Transcript
>>MALE NARRATOR: OVER THE COURSE OF HUMAN HISTORY, OUR CIVILIZATION HAS DEVELOPED AN IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP WITH FIRE...FROM ITS BENEFICIAL USE IN COOKING, WARMING OUR HOMES, AND MANAGING OUR LAND...TO ITS DESTRUCTIVE CAPABILITIES. COMING UP, WE'LL LOOK AT FIRE IN GEORGIA...AND FIND OUT HOW IT CONNECTS WITH US AND THE NATURAL WORLD...NEXT ON GEORGIA OUTDOORS.
>>FEMALE NARRATOR: FUNDING FOR GEORGIA OUTDOORS HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY A GRANT FROM MARY HALL SINGLETON, AND BY THE IMLAY FOUNDATION
>>MALE NARRATOR: FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, HUMANKIND HAS HELD AN INTIMATE CONNECTION WITH FIRE... THE EARLIEST EVIDENCE OF HUMAN CULTURE...SHOWS FIRE AS A CONSTANT PART OF DAILY LIFE.
>>Mosley: I think fire is something that all man has been drawn to over time. It's supernatural almost. It draws us in, and I think fire is a tool that can be utilized for good and for bad.
>>NARRATOR: LONG BEFORE HUMAN HABITATION, WILDFIRES SPREAD FAR AND WIDE ACROSS THE SOUTHEASTERN LANDSCAPE. OVER TIME, NATIVE WILDLIFE LEARNED TO ADAPT, AND MANY OF OUT OUR ECOSYSTEMS BECAME DEPENDENT UPON FIRE FOR THEIR VERY SURVIVAL... BUT, IN OUR MODERN AGE, WILDFIRES CAN CAUSE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN DAMAGE TO PROPERTY. NEARLY EVERY STATE IN THE U.S. HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY THE MORE THAN 140,000 WILDFIRES WHICH OCCUR EACH YEAR IN OUR COUNTRY...
>>Sorrels: On a normal year within the southeast Georgia area we have typically 800 to 1,000 wild land fires annually, burning approximately an area of 7 to 8 thousand acres. That's a typical normal year for us in south Georgia.
>>NARRATOR: IN THE SPRING OF 2007, GEORGIA EXPERIENCED ONE OF THE MOST DEVASTATING WILDFIRES ON RECORD IN THE SOUTHEAST...
>>Sorrels: This fire started on April 16th of 2007…initially was called in as a down power line in an area we call Sweat Farm road. We immediately dispatched two suppression units. Upon arrival the fire was estimated about 20 acres and growing very rapidly. The fire continued to grow and started threatening structures so we started bringing in more resources and more tractor plows. By about 4 o'clock the fire was estimated at about 500 acres. The fire progressed very rapidly from there…
>>NARRATOR: WITH A DEFICIT OF ABOUT A FOOT OF RAIN IN SOUTHEAST GEORGIA...DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN 2007 WERE OF NEAR DEVASTATING PROPORTIONS. LACK OF RAIN DRYING OUT THE FUELS ON THE FOREST FLOOR ALLOWED THE FIRE TO CONSUME THE LAND SURROUNDING THE OKEFENOKEE AT AN ALARMING RATE...
>>Sorrels: Around 11 o'clock we had a spot fire that was about 2 miles ahead of the main fire that was already about 500, so that was an indicator to us that we were experiencing something very unusual, unique.
>> NARRATOR: IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR THIS MONSTEROUS FIRE TO ENTER THE OKEFENOKEE...
>>Sorrels: The conditions are so rough in there that people can't safely work in there, so we made a decision that once the fire entered the Okefenokee swamp we would take up a

