



Woodrat Fire, 2015

Wildfire Costs and Policy Implications

Forestry Day at the Legislature

January 19, 2016

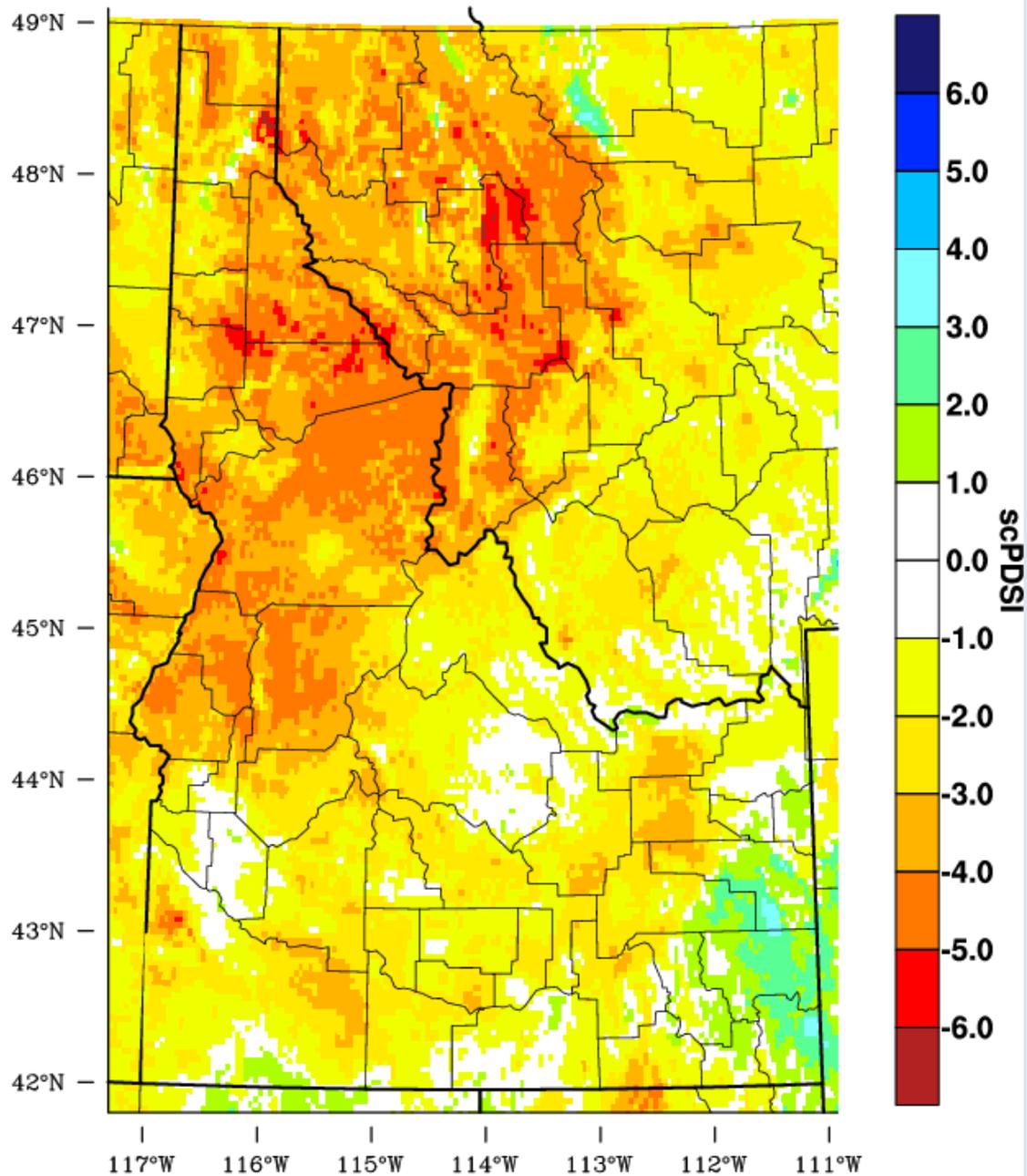
Presented by David Groeschl
State Forester & Deputy Director
Idaho Department of Lands

The 2015 Drought in Idaho

- Below normal precipitation (89.5% of normal)
 - Extremely dry Apr-Aug in northern half of state
 - Compounded by lack of mountain snowpack
- 2nd warmest year on record (3F above normal)
 - Warmest June in 120 years
 - Accelerated seasonal drying of fuels
- Worst statewide drought since 2007
 - Worst since 1977 in the Panhandle

Idaho - Self Calibrated PDSI

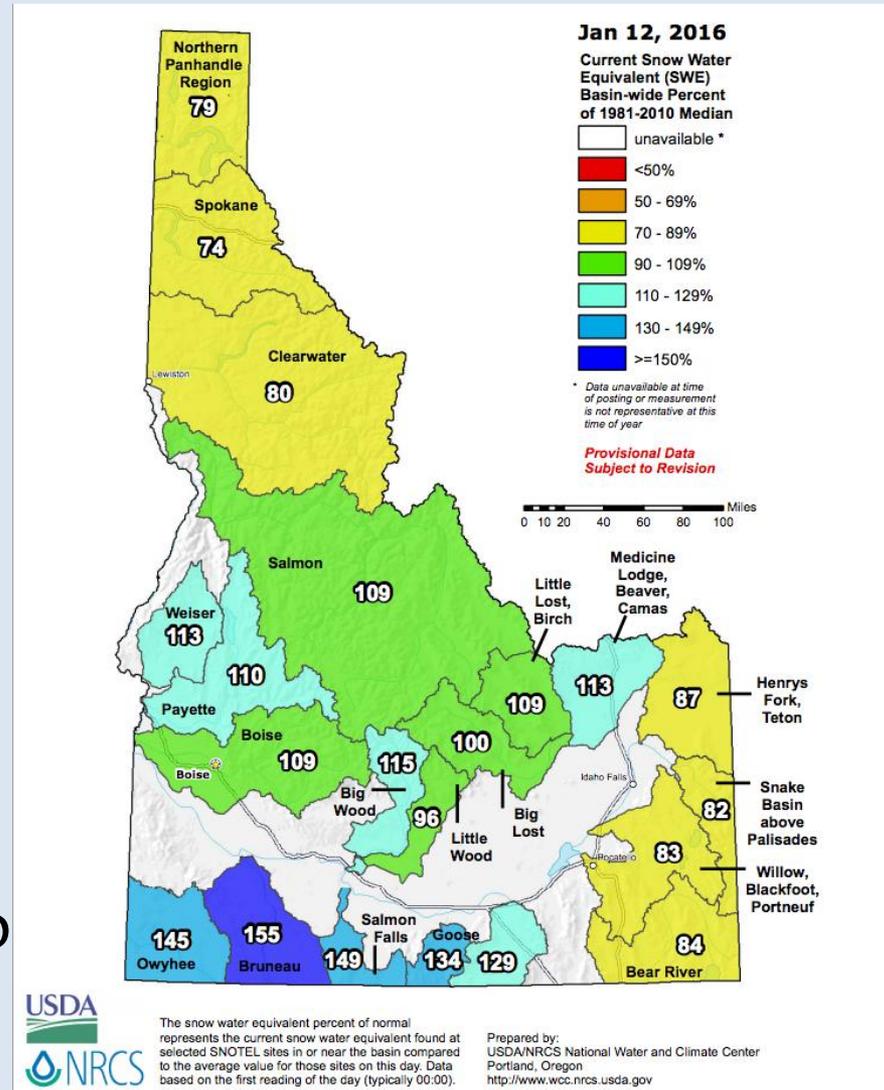
August 2015



WestWide Drought Tracker - WRCC/UI Data Source - PRISM (Prelim), created 16 SEP 2015

