



CANADIAN INTERAGENCY FOREST FIRE CENTRE INC.
CENTRE INTERSERVICES DES FEUX DE FORÊT DU CANADA INC.

CANADA REPORT 2018



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Preamble

The 2018 Fire Season was another extremely challenging year for the CIFFC organization and a number of the member agencies.

From early May through Mid September resources from across Canada and Internationally were mobilized to assist firefighting efforts in several jurisdictions, notably Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia.

The season can be characterized by the requirement for support by one agency or another over throughout the season and the true reciprocity of the agreement with agencies supporting each other during different periods.

Fire Season

A dry spring and low over winter snow loads contributed to an early start to the fire season across the central prairies. Both Manitoba and parts of Saskatchewan experienced an increase in fire activity in early May. Fire crews and airtankers were mobilized to Manitoba as early as May 9th to support their fire response needs. By May 13 an active fire in Prince Albert National Park in Saskatchewan also required the assistance of CIFFC member agency partners.

Through the rest of May additional crew, overhead, equipment and airtanker resources were mobilized from various CIFFC partners to bolster efforts in Manitoba and Prince Albert National Park. In the last week of May Alberta also requested and received overhead and crew resources to help contend with their escalated fire activity.

Early June saw some moderating weather in Saskatchewan allowing Prince Albert National Park to demobilize the partner agency resources back to their home provinces. Similarly, by June 10 all out of province personnel and airtankers had been returned by Manitoba and Alberta.

The following 2 weeks would prove to be the only quiet period for the rest of the season from a resource sharing perspective.

By June 23, Manitoba again reached out to CIFFC partners for additional fire crews.

In early July the fire activity in Quebec increased, requiring the mobilization of additional firefighting resources. The situation in central Canada continued to build over the ensuing week with both QC and Ontario needing additional support to help manage their fire load. On July 9 CIFFC's National Preparedness Level (NPL) increased to 3 for the first time in 2018 as both Ontario and Quebec had requested and received additional resources. The NPL would remain at 3 or above until September 7.

Through to Mid-July both QC and Ontario received significant additional personnel, equipment and aviation resources from domestic sources until resource availability approached draw down levels nationally. On July 18 firefighters from Mexico joined the efforts in Ontario. An additional 100 firefighters from Mexico arrived in Ontario on July 24 followed by a further 100 on July 28. In total, Ontario brought in 309 Mexican firefighters and overhead staff in 2018.

As July wore on British Columbia began to experience an increase in both fire occurrence and fire behaviour. BC staff that had been supporting Ontario and Quebec returned home and after a brief respite were back on the firelines in their home agency. By the end of July, Quebec had received some mitigating weather allowing them to return all CIFFC member agency staff to their home provinces.

In early August the focus shifted to British Columbia and as the Ontario fire activity slowly wound down, resources were once again being directed westward to British Columbia. After spending most of the month of July at NPL 4 CIFFC ramped up to NPL 5 on August 3, remaining at 5 until August 31.

All available resources from across Canada poured into BC for the entire month of August and into early September on a virtually continual basis. Unprecedented numbers of international firefighters also contributed to the effort; over 500 Mexican firefighters (including 200 that were re-deployed from Ontario) worked the fire lines in BC. As well, Australian and New Zealand overhead staff and New Zealand Initial attack crews were engaged. The last out of province resources left BC September 21 as fall weather patterns and successful suppression reduced the requirements for additional staffing.

2018 will be remembered as consistently active throughout the fire season with activity shared between the prairies, central Canada and British Columbia.

Summary

2018 saw about 16% more fires nationally than the 10 yr average, but total area burned was down almost 16% from the 10yr average. During the course of the fire season CIFFC responded to 263 Resource Orders (mobilizing 761 Initial Attack and 2005 Sustained Action firefighters, along with 522 overhead personnel. In addition 15324 lengths of hose, 398 medium pumps and 41 airtankers were deployed throughout the fire season.

