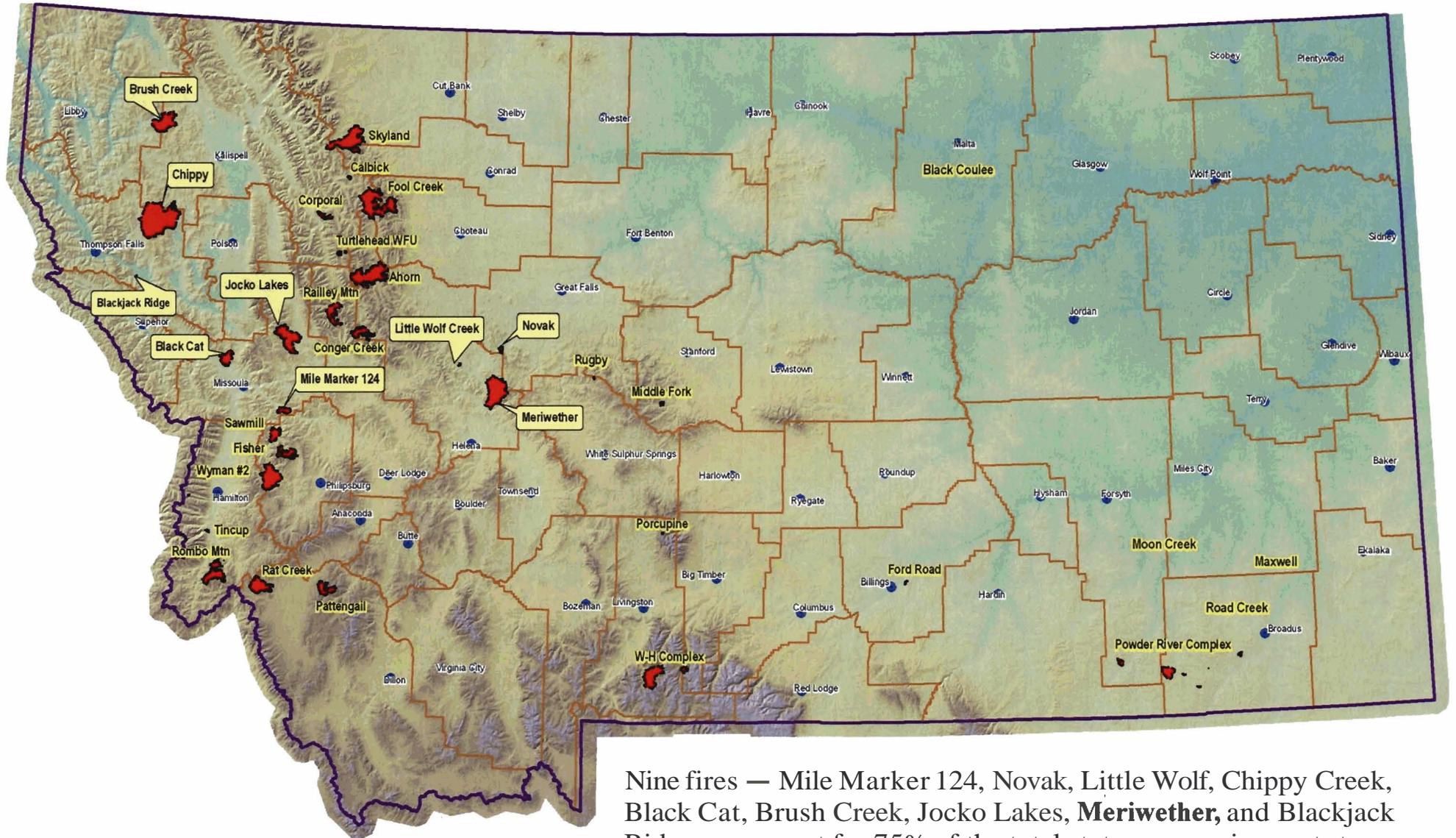


2007 MONTANA WILDFIRES



GARCEAU BEEHIVE SICKLER CREEK EAGLE STUD YOEMAN **PATTENGAIL** HALL ROAD
HOUSE BAY INDIANS CORNER COON SPRINGS **421** STRAWBERRY TRAIL THOMPSON
REVER ROAD LION MOUNTAIN **AHORN** BITTERROOT LANE RHODES DRAW JACKSON
MOUNTAIN CABIN CREEK **BLACK CAT** COW CREEK ROGERS RIDGE WEST MONROE RED
MOUNTAIN HOLLAND LAKE WHITETAIL CEDAR RIDGE CALICO CREEK NORTH TIMBER COX
ROAD WINDY TREE JONES BENCH BIG ROCK PRAIRIE CREEK ROAD **BRUSH CREEK**
COURTNEY CREEK SOUTH PORTAL **SAWMILL COMPLEX** HUNTER CRYSTAL CREEK WOLF
JOINT SHEPPARD ELK CREEK BROWNS RANCH GRAINGER RIDGE BEAVERTAIL CAMAS
CREEK WHEAT MOUNTAIN DRY CREEK MARTIN GULCH DEAN-STONE CARLTON RIDGE
BURNING HILL **HICKS PARK** BLANCHARD FLATS FISH CREEK **MILE MARKER 124** SNOW MASS
WIND HORSE OVANBO BALSAMROOT ROAD SENTINEL EAST TWIN CREEK BIRCH HILL
ENGLISH GULCH LONG PINE **POWDER RIVER COMPLEX** CLEAR CREEK SPRING HILL
GRASSY MOUNTAIN BUFFALO MORRIS CREEK CAMPBELL MOUNTAIN FREEZEOUT ROWAN
RADERSBURG **JOCKO LAKES** ROAD WAPITI CAMBRIDGE ROAD MAIDEN ROCK DRY GULCH
POTHOLE HOMESTEAD GULCH WIND HORSE CREEK RODEO MOSQUITO BIG FLAT DEVIL
MOUNTAIN POWERLINE **CHIPPY CREEK** MULLIGAN HORSEBACK RIDGE **PINE CREST**
RAINY COLT LODGEPOLE **FORD** SAVANNA LANE JUNIPER DAM RIDGEWAY ROCKY CREEK
SNOWDRIFT HOUND CREEK EVERGREEN SIEBEN FLATS BALDY **MCKNIGHT CANYON**
HIDDEN MEADOW BIG TURNAROUND COMPLEX ANGORA ANTELOPE COMPLEX MUSKRAT
DUGAN DRAW HIGHLINE **TIN CUP** SUNDAY GRIZZLY BROKEN TREE **MERIWETHER** GRAVES
CREEK KERR MOUNTAIN LOLO CREEK DICKIE LAKE PORCUPINE MEADOWS WOUNDED
CREEK APPLIGATE WILLOW CREEK UPLAND TRAIL **BLACKJACK RIDGE** BACHELOR
COLUMBINE METLEN BAR Z MOOSE TRIDENT HANLEY PAINTER CREEK **MADISON ARM**
KLONDIKE CREEK QUARTZ CREEK DALY PEAK FLESHER ANACONDA CREEK COLORADO
GULCH DIAMOND **LITTLE WOLF** RING ROAD CREEK SALT RAILS TO TRAILS WASSON
CREEK BEAR SPRINGS LIVERPOOL POINT MIDDLE FORK RESERVE
GULCH ACUTE CRESTWOOD MUD CREEK BAR Z DEARBORN RA

