

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-401

September 30, 2013

Operations and Services

Products and Services to Support Fire and Other Incidents, NWSPD 10-4

FIRE WEATHER SERVICES PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

NOTICE: This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>

OPR: W/OS22 (H. Hockenberry)

Certified by: W/OS22 (E. Jacks)

Type of Issuance: Routine.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWSI 10-401, “Fire Weather Services Product Specification,” dated June 28, 2011. Changes are: (1) Section 1: Added a basic fire weather forecast philosophy paragraph, detailing overarching product intent and fire weather forecast flow from broad to fine-scale forecasts.(2) Added “Other local and/or regional Decision Support Services” and “Storm Prediction Center Fire Weather Outlooks” into the services list provided by the NWS (3) Section 3.2.2: Added wording encouraging direct discussions with users, during prolonged critical fire weather events, on the content and timing of Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches. (4) Section 3.3.4: Removed wording of non-bullet Red Flag Warning option. (5) Section 3.3.4.1, now specifies that the overview headline is optional. (6) Section 3.3.5 now has colons removed in favor of the AWIPS convention of “...” instead. (7) Throughout Section 10, changes made to have SPC Outlook product names consistent with online product names. This is mainly to change the spelling out of “Day One” and “Day Two”; and instead listing them numerically as “Day 1” and “Day 2”. (8) Made changes to the externally-linked product examples to be consistent with AWIPS output and updated call-to-action statements in the Red Flag Warning formatters. (9) Added Section 12, “Other local and/or regional Decision Support Services as outlined in the Weather Ready Nation Strategic Plan”.

-signed-

September 15, 2013

Christopher S. Strager
Acting Director, Office of Climate,
Water, and Weather Services

Date

Fire Weather Services Product Specification

<u>Table of Contents:</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Digital Forecasts and Services	6
3. Fire Weather Watch/Red Flag Warning (Product Category RFW, WMO Header WWUS8i). 6	
3.1 Mission Connection.....	6
3.2 Issuance Guidelines	6
3.2.1 Creation Software.....	6
3.2.2 Issuance Criteria	6
3.2.2.1 Fire Weather Watch.....	7
3.2.2.2 Red Flag Warning.....	7
3.2.3 Issuance Time	7
3.2.4 Valid Time.....	7
3.2.5 Product Expiration Time	8
3.3 Technical Description.....	8
3.3.1 UGC Type and Valid Time Event Coding (VTEC)	8
3.3.2 MND Broadcast Instruction Line	8
3.3.3 MND Product Type Line	8
3.3.4 Content	8
3.3.4.1 Overview Section	8
3.3.4.2 Segmented Forecast Information	9
3.3.4.3 Order of Segments	9
3.3.4.4 Order of Headlines.....	9
3.3.4.5 Bullet Format.....	9
3.3.5 Format.....	10
3.4 Updates and Corrections.....	11
3.5 Other Dissemination of Red Flag Information	11
4. Site-specific (Spot) Forecasts (Product Category FWS, WMO Header FNUS7i).....	11
4.1 Mission Connection.....	11
4.2 Issuance Guidelines	12
4.2.1 Creation Software.....	12
4.2.2 Issuance Criteria	12
4.2.2.1 Requester Identification.....	14
4.2.3 Issuance Time	14
4.2.4 Valid Time.....	14
4.2.5 Product Expiration Time	14
4.2.6 Event Expiration Time	14
4.3 Technical Description.....	14
4.3.1 UGC Type.....	14
4.3.2 MND Broadcast Instruction Line	14

4.3.3	MND Product Type Line	15
4.3.4	Content	15
4.3.5	Format.....	15
4.3.5.1	Format for Wildfire Spot Forecasts	15
4.3.5.2	Format for Non-Wildfire Spot Forecasts.....	17
4.4	Updates and Corrections.....	17
5.	Fire Weather Planning Forecast (Product Category FWF, WMO Header FNUS5i)	17
5.1	Mission Connection.....	17
5.2	Issuance Guidelines	17
5.2.1	Creation Software.....	17
5.2.2	Issuance Criteria	17
5.2.3	Issuance Time	17
5.2.4	Valid Time.....	18
5.2.5	Product Expiration Time	18
5.2.6	Event Expiration Time	18
5.3	Technical Description.....	18
5.3.1	UGC Type.....	18
5.3.2	Mass News Disseminator (MND) Broadcast Instruction Line.....	18
5.3.3	MND Product Type Line	18
5.3.4	Content	18
5.3.5	Format.....	20
5.4	Updates and Corrections.....	24
6.	National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) Forecast (Product Category FWM, WMO Header FNUS8i)	24
6.1	Mission Connection.....	24
6.2	Issuance Guidelines	24
6.2.1	Creation Software.....	24
6.2.2	Issuance Criteria	25
6.2.3	Issuance Time	25
6.2.4	Valid Time.....	25
6.2.5	Product Expiration Time	25
6.2.6	Event Expiration Time	25
6.3	Technical Description.....	25
6.3.1	UGC Type.....	25
6.3.2	MND Broadcast Instruction Line	25
6.3.3	MND Product Type Line	25
6.3.4	Content	25
6.3.5	Format.....	26
6.4	Updates and Corrections.....	27
6.5	Suspension of NFDRS Forecasts.....	27
7.	Land Management Forecast (Product Category FWL, WMO Header FNUS8i)	27
8.	Smoke Management Forecast (Product Category SMF, WMO Header FNUS7i).....	28

9. Rangeland/Grassland Fire Danger Statement (Product Category RFD, WMO Header FNUS6i) 28

10. Storm Prediction Center (SPC) Fire Weather Outlook (Product Category FWD, WMO Header FNUS21, FNUS22 and FNUS28) 28

 10.1 Mission Connection..... 28

 10.2 Issuance Guidelines 28

 10.2.1 Creation Software..... 28

 10.2.2 Issuance Criteria 28

 10.2.3 Issuance Time 28

 10.2.4 Valid Time..... 28

 10.2.5 Product Expiration Time 29

 10.2.6 Event Expiration Time 29

 10.3 Technical Description..... 29

 10.3.1 UGC Type..... 29

 10.3.2 MND Broadcast Instruction Line 29

 10.3.3 MND Product Type Line. Day (One, Two or 3-8) Fire Weather Outlook 29

 10.3.4 Content 29

 10.3.5 Format..... 30

 10.4 Updates and Corrections..... 32

 10.5 AWIPS IDs 32

11. Fire Weather Point Forecast Matrix 32

12. Other local and/or regional Decision Support Services as outlined in the Weather Ready Nation Strategic Plan32

1. Introduction. The National Weather Service (NWS) ensures the provision/availability of fire weather products and services consisting of the following:

- a. Digital Forecasts and Services
- b. Red Flag Warnings/Fire Weather Watches (RFW)
- c. Spot Forecasts (FWS)
- d. Fire Weather Planning Forecasts (FWF)
- e. National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) Forecasts (FWM) *
- f. Other local and/or regional Decision Support Services as outlined in the Weather Ready Nation Strategic Plan and Roadmap
- g. Storm Prediction Center Fire Weather Outlooks

** In Alaska Region, WFOs do not produce NFDRS FWM products*

These services and products define NWS forecast response across the spectrum of operational fire weather user requests. The top priority in product content is user and public safety, with an emphasis on preparing fire fighters and fire managers with weather information for tactical decision support. Fire weather products support medium to short range tactics and planning through Digital Forecasts and Services. The FWF and Fire Weather Outlooks provide the basic fire weather forecast information from short to medium ranges. As any fire weather event nears, Fire Weather Watches identify potential critical events. Within 36 hours of a potential fire weather event, more detailed information can be found in the Red Flag Warning, Spot Forecast, Fire Weather Outlooks and NFDRS forecast products.

Each product type is designed to fulfill the specialized needs for fire weather information with as much advance notice as possible. While most fire weather products are available to the general public, their response to unfolding fire events should be facilitated through communication with local governments, emergency managers, fire fighters, and other public safety officials. These officials receive NWS forecast information and provide the appropriate calls-to-action for the public. The NWS can assist in the process through user-coordinated call-to-action statements found in NWS products and agreed upon in appropriate Annual Operating Plans (AOPs).

