

RESILIENCE

MARCH 2025
SPRING EDITION

FROZEN

DEL NORTE WILDFIRE
RESILIENCE UPDATE
HOW TO THAW A
FREEZE?

WISE WORDS

IN DEFENSE OF
DEFENSIBLE SPACE
BE NEIGHBORLY

FIRE HISTORY

WHAT STUMPS AND MUD
CAN TELL US.

DEL NORTE PBA CORNER

MARCH BURNS AND
APRIL WORKSHOP
DON'T MISS OUT!

INTERVIEWS

OUR COUNTY
COORDINATOR

DEL NORTE FIRE SAFE COUNCIL
WILDFIRE MAGAZINE



CONTENTS

NO.2

PAGE 3-6

DEL NORTE WILDFIRE RESILIENCE UPDATE A SPRING THAW?

"We're building a model that Washington is starting to notice—one that kept working through the freeze and helped thaw it, rooted in action, not bureaucracy."

PAGE 7-13

STUMPS AND MUD

"Rest! cries the chief sawyer, and we pause for breath." Like Leopold's saw, our work cuts through time—through years of fire, culture, and forests past.

PAGE 14-16

IN DEFENSE OF DEFENSIBLE SPACE HERD IMMUNITY

Ever heard of "herd immunity"? A look at defensible space. Why you should care about yourself, your neighbor, and your community.

PAGE 17-20

DEL NORTE PBA CORNER & INTERVIEWS

DNPBA has been working in the background. What have we been up to, and where are we going? How you can join. Learn a bit more about our County Coordinator

PLUS

**MONTHLY CHORE - UPCOMING EVENTS - SPRING PROJECTS
FIRE-RESISTANT HOMES**

Thawing the Freeze

Del Norte Wildfire Resilience Update

The recent thawing of Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) funds brought a collective sigh of relief to wildfire resilience groups like the Del Norte Fire Safe Council (DNFSC). But the month-and-a-half funding freeze, with no clear resolution in sight, had real consequences. It cost us prime work time during ideal weather windows—time that could have been used to reduce fuels and improve community safety. January and February are the best months to prepare for the upcoming fire season—time that would have been great to reduce fuel loads, but DNFSC adapted to the quickly changing environment, looking toward the future and planning for a variety of different scenarios.



This disruption was perhaps a catalyst for action among many organizations that already had a growing mistrust of the federal government. "Frosting without the cake," said Aaron Babcock of the DNFSC, summing up the frustration felt by many organizations. While funding programs exist on paper, bureaucratic inefficiencies and sudden policy shifts often render them ineffective when it matters most. Many engaged in wildfire resilience have faced years of inconsistent funding, shifting priorities, and delayed government responses, making it difficult to sustain long-term strategies for fire preparedness.

One non-profit had already purchased equipment and completed an extensive interview process for a wildfire resilience crew, only to be forced to tell them they had to wait indefinitely. Now, the equipment sits unused, and the entire hiring process must start over. Many have watched critical projects stall due to federal red tape, seen prescribed fire initiatives deprioritized, and struggled with agencies that fail to follow through on commitments. The lack of commitment and accountability in federal funding led many community-led groups, including DNFSC, to seek alternative partnerships and funding sources, ensuring that critical wildfire mitigation efforts move forward without unnecessary interference.



"Conversations are happening, and decisions are being made around how funding and accountability will be in the future. What's working, what's not—and honestly, it's both a relief and an honor to be part of it," said Aaron Babcock, County Coordinator for the Del Norte Fire Safe Council.

Anticipating potential funding instability, Babcock began contingency planning well before the Presidential election. With the risk of grant funding diminishing or shifting toward less stable sources, discussions evolved into the formation of Fire Adapted Forestry, LLC in early March. The intent was to establish a reliable alternative in case the funding landscape moved decisively from grants and government—if federal and state budgets simply stopped showing up for rural communities.

"It's a backup plan," said Babcock. "But I'd be a terrible employer if I didn't look out for our communities and employees. We can point fingers at the federal government all day, but I won't sit back and say, 'We'll see,' and then write off the consequences as 'not my fault.' It's one more problem on the pile—but there are solutions."

The Impact of the Freeze on Wildfire Prevention Efforts

The funding freeze disrupted more than just project momentum—it directly affected our ability to follow through on commitments made to the community. Many residents had been expecting home risk assessments, defensible space work, and fire prevention projects that were suddenly put on hold with little explanation. This created confusion and frustration, as people who had taken proactive steps to engage with the DNFSC were left wondering why the promised work was not happening.

Rebuilding trust after these delays will take time and renewed effort. Additionally, to keep our wildfire resilience crew employed during this uncertain period, we had to rely on our safety net projects—funding and work we had set aside for more effective times of the year—to ensure our crew could continue receiving a paycheck. These projects were planned for when weather conditions would have allowed for the best possible outcomes, meaning their early use added further strain to our long-term strategy.

While the funding freeze is over, the ramifications of the delay are still being felt. Essentially, we lost about one-third of our pre-fire season preparation time. This setback means we are now playing catch-up, pushing crews to work harder and faster to make up for lost time. The spring season is critical for implementing defensible space projects, conducting prescribed burns, burning piles that have already been stacked, and clearing shaded fuel breaks—every week lost is a missed opportunity to enhance our community's safety.

Political Pressure

Despite recent setbacks, our Coordinator views this moment as an opportunity to strengthen partnerships and reaffirm our mission. The Del Norte Fire Safe Council remains committed to moving forward, adapting to challenges, and finding practical solutions to ensure our community is prepared for wildfire risks—regardless of political or funding uncertainties.

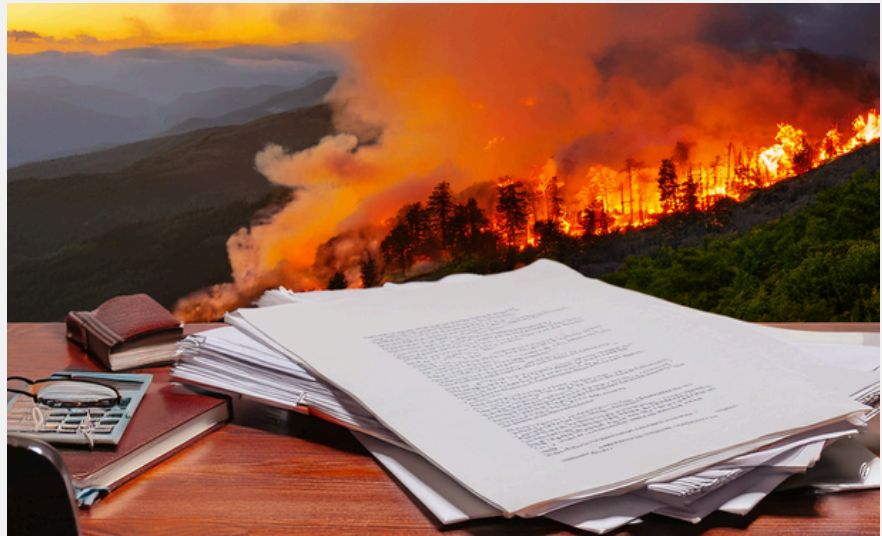
We continue to work with leaders on both sides of the political aisle. Wildfire resilience is not a partisan issue—it is a matter of public safety, responsible stewardship, and long-term sustainability for our forests and communities. The DNFSC will engage with any decision-makers willing to support efforts that protect our people, landscapes, and livelihoods of Del Norte County.

In that spirit, our Coordinator has been actively communicating with President Trump and members of the DOGE Caucus to advocate for more innovative, community-centered wildfire strategies. A comprehensive wildfire resilience plan—along with supporting documentation—has been reviewed by the President and his advisors. These materials outline how federal funding can be deployed more effectively and cut inflated reporting to protect communities, generate jobs, and address the wildfire crisis with long-term, scalable solutions.



By elevating local solutions with national relevance, we are ensuring that rural voices—especially from wildfire-prone regions like Del Norte County—remain central to the conversation at the highest levels of government. We believe wildfire resilience, when supported by strategic investment and collaborative partnerships, can be a catalyst for both safety and economic opportunity.

A recent conversation with President Trump emphasized the crucial role of local organizations in driving wildfire resilience and the damage caused by delays in Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) funding. That dialogue helped push forward the unfreezing of those funds and opened the door to continued high-level conversations focused on practical, common-sense wildfire solutions rooted in the experience of communities like ours.



Moving Forward with CWDG and Federal Momentum

With Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) funds now unfrozen, the Del Norte Fire Safe Council has fully resumed wildfire mitigation work starting March 17th—despite the near federal government shutdown on March 14th. While uncertainty remains, our team is ready to act and make the most of every opportunity to protect Del Norte communities.

The reactivation of CWDG funding allows us to ramp up on-the-ground work significantly. Over the coming months, we will complete home wildfire risk assessments, defensible space treatments, and fuel reduction across Del Norte County. Our crew will be reengaging with priority areas identified in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, supporting property owners, and collaborating with partner organizations and tribal nations to expand our reach and impact. Community education, outreach, and training efforts will also continue, ensuring residents have the knowledge and tools they need to prepare for fire season. With this grant fully in motion, we're now able to return to the scale and pace required to meet the growing wildfire threat.

Even during the funding freeze, DNFSC remained active. We supported prescribed fire efforts, led a Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) workshop, and partnered with the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation and Smith River Alliance on a county-wide fire prevention media campaign. Meanwhile, our Wildfire Resilience Crew stayed busy supporting partner organizations to keep fire prevention projects moving across the County.