2007 MONTANA LARGE FIRES



Nine fires — Mile Marker 124, Novak, Little Wolf, Chippy Creek, Black Cat, Brush Creek, Jocko Lakes, **Meriwether**, and Blackjack Ridge — account for 75% of the total state suppression costs to date. A 2007 DNRC report stresses the importance of initial attack in reducing fire suppression costs, noting that average costs for a small fire (<10 acres) is \$4,070, while the average costs for large fires (>5000 acres) is \$2.5 Million.

Major Themes of the 2007 Fire Season

EXTREME FIRE DANGER

Many fires have been resistant to control, despite rapid dispatch of initial attack resources.

EXAMPLE: **JOCKO LAKES FIRE**
MISSOULA COUNTY

The Jocko Lakes fire ignited Friday, August **3, 2007**, and burned about **300** acres before heavy winds the next day pushed the fire eight miles to the southwest. Spot fires propelled the blaze forward a mile and a half or more at a time, much too fast for firefighters to catch.

Roughly 650 homes were evacuated, sending 1500 **Seeley** Lake area resident and visitors out of the community.

For firefighters, the conditions and behavior of the fire was like nothing they had ever seen before. Yet, most fear that these firestorms will become increasingly common given Montana's deepening drought, record high temperatures in the summer, and an overabundance of forest fuels.



Night Ops, Jocko Lakes Fire

INITIAL ATTACK

Safe and aggressive initial attack done in cooperation with federal, state and local partners is the key to protecting Montana lives and property, while minimizing costs to taxpayers.

EXAMPLE: **GRAINGER FIRE**
LAKE COUNTY

"The Grainger Fire near Marion was caught at 4 acres thanks to response of two severity dozers, the Montana National Guard Blackhawk helicopter, DNRC helicopter, 2 single-engine air tankers and numerous engines. This fire had a lot of potential in timber and grass fuels to be a large fire if not for the additional resources."

