

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Southern Area

Southern Appalachian Mountains

October 7-21, 2016



Subject: Increasing Fire Danger in area of Hurricane Matthew subsidence

Discussion: An area of exceptional drought with Energy Release Component values above the 90th percentile currently exists over an area covering a large portion of the Southern Area.

With the passage of Hurricane Matthew along the east coast relative humidity values are forecast to drop into the teens over this area. There will also be a high likelihood of gusty winds, especially along the western face of the Appalachian Mountains.

Difference from normal conditions: The area of subsidence associated with Hurricane Matthew will exacerbate the already dry environment and move ERC values over a large area above the 97th percentile over the next 10 days.

Concerns to Firefighters and the Public: Any fire in this area will be very resistant to control efforts. Expect complete consumption of fuels down to mineral soil or rock, frequent torching, and increased spotting. Fire intensities will be higher than normal which will likely preclude direct attack of fires. Expect the need for extended mop-up. Expect an increase in long duration fires; with heavy fuels being available to burn and leaves coming off of trees expect a higher than normal probability of re-burn on contained fires.

Mitigation Measures: Do not expect any fire to be routine. Be prepared to utilize indirect tactics with extended mop-up. Utilize aerial supervision to help direct crews and keep them informed on fire behavior. Ensure that LCES is in place before engaging on any fire. Remember to STOP, THINK and TALK before you ACT...actively look for ways to minimize risk to firefighters in what is forecast to be a period of very high fire danger.

Area of Concern: Alabama, Mississippi, Central and north Georgia, Tennessee and the mountain areas of Western South Carolina and North Carolina.

