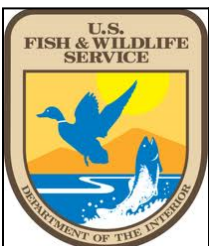
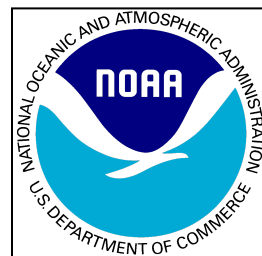




2023 Lower Michigan Fire Weather Area Operating Plan



Introduction

This Fire Weather Annual Operating Plan (FWAOP) was developed to enhance the communication and organization between members of The National Weather Service along with federal and state user agencies, for the 2023 fire season. This AOP was written from information compiled in The National Weather Service Directive 10-4, and the 2022 FWAOP.

Appendices

- Internet Spot Forecast request procedures (Appendix A)
- Example of products issued (Appendix B)
- Fire Weather Indices (Appendix C)
- Lower Michigan Fire Weather Zone Groupings (Appendix D)
- ~~Experimental Smoke Modeling Plumes (Appendix E)~~

Service Area and Organization

Service Areas

The **National Weather Service Office in Gaylord (APX)** will prepare Fire Weather Forecasts, Point (NFDRS) Forecasts, Spot forecasts, and Red Flag event support for the following fire control/land management agencies in Lower Michigan:

- Huron-Manistee National Forest in Northern Lower Michigan along and north of M-55
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Northern Lower Michigan
- State forest lands along and north of M-55 in Northern Lower Michigan
- State, tribal, and local land management agencies across Northern Lower Michigan and the eastern Upper Peninsula

National Weather Service Office in Grand Rapids (GRR) will prepare Fire Planning Weather Forecasts, Point (NFDRS) Forecasts, Spot forecasts, and Red Flag event support for the following fire control/land management agencies in Lower Michigan:

- Manistee National Forest in West-Central Lower Michigan south of M-55
- State forest lands south of M-55 in Southwest Lower Michigan
- State, tribal, and local land management agencies across Central-Southwest Michigan

National Weather Service Office in White Lake Township, MI (DTX) will provide Fire Weather Planning Forecasts, Red Flag event support and Spot Fire Weather Forecasts in Lower Michigan for the following fire control/land management agencies:

- Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge in Lower Michigan
- State and local land management agencies across Southeast Michigan

National Weather Service Office in Northern Indiana (IWX) will provide Fire Weather Planning Forecasts and Spot Fire Weather Forecasts for the following fire control/land management agency in Michigan:

- State, tribal, and local land management agencies in Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, Branch and Hillsdale counties

Backup

In events in which the National Weather Office Gaylord cannot provide routine services, as laid out in this FWAOP, then the National Weather Service Office Marquette will assume responsibility for fire weather products and services needed over Northern Lower Michigan. In the event the National Weather Service Office Marquette cannot provide routine services as laid out in their FWAOP, then the National Weather Service Office Gaylord will assume responsibility for all fire weather products and services needed over Upper Michigan.

The National Weather Service Office in Marquette (MQT) prepares the fire weather products for the following fire control/land management agencies in Upper Michigan.

- Ottawa National Forest in Upper Michigan
- Hiawatha National Forest in Upper Michigan
- Isle Royale National Park in Lake Superior
- Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Upper Michigan
- Seney Wildlife Refuge in Upper Michigan

Similarly, the National Weather Service Detroit/Pontiac will be the backup for the Grand Rapids office for routine fire weather services. In turn, Grand Rapids will back up the Detroit/Pontiac office for routine fire weather services.

The National Weather Service in Indianapolis will serve as back up for the National Weather Service in Northern Indiana.

National Weather Service contacts

WFO Detroit/Pontiac:

Fire weather: (248)625-4139
(248)625-4249
FAX: (248)625-4834

Contacts:

Fire Weather Program Leader:	Kevin Kacan	kevin.kacan@noaa.gov
Meteorologist In Charge:	[Vacant]	
Warn. Coordination Meteorologist:	Rich Pollman	richard.pollman@noaa.gov
Science Operations Officer	Greg Mann	greg.mann@noaa.gov

Mailing Address: NWS Office, NOAA
Fire Weather Program
9200 White Lake Rd
White Lake Township, MI 48386

WFO Gaylord:

Fire Weather: (989)732-9306
Administration: (989)731-3384
FAX: (989)731-0682

Contacts:

Fire Weather Program Leader:	Mike Boguth	michael.boguth@noaa.gov
Asst. Fire Weather Program Leader:	Jeff Lutz	jeffrey.lutz@noaa.gov
Meteorologist in Charge:	Jim Keysor	james.keysor@noaa.gov
Warn. Coordination Meteorologist:	Pat Bak	pat.bak@noaa.gov
Science Operations Officer:	John Boris	john.boris@noaa.gov

Mailing Address: NWS Office, NOAA
Fire Weather Program
8800 Passenheim Rd
Gaylord, MI 49735-9454

WFO Grand Rapids:

Fire Weather: (616) 949-5150

Administration: (616) 949-0643

FAX: (616) 949-1708

Contacts:

Fire Weather Program Leader: Cort Scholten

cort.scholten@noaa.gov

Asst. Fire Weather Program Leader: Nathan Jeruzal

nathan.jeruzal@noaa.gov

Meteorologist in Charge: Bruce Smith

bruce.smith@noaa.gov

Warn. Coordination Meteorologist: Jim Maczko

james.maczko@noaa.gov

Science and Operations Officer: TJ Turnage

thomas.turnage@noaa.gov

Mailing Address: NWS Office, NOAA

Fire Weather Program

4899 Tim Dougherty Dr SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49512-4034

WFO Northern Indiana:

