Wildfires in California

Interactions and Implications for Agriculture

USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum

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Unprecedented Challenge

Wildfire

- Nearly 10,000 wildfires in California in 2020
- 4.2+ million acres burned
- August Complex - largest recorded wildfire in state history
- Escalating suppression costs nationally

Federal Fire Suppression Costs
(source: National Interagency Fire Center)

$3.1 billion

Forest Service
Agriculture

Wildfire Impacts

• Fire and smoke
• Damage to crops, livestock, infrastructure, health, natural resources
• Indirect and out of state economic losses

Economic Footprint of CA Wildfires in 2018

Wang et al. 2020
https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-020-00646-7
Agriculture

Recovery and Renewal

• Wildfire response
• Hazard reduction
• Fire adapted communities
• Build resilience
• Shared Stewardship
• USDA Climate Hubs
Panel Members

Thom Porter, Chief, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
James D. Johansson, Director, California Farm Bureau Federation
Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture
Kent Pinkerton, Director, UC Davis Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety