



“Voice of the Western Slope since 1953”
A coalition of counties, communities, businesses & individuals

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96-9 NR 1
Fire, Federal and State Wildfire Policy

WHEREAS: Under current Colorado law county sheriffs are charged with responsibility to extinguish wildfires, without discretionary authority to allow such fires to burn, even where property and lives are not in danger, and such fires could be useful for sound range management, and

WHEREAS: Federal policy is placing increased emphasis on prescribed fires and prescribed natural fires as a management tool, often to the exclusion of other available management tools which could be more suitable for the environment and the economy, and

WHEREAS: As a result of these conflicting federal and state policies, tens of thousands of acres of Western Colorado resources are being burned each year, causing serious property damage and occasional loss of lives, sometimes with a serious impact on visibility and haze problems, and often with dire economic consequences, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CLUB 20 supports changes in federal and state wildfire policy, including:

- legislation to give county sheriffs discretionary authority to allow some wildfires to burn, where appropriate, including a reasonable limit on the sheriffs' liability,
- repeal of the Forest Service Chief's directive which calls for replacement of logging with fire as a management tool,
- full federal responsibility for any haze/visibility problems associated with prescribed fires,
- federal responsibility for damage to property or lives resulting from federal decisions or actions.

Adopted Sept. 6, 1986