

Region 2 Fire Danger Outlook

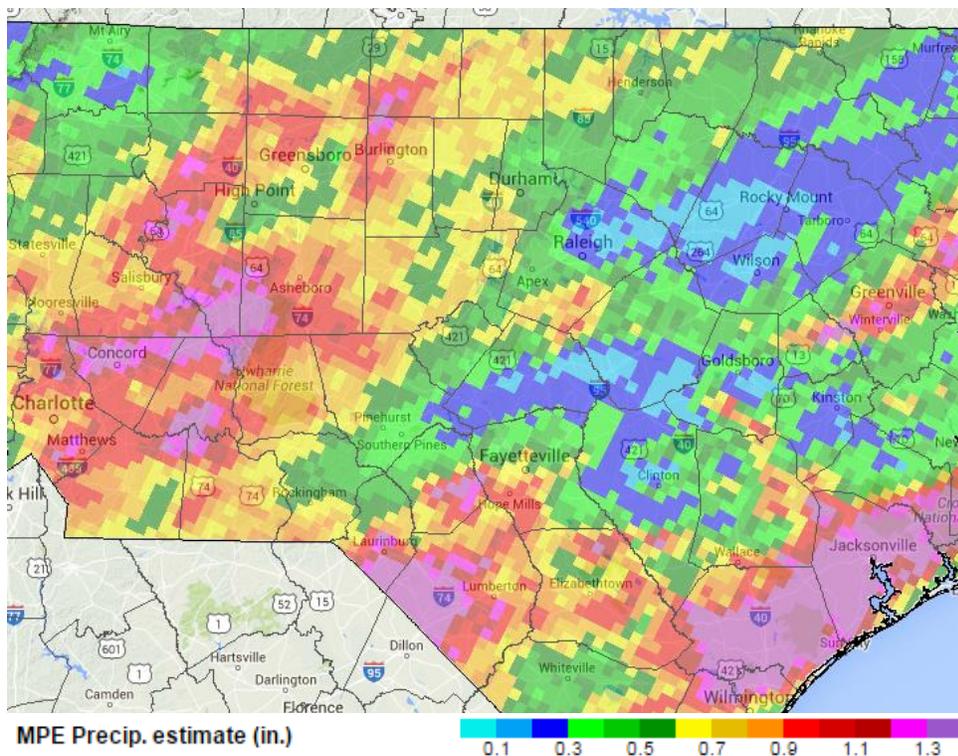
May 20th, 2016, 1400

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

Weather Outlook

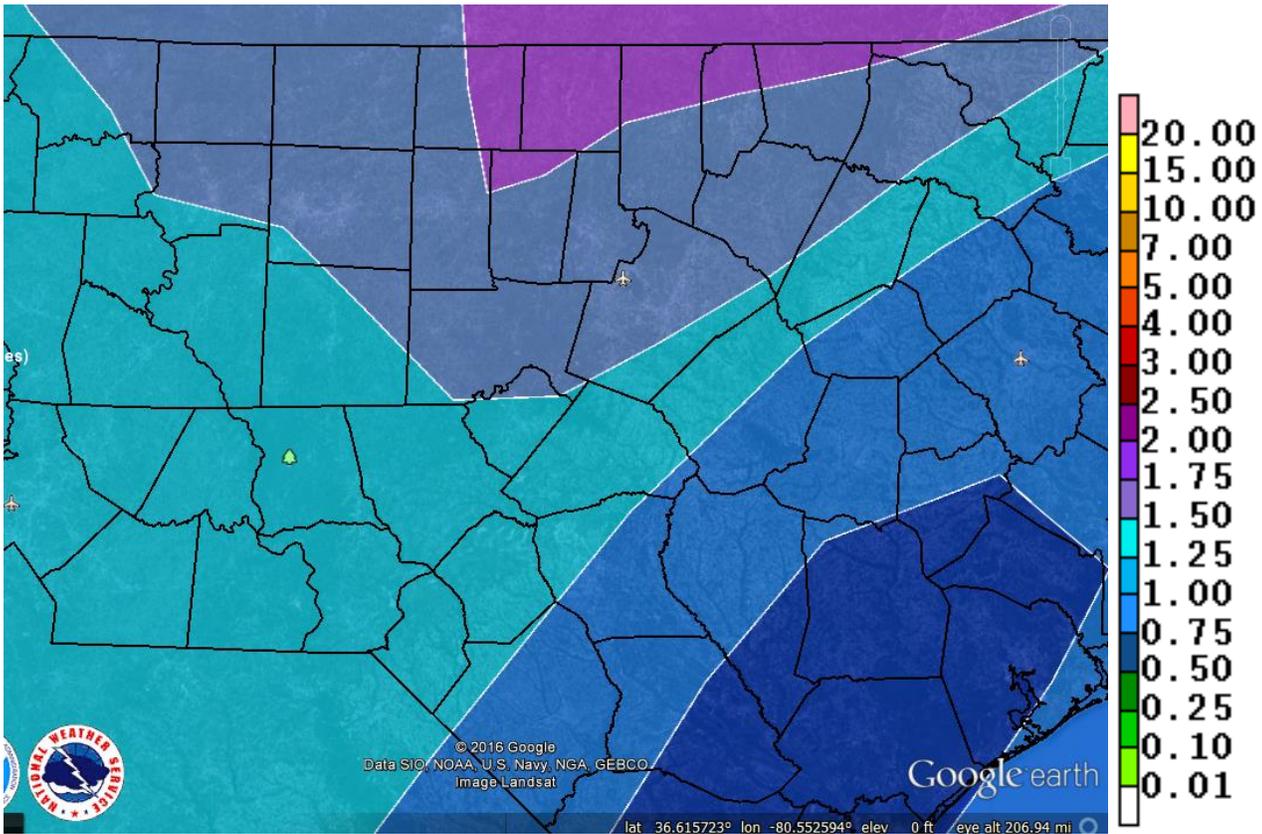
- A slow moving storm system and associated cold front will bring showers and thunderstorms to the area through Saturday. Conditions slowly dry out Sunday and Monday as the system moves away. High pressure will build in and dominate the weather Tuesday through Thursday of next week. Rain chances return to the western areas of the region Wednesday night. From May 27-June 2 there is a 30-40% chance that precipitation will be **above** normal, except in the D-5 area where there is an equal chance of above or below normal precipitation.
- Low RH's are forecast to be in the 60s 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 through the period. Transport winds will be E-SE at 15-25 MPH for Friday and W-SW at 15-25 MPH on Saturday. Mixing heights should be 2-3,500 feet both days.
- High temperatures will remain in the 60s and low 70s today through Sunday, gradually warming to the 80s for the remainder of the period. 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



