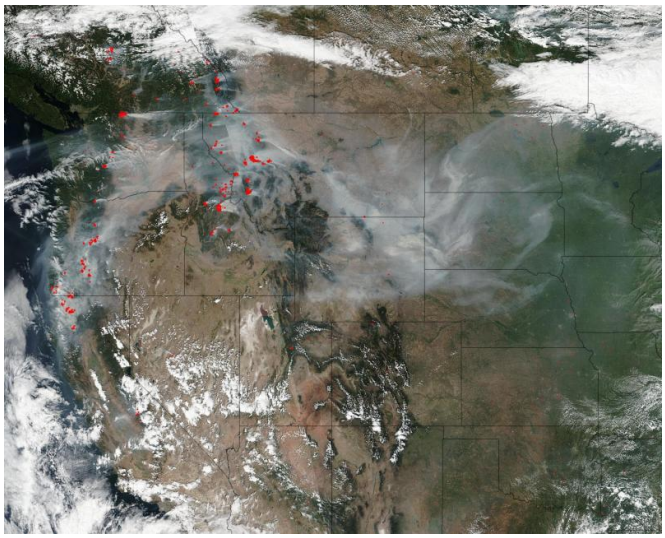
Image: Smoke and fires light up Pacific Northwest

6 September 2017, by Lynn Jenner



Credit: Jeff Schmaltz LANCE/EOSDIS MODIS Rapid Response Team, GSFC

Northwest experienced a very wet spring, the summer has been anything but. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that July was the fifth-driest on record (going back to 1885) for Washington.

This natural-color satellite image collected by NASA's Suomi NPP using the VIIRS (Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite) instrument on September 04, 2017, shows wildfires in the Pacific Northwest, Calfornia, Idaho and Montana. Actively burning areas are outlined in red.

Provided by NASA

Hot, dry conditions in the summertime make wildfires likely to plague the Pacific Northwest and California. This year, however, record-dry conditions, record breaking heat and a spate of lightning storms is a recipe for a very dangerous fire season.

Currently, Washington state has nine fires that are over 1,000 acres in size. Both Oregon and Idaho have 19 fires over 1,000 acres and each state's largest fire is well over 150,000 acres in size. That is 234 square miles or more in each state of land consumed by fire.

The Northwest Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) reports that moisture levels in heavy vegetation are at record lows. Lightning strikes in dry underbrush are not the only things that start these fires, in fact in Washington state nearly 89 percent of the 699 wildfires through July have been human caused. Even though the Pacific

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