Now that CWDG work is back in motion, DNFSC is prepared to deliver results on the ground and will continue this vital work for as long as funding allows. At the same time, our Coordinator is preparing contingency plans and working across the aisle to ensure Del Norte County stays on Washington's radar. In times of uncertainty, resilience means both showing up for the work and planning for whatever may come next.

Encouragingly, new federal funding is emerging as another \$70 million was allocated to California for wildfire prevention, including shaded fuel breaks and other strategic mitigation projects. While this support is a step in the right direction, it represents only a fraction of what's needed to address the state's wildfire crisis. More is required in order to fix the mistakes of the past.

Recent conversations between DNFSC leadership and the President's team have helped reinforce national momentum. The administration has voiced strong support for prescribed fire, cultural burning, and increased local capacity—opening the door for community-based organizations like ours to play a more meaningful role in shaping and implementing effective wildfire prevention strategies.

We welcome the opportunity to continue leading from the ground up, bringing practical, common-sense solutions to the table—locally, statewide, and at the national level.

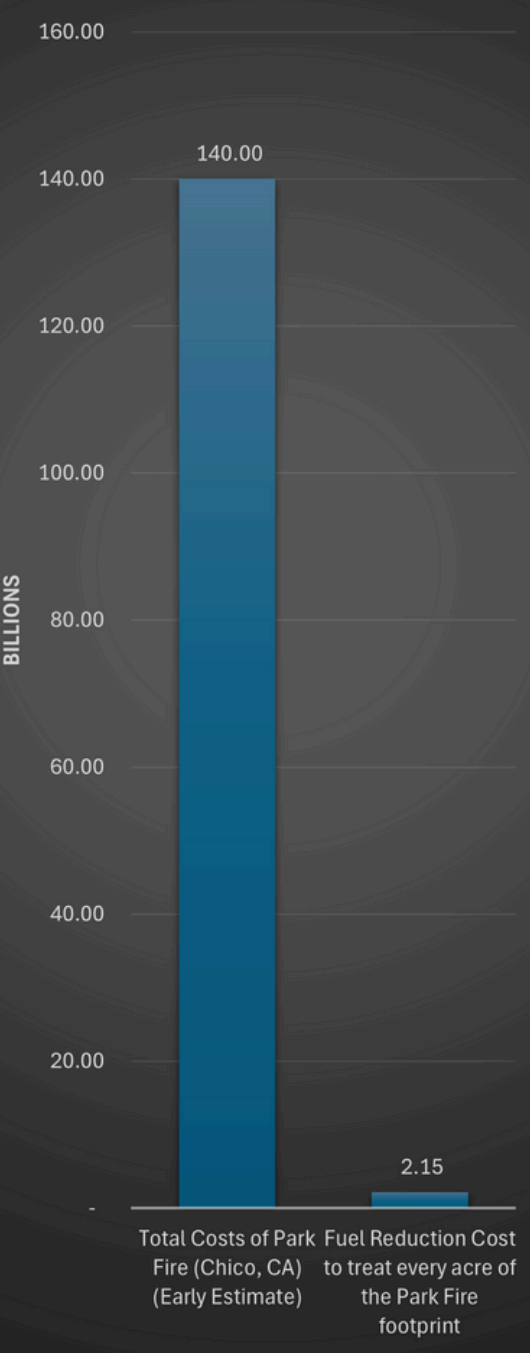


What if we put prevention first?

- **\$140 billion** - Early estimated total costs of the Park Fire, including property damage, firefighting, and recovery (Source: CAL FIRE reports and Chico Fire Protection District, 2022).
- **\$2.15 billion** - Estimated cost for fuel reduction for every acre burned in the Park Fire, which is 65 times less than the fire's total projected costs.

- **\$148.5 billion** - Total cost of the Camp Fire, including damages, lawsuits, and recovery (Source: National Institute of Standards and Technology, NIST, 2020).
- Estimated fuel reduction cost (on the high side) for the fire's 153,336-acre footprint: **\$770 million**.
- Prevention could have saved almost \$148 billion.

Park Fire Costs vs Fuel Reduction of Fire Footprint (Billions)



Benefits of Wildfire Prevention

Return on Investment (ROI)

- For every \$1 spent on fuel reduction, up to \$191 in Camp Fire costs and up to \$65 in Park Fire costs could have been saved.

Fire Intensity Reduction

- Prescribed fire and thinning efforts can reduce fire intensity by 60%-80%, protecting homes, lives, and infrastructure (Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2021).
- Catastrophic wildfires release 10-15 tons of carbon per acre, compared to 2-3 tons for controlled burns (Source: Environmental Protection Agency, 2020).
- Areas with active fuel management see 50%-70% fewer destroyed structures during wildfires (Source: Fire Adapted Communities Coalition, 2022).

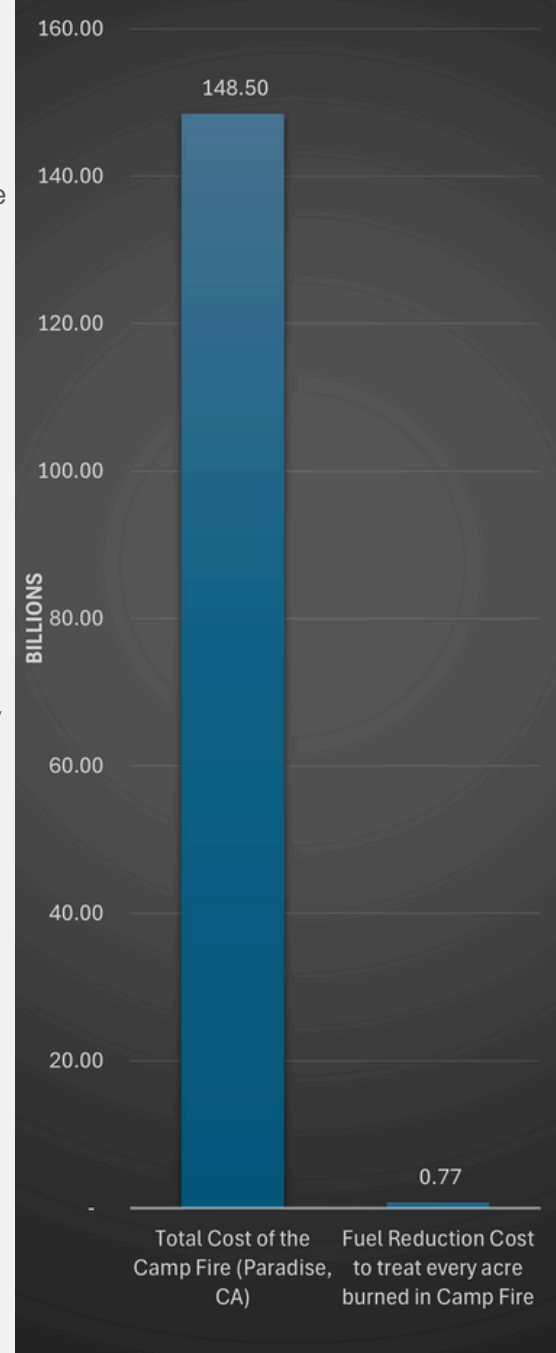
Cost of Prevention per Acre

- Average cost of prescribed burning ranges from \$200 to \$400 per acre (Source: National Interagency Fire Center, NIFC, 2021).
- Thinning costs average \$1,000 to \$4,000 per acre, depending on terrain and fuel density.
- For our calculations, we included thinning (\$4000/acre) and prescribed fire (\$1000/acre) for a worse-case scenario rate of \$5,000 per acre.

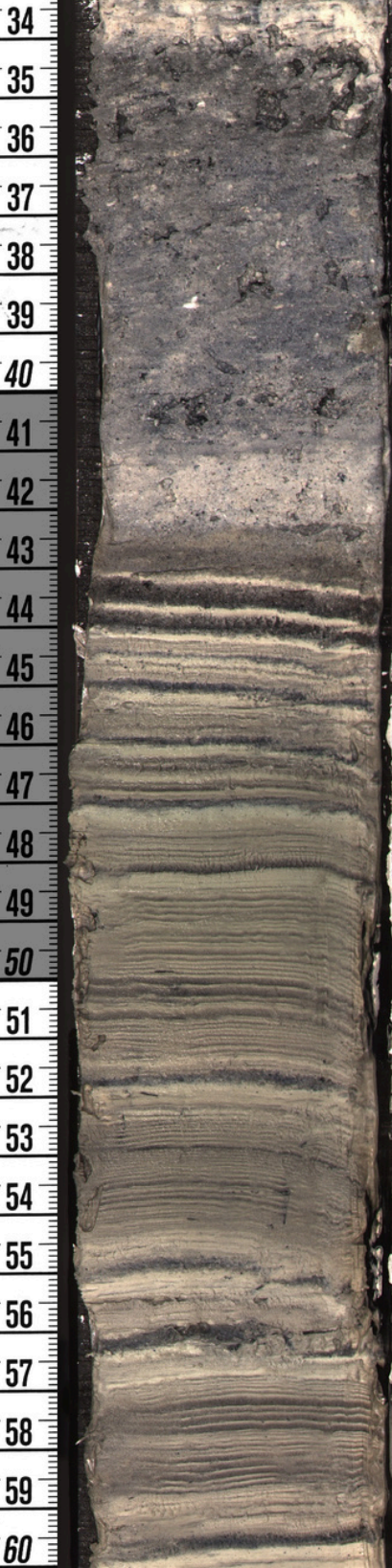
Human Costs and Lives Saved

- Camp Fire Fatalities: 85 lives lost (Source: CAL FIRE, 2019). Proactive fuel reduction could have significantly lowered fire intensity and provided more evacuation time.
- Park Fire Projections: Similar catastrophic fires put thousands of lives at risk; early fuel management reduces this threat by up to 80% (Source: U.S. Forest Service).

