

# Prescribed Fire

Helping make forests healthy



Coloring Book

## Dear Grown-Up,

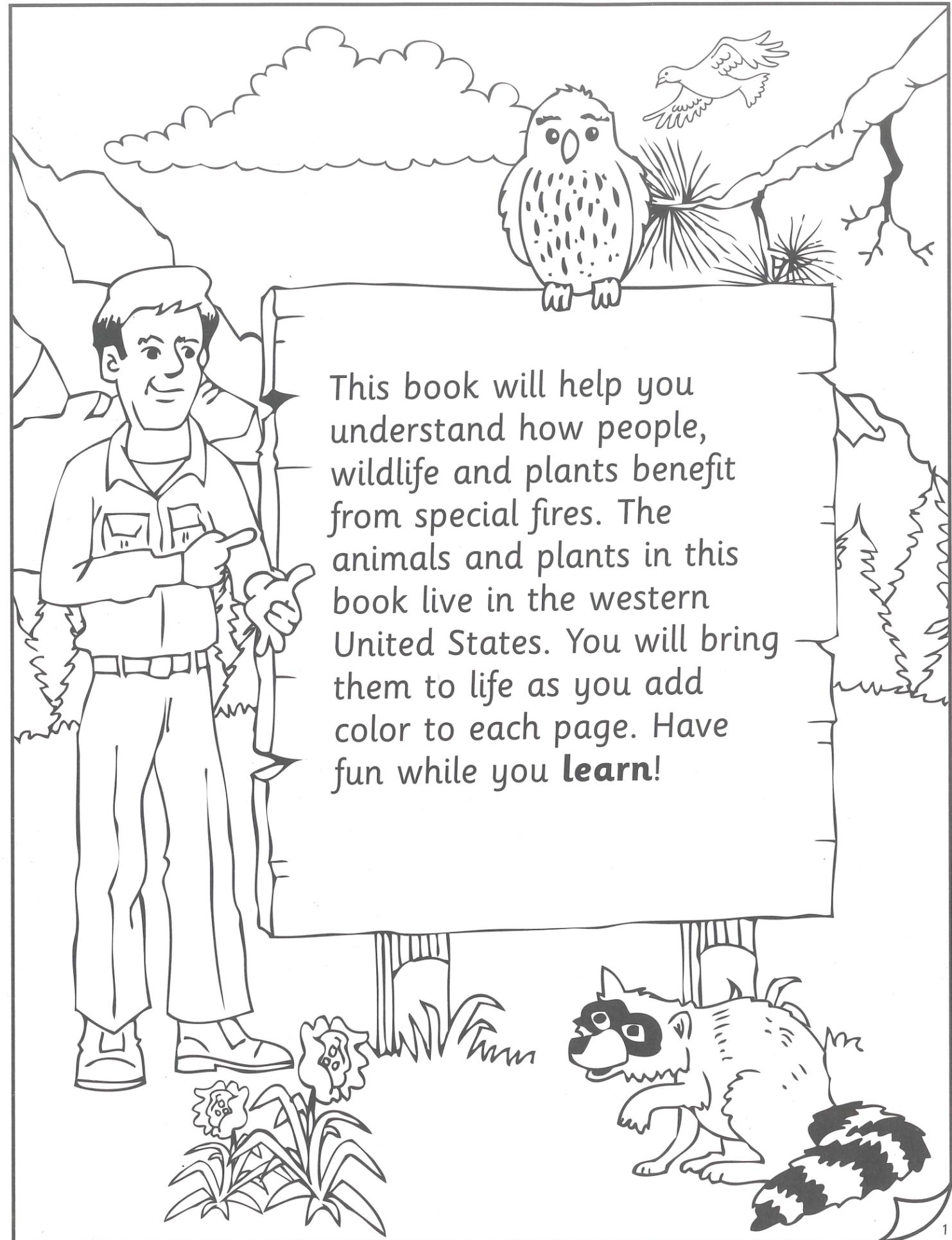
This coloring book is designed to introduce children to the essential role fire plays in our environment, and to help them understand the benefits of prescribed fire. Please note that some of the technical language may place the text above their reading level. By reading this book together, you can help children understand these concepts.

Wildland fire is an essential, natural process. Land management agencies are committed to a balanced fire program that will reduce risks and realize benefits of fire. Prescribed fire is a management tool used to accomplish specific objectives, such as removal of excess vegetation or stimulating plant growth and regeneration.

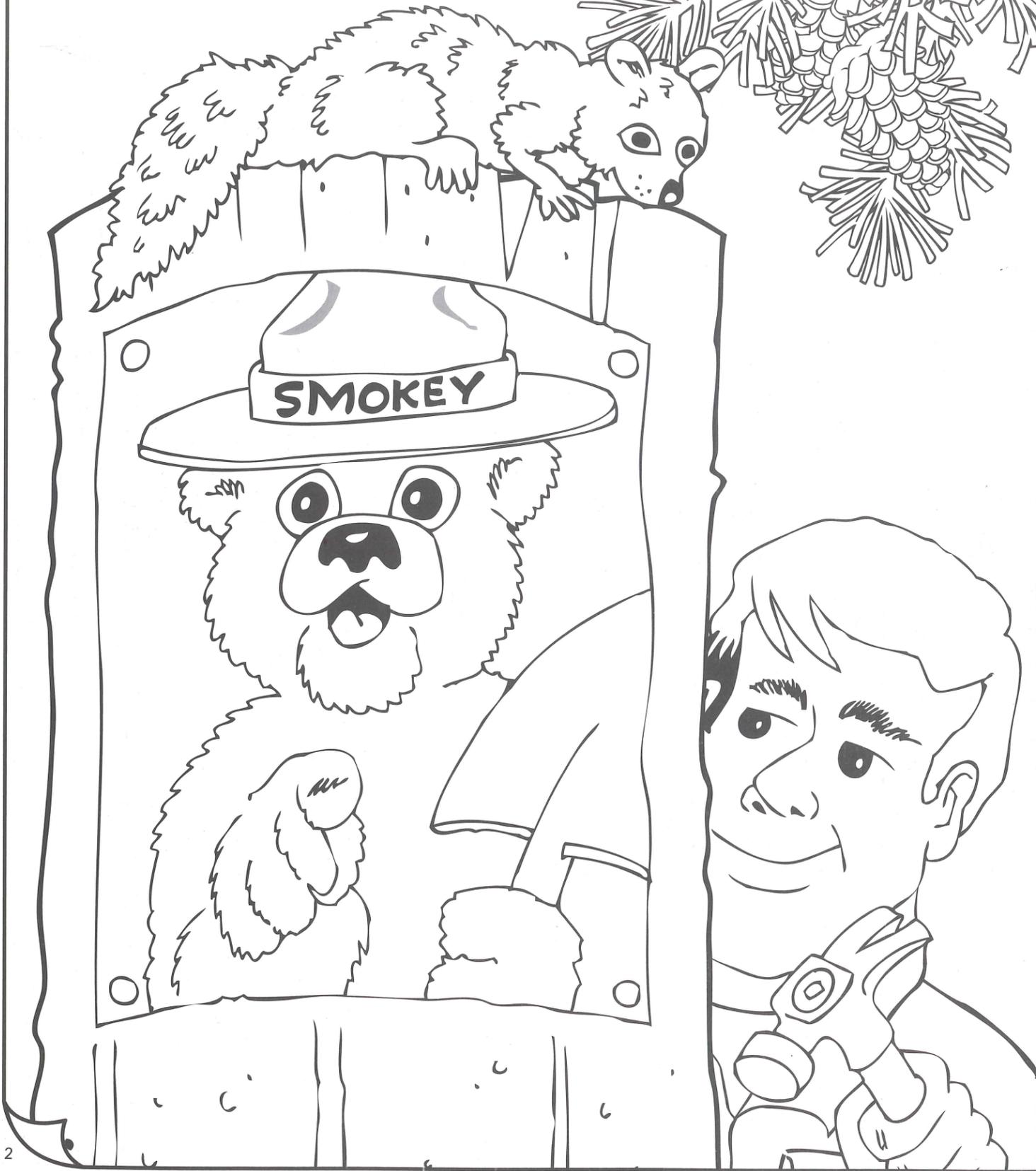
Smokey Bear's message is still very important! We want children to know that they should never play with fire.

Please read this coloring book with your children, and help them understand the difference between "good fire" and "bad fire." It is important to stress fire safety, and to emphasize that prescribed burns should only be done by trained fire managers. For more help in teaching fire safety and understanding prescribed fire, please visit Smokey Bear's website at [www.smokeybear.com](http://www.smokeybear.com).

