



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
 Thursday, November 1, 2007

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**  
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**Government Gets High Marks for Response to Fires**  
**CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES DRAW LARGE AUDIENCE**

The California wildfires overshadowed all other news stories last week both in terms of public interest and news coverage. Four-in-ten Americans followed news about the fires very closely, making it the fourth most closely followed news story of the year. The only stories that have attracted a larger audience this year were rising gas prices in May, the Virginia Tech shootings in April, and the Minnesota bridge collapse in August. Nearly half of the public (46%) listed the California fires as the single news story they followed more closely than any other last week.

Large scale natural disasters, when they occur on American soil, tend to attract a large news audience. Interest in last week's California fires does not come close to the level of interest for Hurricane Katrina (73% followed that story very closely), the San Francisco earthquake of 1989, or Hurricane Andrew in 1992. It is more comparable to past California fires – slightly below the level of interest in the 1993 fires and slightly higher than in the fires of 2003.

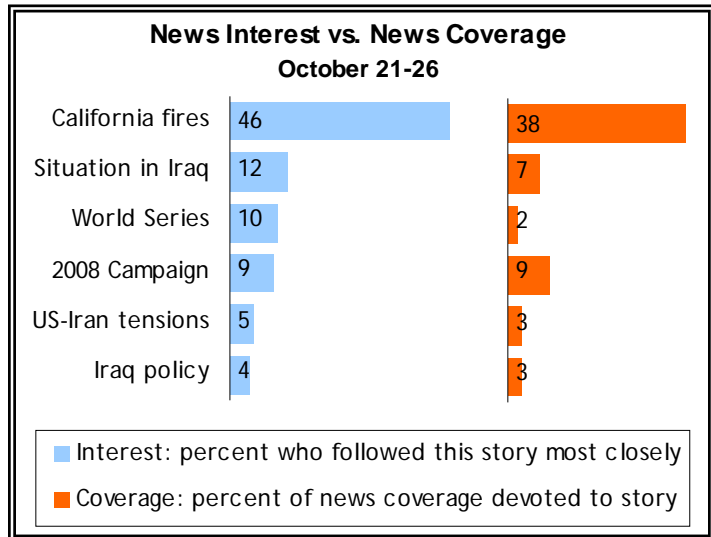
Comprising 38% of the national newshole, the wildfires became the second most heavily covered news story of 2007. Only the Virginia Tech shootings surpassed the fires in terms of overall news coverage. The fires were

Public Interest in Natural Disasters		
Event	Date	% following very closely
San Francisco earthquake	Nov 1989	73
Hurricanes Katrina & Rita	Oct 2005	73
Hurricane Andrew	Sep 1992	66
Midwest floods	Aug 1993	65
Earthquake in Southern California	Jan 1994	63
Hurricane Hugo	Oct 1989	60
Tsunami in Indian Ocean	Jan 2005	58
Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan	Sep 2004	52
Drought/Effect on farmers	Aug 1988	49
Hurricane Isabel	Sep 2003	47
Hurricane Floyd	Oct 1999	45
Fires in Southern California	Dec 1993	44
<b>California wildfires</b>	<b>Oct 2007</b>	<b>40</b>
Gulf coast hurricanes	Jul 2005	38
California wildfires	Nov 2003	38
Hurricanes in Gulf of Mexico	Oct 2002	38
Tornadoes in Oklahoma & Kansas	May 1999	38
Floods in California	Mar 1995	37
Hurricane Mitch	Nov 1998	36
Hurricane Wilma	Nov 2005	34

covered more intensely on television news outlets than on other sectors – 53% of network TV news and 51% of cable news was devoted to the story.

The government – state, local and federal – receives high marks from the public for its response to the fires. Reactions to the government’s response stand in stark contrast to the dismal ratings the government received in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Fully three-quarters of the public (76%) give the state and local governments in California excellent or good ratings for their response to the fires. Only 16% give the local and state governments fair or poor marks. In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, only 41% of the public gave the local and state governments in Louisiana and Mississippi excellent or good ratings, 51% rated them fair or poor.



Similarly, impressions of the federal government’s response to the California disaster are much more positive than the ratings it received for its handling of Katrina. Nearly six-in-ten Americans (58%) say the federal government has been doing an excellent or good job responding to the wildfires. Roughly a third (34%) rate the federal government’s efforts only fair or poor. Following Katrina, only 38% gave the federal government excellent or good marks, 58% graded the response efforts fair or poor.

