

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AFE Members Ask Forest Service Chief to Reconsider 90-day Prescribed Fire Pause**

*Members of the Association for Fire Ecology jointly sign a letter to support the continued use of prescribed fire on national forest lands where local conditions are safe*

On June 6, 2022, the Association for Fire Ecology (AFE) sent a letter signed by 121 members to the USDA Forest Service Chief in response to the recent decision to implement a 90-day pause on prescribed fire on all national forest lands. The letter asks Chief Moore to consider re-instating prescribed burning in areas on US National Forests that are not in extreme drought during the 90-day pause. Many areas outside of the western US are not currently experiencing drought and show strong need for growing season burning.

Our nation's forests need prescribed fire now more than ever. Prescribed fires are a primary tool to abate wildfire risks, to expand strategic and tactical locations for wildfire suppression, and to maintain and reduce wildland fuels. They are also critical to restoring ecosystem resilience of native plant and animal communities and to improving the health of forests warmed and dried by climate change.

As part of AFE's mission, the organization is committed to continuously improving knowledge and practice with prescribed fire, fire behavior modeling, fire weather prediction, and trainings. AFE fully supports the USDA Forest Service's concerns over the safe application of prescribed fire and the national review that is underway. The data suggest that 99.7 to 99.8% of all prescribed fires stay within their boundaries and achieve the intended prescription; an even larger percentage avoid any damage to homes and other assets.

By supporting this request, wildland fire managers and researchers can continue achieving important prescribed fire outcomes where local conditions are safe and within prescription, rather than delaying this work due to a blanket 90-day pause across the nation.

**Signed letter sent to the USFS Chief:** [https://fireecology.org/s/AFE\\_Chief\\_Letter\\_Signed.pdf](https://fireecology.org/s/AFE_Chief_Letter_Signed.pdf)

**Images of Prescribed Fire:** <https://fireecology.org/photos?tag=Prescribed+Fire> (click image for caption and image credit)

**About AFE:** The Association for Fire Ecology is a professional organization dedicated to improving the knowledge of fire ecology and uses of fire in resilient landscape management. The organization works in the United States and internationally, with 550 members representing wildland fire scientists, ecologists, managers, students, and other professionals. For more information, visit <http://fireecology.org>.

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