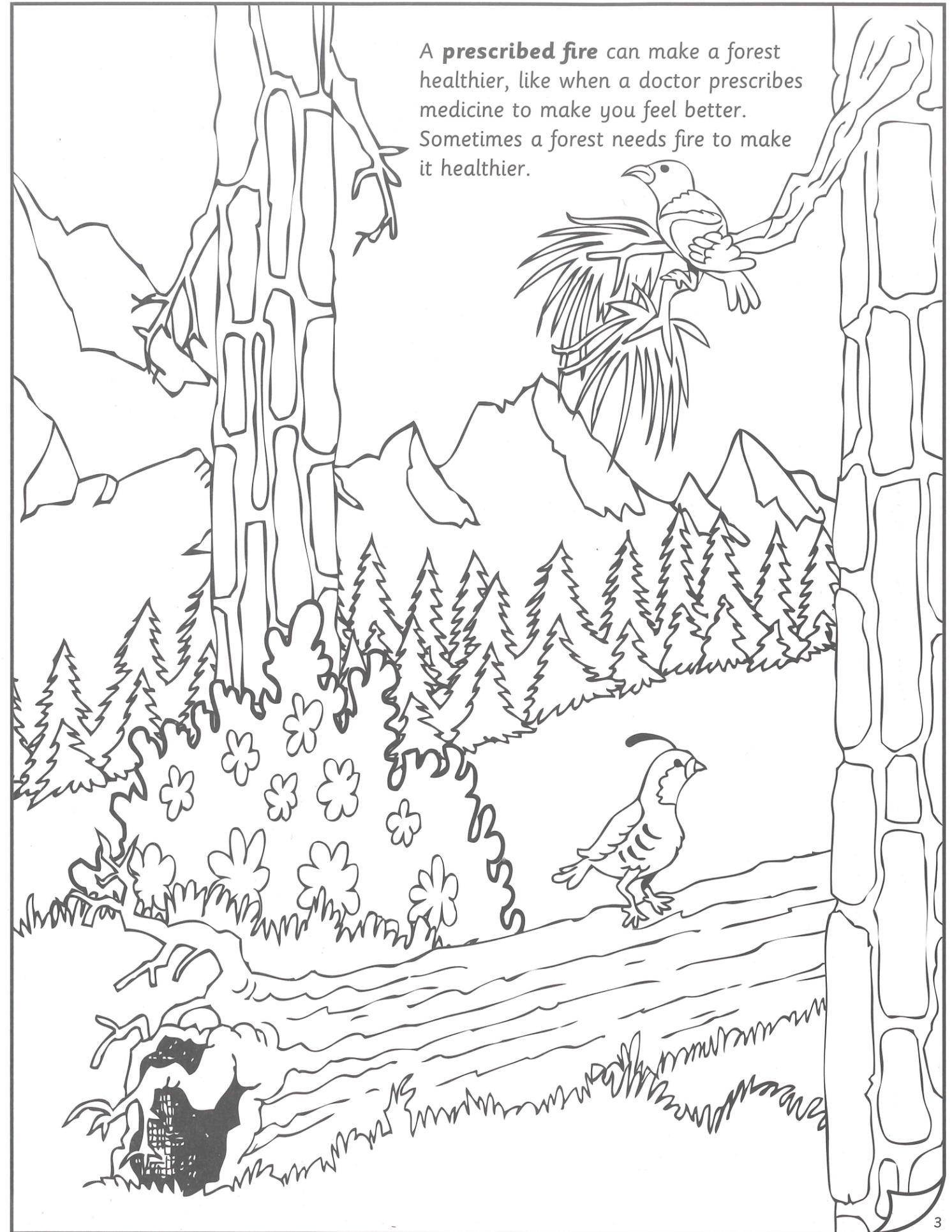
Thank you!



Smokey Bear has done a good job of preventing forest fires caused by human carelessness. However, there is a type of fire that actually helps our trees, plants and wildlife. It's called **prescribed fire**.



A **prescribed fire** can make a forest healthier, like when a doctor prescribes medicine to make you feel better. Sometimes a forest needs fire to make it healthier.



Fire is a part of nature, just like sun, rain and wind.

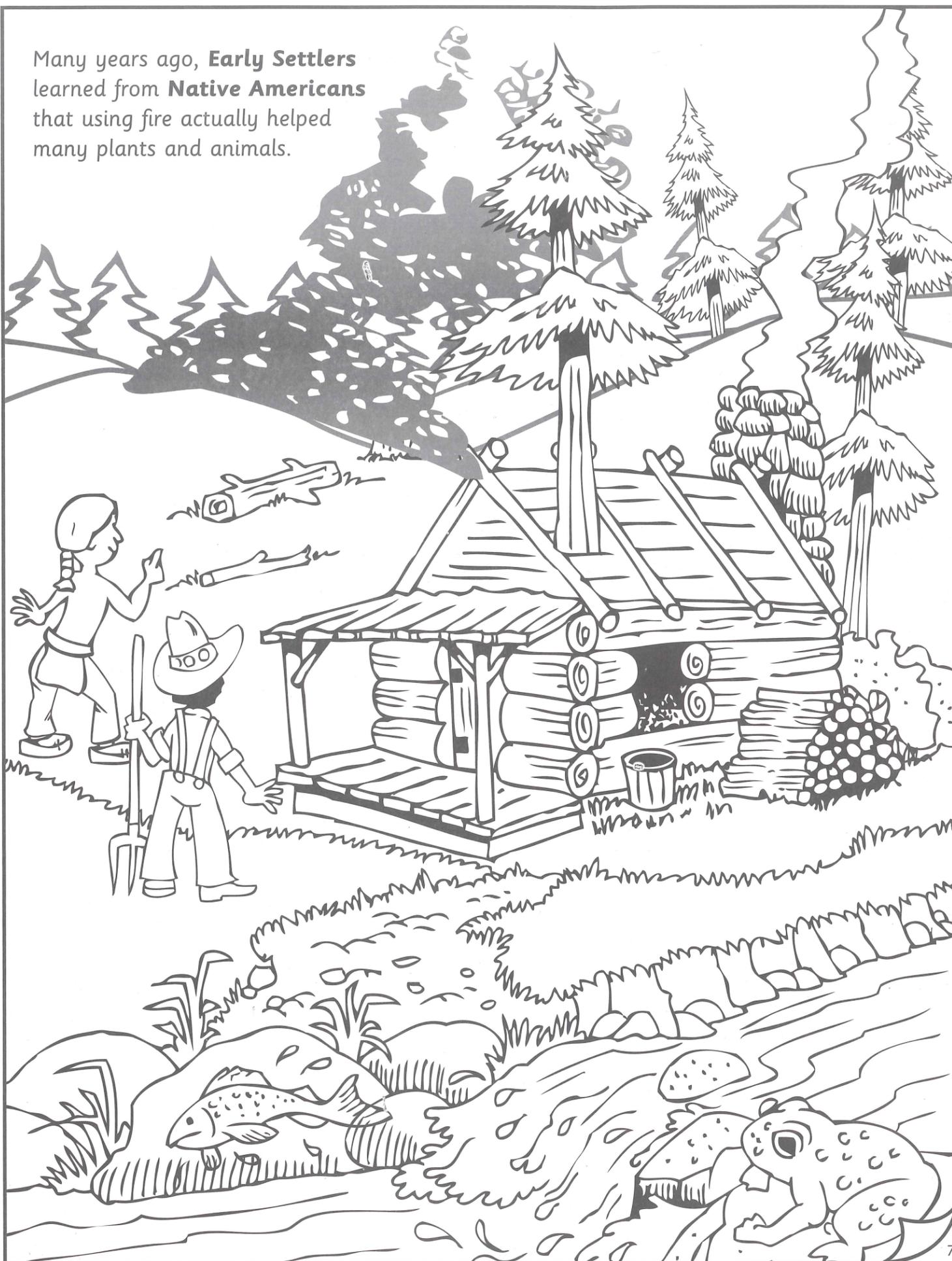


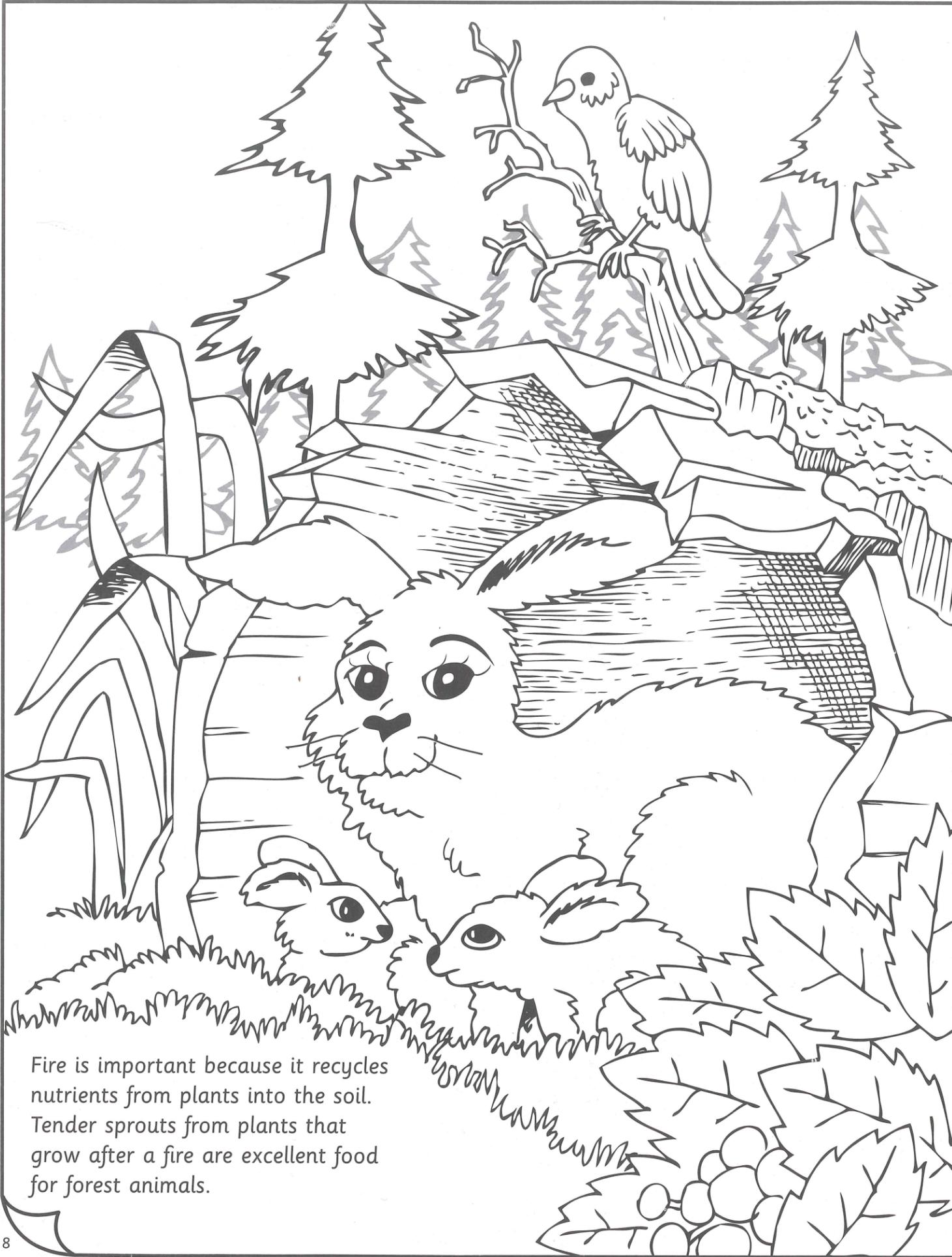
If there is too much plant life and dead wood (called "fuels") in the forest, a **wildfire** can get very big. **Prescribed burning** can reduce **forest fuels!**

