

A white helicopter with a red stripe is flying in the sky. Below it, a mountain range is visible with smoke rising from one of the peaks, suggesting a wildfire. The foreground shows some trees and foliage.

Fire Management in the Southern Area

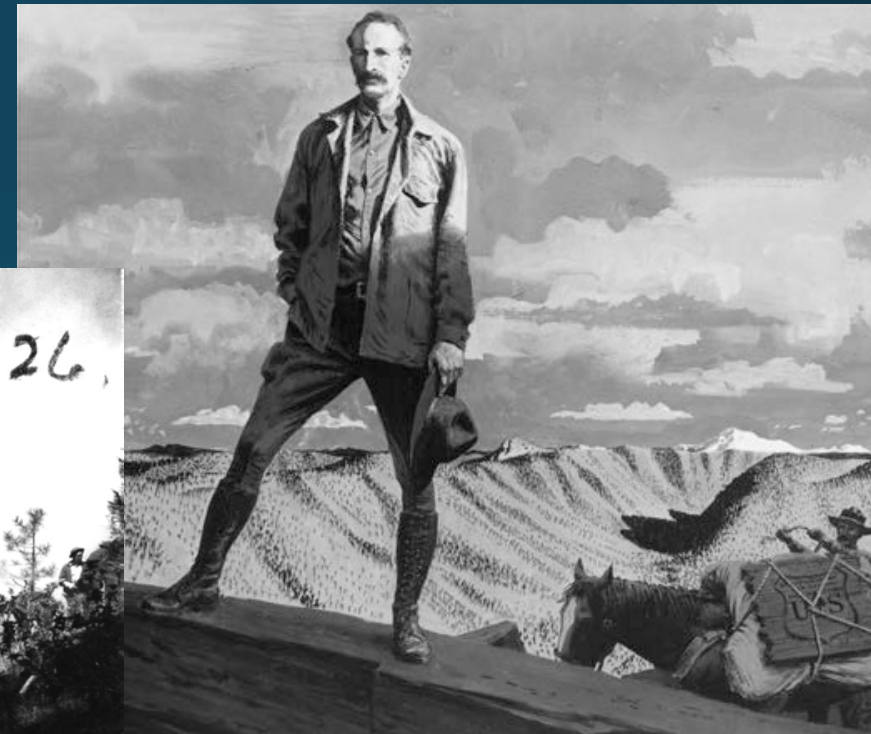
Tony Tooke,
USFS R8 Regional Forester
May 16, 2017

Themes

- Brief history of the Forest Service
- Fire in the south
- Fall 2016 – an unprecedented season
- Our future course of action
- Summary and discussion