NWS Regional Headquarters and Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) may provide localized services or products to support user requirements assuming these services or products remain within the bounds of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) NWS mission and do not conflict with the national fire weather services program or product suite. These local applications will be coordinated with Regional Headquarters and included in the interagency AOPs and NWS Instruction 10-404. Implementation of new products and services complies with NWS Instruction 10-102, New or Enhanced Products and Services.

Meteorologists-in-Charge (MICs) and WFO fire weather program leaders will annually reassess and coordinate with the fire management agencies the criteria for issuance, frequency of issuance, format, content, dissemination, etc. for each fire weather product. This information should be clearly defined in the interagency AOPs.

Examples of the required text products are shown as web links at the bottom of this Instruction.

Note: World Meteorological Organization (WMO) headers for the products in this instruction are shown for the continental United States. Alaska products use AK in place of US, e.g., instead of FNUS5i, Alaska FWFs will use FNAK5i. Similarly Hawaiian products use HW in place of US, e.g., FNHW5i, while Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas use MY in place of US, e.g., FNMY50.

2. Digital Forecasts and Services

National Digital Forecast Database (NDFD) grids are used to produce a wide variety of products and services, some of which are specific to fire weather support. Operational status of NWS grid elements is available at the following website:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/ndfd/resources/NDFD_element_status.pdf

3. Fire Weather Watch/Red Flag Warning (Product Category RFW, WMO Header WWUS8i).

3.1 Mission Connection. Forecasters issue Fire Weather Watches/Red Flag Warnings (RFW) when the combination of fuels and weather conditions support extreme fire danger and/or fire behavior. These conditions alert land management agencies to the potential for widespread new ignitions or control problems with existing fires, both of which could pose a threat to life and property.

3.2 Issuance Guidelines.

3.2.1 Creation Software. WFOs use the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) Graphical Headline Generator (GHG) software to issue/update RFW products. Bullet format RFWs are produced for a combination of weather and fuel dryness criteria as defined in local interagency AOPs. Additionally, the formatter for bullet style RFWs allows definitions of affected areas above or below specified elevations.

Dissemination of the RFW reflects local user capabilities to provide the most efficient means of relaying watch/warnings information to the appropriate fire suppression personnel. Fire Weather Watch/RFW dissemination methods are detailed in the AOP.

3.2.2 Issuance Criteria. Red Flag criteria are determined by coordination between WFO personnel and land management users within the WFO fire weather service area. Each WFO or group of WFOs should have their criteria well-documented in the interagency AOP (see NWSI 10-404) and Station Duty Manual (SDM).

Red Flag criteria consist of both fuel dryness and weather parameters. WFO fire weather program leaders monitor NFDRS and other suitable fire danger indices, coordinate with land management personnel on fuel condition status, and make sure this information is available to WFO forecasters. Meteorological criteria for a RFW include but are not limited to:

- a. Lightning episodes
- b. Significant dry frontal passage
- c. Strong winds
- d. Very low relative humidity
- e. Dry Thunderstorms

Forecasters should coordinate with local fire and land managers and Predictive Services prior to the issuance of a Fire Weather Watch or RFW. However, final authority to issue a RFW product resides with the NWS.

In some synoptic situations, weather conditions meeting warning criteria will exist for portions of a multi-day period, with only a few hours periodic remission due to diurnal effects or local climatology. In these situations, it may be less confusing for fire agency users when a Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch is issued for the entire period described above rather than expiring and issuing new warnings/watches each time weather conditions go into and out of warning criteria. If a Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch is issued in this fashion, the discussion portion of the warning contains explicit information regarding the expected short time period(s) when critical conditions will subside. WFOs are encouraged to discuss handling prolonged Red Flag Warning and Fire Weather Watch situations in partner meetings to determine which method is preferred in their local area.

3.2.2.1 Fire Weather Watch. Forecasters should issue a Fire Weather Watch when there is a high potential for the development of a Red Flag event. The watch will be issued 18 to 96 hours in advance of the expected onset of criteria. The watch may be issued for all, or selected portions within a fire weather zone or region. The overall intent of a Fire Weather Watch is to alert users at least a day in advance for purposes of resource allocation and firefighter safety.

A Fire Weather Watch should not be issued, or continued, to indicate low confidence or borderline conditions. In these situations, the forecaster should describe the expected conditions and reasons for uncertainty in the discussion portion of the routine Fire Weather Planning Forecast, using a non-Red Flag headline if needed (e.g., ...Very Low Humidity Expected Tuesday Afternoon...).

3.2.2.2 Red Flag Warning. A RFW warns of an impending, or occurring Red Flag Event. Its issuance denotes a high degree of confidence that weather and fuel conditions consistent with local Red Flag Event criteria will occur in 48 hours or less. Longer lead times are encouraged when confidence is very high or the fire danger situation is critical. Forecasters can issue the warning for all or selected portions within a fire weather zone.

3.2.3 Issuance Time. Fire Weather Watches/RFWs are issued on an event-driven basis when agreed upon criteria are met.

3.2.4 Valid Time. A Fire Weather Watch or RFW is valid from the time critical fire weather conditions are expected to commence (event start time) until the time when the same conditions are expected to end (event expiration time). When the event start time precedes the issuance of

the RFW, the beginning of the Valid Time period is simply the issuance time. For RFWs involving a duration factor (i.e. wind exceeding a threshold for 3 hours or more), the product valid time will begin at the expected onset (i.e. first observation) of critical conditions (see 10-1601 for verification details).

Valid time information is included in RFW headlines as well as in Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) coding.

3.2.5 Product Expiration Time. The Universal Generic Code (UGC) product expiration time should be approximately 12 to 36 hours. Updates or continuation statements should be issued as the situation dictates. This expiration time can vary, but any significant variance should be agreed upon and noted in the AOP.

3.3 Technical Description.

3.3.1 UGC Type and Valid Time Event Coding (VTEC). RFWs use fire weather zone numbers and the zone (Z) form of UGC coding. Where defined as such by the WFO, fire weather zone numbers may be the same as public zone numbers. WFOs will include a VTEC line following the UGC coding line as described in NWSI 10-1703 (Valid Time Event Code). The VTEC line will contain information on the type of product (RFW or Fire Weather Watch), the action (new issuance, expansion of area, continuance, extension in time, cancellation), issuing office, and event start and expiration times.

3.3.2 MND Broadcast Instruction Line. None.

3.3.3 MND Product Type Line. The RFW MND is “URGENT – FIRE WEATHER MESSAGE”.

3.3.4 Content. The Fire Weather Watch and RFW format will include segmented forecast information, and will contain an overview section. All segments of Fire Weather Watches and RFWs will follow a bullet format as shown in Exhibit 3-1.

3.3.4.1 Overview Section. RFWs will contain an optional overview headline and an optional overview synopsis:

- a. Overview Headline(s) - general headline statement(s) that summarizes the Fire Weather threat, timing, reason for issuance, and area affected.

Example:

...RED FLAG WARNING FROM 2PM TO 7PM PST TODAY FOR STRONG WINDS AND LOW HUMIDITY ACROSS SOUTHEAST OREGON...

- b. Overview Discussion – an optional, brief, non-technical discussion of the

expected fire weather event. This section should not repeat information already found in the FWF discussion, focusing solely on the cause of the RFW event. This optional discussion should not be more than three lines in length.

3.3.4.2 Segmented Forecast Information. Each bulleted segment of the Fire Weather Watch/RFW will include:

- a. UGC coding followed by the VTEC line and Geographic Descriptor(s);
- b. A headline describing the state of the FIRE WEATHER WATCH or RED FLAG WARNING (issued, continued, canceled), the effective time of the event, the critical weather element(s) causing the event, and the affected area;
- c. In the initial issuance of the watch or warning, include the following phrase to begin the discussion:

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN [WFO or location] HAS ISSUED A [RED FLAG WARNING or FIRE WEATHER WATCH] FOR

There is no attribution line for subsequent issuances (updates, cancellations), unless a new area is added to the RFW.

3.3.4.3 Order of Segments. The order of RFW segments is:

- (1) Cancellation
- (2) Warnings
- (3) Watches

3.3.4.4 Order of Headlines. If multiple headlines are required in a single segment, the order of headlines will follow the order of segments above.

3.3.4.5 Bullet Format. Bullet format RFWs have been endorsed by fire weather users to help ensure brevity and more efficient communication of critical information to fire crews. Bullets should be one to two lines long, with no single bullet within a RFW (segment) more than four lines long. Routine exceptions to this size limit can only be made with approval from a Regional Headquarters unit.

