To: Subscribers:
- NOAA Weather Wire Service
- Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
- NOAAPort
  Other NWS Partners, Users and Employees

From: Mary Mullusky, Chief
Forecast Services Division

Subject: Changes to Fire Forecast Zones for WFO Gray and WFO Caribou, ME: Effective March 8, 2023

On or about Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 04:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST), 2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Offices in Gray, Maine (GYX) and Caribou, Maine (CAR) will change Fire Weather Forecast Zones encompassing the entire state of Maine. After this change, fire weather forecasts and related products will use the new zone numbers and names shown below.

If March 8, 2023 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to March 9, 2023 at 2100 UTC.

These changes are intended to provide increased flexibility and improved accuracy of forecast, watch and warning products in the fire weather program. These changes will result in an alignment of land agency fire danger rating areas and fire weather forecast zones. This aligning will better connect fire danger rating outputs with our fire weather forecast products for our government partners, media partners and the general public.

The current 33 fire weather zones across the state of Maine will be converted and consolidated down to 14 fire weather zones. The new zones are as follows:

Table 1: Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs): New Fire Weather Zone Forecast Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UGC</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEZ101:</td>
<td>Quebec-Maine Borderlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ102:</td>
<td>North Woods and St. John Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ103:</td>
<td>Eastern Aroostook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ104:</td>
<td>Western Maine Mountains &amp; Foothills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ105:</td>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ106:</td>
<td>Central Maine North of Bangor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ107:</td>
<td>Kennebec River Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ108:</td>
<td>Interior Downeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ109:</td>
<td>Lakes Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ110:</td>
<td>Beaches and Casco Bay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs): Current Fire Zone Forecast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEZ111: Mid-Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ112: Coastal Downeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ113: Bangor Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ114: Eastern Penobscot Bay Coast</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEZ001: Northwest Aroostook County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ002: Northeast Aroostook County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ003: Northern Somerset County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ004: Northern Piscataquis County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ005: Northern Penobscot County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ006: Southeast Aroostook County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ007: Northern Oxford County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ008: Northern Franklin County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ009: Central Somerset County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ010: Central Piscataquis County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ011: Central Penobscot County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ012: Southern Oxford County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ013: Southern Franklin County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ014: Southern Somerset County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ015: Southern Penobscot County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ016: Interior Hancock County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ017: Central Washington County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ018: Interior York County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ019: Interior Cumberland County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ020: Androscoggin County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ021: Kennebec County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ022: Interior Waldo County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ023: Coastal York County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ024: Coastal Cumberland County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ025: Sagadahoc County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ026: Lincoln County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ027: Knox County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ028: Coastal Waldo County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ029: Coastal Hancock County</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEZ030: Coastal Washington County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ031: Southern Piscataquis County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ032: Northern Washington County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEZ033: Interior Cumberland Highlands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: NWS Products Affected by the WFO NWS Gray, ME and Caribou, ME Fire Zone Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AWIPS ID</th>
<th>WMO Heading</th>
<th>Product Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FWFGYX</td>
<td>FNUS51 KGYX</td>
<td>Fire Weather Forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFWGYX</td>
<td>WWUS81 KGYX</td>
<td>Fire Weather Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFWGYX</td>
<td>WWUS81 KGYX</td>
<td>Red Flag Warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FWFCAR</td>
<td>FNUS51 KCAR</td>
<td>Fire Weather Forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFWCAR</td>
<td>WWUS81 KCAR</td>
<td>Fire Weather Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFWCAR</td>
<td>WWUS81 KCAR</td>
<td>Red Flag Warning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NWS partners and users should take the appropriate action to ensure systems recognize the new UGC (Z) and new zone alignments and names.

Preliminary shapefiles for public and fire weather forecast zones are available online at:

https://www.weather.gov/gis/FireZones
https://www.weather.gov/gis/Counties

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on January 17, 2023.

A graphical depiction of this change is online at:

https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f653136a6a8e40ca9949ebeaae26e46d

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

https://www.weather.gov/notification/

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