The CIFFC contract aircraft flew 48 missions transporting a total of 3288 personnel over the course of the 2018 fire season.



Agency Seasonal Summaries

Alberta

Alberta's 2018 fire season was uneventful. Weather conditions throughout the fire season did not support the development of prolonged elevated fire danger conditions over most areas of the province. Slightly below average number of wildfires occurred with total hectares burnt well below the five year average. Alberta was able to contribute to wildfire suppression efforts in other areas of the country with 630 staff deployed to six CIFFC partner agencies including 60 firefighters to the United States by way of the Northwest Compact Agreement.

Manitoba

Manitoba experienced a very busy spring fire season with human caused fires in urban interface areas resulting in many evacuations of several first nations communities. Municipal fires were also an issue with the town of Ashern being on a two hour evacuation notice. A total of 477 fires were reported of which 233 or nearly 50% were human caused. Northern Manitoba experienced a relatively normal fire season with two large incidents in the Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids area. The south however saw little precipitation during the fire season with extreme drought conditions all along the eastern border with the US up to Hudson Bay. The summer season was steady with lightning fires and extreme fire indices and behaviour resulting in two large incidents in the Eastern Region at Little Grand Rapids and another north of Bissett. As a result of high to extreme fire weather indices and fire activity closures of the Bloodvein River in Atikaki & Nopiming Provincial Parks as well as the Bird River and Elbow Lake in the Nopiming Provincial Park were in effect during July and August. A change in the weather pattern occurred and the first appreciable rain event of the season occurred on September 12 in the south bringing the season to an end.

Manitoba required assistance during the extremely busy spring season in May and June. Personnel imports from Ontario began on May 9th with 5/4p initial attack followed by an additional 4 resource orders of 10/4p Type 1 initial attack personnel. Ontario also provided CL-415 airtanker group in May along with a Birdog aircraft in August. Quebec provided a CL-415 airtanker group on May 15th as well as two CL-415's on May 23rd. Manitoba did not export any resources with the exception of quick strikes to Saskatchewan and Ontario.



Quebec

Québec experienced a season that was more eventful than usual in 2018. Temperatures turned out to be higher than seasonal norms, and there was below average rainfall in most of the territory. The arrival of heat in May caused a first episode of high activity, despite late snowmelt. In fact, around 100 human-caused fires were ignited between May 10 and 20.

Workload increased again from mid-June to the end of July when heat waves hit the province. The passage of numerous lightning fronts, combined with a lack of rainfall, ignited more than 130 fires between June 28 and July 8. The most intense day of the season occurred at the end of this period, with 40 active fires in the intensive protection zone. To respond to these demands, Québec turned to its Canadian partners as well as those in the northeastern United States. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Parks Canada, along with the states of Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, answered the call by lending staff, equipment, and aircraft.

Québec also provided support to its peers on several occasions by allocating resources to British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and to Parks Canada. These deployments were mainly concentrated in August.