The recommended order of bullets is shown below, but can vary based on local user needs and if documented in the AOP.

- *Affected Area (by fire weather zone; if users agree, fire weather zone numbers can be used alone for brevity);
- *Timing
- *Weather Element Forecast(s) (more than one bullet is allowed, such as Wind and relative humidity (RH) or Lightning and Outflow winds; no more than three weather

element bullets should be used);

*Impacts (specific impacts on fire threat and/or fire behavior)

Each bulleted segment will be followed by a brief precautionary/preparedness action statement.

3.3.5 Format. Exhibit (3-1) – Bullet format for a FIRE WEATHER WATCH MESSAGE:

WWUS8i KNNN DDHHMM
RFWNNN

URGENT - FIRE WEATHER MESSAGE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CITY STATE
TIME-DATE (example: 830 MDT WED SEP 1 2011)

If more than one segment:

...OVERVIEW HEADLINE/S...

Attribution statement (required only for initial issuance):

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN CITY HAS ISSUED A FIRE WEATHER WATCH (RED FLAG WARNING)...WHICH IS IN EFFECT FROM DAY OF THE WEEK AND TIME TO DAY OF THE WEEK AND TIME.

(Optional brief overview synopsis; focus solely on the cause of the RFW event and not be more than three lines in length)

SSZXXX-XXX>XXX-DDHHMM- (UGC coding)
/<VTEC CODING>
GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTORS (including land management governing units, fire weather zone numbers, and/or county names)
TIME-DATE (example: 0830 MDT WED SEP 1, 2004)

...SEGMENT HEADLINE (of what, when, why and where)...

Attribution statement (required only for initial issuance):

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN CITY HAS ISSUED A FIRE WEATHER WATCH (RED FLAG WARNING)...WHICH IS IN EFFECT FROM DAY OF THE WEEK AND TIME TO DAY OF THE WEEK AND TIME.

* AFFECTED AREA...Fire weather zone(s); if elevation criteria is used in formatter, this bullet will list above or below chosen elevation here

* TIMING...When weather conditions should reach RFW criteria.

Weather element forecasts, such as...

* WINDS...list forecast speed and direction
* RH...list minimum RH

-or-

* THUNDERSTORMS...Expected coverage and wet or dry; LAL may be listed;

* OUTFLOW WINDS...Formatter produces only for thunderstorm driven RFW

* IMPACTS...Pre-formatted impacts statements from formatter.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS:

Formatter will provide brief statements here.

\$\$

-next segment if necessary-

\$\$

NNNN

An example of a single segment bullet format Fire Weather Watch can be found here:

http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/RFW_single_segment.pdf

An example of a multiple segment bullet format RFW can be found here:

http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/RFW_multiple_segment.pdf

An example of a bullet format Fire Weather Watch and RFW with an overview synopsis can be found here:

http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/RFW_multiple_segment_overview.pdf

3.4 Updates and Corrections. A Fire Weather Watch remains in effect until the watch: 1) is canceled, 2) is upgraded to a RFW, or 3) expires. A RFW remains in effect until the warning: 1) is canceled, or 2) expires.

The same product identifier (RFW) is used for issuing, updating, and canceling Fire Weather Watches and RFWs. Forecasters will also update the FWF product when a RFW product is issued, updated, or canceled.

The RFW will be corrected when a typographical/format error is detected.

3.5 Other Dissemination of Red Flag Information. Forecasters will place headlines for Fire Weather Watches/RFWs at the beginning of the routine Fire Weather Planning Forecast (FWF) and in the appropriate zone sections (see 5.3.4.a for details).

Forecasters should include the RFW highlights in the appropriate list of highlights in the Area Forecast Discussion. Dissemination of RFW information on NOAA Weather Radio is left to local or regional policy.

4. Site-specific (Spot) Forecasts (Product Category FWS, WMO Header FNUS7i).

4.1 Mission Connection. Site-specific (spot) forecasts are issued by WFOs in support of wildfire management and natural resource management. These forecasts aid the land management and fire control agencies in protecting life and property during wildland fires, hazardous fuels reduction, and rehabilitation and restoration of natural resources. Spot forecasts are also issued for hazardous materials incidents, marine incidents, search and rescue response and other threats to public safety. However, the instructions in this section focus primarily on wildland fire response and certain elements of hazardous materials response.

4.2 Issuance Guidelines.

4.2.1 Creation Software. Spot forecasts are generated in a two step process. The user requests a spot through the “NWS Spot” web interface. When the request is received at the WFO, the AWIPS Graphical Forecast Editor (GFE) spot forecast formatter is used to produce a draft forecast from the local digital database. The forecaster then edits the draft forecast as needed and sends it back to the user via AWIPS and the Internet. When internet access is unavailable, spot forecasts may be requested and disseminated manually using WS Form D-1, Spot Request (available in appendix B of this instruction). Copies of spot forecasts outside AWIPS are retained in archive by the originating WFO for 5 years (NWS Instruction 10-2003, Records Retention).

4.2.2 Issuance Criteria. Site specific (spot) forecasts are non-routine, near term forecasts.

- The forecast contains three forecast periods with detailed forecast information as per user specifications.
- General outlooks and extended forecasts can be provided beyond the first three forecast periods when requested.
- The forecasts are usually issued with a turn-around time of 30 to 60 minutes unless the request is for the next day; in this case fulfillment may be delayed until the date of ignition depending on forecast workload and duty priorities.
- Requests may be submitted up to one day before a specified ignition time.
- For one-day advance forecast requests and beyond, users should use the variety of available weather planning tools in the planning of prescribed burns or other future projects.

Multiple requests for the same project prior to ignition are strongly discouraged. The purpose of the spot forecast is for active wildfires, active all-hazard incidents, search and rescue, and prescribed projects that are intended to be performed within one day of the spot request. NWS WFOs will strongly encourage their users to utilize alternative planning tools and forecasts to prevent unnecessary forecast requests, especially for projects that will not be started within one day of the request. Planned, advance spot forecasts up to one day in advance can however be coordinated for active, long-duration emergencies or fires. Once the project has begun, the frequency of spot updates is coordinated with the requester.

A list of alternative planning tools and forecasts can be found here:

<http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/PlanningTools.pdf>

WFOs may provide spot forecasts upon request of any federal, state, tribal, or local public safety official who represents the spot forecast is required to support a wildland fire.

For non-wildfire purposes, resources permitting, WFOs will provide spot forecast service under the following circumstances and conditions:

- a. Upon request of any federal official who represents that the spot forecast is required under the terms of the Interagency Agreement for Meteorological Services.
- b. Upon request of any state, tribal, or local official who represents that the spot forecast is required to carry out their wildland fire management responsibilities in coordination with any federal land management agency participating in the Interagency Agreement for Meteorological Services.
- c. Upon request of any public safety official who represents that the spot forecast is essential to public safety, e.g. due to the proximity of population centers or critical infrastructure, essential to protect incident responders, and/or essential to protect vital resources. A “public safety official” is an employee or contract agent of a government agency at any level (federal, state, local, tribal, etc.) charged with protecting the public from hazards including wildland fires of whatever origin and/or other hazards influenced by weather conditions such as hazardous material releases.
- d. In support of Homeland Security Presidential Directive #5 (HSPD 5).

<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/ICSResource/assets/HSPD-5.pdf>

WFOs will not provide spot forecasts to private citizens or commercial entities not acting as an agent of a government agency.

MICs and fire weather program leaders should coordinate with local users and establish local policies/procedures for the site specific spot services in their County Warning Area (CWA) or fire weather services area. These policies/procedures should be clearly defined in the Station Duty Manual (SDM) and for fire weather applications, in the local AOP.

At or before the time of a spot request, the requesting agency should provide incident information: (latitude, longitude), topography and elevation (if needed), and contact name(s) and telephone number(s) of the requester(s) (see section 4.2.2.1). For spot requests supporting wildfires or prescribed burns, the requester(s) will also provide fuel type(s), size, and ignition time. Also, representative observation(s) at, or near, the site of the planned controlled burn, or wildfire, should be available to the responsible WFO prior to the issuance of the spot forecast(s). In the case of a wildfire, or a prolonged controlled burn, land management personnel should provide updated observations and information to NWS during the course of the event.

