

2012 Fire Season Review

Northwest Colorado District



UPPER COLORADO RIVER INTERAGENCY FIRE MANAGEMENT

NPS Colorado National Monument
BLM Northwest Colorado District
USFS White River, Grand Mesa and
Uncompahgre National Forests



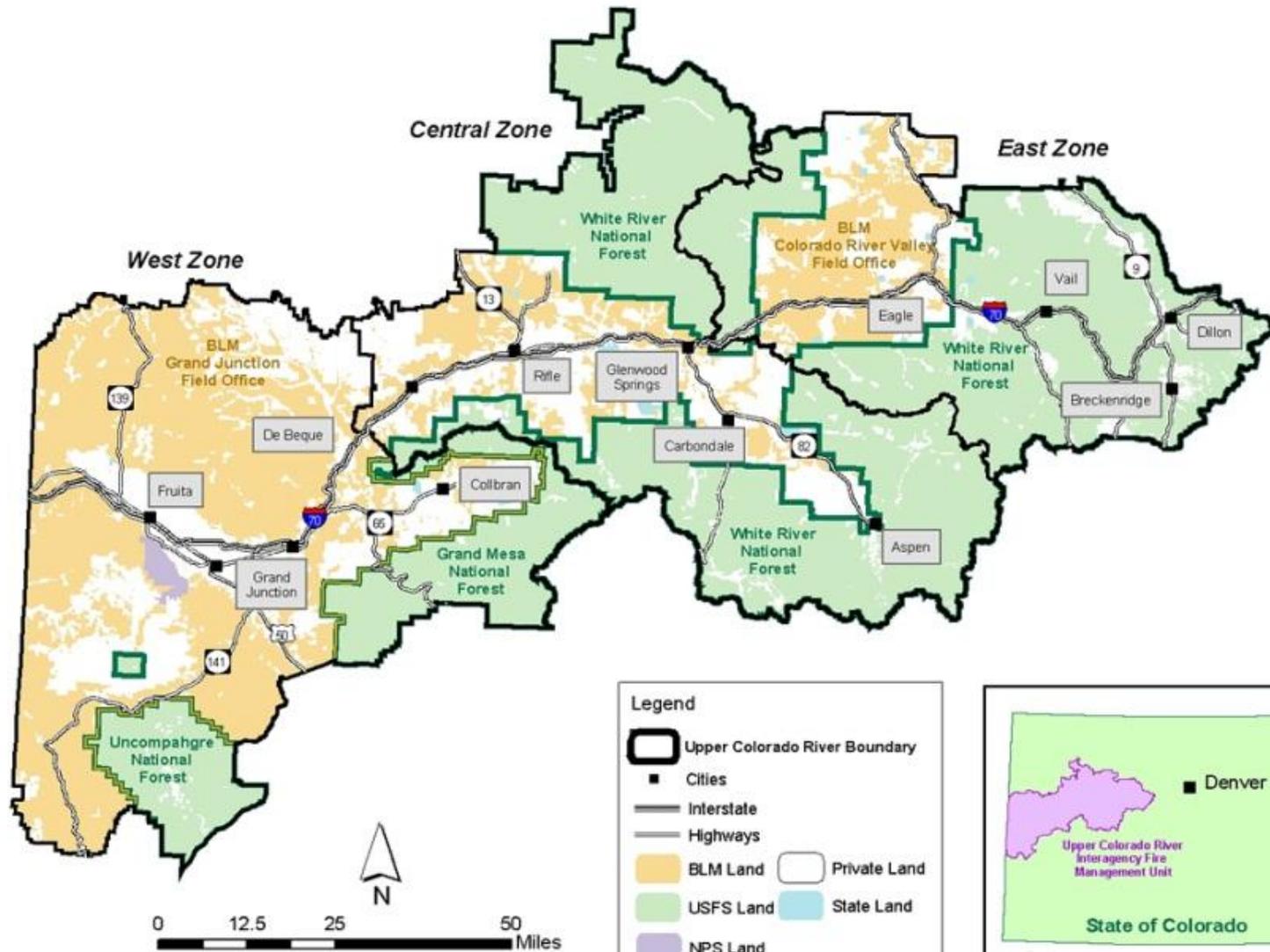
NORTHWEST COLORADO FIRE MANAGEMENT UNIT

Overview

- **Fire unit boundaries**
- **2012 conditions**
- **Fire season stats**
- **Fire restriction discussion**



