

Beneficial Use of Fire: Report of Futuring Group 7¹

Futuring Group 7 identified nine trends that frame the way prescribed fire will be used in the future. The group identified three key visions and associated strategies.

IDENTIFIED TRENDS

1. Continuing need for correlation of fire behavior with fire effects.
2. More information becoming available on the effect of fire on specific ecosystems.
3. The public at large giving less support to the exploitive use of natural resources.
4. Wildland owners and managers conducting prescribed burns with or without research needed to help them meet their objectives.
5. Increasing interest by both the public and land managers in the utilization of fire and fire effects in land management.
6. Public perceiving fire more favorably, as an alternative to other methods of land management.
7. Decreasing reliance on federal agencies to research fire effects, and an increasing dependence on research by universities and consultants.
8. Litigation process requires more data on fire effects.
9. Greater public understanding and interest in the environment is resulting in increased public involvement in wildland management.

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KEY VISIONS AND ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES

Scientific Fire Effects Information

Scientific fire effects information would be available to support or justify land management practices involving the use of fire. Questions concerning fire effects may be used in the the litigation process.

Strategies

- Increase funding by lobbying key people such as legislators.
- Assess legal response of land managers for managing fire effects (laws may provide justification for funding collection of data).

Fire Effects Related to Ecosystems

Fire effects research would be expanded and organized around unifying integrated ecosystem level concepts and would be conducted by interdisciplinary teams of agency, academic, and private researchers and the technology transferred to land managers.

Strategies

- Increase money invested in research.
- Define research needs, skills and relevant geographical areas.
- Develop a public education program.

Fire Effects Information as a Guide to Managers

Specific fire effects/fire regime research results would be employed by land managers to guide prescribed fire management for natural ecosystems and multiple use wildlands.

Automatic data processing methods would be an integral part of the process.

Strategies

- Continue and expand work toward fire effects data base design and development.

- Use more and better technology transfer methods.

- Increase the level of fire effects research funding.