

Social and Psychological Drivers Influencing Homeowner Decisions on Wildfire Mitigation

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Abstract

This study examines the social and psychological factors that influence homeowners' decisions to adopt wildfire mitigation measures. As wildfires become increasingly frequent and severe, understanding the drivers of homeowner behavior is critical to enhancing prevention efforts. Key factors explored include risk perception, social norms, trust in authorities, and personal values, each playing a significant role in shaping decisions regarding wildfire mitigation. The study also identifies barriers, such as financial constraints, cognitive biases, and logistical challenges, that hinder proactive behavior. By addressing these factors through targeted policies and communication strategies, it is possible to encourage more widespread adoption of wildfire prevention measures. The findings underscore the importance of integrating social and psychological insights into wildfire risk management to better protect communities in fire-prone areas.

Keywords: Wildfire Mitigation; Risk Perception; Homeowner Behavior; Social Norms; Psychological Barriers

Introduction

Wildfires are one of the most destructive natural hazards, posing significant risks to human life, property, and the environment. As climate change accelerates, wildfire seasons are becoming longer, and fires more intense. This growing threat underscores the importance of mitigation efforts by homeowners, particularly those living in fire-prone areas. Yet, while there is a growing body of research on the technical aspects of wildfire prevention, less attention has been given to the social and psychological drivers that influence homeowners' decisions to adopt mitigation strategies. Understanding these factors is essential for creating effective public policies and communication strategies that encourage homeowners to take action. This article explores the social and psychological dimensions that shape homeowner behavior regarding wildfire mitigation, including risk perception, social norms, trust in authorities, and personal values. By shedding light on these elements, we can better understand the barriers and motivators for mitigation and how to foster more proactive behaviors in the face of

government agencies are not adequately addressing wild re risks or that mitigation policies are ine ective, they may be less inclined to invest time or resources into protecting their properties. Trust is built through consistent, transparent, and responsive communication between authorities and the public. Fire management agencies that engage with communities, provide clear and actionable information, and involve homeowners in decision-making processes are more likely to gain the trust needed to promote mitigation e orts. Public education campaigns, community meetings, and partnerships with local organizations can help build this trust and encourage homeowners to