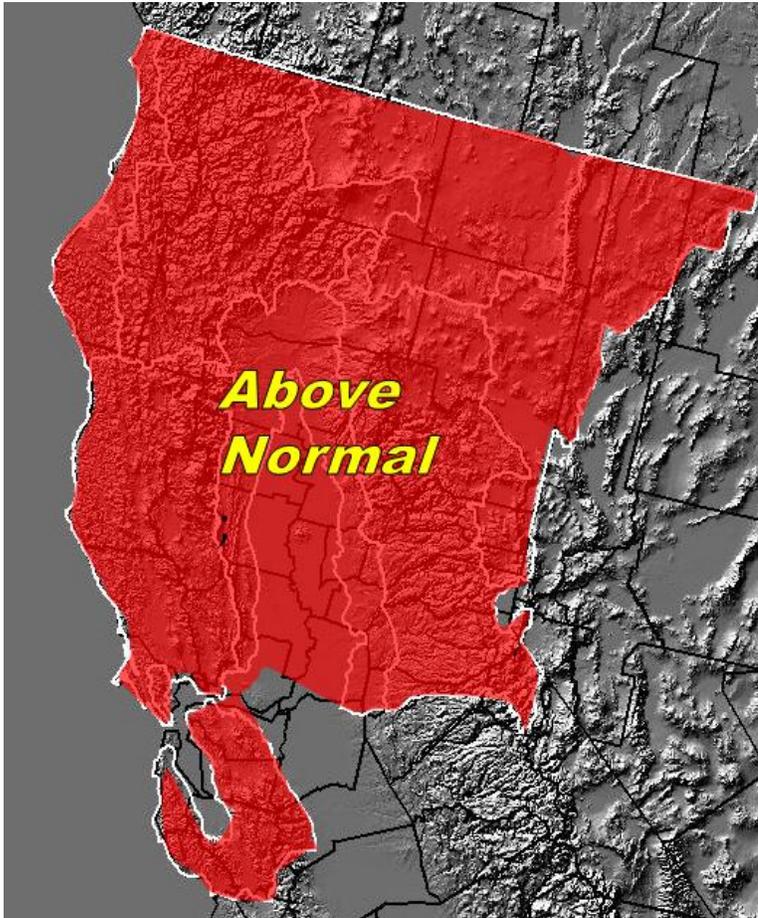


# MONTHLY OUTLOOK

For Northern California and Hawaii

Issued: October 1st, 2012

Valid for: October 2012



## Summary

- *Near record dry fuels continue across most areas...with significant drying spreading to coastal areas.*
- **Above Normal Temperatures & Below Normal Precipitation** expected for October.
- *Near Record Warmth early October and Significant Northeast/Offshore winds possible 2<sup>nd</sup> week of October.*
- *No widespread wetting rain event expected thru at least late October.*
- **Above Normal Large Fire Potential** expanded across the entire area.

## Weather Discussion

### REVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 2012 WEATHER:

The Four Corners High Pressure System again shifted westwards towards CA and dominated our weather with very warm, dry conditions, except for the immediate coast. Temperatures were generally 2-6 degrees warmer than normal except near normal to 4 degrees cooler than normal along the immediate coast (**Fig 1**). Most of this cool weather along the coast was due to an unusually deep late season marine layer, helped largely by the warm inland temperatures creating a persistent onshore flow. Other than some small scale lightning activity from the 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> there was little to no lightning activity across Northern California for the remainder of the month and no significant wetting rain events, with below normal precipitation for the entire region (**Fig 2**). Most areas have not seen significant wetting rains for several months.

## Fuel/Fire Potential Discussion

Long term drought conditions continue across Nrn CA (**Fig A**) with the greatest anomaly across NE CA. No relief to the drought conditions are expected for most of October across Northeast California, and the drought may actually worsen and spread westward by later in October. In October, ERC's typically fall below the values typically associated with historic large fires. However, with most fuels currently ranging from the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile to record levels (**Fig B**), and near record warmth expected for early October, it is likely that the potential for large fire will remain significant until a wetting rain event. Historically, lightning in October is not a significant factor in large fire ignitions, with wind typically being the main weather driver of large fire growth. Also with offshore winds expected the first part of the month, significant drying of coastal fuels is likely, and could reach critical dryness levels needed to sustain large fires...which is typical for this time of year.

