Written by **James Murphy** on May 21, 2024

Study: Wildfires Are Worse Because CO2 Makes Trees Grow

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Carbon dioxide has borne the brunt of the blame for what climate zealots refer to as climate change. The compound is now being blamed for a specific aspect of climate change, but probably not in the way most people would think.

Researchers at University of California-Riverside are blaming CO_2 for worsening wildfires due its role in helping plants grow. That's right: According to the researchers, carbon dioxide's role in helping plants and trees to grow is creating more fuel for wildfires, thus making them far worse.

"In addition to enhanced fire weather, increasing atmospheric CO_2 concentrations are associated with enhanced carbon uptake and storage by the terrestrial biosphere through the CO_2 fertilization effect."

"It's not because it's hotter that things are burning, it's because there's more fuel, in the form of plants," said the study's author James Gomez, a doctoral student at UC-Riverside.

> This is really too stupid for words:
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> "CO2 worsens wildfires by helping plants grow."
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> Wildfires have actually dramatically declined around the world as atmospheric CO2 has increased. Check out the attached US wildfire record over the past 100 years.
>
> If correlation were… pic.twitter.com/0WXtjefU7r
>
> — Steve Milloy (@JunkScience) May 21, 2024

At least climate zealots are finally understanding what photosynthesis is.

"Warming and drying are still important fire factors. These are the conditions that make the extra plant mass more flammable," admitted UC-Riverside professor Robert Allen.

The researchers produced models in which increases in carbon dioxide were examined for how future increases might affect future wildfires. The models all assumed a one-percent increase in atmospheric CO_2 concentrations since 1850. That increase was meant to isolate the effects of CO_2 specifically.

"Our goal is to assess how wildfire activity is projected to change under idealized increases in atmospheric CO_2 in the current generation of models, and moreover, to assess the relative importance of physical climate impacts," the study states.

"These experiments are mainly looking at the contribution of CO_2 to changes in wildfire activity," said

Gomez. “That’s the only thing that’s changing in these models. Other drivers of climate change and wildfire activity do not change through time.”

The fuel load is more important to the fires than any warmth that the CO_2 might bring. While dry and windy conditions contribute to fire problems, the increased fuel load due to CO_2 is a major problem, according to Gomez.

“However, our study shows the increase in fires during hotter seasons is driven by fuel load rather than an increase in the number of what some consider ‘fire weather’ days,” Gomez said.

In reality, although a few high-profile fires have occurred in recent years, fire activity is drastically lower than it was in the early 20th century.

“Wildfires have declined sharply over the course of the past century in the United States and globally,” wrote Dr. H. Sterling Burnett in 2020. “Using data on U.S. wildfires from as far back as 1926, NIFC reports the numbers of acres burned is far less now than it was throughout the early 20th century, with the current acres burned running about 1/4th to 1/5th of the record values that occurred in the 1930s.”

Such facts do not matter to climate zealots, however. Wildfires are terrifying and a good photo op. They must be blamed on climate change, and the study’s authors do not disappoint.

“We do need to implement better fire control and have more prescribed burns to use up plant fuel. We need to get rid of the old stuff,” Gomez said. “But the best way to decrease wildfires is to mitigate our carbon dioxide emissions. We need more emission control now.”

The Earth has been getting steadily greener, in part due to the slight increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide. Is this study saying that that’s a bad thing?