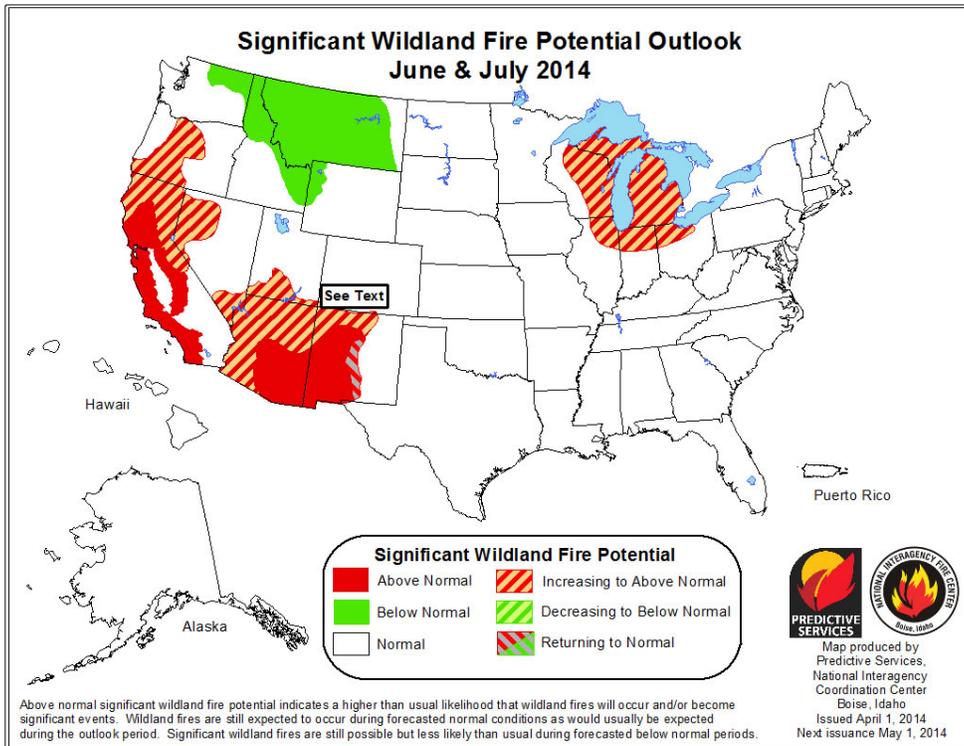
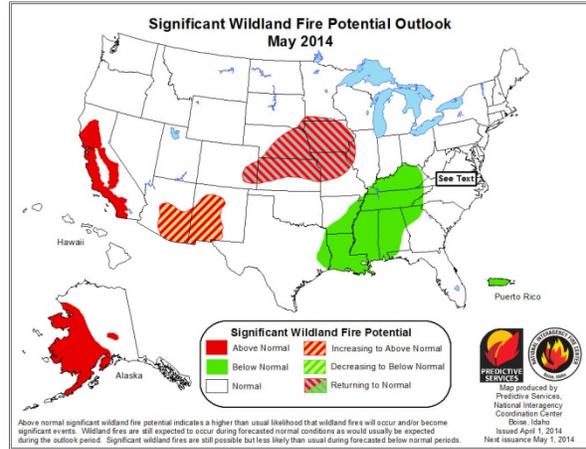
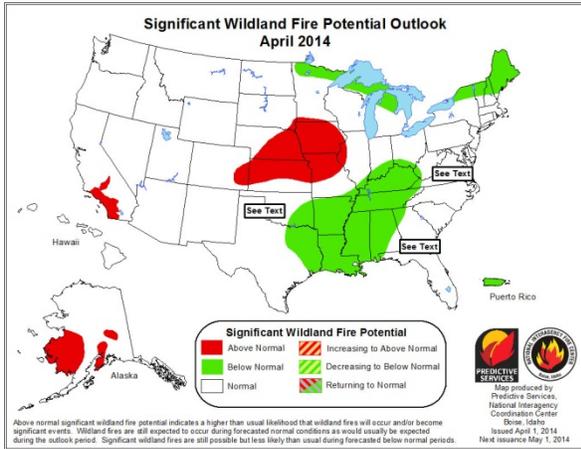


Western Great Basin Monthly and Seasonal Outlook

Issued: April 1, 2014

Valid for: April - July 2014

WGB Monthly and Seasonal Fire Potential Outlook: ***Increasing to Above Normal***



Weather Conditions Over the Last 30 Days

The average temperature across the Western Great Basin (WGB) has been above normal the last 30 days and up to 2-5+ degrees above normal over parts of western, central, northeast and southern areas of the WGB (See **Figure 2**).

