

Southern Area

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Subject: Ongoing Drought in Southern Region associated with La Nina Weather pattern

Discussion: In many areas of the region Energy Release Component and 1000 hour fuel moisture values are setting new records on a daily basis. It's dry.

Much below average rainfall conditions are expected to be the dominate condition during the fall as a strong to very strong La Nina pattern influences the weather across much of the United States. Rainfall from tropical activity originating from the western or Central Caribbean will provide the only wildcard to the very dry fall that is expected across the Southern Area.

Recurring fall frontal passages will produce four to six days of lowest humidity in the **teens to 20%** and these types of situations will become more common as we progress through October with winds becoming more of a factor to increase large fire and unusual fire behavior potential. Tropical moisture influences notwithstanding, rain from cold fronts is expected to be minimal.

Currently, fire potential remains highest in the drought stressed fuels across the central third of the Southern Area from KY, TN, AR, LA, MS, AL, GA, north FL and eastern TX with other states also trending dry.

Expect continuing high fire threat trending fuel/weather conditions to persist into December. Low RH/wind weather triggers and fall human related risks from hunting, agricultural burning, and the annual late October Halloween mischief will add to fire potential.

Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:

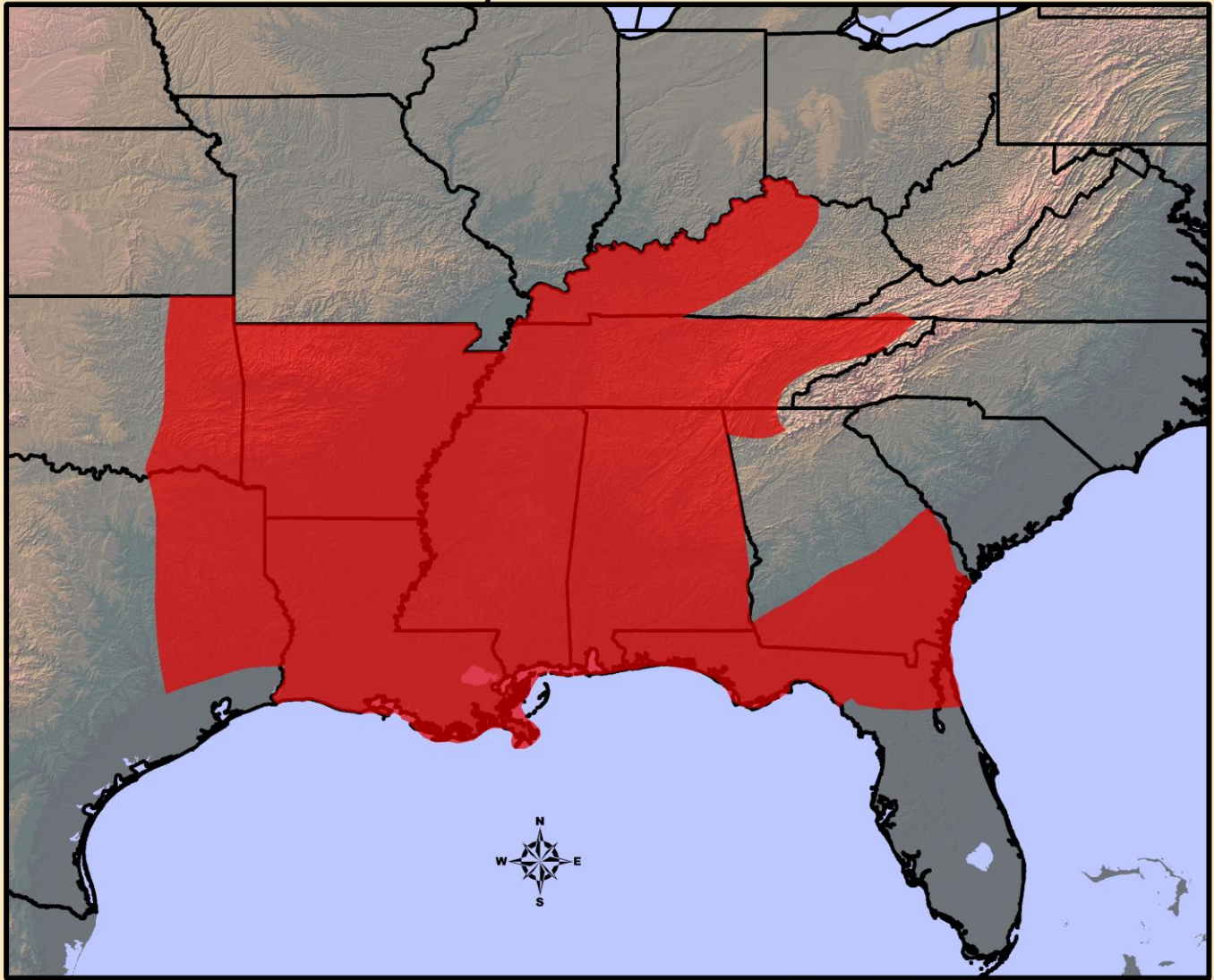
- Anticipate any ignition in flashy fine fuels to ignite easily and move rapidly.
- 1000 hour fuels will ignite easily and burn readily, increasing fire intensity and increasing the need for thorough mop up.
- Anticipate large acres to be consumed in a short period of time.
- Anticipate fires to exhibit extreme spread rates, elongated flaming fronts, and increasing fire brands; **expect increased short and long range spotting.**
- Live fuels are currently entering their dormant phase in most of the Southern Area. Leaf drop will add fuel to the fuel bed and wind reduction will decrease inside of timbered areas. This will add to intensity and spread of fires, especially on slopes.

Mitigation Measures:

- **Adjust Tactics**
 - Indirect tactics may have to be used earlier this year.
 - Aircraft support may need to be utilized in areas where it has not traditionally been used
- **Adjust Forces**
 - Supplement local and state initial attack resources earlier than normal.
 - Consider increasing forces in initial attack response
- **Think Safety**
 - Ensure firefighters have good anchor points - keeping one foot in the black.
 - Emphasize Maintaining Situational Awareness!
 - Emphasize LCES!

Area of Concern: See Next Page

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SACC, Decision Support

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