

# Communication Responsibilities: *new insights, perspective, context*



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W.A. Franke College of Forestry & Conservation **PaleoEcology and Fire Ecology Lab**

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## PaleoEcology and Fire Ecology Lab

Forest and fire ecology in the context of environmental change

Research in the PaleoEcology and Fire Ecology Lab focuses on understanding the interactions among climate, vegetation, and fire regimes over a range of spatial and temporal scales, in the past, present, and future. Understanding ecological change over time integrates projects within the lab, revealing patterns and processes unobservable over human life spans, providing context for ongoing environmental change, and helping anticipate the consequences of future environmental change.

### Recent Lab News:

- [We're looking for an undergraduate research assistant to join the Big Burns Project!](#) (1/2018)
- [New paper in a special issue of \*Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment\* lead by former post-doc Jesse Morris](#), titled "Bark beetles as agents of change in social-ecological systems."
- [New paper in \*Ecology Letters\*](#) highlighting evidence for declining forest resilience to wildfires under climate change (12/2017)
- [New paper in \*Biogeosciences\*](#) highlighting how fire-regime variability can have long-lasting impacts on forest carbon dynamics (9/2017)
- [Editorial published in the \*Bozeman Daily Chronicle\*](#) by Phil and colleagues, titled "Learning to live with Western wildfires" (10/2017)
- [Lots of press coverage of the 2017 fire season](#) across local and national outlets, including [High Country News](#), [AMP's Marketplace](#), and [more](#). (9-11/2017)



There are no open positions in the Lab currently, but students interested in graduate research should contact Prof. Higuera, and include a resume or CV and statement of research interests.



Undergraduate students interested in conducting

## Academia: Scientist and Faculty

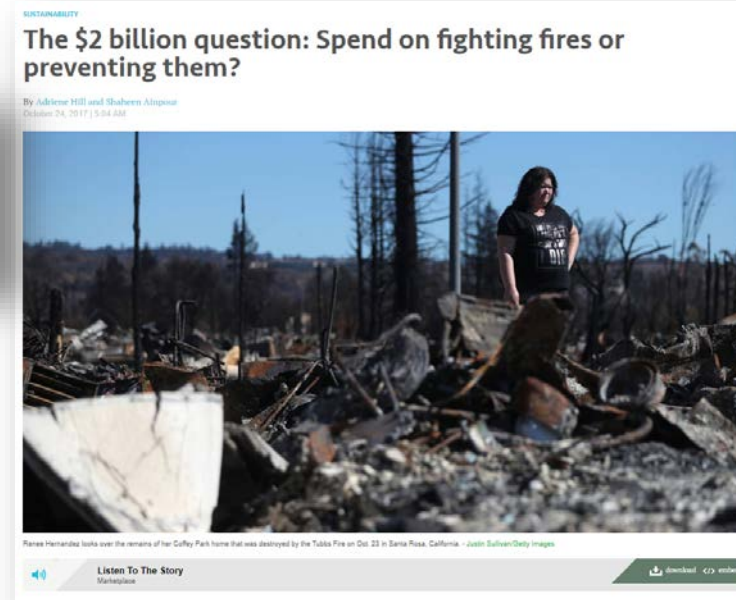
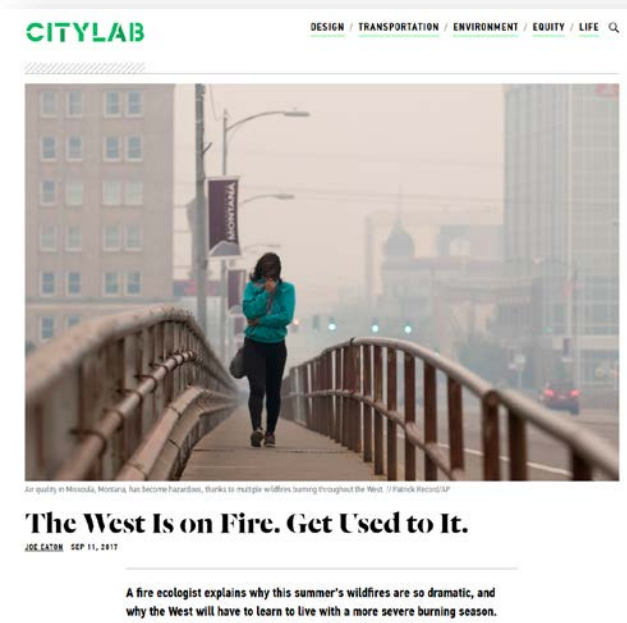
**Scientist:** Think, propose, execute, and communicate scientific research

