

NOUS41 KWBC 211400  
PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 23-119  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
900 AM EST Thu Dec 21 2023

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

From:        Stephen Bieda III, Ph.D., Chief  
              Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject: Changes to Fire Forecast Zones for WFO Fairbanks, AK: Effective  
March 5, 2024

Effective Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 11:00 AM Alaska Standard Time (AKST), 2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office (WFO) in Fairbanks, Alaska (AFG) will change Fire Weather Forecast Zones throughout its County Warning Area (CWA). After this change, all forecasts and related products will use the zone numbers and names shown in Table 2 below.

If March 5, 2024 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to March 6, 2024 at 2100 UTC.

In September 2023, WFO Fairbanks made significant changes to its public and fire weather zones. During these changes, it was discovered that some additional, minor adjustments were needed to shapefiles for two fire weather zones in interior Alaska as they conflicted with the numbering of our public zones. To eliminate this issue, WFO AFG will be changing the numbering of its fire weather zones to start with a 9 digit in March 2024. Changes will also be made to shapefiles within NWS systems to alleviate the issue. The only noticeable change will be to the first digit of the fire weather zones. All other information including zone boundaries will remain unchanged.

The new zones are listed in Table 2. Although all zone numbers are changing, all zones are retaining the same name due to minor changes to only two zones. In Alaska, all Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs) use the UGC-Zone (UGC-Z) format.

Table 1. Universal Geographic Code (UGC): Current Fire Forecast Zone Names

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AKZ801: Western Arctic Coast  
AKZ802: Northwest Arctic Coast  
AKZ803: Northern Arctic Coast  
AKZ804: Central Beaufort Sea Coast  
AKZ805: Eastern Beaufort Sea Coast  
AKZ806: Western Arctic Plains

AKZ807: Howard Pass and the Delong Mountains  
 AKZ808: Central Arctic Plains  
 AKZ809: Central Brooks Range  
 AKZ810: Romanzof Mountains  
 AKZ811: South Slopes of the Eastern Brooks Range  
 AKZ812: South Slopes of the Central Brooks Range  
 AKZ813: South Slopes of the Western Brooks Range  
 AKZ814: Noatak Valley  
 AKZ815: Kivalina and Red Dog Dock  
 AKZ816: Lower Kobuk Valley  
 AKZ817: Baldwin Peninsula  
 AKZ818: Northern Seward Peninsula  
 AKZ819: Upper Kobuk Valleys  
 AKZ820: Shishmaref  
 AKZ821: Bering Strait Coast  
 AKZ822: Southern Seward Peninsula Coast  
 AKZ823: Interior Seward Peninsula  
 AKZ824: Eastern Norton Sound and Nulato Hills  
 AKZ825: Yukon Delta Coast  
 AKZ826: Lower Yukon River  
 AKZ827: St. Lawrence Island  
 AKZ828: Lower Koyukuk Valley  
 AKZ829: Middle Yukon Valley  
 AKZ830: Lower Yukon and Innoko Valleys  
 AKZ831: Upper Koyukuk Valley  
 AKZ832: Dalton Highway Summits  
 AKZ833: Yukon Flats  
 AKZ834: White Mountains and High Terrain South of the Yukon River  
 AKZ835: Fortymile Country  
 AKZ836: Upper Tanana Valley  
 AKZ837: Delta Junction  
 AKZ838: Upper Chena River Valley  
 AKZ839: Tanana Flats  
 AKZ840: Eielson Air Force Base and Salcha  
 AKZ841: Goldstream Valley and Nenana Hills  
 AKZ842: Chatanika River Valley  
 AKZ843: Two Rivers  
 AKZ844: Fairbanks Metro Area  
 AKZ845: Nenana  
 AKZ846: Central Interior  
 AKZ847: Northern Denali Borough  
 AKZ848: Southern Denali Borough  
 AKZ849: Eastern Alaska Range North of Trims Camp  
 AKZ850: Eastern Alaska Range South of Trims Camp  
 AKZ851: North Slopes of the Western Alaska Range  
 AKZ852: Upper Kuskokwim Valley

Table 2. UGC: New Fire Forecast Zone Names

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 AKZ901: Western Arctic Coast  
 AKZ902: Northwest Arctic Coast  
 AKZ903: Northern Arctic Coast  
 AKZ904: Central Beaufort Sea Coast  
 AKZ905: Eastern Beaufort Sea Coast

AKZ906: Western Arctic Plains  
AKZ907: Howard Pass and the Delong Mountains  
AKZ908: Central Arctic Plains  
AKZ909: Central Brooks Range  
AKZ910: Romanzof Mountains  
AKZ911: South Slopes of the Eastern Brooks Range  
AKZ912: South Slopes of the Central Brooks Range  
AKZ913: South Slopes of the Western Brooks Range  
AKZ914: Noatak Valley  
AKZ915: Kivalina and Red Dog Dock  
AKZ916: Lower Kobuk Valley  
AKZ917: Baldwin Peninsula  
AKZ918: Northern Seward Peninsula  
AKZ919: Upper Kobuk Valleys  
AKZ920: Shishmaref  
AKZ921: Bering Strait Coast  
AKZ922: Southern Seward Peninsula Coast  
AKZ923: Interior Seward Peninsula  
AKZ924: Eastern Norton Sound and Nulato Hills  
AKZ925: Yukon Delta Coast  
AKZ926: Lower Yukon River  
AKZ927: St. Lawrence Island  
AKZ928: Lower Koyukuk Valley  
AKZ929: Middle Yukon Valley  
AKZ930: Lower Yukon and Innoko Valleys  
AKZ931: Upper Koyukuk Valley  
AKZ932: Dalton Highway Summits  
AKZ933: Yukon Flats  
AKZ934: White Mountains and High Terrain South of the Yukon River  
AKZ935: Fortymile Country  
AKZ936: Upper Tanana Valley  
AKZ937: Delta Junction  
AKZ938: Upper Chena River Valley  
AKZ939: Tanana Flats  
AKZ940: Eielson Air Force Base and Salcha  
AKZ941: Goldstream Valley and Nenana Hills  
AKZ942: Chatanika River Valley  
AKZ943: Two Rivers  
AKZ944: Fairbanks Metro Area  
AKZ945: Nenana  
AKZ946: Central Interior  
AKZ947: Northern Denali Borough  
AKZ948: Southern Denali Borough  
AKZ949: Eastern Alaska Range North of Trims Camp  
AKZ950: Eastern Alaska Range South of Trims Camp  
AKZ951: North Slopes of the Western Alaska Range  
AKZ952: Upper Kuskokwim Valley

Table 3. NWS Products Affected by the WFO Fairbanks, AK Fire Weather Forecast Zone Changes

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
Fire Weather Forecast	FNAK53 PAFG	FWFAFG
Fire Weather Forecast	FNAK51 PAFG	FWFNSB
Fire Weather Forecast	FNAK52 PAFG	FWFWCZ
Red Flag Warning	WWAK63 PAFG	RFWAFG
Red Flag Warning	WWAK61 PAFG	RWFNSB
Red Flag Warning	WWAK62 PAFG	RFWWCZ

NWS partners and users will need to make necessary changes to their communications systems to accommodate these fire weather forecast zone changes.

NWR users with Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) receivers do not need to make any changes to their current SAME location code or to the transmitter they have been monitoring to continue receiving warning notifications for their county equivalent.

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

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

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on February 23, 2024.

Changes are also detailed online at:

- <https://www.weather.gov/arh/AFGfirezones>

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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