

Understanding A Brush Fire #1

Factors that influence the start and progression of a brush fire: Fuel, Weather & Topography

FUEL: Debris, leaves, grass, trees and any other combustible materials available in the fire area.

On Big Pine Key, fuels vary in size and type. Debris from Hurricane Irma and a build up of local flora and fauna have created a prime fuel source for fire.



WEATHER: A combination of wind, precipitation, relative humidity and temperature all play roles in fire conditions.

The current weather conditions of relatively low humidity, high temperatures and shifting winds enhance conditions in which a wildfire can occur, as the existing fuels on Big Pine Key have continued to dry out.

TOPOGRAPHY: The terrain of Big Pine Key consists of wooded lots and homes with large amount of fuels. These environments allow fire to move forward. Roads and yards that have defensible space create fire breaks that can stop or slow the progression of fire. Defensible space is the cut and maintained areas of your property that are free of debris, combustible materials, and excessive brush growth.



Combining these factors, firefighters can create a fire behavior picture enabling them to understand the current and future direction of a brush fire allowing them to plan ahead for how best to use all resources on a fire operation.