



WHEREAS, unusually high temperatures, gusty winds, low humidity and dry vegetation contribute to a strong likelihood of rapidly developing wildland fires this spring and into the summer months; and,

WHEREAS, drought conditions during the past several months and a deficit of snow cover and moisture during the 2020-2021 winter intensified dry conditions throughout the state and contributed to an early start to the traditional fire season: and,

WHEREAS, based on reports to the North Dakota Forest Service, the total reported acres burned in 2021 is already nearly double the acres burned in all of 2020 ; and,

WHEREAS, based on the most current National Weather Service (NWS) Climate Prediction Center seasonal outlook, drought conditions are expected to persist through the end of May of 2021; and,

WHEREAS, the NWS 2021 fire outlook indicates dry conditions and warm temperatures will persist throughout the spring: and,

WHEREAS, current NWS Climate Prediction Center temperature and precipitation outlooks for the months of June, July and August of 2021 call for above normal temperature trends across the state and below normal precipitation trends across western North Dakota; and,

WHEREAS, the potential exists for rapidly moving wildland fires that threaten the safety of North Dakotans, their communities and farmsteads, and may result in infrastructure, wildlife, livestock, feed and crop losses, as well as damage to structures and miles of fencing; and,

WHEREAS, wildland fires have the potential to adversely impact our state's economy during a time when extensive recovery efforts are underway as a result of the COVID-19 virus, drought conditions impacting the agricultural sector and challenges exist in the oil and gas industry; and,

WHEREAS, local and tribal governments have initiated preparations for an extended spring firefighting season, to include issuance of burn bans and emergency declarations, ensuring mutual aid support and mobilizing resources; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the State of North Dakota to assist its citizens in addressing emergencies, disasters and other hardships.

NOW THEREFORE, Doug Burgum, as Governor of North Dakota, by virtue of the authority vested under Article V, Section 1 of the North Dakota Constitution and Chapter 37.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, hereby declares a statewide fire emergency in North Dakota and orders activation of the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) in order to assist local and tribal officials, to prevent injuries and save lives, alleviate hardships, implement appropriate

response and recovery actions and future mitigation measures, and facilitate restoration of services and infrastructure.

All state agencies, to include the N.D. Department of Emergency Services, the N.D. Forest Service and the N.D. National Guard, are ordered to maintain high readiness levels of fire-related resources and capabilities in preparation for timely execution of their respective responsibilities pursuant to the SEOP. The Adjutant General is authorized to activate and make available N.D. National Guard resources to support state agencies and local and tribal governments based upon normal cost shares.

This order is issued pursuant to the following authority and for the following reasons:

1. The Governor is vested with the executive authority pursuant to Article V, Section 1 of the North Dakota Constitution; and,
2. The Governor is vested with statutory authority to issue executive orders to minimize or avert the effects of a disaster or emergency pursuant to Chapter 37-17.1 of the North Dakota Century Code; and,
3. A coordinated and effective effort of all State departments is required to minimize the impact of disasters and emergencies in this state.

This order is in effect immediately and shall remain in effect until it is rescinded.

Executed at Bismarck, North Dakota, this 1st day of April, 2021.


Doug Burgum
Governor

Attest:


Alvin A. Jaeger
Secretary of State