

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## WILDLAND FIRE PROGRAM

Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry

### AT A GLANCE

- 17 million acres of lands protected from wildfire
- 10 million acres of Wildland-Urban Interface and Intermix
- 928 volunteer Forest Fire Wardens
- 356 fire-qualified employees

### MISSION

*The wildland fire program safely and effectively manages wildland fire to enhance and protect life, property, and natural resources for the public benefit within Pennsylvania.*



**pennsylvania**

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES



### 2023 Wildfire Season

Pennsylvania's 2023 wild-fire season was well above-average. 1,901 wildfires were reported during the calendar year. This marks the fourth year in a row where the state has reported over 1,000 wildfires, a streak that has not been occurred since the 1980's. Several large wildfires occurred during the year, the largest being the Crystal Lake fire, below.

- 1,901 Wildfires
- 9,186 Acres Burned
- 99 % of Wildfires were Human Caused
- 3 Residences Destroyed
- 24 Other Structures Destroyed
- 15 Injuries
- 3 Fatalities



*Above: Morning briefing on the Crystal Lake wildfire. This fire burned over 4,000 acres in April 2023 in Luzerne County. DCNR staff photo.*

## Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation

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Employees and volunteers conducted 540 wildfire prevention events in 2023. These programs involved 3,450 hours and reached roughly 500,000 people.

### Incident Management Teams (IMT)

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Our incident management team was deployed in April 2023 to the Crystal Lake wildfire. Other team members also deployed as single resources to western wildfires to maintain and enhance their qualifications.



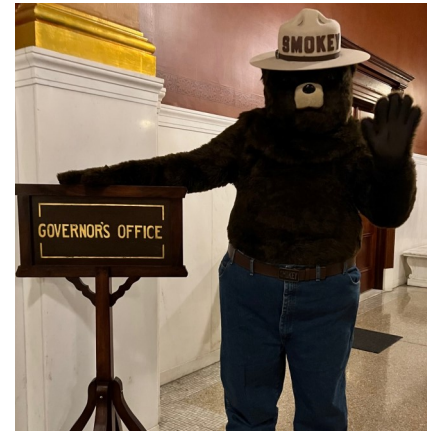
*Above: Incident management team members on the Crystal Lake wildfire, April 2023.*

### Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)

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142 volunteer fire organizations were awarded grants totaling \$883,143 to purchase wildland firefighting PPE and firefighting equipment during the past year. These cost share grants are made possible by funding through the USDA Forest Service.

Below: Smokey Bear paid a visit to Governor Shapiro's office this spring in order to record a public service announcement to address wildfire prevention. Way to go Smokey!



### Fire Cache

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- 65,000 items received
- 45,000 items issued
- 21,200 delivery miles
- Cache supported mobilization of crews, engines, overhead, and training.

### Federal Excess (FFP/FEPP)

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Over 209 items valued at \$665,555 were obtained through the federal excess programs for distribution to local fire departments.



## Wildland Fire Crew

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2023 was again an active year for wildfires nationwide. Assistance provided includes:

- Four (4) Twenty-Person Type 2IA Hand Crews
- One (1) Wildfire Suppression Module
- Eight (8) Type 6 Wildland Fire Engine Assignments
- 69 Single-Resource Overhead Assignments
- 167 Total Resources Assigned



*Above: Type 2IA fire crew “Independence” in northern California, September 2023.*

## Air Operations

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- 39 wildfires supported
- 186,000 gallons dropped on wildfires
- 84 hours flight time on wildfires
- 51 hours flown for fire reconnaissance

## Wildland Fire Training & Qualifications

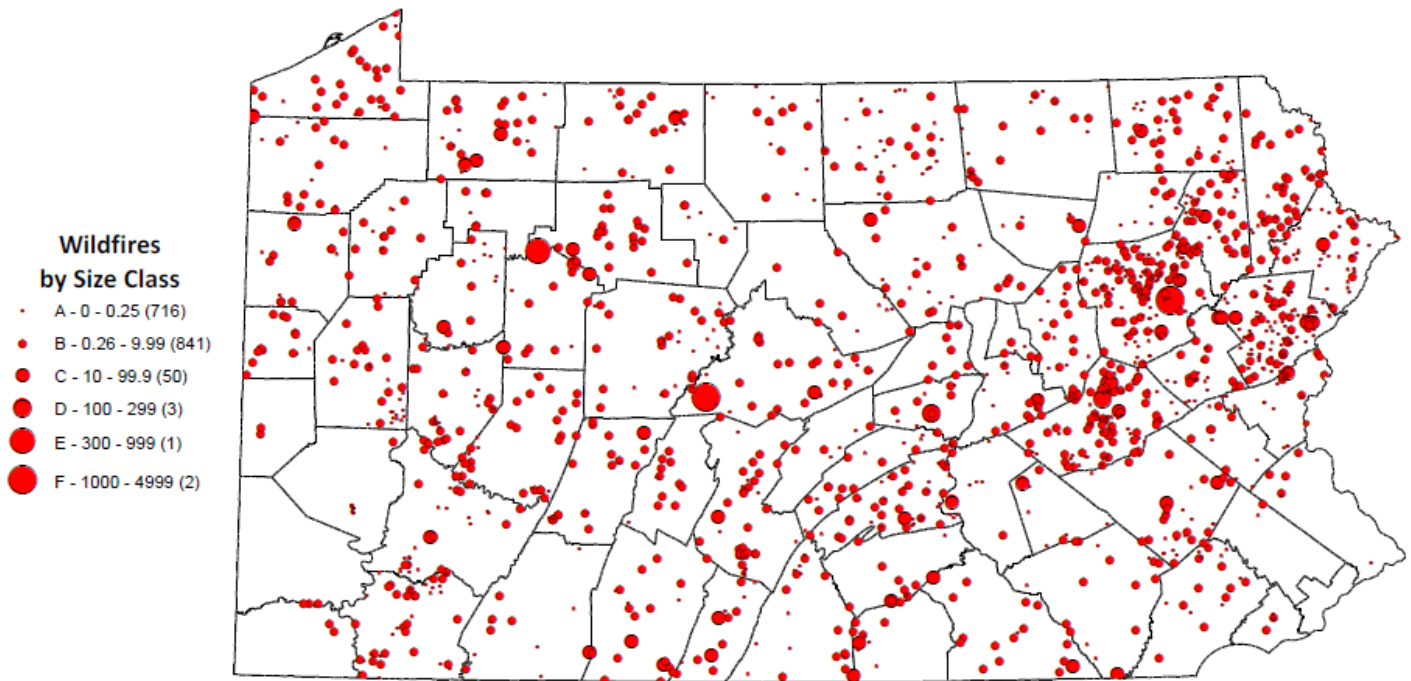
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- 113 classroom training sessions
- 1,522 students completed classroom courses
- 594 students completed online training courses
- 113 Task Books Issued
- 74 Task Books Completed

