

Region 1 Fire Danger Outlook

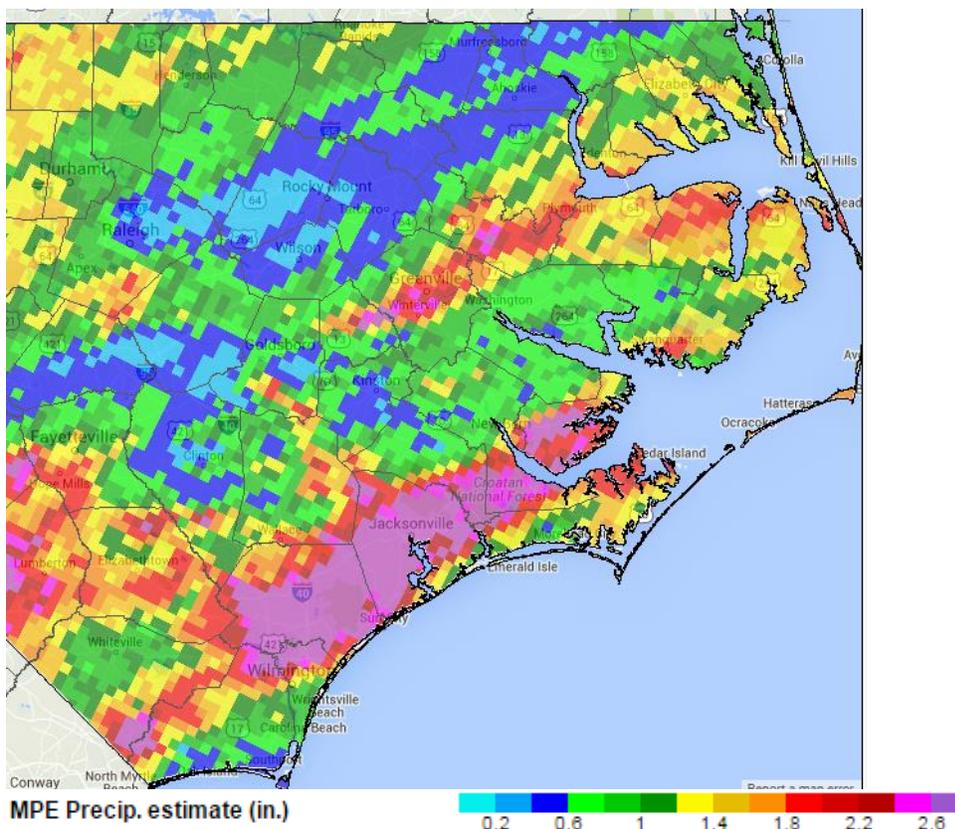
May 20th, 2016, 1500

Cabe Speary, Fire Environment Forester, 252-325-3089

Weather Outlook

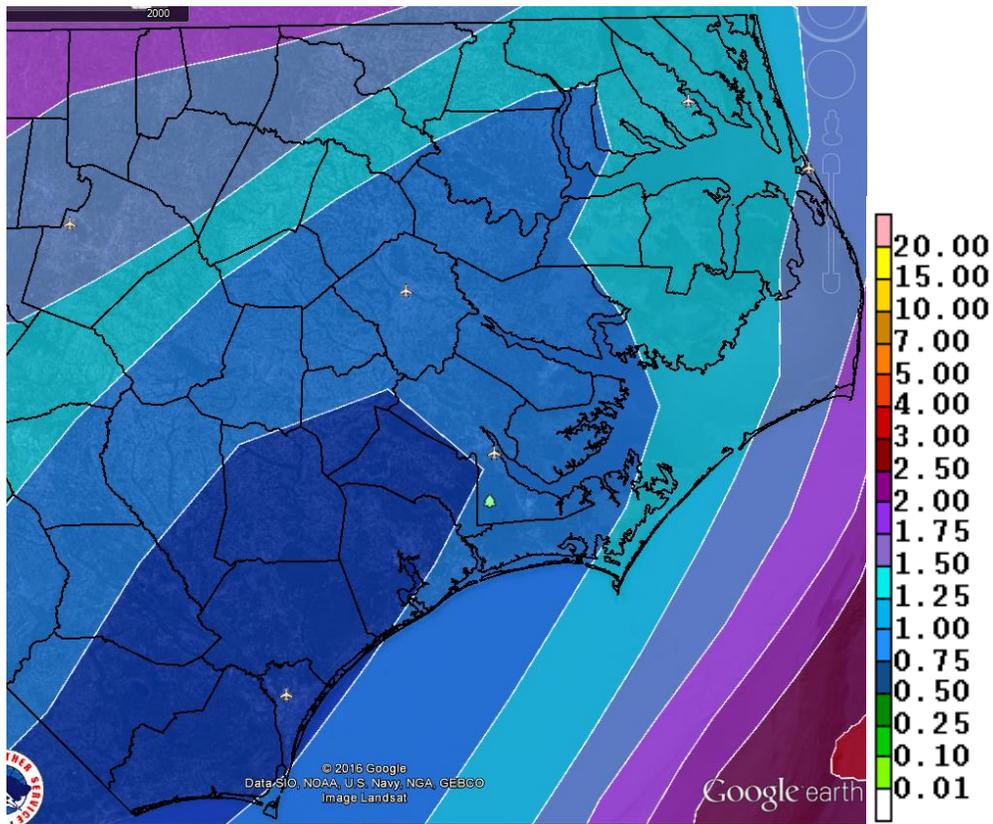
- Low pressure moving northeast across the NC coastal plain will push a warm front across the area overnight, bring very good chances of rain which could be heavy at times. The associated cold front will cross the area Saturday evening. The region will remain in a cool moist air mass between high pressure over the eastern US and low pressure off the east coast Sunday and Monday, with a chance of showers through Monday night. High pressure will influence the weather Tuesday through Thursday. From May 27-June 2 there is an **equal chance** of above or below normal precipitation for D-7, D-13 and most of D-4. For D-8 and southern D-4, there is a 30-40% chance that temperatures will be **above** normal.
