



Forest Service News Release

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Lightning and Low Humidities Increase Fire Risk in Eastern Oregon and Washington

Lakeview, Oregon, Aug. 03, 2023— Lightning and low humidities are forecasted for areas of the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Region, particularly eastern Oregon and Washington. These weather conditions bring a potential for new fire starts and increase fire danger in the region.

With the warm and dry conditions experienced this year, the risk for wildfires is above normal. In response to this heightened risk, fire crews have been pre-positioned to ensure a quick and effective response to emerging incidents.

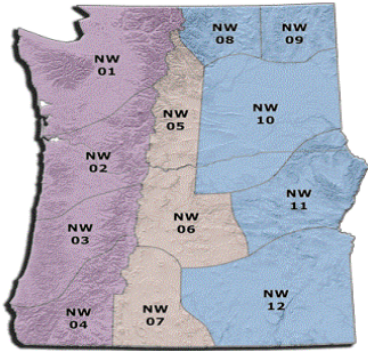
Weather briefings indicate that lightning is expected to begin this evening, Wednesday, August 2, in south/central Oregon, east of the Cascade Mountains, and continue through the area to the far eastern side of the state. All lightning is expected from the Cascade crest to the Oregon/Idaho border and in north central Washington. This weather is predicted to occur over the next few days and possibly continue through Sunday, August 6.

To provide a visual representation of the significant fire potential in the region, please refer to the graphics below:

Pacific Northwest 7 Day Significant Fire Potential



Wednesday, 8/2/2023



Legend

Significant Fire Risk Levels	
Minimal	- The Overall Fire Environment suggests a very low risk for significant fires (less than 1% chance)
Normal	- The Overall Fire Environment suggests a normal risk for significant fires (1 - 4% chance)
Elevated	- The Overall Fire Environment suggests a moderately high risk for significant fires (5 - 19% chance)
High Risk	- The risk for significant fire(s) is very high (≥ 20%) Triggers: 1. ⚡ (Significant Lightning) 2. BEN (Critical Burn Environment)

The assessment of Significant Fire risk considers three main factors including: **weather elements**, **number of ignitions** and **background fire danger**. Significant Fire risk is derived objectively via statistical methods that combine all three factors. **High Risk** levels (≥ 20% probability of a significant fire) are usually due to numerous fire starts from lightning. Human fires don't often result in a large fire probability above 20%.

Predictive Service Areas	ytd	Today	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
NW01								
NW02								
NW03								
NW04								
NW05								
NW06								
NW07			⚡	⚡	⚡	⚡		
NW08				⚡	⚡	⚡		
NW09								
NW10								
NW11			⚡	⚡				
NW12			⚡	⚡				

Fire Weather: Dry with breezy winds near eastside Cascade gaps today. Southerly flow brings mid-level moisture and increasing thunderstorm threats to eastern Oregon starting mainly Thursday and Friday. Storms may continue overnight, especially across eastern Oregon Thursday night into Friday morning. Thunderstorm area expands to eastern Washington Friday, possibly Friday night, and Saturday. Some storms may linger east side on Monday. Thunderstorms will start dry then eventually develop wetting rain potential, but only under the cores. Best wetting rain potential eastern 1/4 of the states. As the upper ridge pushes west Sunday and Monday, deeper mixing heights over the Oregon Cascades may pose problems for ongoing incidents.

Fire Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings are in effect from the National Weather Service. For the weather details in your area, refer to your local NWS office statements and Fire Weather Planning Forecasts.

Fire Potential: Large fire potential remains elevated from the Cascade east slopes and point east the next several days. Cascade crest and west will see potential increase as the upper ridge pushes further west this weekend. The addition of thunderstorms from the Cascade crest eastward will further boost new large fire potential later this week. NW7, NW11 and NW12 are the most likely areas to see significant lightning ignitions Thursday/Friday as storms remain rather dry. Even wet storm lightning will be efficient creating new starts outside of rain shafts. By Saturday, storms across the NE Washington mountains will pose the greater risk with the far eastern PSAs more likely to receive rain on Sunday.

Fire Danger Trends:

https://gacc.nifc.gov/nwcc/application/v1/views/predict/fire_fuel_graphs.php

Preparedness Level:

Northwest: 3
National: 3

-Jon Bonk

SIGNIFICANT FIRE POTENTIAL

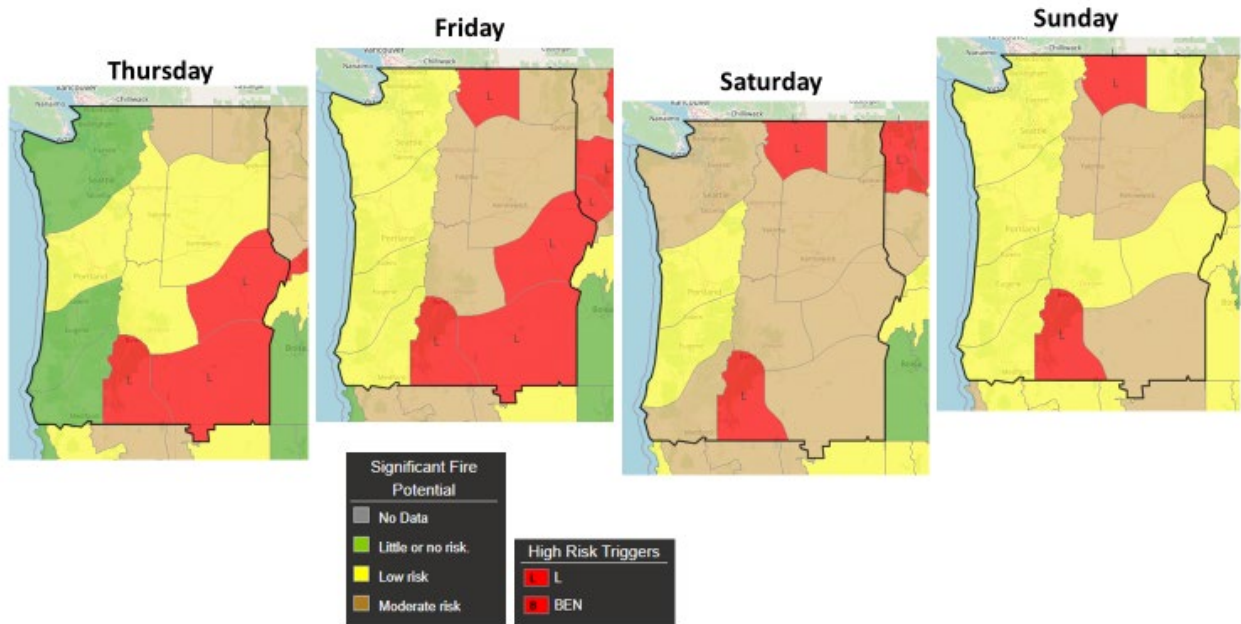


Image source: NWCC

Additional information can be found here: <https://gacc.nifc.gov/nwcc/predict/weather.aspx>.

It is important for everyone to be aware of current fire danger levels and take the necessary precautions to prevent wildfires. Visit the website and/or Facebook page for the National Forests you plan to visit for the latest information on local fire restrictions.

To learn more about how to prevent human-caused fires, visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r6/fire-aviation/prevention>.

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