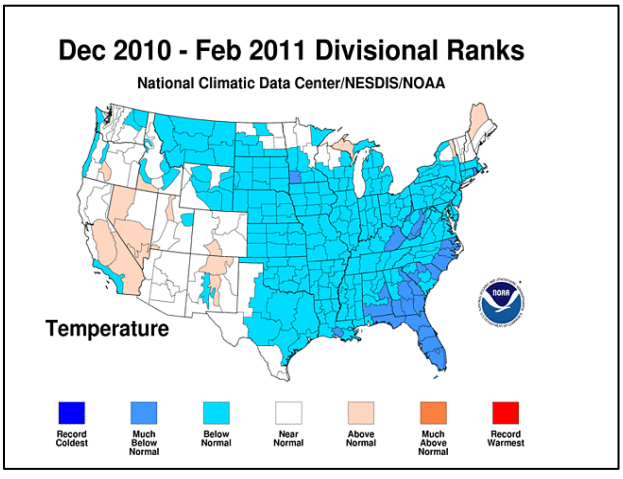
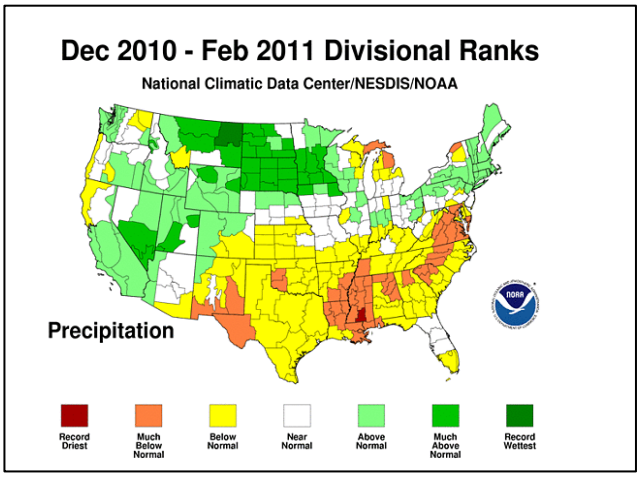
National Interagency Coordination Center
2011 Fire Season Summary
(Data current through August 31, 2011)

Winter (December 2010 – February 2011)

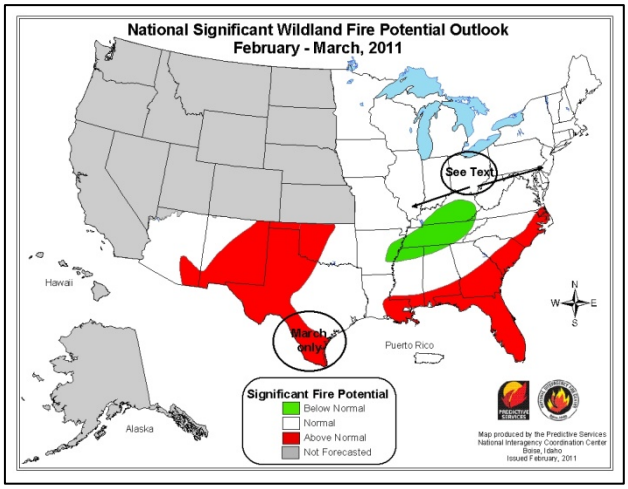
A moderate to strong La Niña produced a season of extremes for much of the nation. The winter (December through February) of 2010-2011 was colder than normal for most of the eastern two-thirds of the country. States hardest hit by the winter chill were mainly in the Southeast with Florida and parts of Alabama, Georgia, North and South Carolina, West Virginia and Kentucky all below normal. Florida was much below normal, recording its tenth coldest winter in 116 years. Cold temperatures reaching much further south than normal resulted in accumulations of frost killed vegetation across portions of the southeastern U.S. that would impact fuel loading and availability later in the spring. The western third of the country mostly had normal temperatures with parts of California, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico seeing above normal temperatures. Alaska was only slightly above normal for the period.

Most of the southeastern third of the country was drier than normal with precipitation deficits extending from the mid and lower Atlantic coast to the Front Range of the Rockies. Parts of the Great Lakes region were also below normal. Much of southern New Mexico, western Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, northern Alabama, northern Georgia, western North and South Carolina, eastern Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and northern Michigan were much below normal. Louisiana and Mississippi recorded their third driest winters on record; Alabama and Virginia their seventh driest; Arkansas its eighth driest; North Carolina and Oklahoma their eleventh and twelfth driest, respectively. Most of the northern Plains, the northern and central Rockies, the Great Basin, southern California, eastern Oregon and western Washington received above normal precipitation. Much of Montana, the Dakotas, Minnesota and parts of southern Nevada and Utah had much above normal precipitation, mostly from snow. Minnesota recorded its third wettest winter; South Dakota and North Dakota their fourth and sixth wettest, respectively; and Montana its ninth wettest. Alaska was wetter than normal, recording its tenth wettest February since 1918. The moisture regime described above resulted in near normal fuel crops across the southern tier of the United States and contributed to increased snow accumulations across the north that delayed the growth of fuel crops and crushed residual vegetation, especially in higher terrain.





