

## Take forest management seriously

<https://www.lcsun-news.com/story/opinion/2022/02/13/letters-editor-national-guard-schools/6767069001/>

As we enter New Mexico fire season, I suppose it's obvious, but apparently it needs restating:

- 1 Trees drink water to live.
- 2 More trees require more water.
- 3 Today's tree growth on public lands in places exceeds 2,000 trees per acre compared to 200 decades ago.
- 4 Even if we get the same rainfall as in the past, the increase in the number of trees guarantees that each tree gets less water than decades ago.
- 5 Trees with less water are drier.
- 6 More trees use more water, leaving less water to replenish aquifers.
- 7 It's not a climate change problem if it's due to something else, like forest mismanagement.
- 8 Even if the problem really is climate change, why would state water advocates permit 10-20 times more trees per acre to rob the state of its fresh water supply?
- 9 Starving trees of water is unhealthy and can lead to damage, including insect infestation.
- 10 Insect-damaged trees can die, leading to dead sections of forest that are easier to burn, leading to more intense wildfires.

Perhaps it would make sense to solve the problem of the tree overgrowth in our forests before blaming wildfires on climate change that may or may not be at fault.

Having two effects that could explain a single problem, but then ignoring the science to blame only climate change is unscientific and propagandistic.

New Mexico, and its forests deserve better. They deserve to be properly managed, like the Native Americans did hundreds of years ago through forest clearing. Forestry should go along hand in hand with proper forest management rather than being viewed as an enemy.

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