

USFS uses bulk of budget to fight fires

By Henry K. Lee, San Francisco Chronicle

The U.S. Forest Service issued a report Wednesday saying that for the first time in its history it was spending more than half of its \$5 billion annual budget battling wildfires, and the toll will only get bigger in years to come

With the increased emphasis on fighting fires, programs that help prevent blazes, such as forest restoration and watershed and landscape management, will continue to suffer, Forest Service officials said.

The report suggested that instead of treating catastrophic wildfires "as a normal agency expense, we must treat them more like other natural disasters, such as tornadoes and hurricanes."

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