



“BOTH WILDFIRE INTENSITY & FREQUENCY ARE WORSE NOW THAN IN THE PAST 10,000 YEARS.” —Linda B. Brubaker

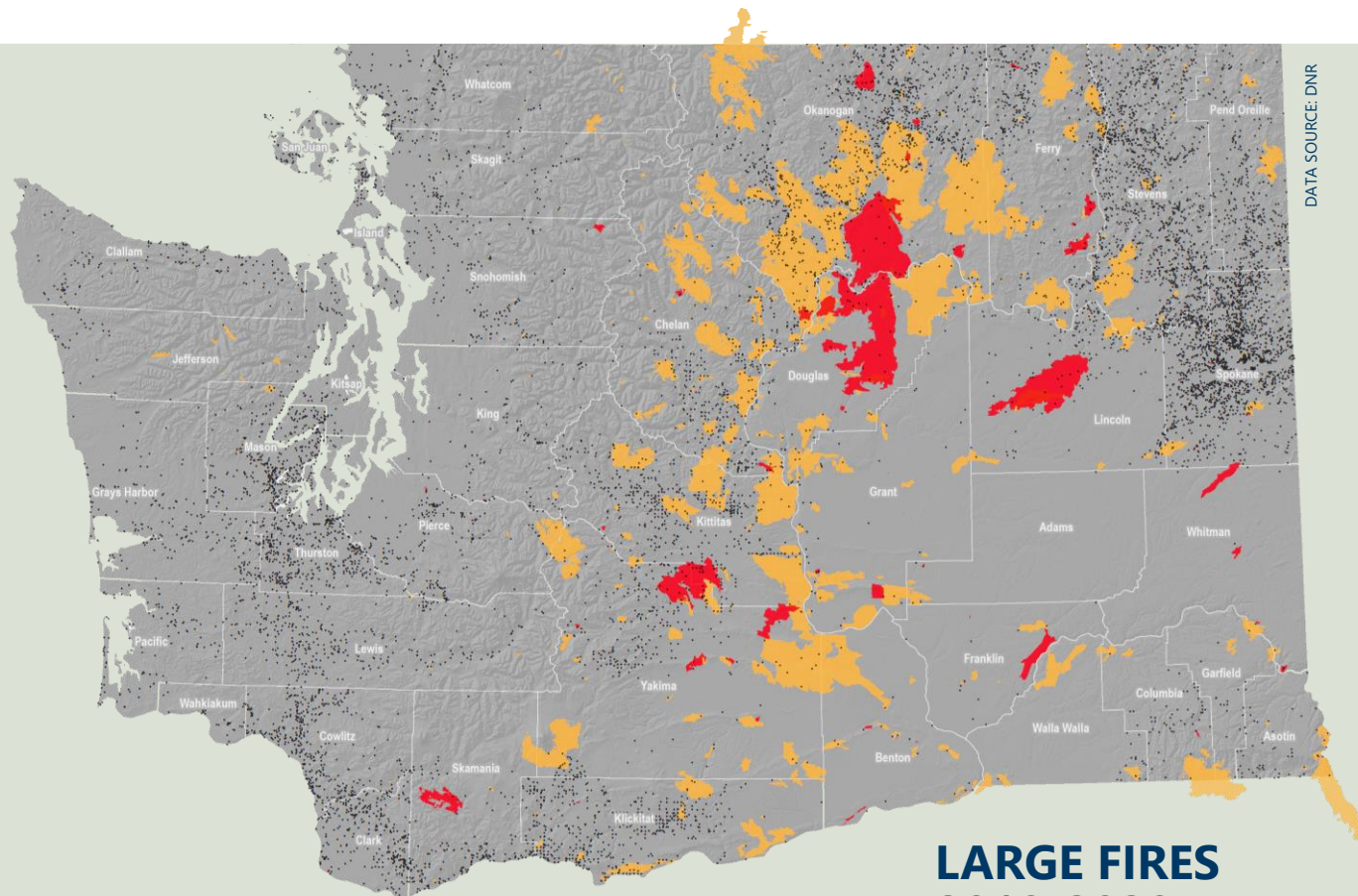
- Large Fire Area Burned 2020
- Large Fire Area Burned 2010-2019
- Other Wildfire Occurrence 2010-2020

“

“In 2020, more than 812,000 acres burned, bringing the five-year average destruction up to 488,000 acres. That’s more than five times the average annual burned acreage from the 1990s.”

