

# 2016 Wildfire Season

Four Forest Restoration Initiative and Watershed Health

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Jeff Whitney, Arizona State Forester



# THIN THE THREAT!

[azsf.az.gov](http://azsf.az.gov)

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

# Arizona's Forest Environment: Changes in 128 Years

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Walker Lake, AZ 1875



Walker Lake, AZ 2003



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Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

# 4FRI– Mechanical Thinning, Fire, and NEPA – April 2016

## Mechanical Thinning & Fire Accomplishments 2010 to 2015

Treatment	Acres
Mechanical Thinning <sup>1</sup>	131,069
Prescribed Fire and Managed Wildfire	255,442
<b>TOTAL (2010-2015)</b>	<b>386,511<sup>2</sup></b>

## Mechanical Thinning & Fire Accomplishments FY 16

### Treatments Completed<sup>3</sup>

4FRI Phase 1 Stewardship Contract	2,536
Prescribed Fire	42,767
Managed Wildfire	0
<b>TOTAL TREATMENTS</b>	<b>45,303</b>

### Mechanical Treatments Under Contract

4FRI Phase 1 Stewardship Contract <sup>4</sup>	57,352
Other Thinning and FS Fuels Reduction Contracts	37,947
<b>TOTAL UNDER CONTRACT</b>	<b>95,299</b>

1 Includes 19,751 acres in White Mountain Stewardship Contract.

2 The 386,511 acres accomplished from 2010 to 2015 is the sum of fire treatments completed, thinning treatments completed, and remaining thinning acres awarded. FS reporting databases identify contracts awarded as “accomplishments.” This number is identified in the 2015 4FRI CFLRP Annual Report footprint acres available online at [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/4fri/AnnualReport](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/4fri/AnnualReport) (Item 8, page17).

3 Does not include acres treated under contracts other than the 4FRI Phase 1 Stewardship Contract.

4 This figure are the acres of 4FRI phase 1 stewardship contract task orders issued to date (55,138 ac) minus the acres of completed task orders (2,414 ac).



# 4FRI– Mechanical Thinning, Fire, and NEPA – April 2016

## 4FRI Summary of all Mechanical Thinning Contracts---Current Status by Fiscal Year

Summary by Fiscal Year	Acres awarded in all contracts	Acres completed in all contracts
Fiscal Year 2010	10,882	13,265
Fiscal Year 2011	17,638	16,034
Fiscal Year 2012	10,063	8,653
Fiscal Year 2013	27,268	14,494
Fiscal Year 2014	26,399	13,023
Fiscal Year 2015	38,319	14,909
Fiscal Year 2016	7,707	TBD
	<b>138,776</b>	<b>80,378</b>

\*Fiscal year 2010-2012 include acres awarded in contracts prior to 2010

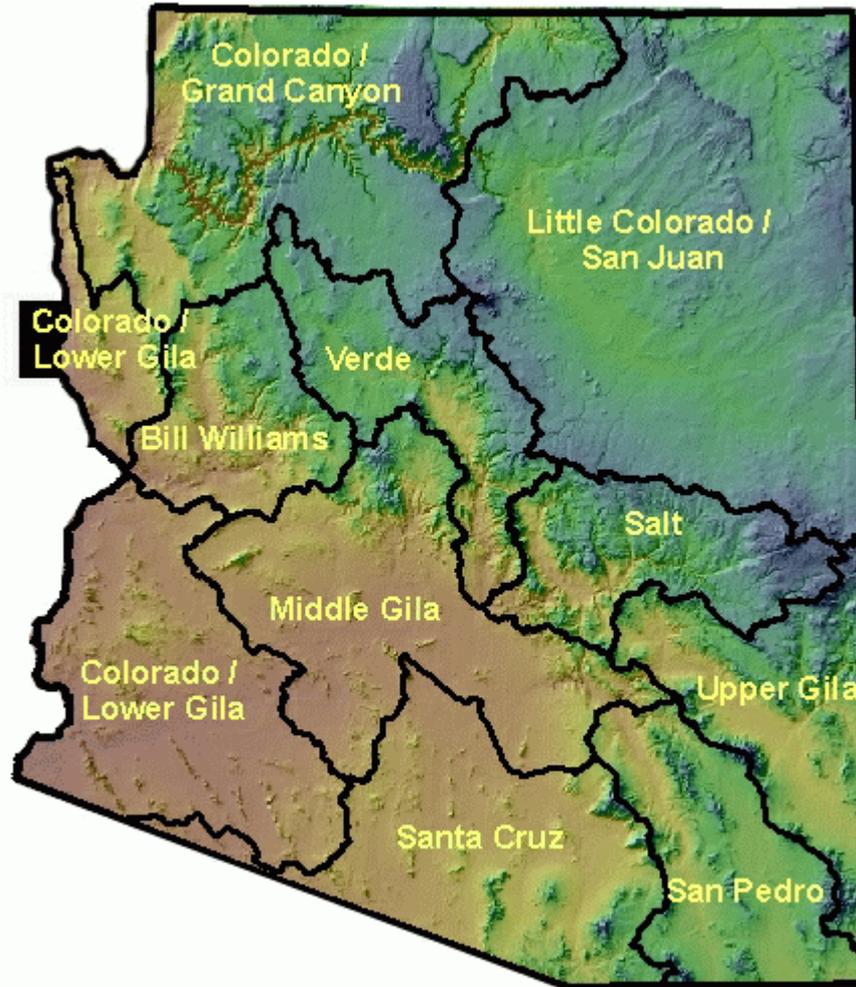
## 4FRI Phase 1 Contract - Current Status by Fiscal Year