**Wildfires**, like the ones caused by **lightning**, are easier to control in areas where a **prescribed fire** burned.



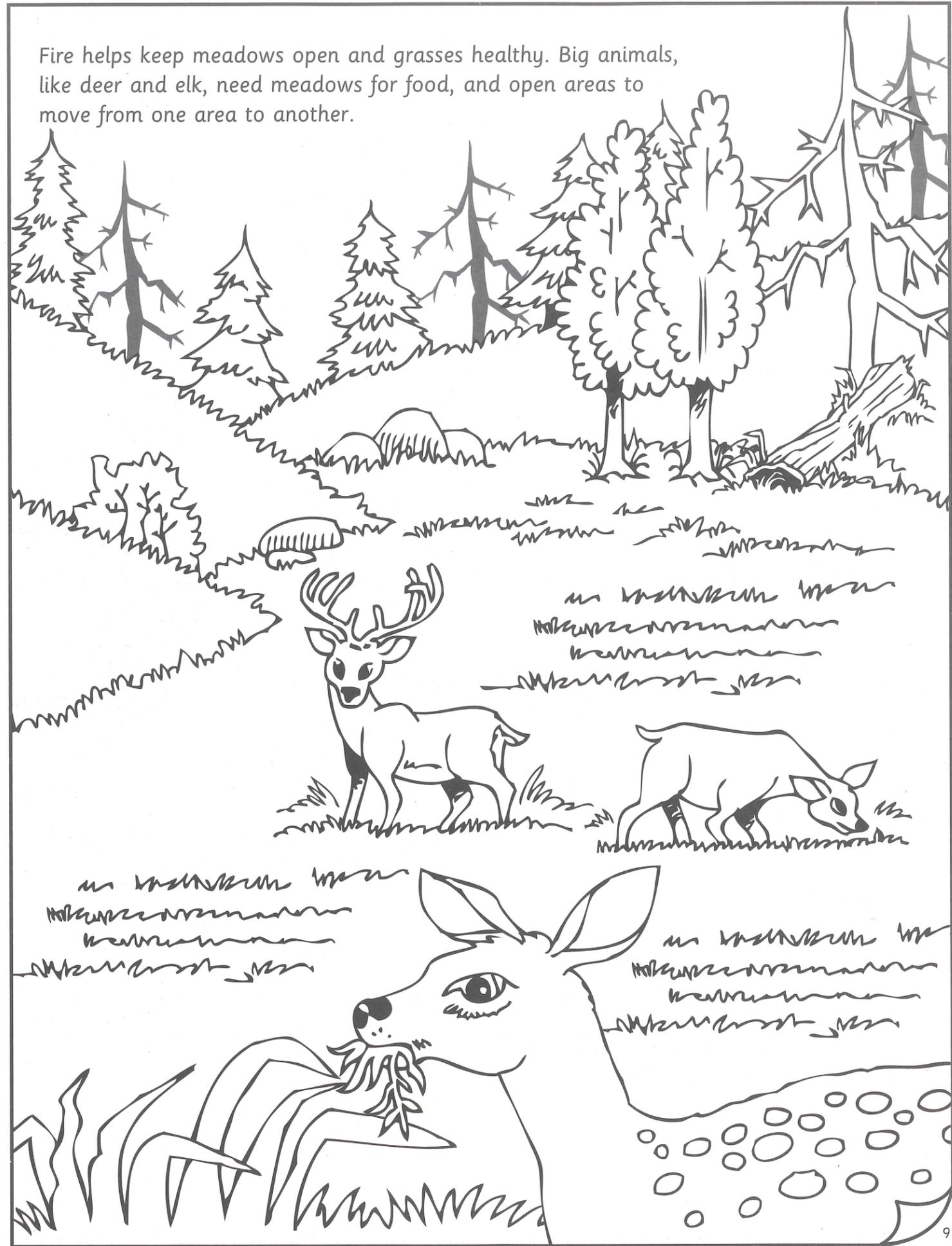
Many years ago, **Early Settlers** learned from **Native Americans** that using fire actually helped many plants and animals.