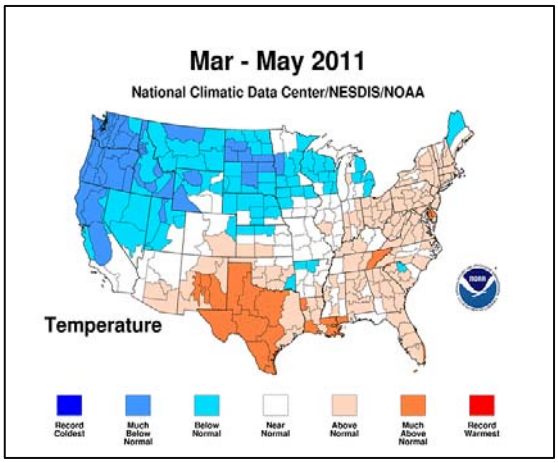
The initial seasonal outlook reports for the Southern, Eastern, and Southwest Areas called for above normal fire potential across much of western Texas, eastern and southern New Mexico and far southeastern Arizona. Also above normal were Florida and coastal regions of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, North and South Carolina. Below normal fire potential was forecast for much of Kentucky and Tennessee and parts of northern Alabama and Mississippi and eastern Arkansas. Reports from the Seasonal Assessment workshops can be found at: http://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/outlooks.htm.

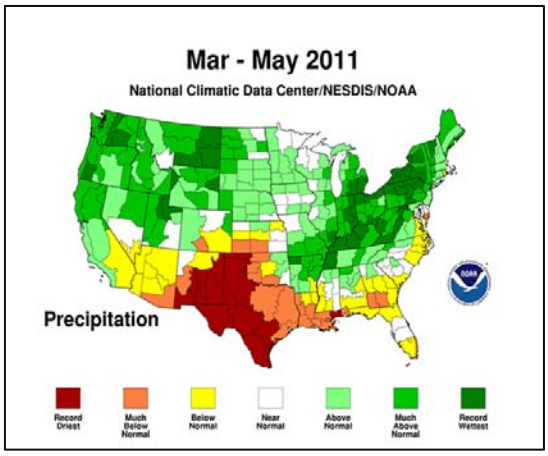


By May 31 a total of 28,630 fires had burned 3,119,542 acres nationally. Compared to the 10-year average this represents 92 percent of fires, but 240 percent of acres burned. Southern and Southwest Geographic Areas claimed the majority of fires and acres burned: 23,523 fires for 2,789,626 acres.

Spring (March – May)

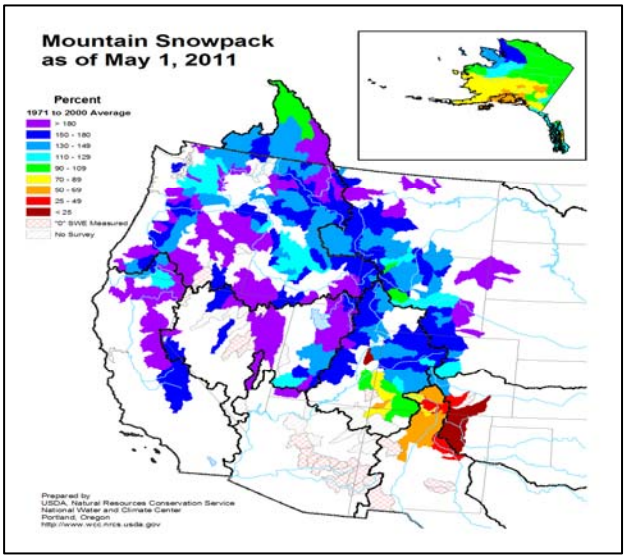
Strong westerly flow dominated the spring pattern across the U.S., effectively splitting the country between cold to the north and west and warm to the south and east. Temperatures were generally below normal across the Great Lakes, the northern and central Plains, the northern Rockies, the Northwest and Great Basin and most of California. Most of Oregon, Washington and the northern two-thirds of California were much below normal as were parts of southern Idaho, western Wyoming, northern Montana, and the North and South Dakota border area. Above normal temperatures covered most of the region east of the Mississippi River, Texas, Louisiana and most of New Mexico and Arizona. Much above normal temperatures covered southeast New Mexico, much of Texas and parts of Louisiana and Tennessee. Texas recorded its second warmest spring in 117 years; Delaware its fifth warmest; Louisiana its seventh warmest; New Mexico its eighth warmest; New Jersey its tenth warmest; and Maryland its eleventh warmest. On the cold side, Washington experienced its third coldest spring on record while Oregon had its fifth coldest. Regionally, it was the seventh coldest spring for the Northwest (Washington, Oregon, Idaho) and the eighth warmest spring for the South (Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi). High temperatures quickly transitioned fuels across the South through green-up and into a cured state.





Precipitation extremes were largely split between the northern two-thirds of country and the southern third. To the north, most areas experienced a wetter than normal spring with much above to record high precipitation amounts reported across much of New England, the Great Lakes, the Ohio Valley, the northern Rockies, the Great Basin and the Northwest. To the south, precipitation was below normal from southern California through the Gulf and mid-Atlantic coast states. Texas and most of New Mexico, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and parts of Kansas, Arizona and Georgia received much below to record low precipitation. Texas had its driest spring on record; New Mexico its third driest; and Louisiana its sixth driest. By contrast, Arkansas, which borders both Texas and Louisiana, had its tenth wettest spring, as did Maine. Nine states experienced their wettest springs on record (Washington, Wyoming, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York and Vermont); three states had their second wettest (Oregon, Montana and Michigan); and two states had their fifth wettest (Idaho and Utah). Alaska had its driest spring since records began in 1918. Regionally, the Northwest had its wettest spring while the northern Rockies and Plains, the Ohio and Tennessee Valleys and New England had their second wettest springs. The South has is ninth driest spring on record. Nationally, March through May 2011 was the twelfth wettest spring on record, despite the extreme drought conditions in the South. Above normal precipitation coupled with below normal temperatures across the north kept fuels dormant through the early portion of the spring, however toward the end of the period promoted increased growth of fine fuels.