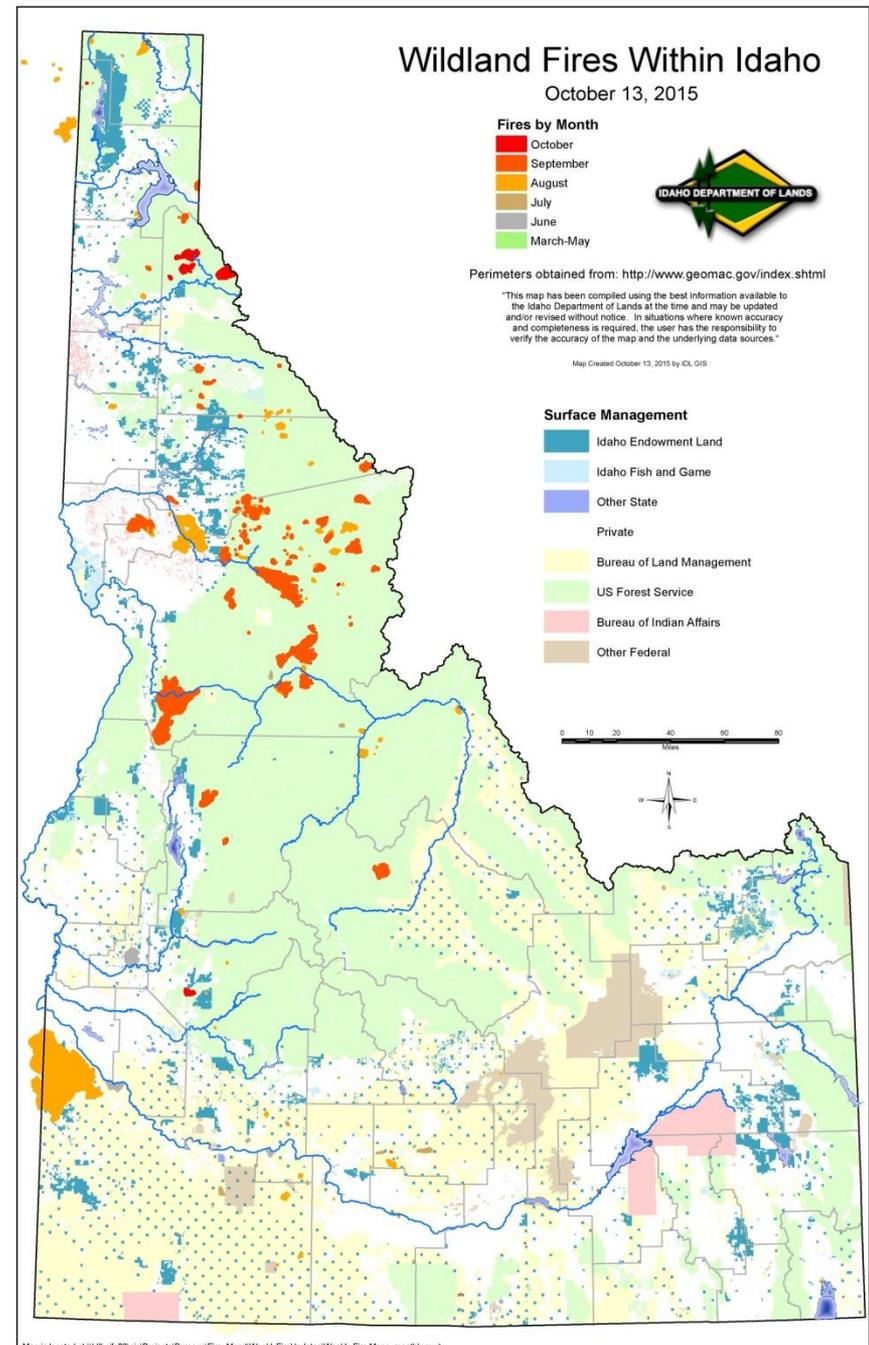
Drought Relief?