Summary by Fiscal Year	Acres awarded and task order signed	Acres awarded & notified to proceed	Acres Treated	% Harvested of notice to proceed task orders	% Harvested awarded all task orders	Acres remaining notice to proceed task orders	Acres remaining all task orders
Fiscal Year 2013	15,233	15,233	800				
Fiscal Year 2014	17,151	17,151	1,547				
Fiscal Year 2015	22,827	0	2,405				
Fiscal Year 2016	0	0	2,536				
<b>Total to date</b>	<b>55,138</b>	<b>32,384</b>	<b>7,288</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>25,096</b>	<b>47,850</b>

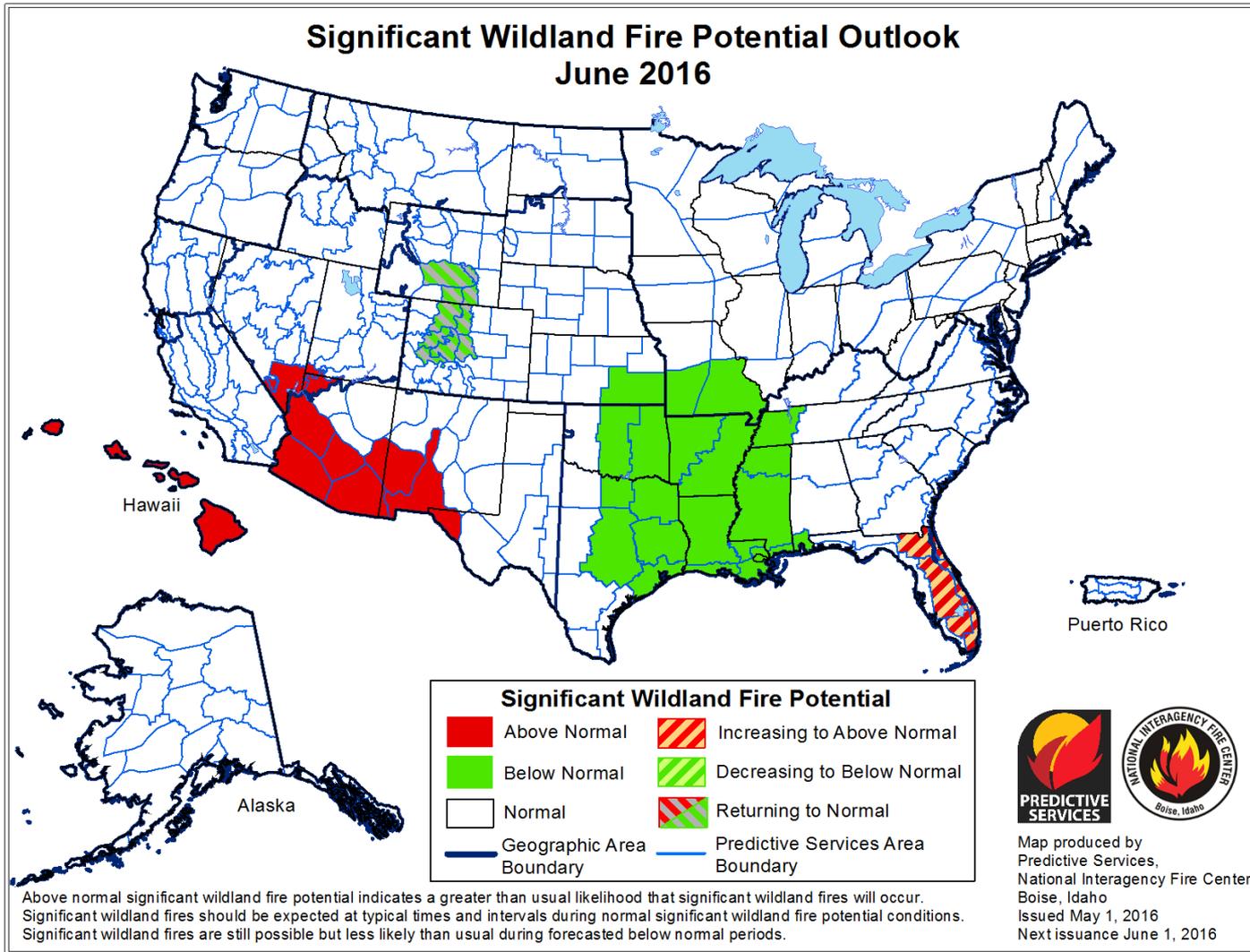


# Arizona's Watersheds

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# Wildland Fire Potential