Snowpack also told a compelling story. Most of the west had much above to record snowfall, with late spring snowpack well over 150% of normal. The exception was the far southern Rockies of Arizona and New Mexico which were virtually snow-free midway through the season. For Alaska, the northern and central areas were near or above normal snowpack by late spring while the southern third of the state was below normal.

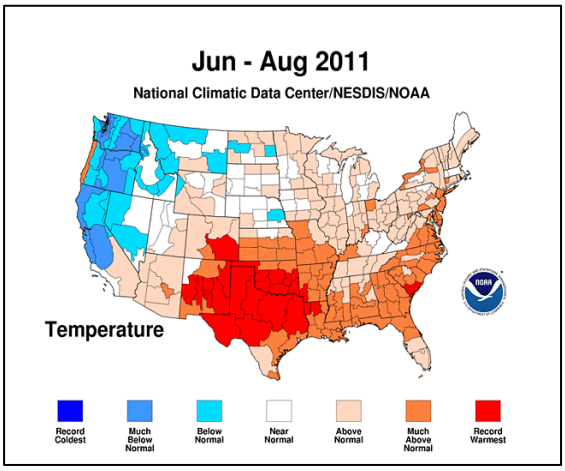


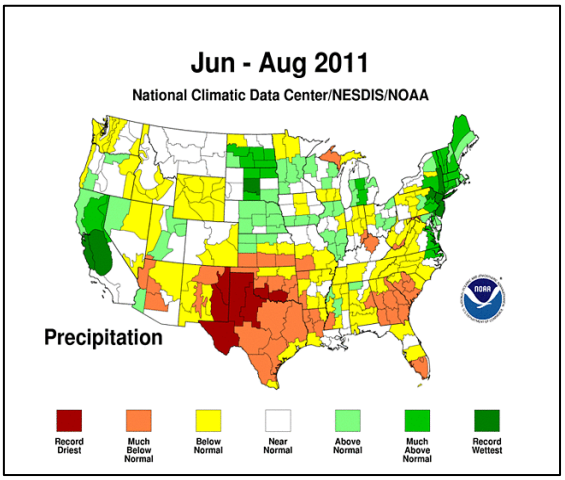
By the end of May, fire season 2011 could be described as below normal for fires across the contiguous U.S., but above normal for acres. Alaska experienced above normal fires and acres burned by May's end. Nationally, by May 31, 28,630 fires had occurred, burning 3,119,542 acres. This represents 92 percent of of fires, and 243 percent of acres burned compared to the 10-year national average. Alaska reported 261 year-to-date fires that burned 104,075 acres, which is 141 percent of its 10-year fire average, and 128 percent of its 10-year average for acres burned. The Southern Geographic Area experienced 114 percent of its 10-year average number of fires, but 253 percent of burned acres. Rocky Mountain Area experienced 115 percent of its 10-year average number of fires, and 314 percent of burned acres. The Southwest Area experienced 107 percent of its 10-year average number of fires, and 347 percent of burned acres. All other Geographic Areas were near normal for fire starts and below their 10-year averages for acres burned.

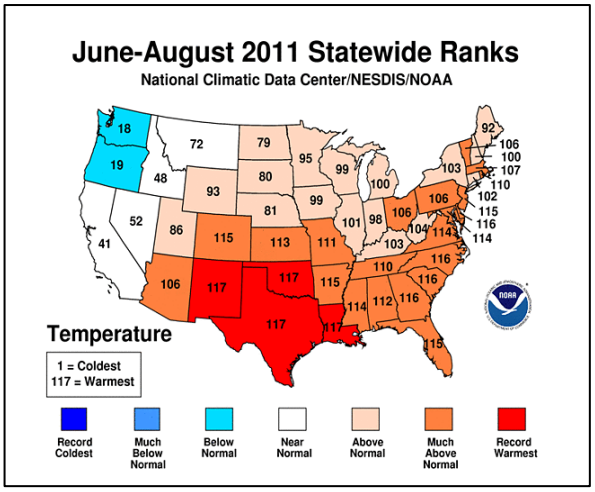
Summer (June – August)