## Weather Discussion (continued)

Ave. Temperature dep from Ave (deg F)  
9/1/2012 – 9/28/2012

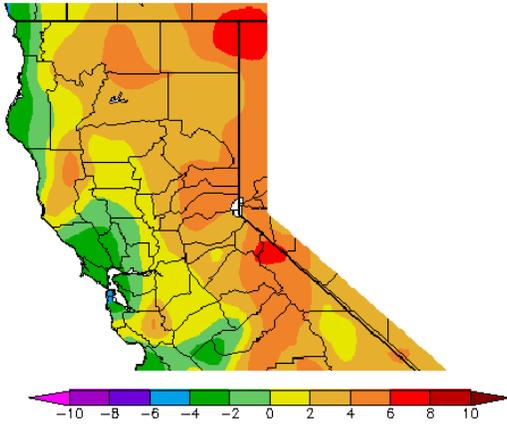


Fig 1: September Temp Departure from Normal (Deg F°)

Percent of Average Precipitation (%)  
9/1/2012 – 9/28/2012

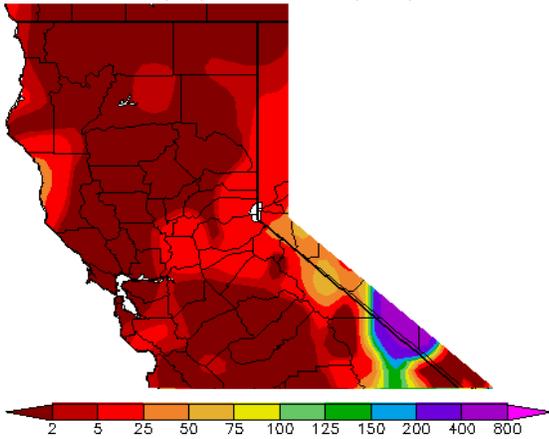


Fig 2: September Precipitation Percent of Average (%)

### FORECAST DISCUSSION FOR OCTOBER 2012:

October will begin with *record warmth* as an unseasonably strong high pressure system builds over the region. Daytime temperatures are expected to be 8-15 degrees above normal much of the 1<sup>st</sup> week. With light offshore flow, even coastal areas will see critically dry conditions. Computer models hint at a weak offshore low pressure system approaching the Northern CA coast by October 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. If this does occur, the region could see an unusual late season lightning event between Oct 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>. By the 2<sup>nd</sup> week, temperatures are expected to moderate back to near normal levels, but long range models indicate the potential of a *significant dry northeast/Offshore wind* event that could last for several days from between the 10<sup>th</sup> thru the 15<sup>th</sup>. No large scale wetting rain event is expected through at least the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October. For this reason we have expanded the area of *Above Normal Fire Potential* for just about the entire Nrn CA region. This above normal fire potential also extends to neighboring regions to our north, south and east.

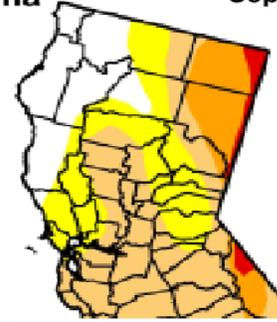
## Fuel/Fire Potential (continued)

### U.S. Drought Monitor

California

September 25, 2012

Valid 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:

- D0 - Abnormally Dry
- D1 - Drought Moderate
- D2 - Drought Severe
- D3 - Drought Extreme
- D4 - Drought Exceptional

Figure A: Drought Monitor Index

### SIG - Mid Coast 1994 - 2011

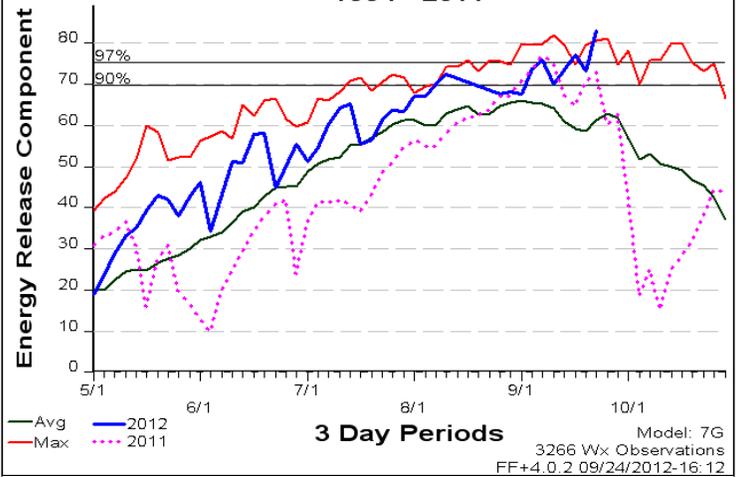


Figure B: ERC MidCoast/Mendocino (2012, Record, Average)