Drier and warmer weather returned in early to mid-March, however some storms brought precipitation at times to parts of western and northern Nevada. Precipitation through March was 100-200% of normal over northern Nevada, and generally below normal in most other areas of the WGB. (see **Figure 3**). The storms in March rarely dropped south and only brought light precipitation at times to parts of southern Nevada, where precipitation remained 5-50% of normal. The water year precipitation (since October 1, 2013) is shown in **Figure 4**. Despite precipitation continuing at times in February over northern Nevada, the water year precipitation is still well below normal in most areas. However, there are small areas of the Sierra into the northern half of Nevada that are near normal.

The snow water equivalent (comparative to the snowpack) is shown in **Figure 5**. Despite wetter February conditions, and at times during March, the snowpack remained well below normal over the western half of the WGB since the snow levels were fairly high with storms and only brought snowfall to the higher elevations. Over the eastern half of Nevada, snow levels were lower at times and allowed the snowpack to increase to 70-105% of normal.

Ave. Temperature dep from Ave (deg F)
3/1/2014 - 3/30/2014

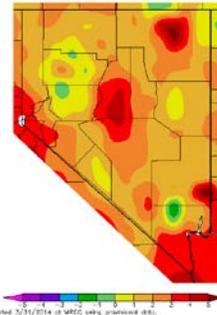


Figure 2: 30-Day Average Temps Departure from Avg. (deg F)

Percent of Average Precipitation (%)
3/1/2014 - 3/30/2014

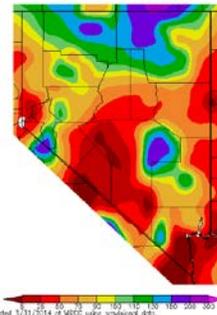


Figure 3: 30-Day Percent of Avg. Precipitation

Percent of Average Precipitation (%)
10/1/2013 - 3/23/2014

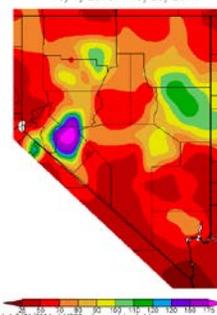


Figure 4: Percent of Avg. Precipitation since Oct 1, 2013

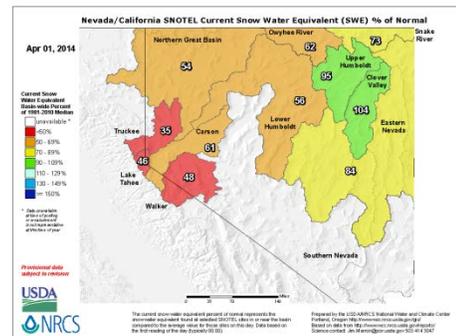


Figure 5: Snow Water Equivalent

Climate Factors, Fuels and Long Range Outlooks

The El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is currently in a state of neutral (with sea surface temperatures just below normal), and will likely remain in a neutral state through the spring. The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) has issued an “El Nino Watch” with the possibility of an El Nino developing by this summer. The impacts on the WGB will depend on the strength of the El Nino, if it develops, and when the development takes place. The CPC is forecasting above normal temperatures across the WGB from April through July. Below normal precipitation will likely extend further north into the Pacific Northwest, but may also extend into western parts of Nevada (see **Figure 7 and 8**). **However, long range models are still pointing at a warm and dry period during late April into early May, with some showers later in the month. June and July may dry out enough to complete the curing process and allow fire potential to increase. with more likely above normal temperatures and drier weather returning by early May.**

The U.S. Drought Monitor (**Figure 8**) shows severe to extreme drought continues over northern and western WGB areas with moderate to severe drought over eastern and southern Nevada. A small area of exceptional drought has slightly expanded over parts of western and northern Nevada. There were some improvements to the drought late in 2013 over parts of southern Nevada due to prolonged periods of rainfall in July and August. However, the drought has redeveloped in recent months. Current drought conditions are expected to persist or intensify in the coming months. (see **Figure 9**).

