

# Experts: Slow fire season has potential to explode

By Brian VanderBeek, Sacramento Bee

The lack of any major fire activity during the first half of the summer has firefighters knocking on wood.

And there's a lot of wood on which to knock. The higher-than-normal rainfall in a longer-than-normal rainy season has produced grasses nearly everywhere, and the bumper crop of herbaceous fuel has smoke-watchers anxiously monitoring the Coast Range and the Sierra.

"We have a few weather stations along the forest, and we've been looking at the trends," said Jerry McGowan, forest fire management officer for the Stanislaus National Forest. "Those trends are climbing, but so far there haven't been any large fires this year within the United States. Everybody has been lucky."

**Read the whole story**