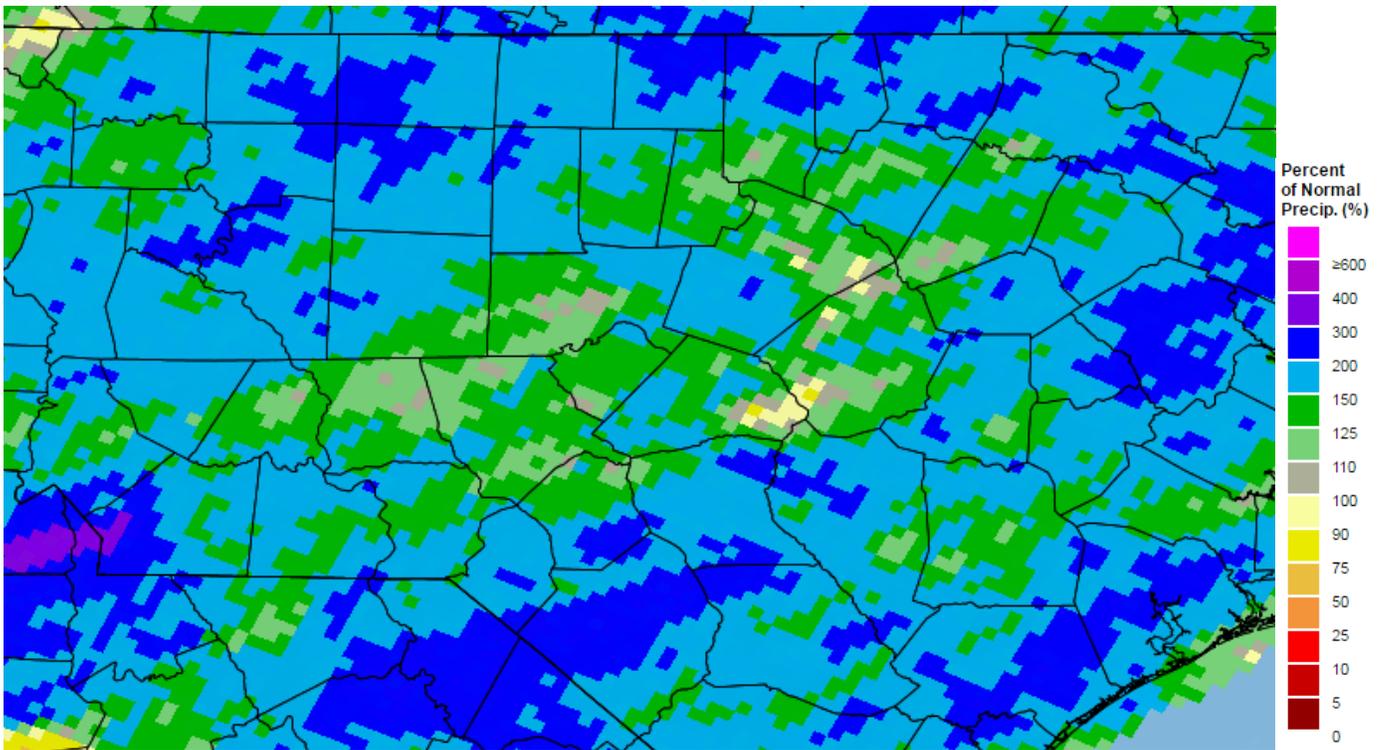
The entire region has had some rain over the past 7 days, with over 2" in a few areas.

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



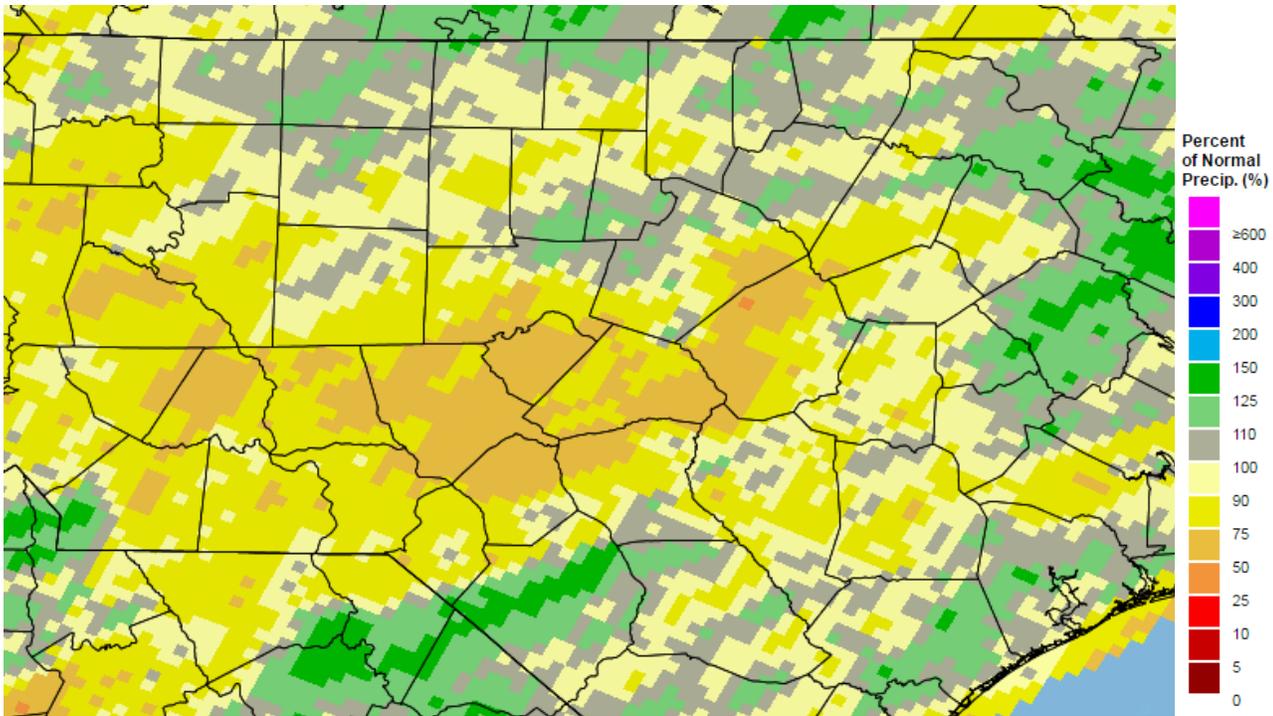
Between .5-1.75" expected over the next 3 days. After a couple of dry days, expect up to .1" on Wednesday.

