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Service Change Notice 24-112
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
1040 AM EST Mon Dec 23 2024

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From: Stephen W. Bieda III, Ph.D., Chief
Severe, Fire, Public, and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject: Changes to Fire Weather Forecast Zones for WFO Boise, ID: Effective March 18, 2025

Effective Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 3:00 PM Mountain Daylight Time (MDT), 2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office in Boise, ID (WFO BOI) will change Fire Weather Forecast Zones encompassing Southeast Oregon. After this change, all forecasts and related products will use the zone numbers and names shown in Table 2 below.

If March 18, 2025 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to March 19, 2025 at 2100 UTC.

The fire management agencies operating under the Southeast Oregon Fire Danger Operating Plan and Blue Mountain Fire Danger Operating Plan requested WFO Boise to realign fire weather zones across Southeast Oregon with interagency Fire Danger Rating Areas (FDRA). FDRAs are based on the components of fire danger, which include vegetation, climate, and topography. They also may incorporate local boundaries. Because FDRAs incorporate climate and topography, aligning fire weather zones with these boundaries will allow fire weather forecasts and products to better target local weather variations across Southeast Oregon.

Aligning fire weather zones with FDRAs will reduce unnecessary complexity and assist fire personnel in integrating fire weather with fire danger. This will improve strategic and tactical decision making, enhance situational awareness, and improve safety for the fire community and the public.

The Burns BLM fire weather zone will be split into portions of four different zones, following FDRA boundaries and current borders with WFOs Medford and Pendleton. The new zones will be Burns BLM, Steens Mountain, Southern Grasslands, and Northwestern Vale BLM.

The Vale BLM fire weather zone will be split into portions of three different zones, following FDRA boundaries and current borders with WFO Pendleton, with an additional split within a geographically large FDRA to

account for differing wind climatology. The new zones will be Southern Grasslands, Central Canyonlands, and Northwestern Vale BLM.

The Baker Valley fire weather zone will be split into portions of three different zones, following FDRA boundaries and current borders with WFO Pendleton. The new zones will be Central Canyonlands, Northwestern Vale BLM, and Baker Valley.

Table 1. Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs): Current Fire Weather Forecast Zone Name

ORZ636: Burns BLM
ORZ637: Vale BLM
ORZ646: Baker Valley

Table 2. UGCs: New Fire Weather Forecast Zone Name

ORZ670: Burns BLM
ORZ671: Steens Mountain
ORZ672: Southern Grasslands
ORZ673: Central Canyonlands
ORZ674: Northwestern Vale BLM
ORZ675: Baker Valley

Table 3. NWS Products Affected by the WFO Boise, ID Fire Weather Forecast Zone Changes

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
Fire Weather Forecast	FNUS55 KBOI	FWFBOI
Fire Weather Message	WWUS85 KBOI	RFWBOI

NWS partners and users will need to make necessary changes to their communications systems to accommodate these fire weather forecast zone changes.

Preliminary shapefiles for fire weather forecast zones are available online at:

https://www.weather.gov/gis/FireZones

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on February 28th, 2025.

A graphical depiction of this change is online at:

https://www.weather.gov/media/boi/fire/NewFireZones_BOI.pdf

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

https://www.weather.gov/notification/

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