position to protect structures and allow the woods fire to continue to burn…
>>NARRATOR: AS THE FIRE SPREAD, THE FORESTRY COMMISSION BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT IT WOULD TAKE MORE PERSONELL...MORE EQUIPMENT...AND MORE INFRASTRUCTURE THAN IT HAD AT ITS DISPOSAL TO CONTAIN THE MASSIVE FIRE WHICH BEGAN AT SWEATFARM ROAD... AN ENCAMPMENT WAS SET UP JUST SOUTH OF WAYCROSS TO ACT AS HEADQUARTERS FOR THE MASSIVE OPERATION...
>>Dozier: First off, we begin to mobilize our own resources from other parts of the state and then things continued to escalate and we started to realize that we're going to need some help. So, as things escalate we start grabbing in more and more resources from other states. I think we got resources from 44 states.
>>NARRATOR: OVER THE NEXT 2 WEEKS, THE FIRE CONSUMED OVER 80,000 ACRES, BURNED 22 HOMES, AND CAUSED THE EVACUATION OF OVER 1,000 RESIDENTS... SMOKE FORCED THE CLOSING OF SEVERAL MAJOR ROADS INCLUDING US 1...AND EVENTUALLY, INTERSTATE 75 ... ...ON MAY 8TH, A LIGHNING STRIKE AT BUGABOO ISLAND INSIDE THE OKEFENOKEE CAUSED A SECOND FIRE...WHICH COMBINED WITH THE ORIGINAL FIRE AND SPREADING ACROSS THE STATE LINE TO FLORIDA...THE SMOKE REACHED AS FAR NORTH AS ATLANTA AFTER BURNING FOR OVER A MONTH, THE FIRE HAD CONSUMED ROUGHLY 600,000 ACRES BY THE END OF MAY...THE LARGEST RECORDED WILDFIRE IN THE HISTORY OF BOTH GEORGIA AND FLORIDA...
>>Dozier: This fire was much larger than what we typically talk about the largest fires ever which were back in the 1950's. Looking at the Georgia forestry magazine from 1954, we have a lot of large fires in this same area and I think the largest one of those fires ended up burning about 25,000 acres. Of course in this particular fire it's about 470,000 acres just in one fire. So, this is historically probably the largest fire we've had since the 1950's…
NARRATOR: CONTAINMENT OF THE FIRE INVOLVED SEVERAL METHODS...EMPLOYING CREWS ON THE GROUND AND IN THE AIR... FIREBREAKS AS WIDE AS HIGHWAYS WERE BULLDOZED AROUND THE PERIMETER OF THE OKEFENOKEE TO TRY AND CONTAIN THE WILDFIRE... INSIDE THE SWAMP...THE LANDSCAPE WAS ALLOWED TO BURN... OVER 90 PERCENT OF THE OKEFENOKEE WAS CONSUMED BY THE FLAME. IN THE EASTERN PORTION OF THE SWAMP, THE PEAT BOGS OF THE OPEN PRAIRIE AREAS CONTINUED TO BURN FOR MONTHS AFTERWARD...
>>Campbell: Okefenokee is really a complex of different wetland systems. The eastern Okefenokee is where the peat accumulation are deeper it's more of a bog land system. The eastern swamp also has the more open vistas the fire created prairie areas. The western swamp is the region of the swamp to which the Okefenokee water drains primarily, and the western swamp is the part of the Okefenokee which is dominated by the classic Cyprus swamp forest.