30 Day Precipitation Departure (shown as percent of normal)



Only some very small areas are below normal.

90 Day Precipitation Departure (shown as percent of normal)

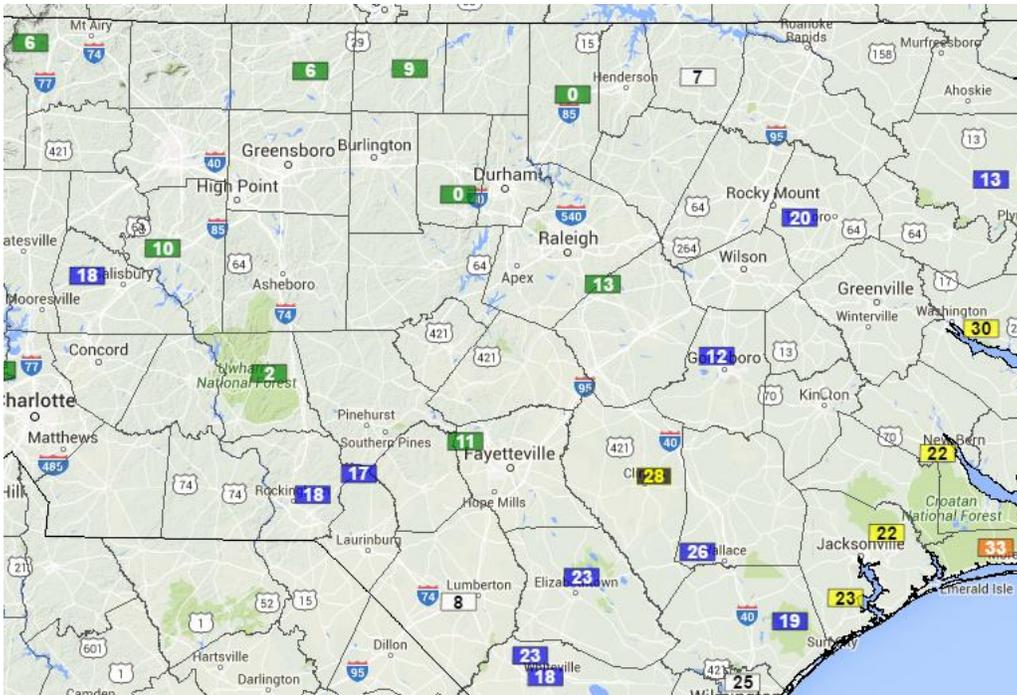


Some improvement since last week, but still a large area in the center of the region that is only 50-75% of normal in this longer term look.

