



The Wildfire Paradox | Historic Context for Fires in the California Region

Our relationship with fire is becoming even more complex. This is what the Forest Service is doing about it.





All of us together — diverse employees, partners, volunteers and Tribes — conserving California's forests and grasslands.



Add the challenge of climate change — severe droughts, massive rain events, and wildfires now happening every few years.





Fire in California — a natural history but also shaped by human actions through time.





And so began the era of full fire suppression — requiring all fires be extinguished within 24 hours.





From 1940s to World War II, timber became critical for war effort. So, figures like Smokey Bear reminded public about danger of forest fires.



ONLY YOU



“Inevitably, our future holds a lot of fire. The goal is always to find and employ the right mix of fire for the land.”

— Fire Historian Stephen Pyne



We're all working to get back to where we can co-exist with fire. This is the challenge of our time.