Fire Weather: (574)834-1183

Administration: (574)834-1104

FAX: (574)834-3492

Contacts:

Fire Weather Program Leader: Rachel Cobb

rachel.cobb@noaa.gov

Asst. Fire Weather Program Leader: Lonnie Fisher

lonnie.fisher@noaa.gov

Meteorologist in Charge: Mark Frazier

mark.frazier@noaa.gov

Warn. Coordination Meteorologist: [Vacant]

Science Operations Officer: Jeffrey Logsdon

jeffrey.logsdon@noaa.gov

Mailing Address: NWS Office, NOAA

Fire Weather Program

7506 East 850 North

Syracuse, IN 46567

WFO Marquette:

Fire Weather: (906)475-5213
Administration: (906)475-5782
FAX: (906)475-6305

Contacts:

Fire Weather Program Leader:	Jon Voss	jonathan.voss@noaa.gov
Meteorologist in Charge:	Robin J Turner	robin.j.turner@noaa.gov
Warn. Coordination Meteorologist:	Matt Zika	matthew.zika@noaa.gov
Science Operations Officer:	Nick Langlieb	nicholas.langlieb@noaa.gov

Mailing Address: NWS Office, NOAA
Fire Weather Program
112 Airpark Drive South
Negaunee, MI 49866-9526

Land Management Agency Contacts in Lower Michigan

Eastern Area Coordination Center (EACC)

Main Office - Milwaukee

Main Phone: (414)944-3811
Office Fax: (414)944-3838

Mailing Address:
626 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Suite 500
Milwaukee, WI 53202

EACC Fire Weather Program Manager – Stephen Marien

Stephen_Marien@nps.gov

Main Phone: (651)293-8446
Cell: (402)250-7844
Office Fax: (651)290-3815

Mailing Address:
111 East Kellogg Blvd. Suite 105
St. Paul, MN 55101

U.S. Forest Service

Huron-Manistee National Forest

Dispatch 24-Hour/Duty Officer: (231)775-8732

SM.FS.midc@usda.gov

Supervisor's Office (Cadillac)

Joe Alyea – Fire Staff Officer (231)942-4524
Cell: (989)305-1227

Joseph.Alyea@usda.gov

Kevin Reese – Fire Staff Officer (231)878-7273

kevin.reese@usda.gov

Ben Wagner – Deputy Fire Staff Officer (231)342-8004

Benjamin.Wagner1@usda.gov

Angela Veal – Center Manager (231)775-8732
Cell: (231)429-7726

angela.veal@usda.gov

Clara Nieland – Assistant Center Manager (231)775-8732
Cell: (231) 878-0386

Clara.Nieland@usda.gov

Mailing Address: Fax: (231)775-8742
1755 South Mitchell St.
Cadillac, MI 49601

Manistee Zone (Baldwin/Manistee)

Todd Moore – ZFMO

Work: (530)545-2528

todd.moore@usda.gov

Cell: (231)852-4460 (?)

Fax: (231)723-8642

Huron Zone (Mio/Huron Shores)

John Norton-Jensen – ZFMO

(989)739-0728 X3101

john.norton-jensen@usda.gov

Cell: (231)878-6053

Fax: (989)739-0951

National Park Service

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

Phil Akers – Chief of Natural Resources (231)326-4750

phil_akers@nps.gov

Joe Lachowski – Park Ranger (231)326-4822

joe_lachowski@nps.gov

Tom Davison – Park Dispatcher (231)326-4742

tom_davison@nps.gov

Dispatch (231)326-4742

Fax (231)326-5653

Mailing Address:

9922 Front Street Hwy M-72

Empire, MI 49630

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

Mary Whitenack – FMO

(219)395-1683

mary_ellen_whitenack@nps.gov

Cell: (219)921-9814

U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Michigan

U.S. Fish Wildlife North Zone (Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio)

Dan Laber – Zone FMO

(608)565-4407

daniel_labber@fws.gov

Cell: (608)377-0259

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuges, (southern lower Michigan)

Josh Haen – Operations Lead (906)586-9851 X19

joshua_haen@fws.gov

Paul Charland – FMS, ELFO (517)351-8469

paul_charland@fws.gov

Cell: (920)948-4875

Fax: (517)351-1143

Mailing Address:

MI Field Office

2651 Coolidge Road, Suite 101

East Lansing, MI 48823

**Kirtland's Warbler Wildlife Management Area,
Seney National Wildlife Refuge & Michigan Islands**

Sara Siekierski - Refuge Manager (906)586-9851 X11
_____ – Refuge Assist. Manager (906)586-9851 X13

sara_siekierski@fws.gov

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge

Dan Kennedy – Refuge Manager (808) 372-8898
Steve Dushane – Asst. Refuge Manager (734) 692-7608

steve_dushane@fws.gov

Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge & Michigan Islands

Scott Simmons – Refuge Manager (989)777-5930 X107
Eric Dunton - Biologist (989)777-5930 X103

scott_simmons@fws.gov

eric_dunton@fws.gov

Michigan Private Lands Office & Michigan Wetland Management District

Jim Hazelman – State Coordinator (517)351-6235

jim_hazelman@fws.gov

Bureau of Indian Affairs

NWS Marquette area: Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Lac Vieux Desert Tribe, Hannahville Tribe, Bay Mills Indian Community, Sault Saint Marie Tribe

NWS Gaylord area: Little Traverse Bay Band, Grand Traverse Bay Band, Little River Band Tribe, Saginaw Chippewa Tribe

NWS Grand Rapids area: Little River Band Tribe, Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, Gun Lake Tribe, Pokagon Band Tribe

NWS Northern Indiana area: Pokagon Band Tribe, Huron Potawatomi Tribe

Will Wiggins

Office: (906)353-7289

Fax: (906)353-7299

Cell: (906)869-0201

wwiggins@up.net

Christopher.Wiggins@bia.gov

**Mailing Address:
100 Hemlock Street
Baraga, MI 49908**

Scott Virden

Office: (906)632-6809 Ext 3131

Fax: (906)632-0689

Cell: (906)630-0366

scott.virden@bia.gov

**Mailing Address:
2845 Ashmun Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783**

Michigan Dept of Natural Resources

Roscommon - Phone (989)275-5151 or (989)275-5019
Roscommon - FAX (989)275-5167

Fire Duty officers and extensions:

Don Klingler (989)275-5151 Ext. 272-2040 klinglerd@michigan.gov
(989) 619-0880 or (989)370-0440 (cell)
Lee Osterland (989)275-5151 Ext. 272-2042 osterlandl@michigan.gov
(231)357-7381 (cell)
Jeff Vasher (989)275-5151 Ext. 272-2050 vasherj@michigan.gov
(989)745-2942 (cell)

Admin / Weekday Fire Dispatch

Rita Defibaugh (989) 275-5151 Ext. 272-2920 defibaughr@michigan.gov
Weekend Fire Dispatch (989)275-0916

Mailing Address:
8717 North Roscommon Rd.
Roscommon, MI 48653

City of Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation

Michael Hahn 734.794.6627 x43484 mhahn@a2gov.org

Mailing Address:
3875 E. Huron River Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Land Management Agency Contacts in Upper Michigan

U.S. Forest Service

Ottawa National Forest:

Dispatch (231)775-8732
FMO - Eric Rebitzke (906)428-5856 eric.rebitzke@usda.gov
Cell (906)241-5719

Mailing Address:

**E 32979 US Hwy 2 East
Watersmeet, MI 49969**

Hiawatha National Forest:

Main Office (906)428-5800
Dispatcher (MIDC Contact) (231)775-8732
FMO - Eric Rebitzke (906)428-5856 eric.rebitzke@usda.gov
Fax (906)428-9030

Mailing Address:

**820 Rains Drive
Gladstone, MI 49837**

National Park Service

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore

Dispatch (Indiana Dunes) (219)395-8585
Alger County Sheriff Office (906)387-4444
Joe Hughs – Chief Ranger (906)387-2608 X 203
Cell (906)202-3192
Matt Davis - Park Ranger (906)494-2669 - Grand Marais ranger station
Cell (906)202-3191 matthew_davis@nps.gov

Mailing Address:

**N8391 Sand Point Road
P.O. Box 40
Munising, MI 49862**

Isle Royale National Park

Coral Conway – Chief Ranger (906)487-7148 coral_conway@nps.gov
Michael Ausema - East District Ranger (906)487-7173 michael_ausema@nps.gov

Mailing Address:

**800 East Lakeshore Drive
Houghton, MI 49931**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Michigan

Seney National Wildlife Refuge & Other Refuges in The UP

Josh Haen - Fire Management Specialist (906)586-9851 X19

joshua_haen@fws.gov

_____ - Deputy Refuge Manager (906)586-9851 X13

Sara Siekierski - Refuge Manager (906)586-9851 X11

sara_siekierski@fws.gov

Michigan Dept of Natural Resources

Marquette Dispatch

Marquette – Phone (906)249-1497

Acting Duty Officer (906)249-9222

Celeste Chingwa – Protection Officer (906)249-2466

chingwac@michigan.gov

[Vacant] – Fire Specialist

Keith Murphy – Fire Specialist

murphyk1@michigan.gov

Mailing Address:

110 Ford Rd.

Marquette, MI 49855

Routine Services provided by the National Weather Service

Format of Fire Planning Weather Forecasts and times of issuance are coordinated with the customers at the beginning of each season. The format of the fire weather products will comply with standards set forth in NWS Instruction 10-401. The format is standardized, in an effort to better serve transient fire fighters. The fire fighters can look at any National Weather Service Fire Weather Forecasts, and be familiar with the format so that critical weather information can be easily obtained.

The National Fire Danger Rating System (Point) forecasts will be issued to determine fire danger on an as needed basis. These are initiated by the reception of 1300 (local time) observation at the designated points.

Special forecasts, such as Spot Forecasts, will be issued as needed for on-going fires, prescribed burns, spraying or other special projects of the fire protection agencies.

A red flag program will be maintained throughout the fire season, to support fire agencies in wildfire prevention and suppression tactics.

Close liaison between the National Weather Service and the fire control agencies will be maintained to insure a smooth exchange of essential information.

Fire weather products issued by Weather Forecast Office Gaylord:

- ARBFWFAPX- Routine Fire Weather Forecast
- ARBFWMAPX- NFDRS (point) forecasts (Mio, Bear, Wellston, Silver Creek, Barton City)
- ARBFW SAPX- Spot Forecasts
- ARBRFWAPX- Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning

Fire weather products issued by Weather Forecast Office Grand Rapids:

- ARBFWFGRR- Routine Fire Weather Forecast
- ARBFWMGRR- NFDRS (point) forecasts (Baldwin, Leota, Bradley)
- ARBFWSGRR- Spot Forecasts
- ARBRFWGRR- Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning

Fire weather products issued by Weather Forecast Office White Lake:

- ARBFWFDTX- Routine Fire Weather Forecast
- ARBFWSDTX- Spot Forecasts
- ARBRFWDTX- Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning

Fire weather products issued by Weather Forecast Office Northern Indiana:

- INDFWFIWX- Routine Fire Weather Forecast
- INDFWSIWX- Spot Forecasts
- INDRFWIWX- Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning

More specific information on the above products is provided below.

Routine Fire Weather Forecast

This forecast has two scheduled issuances, between 400 am and 700 am in the morning, and between 300 pm and 400 pm in the afternoon, preferably by 330 pm. The morning forecast will contain three periods and an extended forecast, while the afternoon forecast will contain four periods and an extended forecast. A standard fire zone grouping has been established to better facilitate information for areas that may experience similar conditions. Adjustment of these groupings can be performed on an as needed basis to address representative fuel conditions in a particular area after coordination with affected state and federal officials. These groupings will be reviewed at least annually. A graphic of the current zone grouping can be found in Appendix D.

The forecasts will contain the following elements:

- **Headline** - The headline should capture the most important aspect of the forecast, or a trend. If a Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch is in effect, then this becomes the headline.
- **Discussion** – This is a short paragraph outlining the synoptic features affecting the Great Lakes region during the next 24 to 36 hours. An outlook also may be produced to highlight potential dangerous fire weather conditions expected in the next few days.
- **Other forecast elements** will include: cloud cover, chance and type of precipitation, precipitation amount, max and min temperatures and its trend, max and min relative humidity and its trend, 20-foot winds in MPH, mixing height in 1000's of feet, and transport winds in knots.
- **Haines Index** - This is a stability index with reportable values that range from 2 to 6. You can calculate the Haines Index by using model soundings.
- **Ventilation Index (VI)** - A smoke management tool used to measure the stability of the atmosphere, in order to indicate how effectively it will disperse fire generated pollutants.
- The extended forecast will be appended to the end of the tabular part of the product and will include the winds through day 7.

This forecast will be updated whenever the following conditions are warranted.

- A Fire Weather Watch is issued, canceled or expired
- A Red Flag Warning is issued, canceled or expired
- Current trends do not support the valid forecast

Methods of receiving and accessing routine Fire Planning Weather Forecasts, is as follows:

- Agencies can routinely access the forecast via the internet at weather.gov/gaylord, weather.gov/grandrapids, weather.gov/detroit, weather.gov/northernindiana or through WIMS (Weather Information and Management System).
- If the above options are not available, then agencies are encouraged to call the respective National Weather Service Office directly.

NFDRS (point) Forecast

The Point Forecast is issued for a specific point within the fire weather area of responsibility (see stations below) and is valid for a twenty-four (24) hour period (through 100 pm the following day). For example, if the NPS wants a Point Forecast for Wednesday at “The Bear”, they will send the 100 pm weather conditions from the site on Tuesday to serve as a reference for the forecast. The Point Forecast for The Bear, would be valid through 100 pm the next day (in this case it would be a Point Forecast for Wednesday at 100 pm at BEAR).

Point forecast Stations:

ID	Station	County	Agency	Latitude	Longitude	NWS Office
202902	Mio	Oscoda	USFS	44.4	-84.1	APX
202010	Bear	Leelanau	NPS	44.5	-86.0	APX
203101	Wellston	Manistee	USFS	44.2	-85.9	APX
203601	Silver Creek	Iosco	USFS	44.4	-83.6	APX
203001	Barton City	Alcona	USFS			APX
203802	Baldwin	Lake	USFS	43.9	-85.8	GRR
204001	Leota	Clare	DNR	44.12	-84.92	GRR
206401	Bradley	Allegan	DNR	42.63	-85.66	GRR

The format for NFDRS forecast is found in NWS Instruction 10-401.

Since 2020, the NFDRS forecasts go out 7 days. This will be 7 distinct 24 hour point forecasts for each site. See Appendix B for examples.

Spot Forecasts

This forecast is prepared for a single location for a very distinct period of time, usually 6 to 12 hours. The forecast is usually requested by federal and state agencies during wildfires or prescribed burns.

The forecast elements will usually consist of the highest or lowest temperature during the period, the highest or lowest relative humidity, wind direction and speed, chances of precipitation and duration.

Spot Forecast requests can come into the office by several means, the internet, by fax, or by phone. The preferred method for requesting or receiving Spot Forecasts will be via the internet. If internet usage is not possible for requesting or receiving Spot Forecasts, then requesting agencies should call the respective NWS office to request the forecast. Instructions for submitting a Spot Forecast request by user agencies, and instructions for completing the Spot Forecast by National Weather Service employees via the internet, are found in Appendix B.

When a request for a Spot Forecast is made by phone, National Weather Service employees should use the Spot Forecast form to help prepare the forecast. Upon receiving a call for a Spot Forecast, the NWS forecaster should ask for the location lat/lon, current observation including temperatures, relative humidity, wind direction and speed location. Elevation, aspect, fuel type, and requesting official and contact phone number should also be given for the site before beginning the forecast process.

Whether the Spot Forecast request is made by phone or the internet, NWS employees will complete the request utilizing the internet process (Appendix B). When the forecast is submitted it will produce a product in AWIPS, which is printed automatically and stored locally. This form can be used for faxing.