- Wet December
 - Tempered drought stress across northern Idaho
 - Snowpack recovery
- Strong El Nino in place
 - Subpar 2nd half of winter, particularly in North Idaho
 - Persistence of drought heading into summer 2016
 - Central Idaho mountains to fare better

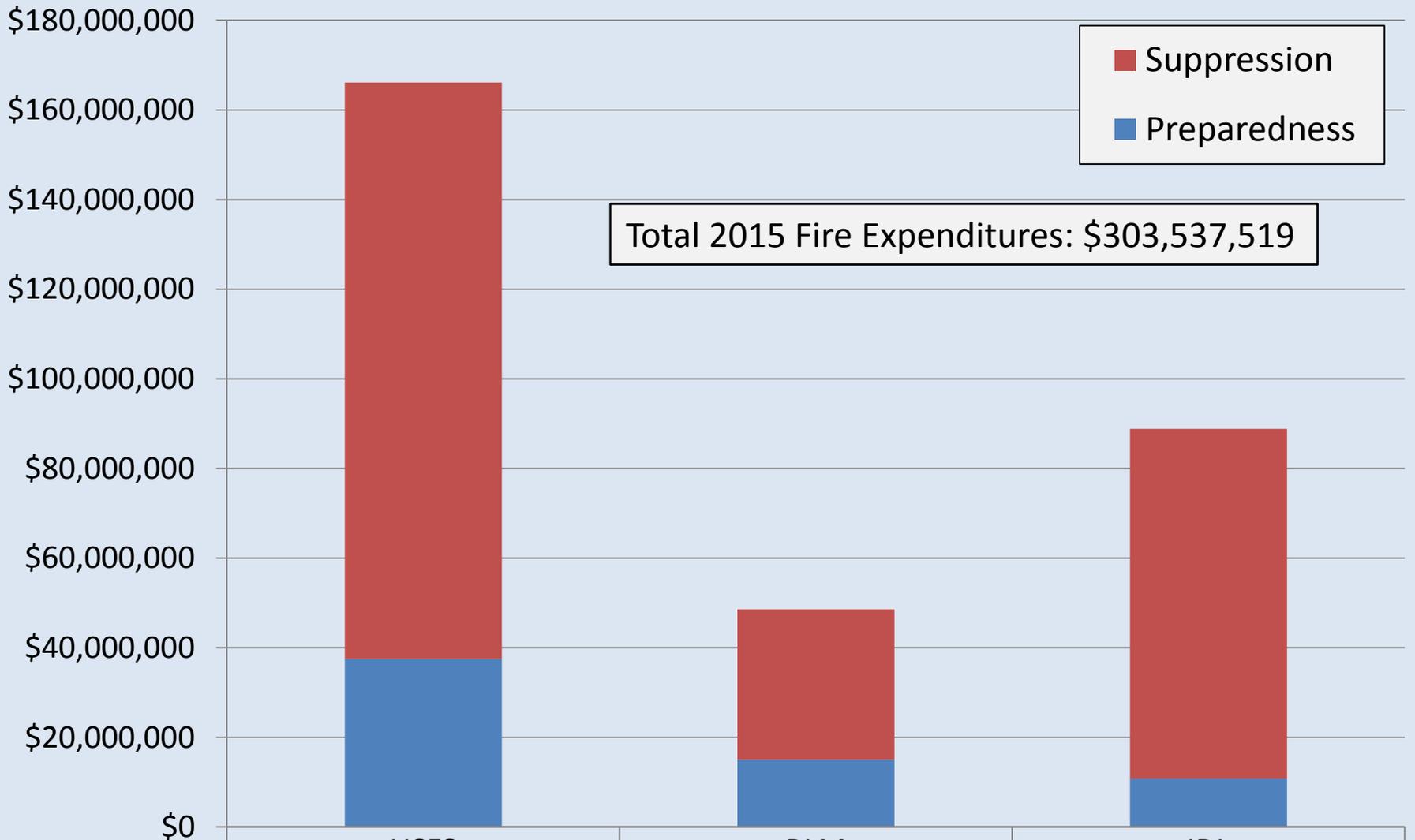


2015 Statewide Fire Season

- Total acres burned in Idaho = Approx. 742,000 ac.
- Acres burned by owner
 - USFS 351,000 ac.
 - BLM 230,000 ac.
 - Private 119,000 ac.
 - IDL 28,000 ac.
 - BIA 11,000 ac.
 - Other 3,000 ac.



