

Mike Garrity

Thank you for Mike Garrity's column about forest fires plaguing Idaho and Montana. My family in Montana says they're prisoners in their home—unable to do anything outdoors because of intense smoke. AP News reports extensively on fires from Los Angeles to Montana, the impact on communities, property destruction, road closings and evacuation of some areas. Although AP mentions extreme heat and very dry weather in the US (and also regarding European fires), I haven't seen any AP article mention climate change. Nor have they interviewed firefighters about trends in fires. Articles about hurricane Harvey stressed ways climate change makes superstorms wetter and stronger, so the silence regarding climate and fires is especially loud.

Four years ago, 60 minutes asked the federal government's chief of fire operations about people who deny climate change. The chief replied: "You won't find them on the fire line in the American west anymore, because we've had climate change beat into us over the last 10 or 15 years. We know what we're seeing and we're dealing with a period of climate in terms of temperature and humidity and drought that is different from anything people have seen in our lifetimes."

It's time for Americans to put down their foot and stamp out lies and willful ignorance about the growing risks we face. A bipartisan House Climate Solutions Caucus is studying legislative solutions. Readers should please urge Rep. Michael Simpson to join this congressional caucus. It's time to help our firefighters and ourselves.

Judy Weiss,

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