**Data Shows Climate Change Fuels Spread of Wildfires Across Country**

*By KENDRA PIERRE-LOUIS and NAZDA POPROVICH*

A warmer world makes a more combustible country. That’s the conclusion in the most comprehensive assessment of the effects of climate change on the United States, released by the government this week. The study found that much of the country is now too hot and too dry to be as forested as it was in the past, putting many areas at risk of ever-fiercer fires.

The report says the continued release of greenhouse gases from cars, factories and other sources worldwide will make fire more frequent, including very large fires that burn more than 10,000 acres. And fire risk in the United States won’t just be on the rise, it will also change in character. There are signs, in particular in the West, that climate change is making fire more dangerous.

“Wildfires are an essential part of our many forest ecosystems,” the report said. “In evidence that area burned is more closely related to climate.” Dr. Gonzalez said.

The report notes that warmer winters and drier springs have increased fire in the Western United States, especially in the Northwest, Southwest and Northern California. “I think what it’s saying is that areas have experienced a change in what they can burn,” said Dr. Prinz.

Data updated through 2017 by A. Park Williams

Source: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

### Key Points

- **Widespread fire risk:** Half of the West and one in four of the 39 largest school districts in the country are now at risk of having a major fire, the report said.
- **Increased drought conditions:** Drought conditions are expected to increase in the West, putting more areas at risk of fire.
- **Higher temperatures:** Higher temperatures and drier conditions are expected to increase fire risk in the West.

### Climate Change and Wildfires

- **Rising temperatures:** Rising temperatures are expected to increase fire risk in the West.
- **Drier conditions:** Drier conditions are expected to increase fire risk in the West.
- **Increased droughts:** Increased droughts are expected to increase fire risk in the West.

### Strikes a Chord

The report said that wildfires are now a major economic and social concern. The economic cost of wildfires is expected to increase, with the potential for billions of dollars in damages.

### Conclusion

The report concluded that climate change is making wildfires more frequent and more severe, putting more areas at risk of more severe fires.

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In Utah Monument Inquiry Interior Leader Is Cleared

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