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Largest wildfire in Louisiana was caused by arson, state officials say

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The largest wildfire in Louisiana history that has destroyed tens of thousands of acres was caused by arson, state officials announced.

The Louisiana State Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) said it concluded its investigation into the wildfires in Beauregard Parish and found that the Tiger Island Fire was deliberately caused.

Officials are offering a \$2,000 reward to anyone who has information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons who caused the fire, the LDAF said in a press release Saturday.

The Tiger Island Fire began on Aug. 22 in a wooded pine plantation and has destroyed more than 31,000 acres of land and damaged 20 homes and structures, LDAF officials said.

The fire is 50% contained as of Sunday, according to the [National Wildfire Coordinating Group](#).

Louisiana State Department of Agriculture and Forestry officials couldn't provide specific details about the cause of the wildfire, as

it's an active investigation, but told ABC News that investigators found the fire started in a secluded area on forested property.

The fire season in Louisiana this year has been unparalleled due to extreme temperatures and dry conditions, according to [The Associated Press](#).



This photo provided by Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry shows scorched woodlands near Merryville, La., at the Tiger Island Fire, Aug., 30, 2023.

Alison Coons/AP, FILE

There were about 600 wildfires in the state in August, with officials anticipating that number to grow, according to The AP.

"Louisiana is still facing unpredictable and dangerous conditions as we continue to fight wildfires across the state. This is a long-term event and until we get a significant amount of rain, we must

remain vigilant," Gov. John Bel Edwards said in a [statement](#) Thursday. "Our state is still a tinderbox and there are still fires popping up all over. Do not burn anything. We must do all we can to prevent the further spread of wildfires and ease the stress on our responders."

About 60,000 acres of land have burned in Louisiana this year, according to The AP.

Louisiana declared a statewide burn ban Thursday to include any open flame outdoors. The State Fire Marshal's Office said people should not "burn anything" until further notice, according to the NWCG.

"Citations and arrests are happening across this state in partnership with local and state law enforcement agencies," the NWCG said.

The Lions Camp Fire and wildfires in Rapides Parish were also a result of arson, according to the LDAF.

Officials have asked the public for help identifying a suspect or suspects who may have caused those blazes.

Louisiana state law [defines](#) simple arson as "the intentional damaging by any explosive substance or the setting fire to any property of another, without the consent of the owner," and "the starting of a fire or causing an explosion while the offender is engaged in the perpetration or attempted perpetration of another felony offense even though the offender does not have the intent to start a fire or cause an explosion."