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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 13-34
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
756 AM EDT Fri May 3 2013

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From: Eli Jacks
Chief, Fire and Public Weather Services Branch

Subject: Changes to the Fire Weather Zones in Washington
State, Effective June 6 2013

Effective Thursday, June 6, 2013, at 500 AM Pacific Daylight Time (PDT), 1200 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office in Spokane, WA (WFO OTX), will change some eastern Washington fire weather zone boundaries, names and numbers. This change supports a more efficient forecast process and provides NWS partners and users improved fire weather watch, warning and forecast products.

Historically, fire weather forecast services for the Northern Columbia Basin (WAZ673) and the Northeast Mountains (WAZ686) have used two large fire weather zones, resulting in planning forecasts that are broad and generic. NWS is dividing these two large zones into three smaller zones more closely aligned with fire agency dispatch boundaries and climatic regimes. Two of the new zones (WAZ673, Northern Columbia Basin and WAZ686, Northeast Mountains) will retain their current zone numbers and names while changing their zone boundaries. The zone boundary changes have been determined by WFO OTX not to significantly affect the fire weather climatology of the existing zones.

Once NWS implements the change, the following Universal Geographic Code (UGC), zone names, numbers and geographic descriptions will be used in eastern Washington State.

Table 1: WFO OTX Fire Weather Zones Affected by this Change:

Zone UGC	Zone name
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WAZ673	Northern Columbia Basin

This includes all of the land east of the Columbia River at the Grant and Douglas County line to the Ferry County line, then southeast through eastern Lincoln County to Whitman and Adams

County, then south along the Whitman County line to the southern Adams County line.

WAZ686 Northeast Mountains

This includes all of the land from north of the Spokane River to the Canadian border and east of the Kettle/Columbia River to the Idaho state border.

WAZ674 Eastern Washington East Columbia Basin

This new zone includes all of the land area south of the Spokane and Little Spokane Rivers south to the Snake River, east of eastern Lincoln County and the Whitman County line to the Idaho border.

Table 2: WFO OTX Fire Weather Products Affected by this Change:

Product Name	WMO Header	AWIPS ID
Fire Weather Planning Forecast	FNUS55 KOTX	FWFOTX
Fire Weather Watch/ Red Flag Warning	WWUS85 KOTX	RFWOTX
National Fire Danger Rating System	FNUS85 KOTX	FWMOTX

An updated fire weather zone map shapefile containing the new zones is online at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/geodata/catalog/wsom/html/firezone.htm>

More information on these new fire weather zones is online at:

http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/otx/firewx/OTX_FZONE_change20130606.php

For more information please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

<http://www.weather.gov/os/notif.htm>

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