

STAFF REPORT

TO: Tom Fisher – County Manager
FROM: Bryce Boyer – Fire Warden
DATE: May 24, 2017
SUBJECT: Fire Season Forecast for 2017



Attached, please find the National Interagency Fire Center's outlook for fire potential for the period of May through August 2017. For your reference, our region is the Great Basin area. Overall, this year's outlook is that lower elevations in the County could see fires after a dry span with a wind event, the upper elevations will most likely be below to normal risk. This is due to the snow packs at the upper elevations keeping it moister, and the lower elevations have lost the snow and are producing high loading of fine fuels (grasses) at the lower elevations. It will depend on the fuel moisture that is retained.

As part of the County's preparations, training with the local fire crews have continued. The following is a list of training activities that have been completed in anticipation of the 2017 season:

- Local fire crews have had the required pre-season refreshers completed.
- The County's preseason reports and planning were completed in April.
- All County Fire Districts have had the required refresher for 2017.
- There are 9 fire fighters are working on task books for Advanced fire fighter. We also completed 10 for chain saw operators.
- Park City Fire District has fire fighters working on Task force leader and Division Supervisor certifications as well.
- The State is requiring County dozer operators to be certified now. We are working on having the County operators' previous fire work experience being counted towards the certification requirement. I will keep up on this.

For your information, Federal resources for aircraft include the following:

- **Fixed Wing Aircraft:**
 - 23 heavy air tankers on contract. With an additional 17 on-call.
 - 33 SEAT or small fix wing air craft with 2 in Cedar City and 2 in Tooele.
- **Helicopters**
 - 59 helicopters are on contract this year.
 - Tooele will have 2 starting in June
 - Mountain Green in Morgan will have 3 stationed starting in June, with a 4th larger helicopter arriving in July.
 - In Utah, we will have reserve access to 13 National Guard Black Hawk helicopters.

The cost for retardant this season will be \$ 3.25 per gallon for the first 100,000 gallons and \$1.10 per gallon for the next 300,000 gallons.

As an update, the revised State Fire policy will be effective January 1, 2017. Additionally, a law was passed that makes the use of Drones in the vicinity of a wildfire incident criminally punishable as a Class A misdemeanor or possibly a felony. Such violations could result in penalty charges for the cost of any retardant dropped outside the wildfire area due to drone activity.