

National Wild Turkey Federation

Dear Editor:

As wildfires once again blaze through California, destroying millions of dollars worth of homes and property and putting countless lives at risk, I'm reminded that this devastation is preventable through active land management by conservation groups such as the National Wild Turkey Federation.

The damage done to wildlife including, deer, wild turkeys and many of California's threatened or endangered species such as salmon, and their habitat is also preventable.

If laws allowed our state and federal agencies to conduct controlled burns in wooded areas to eliminate the dead leaves and underbrush that fuel wildfires, damages to homes and wildlife habitat could be minimized. Controlled fires, unlike wildfires, are closely managed by professionals and are conducted only when conditions are favorable and safe.

Wildfires harm our state's wildlife and aquatic systems, and drain local economies that lose valuable tourism dollars and are left to repair fire damage.

As of Sept. 1, the Department of Finance said California already had spent \$106.5 million of its \$182 million emergency firefighting fund — just two months into the fiscal year. Preventing wildfires through active land management practices such as prescribed burning costs far less than putting out wildfires and restoring damaged property.

It is time Californians tell our lawmakers to pass legislation allowing prescribed burns and stop allowing wildfires to put our lives and homes at risk, drive tax dollars up and ravage our natural resources.

Sincerely,

Vincent M. Rosdahl, Danville, Calif.
Treasurer, National Board of Directors
National Wild Turkey Federation