



## When a wildfire starts, our priority is firefighter and public safety.

- The Forest Service responds quickly and decisively to suppress wildfires and protect lives, property, and valuable natural resources.
- Firefighters contain about 98% of wildfires within 24 hours. Less than 2% of wildfires grow into large, complex fires.
- Humans start 89% of wildfires, and the majority of wildfires start on private land.
- The Forest Service works collaboratively with communities, landowners, states, tribes, and industry and conservation groups to understand risks and develop strategies that reflect local needs and priorities.

## Be prepared and stay safe during wildfires.

- Learn about preparing homes and communities for wildfires at [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org).
- Wildfires create smoke, which can affect people of all ages. The [Centers for Disease Control](https://www.cdc.gov)<sup>1</sup> provide vital information on how to minimize smoke impacts to your health. Track wildfire smoke in your local area at <https://www.fire.airnow.gov>.
- Do not fly drones near wildfires. Drones endanger pilots and firefighters and bring suppression efforts to a stop. Learn more at <https://www.knowbeforeyoufly.org/avoid-wildfires>.
- The National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook identifies areas with above, below, and near normal significant fire potential. Visit <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/predictive-services/outlooks> for the seven-day and four-month fire outlook. A new outlook comes out on the first day of each month.

## The Forest Service has the strongest and most prepared wildland firefighting force in the world.

- In extremely active fire years, we can deploy more than 32,000 wildfire responders including agency employees; tribal, state, local and international partners; and contract and administratively determined emergency hires.
  - The Forest Service manages over 70% of the federal wildland firefighting resources and nearly all of the federal aviation and logistical support contracts.
  - The Forest Service employs about 11,000 operational wildland firefighters each year, more than any other federal agency.
  - Thousands of other qualified agency employees perform essential roles during wildfire response, even though their everyday job is not firefighting.
  - Wildland firefighters have different levels of experience and capabilities, which include three types of [handcrews](https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/fire/people/handcrews):<sup>2</sup> Hotshots, Type 2 IA crews and Type 2 crews. This year, the Forest Service will provide:
    - More than 80 Forest Service Hotshot crews. [Hotshots](https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/fire/people/hotshots)<sup>3</sup> are highly trained and perform some of the most demanding and hazardous tasks in wildland firefighting.
    - Forty Type 2 IA (initial attack) contracted crews. These groups of 18-20 firefighters engage in initial attack, which is critical to stopping small fires from growing into larger ones that can cause significant damage.
    - More than 400 Type 2 contracted crews. These groups of 18-20 firefighters perform critical fire suppression and mop-up work.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/wildfires/safety/how-to-safely-stay-safe-during-a-wildfire.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/fire/people/handcrews>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/fire/people/hotshots>



- Interagency incident management teams provide a command and control infrastructure to manage critical safety, liaison, public information, operations, planning, logistics and finance support during wildfires and other incidents.
- Private companies provide critical services such as catering and shower units through contracts.

## Aircraft and equipment

- This year, the Forest Service will have available:
  - Over 400 total aircraft, including multi-engine airtankers, helicopters, multi-engine water scoopers and other firefighting aircraft.
  - Up to 29 large and very large airtankers
  - 900 fire engines
- We can also mobilize eight C-130s equipped with Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems and a limited number of other airtankers through agreements with Canada and Australia.

## We work with communities to mitigate wildfire risk.

- Over a century of scientific data confirms that strategically placed fuels reduction treatments, such as mechanical thinning and prescribed fire, can reduce fire behavior and wildfire risks.
- Working with states, tribes and other partners, we assist communities as they develop mitigation strategies. These efforts help protect lives and critical infrastructure while also increasing forest resilience around communities facing the most immediate wildfire threats.