

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Pacific Northwest

Date Advisory Effective – August 11, 2026



Subject: Record low winter snowpack and ongoing drought have left live and dead fuels critically dry across the Northwest, resulting in accelerated curing and enabling aggressive fire behavior even without strong alignment of fuels, weather, and topography.

Summary:

- Low snowpack across much of Oregon and Washington has contributed to ongoing drought and critically dry fuels.
- Live fuels are contributing to increased fire behavior.
- Active fire behavior with longer burn periods are occurring, with continuous rangeland fuels allowing rapid rates of spread when winds align.
- Fires are showing extreme resistance to control, requiring substantial ground and aerial resource commitments for longer duration.

Discussion: Winter snowpack in the region was substantially below normal, and persistent drought rapidly dried both live and dead fuels earlier than usual. East of the Cascades, continuous rangeland fuels are supporting high intensity fire behavior, fast rates of spread, and strong resistance to control, while forested areas on both sides of the Cascades are experiencing large fire growth. Thousand-hour fuels have already reached critical levels, and live fuels are curing much earlier than expected, collectively elevating fire potential across all fuel regimes.

Differences from Normal Conditions:

- Under normal seasonal progressions, live fuels cure later in the summer, and 1000-hour fuels maintain significantly higher moisture; this year, heavy dead and live fuels are already fully consuming.
- ERC and 1000-hour fuel percentiles are trending toward the upper end of historical dryness, indicating elevated potential for large fire growth across most of the area.

Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:

- Critically dry fuels are increasing the likelihood of rapid fire growth, earlier transition to crown fire, long-range spotting (up to 3 miles), and higher resistance to control.
- When atmospheric instability is forecast, firefighters should anticipate extreme fire behavior in timbered fuels, including crown fire and long-range spotting, even under moderate wind speeds.
- The risk of large fires, smoke impacts, evacuations, and threats to infrastructure will remain elevated until conditions moderate.
- Suppression efforts should prioritize critical values at risk and focus on strategies with the highest probability of success under current conditions.
- Once inversions lift, expect conditions to escalate from moderate to extreme fire behavior rapidly.

Issued by: NWCC Predictive Services in conjunction with state and federal partners