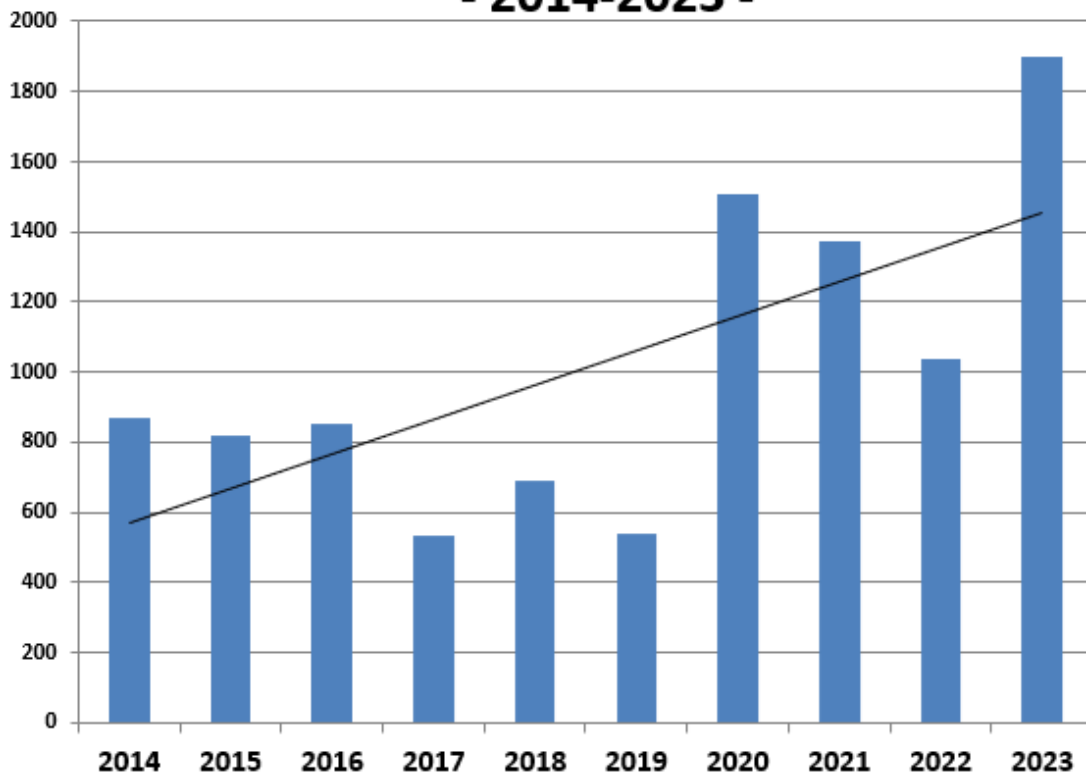


*Above: Over 300 students received training at the annual Pennsylvania Wildland Fire Academy, Shippensburg University, Michaux and Tuscarora State Forests. June 2023. DCNR staff photo.*

## 2023 - Pennsylvania Wildfire Occurrences reported to DCNR



## Number of Reported Wildfires, With Trendline - 2014-2023 -





## Prescribed Fire

50 prescribed burns covering 1,471 acres of DCNR lands were completed. Statewide, 423 individual burns were conducted on 14,600 acres. Some prescribed burning was reduced or curtailed due to extremely dry conditions in the late spring and early summer.



*Above: Prescribed fire in Michaux State Forest during a fall burn, November 2023. DCNR staff photo.*



*Above: Crewmembers of the "Nittany" fire suppression module hike off the line after a long shift on the Tuggles Gap wildfire, in central Virginia, November 2023. DCNR staff photo.*

## Thank You!

*DCNR would like to thank everyone who assisted the wildland fire program in 2023, especially our valuable network of volunteers. We could not succeed without your dedication and service!*

### For More Information:

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of Conservation & Natural Resources  
Bureau of Forestry, Division of Forest Fire Protection  
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717-787-2925

[www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/Wildfire](http://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/Wildfire)

