



February 23, 2022

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Mr. Randy Moore  
Chief of the Forest Service  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20250-0003

Dear Chief Moore:

On behalf of the membership of the National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) I am pleased to provide the attached Position Paper titled, *Managing Wildland Fire, Including the Concept of "Managed Fire"*. NAFSR supports and promotes the maintenance and implementation of a balanced wildland fire management program. This includes the use of "managed fire".

The role of "managed fire" as you well know is sensitive and important in today's ever-changing environment. The term is commonly misunderstood as policy history around this concept is complex. Changes in terminology over the years have often left employees, agency retirees and the public confused about what it actually means. It may merit clarifying the terminology to ensure better communication and understanding by employees, agency partners,

and the public.

There have been some issues with the execution of "managed fire" policies that continue to plague the agency and give the public concern. We believe it would benefit the agency to evaluate how the policy is being applied, identify any holes in the process and what procedural adjustments may be appropriate. Such an assessment should provide lessons learned that can then be communicated to the field. The future use of managed fire may be partially dependent

on obtaining and maintaining a social license. This will include the need for transparency and accountability, perhaps in ways that have never been necessary before. Prescribed burns and managed wildfires, while both included under “managed fires” may warrant new approaches in implementation and messaging to build trust in affected communities.

NAFSR applauds your leadership during the 2021 fire season to declare a “stand down” in the use of the managed fire policy based on critical circumstances. We believe your measured approach was totally appropriate and recommend you retain that option in the future when conditions warrant.

As always, we remain committed to offering our assistance to you and the Forest Service whenever it is useful.

Sincerely,

*Steve Ellis*

Steve Ellis, Chair  
National Association of Forest Service Retirees

Enclosure