

2026 Wildland Fire Preparedness update

Thank you to our valued
parnters



Flagstaff Fire Department - Response

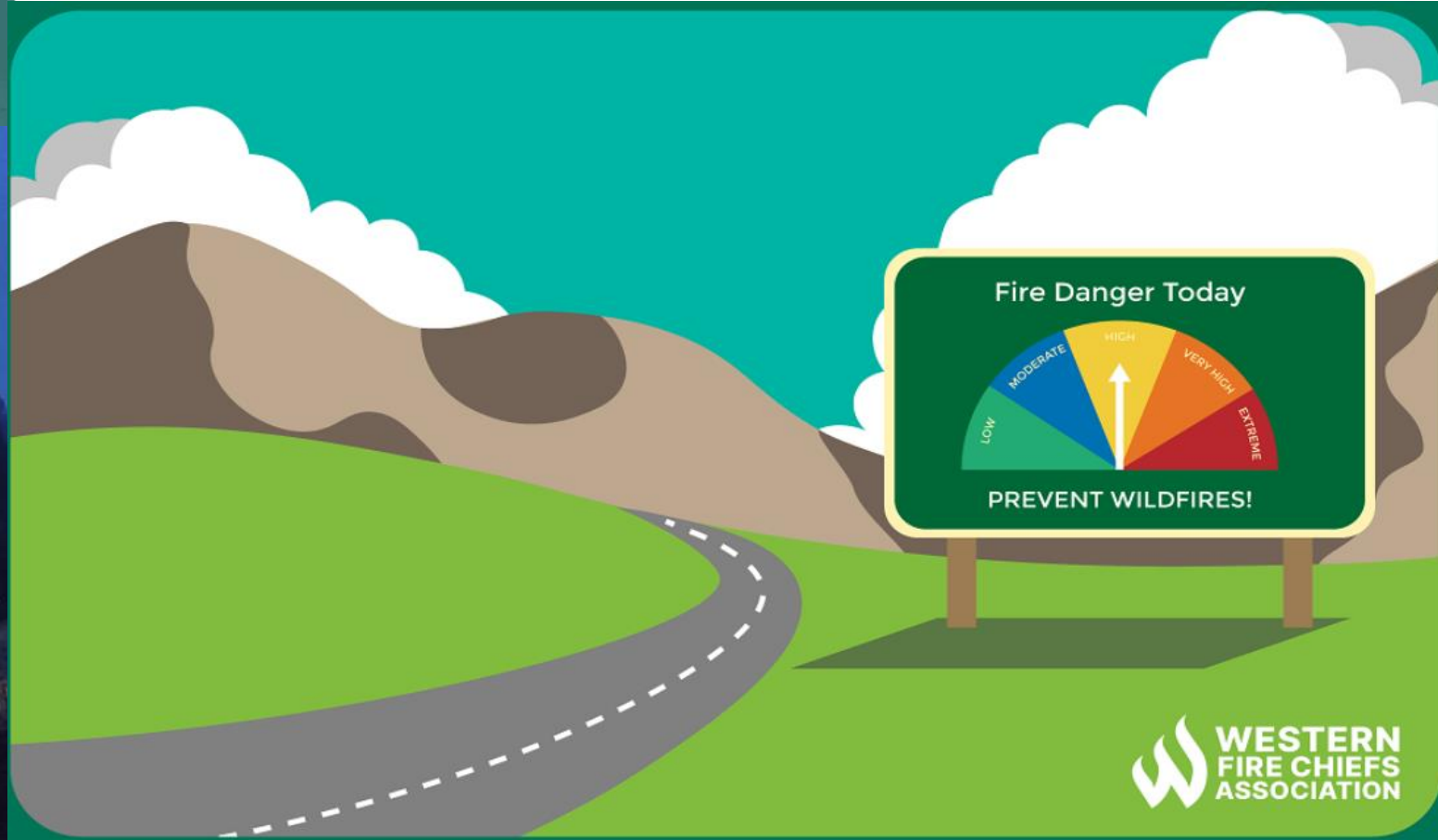
- Response Plan:
 - All operational/on-duty personnel go through annual wildland fire refresher training
 - Mutual Aid with Partner Agencies
 - Year-round planning, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery cycle
 - Call out program provides important wildfire training



Flagstaff Fire Department – Severity Staffing

Preparedness based on weather and resource indices:

*National Fire Danger Rating System:
Currently In High as of 5/11/26*



Aviation Resources



Preposition of Aircraft During Fire Season

- Local Federal and Partner Agencies work with the Southwest Coordination Center (SWCC) to move Aviation resources to Northern Arizona.
- Aviation Resources can stage at local airport: Pulliam Airport, Sedona Airport, Mormon Lake Guard or other designated bases as needed.
- Nearest Airtanker bases: Prescott and Winslow. These bases will host a range of different types of airtankers for support





Fire Season Outlook

Weather Forecast Office

Flagstaff, AZ

Tuesday, May 19

NWS Flagstaff - Robert Rickey





Key Points

- **Drought:**

- The drought status is significantly better than last year at this time.
- Drought conditions are expected to worsen/persist into the summer.

- **Snow:**

- Current snowpack is nearly nonexistent.
- Flagstaff has received 26.9'' of snow this season. This is the 5th lowest snowfall total through April on record, and well below the normal of 89.0''.

- **Liquid Equivalent (Rain + Melted Snow):**

- Liquid equivalent since October 1st is near to above normal across the area.
- The total liquid equivalent for Flagstaff is 13.27. This is 1.23 inches above the normal value of 12.04.

- **Weather Outlook:**

- Temperature and precipitation outlooks for May are leaning toward above normal temperatures, and have no strong signal for precipitation.
- Outlook for the Monsoon Season is leaning toward above normal precipitation and temperatures.

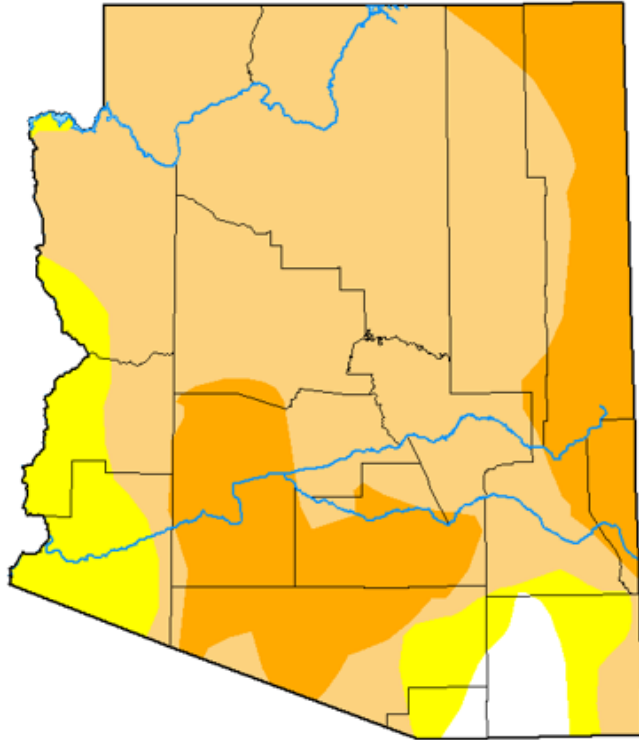
- **Wildland Fire Potential:**

- Forecasted as Above Normal for May and June, with a decline expected in July as monsoon moisture arrives.

2026 (Current)

2025

U.S. Drought Monitor Arizona



April 28, 2026

(Released Thursday, Apr. 30, 2026)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	2.84	97.16	85.57	25.02	0.00	0.00
Last Week 04-21-2026	2.84	97.16	85.57	25.02	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 01-27-2026	31.98	68.02	34.36	6.18	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-06-2026	27.93	72.07	47.69	13.76	1.03	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-30-2025	0.00	100.00	100.00	79.21	25.06	1.49
One Year Ago 04-29-2025	0.00	100.00	99.34	88.72	67.16	12.34

Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

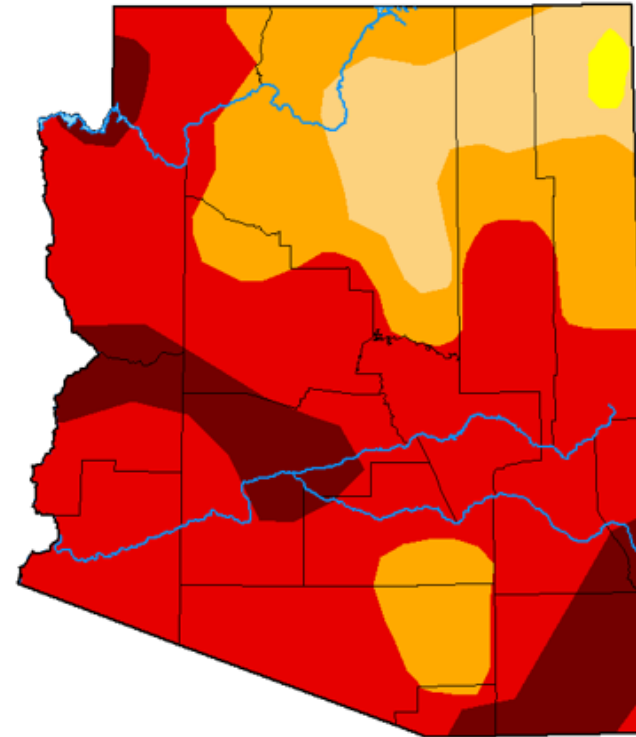
Author:

Brad Rippey
U.S. Department of Agriculture



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

U.S. Drought Monitor Arizona



April 29, 2025

(Released Thursday, May 1, 2025)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	99.34	88.72	67.16	12.34
Last Week 04-22-2025	0.00	100.00	99.34	88.72	67.16	12.34
3 Months Ago 01-28-2025	0.00	100.00	83.70	63.94	21.16	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-07-2025	3.74	96.26	76.63	45.54	14.03	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2024	27.62	72.38	39.91	4.61	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 04-30-2024	25.82	74.18	25.31	3.15	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Richard Tinker
CPC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP



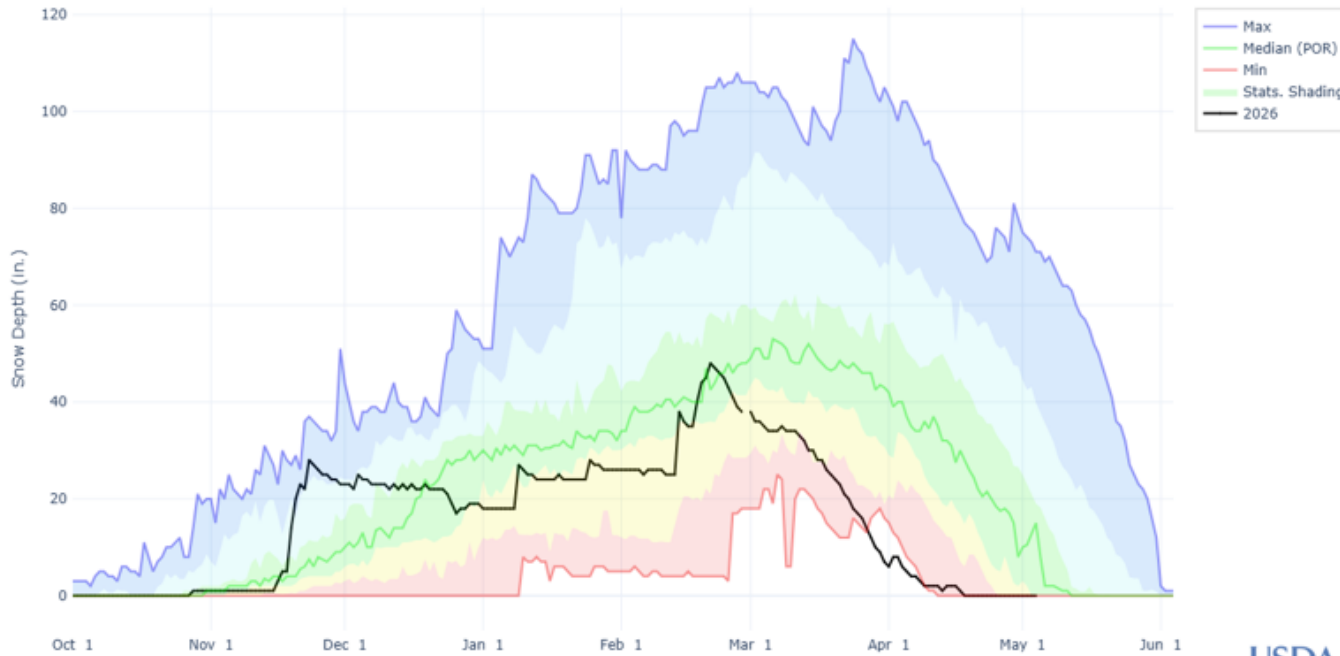
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

25% of Arizona remains in severe or worse drought, compared to 89% of the state this time last year.



Snowpack Conditions

SNOWSLIDE CANYON, AZ (927) SNOW DEPTH



Flagstaff, AZ

Rank	Ending Date	Total Snowfall Oct 1 to Apr 30
1	1934-04-30	11.2
2	1936-04-30	16.0
3	1931-04-30	18.0
4	1904-04-30	26.4

- Current snowpack is **nearly nonexistent**.
- Flagstaff has received 26.9" of snow this season. This is the 5th lowest snowfall total through April since records began in 1898. Well below the normal of 89.0".
- What brief snow accumulations we had were followed by prolonged periods of warm and dry weather.



Historic March Heatwave

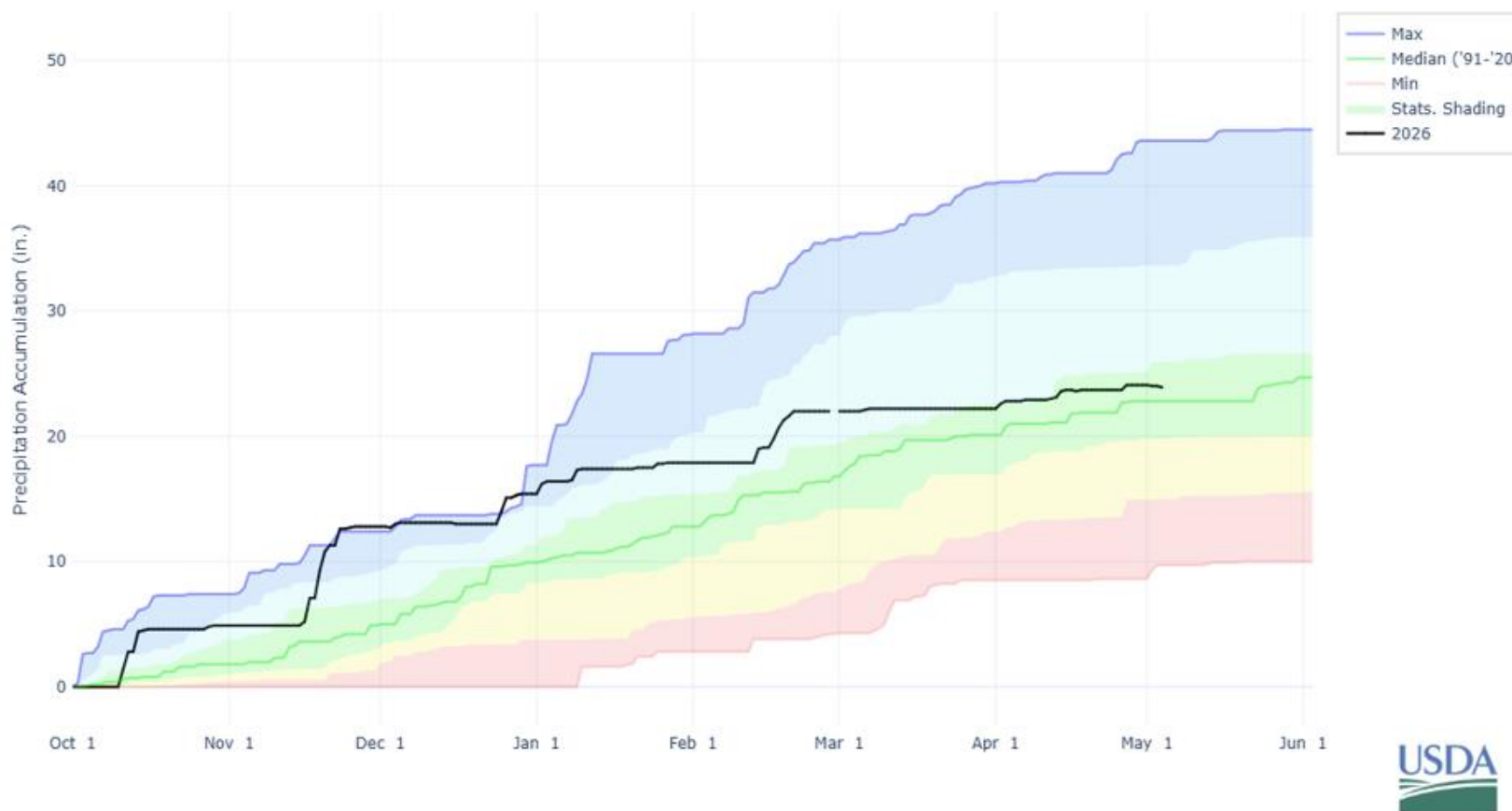
One of the warmest winters on record was followed by a historic heatwave in March 2026. Monthly records for March were broken, some by 10+ degrees. We experienced a prolonged period of summer-like temperatures.

Location	2026 March Record	Previous March Record	Normal June High
Flagstaff	84	73	79
Winslow	95	85	92
Page	89	84	94
Prescott	91	83	88
Payson	90	89	90
Clarkdale	99	92	99
Show Low	86	80	84



Rainfall + Melted Snow

SNOWSLIDE CANYON, AZ (927) PRECIPITATION ACCUMULATION



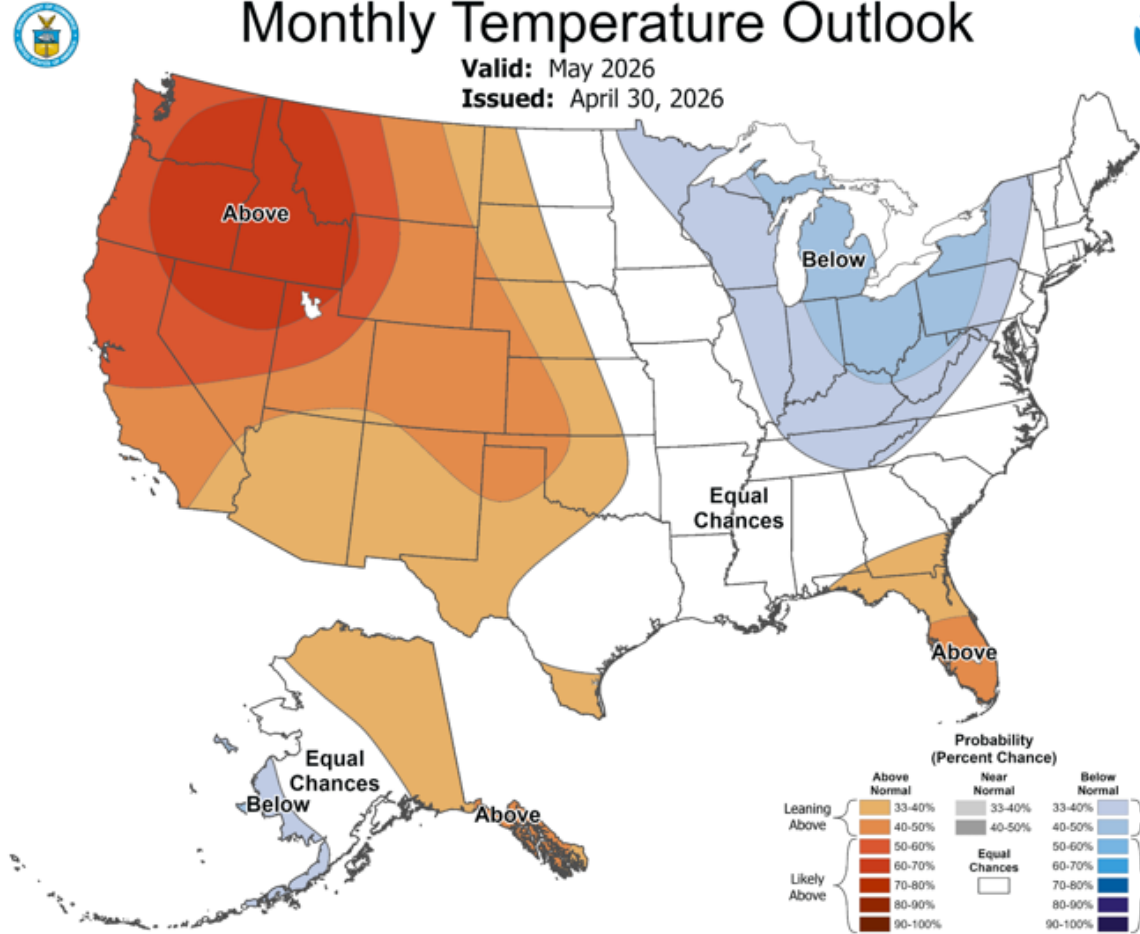
- The total liquid equivalent for Flagstaff (rainfall + melted snow) since Oct 1st is 13.27. This is 1.23 inches above the normal value of 12.04.



