

# Managed Process

# Firefighter and Public Safety

The actual management of wildland fire use requires strict planning and documentation procedures equivalent to those used on wildfires.

Fire use managers rely on the latest scientific information and technology to aid in managing fire use events. Some of the tools commonly used include: long-term fire behavior prediction models, real-time weather information, risk assessment models, GPS mapping, and Geographic Information System data.



Portable remote automatic weather station (RAWS)



Photo compliments of wildlandfire.com

Firefighter and public safety is the first priority every time. Development of the wildland fire implementation plan specifically addresses risks including threats to firefighters and public safety, urban development, and the environment.



Not only is firefighter and public safety our foremost concern when implementing wildland fire use, it is one of the primary reasons we are implementing the program. By allowing fire to resume its natural role on the landscape, we will eventually reduce the risk of larger and more intense fires which pose a greater risk to the safety of the public and also to the firefighters working to suppress these fires.



For more information:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot>

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Darby Ranger Station  
406-821-3913

Stevensville Ranger Station  
406-777-5461

Sula Ranger Station  
406-821-3201

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406-821-3269

# Wildland Fire Use

*"Managing fire to play its natural role"*

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# What is Fire Use?

**W**ildland fire use is managing a lightning-caused fire burning in an approved area (including wilderness and non-wilderness) to play its natural role in the life cycle of the forest.

**Not all lightning fires will be allowed to burn. Only carefully selected fires under certain conditions will be managed as wildland fire use.**

**By carefully choosing which fires to suppress and which to actively manage for resource benefit, managers can begin to return forests to a more natural, resilient and healthy condition.**



*Wildland fire use monitor*

## Natural Process

**F**ire experts and research findings agree that fire has played a crucial role in shaping our wildlands for thousands of years and is vital for the survival of many plants and animals.



**The effects of fire range from subtle to extreme and are influenced by the condition of forest fuels as well as landscape and weather conditions.**

**The benefits of fire use include: reduced risk of catastrophic fire, wildlife habitat improvement, fuels reduction, improved forest health, and reduction in future fire suppression costs.**



## Unnatural Build-up



*Photo compliments of wildlandfire.com*

**I**n many areas of the forest, nearly a century of suppression-oriented fire policy coupled with a very efficient initial attack program has contributed significantly to unnatural fuel conditions.

**Without periodic fire, forest vegetation accumulates to unnatural levels setting the stage for future fires that are larger, more intense, and more dangerous to fight.**

## Balanced Fire Program

**L**and management agencies are committed to a balanced fire program.

**Wildland fire use, prescribed fire, and mechanical treatments are tools available to land managers to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire and realize resource benefits.**

**A combination of ALL these management tools is needed to address our current forest fuel problems.**

*Mechanical treatment*



*Prescribed fire*

*Wildland fire use*