-Dan Cassidy, DNRC

STATISTICS

- ◆ DNRC has responded to 391 fires with an initial attack success rate of **95%**.
- ◆ DNRC performed **42** assists to counties for wildfire incidents.
- ◆ DNRC logged **115 Mutual Aid** assists to federal, state and local partners.
- ◆ Severity resources such as crews, aircraft, **overhead** and heavy equipment have been vital to the IA effort.

COOPERATION

DNRC works in concert with a vast network of partners to suppress fires around the state. Our success depends upon collaboration between federal and state agencies, tribes, local government and private contractors.

EXAMPLE: **COX ROAD FIRE**
GALLATIN COUNTY

When the Cox Road Fire started the evening of July **23rd**, Central Valley Fire Department called the DNRC to request Mutual Aid assistance, and DNRC responded with a state helicopter for initial attack, as well as a 20-person crew and engine for mop-up the next day. The fire was held to 620 acres and put in patrol status one day after it was reported.



Working a hot spot

WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE

Development in the wildland urban interface is the most critical element challenging firefighters throughout the west.

EXAMPLE: **FORD FIRE**
YELLOWSTONE COUNTY

In 2006 the Emerald Hills Fire burned 3,863 acres, destroying one home and damaging others. In 2007, fire returned to Emerald Hills, as the Ford Fire burned 804 acres and destroyed 2 homes. In both cases, the losses would have been even greater if not for the well-coordinated response by firefighters and close proximity of air resources. This illustrates the continued and recurring risk to homeowner in the wildland urban interface.



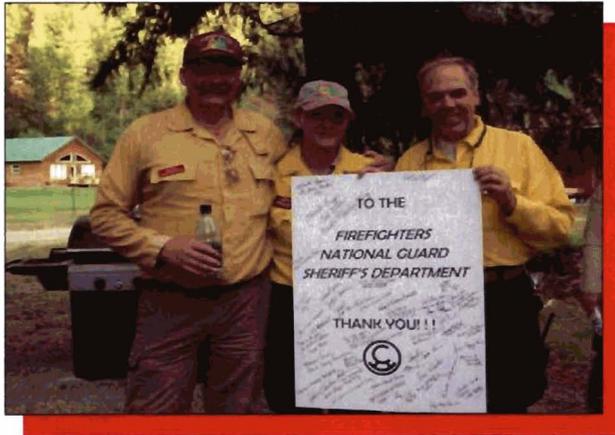
Ford Fire Photo by Billings Gazette

For fires occurring on DNRC direct protection from 1996-2006, fires in the WUI cost at average of 46% more to suppress than **non-WUI** fires.

FIVE HIGHEST-COST FIRE SEASONS THIS DECADE

YEAR	ACRES	STATE COSTS
2000	1,160,145	\$55 MILLION*
2001	146,819	\$13 MILLION
	736,809	\$35 MILLION**
2006	1,047,323	\$37 MILLION
2007	759,096 (as of 8/30/07)	\$40 MILLION (Projected)

* Statewide FEMA Declaration Reimbursement ** Jobs & Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act Funds



Well deserved thanks to firefighters, law enforcement, and the Montana National Guard on the Sawmill Complex

Long Term Solutions to Mitigating Fire Costs

There are some things that can be done to take a proactive approach to mitigating the costs of fire suppression in the long term.

- ◆ Continued investment in DNRC'S Initial Attack capabilities, including use of severity resources during extreme fire danger.
- ◆ Active forest management and restoration activities to improve forest health and **reduce** hazardous fuels.
- ◆ Support for DNRC'S County Cooperative Fire Program, federal Volunteer and Rural Fire Assistance, and other programs whose aim is to ensure that local fire organizations have the equipment and resources necessary.
- ◆ Continued public education about homeowner responsibility that comes with living in the **wildland-urban** interface, as well as financial assistance and incentives for private landowners to create defensible space.

"The extent of hazardous fuel treatments that you have on private lands in this area is not common. We did not see a single home in the Stage 1 and 2 evacuation areas that we felt we could not defend"

*-Joe Molhoek, Tin Cup Fire
Deputy Incident Cmdr.*

The Montana DNRC extends its gratitude to all who offered assistance during the 2007 fire season. Help came to Montana from as far away as Ontario, Canada, Florida, California, and many points in between. To the contractors, local firefighters, community leaders, law enforcement, federal and state agencies, pilots, smokejumpers, hotshots, hand crews, and everyone else who offered their assistance: our sincerest thanks for all of your efforts.