- Low RH's are forecast to be in the 60-70s today and tomorrow, with 40-50% for the remainder of the period. Nighttime recovery should be good to excellent through the period.
- Winds will be 5-10 MPH with gusts to 17 today and tomorrow, then 5-10 for the remainder of the period. Transport winds will be S-SW at 15-25 MPH for Saturday and N-NE at 8-15 MPH on Sunday. Mixing heights are highly variable, from 1,000-6,000 feet for Saturday and Sunday.
- High temperatures will be in the low to mid 70s through Monday, warming to the 80s for Tuesday through Thursday. From May 27-June 2 there is a 30-40% chance that temperatures will be **above** normal.

Precipitation, May 13th, 0700 to May 20th, 0700



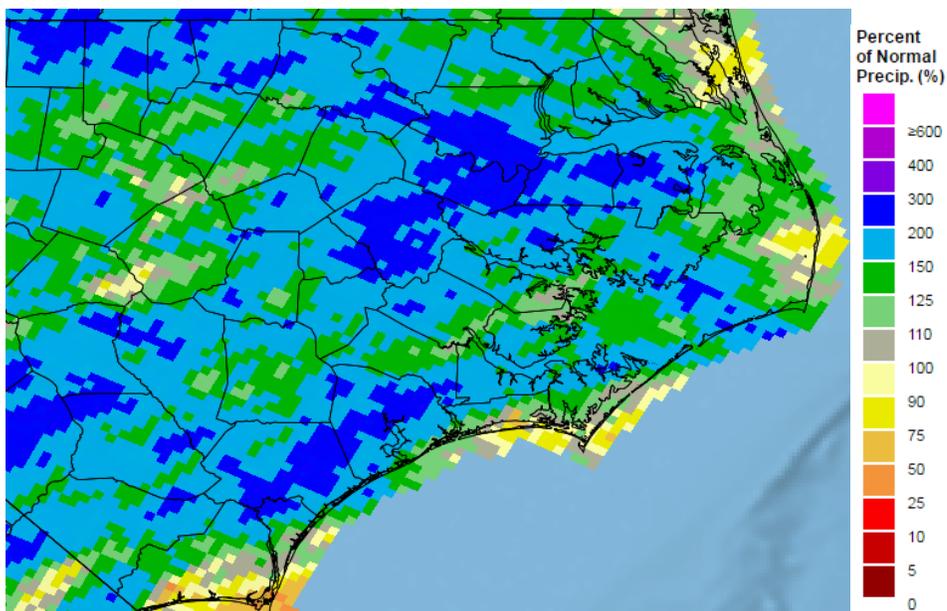
The entire region has had some rain over the past 7 days, with over 2" in a few areas.