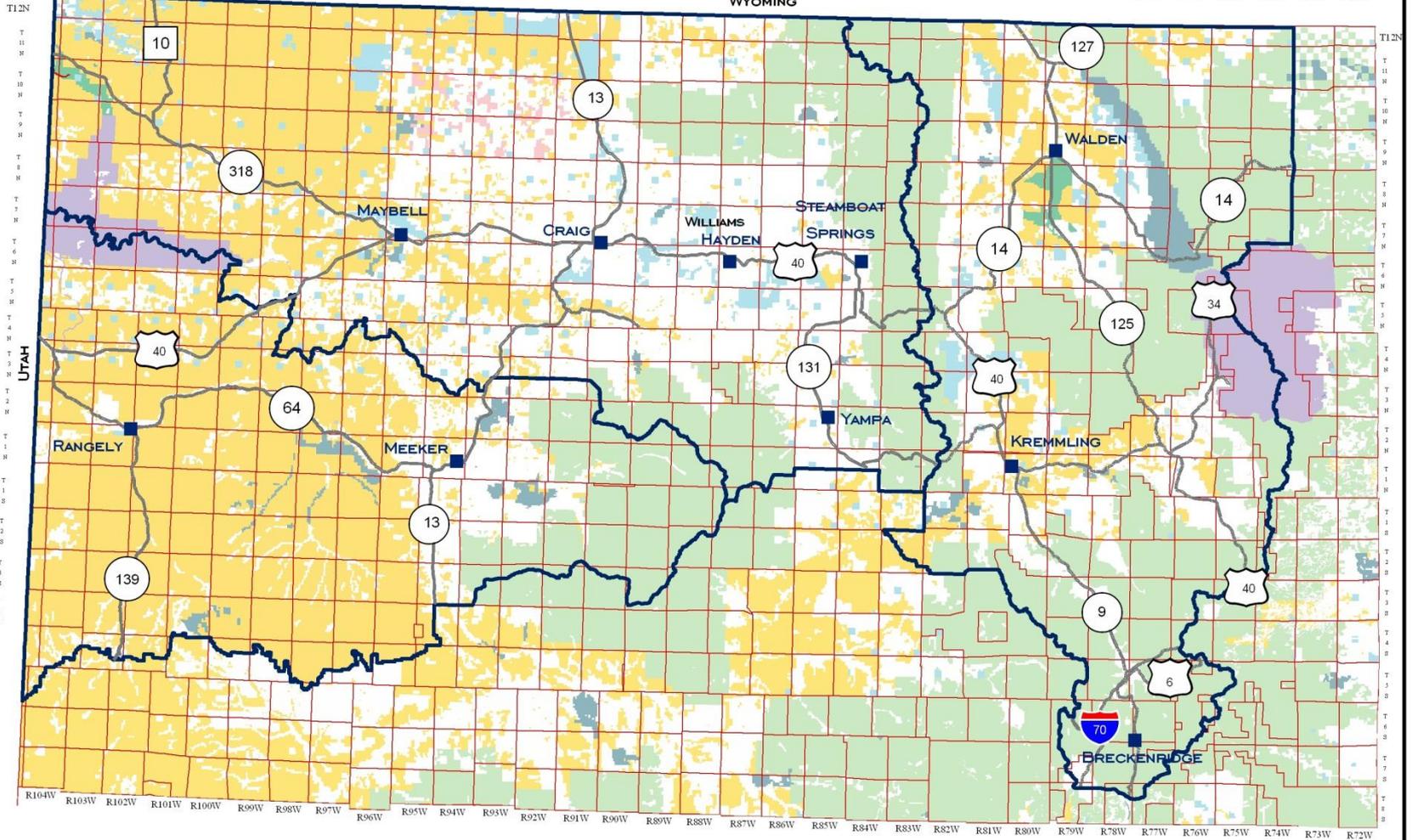
Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Unit



Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit

R103W R102W R101W R100W R99W R98W R97W R96W R95W R94W R93W R92W R91W R90W R89W R88W R87W R86W R85W R84W R83W R82W R81W R80W R79W R78W R77W R76W R75W R74W R73W R72W

UTAH WYOMING

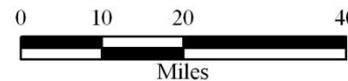


-  Towns
-  Highway
-  Township/Range
-  Field Office Boundary



Surface Management Status

-  BLM
-  BLM LU Lands
-  County
-  US Forest Service
-  Nat'l Monument/Park
-  Nat'l Rec Area
-  Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Private
-  State DOW/Forest/Park
-  State Land Board



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregation use with other data. All boundaries are an approximate representation.

