



April Outlook
Alaska Fire Season 2013

Sharon Alden and Heidi Strader

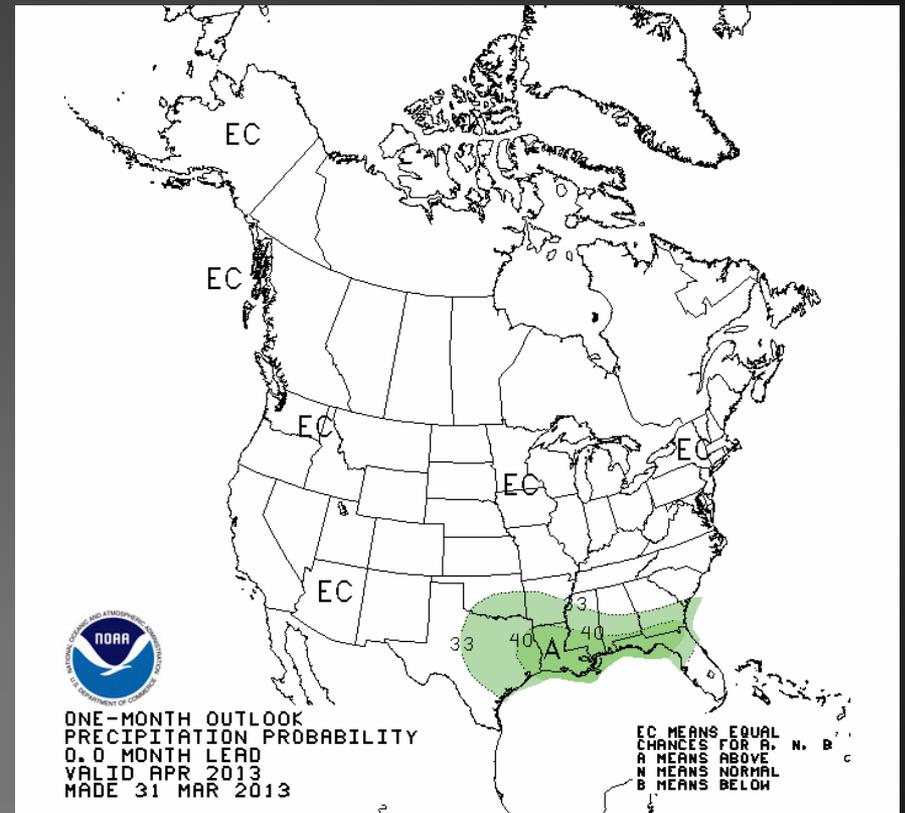
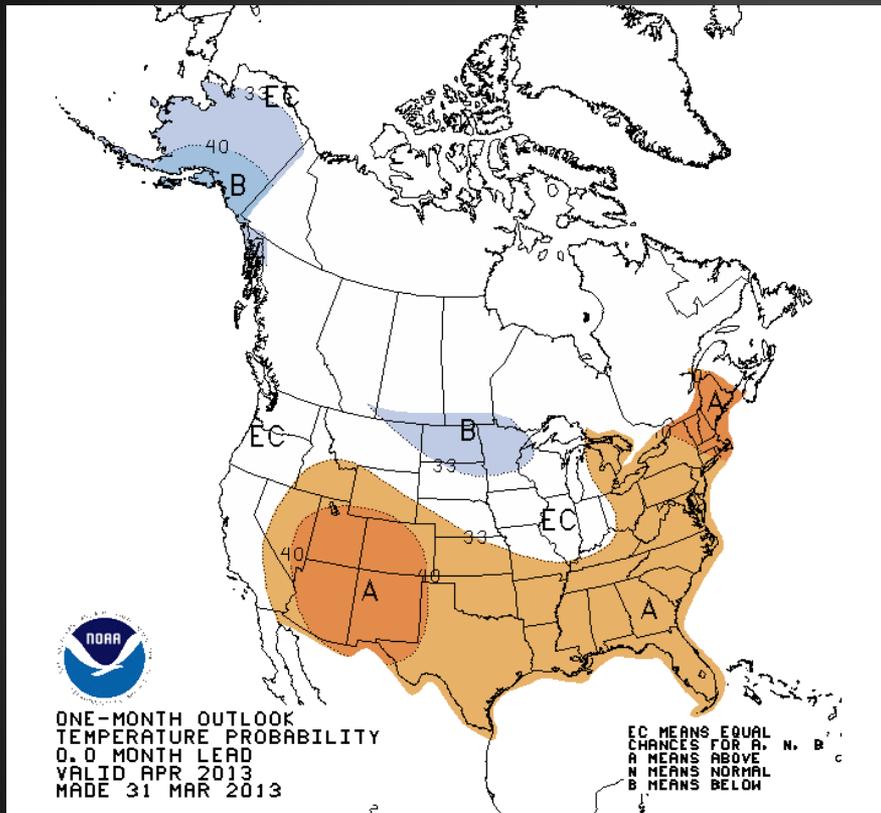
Alaska Monthly Fire Potential Outlook



