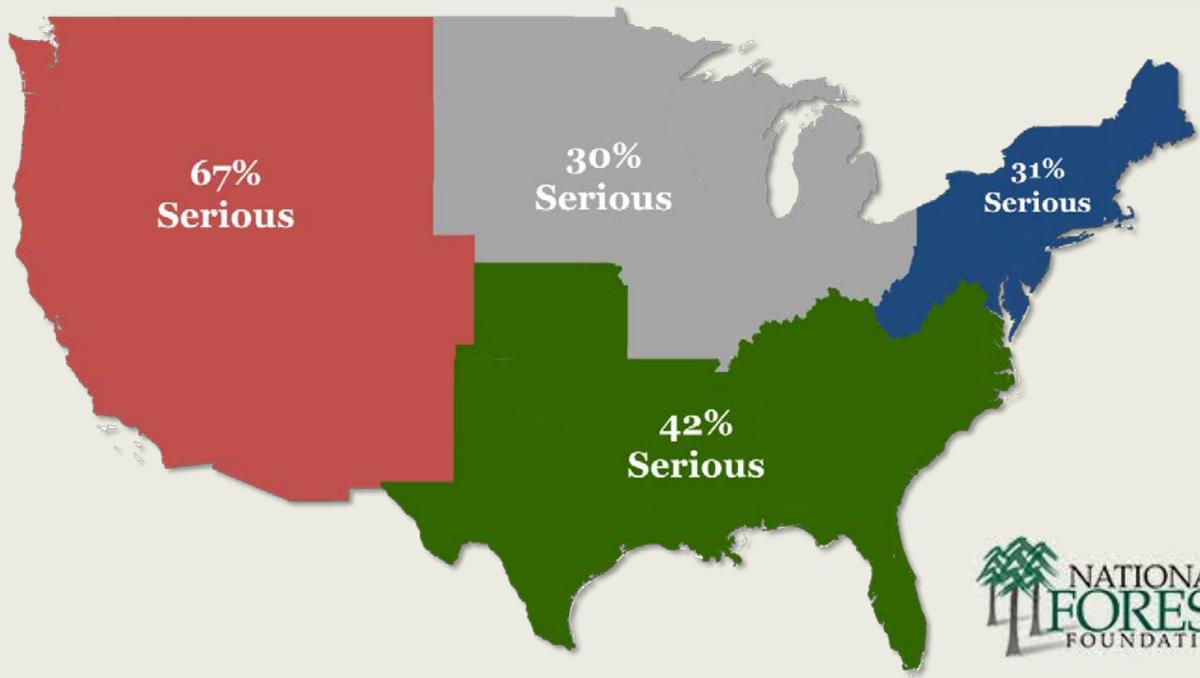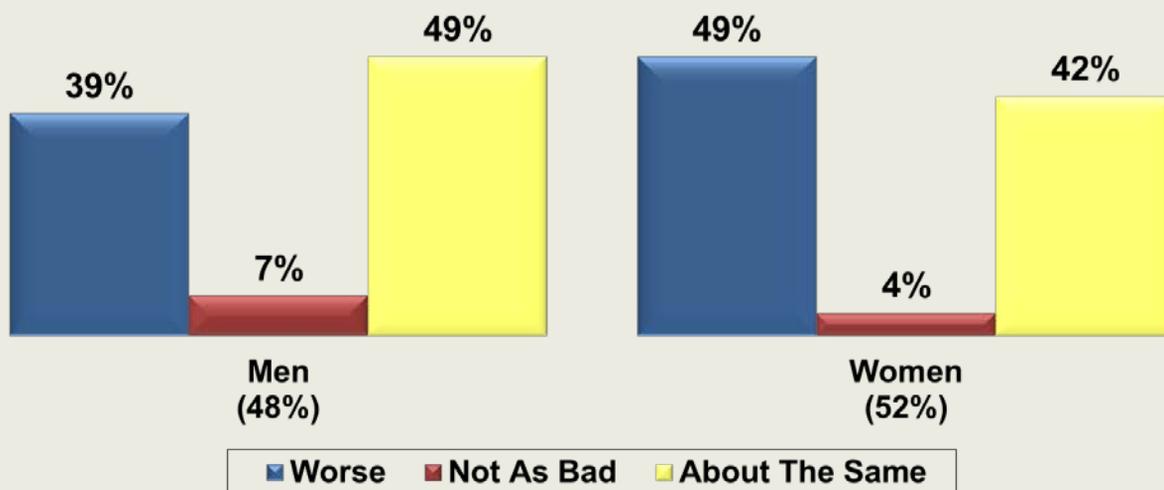# American Voters' Views on Wildfires

- **Forty-four percent (44%) of voters see uncontrollable wildfires as a serious problem.** Just under half (44%) of U.S. voters say "uncontrollable wildfires that destroy property and forests "is a serious problem, facing the nation – with one-in-four calling it an "extremely" or "very" serious problem. This is the highest proportion to register this view since 2007. Concerns about this issue are drastically different by region, with 42% of voters in the West saying wildfires are an extremely or very serious problem and two-thirds deeming them t o be at least somewhat serious.