# Impact of Drought on Wildfire Potential

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- Dryness and drought has quickly begun to ramp up across the Southwest.
- Arizona has experienced a large increase in the coverage of dryness and moderate drought.
- February and March warmth prematurely melted high-elevation snowpack in many basins. Recently, warm, windy conditions have led to numerous wildfires.
- From January 1, 2016 to May 9, 2016 476 wildfires charred 28,983 acres of Arizona Land.



# Factors Affecting Fire Potential

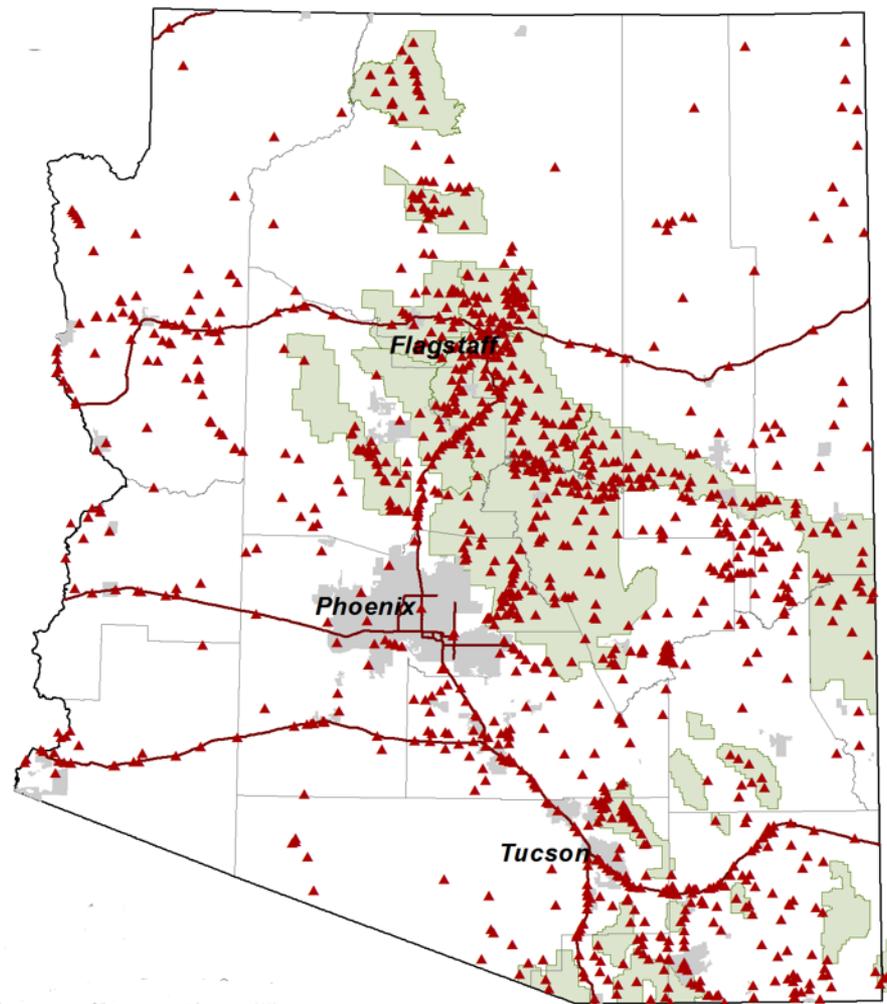
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- Drought
- Fine Fuel Condition
- Seasonal Temperature and Precipitation
- Spring and Early Summer Weather
- Monsoon