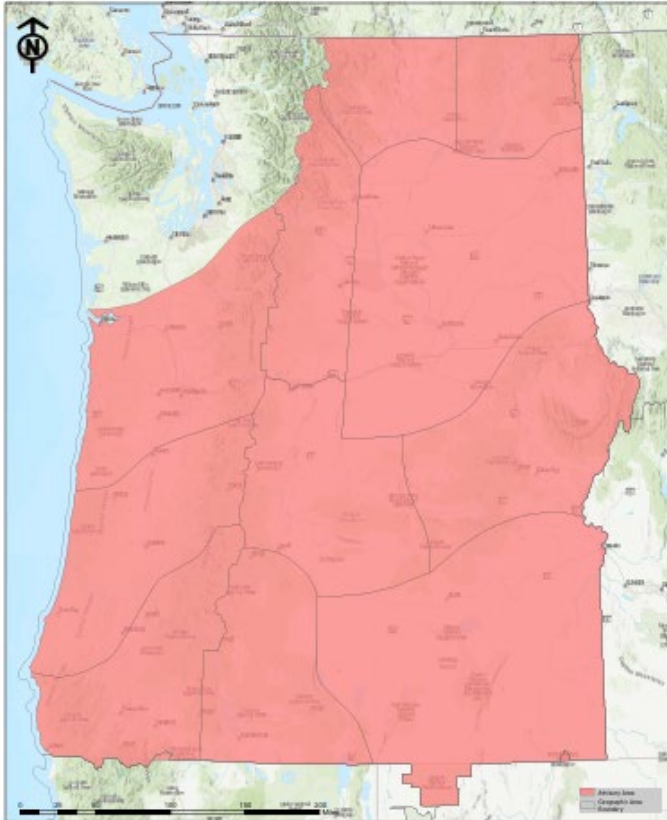
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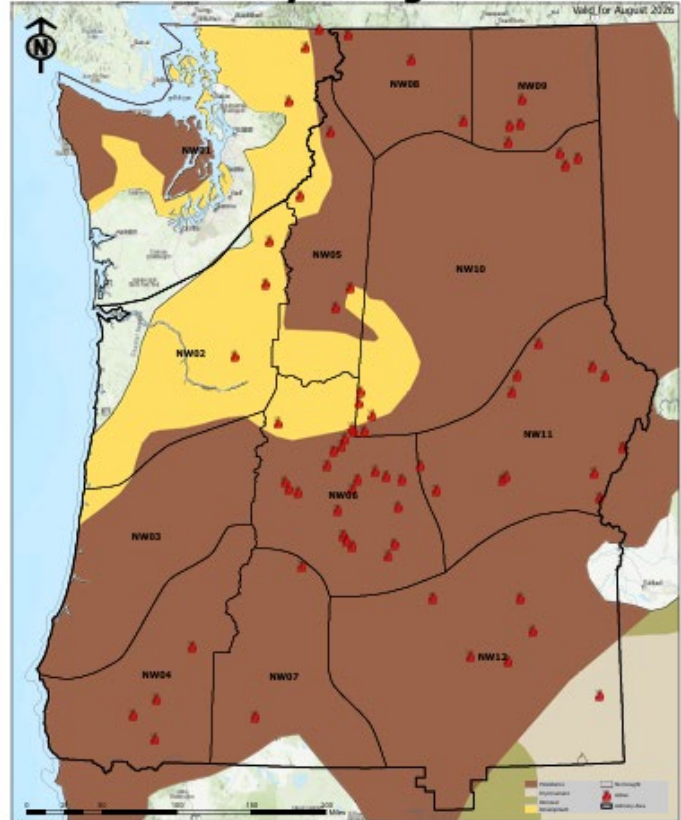
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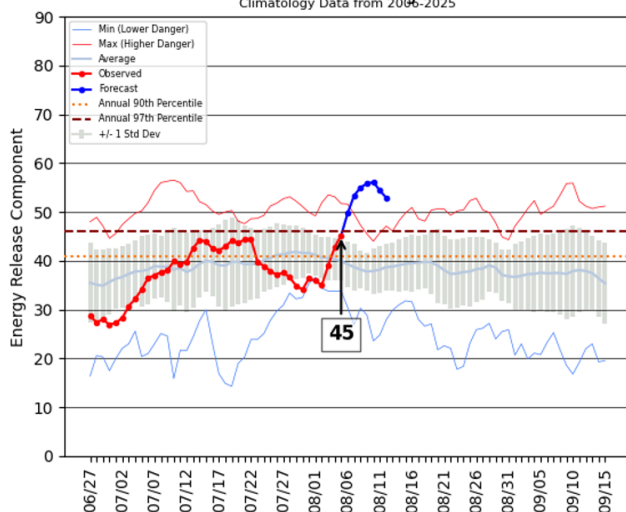
Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory Area



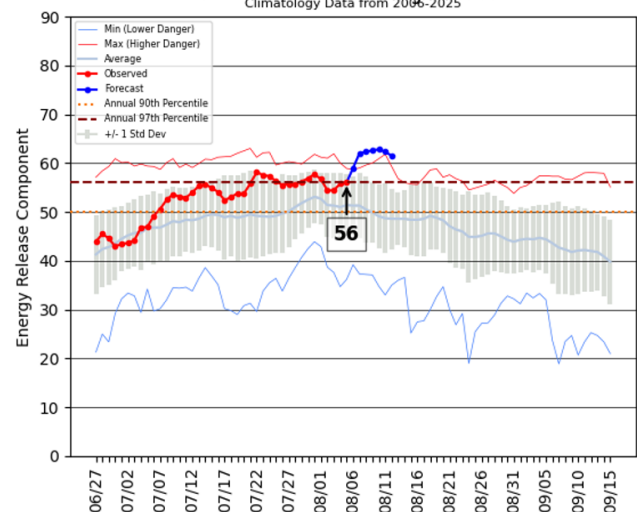
CPC Monthly Drought Outlook



FEMS ERC-Y for PSA NW04 - NFDRSv4
Last Observation: 05 August 2026



FEMS ERC-Y for PSA NW08 - NFDRSv4
Last Observation: 05 August 2026



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