

# Buffelgrass Burn Surprises Firefighters and Researchers

From KOLD News 13  
By *Jim Becker* Reporter

If your life depended on jogging away from a fire, you might not be able to make it if Buffelgrass is involved.

A test burn on 160 acres of city of Tucson owned land shows Buffelgrass fires will move as fast as the wind.

"That's not normal," says Chris McDonald, PhD, a researcher with the UA School of Natural Resources. "In a normal fire situation, the fire is usually slower than the wind, and these Buffelgrass fires almost kept up with the wind.

What's more, in hilly areas, fires would burn even faster, because they pick up speed as they move up a slope.

McDonald, discussing preliminary results from the May 28 burn, also says the fire burned 1700-degrees.

Such intensity produces radiant heat, plenty to burn down a home, if close enough.

As a result of the experiment, homeowners will likely be receiving suggestions on clearing Buffelgrass from the yard. Because a Buffelgrass fire would likely pass through any man made or natural

break, firefighters probably would not be able to save homes with Buffelgrass nearby, says McDonald.

## CALENDAR

**August 9, 2008.** A successful effort last month at Shaw Butte, is being repeated by Phoenix Weedwackers this Saturday. Parking will be about 50 yards south of Cactus on east side, behind "Mings". Hope to see you Saturday; Claudia Bloom.  
Info: 480-641-7449.

**August 16, 2008.** Wildlife for Tomorrow Foundation inducting L.V. Yates see inside panel for more information or visit: [wildlifefortomorrow@cox.net](mailto:wildlifefortomorrow@cox.net).



### LOOKOUT

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The Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council is dedicated to protecting our Phoenix Mountains Preserves.

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TO:



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## SUMMER PUBLIC MEETINGS BEING HELD TO DECIDE FUTURE OF INITIATIVE FUNDING

By Tice Supplee

Greetings! Here is a final draft of the Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council talking points for board and members to use when you provide input at the public meetings or for the on-line survey forms. This was prepared by the committee of Robin Salthouse, Susan Erlich and Susanne Rothwell. Hope you can attend an upcoming meeting and help at a PMPC table.

Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council priority items for Phoenix Parks and Preserves Initiative (3PI) funds are:

- " Immediate funding of preserves and parks maintenance for trails and infrastructure (existing facilities). Refer to priority lists from Preserve Managers.
- " Fund enforcement and citizen steward programs for the mountain preserves.
- " Fund the completion of Phoenix Sonoran Preserve.
- " Acquisition priority at locations with high need and high public use such as trailheads and trail routing.
- " Fund dedicated trail crews.
- " Abide by the edge guidelines developed for the Sonoran Preserve for any new facility or development on city owned or leased lands adjacent to all mountain parks and preserves.
- " Apply LEEDS, green design standards, to all new facility construction.

Also, please take a few minutes to fill out the two Phoenix Parks and Recreation On-Line Survey's at:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=A1cmiSpRCMGef\\_2fhOg0kJZO\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=A1cmiSpRCMGef_2fhOg0kJZO_3d_3d)  
<http://phoenix.gov/PARKS/hikemain.html>

# SUMMER BOOK REVIEW OF 'LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS' POINTS TO NEEDS AND BENEFITS OF NATURE IN OUR LIFE

By Robin Salthouse

Do you know a child: a neighbor, niece, nephew, or grandchild that suffers from "nature-deficit disorder"? While not a scientifically accepted medical diagnosis, *Last Child in the Woods* author, Richard Louv, has coined the term to help readers understand people's withdrawal from nature.

This has become especially prevalent with recent generations who can be easily entertained by electronics or have become fearful of the unknown natural world. The condition may seem absurd to any one born to the Baby Boom Generation or earlier where children weren't allowed inside the house until dinner time, but Louv examines and provides examples of the influences that have made today's parents and children dread and avoid the outdoors.

The book doesn't propose nature-deficit disorder as a forgone conclusion, but encourages readers with examples how individuals and groups are trying to change the trend for people to appreciate and feel comfortable interacting in their natural surroundings which will in turn provide physical and mental health benefits.

Louv outlines several influences that have brought us to where our interactions with the outdoors are less and less hands on. Space that once allowed children to use their imagination as they built and then played in tree houses and forts is now strictly forbidden by Home-owner Associations or even parks to avoid the mess

or expense of litigation should someone get hurt. Parents have become fearful of letting their children loose outdoors due to potential child abductions sensationalized by the media.

Technology has made it easy to plop ourselves in front of a screen to be entertained by a program, movie, software or game allowing ourselves to forget about the opportunities we are missing by not going outdoors beyond our work, school or shopping. Consequently today's children are facing increasing problems with obesity, attention deficit disorder and stress. Studies continue to show that humans exposed to nature during recovery time from an injury heal more quickly. The benefits of exercise certainly are known to society, but the book illustrates how today's children are missing the unstructured and imaginative component of outdoor play to allow for wholesome development.

We all need the opportunity to go somewhere to relax with surroundings that don't over-stimulate us.

