

Region 3 Fire Danger Outlook

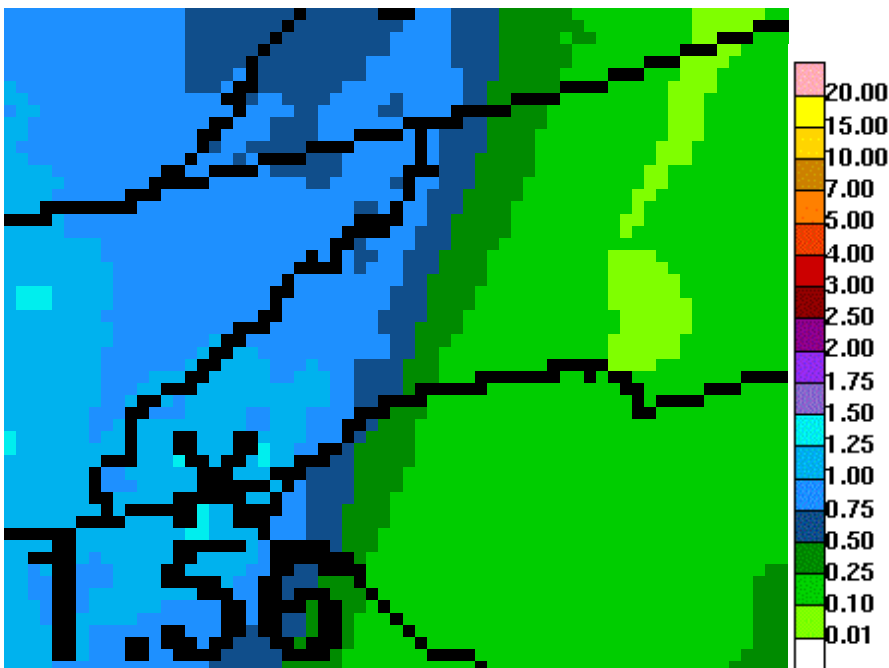
March 23rd, 2016, 1800

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

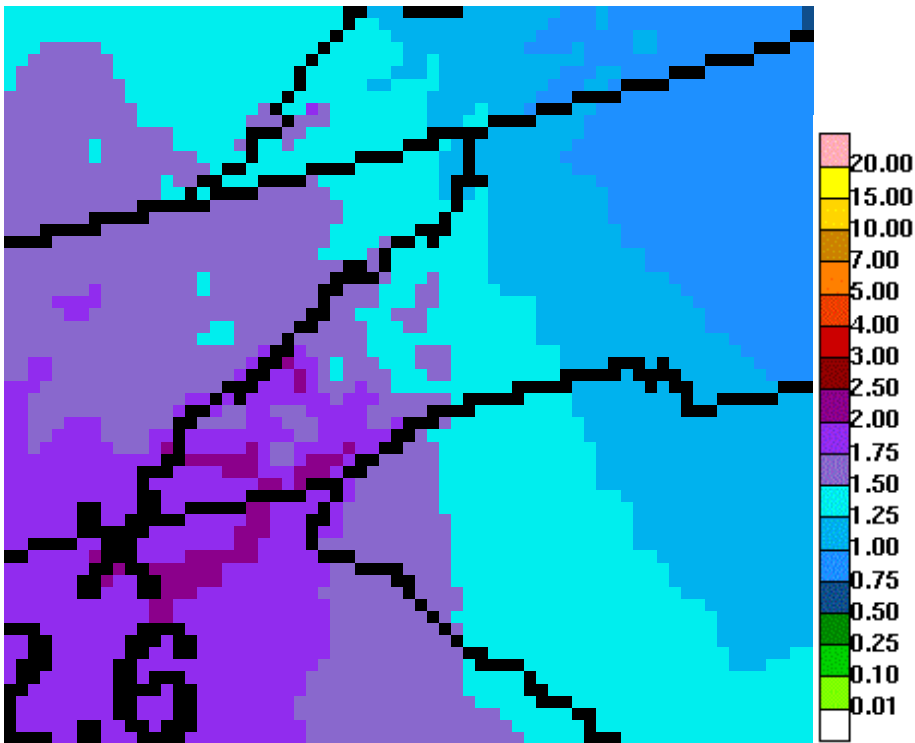
Weather Outlook

- The current high pressure dominating the weather will be replaced as a cold front approaches the area late tonight and early tomorrow morning. The front will bring a good chance for rain starting late Thursday and continuing through Friday morning, with around 1" expected in the Southern Highlands, 2.5-.5" expected in the Northern Highlands and much of the Blue Ridge, with as little as .1-.2" for the Western Piedmont. Precipitation will end from west to east on Friday, with a return to drier conditions and a southerly flow for Friday afternoon through early Sunday. Another moist cold front will approach Sunday with a chance for rain Sunday night and Monday. Tuesday and Wednesday look to be dry.
- Low RH's are forecasted to be in the 40-55% range on Thursday, decreasing back into the 30-40% range for Friday after the frontal passage. Most of the weekend looks like 50-60%, with a drop into the 40s on Tuesday and Wednesday.
- Winds Thursday will be 10-15 MPH with occasional gusts over 20. For the rest of the period, the winds will be in the 5-10 MPH range with gusts up to 20. Wind directions will vary considerably with the frontal passages. Transport winds Thursday will be strong, 30-40 MPH, with mixing heights of 5000-7000 feet.
- Temperatures will be above normal on Thursday and Friday, cooling some for the weekend, before returning to normal for the remainder of the period. Highs will range from the 50s-70s through the period.