2015 Agency Fire Season Costs

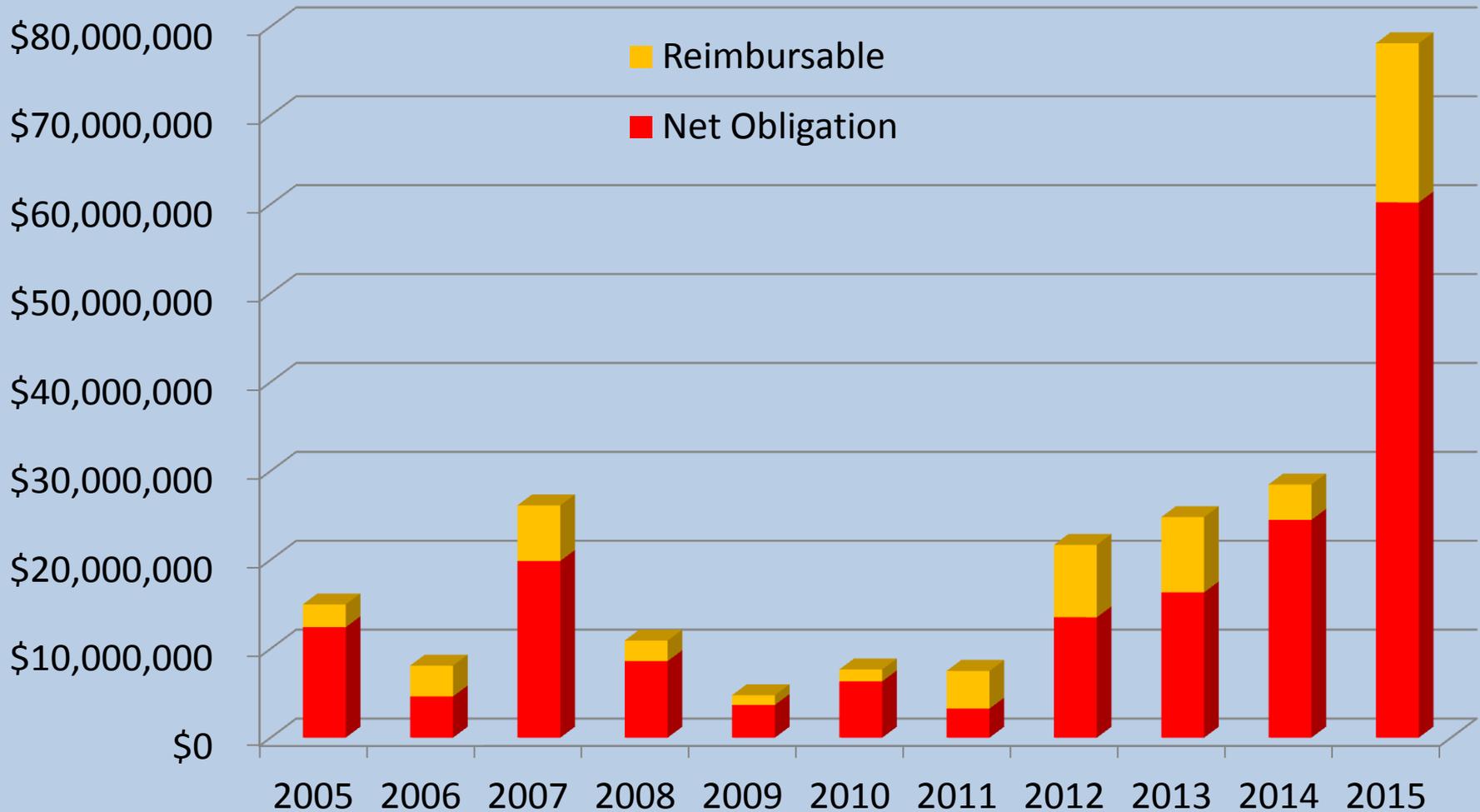


	USFS	BLM	IDL
Suppression	\$128,652,397	\$33,501,714	\$78,113,000
Preparedness	\$37,479,592	\$15,062,216	\$10,728,600

