NATIONAL FUELS & FIRE DANGER BRIEFING
06/09/2022
Fire Weather Advisories

06/09/2022

Today

Tomorrow

Sources: NWS; Storm Prediction Center

Hot!
1 Active Advisory
Central AZ to Central NM (updated 5/26)
Potential for new ignitions, rapid fire growth, and long duration fires continues in AK, esp. SW AK but now expanding northward. Fine fuels are dry and very receptive, and ground fuels continue to dry as well. Grass Adjective is Very High or Extreme for almost all areas between the Brooks Range and Alaska Range, including SW AK. Spruce Adjective is Extreme from Fairbanks westward thru the Yukon and Kuskokwim drainages.

Expect continued growth on the many (currently ~25 fires ≥ 100 ac) large fires in SW AK today and tomorrow, whereupon a change in the weather pattern may bring moderating conditions.
100-Hr Fuel Moisture

Larger dead woody fuels remain critically dry throughout the Southwest (AZ, NM). Recently sampled (not modeled) 100-hr fuels on Kaibab NF in N AZ found moisture content as low as 4%. The area of concern is extending further into SW CO, S UT, & S NV.

Elsewhere in the West, seasonal drying continues, but moisture content is at near-normal levels, and these fuels have limited potential to cause troublesome fire behavior.

Recent precip helped moisten dead woody fuels in the Northeast but missed MN, N WI, and UP of MI.
ERC values in NM/AZ, SW CO, & S GB continue to exceed normal peak season levels. At least 3 more weeks of elevated fire potential lays ahead.

Drying, esp. in heavy dead woody fuels, continues to progress northward. Sites in central NV/UT are projected to reach 90th percentile ERC in the next few days, about a month earlier than normal.

ERCs have risen to above normal levels along the central CA coast, from the Santa Ynez Mountains to Point Reyes, but trend may slow after this weekend.

Rainfall in parts of EA (MN, N WI, & the UP of MI) and SA (Coastal Plain to Appalachians) has been <20% of normal for early June, driving down dead woody fuel moisture and resulting in elevated ERCs. However, fire potential is offset by abundant green fuels.

Source: Wildland Fire Assessment System (WFAS).
Fire Danger in Southwest Area

Most PSA’s in AZ & NM have ERC values at the 90th percentile or higher, with values exceeding normal seasonal peak ERC (with monsoon onset still a few weeks away). In areas west of The Divide and north of The Rim, where lightning is expected, ERCs exceed the 97th percentile.

Overall, conditions have moderated a bit due to recent cloud cover, higher RH, & even some spotty precip in parts of NM. Improvement has been even better in E NM, where fire danger has reverted to seasonal normal levels.

Note: Charts are current as of Tue 6/7

Area includes NMGNF/Black fire (discovered 5/13; now 297k ac)
2021: After a meager early growing season, parts of the Southwest saw a much greater than normal yield in grass growth due to the robust monsoon.

2022: These carry-over fuels have increased fire ignitions, spread, and intensity for the 2022 fire season.
**Fine Fuels in the Northwest**

**Carry-Over & New Growth**

**2022’s grass & herbaceous fuels**
- Growing vigorously if moist soils
- Above average fuel loading
- Continuous fuel beds

**2021’s fuels crop (coverage by annuals)**
- Due to lack of lightning, some areas with abundant fine fuels did **not** burn
- Alignment with areas of prodigious new growth (carry-over fuels + new crop)

Highlighting areas could be problematic
- NE CA & Columbia Basin – already expecting above normal fire potential
- Northern Great Basin – hot/dry weather could lead to large fires (overdue?)

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**2022 soil moisture in Northwest CONUS**
- Ample moisture – better than depicted here (more precip recently)
- Correlated to fine fuel growth/yield
- Favorable for annuals/invasives (e.g. cheatgrass, red brome)

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Credit: Dr. Matt Reeves (USDA RMRS) & FuelCast [Link]

Images from 5/26 informal presentation to Predictive Services

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06-07-2022
Main threat: Potential for lightning ignitions on very dry fuels in NM (W of The Divide) & AZ (N of The Rim), followed by hot/dry/windy period.

SW, S GB, & W CO: Another 3+ weeks (until monsoon) of elevated fire risk, minimally matching but more likely exceeding normal peak conditions.

AK: Numerous large fires (some still emerging) will continue to burn aggressively for at least the next couple days. A favorable weather change may help moderate conditions in W/SW AK starting this weekend, but potential will continue to rise in eastern Interior.

EA/SA: Below normal precip in some areas has elevated certain fire danger measures, but abundant green fuels continue to offset risk.

Hot weather in SW CONUS sets the stage for inevitable step-up in activity, but no particular concerns in other GAs yet. Watching CA’s mid-Coast.
9 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS & 10 COORDINATION CENTERS

Alaska Area (AK)
California Area (CA)
   North Ops (NOps, ONC)
   South Ops (SOps, OSC)
Eastern Area (EA)
Great Basin Area (GB)
Northern Rockies Area (NR)
Northwest Area (NW)
Rocky Mountain Area (RM)
Southern Area (SA)
Southwest Area (SW)
PARTNERING AGENCIES
Comments or questions?

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