North American Seasonal Fire Assessment and Outlook

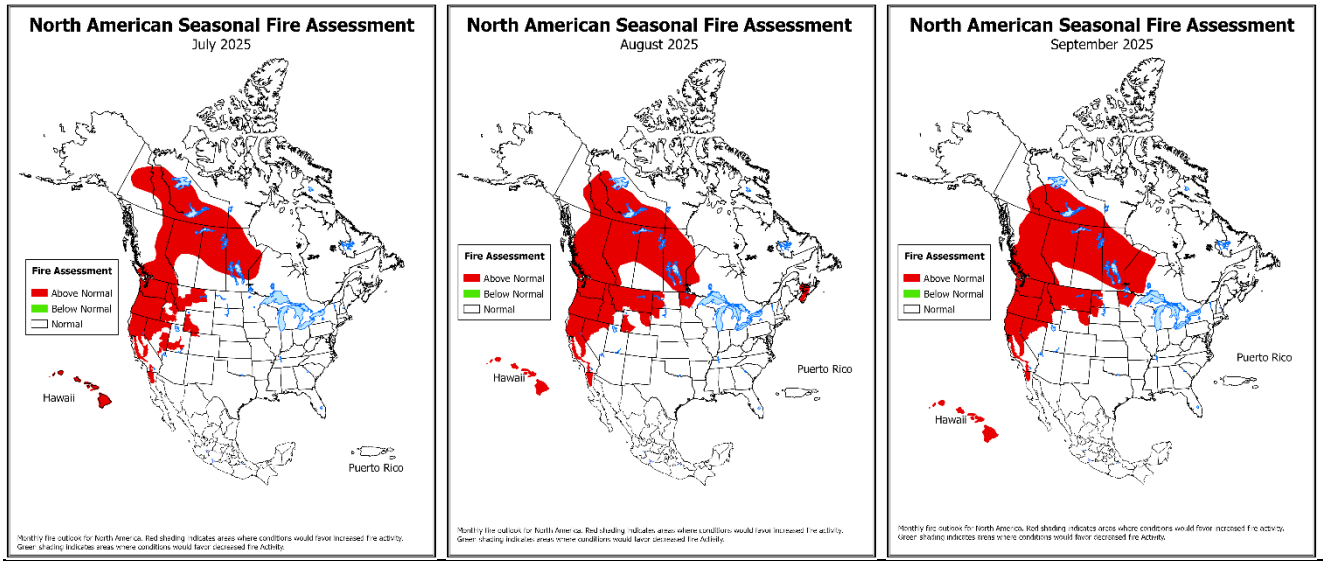
National Interagency Fire Center ● Natural Resources Canada ● Servicio Meteorológico Nacional
United States Canada Mexico

Outlook Period July 2025 through September 2025
Issued 14 July 2025

Executive Summary

In Canada, significant fire activity persisted throughout June, and the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) remained at Preparedness Level 5 (on a scale of 1-5) for the entire month. Warm and dry weather persisted in western Canada through the first third of June, facilitating continued fire growth. Wetter weather moved in partway through June and reduced fire activity in many regions, at least temporarily.

A large cold low moved through the northwestern US and southern parts of western Canada June 20-22 and brought heavy rainfall to parts of Alberta and Saskatchewan with snow at higher elevations in the Rocky Mountains. Rainfall totals in the foothills were 100-200 mm, and snowfall at higher elevations reached up to 30 cm.



Monthly fire outlook for North America for July 2025 (left), August 2025 (middle), and September 2025 (right). Red shading indicates areas where conditions would favor increased fire activity. Green shading indicates areas where conditions would favor decreased fire activity. *Click on each image to see larger versions.*

Yukon and the Northwest Territories remained mainly dry during June, although Yukon began picking up more showers in the last week of the month as the convective season kicked off. Regular precipitation fell over large parts of eastern Canada. Several low-pressure systems moved from the Great Lakes region northeast into northern Quebec and Labrador. Notably, these systems often avoided Nova Scotia, eastern New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, and southern Ontario resulting in drier conditions in southern Atlantic Canada. This drying has been most significant over the interior of Nova Scotia and eastern New Brunswick.