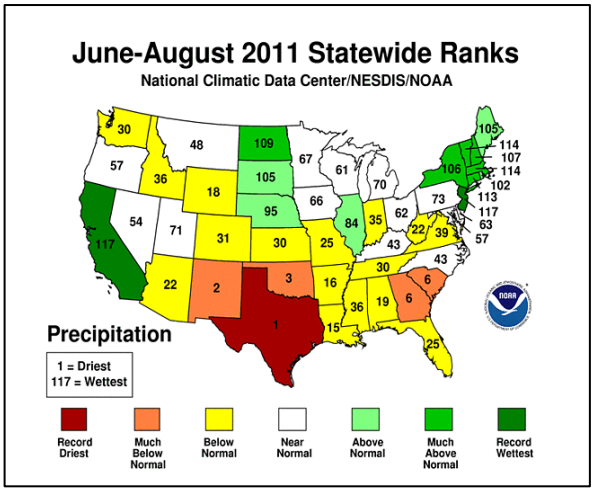
The weather pattern for the summer was dominated by a large ridge of high pressure draped over the center of the country, baking much of the southern and eastern parts of the nation. The southern Plains were especially hard hit with Texas and Oklahoma receiving the brunt of the heat wave. Temperatures were above normal across virtually all but the western part of the country. Most of the southern and southeastern states recorded above normal temperatures. Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Louisiana recorded their warmest summers on record. Fifteen other states, from the Rockies to the East Coast, had summers that ranked among their top ten warmest. Only two states, Washington and Oregon, experienced below normal temperatures. Regionally, the South had its warmest summer on record; the Southeast had its second warmest on record; and the Southwest had its fifth warmest on record. Nationally, June-August 2011 was the second warmest summer on record. Alaska was near normal. During the summer, all states across the contiguous US, with the exception of North Dakota and Vermont, had at least one day with a maximum temperatures exceeding 100 degrees F. Eleven states had at least one weather station recording maximum temperatures of 100 degrees F or more on 40 or more days during the summer (based on preliminary data).

Precipitation deficits continued to plague the south with Texas recording its driest summer on record; New Mexico its second driest; Oklahoma its third driest; Georgia and South Carolina their sixth driest. At summer's end, drought covered one-third of the contiguous United States with eleven percent of the country, including 81 percent of Texas, in Exceptional Drought, the worst drought category assigned. Tree ring analysis of Texas dating back over 425 years showed that the summer 2011 drought in the state was equaled only by the summer of 1789. However, not every part of the US was dry. Thanks to Hurricane Irene, several northeastern states experienced among their wettest summers on record. New Jersey had its wettest summer, with Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut ranking in their top ten wettest summers. Farther west, heavy early summer rains in the northern Plains gave North Dakota its ninth wettest summer. And on the West Coast, an unusual early summer storm helped give California its wettest summer on record. Regionally, the South had its fourth driest summer while the Northeast recorded its tenth wettest summer. Nationally, summer 2011 was the 15th driest summer on record. As temperatures rose and precipitation dipped across the west it became evident that fine fuel loadings were above normal, especially in the north. These fine fuel crops were both heavier and more continuous. Cool and moist weather throughout the spring and early summer had delayed fire occurrence for much of the west but as fires began to occur it was observed that even though they were later than normal they had potential to be more intense and more difficult to extinguish because of the loading and continuity of fuels that had developed.