>>NARRATOR: WHILE A GOOD NUMBER OF THE CYPRESS OF THE WESTERN SWAMP WERE AFFECTED BY THE FIRE, THIS ECOSYSTEM IS BUILT ON FREQUENT FIRES, AND THE SWAMP HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO REBOUND… THE PRIVATE TIMBERLAND SURROUNDING THE SWAMP, HOWEVER, WILL TAKE MUCH LONGER TO RETURN TO ITS PREVIOUS STATE…
>>Sorrels: The fire within the Okefenokee swamp is creating a lot of good habitat, wild land habitat. However, outside of the Okefenokee swamp perimeter, the lands around the swamp are owned by private companies and private individuals. Those lands are economically important to the state in the form of pine timber so when those burn, we take a tremendous loss.
>>NARRATOR: BY JUNE 22ND, MORE THAN TWO MONTHS AFTER THE POWERLINE IGNITED THE FIRST SPARK; THE WILDFIRE WAS LARGELY CONTAINED…
>>Sorrels: I've been involved with wildland fire fore approximately 27 years, and I can say that without a doubt this is the most complex fire that I've had an opportunity to be involved with.
>> NARRATOR: IN THE END, THIS WILDFIRE BURNED MORE THAN 400,000 ACRES, CAUSED MORE THAN 40 MILLION DOLLARS IN DAMAGE, AND REQUIRED THE ASSISTANCE OF MORE THAN 1,500 FIREFIGHTERS TO HELP QUELL ITS FLAMES…ONE OF THE MOST CATASTROPHIC NATURAL DISASTERS IN THE HISTORY OF OUR STATE.
>>NARRATOR: EVERY YEAR…WILDFIRES CONSUME MORE THAN 4 MILLION ACRES ON AVERAGE EACH YEAR…ANDCAUSE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF DAMAGE. BUT FIRE ISN'T ALL BAD…IN FACT, IT'S A NECESSARY PART OF A HEALTHY FOREST ECOSYSTEM. TODAY, FOREST MANAGERS EMPLOY A TECHNIQUE CALLED PRESCRIBED BURNING TO MAINTAIN HEALTHY FORESTS …
>>Edmondson: Fire is a regular part of our system in the southeast, we have you know, fires can usually start by lightning, there's several other ways fires get started, but typically the woods are going to burn too. We want to burn them under conditions that are more suitable for a cool burning fire, and a fire we can control, contain, and manage the smoke.
>>NARRATOR: AFTER THE WILDFIRES WHICH RAVAGED SOUTH GEORGIA IN THE SPRING OF 2007, IT BECAME EVEN MORE IMPORTANT FOR AREA LAND MANAGERS TO TAKE ACTION, BURNING THE LAND IN A SAFE, CONTROLLED MANNER TO HELP PROVENT ANOTHER CATASTROPHE… THIS GROUP OF FIRE TECHNICIANS HAS GATHERED TO BURN A THOUSAND ACRES OF PINE FOREST ADJACENT TO THE OKEFENOKEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE….
>>Mosley: Right now we're working in junction with about 25 different land owners, private and industry, in order to mitigate any possible disaster here in the 2008 wildfire season. Last year we did have a pretty catastrophic wildfire which consumed about 600,000 acres as well as part of the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge. We're here today basically just try to get rid of some of the excess fuels that are surrounding the swamp in order to hopefully stop it from happening again…. In any forest, the debris gathers up over time, the dead branches, the pine straw, the underbrush it gathers up, and after a while the underbrush if there were to be a small spark it could really cause a problem. Prescribed burning is a safe manner to reduce

or to remove that dangerous fuel. We're setting these very controlled fires with under the supervision of professional foresters and forest managers in order to hopefully stave off disaster.
>>NARRATOR: IN PLANNING A CONTROLLED BURN SUCH AS THIS, THERE ARE MANY FACTORS WHICH MUST BE CONSIDERED...WIND DIRECTION PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN CONTROLLING AND PREDICTING THE SPREAD OF THE FIRE...
>>Luffman: The strategy today is to take each block and back burn along the edge of the road then what we'll do is we'll get on the other side of the wind and let the fire come to it, and that usually gives you the safest burn, and that's kind of where we're at right now. The wind is so unpredictable it's wanting to shift right about this time of day, and, but we're getting a pretty good back burn. It's always very important to do a backburn. If you can think of a square or a block of trees, and the wind is blowing from this direction, what you'd want to do is you'd want to get on the other side of it and burn a good strip all along the side of the road or whatever else you have there connecting another piece of land maybe and burn in, so we won't have that hot, hot fire come right up to the road, and that's important, to be as safe as possible.
THERE ARE SEVERAL SAFE METHODS FOR BURNING...
Rentz: We've got some ATVs, different various ATVs, you can probably look around and see some are four wheelers, some are the Polaris rangers, just different ones, and then of course the regular drip torch that you carry by hand.
>>NARRATOR: THOUGH THE CONDITIONS ARE CAREFULLY MONITORED AND SAFETY PRECAUTIONS ARE IN PLACE, FIRE CAN BE UNPREDICTABLE, AND THE WORK OF THE TECHNICIANS ON THE GROUND IS OFTEN SWELTERING...
>>Mason: Hot and sweaty that's about it. You've got to watch what the fire is doing, make sure it doesn't get in behind you, right now this is pretty simple here, I'm just walking in a couple feet off the road and starting it. They do actually fire where they go all the way across the block like this, and you've got to watch what the fire's doing to you, because if the wind shifts it can get in behind you and start running the opposite way on you and get you trapped in there.
>>NARRATOR: OF COURSE, ALL FIRE TECHNICIANS MUST WEAR PROTECTIVE GEAR TO ENSURE THEIR SAFETY...
The protective gear is Nomex. It's fire retardant, not fire proof; it will actually burn. Leather boots with oil resistant soles, hard hat, leather gloves to protect us all. We've got the fire shelter back here. It's mandatory for anyone on fire scene to have that on.
>>NARRATOR: THIS TRACT OF LAND LIES DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO THE OKEFENOKEE WILDLIFE REFUGE, BUT IT IS PRIVATELY OWNED...
>>Edmondson: Most of the property in the state of Georgia is owned by the private, non-industrial land owner, so most of the prescribed burning that we do in our state is done by that group of people.
>>NARRATOR: ONE GROUP OF PRIVATE LAND OWNERS WHO PERFORM REGULAR PRESCRIBED BURNING ON THEIR PROPERTY IN SOUTHWEST GEORGIA IS THE JONES ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH CENTER JUST SOUTH OF ALBANY... THE JONES CENTER PROPERTY HOLDS A LARGE AMOUNT OF LONGLEAF PINE, AN ECOSYSTEM WHICH ONCE DOMINATED THE SOUTHEAST...AND ONE WHICH IS DEPENDENT UPON REGULAR FIRE FOR ITS SURVIVAL...
>>Smith: Ichauway is about thirty thousand acres in size and it's one of the few large remaining tracts of long leaf pine wiregrass forest. It's pretty unique.

