

# Fire in ABC County



## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

**A community-wide survey about fire management in ABC County**

This survey is designed to help wildland fire managers understand the public's views on wildland fire management. Funding for this project is from \_\_\_\_\_. Please answer all of the questions and add any comments in the space provided on the last page of the survey.

**Please return the survey in the postage paid envelope when you are finished.**

**Thanks for your help!**

[ADD NAME OF AGENCY AND ADDRESS WHERE SURVEY SHOULD BE RETURNED AND A CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER]

## Fire Management in ABC County

Fire in ABC County is an ever-present and natural part of the landscape. Your views on this topic are very important to government fire managers as they decide how to protect homes and maintain the health of ABC County's forests and wildlife in the future. Your participation in this survey is important and greatly appreciated.

Currently, the government agencies responsible for managing public forests have in place a fire management program that both controls wildfires and authorizes the use of both prescribed burning and mechanical methods of reducing vegetation fuels on federal, state and private forests in ABC County. At the same time, homeowners can contribute to controlling wildfires and reducing losses by creating defensible spaces around their homes with "fire-wise" landscaping.

We would like to hear your views on these fire management tools, each of which can result in a reduction of the size and effect of future wildfires.

Before you begin the survey we want to define the following terms:

**Fuel management approaches:** Methods developed by foresters and fire professionals to reduce the extent and damages of wildfires on federal, state and private land. This survey addresses these three fuel management approaches.

- **Prescribed burning:** Also called controlled burning, this practice can involve, 1) allowing a naturally caused fire to burn under close and careful watch; or 2) intentionally setting fires in ways that can be controlled to produce desired conditions and protect against undesired results.
- **Mechanical fuel reduction:** These methods vary widely. Resource managers can use chainsaws, brush mowers, or other specialized machines to reduce the number of shrubs and small trees where they are so numerous that they increase the risk and size of wildfires.
- **Defensible space ordinance:** This approach requires homeowners to create and maintain a fire-safe zone around their homes by removing flammable vegetation within 30 feet of their home. It would also require that yard trees and shrubs be no closer than 15 feet apart and that the lower limbs of trees be pruned to a height of 15 feet from the ground or greater.

**Wildland:** The term "wildland" refers to forests, grasslands, and rangelands in ABC County.

Some fire professionals have suggested that these three approaches to fuel management can be used in combination; for example, creating a defensible space can increase the effectiveness of prescribed burning or mechanical fuel reduction on adjacent lands.

**Please keep in mind that we are interested in your opinions and ideas; there are no right or wrong answers to the following questions.**

**Section 1. These questions ask about your length of residency in ABC County and the types of places you have lived.**

**Q1. Which of the following statements best describes your residential status in ABC County?**  
(Please ✓ one)

- I AM A FULL TIME, YEAR-ROUND HOMEOWNER IN ABC COUNTY.
  - I AM A FULL TIME, YEAR-ROUND RENTER IN ABC COUNTY.
  - I OWN A VACATION HOME IN ABC COUNTY. MY PRIMARY PLACE OF RESIDENCE IS IN \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE
  - NONE OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBES MY RESIDENTIAL STATUS IN ABC COUNTY. *Please explain:*
- 

**Q2. Which of the following best describes the type of area where you have lived most of your life?**  
(Please ✓ one)

- A MAJOR CITY OR METROPOLITAN AREA (OVER ONE MILLION PEOPLE) OR ITS SUBURB
- A LARGE CITY (100,000 TO ONE MILLION PEOPLE) OR ITS SUBURB
- A MEDIUM SIZED CITY (25,000 TO 99,999 PEOPLE) OR ITS SUBURB
- A SMALLER CITY (5,000 TO 24,999 PEOPLE) OR ITS SUBURB
- A TOWN OR VILLAGE (2,500 TO 4,999 PEOPLE)
- IN THE COUNTRY OR A VERY SMALL TOWN (UNDER 2,500 PEOPLE)
- A RURAL FARM OR RANCH
- NO ONE CHOICE DESCRIBES WHERE I HAVE LIVED BECAUSE I HAVE MOVED OFTEN

**Section 2. Next we would like to know about your experiences and thoughts about fire.**

**Q3. Which of the following experiences have you had at any time in your life?** (Please ✓ all that apply)

- Been injured or suffered property damage from a wildland fire
  - A prescribed burn has occurred near my home
  - Been required to remove flammable vegetation on my property
  - Personally witnessed a wildland fire
  - Felt fear or anxiety as a result of a wildland fire
  - Other fire experience (*please describe*):
  - A mechanical treatment to reduce fuels has occurred near my home
  - Experienced a road closure due to wildland fire
  - Friends, family or neighbors suffered property damage due to wildland fire
  - Experienced discomfort from smoke caused by wildland fires
- 