<i>Job they are doing handling...</i>	State & local government %	Federal government %
California wildfires		
Excellent/Good	76	58
Only fair/Poor	16	34
Don’t know	8	8
	100	100
Hurricane Katrina (Sept 2005)		
Excellent/Good	41	38
Only fair/Poor	51	58
Don’t know	8	4
	100	100

There is a significant partisan gap in evaluations of the government response to the fires – particularly at the federal level. Fully 75% of Republicans give the federal government an excellent or good rating compared with 52% of Democrats. The gap was even larger after Katrina when Democrats were especially critical of the Bush administration’s response to the disaster. In September 2005, 63% of Republicans gave the federal government an excellent or

good rating compared with only 22% of Democrats. At that time, fully 40% of Democrats said the federal government was doing a poor job responding to the Hurricane.

### Media Gets High Marks for Coverage

The news media get high ratings for their coverage of the fires. Fully 78% say the press has done an excellent or good job covering the wildfires, 17% rate the coverage fair or poor. A majority of the public (62%) says news organizations have given the right amount of coverage to the story; 25% say the story has been overcovered; while just 9% say it has received too little coverage.

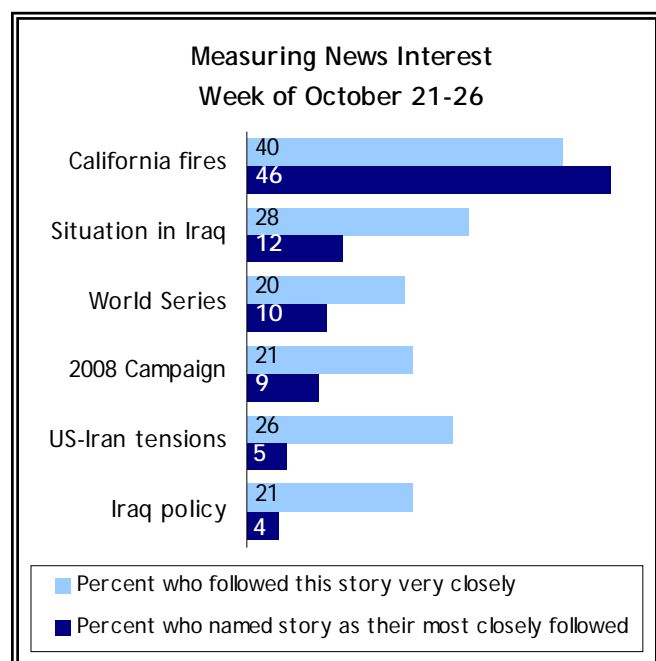
<i>Job press has done:</i>	
Excellent/Good	78
Only fair/Poor	17
Don't know	5
	100
<i>Amount of coverage:</i>	
Too much	25
Too little	9
Right amount	62
Don't know	4
	100

These findings are based on the most recent installment of the weekly *News Interest Index*, an ongoing project of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. The index, building on the Center's longstanding research into public attentiveness to major news stories, examines news interest as it relates to the news media's agenda. The weekly survey is conducted in conjunction with The Project for Excellence in Journalism's *News Coverage Index*, which monitors the news reported by major newspaper, television, radio and online news outlets on an ongoing basis. In the most recent week, data relating to news coverage was collected from October 21-26 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week was collected October 26-29 from a nationally representative sample of 1,035 adults.

### The Week's Other Top Stories

In other news last week, 28% of the public followed the situation in Iraq very closely, unchanged from the previous week. Only 12% listed the Iraq war as their most closely followed story of the week as most attention was focused on the California wildfires.

One-in-five Americans followed the World Series very closely and 10% listed this as their most closely followed story. The national media devoted 2% of its overall coverage to the World Series.



News coverage of the 2008 presidential campaign remained substantial – 9% of the national newshole focused on the campaign. Roughly one-in-five Americans (21%) followed campaign news very closely and 9% listed this as their most closely followed story.

The public continues to express modest interest in U.S.-Iranian relations. Roughly a quarter (26%) followed news about mounting tensions between the U.S. and Iran last week, as the Bush administration imposed new sanctions on the Iranians, 5% listed this as their most closely followed story.

