

Changing Climate Lengthens The Forest Fire Season

BROOKINGS — When it comes to forest fires, the weather matters. Over a 35-year period, the length of forest fire seasons worldwide increased by 18.7 percent due to more rain-free days and hotter temperatures, according to South Dakota State University professor Mark Cochrane, a senior scientist at the Geospatial Sciences Center of Excellence. The wildfire expert is part of a team of researchers led by W. Matt Jolly of the U.S. Forest Service Fire Science Laboratory that examined weather data from 1979 through 2013 to determine how a changing climate impacts forest ecosystems.

"For things to burn, they have to have the proper conditions," he explained. Four independent environmental factors increase the likelihood of wildfires-hotter temperatures, decreased relative humidity, more rain-free days and higher wind speeds.

The researchers combined fire danger indexes from the United States, Canada and Australia with three global climate databases to create what Cochrane calls "an ensemble model." They looked at the length of time and areas where conditions were conducive to fires.

Their findings are published in Nature Communications at <http://www.nature.com/ncomms/2015/150714/ncomms8537/full/ncomms8537.html>.

"Ecosystems are designed to withstand the normal climate situation, but we suspect that things aren't normal anymore," Cochrane said.

On all the forested

continents, except Australia, the fire seasons are getting longer, Cochrane explained. South America had the largest increase — 33 days in 35 years. In addition, the area affected by the longer fire season has doubled.

To verify their model, the researchers pinpointed time intervals and areas where fire danger was highest.

"All the major fire events showed up in our metrics," he said, including forest fires in the Amazon rainforest in 2005, Western Russia in 2011 and Spain in 2012. "That lends credence to the model and gives us confidence that the model is showing real changes that relate to physical factors."

The researchers found that the number of rain-free days has increased by 1.31 days per decade. The average temperature on vegetated land increased by 0.185 degrees per decade, while the annual relative humidity dropped by 0.127 percent per decade. "Our values are very conservative," Cochrane added.

However, the mean annual precipitation worldwide is the same, according to Cochrane. "It's still the same amount of rainfall, just concentrated in fewer days." That translates to more dry days when conditions are amenable to burning.

The United States has experienced hotter, drier weather in six of the last 10 years, he pointed out. During that time, the nation has spent more than \$1.7 billion on wildfire suppression.

There's Nothing Like Country Weddings, Celebrations

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

Recently I attended the wedding of a neighbor girl who grew up on a farm, and a local community boy. They were (well, still are) both superior athletes (she in high school and college volleyball and he in high school and as a lineman in a SEC football program), college educated and employed.

Although both are now capable adults, in our rural communities we proudly think of them as "our girls and boys."

Marilyn couldn't attend the church service and the reception at the bride's family farm with me, for she was visiting our grandchildren and their parents in Utah. I had the happy duty of staying home to keep our farmstead functioning and to represent us at the joyful celebration with people we care about.

As might be expected in the middle of July, the weather was hot and sweaty for the reception at the farm, and the way corn and soybeans like it. Most of the farms in the neighborhood received a nice rain varying from .05 to 1.5 inches the night before, which contributed to the humid air.

The amount of precipitation in my rain gauge was the envy of all the neighbors I talked with, so I was accused of everything from not having emptied out my rain gauge for the past month to visiting the refreshment bar at the reception too frequently.

The reception was carried out with exquisite organization. Adolescent boys directed visitors where to park our vehicles on the immaculately groomed (no pun intended) farmstead.

The barn where the reception was held was thoroughly scrubbed. Decades ago horse sales were held in the farm building.

It was where Dad purchased a treasured quarter horse filly at one of the horse sales the bride's paternal grandfather held annually. Dad, my brothers and I broke and rode Samantha for many years; my



Dr. Mike ROSMANN

Marilyn and I were married some 43 years ago in a small church in Burley, Idaho, also with mostly our families, local farmers and neighbors of Marilyn's family in Burley, my Iowa kin and our graduate school friends present.

Marilyn made her own wedding dress and I helped her with the bridesmaids' dresses when another set of hands was needed. Marilyn and I sang together while I played the guitar at our reception.

We didn't receive the refrigerator, furniture or honeymoon money that some newly wedded couples received at local receptions I attended as a youngster. Already in our mid-twenties, Marilyn and I were given what we needed: practical gifts we didn't already possess and the blessings of the people we respected.

We used the log chain that I kept in my Jeep to pull many a stranded vehicle out of snowbanks and mud holes, as well as to salvage our own stuck vehicles a few times. The spade and chain saw were useful too; I still have the spade but wore out the chain saw.

