

# Alaska Monthly Fire Potential Outlook

## Forecast:

- Alaska is out of fire season with a forecast of normal potential expected through June. As snow retreats in the southernmost parts of the state, human caused fires will start to pop up in late March or early April, spreading northward by the end of April and early May. By late May, most of the state is snow-free, and fire activity increases, reaching its peak with more lightning starts around the summer solstice.

## Factors:

- The U.S. Drought Monitor shows Abnormally Dry (D0) in the northern Panhandle and severe drought (D2) in the southern. This has held since last summer and is expected to continue. The rest of the state shows no drought, and recent snowfall has brought snowpack amounts closer to normal, though it's still a little on the low side. It isn't practical to make early season forecasts based on snowpack, as one big snow event can drastically change moisture storage across the landscape.
- CPC outlook maps are forecasting warmer than normal conditions this spring, which has been typical of the last three years as the ice edge stays farther north, more southerly flow patterns prevail, and the climate warms.
- Precipitation forecasts have notoriously little skill in Alaska, however, all of the long range forecasts are indicating the likelihood for higher than normal precipitation across much of the state through the next 12 months.

- Calculations of CFFDRS FWI Indices have all been turned off for the season as temperatures are below freezing, the ground is frozen or snow-covered in most areas, and ignitions are unlikely. Expect to see calculations start no earlier than the end of March in southern AK.

