

PLANTS

Resource Concerns

Wildfire Hazard

Soil

Water

Air

Plants

Degraded Plant Condition

Plant Pests

Plant Productivity and Health

Structure and Composition

Wildfire Hazard

Animals

Energy

Degraded Plant Condition - Wildfire Hazard

Accumulated plant residue (biomass) creates wildfire hazards that pose risks to human safety, structures, plants, animals, and air resources.

What is it?

All plants produce litter from leaves, stalks, or stems. Normally, this residue is either left to decompose and nourish the next generation of plants and animals, or it is harvested and used for straw, mulch, bio-fuel, pulp, etc. When the rate of utilization and/or decomposition is slower than the rate of biomass production, residues can accumulate to the point of becoming a fire hazard.

Why is it important?

While fire is an important and often beneficial part of the natural ecosystem, uncontrolled or “wild” fire poses a threat to life, health, and property. In addition, the secondary effects of wildfires, including erosion, landslides, introduction of invasive species, and changes in water quality, are often more disastrous than the fire itself.

What can be done about it?

The amount of flammable biomass can be reduced to decrease the incidence of wildfires; the distribution of biomass can be manipulated to influence the direction and rate at which wildfires spread; and precautionary steps can be taken to protect life and property to lessen the impacts of wildfires.

Wildfire Hazard at a Glance

Problems / Indicators - Excess biomass, biomass distribution, lack of preparedness	
Causes	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overstocked forest increases the risk of fire outbreak Unbroken expanse of flammable biomass increases the risk of the spread of fire Lack of a plan on how to respond to fire increases risk to life and property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thin excess trees and brush Treat or remove vegetation, debris, and detritus Create and implement a wildfire plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> post fire control agency phone numbers locate and map water sources map out evacuation routes equip vehicles with fire fighting tools