IDL Record Fire Year



IDL Suppression Costs



2015 Suppression Costs: \$60,211,000 Net + \$17,902,000 Reimbursable



2015 Fire Season – IDL Protection



Clearwater Complex Fire, 2015

- 78,571 acres burned, 321 fire starts
- 15 IDL incidents required use of 27 incident management teams
 - Emergency disaster declaration (FEMA) for portions of Clearwater Complex Fires, Municipal Fire, Cape Horn Fire

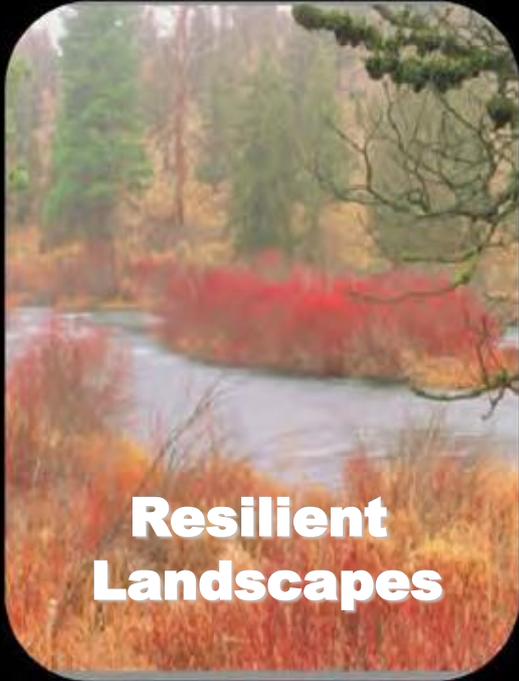
- ▶ **Largest, most expensive fire = Clearwater Complex Fires**
 - ▶ \$25.2 million and 68,100 acres burned
 - ▶ 62 residences & 211 outbuildings lost



True Cost of Wildfire

- Suppression Costs - other costs are 2 to 30 times the suppression costs
- Rehabilitation Costs
- Ecosystem Services
 - Impact to water quality
 - Air Quality
 - Wildlife habitat
 - Short/Long term soil impacts & stability, etc.
- Human/Economic Impacts
 - Life/Structures
 - Property Values & Taxable Value
 - Recreation
 - Local Businesses

Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy





Resilient Landscapes – Endowment Lands

- Rotation Length
- Density Control
- Species Mix – seral species that are resistant to endemic insect and disease and fire
- Seed zones – elevation, aspect, etc.
- Desired Future Conditions (DFC) may not be same as Historic Range of Variability

