

Department of Environmental Conservation

# 2024 NYS DEC Wildland Fire Season Review

#### **NYS DEC Forest Rangers**

February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### **2024 Wildfire Season Overview**

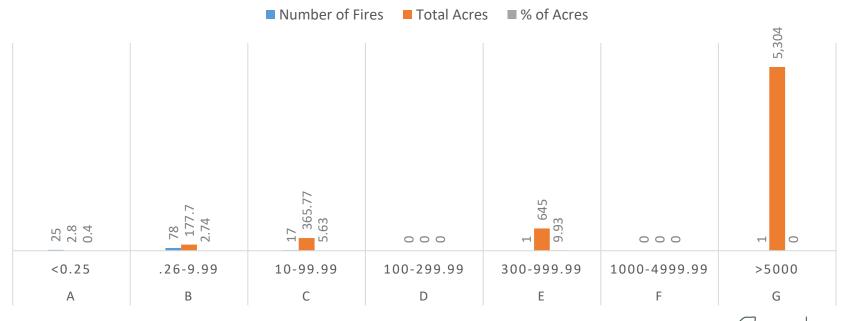
- Combined data from DEC and OFPC:
  - 1,326 Fires burned 7,115 Acres.
  - Many of these fires were suppressed by local fire departments with no DEC involvement.
- DEC Forest Rangers responded to 122 fires which burned 6,495 Acres.



#### DEC Forest Ranger Wildfire Response

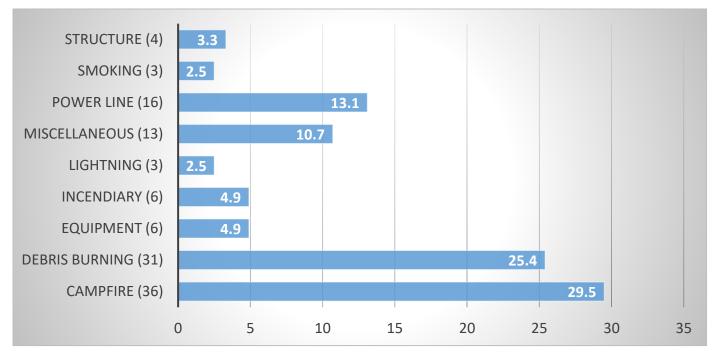
• Rangers responded to wildfires throughout the year. The first fire was February 9<sup>th</sup>. The last fire was December 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **2024 DEC Wildfires by Size Class**

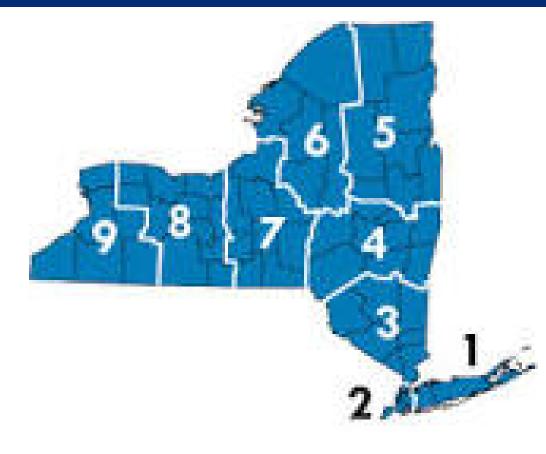


**NEW YORK** STATE OF OPPORTUNITY Conservation

#### 2024 Wildfires by Cause (% of Total)









### **2024 Wildfires: Pre-green up, Spring fires**

• Annual Statewide burn ban in effect March 15-May 14

- During our traditional spring fire season of mid-March to mid-May, we only had 17 fires for 55.1 acres versus 2023 when we had 63 fires for 1,061 acres in the same timeframe.
- The slow spring fire season allowed us to concentrate on prescribed fire throughout the state, completing 41 burns for 979.4 acres from March 15<sup>th</sup> to May 15<sup>th.</sup>



# Typical 2024 spring fire season fire danger map





The Candle Road fire was the biggest fire during the 2024 spring fire season at 32.6 acres. The fire started on March 30<sup>th</sup> and was declared out on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The cause of this fire was a campfire along a hiking trail.



