

Easing fires not as simple as climate change vs. forest work

By Andrew Selsky & Adam Beam
Associated Press

SALEM (AP) — Deadly West Coast wildfires are dividing President Donald Trump and the states' Democratic leaders over how to prevent blazes from becoming more frequent and destructive, but scientists and others on the front lines say it's not as simple as blaming either climate change or the way land is managed.

The governors of California, Oregon and Washington have all said global warming is priming forests for wildfires as they become hotter and drier. But during a visit Monday to California, Trump pointed to how states manage forests and said, "It will start getting cooler, just you watch."

Scientists say wildfires are all but inevitable, and the main drivers are plants and trees drying out due to climate change and more people living closer to areas that burn. And while forest thinning and controlled burns are solutions, they have proven challenging to implement on the scale needed to combat those threats.

As crews battled wildfires that have killed at least 36 people, destroyed neighborhoods and enveloped the West Coast in smoke, Trump contended that the states are to blame for failing to rake leaves and clear dead timber from forest floors. However, many of the California blazes have roared through coastal chaparral and grasslands, not forest, and some of the largest are burning on federal land.

In Oregon, it was the forests that burned at unprecedented levels this past week. Almost the same number of "megafires" — defined as having scorched 100,000 acres or more — were burning last week as have occurred during the entire last century, said Jim Gersbach, spokesman for the Oregon Department of Forestry. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown on Monday requested a Presidential Disaster Declaration, saying it would bring much needed resources to Oregon's response and recovery efforts.

Experts, environmentalists and loggers largely agree that thinning trees and brush

See FIRES on page 11



Scottie Wisdom & Faith

Jean Russell Nave

Scottie truth

One of the many wonderful things about Scottie dogs is their honesty. They express truth. If they are barking, there is something out there. Even if I can't see it, I know there is something or someone outside.

Just yesterday the Scotties started barking. I couldn't see a thing anywhere in the backyard. But sure enough, as I looked through another window, there was a person raking pine needles off our neighbor's roof.

Truth. We are told time and again in the Bible that truth is an essential ideal. There was a time when truth was held so firmly in our society that people did business with a handshake. Today you need a lawyer in your back pocket if you go into business. Every major transaction with a client now has to be put in writing. This in itself is a good example of how "bound-up" we've become because we have treated truth so

cheaply.

Our children may be told to tell the truth, but the actions of our society constantly shout otherwise. We know that commercials mislead. Politicians misinform and sometimes outright lie. Television programs use lying as a punchline for cheap laughs. Our children watch all of this getting a much clearer message from our actions than from our warnings.

What is truth?

Historically, philosophers explored that question back as far as the ancient Egyptians. One's heart would be weighed at death against the "Feather of Truth." If the heart was too heavy with deceit, one was headed for dark places.

Truth has been a relative thing. In the Middle Ages truth was a flat earth, even though the library in Alexandria had held maps showing a round earth centuries earlier. The Church decided the earth was flat and that was that.

Today science tries to prove what is true through scientific investigation. Yet, that investigation results in many ideas that become held like dogma, forbidding newer research from changing the paradigm. One such thing that I've followed for years is the dating of when humans came to the Americas. As recent as the early 20th century, scientists would not believe there were people in America before five thousand years ago. In 1929 when fluted spear points were found in mastodon bones dating to

more than 10,000 BC in Clovis, New Mexico, the head of the Smithsonian Institution would not believe they were real because it challenged his idea of truth.

This helps us understand that truth in the material world is open to subjective interpretation. As followers of Christ, the truth we want to explore is spiritual truth.

Jesus said: "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

What did he mean then and what does it mean to us today? Jesus shared His understanding of His Father's house with His followers. He wanted people to understand that God our Father is love and we are His children. Meaning that we — all humans, regardless of race, creed, color or sexual orientation — are divine spirit. When we live with love, compassionate, non-judgmental and filled with forgiveness, we are living in truth. That is how we live in God's real world. The real world is not this mixed-up mess we call life in this dimension, which is filled with anger and hate. We can spiritually rise above all that and live free of the hate when we turn to truth — God's love. By living with love we are free and we free others. When we hate, we chain ourselves to that hate and the other person or people we focus the hate upon. Living with

love in our hearts means we live with God's truth, and we are free.

Mother Teresa is an excellent example of this put into practice. She lived among people enduring a great deal of death and suffering, but her heart was filled with God's love, which allowed her to ease others' suffering while she thrived and stayed healthy into her later years. The love she was filled with kept her free. She was free of hate and fear, the major causes of misery and death.

It isn't where you live that makes you free, it's how you live that makes you free.

My rescued Scottie, Chewy, was beaten and starved by people in the past. Yet, his heart is so full of love that he greets everyone with a wagging tale, hoping they will bend down and pet him. Chewy's truth is love. Make your truth love and watch how you are greeted with smiles too.

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. John 8:32

YEAR-ROUND FIREWOOD SALES
KINDLING
SISTERS FOREST PRODUCTS
541-410-4509
SistersForestProducts.com

Stop by our **showroom** in the heart of Sisters... wide selection, friendly service!

Sweeney Plumbing, Inc. 541-549-4349 | 260 N. Pine St., Sisters
Licensed / Bonded / Insured / CCB#87587

ELITE ROOFING LLC

- Re-Roof & New Construction
- Composite, Metal, Flat & Cedar Shake Products
- Residential & Custom Home Framing
- Gutter Installation
- Free Estimates
- Financing Available
- Transferable Warranties
- 10-Year Workmanship Guarantee

Family Owned & Operated for 20 Years
541-526-5143

SISTERS MEAT AND SMOKEHOUSE

MEATS, GAME
ALASKAN SEAFOOD
CHEESES
SANDWICHES
BEER, WINE, CIDER

110 S. SPRUCE ST. | 541-719-1186

Always Active, Always Engaged,
CELEBRATING EVERY SINGLE DAY!

The Lodge in Sisters
An Independent & Assisted Living Community

411 E. Carpenter Ln. • TheLodgeInSisters.com
541-549-5634