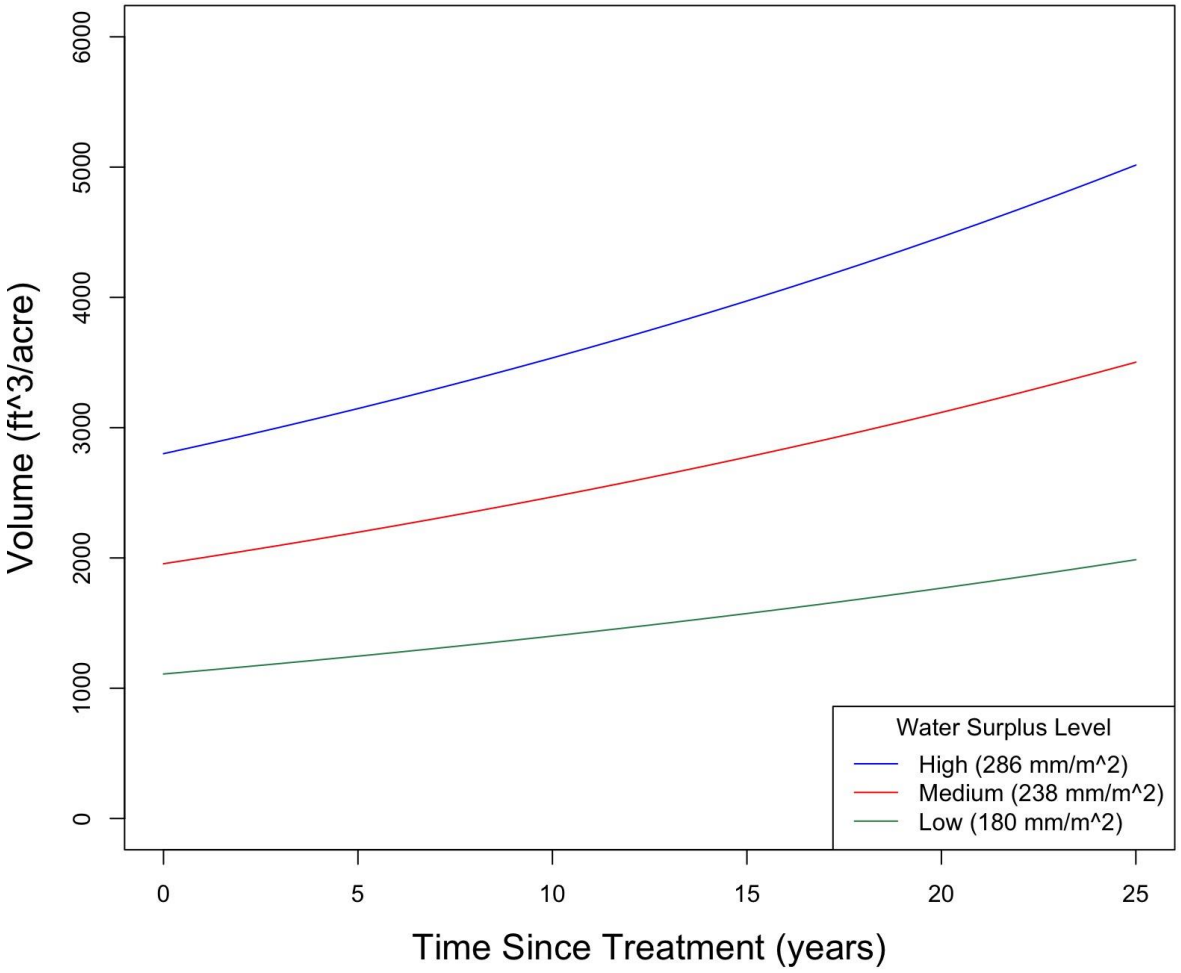
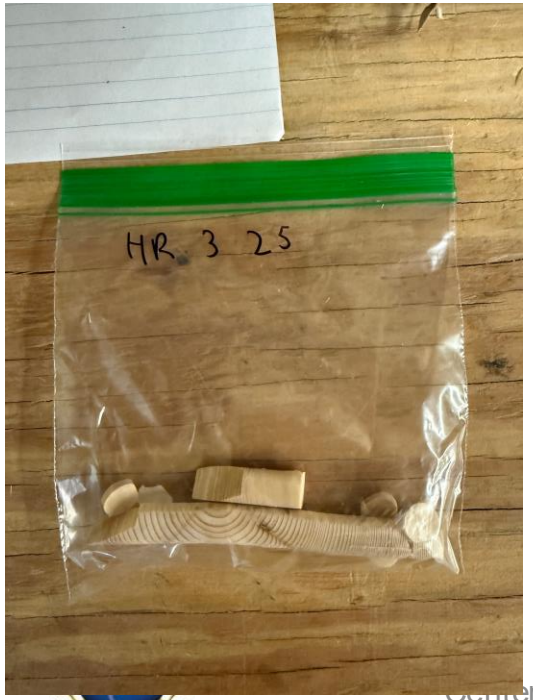
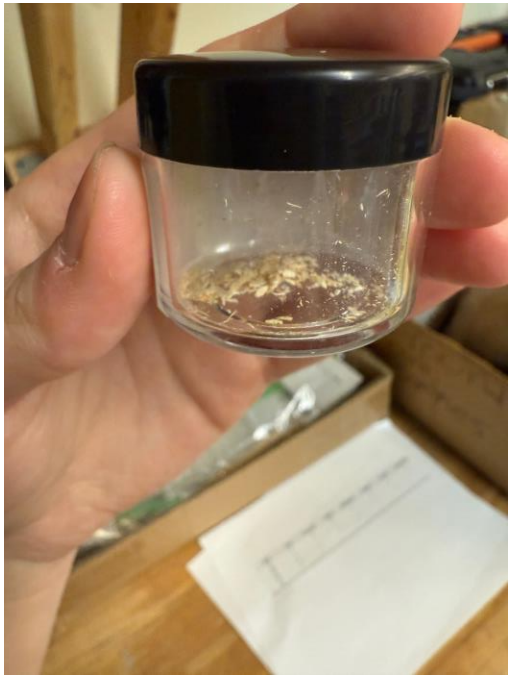


- Site-specific calibration
- High volume at higher levels of water surplus

Progress 2024-25

- Majority of CTRN cores processed
- First round of samples sent to Columbia University
- Begin to process UW cores this summer, upon arrival





Company Benefits

Silvicultural guidelines and geospatial tools of treatment priority and response

Towards site-specific silviculture – "*should I open the stand up a bit more?...*"

Leveraging long-term, cooperative dataset with emerging technologies

Quantifying C sequestration and tools for C based management

The approach can be extended to a variety of applications

Future Plans

Create water surplus variables for each region

- NE and PNW already completed

Continue to process cores from collaborating sites as they arrive

Curate and summarize long-term installation records

Summary

- Density management will continue to be a useful tool in our toolbox – but more research is needed to optimize treatments
- Using new technology while leveraging long-term datasets to develop site-specific thinning regimes has tremendous value
- C based forest management
- This approach can be extended to other areas of future research
  (M/CSP, nutrition, tree improvement, species migration)

Thank you. Questions/Comments/Criticisms?

lila.beck@maine.edu