

**TO:** Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Megafire Action and Hart Research  
**DATE:** November 1, 2025  
**RE:** Key Findings from a National Survey on Wildfires

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In August 2025, Hart Research conducted a survey among registered voters nationwide to explore voters' attitudes on wildfires and whether and how they want the federal government to take action and support states that are impacted by wildfires on the issue.<sup>1</sup>

This research shows that Americans widely view wildfires as an extremely serious problem that is a shared responsibility across levels of government, but requires a greater federal role and more federal spending. They are very negative to the idea of cutting funding across several lanes of wildfire prevention and response.

**1. Voters overwhelmingly view wildfires as a very serious problem that is quickly getting worse.**

- Seven in 10 voters (70%) say wildfires are either already a crisis for the country (46%) or will be a crisis soon (24%). This feeling is, unsurprisingly, strongest in the West (78%), but more than two thirds of voters in every other region of the country agree.
- Moreover, Americans see the problem worsening in real time: 71% say wildfires are increasing in frequency and 73% say wildfires are becoming more severe.
- As such, 75% say wildfires are an important issue for elected leaders to address, putting wildfires above both floods (69% important) and hurricanes (66% important).

**2. Not only do voters want leaders to address wildfires, but they also view it as an all-hands-on-deck situation that requires every level of government.**

- Large majorities say that when it comes to wildfire prevention<sup>2</sup> AND response AND post-fire rebuilding, each level of government—federal, state, and local—has a lot or quite a bit of responsibility.
  - A lot or quite a bit of responsibility for *preventing and reducing the impact of wildfires*: Federal 67%; state 74%; local 68%
  - A lot or quite a bit of responsibility for *responding to and containing wildfires*: Federal 72%; state 83%; local 80%
  - A lot or quite a bit of responsibility for *helping communities recover from and rebuild after wildfires*: Federal 76%; state 86%; local 79%

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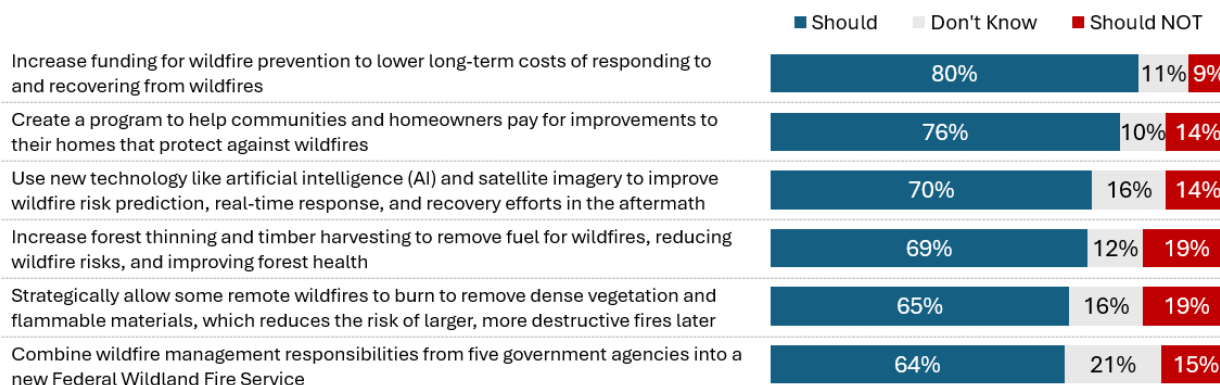
<sup>1</sup> Hart Research conducted an online survey among 1,008 registered voters nationwide from August 5-8, 2025. These findings have a margin of error of ±3.09%.

<sup>2</sup> Research-proven practices to prevent and reduce the impact of wildfire in and around communities include making infrastructure more fire resistant, strategic vegetation management, and utilizing fire breaks. Note that these examples were not included in the survey.

- At the moment, the public gives the federal government negative ratings in this area: just 31% approve of the job it is doing on wildfire prevention (46% disapprove) and 38% approve of the job it is doing in responding to wildfires (43% disapprove).
  - Despite this, 67% say the federal government has a lot or quite a bit of responsibility for helping prevent wildfires; 72% say this about responding to wildfires; and 76% say this about helping communities recover from and rebuild after wildfires.
3. **Americans know that funding is key to dealing with wildfires and they solidly endorse putting more federal resources into it.**
- Two thirds (66%) say the federal government should be spending more money on preventing wildfires; 68% say it should spend more on responding to wildfires.
  - In each case, only 3% of voters say the federal government should be spending less.
  - Majorities across the partisan spectrum agree here: 81% of Democrats, 61% of independents, and 53% of Republicans say the federal government should spend more on prevention (with very similar numbers saying this for response).
4. **A range of proactive policy solutions to deal with wildfires are very popular.**
- Increasing funding for prevention is the most popular policies we tested—four in five voters say the federal government should do this.
  - Two other types of policies also draw wide support:
    - Innovative government policies: Using AI and satellite imagery (70% should do) and creation of a Federal Wildland Fire Service (64% should do).
    - Land management policies: Forest thinning and timber harvesting (69% should do) and controlled burns (65% should do).

## Wide Support for Proactive Wildfire Policy Solutions

*Please indicate whether you believe the federal government should or should not take that action for wildfire management.*



- Notably, support for each of the policies above draws substantial support from both sides of the political aisle: upwards of 60% of Democrats and Republicans say the federal government should undertake each of the actions above. Increasing funding for prevention is the most popular action among voters of both parties.

**5. By comparison, voters reject policies that shrink the resources available for dealing with wildfires.**

- 69% say the federal government should NOT reduce the size and funding of the U.S. Forest Service.
- 65% say the federal government should NOT reduce the size and funding of FEMA.
- 59% say the federal government should NOT reduce funding for grants and programs that reduce wildfire risk through removing hazardous fuels, restoring forests, and helping communities prepare for fires through neighborhood risk assessments.

**6. Political independents are a key audience on this issue: they are especially negative toward the federal government's performance on wildfires but wholly support expanding federal action and funding.**

- The federal government's net approval is deeply in negative territory among independents: -40 for wildfire prevention (13% approve, 53% disapprove) and -18 for wildfire response (28% approve, 46% disapprove).
- Nonetheless, independent voters are clear that the federal government must do more in this arena:
  - 77% say wildfires are an important issue for leaders to address.
  - 70% say wildfires are now a crisis or will be one in the foreseeable future.
  - 61% say the federal government should spend more on prevention and 64% say it should spend more on response. Less than 10% say it should spend less on either.
  - Substantial majorities say the federal government should increase funding for prevention (69%); increase forest thinning (66%); and use AI and satellite imagery in wildfire efforts (57%).