Precipitation Forecast, 0800 ET 5/20 to 0800 ET 5/23



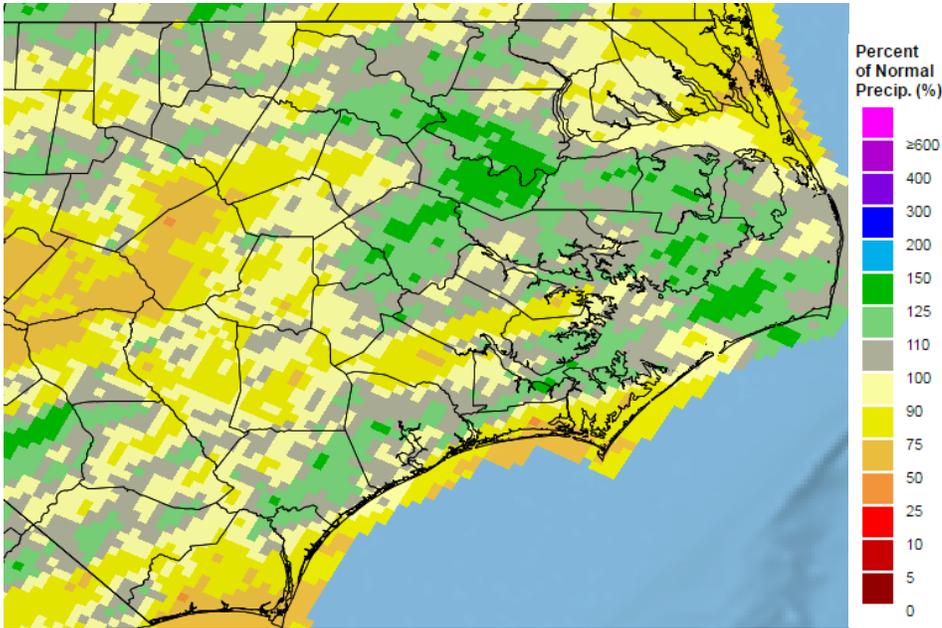
.5-1.5" expected over the next 3 days.

30 Day Precipitation Departure (shown as percent of normal)



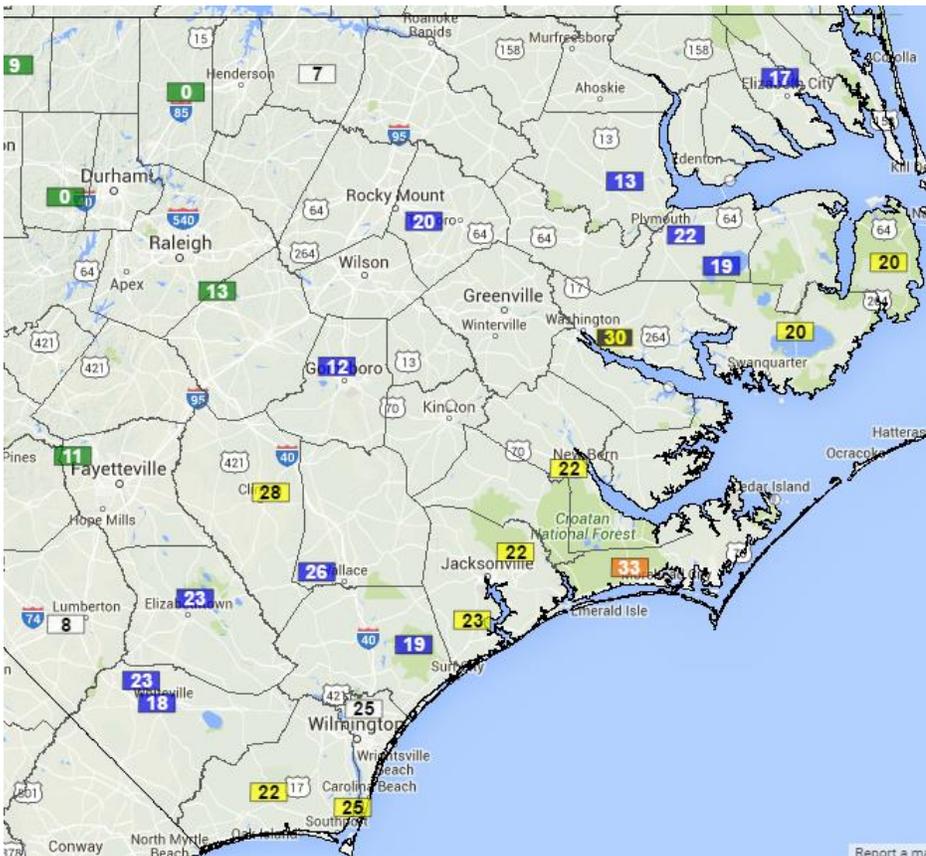
Only Pender, Currituck and Camden are showing up with significant areas below normal.