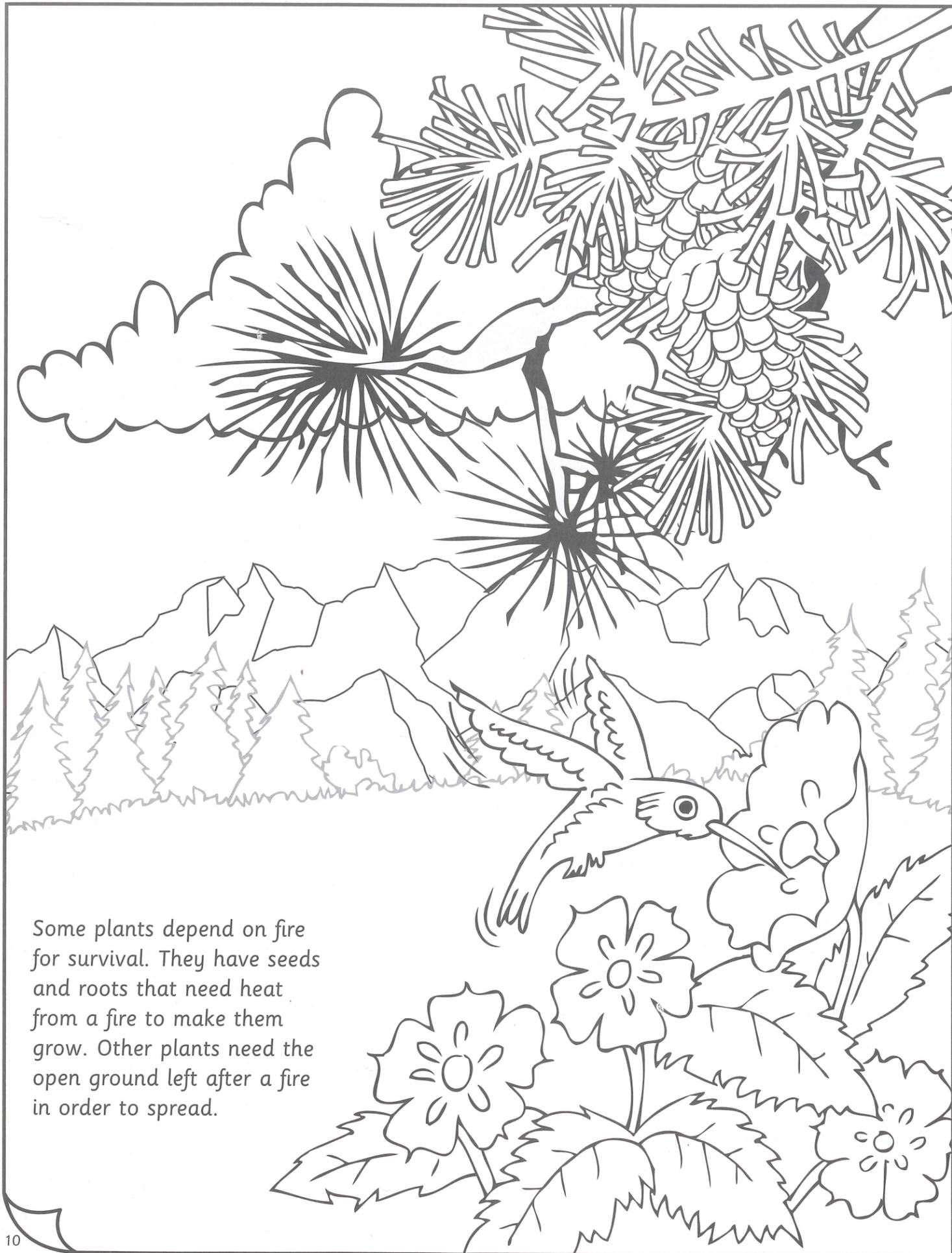




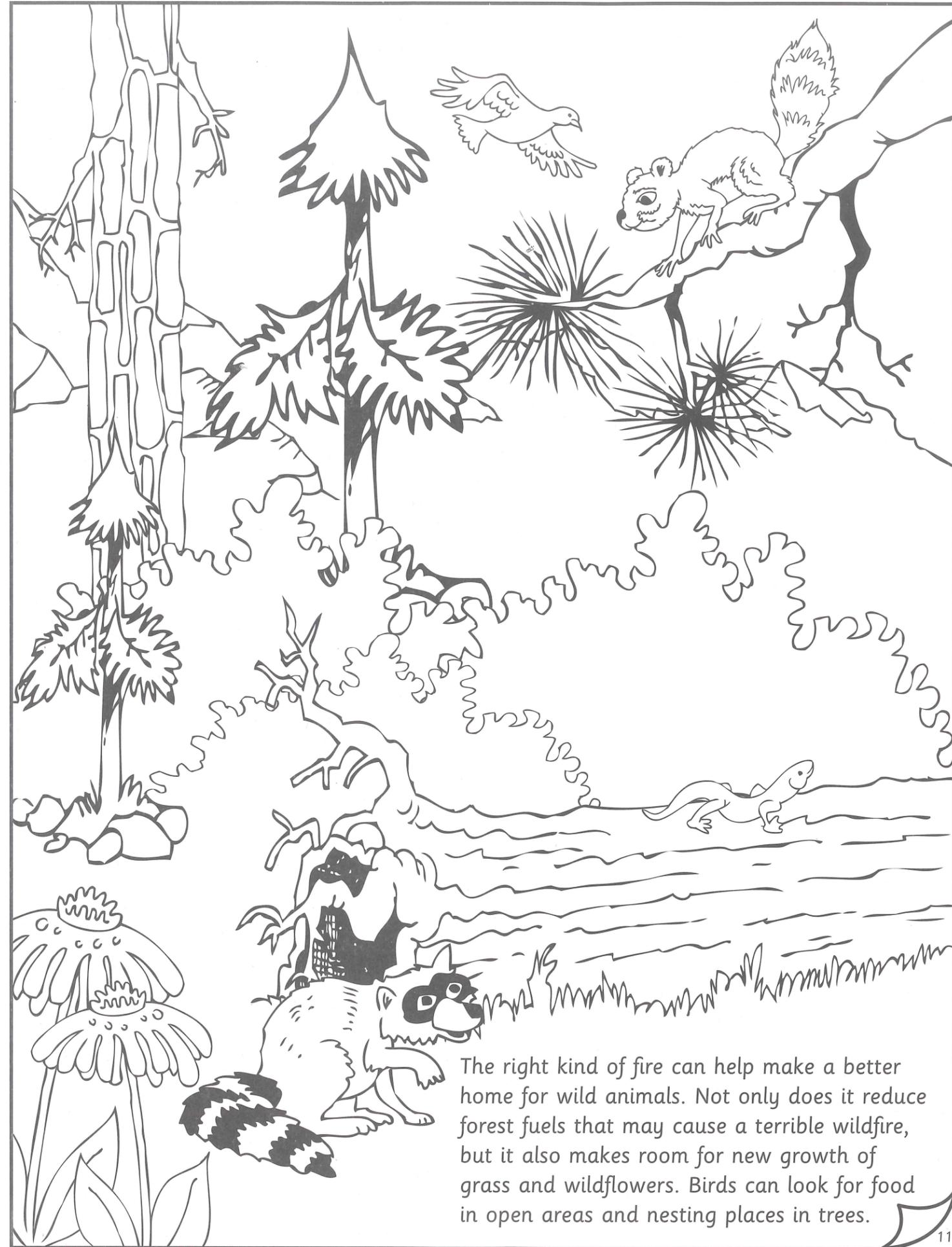
Fire is important because it recycles nutrients from plants into the soil. Tender sprouts from plants that grow after a fire are excellent food for forest animals.

Fire helps keep meadows open and grasses healthy. Big animals, like deer and elk, need meadows for food, and open areas to move from one area to another.



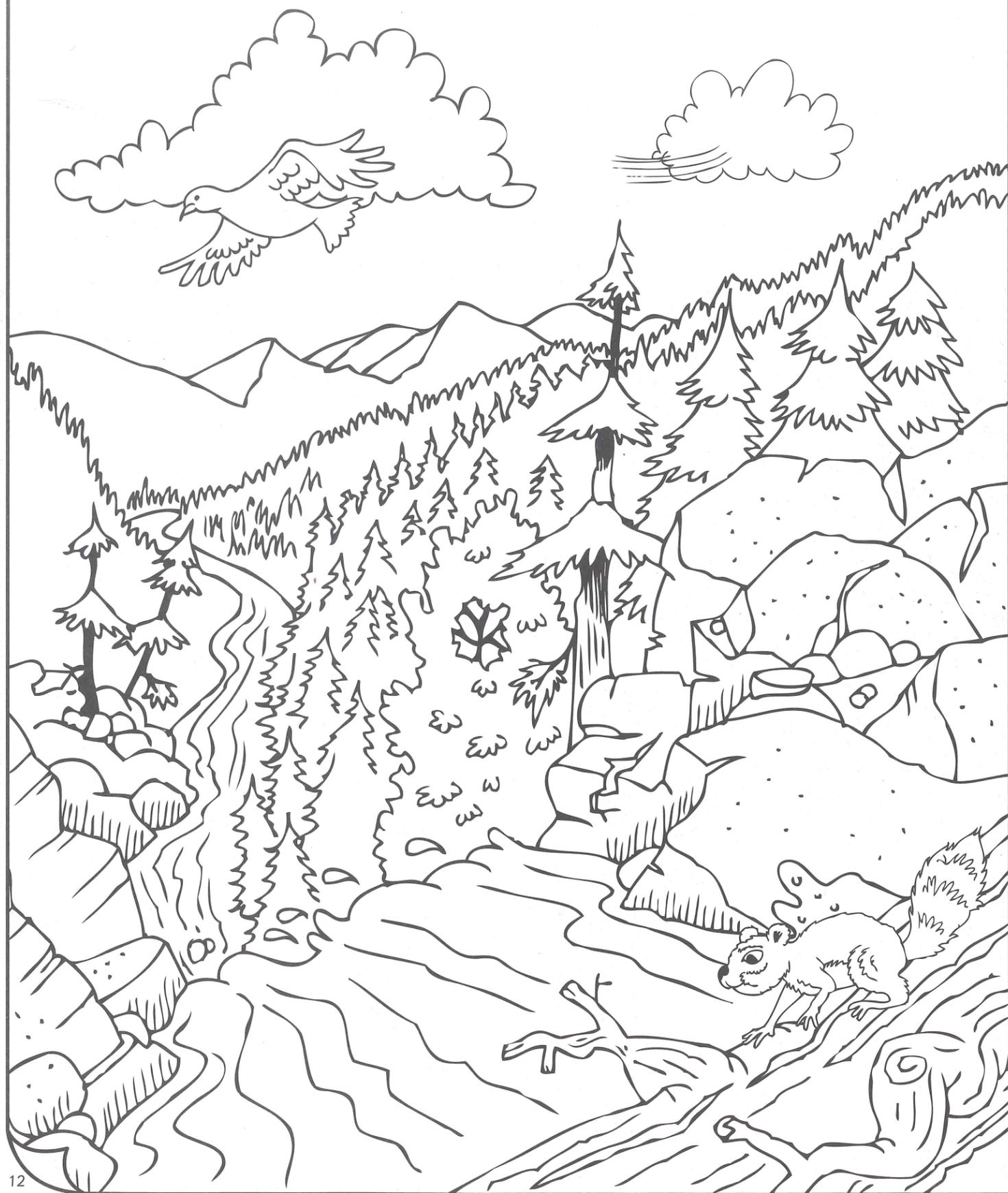


Some plants depend on fire for survival. They have seeds and roots that need heat from a fire to make them grow. Other plants need the open ground left after a fire in order to spread.

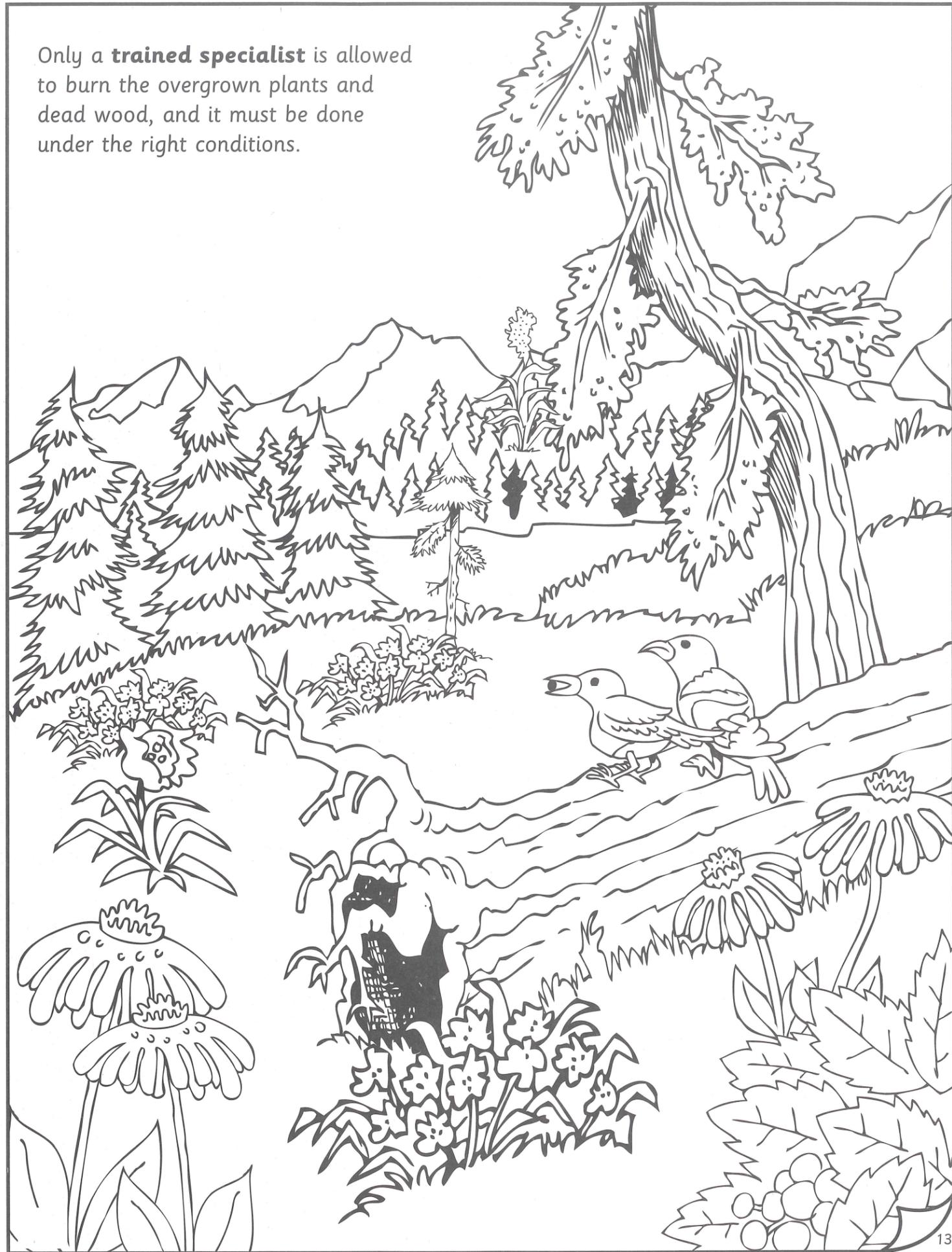


The right kind of fire can help make a better home for wild animals. Not only does it reduce forest fuels that may cause a terrible wildfire, but it also makes room for new growth of grass and wildflowers. Birds can look for food in open areas and nesting places in trees.

