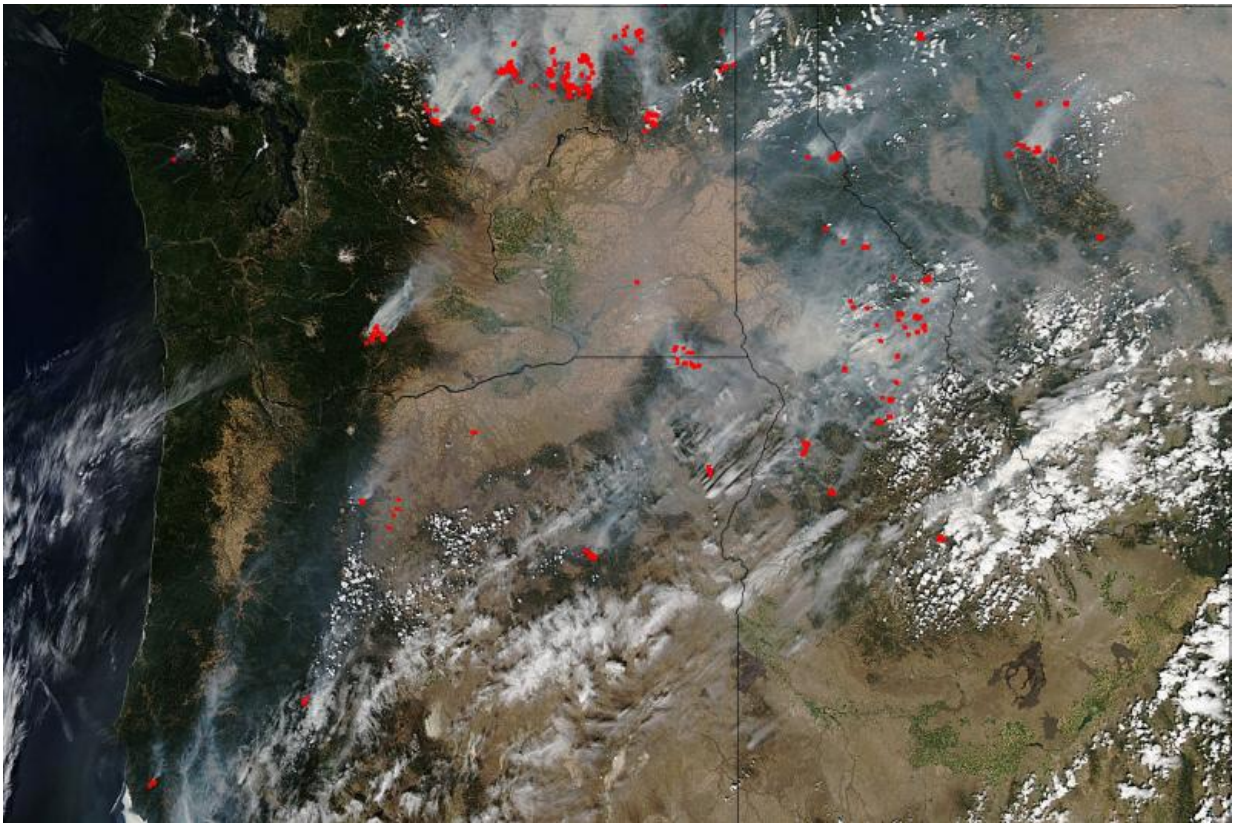


NASA image: Pacific Northwest wildfires severe in intensity

August 26 2015, by Lynn Jenner



This natural-color satellite image was collected by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) aboard the Aqua satellite on Aug. 25, 2015. Actively burning areas, detected by MODIS's thermal bands, are outlined in red. Credit: Jeff Schmaltz, MODIS Rapid Response Team.

The Pacific Northwest is abundantly dotted with wildfires in

Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. There are over 27 fires listed in the Inciweb database for the state of Washington. The largest active fire listed is the Okanogan Complex Fire which is currently at 256,567 acres and has 1,250 personnel working the fire. This fire began as a lightning strike on August 15, 2015. It is only 10% contained at present. Governor Inslee's request for a federal Emergency Declaration to provide additional resources to cover some of the costs related to multiple wildfires burning in eastern Washington state was approved by President Obama's administration recently. Washington state has lost the most this firefighting season with the deaths of three U.S. Forest Service firefighters on August 19 as they were battling the Okanogan Complex Fire.

Idaho is also feeling the heat with over 40 active fires listed in the Inciweb database. The largest [fire](#), the Soda Fire, is actually 100% contained, but the fire has affected 283,686 acres. Crews continue to patrol the fire lines and look for hot spots. Patrol progress has been good and very little if any smoking areas have been found. Firefighters have also rehabilitated nearly 40 miles of firelines constructed by the front blade of a bulldozer, with another 60 miles to go.

Montana hasn't been spared the wildfire plague but currently there are "only" 26 fires listed with the largest being Bear Creek Fire at 20,460 acres. This fire began on August 12. It's origins are unknown. On Thursday, August 20th strong winds, high temperatures, and low relative humidity caused the Bear Fire to drastically increase in size from 465 acres to over 17,000 acres in less than 4 hours. However, with daily smoke inversion (smoke being held down by cooler, higher air layers), fire behavior has slowed and minimal increase in the fire size has been observed.

In Oregon, it's much the same story with 19 ongoing fires torching parts of the state. The largest of these as listed in Inciweb is the Cornet-Windy

Ridge Fire which has affected 103,887 since it began on August 10, 2015 with a [lightning strike](#). This fire is currently 80% contained. The fire size remains unchanged as firefighters continue to douse hot spots within their respective perimeters.

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Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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