California Wildfire Dashboard – short demo script

1. Start on Homepage:

* This dashboard was designed to answer 3 key questions: Are California Wildfires becoming larger, more frequent and more devastating?

2. Navigate to Analysis page

* If we navigate to the Analysis page, we can quickly answer these questions….
* In the Fire Incidents by Year chart we can see that, indeed, wildfires have become more frequent over this time period….starting with 157 fires in 2013 and ending with 257 in 2019 (which is definitely an undercount given limitations in the 2019 data). In particular 2017 and 2018 stand out with huge increases in the number of wildfires with 2017 having more than twice as many fires as the years prior to it. And 24 of those fires were large (over 10,000 acres).
* In the Acres Burned by Year chart we also see that 2017 and 2018 were extreme – over 3 times as many acres burned in 2017 and 2018 compared to prior years. This isn’t surprising as we just saw that there were over twice as many fires that year.
* But if we want to figure out whether those fires were actually larger (rather than just more frequent), we can see from the Average Acres Burned per Wildfire that the size of fires in 2017 was consistent with the size of fires in prior years. 2018, however shows a much larger average wildfire size than any of the other years.
* And if we want to understand more about how destructive these fire years have been, we can look at Destruction Metrics by Year and see that the numbers of fatalities, structures destroyed and damaged has definitely increased over the time period…..with the largest numbers of fatalities and structures destroyed, by far, in 2018 (point out the increasing scale on the y axis).
* If we drill down to the county level, and look at Butte County, for example, we can see that their stats in 2018 were astronomical. Look at the Wildfire Summary metadata: they only had 66 fires over the entire period, but in 2018 they had a huge number of acres burned, and ONE VERY LARGE fire.

3. Navigate to the Wildfire Map page

* Well we just happen to have a handy Wildfire Map on the dashboard where we can view wildfires by the year and see their size by color. If we navigate over to Butte County in 2018 we can see that was the Camp Fire, which as you all may remember was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California’s history, and the most expensive natural disaster in the world in 2018 in terms of insured losses. This was the fire that almost completely destroyed the towns of Paradise and Concow (show en.wikipedia.org/Camp\_Fire\_(2018)

So, as you can see…..our dashboard is a great tool for exploring our key questions……