

NOUS41 KWBC 142200  
PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 22-117  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
500 PM EST Wed Dec 14 2022

To:           Subscribers:  
              -NOAA Weather Wire Service  
              -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network  
              -NOAAPort  
              Other NWS Partners, Users and Employees

From:        Mary Mullusky, Chief  
              Forecast Services Division

Subject: Changes to Fire Forecast Zones for WFO Gray and WFO Caribou, ME:  
Effective March 8, 2023

On or about Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 04:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST), 2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Offices in Gray, Maine (GYX) and Caribou, Maine (CAR) will change Fire Weather Forecast Zones encompassing the entire state of Maine. After this change, fire weather forecasts and related products will use the new zone numbers and names shown below.

If March 8, 2023 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to March 9, 2023 at 2100 UTC.

These changes are intended to provide increased flexibility and improved accuracy of forecast, watch and warning products in the fire weather program. These changes will result in an alignment of land agency fire danger rating areas and fire weather forecast zones. This aligning will better connect fire danger rating outputs with our fire weather forecast products for our government partners, media partners and the general public.

The current 33 fire weather zones across the state of Maine will be converted and consolidated down to 14 fire weather zones. The new zones are as follows:

Table 1: Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs): New Fire Weather Zone Forecast Names

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MEZ101: Quebec-Maine Borderlands  
MEZ102: North Woods and St. John Valley  
MEZ103: Eastern Aroostook  
MEZ104: Western Maine Mountains & Foothills  
MEZ105: Central Highlands  
MEZ106: Central Maine North of Bangor  
MEZ107: Kennebec River Valley  
MEZ108: Interior Downeast  
MEZ109: Lakes Region  
MEZ110: Beaches and Casco Bay

MEZ111: Mid-Coast  
 MEZ112: Coastal Downeast  
 MEZ113: Bangor Region  
 MEZ114: Eastern Penobscot Bay Coast

Table 2: Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs): Current Fire Zone Forecast Name

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 MEZ001: Northwest Aroostook County  
 MEZ002: Northeast Aroostook County  
 MEZ003: Northern Somerset County  
 MEZ004: Northern Piscataquis County  
 MEZ005: Northern Penobscot County  
 MEZ006: Southeast Aroostook County  
 MEZ007: Northern Oxford County  
 MEZ008: Northern Franklin County  
 MEZ009: Central Somerset County  
 MEZ010: Central Piscataquis County  
 MEZ011: Central Penobscot County  
 MEZ012: Southern Oxford County  
 MEZ013: Southern Franklin County  
 MEZ014: Southern Somerset County  
 MEZ015: Southern Penobscot County  
 MEZ016: Interior Hancock County  
 MEZ017: Central Washington County  
 MEZ018: Interior York County  
 MEZ019: Interior Cumberland County  
 MEZ020: Androscoggin County  
 MEZ021: Kennebec County  
 MEZ022: Interior Waldo County  
 MEZ023: Coastal York County  
 MEZ024: Coastal Cumberland County  
 MEZ025: Sagadahoc County  
 MEZ026: Lincoln County  
 MEZ027: Knox County  
 MEZ028: Coastal Waldo County  
 MEZ029: Coastal Hancock County  
 MEZ030: Coastal Washington County  
 MEZ031: Southern Piscataquis County  
 MEZ032: Northern Washington County  
 MEZ033: Interior Cumberland Highlands

Table 3: NWS Products Affected by the WFO NWS Gray, ME and Caribou, ME Fire Zone Changes

AWIPS ID	WMO Heading	Product Name
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FWFGYX	FNUS51 KGYX	Fire Weather Forecast
RFWGYX	WWUS81 KGYX	Fire Weather Watch
RFWGYX	WWUS81 KGYX	Red Flag Warning
FWFCAR	FNUS51 KCAR	Fire Weather Forecast
RFWCAR	WWUS81 KCAR	Fire Weather Watch
RFWCAR	WWUS81 KCAR	Red Flag Warning

NWS partners and users should take the appropriate action to ensure systems recognize the new UGC (Z) and new zone alignments and names.

Preliminary shapefiles for public and fire weather forecast zones are available online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/gis/FireZones>  
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/Counties>

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on January 17, 2023.

A graphical depiction of this change is online at:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f653136a6a8e40ca9949efeaae26e46d>

For more information, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification/>

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