Early June (9-11) had extremely high temperatures in southern British Columbia, with Lytton and Ashcroft both reaching 39 C (102°F) on June 9. Several springtime Pacific weather systems impacted the central and north coast of British Columbia, bringing ample moisture to the coast mountains and parts of the northern interior. None of these weather systems were especially strong (precipitation totals

in the 10-30 mm range), and they were not able to spread beyond the spine of the Rocky Mountains. This was especially notable in the north, where rain was prevented from falling on many of the fires in the northeast part of the province.

High pressure drifting through eastern Canada late in the month kept conditions dry though precipitation early in June helped to keep fire weather conditions moderate. Very warm air from the US passed through southern parts of the eastern provinces June 23-26 before being replaced with seasonal temperatures and a moister airmass. Many locations in Ontario, Quebec, and the southern Atlantic region in this hot airmass reached 35 C (95°F) or higher.

In the US, fire activity increased across the US during June and early July, with most of the western geographic areas increasing in activity, while Alaska observed the most notable increase in activity. The National Preparedness Level increased to three (on scale of 1-5) June 21, and four July 12. June precipitation was below normal across much of California and the northern two-thirds of the West, with portions of California, the Great Basin, and Columbia Basin receiving no rainfall. However, precipitation was above normal in the Mojave Desert and Arizona. Precipitation was generally below normal for the Mid-Atlantic Coast and Florida, while much of the rest of the US from the Plains to the Appalachians had mixed anomalies. Overall, drought expanded slightly across the US in June to early July, with expansion and intensification in the northwestern US. However, drought improved in South Texas, much of Florida, and portions of the central and northern Plains.

Climate Prediction Center and Predictive Services outlooks issued in late June indicate above normal temperatures are likely across much of the US through September, with the West, Northeast, and southern Plains most likely to be above normal. Drier than normal conditions are expected across the northern half of the West through the summer. Above normal significant fire potential is forecast much of the northwestern US through September, with much of northern California and the mountains of central and southern California above normal, as well. Above normal potential also likely in portions of the southern Great Basin in July before returning to normal. Above normal potential forecast for Texas is now unlikely to occur for July but is still expected for August and spread into Oklahoma. Above normal potential is forecast for Hawai'i all three months, and in northwest Minnesota for August and September.

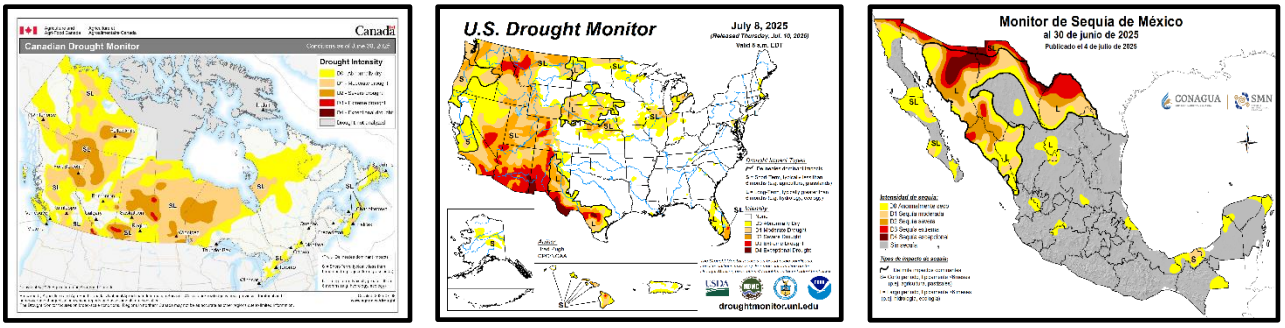
In Mexico, average temperatures remained above normal from April to June. Precipitation was below average in April but exceeded normal values in May and June. For July, wet conditions are expected, while hot and dry conditions are expected for August and September.

The wildfire season across most of Mexico remains relatively stable, with minimal activity typically observed during July, as June marks the statistical end of the season. However, in the northern Baja California Peninsula, the season continues to gradually intensify, with activity expected to peak in August and conclude in September.

