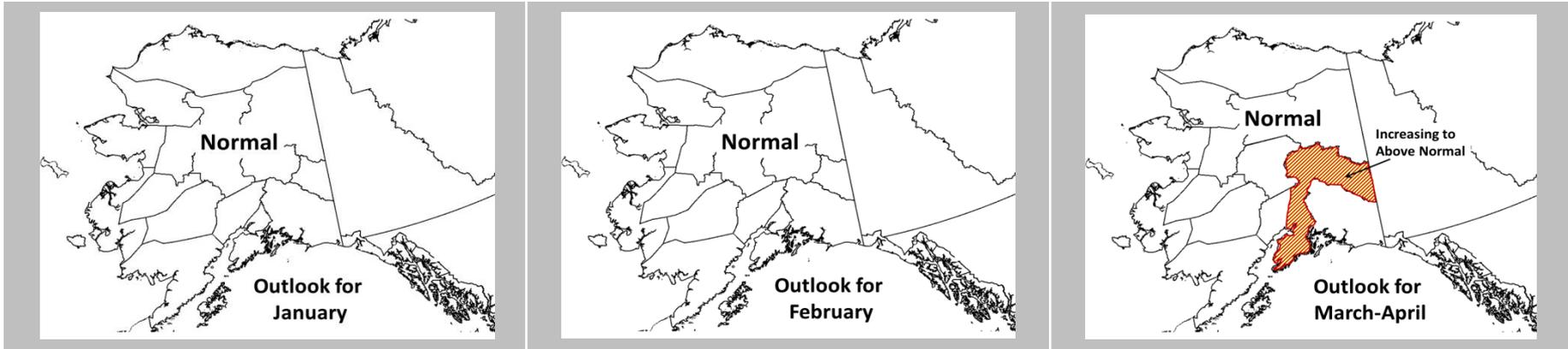


Alaska Monthly Fire Potential Outlook



Forecast:

- The forecast for January through March is for normal fire activity, which is pretty minimal as Alaska is out of fire season. By April, the current low snowpack foreshadows that there may be a busy early start to fire season, particularly along human-populated corridors. Of course, one good snow event could provide significant moisture for the spring melt, slowing the early fire season.

Factors:

- Precipitation amounts have been below normal around much of the state for the last few months, and temperatures have been mild, particularly in the far north. This is helping to keep the ice edge far off shore (in fact, the sea ice extent has hit its lowest ever recorded in October and November).
- Warmer than normal conditions are forecasted for much of western and northern Alaska for the coming months. Currently, the long range models show a very volatile pattern, indicating no long cold or warm, wet or dry periods.
- Calculations of the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating system have been stopped for the season, as the ground is generally frozen and most of Alaska has at least a small amount of snow cover. Warmer conditions in parts of southern Alaska, particularly along the coast, may provide some burnable fuels, but fire spread potential is low without strong winds.