May Outlook

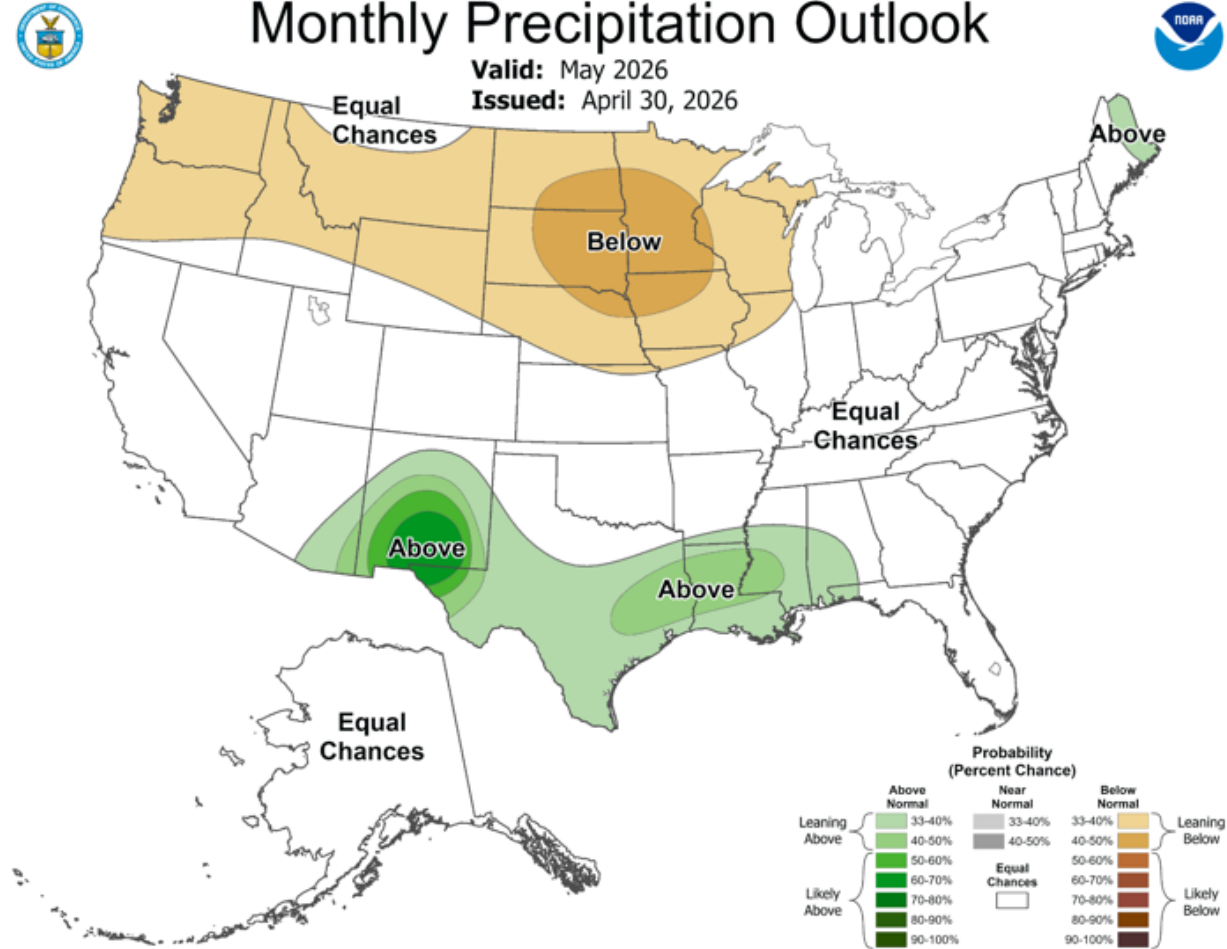
Monthly Temperature Outlook

Valid: May 2026
Issued: April 30, 2026



Monthly Precipitation Outlook

Valid: May 2026
Issued: April 30, 2026



- The climate outlook for May slightly favors above normal temperature.
- The climate outlook for May calls for equal chances of above, near-normal, or below precipitation.

