

## *Felice Pace*

*28 Maple Road    Klamath, Ca. 95548    707-482-0354    [unofelice@gmail.com](mailto:unofelice@gmail.com)*

To the Editors  
Humboldt Mag  
Via e-mail to magazine @humboldt.edu

Dear folks,

Your feature article in the Spring 2009 edition “Fire on the Mountain” was little more than an advertisement for the popular ideology that places blame for the current fire risk and fire behavior on 100 years of fire suppression. Both research and experience strongly indicates that logging methods are a prime reason why fires are burning more intensely. Your article completely ignores logging’s role in creating conditions that favor larger and more intense fires.

Actual fire histories in the rugged Klamath Mountains backcountry indicate that fire has never been successfully suppressed. All the large fires we’ve experienced recently: the 1987 “fire siege”, the Big Bar Complex of 2003 and last summers fire were all put out by fall rain and snow – not by fire crews. Our remote roadless forests have not been substantially altered by fire suppression. This is as true today as it was in 1900.

Fire histories also demonstrate the role that past logging plays in most of today’s fires. A host of “recent” fires blew up in clearcut logging slash including the Hog Fire of 1977, The Glasgow and Yellow Fires of 1987 and the Specimen Fire of 1994. As for the “Friday Fire” you mention – it was another in a long list of ill-advised Forest Service burn outs; the natural fire burned beautifully in the backcountry and never got close to most fire lines much less communities.

A magazine for a great university needs to employ good journalism – including seeking diverse sources. It is ironic that we have a very active “fire community” in our environmental and university communities but the two are not talking to each other! May I suggest that Humboldt Magazine now do an article which focuses on the rest of the story? Surely HSU has forestry professors who are not in denial about the impact of logging on fire risk.

Felice Pace  
Klamath, CA