

Fire Season 2012: Hard Work & Hard Times

Montana Fire Statistics (All Ownerships):

1,697 Fires
909,949 acres
106 Large Fires (>100 acres), burned 862,928 acres
110 homes destroyed
\$43 million in net DNRC costs (9/10/12)

Successes

- ◆ Extraordinary safety record given the numbers of hours worked, miles driven, hours flown, etc.
- ◆ IA Success Rate estimated at 94%
- ◆ Investment in severity resources is working
- ◆ New engines and staff in Eastern MT are paying off;
- ◆ Interagency cooperation has been excellent;
- ◆ Contractors have been busy;
- ◆ Human-caused fires account for 50% of all fire starts, but 10% of acreage.
- ◆ DNRC Aircraft use — 3 million gallons (9500 drops). 210+ hours each on DNRC UH-1H.
- ◆ Northwest Fire Compact has worked.
 - Canadian Aircraft & Crews
 - Idaho helicopter/helitack
- ◆ Sharing resources across DNRC offices has worked well;
- ◆ Incident Management Teams have been assigned continually for 3 months.



Pine Creek Fire south of Livingston

Challenges

- ◆ **Fatigue.** Firefighters and IMTs are tired;
- ◆ **Damage to personal property.** Effects on homes, livestock, grazing, improvements, and air quality/tourism.
- ◆ **Resiliency.** Forest and range landscapes not resilient enough for these conditions.
- ◆ **Most communities are not prepared for wildfires.**
- ◆ **Public expectations of firefighters are frequently unrealistic.**
- ◆ **The Fire Season Hasn't Ended.** The outlook is for continued activity through September and beyond.