The heavy cast iron skillet, pressure cookers and jars for canning, a portable camping stove we used on wilderness ventures and when electricity was suspended, small kitchen appliances—they went a long ways toward making our lives easier

over the years. We recall who gave us these thoughtful gifts with happy memories every time we use them, even after we had to replace some of them.

Rural neighborhood celebrations like weddings, grand openings of new businesses, farm house-warming parties, even funerals—they all are cultural ceremonies that bind farmers and rural community neighbors together to celebrate the continuation of life.

Neighbors look past any differences such as political opinions, wealth, ethnicity and religion, while recognizing deeper bonds, like common agrarian roots, appreciation for being able to count on one another, and friendship, as purposes to get together. These rituals have deep meaning for everyone.

These rural community events affirm our heritage as people closely tied to the earth and each other for validation and survival.

Urban communities within cities and suburbs have their cultural heritage events too, for the residents of established neighborhoods retain their genetic, sociological and historical predispositions from bygone eras when we all were rural dwellers.

Block parties, church parish picnics and festivals, community music concerts, plays, local art shows and craft fairs are examples of how modern society expresses our earlier agrarian bonds. We need these events to maintain our ties of dependence on one another.

We can't escape the agrarian imperative and tribal roots of our past when we hunted and farmed together for survival. If we think we can ignore these roots we might not survive in today's hubbub and during future threats.

Dr. Mike is a Harlan, Iowa psychologist and agriculturalist. He can be contacted at www.agbehavioralhealth.com.

Vacationers: Protect Your Assets

SIoux FALLS — Nothing is more exciting than packing and getting ready for that much needed summer vacation to "get away from it all."

Unfortunately, some vacationers will find "it all" no longer there when they return home. The FBI warns that July and August are the worst months for home break-ins. According to the Insurance Information Institute, more than 2.15 million burglaries occur each year and more than 65 percent of them are residential break-ins.

Before taking that well-deserved trip, AAA South Dakota advises travelers to prepare their homes against burglary.

"Summer vacation plans can quickly turn into a disaster for travelers who fail to execute a plan to protect their home while they are away," warned Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota. "AAA advises homeowners to safeguard all property while away from home, including not posting detailed status updates online in social media forums and making their homes as burglar-proof as possible."

ONLINE TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY....

One of the biggest mistakes travelers make today is adver-

tising their travel plans and whereabouts on social media sites. Broadcasting your location information and posting photos while on vacation is like handing the key to your house to potential thieves.

• Even if you are not "bragging" about your vacation details, social media settings can display your location online. It's best for travelers to completely log out and wait to log back in once home or make sure privacy and location settings are restricted.

• Don't say you are on vacation on voice mail. Likewise, make sure your family and children do not use an e-mail auto response noting you are out of town. Cyber crooks issue mass mailings in hopes of receiving these automatic reply messages and cross check them with online directories to determine where you live.

• Only share details and photos of your trip after returning home.

OFFLINE TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY....

Remember, a "lived-in" look is the single most important deterrent against burglars. Pretend that you are a burglar. Try to think the way they would and walk around your house, inside and out, to find potential weak spots.

• Use timers on your lights,

radios and televisions.

• Keep your grass cut.
• If you don't stop your paper or mail delivery — make sure a neighbor or trusted friend collects them as a pile of newspapers on the driveway can tip off burglars.

• Park an extra car outside and ask a trusted family member to move it from time to time.

• Don't leave garage door openers inside vehicles that will be parked outside the house.

• Ask your family or trusted neighbor to get boxes, etc. if you expect deliveries while you are gone.

• Don't let the trash pile up.

• Use flood lights and motion detectors. Keeping your lights on during the day time is a dead give-away that you're not at home.

• Look through your windows and see what valuables are in plain sight. If you can see any special possessions, move them out of clear sight.

• Store your valuables in non-traditional places such as the bathroom or attic. Burglars tend to want to get out quickly, so they go to the most likely room in the house first.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE....

• Take an inventory — use a video camera to video all

of your possessions — everything from furniture to jewelry to stereo equipment and televisions. Then be sure to review and update your insurance coverage.

• If possible, get an alarm system. They are a great deterrent to burglars. You may also receive a discount on your insurance rates.

• Don't forget to protect yourself from identity theft while on vacation by tracking your credit and finances with a monitoring service.

Be aware that not all of your valuables will be covered by homeowners insurance in the event of a burglary. There are limits on the amount of coverage you receive for valuables such as jewelry, antiques, business property and art, but you can purchase endorsements that will add extra protection. If you do become a victim of a home invasion, call 911 right away and report the crime. Once you have the police report, call your homeowners insurance agency to file a claim for property theft and damages.

"Protecting our assets at home and while away from home is key to a successful vacation," Buskohl said. "A failure to plan ahead can lead to disappointing financial losses and a sour ending to a sweet vacation."