# 2015 Fire Season

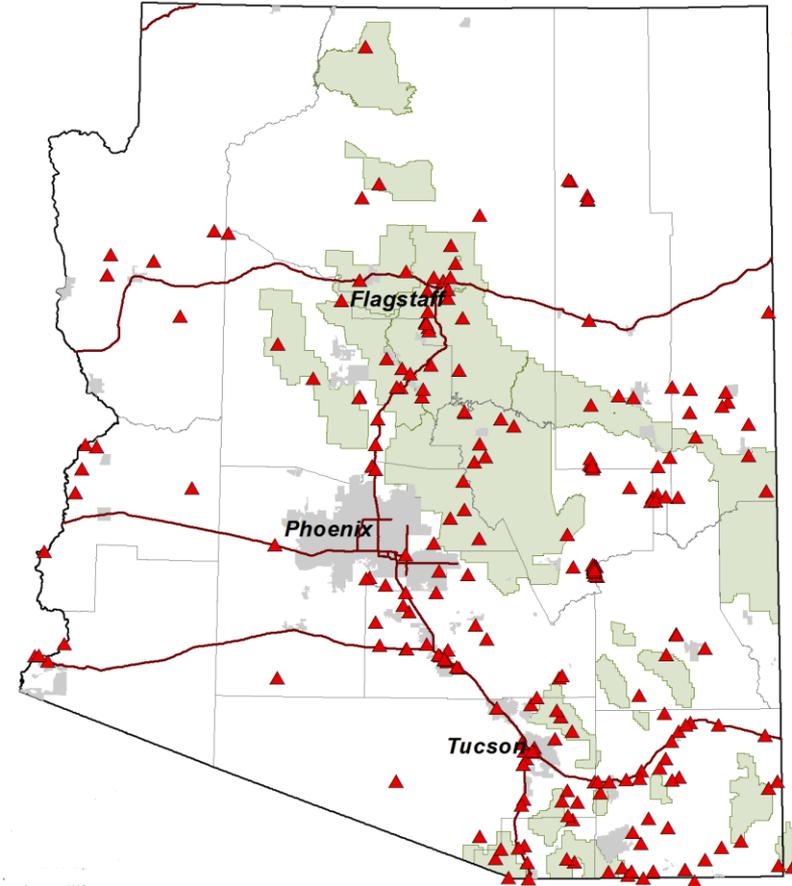
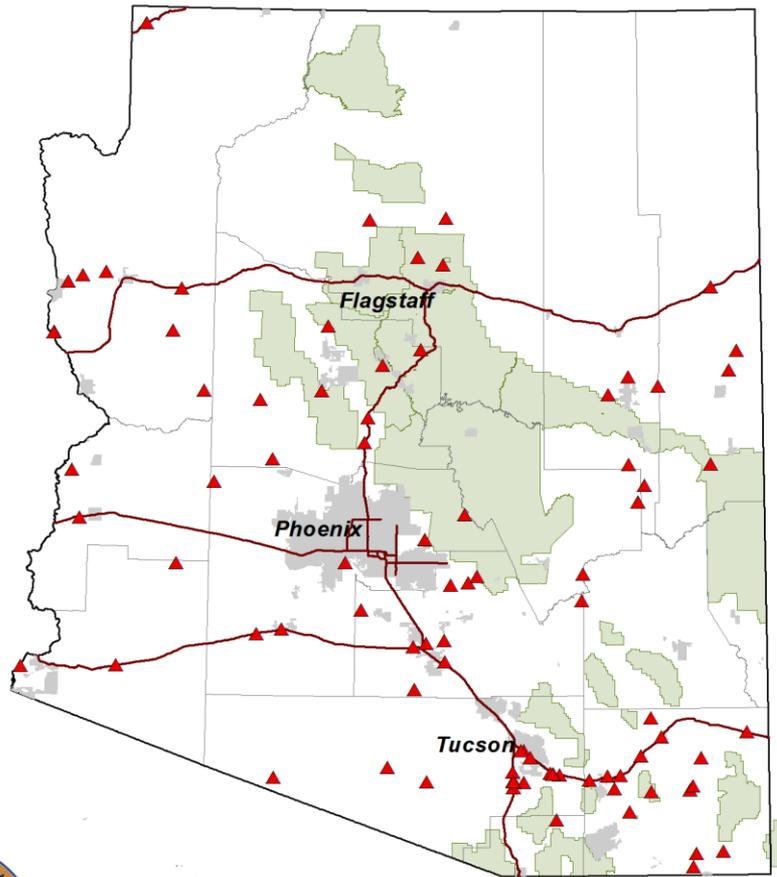
2015	
Total Fires	1,543
Total Acres Burned	158,493
10 Year Average Fires per Year	2,100
Average Acres Burned per Year	300,000



