

America’s Forests in the Balance, A National Emergency: A Call to Action¹

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The 2024 wildland fire season is still roaring. 33,735 fires have already burned 6,418,477 acres. The number of fires is less than this time last year [39,703], acres burned about three times more; +4,344,899 acres. 1,739,846 acres are currently burning. The 2024 fire season is on pace to be one of the most destructive in recent memory. Projections indicate at the current pace, about 10 million acres will burn in 2024. The ten-year average is 41,704 wildfires burning 5,066,024 at the same time this year. This *A Call to Action*, started over four years ago, is an attempt to keep a National Emergency of destructive wildfires due to the lack of forest maintenance for the past 30+ year at the forefront of the American people. To date, 80 professionals [and counting] have contributed to this *A Call to Action*. Sign-on to the *Petition* [Petition Link: <http://chng.it/bGsyZvSb>]. As of September 2, 2024, there are 5,845 signatories. Also, see the posting on [Evergreen Magazine](#) [please be patient for the positing of this latest revision]. A dominant theme of *A Call to Action* is “First, Put Out the Fire.” This is currently in direct opposition to the USDA Forest Service and their concept of “[managed or beneficial wildfire](#).” To be clear, at this time the idea of “managed” wildfire is not working; it’s not logical. Many feel it is a ploy to accumulate false restoration accomplishments. Putting all fires out immediately is cost effective; large fires are unimaginably expensive and destructive. Annual damages from wildfires are approaching \$1 trillion! Let us not forget that [smoke is also a horrendous killer](#). So, for now, it is critical to put all wildfires out quickly with an aggressive Initial Attack. The *National Wildfire Institute [NWI] and Others* made six [recommendations](#) for the *Chief’s Annual Letter of Intent*. None of the recommendations were included. Please see [Appendix A.54](#). Also, check out [page 6](#) of the full document. It includes “...some really important stuff.” America’s forestlands are at risk; lack of forest maintenance is a key culprit. Take a look at the [National Wildfire Outlook](#) through November 2024 by the National Interagency Fire Center. This is very instructional. Please get involved to alter the direction of this destructive force – uncontrollable wildfires and the madness of “managed” fire. With the current land conditions, wildfires are neither *managed* or *beneficial*. *A Call to Action* is continually updated. **This is Revision 18.1. A special note for this revision:** The 2024 fire season has a long way to go. We must stop the absurd notion of “managed” wildfire. Look at the results so far. Less fires, three times the acres destroyed. Managing “wild things” has always been tricky. We have to stop gambling with people’s lives. “First, Put Out the Fire.”

Just click on the following two *hyperlinks* to see the latest Summary and Full Document versions:

THE FULL DOCUMENT: [A Call to Action, rev. 18.1, September 2, 2024](#)

THE SUMMARY: [A Call to Action, rev. 18.1, September 2, 2024](#)



A Call to Action

REV. 18.1

In 2001, when “Managing the Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment” -- the *National Fire Plan*² -- was completed, there were about 38 million acres of our national forestlands [forests are more than just trees] classified as high risk to fire. It is now about 90+ million acres. Why? Because for at least the last three decades, we have significantly underfunded forest maintenance [*aka*, forest management] work that could help restore the health and resiliency of our forested landscapes and help prevent large, intense wildfires. By shifting money *from* sustainable forest maintenance actions *to* fire suppression, today’s forests have become overgrown and act like tinderboxes. Federal forests call for at least 8-9 million acres to be restored annually for the next decade, including timber harvesting, fuel reduction, thinning of non-commercial sized trees, various fish and wildlife habitat improvement projects and plantings; about 20 million acres per year for all forestlands.

These are different times. With the current land conditions and the impacts of a changing climate, the idea of allowing a wildfire to burn anywhere, for whatever reason, is unacceptable and must be stopped; no exceptions. Check out again the earlier contribution sustained in this revision of *A Call to Action*, including, the extremely instructional interview between Jim Petersen and Frank Carroll [[Appendix A.45](#)]; it’s a classic. Also, why is it so hard to comprehend that the [concept of “managed” wildfire is not working?](#) 🔥

This latest revision of *A Call to Action* is again being sent far and wide to decision-makers – members of the current Administration and Congress; County leaders; and more. Please, share your voice so we can begin to alter the direction of this destructive force – uncontrollable wildfires. As usual, I urge all of you to not be confused by the [intellectual argument](#) that wildfires are helpful to ecosystem health. At this point in time, wildfires are not. The current landscape scale conditions, especially in the western part of America, will not allow the “managed” or “beneficial” fire concept to work effectively; it’s simply too dangerous, wildfires will escape the “managed” fire “containment zone.” To make it easier for the reader, we have created a “Graphic Organizer.” Put your cursor in the desired box and “click”. Detailed information from *A Call to Action* will come up.



[Graphic Organizer](#)

¹ Coordinated by Michael T. Rains with input from a wide-range of professionals; 80 and counting.

² Michael T. Rains, USDA Forest Service [ret.]. Lead Author, US Department of Agriculture. 2001.