Experimental Model Smoke Plumes

Land management agencies that have a wildfire of 100 acres or greater, or are conducting a prescribed burn of 100 acres or greater, may request that the local National Weather Service Office run the NOAA Air Resources Laboratory dispersion model, HYSPLIT, to model smoke dispersion. This model is a combination of the U.S. Forest Service's Blue Sky Model and meteorological models used by NWS Forecasters. This data is output in a graphical form and is considered experimental since it is relatively new, and only limited testing has been conducted thus far. This data can be used in addition to a typical spot forecast that is used for Prescribed Burns and Wildfires. ~~More information on the procedures for requesting this and how to interpret the data can be found in Appendix E at the end of this AOP.~~

Weekly Fire Weather Briefings

During the months of April and May, on Thursdays at 815 AM, a weekly weather briefing will be conducted by a NWS Meteorologist from one of the four NWS offices that service the land

management agencies in Lower Michigan. Additional briefings may be requested by the land management agencies outside of this time period. The purpose of these briefings will be to provide an outlook of weather to assist the agencies in the planning of resources out through seven days during the active portion of the fire season. The day and time of these briefings will be determined by coordination between the NWS offices and all of the land management agencies. The webinars should include the use of the web based “Go To Meeting” software, and a conference call. The briefing will be then emailed out to the contacts on the webinar list.

Webinar information:

Web Page for Briefing: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/644430301>

Dial In: +1 (571) 317-3122

Access Code: 644-430-301

In addition to the weekly briefing listed above, a briefing concerning an expected Red Flag event will be conducted by the NWS offices when requested by the land management agencies. This request will likely come during the weekly fire weather briefing. Please see more details on the Red Flag webinar under the Watch/Warning Events section.

[Watch/Warning Events](#)

Fire Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings

A Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning is issued whenever extremely dry fuels are forecast to combine with critical weather parameters to create an atmosphere that could contribute to extensive wildfires with the potential to threaten life and property. Any watch or warning should be coordinated with the affected land management agency for the zone(s) where the watch or warning is being considered or has been issued.

A Red Flag warning may also be requested by a land management agency, if they feel that due to extreme dryness in the forest, that wildfires are likely. Otherwise, if conditions are expected to be close to or exceed red flag conditions, then an appropriate statement should be put into the Hazardous Weather Outlook (ARBHWOxxx and INDHWOIWX for far Southern Lower Michigan counties covered by Northern Indiana).

Fire Weather Watch Criteria

Whenever a geographical area has been dry for a week or two (or for a shorter period if before spring green-up or after fall color), the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) is high to extreme and critical weather conditions are expected then a Fire Weather Watch should be considered. Before issuing a Fire Weather Watch, coordinate your concerns with the pertinent land management agencies. Consider a watch, whenever the above conditions will combine with these forecast weather parameters within the next 24 to 48 hours are:

1. Sustained wind averaging ≥ 15 mph (20 ft RAWs winds)
or ≥ 20 mph (10m ASOS winds)
2. Relative humidity ≤ 25 percent
3. Temperature ≥ 75 degrees.

(Frequent wind gusts reaching the above wind criteria may be used in place of sustained winds at NWS Gaylord and Grand Rapids. This is to increase flexibility and provide additional support when needed to National Forest lands; and to account for differences in land use and fuel types that may be more sensitive to potential wildfire spread across portions of Northern and Western Lower Michigan.)

Red Flag Warning Criteria

A Red Flag Warning will be issued when the Fire Weather Forecaster has a high degree of confidence that all three critical weather conditions, listed below, will occur within 24 hours.

1. Sustained wind averaging ≥ 15 mph (20 ft RAWs winds)
or ≥ 20 mph (10m ASOS winds)
2. Relative humidity ≤ 25 percent, and
3. Temperature ≥ 75 degrees.

(Frequent wind gusts reaching the above wind criteria may be used in place of sustained winds at NWS Gaylord and Grand Rapids. This is to increase flexibility and provide additional support when needed to National Forest lands; and to account for differences in land use and fuel types that may be more sensitive to potential wildfire spread across portions of Northern and Western Lower Michigan.)

The fire weather watch or red flag warning can be issued on a county by county basis. The land management agencies and the NWS offices will discuss the area that will be contained within the urgent fire weather message.

Issuing a Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch

Call the affected land management agency for the zone where the watch or warning was issued to inform them of the warning and to coordinate what information is to be included in any public statement.

1. Issue the Red Flag Warning as RFWxxx.
2. The warning will include the geographic area, duration of the event and key weather parameters.
3. Headline in the daily Fire Weather Forecast (FWFxxx).
4. Subsequent Red Flag Warning messages or routine weather forecasts will carry the warning or watch headline until it is canceled.

Fire Weather Watch/Red Flag Warning Cancellation/Expiration

1. Issue the RFWxxx to cancel the watch or warning.
2. Headline the cancellation in the daily Fire Weather Forecast.

Marginal Events

When conditions are expected to approach Red Flag Warning conditions, a coordination call should take place between the NWS and the various land management agencies. This coordination call will determine whether a Red Flag Warning is required, or whether notification to raise the awareness of the elevated fire danger is desired. The notification includes web stories on NWS web pages, message notification to Emergency Managers and media, mention in the Hazardous Weather Outlook, and Social Media.

Verification

Fire Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings will be verified based on synoptic events. Verification of Red Flag events will be tracked for all fire weather zones. The criteria are as stated previously.

Webinars

Webinars will be provided to the land management agencies as requested prior to a Red Flag event. The webinars will be conducted similar to the weekly webinars as listed above. The content will include important, yet simple information to help the land management agencies make decisions pertaining to the potential Red Flag event.

Non-routine services

The National Weather Service will assist any Federal or State agency in training purposes. Typically, the National Weather Service has served as instructors for the weather portions of the S-290 and S-190 hosted by the USFS or DNR. On different occasions, the National Weather Service has also agreed to supply training/instruction support for state and federal agencies in more general purposes, such as seasonal outlooks during late winter staff meetings or regional gatherings. This type of service will continue in the future.