## 2024 Fall Fire Season

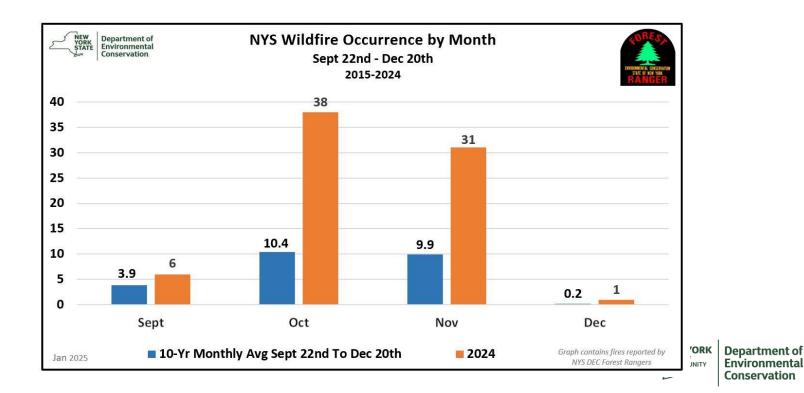
• September 1 to December 31 Rangers responded to 79 fires for 6,352.9 acres.

• Most of the fall fires occurred in DEC Region 3. These fires accounted for 6,149.2 acres or almost 97% of the

total fall fire acreage.



#### 2024 Fall fires vs. 10 year average



### Whitehouse Fire Region 3 Zone A

- Started November 8<sup>th</sup>. Declare out on November 29<sup>th</sup> at 645 acres.
- Town of Denning, Ulster county
- Fire was started by a burning structure. Two structures lost in this fire.



#### Whitehouse Fire Region 3 Zone A



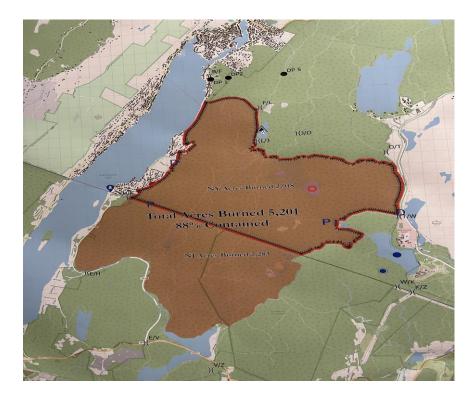


### Jennings Creek Fire Region 3 Zone B

- Started on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Declared out on November 29<sup>th</sup>
- Occurred on Sterling Forest State Park (OPR&HP). Orange County, town of Warwick.
- Final Acreage was 5,304 acres. 2,283 acres in New Jersey
- 180 Structures Threatened
- 1 Fatality (OPR&HP employee) Investigation on going
- Resources brought in from all over the state as well as a T2IA crew from Montana.



#### **2024 Jennings Creek Fire Map**



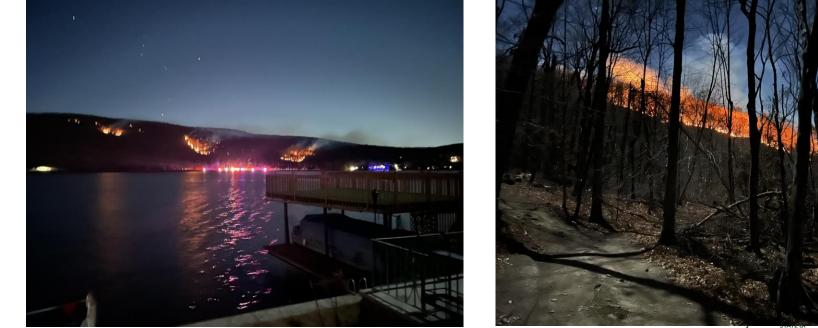


### **2024 Jennings Creek Fire**





#### **2024 Jennings Creek Fire**





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#### **2024 Wildfire Assistance**

New York State sent the first out of state resource request on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. A Type 2 Initial Attack Crew was sent to Helena, Montana.





### **2024 Wildfire Assistance**

Interagency T2IA Hand Crew, Suppression Module and 3 Engine Crews were dispatched to Helena, Montana

Single Resources were deployed to Oregon, 4 Forest Rangers and 2 ADs



#### **2024 Wildfire Assistance**





#### 2024 Prescribed Fire

 DEC Forest Rangers, in cooperation with the Albany Pine Bush and the Central Pine Barrens Commission conducted 60 prescribed burns in 2024. A total of 1,156 acres were treated with prescribed fire.