# 2015/2016 Fire Season Comparison

2015 Through March 28<sup>th</sup> **147** fires  
Burned < **500** acres

2016 Through March 28<sup>th</sup> **234** fires  
**16,864** acres burned **All Human Caused**



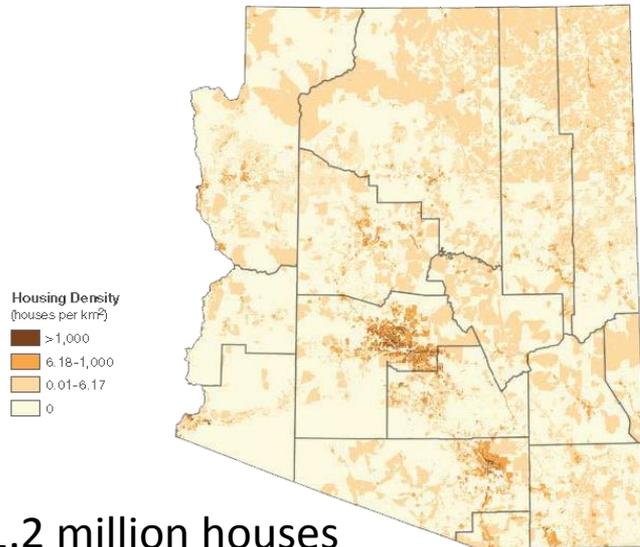
# 2016 Fire Potential

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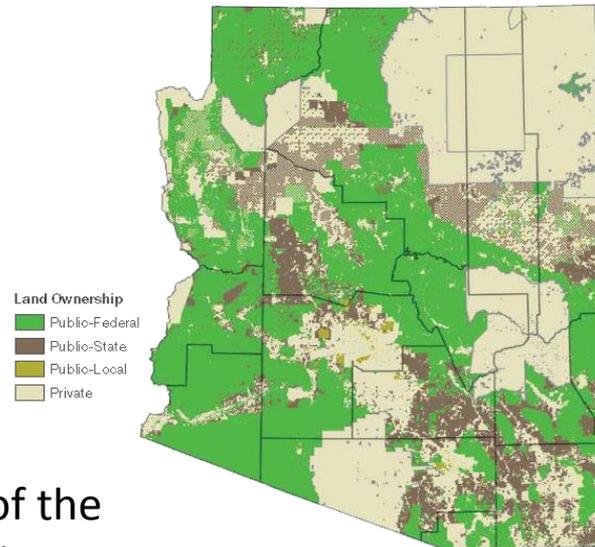
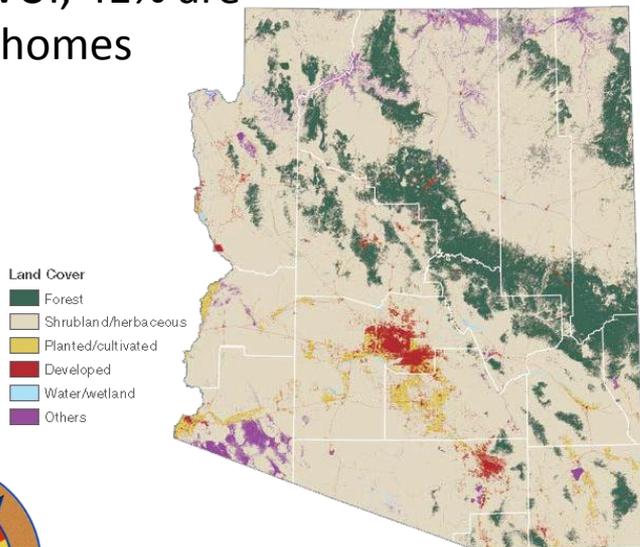
- Overabundance of fine fuels across every ecosystem



