Nearly everyone has heard that “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” The United States Forest Service has taken this idea seriously. Generations of American children have grown up chanting, “Only you can prevent forest fires,” and popular characters like Smokey the Bear and Bambi have given us the idea that any forest fire is bad. Fire prevention programs have succeeded in educating the public about the dangers of forest fires. However, in recent decades, increasing evidence shows this may be bad preventive medicine. A big problem now looms in United States forests. Decades of fire suppression have created an ecological situation where every fire quickly develops to a crisis. Many foresters have begun to advocate “purposely burning within limits deemed safe for a given area,” commonly called prescribed burning (McLean 13). Although it violates traditional forestry procedures, prescribed burning can be best for long-term forest health.