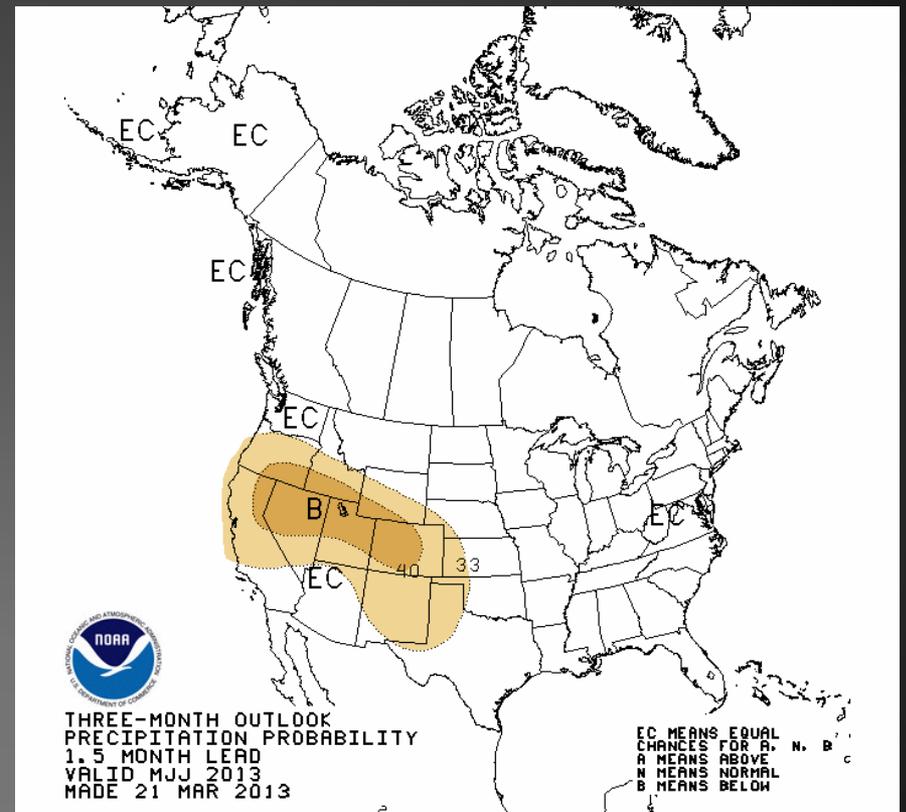
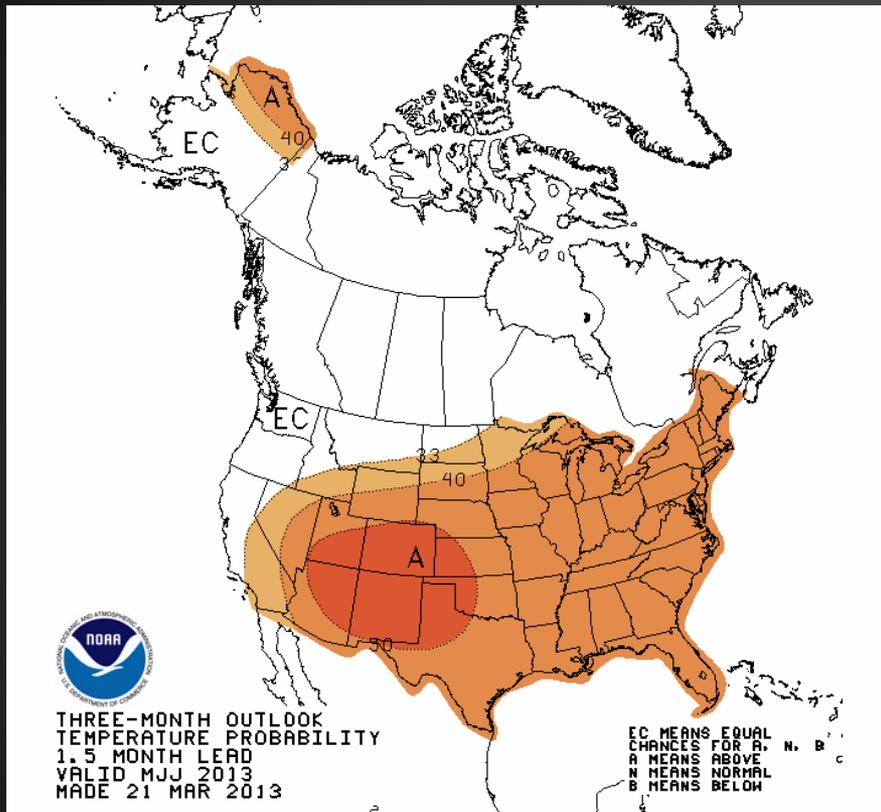
- **Factors:**

