



This message was developed by the  
National Wildfire Coordinating Group Fire Use Team

*Bureau of Indian Affairs  
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Fish & Wildlife Service  
National Park Service  
Forest Service*

*National Association of State Foresters*

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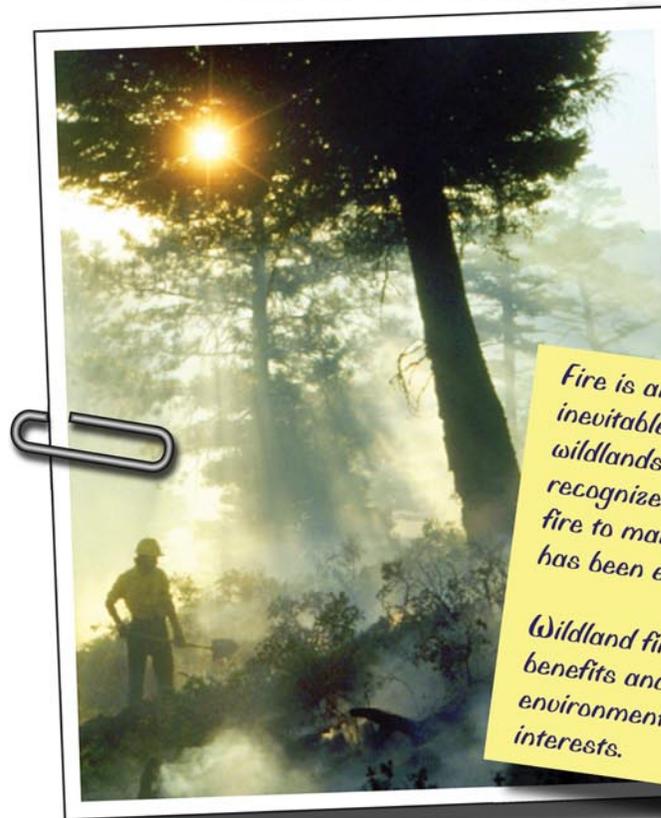
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# MANAGING WILDLAND FIRE: BALANCING AMERICA'S NATURAL HERITAGE & THE PUBLIC INTEREST



*Fire is an important and inevitable part of America's wildlands. It is now widely recognized that we must restore fire to many areas from which it has been excluded.*

*Wildland fires can produce both benefits and damages — to the environment and to people's interests.*



*By working together, people can maximize the benefits of wildland fire and minimize the damages, including threats to public health.*



**Effective use of wildland fire will provide substantial benefits to society and the environment.**

**These benefits include:**

Increased safety for wildland firefighters and the public.

Reduced effects of smoke on public health and visibility.

Minimized damage from wildland fire.

Reduced costs of wildland fire management.

Protection of plants and animals that depend on fire.

Improved habitats and watersheds.

**As partners in wildland fire management, we can all take steps to reduce risks. Many risks can be reduced through the increased use of fire in wildlands.**

To increase our use of fire successfully, all of us need to:

Become better informed about the prevention, control, and use of fire.

Become better informed about the beneficial effects of fire.



Participate in planning and preparing for wildland fire.

Accept the necessary trade-off between manageable smoke impacts from planned wildland fire and the more severe impacts of smoke from unwanted fire.

Create incentives for building and maintaining fire-safe homes and communities to reduce the unwanted consequences of wildland fire.

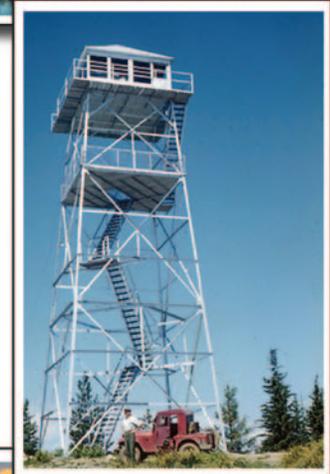


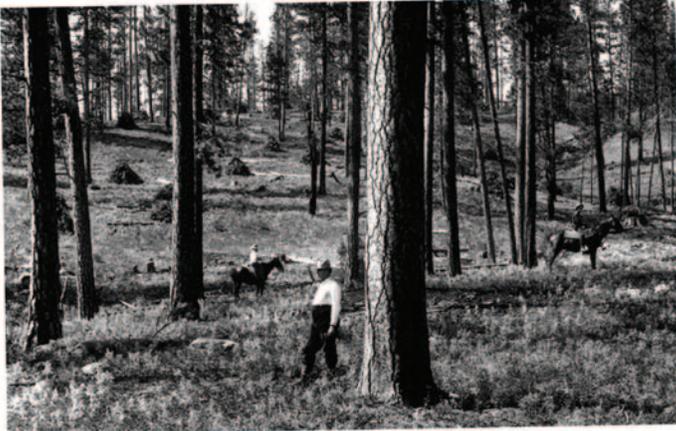
**Wildland fire management, which includes the prevention, control, and use of wildland fire, is a process affecting us all.**

Prevention is education and other actions that reduce unwanted wildland fires.

Control is action taken on unwanted wildland fires to protect life, and to reduce damage to resources and property.

Use is the application of wildland fire to meet specific objectives.





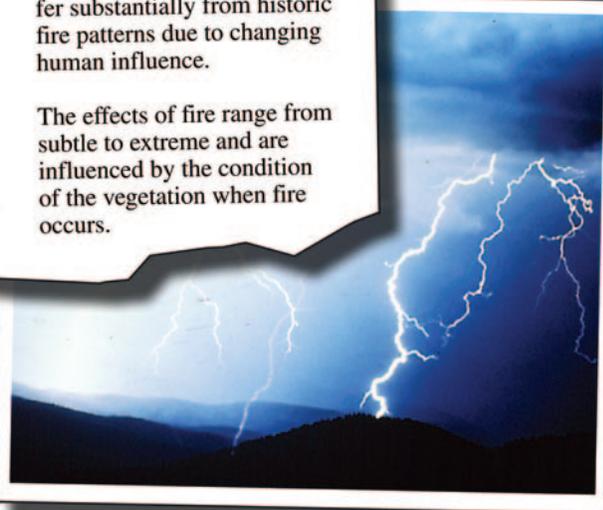
**Wildlands are always changing, sometimes dramatically, sometimes subtly. Fire is one of the important natural agents of change.**

Fire has helped shape many of North America's wildlands for thousands of years and is essential for the survival of many plants and animals.

Historic patterns of wildland fire varied from one place to another, depending largely on climate, type of vegetation, and human influence.

Present fire patterns now differ substantially from historic fire patterns due to changing human influence.

The effects of fire range from subtle to extreme and are influenced by the condition of the vegetation when fire occurs.



**We have learned that the lack of periodic fire in many wildlands increases risks to society and the environment.**

Risks vary from one location to another and may include:

Large and damaging fires resulting from fuel accumulations above historic levels.

Loss of life or serious injury to firefighters and the public.

Health effects and visibility impairment from intense or extended periods of smoke.

Escalating costs of controlling unwanted wildland fires.

Property loss and damage to economically valuable landscapes

Loss of plant and animal species and their habitats.

Damage to soil, watersheds, and water quality.