90 Day Precipitation Departure (shown as percent of normal)



A few more areas showing up as below normal, but very few in the 50-75% below normal class.

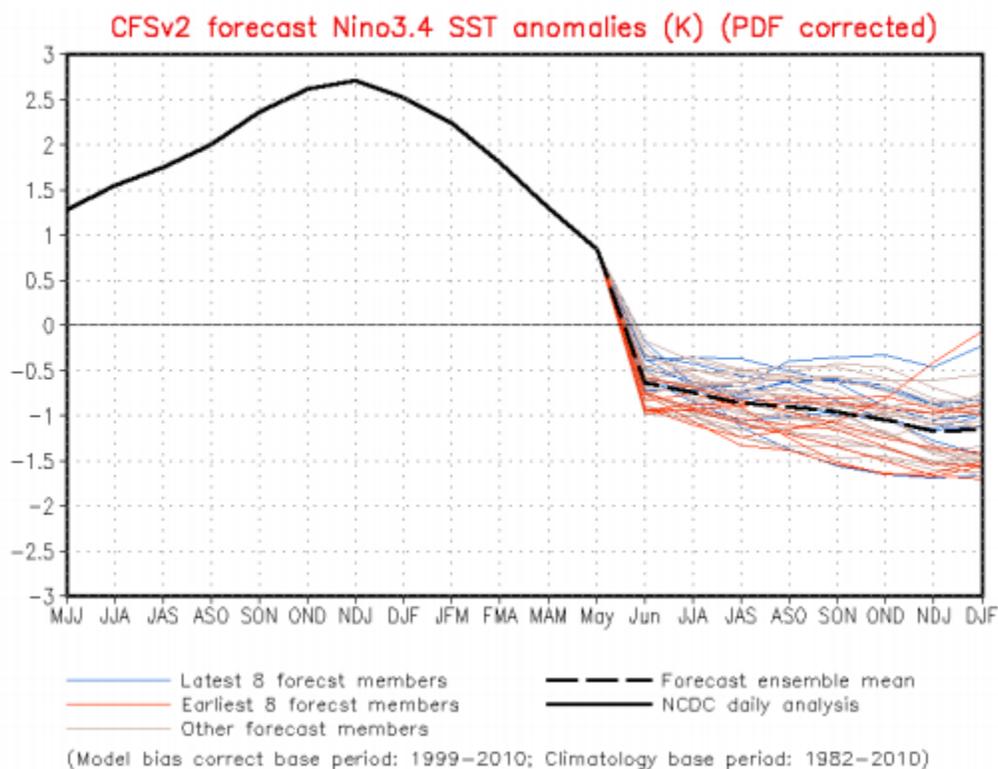
Forecast ERCs, 1300 EST, 5/20/16



Forecast ERCs at most stations are tracking at or below normal. A few stations closer to the coast are showing elevated levels, but not near historic highs.

Latest on the El Nino

The El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) has been in a strong El Nino phase for over a year. It is currently weakening and may switch to La Nina. Without going into too much detail, the oscillation is in the water temperatures of the equatorial Pacific Ocean. Why does that matter to folks in North Carolina? El Nino typically means cooler and wetter in the mid-Atlantic region and hotter and dryer in the western US. A strong La Nina will usually bring us warmer and dryer conditions, and conditions less conducive to significant fires in the western US. We had strong La Nina's in 2008 and 2011 when we had our last prolonged fire seasons. The latest forecast (May 16th) predicts La Niña is favored to develop quickly during Summer 2016, with about a 75% chance of La Niña during the fall and winter 2016-17. The graph shown below is an ensemble of models, with the black dashed line showing the median of the models. Anything -0.5 or lower is La Nina, with anything 0.5 or greater as El Nino. Go to http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/lanina/enso_evolution-status-fcsts-web.pdf for more information.



This will be the final assessment for the Spring 2016 Fire Season. If conditions warrant, assessments will be issued during the summer and/or fall.