

U.S. Major Wildfires Timeline

(does not include ALL major wildfires)

October 1825	Maine/Canada <u>Miramichi Fire</u>	After a summer of sparse rain, sporadic wildfires in Maine and the Canadian province of New Brunswick reached disastrous levels. Strong winds spurred the fires, which burned through forests and settlements in Maine and along the Miramichi River in Canada. Among the worst wildfires in North American history, the Miramichi fire burned 3 million acres, killed 160 people and left 15,000 homeless.
1849	Oregon Siletz Fire	800,000 acres burned
1853	Oregon Yaquina Fire	484,000 acres burned
1865	Oregon Silverton Fire	988,000 acres burned
October 1871	Wisconsin/Michigan <u>Peshtigo Fire</u>	The Peshtigo Fire burned more than 3.7 million acres in Wisconsin and Michigan. Federal authorities estimate at least 1,500 people died in the fire. Eight hundred died in Peshtigo, Wisconsin alone—nearly half the town's population. Despite the fire's extensive devastation and the fact that it killed more people than any fire since, the Peshtigo Fire was overshadowed at the time by the Great Chicago Fire, which began the same day.
September 1881	Michigan <u>Thumb Fire</u>	Located in the Thumb area of Michigan, the fire burned 1,000,000 acres in less than a day; 282 lives were lost; damage estimated at \$2,347,000.
September 1894	Minnesota Hinckley Fire	After one of the driest summers on record, small blazes converged to form a firestorm near Hinckley, Minnesota. The flames rushed through the city and surrounded towns in a matter of hours, burning 350,000 acres and killing 418 people.
September 1902	Washington/Oregon <u>Yacolt Fire</u>	The fire burned across more than 1,000,000 acres in Washington and Oregon. 38 lives were lost.
April 1903	New York <u>Adirondack Fire</u>	Fire burned 637,000 acres.

August 1910	Idaho/Montana <u>Great Fire of 1910</u>	Over two days and nights, several small blazes, hurricane-force winds and dry forests combined in Idaho and Montana to form what became known as the Great Fire of 1910. The flames burned about 3 million acres, making it one of the biggest wildfires ever recorded in North America, and killed 86 people. A forester later wrote that the fire was "fanned by a tornadic wind so violent that the flames flattened out ahead, swooping to earth in great darting curves, truly a veritable red demon from hell."
October 1918	Minnesota Cloquet-Moose Lake	Fire destroyed Cloquet, a sawmill town of 12,000, and left 450 dead; 250,000 acres burned; timberland and property losses estimated at \$30 million.
August 1933	Oregon Tillamook Burn	The Tillamook Burn became the collective name for the series of large fires that began in 1933 and struck at six-year intervals through 1951, burning a combined total of 355,000 acres. Oregon voters passed a constitutional amendment in 1948 authorizing \$12 million in bonds to rehabilitate the land.
October 1947	Maine	Wildfire destroyed part of Bar Harbor and damaged Acadia National Park. In all, 205,678 acres were burned and 16 lives were lost.
August 1949	Montana Mann Gulch Fire	It was in this fire that 13 firefighters lost their lives attacking what looked like a small, routine flare up. This fire's "blow up" and the crews' response led to new smokejumper training and techniques.
November 1956	California Cleveland National Forest	Wildfire destroyed 40,000 acres in Cleveland National Forest and caused 11 deaths.
1987	California Siege of '87	640,000 acres burned; no lives were lost, but valuable timber lost in the Klamath and Stanislaus National Forests.
July 1988	Wyoming <u>Yellowstone</u>	During summer 1988, parts of Yellowstone National Park and surrounding areas were overwhelmed by continuous forest fires that scorched 36 percent of the park's 2,221,800 acres by the end of the season. Even with the work of firefighters from all over the country, it took the first September snowfalls of the year to extinguish the wildfires.

July 1994	Colorado Storm King	A small, lightning-caused fire near Glenwood Springs escalated into an intense fire traveling over 500 feet per minute. Within five hours, the fire burned 2,115 acres and killed 14 firefighters. This again changed firefighting training and techniques.
1994	Montana	4,500 wildfires rage across Montana, burning 286,000 acres.
July 1997	Alaska Inowak	610,000 acres burned; fire threatened three villages. (See also CIDI Incident Report)
1998	Florida	Over 2,200 fires ravaged Florida, with over 80,000 people requiring evacuation. The fires caused \$390 million worth of timber losses and cost over \$133 million to fight.
April/May 2000	Northern New Mexico Los Alamos Fire	Prescribed fire started by National Park Service raged out of control, destroying 235 structures and forcing evacuation of more than 20,000 people. Blaze consumed an estimated 47,000 acres and threatened Los Alamos National Laboratory.
Summer 2000	Western U.S.: Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming	Dry conditions led to one of the most destructive forest fire seasons in U.S. history. About 7.2 million acres burned nationwide, nearly double the 10-year average. States hardest hit included AK, CA, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, TX, UT, WA, and WY.
June/July 2002	Deadwood, South Dakota Grizzly Gulch Fire	Grizzly Gulch wildfire burned more than 10,000 acres south of Deadwood.
June/July 2002	Pike National Forest, Colorado Hayman Fire	The Hayman fire consumed some 137,760 acres and 600 structures, making it the worst wildfire in Colorado's history.
June/July 2002	Central Arizona Rodeo/Chediski Fire	The 85,000-acre Rodeo fire, which had already been declared the worst in Arizona's history, merged with the Chediski fire to form a raging wildfire that consumed 468,638 acres and more than 400 structures.

October California
2003 **Cedar & Old fires**

15 devastating forest fires burned for two weeks, primarily in San Diego County, Ventura County, Riverside County, and San Bernardino County, forcing more than 80,000 people to evacuate their homes and burning 800,000 acres. More than 15,500 firefighters battled the blazes that killed 24 people and destroyed 3,640 homes. The Cedar Fire in San Diego, which burned through 200,000 acres, was the largest fire in California's history.

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, human activity and lightning strikes sparked the wildfires.

On May 7, 2004, federal and state officials approved \$317 million to help the fire-ravaged communities rebuild.

According to the National Interagency Fire Center, more than 85,000 fires burned a total of 4,918,088 acres in the United States during 2003. (See also [CIDI Incident Reports](#))

July/Aug Alaska
2004

Wildfires in Alaska burned more than 5 million acres, the worst year for Alaska fires.

Dec '05 – Texas and Oklahoma
Mar '06

Wildfires destroyed over 500 homes and over 500,000 acres. In Oklahoma, 33 of its 77 counties had wildfires, with damages well over \$10 million.

Jan- Mar Southern Plains
2006 States

Wildfires occurred in Texas, Oklahoma, southern Kansas, western Arkansas, and southern Missouri.