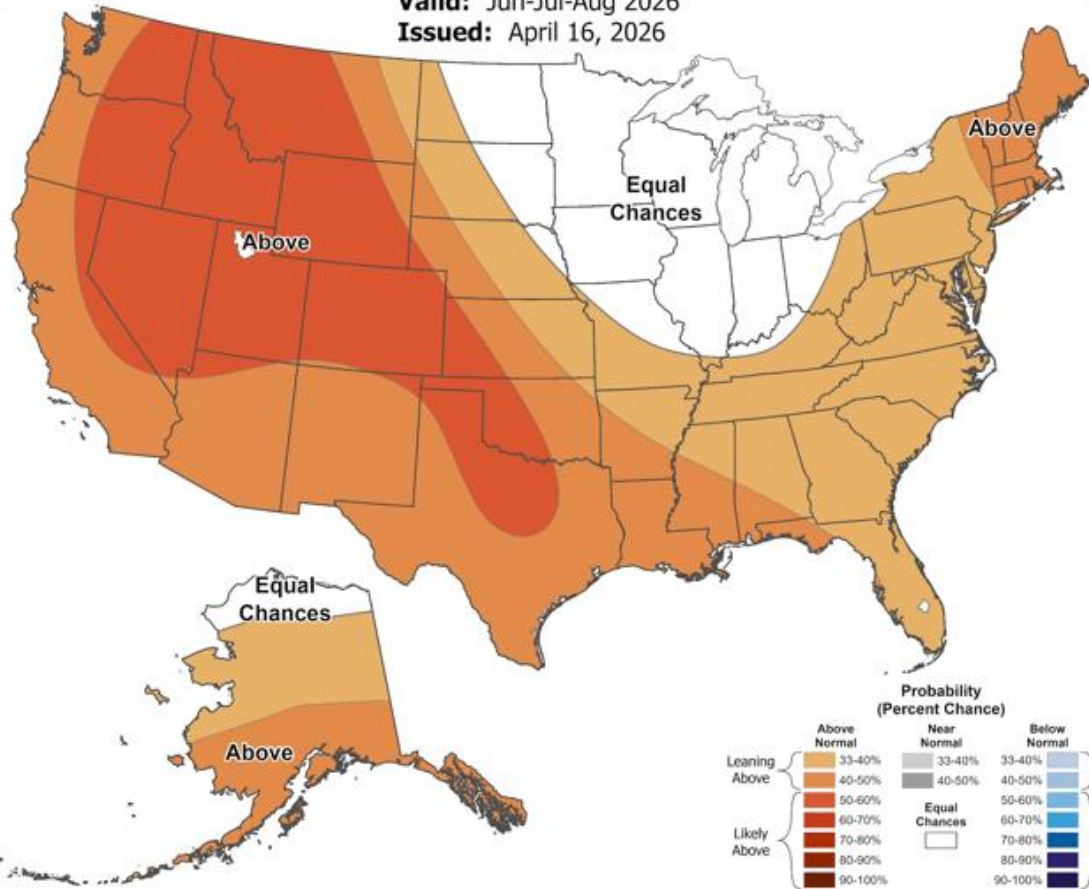


June-August Outlook



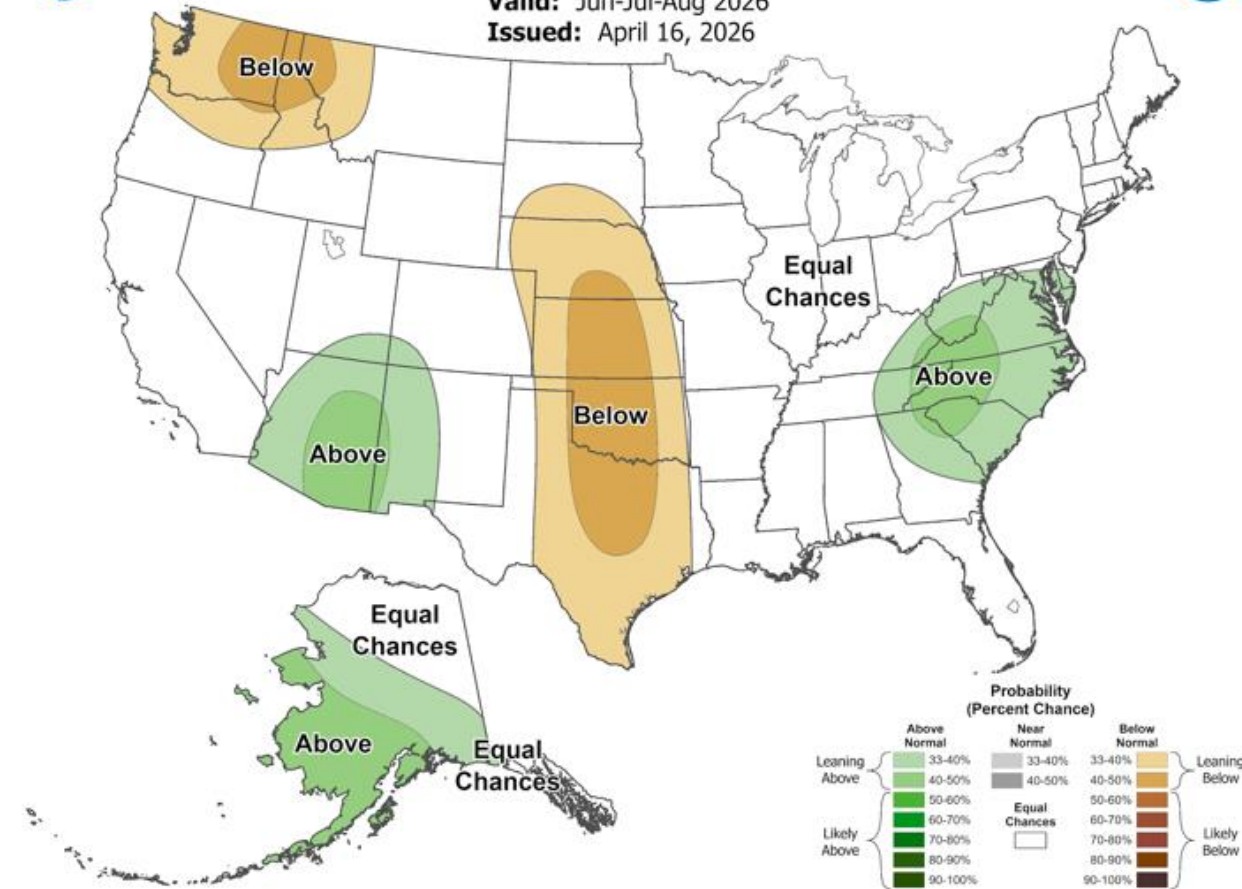
Seasonal Temperature Outlook

Valid: Jun-Jul-Aug 2026
Issued: April 16, 2026



Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

Valid: Jun-Jul-Aug 2026
Issued: April 16, 2026



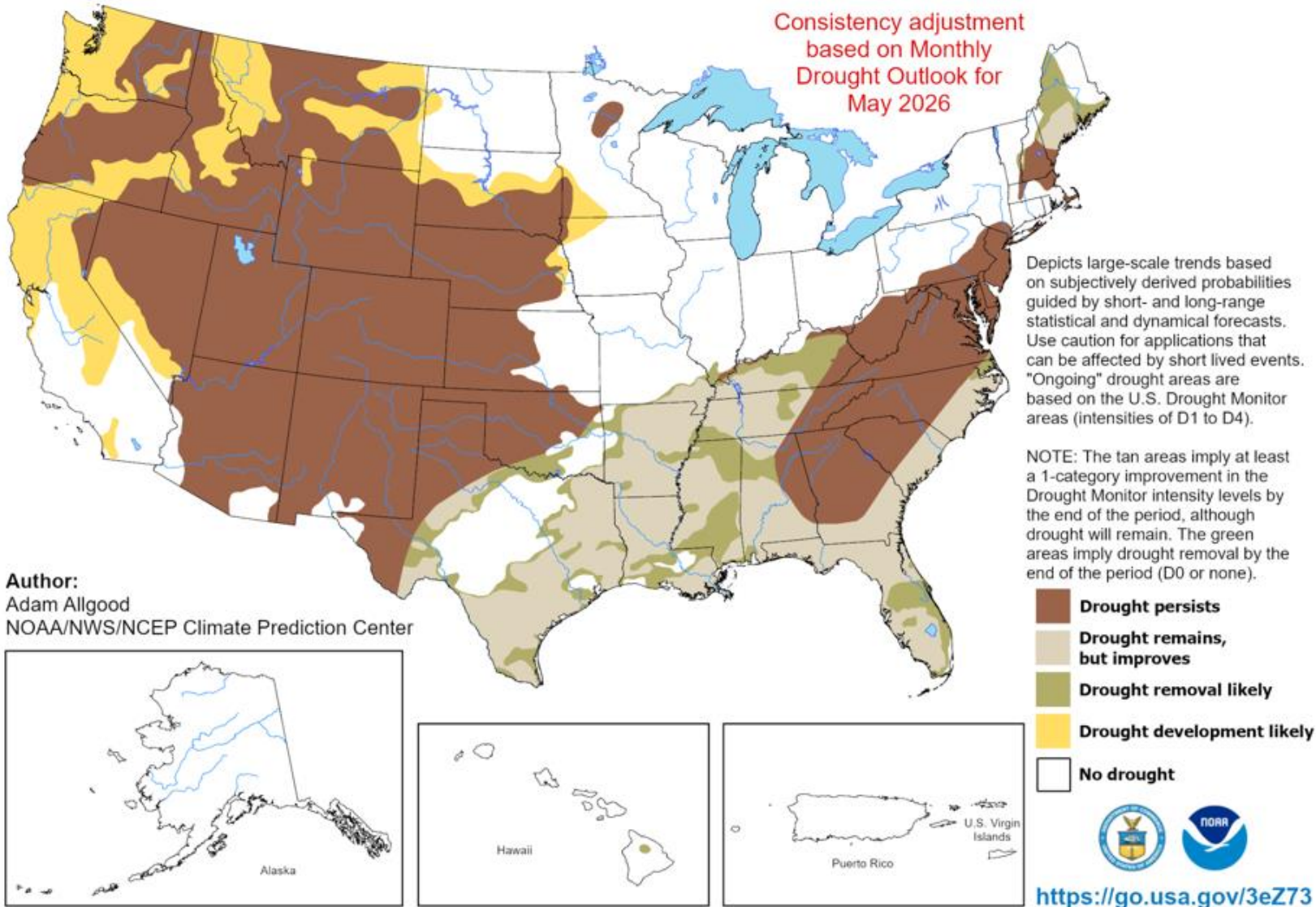
- The climate outlook for June-August slightly favors above normal temperature.
- The climate outlook for June-August slightly favors above normal precipitation hinting at the possibility of a robust monsoon,



Seasonal Drought Outlook

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

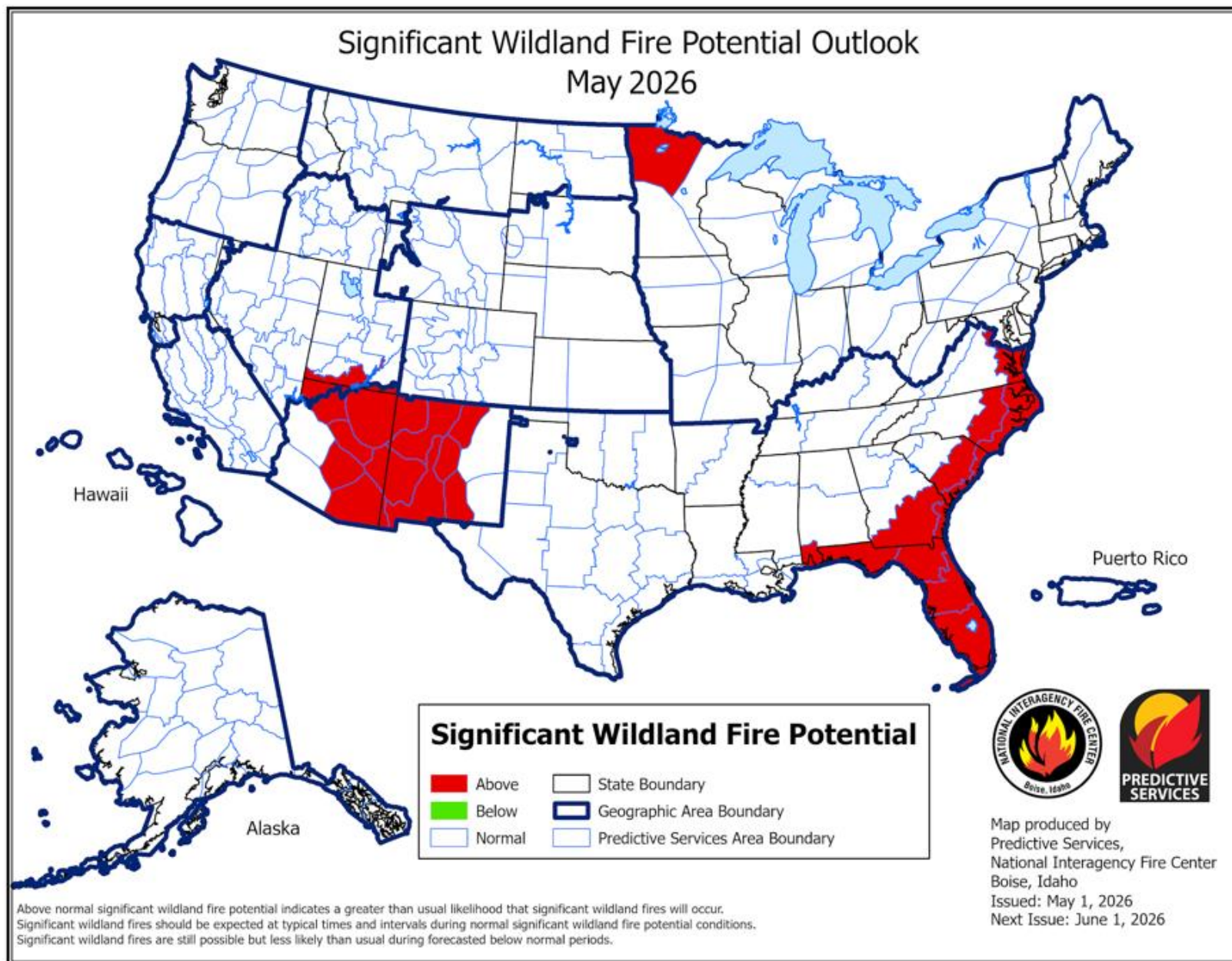
Valid for May 1 - July 31, 2026
Released April 30, 2026



Author:
Adam Allgood
NOAA/NWS/NCEP Climate Prediction Center

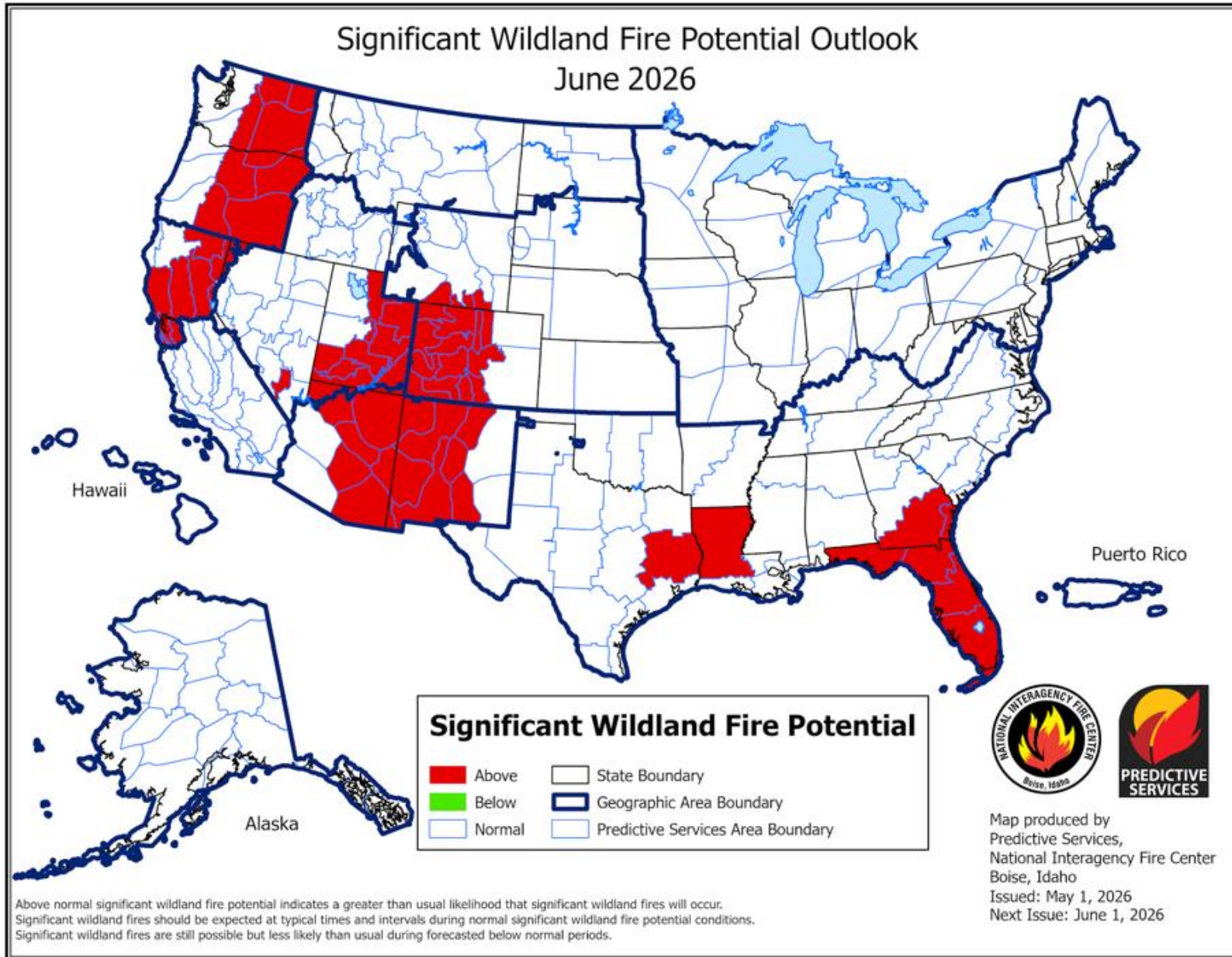


Significant Wildland Fire Potential - May





Significant Wildland Fire Potential - Jun





Significant Wildland Fire Potential - Jul





Key Points

- **Drought:**

- The drought status is significantly better than last year at this time.
- Drought conditions are expected to worsen/persist into the summer.

- **Snow:**

- Current snowpack is nearly nonexistent.
- Flagstaff has received 26.9" of snow this season. This is the 5th lowest snowfall total through April, and well below the normal of 89.0".