The Seattle Times

FEB. 26, 2021



**LARGE FIRES
2010-2020**

LINDA B. BRUBAKER; SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND FOREST SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, SEATTLE, WA 98195;
“RECENT BURNING OF BOREAL FORESTS EXCEEDS FIRE REGIME LIMITS OF THE PAST 10,000 YEARS”. PNAS | AUGUST 6, 2013 | VOL. 110 | NO. 32 | 13055–13060

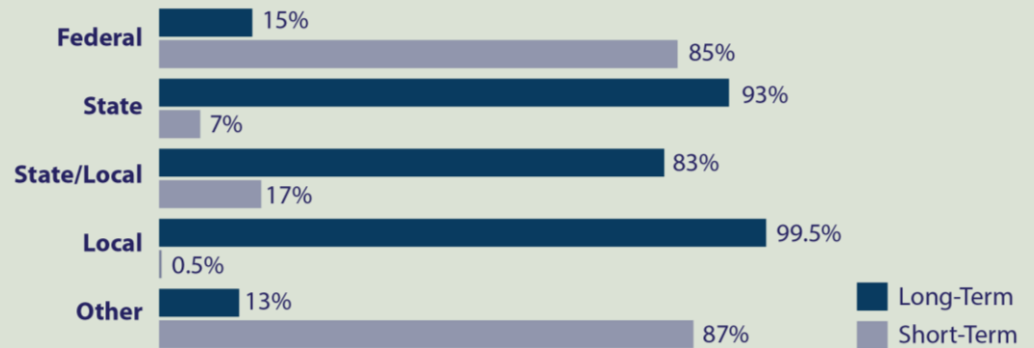
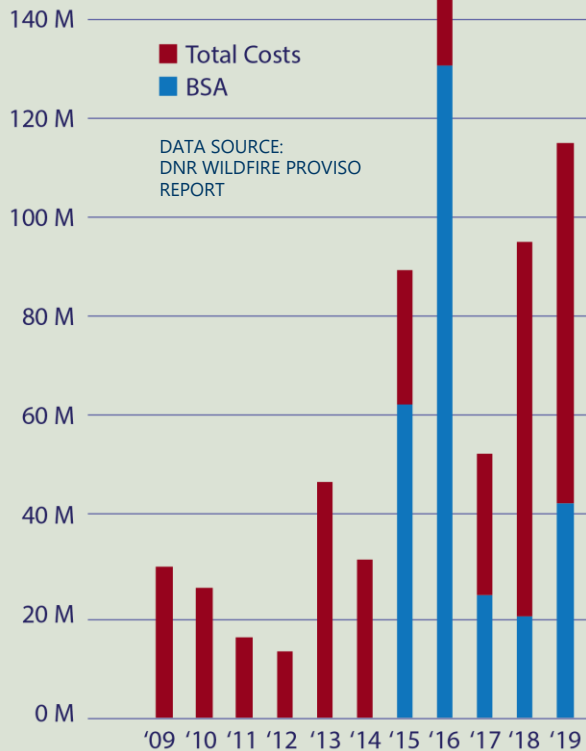


WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

dnr.wa.gov

WILDFIRE EXPENDITURE HISTORY

WA WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION HISTORICAL EXPENDITURES BY FISCAL YEAR



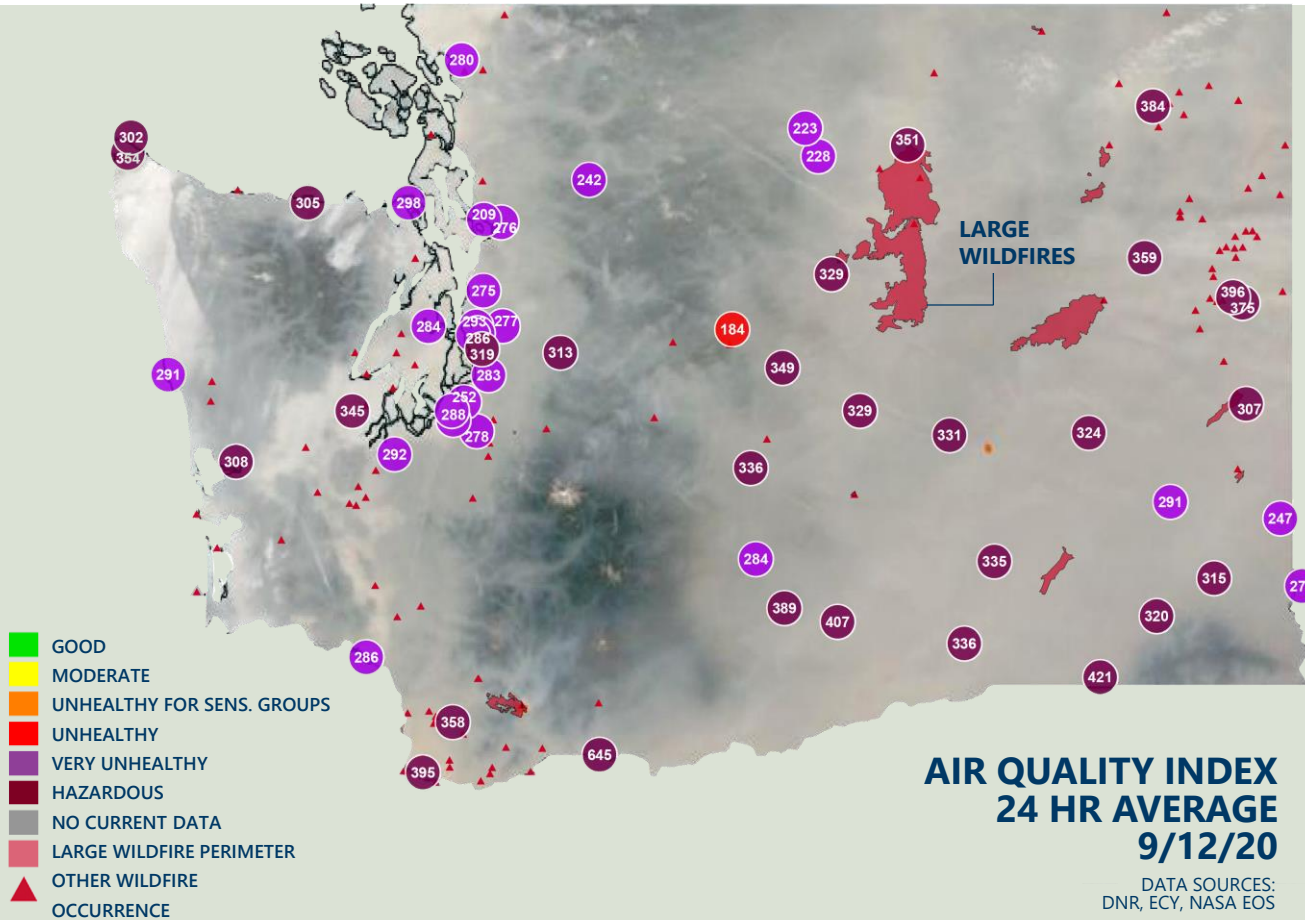
NATIONAL AVERAGES OF PROPORTIONAL COSTS OF WILDFIRE

DATA SOURCE:
HEADWATERS ECONOMICS
[HTTPS://HEADWATERSECONOMICS.ORG/
WILDFIRE/HOMES-RISK/FULL-
COMMUNITY-COSTS-OF-WILDFIRE/](https://headwaterseconomics.org/wildfire/homes-risk/full-community-costs-of-wildfire/)



THE 'SMOKE STORM' OF 2020

The Disproportionate Impacts of Uncharacteristic Wildfires



“Certain life stages and populations may be at greater risk of experiencing a health effect due to wildfire smoke and may experience more severe effects.”