Wildland Fire Agency Responsibilities

The agency responsibility will be as noted in the Interagency Agreement for Meteorological Services, between federal and state user agencies and the National Weather Service. This has been appended.

Effective Date of the AOP

The beginning and ending dates of the fire weather season are determined by federal and state agencies in coordination with the National Weather Service Fire Weather Program Leader at the respective weather forecast office. These dates are a function of the first or last snow and by the state of vegetation. Typically the fire weather season for Lower Michigan extends from mid-March through mid-November.

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[Appendix A - Spot Forecast Instructions](#)

Instructions for Submitting a Spot Forecast request via the internet

- Go to the NWS Spot Forecast request page at: <https://www.weather.gov/spot/>
- If desired, zoom in to area of interest, then copy and paste link with lat/long info included for later use to skip having to zoom
- Step 1: Enter in location of spot request using street address (Section A), or via lat/long (Section B), or moving the pin on the map (Section B)
- Step 2: Select type of incident (Usually wildfire or prescribed fire)
- Step 3: Click **“Generate A Spot Request”** button
- Enter Spot Forecast Contact Information, Fire Weather Supplemental Information, Forecast Information, Answer Yes/No to NOAA Hysplit model, Enter observations
- Click Submit request

Retrieving the Spot Forecast

- Monitor the Spot Forecast Monitor page at: <https://www.weather.gov/spot/monitor/>
- A green pin means the request is still being worked on, red pin means spot is completed
- The forecast can be retrieved by clicking the specific pin, or clicking the spot on the list below the map

Instructions for completing a non-internet Spot Forecast request

- Download a spot request form at:
https://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/010/401j/WS_FORM_D_SPOT.pdf
- Fax it to the appropriate office at the numbers listed in office contact information
- Call the appropriate office (fax machines may be in other locations of the building).
- NWS personnel will return it via fax to the contact information given in the request

Appendix B - Examples of Fire Weather Products

Fire Weather Planning Forecast (morning) – ARBFWFxxx (The afternoon format is similar)-

FNUS5i KNNN DDHHMM

FWFNNN

FIRE WEATHER PLANNING FORECAST

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CITY STATE

TIME-DATE

...HEADLINE...

.DISCUSSION...

SSZXXX-XXX>XXX-DDHHMM-

GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTORS

TIME-DATE

...RED FLAG WARNING/FIRE WEATHER WATCH HEADLINE...

.TODAY...

SKY/WEATHER.....

MAX TEMPERATURE.....

24 HR TREND.....

MIN HUMIDITY.....

24 HR TREND.....

WIND. (20 FT/10-MIN AVG)...

HAINES INDEX...

MIXING HEIGHT...

TRANSPORT WINDS. (MPH)...

VENTILATION INDEX...

.TONIGHT...

SKY/WEATHER.....

MIN TEMPERATURE.....

24 HR TREND.....

MAX HUMIDITY.....

24 HR TREND.....

WIND. (20 FT/10-min avg)...

HAINES INDEX...

MIXING HEIGHT...

TRANSPORT WINDS. (MPH)...

VENTILATION INDEX...

.TOMORROW...

SKY/WEATHER.....

MAX TEMPERATURE.....

MIN HUMIDITY.....

WIND. (20 FT/10-min avg)....

HAINES INDEX...

MIXING HEIGHT...

TRANSPORT WINDS. (MPH)...

VENTILATION INDEX...

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.FORECAST FOR DAYS 3 THROUGH 7...
.DAY3...
.DAY4...
.DAY5...
.DAY6...
.DAY7...

Fire Weather Watch/Red Flag Warning (RFW).

Single Segment Fire Weather Watch (Red Flag Warning is similar except headline in the body of the product would say "RED FLAG WARNING IN EFFECT" and there would be different coding at the top.)

WWUS83 Kxxx 012130
RFWxxx
URGENT - FIRE WEATHER MESSAGE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Office MI
330 PM EDT WED MAY 1 2011

MIZXXX-XXX-021800-
/O.NEW.KXXX.FW.A.0005.110502T1800Z-110503T0200Z/
COUNTY1-COUNTY2-COUNTY3-COUNTY4-COUNTY5
330 PM EDT WED MAY 1 2011

...FIRE WEATHER WATCH IN EFFECT THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND THURSDAY EVENING...

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN XXXXXX HAS ISSUED A FIRE WEATHER WATCH...WHICH IS IN EFFECT FOR THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING.

- * WINDS...SOUTHWEST WINDS 10 TO 20 MPH WITH FREQUENT GUSTS TO 30 MPH THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING.
- * RELATIVE HUMIDITY...HUMIDITIES WILL BOTTOM OUT IN THE 15 TO 20 PERCENT RANGE LATE THURSDAY AFTERNOON. HUMIDITIES WILL RECOVER QUICKLY AFTER 9 PM.
- * TEMPERATURES...TEMPERATURES WILL WARM INTO THE 83-88 DEGREE RANGE BY LATE AFTERNOON ON THURSDAY.
- * IMPACTS...BURN RESTRICTIONS ARE IN EFFECT. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BURN RESTRICTIONS...VISIT THE MICHIGAN DNR WEBSITE AT WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/BURNPERMIT OR CALL 866-922-2876.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

A FIRE WEATHER WATCH MEANS THAT CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER CONDITIONS ARE FORECAST TO OCCUR. LISTEN FOR LATER FORECASTS AND POSSIBLE RED FLAG WARNINGS.

