



**August 21st
2025**



Addressing Wildfire Risk And Related Issues Together

Reviewing our Priorities: Water Resources

Increased wildfires in quantity and severity not only demand water, they threaten it. **Local reporting from the Nevada Current** found that the Grand Canyon Dragon Bravo megafire damaged water infrastructure and pipes, and led to a chlorine gas leak at a nearby water treatment facility which endangered firefighters and prevented them from acting. This situation is indicative of a larger issue. Namely, aging water infrastructure and watersheds, especially out West, are failing under increasingly extreme fires and threatening long-term planning. **The US Geological Survey studied climate, fire, and erosion models for 471 western watersheds.** They found that by 2050, sedimentation in more than one-third of the watersheds could double and in nearly nine-tenths increase by more than 10%. Following several California fires, widespread drinking water chemical contamination was **discovered for the first time without the source water being contaminated.**

Why this matters?

This might be an easy one. Of course water matters, it's essential. But many policymakers and even experts are only recently grasping how dramatically fire affects water. **A roundtable review of California water systems following significant fires found** that wildfires threatened water supply, long-term water supply planning, water quality, and public health. Wildfire Alliance seeks to work with Congress to increase funding for watershed management and water infrastructure repair in fire-prone areas; leveraging data and our coalition to help policymakers understand real community needs.



Updates from Capitol Hill

With Congress in Recess, We Review What Laws Have and Have Not Passed this Year

New laws relating to wildfires have come to a crawl even as several fires burn throughout the country. Over halfway through the year, we're taking the time to review which bills became law, which have partial progress, and which are interesting but still languishing in Committee.

Became Law

- **Aerial Firefighting Enhancement Act of 2025** - Reauthorizes the Department of Defense to sell its excess aircraft and aircraft parts that are acceptable for commercial sale for wildfire suppression purposes.

Passed One Legislative Chamber

- **Fix Our Forests Act** - Establishes requirements for managing forests on federal land, including requirements concerning reducing wildfire threats, expediting the review of certain forest management projects, and implementing forest management projects and other activities.
- **Emergency Wildfire Fighting Technology Act of 2025** - Requires the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior to (1) jointly evaluate the container aerial firefighting system to assess its use to mitigate and suppress wildfires, and (2) report on the results of the evaluation to Congress.

- **DOE and USDA Interagency Research Act** - Requires the Department of Energy and Department of Agriculture to carry out cross-cutting and collaborative research and development activities through the establishment of an interagency agreement.
- **ACRES Act** - Establishes requirements regarding reports about hazardous fuels reduction activities and standardized procedures for tracking data for hazardous fuels reduction

Still in Committee

- **Modernizing Wildfire Safety and Prevention Act of 2025** - Addresses wildfires by expanding emergency and disaster assistance, establishing scientific monitoring, and increasing assistance for firefighting personnel. Based on recommendations in a 2023 report from the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission.
- **National Prescribed Fire Act of 2025** - Invests in and increases the use of prescribed fire for hazardous fuels management, developing a skilled workforce, and improving smoke management and permitting.

Several dozen more bills relating to wildfires have been introduced in Congress, including both locally focused and regionally impactful. Yet dozens of bills remain trapped in committee without clear pathways going forward. Some reporting has pointed towards some bills being combined in hopes of an 'omnibus' wildfire or forest management bill, but this is without clear sources. Real movement on certain laws relating to wildfires could be delayed until **Congress sorts out its concerns with the Administration's proposed wildfire priority of a single federal agency.**



Local Perspective on Wildfires

Rural Counties, State Governments Sound the Alarm on Growing Wildfire Threats

Five rural counties in southwestern Utah formally voiced their urgent demand for improved federal forest management in response to devastating wildfires this year through the adoption of a joint resolution. The move came through the counties' regional Association of Governments on August 15, 2025. The resolution emphasized that decades of under-management, marked by overly dense, homogeneous forests, have heightened wildfire risk and harmed local economies, cultures, and histories. Officials argued that the region has swung from "over-management" into a dangerous cycle of "under-management," and must now return to balanced, proactive land stewardship. They called for targeted measures such as reducing tree density, promoting biodiversity, and clearing flammable vegetation.

This comes at a time when the Trump Administration has largely been able to avoid any too harsh criticisms over wildfire management despite concerns related to Forest Service funding and staffing. Part of the reason is that States and local governments are beginning to assume more costs due to wildfires, putting strains on local resources and revenue streams. **Following the LA fires, California approved \$2.5 billion for rebuilding efforts** and largely hasn't seen the same support from Congress as FEMA has started to take a step back in the Trump Administration.



Wildfire in the Data

Homeowners Feel the Burn as Wildfire Put Homes at Risk Potentially Costing Trillions

A **recent Cotality report reveals** that approximately 2.6 million homes across 14 Western U.S. states are at moderate or higher risk of wildfires, representing a staggering \$1.3 trillion in reconstruction value. About 1.2 million of those homes face 'very high' risk. California leads with the greatest exposure, and eight of the 15 most at-risk metro areas, including Los Angeles, are located there. The January 2025 Palisades and Eaton Fires in Los Angeles alone caused catastrophic damage, destroying over 13,500 properties and triggering \$40 billion in insured losses. Months later rebuilding is delayed and homeowners have come under a 'coverage crunch' as insurance is only covering so much with compounding prices. Major carriers are also flocking away from WUI zipcodes, leaving homeowners with expensive or no options. By checking out the Cotality report you can view your local area's wildfire homeowner risk, and see how the West is dramatically effected by increased wildfires.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Wildland Urban Interface Summit - Prescott, AZ | Oct. 28-30**
- **Southern Blueridge TREX - Blueridge NC & SC | Nov. 3-15**

Wildfire in the News

- **Quiver Quantitative** - New Bill: Representative Maxine Dexter introduces H.R. 4976: Shielding Students from Wildfire Smoke Act
- **The Guardian** - Wildfire smoke far more dangerous to health than thought, say scientists
- **New York Times** - Wildfire Fighters, Unmasked in Toxic Smoke, Are Getting Sick and Dying
- **ABC** - Dangerous heat descends on California and the Southwest, raising wildfire risk

About Us

Wildfire Alliance is a coalition of local governments and state entities working with Congress and federal agencies to address the rising threat of wildfires.



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