## Prescribed Fires/Misc Fuel&Fire Data

### PRESCRIBED FIRE IMPLICATIONS:

Fuels in most areas will be too dry to fit most prescriptions, until a significant wetting rain event occurs. Typically the higher elevations east of the Sierra/Cascades (above 5000 ft) will be the first to be ready for burn projects with longer cold, moist nights and lack of Foehn wind type drying at night. Otherwise burning activity will likely be minimal, and involving light fuels at low elevations, or other small, short duration projects conducted by local government.

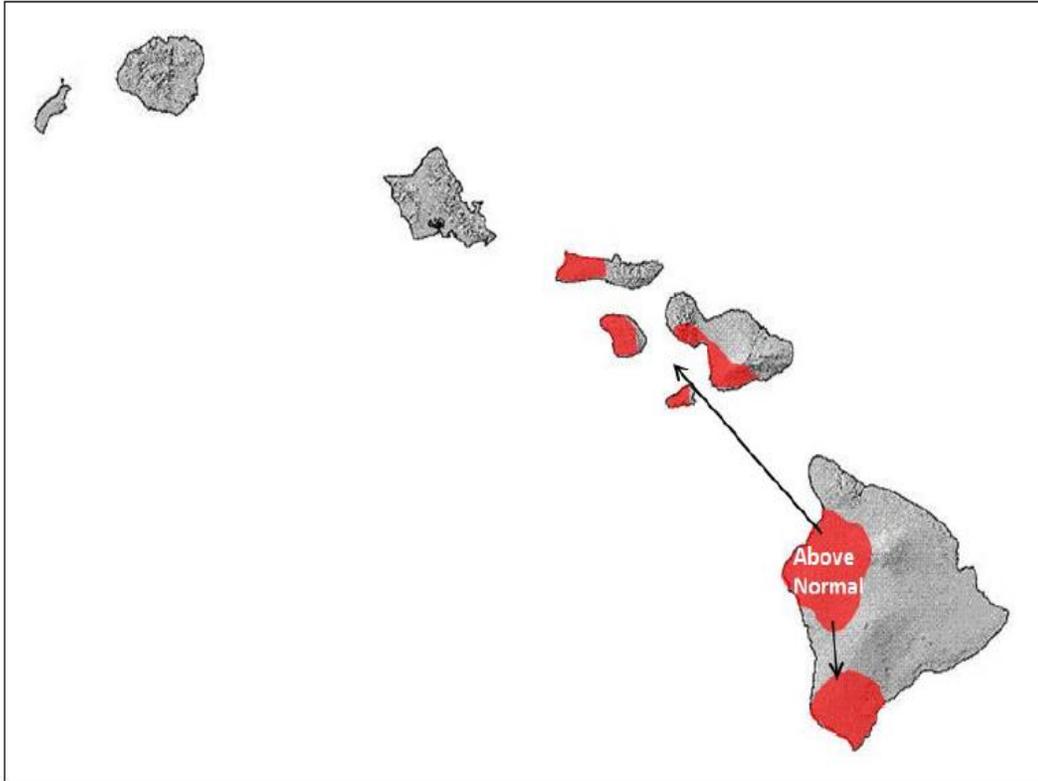
### FUELS:

Live Woody Fuel Moisture: 61% to 106%  
100-Hour Dead Fuel Moisture: 6% to 14%  
1000-Hour Dead Fuel Moisture: 5% to 14%

### Fire Occurrence /Acres Burned YTD:

Fires 3240  
Acres 654,734

# Hawaii Monthly Outlook October 2012



## October Discussion:

Late season drying is expected to continue the drought conditions across the lower islands, where **Above Normal Fire Potential** is expected to continue



*This Product was developed by the Predictive Services group, located at the North Zone Coordination Center in Redding, California*

Phone:  
530-226-2730

Fax:  
530-226-2742