## About the News Interest Index

The *News Interest Index* is a weekly survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press aimed at gauging the public's interest in and reaction to major news events.

This project has been undertaken in conjunction with the Project for Excellence in Journalism's *News Coverage Index*, an ongoing content analysis of the news. The News Coverage Index catalogues the news from top news organizations across five major sectors of the media: newspapers, network television, cable television, radio and the internet. Each week (from Sunday through Friday) PEJ will compile this data to identify the top stories for the week. The News Interest Index survey will collect data from Friday through Monday to gauge public interest in the most covered stories of the week.

Results for the weekly surveys are based on telephone interviews among a nationwide sample of approximately 1,000 adults, 18 years of age or older, conducted under the direction of ORC (Opinion Research Corporation). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls, and that results based on subgroups will have larger margins of error.

For more information about the Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, go to [www.journalism.org](http://www.journalism.org).

## About the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of six projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director  
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research  
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors  
Richard Wike and Kim Parker, Senior Researchers  
April Clark, Juliana Menasce Horowitz, Robert Suls, Shawn Neidorf and Allison Pond, Research Associates  
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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**OCTOBER 26-29, 2007 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,035**

Q.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE ITEMS] [IF NECESSARY “Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?”]**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a. News about the current situation and events in Iraq					
Iraq	28	37	21	13	1=100
October 19-22, 2007	28	37	20	15	*=100
October 12-15, 2007	26	36	18	19	1=100
October 5-8, 2007	29	33	22	16	*=100
September 28 – October 1, 2007	30	41	18	11	*=100
September 21-24, 2007	32	38	17	13	*=100
September 14-17, 2007	31	36	18	15	0=100
September 7-10, 2007	32	34	20	14	*=100
August 30 – September 2, 2007	31	34	18	16	1=100
August 24-27, 2007	34	36	18	12	*=100
August 17-20, 2007	33	34	18	15	*=100
August 10-13, 2007	36	37	14	13	*=100
August 3-6, 2007	29	40	19	12	*=100
July 27-30, 2007	28	36	19	16	1=100
July 20-23, 2007	28	34	21	16	1=100
July 13-16, 2007	25	41	17	16	1=100
July 6-9, 2007	36	34	18	12	*=100
June 29-July 2, 2007	32	35	19	13	1=100
June 22-25, 2007	30	36	18	15	1=100
June 15-18, 2007	30	37	20	13	*=100
June 8-11, 2007	32	38	15	14	1=100
June 1-4, 2007	30	36	20	13	1=100
May 24-27, 2007	33	36	18	12	1=100
May 18-21, 2007	36	34	15	14	1=100
May 11-14, 2007	30	34	18	17	1=100
May 4-7, 2007	38	37	15	10	*=100
April 27-30, 2007	27	35	21	16	1=100
April 20-23, 2007	28	35	22	15	*=100
April 12-16, 2007	34	33	20	13	*=100
April 5-9, 2007	33	39	16	11	1=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	34	37	16	13	*=100
March 23-March 26, 2007 <sup>1</sup>	31	38	18	12	1=100
March 16-19, 2007	34	34	17	15	*=100
March 9-12, 2007	34	37	16	13	*=100
March 2-5, 2007	37	37	16	9	1=100
February 23-26, 2007	36	36	15	13	*=100
February 16-19, 2007	30	36	19	14	1=100
February 9-12, 2007	37	34	18	11	*=100
February 2-5, 2007	38	38	17	7	*=100
January 26-29, 2007	36	38	15	11	*=100
January 19-22, 2007	37	34	18	10	1=100

<sup>1</sup> From May, 2003 to March 23-26, 2007, the story was listed as “News about the current situation in Iraq.”

