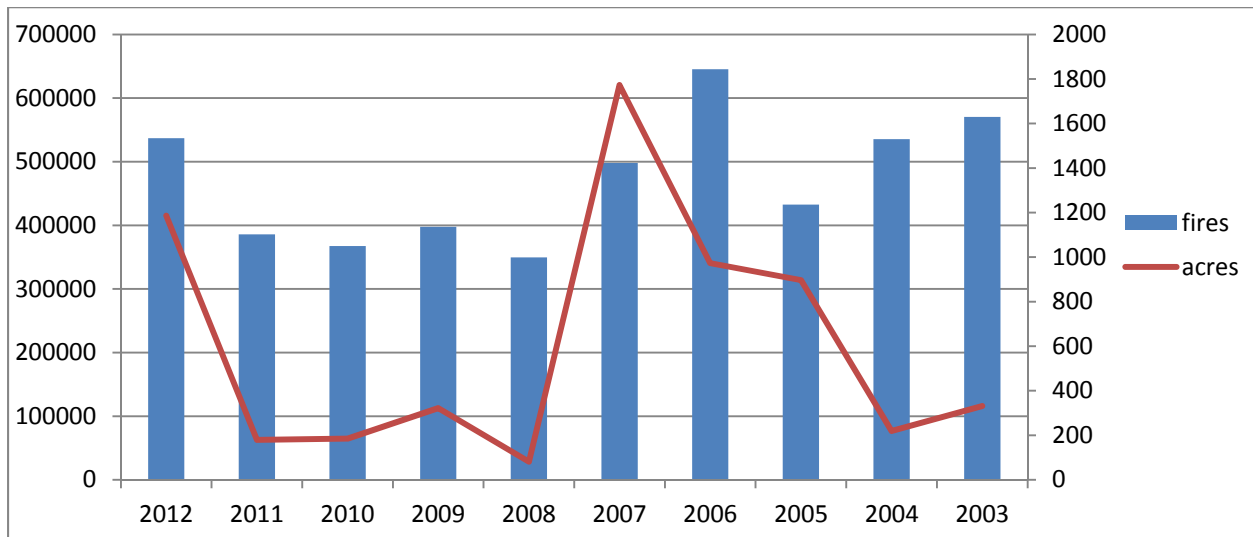


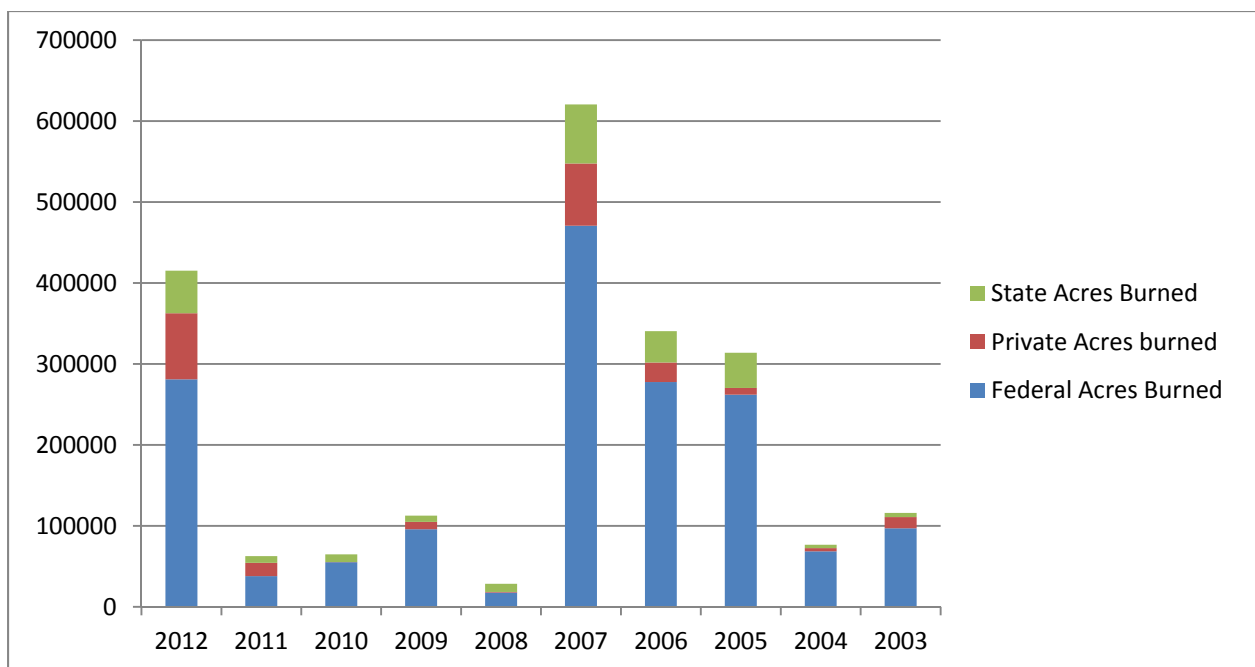
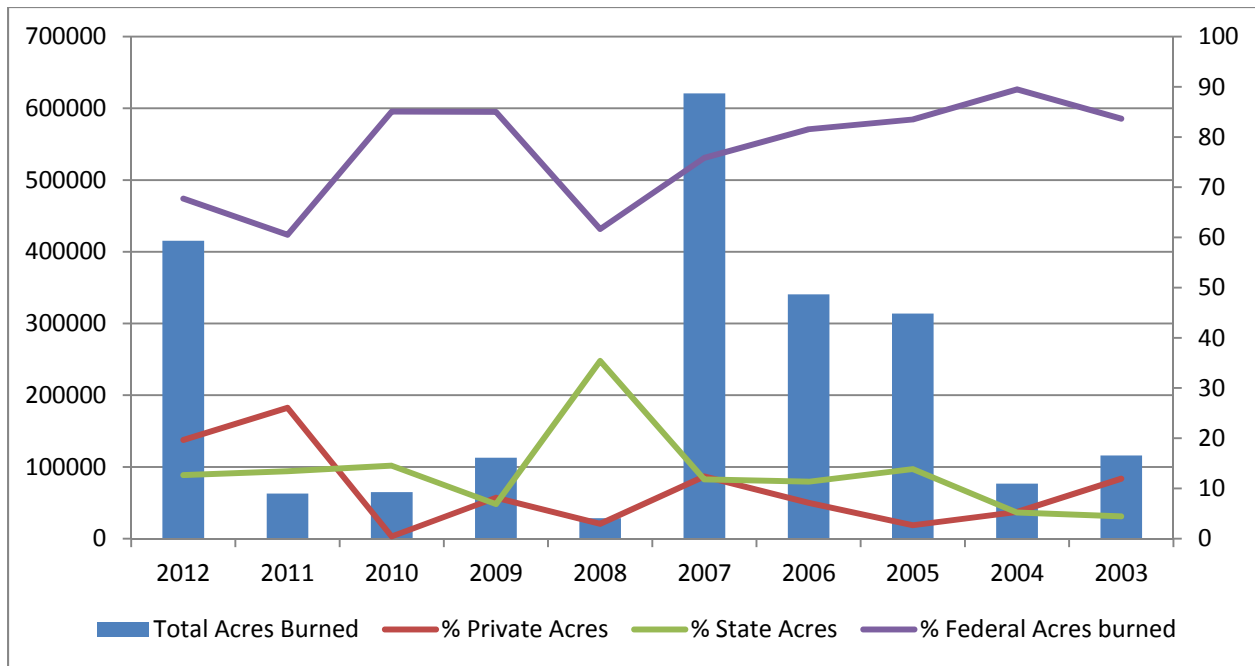
Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy

Fires in Utah, the Current Situation and Existing Resources

Utah averages over 1,300 wildland fires and burns almost a quarter-million acres annually. Numbers vary each year depending on precipitation, lightning, condition of fuels, and ignitions related to human activity. As the numbers below indicate, most of the last ten years produced active fire seasons, with the exception of 2008 through 2011, which were relatively slow fire years. The figures below represent fires on all public and unincorporated private jurisdictions in Utah. Final numbers for 2013 are still being generated; however, fire activity so far this year has been consistent with an average season in terms of numbers of fires, and less than average in terms of acres burned.



Wildland fire does not discriminate—all ownerships and jurisdictions have been impacted. The majority of the land burned by wildfires in Utah is managed by federal agencies; so it is no surprise, as the following chart and graphs show, that they traditionally have the most acres burned each year. However, impacts are not restricted to land ownership. Communities and individual citizens are often severely impacted during and after catastrophic fires. Our watersheds that provide our water for drinking, food production and many recreation experiences are generally found on federal lands. Air quality problems are directly linked to these large-scale fires both during and after an event. In many cases blowing dust can originate from a burned area for years following a fire.



Fireshed Conditions

Reducing the fuel supply that can contribute to catastrophic fires is a major challenge in Utah as well as in most of the Western states. The simple size of what is referred to as a “fireshed” covers hundreds of thousands of contiguous acres in many areas of the state. Many of these large firesheds are created by unhealthy conditions brought on by invasive weeds such as cheatgrass and the proliferation of the bark beetle. Fire prone high-density tree stands are caused by unharvested plant succession, and general lack of natural fire activity.

Many of our landscapes are not in healthy conditions are very prone to catastrophic fires. We need to return our forests and rangeland to healthier conditions that allow fire to burn through without catastrophic damage to plant life, wildlife, soils, water quality, communities and private citizens. Ultimately, good forest and range health could make a big difference in the size and intensity of wildfires. Good forest health is the proper tree and vegetation density balanced with the water supply and biodiversity that benefits life in general. Good range health requires the control or elimination of cheatgrass combined with a mosaic pinion/juniper landscape pattern which would greatly reduce the severity of range fires and benefit all wildlife and especially threatened and endangered species.