Camp Fire Costs vs Fuel Reduction of Fire Footprint (Billions)



Trees & Mud



"Rest! cries the chief sawyer"

One of my favorite stories to read after a long day on the trail with a crosscut.

It's a recurring line in Aldo Leopold's *The Good Oak*, marking pauses in the physical labor of sawing through the 80-year-old Wisconsin oak tree. These pauses serve as moments for reflection, allowing Leopold to recount the environmental and social history represented by each growth ring—transforming the act of cutting wood into a meditation on time, memory, and land ethics.

If forests could talk, what stories would they tell? As it turns out, they do speak—just not in words, but perhaps in a way Leopold could understand. Their stories are etched into tree rings and buried in layers of lake sediment. These natural archives act like time machines, preserving a detailed history of fire stretching back centuries, even millennia. By decoding these records, we can uncover how fire has shaped the landscapes we see today—and how it might shape the ones we leave behind.

Fire has long played a vital role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. It clears out underbrush, recycles nutrients, and makes way for new growth. Indigenous peoples understood this balance deeply, using cultural burning to steward the land, enhance food sources, and reduce the risk of large, destructive fires. But in the early 20th century, national fire policy shifted toward total suppression, disrupting natural cycles and allowing fuels to accumulate to dangerous levels. Today, we're seeing the consequences: more intense, unpredictable wildfires that threaten communities, ecosystems, and lives.

To restore the balance, we're looking to the past. By studying tree rings and lake sediments, we can reconstruct historical fire patterns—how often fires occurred, how intense they were, and how they responded to changes in climate and land management.

Tree rings provide precise, year-by-year fire records. When a tree survives a fire, it can leave behind a scar within its ring. By sampling and cross-dating multiple trees across a landscape, we can pinpoint the timing and extent of past fires with remarkable accuracy. Lake sediments take us even further back—thousands of years—preserving layers of charcoal and pollen that offer a broader, long-term view of fire frequency, vegetation changes, and climate shifts.

Together, these tools help us answer important questions:

- 🔥 How often did fires burn before suppression policies took effect?
- 🔥 What impact did climate cycles have on fire over the centuries?
- 🔥 How did Indigenous burning practices shape and sustain ecosystems?
- 🔥 How can we apply this knowledge to modern fire management?

By reading the stories stored in nature's library, we can begin to restore fire's rightful role in the landscape. These lessons from the past are guiding our efforts today to make forests healthier, communities safer, and ecosystems more resilient in the face of a changing climate.

The Science of Tree-Ring Fire History



Fire scars recorded on a tree.
Peter Brown



How Trees Capture Fire History

Tree-ring analysis, known as dendrochronology, is one of the most precise methods for studying past fire activity. Every year, trees add a new ring of growth, responding to environmental conditions such as temperature, moisture availability, and disturbances like fire. When a wildfire sweeps through a forest, it damages the cambium, the thin living layer beneath the bark, leaving behind a fire scar. However, trees are resilient—they do not simply remain wounded. Instead, they heal around the scar, forming new layers of wood over time. As a result, each subsequent ring grows around the injury, encasing the evidence of past fires within the tree's structure. Once a tree is damaged, the more times it experiences fire and survives, the more fire scars it accumulates, providing an invaluable historical record of fire frequency and severity.

In addition to fire scars, tree rings record subtle growth changes linked to fire events. Low-intensity fires, which burn away competition and release nutrients into the soil, often lead to a growth release, where surviving trees experience a burst of wider ring formation due to reduced competition for sunlight and water. Conversely, in the aftermath of a high-severity fire, which can cause canopy loss and prolonged stress, trees may show narrow rings, indicating slow growth or even tree death. These patterns allow scientists to infer not only when fires occurred but also their impact on the surrounding forest and how quickly trees recovered afterward.

Building a Fire History: From Individual Trees to Landscapes

While a single tree can tell us a lot about fire history, it represents only one perspective. To get a more complete picture of fire in a region, scientists analyze multiple trees within the same area. By collecting and cross-dating samples from different trees, researchers create fire chronologies that reveal patterns in fire frequency, intensity, and seasonality. If multiple trees show fire scars in the same year, it suggests that a widespread fire event occurred, affecting the entire landscape rather than just one isolated tree.

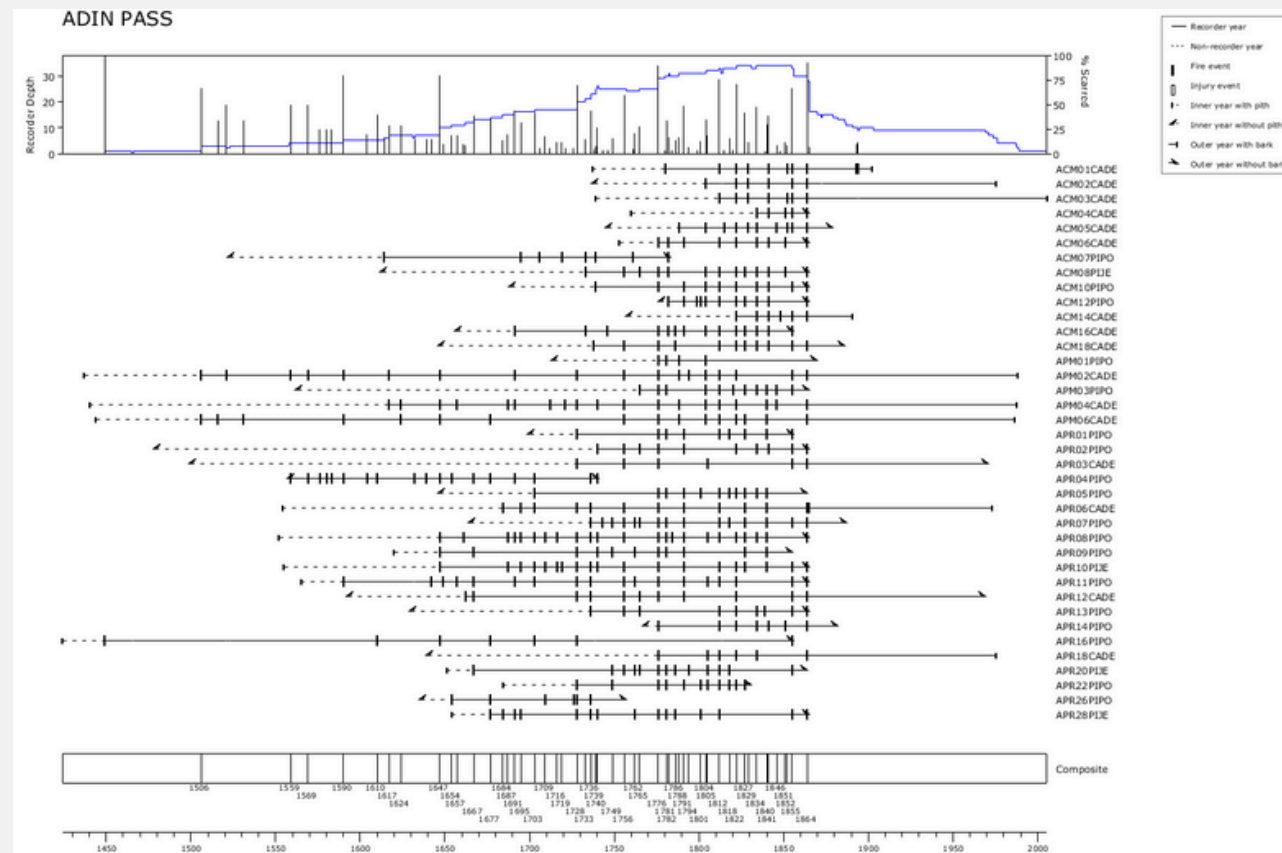
These multi-tree chronologies help researchers determine fire return intervals—the number of years between successive fires at a given location. For example, in historically fire-adapted forests, fires may have occurred every 7 to 15 years, keeping fuel loads low and maintaining open, park-like stands. However, when fire suppression policies were enacted in the early 20th century, fire intervals lengthened dramatically, leading to denser forests with higher fuel accumulation, increasing the risk of severe, stand-replacing wildfires today.



Fire-Scar Chronologies

One way to understand fire's role in a landscape is to focus on multiple trees over a general area and analyze its fire history over time. The Adin Pass fire chronology is one of many spread across North America that provides a window into how fire shaped our forests for centuries.

By collecting and analyzing tree-ring samples from trees in this area, scientists were able to reconstruct a timeline of past fire events. Each vertical bar (|) on the fire chronology graph represents a fire scar recorded in an individual tree's rings. If multiple trees show fire scars in the same year, it suggests a widespread fire event that burned across the landscape. The composite plot at the bottom of the graph aggregates these fire scars into a single record, listing all years in which at least two trees recorded a fire event.



Key Findings from Adin Pass:

- Fires historically occurred every 7 to 14 years, indicating a frequent, low-severity fire regime.
- Many trees recorded multiple fire scars, demonstrating that fire was a regular part of this ecosystem.
- After 1900, the number of recorded fire scars dropped dramatically, coinciding with modern fire suppression policies.
- The blue line in the graph represents the number of trees available for analysis, not the number of fires. As older trees die, the number of recorder trees decreases, making it harder to detect past fires.

The Adin Pass study provides strong evidence that fire suppression has drastically altered the natural fire cycle, allowing fuel to accumulate and making modern wildfires more intense and destructive.