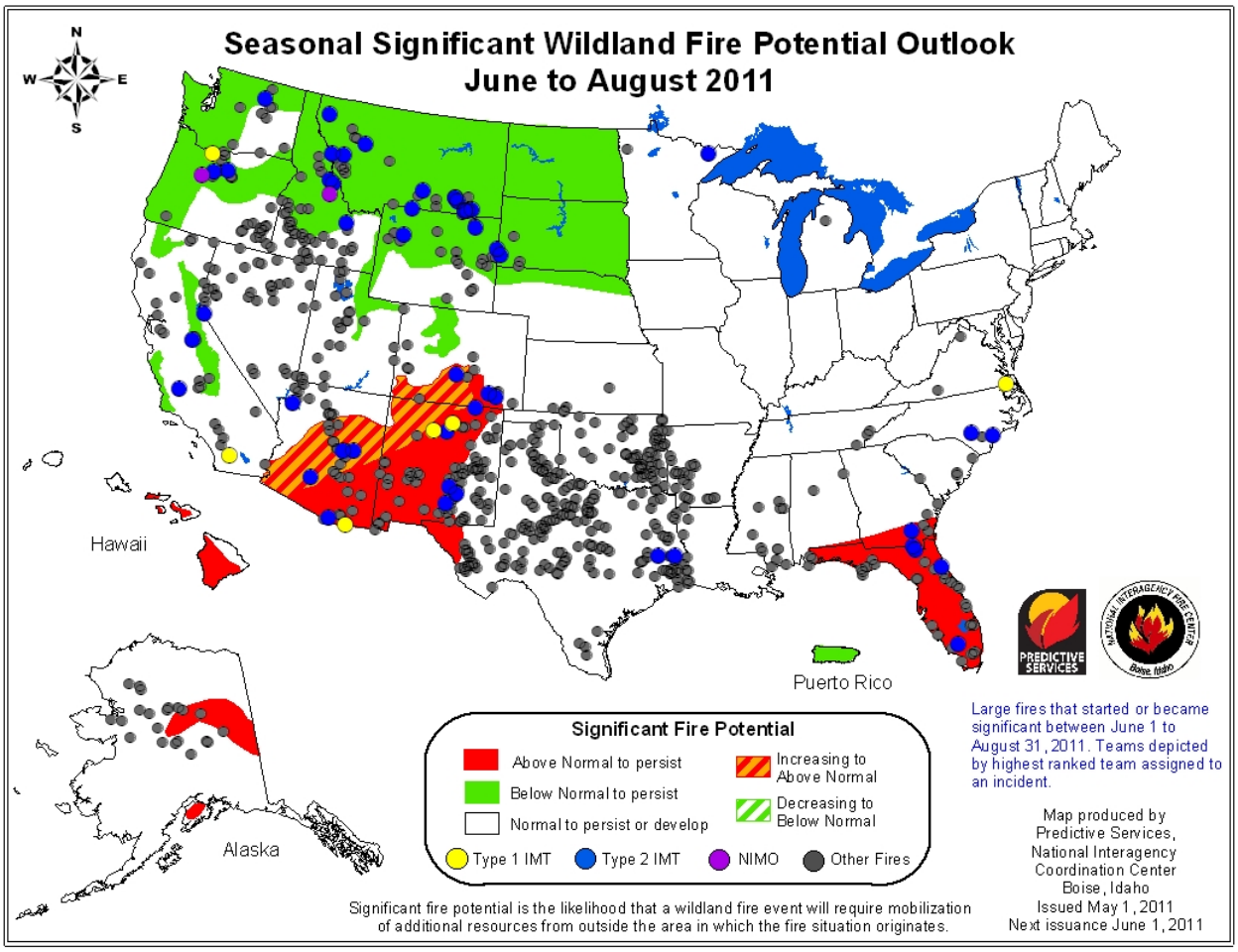






Nationally, by the end of August, 53,870 fires had occurred, burning 6,956,042 acres. This represents 93 percent of the total number of fires, but 121 percent of total acres burned as a compared to the 10-year national average. Last year 10,577 fewer fires had occurred and 4,343,434 fewer acres had burned by August 31. Only three Geographic Areas experienced an above average number of fires, Alaska (101 percent), Southern California (105 percent) and Southern Area (117 percent). Southwest, Rocky Mountain and Southern Areas all experienced above average acres burned (323 percent, 195 percent and 285 percent respectively). Alaska did not contribute significantly to the national fires and acres total, reporting just 492 fires for 292,000 acres burned. Southern Area was by far the most active Geographic Area by the end of August, with 61 percent of all reported fires and 50 percent of all burned acres.

The National Seasonal Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for June through August called for above-normal significant fire potential Arizona, New Mexico, southwest Texas, Florida, southern Georgia and Alabama, the leeward side of the Hawaiian Islands, and portions of Alaska. Below normal significant fire potential was forecast for much of the northern tier states in the West, and portions of California, Utah and Colorado. The map below depicts the Seasonal Wildland Fire Potential Outlook with significant fires that occurred from June through August.

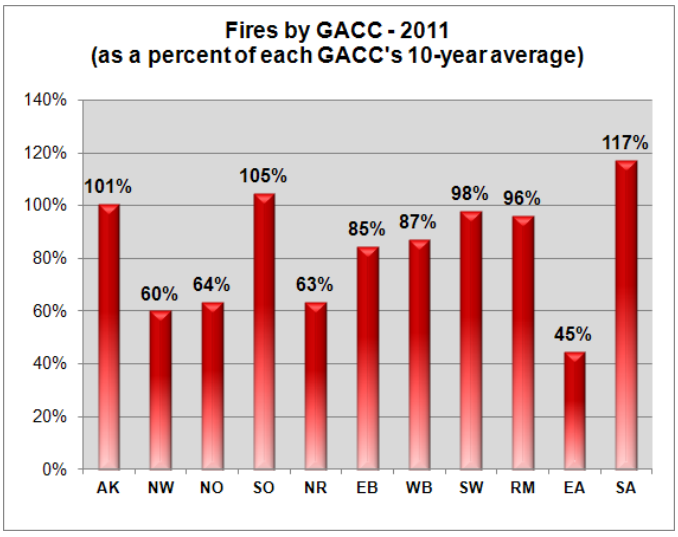


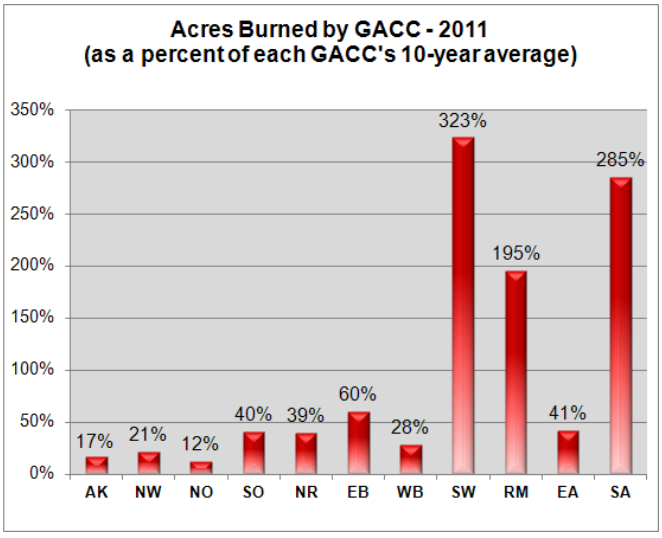
Fires reported by Geographic Area and Agency

The first table and charts below depict the numbers of fires and acres for each Geographic Area, comparing 2011 figures to each Geographic Area's 10-year average. The second table and charts below depict fire activity by agency.