Critical Factors

The critical factors influencing significant fire potential for this outlook period are global climate patterns related to sea surface temperatures, particularly in the Pacific Ocean, and large scale, longer-term soil moisture deficits:

El Niño-Southern Oscillation and Other Climatic Teleconnections:
El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral conditions persist in the equatorial Pacific Ocean with sea surface temperatures near average. The Climate Prediction Center and climate models are forecasting ENSO neutral conditions to continue through the summer, which may continue through the fall into early winter, but is of lower confidence. The negative phase of the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) persists and is likely to be a factor for this outlook, as well. The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) has been weaker during the spring but is forecast to increase in late July, which may have an impact then into early August. However, the ENSO neutral conditions will continue to be the main driver of this outlook, with modest effects from the PDO.



Left: Canadian Drought Monitor from *Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.* **Middle:** United States Drought Monitor. **Right:** Mexican Drought Monitor from *CONAGUA-Servicio Meteorológico Nacional.*

Drought:
Abnormally dry to drought conditions persisted across much of western and central Canada through June into July. Large areas of severe drought exist over the intersection of British Columbia, Alberta, and the Northwest Territories, extending into central Northwest Territories near Yellowknife. The remainder of Northwest Territories remains dry with large drought areas north through the Arctic Ocean coast. Additionally, southern and central Saskatchewan has a broad area of severe drought with small pockets in the extreme drought category. Drought conditions extend into much of Manitoba and northwestern Ontario. British Columbia is largely dry except for the central and northern coastal region. Northern Quebec and Labrador are also dry, extending from Hudson Bay east to the Atlantic coast. In far southwestern Alberta, a small region of extreme drought exists in the southern foothills. Southern Ontario, Nova Scotia, and southern Newfoundland are all drier than normal with small, embedded pockets of moderate drought.

Compared to May, drought conditions are relatively similar with some marginal improvements over central Saskatchewan, across southern British Columbia, and across northern Quebec and Labrador. Even with small improvements, drought conditions persist in these regions. The areas of extreme drought expanded in northwestern Alberta, where the rain shadow in the lee of the Rocky Mountains was especially noticeable in June with only a couple of systems bringing rain to the region. The effects of many rain systems missing Atlantic Canada and southern Ontario in May are now showing up with the expansion of dry conditions and pockets of drought. The area of dry to moderate drought conditions now extends across Atlantic Canada as well as in southern Ontario. Finally, southern Yukon also experienced significant drying with much of the region, outside the largest mountains in the southwest, becoming drier than normal.

In the US, temperatures in June were above normal across much of the West, except for near to below normal temperatures near the coast. Temperatures were also above normal across much of the eastern US from the Mississippi River to the East Coast, but near normal for much of the Plains and Florida. Temperatures have been above normal across the northern half of the US in early July, but near to below normal in the southern Plains and portions of California.

Precipitation across the US in June was above normal in much of the Southwest into southwest Colorado. Most of the precipitation in the Mojave Desert and Arizona fell at the start of the month, while the rain in New Mexico and southwest Colorado was toward the end of the month. Precipitation was

also above normal across portions of east Texas and Oklahoma eastward into the Lower Tennessee and Ohio Valleys. Above normal rainfall was also observed from Nebraska into southern Minnesota then east into Upper Michigan. Meanwhile, much of the northern two-thirds of the West was very dry in June, with portions of California, the Great Basin, and Columbia Basin receiving no rain. Other areas of below normal rainfall were observed in portions of the northern Plains, the Mid-Atlantic coast, and the east coast of Florida. Precipitation in Alaska was mostly below normal, especially across the central Interior, but above normal precipitation was found along the southern coast and in the panhandle. Precipitation in Hawai'i below normal, although portions of Kauai observed above normal precipitation. For early July, mixed anomalies have been observed across the US, with below normal precipitation most notable in the Northwest and Great Basin. However, a historic rain event occurred in central Texas July 3-5 resulting in catastrophic flooding that caused at least 121 deaths, with many still missing.

Overall drought across the US has increased slightly since early June, with just over 31% of the US as of July 8. Drought persisted in the southwestern US, with areas of modest improvement, while drought intensified and expanded from the northern Great Basin into the Northwest and northern Rockies. Drought improved in much of Florida and South Texas, with improvement in the central and northern Plains, as well. Drought persists in Hawai'i from the Big Island to Molokai, with drought also developing in a small portion of Interior Alaska. Extreme drought persists in the southwestern US and covers portions of southeast California, southern Nevada, southern and western Arizona, southern and central New Mexico, western Colorado, and southwest Texas. Other areas of extreme drought are noted in northwest Colorado and western Montana into the southern Idaho panhandle. Exceptional drought persists in southwest New Mexico, and portions of southwest Texas.

