

The issues with Wildfires in California

In the past few years wildfires in California have become devastating across the state.



Dangers of Wildfires

Wildfires have started to become apart of California. Instead of the fires happening in low populated areas they are happening often and in higher populated areas. Cities across the state are now under high-risk for wildfires. As people's families are affected in the Bay Area or somewhere else. Fire does not come after anyone in particular. With each fire season getting worse we are left to wonder how are we going to live normal lives if there isn't greater measure to prevent wildfires.

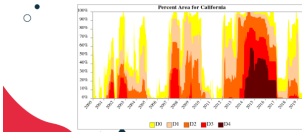
High temperatures resulting in fires

From 2010 to 2019 temperatures are rising each year. On the left we have a temperature map of 2010-2019 from Cal-Adapt. Looking at the right we see the fires through 2019 from the San Francisco Chronicle. Side by side we can see the warmer it gets the more likely a fire is to breakout.



Drought become another factor for perfect conditions for fires

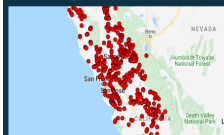
For the past decade California was struck with drought. In March was when the drought ended. Even though months have passed it did create conditions for fires to spread quicker throughout the state. This graph from the National Integrated Drought Information System shows how bad the drought had gotten. In 2019 you can still see California recovering from the dry season. Keeping the fire season alive.



PG&E the victim or the enemy

In the past few years PG&E has been linked with causing fires throughout the Northern and Central California. With some of those fires in 2018 and 2019 burning thousands of acres, destroying hundreds of home and a couple of towns. This map from Fox 2 KTVU Bay Area shows each time a PG&E equipment that many have caused a fire. Each time a fire sparks it is because of the faulty equipment that PG&E has failed to check on and clear any debris caught on it.

When PG&E does check they left millions of Bay Area residents without power for days. An article from San Francisco Chronicle it left "some people may be without electricity for days longer because even as PG&E predicted calmer weather throughout its service area by Monday, it also issued an ominous warning about another wind event that may prompt more shut-offs just one day later".



With PG&E trying to make this right it ends up back to square one. They are want to make things better because some much of the fire-end up being their fault. It is only a matter of time where the state government says enough is enough.

Summary

Throughout Northern and Central California it has faced fire close to home. It has gotten to the point where other states sent in their own firefighters to help where ever they could. The high temperatures each year are providing the perfect conditions for fires to start. With those higher temperatures each year the drier it becomes as well.

Drought and higher temperatures play dangerously well with each other. It being hot and dry fire will spread quickly to the point where it can become uncontrollable. With most of those fires right at our doorsteps.

As PG&E have proven they are not prepared when the fire season starts. Their equipment becoming unreliable in these high-risk fire areas. With it become very dangerous for areas with a high population to catch on fire because it could spread like wildfire literally. Not only can they not be relied on when they do try and help they give us notice of what they are planning. The planned blackout PG&E had in the end of October left millions without power trying to fix their equipment. But still could not prevent the fires that came after.

Finding solutions to this problem of wildfires it tough. With rising temperatures and drought from Global Warming we need to reduce CO2 emissions by driving less and just doing everything you can to help the planet. For PG&E we need them to be held accountable for the damages they have caused. By them compensating for damages, repairing their outdated equipment, and remove any debris caught in their power lines. With these steps we can hope to prevent any big fires from happening on our watch.

REFERENCES

Morris, J.D. "PG&E Outages: Historic blackout under way, 1.3 million in Bay Area without power." SFChronicle.com, San Francisco Chronicle, 28 Oct. 2019. <https://www.sfchronicle.com/california-wildfires/article/PG-E-outages-Over-3-million-people-blackout-14566085.php>.

Wagstaff, Evan, et al. "California Fire Tracker: The Latest on Wildfires across the State." The San Francisco Chronicle, San Francisco Chronicle, 3 Dec. 2019. <https://projects.sfchronicle.com/tracker/california-fire-map/>.

"Wildfire." Cal. https://cal-adapt.org/hosts/wildfires/4161main.html&boundary=45&population=basin_uk&lat=34.28125&lng=-115.78125&boundary=tcag&units=ha.

Nguyen, Candice. "PG&E Equipment Possibly Involved in 400 Fires." KTVU FOX 2, KTVU FOX 2, 26 Oct. 2019. <https://www.ktvu.com/news/pg-e-equipment-possibly-involved-in-400-fires>.

"California." California | Drought.gov, 16 Oct. 2019. <https://www.drought.gov/drought/states/california>.