GACC	2011 - (to 8/31)	10-Year Average (to 8/31)	Percent of Average	
AK	**492**	**489**	**101%**	**Fires**
	292,231	1,747,293	17%	Acres
NW	**1,585**	**2,636**	**60%**	**Fires**
	72,110	339,787	21%	Acres
NO	**1,775**	**2,788**	**64%**	**Fires**
	17,584	155,133	12%	Acres
SO	**3,331**	**3,184**	**105%**	**Fires**
	68,086	169,179	40%	Acres
NR	**1,453**	**2,291**	**63%**	**Fires**
	113,880	289,085	39%	Acres
EB	**1,518**	**1,796**	**85%**	**Fires**
	344,571	576,738	60%	Acres

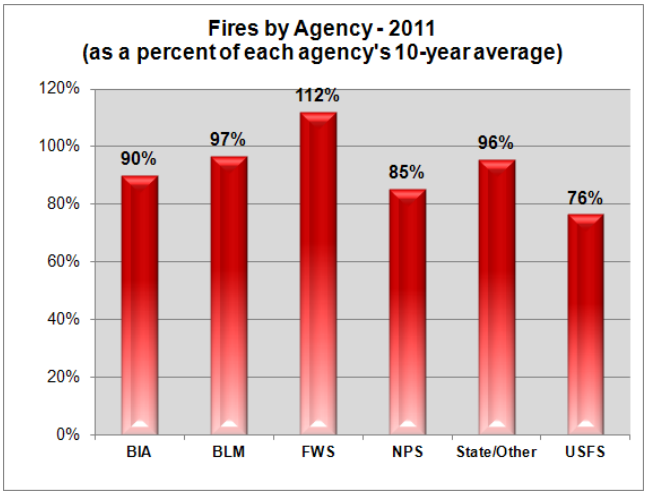
WB	**564**	**646**	**87%**	**Fires**
	96,476	349,045	28%	Acres
SW	**3,431**	**3,501**	**98%**	**Fires**
	2,089,825	646,830	323%	Acres
RM	**2,111**	**2,196**	**96%**	**Fires**
	373,913	192,188	195%	Acres
EA	**4,496**	**10,097**	**45%**	**Fires**
	43,405	105,124	41%	Acres
SA	**33,114**	**28,217**	**117%**	**Fires**
	3,443,961	1,207,016	285%	Acres
Nationally	**53,870**	**57,841**	**93%**	**Fires**
	6,956,042	5,777,418	120%	Acres

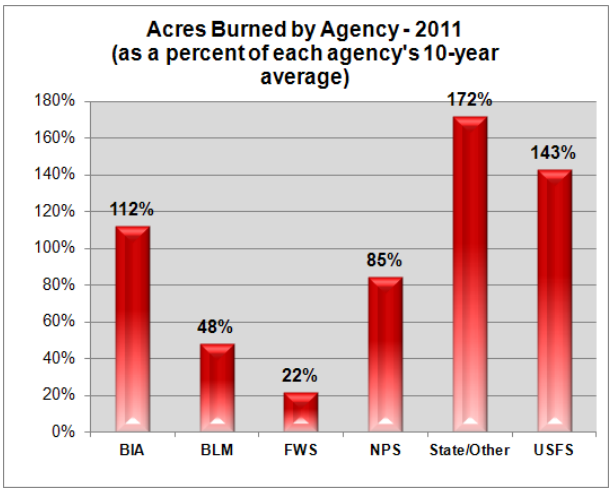




Percentages depicted above are year to date to August 31.

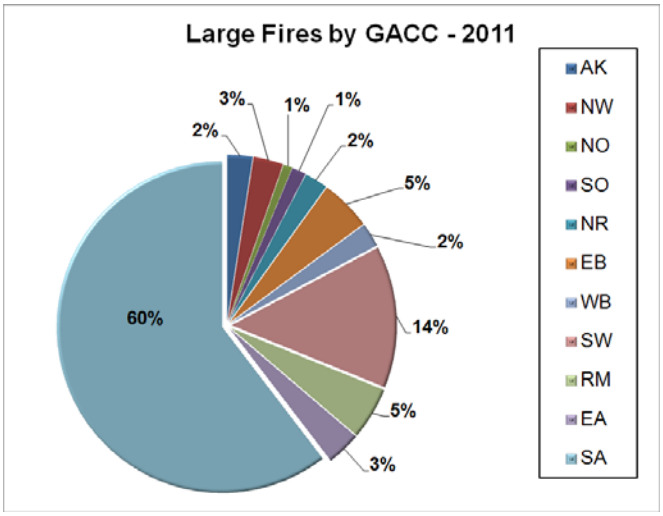
Agency	2011 (to 8/31)	10-Year Average (to 8/31)	Percent of Average	
BIA	**3,211**	**3,562**	**90%**	**Fires**
	202,417	180,421	112%	Acres
BLM	**2,187**	**2,266**	**97%**	**Fires**
	614,658	1,277,816	48%	Acres
FWS	**370**	**330**	**112%**	**Fires**
	128,229	593,118	22%	Acres
NPS	**313**	**368**	**85%**	**Fires**
	90,355	106,783	85%	Acres
ST/OT	**42,772**	**44,750**	**96%**	**Fires**
	4,429,931	2,576,671	172%	Acres
USFS	**5,017**	**6,565**	**76%**	**Fires**
	1,490,452	1,042,609	143%	Acres
Nationally	**53,870**	**57,841**	**93%**	**Fires**
	6,956,042	5,777,418	120%	Acres





Percentages depicted above are year to date to August 31.

By August 31, a total of 1,367 large fires were reported to the National Interagency Coordination Center (including fires managed for multiple objectives). This is up dramatically from the 716 large fires reported for the same period in 2010, but still below the record 1,636 large fires reported during this period in 2006. Comparing earlier years, the number of large fires reported by August 31 include: 552 in 2002; 739 in 2003; 540 in 2004; 765 in 2005, 1,096 in 2007; 984 in 2008; and 977 in 2009. August 2011 set a new record with 343 new large fires reported in a single month over the last ten years (beating July 2006 by eight fires).



