Subject: Re: Natural Forest Fires
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 08 Jun 2023 16:56:28 GMT
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A couple years ago, there was a really weird fire near where I live. It was literally underground. One would think that's not possible, but what made it so was underground caves and caverns.

Apparently, decades ago there was a trash pit far outside any population centers that was eventually overtaken by city development. And here - much to my surprise - it isn't uncommon for people to burn trash in this area, usually woody trash that comes from fallen trees and those uprooted by local flooding. It's common enough here that the trash area was actually called a "stump dump." This practice was foreign to me 'cause I'm an import here.

Anyway, the common practice of burning at the "stump dump" eventually caught material that extended into the caverns, which then gave a source of oxygen from underneath. Once that happened, the fire couldn't be extinguished from water or by covering the burn with soil. The heat was deep enough surface water would vaporize before lowering the temperature and covering didn't remove the oxygen source. So the hillbillies were screwed.

Sorry if that sounds condescending - I suppose it is - but I just can't understand how anyone could be so stupid to not foresee this eventuality. In my mind, once you start populating natural woodland, you have to be mindful that there is a lot of natural kindling. And especially if it has a lot of caves, now you have kindling and underground oxygen sources. So openly burning trash seems somewhat dangerous.

Funny stuff.