The history of the Forest Service is the history of fire management



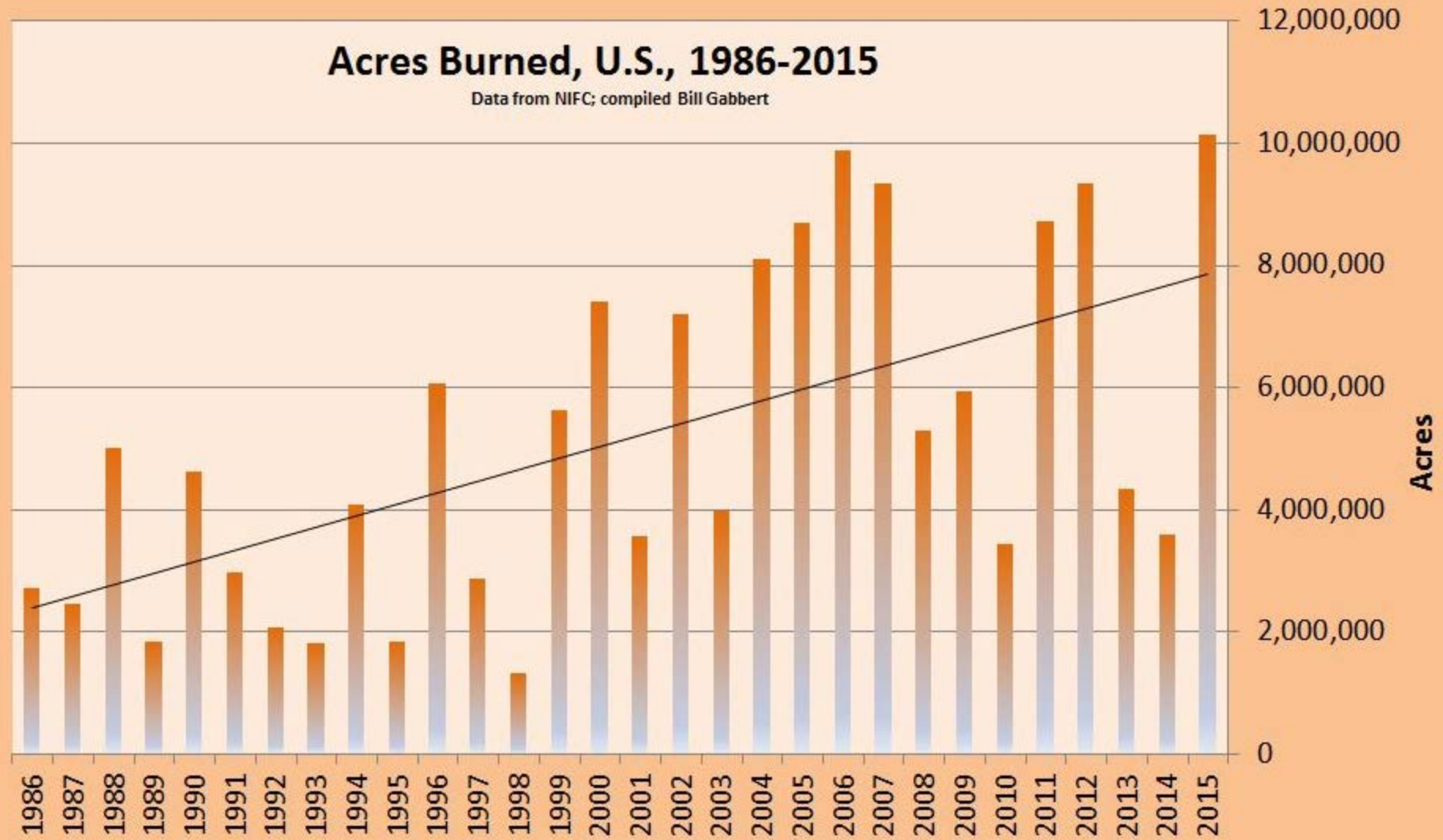
Fire management has evolved




Chattahoochee-Oconee NF
Pine Knot Community Rx Burn

Acres Burned, U.S., 1986-2015

Data from NIFC; compiled Bill Gabbert

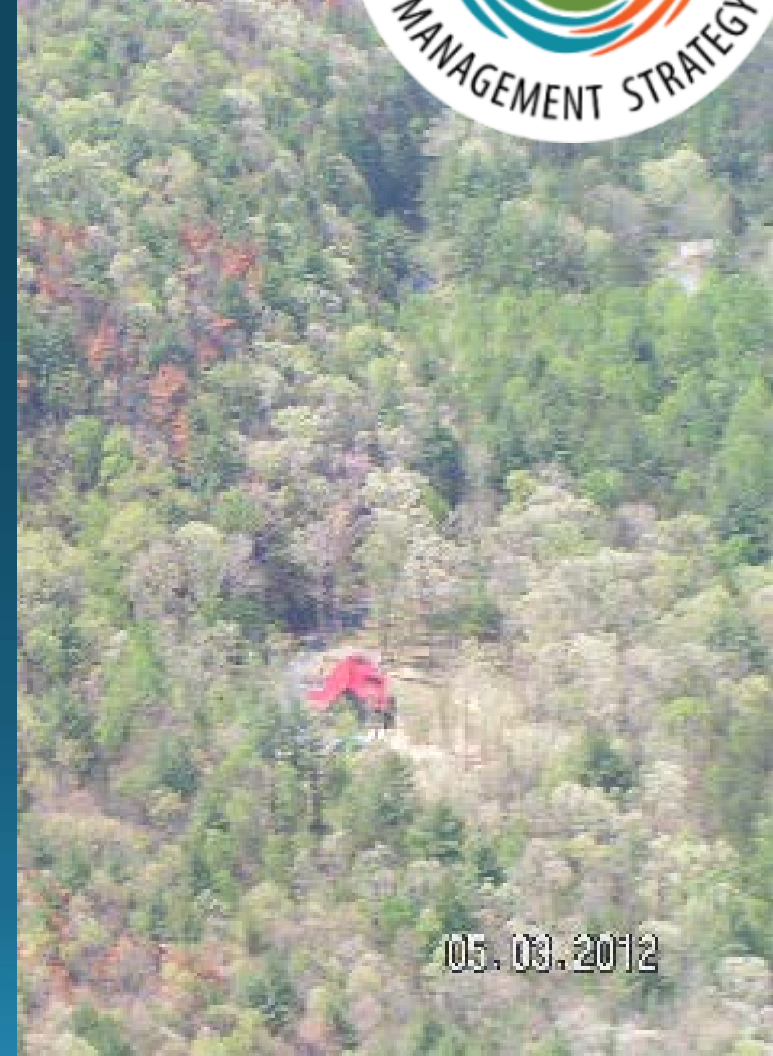


An aerial photograph of a vast, flat landscape, likely a savanna or tundra. The terrain is covered with low-lying vegetation, showing a mix of green and brownish-orange hues, which may indicate the aftermath of a fire. In the distance, a hazy horizon line separates the land from a pale, overcast sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of scale and environmental impact.

There has been a fivefold increase
in the number of fires
>25,000 acres since the mid 1970's

Cohesive Strategy *vision*:

- to safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed;
- use fire where allowable;
- manage our natural resources;
- and as a nation, live with wildland fire



