



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

BLM Fire

Fire Year 2024 Program Overview



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management Fire program (BLM Fire) is the largest and most complex fire program within the Department of the Interior (DOI). The BLM represents 61% of DOI's fire-related workforce and is directly responsible for fire management on more than 245 million acres of public lands, predominantly in the western United States and Alaska; wildfire is prevalent across much of this landscape. This land is commonly intermixed with other federal, state and local jurisdictions, making partnerships and collaborative efforts crucial to the mission of safety and fire management. Overall, BLM Fire implements fire protection on approximately 650 million acres of public land with other fire management agencies and manages fuels treatments to reduce wildfire risk and support healthy ecosystems across the landscape.



34 RFPAs



2 Fire Boats



12 Water Tenders/23 Semi-tractors



23 Dozers



6 Veterans Crews



13 Hotshot Crews



4 Wildland Fire Modules



276 Engines



154 Smokejumpers



34 SEATs/4 Fire Bosses



26 Tactical Aircraft



25 Helicopters/18 Helitack Crews

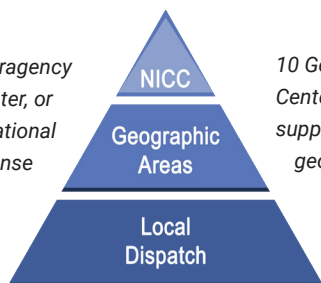
The number of hotshot crews includes 2 veterans crews. RFPAs are Rangeland Fire Protection Associations.

Resource mobilization

All fire suppression resources are supported by a three-tier interagency network of dispatch and coordination centers across the country. The national dispatch system's primary mission is the timely, cost effective, and efficient coordination, mobilization and demobilization of wildland fire resources.

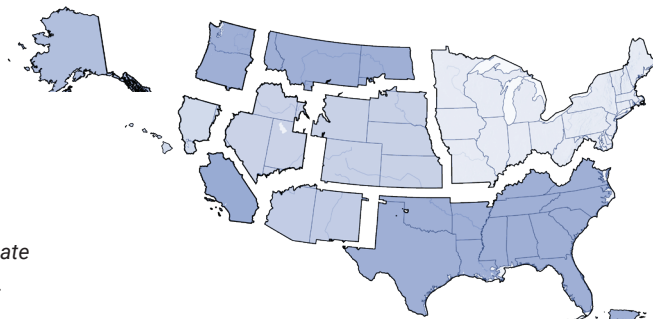
Each tier has a unique role in locating and dispatching fire suppression resources to wildland fire incidents. Local level dispatch centers are responsible for initial wildfire response and support.

The National Interagency Coordination Center, or NICC, provides national emergency response for wildland fire and all-hazard incidents.



10 Geographic Area Coordination Centers, or GACCs, mobilize wildfire suppression resources within specific geographic areas of the U.S.

