

FORESTS WITH A

FUTURE

TREASURE.

TRAGEDY.

Protect Old Growth Trees in the Sierra Nevada.

The forests of the Sierra Nevada are out of balance

Fire has always been a natural part of forest ecosystems. In the past, Sierra Nevada forests were far less packed with vegetation than they are today. Fires were frequent, low, and slow. Old growth trees stood safely above the flames.

But fire suppression practices in recent decades have allowed a dangerous buildup of brush and densely-crowded small-to-medium trees. Overgrown forests also allow disease and insects to attack more trees, leaving many dead, dry, and prone to ignite. Wildfires in these areas destroy everything – old forests, wildlife habitat and local communities.

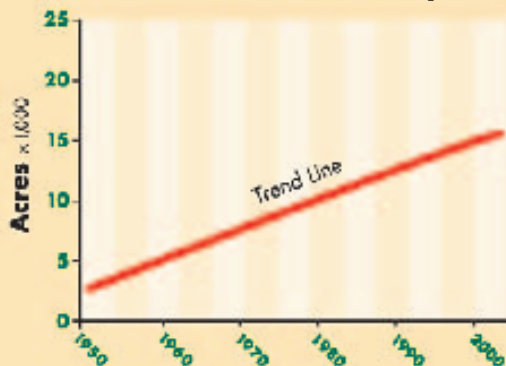
Forest density creates deadly “ladder” conditions which allow wildfire to climb from ground to treetops. Flames can then spread from tree to tree in a devastating phenomenon known as a “crown fire.” Crown fires burn hot, fast, and high. They kill even the mightiest old growth trees.



Fuel Ladder Intact

Fuel Ladder Removed

Catastrophic Fires Have Increased Dramatically



Acres of forest destroyed in the Sierra Nevada.

Catastrophic wildfires also reduce the soil's ability to soak up rain. This ruins valuable watersheds. The run-off causes soil erosion, mud-slides and flash-flooding.

Our forests are in crisis.

Approximately 7.5 million acres in the eleven Sierra Nevada national forests are estimated to have dangerously high levels of fire hazard.

We must reduce this threat, and protect our old growth forests.

A Campaign Against Catastrophic Wildfires



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

Crown fires kill old growth forests.

What can be done?

Based on the best scientific information available, the Forests With A Future Campaign will adapt and apply methods to preserve old growth trees, wildlife, and local communities against catastrophic fires.

This Forest Service campaign initiates an intensified program of tree thinning and removal of underbrush in strategic areas, while protecting wildlife habitat. Methods of controlled and monitored burning and mechanical removal will be used. In the Sierra Nevada, there are approximately 90 million trees 20 to 30 inches in diameter, of which 0.2% will be thinned each year, in strategic sites. Removing these trees will reduce fire hazard and help pay for some of the other removal costs. All trees 30 inches in diameter and larger will be protected.

Though the plan treats only a small percentage of forest area, these strategically placed thinning sites will not only protect communities, but will also benefit the entire forest including wildlife habitat.



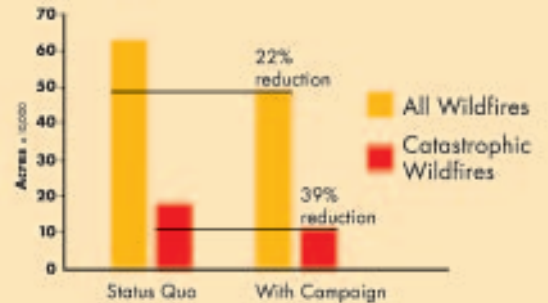
Today's overgrown forest.



Thinned forest sites, strategically located to slow fires.

Projected long-range benefits

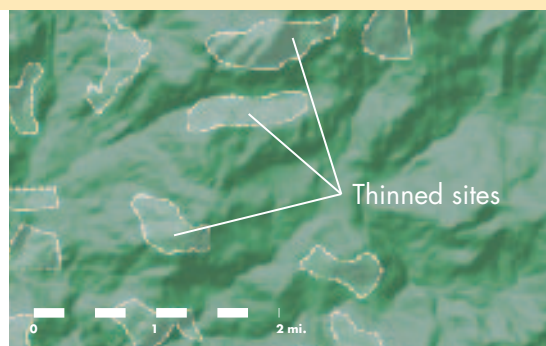
Reduction of Acres Burned Annually
Fifth Decade Estimate



Restoring nature's balance

Changing wildfire behavior on a landscape-wide scale won't be quick or easy. Under Forests With A Future, the net growth of forests still will far outpace planned tree removal. But the accumulating threat of decades of uncontrolled growth should be reversed strategically, while doubling the number of old growth trees in fifty years. Wildlife habitat should also dramatically increase.

Nature seeks balance. Fire suppression in the Sierra Nevada has disrupted that balance.



Thinning in strategic sites acts as "speed bumps" for runaway wildfires.

Tree-thinning projects, tailored to preserve individual forests, wildlife habitat and local communities will be developed by District Rangers. The projects must meet strict guidelines and the results will be monitored by other scientists and professionals.

Please help

Help to preserve our forest heritage. Support the Forests With A Future Campaign.

Everyone has a vital role – individuals, local communities and organizations, civic leaders, government, and timber companies, in addition to the dedicated scientists and experts of the Forest Service.

Please see further information at

www.forestsfuture.fs.fed.us or
www.fs.fed.us/r5/snfp



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