

Florida

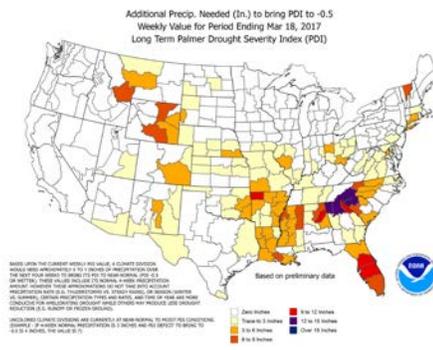
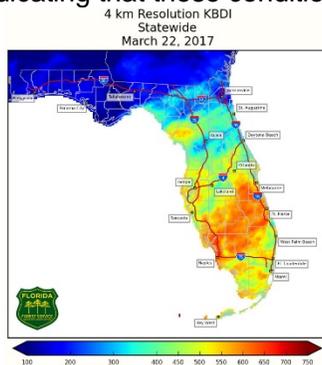
Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

March 24, 2017



Subject: Deep soil moisture and live fuel moisture dryness in most of Florida due to long-term drought conditions has created a fuel condition that supports fires of longer duration and more extreme fire behavior than would normally be expected.

Discussion: Drought conditions continue to persist from last fall with continued drought development across portions of northern, central and southern Florida. Current Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KDBI) values are in the 90th to 95th percentile, with KDBI values ranging from 600 to 700+. When low relative humidity levels and windy conditions arise these baseline dryness levels add the necessary fuels component to increase fire behavior and duration beyond what would normally be expected. The 6 to 10 day outlook shows below normal chances for precipitation for most of central and southern Florida, with equal chances for precipitation for the rest of March, indicating that these conditions are likely to persist. <http://www.cpc.noaa.gov>



Parliament Fire; Observed Fire Behavior 3/21/17



Difference from normal conditions: Greenup is starting to occur, but with drought conditions any herbaceous growth will further deplete moisture in soils. Without significant rain, green herbaceous and woody fuels will dry quickly becoming available for consumption and less of a barrier to fire spread than usual. 100 hour and 1000 hour fuels are also extremely dry hovering at or above the 90th percentile. Fires have exhibited prolific and long range spotting.

Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:

- Extreme fire growth and intensity is to be expected with any new or ongoing fires, especially under critical fire weather conditions.
- Typical barriers to fire spread and behavior including roadways may not be effective.
- Dense smoke along travel corridors may cause visibility issues presenting danger to public, and firefighters working along roadways.
- The public will need to be advised to avoid areas near ongoing fires, monitor the media, and heed evacuation notices should fires occur near their homes or places of employment.

Mitigation Measures:

- Fire managers should be prepared to support periods of more frequent fire occurrence as well as complex, larger duration wildfire incidents.
- Extra road guards and increased signing along roadways may be needed to help prevent vehicle and pedestrian accidents in smoky conditions.
- Firefighters should expect to construct wider control lines than typical in all fuel types.
- Due to dry conditions, increasing fire intensity and behavior; firefighters may consider using more indirect strategies and tactics especially in fuel beds containing exotic vegetation.
- Contained fires will require longer periods of patrol to prevent escape.

Area of Concern: All of Florida south and east of a line stretching along the Apalachicola River, including the Florida Keys.

Please reference the map posted on the National Fuels Advisories page:

https://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/fuels_fire-danger/fuels_advisories.htm