Wildfires or large or complex prescribed burns may pose a higher threat to life and/or property than a severe thunderstorm, flash flood, or tornado. In these instances, the issuance of spot forecasts should be prioritized in a manner similar to that of short-fuse warnings.

User-defined forecast information for time periods beyond 48 hours should be supplied via the variety of available local, regional and national forecast tools. Available planning tools can be found here:

<http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/PlanningTools.pdf>

However, available planning tools may not replace the need for a spot forecast.

In specialized long-term decision support events, routine detailed SPOT forecasts may be coordinated through the local WFO and incident response team.

4.2.2.1 Requester Identification. The requester for each spot forecast will provide the following information before a spot forecast can be issued:

- a. Requesting Official;
- b. Government agency;
- c. Phone number, and
- d. The reason for the spot forecast, which satisfy reasons specified in section 4.2.2 above.

The NWS will accept the representation of the requester and will forward to the requester any questions regarding their representation. The spot forecast request form will contain the following warning regarding potential penalties for misrepresentation:

"NOTICE: Information provided on this form may be used by the NWS for official purposes in any way, including public release and publication in NWS products. False statements on this form may be subject to prosecution under the False Statement Accountability Act of 1996 (18 U.S.C. § 1001, as amended) or other statutes."

All spot forecasts will be available for public use, including identification of the requester.

4.2.3 Issuance Time. Spot forecasts are non-routine and may be issued at any time upon user request.

4.2.4 Valid Time. The valid time will be determined at the time of the request. Requests for advance forecast periods will have appropriate period labels in the body of the forecast. For example, a forecast request in the afternoon for the next morning (that is issued immediately) would have forecast period labels of "(Day of the week)", "(Day of the week) NIGHT", and the next calendar day.

4.2.5 Product Expiration Time. Not applicable.

4.2.6 Event Expiration Time. Not applicable.

4.3 Technical Description.

4.3.1 UGC Type. None.

4.3.2 MND Broadcast Instruction Line. None.

4.3.3 MND Product Type Line. The FWS MND is “SPOT FORECAST FOR NAME_OF_INCIDENT”, where “NAME_OF_INCIDENT” is replaced appropriately.

4.3.4 Content. The standard format for wildfire spot forecasts defines the required elements: headlines (when RFW in effect or other significant weather is headlined in the FWF), discussion, sky/weather, temperature, relative humidity, and wind. Optional elements should be defined by the requesters or by agreement with the land management agencies in the AOP.

The content for non-wildfire spot forecasts (e.g., controlled burns, HAZMAT incidents, etc.) is determined by the requester. These spot forecasts may contain any of the above required or optional elements plus any other agreed upon parameters. The period or number of periods in the spot should be defined by the user upon request of the spot forecast.

Forecasters should be aware of the critical weather element thresholds for the spot forecast area and/or incident. These thresholds are often determined by a fire behavior analyst or other fuels/fire behavior expert and define ranges of wind, relative humidity, etc. that, if realized, may cause significant increase (or decrease) in fire behavior. In most cases, such information can be obtained directly from the on-site requester. In the case of prescribed burns, these thresholds are often defined in the “Burn Plan”, which is normally developed and approved well before a spot forecast is requested. Similarly, for hazardous materials releases, temperature, humidity and wind thresholds can cause dramatic changes in the behavior of a chemical and thus the response strategy that can be used.

Since spot forecasts cover a small geographical area, areal weather descriptors (such as scattered showers, isolated showers, etc.) should be avoided. Probability wording is more useful. The timing of significant events is important and, in the case of wind shifts, extremely critical. Twenty-foot, ten minute wind will be used for fire related spot forecasts. Spot forecasts for other purposes will clearly indicate the level of the wind forecast.

4.3.5 Format.

4.3.5.1 Format for Wildfire Spot Forecasts. Forecasters will use the national standard for spot forecasts for wildfires as shown below in Exhibit 4-1. This standard ensures that fire suppression personnel brought in from another area of the country will be proficient in the interpretation of any spot forecast issued for wildfires.

Exhibit (4-1) - Standardized Spot Forecast for Wildfires (also for HAZMAT and Search and Rescue)

```
FNUS7i KXXX DDHHMM  
FWSXXX
```

```
SPOT FORECAST FOR (location or name of burn)
```

```
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE (CITY STATE)  
TIME-DATE (800 AM MST TUE NOV 27 2001)
```

```
IF CONDITIONS BECOME UNREPRESENTATIVE...CONTACT THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE.
```

...HEADLINE...(if a fire weather watch or red flag warning is in effect, a headline is required - otherwise, a headline is recommended for every issuance.)

DISCUSSION...(required)

FIRST PERIOD

SKY/WEATHER.....
TEMPERATURE.....
HUMIDITY.....
WIND.....(20-foot wind)
OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(as requested by the users)

SECOND PERIOD

SKY/WEATHER.....
TEMPERATURE.....
HUMIDITY.....
WIND.....(20-foot wind)
OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(as requested by the users)

THIRD PERIOD

SKY/WEATHER.....
TEMPERATURE.....
HUMIDITY.....
WIND.....(20-foot wind)
OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(as requested by the users)

(OPTIONAL TABULAR INFORMATION)

.FIRST PERIOD...

TIME (LST or LDT) (time step) (time step) (time step) (time step)

ELEMENT #1.....

ELEMENT #2.....

ELEMENT #3.....

(other optional elements as requested by the users)

.SECOND PERIOD...

TIME (LST or LDT) (time step) (time step) (time step) (time step)

ELEMENT #1.....

ELEMENT #2.....

ELEMENT #3.....

(other optional elements as requested by the users)

.THIRD PERIOD...

TIME (LST or LDT) (time step) (time step) (time step) (time step)

ELEMENT #1.....

ELEMENT #2.....

ELEMENT #3.....

(other optional elements as requested by the users)

FORECASTER...(optional)

\$\$

REQUESTING OFFICIAL...(name of requester)

REASON FOR REQUEST...(reason for request)

\$\$

NNNN

An example of a *narrative* Spot Forecast can be found here:

http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/FWS_narrative.pdf

An example of a *tabular* Spot Forecast can be found here:

http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/FWS_tabular.pdf

A copy of the manual Spot Forecast Form D can be found here:

http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/WS_FORM_D_SPOT.pdf

4.3.5.2 Format for Non-Wildfire Spot Forecasts. Though the content and number of forecast periods may be different, the format for non-wildfire spot forecasts should conform to the standard format for wildfire spot forecasts (as in section 4.3.5.1 above). Other formats should be approved by the appropriate Regional Headquarters and coordinated with the users in the AOP.

4.4 Updates and Corrections. Site-specific forecasts are considered one-time requests, and are not routinely monitored or updated. Spot forecasts may be updated when representative observations are available to the forecaster, he/she deems the current forecast does not adequately represent current or expected weather conditions, and emergency contact information is available to disseminate the update. Land management personnel may contact the appropriate WFO for a spot update if forecast conditions appear unrepresentative of the actual weather conditions.

The FWS will be corrected when a typographical/format error is detected. Corrections should be delivered to users in the same manner as the original FWS when possible.

5. Fire Weather Planning Forecast (Product Category FWF, WMO Header FNUS5i).

5.1 Mission Connection. The Fire Weather Planning Forecast is a zone-type product used by land management personnel primarily for input in decision-making related to pre-suppression and other planning. The decisions impact firefighter safety, protection of the public and property, and resource allocation. Weather parameters represent average conditions across the given zone unless otherwise stated in the local AOP.

5.2 Issuance Guidelines.

5.2.1 Creation Software. WFOs will use the GFE formatter to produce the FWF from published grids.

5.2.2 Issuance Criteria. The FWF is a routine product and should be issued at least once daily during the local fire season. The AOP will contain actual issuance criteria and frequency of issuance information based on user needs.

5.2.3 Issuance Time. Issuance times will be noted in the WFO or consolidated WFO AOP

based on user needs.

5.2.4 Valid Time. The FWF is valid from time of issuance through day five (optional day seven).

5.2.5 Product Expiration Time. The FWF expires at the next routine issuance time, generally 12 to 24 hours from issuance.

5.2.6 Event Expiration Time. None.

5.3 Technical Description.

5.3.1 UGC Type. FWFs will use fire weather zone numbers and the zone format (Z) of the UGC to identify each specific forecast zone within a FWF segment. Where defined as such by the WFO, fire weather zone numbers may be the same as public zone numbers.