UNITED STATES
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AGENCY



WILDFIRE IMPACTS US ALL

Wildfire is a shared risk, and a shared responsibility.

Significant increases in area burned are projected across much of the state. Many of these areas overlap with counties with swiftly increasing population and ample undeveloped land in fire-prone areas. In these areas, much of the population faces communication barriers, human-related wildland fires are very common, and wildland fire risk is already very high.

2040 BURN PROJECTIONS



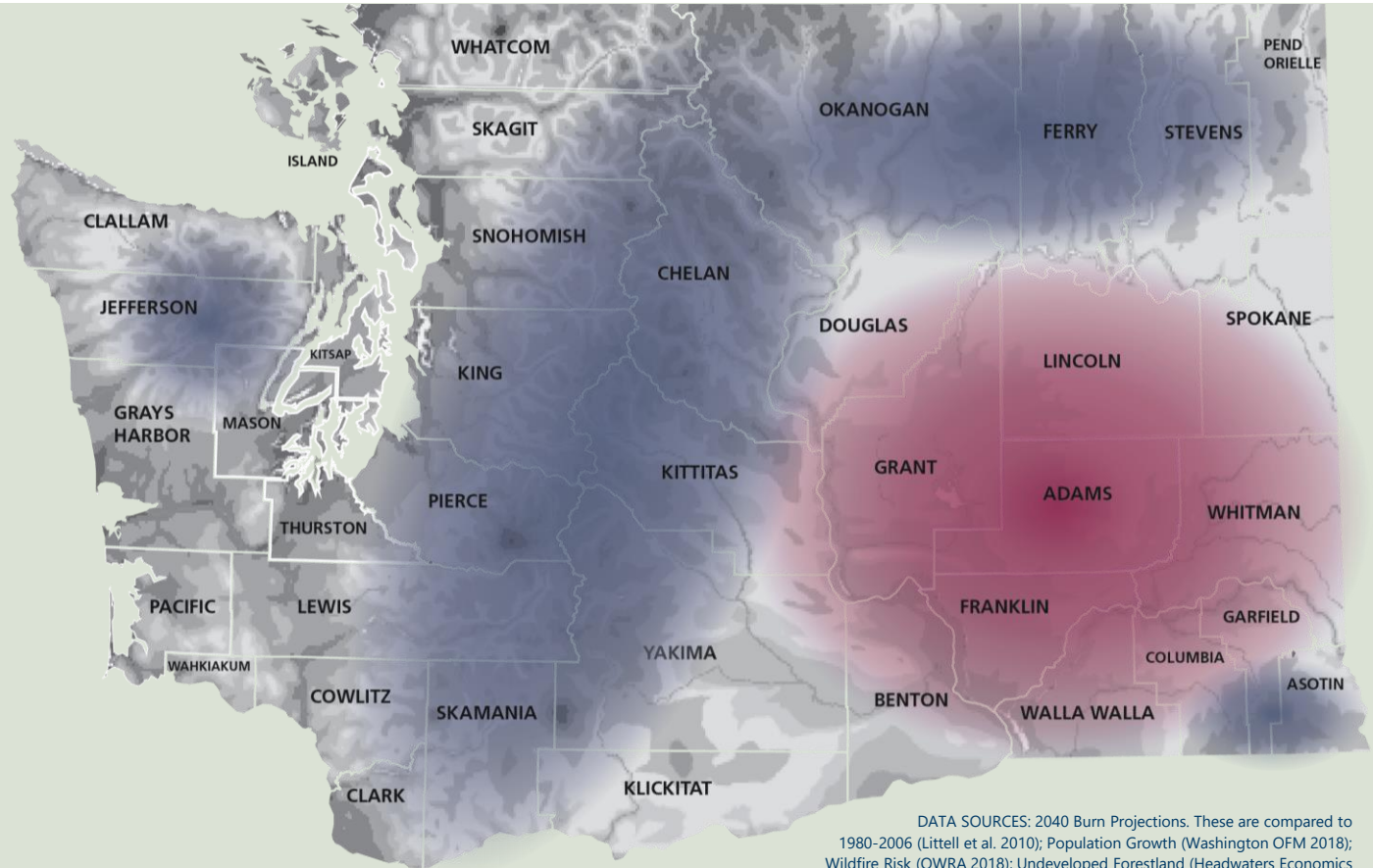
Annual area acres burned projected to quadruple by 2040.



