2017 Wildfire Season Forecast

by Bill Warren

The NIFC (National Interagency Fire Center) wildfire forecast for summer issued May 1 is for a normal to below normal wildfire season for 2017 through August (see figures) for Idaho. The heavy precipitation we've had since last fall, and the cool/wet spring is delaying the onset of the wildfire season.

NIFC updates their wildfire forecast on the 1st of every month. You can download the NIFC forecast at ww.nifc.gov. Climate models indicate normal precipitation and temperature probability for our area for June, and a slight increase in probability for above normal temperatures along with normal precipitation for the June-August period (See figures, page 3).

The water-year (precipitation since October 1, 2016) precipitation for the mountainous areas of the Clearwater Basin is 122% of normal as of May 18. Some towns in the Inland NW are experiencing their wettest water-years since the 1940s. As of March 31st, Orofino’s water-year total was 181% of normal (27.59").
Upcoming Programs

by Bill Warren

Summer is the season for Extension natural resource field tours and we have three scheduled at this time. On June 8th is our Forest Landowners Peer Learning Field Tour based out of Orofino where we will be visiting local forest owners and learning from them how they’ve managed their land. On June 16th is our Forest Insect and Disease Field Day where we will learn how to identify and prevent forest insect and disease pathogens that can cause significant economic loss and forest health decline in your timber stands.

In late July or early August we will be holding a field tour on managing forest stands concurrently with forage management for livestock grazing, including demonstrations of some of the equipment used to thin stands. This will be hosted by ranching family in Idaho County and will be based out of Keuterville. The date won’t be set until July 1 in order to accommodate the family’s harvest schedule. Look for the date in our summer newsletter and program announcement mailings.

Also in July we hold 4-H camp for area county 4-H members at Camp Wooten on the Tucannon River near Dayton Washington, as well as the Sixth Grade Forestry Tour which will be held near Headquarters July 11, 12, 13, 2017. This will be the 57th consecutive year the Tour has been held. It provides a great experience for our county youth to learn about our great natural resource heritage and the importance of sustainable management of these resources for the land and our local natural resource based economy.

Forest Insect & Disease Field Day will be held on Friday, June 16, 2017 at the University of Idaho Extension Office
2200 Michigan Ave., Orofino, ID

A $15.00 per person registration fee.

Pre-registration is highly encouraged to ensure seating availability and to help us plan for refreshments & handouts.

This one-day field trip will give participants first-hand exposure to a wide range of insects, diseases, and parasitic plants that impair the growth of trees and forests in northern Idaho. Experts will be on hand to help participants identify insect and disease symptoms and discuss practical, long-term and short-term methods of dealing with them.

Forest Landowners Peer Learning Field Tour will be held on
Thursday,
June 8, 2017, Orofino, ID
$10.00 per person registration fee.

Meet at the Orofino City Park by 9:00 am. Orofino, ID

The landowner hosts will be the primary “presenters” for this informal discussion and walk in the woods. Accompanying the tour to stimulate questions and aid discussion will be Bill Warren, UI Extension; Chris Gerhardt, Idaho Department of Lands, Kara Chase, NRCS, and Norm Tomlinson, local forester and logging contractor.

Coming In August
Silvopasture & Forest Grazing Field Tour
August 2017
(Date and time TBA)

Look for the details in our Summer Newsletter and program announcement mailings.

Idaho Hay Report
Idaho Hay and Forage Association
Alfalfa—Mid Square
Supreme $135.00
Premium/Supreme $150.00

Friday, May 19, 2017

Workshop News

Don’t be disappointed, REGISTER EARLY!

We highly recommend that if you are interested in one of our workshops that you register early. Attendance at workshops has increased rapidly in recent years and late registrations and walk-ins have been turned away.

Know someone who would enjoy a copy of our Newsletter? Let us know, we will be happy to send them a copy. Then they can decide for themselves and let us know if they would like to be on our regular mailing list. Email: clearwater@uidaho.edu or call 208-476-4434.
A Sampling of Current Log Prices from Local Mills—April 2017

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<th>Douglas Fir</th>
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Chemical control for noncrop and rangeland sites: Refer to Idaho’s Noxious Weeds 2011 Control Guidelines.

Taken from Pest Notes, University of California Agriculture & Natural Resources. http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/index.html

**Field Bindweed**

Field bindweed is a hardy perennial. It spreads from an extensive rootstock and from seed. An average plant produces about 550 seeds.

