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INCENDIARY FIRES IN THE NATIONAL FORESTS
Expressed as Per Cent of All Fires,
Based on Reports of Chief Forester
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to determine why forest fires are set and how this practice may be prevented. A few articles have been written on the cause or prevention of incendiarism in various sections of the United States. The consolidation of the main points of these articles, plus information obtained from forest officers who have had to contend with the problem, and the ideas of the author, which, the reader should be warned, come not from field experience but as a result of reading, thinking and listening, constitute the basis upon which this thesis has been prepared.

The graph of the per cent of the total number of fires in the National Forests which were of incendiary origin, is a poor indication, in itself, of the importance of this problem. This is due to the absence of any indication of the comparative area burned over, total damage done, and the expense of suppression of the incendiary fires and those from other causes.*

In an article published by the Forest Service in the SCIENCE NEWS LETTER for February 12, 1938, the following statement was made regarding incendiary fires:

"In total damage they ran far ahead of those caused by smokers: 41 per cent as compared with 10. This is attributed to the fact that the smokers' blazes start in a very casual fashion, usually near trails where they are easy to detect and put out. Incendiaries, on the other hand, operate cunningly and in secret as

*No data on comparative costs is available.
criminals usually do, setting their fires in such places and at such times as to cause maximum damage before they are detected."(1)

With this in mind, the graph assumes greater importance.
I

EXTENT OF INCENDIARISM

Incendiarism is a problem throughout the forests of the United States, but the operations of the incendiary-minded individual can usually be localized in any given area. This is because the incendiaryist is usually, but not always, a local resident who, for various reasons of his own, will set fire loose in our forests.

John P. Shea, psychologist of the United States Forest Service, stated in regard to incendiarism that:

"The question is one with which all forest agencies have been at grips for the past twenty years. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of public and private funds are spent annually in efforts to prevent the fires and extinguish or control them after they have been set by unseen hands. Progress has been made but all too slowly, as evidenced by the fact that each year the number of man-caused fires remains at an appalling height." (2)

Due to a number of very good reasons, the cost of these fires and the amount of damage done by them is usually greater than for fires from other causes, with the possible exception of lightning. The firebug operates when the weather and burning conditions are best for the rapid spread of fire. He places his set, or sets, with an eye to their potential spread, burning together, or delayed detection because of intervening ridges which create blind spots in the lookout system. Rough country, the local firebug's knowledge of the area, his knowledge of the positions and, if he can get it, movements of the forest officers, all contribute to his
successful operation in the woods without the knowledge of the protection force.
II

CAUSE AND PREVENTION

There are numerous motives given for setting fires with many of them more or less closely related; but an attempt at classification into groups here would not, in all probability, be satisfactory to others. I shall, therefore, treat them individually because my intention is not to create argument or controversy but to present facts, ideas and suggestions for dealing with the problem of incendiarism which might be of value in its study and prevention. Neither will they be listed in order of importance, because this will vary with the different regions, but rather in the order in which they seem to me to best fall for discussion.

1. Lack of Proper Education.

Lack of education is more predominant in the backwoods areas, although it may be found in the more settled communities. These people, through restricted opportunities for education, recreation, and earning a living, have retained a philosophy of life which dates back to the days of the pioneers. Woods burning was the accepted practice then because the forests were broad, settlers few, and it was the easiest method of clearing land for agriculture. These beliefs, though long outdated, have been perpetuated by traditions which in turn have survived as a result of lack of education or communication which might introduce new ideas or disprove old ones. The attitude of the hillbilly toward woods burning is quite definite and as expressed in his own
words, "Woods burnin's right. We allus done it. Our pappies burned th' woods an' their pappies afore 'em. It war right fer them an' its right fer us." (2) One would think that in the United States we had advanced beyond such a statement which amounts to ancestor worship. When asked why burn the woods, the answer was: "Fires do a heap of good. Kill th' boll weevil, snakes, ticks an' bean beetles. Greens up the grass. Keeps us healthy by killin' fever germs." (2) The solution here lies in an educational program such as suggested by John P. Shea. This is not just the "three R's" but includes lectures, demonstrations, motion pictures, etc. which will reach the illiterate by the easiest and quickest method. A condensed form of John P. Shea's program will be found later in this paper.

