
The NRCS PRISM Climate Mapping Project

Issue Area	Spatial Climate Products for Resource Assessment and Conservation Planning
What's the Challenge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating and distributing spatial climate products (maps and data layers) of all major climate elements and derived variables needed to support NRCS field activities.• Training Field Office personnel in an understanding of these products, and how to use them in their daily operations.• Involving Geographic Information System (GIS) specialists who are knowledgeable of these climate layers, and how they can be used for geospatial applications.• Interfacing these spatial climate layers with computer models used for NRCS planning and assessment activities, including wind and water erosion, and cropping strategies.
What Are We Doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnering with Oregon State University (OSU) and the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) in support of PRISM spatial climate layer production and associated research.• Coordinating dissemination of climate layers and maps with the NRCS National Cartography and Geospatial Center, via hardcopy maps, CD-ROM's, and the Internet.• Conducting training for NRCS Climate Liaisons, GIS specialists and others who will be using this information, and training others in its use.• Developing PRISM climate layer training materials.• Facilitating and conducting thorough reviews of these layers, in conjunction with national, state and regional climate experts.
Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Release of the first of several CD-ROM's in June 1998, featuring all monthly and annual precipitation layers for all 50 states, along with full documentation.• Training of Climate Data Liaisons in the PRISM concept and use of the data facilitated through teleconferences in April and August 1998.• A fact sheet and a one page promotional summary have been completed that describes the PRISM Climate Mapping Project.• Monthly meetings with PRISM developers and production crew at OSU, discussing current and future production, and applied research for mapping new elements.• Marketing PRISM climate products through education of hundreds of users and potential users at several meetings and conferences in 1998, including the Soil and Water Conservation Society meeting in San Diego in July, and the International Geospatial Information Conference in Orlando in June.
What's Left?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training for production and interpretation of local level (county, watershed, etc.) climate layers.• Identification of long-term funding source to support development of agency-critical geospatial climate products.• Completion of documentation, training materials and professional papers.• Completion of all precipitation and temperature layers by summer 1998.