- Alaskan fuels are frozen and covered in snow. This will change mid April for the southern half of the state and during late April for the central Interior. The first week of April is forecast to have above normal temperatures in the southwest, however this will not likely result in snowmelt since the long range forecasts indicate a cooler April across most of southern Alaska. This may delay snow melt in southern Alaska. Warmer than normal temperatures will evolve on the north slope later this spring..
- So far this winter, precipitation and snowpack are a little below normal from the north central interior westward to the northwest coast, but closer to normal and locally above normal for the remainder of the state.

April Outlook



May-June-July Outlook

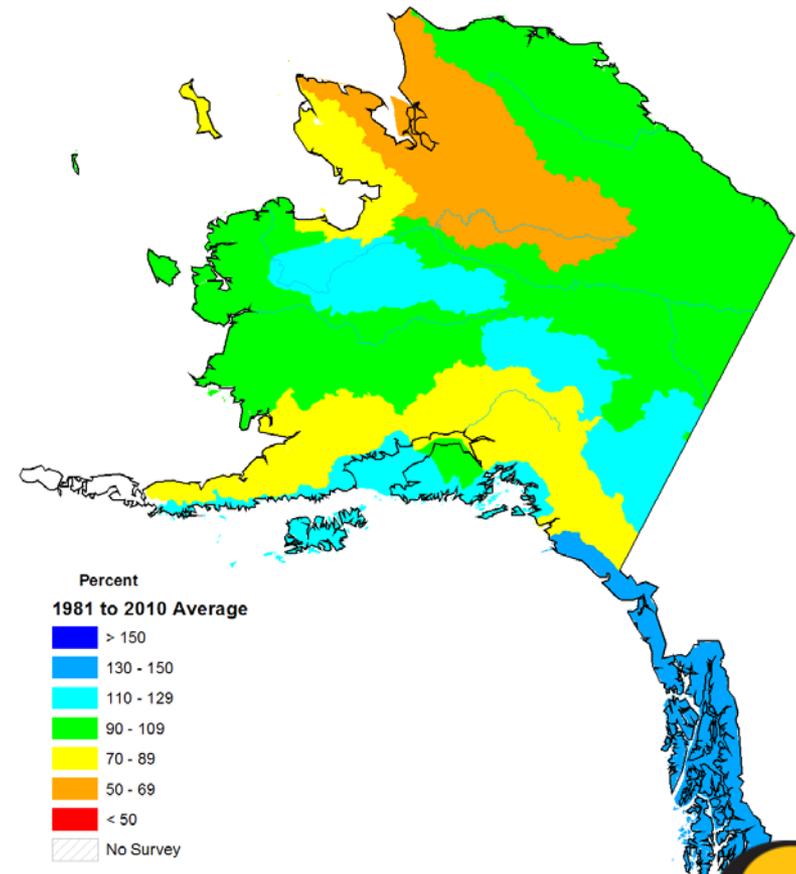


Snowpack

- A little above to a little below normal across southern Alaska.
- 150+% snowpack along the Panhandle.
- Anchorage received significant snowfall the last week in March.
- Driest in north-central Interior west to Kotzebue Sound.