2. For Profit.

Mr. Lee Blevins, Law Enforcement Officer of the Siskiyou National Forest, so thoroughly cover's this subject that it is necessary to quote him quite extensively:

"In my work as a Law Enforcement officer here on the Siskiyou, I find there are many motives for setting fires. When I first started work here in 1932, the most important motive was profit in one way and another. The local people who resided in the small towns and communities in and around the forest had the fire Game highly commercialized. The majority of such people do not have any ambition for anything big. The climate is ideal for raising a good garden and they secure their meat by illegal hunting and fishing. With these necessities so easily available about all that is necessary to round out the picture is to set a few fires and secure 30 to 60 days work fighting fire--then they are sitting pretty for the balance of the year."
"These people were highly organized in some communities. They would be organized and waiting in some little town where they would be easily found when the first Forest officer came through on his way to the fire. In fact, I have seen them drift in and hang around the Ranger's or Guard's office just before a fire was to be set so that they would be sure and be hired when the fire call came in.

"In some instances the local merchant was the brains of the organization, for the reason that he not only secured a large profit selling food supplies to the Forest Service but also collected back bills from these firefighters when they secured their pay checks. In fact, I personally know of one merchant that advocated setting fires so that people who owed him could collect wages to pay him what they owed him.

"Another common motive was to set fires for the purpose of securing a packing job. I personally know of one packer, who had a large string of pack horses, and was hiring young men to set fires and paying them $5.00 per day for every day he used his pack horses on the fire. This packer was making about $60.00 a day when 'John Law' caught up with him. Another common motive was for purpose of stealing their winter's food supplies from the fire camps." (5)

Some of the prevention measures used in the Siskiyou to control this situation, as stated by Mr. Blevins, are:

"Under our present policy we do not hire local people for firefighters, or buy any supplies from local merchants, or hire any local trucks or pack stock. This is a measure that is rather drastic but is almost the only way to hold fires set for profit to the minimum. In 1938, we had many large lightning fires and we let the bars down and hired many local men. As soon as the lightning fires were extinguished, these locals started setting fires for jobs and they did the same thing again in 1939, with the hope they would secure jobs. When they found we would not hire them they would go to distant employment
centers and sign up and come back with firefighters hired from distant points." (5)

Possibly the use of a "black list" might be the solution to the situation in this case; but if it were used, great care would have to be exercised in keeping the knowledge of its existence and contents within the Forest Service itself to avoid the resentment of the incendiaries and the probable increase in their activities if they found they were on such a list. This list could be sent from the area in which the firefighters were needed to the man in charge of hiring, preferably a Forest Service man to avoid leaks. In time, the existence of the list might be suspected by the men on it and it would be necessary for the law enforcement officers to increase their vigilance. The resentment felt by these men would probably cause them to be more careless in their efforts to "get even". Therefore, the chance to eliminate the practice by a number of arrests and convictions would be greatly increased and should discourage setting fires for jobs.

Mr. Blevins has found that the use of CCC boys helped reduce fires set for profit, but too many times they are not available in sufficient numbers for large fires. In concluding his letter, Mr. Blevins states:

"It's my opinion that the Criminal Incendiary or the incendiary that sets fires for profit, only understand one language, and that is the language of strict and vigorous investigation and prosecution of every case. The majority of this type are yellow and easily scared out. It has been my observation that it only takes one or two clear cut convictions in a community to stamp it out entirely." (5)
In some areas in the southern states, the use of trained dogs to trail offenders has been quite successful. After one or two convictions as a result of using dogs, the number of set fires has in some cases been reduced to zero. Once the reputation of dogs for "getting their man" is established, the appearance of the dogs with forest officers in an area is enough to stop the activities of the incendiary. Where any forester is patrolling, especially on foot patrol and in areas where there are incendiaries operating, a dog of almost any kind is very useful in detecting the presence of persons who may wish to remain unseen.

Would the solution be in more trained law enforcement officers? Should they be secret investigators or uniformed men, or would this have to be decided by a study of the area, the people, and their attitude? More trained law enforcement officers would be an advantage, but I believe they should be uniformed men and not secret investigators as less resentment would be aroused if the people had no reason to believe that an attempt was being made to "put something over on them" or pry into their business. However, the forester should be well acquainted with the area in all respects and law enforcement should be more of the nature of a last resort and then, when it is found to be necessary, make it stick. Otherwise, it may result in a game of "cops and robbers" with the advantage being the incendiary's.