- **Liquid Equivalent (Rain + Melted Snow):**

- Liquid equivalent since October 1st is near to above normal across the area.
- The total liquid equivalent for Flagstaff is 13.27. This is 1.23 inches above the normal value of 12.04.

- **Weather Outlook:**

- Temperature and precipitation outlooks for May are leaning toward above normal temperatures, and have no strong signal for precipitation.
- Outlook for the Monsoon Season is leaning toward above normal precipitation and temperatures.

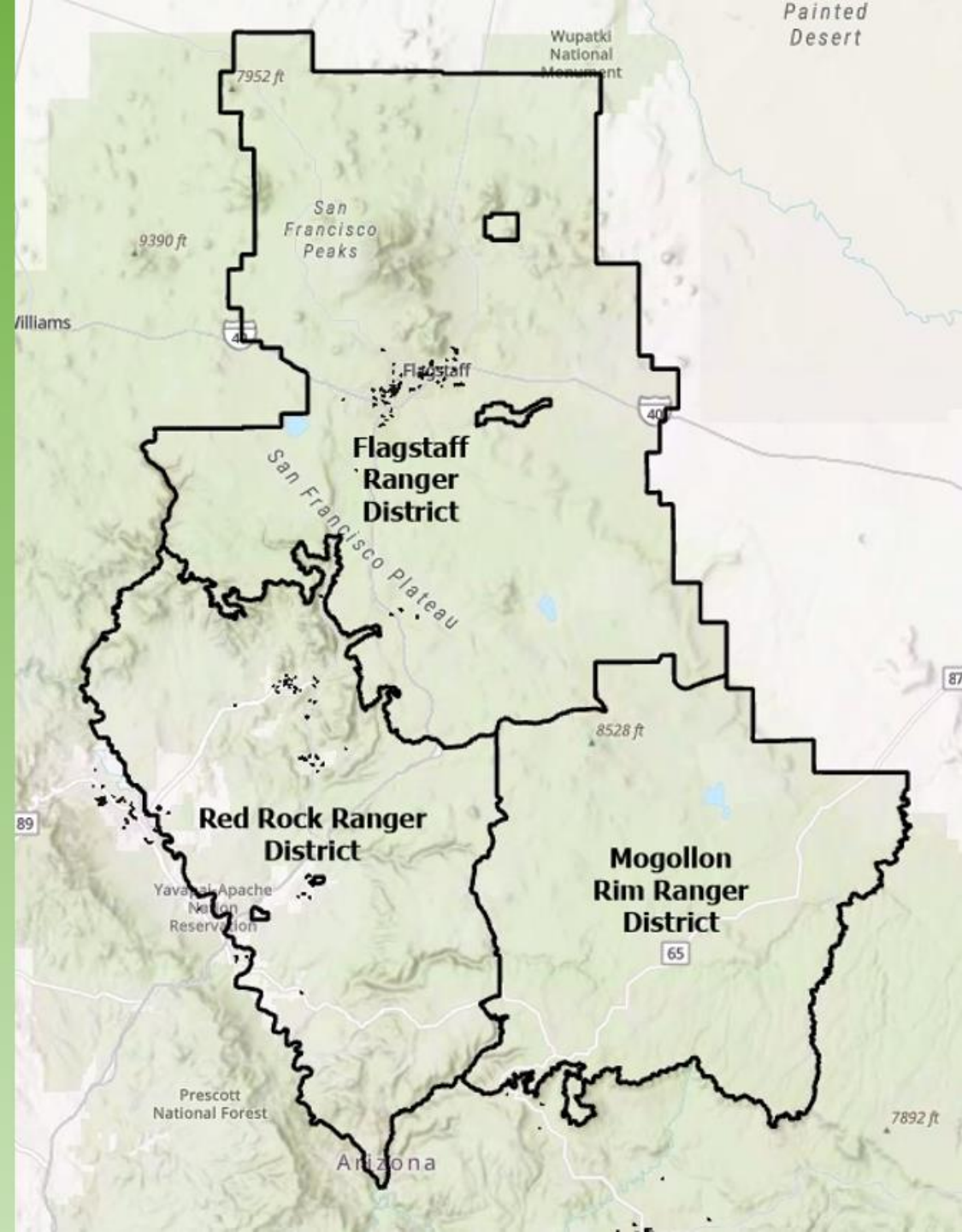
- **Wildland Fire Potential:**

- Forecasted as Above Normal for May and June, with a decline expected in July as monsoon moisture arrives.



Coconino National Forest
Wildfire Risk Reduction,
2026 Fire Readiness,
and Fire Restrictions

Coconino National Forest Fire Management Program





Operational Resources

218 - Personnel

3 - Districts

7 - Stations

12 - Engines

3 - Hotshot Crews

3 - Fuels Crews

2 - Fire Dozers (1 Engineering Dozer)

2 - Water Tenders

8 - Staffed Lookout Towers

Severity Staffing Options

Extended staffing for USFS resources
(6/10's)

Additional Engine Modules

Additional Hand Crews

Air Attack @ Flagstaff Airport

Type 1 Helicopter @ Sedona Airport

Type 3 Helicopter @ Mormon Lake
Guard Station



Coconino National Forest fire restriction indices

Maximum temperature	Ignition component
Minimum relative humidity	1 hour fuel moisture
Energy release component (ERC)	10-hour fuel moisture
Burning index (BI)	100-hour fuel moisture
Spread component	1000-hour fuel moisture

Restrictions decisions are index/science-based with professional judgment and partner/cooperator considerations factored in

Examples:

- weather forecast/extended outlook
- resource availability
- resistance to control
- visitor use/holidays/etc.

Overview of stage 1/2/3 restrictions

Stage 1: campfires only in developed sites (CGs, picnic areas); propane stoves/fires allowed

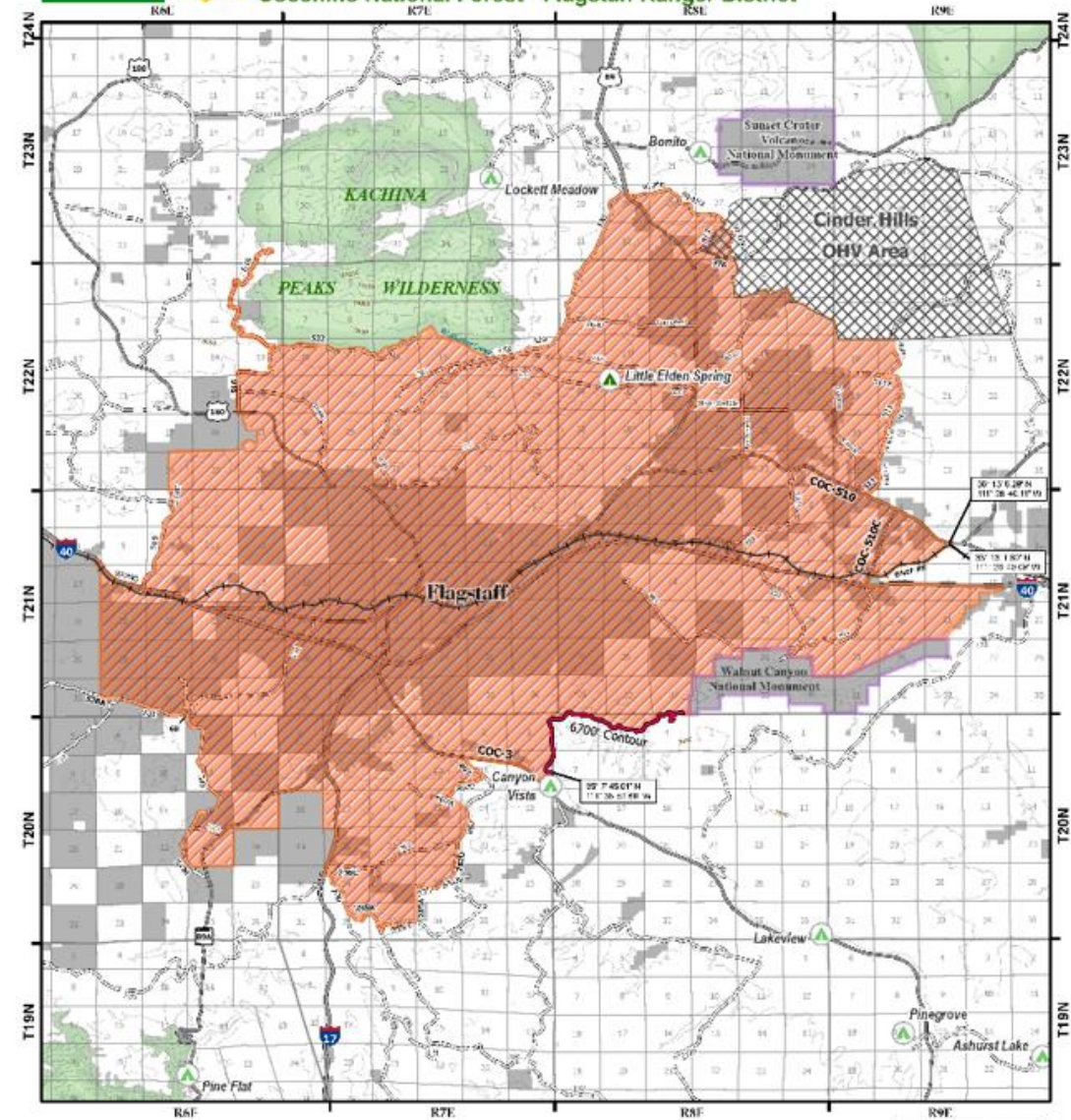
Stage 2: no campfires (propane stoves/fires allowed)

- 9am-8pm: no chainsaws or other equipment powered by an internal combustion engine
- Temporary non-motorized areas around Flagstaff

Stage 3: area/s or entire forest closed to public entry

Flagstaff RD: existing year-round stage 2 restrictions
surrounding Flagstaff, Kachina Village,
Mountainaire, Doney Park, Timberline

Flagstaff area year-round camping and campfire restrictions



Forest Order Information
 Order Number: 03-04-08-23-10
 Start Date: May 1, 2023
 End Date: May 1, 2025

Disclaimer
 The USDA Forest Service makes no warranty, expressed or implied, regarding the data displayed on this map, and reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace this information without notification.

