

Name

Professor's Name

Course

Date

Wildfire Management Strategies

In the global landscape, wildfire sizes, severity, and frequency of occurrence have risen, resulting in numerous fatalities and high costs incurred by firefighting initiatives. According to North et al., most accessible forests prefer wildfire suppression since it is more comfortable and less costly to suppress such fires when small (1280). For example, the USA can crush 98% of wildfires before escalating to reach 120 ha in size. However, the remaining 2% of hard-to-contain fires often occur in extreme weather conditions (North et al. 1280). Most of these wildfires occur in fuel-loaded forests, consuming approximately 97% of the firefighting costs (North et al. 1280). Moreover, the changing climatic conditions coupled with decades of fuel accumulation end up causing significant difficulties and raising prices to the initiatives intended to suppress wildfires. Though America has made adequate efforts to deal with fires, there is a need to devise additional wildfire management strategies since the minute cases of wildfires under extreme weather conditions can be very costly to contain.

Firstly, prescribed burning is a strategy that could reduce the risks and intensity of wildfire conflagration. The policy originated in the Smokey Bear era during the early 20th century (Donovan and Brown 73). When enacting the regulation, the debate revolved around the appropriateness of fire in the management of forests. As a result, the proponents of this strategy stated that it was essential to have regular fires at restricted intensities to help remove extra fuel that would eventually build up and pose more risks of destructive fires (Donovan and Brown 74).

However, more than a century since its implementation, America has experienced increased fuel loading and significant ecological changes. Besides, the opponents of this guiding principle argued that prescribed fires were responsible for killing small trees that would have grown to maturity in the future (Donovan and Brown 74). Therefore, it is possible to utilize prescribed burning for wildfire management on conditions that do not raise maintenance costs.

Secondly, limited suppression is another possible strategy to reduce the risks and intensity of wildfire conflagration. This policy's history goes back to when the British army recorded a victory over the American rebels at Bunker Hill in 1775 (Donovan and Brown 73). When enacting this policy, the proponents believed limited suppression was an efficient way to deal with rising wildfire costs and damages. Most importantly, the policy supporters thought that since fires have been in forests for decades, limited suppression was the only way to get rid of the wildfires in a safe manner (Donovan and Brown 75). However, according to Donovan and Brown, the opponents to this procedure argue that it has shifted the forest's composition to more minor fire-tolerant species (73). Moreover, some individuals stated that limited suppression initiatives pay little concern to containment costs. Thus, despite its few setbacks, it is possible to utilize the limited suppression policy to prevent the escalation of wildfires when used appropriately.

Overall, the problems of wildfires have been affecting the USA for many decades. Despite instituting various initiatives, America still faces the challenge of dealing with a small percentage of uncontrollable fires propelled by adverse weather conditions. However, policies like limited suppression and prescribed burning could reduce the risks and intensity of wildfire conflagration. Hence, it is vital to observe adequate measures to ensure maximum outcomes from these two strategies.

Works Cited

- Donovan, H. Geoffrey, and Thomas, C. Brown. "Be Careful What You Wish For: The Legacy of Smokey Bear." *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2007, pp. 73-79.
- North, M. P, Stephens, S. L., Collins, B. M., Agee, J. K., Aplet, G., Franklin, J. F., and Fule, P. Z. "Reform Forest Fire Management." *Science*, vol. 349, no. 6254, 2015, pp. 1280- 1281.