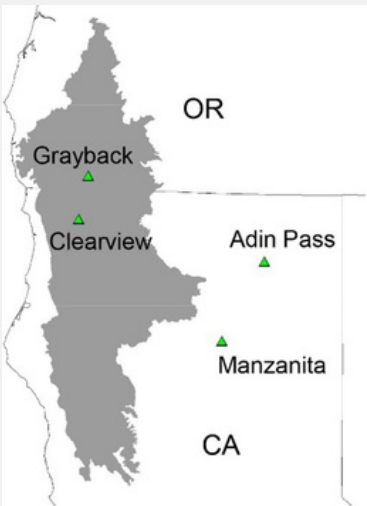
Fire History Analysis

Adin Pass, Grayback Creek, Clearview, and Manzanita Lake

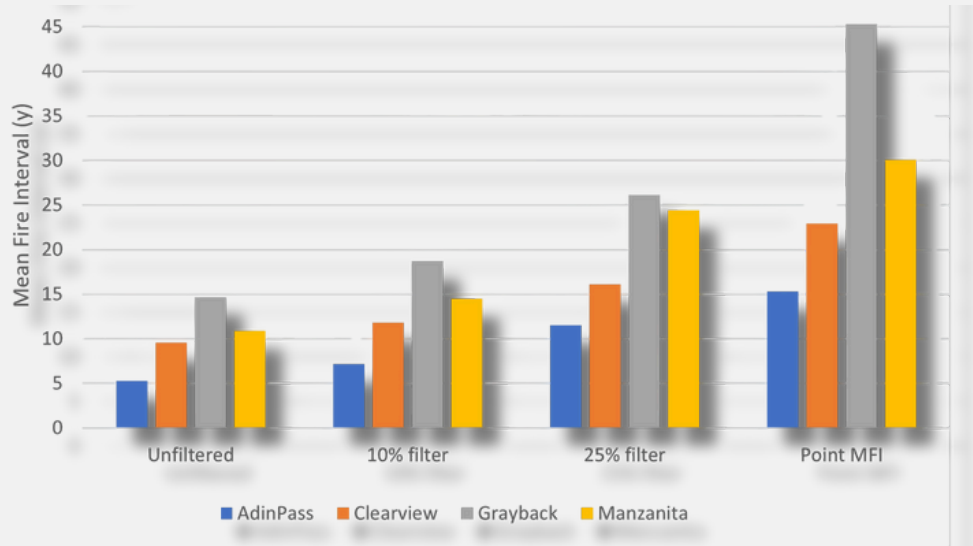
To understand how fire once shaped our landscapes—and how it can again—we must look beyond individual trees and sites. While a single tree tells a powerful story, and multiple trees within an area can reveal local fire history, we begin to see the full picture only by studying entire regions—across different elevations, forest types, and ecological zones. These broader fire chronologies uncover patterns in fire frequency, intensity, and spread that vary with topography, vegetation, and climate. Together, they help us understand not just when and where fire occurred but how often it returned, how ecosystems adapted, and how different landscapes responded to fire over time.

By studying tree rings from places like Adin Pass, Clearview, Grayback Creek, and Manzanita Lake, we’ve learned that fire used to be a regular part of the landscape in many areas but at different return intervals. Before fire suppression policies began in the early 1900s, low-intensity fires swept through these areas every 7 to 15 years. These natural fire cycles helped keep forests healthy—clearing out underbrush, recycling nutrients, and reducing the risk of large, destructive wildfires.

Each site tells a similar story: frequent fire before 1900, followed by a steep drop in fire activity once suppression became the norm. Trees at Adin Pass recorded fire about every 7–14 years, while Grayback Creek saw slightly longer intervals of 10–15 years. At Clearview and Manzanita Lake, many trees recorded multiple fire scars, showing that fire was a regular and expected part of the environment.



Locations of the four fire-history sites in relation to the extent of the Klamath Mountains/California High North Coast Range (EPA Level III Ecoregions) of northwestern California and southwestern Oregon. Approximate elevations of the study sites are 5,000 ft at Adin Pass, 2,500 ft at Clearview, 2,000 ft at Grayback, and 6,000 ft at Manzanita. Datasets represent unpublished fire-history data sampled by Carl Skinner of the US Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Center.

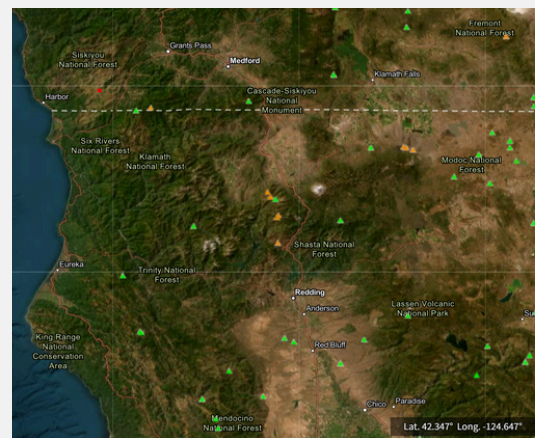


To better understand and compare fire patterns across sites, researchers use a measurement called Mean Fire Interval (MFI)—which is just the average number of years between fires. A lower MFI means fire was more frequent. For example, Adin Pass has an unfiltered MFI of around 5 years, showing very frequent fire activity, while Grayback’s MFI is closer to 15 years. When filters are applied to focus on larger or more representative fires, the MFI increases, helping us understand broader fire trends over time.

Another helpful measure is Point MFI, which looks at how often fire returned to the same exact spot—like a single tree. Because not every fire burns every corner of the forest, Point MFI tends to be longer than the overall MFI. Still, it gives us important insight into how often a particular place burned, which is key for deciding how often to reintroduce fire through prescribed burns or cultural burning today.

These fire histories help us answer important questions: How often did fires naturally occur? How did that vary from place to place? And how can we use that knowledge to safely bring fire back in a way that protects people, forests, and ecosystems?

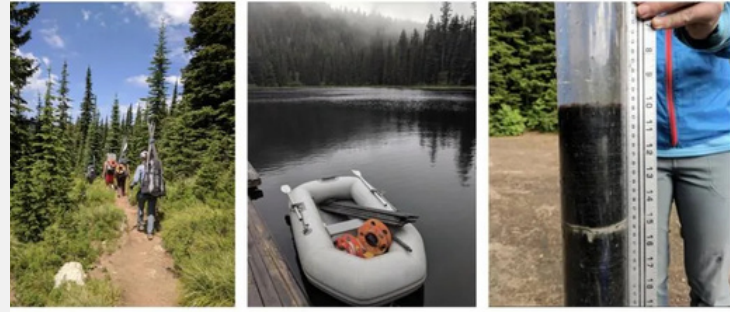
The big takeaway? Fire was once a regular, natural part of these ecosystems—and understanding that past helps us build a more resilient future.



Locations of other tree ring sites in green, and lake charcoal studies in orange. You can find them on multiple websites. One is <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/products/paleoclimatology/tree-ring>

Lakes, Mud, and Charcoal

While tree rings provide a century-by-century view of fire history, lake sediments extend that record back thousands of years. Scientists studying Fish Lake, and Lake Ogaromtoc in Six Rivers National Forest are using sediment core analysis to reconstruct a long-term history of fire, climate change, and ecological shifts.



How Lake Sediments Preserve Environmental History

Lake sediments act as natural time capsules, accumulating layers of organic and mineral material over millennia. As ash, pollen, plant debris, and soil wash into the lake, they settle in distinct layers, creating a continuous environmental record. By extracting sediment cores—long cylindrical samples drilled from the lakebed—scientists can analyze these layers to determine:

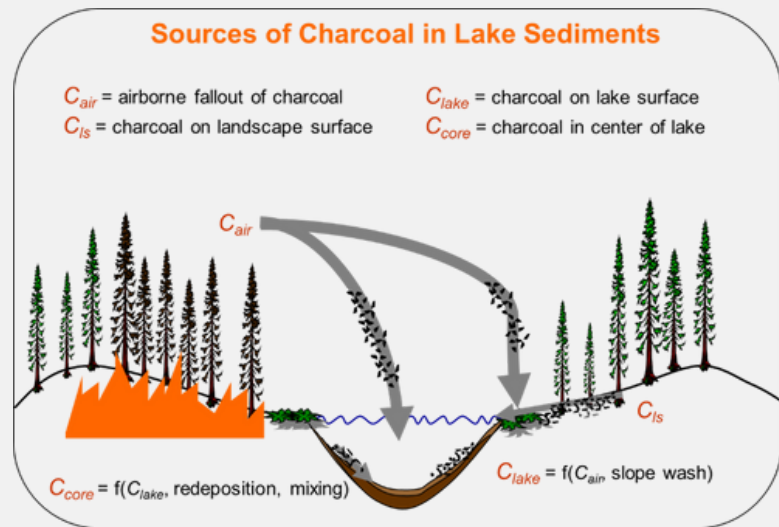
- Charcoal concentrations, which indicate fire events.
- Pollen composition, showing shifts in plant species over time.
- Organic matter content, revealing changes in climate, hydrology, and erosion patterns.

Each layer in a sediment core corresponds to a different point in history, with deeper layers representing older time periods. By dating these layers using radiocarbon analysis, researchers can construct a timeline of fire activity stretching back thousands of years.

Fire History Recorded in the Sediments of Lake Ogaromtoc

The sediment cores from Lake Ogaromtoc tell a compelling story of fire's role in shaping the landscape of Six Rivers National Forest. The data suggests a distinct pattern:

- Frequent, low-intensity fires dominated the landscape for thousands of years.
 - Small, consistent charcoal deposits in the sediments indicate that fire was a regular and expected part of the ecosystem.
 - These fires likely resulted from natural ignitions (lightning) and cultural burning practices used by Indigenous peoples.
 - Frequent burning prevented heavy fuel accumulation, maintaining open woodlands with diverse plant and animal communities.
- Fire suppression caused an abrupt shift in the sediment record.
 - Beginning in the early 1900s, charcoal deposits in the sediment drastically decline, reflecting the onset of fire suppression policies.
 - Without regular fire, the landscape became denser and more fuel-loaded, leading to increased tree cover and reduced plant diversity.