5.3.2 Mass News Disseminator (MND) Broadcast Instruction Line. None.

5.3.3 MND Product Type Line. The FWF MND is “FIRE WEATHER PLANNING FORECAST FOR YOUR_AREA”, where “YOUR_AREA” is replaced appropriately.

5.3.4 Content. Include the following elements in both the narrative and tabular versions of the FWF product. Some parameters, as noted, are optional.

- a. **Headlines.** A product headline is required when RFWs and/or Fire Weather Watches are in effect. All headlines will include the warning type, location, reason for issuance (e.g., high winds and low humidity), and effective time period (i.e., the same format and information as in the RFW headline, section 3.3.4.1). Describe the location in terms of geographic or other easily identified markers, such as forests, parks, cities, towns, rivers, or highways. Also, include a headline for a warning and/or watch in each appropriate zone grouping. FWF headlines also use the standard NWS format of an ellipsis (...) preceding and following the headline statement.

Significant trends of locally-defined critical weather elements should be headlined for non-watch/warning periods. To avoid confusion and possible inconsistencies among products, headlines for other watch-warning events from the public program (i.e., those headlined in the Zone Forecast Product as detailed in 10-503) should not be included in the FWF.

- b. **Discussion.** The discussion should be a brief, clear, non-technical description of weather patterns that influence the weather in the forecast area. The emphasis of the discussion should be on the first two days of the forecast period, though latter periods may be included if significant weather is expected to impact safety or operations, and the forecaster has reasonable confidence the weather will occur.

- c. Forecast Period. The FWF product should have a minimum of three 12-hour time periods. Insert locally-established weather elements, if any, in the “Optional Elements” section at the end of each time period in the narrative version and after the required elements in the tabular version. All issuances should have a general outlook section valid to day 5. Days 6 and 7 are optional. In this general outlook section, a forecast period may be either 12 or 24 hours depending on local user requirements.
- d. Sky/Weather. Forecasters will follow the same guidelines for sky/weather and weather descriptors as those used in the Public Zone Forecasts (Refer to NWS Instruction 10-503) with the following exception. WFOs may optionally use the term “Widely Scattered” for the qualifying term when forecasting 20% Probability of Precipitation (POPs). This designation keeps the qualifier consistent with Lightning Activity Level (LAL) and thunderstorm coverage from the NFDRS.
- e. Maximum or Minimum temperatures and optional 24-hour temperature trend.
- f. Maximum or Minimum relative humidity (RH) and optional 24-hour RH trend. Minimum RH should be forecast during the daytime and the maximum RH during the nighttime. The range of the RH forecasts should be 5 percent. However, where large elevation differences exist within a zone, ranges of 10 percent or more may be forecast, along with explanations for the larger ranges. In the narrative versions of the FWF, qualitative descriptions (poor, moderate, good) of nighttime humidity recovery are left as a regional or WFO option.
- g. Wind. Indicate the prevalent direction and speed of the wind for each time period. Maximum gusts, erratic winds, and wind shifts should be mentioned when deemed significant. Wind directions should not be abbreviated in the narrative-style forecast. Wind will be derived from the local surface wind grid which approximates the 20 foot, 10 minute average. Other sub-descriptors can be added such as slope/valley, ridge top, AM/PM, or other local formatter options. Use the 8-point compass for the wind direction, or in complex terrain, indicate slope or valley oriented wind direction (upslope/down valley, etc.).
- h. Extended (days 6, 7 optional). The extended period may be located at the end of the FWF and reflect an outlook for the entire FWF area, or optionally, an extended period may be located at the end of each zone segment and reflect an outlook for that particular segment. Weather elements in the extended period may include any or all of the mandatory day 1 and day 2 forecast elements. Forecasters will include the wind in the 3 to 5 day period and, when significant, beyond day 5 if appropriate. Wind forecasts should reflect the most significant synoptically driven wind affecting fire operations or ignition.

Additional elements may be included in the FWF. Specific parameters and formats will be

specified in the local AOP. Examples of optional elements are: transport winds, mixing heights, LAL, Haines index, chance of wetting rain (CWR), etc.

5.3.5 Format. Forecasters will compose the product in either the standardized narrative format (Exhibit 5-1, 5-2) or the standardized tabular format (Exhibit 5-3).

Exhibit (5-1) - Format of a morning narrative Fire Weather Planning Forecast.

FNUS5i KNNN DDHHMM
FWFNMM

FIRE WEATHER PLANNING FORECAST FOR name of area
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CITY STATE
TIME-DATE (example: 900 AM MDT FRI JUL 9 2011)

...HEADLINE... (REQUIRED for Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather
Watches....significant feature(s) at other times recommended)

.DISCUSSION...(concise, clear, non-technical explanation of the
current/forecasted fire weather)

SSZXXX-XXX>XXX-DDHHMM- (UGC/FIPS CODING)
GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTORS (including land management governing units and
optional fire weather zone numbers)
TIME-DATE (repeat)

...RED FLAG WARNING/FIRE WEATHER WATCH HEADLINE (as needed in each appropriate
zone grouping)...

.TODAY...
SKY/WEATHER.....
MAX TEMPERATURE.....
 24 HR TREND..... (optional)
MIN HUMIDITY.....
 24 HR TREND..... (optional)
20 FT WIND..... (optional - include sub-descriptors e.g.
slope/valley..valleys/lwr slopes..ridge top...ridges/upr slopes..etc.)
LOCAL OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(transport winds, mixing heights, LAL, Haines, CWR,
etc.)generated from fire weather grids.

.TONIGHT...
SKY/WEATHER.....
MIN TEMPERATURE.....
 24 HR TREND..... (optional)
MAX HUMIDITY.....
 24 HR TREND..... (optional)
20 FT WIND..... (optional - include sub-descriptors e.g.
slope/valley..valleys/lwr slopes..ridge top...ridges/upr slopes..etc.)
LOCAL OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(transport winds, mixing heights, LAL, Haines, CWR,
etc.)

.TOMORROW...
SKY/WEATHER.....
MAX TEMPERATURE.....
MIN HUMIDITY.....
20 FT WIND..... (optional - include sub-descriptors e.g.
slope/valley..valleys/lwr slopes..ridge top...ridges/upr slopes..etc.)
LOCAL OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(transport winds, mixing heights, LAL, Haines, CWR,

etc.)

(.FORECAST DAYS 3 THROUGH 7 may optionally be provided for each zone segment)

\$\$

[forecast for next geographical descriptor and fire weather zone group]

\$\$

.EXTENDED...(Optional time period) (winds will be included for days 3-5, days 6 and 7 if appropriate; other elements per locally-established policy; may be in each zone segment versus this location; may optionally be presented as 12 hour periods)

.DAY3... (days can be combined, e.g., .SUNDAY THROUGH TUESDAY...)

.DAY4...

.DAY5...

.DAY6... (days 6 and 7 optional)

.DAY7...

.OUTLOOK... FOR DAY MONTH DATE THROUGH DAY MONTH DATE (per local-established policy - Days 8-14, 30 and 90 day outlooks when issued)

\$\$

NAME (OPTIONAL)

\$\$

NNNN

Exhibit (5-2) -Format of an afternoon narrative Fire Weather Planning Forecast.

FNUS5i KNNN DDHHMM
FWFNNN

FIRE WEATHER PLANNING FORECAST FOR name of area
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CITY STATE
TIME-DATE (example: 300 PM MDT THU JUL 10 1999)

...HEADLINE... (REQUIRED for Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches....significant feature(s) at other times)

.DISCUSSION...(concise, clear, non-technical explanation of the current/forecasted fire weather)

SSZXXX-XXX>XXX-DDHHMM- (UGC/FIPS CODING)
GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTORS (including land management governing units and optional fire weather zone numbers)
TIME-DATE (repeated)

...RED FLAG WARNING/FIRE WEATHER WATCH HEADLINE (as needed in each appropriate zone grouping) ...

.TONIGHT...

SKY/WEATHER.....

MIN TEMPERATURE.....

24 HR TREND..... (optional)

MAX HUMIDITY.....

24 HR TREND..... (optional)

WIND..... (include definition, e.g. 20 FT/10-min avg)
(slope/valley..valleys/lwr slopes..etc.)

(ridge top...ridges/upr slopes..etc.)
LOCAL OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(transport winds, mixing heights, LAL, Haines, CWR,
etc.)

