

Hash Rock Fire

Student Instructions

Background Information:

The forest service describes the Hash Rock fire in the Ochoco National Forest as follows:

"Late in the afternoon of August 23rd, 2000 an isolated dry lightning storm (lightning with no rain) rolled over the Western section of the Ochoco National Forest. Some 12 fires were ignited in all. Most all were caught under an acre in size. One was caught at 20. One fire began in the bottom of the rugged Mill Creek Drainage and quickly spread to the Mill Creek Wilderness where heavy fuel loading and steep terrain carried the fire for the better part of a week. The fire would eventually threaten several private residences and Highway 26. Cooler fall weather and an aggressive burnout operation by firefighters stopped the fire's spread at 18,500 acres in late August. Occasional flare-ups and more moderate burning activity were observed and monitored on the fire through mid October."

<http://www.geocities.com/rainforest/jungle/5057/hashthumz.html>

Procedure:

With your partner, go to <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/ochoco/firenews/intens2.jpg> or look at the map provided by your teacher.

Answer the following questions:

1. Describe the pattern of burning and burn intensity that you see.
2. By looking at the map, what factors might stop the spread of the burn?
3. What other factors do you think might help stop burning?
4. On the map is a small area labeled Rx Natural Fire Area. How does the burn intensity appear to be affected in this area?
5. This Rx Natural Fire Area indicates an area that was allowed to burn when conditions allowed for easier control a few years earlier. How can a prescription burn affect the burn intensity of an uncontrolled fire?
6. In natural, unmanaged conditions, this area in the Ochoco National Forest would burn every 15-25 years. Under fire suppression management, it hadn't burned in 90 years.
 - o How do you think that might affect the ecosystem?
 - o How might it have affected the intensity of this burn?

Watch the video that your teacher shows describing the Hash Rock Fire and then revisit the questions above.