67%
Serious

30%
Serious

31%
Serious

42%
Serious

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American Voters' Views on Wildfires

- **Equal numbers of voters say wildfires in the country are worse than they were five years ago as say they are about the same.** Fully 44% of voters say wildfires are worse than they were five years ago, while 45% say they are about the same. Almost no one - a scant 5% - say they are not as bad as they were five years ago. Interestingly, there is no clear split by region on this question, and voters in the West are actually the most likely to say wildfires in the country are about the same as they were five years ago (42% worse than five years ago/50% about the same). There is, however, a clear difference by gender. Half (49%) of women judge wildfires to be worse than they were five years ago (42% the same.) – ten points higher than among their male counterparts (39% of men view wildfires as worse; 49% about the same).

Men (48%): Worse 39%, Not As Bad 7%, About The Same 49%

Women (52%): Worse 49%, Not As Bad 4%, About The Same 42%

Legend: ■ Worse ■ Not As Bad □ About The Same

American Voters' Views on Wildfires

Pie chart:
- Worry More 25%
- Worry Less 34%
- Same 30%

- **On a personal level, a majority of voters are either more worried about wildfires affecting their own personal safety than they were five years ago, or worried the same amount.** When asked if they personally worried more or worried less about wild fires than they did five years ago, 25% of voters said they worried more, 30% said they worried the same amount, and 34% said they worried less. Women, Hispanics, and voters in the West are most likely to say they are more worried than they were five years ago.

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American Voters' Views on Wildfires

- **A majority of voters say that forest fires are unpredictable and dangerous and should be contained and extinguished as soon as they are discovered.**
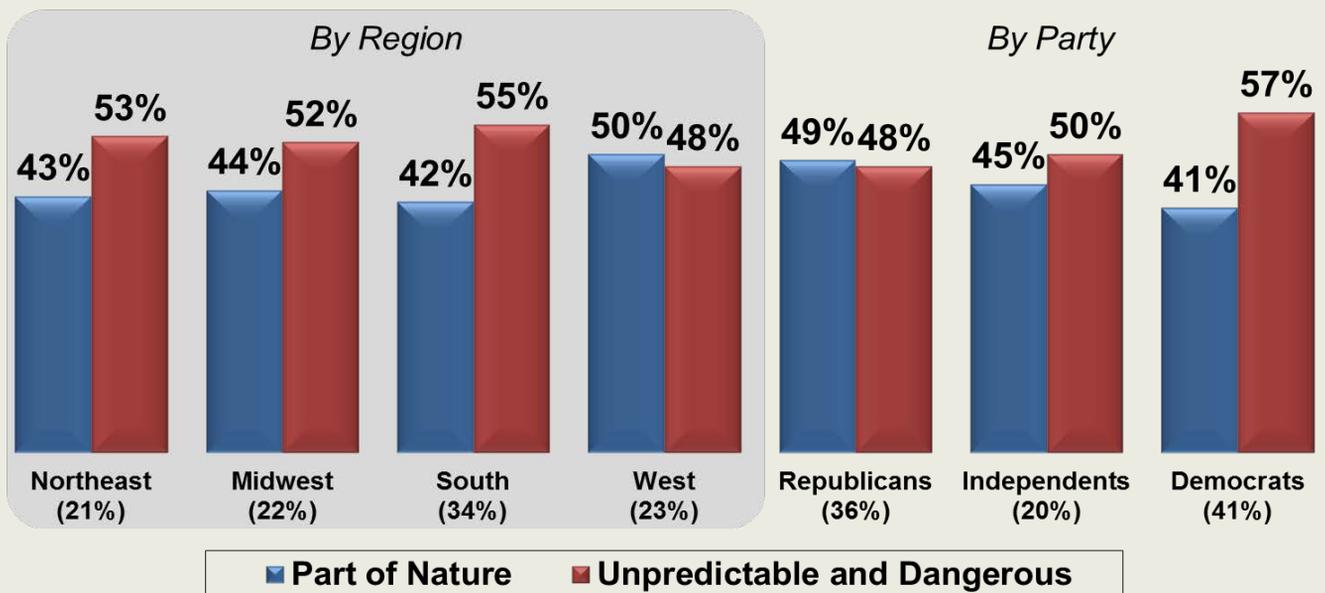 Voters were presented with two options:

  Forest fires are a part of nature. We need to protect communities from fires, but in remote areas we should let fires burn and let nature take its course.
  ...or...
  Forest fires are unpredictable and dangerous. We need to contain and extinguish fires as soon as they are discovered.

- Fully 52% of voters said that forest fires are unpredictable and dangerous, with 44% saying they are a part of nature. There is a clear distinction by region, and party as depicted in the following graph.

By Region

	Part of Nature	Unpredictable and Dangerous
Northeast (21%)	43%	53%
Midwest (22%)	44%	52%
South (34%)	42%	55%
West (23%)	50%	48%

By Party

	Part of Nature	Unpredictable and Dangerous
Republicans (36%)	49%	48%
Independents (20%)	45%	50%
Democrats (41%)	41%	57%

■ **Part of Nature**   ■ **Unpredictable and Dangerous**

Clearly, there is yet another distinction between those in the West and those elsewhere in the country. Moreover, there is a decided partisan distinction, with voters in the West divided , but majorities in the rest of the country saying that fires are dangerous. Party also bears a relationship to responses.

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