3. To Clear Land for Grazing.

Setting fires to clear land for grazing may result
in a serious fire. Often the stockmen will set these fires just before the closed season and allow them to spread from their land to the brush land adjoining their property with no attempt to control its direction or extent. This clears more land for their stock to graze while keeping within the law enough to avoid prosecution.

"Fires for grazing purposes... can be determined as to the location and type of land they wish to burn. As prevention: help the stockmen develop land that would be better adapted for grazing than timber—by the grazing act enacted by Congress and the land use method adopted by the state." (4)

"Progress in preventing Stockmen or grazing fires is very slow. Recent laws has made it possible for these stockmen to organize to burn, but whether this will solve the matter remains to be seen." (5)

4. To Clear Land for Better Prospecting.

The prospector often succumbs to the temptation of burning a likely looking area when it has a dense brush cover as is usually found on the ridges where mineral outcrops might be expected. It should be fairly easy to determine whether the fire was set for this purpose by noting the location, outcrops, etc. of the area burned out. The fire set for ease of prospecting would usually be farther back from the main routes of travel than one set for grazing. Prevention here, because of the difficulty of checking on their movements, might be solved by denying prospectors who were known to be responsible for fires the right to prospect in the National Forests.
5. To Make Better Deer Pasture for Hunting.

Burning over brush land for better hunting is frequently a double violation of the law because it is often spotlight or out-of-season hunting in which the incendiariest is interested. The guilty party in this case is usually a local or at least someone who has easy access to the area in which the fire is set. Strict enforcement of the fire and game laws is probably the only solution. A close plan of cooperation between the Game Enforcement officers and the Forest Service should be worked out where the problem is encountered. The plan would vary with the type of country, the people concerned, and other local conditions, and would, therefore, be best determined by the officers in each section of the country.

6. For Excitement.

"The sight and sound and odor of burning woods provide excitement for a people who dwell in an environment of low stimulation and who quite naturally crave excitement. Fire gives them distinct emotional satisfactions which they strive to explain away by pseudo-economic reasons that spring from defensive beliefs. Their explanations that woods fires kill off snakes, boll weevil and serve other economic ends, are something more than mere ignorance. They are the defensive beliefs of a disadvantaged culture group." (2)

Occasionally, slight mental instability will create the desire to set fires. Although this is not as prevalent in forest fires as in cases of arson, it sometimes has to be taken into consideration.

"People who have a mania for setting fires should be watched by their friends or relatives or put in a home." (4)
From this, the problem of incendiarism can be seen as not only a forestry problem but also as one of human behavior. Therefore, no one thing should be considered the cause of incendiarism. It should be approached from the angle of many or multiple factor causation. (7)

7. To Kill Ticks, Snakes, etc.

The reason for these beliefs is stated in the preceding section. The remedy lies in education by demonstration of the best methods of eradication or control of these pests or by the distribution of United States Department of Agriculture bulletins dealing with the problem. Movie shorts showing the life cycle of pests, such as boll weevil, bean beetles, etc., made in the area if possible and with local people in it, could be used to advantage. (7) This type of people is usually found to be co-operative if approached by someone understanding them and their problems.

8. For Spite or Grudge.

This can be directed against the Forest Service and its policies, individual forest officers, or neighbors. The reasons for this attitude might vary from belief that a Forest Service regulation interfered with some personal liberty of the individual, which he had enjoyed until the Forest Service said "no", to a personal quarrel with a forest officer or neighbor. The outlet for this feeling may vary also from setting fires with the hope that the neighbor is blamed, to petty thievery of Forest Service equipment. This type is a difficult one with which to cope and probably the
best preventive measure is efficient law enforcement.

   This might be traced to such sources as: Unemployment, discouragement, lack of ambition, inaccurate information or understanding of local, national and international affairs, ignorance, chronic grouch, or an "ism" complex. In this case, a study of the underlying causes would be necessary to gain the required understanding to determine the proper procedure to follow. If a lasting solution is to be attained, law should be resorted to only after other remedies, such as resettlement, help in getting a job, etc., have been proven ineffective.

10. Belief That Timber Has No Value.
   Many people have a restricted sense of value in regard to timber lands not having trees of at least cordwood size. If there is little prospect of obtaining cash income from the timber, it is considered worthless. There is no thought of the protection it affords for regeneration, its recreational value, its value as watershed protection, as food and protection for wild game, or its aesthetic value. This applies especially to areas that are quite extensively brushy or that have been cut and burned over. Prevention in this case could range from public education by grade school shows and lectures, such as are given at present, to the introduction of forestry courses in our high schools. If the Forest Service motion pictures were circulated through the local theaters, adapting the subject to the need of the
community, it seems to me that more people would become aware of forestry policies, practices and aims. This would help build favorable public opinion and increase co-operation in preventing fires in our forests.