Appendix D: Fire in Utah, Existing Resources

Fire suppression resources can be categorized into two groups—local and national. Local resources are those stationed here in Utah; their availability is controlled by the local unit, and their primary responsibility is response to fires in Utah. National resources are those based out of Utah or temporarily stationed here in the state, but are controlled nationally based on national priorities.

In addition to fire suppression resources, there is a dispatch and coordination system we in Utah depend on for suppression resources, logistical support and predictive services:

The National Interagency Coordination Center

The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) is the focal point for coordinating the mobilization of resources for wildland fire and other incidents throughout the United States. Located in Boise, Idaho, the NICC also provides Intelligence and Predictive Services-related products designed to be used by the wildland fire community for wildland fire and incident management decision-making.

Great Basin Coordination Center

The Great Basin Coordination Center is the focal point for coordinating the mobilization of resources for wildland fire and other incidents throughout the Great Basin geographic area. Located in Salt Lake City, the Center also provides Intelligence and Predictive Services-related products for use by the wildland fire community for purposes of wildland fire and incident management decision-making.

Dispatch Centers

There are five Interagency Fire Dispatch Centers in Utah. Centers are located in Salt Lake City, Vernal, Richfield, Moab and Cedar City. These dispatch centers are responsible for managing the response to and logistical support for fires in their geographic area of responsibility. A local fire cache is also associated with each of the five dispatch centers.

Great Basin Cache

The Great Basin Cache (GBK) is one of eleven National Interagency Support Caches (NISC) in the United States. The GBK provides supply support to incidents within the Great Basin and to other geographic areas as requested. The cache is located at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho.

Incident Management Teams

There are seven type 2 Incident Management Teams in the Great Basin and two type 1 Incident Management Teams. An additional type 1 Incident Management Team is shared with the Rocky Mountain geographic area. These teams are made up of federal, state and local agency personnel from Utah, Nevada, Idaho and Wyoming.

Aviation

Very Large Air Tankers (VLAT): Two very large air tankers are available through federal contract. VLATs are a national resource positioned by the National Incident Coordinating Center (NICC), based on national priorities.

Heavy Air Tankers: There are nine heavy air tankers available through federal contract. These are a national resource positioned by NICC.

Single Engine Air Tankers (SEAT)

Type One Helicopters

Type Two Helicopters

Type Three Helicopters

Smoke Jumpers

There are two Smoke Jumper bases in the Great Basin—one in McCall, Idaho, operated by the U.S. Forest Service, one in Boise, Idaho, operated by the federal Bureau of Land Management.

Handcrews

Type One Crews: There are eleven Type One or “Hotshot” crews in the Great Basin. Four Hotshot crews are based in Utah. These crews, including the State of Utah’s Lone Peak Hotshot crew, are a national resource and assigned by the Geographic Coordination Center.

Type Two IA Crews: All five interagency dispatch centers in Utah can provide at least one Type Two IA crew. Most of these crews are put together ad hoc from federal, state and local agency personnel. The Northern Utah Interagency Fire Center dispatches standing Type Two IA crews sponsored by Utah County, Unified Fire Authority, and the State of Utah.

Type Two Crews: Each of the interagency dispatch centers in Utah can provide at least one Type Two crew.

Engines

All the land management agencies in Utah with wildfire management responsibilities have wildland fire engines for initial attack on the lands they administer. Numbers and types of engines vary by agency and location, depending on fire frequency, fuel type and access. In addition to these engines, county and local fire departments have engines with which to respond to fires within their jurisdictions. All of these engines respond to assist neighboring agencies and jurisdictions through a series of mutual aid and cooperative agreements.

Heavy Equipment

Heavy equipment, such as dozers and graders, is available from land management agencies, county and local governments, and through local contractors.

	Engines	Helicopters/Aircraft	Crews	Equipment
U.S. FOREST SERVICE	25	5	19	numerous
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT	T3 – 2 T4 – 16 (3 unstaffed) T6 – 17 (2 unstaffed)	T3 – 3 ATGS w/platform – 1 SEAT – 3 (no field for fixed wing)	T2 IA – 1 T1 – 1	T2 Tender – 6 (1 unstaffed) Road Grader – 1 Dozer – 3
NATIONAL PARKS				
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS				
U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE				
STATE	26 T6 Engines 1 T3	*	1 T1 2 T2IA	
**LOCAL				

**Under a Governor’s declared “State of Emergency,” the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, in cooperation with the Utah National Guard, can mobilize UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters for water dropping and logistical missions. Numbers of available Blackhawks vary based on military missions that take priority over wildland fire support.*

***There are approximately 250 local fire service providers in Utah. In addition, County governments have equipment, facilities and personnel available to respond to a variety of emergency situations. The Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands maintains cooperative agreements with all the counties in Utah, along with many cooperating cities. The Division maintains agreements with 203 individual fire departments to provide over 900 engines and 35 pieces of heavy equipment for wildland fires outside their jurisdictional area of responsibility.*