3 Day Precipitation Outlook (cumulative), 3/23/16-3/26/16

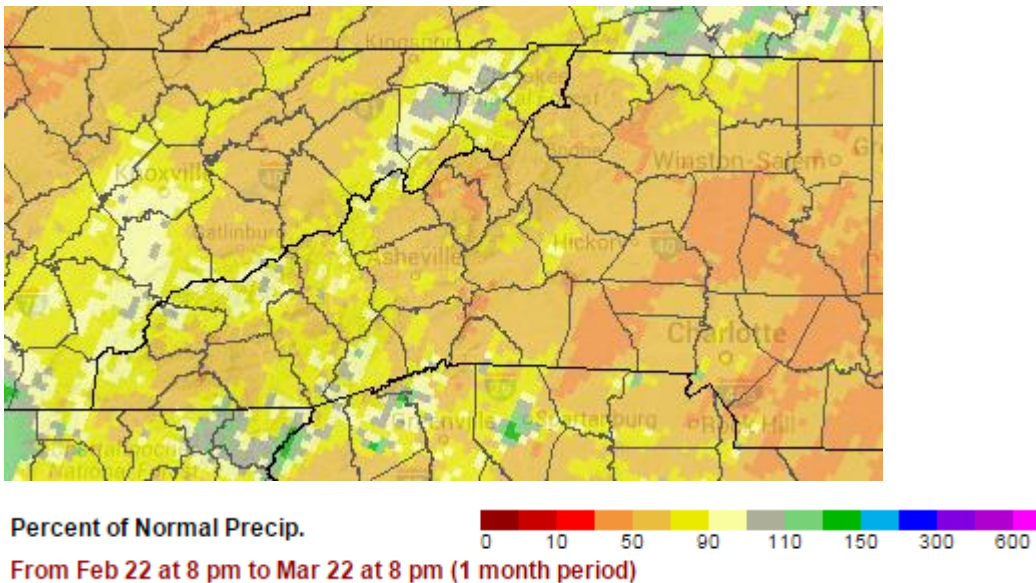


7 Day Precipitation Outlook (cumulative), 3/23/16-3/29/16



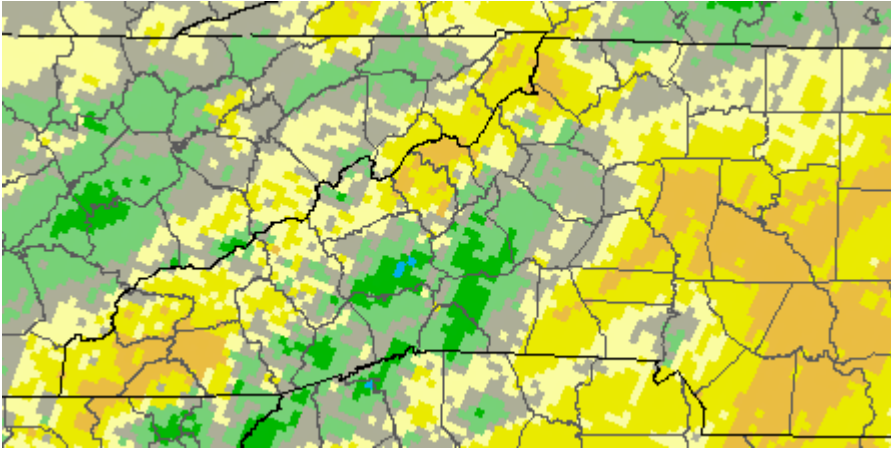
These maps are from the general forecast and are meant to show expected rainfall. The Fire Weather forecast is for worst case scenario, which usually means lower predictions than the general forecast.