Drought Monitor, for week starting May 17th

No areas included in this week's Drought Monitor

Forecast ERCs, 1300 EST, 5/20/16



Other than the station in Clinton, ERCs are in the low to moderate range

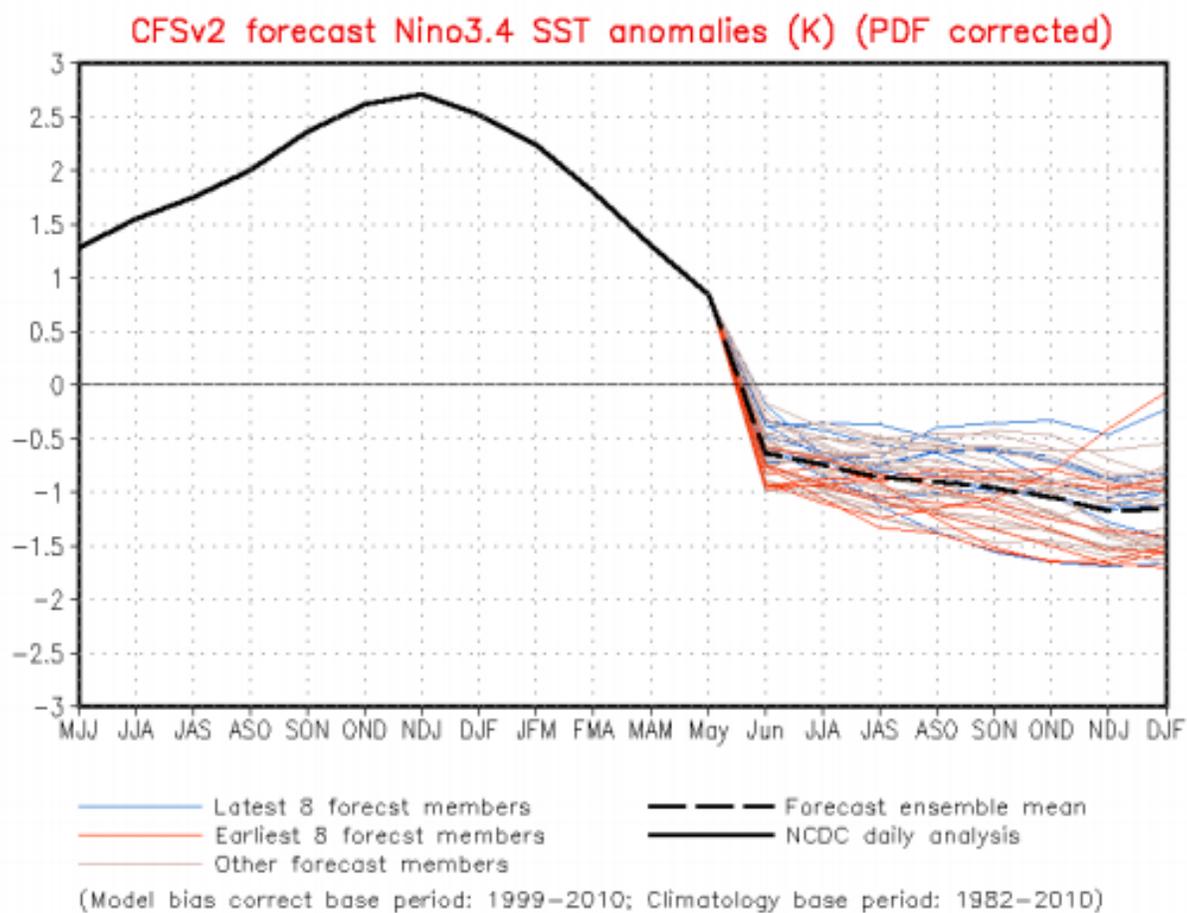
1000 HR Fuel Moistures, 1300 5/19/16



A few stations are still below the 20% threshold in the sandhills, but improvement is forecast over the next several days.

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.