

Policy Recommendations for Prescribed Burning

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PRESENTATION TO WILDFIRE MATTERS REVIEW COMMITTEE



Image: Becca Wissman, via thedenverchannel.com

Drivers of wildfire



- 🔥 Climate change
- 🔥 Drought
- 🔥 **History of fire suppression**
- 🔥 **Building in high fire risk areas**



Image: CIRES, CU Boulder

History of fire suppression



Prescribed fire

- 🔥 Clears out excess fuels while preserving mature trees
- 🔥 Protects communities
- 🔥 Makes water sources, infrastructure, assets easier to defend



Image: Colorado State University

Prescribed fire challenges



- 🔥 Liability
- 🔥 Certification
- 🔥 Smoke permitting
- 🔥 Public perception



Image: US Forest Service

Prescribed fire recommendations

- 🔥 Establish the “Right to Burn”
- 🔥 Clarify liability and create backstop fund
- 🔥 Update burner certification process
- 🔥 Improve smoke permitting process
- 🔥 Increase funding for technical review, other support
- 🔥 Public education

Building in high fire risk areas

- 🔥 About half of CO population lives in areas at risk of wildfire
- 🔥 80% of WUI in CO is undeveloped
- 🔥 97% of home-threatening wildfires are human-caused



Image: Colorado State Forest Service

Land use planning recommendations



- 🔥 Require counties to address natural hazards in master plans (as municipalities are already required to do)
- 🔥 Develop a model WUI code and provide incentives for adoption
- 🔥 Grading system for community wildfire risk reduction
- 🔥 Certificate program for home risk mitigation
- 🔥 Expand eligibility and options for incentive programs



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Image: Brandon Woody, via kdvr.com