Alaska Snowpack as of March 1, 2013

Manual snow course data are no longer available in some regions due to program decisions to meet reduced budgets. As a result, this map may have additional unrepresented areas and some regions may not be directly comparable to previous years.



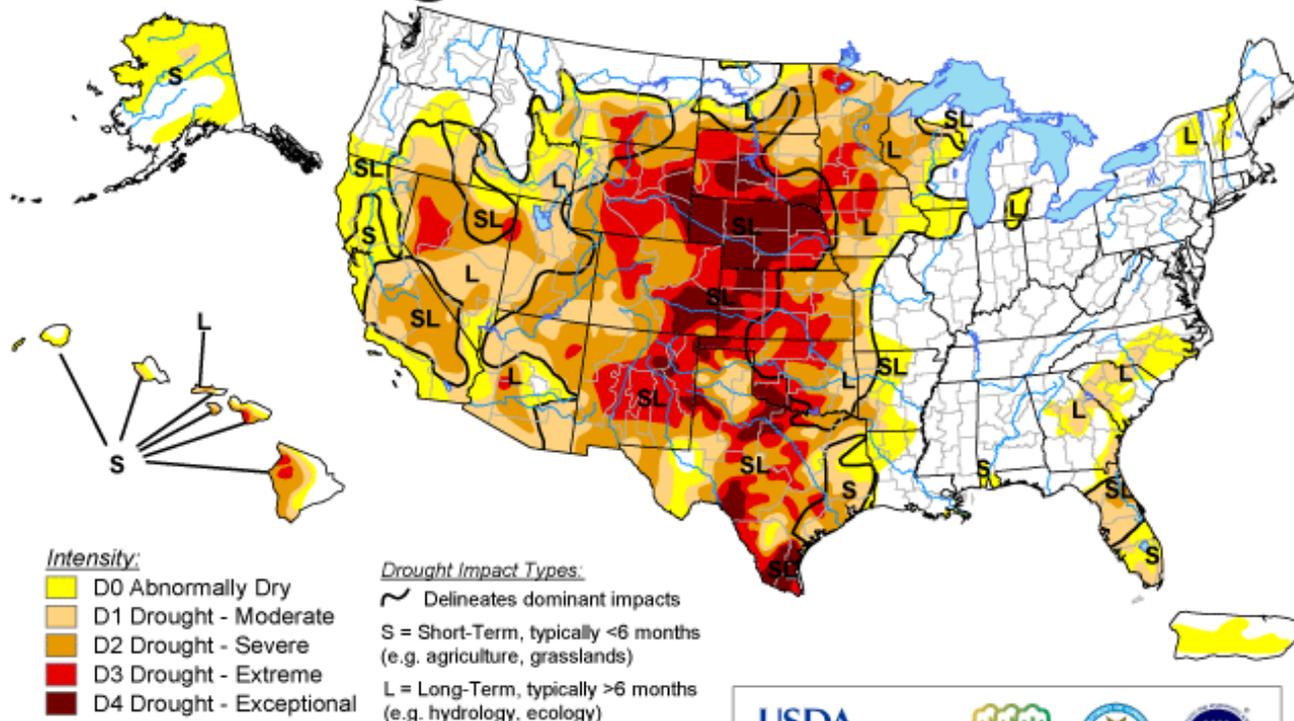
Prepared by
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
National Water and Climate Center
Portland, Oregon
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>

Drought Conditions

U.S. Drought Monitor

March 26, 2013

Valid 7 a.m. EDT



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>



Released Thursday, March 28, 2013
Author: Anthony Artusa, NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC

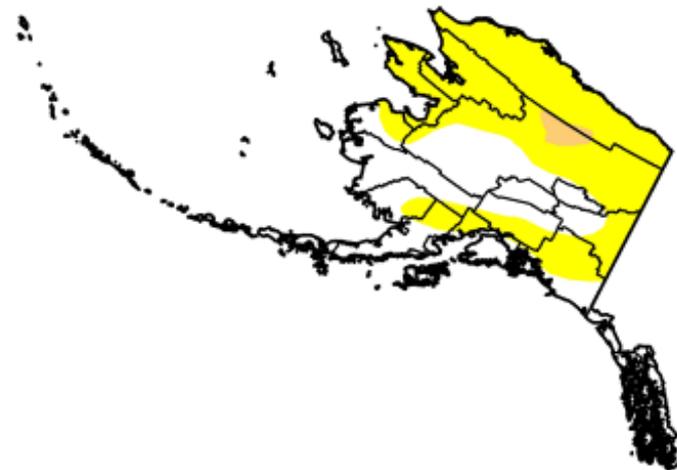
Drought Conditions

U.S. Drought Monitor Alaska

April 2, 2013
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	46.01	53.99	1.80	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week (03/26/2013 map)	46.01	53.99	1.80	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago (01/01/2013 map)	35.24	64.76	1.80	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	35.24	64.76	1.80	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/25/2012 map)	70.72	29.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago (03/27/2012 map)	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00



Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, April 4, 2013
National Drought Mitigation Center,



ENSO

- ENSO is slightly on the cool side
- Most forecast models are indicating ENSO neutral (-0.5 to +0.5) to the end of the year
- These conditions have resulted in both big and small number of acres burned