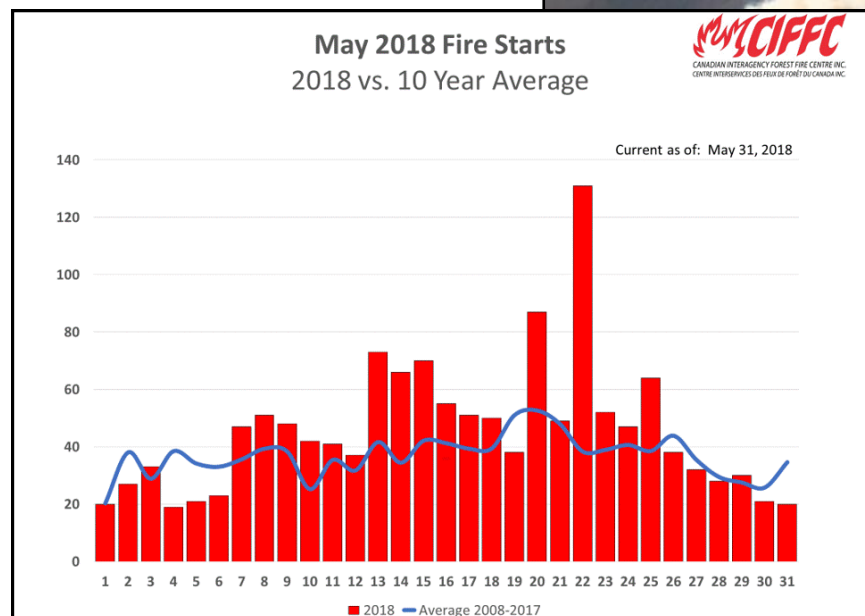
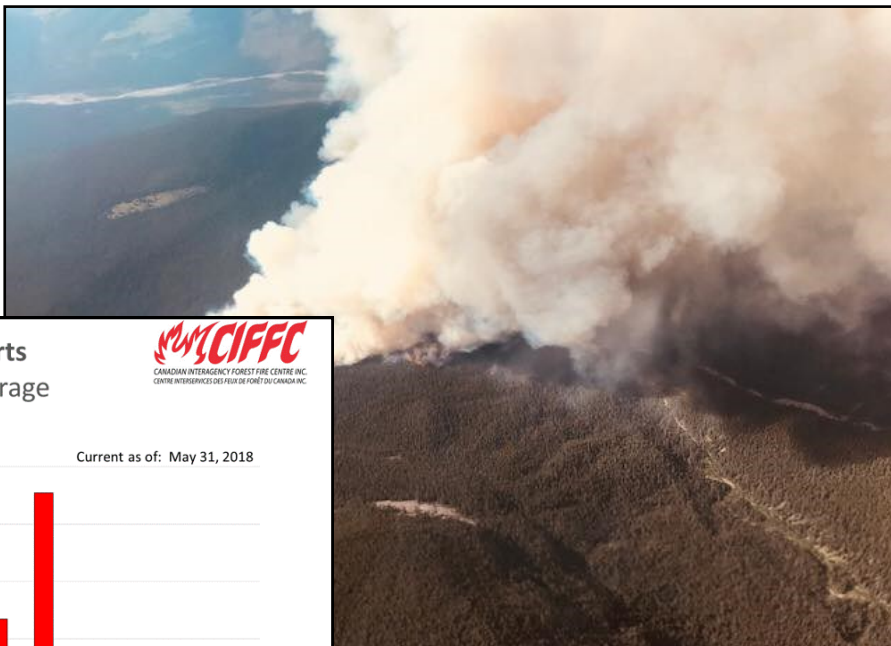
New Brunswick

The New Brunswick 2018 fire season started with some of the worst flooding the Province's history, a number of fire staff had been engaged in flood support in front line and overhead roles. The season quickly moved from floods to a fairly active fire season which saw our air tanker fleet and staff busier than they have been in the past 5 years. Over all the summer remained hot and dry and while the large fire potential was there it did not occur. We did see the total number of fires above the ten year average and on two occasions had brought in airtanker support from Quebec and we thank them for their support. Despite the hot dry conditions we were able to mobilize a number of resources to support other National jurisdictions and were humbled to be able to help.