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Multiple Segment Fire Weather Watch (Red Flag Warning is similar except headline in the body of the product would say "RED FLAG WARNING IN EFFECT" and there would be different coding at the top.)

WWUS83 Kxxx 012130

RFWxxx
URGENT - FIRE WEATHER MESSAGE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Office MI
330 PM EDT WED MAY 1 2011

MIZXXX-XXX-021800-
/O.NEW.KXXX.FW.A.0005.110502T1800Z-110503T0200Z/
COUNTY1-COUNTY2-COUNTY3-COUNTY4-COUNTY5
330 PM EDT WED MAY 1 2011

...FIRE WEATHER WATCH IN EFFECT THROUGH THURSDAY AFTERNOON...

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN XXXXXX HAS ISSUED A FIRE WEATHER WATCH...WHICH IS IN EFFECT FOR THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING.

* WINDS...SOUTHWEST WINDS 10 TO 20 MPH WITH FREQUENT GUSTS TO 30 MPH THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING.

* RELATIVE HUMIDITY...HUMIDITIES WILL BOTTOM OUT IN THE 15 TO 20 PERCENT RANGE LATE THURSDAY AFTERNOON. HUMIDITIES WILL RECOVER QUICKLY AFTER 9 PM.

* TEMPERATURES...TEMPERATURES WILL WARM INTO THE 83-88 DEGREE RANGE BY LATE AFTERNOON ON THURSDAY.

* IMPACTS...BURN RESTRICTIONS ARE IN EFFECT. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BURN RESTRICTIONS...VISIT THE MICHIGAN DNR WEBSITE AT WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/BURNPERMIT OR CALL 866-922-2876.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

A FIRE WEATHER WATCH MEANS THAT CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER CONDITIONS ARE FORECAST TO OCCUR. LISTEN FOR LATER FORECASTS AND POSSIBLE RED FLAG WARNINGS.

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MIZXXX-XXX-021800-
/O.NEW.KXXX.FW.A.0005.110502T1800Z-110503T0200Z/
COUNTY6-COUNTY7-COUNTY8-COUNTY9-COUNTY10
330 PM EDT WED MAY 1 2011

...FIRE WEATHER WATCH IN EFFECT THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND THURSDAY EVENING...

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN XXXXXX HAS ISSUED A FIRE WEATHER WATCH...WHICH IS IN EFFECT FOR THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING.

* WINDS...SOUTHWEST WINDS 10 TO 20 MPH WITH FREQUENT GUSTS TO 30 MPH THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING.

* RELATIVE HUMIDITY...HUMIDITIES WILL BOTTOM OUT IN THE 15 TO 20 PERCENT RANGE LATE THURSDAY AFTERNOON. HUMIDITIES WILL RECOVER QUICKLY AFTER 9 PM.

* TEMPERATURES...TEMPERATURES WILL WARM INTO THE 83-88 DEGREE RANGE BY LATE AFTERNOON ON THURSDAY.

* IMPACTS...BURN RESTRICTIONS ARE IN EFFECT. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BURN RESTRICTIONS...VISIT THE MICHIGAN DNR WEBSITE AT WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/BURNPERMIT OR CALL 866-922-2876.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

A FIRE WEATHER WATCH MEANS THAT CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER CONDITIONS ARE FORECAST TO OCCUR. LISTEN FOR LATER FORECASTS AND POSSIBLE RED FLAG WARNINGS.

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Single Segment Red Flag Warning with Overview Section (Fire Weather Watch is similar except headline in the body of the product would say "FIRE WEATHER WATCH IN EFFECT" and there would be different coding at the top.)

WWUS83 Kxxx 012130
RFWxxx
URGENT - FIRE WEATHER MESSAGE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Office MI
1030 AM EDT THU MAY 2 2011

...RED FLAG WARNING IN EFFECT THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND THURSDAY EVENING...

.AN AREA OF LOW PRESSURE WILL APPROACH THE AREA TODAY. VERY WARM AIR IS EXPECTED TO MOVE IN AHEAD OF THIS FRONT AS SOUTHERLY WINDS WILL BECOME GUSTY. THE LACK OF RECENT RAINFALL ACROSS THE AREA WILL ALLOW FOR VERY DRY CONDITIONS TO CONTINUE INTO THIS EVENING. CONDITIONS WILL IMPROVE LATE THIS EVENING AND OVERNIGHT TONIGHT AS SHOWERS AND THUNDERSTORMS ARE EXPECTED TO MOVE IN WITH THE FRONT AT THAT TIME.

MIZXXX-XXX-030200-
/O.NEW.KXXX.FW.W.0005.110502T1800Z-110503T0200Z/
COUNTY1-COUNTY2-COUNTY3-COUNTY4-COUNTY5
1030 AM EDT THU MAY 2 2011

...RED FLAG WARNING IN EFFECT THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND THURSDAY EVENING...

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN XXXXXX HAS ISSUED A RED FLAG WARNING...WHICH IS IN EFFECT FOR THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING.

* WINDS...SOUTHWEST WINDS 10 TO 20 MPH WITH FREQUENT GUSTS TO 30 MPH THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING.

* RELATIVE HUMIDITY...HUMIDITIES WILL BOTTOM OUT IN THE 15 TO 20 PERCENT RANGE LATE THURSDAY AFTERNOON. HUMIDITIES WILL RECOVER QUICKLY AFTER 9 PM.

* TEMPERATURES...TEMPERATURES WILL WARM INTO THE 83-88 DEGREE RANGE BY LATE AFTERNOON ON THURSDAY.