>>Melvin: Long leaf pine forest, is really a unique place. The canopy is dominated by long leaf pine and its void of any mid story in other words we have the under story which is the ground cover and then we have the over story trees. There is a lot of physical structure, vertical structure, in long leafed forest, but it's one that is open and most people would describe it as park like.

>>NARRATOR: THESE OPEN LONGLEAF SAVANNAHS ONCE COVERED 90 PERCENT OF THE SOUTHEASTERN LANDSCAPE, BUT LOGGING PRACTICES IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY HAVE NOW REDUCED LONGLEAF POPULATIONS TO 3 PERCENT OF THEIR HISTORIC RANGE...

MANY SPECIES DEPEND UPON THIS ECOSYSTEM FOR THEIR SURVIVAL. THE GOPHER TORTOISE AND RED COCKADED WOODPECKER ONCE THRIVED IN THE SOUTHEAST, AND THESE SPECIES ARE NOW IN PERIL DUE TO THE REDUCTION IN THEIR HABITATS...

PRESCRIBED FIRE NOT ONLY HELPS TO REVIVE THESE GREAT FORESTS, IT ALSO HELPS TO BRING THESE WILDLIFE POPULATIONS BACK FROM THE BRINK.

>>Cammack: Fire is our biggest and best tool. Some of the species that are really benefiting from this management tool include gopher tortoise, indigo snake, red cockaded woodpecker, but also a number of plants, a lot of plants you can find in a pitcher plant bog need fire to live and thrive.

>>NARRATOR: OUR STATE REPTILE, THE GOPHER TORTOISE IS ONE OF THE SPECIES OF MAJOR CONCERN IN OUR STATE...AND PROPER FOREST MANAGEMENT, WITH BURNING AS A MAJOR TOOL, HAS HELPED POPULATIONS OF THIS BURROWING REPTILE REBOUND IN RECENT YEARS...

>>Smith: The gopher tortoise is a keystone species in the southeastern forest, in particular in long leaf pine and wiregrass and it's the only tortoise in the southeastern U.S. that's truly a tortoise it lives in upland and terrestrial habitats. And they are completely adapted for existence in a pretty harsh environment. They are really excellent burrowers, and their burrows can be up to forty feet in length and ten to fifteen feet bellow the surface of the soil. They are reptiles so their thermal regulation is extremely important, and they use their burrows to escape extremely hot and extremely cold weather, and also in this ecosystem, frequent fires are a major component, it's a natural part of the system and the tortoises have a refuge in the burrow from fire, and so they retreat to the burrow in advance of a fire and rarely ever actually encounter fire at the surface. The ecosystem depends on periodic fire to maintain the structure and the species that occur there it's absolutely dependent on fire, you take fire out of the system you get a successional change towards an oak forest or a hardwood forest, and you change the structure that much you loose a lot of the species that occur there.

>>NARRATOR: ANOTHER IMPORTANT INHABITANT OF THE LONGLEAF ECOSYSTEM, THE RED COCKADED WOODPECKER ONLY THRIVES IN OLD GROWTH LONGLEAF ECOSYSTEMS...

