

ABOUT THE WCA

The 2012 wildland fire season was the worst fire season on record in Nebraska. Nearly 500,000 acres burned across the north and northwest part of the state. 65 structures were destroyed, and the cost of fighting those wildfires were in excess of \$12 million. The hot dry summer combined with high winds and low humidity led to extreme fire behavior, fortunately no lives were lost.

These dangerous wildfires, which have the potential of growing into megafires, and threaten lives and property across the state. Whole communities and ecosystems are at risk from the increasingly more frequent and intense wildfires.

The WCA was passed in 2013 in response to massive and highly destructive fires in the state. The WCA has dramatically increased the capacity of the state to reduce risk to life and property while enhancing the management and suppression efforts of wildfires.

Impacts of the bill have exceeded original expectations. As a result, thousands of Nebraska residents and first responders are facing reduced risks from wildfire. WCA funding allocations for forest fuels reduction have enabled the Nebraska Forest Service to more effectively complete and secure millions of additional dollars in federal and state funding.

Because of the WCA Nebraska's forests are healthier and economies more resilient as rural areas experience surges in federal, state and local investment. Reducing the risks of future fires, creating jobs and reinforcing rural economies are a direct byproduct of this piece of legislation.



NEBRASKA FOREST SERVICE



CONTACT US

Nebraska Forest Service T: (402) 472-2944
PO Box 830815 E: trees@unl.edu
Lincoln, NE 68588 W: nfs.unl.edu

Updated by: John Erixson and Diana Marcum

For more information please visit nfs.unl.edu

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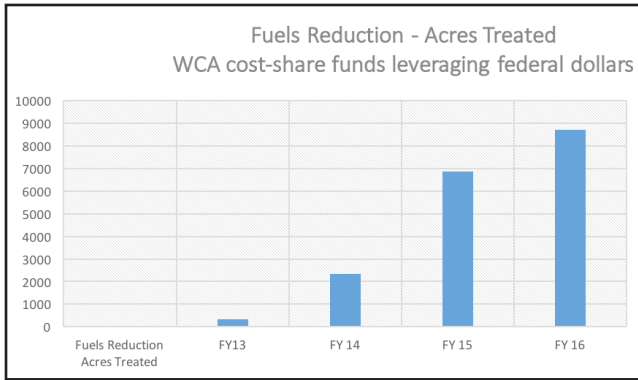
Nebraska's Wildfire Control Act: Collaborating to keep fires small

WF 03-2017-02

REDUCED RISKS

WCA funds dedicated to forest fuels reduction are leveraged to successfully secure an additional \$4.8 million in federal and NET funding. \$1.6 million in local contributions were also put forth, resulting in a 5:1 return on investments.

Nearly 9,000 acres of overstocked dense forest fuels on critical lands near homes, ranches and towns were thinned.



Two wildfire training specialists/SEAT managers located in Ainsworth and Chadron, have participated in the training of 5,482 volunteer firefighters and conducted approximately 28,517 total hours of wildfire training.

Three SEAT bases were constructed with WCA and federal funds in Valentine, Chadron and Alliance, as well as a mobile base. In 2017 an additional base will be constructed in Scottsbluff.

RAPID AERIAL SUPPRESSION RESPONSE VALUE

Since 2013, a contracted Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) has been positioned in fire prone areas during peak fire seasons to reduce risks for first responders and bolster suppression activities.

BENEFITS OF SEAT

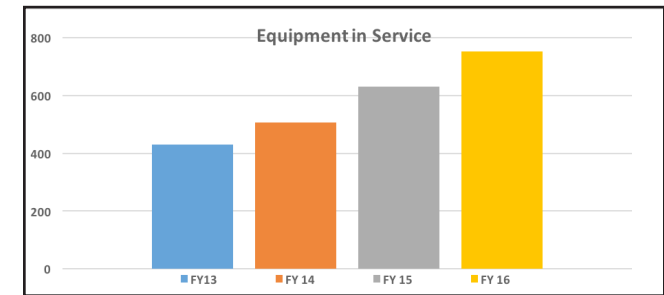
The 2016 Henderson Fire burned 50 acres, costing an estimated \$98,000. 40 firefighters, 15 engines and the NE SEAT plane responded to the fire. The fire was fully contained within 30 hours.

In contrast, the 2007 Henderson Fire burned 1,000 acres that cost almost \$900,000. This response required the efforts of 175 firefighters from 15 VFDs for 96 hours; the fire was eventually extinguished with the help of rain.

The 2016 Belmont Fire required an initial attack of 30 engines, 90 firefighters and two SEAT planes – one from NE and one from SD. The fire was contained to 20 acres and extinguished in 10 hours.

Without the SEAT, estimated costs to relieve those crew would have been about \$70,000 per 10-hour shift. If the fire grew and transitioned to an Incident Management team, that cost would have increased to approximately \$261,500 per day, not including the cost of incidental damages.

CAPACITY TO SUPPRESS WILDFIRES



- Over 750 pieces of firefighting equipment are placed with VFDs, 320 since the WCAs enactment in 2013
- The total replacement value of refurbished federal excess property currently on loan to VFDs now exceeds \$81 million, nearly doubling the replacement value in 2013
- 289 VFDs currently have one or more pieces of equipment on loan from the NFS – this accounts for more than 50% of all VFDs in the state

