A seminar on “Forest Fire and Its Management” was organized by the Institute on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018. The official of State Forest Department, members of NGOs, researchers from HPU Shimla, Scientists, officers and research staff of HFRI participated in the seminar. The main themes of the seminar were:

- Identification of the causes and impact of the forest fire
- Prevention, management and control of forest fire
- Identification of safety measures to be taken during forest fire

The seminar was inaugurated by Sh. Amar Chand Sharma, IFS, PCCF (Management), Himachal Pradesh Forest Department. Addressing the participants, he congratulated the organizers for selecting a topic of immense significance for the seminar and affirmed the fact that fire effects irreparable loss to the flora and fauna. Sensitization of common people in general and researchers, forest department functionaries in particular is of utmost significance. He called upon forest department, research organizations and civil society to tackle the issue of the forest fires with the concerted efforts.

At the outset Dr. Ranjeet Kumar, organizing secretary of seminar elaborated upon the need of the seminar to sensitize the society towards conservation and management of biodiversity in forest fire affected areas.
Dr. Ranjeet Singh, Scientist-G welcomed the Chief Guest, resource persons, participants and briefed about the importance of forest fire management. In the end of inaugural session, Dr. R. K. Verma, Scientist-G gave the vote of thanks.

In the forenoon technical session, Dr. Sunil Chandra, Deputy Director (SM), Forest Survey of India, Dehradun gave a presentation on the status of forest fire in India and its management. He stressed upon the need for developing infrastructure for effective communication during forest fire management in state forests departments.

Dr. Joachim Scumerbeck, GIZ, Shimla linked forest fires with livelihood, its impact on environment and its control in his presentation through skype from Germany.

Dr. Ombir Singh, Scientist, Forest Research Institute (FRI), Dehradun talked about initiatives on Fire fighter safety, equipments and fire suppression. He said that there is a need for developing such equipments which require less manpower and are also cheaper in forest fire management.
Dr. Ranjeet Kumar, Scientist-E gave a presentation on forest fire in chir pine forests and its management in Himachal Pradesh. He said that forest fires are one of cause for degradation of forests in India, especially chir pine forests of North India, and affects biodiversity and regeneration trend of existing vegetation.

In the afternoon technical session, Shri Bhagat Ram, Ph.D. Scholar from HPU, Shimla talked on the use of pine needle for specialty application. He said that these needles can be used for purification of water. Dr. S.K. Joshi, representative of NGO, SEWAHAR elaborated upon the role of community participation in management of forest fire. He said that there is need of active involvement of local people/ developmental Functionaries/ youth clubs/Mahila Mandels and voluntary organizations for the successful implementation of fire management programmes.

Shri M.L. Thakur, Division Fire Officer, Himachal Pradesh Department of fire services gave a presentation on safety measures for control and management of fire and linked it with forest fires. He said that fire lines can be used to control the forest fires.
Sh. Alok Prem Nagar, IFS, CCF, HPSFD, talked about forest fire in Himachal Pradesh and it’s over view. He stressed upon of enrolling volunteers in controlling forest fires and standardising system of damage assessment due to forest fires.

The plenary session was chaired by Sh. Alok Prem Nagar, CCF, HPSFD. He hoped that what the participants have learnt here, will definitely be implemented in the field during the incidences of forest fires. The seminar finally concluded with a formal vote of thanks by Sh. S.P. Negi, IFS, Conservator of Forests of the Institute. He thanked Shri Amar Chand Sharma, IFS, Chief Guest of the Inaugural Session and Shri Alok Prem Nagar, IFS, Chief Guest for the Plenary Session for sparing their valuable time and sharing their experience with the participants. He also thanked all the presenters for their valuable contribution and the participants for attending this important event.

**Recommendations has been emerged from the seminar:**

1. There is a great need of compilation of database from various agencies and analysis of data-base for standardizing damage assessment due to forest fire. There is also need of doing intensive research studies on ecological and economical effect of forest fires.

2. Awareness campaign among different stakeholders to take preventive measures before the beginning of the fire season. There should be effective campaign at national level on control of forest fire.

3. There is a need for setting up effective communication network for quick flow of information.

4. Regular seminars, workshops and practical trainings of frontline staff of Forest Departments and communities should be organized.
5. Legal provisions for fire prevention and control should be implemented strictly.

6. The value added product from needles of chir pine has great potential to raise the income of people and reduce fire hazard in the forests. There is a need of doing research on value addition of chir pine needles.

7. There should be community based Forest Fires Management System by involving JFM committees and forest protection committees.

8. There is a need of increasing the budget allocation for fire management in the Forest Departments.
पंजाब केसरी, 09 फरवरी, 2018

शिमला में जंगल बचाने पर मंथन

दिव्य हिन्दीहर, 09 फरवरी, 2018

वनों की आग एवं इसका प्रबंधन विवाह व वैज्ञानिकों ने दिये सुझाव

दैनिक भास्कर, 09 फरवरी, 2018
Sensitise people on forest fires: Official

SHIMLA: The Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI) organised a seminar on Forest Fires and its Management, here on Thursday. The seminar was attended by officials from the State Forest Department, NGOs, researchers from the HPU, Shimla, and scientists and staff of HFRI. Inaugurating the seminar, Amar Chand Sharma, Principal Chief Conservator Forest (Management) said forest fire caused irreparable loss to the flora and fauna. “Sensitisation of common man is of utmost significance,” he said. TNS

(The Tribune, 09 February 2018)