

For anyone who manages forest lands there are two words that will strike fear and worry like no other...

"Forest Fire!"

Uncontrolled wildfires cause billions of dollars in economic damage each year in the US, as property is destroyed, water supplies are polluted, and economies are affected by evacuations.

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The five principles of creating and maintaining fire-resistant forests are:

- Reduce surface fuels.
- Increase the height to the base of tree crowns.
- Increase the spacing between tree crowns.
- Keep larger trees of more fire-resistant species.
- Promote more fire-resistant forests at the landscape level by reducing fuels both vertically and horizontally.

Forest Fire Prevention

Protect your woodland investment

Properly managed forests minimize the risk of wildfires

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about Forest
Stewardship

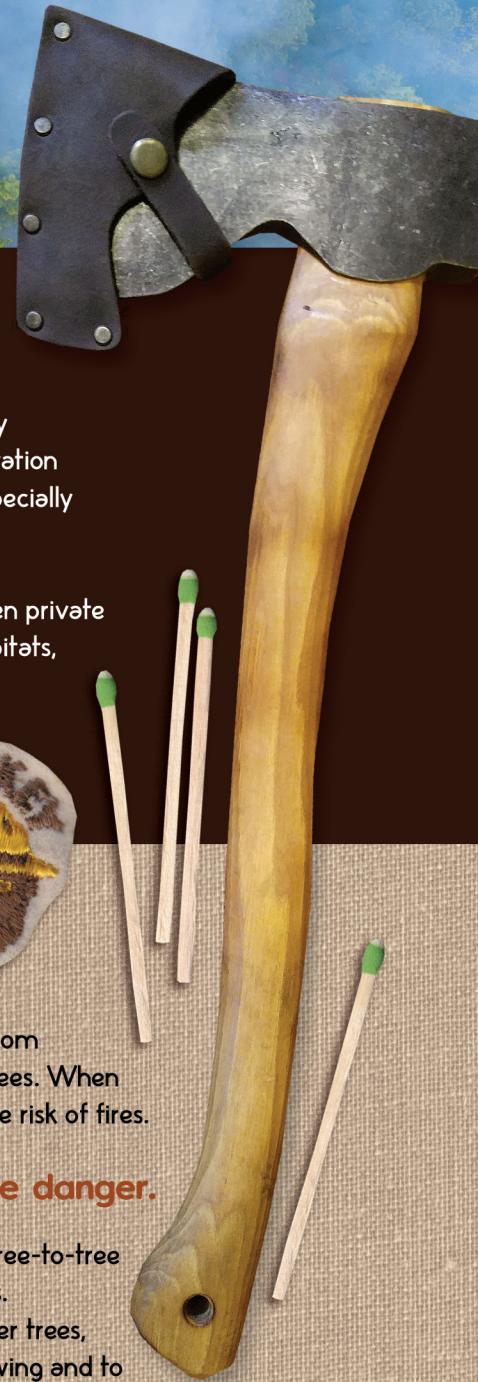




Good management prevents fires

Sustainability is forestry's defining feature. Sustainable profits are obviously sought by every well-run business, and the root of sustainability relies on the long-term conservation of resources that foster profit. There is a natural incentive for private landowners, especially those in the timber market to engage forest growth through proper management.

Private woodlands benefit local communities, customers, and the environment. When private forest landowners conserve and maintain forests they provide havens for wildlife habitats, protect clean air and water, and protect against widespread forest fires through their ongoing forest cleanup and management practices.



Managing Family Forests Is Key to Managing Wildfire

Timber harvesting can be extremely beneficial to the environment when operated sustainably. The hazardous fuel loads that are the cause of many wildfires develop from the buildup of dead logs, sticks, and brush that result from a high concentration of trees. When forest managers declutter forests and remove fuel loads, they drastically decrease the risk of fires.

Thinning improves tree growth, forest health & reduces fire danger.

Thinning is the process of tree removal in a forest stand to reduce tree density and tree-to-tree competition, encouraging increased growth of fewer, higher quality trees.

Tree thinning is conducted every 10 to 15 years to remove the weaker trees, allowing more room and light for stronger trees to continue growing and to improve the overall health of the forest.



Wildfires are often fueled by an over-accumulation of dead matter on the forest floor.

Thinning reduces excess fuels in a given area, making wildfires more manageable while also reducing smoke emissions.



Catastrophic wildfire events

Fire is a natural and beneficial part of a healthy ecosystem. Catastrophic wildfires, on the other hand, endanger humans, fish and wildlife species, they compromise air quality, and threaten the safety of surrounding communities. While only a small percent of wildfires become catastrophic, the ones that do destroy an average of 1.2 million acres of US woodlands every year.

The greatest threat of catastrophic wildfire today is in U.S. National Forests and wilderness areas, where years of fire suppression practices have allowed our federally-owned forests to reach dangerous fuel load levels. Private forest landowners across the state might be doing the most good for fire prevention through their own forest management practices.

Property lines are irrelevant to a raging fire, which means risk-reduction efforts often must include coordinated efforts on both private and public lands



Protecting your investment

Wildfire behavior can escalate rapidly, and quick decision making in the event of a fire can greatly increase the likelihood of control and/or minimize negative effects. Having necessary information in a fire plan easily accessible for firefighting personnel can be very important to reducing risk of damage to homes and other improvements, as well as to important forest resources.

Common fire risk reduction methods included burning excess forest fuels in brush piles, grazing livestock, thinning trees, clearing brush and creating firebreaks.

Forming a plan . . .

**"If you fail
to plan, you are
planning to fail"**
— Benjamin Franklin

A management plan can help you get the most out of your property and protect your woodland investment. Your local SWCD can help you develop a forest management plan that includes safeguards against forest fires.

A forest stewardship plan written by a certified plan writer, such as your local SWCD, the DNR or a private forest planner, qualifies landowners to apply for local or state tax-relief and incentive programs. To qualify for one of these programs, a landowner must generally have at least 20 qualifying acres of land.

The DNR's Forest Stewardship Program helps landowners finalize their own goals and prepare a professional, voluntary management plan for their woodland. A forest management plan (also known as a Woodland Stewardship Plan when written by a certified writer), is a non-binding, written document that lists your land's potential, what you want to accomplish, and specific actions you can take to accomplish those goals within a given time-frame.

Create your own forest fire risk management strategy. Contact us to get started on a Forest Stewardship Plan

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**HUBBARD COUNTY
Soil & Water
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**CLEAN
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