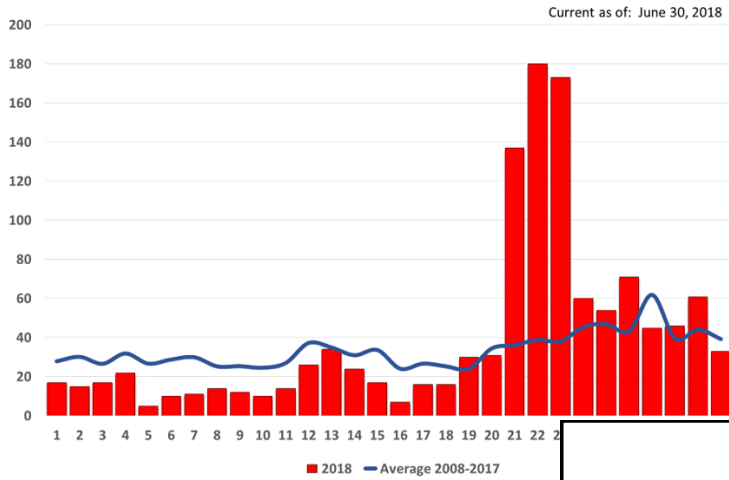
Nova Scotia

The winter of 2018 had very little snow. We were experiencing grass fires in January and February. March became wet and cold as normal and we had a typical spring. Lots of small fires that were extinguished very quickly. As the summer progressed, we had times of high heat which fortunately for fire weather was accompanied by very high humidity and low winds. August and September were extremely dry for us and we were very successful at extinguishing the fire starts before they could grow.

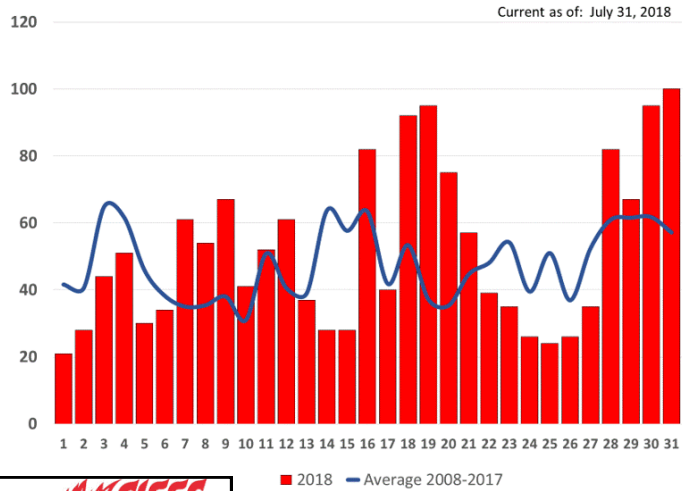
The 2018 wildfire season had the lowest hectares burned since 2011.



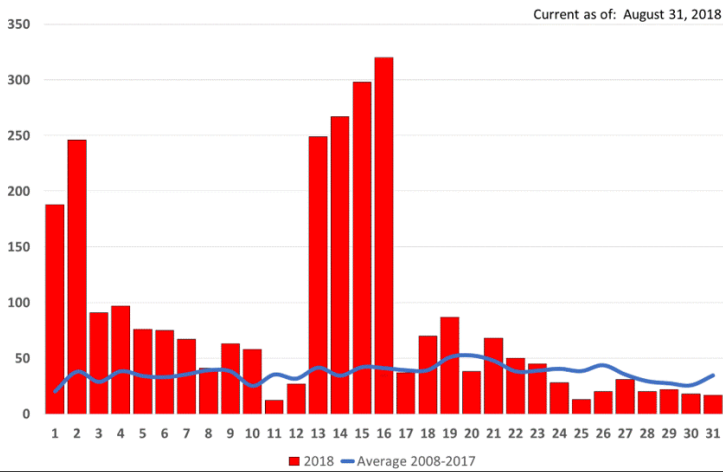
June 2018 Fire Starts 2018 vs. 10 Year Average



July 2018 Fire Starts 2018 vs. 10 Year Average



August 2018 Fire Starts 2018 vs. 10 Year Average



Fires by Month	May	June	July	August
	1411	1208	1607	2739

Statistics

As of December 31, 2017 Canadian Fire Management Agencies recorded 5597 fires with an area consumed of 3,371,509 hectares.