Large fires reported as of August 31.

Fires that exceeded 50,000 acres in size in 2011 (as of August 31).

As of August 31, 29 fires have exceeded 50,000 acres in size, contributing along with other factors to make 2011 one of the most active fire seasons this century. By comparison there were just eight fires by the end of August in 2010 that exceeded 50,000 acres, six in Alaska and two in Eastern Great Basin. The Wallow fire became Arizona's largest wildfire in history, and the Las Conchas and Donaldson fires were the two largest fires in New Mexico history.

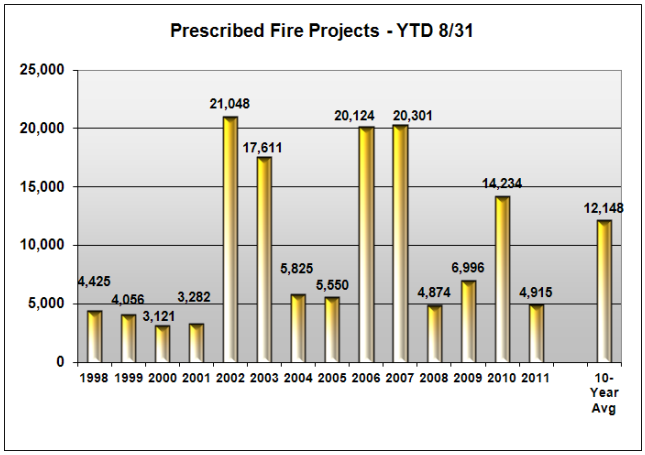
Fire Name	Acres Burned	Geographic Area	State	Agency	Month Contained
Wallow	538,049	SW	AZ	USFS	July
Rock House	314,444	SA	TX	State	May
Honey Prairie	306,226	SA	GA	FWS	(uncontained)
Horseshoe 2	222,954	SW	AZ	USFS	July
Deaton Cole	175,000	SA	TX	State	May

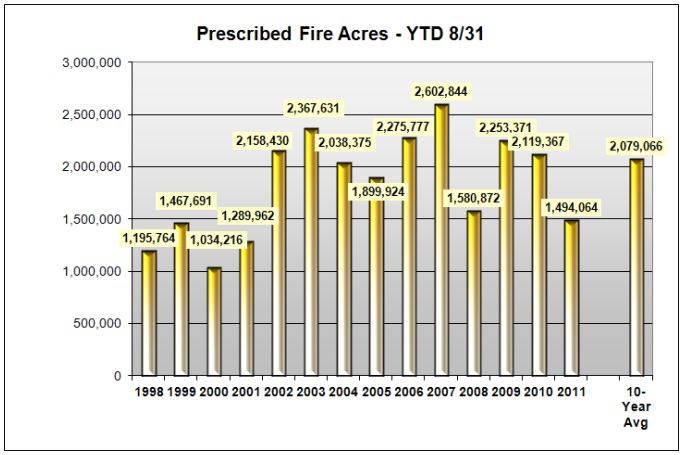
Cooper Mountain Ranch	162,625	SA	TX	State	April
Wildcat	159,308	SA	TX	State	May
Las Conchas	156,593	SW	NM	State	August
PK Complex	126,734	SA	TX	State	May
Swenson	122,500	SA	TX	State	April
High Cascades	103,297	NW	OR	BIA	(uncontained)
Donaldson	101,563	SW	NM	State	July
Dickens County Complex	89,200	SA	TX	State	May
Miller	88,835	SW	NM	USFS	June
Iron Mountain	87,401	SA	TX	State	May
Schwartz	83,995	SA	TX	State	May
Frying Pan Ranch	80,907	SA	TX	State	April
White Hat	72,473	SA	TX	State	July
Prairie	68,295	SA	FL	State	June
Murphy Complex	68,079	SW	AZ	USFS	June
Big Hill	67,000	EB	ID	BLM	August
Enterprise	64,936	SW	NM	State	February
Crawford Ranch	60,000	SA	TX	State	April
Hancock Complex	57,597	NW	OR	BLM	September
East Volkmar	54,217	AK	AK	State	August
Killough	54,000	SA	TX	State	April
Last Chance	53,342	SW	NM	USFS	May
Diamond Complex	52,710	NR	MT	BLM	(uncontained)
T17	50,176	EB	ID	DOE	August

USFS – U.S. Forest Service FWS – Fish and Wildlife Service BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM – Bureau of Land Management DOE – Department of Energy

Prescribed Fire Activity

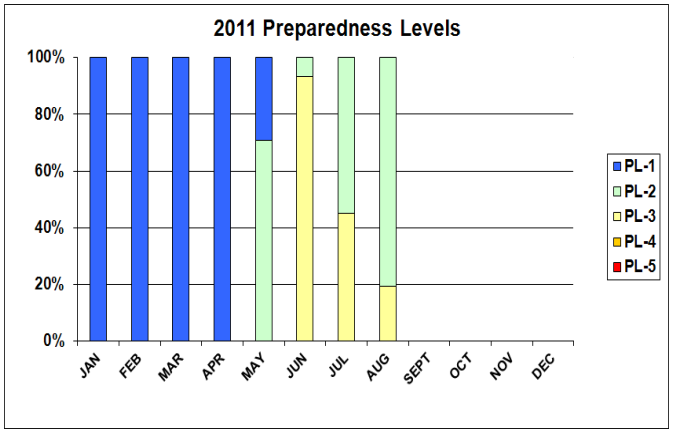
As of August 31, planned prescribed fire ignitions were 40 percent of the ten-year average. Accomplished acres were 72 percent of the 10-year average. This is a significant reduction in both projects and accomplishments from last year.