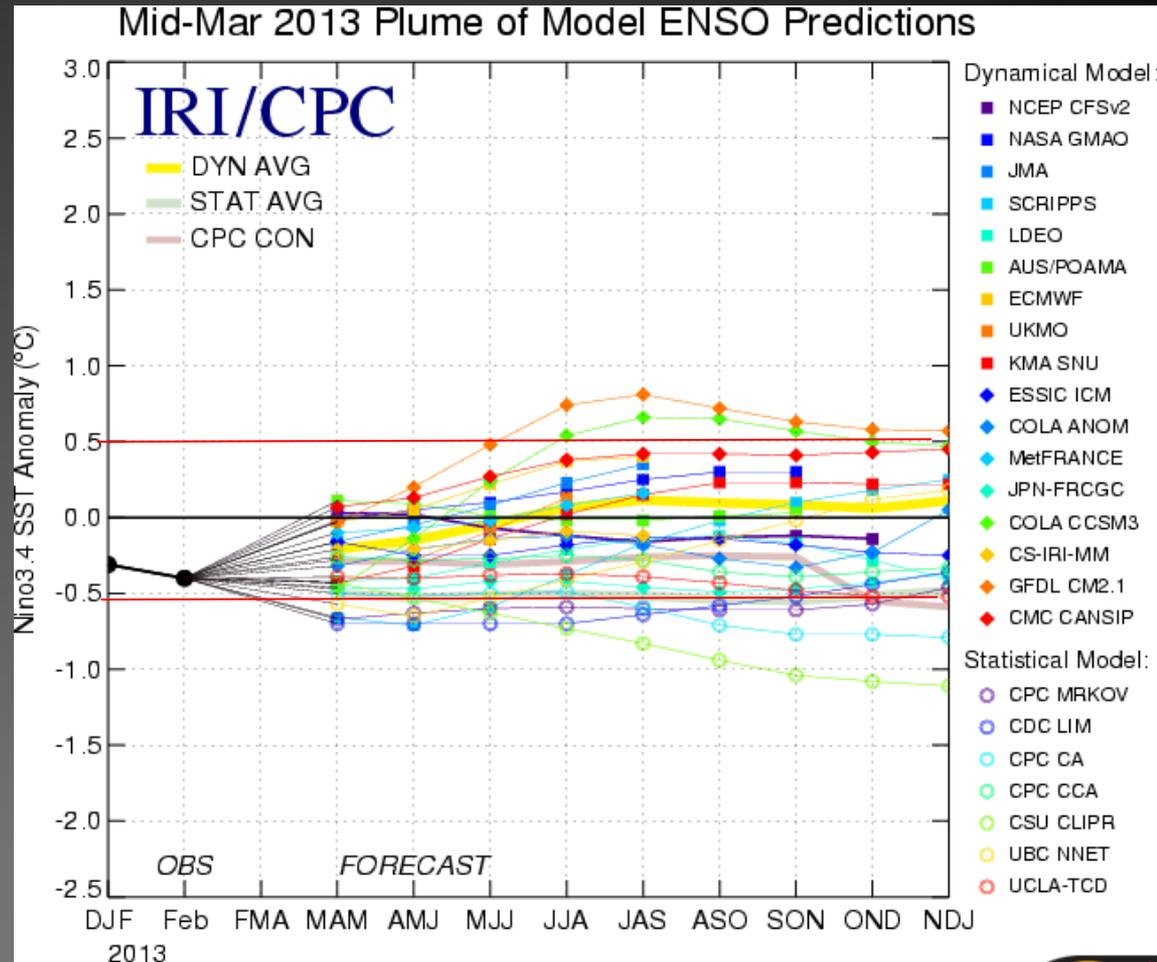
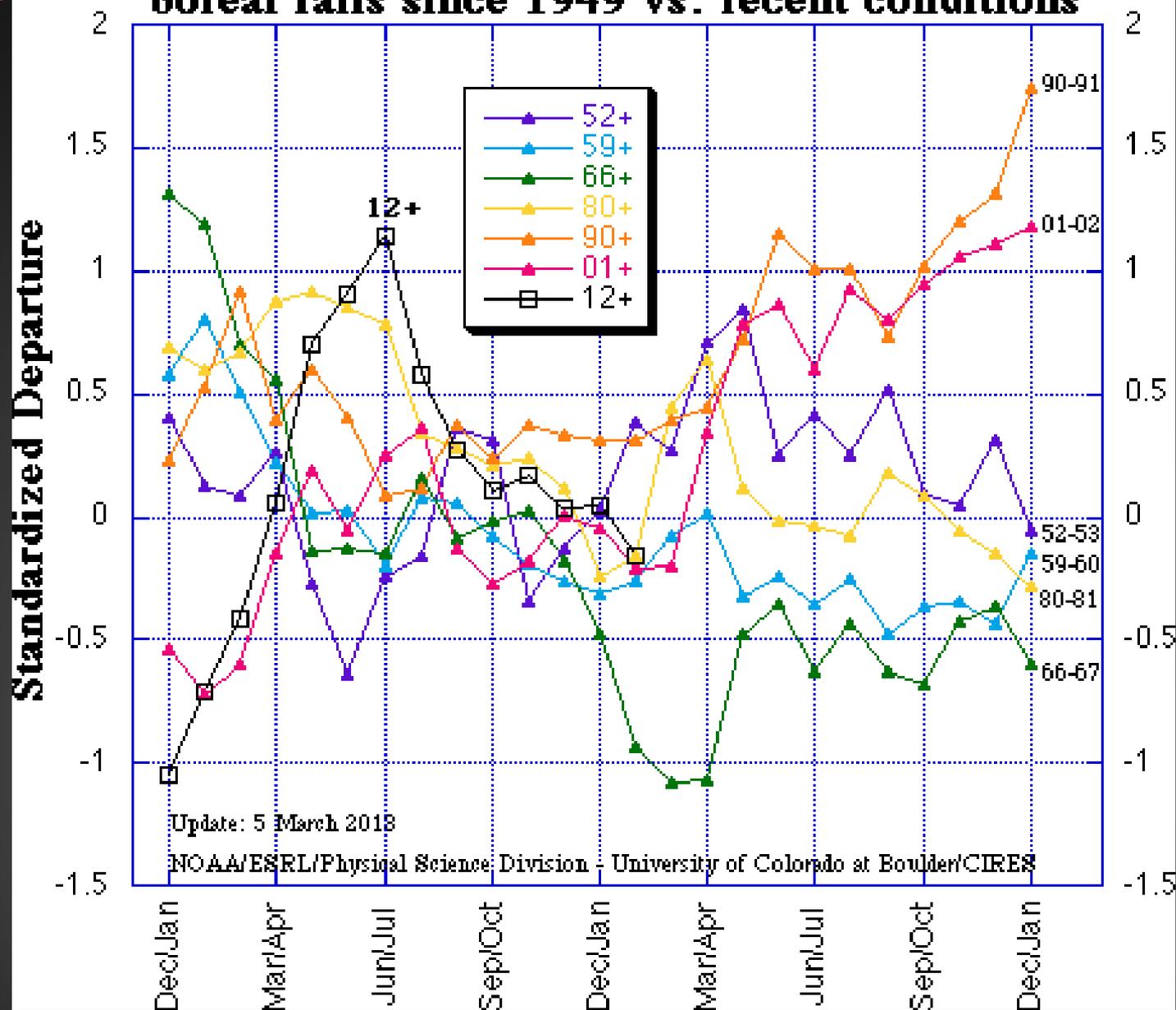