During the first half of June, above-average rainfall was recorded in northwestern, northeastern, eastern, central, and southern regions of Mexico. These precipitation events were associated with the passage of tropical waves, areas of low-pressure, and cloud development linked to Tropical Storm Dalia. As a result, areas affected by extreme to exceptional drought in Sonora and Chihuahua showed a notable decrease. Similarly, regions experiencing moderate drought and abnormally dry conditions in western, central, and southern Mexico also showed improvement.

Conversely, earlier in the month, a heat wave affected the Mesa del Norte, the northeast, central Mexico, and the Yucatán Peninsula, leading to below-average rainfall anomalies in these regions. The most pronounced deficits occurred in the Yucatán Peninsula, where an increase in areas classified as abnormally dry was observed.

As of June 15, the extent of moderate to exceptional drought across Mexico was estimated at 38%, representing a nearly 3% decrease compared to the over 40% recorded on May 31.

Fire Season Status:
Fire activity continued in western Canada (British Columbia and Ontario) during much of June, though the days of most intense activity was concentrated in the first third of the month. Rain helped reduce activity from Alberta to western Ontario as the month progressed. Evacuees were returning to their home communities in Manitoba (MB) and Saskatchewan (SK) late in the month. Perhaps the largest return by population was in the border community of Flin Flon, MB, and Creighton, SK, which was evacuated for more than a month.

The northeast corner of British Columbia and southwestern Northwest Territories remained active with seven fires (2025-BC-0216, 2025-BC-0352, 2025-BC-0475, 2025-BC-0382, 2025-BC-0413, 2025-NT-FS001-25, 2025-NT-FS002-25) accounting for most area burned in the region. Three other large fires (2025-BC-0396, 2025-BC-0425, and 2025-BC-0426) were notable due to their proximity to the Alaska highway.

The largest fire in Saskatchewan, known as the Shoe fire, continued to burn intermittently throughout June and remains classified as out of control, as is the case for many of the fires in central Saskatchewan. In central Saskatchewan and Manitoba, periods of warm, dry, and wind conditions

allowed continued fire growth though convective precipitation helped to prevent the extreme activity that occurred in late May and early June.

While the Prairies region was quieting somewhat, many new fires started in Yukon as dry weather had persisted for a few weeks. The Northwest Territories were very dry through much of June, but a lack of lightning may have limited the number of fires to date, aside from a few that ignited in the second half of June in western portions of the Northwest Territories. Many of the fires in the Yukon and Northwest Territories have exceeded 1000 hectares in size and continue to grow. Most recently, northwestern Saskatchewan has experienced an uptick in fire activity, resulting in evacuations of several communities. Additionally, several fires have started in the dry conditions of southern British Columbia, most notably two which are close to the town of Lytton.

While not yet verified, June appeared to be less windy than in May, which is suspected to have helped limit some of the extreme fire growth days. The convective season across the Prairies region featured almost daily thunderstorms and patchy, yet consistent precipitation.

In the US, Fire activity gradually increased across most geographic areas over the course of June into early July. However, the Southern and Eastern Areas saw a slow decrease in activity throughout the month. The most significant increase in activity occurred the latter half of the month across the Alaska, Great Basin, and Southwest Geographic Areas. A prolonged heat wave across Interior Alaska ended with a prolific lightning event with a significant increase in activity and the geographic area preparedness level briefly rising to five (on a scale of 1-5) July 3-12. Scattered thunderstorms across the southern Great Basin and Southwest occurred June 8-10 and resulted in numerous large fires in the following days as temperatures rose to well above normal amid very low relative humidity. Other areas observed a more gradual increase in activity across the West June into early July, including the Northwest, California, and Rocky Mountain Geographic Areas. Through July 13, 993,717 hectares (2,454,480 acres) have burned across the US, below the 10-year average at 85% of average. However, the 37,483 fires recorded thus far is above average, at 127%.