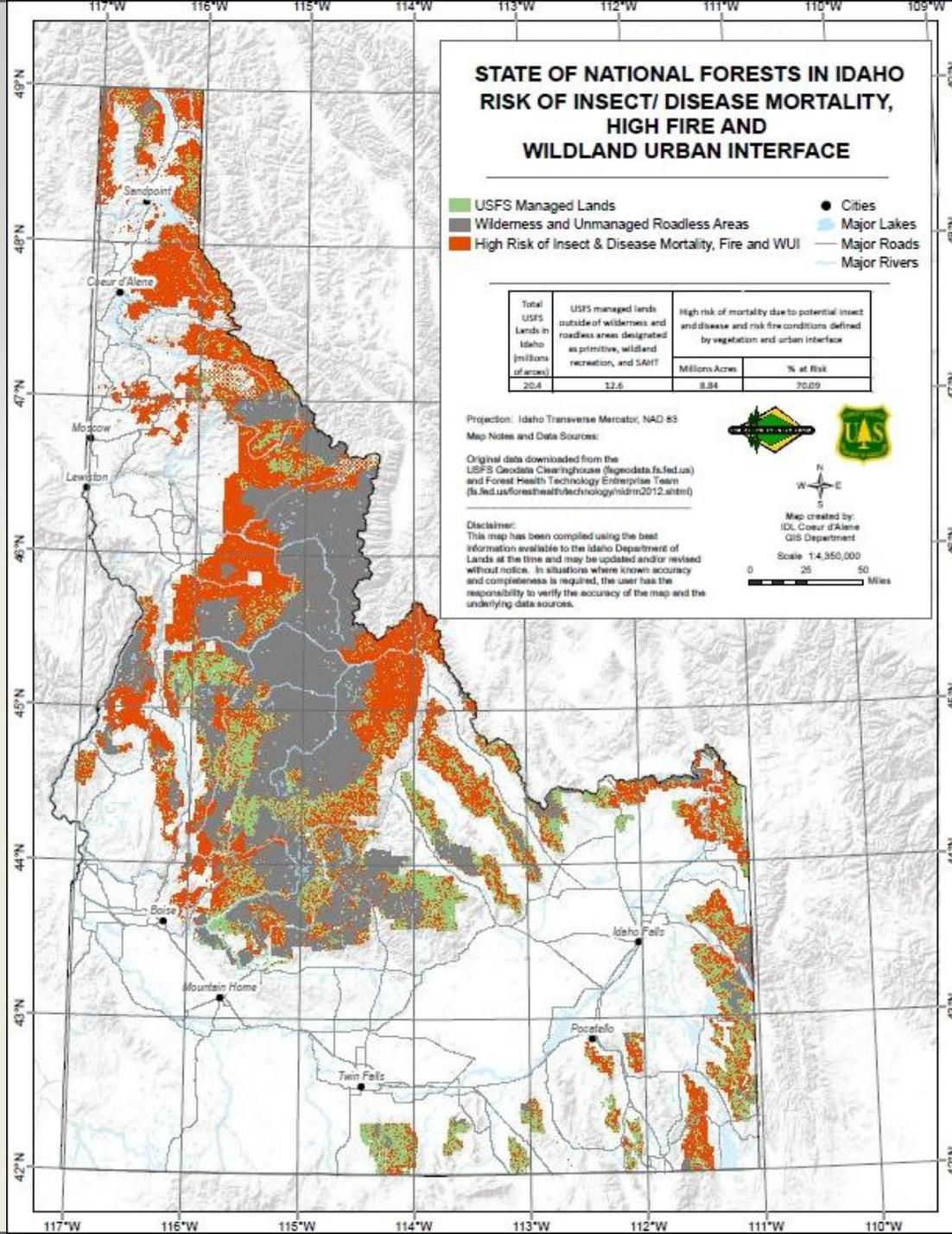




Resilient Landscapes – Federal Lands

Increase pace & scale of
active management:

- Reduce insect & disease mortality
- Reduce fuels and threats of wildfire
- Reduce fire suppression costs over time
- Reduce environmental impacts (i.e. – watersheds, wildlife, air quality, etc.)
- Benefit local economies, jobs and industry



Resilient Landscapes – Opportunities on Federal Lands

2014 Farm Bill: Signed into law Feb 7, 2014

- **Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA)**
 - **Governor's I&D Designations**
- **Stewardship Contracting – permanent authorization**
- **Good Neighbor Authority – Idaho exploring Master GNA Agreement as per SCR 126**





IDAHO FIREWISE

Idaho Firewise coordinates, supports, and promotes wildland fire education to help residents and visitors understand that fire is a natural occurrence in Idaho and that along with it comes a responsibility to prepare for it.



Prevention – What can I do?



Policy Implications

- Federal Lands
 - Wildfire Funding Fix & Land Management Reforms
 - 2014 Farm Bill Authorities – GNA
- State – endowment lands & fire program
- Private Lands
 - Local/County Zoning Laws
 - Homeowner's Insurance
 - Firewise – Defensible Space
- Wildfire Response – ALL – local, state, federal



Questions?

