



No Easy Answer

Fire and Resource Management in the National Parks

Changing Perspectives

1885

"The most important duty of the Superintendent... is to protect the forest from fire and ax."

House Committee on Yellowstone National Park

1933

"...[O]ur greatest national heritage is nature itself, with all its complexity and its abundance of life..."

Fauna of the National Parks of the United States,
George Wright, Joseph Dixon,
and Ben Thompson

1963

"Management based on scientific research is, therefore, not only desirable but often essential to maintain some biotic communities..."

Leopold Report

Current Views

The evolution in understanding fire's role in the ecosystem is a long process. Today's managers recognize that suppression of wildfires has changed plant communities and altered cultural landscapes. In many cases aggressive mechanical fuels treatments are needed to allow fire to play its natural role in the ecosystem.



Confederate Group - Mariposa Grove, Yosemite National Park



Pile burning & chipping



Prescribed fire



Grinding and mowing



Because of the diversity of conditions across ecosystems, today's managers use many tools including specific fuels treatments and Wildland Fire Use in managing park resources.

Wildland Fire Use



Grazing



Thinning -



before



after



Herbicides