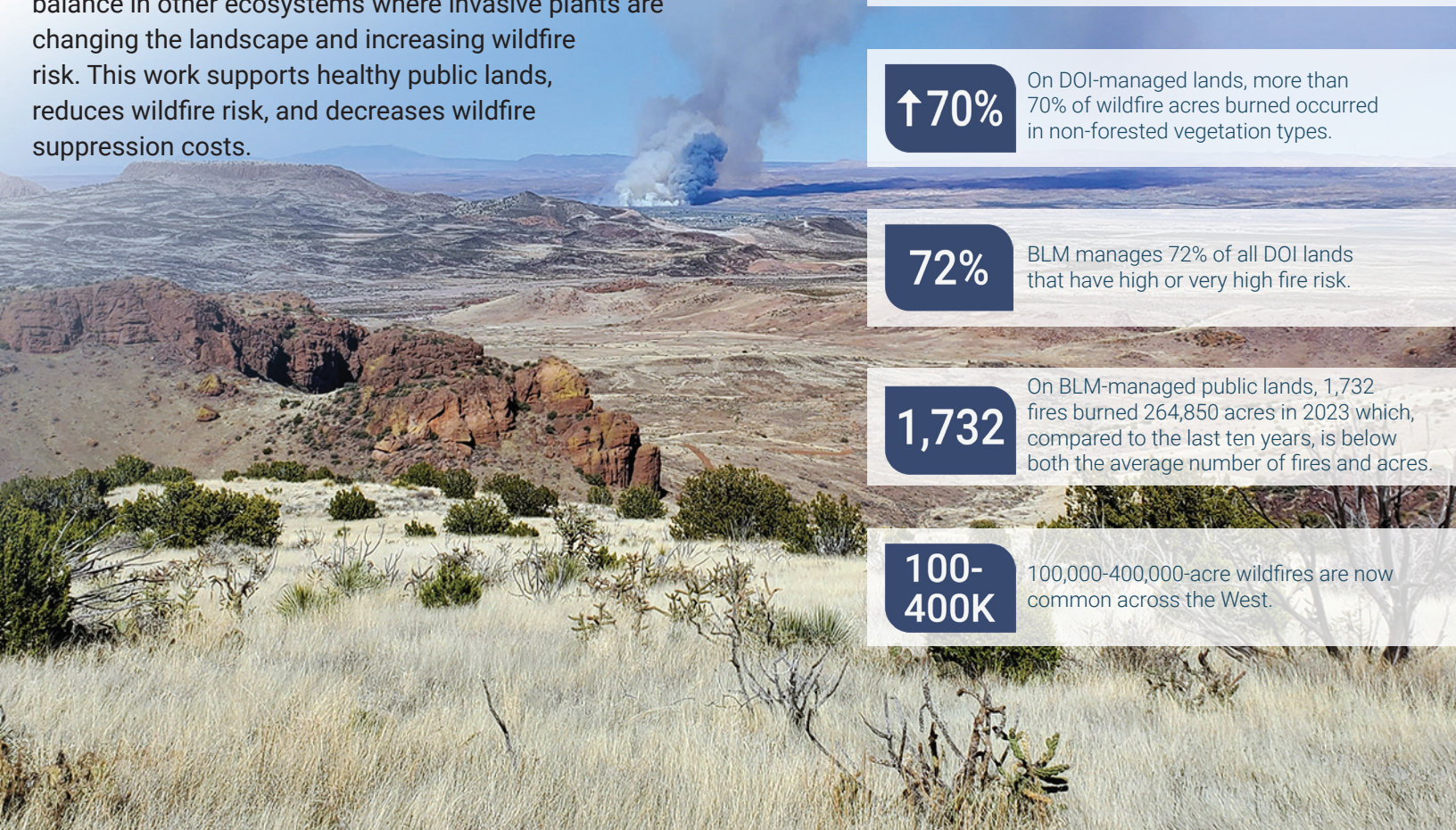
Local level dispatch centers coordinate initial wildfire response and support.



Unique fire management challenges

Most BLM-managed public lands are composed of non-forested shrub and grass ecosystems. Invasive plants, which make landscapes more flammable, are present in many of these ecosystems. Cycles of frequent wildfire followed by invasive plants are impacting vast areas of the western U.S., particularly in the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem. Because of the fire and invasives cycle, many western ecosystems are experiencing too much wildfire compared to historical fire regimes. Suppressing wildfires in these ecosystems is costly and puts wildland firefighters at risk.

The BLM is working to preserve ecosystems that are currently not impacted by invasive plants while restoring ecological balance in other ecosystems where invasive plants are changing the landscape and increasing wildfire risk. This work supports healthy public lands, reduces wildfire risk, and decreases wildfire suppression costs.



25

25 square miles of rangelands with invasive grasses can burn in just one day.

36M

36 million acres of BLM-managed public lands are at high/very high fire risk - much of this is due to invasive plants.

54%

Over the past two decades, 54% of wildfire acres burned in the continental U.S. occurred on shrublands and grasslands.

↑70%

On DOI-managed lands, more than 70% of wildfire acres burned occurred in non-forested vegetation types.

72%

BLM manages 72% of all DOI lands that have high or very high fire risk.

1,732

On BLM-managed public lands, 1,732 fires burned 264,850 acres in 2023 which, compared to the last ten years, is below both the average number of fires and acres.

100-400K

100,000-400,000-acre wildfires are now common across the West.



Fuels management

The BLM achieved over 1.2 million acres of fuels treatments in 2023. By increasing fuels accomplishments, the BLM will improve wildfire resiliency, improve firefighter and public safety, protect communities, and boost local economies.

The BLM Fuels Management program is focused on managing landscapes to reduce wildfire risk, improve wildfire resiliency and promote fire-adapted communities. This effort is critical considering the vast spread of wildfire risk throughout the West, as the BLM works to address more than 70% of DOI's wildfire risk. To address these fire-invasives challenges, the BLM conducts a wide variety of fuels treatment projects, including fuel breaks, mechanical treatments, chemical and biological treatments, and prescribed fire. Use of prescribed fire is often limited where invasive plants are present; many of these areas are experiencing too much wildfire.

This work protects vulnerable communities from wildfire while preparing natural landscapes for a changing climate. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law supports mechanical thinning, prescribed fire, employing contractors, young adults, veterans, and Tribal youth.



The BLM accomplished more than 50% of the DOI's total fuels treatment acres.



In 2023, the BLM treated 1.2 million acres through active management, approximately 211,000 more acres treated than in 2022.



The BLM also reduces hazardous fuels by allowing some wildfires to function in their natural ecological role when they can be safely and effectively managed to meet

desired objectives identified in local land use and fire management plans. An additional 614,000 acres of resource benefit were achieved in wildfires bringing BLM's total acres treated to approximately 1.9 million, exceeding BLM's 1-million-acre goal in 2023.