05.03.2012

Southern Region: the lands nobody wanted



Fire plays an integral role in the south



2014 Tall Timbers burn at
old-growth Wade tract



Herbert Stoddard, early advocate of fire,
burning his property in Georgia, 1966



Interagency crew burning in the
Appalachians, 2012

Across the south, USFS burns only about 1/3 the rx acres

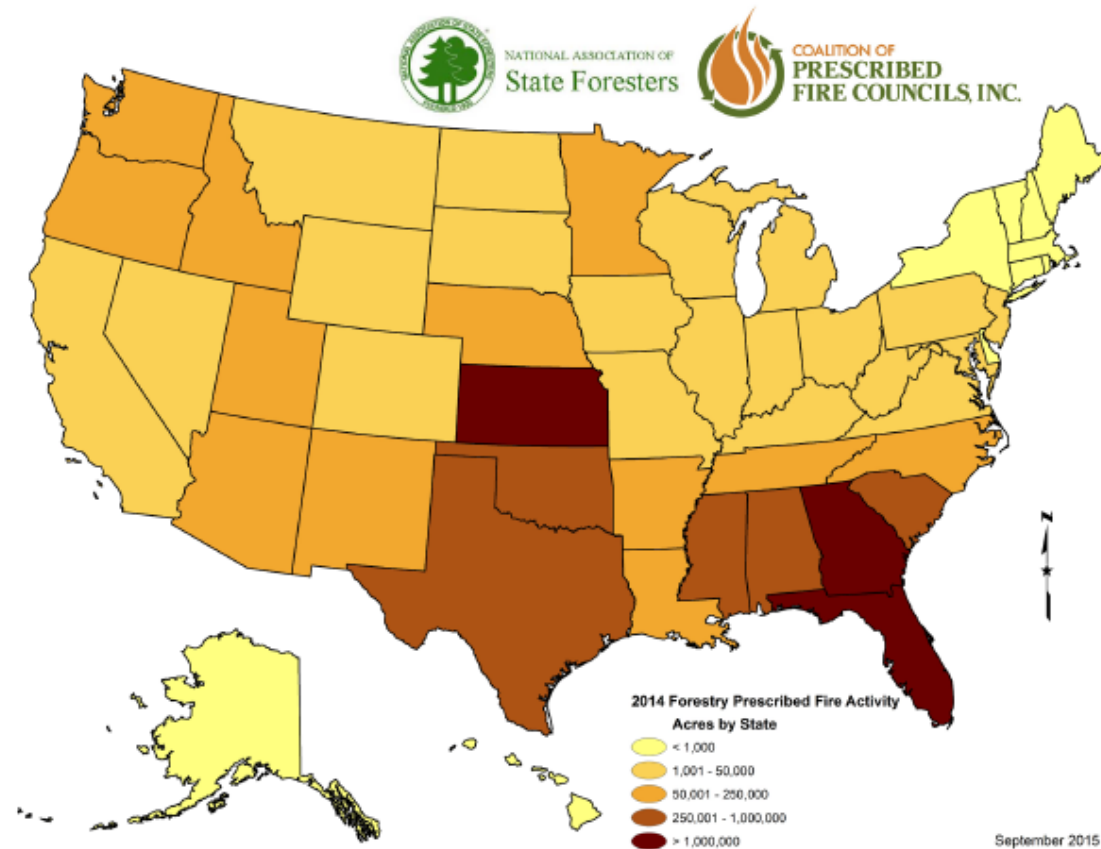


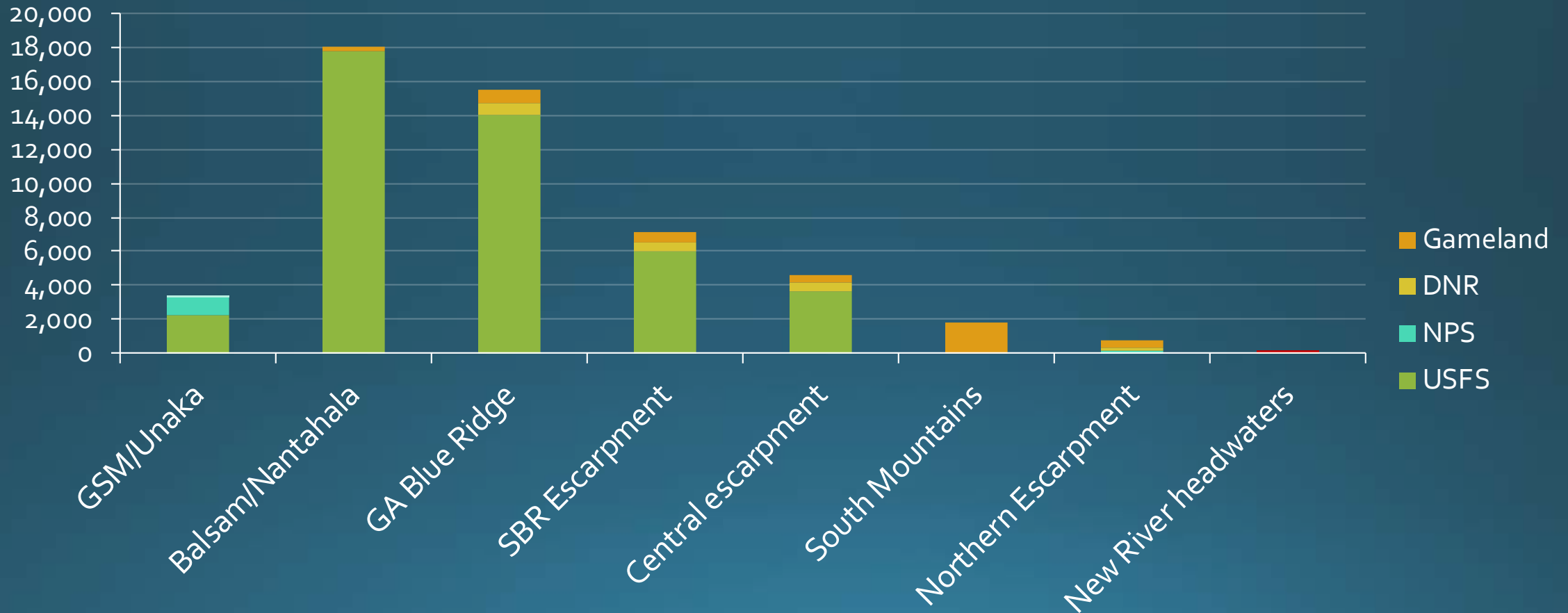
Figure 10. Acreage of prescribed fire use for forestry objectives by state. Coarse acreage classes were created using a histogram that determined the most significant breaking points in acres reported.

Fire plays an integral role in the *mountains*



Mountain managers are igniting more...