* IMPACTS...BURN RESTRICTIONS ARE IN EFFECT. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BURN RESTRICTIONS...VISIT THE MICHIGAN DNR WEBSITE AT WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/BURNPERMIT OR CALL 866-922-2876.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

A FIRE WEATHER WATCH MEANS THAT CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER CONDITIONS ARE FORECAST TO OCCUR. LISTEN FOR LATER FORECASTS AND POSSIBLE RED FLAG WARNINGS.

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NFDRS Point Forecast - ARBFWMxxx:

FCST,202902,200311,13,3,38,68,1,1,SSW,04,M,42,28,85,41,0,5,N
 FCST,202902,200312,13,2,47,71,1,1,S,08,M,48,31,100,64,0,0,N
 FCST,202902,200313,13,2,36,57,1,1,W,14,M,49,32,92,56,11,0,N
 FCST,202902,200314,13,2,34,47,1,1,NW,06,M,36,24,74,45,0,0,N
 FCST,202902,200315,13,1,34,46,1,1,E,07,M,35,21,81,43,0,0,N
 FCST,202902,200316,13,2,41,47,1,1,S,05,M,41,23,81,41,0,0,N
 FCST,202902,200317,13,2,44,61,1,1,W,07,M,44,32,88,45,0,0,N

FCST,202010,200311,13,2,37,76,1,1,WSW,06,M,37,29,82,61,0,0,N
 FCST,202010,200312,13,6,44,76,1,1,S,07,M,45,34,89,75,0,0,N
 FCST,202010,200313,13,2,33,60,1,1,W,15,M,45,32,86,58,11,0,N
 FCST,202010,200314,13,2,30,59,1,1,N,05,M,35,26,68,54,0,0,N
 FCST,202010,200315,13,2,33,51,1,1,E,04,M,33,25,71,49,0,0,N
 FCST,202010,200316,13,2,37,58,1,1,SW,03,M,37,28,68,47,0,0,N
 FCST,202010,200317,13,2,38,70,1,1,W,05,M,39,34,85,56,0,0,N

FCST,203101,200311,13,3,40,73,1,1,WSW,02,M,40,31,88,50,0,0,N
 FCST,203101,200312,13,6,50,70,1,1,S,07,M,50,35,96,68,0,0,N
 FCST,203101,200313,13,2,36,56,1,1,W,13,M,51,33,89,54,9,0,N
 FCST,203101,200314,13,2,34,53,1,1,N,04,M,37,27,68,51,0,0,N
 FCST,203101,200315,13,1,38,44,1,1,E,04,M,38,25,71,44,0,0,N
 FCST,203101,200316,13,2,42,50,1,1,S,04,M,42,26,74,42,0,0,N
 FCST,203101,200317,13,2,44,65,1,1,W,05,M,44,35,89,49,0,0,N

FCST,203601,200311,13,3,37,70,1,1,S,05,M,43,28,81,41,0,3,N
 FCST,203601,200312,13,2,46,72,1,1,S,06,M,46,31,100,67,0,0,N
 FCST,203601,200313,13,2,39,53,1,1,W,14,M,47,33,89,52,8,0,N
 FCST,203601,200314,13,1,36,44,1,1,NNW,04,M,39,25,71,43,0,0,N
 FCST,203601,200315,13,1,33,50,1,1,ENE,07,M,36,24,74,43,0,0,N
 FCST,203601,200316,13,2,40,52,1,1,SSE,04,M,40,26,74,49,0,0,N
 FCST,203601,200317,13,2,44,65,1,1,WSW,05,M,44,32,89,50,0,0,N

Appendix C - Explanation of Fire Weather Indices

Haines Index (Low elevations):

The Haines index is an Atmospheric severity Index used to determine fire severity due to the stability of the lower atmosphere, typically used for days when plume dominated fires are likely. The terms in the index are the lapse rate between 950mb and 850mb (F1) and the moisture availability at 850mb by calculating the dew point depression (F2). Once the lapse rate and dew point depressions have been calculated, look up the appropriate value for each term (A and B) and add the numbers together (A+B). The lowest the index will be is 2 and the highest is 6.

Haines Index = A + B

$$F1 = T_{950} - T_{850}$$

$F1 = 3^{\circ}\text{C}$ or less, then **A** = 1

$F1 = 4\text{-}7^{\circ}\text{C}$, then **A** = 2

$F1 = 8^{\circ}\text{C}$ or more, then **A** = 3

$$F2 = T_{850} - T_{d850}$$

$F2 = 3^{\circ}\text{C}$ or less, then **B** = 1

$F2 = 4\text{-}7^{\circ}\text{C}$, then **B** = 2

$F2 = 8^{\circ}\text{C}$ or more, then **B** = 3

Ventilation Index:

This index is found by multiplying the mixing height (feet) with the transport wind speed (mph), then dividing by 100.

Example...

Mixing height = 14,000 feet

Transport wind = 15 mph

$$VI = (14,000 * 15) / 100 = 2100$$

Example...

Mixing height = 5,000 feet

Transport wind = 10 mph

$$VI = (5,000 * 10) / 100 = 500$$

VI scale...

Less than 130 = POOR dispersal

130 – 299 = FAIR dispersal

300 – 599 = GOOD dispersal

600 and greater = EXCELLENT dispersal

A ventilation index of zero implies no ability for the atmosphere to disperse smoke or pollutants, while a value of 600 or greater implies an excellent ability to disperse smoke or pollutants. The United States Forest Service and Department of Natural Resources has requested that when the VI is “fair”, that we include a number value along with the term.

Appendix D - Lower Michigan Fire Zone Groupings