**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
<b>January 12-15, 2007</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1=100</b>
January, 2007	46	40	8	5	1=100
<b>January 5-8, 2007</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0=100</b>
December, 2006	42	39	12	7	*=100
<b>November 30-December 3, 2006</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>*=100</b>
Mid-November, 2006	44	38	12	6	*=100
September, 2006	33	43	14	8	2=100
August, 2006	41	39	12	7	1=100
June, 2006	37	43	13	6	1=100
May, 2006	42	35	15	7	1=100
April, 2006	43	36	13	7	1=100
March, 2006	43	38	12	6	1=100
February, 2006	39	42	12	6	1=100
January, 2006	40	40	12	7	1=100
December, 2005	45	38	11	5	1=100
Early November, 2005	41	40	13	6	*=100
Early October, 2005	43	36	15	6	*=100
Early September, 2005	32	40	20	7	1=100
July, 2005	43	37	13	6	1=100
Mid-May, 2005	42	42	11	5	*=100
Mid-March, 2005	40	39	14	5	2=100
February, 2005	38	45	13	4	*=100
January, 2005	48	37	11	4	*=100
December, 2004	34	44	15	6	1=100
Mid-October, 2004	42	38	11	8	1=100
Early September, 2004	47	37	9	6	1=100
August, 2004	39	42	12	6	1=100
July, 2004	43	40	11	6	*=100
June, 2004	39	42	12	6	1=100
April, 2004	54	33	8	5	*=100
Mid-March, 2004	47	36	12	4	1=100
Early February, 2004	47	38	10	4	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	48	39	9	4	*=100
December, 2003	44	38	11	6	1=100
November, 2003	52	33	9	5	1=100
September, 2003	50	33	10	6	1=100
Mid-August, 2003	45	39	10	5	1=100
Early July, 2003	37	41	13	8	1=100
June, 2003	46	35	13	6	*=100
May, 2003	63	29	6	2	*=100
April 11-16, 2003 <sup>2</sup>	47	40	10	2	1=100
April 2-7, 2003	54	34	9	2	1=100
March 20-24, 2003	57	33	7	2	1=100
March 13-16, 2003 <sup>3</sup>	62	27	6	4	1=100
February, 2003	62	25	8	4	1=100
January, 2003	55	29	10	4	2=100
December, 2002	51	32	10	6	1=100
Late October, 2002	53	33	8	5	1=100
Early October, 2002	60	28	6	5	1=100

<sup>2</sup> From March 20-24, 2003 to April 11-16, 2003, the story was listed as “News about the war in Iraq.”

<sup>3</sup> From Early October, 2002, to March 13-16, 2003, the story was listed as “Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq.”

**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
Early September, 2002 <sup>4</sup>	48	29	15	6	2=100
b. The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq					
Iraq	21	25	25	28	1=100
October 19-22, 2007	21	28	20	31	*=100
October 12-15, 2007	19	23	22	36	*=100
October 5-8, 2007	20	28	23	29	*=100
September 28 – October 1, 2007	22	32	22	24	*=100
September 21-24, 2007	25	28	20	27	*=100
September 14-17, 2007 <sup>5</sup>	25	27	20	27	1=100
September 7-10, 2007	25	27	22	26	*=100
August 30-September 2, 2007	22	27	20	31	*=100
August 24-27, 2007	25	30	19	25	1=100
August 3-6, 2007	21	33	20	26	*=100
July 27-30, 2007	24	28	20	27	1=100
July 20-23, 2007	23	24	24	28	1=100
July 13-16, 2007	20	30	20	30	*=100
July 6-9, 2007	27	26	23	24	*=100
June 1-4, 2007	20	27	24	27	2=100
May 24-27, 2007	30	32	20	18	*=100
May 18-21, 2007	24	32	19	24	1=100
May 11-14, 2007	25	26	19	29	1=100
May 4-7, 2007	30	31	19	20	*=100
April 27-30, 2007	18	31	21	29	1=100
April 20-23, 2007	22	29	24	25	*=100
April 12-16, 2007	25	29	22	23	1=100
April 5-9, 2007	31	28	20	21	*=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	26	29	21	23	1=100
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
January 12-15, 2007: President Bush's proposal to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq	40	33	13	13	1=100
c. Damage caused by wildfires in California	40	41	13	6	*=100
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
November, 2003: Damage caused by wild fires in California	38	35	17	9	1=100
September, 2001: Wild fires in the west	28	37	24	11	*=100
December, 1993: The fires in Southern California	44	39	13	4	*=100
July, 1990: The fires in Southern California	29	35	24	12	0=100
d. The Major League Baseball playoffs and World Series	20	16	20	43	1=100
November, 1989 <sup>6</sup>	23	17	22	38	*=100
October, 1988	31	21	19	28	1=100

<sup>4</sup> In Early September, 2002, the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq."

<sup>5</sup> September 14-17, 2007 asked about "General David Petraeus's report to Congress about how things are going in Iraq."