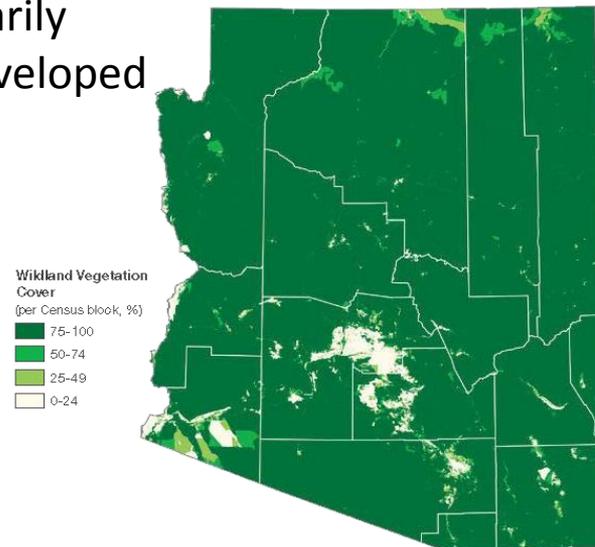
# Wildland-Urban Interface



Of the 1.2 million houses in the WUI, 41% are second homes

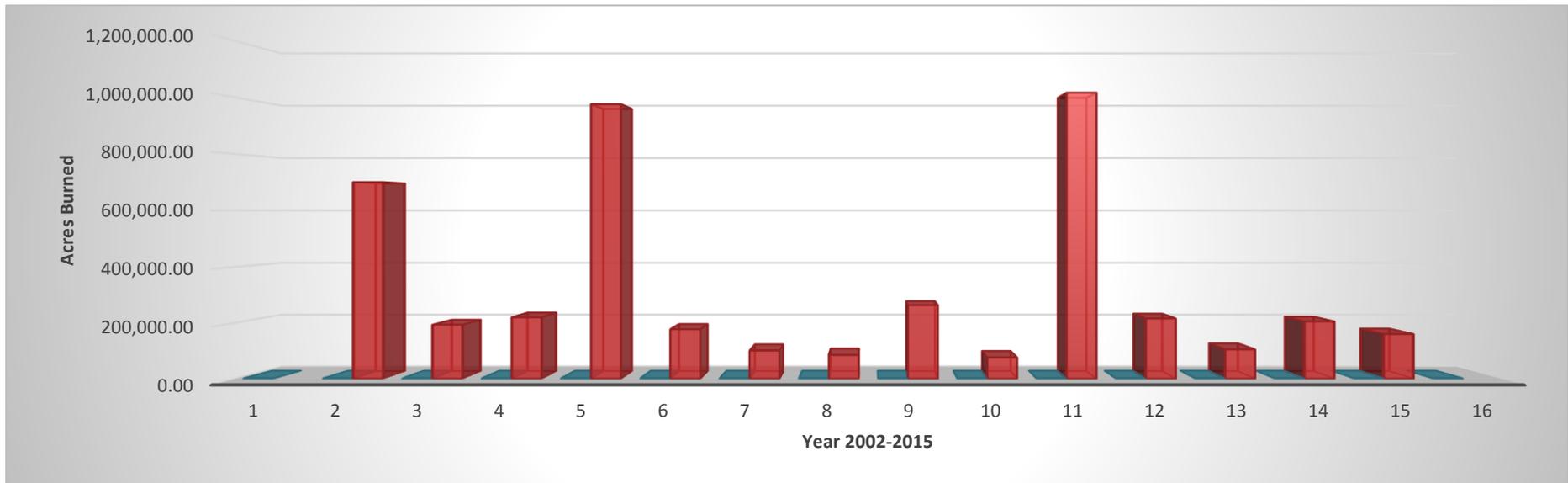


84% of the state is primarily undeveloped



# Years With Major Wildfire Occurrence

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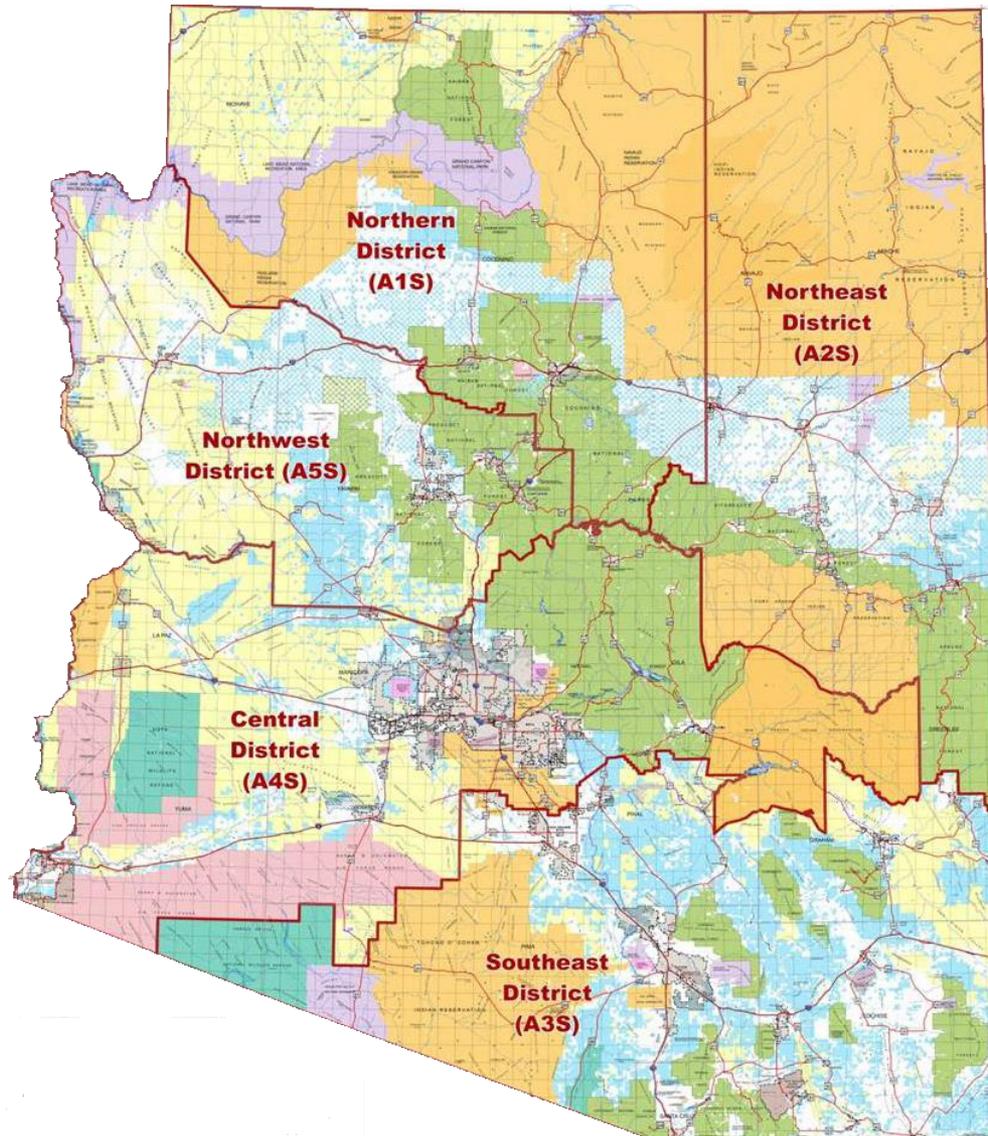


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Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

# Department Organization

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# Take Home Message

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- Arizona faces a potentially significant fire season in 2016. Fuel loads are heavy and much work needs to be done to *thin the threat* in the forests and WUI.
- DFFM is prepared to fight wildfire and work to minimize its impact to the state.
- Most wildfires are human caused. We need to be careful with fire.
- Wildfires are a function of fuel, moisture levels, and the weather. On a hot, windy day we are one spark away from the next catastrophic wildfire.



# Thank You

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