United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

**Pacific Southwest
Forest and Range
Experiment Station**

Berkeley, California
94701

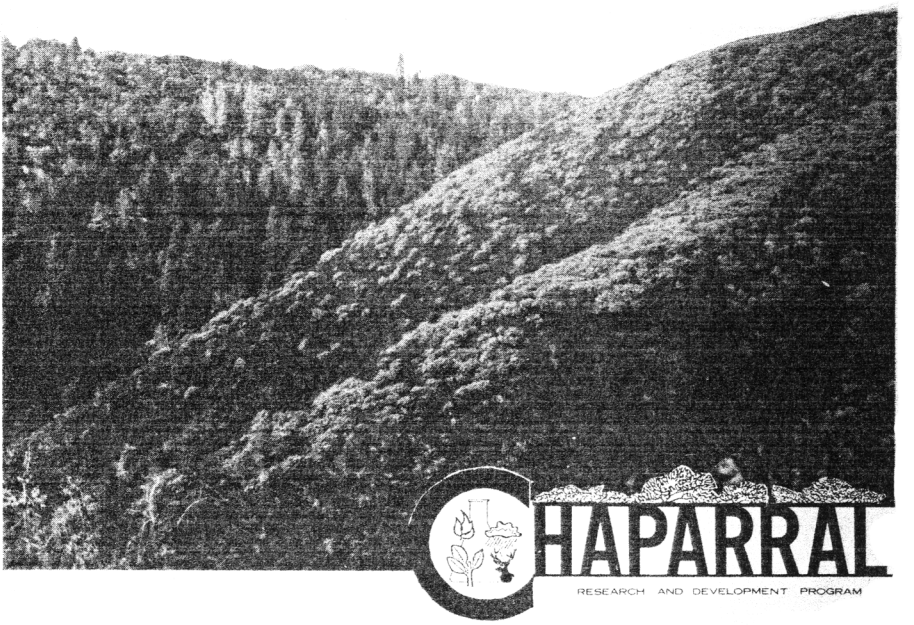
General Technical
Report PSW-36

Measuring Moisture Content in Living Chaparral:

a field user's manual

Clive M. Countryman

William A. Dean



The Authors

CLIVE M. COUNTRYMAN was, until his retirement in 1977, in charge of the Station's fire behavior studies, with headquarters at the Forest Fire Laboratory, Riverside, Calif. He earned a bachelor's degree in forestry at the University of Washington in 1940, and joined the Forest Service the following year. He is now a consulting fire scientist with the Physical Dynamics Corporation, Bellevue, Washington.

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PREFACE

In 1977, the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture established a research and development program at this Station titled "Vegetation Management Alternatives for Chaparral and Related Ecosystems." This 5-year program, headquartered at Riverside, California, is an intensive effort to develop, test, and demonstrate a wide range of options for maintaining or increasing the productivity of chaparral and related ecosystems in southern California.

This manual is based on a report by the Physical Dynamics Corporation, Bellevue, Washington, as part of its contract with the program. It is intended for field use. Supplementing the manual are two short slide-tape training programs that describe the procedures for collecting and drying chaparral samples.

Comments about the manual should be directed to:

Program Manager
Chaparral Research and Development Program
Forest Fire Laboratory
4955 Canyon Crest Drive
Riverside, California 92507

Copies of the slide-tape training program may be ordered from:

National Audio-Visual Center
General Services Administration
Washington, D.C. 20409
Request: Fuel Moisture Sampling—A01013-5500 (contains two programs); price: $36 U.S. Make check, money order, or purchase order payable to *National Archives Trust Fund.*

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1979. **Measuring moisture content in living chaparral: a field user's manual.** Gen. Tech. Rep. PSW-36, 28 p., illus. Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Exp. Stn., Forest Serv., U.S. Dep. Agric., Berkeley, Calif.

This manual standardizes procedures for determining the moisture content of living chaparral for use in a proposed statewide system of monitoring living fuel moisture. The manual includes a comprehensive examination of fuel moisture variations in California chaparral, and describes techniques for sampling these variations. Equipment needed to sample and determine living fuel moisture is discussed. Detailed procedures for collecting living fuel samples and processing the samples for moisture content are provided.

Retrieval Terms: fire management; chaparral; prescribed burning; fuel moisture; living wildland fuels; chamise; manzanita.