Fuel Conditions

Fuel moistures (including the larger fuels) were near or at record low levels in January across all of the WGB due to warm and dry conditions. However, fuel moisture increased through much of February due to storms bringing some precipitation across parts of the WGB, most

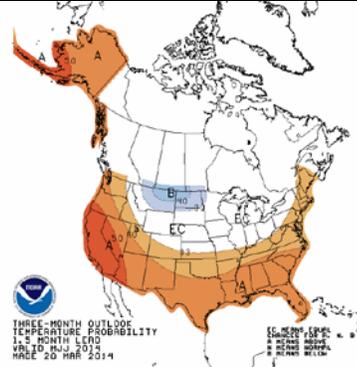


Figure 6: 3-Month Temperature Outlook – MJJ

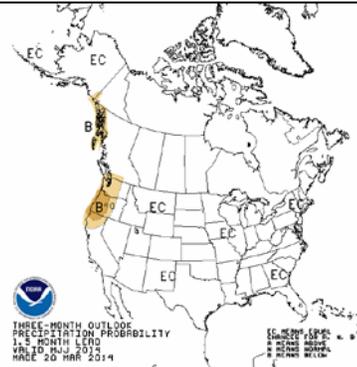


Figure 7: 3-Month Precipitation Outlook – MJJ

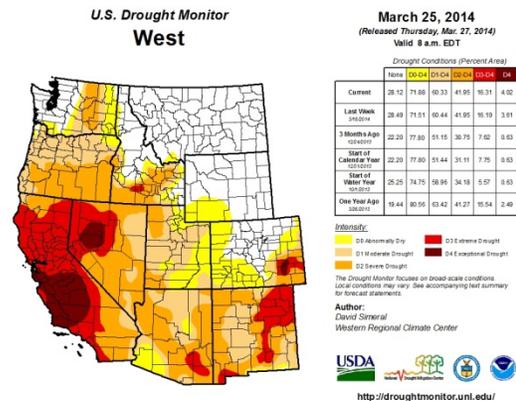


Figure 8: U.S. Drought Monitor

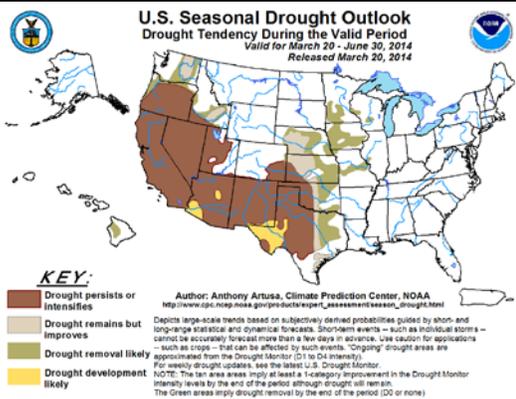


Figure 9: U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook

significantly over the northern half of the WGB. Fuel moisture has decreased through March as the weather pattern has been drier in many areas. However, occasional periods of moisture at the end of the first week in March and again at the end of the month did bring fluctuating fuel moisture throughout the month. April is still expected to be somewhat showery; therefore fuel moisture will likely fluctuate up and down through April as well. Depending on the length and intensity of the showers, we will be watching the new fuel growth across the landscape. Due to long term drought conditions fuel moistures will also likely quickly respond to moisture, but also quickly respond to drier conditions allowing fuel moistures to rapidly return to very low levels after prolonged warm and dry periods this summer.

Western Great Basin Outlook

After a dry and warm period in May there may be a brief uptick of fire activity on windy days if there are ignitions before a showery pattern returns, especially in very dry areas. By May/June, fire potential may start increasing across southern Nevada, which is normal timing-wise, if the precipitation remains mainly focused further north. The higher elevations' fuel moistures would remain very low and are showing significant drought stress. However, there is uncertainty as to how far south the precipitation will focus. Further north, fire potential may start increasing in June, but this would be considered normal. Conditions in the higher elevations of the Sierra are more in question. Large fuel moisture will likely still be very dry due to drought stress and lack of precipitation; however right now it looks like there will be enough chances for precipitation through May to keep fire potential under control over the northern half of the WGB, with June less certain. Later in June and July fuels will likely cure, and with some increased fine fuel growth, fire potential will be on the rise to possibly above normal. There is low-moderate confidence in the June/July period.