**Q4. Which of the following actions have you taken at any time in your life?** (Please ✓ all that apply)

- Asked local fire department about how to reduce my risk of property damage
- Read information on protecting homes from wildland fires
- Attended a park or forest interpretive program about fire
- Attended a public meeting about fire
- Removed flammable vegetation on my property to protect home from fire
- Other fire experience (*please describe*):
- Observed neighbors being careless with fire
- Called authorities about neighbor's hazardous activity
- Observed the effects of fires on wildlands
- Worked with local fire department on neighborhood and community fire protection
- Evacuated my home or office due to wildland fire
- Worked with wildland fires as a part of my job or as a volunteer

**Q5. Governments have programs or ways of improving communities and quality of life. Not all of these programs have the same importance to citizens. How important are these programs to you personally as they are practiced in ABC County? Please circle a response that best fits your personal level of importance ranging from “1” for not at all important to “7” for extremely important? (Please circle one number for each statement)**

	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT						EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
A. Prescribed burning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Mechanical fuel reduction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Defensible space ordinance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q6. How likely do you think it is that prescribed burning will achieve the following outcomes? Please circle a response that best fits your view of likelihood ranging from “1” zero likelihood to “7 for certain”? (Please circle one number for each statement)**

	ZERO LIKELI- HOOD	NOT AT ALL LIKELY	SLIGHTLY LIKELY	SOME- WHAT LIKELY	VERY LIKELY	EXTREMELY LIKELY	CERTAIN
A. Impacts scenery	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Creates more smoke in the short-term, but less smoke over time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Saves money by reducing the cost of fighting a wildfire	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. Restores wildlands to a more natural condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Improves conditions for wildlife	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F. Could allow fires to get out of control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q7. How likely do you think it is that mechanical fuel reduction will achieve the following outcomes? Please circle a response that best fits your view of likelihood ranging from “1” zero likelihood to “7” for certain”? (Please circle one number for each statement)**

	ZERO LIKELI- HOOD	NOT AT ALL LIKELY	SLIGHTLY LIKELY	SOME- WHAT LIKELY	VERY LIKELY	EXTREMELY LIKELY	CERTAIN
A. Impacts scenery	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Extracts usable wood products	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Saves money by reducing the cost of fighting a wildfire	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. Restores wildlands to a more natural condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Improves conditions for wildlife	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q8. How likely do you think it is that enacting and enforcing a defensible space ordinance will achieve the following outcomes? Please circle a response that best fits your view of likelihood ranging from “1” zero likelihood to “7” for certain? (Please circle one number for each statement)**

	ZERO LIKELI- HOOD	NOT AT ALL LIKELY	SLIGHTLY LIKELY	SOME- WHAT LIKELY	VERY LIKELY	EXTREMELY LIKELY	CERTAIN
A. Impacts scenery	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Extracts usable wood products	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Saves money by reducing the cost of fighting a wildfire	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. Improves conditions for wildlife	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q9. How would you rate the government agencies that manage wildlands in ABC County? Please circle a response that best fits your level of agreement with each statement, ranging from “1” for strongly disagree to “7” for strongly agree. (Please circle one number for each statement)**

	STRONGLY DISAGREE			NEUTRAL				STRONGLY AGREE
A. I trust the government to make the best decision about enacting and enforcing defensible space ordinances.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B. The government does a good job in managing public land.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C. The government does a good job communicating with the public about forest issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D. The government does a good job of protecting private property from wildland fires.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
E. I trust the government to make the proper decisions about the use of prescribed burning.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F. The government does a good job of notifying the public about upcoming prescribed burns.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
G. I trust the government to make the proper decisions about the use of mechanical fuel reduction.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

**Q10. If you were given the opportunity to vote for or against allowing prescribed burning on public land in ABC County, how would you vote? (Please ✓ one)**

FOR PRESCRIBED BURNING

AGAINST PRESCRIBED BURNING

**Q11. If you were given the opportunity to vote for or against allowing mechanical fuel reduction on public land in ABC County, how would you vote? (Please ✓ one)**

FOR MECHANICAL FUEL REDUCTION

AGAINST MECHANICAL FUEL REDUCTION

**Q12. If you were given the opportunity to vote for or against allowing stronger enforcement of a defensible space ordinance in ABC County, how would you vote? (Please ✓ one)**

FOR DEFENSIBLE SPACE ORDINANCE

AGAINST DEFENSIBLE SPACE ORDINANCE

**Q13. Would you like to tell us anything else?**

**Thank you for completing this survey. Please return it in the enclosed stamped envelope.**

**If you have specific questions about wildland fire management, please call [PROVIDE NAME AND PHONE NUMBER OF CONTACT PERSON WHO CAN ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SURVEY AND ABOUT FIRE MANAGEMENT IN ABC COUNTY]**