

CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE FOREST AND LAKE COUNTRY OF NORTHERN MINNESOTA

Lee E. Frelich

Abstract

A warmer climate will lead to multiple changes in environmental factors including droughts, storms, fires, native and invasive insect pests and diseases, invasive earthworm species and deer grazing, which will reinforce the impacts of climate change on forests. With a business as usual climate change scenario, it is likely that the prairie-forest border will move north by a few hundred miles, and many forests in Minnesota will change to savanna-like vegetation. Water quality in lakes will be affected by warmer temperatures, as well as by the changes in vegetation and invasive species that occupy their watersheds.