Annual area acres burned projected to double by 2040.

2.2 MILLION HOMES ARE AT RISK FROM WILDFIRE

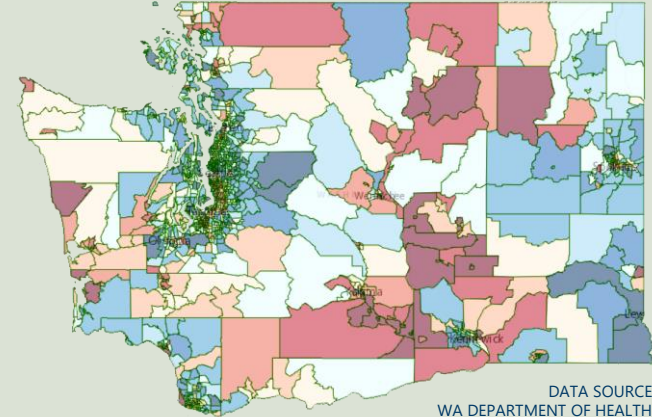
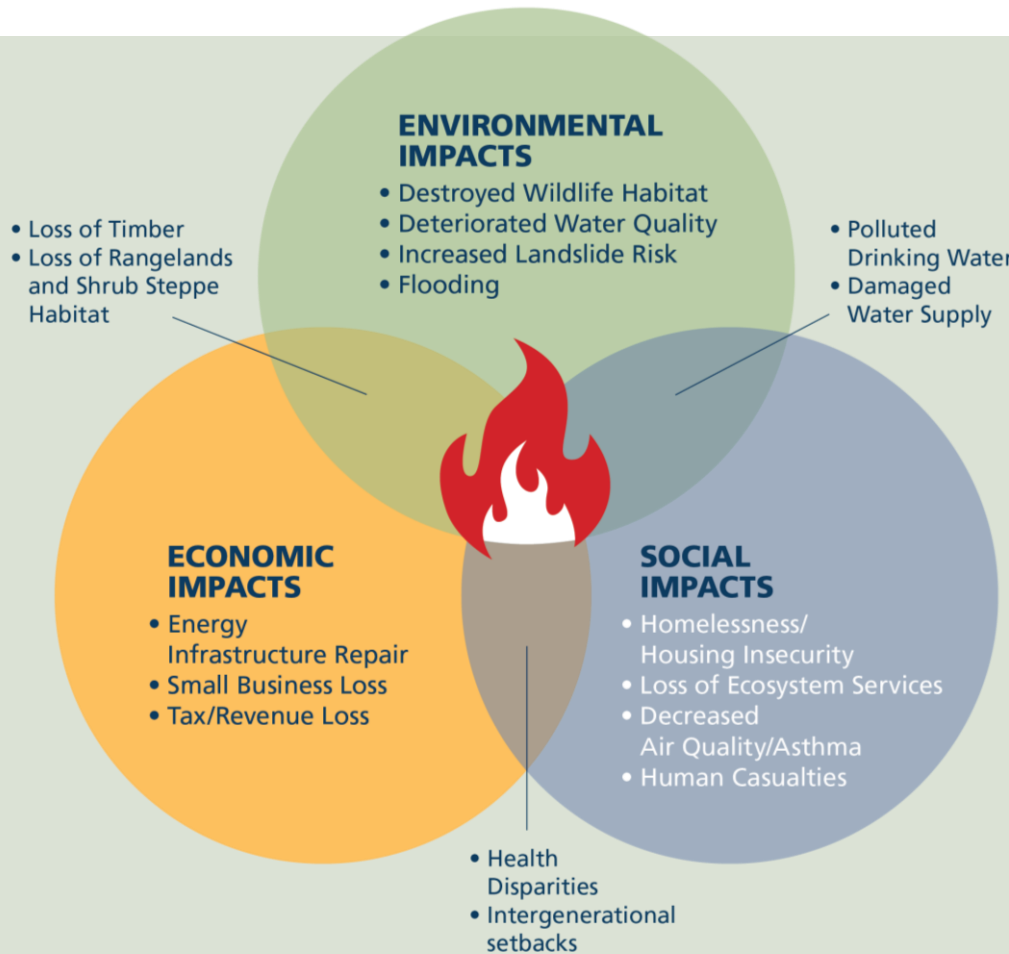
UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE



