

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Central & Southern UT / AZ Strip / West Slope CO / Southwest WY

Valid July 13 – July 26, 2025



Subject: Critically dry fuel conditions are present across Central/Southern Utah and the Arizona Strip extending into the Colorado West Slope and southwest Wyoming due to the ongoing drought and recent hot and dry weather which has resulted in extreme fire behavior. Continued above normal temperatures and ongoing dry weather will keep the potential for extreme fire behavior elevated until significant precipitation arrives.

Discussion: After a dry winter with minimal snowpack fuel moistures are well below normal, and much of the region is under severe to extreme drought. A handful of major wildfires are currently burning in the area: the **Deer Creek Fire** on the La Sal Mountains has burned over 10,000 acres in just two days, the **White Sage Fire** on the AZ Strip is over 40,000 acres and the **Forsyth Fire**, near Pine Valley, has consumed 15,000 acres. Further east in Colorado acres have been less with the **South Rim Fire** burning 3,556 in three days, but fire behavior remains just as extreme. Extreme fire behavior marked by rapid spread, torching, and resistance to control is being driven by critically dry 1000-hour fuels, and drought-stressed brush and trees. 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 mid-July. 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 seen only during the driest and most severe fire seasons.

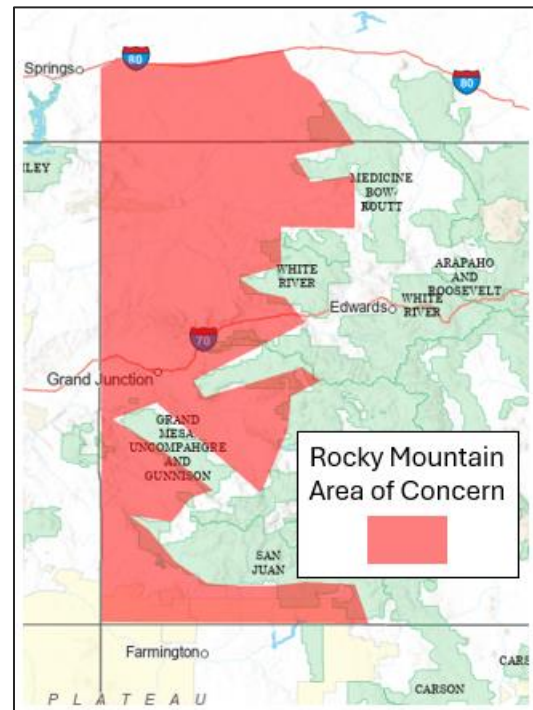
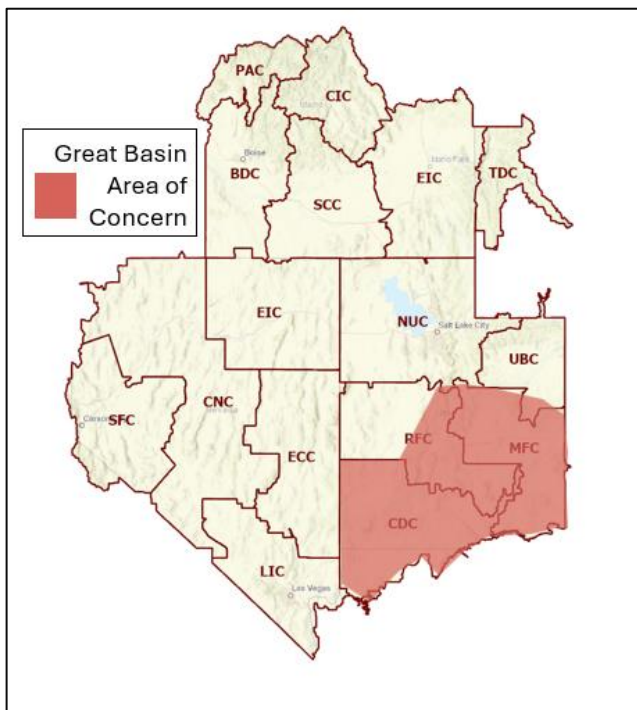
Concerns to Firefighters and the Public: Dry fuels and rising temperatures are creating conditions for fast-moving, unpredictable wildfires. Firefighters face limited suppression options, while communities near wildland-urban areas are at heightened risk. Even routine activities can spark new ignitions.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

Mitigation Measures:

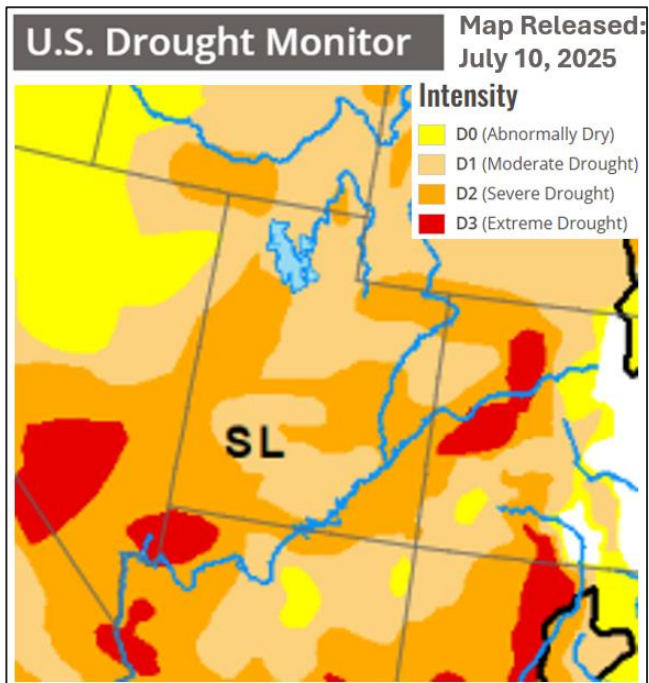
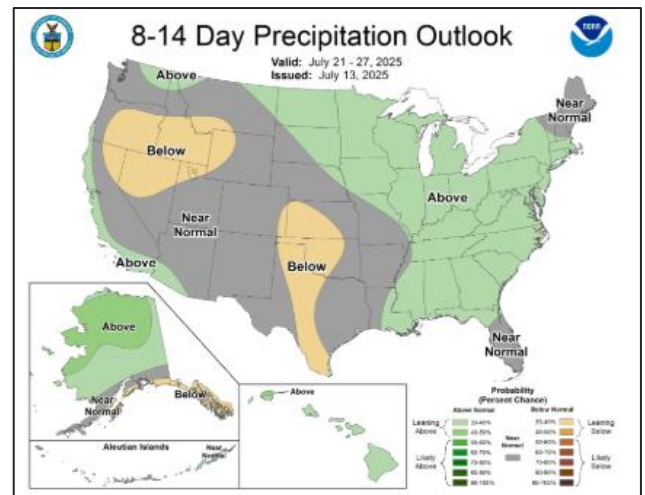
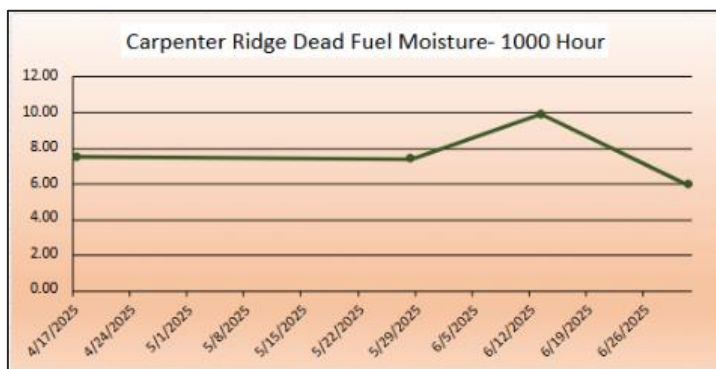
- ☐ **Low Fuel Moistures (Live & Dead):**
 - Monitor conditions closely; anticipate high resistance to control and intense fire behavior.
 - Plan for longer operations and use indirect tactics as needed.
- ☐ **Heavy Fuels & Sagebrush Consumption:**
 - Be prepared for torching and spotting; increase lookouts 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: BLM: Color Country, Canyon Country, Arizona Strip and Paria River Districts. USFS: Dixie, Fishlake and Manti National Forests, National Park Service: Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks, West Slope of CO and Southwest WY below 8,000 feet.

Issued By: Great Basin & Rocky Mountain Predictive Service Units and Local Interagency Fire Planners and Fuel Specialists



Dead Fuel Moisture near the Deer Creek Fire



Arizona Strip Juniper Die Off



Forsyth Fire at Initial Attack



Turner Gulch at Initial Attack Western CO



Deer Creek Fire Behavior, Eastern UT