30 Day Precipitation Departure (shown as percent of normal)

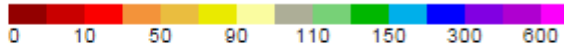


Most of the region is below normal rainfall for the past month, with the some areas in the western Piedmont only showing 25-50% of normal rainfall.

90 Day Precipitation Departure (shown as percent of normal)



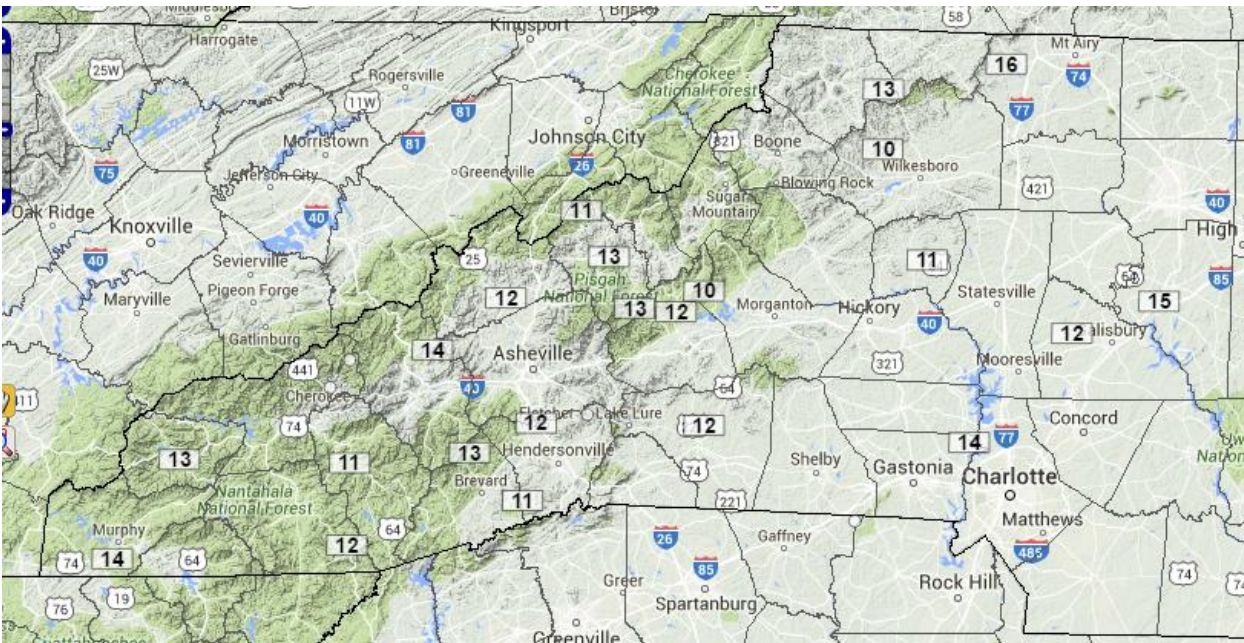
Percent of Normal Precip.