- High-severity fires reappeared in recent layers of sediment.
- Over the past century, charcoal deposits in lake sediments become more erratic but much thicker, suggesting a shift toward less frequent but far more intense wildfires.
- This aligns with the modern trend of megafires, where long periods of fuel buildup result in catastrophic burns that torch entire landscapes instead of maintaining natural ecological balance.

These findings reinforce the conclusions drawn from tree ring studies—that fire was once a natural and necessary force in the region, and that removing it has led to larger, more destructive wildfires.

Vegetation Shifts in the Sediment Record

Beyond fire history, lake sediments provide insights into how forests and ecosystems have responded to climate change over thousands of years.

Pollen Analysis: Tracing Vegetation Changes

Pollen grains from plants settle in lake sediments over time, creating a detailed record of plant communities through history. By analyzing pollen concentrations in different sediment layers, we can determine:

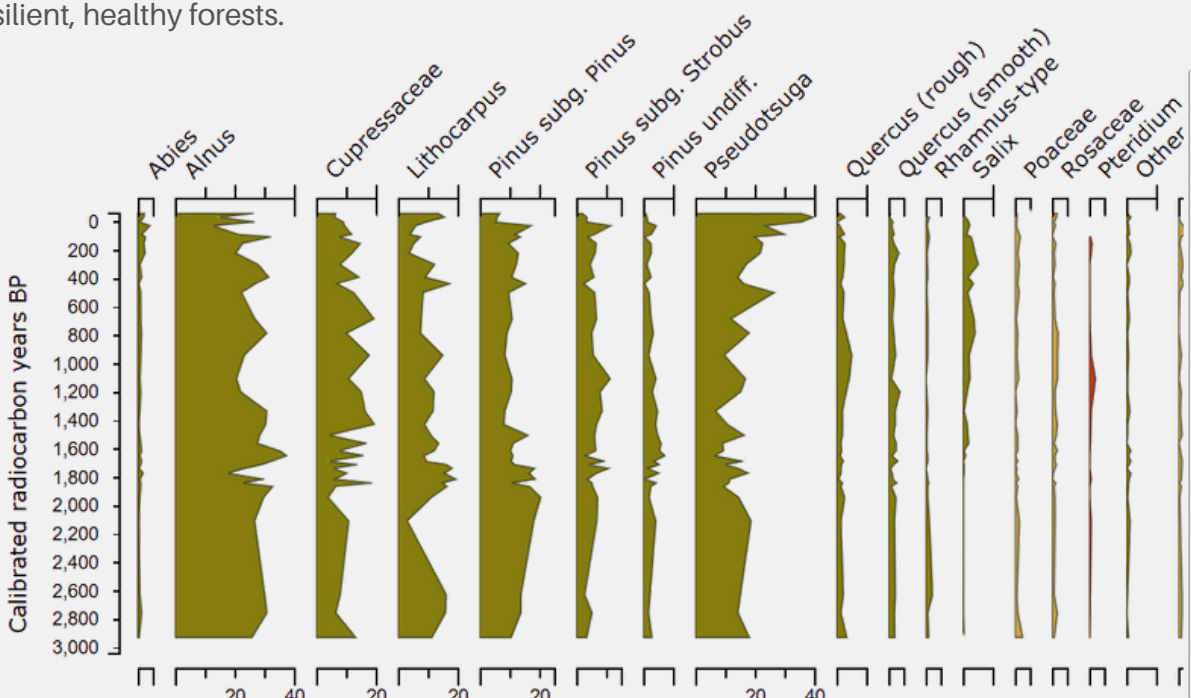
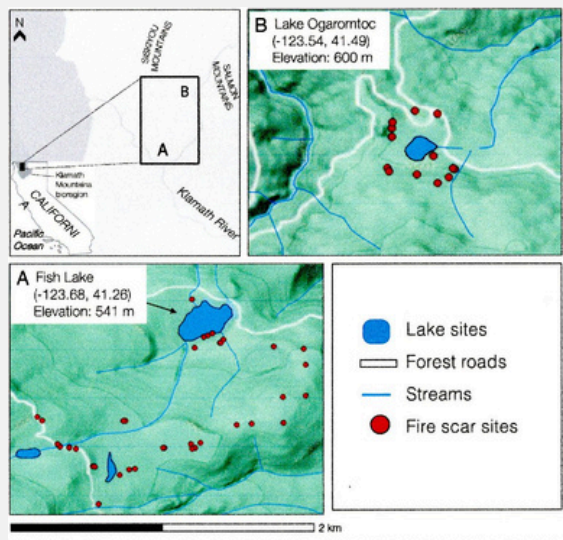
- Which species dominated the landscape in different time periods.
- How vegetation responded to shifts in temperature, precipitation, and fire regimes.
- The impacts of drought and wet periods on forest composition.

Sediment cores from Lake Ogaromtoc reveal that:

This diagram shows how plant communities around Fish Lake (or a nearby site) have changed over the past 3,000 years, based on pollen preserved in lake sediments. Each column represents a different plant group, with the shape of the shaded area showing how much of that plant’s pollen was found in each time period.

- Conifers like pine (Pinus), Douglas-fir (Pseudotsuga), and incense cedar (Cupressaceae) were historically dominant, along with hardwoods like tanoak (Lithocarpus) and oak (Quercus). This mix reflects a fire-adapted forest that was maintained by regular, low-intensity burns.
- About 200 years ago, fir (Abies) begins to increase dramatically, while incense cedar and other species decline.
- This shift likely reflects the suppression of fire after Euro-American settlement, which allowed fire-sensitive species like fir to become more dominant.
- Fir trees are less fire-tolerant, and their increase can make forests denser and more flammable—contributing to today’s risk of high-intensity wildfires.
- Open-land and grass species (like Poaceae) remain rare, supporting the idea that this area remained mostly forested, with fire helping to maintain canopy openings and diversity.

These trends support the fire history data from tree rings and charcoal: frequent fire kept forests open and diverse for thousands of years, but modern fire exclusion has shifted that balance. This long-term record helps explain how fire and vegetation have always been connected—and why bringing fire back through cultural burning and prescribed fire is critical for restoring resilient, healthy forests.



Organic Matter and Hydrology: Evidence of Past Climate Fluctuations

In addition to fire and vegetation changes, lake sediments record long-term shifts in water availability.

- Dark, organic-rich layers indicate periods of increased rainfall, when forests and lakes were healthy.
- Lighter, mineral-heavy layers suggest dry periods, when lower water levels and drought conditions reduced plant growth.

By comparing this data with tree ring drought records, scientists can map long-term climate cycles and better understand how future climate change may influence fire regimes.

Lessons for Forest and Fire Management

The long-term history recorded in Lake Ogaromtoc's sediments reinforces a critical message:

- Frequent, low-intensity fire maintained a balanced ecosystem for thousands of years.
- Fire suppression led to an unnatural buildup of fuels, making modern wildfires more destructive.
- Climate variability has always influenced fire patterns, and with today's accelerated climate change, proactive fire management is more crucial than ever.

Applying the Science to Fire Resilience Strategies

Findings from Lake Ogaromtoc can help inform wildfire resilience efforts in Six Rivers National Forest and beyond.

- Reintroducing prescribed fire and cultural burning will help restore the historical fire regime, reducing extreme wildfire risk.
- Understanding vegetation shifts over time allows managers to prioritize species and forest structures that are more climate- and fire-resilient.
- Incorporating Indigenous knowledge and fire stewardship—which aligns with both tree ring and sediment evidence—can ensure that fire is restored in a way that benefits both people and ecosystems. The combined evidence from tree rings and lake sediments tells a powerful story: fire has long been a natural and necessary force in Six Rivers National Forest. Fire exclusion has disrupted this balance, leading to fuel buildup, shifts in forest composition, and more destructive wildfires.

By restoring prescribed fire, cultural burning, and adaptive forest management, we can build a more resilient landscape—one that works with fire instead of against it. The past has shown us what works. Now, it's time to act.

Join the Del Norte PBA on our website:
www.delnortefsc.org/pba



In Defense of Defensible Space

Have you heard of “Herd Immunity”?

Wildfire season in California is no longer something we can ignore. The increasing frequency and intensity of wildfires have made it clear that no community is immune. While we often focus on fire suppression, another critical factor in protecting our homes and communities is defensible space.

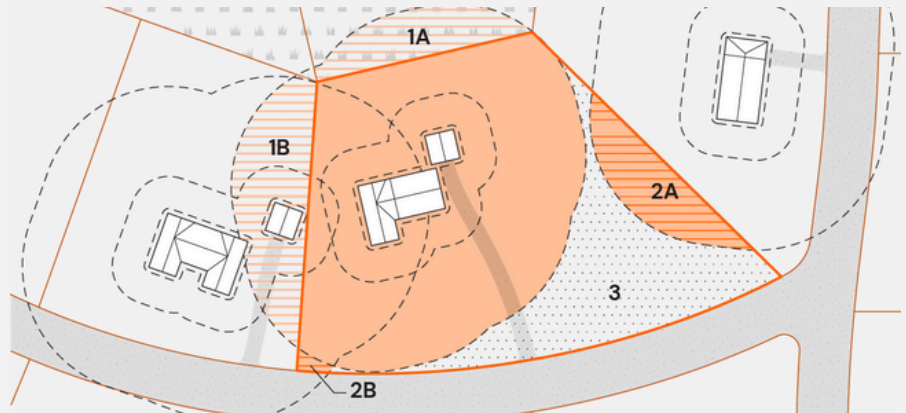
Why You Should Care About Your Community

In an article recently published in The Triplicate, we explored how creating defensible space around homes is not just an individual responsibility but a community-wide necessity. The concept is similar to herd immunity in public health—when enough people take preventive action, the entire group benefits. By managing vegetation and reducing flammable materials, we can create a landscape that slows the spread of fire, protecting not just individual homes but entire neighborhoods. This article expands on those ideas, delving into California’s legal requirements, the real risks posed by urban wildfires, and how collective action can make a difference.