The practice of light burning has been handed down from father to son for so many generations that it is part of their life and as the quotations in Section 1 indicate, what was good enough for their "pappies" is good enough for them. The best way to convince them that they are wrong is probably by the use of demonstration plots.

12. Miscellaneous.

"Anyone who investigates the cause of incendiary fires over a period of years will find many odd motives. In fact, if one just used his imagination, he would not be too far wrong. As an illustration some 2 or 3 years ago, we had a case where the only road into a certain little community leads over high mountains and this road becomes blocked with snow every winter. The people in this community generally haul in sufficient supplies to last them all winter. In this particular winter the snow was deeper than usual and it remained on much later than usual the next spring. These people were getting pretty short of grub, so they went up and took a look at the snow in the road. They decided there was a little too much there for them to shovel out so they went home and set a big fire. The Ranger took the bait, hook, line and sinker and rushed in with CCC trucks and tractors and broke a road through the snow to get to the fire. Result--people of this community went to town next day for their much needed supplies and the Ranger and his force got the experience." (5)

Another unusual reason for setting a fire was given by a man who wanted to start a game farm to raise deer. He
needed a 160-acre homestead but all the land surrounding the 160 acres he had contracted to buy was classified as timber land and was not open to settlement. He had set the fire hoping that the land might be reclassified and opened to homesteading. (6)

Regarding prevention in general, there seems to be definite agreement of opinions as illustrated by the following quotations:

"Prevention efforts have been predicated largely upon educational activities but results indicate that these educational serums either have been too dilute or have not reached the blood stream of the fireminded population." (2)

"T. M. Talbott, United States Forest Service, in speaking on 'Combatting Incendiaryism', stated that a combination of methods was the only solution, with public relations perhaps taking the lead, but that this method failed to reach about 10 per cent of the public and this 10 per cent included the incendiaries." (6)

John P. Shea's suggested ten-point program of education through social action is presented here in a very condensed form. (2)

1. Demonstration plot of 100 to 500 acres in selected area.

2. Locally constructed People's Center for community gatherings. (Including a supply of cuspidors and soft pine sticks for whittling.)

3. Roads to meeting house contracted by locals if possible.
4. A local forester should get the people started using the hall by dances, motion pictures, etc.

5. Get the local people to take over the running of the meeting house and encourage them to consider it as their own.

6. Development of outside social activities, such as: 4-H Club, horseshoe pitching, shooting range, archery, etc.

7. Gradually work in soil conservation, improved agricultural methods and home practices.

8. Organize local fish, game and forest protective groups. Let "pappies" deal with violators.

9. Exhibits of local forest resources and marketing possibilities.

10. As demonstration area progresses, it can be used as the base of lectures and outdoor demonstrations.

Such a program could be worked out to fit any given area.
METHODS OF SETTING FIRES

There are many ways to set a fire, from tossing a match into dry leaves to stringing a number of sets timed so they all start at the same instant. Some of the methods used by the incendiary are:

1. Hike and set direct.
2. Candles.
3. Spontaneous combustion bombs.
4. String.
5. Bottles.
7. Intentional carelessness.

The first method is used by one who can travel fast in the woods and who knows the country well enough to keep out of the way of forest officers, firefighters, etc. coming in to the fire. He starts out on a route usually determined in advance and sets his fires in favorable locations along the way.

The candle method is more refined in that the candles are cut to different lengths in such a manner that they will all burn down and start fires at the same time. This gives the incendiary more time to get out of the country and does not reveal his direction of travel.

In the third method, the spontaneous combustion bomb is made with oily waste fastened in a tight package and can be placed in position anytime in the winter. The hot summer days will start the fire during bad fire weather.
The fourth or string method consists of running a piece of string along the ground on rocks, or otherwise placed, so it is not in contact with a dry fuel until the desired length is used. One end is then placed in some highly combustible material and the other end is lighted. The string will carry the fire to the tinder and off it goes.

The fifth method, in which bottles are used to catch the sun's rays and thus start fires, is one which I have heard has been used, while others say not. Personally, I do not know.