Legend

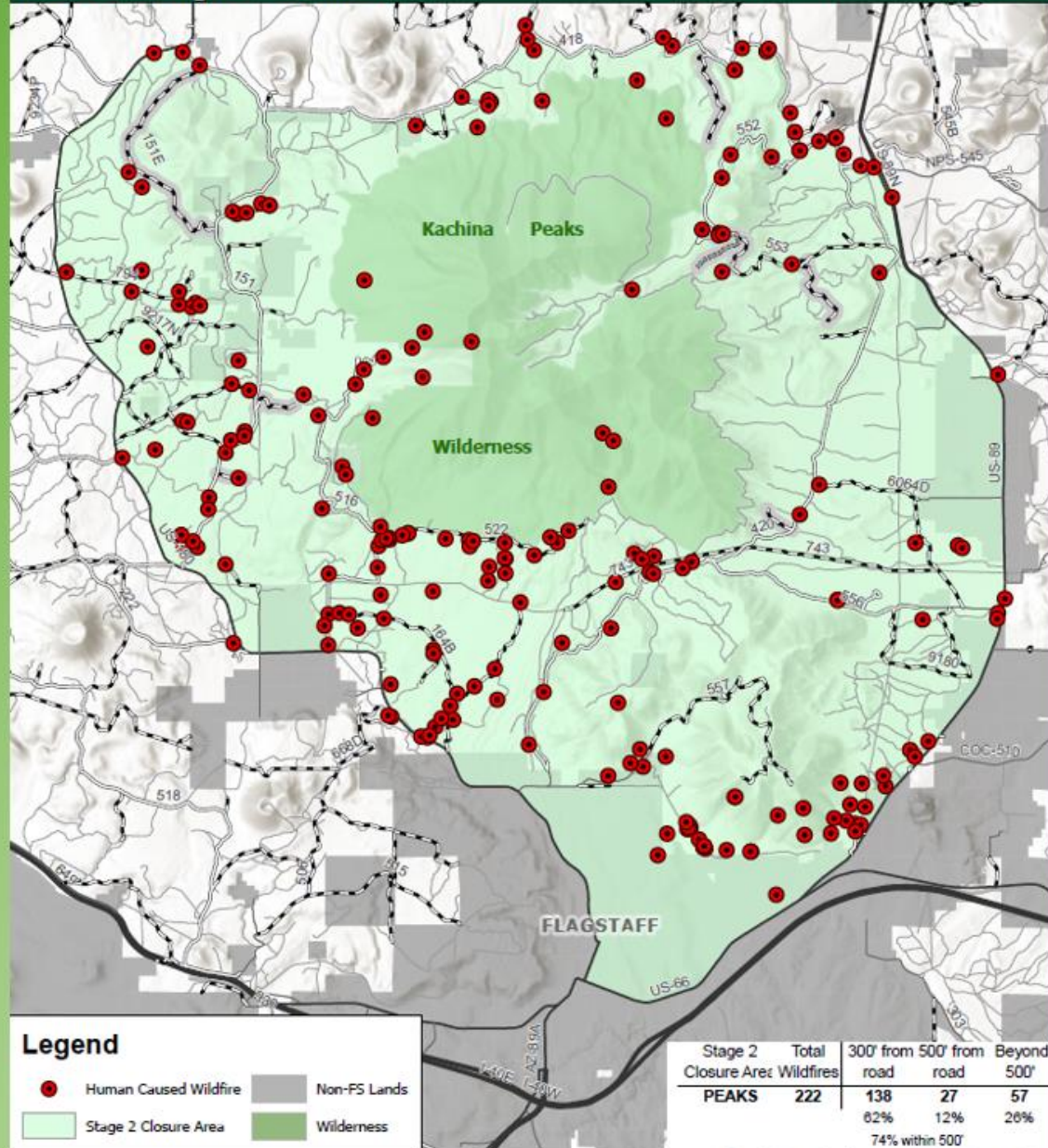
Described Area	Wilderness Area Boundary
Campground	Cinder Hills OHV Area
Horse Camp	BNSF Railroad
Non-federal Forest System Lands	6700' Contour line

0 1 2 4 6 8 miles

ARIZONA
 Coconino County

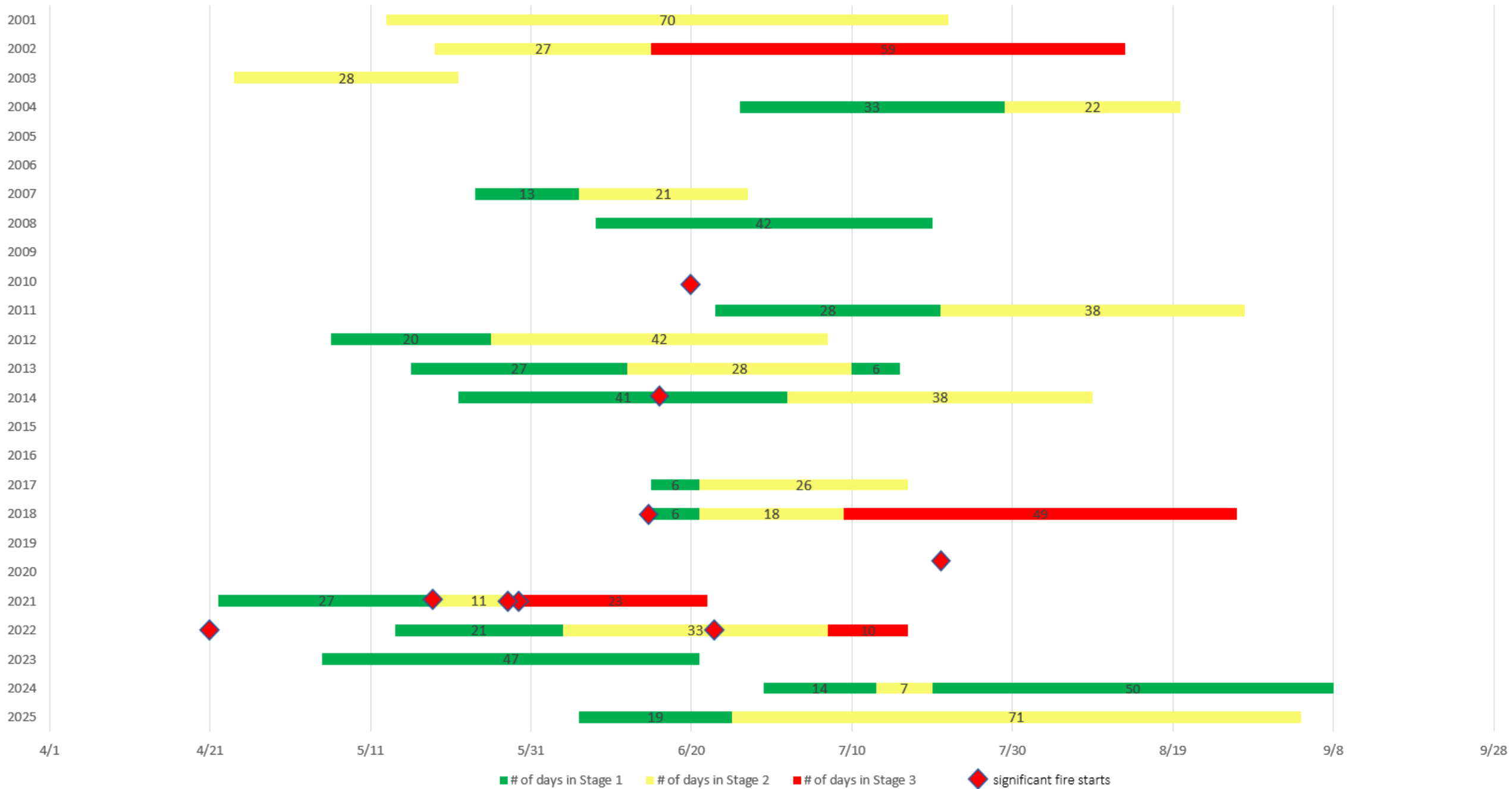
Map Created on 4/25/2025

Human caused fires around the San Francisco Peaks -- 2013-2024

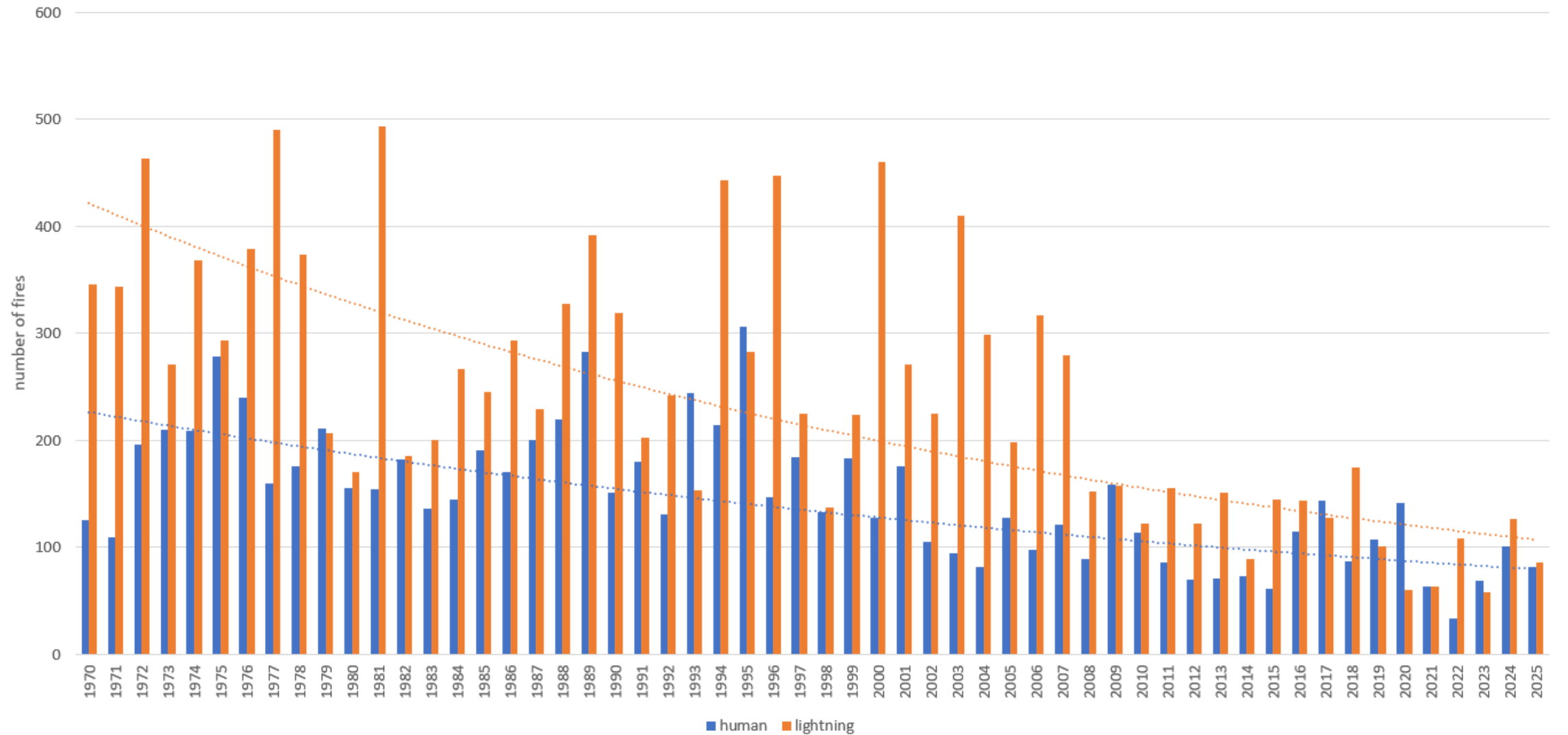


This product is reproduced from geospatial information prepared by the USDA Forest Service. Geospatial information and GIS product accuracy may vary. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. USDA Forest Service reserves the right to modify this information without notice.