>>Spivey: Red-cockaded woodpeckers at one time were very common within the southeastern landscape. At one time there were anywhere between 60 and 90 million acres of long leaf pine, so they were certainly very common birds. Throughout the rest of Georgia there are huge regions that simply have no Red-cockaded woodpeckers because the habitat simply does not exist. Red-cockaded woodpeckers are very much habitat specialist in that

they require very old pine forests that have very specific structure. They have to be burned frequently, they have to be maintained in a sort of grass like or a grassland prairie type situation and they require fire every two to three years as a general rule.
>>NARRATOR: THE JONES CENTER HAS A RELATIVELY HEALTHY POPULATION OF RED COCKADED WOODPECKERS...TODAY, RESEARCHERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE ATTTENDING A FIRE SUMMIT TO STUDY FIRE BEHAVIOR IN THE FOREST...AS PART OF THE BURN, WILDLIFE BIOLOGISTS ARE ON HAND TO ENSURE THE RED COCKADED WOODPECKER POPULATIONS HERE GO UNHARMED DURING THE BURN...
>>Stober: Somewhere between 60 and 70 birds at present, about 24 active clusters, 20 potential breeding groups or pairs of birds are breeding on the property right now. We're lighting backfires around the bases of our cavity trees. Cavity trees tend to have a lot of resin on them, so there's a lot of resin around the base of the tree and that can ignite and so what we're doing is we're basically defending around those cavity trees.
>>NARRATOR: DURING THIS BURN THE RESEARCHERS STUDY HOW A FIRE BEHAVES IN A FOREST. FROM WEATHER PATTERNS, TO ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS, EVERY ASPECT OF THE FIRE IS DOCUMENTED...
>>Cammack: We've got a really exciting event happening out here at Ichauway this week. It's a meeting of minds of fire researchers from all across the country. We're studying all kinds of things in the fire fuel modeling, plume modeling, wind dynamics, we've got a bunch of different research set up in the same burn unit, so that we can take a lot of different measurements for the same fire, and there's a lot going on.
>>Hiers: This project is an attempt to bring together all the expertise and equipment needed to fully instrument a prescribed fire, to understand the fire behavior and atmospheric interactions that represent the complex dynamic that is a burn event. We also have focused in on fire effects, which are the impacts the actual prescribed fire has on the vegetation and forest community
>>Hiers: Well, this is an area that we just lit on the upland side of the unit. So, the fire is currently burning with the wind, and we call that a head fire, and this particular head fire is moving quickly through a number of research plots that we have set out in the wiregrass and the under story. If you look in between these two fire lines you get a representative example of two flanking fires, fires that are actually burning parallel to the direction of the wind. Those interactions of fire lines are fundamental to understanding fire behavior, fire effects. That's one of the goals for this project here is to fundamentally understand the interactions of multiple lines of fire as they come together.
>>NARRATOR: IN ORDER TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE BEHAVIOR AND INTENSITY OF A FOREST FIRE, RESEARCHERS PLACE INSTRUMENTS ON THE GROUND TO COLLECT DATA AS THE FIRE BURNS ACROSS THE GROUND.
>>Butler: We have a set of instruments that we put out in the fire we want to burn over, and right now we're collecting infrared images, as the fire moves across those instrument sites. This gives us information on how much energy is released from the fire, and where that energy's going in terms of up into the tree canopy or along the ground. This information we hope will not only help us to build better tools for predicting how fire spreads, but will help us use fire more affectively as a tool to manage the landscape, either to control tree and plant species we don't want here, or to enhance the growth and production of desirable species.
>>NARRATOR: RESEARCHERS EVEN USE CRANES TO HELP GET A BETTER VIEW OF THE ACTION...

