Santa Fe National Forest – 25 Year Wildfire History

From 2000-2024 — Fires over 1,000 acres

December 10, 2024

- *Human-caused fire ignited by a federal land management agency prescribed burn*
- *Human-caused fire not ignited by a federal land management agency*
- *Natural-caused fire*
- *Natural-caused fire, with the majority of acres burned ignited by the Forest Service during firing operations*

Year	Name of Fire	Acres Burned	Cause of Ignition
2024	Tanques Fire	6,645	Natural-caused, lightning
2024	Indios Fire	11,500	Natural-caused, lightning
2023	Black Feather Fire	2,198	Natural-caused, lightning
2022	Cerro Pelado Fire	45,605	Human-caused, escaped pile prescribed burn
2022	Calf Canyon Fire	299,565	Human-caused, escaped pile prescribed burn
2022	Hermits Peak Fire	41,909	Human-caused, escaped broadcast prescribed burn
2021	Cuervito Fire	1,621	Natural-caused, lightning
2020	Medio Fire	4,010	Natural-caused, lightning
2019	Cueva Fire	1,176	Natural-caused, lightning
2019	Naranjo Fire	1,010	Natural-caused, lightning
2018	Venado Fire	4,150	Natural-caused, lightning
2017	Cajete Fire	1,412	Human-caused, campfire

Year	Name of Fire	Acres Burned	Cause of Ignition
2017	Ojitos Fire	3,306	Natural-caused, lightning
2017	Palmer Fire	1,032	Human-caused, fireworks
2017	Deer Creek Fire	1,022	Natural-caused, lightning
2015	Commissary Fire	2,536	Natural-caused, lightning
2014	Pino Fire	4,313	Natural-caused, lightning
2014	Diego Fire	3,614	Natural-caused, lightning
2013	Thompson Ridge Fire	23,938	Human-caused, downed power line
2013	Jaroso Fire	11,149	Natural-caused, lightning
2013	Tres Lagunas Fire	10,219	Human-caused, downed power line
2011	Las Conchas Fire	156,593	Human-caused, downed power line
2011	Pacheco Fire	10,113	Human-caused, escaped campfire
2011	Guacamalla Fire	1,558	Natural-caused, lightning
2010	South Fork Fire	17,100	Natural-caused, lightning
2010	Virgin Canyon Fire	1,706	Natural-caused, lightning
2010	Grave Fire	1,656	Natural-caused, lightning
2010	Rio Fire	1,350	Human-caused, camping
2009	San Miguel Fire	1,635	Natural-caused, lightning

Year	Name of Fire	Acres Burned	Cause of Ignition
2006	Bear Paw Fire	3,075	Human-caused, undetermined
2003	Capulin Fire	7,429	Natural-caused, lightning
2002	Borrego Fire	12,995	Human-caused, incendiary
2002	Trampas Fire	5,800	Natural-caused, lightning
2002	Lakes Fire	4,026	Human-caused, camping
2000	Cerro Grande Fire	47,650	Human-caused, escaped broadcast prescribed burn
2000	Viveash Fire	28,348	Human-caused, undetermined
2000	Prieta Fire	1,555	Natural-caused, lightning

Acres burned by human-caused wildfire other than escaped prescribed burns	253,101
Acres burned by wildfire ignited by escaped prescribed burns	434,729
Acres burned by human-caused wildfire	687,830
Acres burned by natural-caused wildfire	96,689
Total acres burned	**784,519**

Notes–

1) This table includes fires that either burned within the Santa Fe National Forest, or were ignited within the Santa Fe National Forest.

2) The source of most of the data in this table is the U.S. Forest Service “Wild Land Fire” data in the Fire_History.zip geodatabase file downloaded from the Region 3 geospatial data site on March 8, 2024. The data site designated the causes of a few of the wildfires with known causes as “cause undetermined,” so other information sources were utilized for those fires.

3) This table includes fires designated as “natural caused” fires, that were greatly expanded by the Forest Service. However, it is not known to what extent that occurred during most fires in which that strategy was employed. It is

known that the 2024 Indios Fire and Tanques Fire were greatly expanded by USFS aerial and hand ignitions. For example, during the Tanques Fire, when the fire reached 13 acres, the Forest Service began expanding the fire for "resource management objectives." So out of a total of 6,645 acres burned, only 13 acres actually burned due to the lightning strike ignition, and 6,632 acres were primarily ignited by the USFS.

4) This table only considers actual number of acres burned. It does not take into account any differences in the time required for the Forest Service to suppress fires with differing ignition types, which could affect the number of acres burned. For example, it's possible that a lightning strike fire could be suppressed more quickly than a fire ignited by an escaped broadcast prescribed burn, and quicker fire suppression generally reduces the number of acres burned.