DATA SOURCES: 2040 Burn Projections. These are compared to 1980-2006 (Littell et al. 2010); Population Growth (Washington OFM 2018); Wildfire Risk (QWRA 2018); Undeveloped Forestland (Headwaters Economics 2018); Language (2016 American Community Survey); Smoke Incurision (Washington ECY 2018) Human-Caused Fires (Short 2017)



WILDFIRE CREATES SHORT-TERM EXPENSES & LONG-TERM DAMAGES



Rank
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

High

Low

DATA SOURCE:
WA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
DATA TRACKING NETWORK;
SOCIOECONOMIC FILTER
9/10/2020

SOCIOECONOMIC DISPARITIES

Analysis suggests nearly half of the full community costs of wildfires are paid at the local community level by government agencies, non-governmental organizations, businesses and homeowners. Almost all wildfire costs accrued at the local level are the result of long-term damages of wildfire—landscape rehabilitation, lost business and tax revenues, degraded ecosystem services, depreciated property values and impacts to tourism and recreation.



COLLABORATION

Before, During & After

Transition to Recovery

Community groups and long-term recovery organizations with assistance from FEMA and national volunteer groups help damaged communities rebuild. Agencies such as NRCS and conservation districts help landowners navigate post-fire hazards.

Tribes

Several individual tribes maintain fire organizations and authorities. On other tribal lands, DNR and BIA provide full or partial protection.

Federal Lands

Fire management services for Washington's approximately 12.5 million acres of federally managed land are provided by USFS, NPS, BLM, BIA and USFWS.

DNR-Protected Lands

DNR is responsible for preventing and fighting wildfires on 13 million acres of private, state and tribal-owned land across Washington.

Local Jurisdictions

Counties and cities are responsible for land use planning and WUI code implementation. Wildfire evacuations are the responsibility of local law enforcement.

Local Fire Service

Approximately 500 fire departments are responsible for localized structural and wildland fire protection across Washington.

Private Lands

Private landowners own and manage over 50% of Washington State's land area, and they are taking action to reduce fuel and manage vegetation.

Community Preparedness

DNR is responsible for preventing and fighting wildfires on 13 million acres of private, state and tribal-owned land across Washington.



STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS: HB 1168

PROTECT AT-RISK COMMUNITIES NOW & INTO THE FUTURE

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

We know which communities in our state are at risk. We know where we need to target our investments to protect these communities and strengthen their defenses. This bill would help us make investments at the home, neighborhood, and community level to reduce wildfire risk and protect our communities.

That means:

- **Investing in defensive strategies** at the community level, like fuel breaks, prescribed fire, and creating defensible green space
- **Direct assistance to homeowners** to secure their property and neighborhood with programs like FireWise

IMPROVE FOREST HEALTH TO REDUCE RISK OF SEVERE WILDFIRES

FOREST RESTORATION

Building up our forests' natural fire resistance requires treating them and keeping them healthy. Because fire doesn't stop at property lines, we must restore forests on federal, state, tribal and private land. This work is underway—we treated 256,000 acres from 2017 to 2019—but it's slow and difficult due to sporadic and unpredictable funding, and the challenge ahead of us is immense.

