

Wildfires do more than burn trees....

Wildfires destroy animal habitat, recreational lands, natural watershed areas and water conservation facilities. Wildfires cost six millions of dollars, consume billions of gallons of water and some times take human life.

Why you need to know...

While forest cover remains intact, rivers not only run clear and close, they also flow throughout the year. When the forest is destroyed, rivers turn muddy and swell or shrink causing floods or droughts.

Forests exert a "sponge effect," soaking up water before releasing it at regular rates. The multi-storied structure of the forest, together with its abundant foliage, helps break the impact of down-pouring rains. Much of the water trickles down branches and tree trunks, or drips off leaves in a fine spray, so that when the rainfall reaches the ground, it percolates steadily into the soil or runs off into streams and rivers gradually.

Burned out forests allow downpours to erode the soil at an alarming rate. Washed away topsoil causes rivers to become burdened with sediment. Siltation becomes a problem for municipal water supply systems and impedes the ability of fish stocks to migrate and spawn.

How the Upper District is helping...

In fall and spring, the Upper District in cooperation with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, hold "Watershed Restoration Program" events. By replanting native vegetation, soils will not erode so quickly. Such planting helps to stabilize slopes and alleviate siltation. The planting of acorns, native seeds and saplings is done in the nearby Angeles National Forest.

What you can do...

Now more than ever, the Upper District needs volunteers for the program events coming this spring. Due to the recent devastating fires, the Angeles National Forest is currently closed and our fall events cancelled. For information or to volunteer for future events, call Pam Whelanby, USGVMWD (626) 443-2297 or Karen Forman, USDA Forest Service (626) 335-1251.



Williams Fire, 2002
photo by Chris Hoover



Fighting the flames on Mt. Baldy



Curve Fire, 2002



Williams Fire, 2002



Williams Fire, 2002



Williams Fire, 2002
photo by Jim Tomasselli



Curve Fire, 2002 Crystal Lake Vicinity
photo by Russ Sechler



Curve Fire, 2002

Please...
Be fire safe
Be water aware
It's our heritage • Let it be our legacy

photos courtesy of
USDA Forest Service