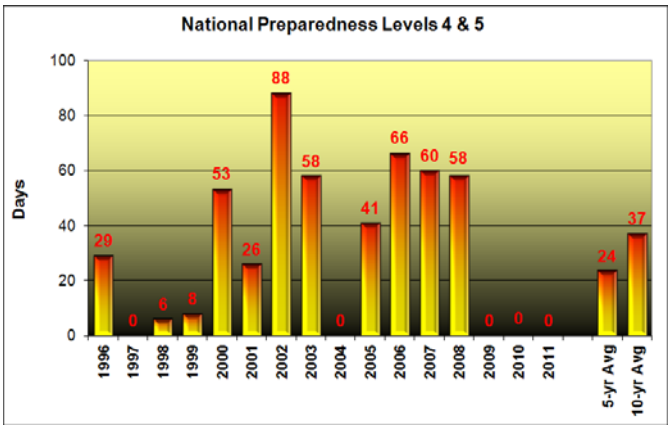




National Preparedness Levels

On May 10 the preparedness level was elevated from 1 to 2 and remained there until June 3, when it was then elevated to 3. On July 14, the preparedness level dropped back to 2, but returned to 3 on August 26.





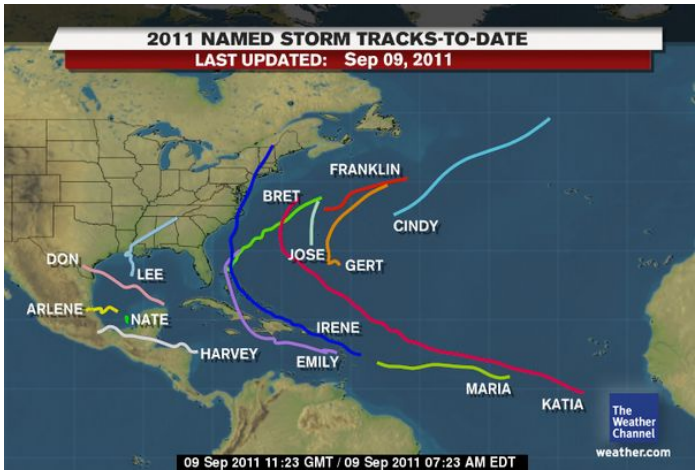
Military and International Assistance

By the end of August there were four military C-130 Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS) activations in support of wildland fires in Mexico, Texas, the Southwest and other parts of the West. The first mobilization to Texas occurred on April 15 to support fires burning in Mexico. Two MAFFS flew 37 sorties in Mexico from April 16 to April 23, and delivered 105,000 gallons of retardant. The second activation involved MAFFS from California, North Carolina, Colorado and Wyoming at different times. These MAFFS flew101 sorties from April 17 to May 4 in Texas, and delivered a total of 315,000 gallons of retardant.

The third MAFFS activation occurred from June 15 to July 13 and involved six MAFFS from California, North Carolina and Colorado at different times during this period. The aircraft were based in Albuquerque, New Mexico and flew a total of 287 sorties and dropped 610,173 gallons of retardant in Arizona and New Mexico. The fourth MAFFS activation occurred on September 8 and involved six MAFFS from Colorado, Wyoming and North Carolina. The Wyoming MAFFS were based in Boise, Idaho, and the other four in Austin, Texas.

Canada provided three air tankers and three aerial supervision modules (“Bird Dogs”) from British Columbia and Alberta. The first aircraft were sent to the U.S. on August 27, and the second a day later. On August 29, Canada also provided a contingent of 20 Smokejumpers from British Columbia to Montana for a 14 day assignment. The Jumpers were based in Missoula, Montana.

Hurricane Support



The 2011 Atlantic hurricane season experienced above-normal tropical activity for the summer. Through September 9, there were 14 names storms (six is normal), two hurricanes (three is normal) and two major, or Category 3, hurricanes (one is normal). Three storms hit the mainland U.S., including Irene (August 20-28), a Category 3 storm which, after barreling through Puerto Rico, made landfall at Cape Lookout, North Carolina, on August 27, then moved over open water before making landfall a second time at Little Egg Inlet, New Jersey, and then a third landfall at New York City, both on August 28. Irene battered much of the Northeast with record rainfall and major flooding. Other storms that struck the U.S. mainland were Tropical Storm Lee (landfall at Pecan Island, Louisiana, on September 4) and Tropical Storm Don (landfall near Baffin Bay, Texas, on July 29 as a depression). The early season forecasts called for an above normal season with 12-18 named storms (11 is normal), six to ten hurricanes (six is normal) and three to six major (Category 3 or greater) storms (two is normal). Three incident management teams were mobilized to New York and Massachusetts following Hurricane Irene. Type 1 and Type 2 teams were assigned to New York from late August to September. A Minnesota Type 2 team was assigned to Massachusetts at the same time. Map courtesy of The Weather Channel (http://www.weather.com).