What Is Defensible Space and Why Does It Matter?

Defensible space refers to the buffer zone homeowners create around their structures to reduce the risk of fire ignition. The goal is to slow or stop the spread of wildfire before it reaches homes, providing a safer environment for firefighters and increasing the chances of structural survival.



This map shows a cluster of neighboring properties, with overlapping defensible space zones in need of coordinated wildfire resilience planning. While 100 feet of Defensible Space is the law, we must work together across boundaries collaboratively to achieve community protection.

California law requires property owners in wildfire-prone areas to maintain defensible space around their homes. Under Public Resources Code (PRC) 4291, residents must clear flammable vegetation within 100 feet of structures. The law outlines three key zones:

Zone 0 (0-5 feet from the home): Also called the “ember-resistant zone,” this area should be free of flammable materials. Keeping it clear of mulch, dry leaves, and combustible decks can prevent embers from igniting a structure.

Zone 1 (5-30 feet from the home): This zone requires the reduction of flammable plants, tree trimming, and removal of dead vegetation.

Zone 2 (30-100 feet from the home): Here, vegetation should be thinned, grasses mowed, and trees spaced to prevent crown fires.

While these laws are essential, compliance varies. Many property owners either aren’t aware of their responsibilities or choose not to follow them. Unfortunately, one unprepared home can threaten an entire neighborhood, especially when urban wildfires spread house to house.

The Dangers of Urban Wildfire Spread



One of the most devastating aspects of wildfires in recent years has been the rapid spread through urban and suburban neighborhoods. Unlike fires that primarily consume wildland vegetation, urban wildfires ignite homes and leap from one structure to another. This phenomenon was tragically evident in the Camp Fire (2018), which leveled Paradise, CA, and the Tubbs Fire (2017), which devastated Santa Rosa. In both cases, homes provided the fuel load that accelerated the spread of flames, overwhelming firefighting resources and causing massive losses of life and property.

How does this happen?

- Embers Travel Miles: **Wind-driven embers** can ignite homes far ahead of the fire front. Once a home ignites, it becomes a source of embers for neighboring properties.
- Flammable Landscaping and Materials: Many homes have combustible fences, decks, and **vegetation that create a direct path for fire to spread**.
- House-to-House Ignition: **Once one home burns, radiant heat and direct flame contact easily ignite adjacent structures**, especially in densely packed neighborhoods.

Creating defensible space helps disrupt these fire pathways. A neighborhood where every home has defensible space is far less likely to experience catastrophic losses than one where properties are unprepared.

Defensible Space: A Community Responsibility

We often think of defensible space as an individual action—something you do to protect your home. But the truth is, defensible space is most effective when entire communities participate. A well-maintained property is at risk if neighbors are neglecting theirs.

The “Herd Immunity” Concept Applied to Wildfire

In public health, herd immunity occurs when a high percentage of a population is vaccinated or protected against a disease, reducing the chances of an outbreak. Hospitals can treat the few who are sick; they won’t be overwhelmed by the many and the likelihood of it spreading throughout the “herd” is lessened. The same principle applies to wildfire resilience. If enough homes in a community have defensible space, the risk of home-to-home fire spread is significantly reduced, and firefighters can defend all the homes effectively.

Consider these scenarios:

1. In a prepared community: Homes are surrounded by nonflammable landscaping, and residents comply with defensible space laws. A wildfire moves into the area, but because fuels are reduced, the fire slows. Firefighters have a chance to intervene, and most homes survive.
2. In an unprepared community: Dense vegetation, overgrown brush, and flammable materials surrounds a few homes. Those structures ignite, and the fire spreads rapidly to neighboring houses, causing a chain reaction that destroys the neighborhood.

By working together, communities can create a network of protection that enhances everyone’s safety.





THIS MONTH'S CHORE

Be a Good Neighbor with Defensible Space

Wildfire preparedness isn't just about protecting your own home—it's about **strengthening your entire community's resilience**. When it comes to defensible space, being a good neighbor means looking beyond your property lines and working together to reduce fire risk. Here are some ways to ensure your property is fire-ready while also helping those around you.

1. Keep Your Own Defensible Space in Check - Before worrying about what others are doing, start with your own property. Regularly maintain your zones, ensuring:

- ✓ Leaves, pine needles, and flammable debris are cleared from roofs and gutters.
- ✓ Firewood and other combustible materials are stored at least 30 feet from your home.
- ✓ Grass is mowed and vegetation is trimmed, especially near structures.
- ✓ Trees are pruned to eliminate ladder fuels and provide 10 feet of clearance between branches and structures.

A well-maintained property encourages others to follow suit. When neighbors see you putting in the effort, they're more likely to do the same. Invite neighbors to participate in group clean-ups or work parties.

2. Offer a Helping Hand - Not everyone has the ability to manage their defensible space. Elderly neighbors, those with physical limitations, or people unfamiliar with wildfire preparedness may need assistance. **Offer to help with yard work or connect them with local resources, such as the Del Norte Fire Safe Council's Wildfire Resilience Crew or grant-funded programs for fuel reduction.**

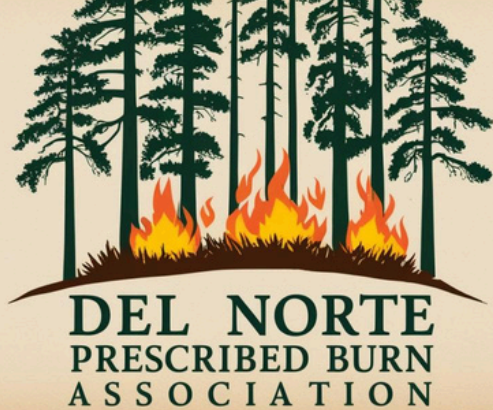
3. Coordinate with Property Lines in Mind - Wildfire doesn't stop at fences. If you share a boundary with a neighbor, **discuss mutual fuel reduction efforts**. Overgrown brush or hazardous trees near property lines can threaten multiple homes. Consider splitting the cost of tree removal or working together on a joint workday to tackle shared concerns.

4. Be Fire-Smart About Landscaping - If you're updating landscaping, choose fire-resistant plants and avoid species that generate heavy dry fuels, such as junipers or highly resinous pines. Gravel pathways and well-spaced, healthy trees help slow fire spread while maintaining curb appeal.

5. Stay Informed and Share Resources - Wildfire preparedness is an ongoing effort. **Keep up with burn bans, Red Flag warnings, and local defensible space requirements.** Share updates with neighbors, whether through social media, local meetings, or casual conversations. If you've learned new tips about fire-resistant home improvements or cost-share programs, spread the word!

6. Plan for Emergencies Together - Know your **evacuation routes** and encourage neighbors to do the same. Discuss contingency plans, including communication strategies and transportation for those who might need assistance in an emergency.

By taking action on your property and fostering a fire-conscious community, you're doing more than just protecting your home—you're strengthening the resilience of your entire neighborhood. Defensible space isn't just an individual responsibility; it's a collective effort that benefits everyone.



A Growing Movement - Del Norte PBA in the News!

In March, the Del Norte PBA was featured in Redwood Voice, where we shared our mission of bringing prescribed fire back to Del Norte County. The article highlighted the importance of community-led fire management and the growing interest in prescribed burning across our region.

We had a fantastic workshop in March, where new and experienced burners came together to learn, practice, and prepare for our upcoming burn season. But we're not stopping there—our next big event is coming up April 25-27, and we're inviting everyone to take part in this exciting opportunity to apply what we've learned and get fire on the ground!

Why Prescribed Fire?

For thousands of years, fire was an essential tool for maintaining the health of our landscapes. Indigenous communities used fire to promote wildlife habitat, improve plant diversity, and reduce dangerous fuel loads. But over the past century, fire suppression policies have left our forests and grasslands overgrown, leading to more intense and destructive wildfires.

Prescribed burning is one of the most effective ways to reduce this risk. By working with fire instead of against it, we can restore balance, protect homes, and make our landscapes more resilient. We can also shape our properties to grow what we would like to see, and less of what we don't. Controlling invasive species, or just promoting growth of the species that fit your area, fire is a useful and fun way to improve your landscape. The Del Norte PBA is here to help landowners and community members learn how to safely and effectively use fire as a management tool.


🔥 No experience? No problem! The PBA is all about education and teamwork. We'll teach you everything you need to know, and you'll work alongside experienced burn leaders to gain hands-on skills.

So Get Ready to Burn with the Del Norte Prescribed Burn Association!

The Del Norte Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) is picking up steam, and we want YOU to be part of it! Whether you're a landowner looking to reduce wildfire risk, a community member interested in fire ecology, or just someone who wants to get outdoors and be part of a hands-on, rewarding experience—now is the perfect time to join the PBA!



April 25-27 PBA Workshop – Get Ready to Burn!

 Dates: April 25-27, 2025

 Location: Rock Creek Ranch (Upper Parking Lot)
2475 S Fork Rd

 Time: 9 AM to 4 PM

Free Registration Required:

Register on our website www.delnortefsc.org/pba

This workshop will focus on hands-on prescribed fire operations, where participants will get real experience with:

- ✓ Preparing fire breaks and control lines
- ✓ Using drip torches and ignition patterns
- ✓ Managing fire behavior in different fuel types
- ✓ Monitoring weather and safety conditions
- ✓ Learning suppression techniques for containment

We'll be burning each day—giving everyone a chance to learn by doing and see prescribed fire in action!