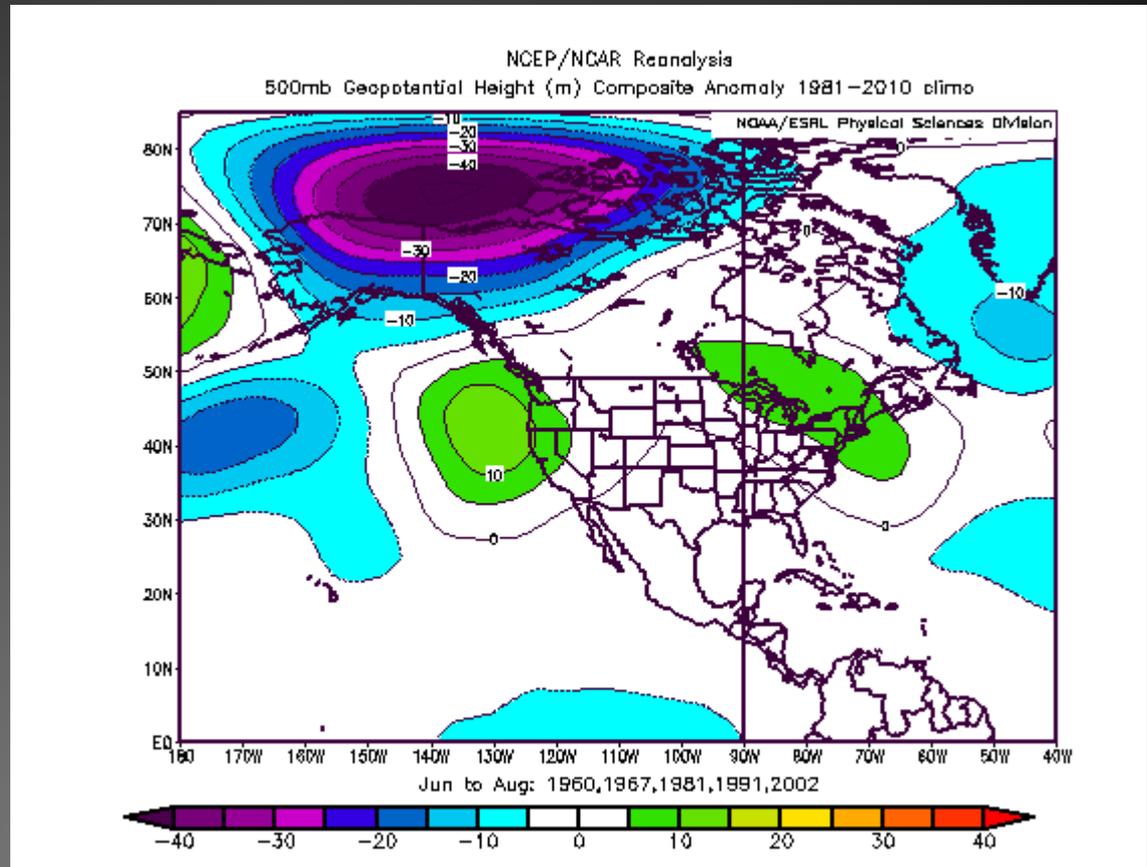
Figure provided by the International Research Institute (IRI) for Climate and Society.

Multivariate ENSO Index (MEI) for six neutral boreal falls since 1949 vs. recent conditions



Analog Years

- 1960: 87,000 ac
- 1967: 109,005 ac
- 1981: 536,217 ac
- 1991: 1,667,965 ac
- 2002: 2,183,265 ac



Average 500 mb height anomalies for June-August, using analog years of 1960, 1967, 1981, 1991 and 2002.