- **Professional responsibility**, but personal interpretation
- e.g., National Science Foundation grants, judged based on Intellectual Merit and **Broader Impacts, including communication and outreach**

**Faculty:** Generate knowledge and educate students

- Research
- Teaching
- **Service:** includes communicating subject matter and new insights, to provide context and perspective, to varying audiences

# 2017 Fire Season



June | July | August | 11<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> | 4<sup>th</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> | 19<sup>th</sup>  
September | October | Nov. | Dec. | Jan | Feb.



## Learning to live with Western wildfires

By Philip E. Higuera, Andrew J. Larson and Elizabeth Covelli Metcalf Guest columnists Oct 28, 2017



### NEWS FEATURED

The controversies that defined the 2017 fire season—and foreshadow the fires next time

Alex Sakariassen Nov 9, 2017 15 min to read

In the morning hours of Aug. 29, an ugly brown-orange haze settled over Missoula so thick it produced what Missoula City-County Air Quality Sp...

# Biggest Communication Challenges

1. **What am I being asked for? Am I the right person for this piece?**
2. **Who is the audience** and how can I tailor my information to communicate it effectively?
3. ***Speaking on topics at the edge of my expertise or experience:***  
responding to “surprise” questions that are outside the realm of science or my expertise and experience as a scientist and educator.

# Successful and unsuccessful outcomes

## *Successful*

1. Genuine interest in information and understanding of topic
2. Longer pieces, generated from unrushed discussion
3. Good match between my expertise and experience, and the goals of the journalist.


## *Unsuccessful*

1. Looking for someone to support a pre-conceived idea
2. Short pieces / sound bites
3. I don't have the information, expertise, experience for which the journalist is looking.



# 2017 Fire Season

**CITYLAB** DESIGN / TRANSPORTATION / ENVIRONMENT / EQUITY / LIFE



**Context, Perspective**

**The West Is on Fire. Get Used to It.**

JOE LACEN SEP 11, 2017

A fire ecologist explains why this summer's wildfires are so dramatic, and why the West will have to learn to live with a more severe burning season.

**Zinke's fire memo calls for aggressive forest thinning**

*The policy ignores major drivers of Western fire: weather and climate change.*

Elizabeth Shogren | DC DISPATCH | Sept. 10, 2017


f t e PRINT

**Perspective**

SUSTAINABILITY

**The \$2 billion question: Spend on fighting fires or preventing them?**

By Adrienne Hill and Shabene Aliqoush  
October 24, 2017 | 5:04 AM



**Context, Perspective**

Renee Hernandez looks over the remains of her Coffey Park home that was destroyed by the Tubbs Fire on Oct. 22 in Santa Rosa, California. — Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

Listen To The Story Marketplace

download | 17 min

**New Study Finds Climate Change Reducing Forest Regrowth After Fires**

By NOEL SAIRS • FEB 15, 2018



**New Insights**

Few surviving trees remain in the changed landscape located in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Area in Idaho, one of the study areas.

SHANEY STEVENSON/GETTY IMAGES

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**Get Used To Wildfire, And Rethink 'Natural Processes,' Panelists Say**

By ERIC WHITNEY • OCT 25, 2017



**Context, Perspective**

Panelists at a forum called "How do we live with fire?" at the University of Montana, October 24 in Missoula.

JOHN GUTENBERG

**Context, Perspective**

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By Philip E. Higuera, Andrew J. Larson and Elizabeth Covelli Metcalf Guest columnists Oct 28, 2017



**Context, Perspective**

NEWS  
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**Scientist:** Think, propose, execute, and communicate scientific research:

- Publications
- ***Outreach***

**Faculty:** Generate knowledge and educate students

- Research
- Teaching
- ***Service***

## Grant-funded researcher

e.g., **National Science Foundation** proposal are judged based on:

- Intellectual Merit
- Broader Impacts:
  - Education
  - Diversity
  - ***Communication and outreach***

*\*Typically communication with media is directly related to a research publication*