

California & Oregon wildfires 2020

Research Topic:			
Geographical Question:	What?	Where?	When?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Millions of acres of land are burning, devastating towns and blanketing communities in thick smoke. At least 24 people have died in California alone, and officials worry that the toll will continue to rise in these record breaking fires. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildfires are burning in Utah, Nevada, Arizona, Wyoming, Idaho and Montana but the largest are in Oregon, Washington, and California Whole towns in California, as well as Oregon and Washington, have been razed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fire season has been expanding — sometimes starting as early as the spring and lasting into late fall. Wildfires in the Sierra Nevada region and the Pacific Northwest have also gotten larger and more frequent in recent years.
Source:	BBC News “California and Oregon 2020 wildfires in maps, graphics and images” 18/09/2020 https://tinyurl.com/y2zbvj3k	NY Times “Where the Wildfires Are Burning, and Other Answers You Need” https://tinyurl.com/yy8c95jq	NY Times “Record Wildfires on the West Coast Are Capping a Disastrous Decade” 24/09/2020 https://tinyurl.com/y24a2wj3
Geographical Question:	Why?	Who?	How?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong, dry, offshore winds that are causing extreme fire behaviour. This can produce mushroom cloud-like plumes of smoke that reach 40,000 feet in height and fire vortexes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thousands of people in the Western states have had to evacuate their homes. Millions up and down the coast have spent weeks living under thick clouds of smoke and ash. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human activity started many fires. Lightning strikes in August sparked a number of the blazes, while unusually strong winds, warm temperatures and dry conditions have fuelled additional fires.
Source:	CNBC News “Deadly wildfires worsen across California, Oregon and Washington” 10/09/2020 https://tinyurl.com/yywjfhk8	NY Times “Record Wildfires on the West Coast Are Capping a Disastrous Decade” 24/09/2020 https://tinyurl.com/y24a2wj3	The Cut “Some Wildfires on the West Coast Are Getting Even Worse” 15/09/2020 https://tinyurl.com/y5gkzj6k
Supporting Sources:	Scientific America: “Photos Show Massive Wildfires Devastating Oregon and California” https://tinyurl.com/yx9uu4p6 , Washington Post, “Western wildfires: Evacuations in California and Oregon” https://tinyurl.com/y2kapfvy N.P.R. “Wildfires Latest...” https://tinyurl.com/y4ssqfx3		
Connections to other geographical issues/events:	Climate Change: Climate change has triggered hotter temperatures and dry conditions that have sparked enormous wildfires. This summer was the hottest on record with a heatwave and extreme drought conditions in August 2020. VOX “Unprecedented”: What’s behind the California, Oregon, and Washington wildfires”, 15/09/2020 https://tinyurl.com/yx9tlwlo		

