



PennState

College of Earth
and Mineral Sciences

Department of Geography

Feb 17 | 3:30 PM

112 Walker
Building and Live
on [Zoom](#)

Refreshments at
3:20pm



INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF WILDFIRE SMOKE

Speaker: Dr. Colleen Reid. Assistant Professor of Geography at the University of Colorado Boulder

Abstract: Wildfires have been increasing in frequency and duration in the western U.S. and the wildfire season has been increasing in length such that many regions now claim that there is no wildfire season anymore but that wildfires have become a year-round threat. While there are many causes of the increase in wildfires in the western U.S., it is becoming clear that wildfires not only affect forests and grasslands, but also have impacts on the health of populations downwind. Indeed, studies have shown that fine particulate air pollution (PM_{2.5}) is decreasing in most areas of the United States, except for areas most affected by wildfires, where an increasing trend in PM_{2.5} can be attributed to wildfire smoke. Studies of the health impacts of wildfire smoke are challenging due to lack of sufficient air pollution monitoring across space, the complexity of the components of the smoke that could affect human health, the numerous health outcomes that have been found to be linked to wildfire smoke, and more. In her talk, Dr. Reid will dive into her research that investigates how to better assess population exposure to wildfire smoke, how it impacts human health, and which communities are more affected by wildfire smoke. She will also provide a glimpse into her ongoing work to understand the health tradeoffs of interventions to protect health from wildfire smoke.