Fire Restrictions History on the Coconino National Forest 2000-2025



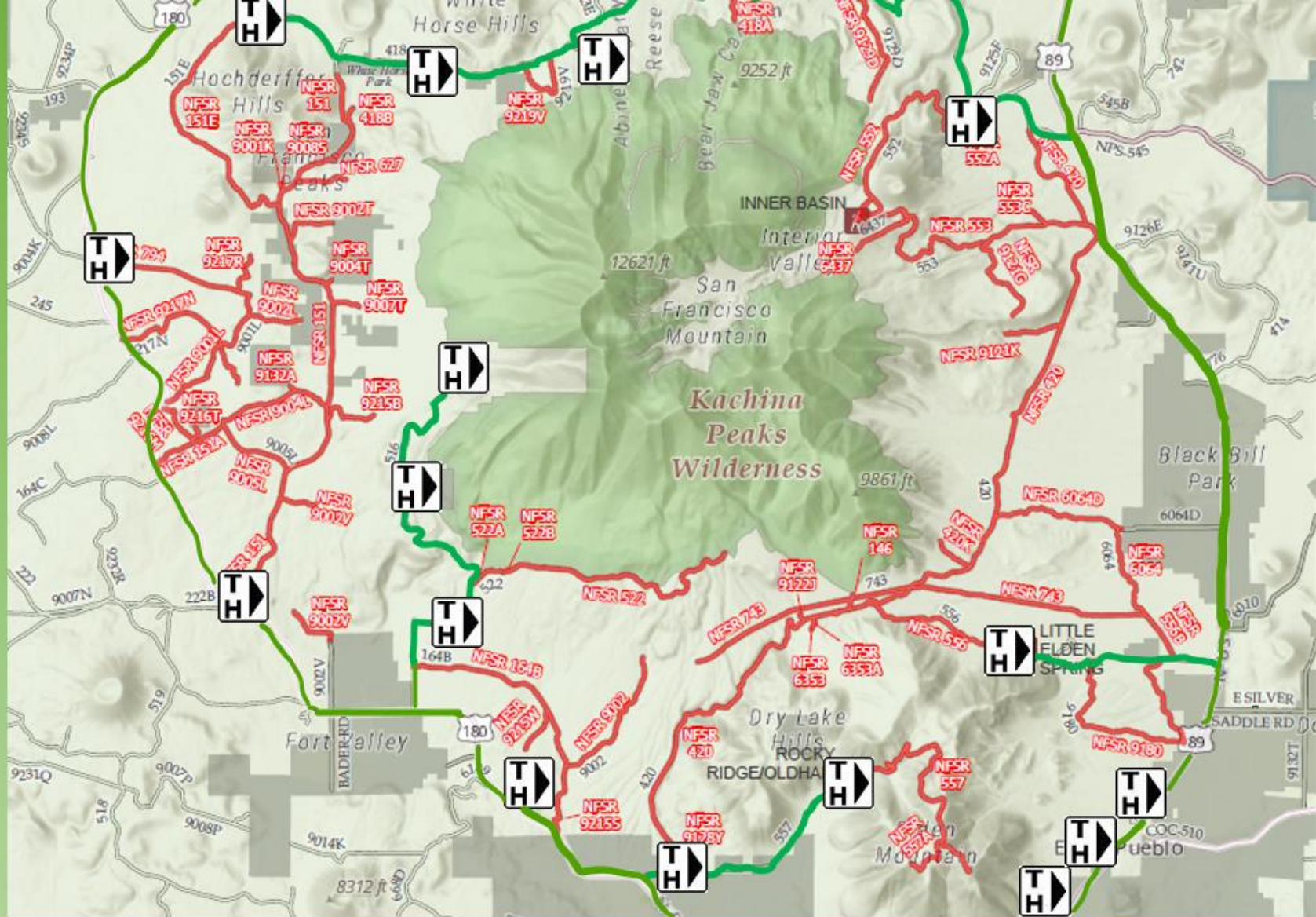
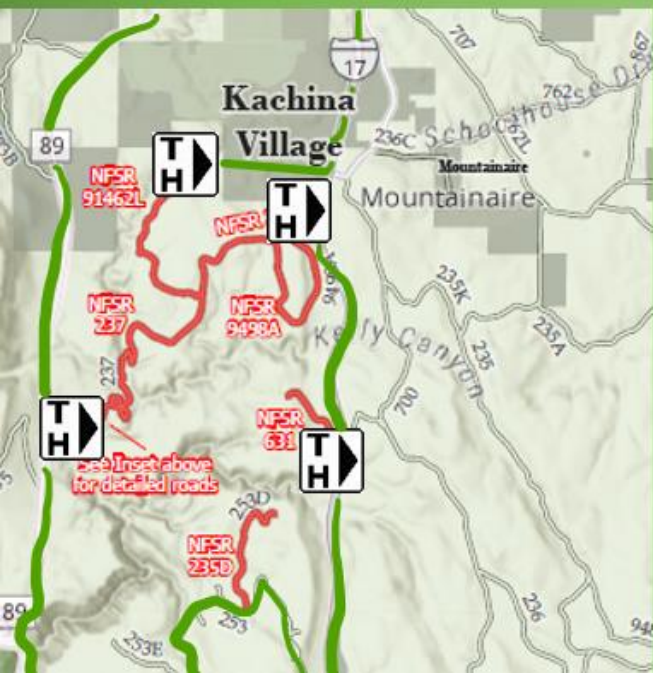
human vs. lightning caused fires on the Coconino National Forest, 1970-2025



Human-caused Fire Risk Reduction

Stage 2

temporary motorized
restrictions



Miles of open roads on Flagstaff RD	1511
Miles of roads closed during stage 2	106
Percentage of roads closed stage 2	7%



FFD and partner Initiatives

Local action enabling risk reduction: Standards and metrics leading to clear, measurable outcomes

- Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)
- Wildfire Resilient Homes Initiative (WRHI) – *Partnership with City of Flagstaff Sustainability*
- Fire Insurance Review Task Force (FIRTF) – HB 2054
- Western States WUI – Urban fire mitigation exchange
- Community Meetings
- Moore Foundation Wildfire Resilience Initiative
- WUI code analysis project and resource protection pilot – designed to mitigate the 3 risks of how homes burn
- Collaborative study of wildland fire smoke with NAU and Cornell
- FWPP/4FRI
- GFFP/Forest Biomass coalition

Local action enabling risk reduction



FIRE-SUPPRESSED FOREST Fire in a ponderosa pine forest where fires have been repeatedly suppressed: Overcrowding can make the forest less healthy and resilient. When such a forest burns, the fire can extend into the crowns, killing large swaths of trees. © Erica Sloniker / TNC



FIRE-MAINTAINED FOREST Fire in a ponderosa pine forest using controlled burns with or without mechanical thinning: A fire burns low through the understory, maintaining gaps between some trees that help prevent future large crown fires. © Erica Sloniker / TNC

Wildfire Resilient Homes Initiative

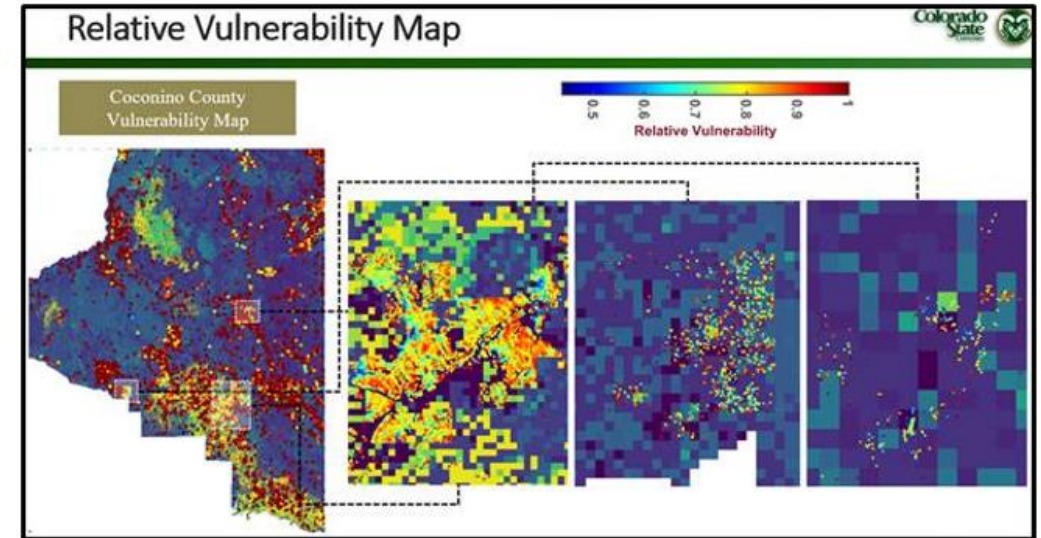
What: A collaborative pilot program to help residents reduce the risk of home ignition during wildfires

Why:

- Residents want to reduce their wildfire risk.
- Many are unsure which actions are most effective or where to start.
- There is a critical gap in accessible, practical tools to support household-level mitigation.

How:

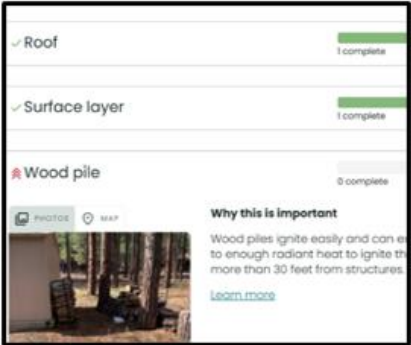
- Provide accessible entry points for residents to take action.
- Prioritize simple, high-impact mitigation measures—like removing shrub and clearing needles.
- Pair education with resources and funding.



