

MONTHLY OUTLOOK

National Report
Located Here

For Southern and Central California

Issued: June 30, 2009

Valid for: July 2009



Summary

- Temperatures and precipitation near normal.
- Fire activity will increase sharply.
- Existing drought conditions will slowly worsen.
- Above normal large fire potential for the central coast region.
- Normal large fire potential elsewhere over the region.

Weather Discussion

A rather cool and moist weather régime prevailed across the region during the past three to four weeks as a series of unusually strong troughs moved through the state. Portions of the area received wetting rains on several occasions which caused a large spike in the average precipitation amounts for the month of June (**Figure 1**). In addition to the wet conditions, temperatures ended up being much cooler than normal over the entire Geographic Area (**Figure 2**). With the unseasonably cool and wet weather, fire activity over the region was very minimal until the very end of the month when warmer and drier conditions returned to the area. Most of the fire activity in June was in and around the Sierras where frequent lightning strikes throughout the month helped to spawn several timber and brush fires.

Sea surface temperature anomalies across the equatorial Pacific region continue to increase with a developing El Niño pattern underway. This type of scenario may help to shift the Southwest Monsoon a little more to the east as the West Coast may be more under the influence of a weak trough. This would result in a more predominate westerly flow across the area

Percent of Average Precipitation (%)
5/30/2009 – 6/28/2009

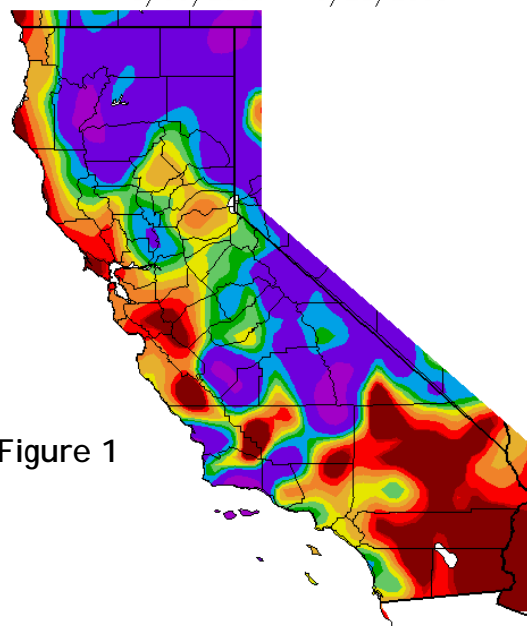


Figure 1

Generated 6/29/2009 at WRCC using provisional data.
NOAA Regional Climate Centers

and would likely reduce the amount of thunderstorm activity over the region. This does not mean there won't be *any* thunderstorms across the area, but that the convective episodes may be fewer than normal. Overall, temperatures are likely to average near normal over much of the region during the month of July.

Ave. Temperature dep from Ave (deg F)
5/30/2009 - 6/28/2009

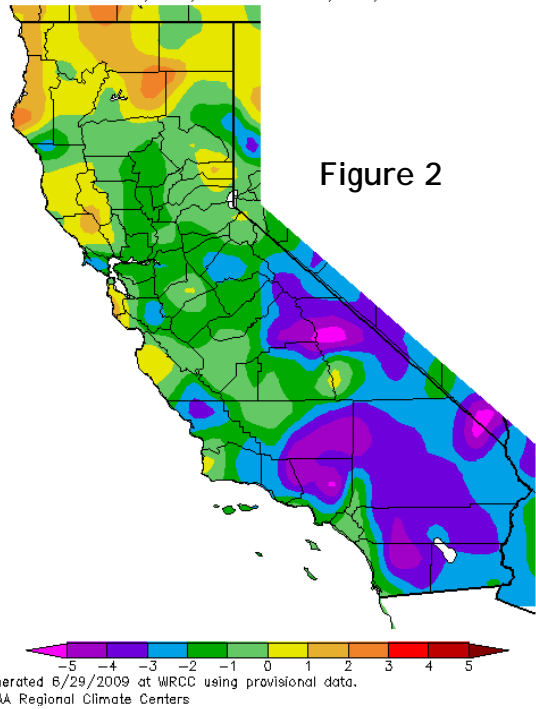
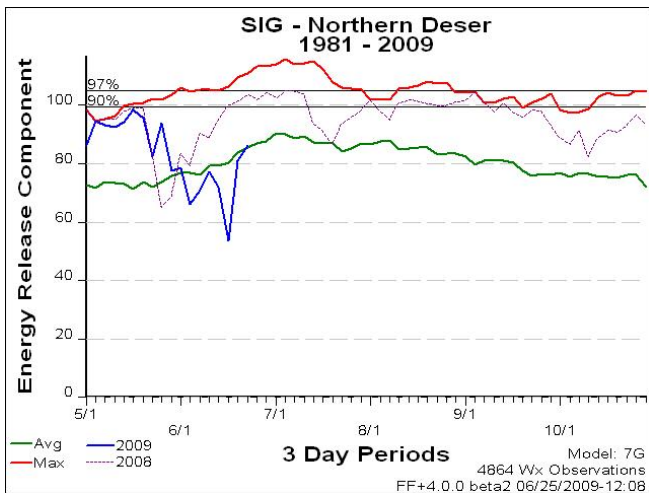
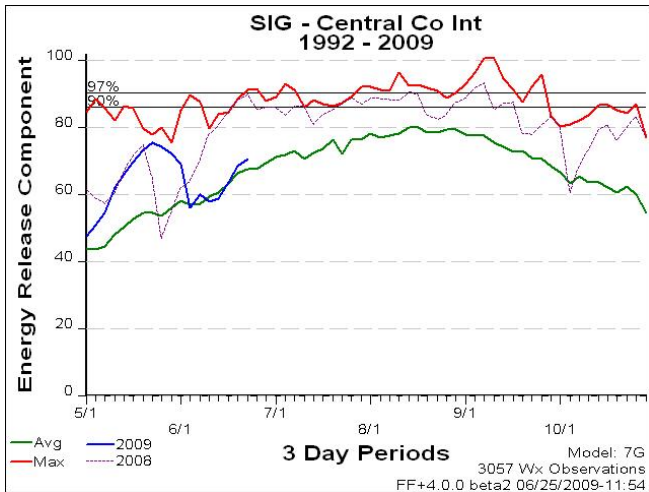


Figure 2



Fuels/Fire Potential Discussion

Weather conditions during the last several weeks prevented fuels from drying out significantly across the region. Most of the Predictive Service Areas have seen a dramatic drop in ERC values with only minor recovery of these values occurring in the last week. Live fuel moisture values continue their downward trend but this trend has slowed down in recent weeks. The annual grasses have now cured below 4,500 feet and new growth is complete below 2,000 feet across the southern half of the state.

While some rain has fallen across the area over the last week or so, it will not be enough to ease the current drought conditions. Furthermore, drought conditions will slowly worsen which means the long-term drought will continue to be problematic across the region. Since the central coast region is one of the driest areas of the state, this area will have the greatest threat for large fires over the next month as temperatures warm and fuels continue to dry out. The remainder of the region's large fire potential will near normal for July.



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