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Cadet Nicole Schneider receives the Sioux Falls Chapter of the Air Force Association Cadet Officer of the Year Award presented by SDANG Lt. Col. Greg Lair.

Cadet To Attend CAP's National Cadet Officers School

Cadet Major Nicole Schneider of Sioux Falls, and member of the Civil Air Patrol's Sioux Falls Composite Squadron, has been selected to attend CAP's prestigious National Cadet Officers School this summer. She will join 120 cadet colleagues from 36 states at CAP's National Headquarters at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama to attend the 10-day, college-level course.

Participation in the National Cadet Officer School is a popular choice for CAP cadets because of the rigorous academic curriculum and caliber of instruction offered by Air Force and CAP officers. Only the top 15 percent of all CAP cadets are accepted to attend.

Wing Commander Colonel John Seten said, "Cadet Major Schneider's selection to attend the National Cadet Officers School shows that South Dakota Wing has some of the finest cadets in all of CAP."

The National Cadet Officers School is an academically challenging program designed to develop cadets' broader understanding of leadership as a discipline. Throughout the week the cadets participate in a variety of lectures and supporting discussions to explore

leadership topics. Through the rigorous curriculum and activities they enhance their ability to work with others. When they leave they are better prepared to serve as leaders in their units, schools and communities.

"At the National Cadet Officer School we are building our nation's leaders of tomorrow," said Lt. Col. Joe Winter, the activity's director. "Our cadets gain confidence and experience as they develop their skills."

The South Dakota Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, with squadrons in Sioux Falls, Brookings, Rapid City, Pierre, Custer and Spearfish has approximately 300 members, six light aircraft and 17 multi-purpose vehicles. These assets are available to federal, state and county governments, emergency responders and law enforcement agencies to perform search and rescue, homeland security, disaster relief, humanitarian assistance and counter-drug missions. For more information visit the wing's website at <http://sd-cap.us> and Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SDWingCAP>. For general information on CAP visit www.govcivillairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteer.com.

New Market President At CorTrust Bank

CorTrust Bank is pleased to announce that Lynn Peterson has been named Market President in Yankton and oversees the management of six locations in Southeast South Dakota. Locations include Vermillion, Gayville, Tabor, Freeman and two Yankton CorTrust Banks.

Peterson has more than 23 years of experience in the financial services industry, 15 of those years with CorTrust Bank. He understands the needs of business, agriculture and retail customers throughout the area. "I look forward to leading the bank and continuing to deliver high level products and the unparalleled customer service that is CorTrust Bank," said Peterson.

Peterson is passionate about the Yankton area and serves on the Yankton Area Progressive Growth Board, Yankton Rotary Foundation



Peterson

Board and is a Member of the Yankton Planning Commission. He has also served as the Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce President, XYZ member, Ability Building Services board member, on the board of Trinity Lutheran Church and coached little league baseball.

CorTrust Bank has remained a true family owned bank for more than 80 years. The Bank's financial strength, high level of personal service and the most advanced technology support the company's desire for continued growth in the area. CorTrust Bank has 22 locations South Dakota and three locations in Minnesota.

Bike MS Ride Event Set

SIoux FALLS — The National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Upper Midwest Chapter will host Bike MS: Sanford Health Sioux Falls Ride Saturday, Aug. 1. Hundreds of cyclists are expected to participate and raise nearly \$80,000 to fund programs and services for families affected by MS, and drive research aimed at stopping the disease in its tracks, restoring lost function and ending MS forever.

The Sioux Falls Ride, which will start and end at Borrowed Bucks Roadhouse, marks the fifth of six Bike MS events to be held across the Upper Midwest Chapter area in 2015. The series, which includes rides in

Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota, is expected to raise more than \$4.3 million. Bike MS is the fifth largest event in the nation, bringing in \$83 million nationally each year.

Riders can choose a 20-, 50-, 80- or 100-mile route before heading back to the finish line celebration with free beer, live music and food. Routes are fully supported and include rest stops every 10-15 miles. All participants will receive a commemorative T-shirt and can register online now or onsite Aug. 1.

Visit bikeMS.org for additional details.

REUNIONS

PETERSON-BERQUIST-LARSON

The Peterson-Berquist-Larson Reunion normally held the first Sunday in August at Gayville will not be held this year.

www.yankton.net

Got News?
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At 665-7811

YOUR NEWS! THE PRESS AND DAKOTAN

CORRECTION

The Basham Auction
on **Sunday, July 26**
at **1606 Pine St. in Yankton**
will begin at **12:30 p.m.**
(Rain date is 8/1 at 12:30 p.m.)

anniversary sale

No interest for **6** years![†]

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