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Ecology and Restoration of Whitebark Pine

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Message from the Guest Editors

Whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*) forests have been declining from the combined effects of mountain pine beetle outbreaks, fire exclusion policies, and the exotic disease white pine blister rust. Projected warming and drying trends in climate may exacerbate this decline; however, whitebark pine has a wide climatic tolerance because of its broad distribution coupled with high genetic diversity. The ongoing decline poses serious consequences for upper subalpine and treeline ecosystems, and, as a result, whitebark pine is a candidate species for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Many land management agencies are now employing various actions in attempts to restore this valuable forest, including implementing pro-active thinning and burning treatments, planting rust-resistant seedlings. However, there has been limited research on this particular species. This Special Issue is designed to be composed of papers that can be used to help restore this important high mountain resource.

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