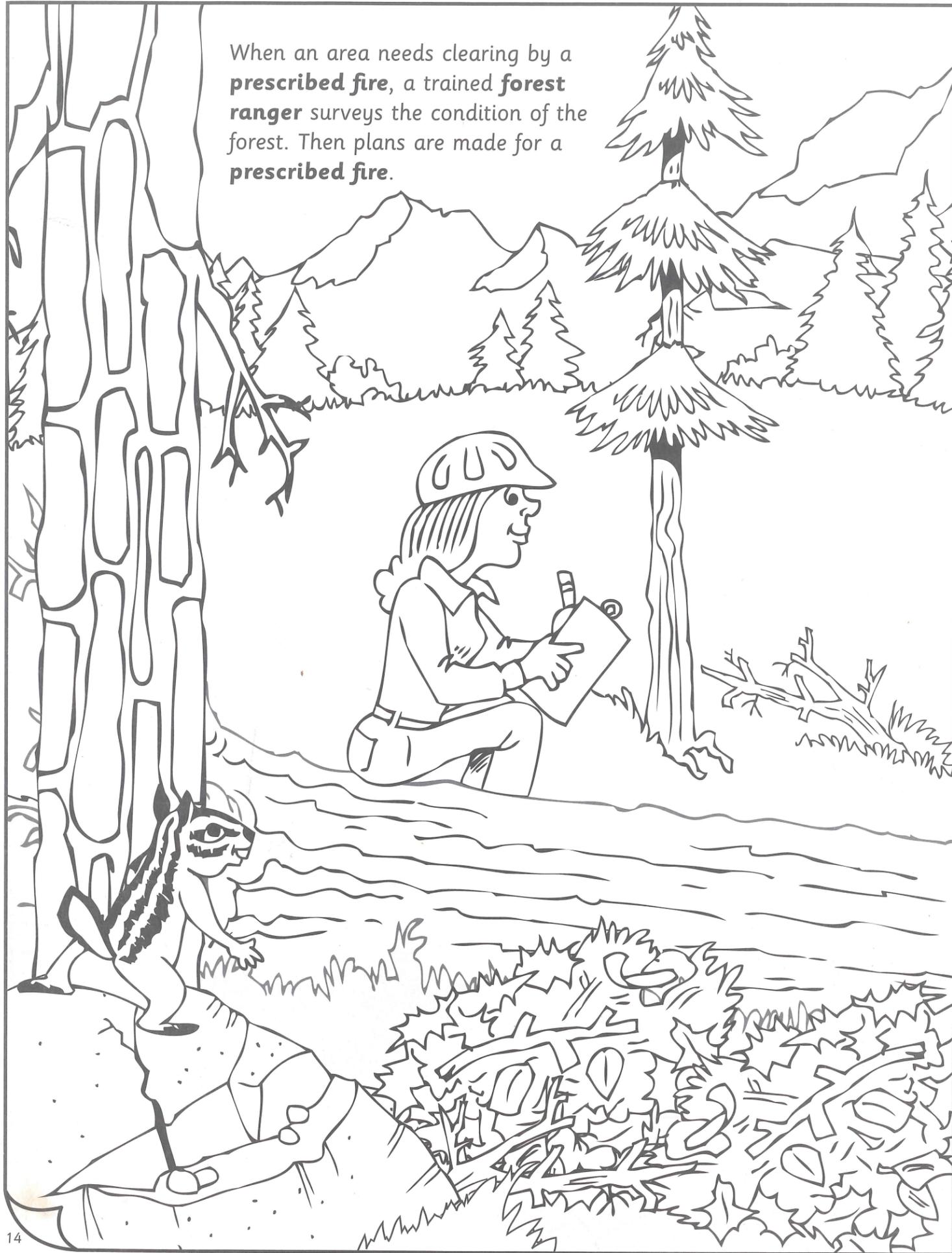
Fire specialists have been using **prescribed fire** to help maintain healthy ecosystems for many years.



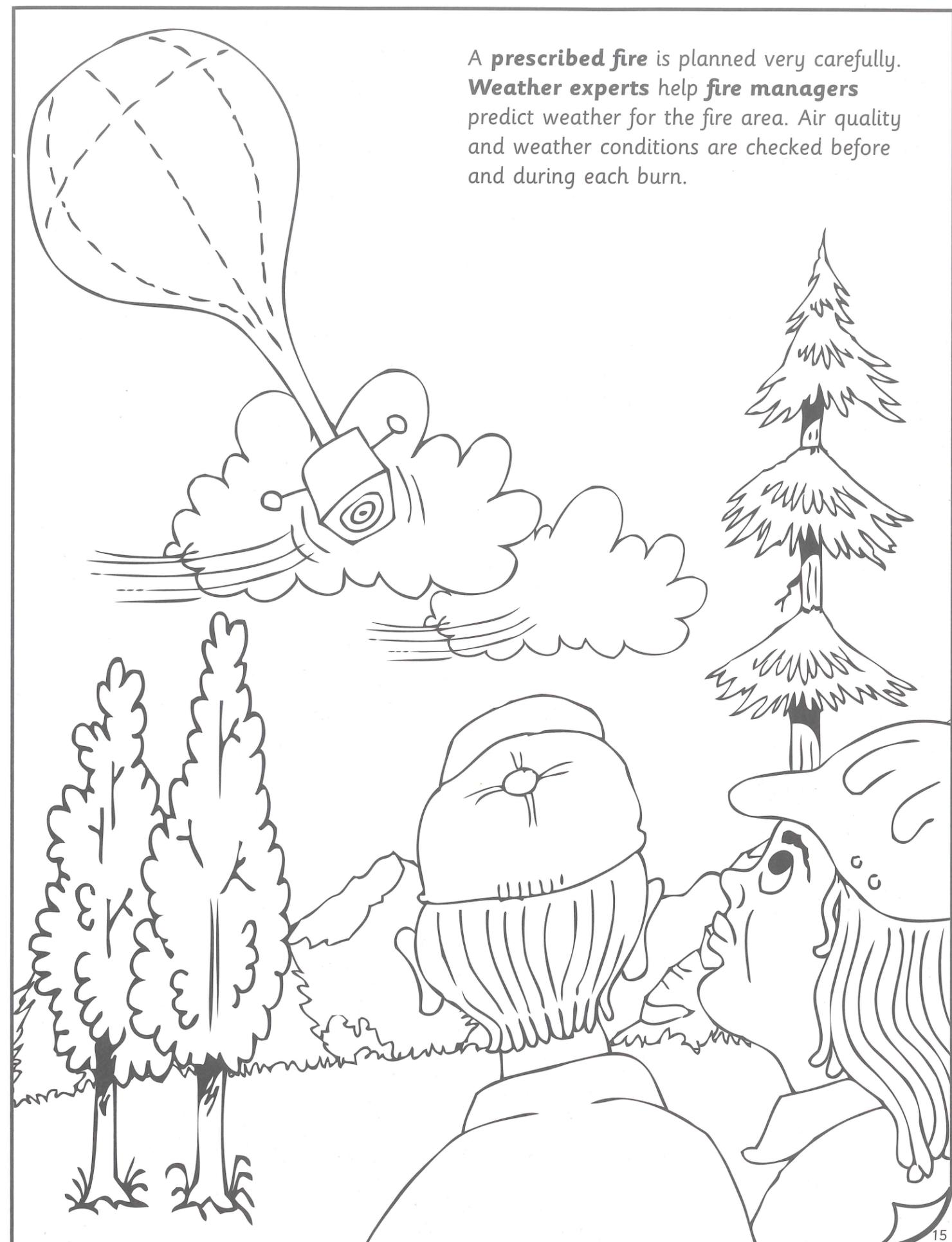
Only a **trained specialist** is allowed to burn the overgrown plants and dead wood, and it must be done under the right conditions.