From Dec 22, 2015 at 8 pm to Mar 22 at 8 pm (3 month period)

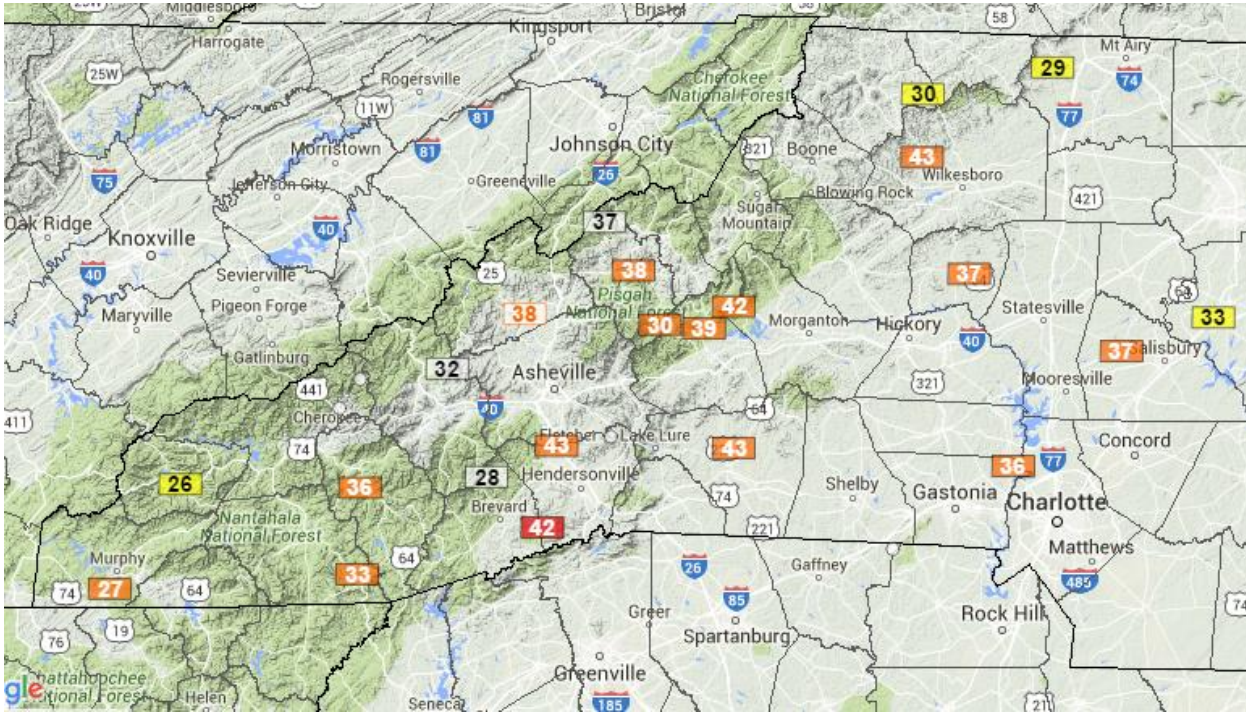
In the 3 month departure, the TN border counties as well as the western Piedmont are showing below normal rainfall. If the below normal pattern were to continue, it is possible some areas could be considered abnormally dry by the middle of next week. However, current KBDI levels are still below 300, which indicates the soil moisture is still high.

100 Hour Fuel Moistures, 1300 EST, 3/23/16



100 hr fuel moistures have dropped considerably within the past week, with all stations in the region reporting at less than 15%, with a few at historic low levels. At these level, these fuels could contribute to fire intensity.

Energy Release Component, 1300 EST, 3/23/16



ERCs are above normal, with some at or near the maximum historical ERC for the day. However, 7 day ERC predictions show a downward trend to below normal with the anticipated precipitation.

COMING SOON TO THE FIRE WEATHER INTELLIGENCE PORTAL

Gridded KBDI and humidity data. Also, historic fire danger indices data will be translated to the G fuel model for more meaningful comparisons with current conditions.

The next assessment will be released on 3/31/16