Control of field bindweed isn’t easy, and it can’t be accomplished with a single treatment or in a single season. Effective control requires prevention of seed production, reduction of stored carbohydrates by deep tillage of the root system, competition for light from other plants, and constant vigilance in removing top growth. Application of herbicides, which reduce bindweed growth and kill germinating seedlings, can also be part of an integrated pest management program.

Chemical control for noncrop and rangeland sites: Refer to Idaho’s Noxious Weeds 2011 Control Guidelines.

**Houndstongue**

Houndstongue is a biennial introduced as a contaminant of cereal seed from Europe. In addition to being very invasive, this member of the Boraginaceae family contains alkaloids that are highly toxic to cattle and horses.

Preventing the spread of houndstongue into uninfected areas is the most important approach to managing weeds. Seeds are the only source of reproduction, so it is important to be aware of seeds clinging to animals, clothing, and vehicles.

Digging, pulling, and cutting are considered ineffective means of control, but can be effective if the root crown is severed and all plants are disposed of properly. Mechanical methods must be done frequently in order to have any effect, and is only feasible for small infestations.

Houndstongue will not withstand regular cultivation of the young rosettes. Clipping and mowing close to the ground during flowering can greatly reduce seed production. Reseed problem areas with fast growing grasses, and do not overgraze.

Effective chemical control requires multiple applications. Timing and application rate are extremely important for success.

Chemical control for noncrop and rangeland sites: Refer to Idaho’s Noxious Weeds 2011 Control Guidelines.

Taken from University of Nevada Fact Sheet-03-49. www.unce.unr.edu

**Scotch Broom**

Brooms are upright shrubs that grow 3 to 10 feet tall. All brooms are prolific seed producers with a single shrub producing as many as 2,000 to 3,500 pods containing up to 20,000 seeds.

The two primary methods for managing brooms are mechanical removal and treatment with herbicides. Maintaining a healthy cover of desirable vegetation and reducing soil disturbance will minimize the potential of broom invasion. Hand pulling or mechanical grubbing to remove smaller infestations in early spring or late fall when the soil is moist makes it easier to dislodge roots.
Introduction:
The meadow vole, or meadow mouse, is the most common vole species in Idaho. During most years, voles are not a significant problem, and populations are partially controlled by predators.

Voles damage pastures, lawns, and landscapes by feeding on roots and stems, grass, seeds, and underground reproductive structures such as bulbs and tubers. They damage and kill trees and shrubs by girdling—removing the bark from the trunk or stems near the base.

Vole Management:
Routinely monitor lawns for signs of feeding activity from early spring until late fall. Shallow Tunnels and runways, clipped shoots or leaves, and gawed stems, bark, and roots are signs of possible vole activity.

Nonchemical practices:
Eliminate habitat. Vegetation modification practices in early spring through late fall include the following:

◊ Mow or burn ditch bans, barrow pits, and fence lines,
◊ Clear weeds and debris from windbreaks and other affected areas.

Exclude voles from trees, shrubs, & flowerbeds.
◊ Surround plants with 3/8 inch netted wire installed 6 inches below soil level and to approximately 6 inches aboveground.
◊ Install aluminum flashing or other materials around areas of concern to serve as entry barriers.

Use wooden mouse traps to eliminate infestations, starting in early spring.
◊ Place traps flush with the ground and at right angles to surface runways.
◊ Stake the trap using a small chair to prevent predators from dragging away the vole trap.
◊ Bait traps with peanut butter, oatmeal, or apple slices.
◊ Examine traps daily and remove and bury dead voles. Always wear gloves when handling voles to prevent contact with harmful organisms.
◊ Place traps where children and small pets cannot reach them.

Chemical practices—Hand baiting
Toxic bait can be purchased from home-and-garden and farm-supply stores. Many of these baits must be placed in bait stations to prevent consumption by nontarget animals. Place bait stations in runways or next to burrows so voles will find them while traveling their normal routes.

Always use fresh bait products. Pre-baiting with nontoxic bait that is the same size, shape, and formulation as the toxic bait may be used to increase successful control.

Use caution when applying baits where children, pets, and other nontarget animals are likely to be present as they can be affected by direct contact with the bait. Dispose of dead voles and any spilled bait so there is no chance of unintended poisoning.

Always read and follow the instruction printed on the pesticide label. Use pesticides with care. Do not use a pesticide unless the specific plant, animal, or other application site is specifically listed on the label. Store pesticides in their original containers, and keep out of the reach of children, pets, and livestock.

Taken from UI Extension publication "Idaho Green Thumb How-To’s". To request the full UI Extension publication, call or email the Clearwater County UI Extension Office at 208 476-4434; clearwater@uidaho.edu.
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