Through early July 2025, a total of 6,474 wildfires were recorded across all 32 states of Mexico, affecting approximately 1,056,818 hectares. Of the total burned area, 95% corresponded to grass and brush, while the remaining 5% affected timber. The states with the highest number of wildfires were Jalisco, State of Mexico, Michoacán, Mexico City, Chihuahua, Durango, Puebla, Guerrero, Chiapas, and Oaxaca accounting for approximately 75% of the national total. The largest burned areas were recorded in Chihuahua, Durango, Guerrero, Sinaloa, Jalisco, Nayarit, Tabasco, Sonora, Michoacán, and Chiapas, which together represent 77% of the total burned area nationwide. Out of the total number of wildfires, 1,290 incidents (approximately 20%) occurred in fire-sensitive ecosystems, burning 156,10` hectares, equivalent to 15% of the total affected area.

The northern, central, and western regions of Mexico have experienced the highest wildfire activity in terms of frequency. Regarding the extent of burned area, the northern, northwestern, and Pacific states have been the most severely impacted.

Canada Discussion

July/August/September: There is a slight decrease in the fire severity forecast for July compared to the forecast from last month. However, the forecast remains dry for much of western Canada. British Columbia and northwestern Alberta are forecast to have the greatest precipitation deficit. Atlantic Canada is also predicted to receive less rain than normal. Portions of Manitoba and Quebec, as well as most of Ontario, are expected to receive seasonal average to slightly above average precipitation. Temperatures are predicted to be above normal for the majority of Canada, with Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island having the largest temperature anomalies. The Yukon and northern Northwest Territories will likely have closer to seasonal temperatures than other parts of the country.

These factors will combine to keep fire activity above normal for most of western Canada. Southwestern portions of the Northwest Territories, northern Alberta, northeastern British Columbia, and the southern interior of British Columbia are likely to have the greatest potential for elevated significant fire activity. The Prairie Provinces will also have conditions favorable for continued fire activity. Portions of the Yukon are likely to have more intense fire activity early in July, then taper off as a pattern with a bit more precipitation and cooler conditions settles in.

The forecast for August anticipates well above normal fire risk for much of western Canada. Most of Canada's forested regions will see above normal temperatures. The largest temperature anomalies will be centered over British Columbia and western Alberta, central Ontario, as well as eastern Quebec and western Labrador. Precipitation is also forecast to be below normal over western Canada, with the driest conditions relative to normal anticipated over northern British Columbia and the northern Prairie Provinces. Atlantic Canada is also forecast to have well below normal precipitation. Eastern Ontario and western Quebec will likely have closer to normal precipitation with the Great Lakes region possibly receiving more rain than is normal.

Regions of sustained dry and warm conditions will intensify the fire hazard over already dry ground. In comparison to July, the risk for wildfire not only grows, but it also increases in extent over western Canada. The southern Yukon, much of the Northwest Territories, and all of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan are expected to have above normal risk. Additionally, parts of northwestern Ontario are included in this region. Finally, there is also a small dry region in western Nova Scotia and eastern New Brunswick with above normal fire risk. This is the result of a relative absence of rain in Atlantic Canada, particularly in the interior of these two provinces. Over Ontario and Quebec sufficient regular rainfall is forecast to keep fire conditions close to normal.

The warm and dry trend is forecast to persist into September. Warmer than normal seasonal temperatures will continue for most of Canada's forested regions. The warmest regions are predicted to be southern British Columbia, the Great Lakes, and central Quebec. The forecasted dry signal remains for British Columbia and parts of western Alberta. Atlantic Canada also is predicted to remain slightly drier than normal. Central Canada is likely to receive near normal precipitation, with southern Ontario receiving more precipitation than normal.

Continued dry and warm conditions will maintain a well above average fire risk for southern British Columbia, Alberta, central Saskatchewan, and parts of southern Manitoba. Additionally, the above-normal fire risk persists for the rest of the Prairie Provinces as well as southern part of the Northwest Territories. The fire season will wrap up during the month of September in the Territories, and the fire risk should be minimized by the end of the month. Even though Atlantic Canada is forecast to be drier than normal, an influx of fall precipitation will eliminate the above normal fire risk region in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Finally, near normal fire risk conditions are forecast to continue in eastern Ontario, Quebec, and Labrador.