.TOMORROW...
SKY/WEATHER.....
MAX TEMPERATURE.....
24 HR TREND..... (optional)
MIN HUMIDITY.....
24 HR TREND..... (optional)
WIND..... (include definition, e.g. 20 FT/10-min avg,)
(slope/valley..valleys/lwr slopes..etc.)
(ridge top...ridges/upr slopes..etc.)
LOCAL OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(transport winds, mixing heights, LAL, Haines, CWR,
etc.)

.TOMORROW NIGHT...(third period could be either TOMORROW NIGHT or FOLLOWING
DAY - Day 2)
SKY/WEATHER.....
MIN TEMPERATURE.....
MAX HUMIDITY.....
WIND..... (include definition, e.g. 20 FT/10-min avg)
(slope/valley..valleys/lwr slopes..etc.)
(ridge top...ridges/upr slopes..etc.)
LOCAL OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(transport winds, mixing heights, LAL, Haines, CWR,
etc.)

.FOLLOWING DAY (Day 2)...
SKY/WEATHER.....
MAX TEMPERATURE.....
MIN HUMIDITY.....
WIND..... (include definition, e.g. 20 FT/10-min avg)
(slope/valley..valleys/lwr slopes..etc.)
(ridge top...ridges/upr slopes..etc.)
LOCAL OPTIONAL ELEMENTS...(transport winds, mixing heights, LAL, Haines, CWR,
etc.)

(.FORECAST DAYS 3 THROUGH 7 may optionally be provided for each zone segment)

\$\$

[forecast for next geographical descriptor and fire weather zone group]

\$\$

.FORECAST DAYS 3 THROUGH 7...(winds will be included for days 3-5, days 6 and
7 if appropriate; other elements per locally-established policy; may be in
each zone segment versus this location; if day 2 not included above, then this
section should start at day 2; may optionally be presented as 12 hour periods)
.DAY3... (days can be combined, e.g., .SUNDAY THROUGH TUESDAY...)
.DAY4...
.DAY5...
.DAY6... (days 6 and 7 optional)
.DAY7...

.OUTLOOK FOR DAY MONTH DATE THROUGH DAY MONTH DATE (per local-established
policy - Days 8-14, 30 and 90 day outlooks when issued)

\$\$

NNNN

An example of a *narrative* Fire Weather Forecast can be found here:

http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/FWF_narrative.pdf

Exhibit (5-3) - Format for the Tabular Fire Weather Planning Forecast. Format shown is for the afternoon issuance; morning issuance is identical except for three periods instead of four. **Bold text** denotes required elements.

FNUS5i KNNN DDHHMM
FWFNNN

FIRE WEATHER PLANNING FORECAST FOR name of area
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CITY STATE
TIME-DATE (example: 300 PM EST TUE JAN 1 2001)

...HEADLINE... (REQUIRED for Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches...significant feature(s) at other times recommended)

.DISCUSSION...(concise, clear, non-technical explanation of the current/forecasted fire weather)

SSZXXX-XXX>XXX-DDHHMM- (UGC/FIPS coding)
GEOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTORS (such as land management units, political boundaries, geographic features, and/or fire weather zones)
TIME-DATE (repeated)

...RED FLAG WARNING/FIRE WEATHER WATCH HEADLINE (as needed in each appropriate zone grouping)...

PARAMETER	TONIGHT	TOMORROW	TOMORROW NIGHT	FOLLOWING DAY
CLOUD COVER	(CLOUDY, MCLDY, PCLDY, CLEAR)			
CHANCE PRECIP (%)	(Percent chance precip 0-100 or areal coverage)			
PRECIP TYPE	(NONE, DRIZL, FRZ RAIN, SNOW/RAIN, RAIN, TSHWR)			
TEMP (24H TREND)	(Max/min temps as zone avg or extremes, trend not included in 3 rd or 4 th period PM forecasts)			
RH % (24H TREND)	(Max/min relative humidity as zone avg or extremes, trend not included in 3 rd or 4 th period PM forecasts)			
20FT WND MPH (VALLEY/AM)	(8 pt compass or upslope/downslope and MPH w gusts, can be VALLEY or AM wind)			
20FT WND MPH (RIDGE/PM)	(8 pt compass and MPH w/gusts, can be PM or ridge top winds)			
PRECIP DURATION	(Hours of precip in period)			
PRECIP BEGIN	(Onset of precip probability)			
PRECIP END	(Cessation of precip probability)			
PRECIP AMOUNT	(Zone avg QPF inches)			
LAL	(Lightning Activity Level)			
HAINES INDEX (LOW)	(As applicable)			
HAINES INDEX (MID)	(As applicable)			
HAINES INDEX (HIGH)	(As applicable)			
MIXING HGT (AGL/MSL)	(Feet or meters)			
TRANSPORT WIND (KTS)	(8 pt compass)			
VENT RATE (KT-FT)	(Mixing height times transport wind)			
DISPERSION	(Locally defined category, e.g. GOOD)			
SUNSHINE HOURS	(Total hours of sun)			
(OTHER LCL OPTIONS)	???	???	???	???

REMARKS...APPROPRIATE REMARKS TO ADD VALUE AND MARK SIGNIFICANT WEATHER CHANGES. INSERT 'NONE' IF NONE.

(.Extended forecast may optionally be provided for each zone segment)

\$\$

[Forecast for next geographical descriptor and fire weather zone group]

\$\$

.EXTENDED... (wind required days 3-5, days 6 and 7 if appropriate; other elements per locally-established policy; days 3-7 may be grouped in any combination; may be in each zone segment versus this location; may optionally be presented as 12 hour periods)

.DAY 3...

.DAY 4...

.DAY 5...

.DAY 6... (days 6 and 7 optional)

.DAY 7...

.OUTLOOK (per local-established policy - Days 8-14, 30 and 90 day outlooks when issued)

\$\$

NNNN

An example of a *tabular* Fire Weather Forecast can be found here:

http://weather.gov/directives/010/401i/FWF_tabular.pdf

5.4 Updates and Corrections. The FWF will be updated when a Fire Weather Watch or a RFW is issued or canceled, or when forecast elements are deemed unrepresentative. The FWF will be corrected when a typographical/format error is detected.

6. National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) Forecast (Product Category FWM, WMO Header FNUS8i).

6.1 Mission Connection. The NFDRS measures wildland fire danger at observation sites throughout the contiguous United States. The NWS role in NFDRS is forecasting weather input which, combined with user input, allows the NFDRS software to predict the next day's fire danger indices. These indices contribute to agency decisions on resource management, firefighter safety, and protection of the public and property. Note that an NFDRS station may represent a large fire danger rating area of similar climatology and fuel type. NFDRS forecasts for a station are intended to be applied across a large fire danger rating area.

6.2 Issuance Guidelines.

6.2.1 Creation Software. The AWIPS GFE NFDRS formatter will be used to generate the NFDRS Forecast (FWM). The individual station forecast (either actual or trend) is recommended over the zone format.

6.2.2 Issuance Criteria. The NFDRS forecast is a routine product. Where requested by the user, forecasts will be issued at least once a day during the locally determined fire season.

6.2.3 Issuance Time. Weather observations valid for approximately 1300 Local Standard Time (LST) are taken by the land management agencies and transmitted through AWIPS using the Fire Weather Observation (FWO) product ID. This product should have a header above the data which states “Listing of Observations”. Forecasters will use these observations as a basis for generating forecasts valid 24 hours later (the NFDRS forecast), so NFDRS forecast issuance times are dependent on the arrival of these observations. Observations generally arrive in the mid-afternoon hours and forecasts follow soon thereafter. Representative observations for use in making NFDRS projections can also be accessed by other dependable means, including the Real-time Observation Monitor and Analysis Network (ROMAN) and state Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) collectives from the Internet.

The Fire Agencies recently implemented a combined automated and manual observation issuance system, using what is known as the Nelson model. This results in a new observation type “N” and indicates that the Nelson model was used in determining 1-hour and 10-hour fuel moisture. Though several Nelson model observations are generated, only the final “N” type observation is stored for the 1300 LST observation. Several N-model calculations are performed to generate automated State of Weather (SOW) and Wet Flag. A user can at this point manually edit the SOW and Wet Flag values based on local knowledge. In this case, the observation is recalculated and the type of observation becomes “O” to indicate user editing. The manual editing of SOW and Wet Flag is the key difference, along with automatic availability of the “N” observation type.

