

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CANADA'S FIRE HISTORY

Vancouver, BC- As fires make their presence known in Saskatchewan and south of the border, the possibility of greater destruction is unfortunately ever-present. Learn more about Canada's fire history as fire season quickly descends upon us. Why and how has fire claimed such a huge role in Canada's geographical history? What does our interaction with wildfire through the ages tell us about Canadian culture? Prominent environmental historian **Stephen J. Pyne** enlightens us on these issues and more in *Awful Splendour: A Fire History of Canada*, a new paperback release from UBC Press.

With fires continuing to plague the boreal environment, it is impossible to deny the impact that fire has had on Canada's land and its inhabitants. In *Awful Splendour*, Stephen J. Pyne leads readers through Canada's fascinating historical journey with fire, bringing to life this great and terrifying history while also integrating an important global context.

Fire history expert Stephen Pyne takes a fresh approach by comprehensively examining Canada's experience with fire, and fire technologies, from coast to coast. As Pyne mentions, "Canada is a global firepower. It has fires to rival any on Earth: its boreal forest routinely burns with a ferocity and on a scale few other environments can match. Against them Canada has created a fire science of international stature and invented important technologies. These responses are what transform Canada from being merely fire-prone to being a fire power."

Points of discussion include:

- Why fires exist in Canada
- The rivalry between ice and fire in Canada's geographical history
- Canada's technological evolution through torch, axe and engine
- The intersection of people and nature— how humans have negotiated with fire's powerful force and ultimately found ways to govern it

Stephen J. Pyne is a professor in the School of Life Sciences at Arizona State University. He will be the main participant in the discussion of fire on an upcoming installment of *Ideas* on CBC Radio One.

"Another blockbuster from one of the world's foremost environmental historians. Pyne is a master of rich detail married to grand narrative, and Canada provides a huge subject worthy of those talents. He portrays that great northern country in all of its ecological complexity..."

-Donald Worster, author, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*

The author will be available to participate in radio and print interviews in Toronto on **September 25, 2008**.

REVIEW COPIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR:

Awful Splendour: A Fire History of Canada

Stephen J. Pyne

CAD \$34.95 Paperback • 978-0-7748-1392-1

www.ubcpres.ca

FOR REVIEW COPIES OR FOR MORE
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