

Southern Area

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Subject: Severe drought conditions, long duration fires in coastal region along the Atlantic Coast.

Deep drying at the surface and subsequent drops in water table moisture have allowed for the entire surface layer to become available for deep burning. This deep burning has affected the potential for hold over fires and re-burns, and the ability of suppression forces to control the edges of going fires.

The coastal regions of North and South Carolina indicate that current drought conditions are severe. KBDI values are beginning to surpass 600 in many places. Long duration incidents can occur as fuel condition will allow fire to burn deeper. Live fuels are contributing to fire behavior, increasing the probability of torching and crowning runs.

Above average temperatures forecasted for the next 30 days across of the Southern Region. Fuel moisture, especially deep organic fuels, will continue to decline until precipitation develops in the form of tropical/monsoon influence.

Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:

- Monitor fire danger indices some values are reaching record levels, maintain situational awareness, both rates of spread and intensities will compromise firefighter safety.
- Watch out for re-burn situations, especially when fire spreads rapidly on the surface while preheating the shrub and timber understory.
- Fires in deep organic fuels will continue to burn until extinguished by suppression action or from assistance from environment.
- Historically wet/swampy areas, may not be barriers, and may support fire movement.
- Fires burning out the roots of trees causing trees to fall with no warning with or without wind.

Mitigation Measures:

- Maintain situational awareness by basing all actions on current and expected fire behavior.
- Ensure firefighters have good anchor points - keeping one foot in the black.
- Direct attack may not be a valid tactical option unless supported by mechanized equipment or aerial resources.
- Obtain daily fire behavior and weather briefings and understand the relationship to current fuels conditions.
- Maintain extended patrol schedules in areas with deep organic soils.

Area of Concern: Map attached to explain in detail geographic extent of area of concern.