6.2.4 Valid Time. NFDRS forecasts are valid 24 hours from the time of the observation (approximately 1300 LST).

6.2.5 Product Expiration Time. None.

6.2.6 Event Expiration Time. None.

6.3 Technical Description.

6.3.1 UGC Type. None.

6.3.2 MND Broadcast Instruction Line. None.

6.3.3 MND Product Type Line. None.

6.3.4 Content. Forecasters should include the following in the NFDRS forecast. Item 6.3.4.1 below, 10HR time lag fuel moisture, should only be forecast for manual NFDRS reporting stations. Fuel moisture forecasts for telemetered NFDRS stations will be calculated by WIMS and this forecast field should not be edited:

- a. ZONE/FCST Shows whether this forecast is for an NFDRS zone or individual station. Zone average trends can be used when enough observations are available for the zone area. Choice between zone or individual station forecasts should be worked out in the AOP with fire weather users.
- b. NO NFDRS Zone Number (or individual NFDRS site number)
- c. YYMMDD Year, month, and day valid forecast time
- d. 13 Always 1300 LST
- e. WX Weather valid at 1300 LST tomorrow. Valid entries are:
 - 0 clear
 - 1 scattered clouds (1/8 to 4/8)
 - 2 broken clouds (5/8 to 7/8)
 - 3 overcast clouds (more than 7/8)
 - 4 foggy
 - 5 drizzle
 - 6 raining
 - 7 snowing or sleet
 - 8 showers (in sight or at the station)
 - 9 thunderstorm
 (Categories 5, 6, or 7 sets wet flag to “yes”)
- f. TEMP Temperature in deg F valid at 13 LST (or temperature trend + or -)
- g. RH Relative humidity in percent valid at 13 LST (or RH trend + or -)
- h. LAL1 Lightning Activity Level 1400 LST to 2300 LST (optional)
- i. LAL2 Lightning Activity Level 2300 LST to 2300 LST (optional)
- j. WDIR Use only for point forecast (FCST) version. Enter direction using sixteen point compass (N, NNE, NE, ENE, etc.) valid at 13 LST (20 ft level/10 minute average).
- k. WSPD Enter wind speed in mph valid at 13 LST (or wind speed trend + or -, 20 ft level/10 minute average)
- l. 10HR 10 hour timelag fuel moisture in percent valid at 13 LST (or trend + or -) (***)Forecasted only for manual NFDRS stations(***)
- m. Tx Max temperature from 1300 LST to 1300 LST tomorrow
- n. Tn Min temperature from 1300 LST to 1300 LST tomorrow
- o. RHx Max relative humidity from 1300 LST to 1300 LST tomorrow
- p. RHn Min relative humidity from 1300 LST to 1300 LST tomorrow
- q. PD1 Precipitation duration in hours 1300 LST to 0500 LST
- r. PD2 Precipitation duration in hours 0500 LST to 1300 LST
- s. WETFLAG Y or N. Indicates whether liquid water will be on the fuels at 13 LST. (Use with caution - a “Y” will set all the NFDRS indices to zero!)

6.3.5 Format. The NFDRS Forecast will follow the comma delimited format as shown:

ZONE,NO,YYMMDD,13,WX,TEMP,RH,LAL1,LAL2,WSPD,10HR,TX,TN,RHx,
RHn,PD1,PD2,WETFLAG

FCST,NO,YYMMDD,13,WX,TEMP,RH,LAL1,LAL2,WDIR,WSPD,10HR,TX,TN,
RHx,RHn,PD1,PD2,WETFLAG

Examples of the point and zone products, formatted for transmission into AWIPS, are displayed below:

FNUS85 KBOI DDHHMM
FWMBOI

ZONE,403,011027,13,1,-3,0,1,1,0,0,,,,,0,0,N
ZONE,404,011027,13,0,3,0,1,1,0,0,,,,,0,0,N
ZONE,408,011027,13,0,4,-5,1,1,-3,0,89,68,75,22,0,0,N

FNUS82 KMWI DDHHMM
FWMJAX
FCST,083501,030219,13,1,69,43,1,1,SE,8,,72,46,100,40,0,0,N
FCST,081301,030219,13,1,67,42,1,1,SSE,5,,70,41,100,39,0,0,N

\$\$
NNNN

Follow the format precisely in order for the forecasts to be used as NFDRS input. Separate each element by a comma with no intervening spaces. (Some elements may not be forecast, but are represented by the null space between two consecutive commas.)

When the NWS NFDRS Forecast (FWM) is sent to the Weather Information Management System (WIMS), the product is automatically combined with information entered by land management personnel to provide the NFDRS fire index forecast. At roughly 1500 LST, the AWIPS product NMCFWOXXX should be available if the forecast values were accepted into the NFDRS system. The product will look similar to the observed values reported earlier, but the header should read: Listing of Forecasted Observations. If the page is blank, some formatting error prevented the forecast values from being accepted.

6.4 Updates and Corrections. Since the NFDRS system runs once a day, FWMs are not typically updated. The FWM will be corrected when a typographical/format error is detected.

6.5 Suspension of NFDRS Forecasts. If a known maintenance or data accuracy problem exists with an NFDRS forecast site, the problem will typically be reported to the station owner by the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) RAWs depot via e-mail. It is the duty of the station owner to take corrective action. If a WFO knows of this problem and maintenance is not completed on the observation site, the WFO may suspend the NFDRS forecast for that site until the problem is solved. Coordination and notification of the NFDRS forecast suspension will be coordinated with the Predictive Services section in the affected Geographic Area Coordination Center.

7. Land Management Forecast (Product Category FWL, WMO Header FNUS8i). The Land

Management Forecast product is a general-purpose, miscellaneous-type product with content, format, issuance, etc. determined per locally established requirements.

8. Smoke Management Forecast (Product Category SMF, WMO Header FNUS7i). WFO staff issue Smoke Management Forecasts (SMFs) at the request of land management agencies. The SMF may be issued on a routine basis, or issued as needed, and may be narrative, or tabular in format, or a combination of both. Forecasters may include the SMF as part of another weather product (for instance, the FWF) or as a separate product. The requester and the responsible NWS office should establish the content, format, frequency of issuance, dissemination method, etc. This product may contain forecasts of the transport winds and the variability of transport winds with height and time, air mass stability, air dispersion and measures of dispersion, mixing depths and variations with time as well as other smoke management related parameters.

9. Rangeland/Grassland Fire Danger Statement (Product Category RFD, WMO Header FNUS6i). A Rangeland, or Grassland Fire Danger Statement (RFD) product is a miscellaneous product which provides advisory information on rangeland and/or grassland fire potential or conditions. Land management and NWS personnel should establish the contents, format, frequency of issuance, dissemination, etc. This product may be issued on a routine or non-routine basis.

10. Storm Prediction Center (SPC) Fire Weather Outlook (Product Category FWD, WMO Header FNUS21, FNUS22 and FNUS28).

10.1 Mission Connection. The National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) SPC Day 1, Day 2 and Day 3-8 Fire Weather Outlooks (narrative and graphical) describe large-scale meteorological conditions in the lower 48 states which, when combined with the antecedent fuel conditions, favor the rapid growth and spread of a fire, should a fire ignition occur. These outlooks provide guidance for WFO forecasters and aid land management agencies in determining large-scale areas of fire danger risk.

10.2 Issuance Guidelines.

10.2.1 Creation Software. NCEP AWIPS (N-AWIPS), PC and Web based.

10.2.2 Issuance Criteria. The Day 1, Day 2 and Day 3-8 Fire Weather Outlooks are scheduled products. The Day 1 and Day 2 Outlooks are issued twice per day. The Day 3-8 Outlook is issued once per day.

10.2.3 Issuance Time. The Day 1 Outlook is issued at 4:00 AM local time and updated at 17:00 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) (11:00 AM CST/12:00 PM CDT). The Day 2 Outlook is issued at 10:00UTC (4:00 AM CST/5:00 AM CDT) and updated at 20:00UTC (2:00 PM CST/3:00 PM CDT). The Day 3-8 Outlook is issued at 22:00UTC (4:00 PM CST/5:00 PM CDT).

