

NASA image: Wildfires persist in California

August 19 2013



Several fires are currently raging in central and northern California. These fires can be seen in this natural-color Terra satellite image taken by the MODIS instrument on Aug. 18, 2013. Credit: Jeff Schmaltz LANCE/EOSDIS MODIS Rapid Response Team, GSFC.

Several fires are currently raging in central and northern California. These fires can be seen in this natural-color Terra satellite image taken by the MODIS instrument on August 18, 2013.

The American wildfire began August 10, 2013 and the cause of the fire is still under investigation. To date over 13,000 acres have been affected. The growth potential for this fire is high due to terrain and [weather patterns](#). Thunderstorms predicted over the next few days may bring additional complexity and increase the potential for new starts. The National Weather Service has issued a Red Flag Warning beginning today, through Wednesday evening, August 21. Changing weather patterns are likely to affect [fire behavior](#) and smoke dispersal patterns.

The Swedes Fire began on August 17, 2013 and grew to 1,995 acres Sunday, where it now stands. Firefighters have contained 45 percent of the blaze. The goal is to have the fire fully contained by Thursday the 22nd. Winds are erratic and change frequently, which is dangerous for residents in the area because the fire can move quickly in unexpected directions.

Smoke from the Corral complex, Orleans complex fire, and Salmon complex will cover most of Northern California. Smoke from Oregon's fires will impact coastal regions. Fire growth has been moderate; however, smoldering fuels are still producing enough smoke to fill the drainages. The long range outlook for these fires from inciweb is as follows: Over the next couple of days wind direction will become light and variable; dominate winds will be terrain driven. This pattern will continue through the weekend, due to the close upper level low off the coast. The low will start to move on-shore Tuesday or Wednesday, possibly bringing more lightning and rain to the region. A return to south-southwest winds will occur after the low moves northeast late next week. With the weaker winds, atmospheric dispersion will decrease, reducing smoke transport, and increasing the chance for [poor air quality](#)." For more information on the history of these fires, see this fire update from August 15, 2013.

NASA's Terra satellite collected this natural-color image with the

Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer, MODIS, instrument on August 18, 2013. Actively burning areas, detected by MODIS's thermal bands, are outlined in red.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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