

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Southwest Oregon

July 24, 2024



Subject: The recent hot and dry weather in the Pacific Northwest has rapidly dried both live and dead fuels across southwest Oregon. Recent fuels conditions are reported as more like conditions experienced in mid to late August with high consumption of the brush and rapidly curing of live foliage. **Current live and dead fuels have resulted in high lightning efficiency with a significant increase in the amount of fire on the landscape and rapid-fire growth.**

Discussion: Local observations include:

- Extended periods of hot, dry weather have dried both live and dead fuels. 100 and 1000-hr fuels continue to be at or near record low values. Live fuel moistures are dropping rapidly.
- **ERCs in western Oregon are at or above the 97th percentile or near maximum values.**
- Aggressive fire spread has occurred in fuels that are normally barriers to fire spread.

Difference from normal conditions:

- Live fuel moistures are dropping abnormally fast. Fuel conditions are more representative of mid-August, and they are tracking with other large fire years in Oregon.
- Recent fire behavior has been more aggressive than anticipated. Fuel treatments and harvest units typically inhibit fire spread but have supported fire spread.
- Under unstable conditions or sustained winds of 10+ mph expect these areas to support active fire spread.

Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:

- **Offshore wind events have surprised many firefighters.** A 180-degree wind direction change that is accompanied with lower RHs and unstable atmospheric conditions can drastically increase fire behavior in a short amount of time.
- During offshore wind events, when winds over 10 mph and instability occur together, expect extreme fire behavior when wind is aligned with slope.
- Resistance to control continues to increase, even during moderate weather conditions if no substantial precipitation occurs.

Mitigation Measures:

- **Validate safety zones and escape routes frequently.**
- Consider increasing coverage levels when using retardant. Retardant effectiveness has been diminishing.
- Burning Index is an excellent predictor of daily fluctuations influencing fire danger and growth potential.

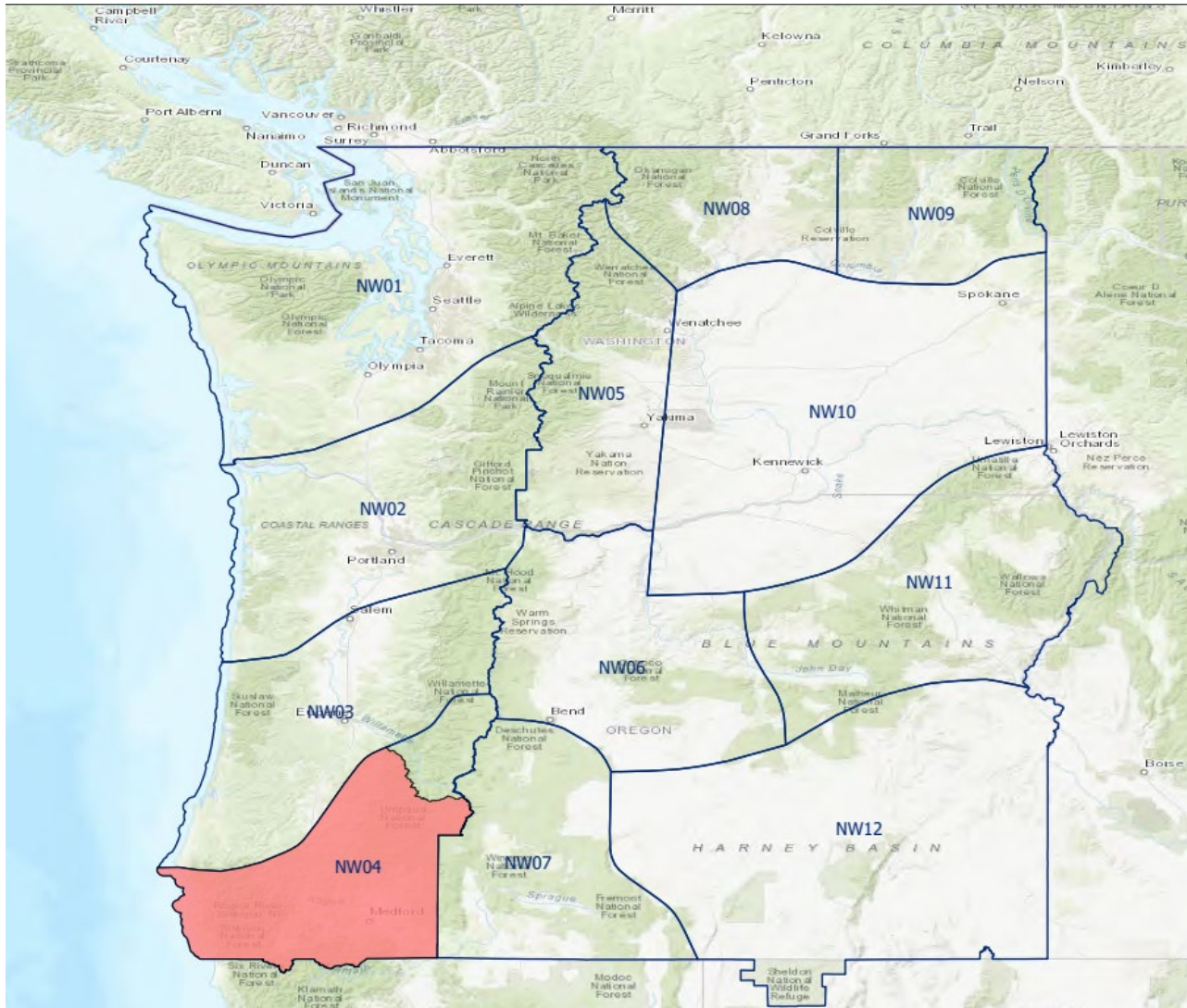
Area of Concern: Southwest Oregon.

Issued By: Northwest Coordination Center Predictive Services

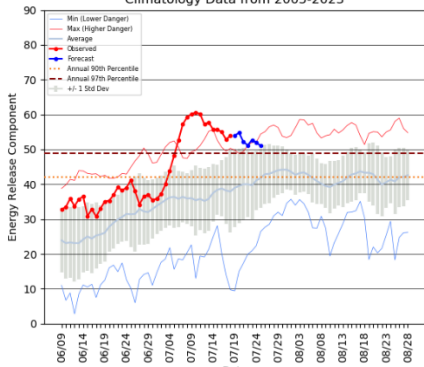
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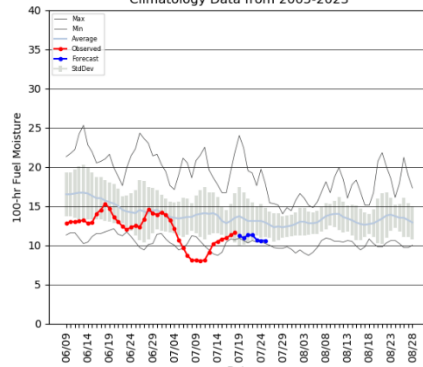
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ERC-Y for PSA NW04 - NFDRSv4
Last Observation: 18 July 2024
Climatology Data from 2005-2023



100-hr Fuel Moisture for PSA NW04 - NFDRSv4
Last Observation: 18 July 2024
Climatology Data from 2005-2023



1000-hr Fuel Moisture for PSA NW04 - NFDRSv4
Last Observation: 18 July 2024
Climatology Data from 2005-2023