This is an incredible opportunity for anyone interested in learning about fire, gaining practical skills, and contributing to wildfire resilience in our county. Whether you attend one day or all three, we'd love to have you there!

Spring Burning Season – Get Involved!

Joining the Del Norte PBA is easy and FREE!

- 1** Sign up for the April 25-27 workshop – No prior experience needed!
- 2** Sign up on our website, www.delnortefsc.org/pba
- 3** Spread the word – Tell your friends, neighbors, and family about prescribed fire!

To register for the workshop or learn more, contact us at aaron@delnortefsc.org or visit www.delnortefsc.org/pba



Interviews

Aaron Babcock DNFSC Coordinator

For this interview, we're spotlighting another important member of the Del Norte Fire Safe Council team—someone whose work often happens behind the scenes but plays a vital role in keeping our programs running and our communities engaged. With a deep commitment to wildfire resilience and a passion for community outreach, this team member has helped connect residents, partners, and projects in meaningful ways that continue to strengthen our mission.

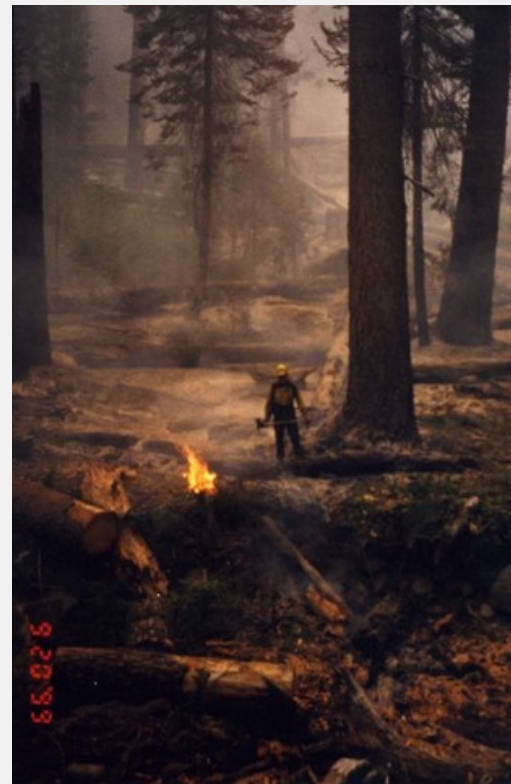
Throughout our conversation, they shared their perspective on what it takes to build lasting partnerships, organize effective outreach, and navigate the complex world of wildfire preparedness in rural communities. They spoke about the importance of listening, adapting, and staying rooted in purpose—even when challenges arise. Their story is a reminder that wildfire resilience isn't just about cutting brush or setting good fire—it's also about building trust, sharing knowledge, and creating space for everyone to be part of the solution.

1. What first sparked your interest in wildfire management, and how has your journey evolved from suppression to resilience and prescribed fire?

I started fighting wildfires in 1999, mostly in suppression. Over time, I realized suppression is a last resort — it's entirely reactionary. The people I saw lose their lives, and the homes and towns that were lost, weren't just victims of fire. They were victims of our approach. We were trying to force the environment to adapt to us instead of adapting ourselves to the environment — and we were doing a piss poor job of it. Greed, politics, lack of understanding, fear, and apathy were driving the destruction. So I decided to do something different. I started a business focused on helping people make their homes defensible — doing the work for them, and teaching them how to maintain it. But then the housing market took a nose dive, and the market crashed. No one could afford to do the work anymore, and government programs were few and far between. I moved back up to Grants Pass and shifted gears, joining the Siskiyou Mountain Club. It wasn't fire work at first — it was about restoring trail systems, many of them through burned landscapes. But being out there, surrounded by the impacts of fire and abandonment, I felt pulled back toward wildfire mitigation. I knew I had more to give, and that's what led me back to the work I'm doing now.

2. You've worked across a range of landscapes and communities — what experiences or lessons stand out as most influential in shaping your approach to fire and land stewardship?

My time as a firefighter was incredibly formative in shaping my leadership style. I was thrown into tough situations early on, and I learned how to lead through hard work and clear-headed decision-making. Emotions didn't have much of a place on the fireline — you had to act, adapt, and push through. I learned just how much the body and mind are capable of when you're under pressure. That experience taught me to expect a lot — from myself and from others — and to stay focused when it matters most. Later, with the Siskiyou Mountain Club, I developed a very different but equally important part of my leadership approach. There, it wasn't about force — it was about creativity, resourcefulness, and doing a lot with less. I worked with people from all different backgrounds and skill levels, and I found deep satisfaction in guiding and watching people grow. I didn't force anything — I encouraged risk-taking, independence, and real problem-solving. That's something I think this country could use a lot more of: the ability to step up, take initiative, and figure things out without needing a playbook. Those two chapters — firefighting and trail restoration — gave me a balance of grit and grace. They're both central to how I lead now at DNFSC: expecting excellence, encouraging independence, and focusing on meaningful, community-rooted work.



3. What led you to take on a leadership role at the Del Norte Fire Safe Council, and what challenges or opportunities do you see as unique to this region?

When I stepped into the County Coordinator role in 2022, it was because I saw real potential here. Del Norte County is remote, heavily forested, and largely underserved when it comes to fire planning and support. But it's also a place with strong cultural roots, deep tribal knowledge, and a community that cares about the land — even if they haven't always had the tools or resources to manage it.

We've got extreme fuel loading, aging infrastructure, and limited capacity. But that's also the opportunity. We aren't locked into outdated systems. We can build something smarter — something local, collaborative, and built to last. DNFSC can be the backbone that brings partners together: tribes, landowners, agencies, and everyday residents. That kind of work isn't always flashy, but it's how real change happens.

4. How are you building community support and trust around practices like prescribed burning, especially in a place where that might still be unfamiliar or controversial?

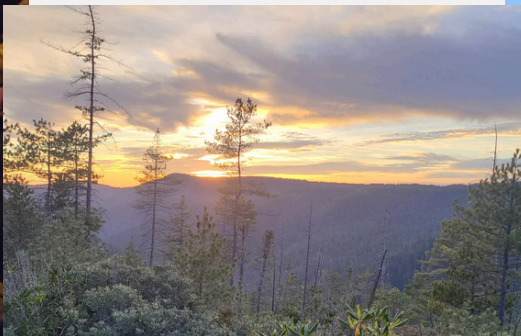
It starts with being present and being honest. I don't walk into a room trying to impress anyone — I show up, I listen, and I tell the truth. A lot of people are nervous about fire, and for good reason. Some people, even some leaders, aren't stoked about change; they see it as a risk. But most of the fear comes from not understanding. So we talk about fire. We explain how fire works, how it's always been part of this landscape, and how the right kind of fire — cultural fire, prescribed fire — can actually protect homes and ecosystems.

That's where the Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) comes in. It's not just a tool — it's a way to bring people together, train them up, and give them ownership. When neighbors plan and burn together, they learn by doing. They stop seeing fire as something that's "out there," and start seeing it as something they can understand and use. That shift in mindset is what builds trust — not just in fire, but in each other.

5. Looking ahead, what's your long-term vision for DNFSC, and how do you see its role evolving in the face of increasing wildfire risks and changing land management priorities?

I want DNFSC to become a model for what local fire resilience can look like — something grounded in community, driven by purpose, and built for the long haul. Our role is not just to react to wildfire threats, but to fundamentally reshape how our communities live with fire. That means fully supporting the Prescribed Burn Association, training and retaining skilled local crews, and working alongside tribes, residents, and agencies to create fire-adapted communities. We need to transfer ownership **and responsibility** back to our communities.

I also want to see a strong workforce pipeline that provides good jobs — real, meaningful work — in land management and fire. From forest thinning byproducts like timber, firewood, and wood chips, to innovative uses like bio-char, we can build a local economy that supports both fire resilience and economic development. These aren't just jobs — they're meaningful careers that restore our landscapes and strengthen our communities. We need people who can use chainsaws and drip torches, but also who can educate, lead, and organize. If someone wants to invent a use for byproducts, let them. We need to get out of our box. We're not going to solve this by outsourcing it. Nor are we going to solve it by relying on top-heavy agencies. We're going to solve it by growing our own capacity — from the ground up, with knowledge, common sense, and a lot of grit. Ultimately, I see DNFSC as a hub — for education, action, and opportunity. A place where solutions are community-powered and where the responsibility for our future is put back where it belongs: in our own hands.



Fire Resistant Homes

Understanding and supporting the implementation of fuel reduction, prescribed fire, and defensible space is a massive step in the right direction. However, building fire-resistant homes can't be left out as an extremely important part of the solution. Building a fire-resistant home typically only costs 10-25% more than a standard home, and these upfront costs can significantly reduce risks, increase value, and reduce long-term expenses. The final cost difference depends on several key factors:

Cost of Fire-Resistant Homes

Fire-resistant homes are designed with specific materials and methods to minimize fire risks.

These include:

- Roofing: Metal, clay, or concrete tiles (fire-resistant roofing costs \$10–\$30 per square foot compared to \$5–\$10 for asphalt shingles).
- Siding: Fiber cement, stucco, or fire-treated wood (costs \$5–\$15 per square foot compared to \$3–\$7 for vinyl).
- Windows: Double-paned or tempered glass (\$500–\$1,000 per window compared to \$300–\$600).
- Vents: Ember-resistant vents (\$10–\$20 each compared to \$5–\$10).
- Landscaping: Defensible space and fire-resistant plants (\$1.50 - \$3.00 per square foot).
- Construction Costs: Building a fire-resistant home can cost 10% to 20% more than a regular home, depending on the level of fire-hardening.

