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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 17-53  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
1250 PM EDT Thu Apr 27 2017

To:           Subscribers:  
              -NOAA Weather Wire Service  
              -Emergency Manager Weather Information Network  
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              Other NWS Partners and Employees

From:         Michelle Hawkins, Chief  
              Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject:      Change in Fire Weather Forecast Zones for WFO  
              Portland, OR, in Washington and Oregon: Effective  
              July 11, 2017

Effective Tuesday, July 11, 2017, at 1200 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office (WFO) in Portland, Oregon (PQR), will split its existing Fire Weather Zone (WAZ660) into a western section and an eastern section. The western section will encompass much of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and the Washington side of the Columbia River Gorge. The eastern section will include much of the Mt. Adams Ranger District.

Additionally, three other existing Fire Weather zones on the Washington side of the Columbia River (WAZ601, WAZ602, WAZ604) will be renamed with new zone numbers WAZ664, WAZ665 and WAZ667. The current Fire Weather zone numbers 601, 602 and 604 will be retained by the Oregon portions, while new zone numbers will be assigned to the Washington portions.

Fire weather zone WAZ660 will be split into two zones: WAZ660 and WAZ663 along the southern flank of Mt. Adams, to include most of the Mt. Adams Ranger District. The new fire weather zone WAZ663 will have its southern boundary along the Columbia Gorge Scenic Area and the western boundary along the Pacific Crest Trail. The existing fire weather zone WAZ660 will have a new eastern boundary of the Pacific Crest Trail. The other boundaries remain unchanged.

The renaming of fire weather zones 601, 602, 604 will be along the Columbia River, resulting in the existing fire weather zones ORZ601, ORZ602, ORZ604 having a northern boundary of the Columbia River, remaining in Oregon. The three fire weather zones in Washington north of the Columbia River (WAZ664, WAZ665 and WAZ667) will have a southern boundary of the Columbia River with new zone numbers.

These changes will improve warnings and forecasts for the

Mt. Adams Ranger District. This new zone configuration will assist in providing more accurate information for the Mt. Adams area as well as areas adjacent to the Columbia River in Oregon and Washington where the weather and climate vary significantly over small distances. The new zone numbers on the Washington side of the Columbia River will help forecasters, land managers and fire fighters more easily distinguish the specific area for forecasts and warnings.

Once these changes are implemented, the following zone numbers and names will be used in all fire weather forecast products issued by WFO PQR for the affected zones on either side of the Washington-Oregon border.

New Fire Weather Forecast Zone names and numbers for the WFO Portland Forecast Area effective July 11, 2017 are noted below.

New Zone

Number	New Zone Name
WAZ664	South Washington Coast and West Willapa Hills
ORZ601	North Oregon Coast
WAZ665	East Willapa Hills
ORZ602	North Oregon Coast Range
WAZ660	Extreme South Washington Cascades and Foothills
WAZ663	Eastern Gifford Pinchot NF - Mt. Adams Ranger Dist.
ORZ604	Willamette Valley
WAZ667	Clark County Lowlands

Fire weather forecast zones WAZ601, WAZ602, WAZ604 will no longer be used by WFO PQR.

A graphical depiction of the new fire weather forecast zones as well as detailed geographic descriptions are online at:

[http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/pns/pqr\\_zones.pdf](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/pns/pqr_zones.pdf)

An updated fire weather zone shapefile is online at:

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

Partners and users of WFO Portland fire weather products will need to update their system(s) to continue receiving correct fire weather forecasts/products.

Product categories affected by zone reconfigurations are found below.

Product	AWIPS ID/WMO Header
Fire Weather Planning Forecast	FWF / FZUS56 KPQR
Red Flag Warning/Fire Weather Watch	RFW / FNUS56 KPQR
Fire Weather Spot Forecast	FWS / FNUS76 KPQR
Fire Danger Rating System Forecast	FWM / FNUS86 KPQR

For more information, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification/archive#scn>

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