#### The LEADER PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024 | THE-LEADER.COM

#### **Prescribed** fire benefits landscapes



The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation conducted a prescribed fire at Coon Hollow State Forest in Schuyler County this spring, PHOTOS PROVIDED BY STATE DEPARTMENT

Should practice expand in NYS?

Chris Potter USA TODAY NETWORK

Dark clouds of smoke billowing from the landscape are often a cause for concern, especially in the early portions of spring when New York state's forests and fields are a tinderbox of dried leaves, grasses and brush. In parts of the Southern Tier and Fin

ger Lakes, though, those smoke clouds were by design, the fire intentionally managed. The Department of Environmental

Conservation burned hundreds of acres this spring with "prescribed fire," a land management practice used to improve wildlife habitat, slow the spread of invasive species and pests, and reduce the risk of uncontrolled wildfires.

"Not all fire is bad. In this case it's very controlled with very strict parameters on when we're burning," said Forest Ranger Timothy Carpenter, Assistant Fire Management Officer with DEC's Division of Forest Protection.

"It's actually beneficial to the land- prescribed fire is the remedy to improve See FIRE, Page 2A



prescribed fire at West Hill State Forest in Steuben County.

scape. Just because you see smoke in their acreage for game animals like deer and turkey, and want to see reguthe air in the woods or out in the fields somewhere doesn't necessarily mean lations loosened up, Carpenter said a it's bad for the environment." growing prescribed fire coalition is

Prescribed fire is largely the purview working to standardize the practice. of DEC Forest Rangers in New York state. "I think people just want options, In some other states, though, particularsaid Jon Teater, a habitat consultant at ly in the south, it's a common practice Whitetail Landscapes. "They want to among private landowners. have the opportunity to use different Some New York residents believe

#### UNITED WAY DAY OF ACTION Volunteers aid these Elmira area projects on

Jeff Murray Elmira Star-Gazette USA TODAY NETWORK

Bill Trondsen, of Horseheads, works at Eaton Corp., which manufactures electronic parts, and he's normally at the plant Fridays.

But on this Friday, Trondsen was spending some time outdoors. He wasn't goofing off. In fact, he was hard at work on a different kind of job. hard at work on a different kind of job. Trondsen and several of his Eaton Corp. colleagues were sprucing up For-est Lawn Cemetery on Jerusalem Hill Road in the Town of Elmira.

The Eaton crew was taking part in the annual Day of Action organized by the United Way of the Southern Tier, and Trondsen and his team were among 390 volunteers from local businesses and organizations that painted

See VOLUNTEERS, Page 2A

ONFIDA COUNTY Sheriff's Office introduces three new **K9** officers

**Casey** Pritchard USA TODAY NETWORK

Over the course of three days, the Onei-da County Sheriff's Office introduced the community to its new K9 units: Mastro, Indi, and Jensen - with Jensen taking his name to honor the life of slain Symcuse Police officer and Rome resident Michael Jen-

This major expansion of the sheriff's K9 program was thanks to community partners, whose contributions went directly to purchasing the dogs.

"When we were looking into expanding our K9 program, there's obviously signifi

See K9. Page 4A



#### 2024 Prescribed Fire

 Starting mid March and continuing through the middle of May, prescribed burns were conducted in DEC Regions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8.





2024 Prescribed Fire-Rx Fire Modules

• Modules consisting of 6 Rangers were sent to assist with prescribed fire projects on Long Island. This provided a great training opportunity, and it ensured adequate staffing to conduct the burns.





2024 Prescribed Fire-Regions 3,4,67 & 8 • Additional Rangers were sent to assist with prescribed burns in these regions to provide training opportunities and adequate staffing.

• The NWS forecast and the NWS Fire Weather Dashboard were critical decision making tools in planning for these burns.



#### 2024 Prescribed Fire-Regions 1 & 4

 Following green-up and into the fall, additional burns were conducted in DEC Region 4 in partnership with the Albany Pine Bush, and in DEC Region 1 in partnership with the Central Pine Barrens Commission and the Brookhaven National Lab.



#### QUESTIONS???



#### **Thank You**

- Tim Carpenter
- Assistant Fire Mgmt. Officer
- DEC Forest Rangers
- timothy.carpenter@dec.ny.gov
- 607 664-1021

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