Cost Savings and Benefits

While the upfront costs are higher, fire-resistant homes:

- Lower Rates in High-Risk Areas: Homeowners in wildfire-prone areas may see insurance premiums reduced by 20%-40% for fire-resistant homes, depending on the level of fireproofing and local insurance policies.
- Improve Survivability: Fire-resistant materials and systems (like sprinklers and ember-resistant vents) significantly improve the chances of survival during a wildfire, giving occupants more time to evacuate safely.
- Increase property value becoming increasingly desirable in wildfire-prone regions.
- Improve energy efficiency, double-paned windows and heavy insulation lead to savings on heating and cooling costs over the home's lifespan.
- Reduce the risk of embers igniting nearby structures, contributing to community-wide wildfire resilience.

Home Size	Standard Home Cost	Fire-Resistant Home Cost	Cost Difference
1,500 sq. ft.	\$225,000 - \$375,000	\$270,000 - \$450,000	+\$45,000 - \$75,000
2,000 sq. ft.	\$300,000 - \$500,000	\$360,000 - \$600,000	+\$60,000 - \$100,000
2,500 sq. ft.	\$375,000 - \$625,000	\$450,000 - \$750,000	+\$75,000 - \$125,000



Component	Standard Materials	Fire-Resistant Materials	Cost Difference
Exterior Walls	Wood siding: \$5-\$8/sq. ft.	Fiber cement, stucco, or masonry: \$6-\$15/sq. ft.	+\$1-\$7/sq. ft.
Roofing	Asphalt shingles: \$4-\$7/sq. ft.	Metal, tile, or Class A shingles: \$6-\$12/sq. ft.	+\$2-\$5/sq. ft.
Windows	Single-pane glass: \$15-\$20/sq. ft.	Double-paned, tempered glass: \$25-\$40/sq. ft.	+\$10-\$20/sq. ft.
Doors	Standard wood door: \$400-\$600	Fire-rated door: \$500-\$1,000	+\$100-\$400 per door
Decking	Wood decking: \$10-\$15/sq. ft.	Fire-resistant composite, metal, or treated wood: \$15-\$25/sq. ft.	+\$5-\$10/sq. ft.
Framing	Wood framing: \$6-\$10/sq. ft.	Heavy timber or fire-resistant steel: \$10-\$15/sq. ft.	+\$4-\$5/sq. ft.
Ventilation	Standard vents: \$50-\$80 each	Ember-resistant vents: \$120-\$200 each	+\$70-\$120 per vent
Sprinkler System	Not included	\$1.50-\$3 per sq. ft.	+\$3,000-\$6,000 for 2,000 sq. ft.
Landscaping	Basic: \$1/sq. ft.	Defensible space landscaping: \$1.50-\$3/sq. ft.	+\$0.50-\$2/sq. ft.

2025

SPRING PROJECTS

Del Norte Fire Safe Council

**Creativity, Adaptation, Hard Work
Putting Boots on the Ground**

Spring 2025 is a major season of progress for wildfire resilience and forest stewardship in Del Norte County. With active field projects, homeowner support, and community education underway, here's what we're focused on:

- Del Norte Wildfire Resilience Project (DNWRP): Our team is fully engaged in implementing DNWRP projects across the county to reduce fuels, support prescribed fire, and protect communities.
- South Gasquet Fuel Break: We expect to finish the majority of work on this critical fuel break, which provides a key buffer for the Gasquet area and surrounding landscapes.
- Rock Creek Community Wildfire Resilience Project (RCCWRP): This spring, we'll burn most of the hand piles generated during fuels treatment work to reduce wildfire risk and prepare the land for future maintenance.
- Countywide Free Chipping Days: We're hosting free chipping events across the county to support residents in creating defensible space and safely removing hazardous vegetation.
- Defensible Space Creation: Our Wildfire Resilience Crew will complete defensible space work for 25 homes this season, improving home ignition resistance and increasing neighborhood protection.
- Home Fire Risk Assessments: We will conduct 50 wildfire risk assessments to help property owners understand and reduce their fire risk.
- Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) Workshop – April 25–27: We're hosting a three-day workshop at Rock Creek Ranch to build capacity for good fire, train community members, and strengthen our local PBA network.
- Trail Maintenance – 25.8 Miles: We are beginning much-needed maintenance on 25.8 miles of public trails across Del Norte County. This work improves access for recreation, fire suppression, and prescribed fire operations, reinforcing the ties between trail systems and wildfire resilience.

Spring Goals

Defensible Space Created
25 Homes

WildFire Risk Assessments
50 Homes

Hazardous Vegetation Removed
5000 Cu. Yds. Chipped
27000 Cu. Yds. Burned

Vegetation Cut and Piled
1000 piles = 6500 Cu. Yds.

Prescribed Fire
30 Acres

Together, these efforts reflect our growing momentum to build safer communities, healthier forests, and long-term wildfire preparedness across Del Norte County.

Major Projects and Community Impact

Strengthening Wildfire Resilience: Fuel Break Construction South of Gasquet

The Del Norte Fire Safe Council (DNFSC), in collaboration with local property owners, is actively constructing a strategic shaded fuel break on the south side of Gasquet to enhance wildfire resilience and protect the community. This effort is part of the Del Norte Wildfire Resilience Project, designed to reduce hazardous fuels, create defensible space, and improve firefighter access in the event of a wildfire.

A fuel break is a carefully planned, thinned area of vegetation that helps slow the spread of wildfire, reducing its intensity and providing a buffer between wildlands and homes. The south Gasquet fuel break follows key ridgelines and property boundaries to create a more fire-adapted landscape while maintaining the natural beauty of the area. Through strategic thinning, removal of ladder fuels, and clearing of dead or hazardous trees, we are improving fire safety for both residents and first responders.



This project is a community-driven effort, with private landowners working alongside the DNFSC to implement wildfire mitigation strategies on their properties. Many of these landowners have firsthand experience with the increasing wildfire risks in our region and recognize the importance of proactive fuel reduction. Their willingness to participate and contribute resources is critical to the success of this fuel break.

The need for proactive wildfire mitigation in the Gasquet area has never been greater. With hotter, drier conditions increasing fire risk, this fuel break serves as an essential first step in protecting homes and infrastructure. Additionally, the work being done now will help facilitate future prescribed burns, which will maintain the fuel break and promote a healthier, more resilient forest.

As work continues, we encourage more community members to get involved. Wildfire preparedness is a shared responsibility, and by working together, we can create a safer future for Gasquet. For more information about this project or to learn how you can participate, visit www.delnortefsc.org or attend an upcoming community wildfire planning meeting.



"The South Gasquet Fuel Break isn't just about slowing wildfires—it's about neighbors coming together to protect their homes, steward the land, and create a safer, more resilient future where fire can be a tool for renewal rather than a threat to our community."

UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring is here, and it's time to get ready for fire season. The Del Norte Fire Safe Council (DNFSC) is excited to announce two great opportunities for residents to build wildfire resilience in our communities. Whether you're interested in hands-on fire experience or getting support for your own property, we've got you covered.

April PBA Workshop at Rock Creek Ranch (April 25-27)

Join us in April for a hands-on Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) Workshop at Rock Creek Ranch along South Fork Road. This workshop will run over three days and will include live fire each day—an opportunity to safely learn how prescribed fire can be used as a tool to reduce fuels and improve ecosystem health.

No experience is necessary. The workshop is open to landowners, community members, fire practitioners, and anyone curious about how prescribed fire works. You'll receive basic training in fire behavior, burn planning, tools, safety, and operations. Our team of experienced burn leaders will guide participants through all aspects of putting fire on the ground, with an emphasis on safety, teamwork, and good fire practices.

Lodging is provided at Rock Creek Ranch, making it easy to stay engaged and focused throughout the weekend. This is a great chance to meet others who are passionate about restoring healthy fire to our landscapes and becoming part of Del Norte's growing Prescribed Burn Association.

Sign up now at www.delnortefsc.org to reserve your spot—spaces are limited!

May is Wildfire Preparedness Month - Free Services for Property Owners

May is Wildfire Preparedness Month, and the Del Norte Fire Safe Council will be offering free chipping and free home wildfire risk assessments to residents throughout the county. We'll also be taking sign-ups for free defensible space construction, which will be scheduled and completed throughout the summer.

Here's when and where we'll be offering these services

- **May 3-4 - Gasquet**
- **May 10-11 - Hiouchi / Fort Dick / Smith River**
- **May 17-18 - Rock Creek / Big Flat**

On-site chipping will help you dispose of branches, brush, and small trees from your defensible space work. Our team will also conduct home risk assessments to help you understand how to better protect your property from wildfire. At each location, we'll be taking sign-ups for defensible space construction—this includes trimming vegetation, clearing around homes and access routes, and improving conditions for firefighter safety. Work will be scheduled and carried out during the summer months.

How to Participate

To register for the April PBA Workshop or to get on the schedule for free chipping, home assessments, or defensible space construction sign-ups, visit www.delnortefsc.org or contact Aaron at aaron@delnortefsc.org.

Working together, we can make Del Norte County more fire-ready and resilient. Whether it's through learning how to use good fire or preparing your own home and property, your participation makes a difference.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR SERVICES, OUR PROJECTS, AND HOW YOU CAN BE MORE FIRE SAFE PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBPAGE.

WWW.DELNORTEFSC.ORG

We never expect but greatly appreciate donations.

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We appreciate your help!



RESILIENCE



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DEL NORTE FIRE SAFE COUNCIL
WILDFIRE MAGAZINE

WINTER 2025