BLM's Community Assistance program provided just over \$12.9 million via 123 cooperative agreements to reduce the risk and impact of wildfire to 1,017

communities. The BLM sponsored 3,667 public education events and treated 58,143 non-federal acres which reduced the fire risk to 9,673 homes. The BLM funded and participated in the creation of 73 new or updated Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

Fuel breaks

BLM Fire uses multiple fuels treatment methods. Fuel breaks reduce hazardous fuels and provide wildland firefighters a safe barrier to conduct fire suppression tactics.

Large swaths of overgrown grasses, brush, or other vegetation provide continuous fuels that can lead to catastrophic wildfires.



Fuel breaks thin out or break up the vegetation, which slows the progress and reduces the intensity of the wildfire, making it safer and easier for firefighters to control.

Fuel treatment types



50% of acres accomplished with mechanical treatments



25% of acres accomplished with chemical and biological treatments



25% of acres accomplished with prescribed fire and fire use treatments

BLM Fire 2023 Top 10 Accomplishments



National Wildfire Coordinating Group's Incident Performance and Training Modernization effort initiated 10 position revisions with 46 subject matter experts from eight agencies. This effort will update all wildland fire positions within the next five years, with the goal of implementing a performance-based training system that is developed by the field, for the field.



Aviation

BLM Fire made strides in aviation, with the first graduate from the Smokejumper Pilot Mentorship program and hiring three additional air tactical group supervisors in Nevada, Utah, and Idaho. The BLM also hosted the first BLM UAS Summit.



Communications

The BLM utilized funding through the Joint Communication Infrastructure Improvement Project to advance over 70 new routers on public lands. These new routers connect to the field through a secure radio over internet protocol network.



Infrastructure

BLM Fire focused on improvements in fire facilities and operational outbuildings. \$6.4 million was allocated to create or improve 12 fire facilities, including environmental improvements to the Casper SEAT Base in Wyoming.



BLM Recruitment

BLM Fire launched a national recruitment toolkit and BLM Fire Jobs Portal, inspired by requests from firefighters in the field, to assist in recruitment efforts nationwide.



Mental Health

The BLM Mental Health program provided critical incident support for 10 BLM incidents this year, as well as coordinated support for multiple interagency Critical Incident Stress Management responses.



International Response

BLM sent a record number of firefighters and support personnel to assist Canada. 11 hand crews, nine engines, and a total of 457 personnel responded across the northern border.



0456 Wildland Fire Management Series

The BLM has been a leader among wildland fire management agencies to advance the use of the new 0456 Wildland Fire Management Series, with multiple states advertising new positions.



The BLM leveraged multiple funding sources and partnerships, including Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds, to accomplish over 1.2 million acres of active fuels management. In addition, BLM's Community Assistance program treated 58,143 acres of non-federal land and provided over \$12.9 million for community wildfire risk reduction.



