Wildfire Trends in Washington

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Trends in Acres Burned

PNW
Changes in Fire Patterns

![Chart showing changes in fire sizes with frequency and hectares. The chart compares presuppression and suppression scenarios.](chart_image)

- **Change in fire sizes**
  - Frequency
  - Hectares

- **Presuppression**
- **Suppression**

- **Historical**
- **Current**
Wildfire Costs Nationally

• Federal wildfire costs averaged $0.92 billion from 1991-1999.
• From 2000-2012, federal costs average $3.13 billion.
• All agencies $6.8 billion by 2012
Wildfire Costs Nationally

Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow
Wildland Fire Cost Consumes Forest Service Budget

- FY 1995: 16% (84%)
- FY 2015: 52% (48%)
- FY 2025 Projected: 67% (33%)

[Diagram showing increasing wildfire costs over time]
Wildfire Costs for DNR

$47 million
True and Total Costs

How much more does a fire cost?

The true and total cost of wildfires includes long-term community and economic impacts. But reported costs are far less than the true costs, as the numbers on these four fires demonstrate.

- **Cerro Grande (NM, 2000)**: $2.7 million, 34 times more for Total Costs than for immediate suppression & recovery costs
- **Rodeo-Chediski (AZ, 2002)**: $320 million, 6 times more for Total Costs
- **Old, Grand Prix, Padua (CA, 2003)**: $5 million, 23 times more for Total Costs
- **Rim Fire (CA, 2013)**: $1.8 billion, 13 times more for Total Costs than for immediate suppression & recovery costs

Immediate Suppression & Recovery Costs

Total Cost = the True Cost of Wildfires

$1.2 billion

$1.8 Billion

$0.9 Billion

$0.0 Billion
Structures Lost

Washington

• 2014 and 2015 were particularly devastating years with nearly 800 structures lost total.
## 2015 Wildfire Season

### Table 1. 2015 Northwest Wildfire Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Oregon</th>
<th>Washington</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Fires in 2015</td>
<td>2273</td>
<td>1541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Fires: 10-Yr Average (2005-2014)</td>
<td>2592</td>
<td>1355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Large Fires*</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres affected by wildfires</td>
<td>685,809</td>
<td>1,089,966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres Burned: 10-Yr Average (2005-2014)</td>
<td>442,963</td>
<td>152,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largest Fires by State</td>
<td>Canyon Creek Complex (110, 422 acres)</td>
<td>North Star (218,138 acres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes and Structures Lost</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatalities</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total Cost: Over $609 million!

*A large fire is at least 100 acres in timber or 300 acres in grass or brush.
Air Quality
Air Quality

Suppression Success Rate

- 97% of all fires are contained in controlled during initial attack, even with longer fire seasons.
- 3% of fires become large and account for the vast majority of cost and loss of values.
- Our wildfire problem in Washington is not necessarily about our response but more about preparing for fire before it occurs.
A New Paradigm

• The trends in wildfires suggest we need to improve how we manage wildfires.
• The challenge before us is to consider a unified course correction on our wildfire strategies in Washington.