



Wildfires in California, US, shut down Sequoia National Park and threatened its ancient trees. The Colony Fire, one of two burning in the national park, has threatened to reach the famed Giant Forest.

Authorities increased the number of firefighters in the park, and they used **prescribed fires** to help protect the sequoias. Firefighters wrapped the bases of the world's largest trees in fire-resistant **aluminum** blankets, as they tried to save a famous grove of gigantic old-growth sequoias from burning. Among the 2,400 sequoias is the largest tree on earth, General Sherman, at 83.82 meters high.

The sequoias are among the tallest trees in the world, and they can be thousands of years old. Fortunately, giant sequoias adapted to fire and that can help them **thrive** because the fire makes them release seeds from their cones and it clears other trees.

Difficult words: **prescribed fire** (a fire that is set intentionally to help reduce the strength of other wildfires), **aluminum** (a light silver-grey metal), **thrive** (to grow, develop, or live well).

**Discussion Questions****Topic Talk**

1. Define the following words: *prescribed fire*, *aluminum* and *thrive*
2. Why did they have to shut down Sequoia National Park?
3. What did the firefighters save the sequoia trees from burning?
4. What is the largest tree on earth called? And how high is it?
5. How does fire benefit sequoia trees?

Express Your Thoughts

1. Have you ever wondered how large and tall these sequoia trees are?
2. Where can you find the largest and the tallest trees in your country?
3. Do wildfires happen in your country? What are the common reasons?
4. Have you been to your country's national parks? What are the most famous ones?