Confidence: Moderate

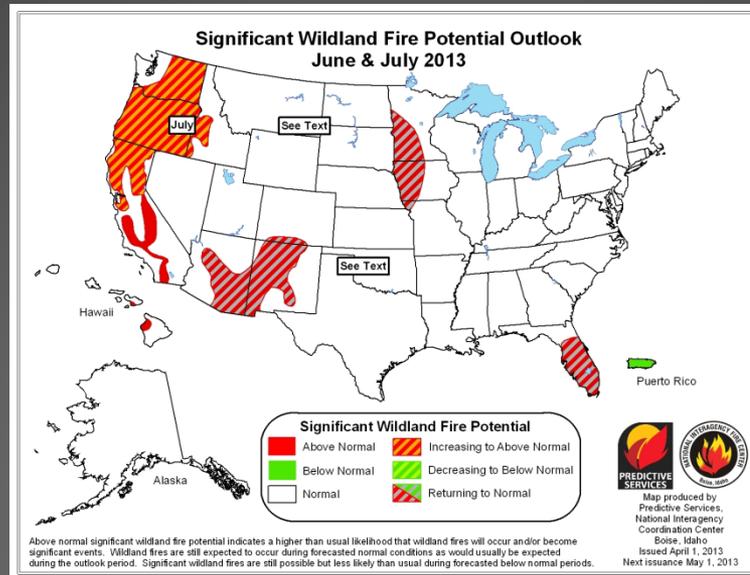
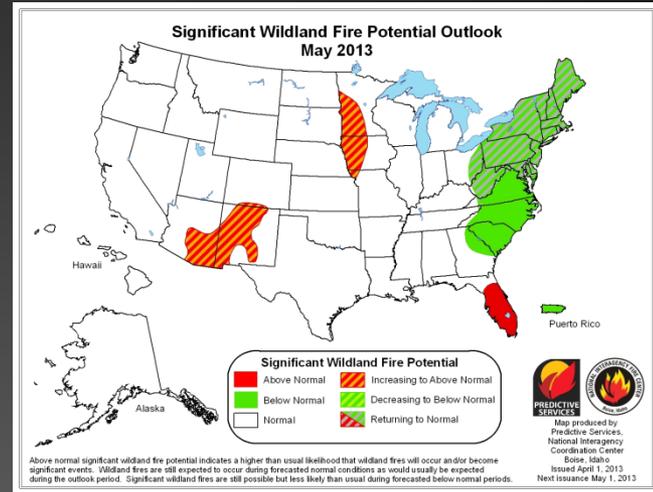
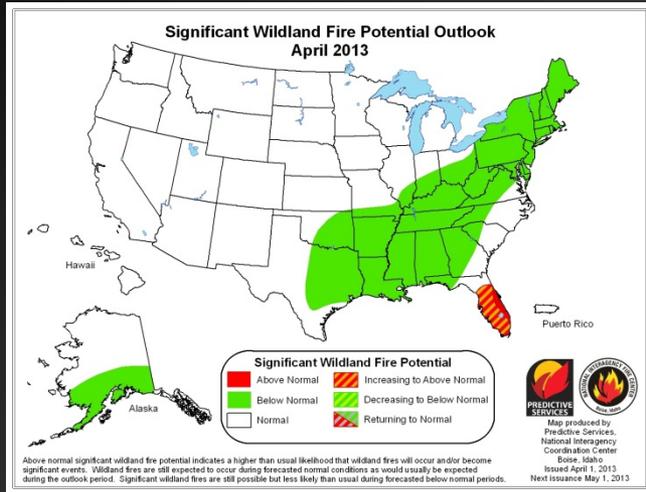
- Many factors are hard to forecast before the fire season
 - Difficult to pinpoint lightning intensity and location
 - Timing and duration of precipitation- showers
- The Big Wildcard:
 - Past ENSO Neutral years have had wildly varied acreage burned.

Alaska Monthly Fire Potential Outlook



Bottom line is a slower April in the south and no strong indications of a busy or slow season for the remainder of the summer.

2013 National Outlook



Check out the Outlooks link at: www.nifc.gov/nicc/

