

Weekly Fire Weather / Fire Danger Outlook

Wednesday 27 October to Friday 5 November 2004

Eastern Great Basin Predictive Services
ISSUED Tuesday 26 October 2004

Weather Discussion

Last Week: The past week was very wet across Eastern Great Basin as low pressure dominated the weather pattern. A deep west coast low moved slowly east across the Great Basin Tuesday through Friday (19-22 October) bringing fairly widespread record-breaking rains, heavy mountain snows, and local flooding. This low finally moved east into Colorado Friday afternoon with drying developing in its wake. The drying was short-lived though as a series of troughs moved through the region over the weekend and Monday (23-25 October). Another deep trough developed over the west Tuesday (26 October) bringing yet another bout of windy, wet conditions.

Temperatures were generally 3-5 degrees below normal, except for eastern Utah which was right around normal. Precipitation was copious with stations reporting on average 2-3 inches over most of Utah, around 1 ½ inches over eastern Idaho, over an inch in the Bridger-Teton, and 2/3 of an inch over western Idaho. The Salmon-Challis somehow missed most of the precipitation, reporting on average only .16 inches.

Next Week: The cool, wet pattern is expected to continue for another week. Another wet, cold upper level trough will be directly over the Great Basin Wednesday and Thursday (27-28 October) bringing fairly widespread rain and mountain snows to the region. This trough will move east into Colorado Friday (29 October) with drying developing from the west. The weather pattern will be unsettled through the weekend and into the middle of next week (30 October – 3 November) with a chance of valley rain and mountain snow each day. Drying and warming is expected towards the end of next week (4-5 November) as high pressure moves into the west.

10-Day Forecast

Idaho/Western Wyoming: *Payette, Central Idaho, Boise, South Idaho, East Idaho, Bridger-Teton Dispatch Areas*

Day/Date	Fire Danger	Weather
Wed - Thu (27-28 Oct)	Low	Scattered to numerous showers Wednesday, decreasing from the west Thursday. Snow level 6000-7000 feet.
Fri (29 Oct)	Low	Partly cloudy and cool. Isolated rain or snow showers.
Sat - Wed (30 Oct – 3 Nov)	Low	Cool and unsettled with a chance of valley rain and mountain snow each day. Breezy to windy at times.
Thu - Fri (4-5 Nov)	Low	Partly cloudy with a drying, warming trend.

Northern Utah: *Northern Utah, Uintah Basin Dispatch Areas*

Day/Date	Fire Danger	Weather
Wed - Thu (27-28 Oct)	Low	Widespread rain and significant mountain snow. Snow level 7000-8000 feet. Windy with southwest winds 15-30 mph.
Fri (29 Oct)	Low	Partly cloudy and cool. A chance of lingering rain or snow showers, mainly east. Breezy west winds 10-20 mph.
Sat - Wed (30 Oct – 3 Nov)	Low	Cool and unsettled with a chance of valley rain and mountain snow each day. Breezy at times.
Thu - Fri (4-5 Nov)	Low	Partly cloudy with a drying, warming trend. A slight chance of lingering showers Thursday.

Southern Utah/Arizona Strip: *Richfield, Cedar City, Moab Dispatch Areas*

Day/Date	Fire Danger	Weather
Wed - Thu (27-28 Oct)	Low	Widespread rain and significant mountain snow. Snow level 7500-8500 feet. Windy with southwest winds 15-30 mph.
Fri (29 Oct)	Low	Partly cloudy and cool. A chance of lingering rain or snow showers, mainly east. Breezy west winds 10-20 mph.
Sat - Wed (30 Oct – 3 Nov)	Low	Cool and unsettled with a chance of valley showers and mountain snows each day. Breezy at times.
Thu - Fri (4-5 Nov)	Low	Partly cloudy with a drying, warming trend. A slight chance of lingering showers Thursday.

Fuels Discussion

Most live fuels are going into dormancy or are already there for the season. As dormancy occurs live fuel moistures will drop and additional fine fuel will accumulate. On the other hand, dead fuel moistures have moderated dramatically over the past week due to cool temperatures, rains, and high humidity. This steep trend will continue over the next week due to continued cool, unsettled weather. Fire danger will remain low over Eastern Great Basin.

Thousand hour fuel moistures are running near/at record high levels over most of Utah, the Arizona Strip, southern Idaho, and western Wyoming with above normal levels in central Idaho. Likewise, ERCs are running near/at record low levels over the same areas due to the heavy rains and cool temperatures. Cooler temperatures and showers expected over the next period will lead to continued moderation of thousand hour fuel moistures and ERCs.

Resources:

Fall prescribed fire activity has tapered-off due to the rains with mostly just pile burns continuing. Initial attack activity continues to be minimal with no large fire activity reported in the geographic area. The Preparedness level is 1 both nationally and in Eastern Great Basin.

Resources in Eastern Great Basin are sufficient to support light initial attack activity and minimal extended attack. Large fire activity would require support from outside the region. One Type 1 crew is available, and a couple of Type 2IA and Type 2 crews are also available. Two lead planes are available within the region. Smokejumpers are available in Boise.

Fire Danger Map (next page):

