

Alaska Interagency Coordination

Center Predictive Services



SPRING 2016



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ON THE

New & Improved Spot Forecast Page

Intel note from GaBriella

Alaska 2016 Early Season Outlook



AKFF-Adjective Ratings and YOU!

A new way of looking at the CFFDRS.

<http://akff.mesowest.org/>

Last year we debuted the new Alaska Fire and Fuels Web page (AKFF.) AKFF was developed by the folks who brought you MesoWest in conjunction with Predictive Services, and this season will be replacing the AICC web page

for displaying the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System's codes and indices. There will be new links on the AICC web page that direct you there.

AKFF includes hourly calculations as well as daily indices and 2 day forecasts of Temperature, RH, Wind Speed as well as the CFFDRS codes and indices of

FFMC, DMC, DC, ISI, BUI and FWI. These can be displayed in a tabular as well as map format.

You will also be able to see adjective ratings for fire danger developed especially for spring (grass) as well as summer time (spruce) conditions.

Take a look and mess around some. We think you'll like it.

New Red Flag Warning Criteria!

Remember all those days, day after day, with Red Flag Warnings? Well after almost two years of analysis and discussion the AWFCG approved the Weather Committee's recommendation for new Red Flag Warning criteria.

First, we'd like to clarify that a **Red Flag Warning** means that conditions are occurring or imminent (within 12 hrs) that will lead to **extreme** fire behavior that poses a great safety risk to firefighters or will lead to **many** new fire starts (as with the lightning criteria.) A **Fire Weather Watch** means that these conditions are forecast 12-48 hrs in the future.

The adjacent chart shows the new criteria.

Alaska Red Flag Warning & Fire Weather Watch Criteria (if combined with burnable fuels)

General non-convective Red Flag Warning criteria:

Temp $\geq 75^{\circ}\text{F}$	RH $\leq 25\%$	Wind ≥ 15 mph (sustained)
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Exceptions to the non-convective Red Flag Warning criteria:

223- Deltana/Tanana Flats 226- Eastern AK Range	No temp criteria	RH $\leq 25\%$	Wind ≥ 30 mph (sustained)
Pre-green-up* in zones: 101- Anchorage 111- Matanuska Valley 121- Western Kenai 125- Western PWS	Temp $\geq 65^{\circ}\text{F}$	RH $\leq 25\%$	Wind ≥ 15 mph (sustained)

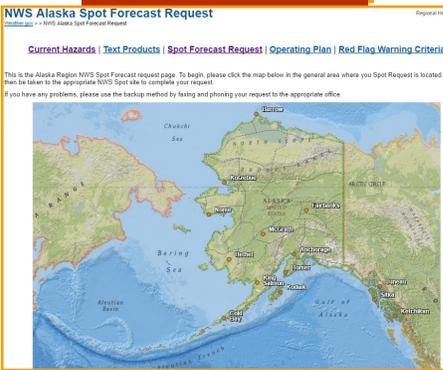
*Green-up will be discussed with local fire managers each spring to ensure an appropriate change date for South Central zones.

Lightning Criteria

Forecast LAL ≥ 4	Very dry fuels using adjective ratings with guidance from Predictive Services.
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New NWS Websites, Including Spot Forecast Page



The National Weather Service has updated two web pages this year. The first is their main AK Fire Weather page, now at <http://w2.weather.gov/arh/fire>. Also, a newly developed Spot Forecast Request page is in process. The long serving and much used “old” page will still be functioning, but on June 1st, 2016, expect to use the new site.

What’s so great about the new page? Well for one thing, MAPS!!! The new page will use a google maps interface to allow you to really have an

idea where your fires are. Typos in the old system sometimes went unnoticed but things will be a bit more obvious now. Eliminating the calendar interface will stop the confusion when a forecast is requested several days in advance. We were never sure where the request and forecast would be on the calendar. Now, a click on the correct map location will retrieve your latest forecast.

The links will be updated on the AICC and the NWS web pages and we will provide

some training on the new Spot Forecast page. It should be fairly intuitive!

The page is already up for testing so we’d encourage you to take a look at it and get comfortable. You don’t want the first time you look at it to be the first time you need to request a spot forecast. Take a look at:

<http://preview.weather.gov/spot/>.

Just be sure to name any practice requests something with the word “TEST” in it.

“Early snowmelt has little influence on fire season as a whole.”

Fire Weather Briefing
Time: **9:45 AM**
in AFS Training Rooms,
or dial in at
1-888-459-5751
Code **1595222#**



What’s Up in the Intel World

While the Intel desk was relatively quiet over the winter, GaBriella was busy working on the IRWIN Core Team as a contributing member and Subject Matter Expert. Her main task was to create a series of user documents assisting folks in the data exchange environment – teaching them about IRWIN and how all the systems sharing data between IRWIN interact and respond to moving data.

IRWIN is now in its third

year and the number of systems hooking up to share and use the data continue to grow. FireStat and the WFMI prototype Fire Reporting application came online this month. IQCS and IQS are expected to begin reading data sometime this summer. It is exciting to see the data flow and the incredible reduction of redundant data entry!

Chery Van Der Horn - the world’s best Intel sidekick - has returned to the Intel

desk and we are ready for whatever this fire season may bring.

We will be evaluating the data available on the AICC Intel page and expect to add additional data sets and documents to assist folks wanting to use Alaska fire history data.

If you are interested in learning the Intel world give us a call. We may be able to bring you in on a detail!

2016 Fire Season Outlook for Alaska

Snow melt, what snow? As with the spring of 2015, warm temperatures along the Gulf of Alaska and South Central have led to meagre to no snowpack this spring. While precipitation amounts were not far below normal, the warm temperatures meant that rain fell instead of snow for much of the

winter. This is again likely to bring an early start to fire season through the Mat-Su, Anchorage, and the Kenai Peninsula.

Assessments are based on snowpack, temperature and precipitation forecasts, Effects of teleconnections such as the El Niño

Southern Oscillation and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, climatology, and historical data trends are also incorporated.

Take a look at the outlook, updated monthly, at <http://fire.ak.blm.gov/content/weather/outlooks/monthly.pdf>