Without an intimate relationship with nature we are losing touch with many of the basics that make up our environment. From knowing more about the ATV models we drive versus the snakes and birds we drive by to putting extraordinary efforts

into saving the rainforest without realizing open space in our own backyard is disappearing. If future generations do not create an attachment to land then as Louv writes "This lack of attachment will exacerbate the very conditions that created the sense of disengagement in the first place, fueling a tragic spiral, in which our children and the natural world are increasingly detached."

Luckily for us in Arizona, the very people who manage and protect our public lands from the local up to the federal level are familiar with Louv's message and are rallying around it. They understand that if we don't start engaging taxpayers; current and future, with the need to experience our open space, then we won't have the citizenry who understand why it should be protected and supported. In his updated and expanded version, published in 2008, Louv provides additional resources including family nature activities, suggestions to help communities incorporate healthy outdoor spaces and suggestions for educators and parent-teacher groups to get involved. Louv's discussion points, at the end of the resource section, make this an ideal book club read.

Louv has caught people's attention by identifying and defining a problem many of us know exists. He has also organized a foundation, Children and Nature Network at [www.cnaturenet.org](http://www.cnaturenet.org) to provide a means to further organize and reconnect people with nature. By virtue of

a PMPC membership you support protecting our natural world, and hopefully by reading *Last Child in the Woods* you will understand how vital this work has become and how important it is to ensure we include our children in the journey.

(Updated and Expanded - *Last Child In the Woods*, Algonquin Book, Copyright 2008.)

## UPDATE - update - UPDATE

By Leslie Spencer-Snider

Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council was represented at the North Mountain Village Planning Committee's meeting Wednesday, July 16, 2008 by Leslie Spencer-Snider. PMPC regularly attends meetings that involve parcels adjacent to the Preserve to voice support of the Hillside Ordinance. The parcel in question this time is located at 134 West Mountain View, more commonly referred to by PMPC members as "the Frank Meluzzo house" that burned down in 2000. Ms. Spencer-Snider voiced PMPC's opinion that the Hillside Ordinance should be followed in spirit even though the COP Planning Dept. ruled that the Hillside Ordinance did not apply to this parcel (zoning # Z-42-07-3). This would enforce that the project to be capped at a height restriction of 30 feet instead of the requested 40 feet. The developer promised to revegetate any disturbed areas adjacent to the Preserve as well as the other sides viewed by the neighborhood. The Committee voted in favor of the project with the 30 foot height restriction stipulation. Although the neighborhood was not happy for other reasons, which PMPC cannot be involved in, the vote with stipulations was a victory for PMPC.



## L.V. Yates Being Honored by Wildlife for Tomorrow

**Plan on joining** the Wildlife for Tomorrow recognition of both individuals and organizations that have worked consistently over many years through political and individual leadership, volunteer service, the mass media, environmental restoration and educational activities on behalf of Arizona's natural resources.

The annual Arizona Outdoor Hall of Fame class of 2008 four inductees are L.V. Yates, Duane L. Shroufe, Gary Barcom, plus the Chandler Rod and Gun Club. All have made contributions that have benefited Arizona's fish and wildlife and their habitats.

The new inductees will be honored August 16 at the Wildlife for Tomorrow Foundation's Arizona Outdoor Hall of Fame banquet at the Scottsdale Resort and Conference Center.

Board member of PMPC is only one of L.V. Yates' longtime contributions. Owner of the memorable Yates Army/Navy Surplus in Phoenix, he has been passionately promoting outdoor Arizona for 60 years. Active with 4-H clubs, the Governor's Commission on the Arizona Environment, he has won a lifetime achievement award from the Arizona Wildlife Federation. Additionally, for over 30 years, L.V. has hosted the 'Know Your Resources' seminar series, teaching "city folk" about the wonders of Arizona's natural resources.

This major award and induction event was developed in 1998 by the Wildlife For Tomorrow Foundation to honor those who have made significant contributions to the preservation of Arizona's outdoor heritage. Selections for this award are made annually by the Board of Directors of Wildlife for Tomorrow Foundation.

To make a reservation to attend this dinner contact the Wildlife for Tomorrow Foundation as soon as possible at (623) 204-2130 or send an e-mail to: [wildlifefortomorrow@cox.net](mailto:wildlifefortomorrow@cox.net).

### Annual Dinner Combined Members, Guests, & Presentations

A good turnout, a great dinner, and two interesting speakers helped make the annual PMPC event successful. **Eric Gorsegner** covered the Sun Corridor Legacy Program by the Sonoran Institute and outlined the need for more protected areas (like the Mountain Preserves) as the metropolitan region grows. Plus, **Joe Yarchin** gave details on how Arizona Game and Fish manages wildlife projects. The **Sheriff Posse** for use of their Clubhouse and **Shirley Ward** for catering the dinner are owed a "thank you" for helping everyone have an enjoyable evening.

In May, 83 percent of the votes cast were in favor of the proposition that strives to protect more of the Sonoran Desert. Once again, Phoenix voters have shown the desire to protect more of our natural lands.

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of the  
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