>>O'Brien: With the camera when you're looking across a landscape you're looking at an oblique view, so you're kind of compressing the image, and what we're trying to do is look straight down so we can get an image of the fire passing across the plot. It gets, we can relate temperatures and the positions better if we're above looking down than if we're looking across.
>>NARRATOR: RESEARCHERS ALSO OBSERVE THE FIRE FROM THE AIR...USING INFARED CAMERAS, THESE SCIENTISTS GET A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF HOW FIRE SPREADS ACROSS A FOREST.
>>Jimenez: By being above the fire we're able to not only measure where our instruments are measuring, but we'll be able to monitor the fire behavior throughout the whole burn unit, so it gives us much more data, and then if we're able to coordinate what the camera see versus what our sensor packages see, we can then extrapolate our point data to the whole unit. To be out in the field and really collecting data on the ground is vital. We can do things in the lab, but that's still very ideal conditions, and to get out and get real fire on the ground and see how fire behaves in the natural environment is a critical link to validating what we develop in the lab, versus what's really happening on the ground, so to be out on the field is a vital component and that's a lot of fun.
>>NARRATOR: PRESCRIBED BURNING HELPS NOT ONLY PROVIDES VALUABLE SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION AND MAINTAIN FORESTS FOR WILDLIFE...IT HELPS TO PREVENT WILFIRE FROM SPREADING... THERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU CAN DO AROUND THE HOME TO MAKE YOUR HOME MORE WILDFIRE RESISTANT...A NATIONAL PROGRAM CALLED "FIREWISE" HELPS HOMEOWNERS KNOW WHAT TO DO TO MAKE THEIR HOMES MORE RESISTANT TO FIRE...
>>White: Roughly 50 % of the homeowners in Georgia live in what we call the wildland urban interface, it's where development or homes have moved into what was once forested or natural areas, so about half the home owners in Georgia need to know about firewise concepts.
>>NARRATOR: NORTH GEORGIA HOME OWNERS CHRIS AND MARY GEIDEL BUILT THEIR HOME IN 2000 USING SOME OF THE TECHNIQUES FOUND IN THE FIREWISE PROGRAM...TODAY, THE GARY WHITE FROM THE GEORGIA FORESTRY COMMISSION IS SURVEYING THEIR HOUSE...
>>Geidel: Our house is located in Nacoochee Valley, White County. Our thinking at the time was that we wanted something out here that was basically flameproof, flame retardant, and have space around it.
>>Geidel: We knew White County provides only volunteer fire services, and so we were very aware of things we might be able to do to help out the fire department in someway…
>>White: What we're trying to do when we use firewise concepts to make a home less vulnerable to wildfire is to reduce the amount of fuel that's near the home or on the home, so that the fire would be less intense when it approaches the home, or if it does hit the house the materials would not burn.
>>Geidel: I really like what you've done with the rocks around here. A lot of people think Firewise landscaping has to be ugly, this is not ugly at all. You've done a really good job of creating a firebreak with the wooden deck and the home, and the really steep slope we have here.
>>NARRATOR: CHOOSING FIRE SAFE BUILDING MATERIALS IS ALSO IMPORTANT.

>>White: The roof is probably one of the most important things to look at when you're constructing your house in the wildland urban interface. The roof is the most vulnerable part of the house to firebrands, which are the burning embers that fly in front of a moving fire. You also have to look at the siding, window materials, and then you also have to bear in mind that anything attached to the house such as decking or fencing are also part of the house, and if they caught on fire could spread the fire to the house itself.

One of the main concepts of the firewise idea is to make a home able to stand alone in case of a wildfire, so if there is a wildfire in the area, your best bet is to stay close to your home and keep in touch with the local authorities to see what to do.

THROUGH THE AGES, FIRE HAS SERVED MANY PURPOSES TO HUMANKIND, AND HAS LARGELY DONE MORE GOOD THAN HARM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR SOCIETY...WHETHER COOKING ON AN OPEN FLAME...OR BURNING A FOREST UNDER CONTROLLED CONDITIONS. FIRE DOES MORE TO HELP US THAN TO HURT US, SO LONG AS YOU MAINTAIN A CERTAIN DEGREE OF RESPECT FOR WHAT IT CAN DO, FIRE IS YOUR FRIEND.

>>FEMALE NARRATOR: THOUGH A NUMBER OF FOREST FIRES BEGIN EACH YEAR AS THE RESULT OF NATURAL EVENTS SUCH AS LIGHTNING STRIKES, A FAR GREATER NUMBER OF FIRES ARE IGNITED BY HUMAN ERROR. HERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FOREST FIRES...

DON'T PARK YOUR VEHICLE ON DRY GRASS.

IF SMOKING IS PERMITTED, SAFE PRACTICE REQUIRES A 3-FOOT CLEARING AROUND THE SMOKE.

NEVER TAKE BURNING STICKS OUT OF A FIRE.

KEEP STOVES, LANTERNS, AND HEATERS AWAY FROM COMBUSTIBLES AND NEVER USE COMBUSTIBLES INSIDE A TENT. STORE FLAMMABLE LIQUID CONTAINERS IN A SAFE PLACE.

LEAVE CAMPSITE AS NATURAL AS POSSIBLE, TRAVELLING ONLY ON TRAILS AND OTHER DURABLE SURFACES AND INSPECT YOUR SITE UPON LEAVING.

NEVER TAKE ANY TYPE OF FIREWORKS ON PUBLIC LANDS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO HELP PREVENT WILDFIRES, VISIT THIS WEBSITE

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