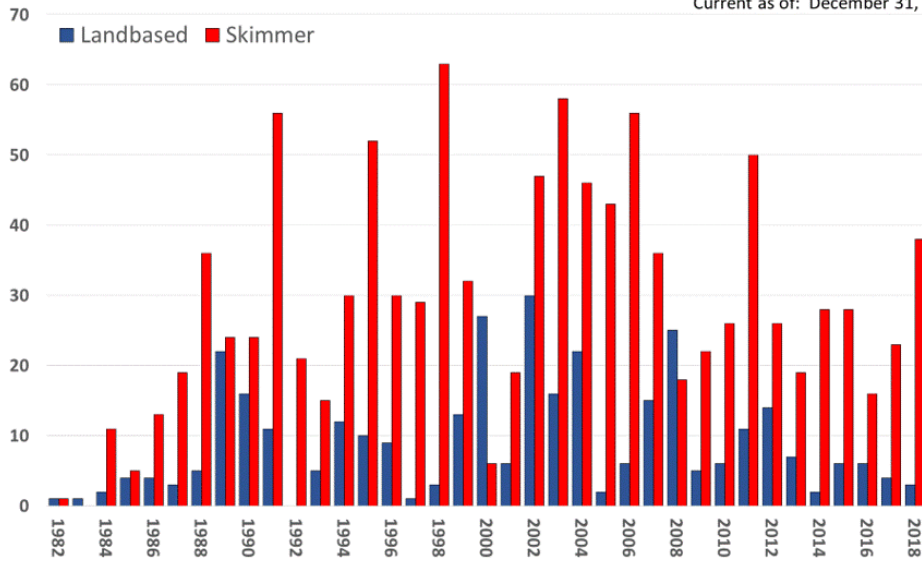
Wildland Fire Statistics - 2018												
As of December 31, 2018												
	Fires							Hectares			Prescribed Fire	
	Full		Modified		Total		Total	Full	Modified	Total	Fires	Ha
	Ltg	Human	Ltg	Human	Ltg	Human						
BC	1290	518	247	31	1537	550	2087	1126182.56	227678.53	1353861.1	0	0
YT	13	28	20	6	33	34	67	11,526	74,098	85,624	4	4
AB	511	777	0	0	511	777	1288	59,809	0	59,809	29	3,144
NT	16	3	38	2	54	5	59	345.43	15391.31	15736.74	0	0
SK	54	241	108	13	162	254	416	17,294.80	101,689.50	118,984.30	1	1
MB	156	225	88	8	244	233	477	79,289	155,045	234,334	0	0
ON	787	373	156	11	943	384	1327	29047.1	236540.4	265587.5	3	149.7
QC	139	392	56	6	195	398	593	28430.4	34099.3	62529.7	0	0
NL	4	121	0	7	4	128	132	395.2	0.4	395.6	0	0
NB	263	19	0	0	263	19	282	304	0	304	0	0
NS	4	186	0	0	4	186	190	253	0	253	0	0
PE	0	10	0	0	0	10	10	12.51	0	12.51	0	0
PC	33	75	20	12	53	87	140	41082.29	33758.63	74840.92	18	675.80
Tot.	3270	2968	733	96	4003	3065	7068	1393971.288	878301.07	2272272.368	55	3974.497

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS LEVEL DAYS MAY 1– AUG 31					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
No. of days	29	30	9	26	29

