

# Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

## Southwest Utah

Valid June 27 – July 10, 2025



**Subject:** Critically dry fuel conditions are present across southwest Utah due to the ongoing drought and recent hot and dry weather which has resulted in extreme fire behavior. Continued above normal temperatures this weekend, followed by an increase in thunderstorm activity next week sets the stage for an increase in initial attack and new large fire activity which is expected to exhibit unusual fire behavior for the time of year.

**Discussion:** Southern Utah is facing critical wildfire conditions. After a dry winter with minimal snowpack, fuel moistures are well below normal, and much of the region is under severe to extreme drought. Two major lightning-sparked fires are currently burning: the **Forsyth Fire**, near Pine Valley, has consumed over **9,600 acres**; the **France Canyon Fire**, near Bryce Canyon, has grown to more than 27,000 acres, Utah's largest wildfire this year. Extreme fire behavior marked by rapid spread, torching, and resistance to control is being driven by critically dry 1000-hour fuels, drought-stressed brush and trees, and persistent red flag conditions. As heat intensifies and fuel moistures decline further, fire potential will remain elevated across the area.

**Difference from Normal Conditions:** Fuel conditions across the region are significantly drier and more volatile than normal for late June. Prolonged heat, low humidity, and steady winds have rapidly dried out live and dead fuels—especially native grasses, brush, sagebrush, and 1000-hour fuels. In parts of southern Utah moisture levels are nearing or exceeding historic lows, triggering fire behavior usually seen much later in the season and raising the risk of larger, harder-to-control fires.

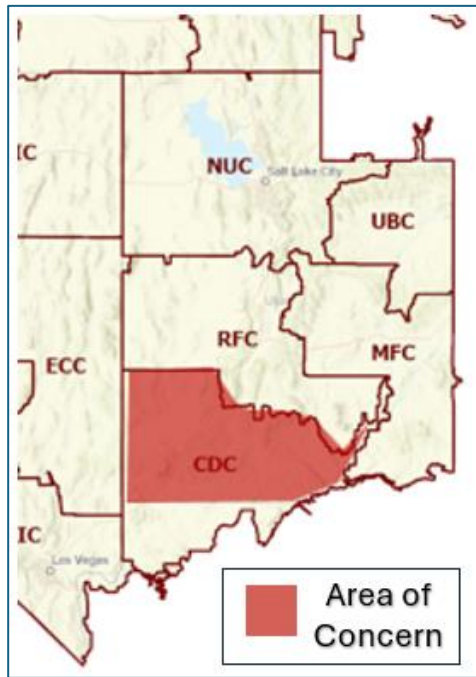
**Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:** Dry fuels and rising temperatures are creating conditions for fast-moving, unpredictable wildfires. Firefighters face limited suppression options, while communities near wildland-urban areas are at heightened risk. Even routine activities can spark new ignitions. Extreme caution is critical as fire danger escalates.

### Mitigation Measures:

- ☐ **Low Fuel Moistures (Live & Dead):**
  - Monitor conditions closely; anticipate high resistance to control and intense fire behavior.
  - Plan for longer operations and use indirect tactics as needed.
- ☐ **Heavy Fuels & Sagebrush Consumption:**
  - Be prepared for torching and spotting; increase lookouts and contingency lines.
  - Avoid direct attack in volatile brush, especially on slopes.
- ☐ **Drought-Stressed Areas:**
  - Treat all vegetation as highly flammable; spotting distances may increase.
  - Adjust escape routes and safety zones accordingly.
- ☐ **Public Risk:**
  - Boost prevention messaging and patrol high-risk areas.
  - Enforce fire restrictions, especially in WUI zones.
- ☐ **Weather & Heat:**
  - Plan for extended shifts and heat exposure—rotate crews and hydrate often.
  - Use updated forecasts to anticipate critical fire behavior periods.

**Area of Concern:** Bureau of Land Management: Color Country and Paria River Districts. Dixie National Forest. National Park Service: Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks.

**Issued By:** Great Basin Predictive Service Unit and Color Country Land Management Fuel Specialists



Forsyth Fire at Initial Attack

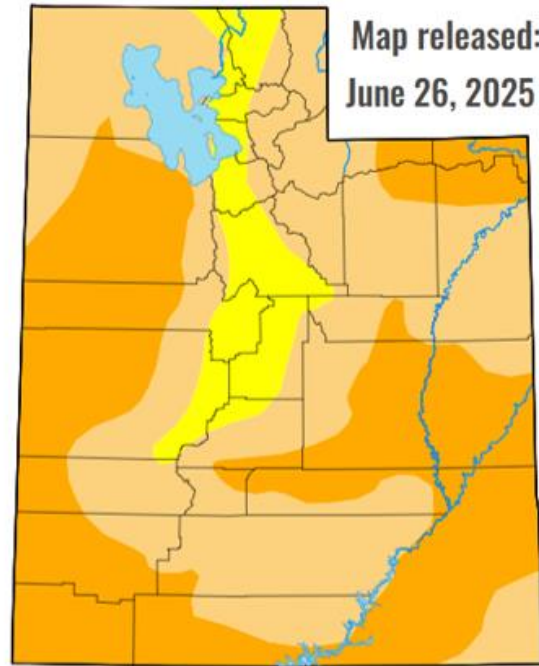


Ash Creek Cheatgrass Conditions



## U.S. Drought Monitor

Map released:  
June 26, 2025



None D1 (Moderate Drought)  
D0 (Abnormally Dry) D2 (Severe Drought)

Jensen Spring Sagebrush Conditions