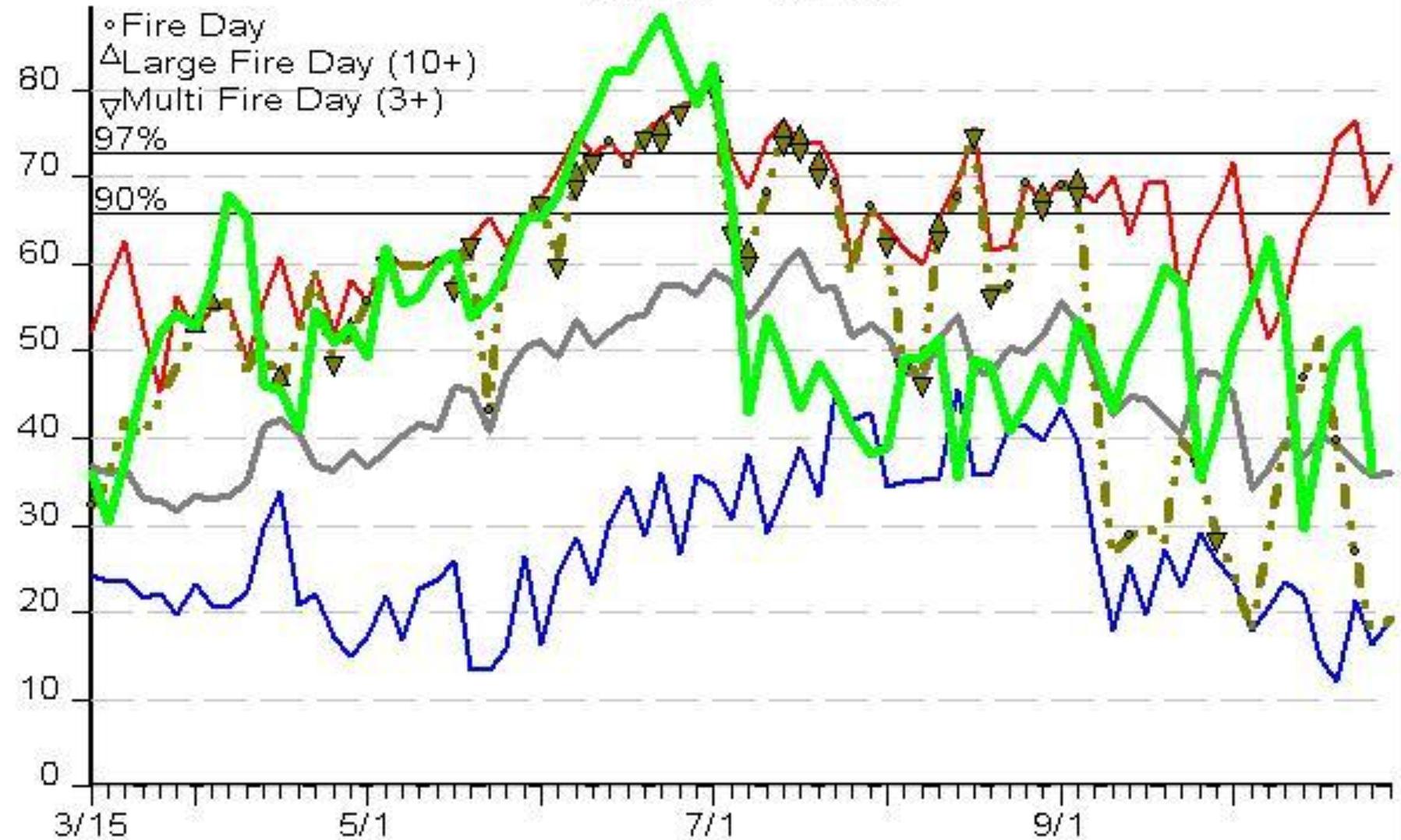
11/21/2012

Extreme conditions

- Fuel moisture as dry or dryer than 2002
- Light to heavy fuels all extremely dry
*1000HR fuels typically average 9-11% in May
2012 samples were as low as 5% in NW Colorado*
- Dry conditions began early

SIG - Timber 2002 - 2011

Energy Release Component



— Avg
— Max
— Min
--- 2002 (61/14/27)
— 2012 (0/0/0)

3 Day Periods

Model: 7F
2210 Wx Observations
FF+4.0.2 10/25/2012-15:18

Colorado Fire Season Starts Early

- **Lower North Fork in Jefferson County**
- **March 26**
- **Set tone early, statewide implications**



What we saw

- **Northwest Unit**

- 211 fires burned 12,250 acres
- Wolf Fire: 5,126 acres
- 1 Prescribed Burn completed prior to restrictions (Long Mtn 700 acres)
- Stage 2 Fire restrictions
- Escaped agricultural burns problematic

- **Upper Colo River**

- 205 fires burned 16,400 acres
- Pine Ridge: 14,000 acres
- No prescribed burns
- Stage 2 Fire restrictions

Fire Restrictions

- **Tool to mitigate risk of human-started fires**
- **Degree of restriction increases with stages, 1-3 (handout)**
- **Based on science (ERCs), anticipated conditions, coordination with counties (handout)**