Air Tankers Mobilized 1982-2018



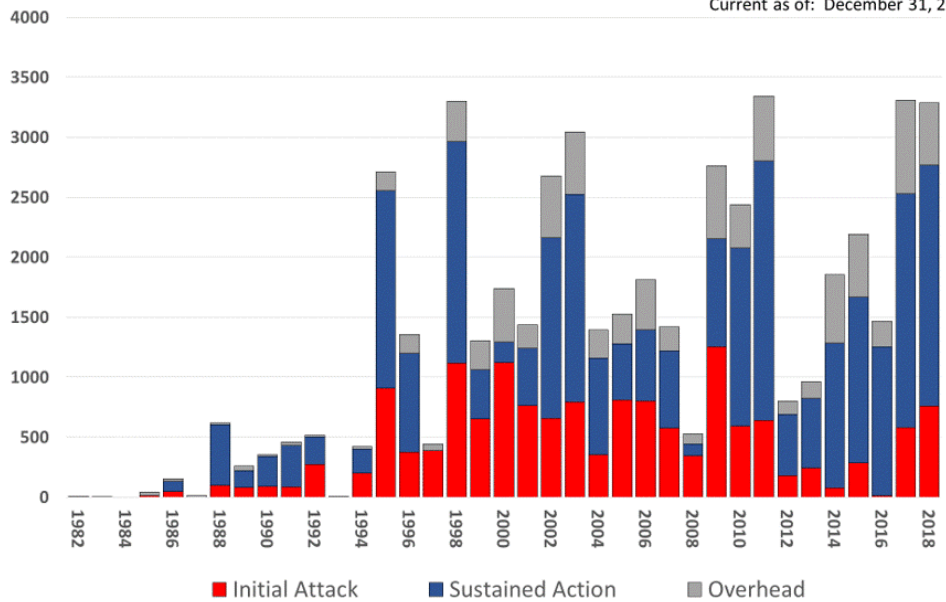
Current as of: December 31, 2018



Personnel Mobilized 1982-2018



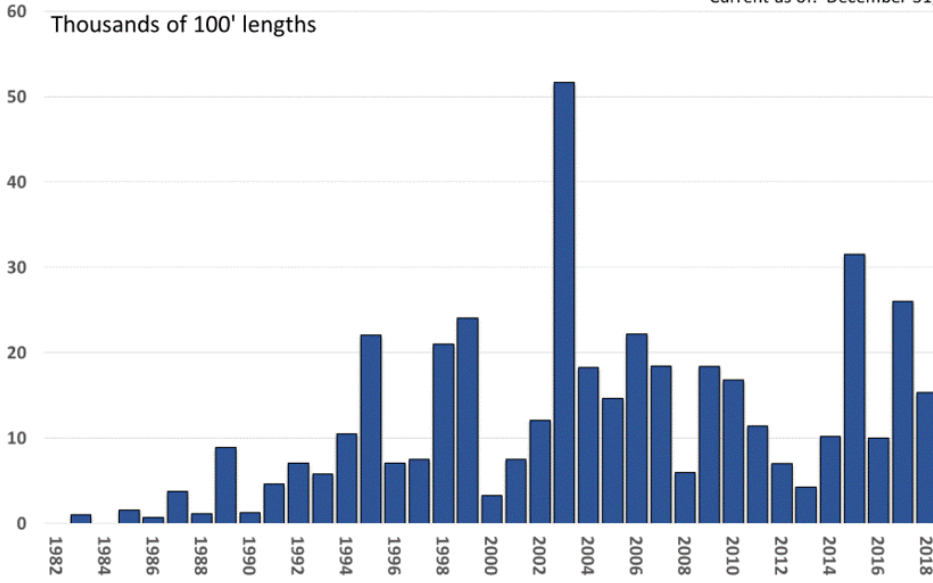
Current as of: December 31, 2018



Hose Mobilized 1982-2018



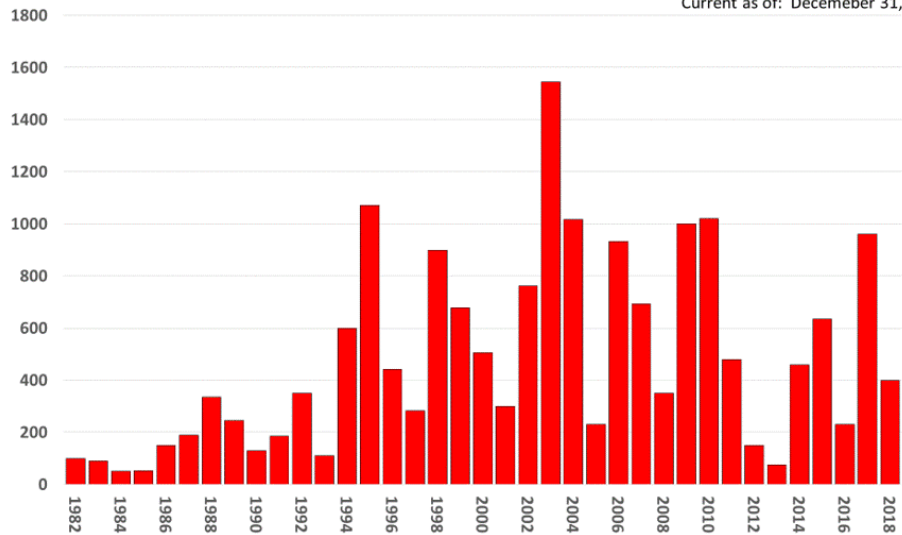
Current as of: December 31, 2018



Pumps Mobilized 1982-2018



Current as of: Decemeber 31, 2018

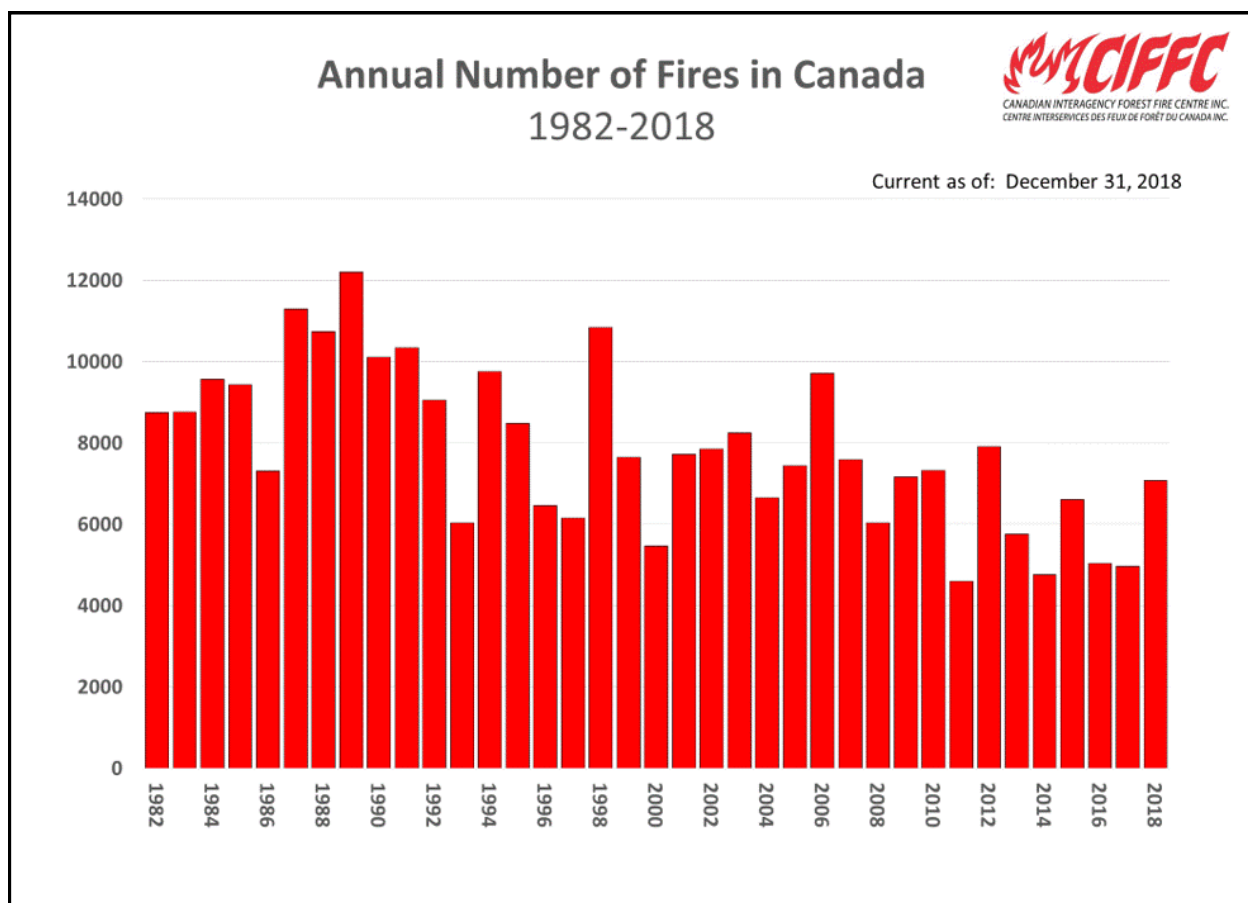


WILDFIRE RELATED FATALITIES

Year	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Fatalities	6	3	3	0	3	4	2	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	2	0	3	3	2	1	5	4	0	1	0	2	1	0	1

**WILDLAND FIRE STARTS
TOTAL NUMBERS OF FIRES (LIGHTNING AND HUMAN CAUSED)**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Avg.	2018
BC	1,817	3,084	1,678	646	1,642	1,854	1,455	1,836	1,049	1,352	1,641	2,087
YT	67	118	88	56	126	177	34	184	53	115	102	67
AB	1,695	1,655	1,837	1,097	1,565	1,214	1,451	1,850	1,366	1,217	1,495	1,288