The sixth method is one which a man was heard to say he preferred because, "a magnifying glass left no evidence".

The seventh method, intentional carelessness, may be carelessness with burning tobacco or camp fires.
CONCLUSIONS

The underlying causes must be determined before a remedy can be found, intelligently applied, and favorable results obtained. The use of specially trained men to make the investigations or advise the procedure, would increase the effectiveness of prevention by decreasing the possibility of antagonizing the local people. Once the people in and around the forest are convinced that the policy and plans being carried out are going to help them, they will take an active interest not only in improving the hunting, fishing recreational opportunities, etc. from which they will receive personal gain, but also will be tolerant at least of the long-time viewpoint of the forester. This would be especially true when they realized that the less money spent fighting forest fires, the more there would be to spend on work which would be of benefit to them now or in the near future.

In some localities, the best place to start combating incendiaryism will be in the schools. In others, the establishment of a community center may be the best plan. But in all cases, the use of motion pictures to teach the value of the forests and point out the opportunities for additional cash income for the local residents or how this income is depleted or lost through burning, cannot be overemphasized. Motion pictures, showing conditions in some forest communities, the remedial measures being applied, the progress being made and how the money formerly spent on fire suppression is being used to help the present and future forest residents, could
be used to build up public opinion for fire prevention work of this type. These pictures would reach more people if they were distributed through established motion picture houses.

Keeping comparative costs on fires of incendiary origin, lightning fires, etc. would develop into an excellent argument for such work. Only by definitely planned action, such as started by John P. Shea's investigation, can we hope to eliminate permanently the false beliefs which are the basis of all incendiarism.
REFERENCES


4. J. E. Sherman, State Forestry Department, Gold Beach, Oregon (copy of letter included).


6. The Oregonian, August 10, 1927.

7. Getting at the Roots of Man-Caused Forest Fires, by John P. Shea, Psychologist, U.S.F.S.
Dear Ralph:

I received your letter of December 11 and was glad to hear from you. I am glad to hear that you have chosen "Incendiarism" as a subject for your thesis as there has been very little written on this. I would appreciate receiving a copy if it is convenient for you to type one when you write your thesis.

I am sure that Vern Jess could give you some valuable information as he has lived in incendiary country most of his life. His address is c/o Hawaii National Park, Hawaii, T. H.

From my experience I have found that some of the causes of incendiarism are as follows:

1. Lack of proper education.
2. For spite or a grudge.
3. To clear land for grazing or agriculture.
4. To clear land for easy prospecting.
5. To make better deer pasture for hunting.
6. Belief that timber has no value.
7. To make work for themselves.
8. Sour on the government and everything in general.
9. Because light burning is in their blood.

Some preventive measures are as follows:

1. Through proper education.
2. Through a clear understanding of the hillbilly's problems.
3. Provide an adequate protection system.
4. Strict law enforcement with severe penalty.
5. Through the press and public opinion.
6. Promote business interests in the production of forest products.

Sincerely,

(SGD)  ED MARSHALL
Gold Beach, Oregon  
January 14, 1940

Ralph F. Yeater  
233 Kings Road  
Corvallis, Oregon

Dear Mr. Yeater:

In answer to your letter of January 9, will try to see if I can be of any help to you.

As we all know, incendiary fires are man made for various reasons—some to secure employment, some for range purposes, and others for better hunting conditions. We might add also— for the excitement that fire causes to some.

First let us take employment. This, I believe, is the greatest cause of incendiaryism today. Where there is a lack of employment idle hands will try something to bring in a few dollars. These fires are generally set in a string on some trail or old road where the person can travel fast and get out before being detected, and at a time when the weather conditions are at the very zero hour so the fire will spread very rapidly and will require a number of men to control. As prevention of such fires again my answer would be: a good substantial reward for the arrest and conviction and a long prison sentence for the culprit. Also more secret investigators to help run down the firebug.

Fires for grazing purposes are set much the same as the first mentioned but can be determined as to the location and type of land they wish to burn. As prevention: help the stockmen develop land that would be better adapted for grazing than timber—by the grazing act enacted by Congress and the land use method adopted by the state.

Hunter's fires can generally be determined by the condition of the surrounding country and are usually set at a time when they may not develop into a large fire. A large fire will drive the game out and the hunter would be worse off than ever. Prevention: to enforce the laws more than at the present date, keep the preditory animals down so the game animals can increase and become more plentiful so the hunter can find his deer more easily.