<sup>6</sup> In 1988 and 1989, the story was listed as "The World Series."



**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
e. Mounting tensions between the United States and Iran	26	34	21	18	1=100
<b>February 23-26, 2007</b>	29	37	18	15	1=100
<b>February 2-5, 2007</b>	33	38	18	10	1=100
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
<b>September 28 – October 1, 2007:</b> Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's recent trip to New York City where he spoke at Columbia University and the United Nations	23	31	20	25	1=100
<b>June 1-4, 2007:</b> Recent talks between the United States and Iran	19	27	27	26	1=100
<b>February 16-19, 2007:</b> Reports that Iran may be supplying weapons to insurgents in Iraq	28	32	20	19	1=100
f. News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election	21	34	26	19	*=100
<b>October 19-22, 2007</b>	23	32	22	23	*=100
<b>October 12-15, 2007</b>	13	31	26	30	*=100
<b>October 5-8, 2007</b>	22	30	24	24	*=100
<b>September 28 – October 1, 2007</b>	21	34	25	20	*=100
<b>September 21-24, 2007</b>	24	31	22	23	*=100
<b>September 14-17, 2007</b>	22	31	24	23	*=100
<b>September 7-10, 2007</b>	18	34	26	22	*=100
<b>August 30-September 2, 2007</b>	19	35	21	25	*=100
<b>August 24-27, 2007</b>	22	28	24	26	*=100
<b>August 17-20, 2007</b>	19	27	24	30	*=100
<b>August 10-13, 2007</b>	23	32	21	24	*=100
<b>August 3-6, 2007</b>	19	31	25	25	*=100
<b>July 27-30, 2007</b>	19	32	22	26	1=100
<b>July 20-23, 2007</b>	16	26	30	27	1=100
<b>July 13-16, 2007</b>	17	29	27	27	*=100
<b>July 6-9, 2007</b>	24	29	24	22	1=100
<b>June 29-July 2, 2007</b>	20	32	25	23	*=100
<b>June 22-25, 2007</b>	18	31	21	30	*=100
<b>June 15-18, 2007</b>	17	32	26	25	*=100
<b>June 8-11, 2007</b>	19	30	24	26	1=100
<b>June 1-4, 2007</b>	16	27	32	24	1=100
<b>May 24-27, 2007</b>	22	33	23	22	*=100
<b>May 18-21, 2007</b>	18	31	24	27	*=100
<b>May 11-14, 2007</b>	18	30	23	28	1=100
<b>May 4-7, 2007</b>	23	34	21	21	1=100
<b>April 27-30, 2007</b>	14	30	29	26	1=100
<b>April 20-23, 2007</b>	18	28	27	27	*=100
<b>April 12-16, 2007</b>	18	28	27	27	*=100
<b>April 5-9, 2007</b>	25	30	26	19	*=100
<b>March 30-April 2, 2007</b>	20	29	27	23	1=100
<b>March 23-26, 2007</b>	20	32	22	26	*=100
<b>March 16-19, 2007</b>	15	28	29	27	1=100
<b>March 9-12, 2007</b>	24	30	23	23	*=100
<b>March 2-5, 2007</b>	19	31	26	23	1=100
<b>February 23-26, 2007</b>	22	33	24	21	*=100
<b>February 16-19, 2007</b>	18	32	22	27	1=100