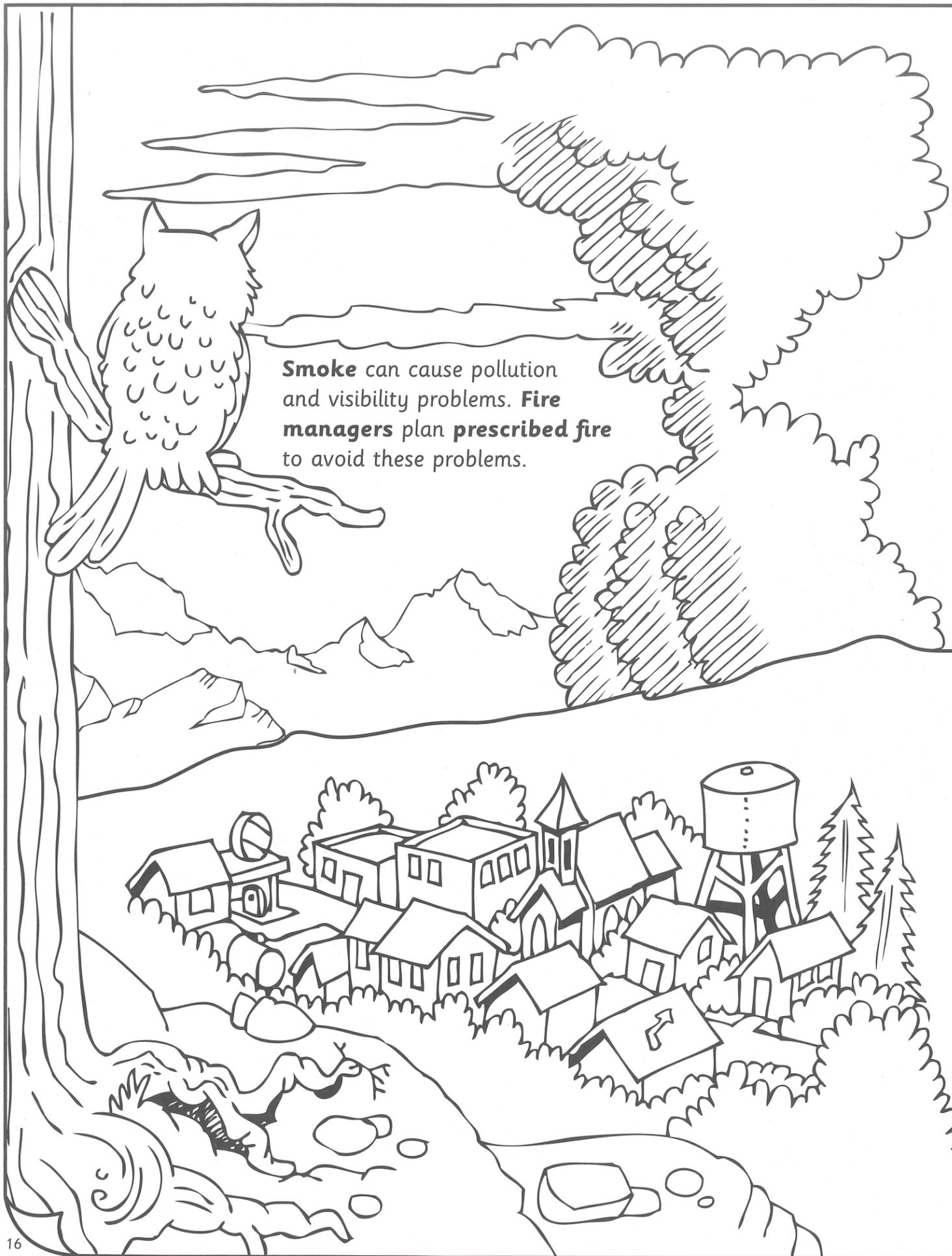


When an area needs clearing by a **prescribed fire**, a trained **forest ranger** surveys the condition of the forest. Then plans are made for a **prescribed fire**.

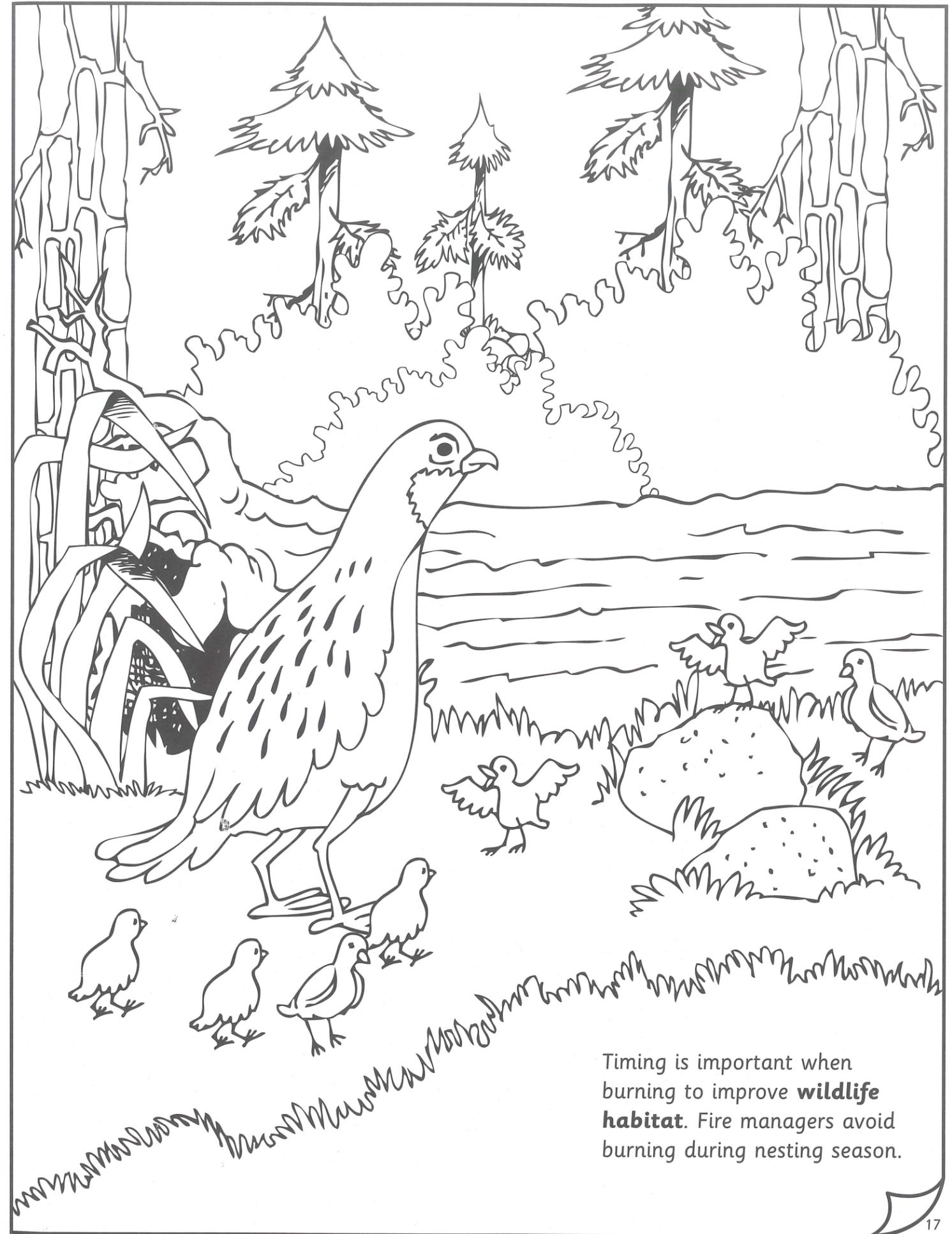


A **prescribed fire** is planned very carefully. **Weather experts** help **fire managers** predict weather for the fire area. Air quality and weather conditions are checked before and during each burn.





Smoke can cause pollution and visibility problems. Fire managers plan **prescribed fire** to avoid these problems.

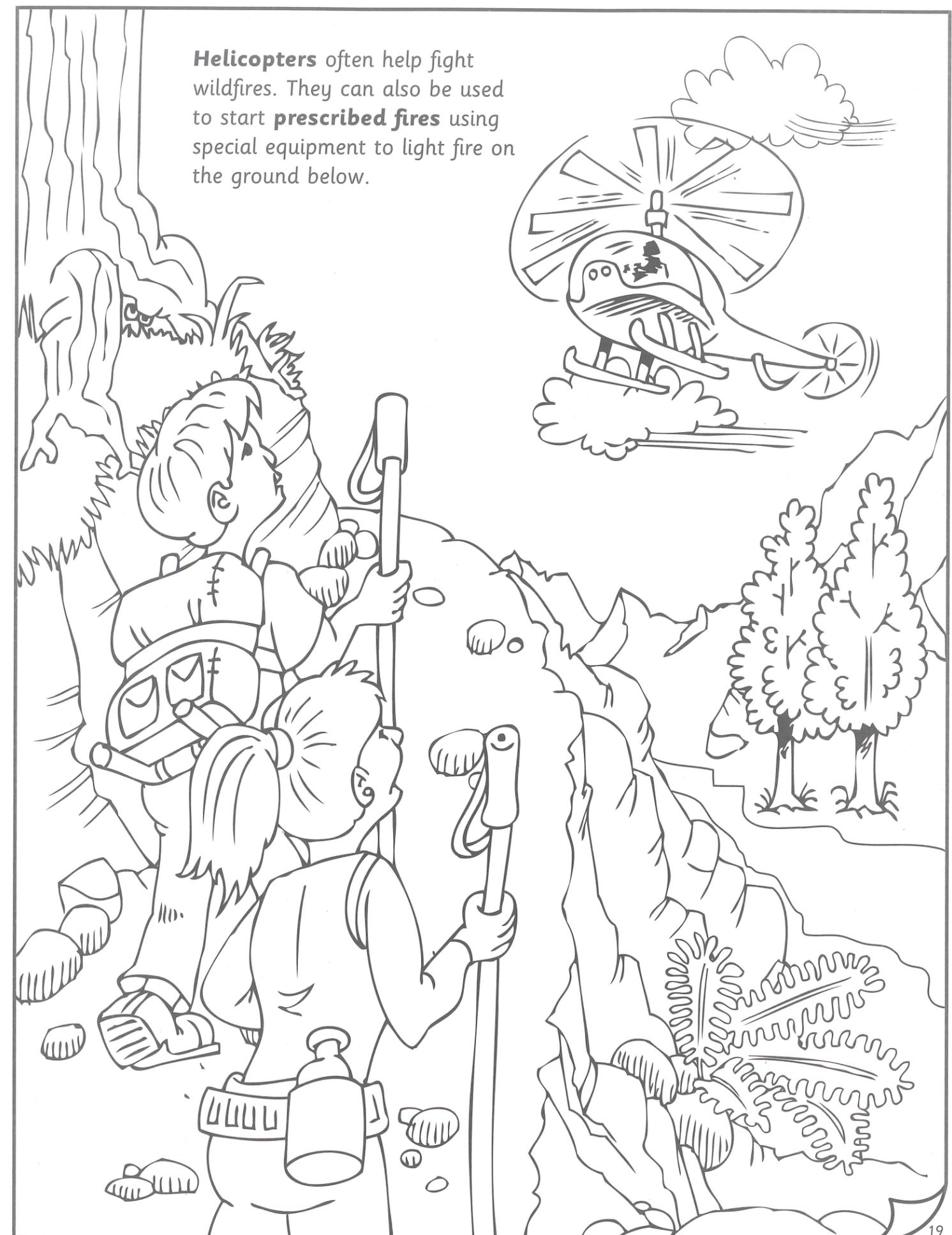


Timing is important when burning to improve **wildlife habitat**. Fire managers avoid burning during nesting season.

