

Fire, Fuel, and Restoration Priorities of the Forest Conservation Community

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In February 2001, forest activists from all over the country gathered in Boulder, Colorado, to listen to presentations and engage in discussion about the science and practice of forest restoration. A year in the making, the result is a set of agreed-upon principles and criteria that form the foundation of the conservation community's stance on restoration and fuel treatment. The document is organized around three core principles reflecting ecological, economic, and community and workforce considerations. Paramount among the principles are planning and adaptive management. With regard to fire, the document acknowledges the importance of restoring natural fire regimes to fire-dependent forests. To achieve this important goal, The Wilderness Society advocates a four-step approach: first, protect communities by addressing home ignitability and adjacent fuels; second, complete fire management plans on federal lands to allow Wildland Fire Use for Resource Benefit; third, re-introduce prescribed fire where it is safe to do so; and fourth, where it is not safe to burn, mechanically treat fuels to create a structure into which fire can safely be reintroduced.

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