# 2026 Wildland Fire Seasonal Outlook Briefing

# 2025 Fire Season and Trends:

## 2025 Fire Data

- 1,608 wildfires
- 331,629 acres burned

*Total fires down 26% compared to 2024*

*Total acres burned up 17% compared to 2024*

**Numbers reflect state, federal, and tribal data*


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# Year to Date:

## 2026 Data:

- 296 fires
- 5,994 acres burned

## 2025 Data:

- 407 fires
- 8,581 acres burned

**Numbers reflect state, federal, and tribal data*

# 2026 Seasonal Outlook:

May: Above normal significant fire potential forecast for southeast Arizona expanding north through June

Southern Arizona: Long-term dryness, warmth, and drought capable of significant fire potential across Sonoran desert and lower elevations where grasses and fine fuels reside

Northern Arizona: Low snowpack and drought conditions, along with tree mortality and stress in diverse forest types = above normal significant fire potential

# Fuel Conditions

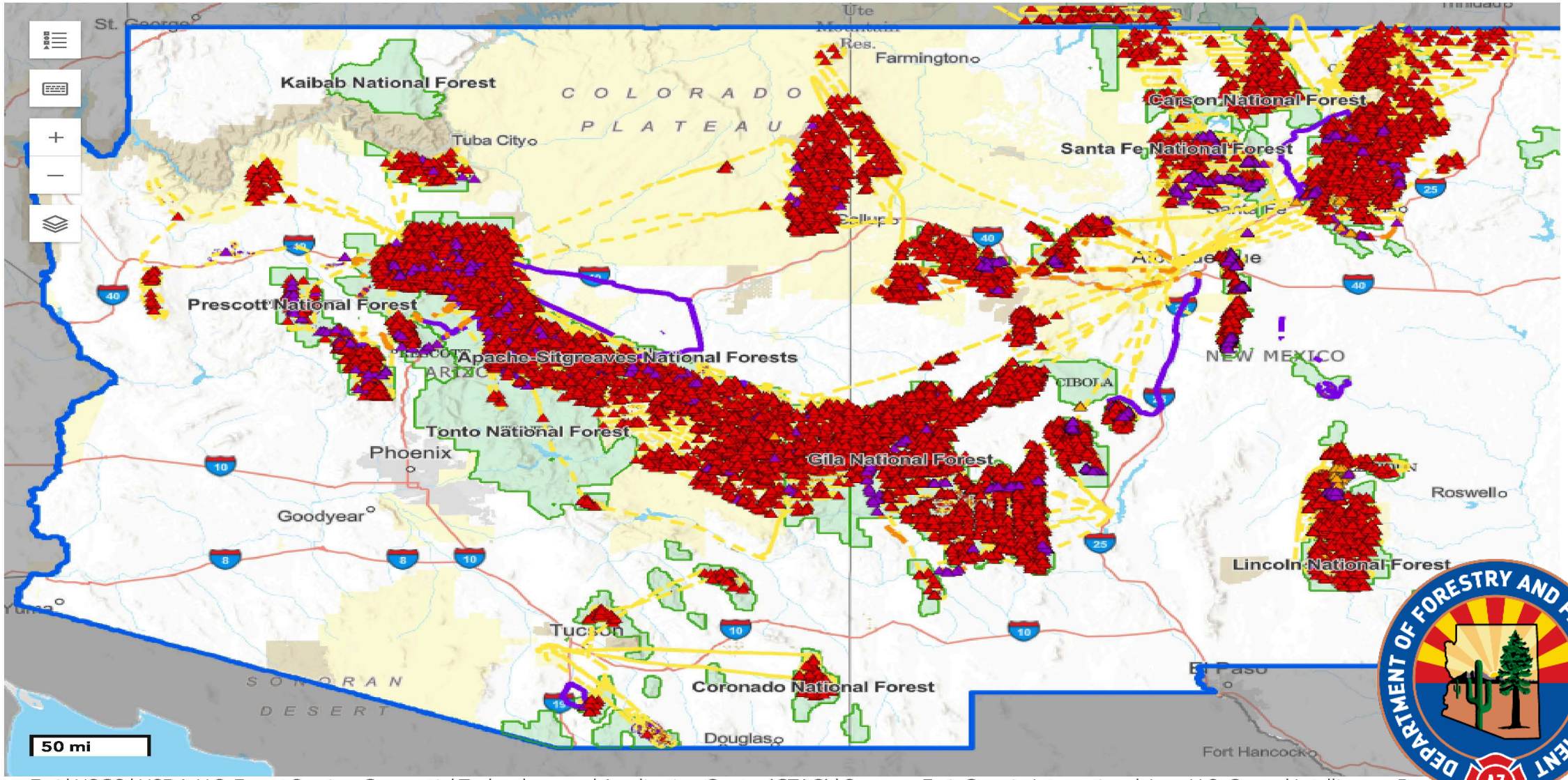
Tree mortality and drought-stressed trees, coupled with the dry conditions could be the catalysts for high activity.

**Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:**

Increased Fuel Loading and Continuity: Widespread mortality significantly increases the amount of dead and dry woody fuels, both on the ground and standing, creating heavy and continuous fuel beds that lead to higher fire potential.

Enhanced Fire Intensity and Severity: The abundance of dead pinyon, juniper, and oak trees and their debris contribute to hotter, more intense fires that are harder to control.

# 2025 Forest Service Southwestern Region Forest Health Damage Map



# Fuel Conditions Cont.

Greater Potential for Crown Fire: Dead pinyon and juniper, with their volatile foliage, and dead oak branches can act as effective ladder fuels, increasing the likelihood of fire moving into tree crowns, leading to rapid, high-intensity crown fires.

Heavy grass crop in the Prescott, Chino Valley Area

Abundance of grasses and brush in southern/southeastern Arizona

# 2026 Collaboration:

Local, state and federal cooperators critical to operations

Early preparedness and prepositioning with engine and hand crew staging along with prevention patrols necessary to support quick Initial Attack (IA) response

Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact to be utilized if necessary for additional state support

# DFFM's Advanced Technology

# Pano AI Wildfire Detection Cameras

- ✓ **AI Wildfire Detection**

Seven Sites

- *Sawmill, north end of Hualapais*
- *Blake Ranch, Mohave County*
- *Wittmann, western Maricopa County*
- *Dudleyville, Pinal County*
- *Foreman Wash, Tucson-area*
- *Suffering Gulch, northeast of Oracle Junction, Pinal County*
- *Chiricahua, south of the Dragoons*

- ✓ Situated on high viewpoints to provide 24/7, 360° monitoring and live feeds
- ✓ Immediate smoke report notifications to Arizona Dispatch Center (ADC)
- ✓ Cameras integrate with other AI systems across the state, incl. APS, TEP, and SRP cameras

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# Arizona Dispatch Center

- ✓ 7,000 square foot facility: 3x the size of the old center
- ✓ Operational and tactical support
- ✓ Updated, adequate facilities for dispatchers and fire operations personnel
- ✓ State of the art technology for wildfire tracking and monitoring, including new AI cameras
- ✓ $4.2 million project; funding supported through HB 2001

# Thank you