NT	241	42	224	207	279	248	385	245	189	262	232	59
SK	599	511	571	303	409	429	403	723	364	353	466	416
MB	397	184	583	315	497	494	245	454	202	545	392	477
ON	338	385	931	1,334	1,615	582	303	668	648	776	758	1,327
QC	222	483	737	329	795	515	292	384	602	319	468	593
NL	139	176	61	53	198	101	124	128	91	80	115	132
NB	168	192	179	81	344	356	178	222	285	245	225	282
NS	247	193	313	116	352	171	171	247	274	175	226	190
PE	3	8	4	4	8	9	4	5	7	4	6	10
PC	103	136	113	67	87	96	81	122	43	168	102	140
TOTAL	6,036	7,167	7,319	4,608	7,907	6,246	5,126	7,068	5,173	5,611	6,228	7,068



**WILDLAND FIRE HECTARES
TOTAL AREA CONSUMED (HECTARES)**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Avg.	2018
BC	11,939	229,566	331,508	12,357	102,042	17,990	368,785	280,445	100,336	1,215,851	267,082	1,353,861
YT	18,845	227,057	146,957	39,091	58,280	179,510	3,160	169,841	21,543	399,280	126,356	85,624
AB	20,644	66,826	83,643	940,596	337,000	21,890	23,120	492,536	741,550	49,118	277,692	59,809