Wildfire Resilient Homes Initiative



**Education +
Engagement**



**Homes
Assessments**



Resources + Kits



**Financial
Assistance**



Emergency Preparedness



Risk Reduction



Resilience

Wildfire Resilient Homes Initiative

57

Needs updated to actual metric



Home Assessments

23

Needs updated to actual metric



Kits Distributed

9



Grant Applicants

2,640



Flyers Distributed

230



Attended a Community Meeting

3

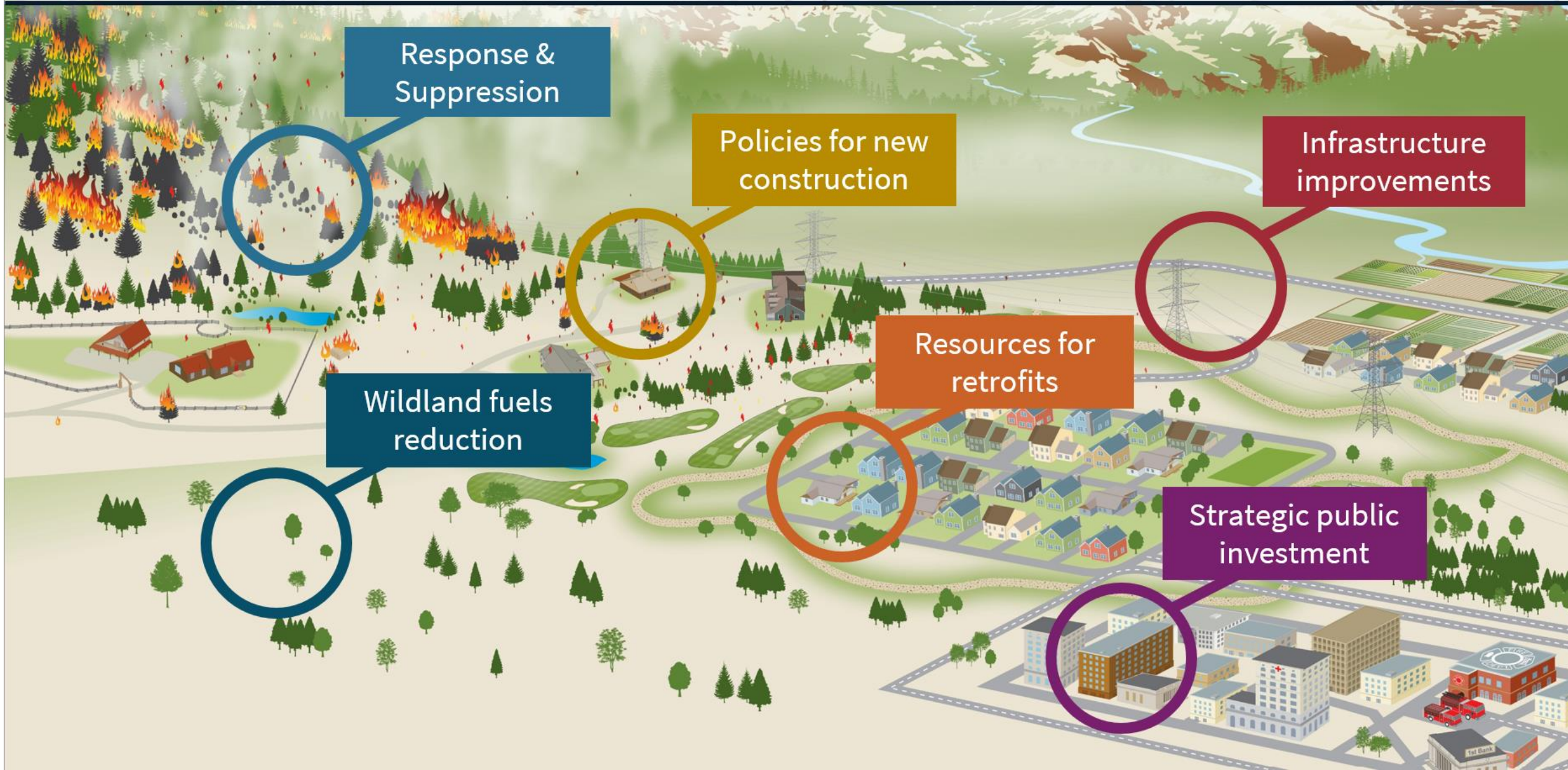
Needs updated to actual metric



Clean up [Metric]

IDEAS:
participants,
of bags removed,
or events
(?)

Risk Reduction Measures



Response & Suppression

Policies for new construction

Infrastructure improvements

Resources for retrofits

Strategic public investment

Wildland fuels reduction

Wildland fuels reduction

Fundamentals of Fire Management

Fire Spread = Heat, Fuel, Oxygen

Fire Behavior = Fuel, Weather,
Topography

How do homes burn in wildfires?

- Embers
 - Radiant Heat
 - Direct Flame
-
- WUI Code + Amendments designed to mitigate all three fire risks
 - High Density & Urban Conflagration = All three fire spread risks

Jack D. Cohen,
Research
Physical
Scientist, U.S.
Forest Service



Pine Needle Drop Off (PNDO)

- 6 project areas
 - Strategically selected for risk reduction
 - Tangible risk reduction has occurred
 - Dumpsters are open to all COF residents
- High level communications campaign
 - Message is community engagement forward
 - Pairs with wildfire risk reduction and WRHI
- Widescale support for this project



Community Meetings

- Railroad Springs:
 - Between 80-100 community members attended
 - Significant increase in home assessments being scheduled here
- NOHO:
 - Over 120 community members attended
 - Lots of new home assessments scheduled immediately following meeting
- Continental/Country Club:
 - Only 30 community members attended
 - Almost everyone in attendance signed up for a home assessment



Connecting the Social Element to Operations

- Increasing parcel level wildfire resilience gives firefighters the opportunity to save homes and keeps us safer.
- An informed community is a resilient community.
- Preparing community for evacuations before an emergency increases efficiency and safety of operations.
- By having dialog with the community, we are creating advocates for community resiliency and learning about nuances.

IBHS Available in AZ: Translating wildfire risk actionable steps



Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety Wildfire Prepared Home and Neighborhood

A screenshot of the Wildfire Prepared website. The background is a photograph of a modern, single-story house with a brown metal roof and white walls. The house has several arched windows and a small tower-like structure on the roof. The website interface is overlaid on the image. At the top, there is a dark blue navigation bar with 'NEED HELP?' on the left, a close button (X) in the center, and 'LOGIN | CREATE ACCOUNT' on the right. Below the navigation bar is the 'WILDFIRE PREPARED' logo, which includes a house icon and the text 'A PROGRAM OF IBHS'. To the right of the logo is a horizontal menu with 'About', 'Designation Levels', 'Homeowner Resources', and 'Professional Resources', each followed by a downward arrow. A red 'Apply Now' button is positioned to the right of the menu. Below the menu, there is a breadcrumb trail 'Home / About'. The main heading reads 'Your Pathway to Better Home Protection Against Wildfire'. Below the heading is a paragraph: 'We can't stop wildfire; however, these steps will guide you through required actions to help protect your home and receive a designation certificate.'



5'

30'

Targeted mitigation efforts



How To Prepare Your Home for an Evaluation

The Wildfire Prepared Home designation program enables homeowners to take preventative measures for their home and yard to protect against wildfire. This checklist will guide you through required actions to help protect your home and receive a designation certificate.

Eligibility

- The applicant must be the owner of the 3-story or less, single-family detached home (no townhomes or condos).
- The home must be located in California.
- A 5-foot noncombustible buffer must surround the home. Photos submission are required for eligibility.

NOTE:

- Designation certificate requirements are stringent. Tree requirements may disqualify some homes, and some homeowners may have to work with neighbor(s) to meet the requirements.
- One of the most stringent required actions is creating a 5-foot noncombustible buffer around your home and decks. **ALL** vegetation, trees including overhanging branches, grass/turf, wood/rubber mulch, wood/vinyl fencing, and any stored items within 5 feet of your home must have been removed. Your home will not receive the designation certificate without meeting the requirements.

Examples of eligible homes with a 5-foot noncombustible buffer



Designation Certificate Levels

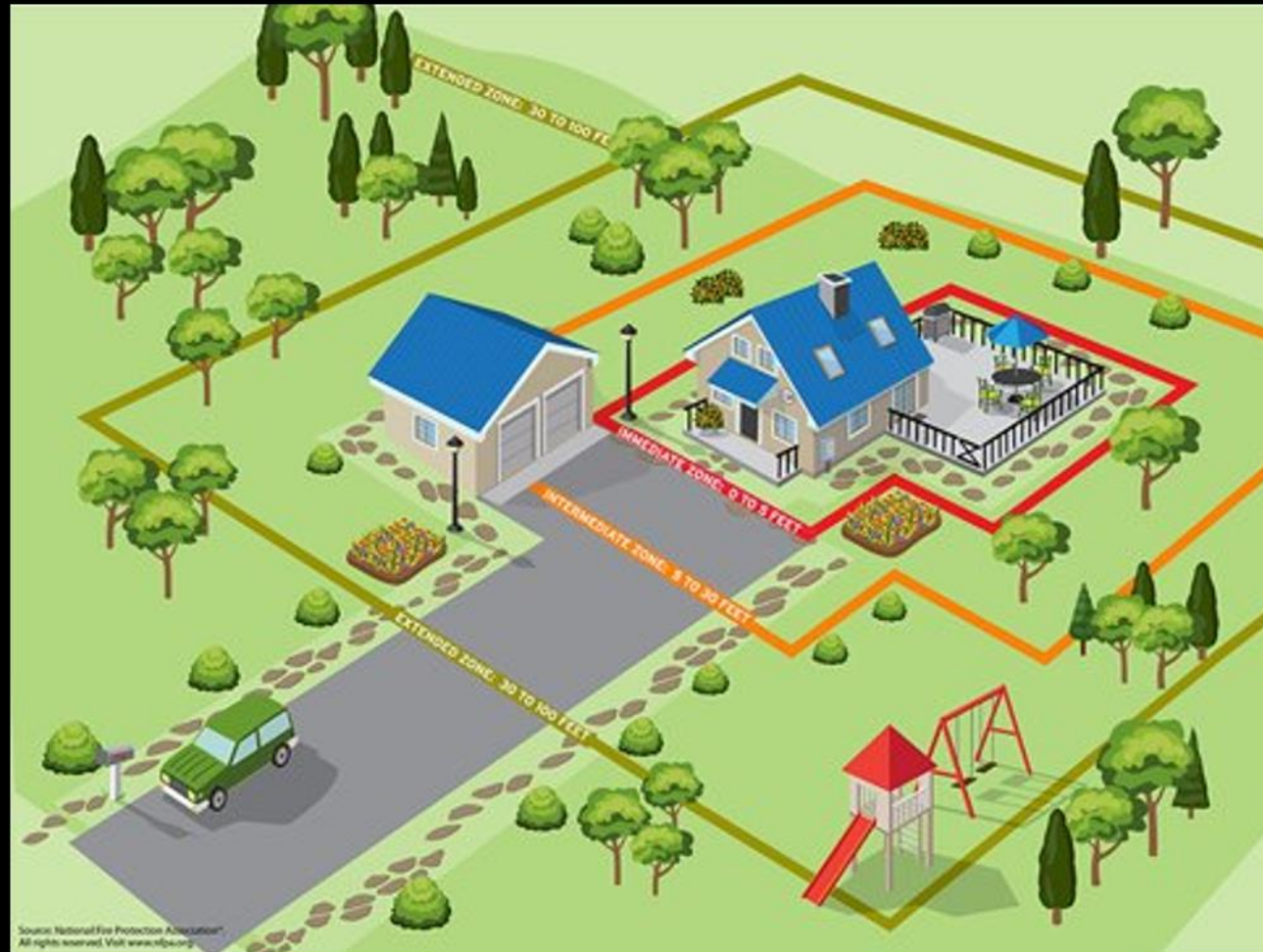
We offer two solutions. To receive a designation certificate, your home must meet **all** requirements listed for the desired level.

1. **Wildfire Prepared Home Base** — This group of required actions includes creating a 5-foot home buffer, preparing the home's exterior, and maintaining the deck/covered porch and yard, **typically achieved through retrofits** to existing homes.
2. **Wildfire Prepared Home Plus** — This group of required actions builds upon *Wildfire Prepared Home Base* to add an extra layer of home protection, **commonly achieved with newer home construction** or after exterior home renovations.

IBHS Wildfire Prepared Home Designations

Built Environment Desired Conditions

National Fire Protection Association Firewise USA Standards



Questions/Comments?