People who have a mania for setting fires should be watched by their friends or relatives or put in a home. I might add also that I think much could be done in the public
schools to prevent incendiaryism in the future by teaching the younger generation the evils of fire.

Very truly yours,

(SGD) E. J. SHERMAN

(Mr. Sherman is with the State Forestry Department of Oregon.)
Mr. Ralph F. Yeater,
Corvallis, Oregon.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to your letter of Jan. 29, 1940.

In my work as a Law Enforcement officer here on the Siskiyou, I find there are many motives for setting fires. When I first started work here in 1932, the most important motive was profit in one way and another. The local people who resided in the small towns and communities in and around the forest had the fire game highly commercialized. The majority of such people do not have any ambition for anything big. The climate is ideal for raising a good garden and they secure their meat by illegal hunting and fishing. With these necessities so easily available about all that is necessary to round out the picture is to set a few fires and secure 30 to 60 days work fighting fire—then they are sitting pretty for the balance of the year.

These people were highly organized in some communities. They would be organized and waiting in some little town where they would be easily found when the first Forest officer came through on his way to the fire. In fact, I have seen them drift in and hang around the Ranger's or Guard's office just before a fire was to be set so that they would be sure and be hired when the fire call came in.

In some instances the local merchant was the brains of the organization, for the reason that he not only secured a large profit selling food supplies to the Forest Service but also collected back bills from these firefighters when they secured their pay checks. In fact, I personally know of one merchant that advocated setting fires so that people who owed him could collect wages to pay him what they owed him.

Another common motive was to set fires for the purpose of securing a packing job. I personally know of one packer, who had a large string of pack horses, and was hiring young men to set fires and paying them $5.00 per day for every day he used his pack horses on the fire. This packer was making about $60.00 a day when 'John Law' caught up with him. Another common motive was for purpose of stealing their winter's food supplies from the fire camps.

Setting fires to clear off the brush to make better spot-light hunting is a very common motive. Also, setting fires for better grazing has caused us much trouble and
concern. We have had many fires set by locals who were at outs with one another, and one would set a fire near the other to make it appear the other was to blame. Revenge against the Forest Service is a common motive.

Anyone who investigates the cause of incendiary fires over a period of years will find many odd motives. In fact, if one just used his imagination, he would not be too far wrong. As an illustration some 2 or 3 years ago, we had a case where the only road into a certain little community leads over high mountains and this road becomes blocked with snow every winter. The people in this community generally haul in sufficient supplies to last them all winter. In this particular winter the snow was deeper than usual and it remained on much later than usual the next spring. These people were getting pretty short of grub, so they went up and took a look at the snow in the road. They decided there was a little too much there for them to shovel out so they went home and set a big fire. The Ranger took the bait, hook, line and sinker and rushed in with CCC trucks and tractors and broke a road through the snow to get to the fire. Result—people of this community went to town next day for their much needed supplies and the Ranger and his force got the experience.

Prevention work, other than straight law enforce-
ment work, is not in my line. Therefore, I am not in a position to give you much help on this phase of the work.

Under our present policy we do not hire local people for firefighters, or buy any supplies from local merchants, or hire any local trucks or pack stock. This is a measure that is rather drastic but is almost the only way to hold fires set for profit to the minimum. In 1938, we had many large lightning fires and we let the bars down and hired many local men. As soon as the lightning fires were extinguished, these locals started setting fires for jobs and they did the same thing again in 1939, with the hope they would secure jobs. When they found we would not hire them they would go to distant employment centers and sign up and come back with firefighters hired from distant points.

The use of CCC boys has helped to reduce incendiary fires set for profit. Many of the old prevention methods, which you are familiar with, are still used, and are effective in some cases. Prevention of fires set for better spotlighting of deer, is of course, hard to handle. Also, the prevention of fires set for better grazing. Progress in preventing stockmen or grazing fires is very slow. Recent laws have made it possible for these stockmen to organize to burn, but whether this will solve the matter remains to be seen.

It's my opinion that the Criminal Incendiariist or the incendiariist that sets fires for profit, only understand
one language, and that is the language of strict and vigorous investigation and prosecution of every case. The majority of this type are yellow and easily scared out. It has been my observation that it only takes one or two clear cut convictions in a community to stamp it out entirely.

I hope that the above information will be of some use to you.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) LEE BLEVINS

Law Enforcement Officer, U.S.F.S.