

Office of State Fire Marshal

Fire season outlook briefing



June 2006 . State Fire Marshal Nancy Orr . 4760 Portland Road NE . Salem Oregon 97305-1760

SEASONAL OUTLOOK

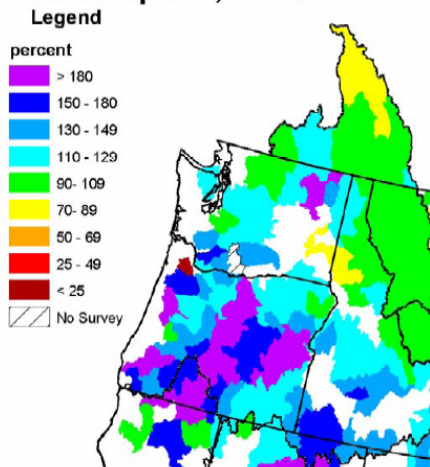
The Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal responds to wildfires **only** when the threat involves **life and structures**. The Office of State Fire Marshal maintains a strong and ever-growing partnership with the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and other natural resource agencies.

The nature of the role of the State Fire Marshal does not provide an ongoing need for monitoring seasonal fire severity conditions and relies on these partnerships. ODF will appear before the Legislative Emergency Board June 22 to request acceptance of the 2006 fire season severity plan. At that point, Oregon will have a more definitive view of the upcoming season.

Oregon's current outlook is:

- An average fire season.
- Major fires at higher elevations unlikely till late in the season due to heavy snow pack.
- Delayed start of fire activity by about three weeks due to above-average rainfall this winter and spring.

Mountain Snowpack as of April 1, 2006



Source: Seasonal Outlook Executive Outlook
NW Interagency Coordination Center

READINESS &

STATE FIRE MARSHAL COORDINATION

The *Mobilization Plan* provides the structure, operating guidelines and direction for deployment of Oregon fire service resources.

Emergency Response Center (ERC)

The State Fire Marshal manages resources used in the *Oregon Fire Service Mobilization Plan*. Fire Marshal staff coordinates incidents at the State Fire Marshal ERC in the Anderson Readiness Center by monitoring the incident and filling resource requests from Incident Management Teams (IMT) on the incident scene.

Incident Management Teams (IMTs)

IMTs use the National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS). Individuals trained in all hazard response from the State Fire Marshal staff and fire departments across the state are unified as IMTs to manage mobilized resources. They ensure safe, effective and efficient use of structural fire equipment and resources.

IMTs train in tandem with the fire service and potential incident partners. For wildfire readiness IMTs train with the Oregon Department of Forestry and for other incidents train with Oregon Emergency Management, Oregon Department of Forestry and other emergency management agencies.

During an incident these multiple partners create a unified command to coordinate involvement of multiple jurisdictions and agencies providing joint decisions on objectives, strategies, plans, priorities and public communications.

COMMUNICATIONS

The State FIRE NET was developed to provide a common communications channel for fire service use during multiple-agency responder incidents, such as a conflagration. The FIRE NET utilizes 23 mountain-top microwave base stations and a master console to form a radio and telephone access communication network.

Authorization from the State Fire Marshal is necessary prior to using the state FIRE NET.

FIRE NET provides

- two-way communication statewide on a mutual radio frequency,
- a system of mountain-top radio communication directly to Salem, and
- the ability for an incident commander to talk to the State Fire Marshal Emergency Response Center, located in the Anderson Readiness Center, for requests of additional resources and current incident updates.

Fire department communications readiness

Most fire departments have programmed FIRE NET in their communication equipment and are interoperable on that channel. This enhances local structural fire service communications should they have an event mobilizing state resources to their community and enables them to deploy, ready to communicate, to assist other communities.

FIRE NET is used during mobilization and anytime state fire marshal resources are deployed. It provides constant communications from jurisdictions to Salem to keep updated on an incident.

Upgrades to FIRE NET

Current enhancement to FIRE NET includes a mobile communications vehicle providing:

- 100 handheld radios to issue on scene to emergency responders,
- a station to repair and program radios during an incident,
- communication through interoperability technology, dubbed the black box, increasing the ability to talk to other frequencies, and
- a satellite to
 - broadcast wireless, or wifi, communications, and
 - voice-over internet to communicate via telephone.

Future communication upgrades

Future FIRE NET upgrades will

- Allow for repair and replacement of parts. The current system is outdated making repairs costly and difficult since many parts are unavailable.
- Allow radio communications to meet the Federal Communications Commission, or FCC, mandate for narrow band frequencies required to be fully operable by the year 2013.
- Increase communication ability with collaborative agencies. Federal resources other state agencies and local fire service jurisdictions already use narrow band.
- Increase capacity to add channels.

All OSFM vehicles will have narrow band capabilities.

More information on is available at http://www.oregon.gov/OOHS/SFM/Emergency_mobilization.shtml