United States Discussion

July/August/September: ENSO neutral conditions are occurring in the equatorial Pacific Ocean and are expected to continue through the summer. Model, Climate Prediction Center, and Predictive Services forecasts for the next three months indicate above normal temperatures are likely across much of the US, especially in the western US. Below normal precipitation is expected across much of the northern half of the West. The North American Monsoon has been weak thus far but is expected to increase the latter half of July into August. In the eastern US, above normal precipitation is likely for the Appalachians to the East Coast. The warmer and drier than normal conditions in the West this spring resulted in a faster than normal snowmelt, and many locations became snow-free two to three weeks earlier than normal. Northwestern areas of the US are reporting fuels conditions and fire danger indices were two to four weeks ahead of where they would normally be in early July.

Due to these conditions, above normal significant fire potential is anticipated for much of the northwestern US through September including all of Oregon and Washington, and most of Idaho and Montana. Above normal potential is forecast for almost all northern California and the central and southern California mountains in through September, as well. For July, above normal potential is forecast of portions of the central Great Basin into northwest Colorado. The above normal potential originally forecast for much of central Texas is unlikely to occur due to heavy rainfall early this month. However, above normal potential will return to normal in the Southwest and southwest Colorado due to the monsoon. However, above normal potential may return to much of Texas and Oklahoma for August. Above normal potential is also forecast for northeast Wyoming for August and September, as well as northwest Minnesota. Above normal potential is forecast for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands in July, as well as the lee sides of Hawai'i July through September.

Mexico Discussion

July/August/September: Above average rainfall is forecast for several Mexican states in July, including Aguascalientes, Baja California Sur, Campeche, Colima, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacán, State of México, Oaxaca, Querétaro, Quintana Roo, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tabasco, Yucatán, and Zacatecas. Otherwise, below average precipitation is expected in the rest of the country. While above average maximum temperatures are projected across most of the national territory, exceptions include some areas of the Baja California Peninsula, Sonora, Chihuahua, Sinaloa, Nayarit, Jalisco, Colima and Veracruz, where below average maximum temperatures may occur.

For August, above average rainfall is forecast for the states of Baja California, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, Guanajuato, Sinaloa, Sonora, and Yucatán. In contrast, below average precipitation is expected in the rest of the country. While above average maximum temperatures are projected overall across most of Mexico, exceptions include the Baja California Peninsula, and some areas of Sonora, Chihuahua, Sinaloa, Nayarit, Jalisco, Colima, Veracruz and Quintana Roo, where below average maximum temperatures may occur.

In September, below average rainfall is forecast across all of the Mexican states. While above average maximum temperatures are projected across most of the country, exceptions include the Baja California Peninsula, and some regions of Sonora, Chihuahua, Sinaloa, Nayarit, Jalisco, Colima, Veracruz and Quintana Roo where below average maximum temperatures may occur.

Considering the current temperature and precipitation patterns, the national drought situation, and the climatological outlook, wildfire activity across most of Mexico is expected to remain minimal during the July to September period, due to the seasonal decline in fire occurrence typical of this time of year. However, in the state of Baja California, wildfire activity is projected to remain above normal throughout the quarter, with a peak in August and the end of the season expected in September.

Additional Information

Additional and supplemental information for this outlook can be obtained at:

United States:
National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook
https://www.nifc.gov/nicc-files/predictive/outlooks/monthly_seasonal_outlook.pdf

Canada:
Canadian Wildland Fire Information System
http://cwfis.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/home

Mexico:
Servicio Meteorológico Nacional
https://smn.conagua.gob.mx/es/observando-el-tiempo/monitoreo-atmosferico-ambiental

Outlook Objective

The North American Seasonal Fire Assessment and Outlook is a general discussion of conditions that will affect the occurrence of wildland fires across Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Wildland fire is a natural part of many ecosystems across North America. This document provides a broad assessment of those factors that will contribute to an increase or decrease of seasonal fire activity. The objective is to assist wildland fire managers prepare for the potential variations in a typical fire season. It is not intended as a prediction of where and when wildland fires will occur nor is it intended to suggest any area is safe from the hazards of wildfire.

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