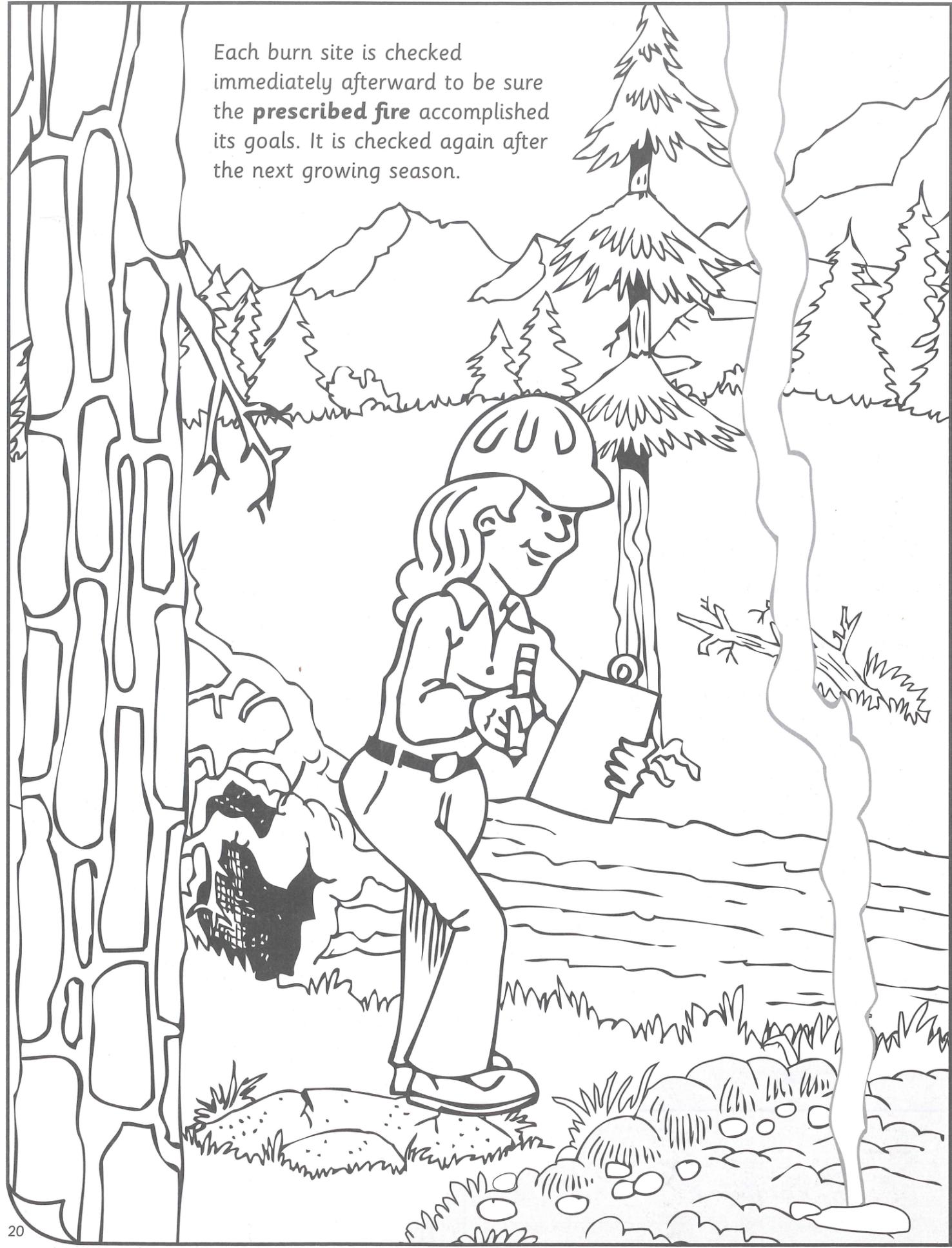
Small **test fires** are set before each **prescribed fire** to be sure conditions are right for a safe burn.



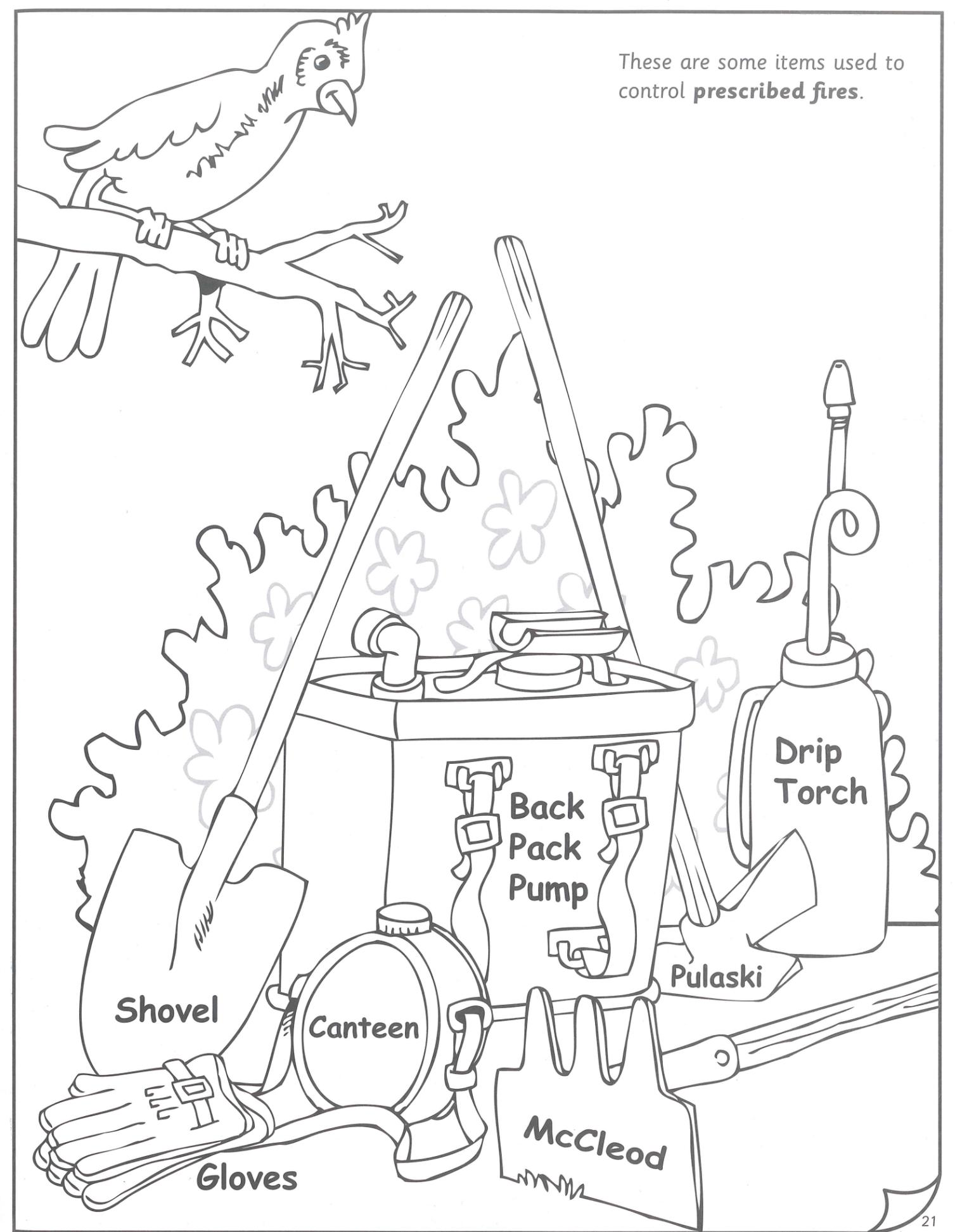
**Helicopters** often help fight wildfires. They can also be used to start **prescribed fires** using special equipment to light fire on the ground below.



Each burn site is checked immediately afterward to be sure the **prescribed fire** accomplished its goals. It is checked again after the next growing season.



These are some items used to control **prescribed fires**.



To protect themselves, **prescribed burners** wear special clothing, the same as when they are fighting wildfires.

