

In a September 3, 2021 Fox Opinion piece professional forester Greg Walcher started out by quoting French historian François-René de Chateaubriand: “Forests precede civilizations, and deserts follow them.” He went on to cite statistics relating to California, the U.S. and the world.

He said that “Professional foresters know how to manage forests to sustain their yield, their beauty and their health, forever. But professional foresters are not in charge.” I couldn’t help but think of this beautiful democratic republic that was handed down to us by our forefathers - this great experiment to see whether a free people can govern themselves. They thought we should at least be able to manage it in order to “sustain its yield, beauty and health.”

What Walcher said next sounded so much like a description of government in general and Liberals in particular. “For 25 years,” he said, “politicians, environmental industry groups and the most cumbersome bureaucratic process imaginable have intervened to prevent professional management... In fact, a generation of politicians has created such a maze of regulations that ‘analysis paralysis’ has all but stopped the professional management of our public forests. Now we are witnessing the disease, death, rotting, collapse and burning of billions of trees covering millions of acres of previously healthy forest lands.”

Recall how President Trump said that it can take ten years to get a new highway or overpass built and that he was in the process of cutting through all the red tape, trying to get ten years down to two or less. “Professional management” had all but stopped and he was trying to get it started again. It obviously takes more than one four-year term to get things permanently turned around. I suppose it takes Walcher’s “generation.”

Will Rogers (1879 – 1935) is credited with saying: “If ‘pro’ is the opposite of ‘con,’ then progress is the opposite of congress.” Evidently, congress/government has always been slow and plodding. Unfortunately, it is now characterized by something much worse than a lack of progress. It is actually – and I dare say deliberately - proceeding in the opposite direction. The Liberals, the deep state, the swamp seem to be trying to “set fire” to our great democracy –trying to convert us from forest to desert in as short a time as possible.