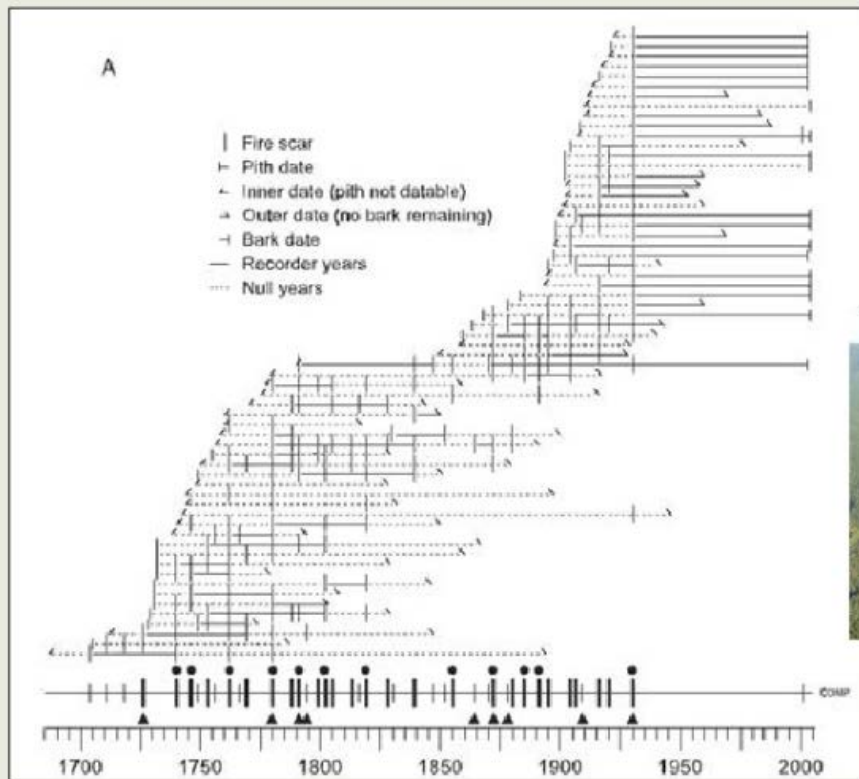
FY16 Fire Acres By SBR FLN Landcape



Our
understanding
of fire has
evolved
over the years



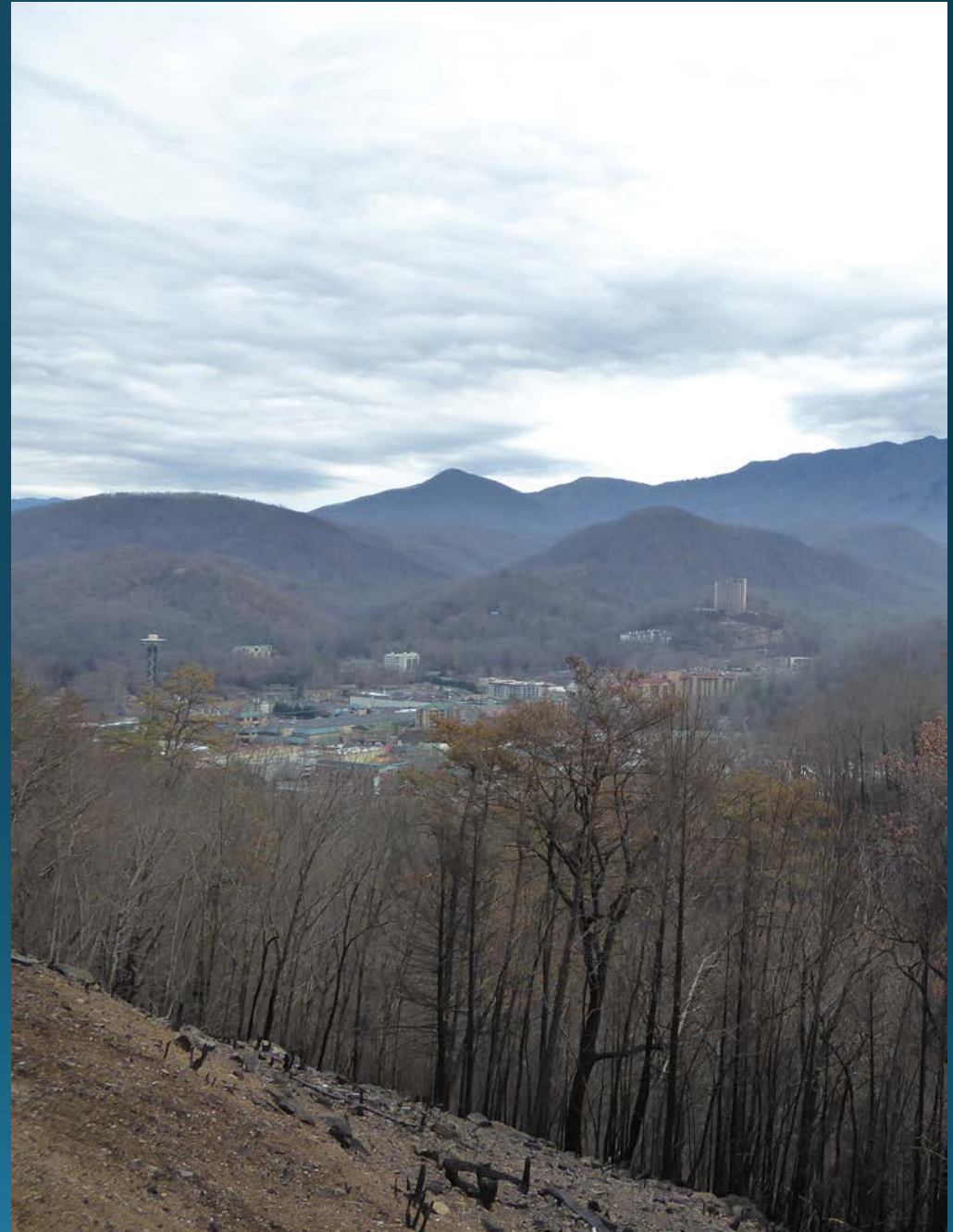
Pre-settlement fire return intervals 3 to 7 years in the Appalachian mountains!