Goggles

Hard hat

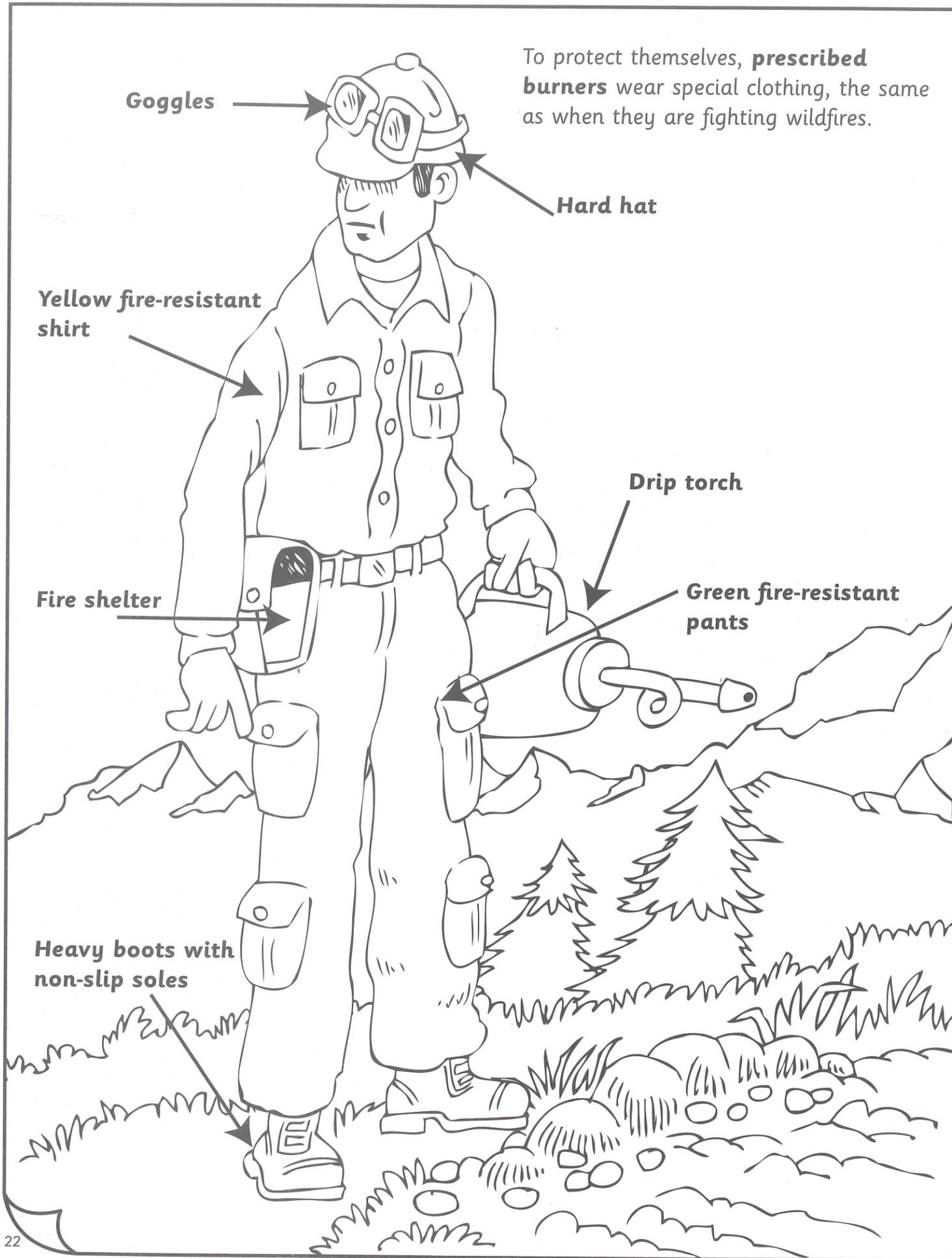
Yellow fire-resistant shirt

Fire shelter

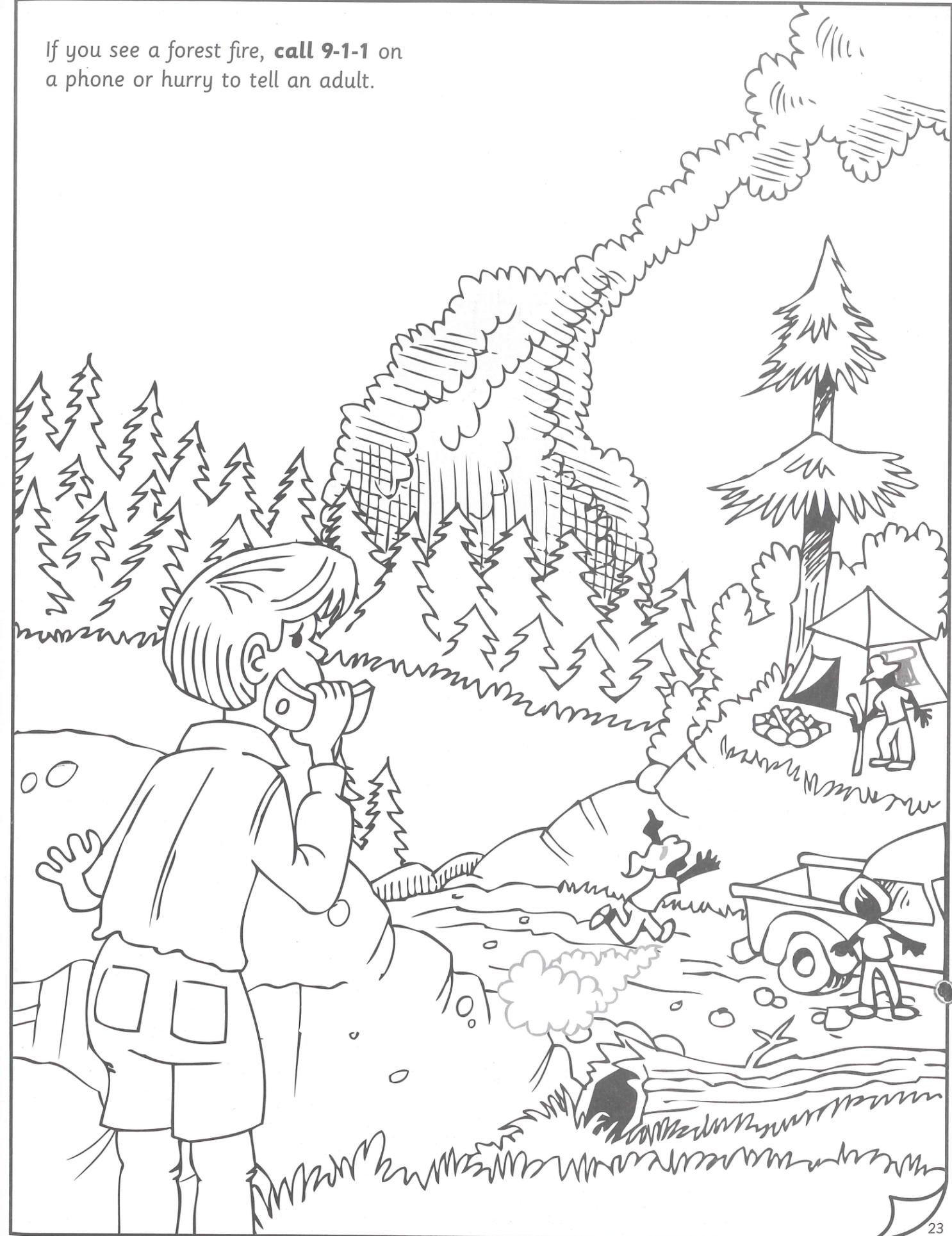
Drip torch

Green fire-resistant pants

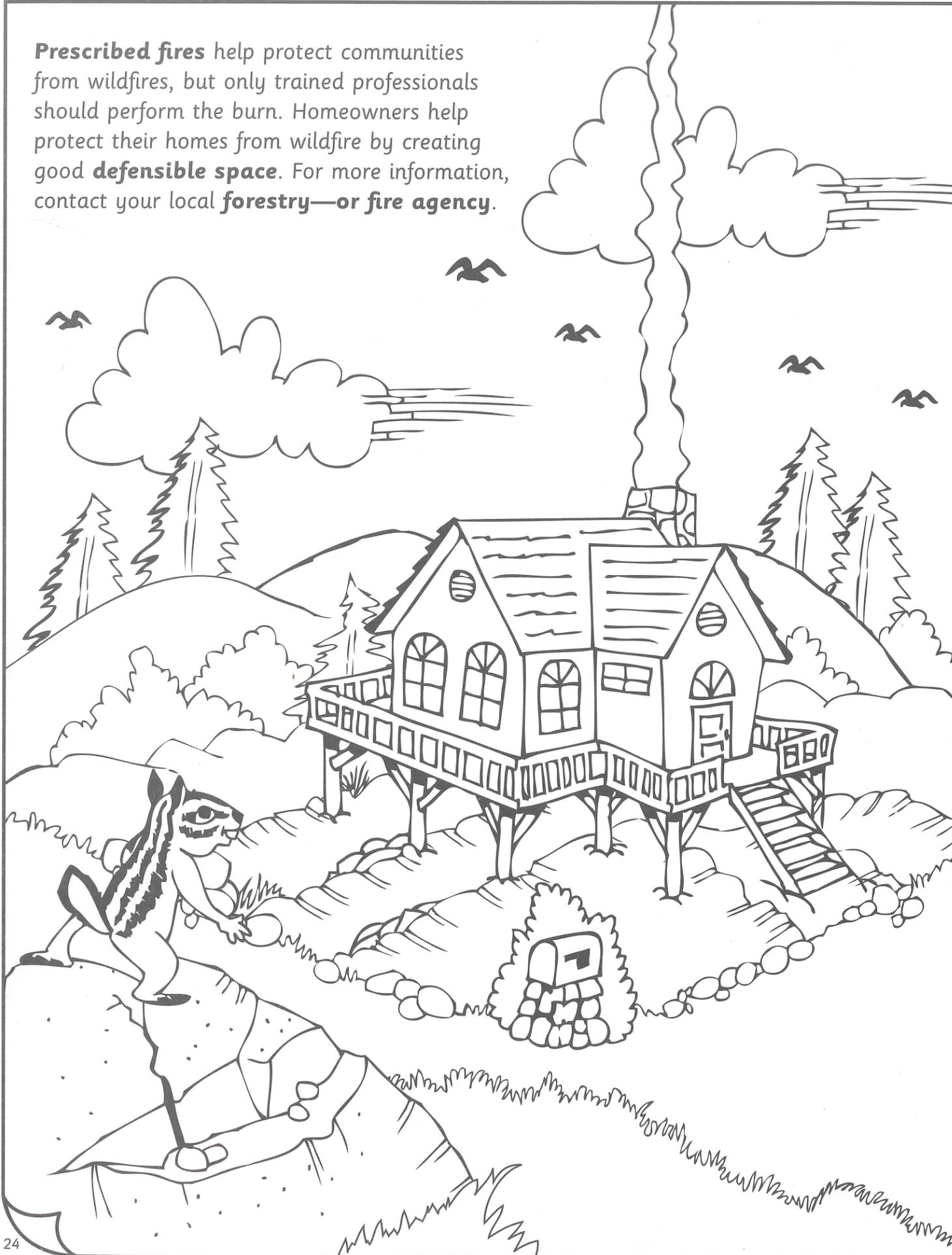
Heavy boots with non-slip soles



If you see a forest fire, **call 9-1-1** on a phone or hurry to tell an adult.



**Prescribed fires** help protect communities from wildfires, but only trained professionals should perform the burn. Homeowners help protect their homes from wildfire by creating good **defensible space**. For more information, contact your local **forestry—or fire agency**.



Color the logos below with your favorite colors.



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This coloring book was developed for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region. Partially illustrated by Ernie "Hergie" Hergenroeder and U.S. Forest Service, Regional Office, Region 5.