**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
<b>February 9-12, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>February 2-5, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>January 26-29, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>January 19-22, 2007<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>24</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>2004 Presidential Election</b>					
November, 2004 (RVs)	52	36	8	4	*=100
Mid-October, 2004	46	30	12	11	1=100
August, 2004	32	38	16	14	*=100
July, 2004	29	37	18	15	1=100
April, 2004	31	33	19	16	1=100
Mid-March, 2004	35	34	18	13	*=100
Late February, 2004	24	40	23	12	1=100
Early February, 2004 <sup>8</sup>	29	37	20	13	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	16	30	27	26	1=100
Early January, 2004	14	32	30	23	1=100
December, 2003	16	26	27	30	1=100
November, 2003	11	26	34	28	1=100
October, 2003	12	27	28	32	1=100
September, 2003	17	25	30	27	1=100
Mid-August, 2003	12	27	27	33	1=100
May, 2003	8	19	31	41	1=100
January, 2003	14	28	29	28	1=100
<b>2000 Presidential Election</b>					
Early November, 2000 (RVs)	39	44	12	5	*=100
Mid-October, 2000 (RVs)	40	37	15	8	*=100
Early October, 2000 (RVs)	42	36	15	6	1=100
September, 2000	22	42	21	15	*=100
July, 2000	21	38	20	20	1=100
June, 2000	23	32	23	21	1=100
May, 2000	18	33	26	23	*=100
April, 2000	18	39	22	20	1=100
March, 2000	26	41	19	13	1=100
February, 2000	26	36	21	17	*=100
January, 2000	19	34	28	18	1=100
December, 1999	16	36	24	23	1=100
October, 1999	17	32	28	22	1=100
September, 1999	15	31	33	20	1=100
July, 1999	15	38	24	22	1=100
June, 1999	11	25	29	34	1=100
<b>1996 Presidential Election</b>					
November, 1996 (RVs)	34	45	15	6	*=100
October, 1996	31	39	18	12	*=100
Early September, 1996	24	36	23	17	*=100
July, 1996	22	40	23	14	1=100

<sup>7</sup> January 19-22, 2007 asked about "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

<sup>8</sup> From May 2003 to Early February 2004 and in March 1992, the story was listed as "The race for the Democratic nomination." In January 2003, the story was listed as "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2004." In September 2000, Early September and July 1996, and May 1992, the question asked about "the presidential election campaign." In January, March and April 1996, the story was listed as "News about the Republican presidential candidates." In August 1992, the story was listed as "News about the presidential election." In July 1992, the story was listed as "News about the presidential campaign." In January 1992, the story was listed as "News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination." In 1988, the story was introduced as being from "this past year" and was listed as "News about the presidential campaign in 1988."

**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
March, 1996	26	41	20	13	*=100
January, 1996	10	34	31	24	1=100
September, 1995	12	36	30	22	*=100
August, 1995	13	34	28	25	*=100
June, 1995	11	31	31	26	1=100
<b>1992 Presidential Election</b>					
October, 1992 (RVs)	55	36	7	2	0=100
September, 1992 (RVs)	47	36	11	6	*=100
August, 1992 (RVs)	36	51	11	2	0=100
July, 1992	20	45	26	9	*=100
May, 1992	32	44	16	8	*=100
March, 1992	35	40	16	9	*=100
January, 1992	11	25	36	27	1=100
December, 1991	10	28	32	30	*=100
October, 1991	12	26	31	29	2=100
<b>1988 Presidential Election</b>					
October, 1988 (RVs)	43	44	11	2	*=100
August, 1988 (RVs)	39	45	13	3	*=100
May, 1988	22	46	23	6	3=100
November, 1987	15	28	35	21	1=100
September, 1987	14	34	37	14	1=100

Q.2 Which ONE of the stories I just mentioned have you followed most closely, or is there another story you've been following MORE closely? **[DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE] ? IF "IRAQ" UNSPECIFIED, PROBE: "Do you mean events IN Iraq or the debate over Iraq POLICY?"]**

- 46 Damage caused by wildfires in California
- 12 News about the current situation and events in Iraq
- 10 The Major League Baseball playoffs and World Series
- 9 News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election
- 5 Mounting tensions between the United States and Iran
- 4 The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq
- 6 Some other story (**SPECIFY**)
- 8 Don't know/Refused
- 100

Now thinking about the wildfires in California...

Q.3 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the wildfires **[READ]?**

	Early Sept. 2005 <u>Katrina</u>
31 Excellent	28
47 Good	37
14 Only fair	18
3 Poor	15
<u>5</u> Don't know/Refused <b>[VOL. DO NOT READ]</b>	<u>2</u>
100	100

Q.4 Do you think news organizations are giving too much, too little, or the right amount of coverage to this story?

25 Too much  
 9 Too little  
 62 Right amount  
4 Don't know/Refused  
 100

Q.5 How would you rate [INSERT ITEM; ROTATE] been doing responding to the wildfires? Would you say excellent, good, only fair or poor?

		<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a.	The job state and local governments in California have	29	47	13	3	8=100
	Early September, 2005: <i>Katrina</i>	9	32	29	22	8=100
b.	The job the federal government has	14	44	26	8	8=100
	Early September, 2005: <i>Katrina</i>	8	30	29	29	4=100