Fuel Treatment Effectiveness



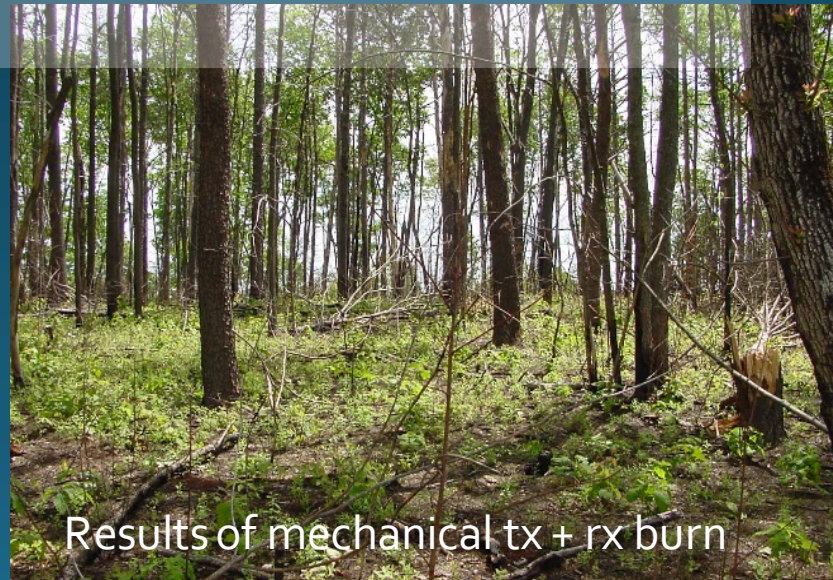
Fall 2016 –
like we've
never seen



The Future . . .



Cohesive Strategy
All-hands, all-lands partnerships
Collaboration
Increased public involvement
Integration
Using all the tools in our box



Cohesive Strategy

– a new name for what we already do



Fire Learning Network (FLN) & Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists (CAFMS)



2016 Bronze Smokey Award for Fire Prevention Conasauga RD



Air Quality Partnership with CDC

- Compare prescribed fire vs. wildfire in terms of public health, economic issues, and ecological benefits
- Leverage existing partnerships
- Use the existing large, interagency datasets for prescribed fire in the Southeast



