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**Fire Season Update for Mid-June 2012**

Hi, this is Ken Frederick at the National Interagency Fire Center with a fire season update.

It’s mid-June, and the western fire season is in full swing. Although several parts of the country are seeing large fire activity, the southwestern United States is again bearing the brunt of 2012’s early fire season.

Some of the Southwest’s significant fires in 2012 include:

* The **Whitewater-Baldy Fire.** At about 280,000 acres, this fire has grown to be the largest fire in New Mexico’s recorded history.
* The 35,000 acre **Little Bear Fire** near Ruidoso, NM has spread dramatically and burned numerous buildings.
* Just a few weeks ago, the **Gladiator Fire** threatened the community of Crown King, AZ as it scorched 16,000 acres in mid-May.

Fires are burning in several other states, including California, Alaska, Idaho, Wyoming and Michigan.

Throughout most of the western U.S., fire season will see little relief as summer officially begins. The potential for large fire activity looks to be normal or above normal as we enter the hot months. Much of the Southwest, however, should benefit from monsoonal moisture starting in early July.

In response to the increase in wildfire tempo and severity, the National Multi-Agency Coordination group at NIFC raised the National Preparedness Level to Level 3 on June 11. In spite of the recent surge in wildfire activity, however, resource availability continues to be good. Resources like hand crews, helicopters and airtankers are busy but not totally tapped out. In response to large wildfire activity, the U.S. Forest Service activated eight additional large airtankers to ensure an adequate number of firefighting aircraft are available.

For more information, keep exploring this website.