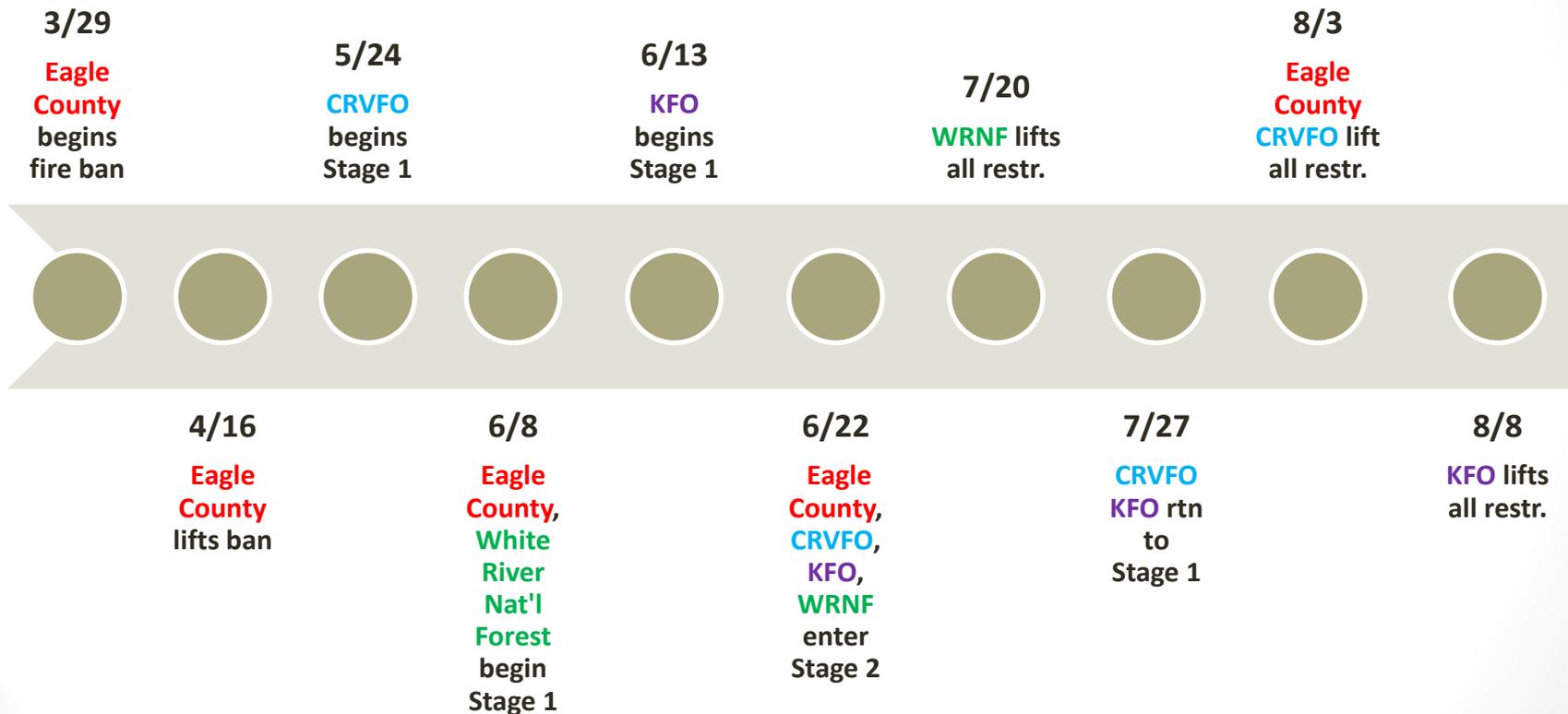
Fire Restriction Challenges

- **Conditions vary by area, elevation**
 - UCR ranges from 4,300 feet to 14,200 feet
- **Condition severity can increase and decrease multiple times a season**
- **County and Field Office boundaries**
 - Multiple counties in a field office
 - Many counties include boundaries of more than one field office

Challenges: Multiple Counties

- **CRVFO – Eagle, Garfield, Mesa, Pitkin, Summit**
- **GJFO – Garfield, Mesa, Delta, Montrose**
- **Kremmling – Eagle, Jackson, Grand**
- **Little Snake – Moffat, Rio Blanco, Routt**
- **White River – Garfield, Moffat, Rio Blanco**

Fire restriction example: Lands in Eagle County 2012



Fire Restriction Challenges

- **Counties have multiple Protection Districts within their boundaries**
- **Planned burns may come into prescription during federal restrictions or county fire bans**
- **Communicating where, why, when to public is challenging**

Questions for the NW RAC

- **What are your general thoughts on fire restrictions and our process?**
- **Are restrictions and the process valid in the public's eyes?**
- **Any suggestions for us?**
- **What are your thoughts about conducting prescribed fires (when conditions are right) in areas with county burn bans?**