NT	353,852	2,057	333,435	406,693	297,618	537,912	3,416,291	646,955	254,980	861,030	711,082	15,736
SK	1,130,179	37,559	1,734,799	343,720	227,512	312,194	343,430	1,758,376	241,607	399,562	652,894	118,984
MB	150,673	2,872	187,494	126,844	216,888	1,115,412	40,333	47,358	38,408	176,677	210,300	234,334
ON	1,314	20,656	14,824	635,373	151,564	43,422	5,386	39,311	83,113	112,337	110,730	265,587
QC	1,481	93,972	314,884	12,726	70,086	1,872,842	63,721	5,380	33,371	38,392	250,685	62,529
NL	5,140	35,267	1,020	594	225,524	43,076	16,816	3,958	10,953	700	34,305	396
NB	143	249	156	45	362	886	112	262	265	568	305	304
NS	2,719	892	463	136	817	301	564	517	755	728	789	253
PE	8	3	5	6	12	55	4	2	20	7	12	12
PC	4,439	38,429	5,912	85,653	273,037	58,377	282,125	458,336	5,539	117,575	132,942	74,840
TOTAL	1,701,376	755,405	3,155,100	2,603,874	1,960,742	4,203,867	4,563,847	3,903,277	1,532,440	3,371,825	2,775,174	2,272,269

**Annual Number of Hectares Burned
in Canada
1982-2018**



Current as of: December 31, 2018

