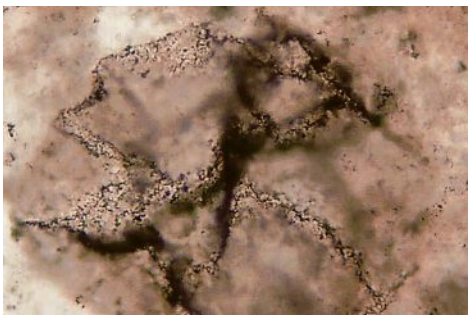




New method spots signs of Earth’s primordial life

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Wildfires are key concern at COP30



Last year was the world’s hottest year on record, and wildfires caused unprecedented tropical forest loss, according to over 20 years of data released in June by the World Resources Institute. MICHAEL DANTAS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES FILE

Data: 2024 set record for tropical forest loss

Andre Cabette Fabio
THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION

BELEM, Brazil – As high temperatures and forest degradation fuel record-breaking wildfires, dozens of governments and organizations meeting at the COP30 climate summit have pledged to boost prevention efforts and funding to fight the stronger, more frequent blazes.

Government environment and forest agencies from Ecuador, Peru, Ghana and Kenya along with nearly three dozen environmental and Indigenous groups worldwide signed an agreement to secure \$100 million in funding by 2030 to strengthen wildfire prevention and response.

The initial focus of the pledge, called the Wildfire Action Accelerator, will be the Amazon Basin, the world’s largest tropical forest, located mostly in Brazil.

Research shows forests in South America and other humid tropical areas are growing more flammable, with fires flaring up in areas that once would not

“We need to be ready for the next extremely dry year. Fire doesn’t respect borders, and we need cooperation.”

Emanuel Lins
Government adviser at the Biodiversity Division of Brazil’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs

have been likely to burn. Last year was the world’s hottest on record, and wildfires caused unprecedented tropical forest loss, according to more than 20 years of data released in June by environmental NGO World Resources Institute.

“We need to be ready for the next extremely dry year,” Emanuel Lins, government adviser at the Biodiversity Division of Brazil’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said at COP30.

“Fire doesn’t respect borders, and we need cooperation,” he said.

Nations also signed a separate call for action proposed by Brazil to incorporate more Indigenous knowledge into efforts at preventing and managing wildfires, with more than 60 signatures, Lins said.

“It’s the first time wildfires are tack-

led on a stage of this magnitude,” Lins said.

Indigenous knowledge

According to the Wildfire Action Accelerator pledge, “fire is fast becoming a defining feature of the global climate crisis,” requiring more focus on prevention than on emergency response.

Wildfires are projected to increase globally by 14% by 2030 and 30% by 2050, according to a 2022 report co-written by the United Nations Environmental Programme. While much of the damage has taken place in tropical forests in developing nations, wealthy nations including the United States, Canada and Greece also have had more intense wildfires in the past year.

With South America hit by widespread drought and fires, Brazil accounted for 42% of the record 16.5 million acres of forests lost in 2024, according to World Resources Institute data.

Communities can help prevent wildfires through measures such as creating firebreaks and preemptively

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Wife gets prison in 2023 case for drug smuggling

Don Reid
Coldwater Daily Reporter
USA TODAY NETWORK

The wife of a former Lakeland Correctional inmate, Della Williams, 57, of Detroit, will serve 19 months to 10 years in prison herself for bringing drugs into the Coldwater prison in 2023.

Circuit Judge Bill O’Grady imposed the agreed-upon term on Monday, Nov. 17, after Williams entered a guilty plea to possession of methamphetamine on Oct. 13.

The nursing home aid said nothing in court or as she was taken from the temporary courtroom in Coldwater for transfer to the Women’s Huron Valley Correctional Facility in Ypsilanti.

Williams was free on bond after she turned herself in to the Branch County Jail on the charges on May 28 and will receive only one day of jail credit.

Lakeland records showed Williams visited her husband, Joseph Dukes, III, 31 times since 2021. After one visit, the Michigan Department of Corrections staff discovered a package hidden under a plunger in the public lobby bathroom of the Coldwater prison on Dec. 9, 2023, according to the Michigan State Police report.

Inside the package was another filled with several balloons, which were field tests by troopers who determined the balloons contained meth,

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QUINCY SCHOOLS

Voters closer to seeing bond proposal

Don Reid
Coldwater Daily Reporter
USA TODAY NETWORK

QUINCY — The Quincy Community Schools board on Monday, Nov. 17 unanimously voted to take the next step toward putting a \$60 million school bond issue before voters May 5, 2026.

The school board will request that Michigan’s Treasury Department accept and authorize a vote on a 4.55 mill increase for 25 years, which would raise the district’s property tax millage to 7 mills.

Study committee member Tom Madden said that would increase the average district residential local taxes to be-

tween \$330 to \$400 a year.

Madden explained that each residence is different. He promised that as the vote gets nearer, the board would provide a way for each person to receive “Exact information of what they would expect for the annual increase.”

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