Texas Fire Potential Update
March 23rd-March 29th, 2020
Predictive Services Department

TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE
Fire Potential Notes

- Initial attack potential is forecast to increase across the High, Southern Plains, and Trans Pecos this week with the return of above normal temperatures, accelerated drying of fuel, and elevated fire weather. IA potential will peak to moderate on Thursday before potential decreases to low through the weekend. The rest of the state will have low initial attack potential through Sunday.

- Above normal fuel moisture is present across the state due to the persistent moist environment and frequent rainfall events observed the past few weeks. Temperatures will increase to above normal statewide through Friday while a dryline in the Western third of the state produces elevated fire weather conditions. High drying in fuel across the Western Plains is expected, but fire activity will be limited to cured grasses. Most of the state will remain dry, except for East Texas over the weekend with the passage of a cold front.
Fire activity has been low across the state due to the moist fire environment.
Areas in eastern 2/3rd of the state have observed 2-3 inches of rainfall the past 7-days. South Texas and the Western Plains received pockets of 1 inch rainfall the past week. Recent rainfall in South Texas will help initiate green up in warm season grasses reducing initial attack potential. Most rainfall over the past 7 days has occurred in the footprint of rainfall the previous week where 5-6 inches of rain has been observed across parts of the Cross Timbers and North Texas.
Rainfall over the past week has reduced precipitation deficits across South Texas and the Gulf Coast. Some pockets of 25% or less than normal rainfall (red) remain in South Texas and the Trans Pecos. Surplus precipitation (blue and green) is common across rest of the state.
Herbaceous Greenness

3/17 Barnhart (Crockett County)
photo by Derek Patteson

3/17 Midland (Midland County)
photo by Greg Murdoch (NWS)

Some herbaceous greenness is being observed in short, cool season grasses across the Western Plains. Warm season grasses have yet to begin vigorous growth as soil temperatures under 60°F are currently observed.
A dryline will be active in the Western Plains this week before a cold front moves through the state Friday and Saturday. Little rainfall is forecast across the state though Sunday except for portions of East Texas.
The combination of above normal temperatures, poor overnight relative humidity recoveries/low daytime relative humidity will produce high drying potential west of the dryline this week.
ERC Seasonal Trend

HIGH PLAINS Predictive Service Area
2001-2020

All 14 PSA for the state are well below seasonal average. With the accelerated drying forecast for the Western Plains, ERC values may return to near normal by the weekend.
Above normal fuel moisture is observed statewide. It is possible a few pockets of dry fuel could emerge across the Western Plains by the weekend. Any Dry fuel will likely be the result of 100-Hr fuel moisture decreasing below the 25th percentile from this week’s accelerated drying.

The rest of the state should continue to observe normal to above normal fuel moisture through Sunday.
Elevated Fire Weather

As the dryline oscillates across West Texas, elevated fire weather conditions are forecast to occur across parts of the Western Plains and Trans Pecos through Friday.

Tuesday’s Texas Fire Weather Outlook will provide details for each day this week:
https://ticc.tfs.tamu.edu/PredictiveServices/Outlooks/texas_fire_weather_outlook.pdf
The combination of drying fuel, above normal temperatures, and elevated fire weather will increase initial attack potential to moderate Thursday in cured grasses across the Western Plains and Trans Pecos.