10.2.4 Valid Time. The outlook period for the initial Day 1 and both Day 2 Outlooks will

extend from 12:00 to 12:00 UTC. The outlook period for the update Day 1 Outlook extends from 17:00 to 12:00 UTC. The outlook period for the Day 3-8 Outlook extends from the end of the Day 2 outlook period, through 12:00 UTC on the eighth calendar day after the product issuance time.

10.2.5 Product Expiration Time. At 12:00 UTC tomorrow (Day 1) and at 12:00 UTC the next day (Day 2). The Day 3-8 Outlook expires at 12:00 UTC day eight.

10.2.6 Event Expiration Time. None.

10.3 Technical Description. Outlooks should follow the format and content described in this section.

10.3.1 UGC Type. None.

10.3.2 MND Broadcast Instruction Line. None.

10.3.3 MND Product Type Line. Day (1, 2 or 3-8) Fire Weather Outlook.

10.3.4 Content. The Day 1 and Day 2 Outlooks (text and graphic) will highlight:

- a. Significant Dry Thunderstorm Critical Fire Weather Areas (based on fuel conditions and numerous cloud-to-ground lightning strikes with generally less than one-tenth inch of rain, a closed scalloped area on graphic).
- b. Critical Fire Weather Areas (based on fuel conditions and forecast of strong winds, low relative humidity, and warm temperatures, designated as a closed area on graphic).
- c. Extremely Critical Fire Weather Areas (issued infrequently for only the most severe forecast and fuel conditions, designated as a closed, hatched area on graphic).
- d. “See Text” defines the case where an area is being considered for a possible critical fire weather outlook, but there is uncertainty or the expected weather conditions will be just below the criteria for a critical area. In addition, a forecaster can use “...AREA...” notation to describe areas that have had fire weather problems and/or have more than one limiting factor.

The Day 3-8 outlooks (text and graphic) will highlight:

- a. Significant Dry Thunderstorm Critical Fire Weather Areas through Day 8.
- b. Critical Fire Weather Areas through Day 8.
- c. “Predictability too low” defines the case where no critical fire weather areas are forecast, but a critical fire weather area is possible during the period and it is too uncertain to delineate at the time of issuance.
- d. “Potential too low” defines the case where fuel and weather conditions indicate a very low threat for a critical fire weather area during the forecast period.

10.3.5 Format. The text outlooks should follow the format specified in exhibit 10-1 for the initial Day 1 and Day 2 Outlooks. Exhibits 10-2 and 10-3 provide examples for the update Day 1 and Day 2 and the Day 3-8 Outlook text products. The products are provided via AWIPS and the Web and can be viewed on the Web at <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/fire>.

The text format for the initial Day 1 and Day 2 Outlooks will include:

- a. Headlines that highlight all critical and extremely critical fire weather areas.
- b. Synopsis of large-scale conditions affecting fire weather conditions across the lower 48 states.
- c. Individual fire weather areas with a discussion of the forecast fire weather conditions.
- d. Other areas forecast to have marginal fire weather conditions but need to be monitored.

The text format for the update Day 1 and Day 2 Outlooks will include:

- a. Headlines that highlight all critical and extremely critical fire weather areas.
- b. Brief discussion update on any changes needed to the graphic or forecast fire weather conditions for individual fire weather areas.
- c. Initial discussion appended below the update discussion.

The text format for the Day 3-8 Outlook will include:

- a. Individual fire weather areas with a discussion of the forecast fire weather conditions.

Exhibit (10-1) - Format example of text version of SPC initial Day 1 Fire Weather Outlook Product.

```
FNUS21 KWNS ddhmm  
FWDDY1
```

```
DAY 1 FIRE WEATHER OUTLOOK  
NWS STORM PREDICTION CENTER NORMAN OK  
Time am time_zone day mon dd yyyy
```

```
VALID DDHMMZ - DDHMMZ
```

```
...EXTREMELY CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER AREA FOR AREA OF CONCERN #1...  
...CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER AREA FOR AREA OF CONCERN #2... (other areas as  
needed)
```

```
...SYNOPSIS...  
(TEXT)
```

```
...AREA OF CONCERN #1...  
AREAS OF HIGHEST RISK ARE DISCUSSED FIRST  
NARRATIVE TECHNICAL DISCUSSION
```

```
...AREA OF CONCERN #2...
NARRATIVE TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

..FORECASTER.. MM/DD/YYYY

...PLEASE SEE WWW.SPC.NOAA.GOV/FIRE FOR GRAPHIC PRODUCT...

$$
NNNN
```

Exhibit (10-2) - Format example of text version of SPC update Day 2 Fire Weather Outlook Product.

```
FNUS21 KWNS ddhhmm
FWDDY1

DAY 2 FIRE WEATHER OUTLOOK
NWS STORM PREDICTION CENTER NORMAN OK
Time am/pm time_zone day mon dd yyyy

VALID DDHHMMZ - DDHHMMZ

...EXTREMELY CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER AREA FOR AREA OF CONCERN #1...
...CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER AREA FOR AREA OF CONCERN #2... (other areas as
needed)

...AREA OF CONCERN #1...
AREAS OF HIGHEST RISK ARE DISCUSSED FIRST
UPDATE TO THE INITIAL NARRATIVE TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

...AREA OF CONCERN #2...
UPDATE TO THE INITIAL NARRATIVE TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

..FORECASTER.. MM/DD/YYYY

.PREV DISCUSSION... /ISSUED HHMM AM time zone day mon dd yyyy/

...SYNOPSIS...

...AREA OF CONCERN #1...
AREAS OF HIGHEST RISK ARE DISCUSSED FIRST
INITIAL NARRATIVE TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

...AREA OF CONCERN #2...
INITIAL NARRATIVE TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

...PLEASE SEE WWW.SPC.NOAA.GOV/FIRE FOR GRAPHIC PRODUCT...
```

Exhibit (10-3) - Format example of text version of SPC Day 3-8 Fire Weather Outlook Product.

```
FNUS28 KWNS ddhhmm
FWDD38

DAY 3-8 FIRE WEATHER OUTLOOK
NWS STORM PREDICTION CENTER NORMAN OK
Time pm time_zone day mon dd yyyy

VALID DDHHMMZ - DDHHMMZ

...AREA OF CONCERN #1...
NARRATIVE TECHNICAL DISCUSSION
```

...AREA OF CONCERN #2...
NARRATIVE TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

..FORECASTER.. MM/DD/YYYY

...PLEASE SEE WWW.SPC.NOAA.GOV/FIRE FOR GRAPHIC PRODUCT...

\$\$
NNNN

10.4 Updates and Corrections. Updates are scheduled to the Day 1 and Day 2 Outlooks (see issuance times). Day 3-8 Outlooks are not updated or amended. Corrections are sent on as needed basis.

10.5 AWIPS IDs. The AWIPS Graphic IDs are:

		WMO	
Day 1	RBGFW1	PMWE98	KWNS for Day 1 (valid 12 or 17 UTC today-12 UTC tomorrow)
Day 2	RBGFW2	PMWI98	KWNS for Day 2 (valid 12 UTC tomorrow-12 UTC the day after)
Day 3-8	FWDD38	PGNO98	KWNS for Day 3-8 (valid 12 UTC third day from issuance through 12 UTC eighth day from issuance)

The AWIPS Text IDs are:

		WMO	
Day 1	FWDDY1	FNUS21	KWNS for Day 1 (valid 12 or 17 UTC today-12 UTC tomorrow)
Day 2	FWDDY2	FNUS22	KWNS for Day 2 (valid 12 UTC tomorrow-12 UTC the day after)
Day 3-8	FWDD38	FNUS28	KWNS for Day 3-8 (valid 12 UTC third day from issuance through 12 UTC eighth day from issuance)

11. Fire Weather Point Forecast Matrix.

A Fire Weather Point Forecast Matrix is a local or national web service providing guidance information. It is available as a national service from the national fire weather web page. It can also be optionally defined as a fixed point within a County Warning Area as agreed in the local/state AOP.

12. Other local and/or regional Decision Support Services as outlined in the Weather Ready Nation Strategic Plan.

The NWS offers evolving services to users, prompted by emerging guidance found in the Weather Ready Nation Strategic Plan. In accordance with this plan, WFOs may use social media tools to engage the public and our partners in conversation around important weather, water, and climate issues. At times, fire weather concerns may be addressed through these venues, in addition to other already established means. WFOs may also use web graphics, emails and webinars to assist in providing fire weather decision support services to fire weather partners.