This account will:

- **Fully fund – and accelerate – DNR's 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan**, which calls for us to restore natural wildfire resistance to 1.25 million acres of forest
- **An additional \$8.5 million for workforce training** is included in this bill to support long-term boots-on-the-ground forest health work
- **Rejuvenate tribal forestlands** that provide critical fish and wildlife habitat, natural and cultural resources, and economic opportunities
- **Develop and expand an integrated Small Forest Landowner Assistance program** for statewide technical assistance

CONTINUE TO AGGRESSIVELY SUPPRESS DANGEROUS WILDFIRES

WILDFIRE RESPONSE

Historically, fire seasons were manageable with the resources we had. In the 2000s, for example, the average acres burned each year was 189,000. In the last five years, that has exploded to an annual average of 488,000 acres. But as fire seasons have gotten more dangerous and destructive, our ability to fight and contain these fires has lagged behind.

This proactive approach would fund:

100 more firefighters, including:

- 3 hand crews (20 people each)
- 20 dozer operators
- 2 post-release hand crews (10 people each)
- Additional firefighters to cover unprotected lands

Expanding our air fleet and new technology:

- 2 new fixed wing planes
- Upgrading/modernizing our aging Huey helicopters
- Adding infrared/night vision technology and advance fire detection systems
- Extend wildfire protection to almost 400,000 acres of unprotected land around the state

Bolster local fire districts — often the ones who are first to arrive on the ground — with funding for training, equipment, and personnel



WHAT ARE WE BUYING? RESILIENCY

HB 1168: LONG-TERM FOREST HEALTH & REDUCTION OF WILDFIRE DANGER

- Trained Workforce
- Small Forest Landowner Assistance Program
- Reduction of Flammable Debris



- State & Local Resources
- Firefighters
- Equipment
- Aviation Support Plan
- Training & Recruitment

- Fire Adapted Communities
- Community-Wide Fire Prevention
- Community Fuel Break



LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS IN A PREPARED, SAFE & RESILIENT WA



REACHING OUR STRATEGIC GOALS, TOGETHER

Current Wildfire Investments



\$57.2 M



HB 1168

Clear Vision

•
Strategic
Investments

•
Capable,
Integrated,
Sustainable
Systems



Resilient Landscapes

Forest Health

\$34.5 M



Safe, Effective Response

Wildfire Response

\$70.8 M



Prepared Communities

Community Resilience

\$19.7 M



Performance

Management Toolkit

\$2.97 M



DAILY RECORD
Since 1909
empowering the community

MARCH 12, 2020

This past fire season showed us we are at a crisis point. City dwellers who considered forest fires a far-off concern felt the heat – in some situations literally. This bill deserves Senate approval and Gov. Inslee's signature. It is a step in the right direction.

The Seattle Times

FEBRUARY 26, 2020

Modern Washington summers are rarely spared a painful surge of wildfires on both sides of the Cascade Mountains ... Every fire-reduction method in the state's arsenal must be deployed against this perennial menace.

 **The Columbian**
www.columbian.com

JANUARY 17, 2020

Washington agencies spend an average of \$150 million a year fighting wildfires, and that number is only increasing. Putting more money into preventing fires and quickly attacking them when they flare up would be a wise investment for the state.

THE DAILY Herald

MARCH 21, 2020

Almost all state spending can be viewed as an investment, but the costs that Washington residents face – in the expenses of fighting wildfires and in the potential losses from those fires – amply makes the case (for HB 1168).



FOR MORE INFORMATION

QUESTIONS

Kristine Reeves

Legislative Director

Kristine.Reeves@dnr.wa.gov

360-764-0013 mobile

STRATEGIES

20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan

www.dnr.wa.gov/ForestHealthPlan

10-Year Wildfire Strategic Plan

www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/rp_wildfire_strategic_plan.pdf

2020 Forest Health Action Plan

www.dnr.wa.gov/ForestActionPlan

Performance Management (Wildfire Proviso) Action Plan

www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/rp_action_plan_conclusions_recommendations.pdf



