

Preventing Fire with Fire

How do we do it?



With the Three Faces of Fire



Bureau of Land Management Oregon/Washington



Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region

Fire has Three Faces that save: our wildlands our resources our selves...

Our forests and grasslands are in danger.

In many places, they are vulnerable to large destructive fires. Today we realize that fire has three faces:



For most of this century our society viewed fire as an absolute enemy. We depended on our public wildland agencies to eliminate all fire from the environment.

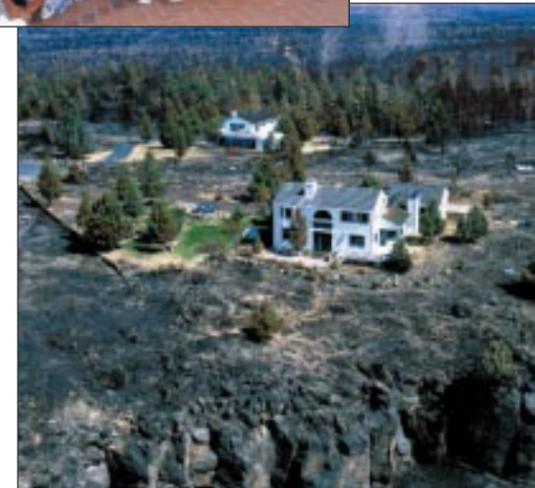
But without low-intensity fires, some of our wildlands have grown overcrowded and explosive. Dead wood and dry brush cover the ground. Destructive insects and weeds invade. New growth is strangled and wildlife is threatened.

Therefore, today, we understand fire's vital ecological role. We realize the important interplay of these three faces of fire.

Fire Prevention
Human carelessness will never be an acceptable cause of fire. We will always need to heed Smokey Bear.



Smokey Bear educates children about preventing human caused fires.



Home threatened by wildfire.

We must reduce the number of unplanned, destructive wildfires.

Today, with more people building homes in wildlands, fire prevention efforts are even more critical. When natural or human caused fires ignite and spread, these homes - and people's lives - are in harms way.

Fire Suppression
Wildfire threatens people, private property, watersheds, wildlife habitat, and our valued scenic and



Wildfire

recreational resources.

These fires must be - and are - put out.

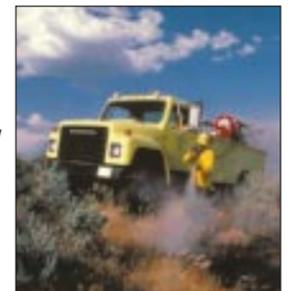
Our wildland firefighters' goal is to protect life, natural and cultural resources, and property.

Thanks to our courageous men and women firefighters, loss of life and damage to property and resources from wildfires remain low.

Even so, our wildlands are now more vulnerable to large, destructive fires that destroy the life of our forests and grasslands and endanger communities.

There is a solution:

Prescribed Fire...



Firefighters put out grassland fire.

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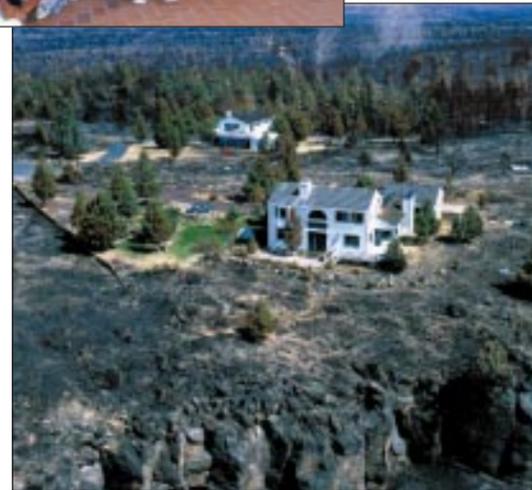
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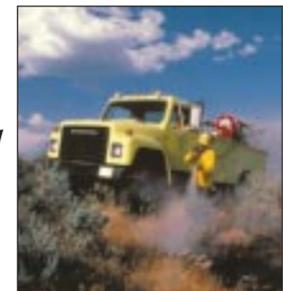
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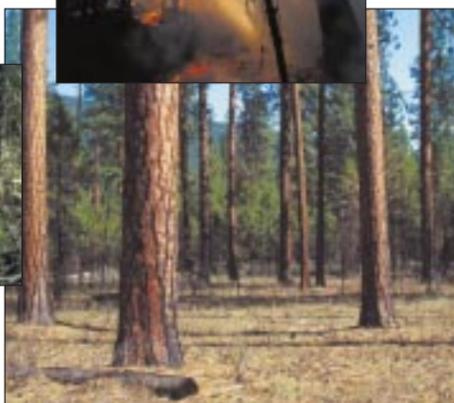
For decades our land managers have used this "face of fire" to restore our wildlands to their balanced health.

With prescribed fire, low-intensity flame is applied by trained experts to clear ground of dangerous fuels like dead wood and brush. Or, if a natural fire starts with conditions that are exactly right, and there is an environmental plan in place - experts can treat it as a prescribed fire.

Low-intensity fire.



Use of driptorch to start prescribed fire.



After prescribed fire has done its work.

This low-intensity fire is vital to the life cycles of our forests and grasslands. There's no question that prescribed fire can save wildlands and resources.

Prescribed fire is just one tool we have to help restore balance to our ecosystems. It is a very effective tool and occurs only under prescribed environmental conditions.

Before Prescribed Fire



- Decades of dead wood buildups threaten the forest
- Combustible materials could trigger large, destructive wildfires
- Unplanned fire could endanger resources and human safety

After Prescribed Fire



- Planned low-intensity fire has removed dangerous dead wood buildups
- Forest retains its natural health
- Threat of intense and harmful wildfire is gone

Yes, fire has many faces. It is a natural and vital element in our forests and grasslands. Through our wise use of fire we will realize a future where fire plays a necessary role in our wildlands' cycle of life.

Here's what you can do:

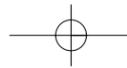
- Learn more about your forests and grasslands.
- Discuss the issues of prescribed fire with your family and friends.
- Contact your local U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management office if you have questions.

Field Offices are listed under U.S. Government in your local phone book or visit our website(s):

- Forest Service - www.fs.fed.us/r6
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Native plants return quickly after fire.



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