Fires are about a 50/50 split between human and lightning caused.

Human caused fires are more prevalent in the spring, coincident with windy and dry conditions.

Lightning caused fires are more prevalent from June onward, coincident with the approaching monsoon.
SEASONAL FIRE POTENTIAL MAIN FACTORS

• 1. Drought
  Big Picture Fuels Complex Conditions

• 2. Fine Fuels Condition
  Fine Fuels Component

• 3. Seasonal Temperature & Precipitation
  Season Setup

• 4. Spring & early Summer Weather Patterns
  Fire Ignition and Spread

• 5. Monsoon
  Season End
2019 Fire Season: Drought

• Long Term drought has decreased from west to east across the region over the past 5-6 months

• “Moderate Drought” to “Severe Drought” limited to eastern Arizona

• Drought Outlook calls for overall drought conditions to generally decrease through May

• Drought impacts are starting to recover but still present, particularly in the White Mtns.
2019 FIRE SEASON: FINE FUELS

• Fine Fuels are those that carry fire, normally less than ¼” in diameter, represented by grass, pine needles, and small herbaceous growth

• Substantial carryover of warm season fine fuels driven by substantial 2018 precipitation totals.

• Area of high summer and fall soil moisture & winter/early spring expected warmth likely will contribute to widespread spring green-up.

• Good carry over fine fuels + additional spring growth = significant amount of fine fuels to potentially carry fire.

• Fine fuel loading and continuity is Normal to Above Normal
2019 Fire Season: Temperature and Precipitation
Jan 2019 thru March 2019

• Overall Cool with Above Normal precipitation

• Snowpack at to well above normal
2019 Fire Season:
Temperature and Precipitation
YTD 2019
• Overall cool and dry
• ERC Values are still well below average across the state due to seasonal moisture
2019 Fire Season: Temperature and Precipitation
Spring/Early Summer Probability

- Warming conditions
- Potentially moist in the White Mtns, helping with drought conditions
2019 Fire Season: Monsoon

Median Dates for “End of Large Fire Season
2019 FIRE SEASON FACTORS SUMMARY

1. **Drought** – Moderate to Severe drought now limited to White Mtns.

2. **Fine Fuels Condition** – Normal to Above Normal loading and continuity area wide

3. **Seasonal Temperature & Precipitation** – Cool, moist winter gradually warming with potential for continued moisture till late spring

4. **Spring and early Summer Weather Pattern** – Expect a variable pattern gradually warming to more seasonal temperatures

5. **Monsoon** – Typical seasonal moisture onset & impacts. However, some increasing concerns about both a late onset and less robust burst focused along/west of the divide.
THANKS TO CHUCK MAXWELL AT THE SOUTHWEST COORDINATION CENTER FOR FORMAT AND BASELINE DATA USED IN THIS PRESENTATION