Diversity and Inclusion

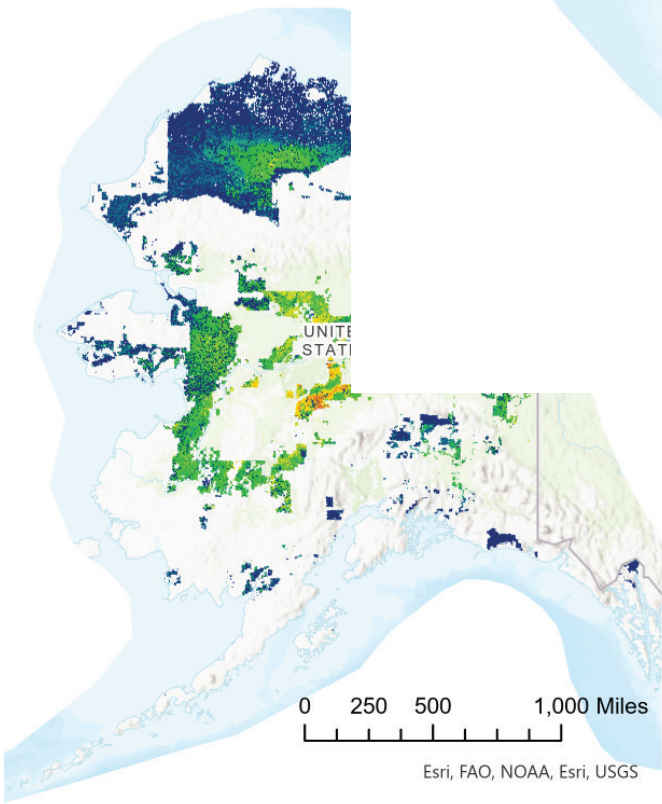
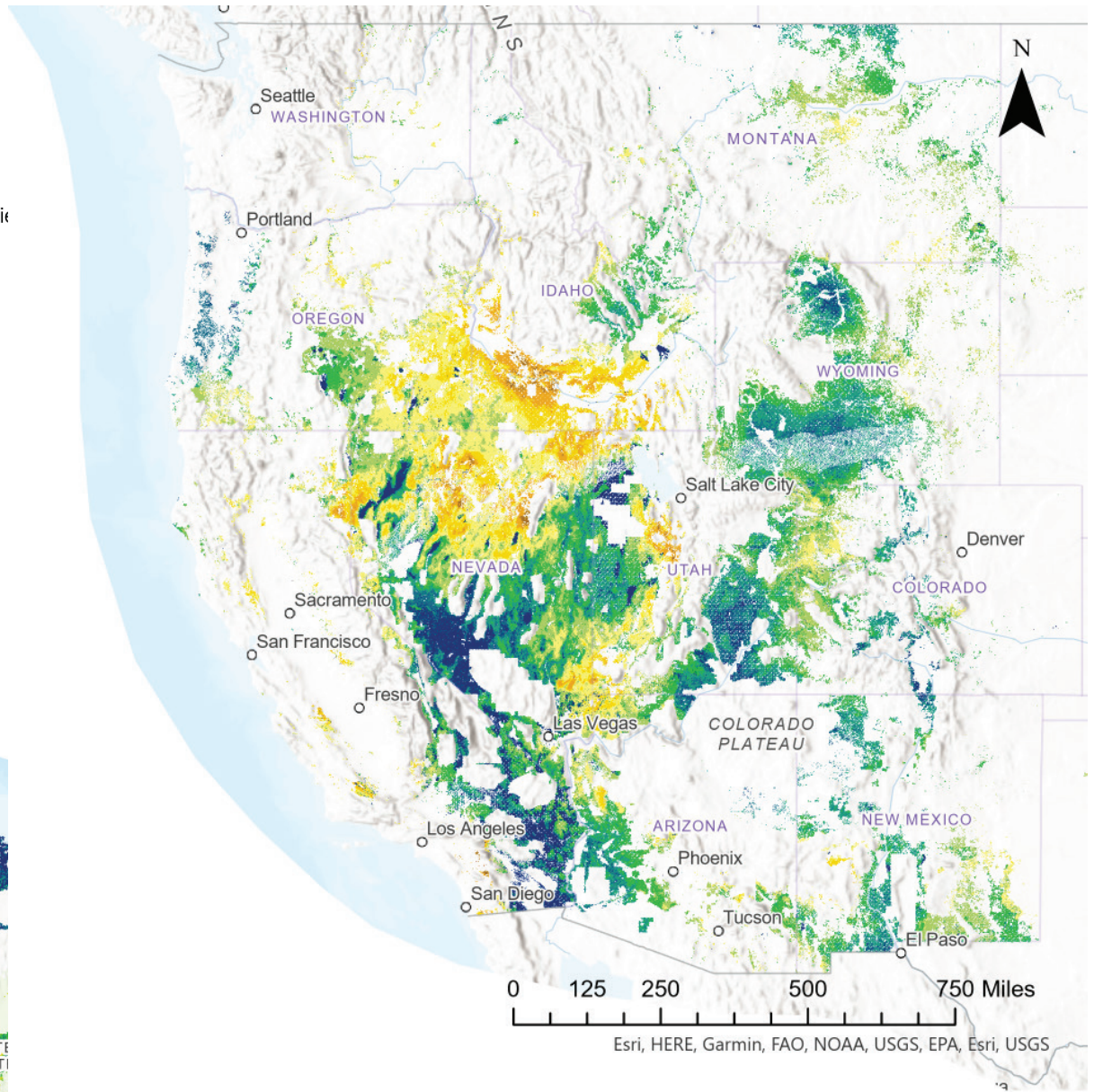
BLM Fire sought unique ways to foster diversity and inclusion in wildland firefighting. Examples include the BLM Oregon/ Washington Women in Wildland Fire Boot Camp, continued success of eight veterans fire crews, and representation at the Boise State University Women in Leadership Conference and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Summit in Idaho.



BLM Wildfire Risk Assessment Map

Lower 48 Fire Risk Categories Fuels Management Priority

- 0 - Non-Burnable
- 2 - Low
- 3 - Low
- 4 - Low
- 5 - Low/Moderate
- 6 - Moderate
- 7 - Moderate/High
- 8 - High
- 9 - High
- 10 - Highest



Alaska Fire Risk Categories Fuels Management Priority

- 0 - Non-Burnable
- 2 - Low
- 3 - Low
- 4 - Low
- 5 - Low
- 6 - Low/Moderate
- 7 - Moderate
- 8 - Moderate/High
- 9 - High
- 10 - Highest

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