United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS

Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C. 20013

**Date:** **March 13, 2007**

**Subject:** **March 1, 2007 Western Snowpack Conditions and Water Supply Forecasts**

The following information is provided for your use in describing western climate and water supply conditions as of March 1, 2007.

## OVERVIEW

Western snowpacks increased slightly in northern California, central Nevada, southeastern Oregon, northern Utah, Wyoming, and much of Montana as a series of winter storms moved through those regions, however most basins in California, Nevada, eastern Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming and southwestern Montana still report below average snowpacks. Dry conditions in southern California, southern Nevada and much of Arizona reduced snowpacks to below average in those regions of the Southwest. Above normal snowpacks are reported in southeastern Colorado, northeastern New Mexico, the Washington Cascades and British Columbia.

Seasonal precipitation is well above average throughout the Pacific Northwest, southeastern Utah, eastern Colorado, central New Mexico and British Columbia. Precipitation is well below average in California, Nevada and most of Arizona.

Forecasted spring and streamflows for most of the West are expected to be below average. Several basins in the Central Sierras of California, Nevada, southwestern Utah and central Arizona are expected to receive less than 50% of average runoff. Streamflows in the Washington Cascades and southeastern Colorado are expected to be above normal. Streamflows forecasts for Alaska are near to slightly below normal.

As of March 1, 2007, reservoir storages are above seasonal averages in Idaho, Nevada and Washington, slightly below seasonal averages in Arizona, California, Colorado, and Oregon, and below seasonal averages in Montana, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

## SNOWPACK

On March 1, 2007, western snowpacks are generally below normal as shown in Fig. 1. The northern Oregon and Washington Cascades and southern Canada report snowpacks ranging from 90% to 150% of average. Snowpacks are also above average in on the Front Range of eastern Colorado and parts of northeastern and central New Mexico, ranging from 110% to 150% of average because of early January snow storms. The Intermountain states of Nevada, Utah, eastern Colorado, central Idaho, Wyoming and southwestern Montana report predominately below normal snowpacks, ranging from 50% to 89% of average.

Well below normal snowpacks, less than 50% of average are reported in northern Arizona, northern Nevada and southeastern Oregon. Alaska snowpacks are generally below average,

50% to 69% of normal, in the north, slightly below to above average, 70% to 129% of normal, in the south and west and well above average in the southeast.

A map containing a daily update of the westwide snowpack may be obtained from the following URL - http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/gis/snow.html

**MONTHLY AND SEASONAL PRECIPITATION**

February 2007 precipitation was quite variable throughout most of the West (Fig. 2). Less than 50% of normal precipitation was reported in southern California, southern Nevada, western Arizona, parts of northeastern New Mexico and most of Alaska. Above average precipitation was reported in northern California, northern Nevada, northeastern Utah, central Colorado and most of Montana.

Seasonal precipitation is well below average in most of California, southern Nevada, and southwest Arizona, less than 50% of normal (Fig 3). In contrast, the Pacific Northwest, eastern Colorado, eastern Utah, northern New Mexico, central Montana and British Columbia report above normal, ranging from 110% to >150% of average. Precipitation is near average, or slightly below, in eastern Wyoming, extreme eastern Montana, eastern Nevada northern California and parts of northern Arizona.

Monthly and seasonal precipitation maps are available from the following location - http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/gis/precip.html and http://www.cbrfc.noaa.gov/wsup/westwide/westwide.cgi

**SPRING AND SUMMER STREAMFLOW FORECASTS**

Forecasted spring and streamflows for most of the West are expected to be below average. Several basins in the Central Sierras of California, Nevada, southwestern Utah and central Arizona are expected to receive less than 50% of average runoff. Streamflows in the Washington Cascades and southeastern Colorado are expected to be above normal. Streamflows forecasts for Alaska are near to slightly below normal.

In order to track changes in the water supply forecasts each month, a new product has been added to this report. Figure 5 illustrates the percent change in streamflow forecasts issued on February 1 and March 1, 2007 for each basin. Figure 5 shows that although basins in California, Nevada and the Intermountain areas improved from three to six percent, the seasonal volumes are still well below normal as shown in Fig. 4. Fig. 5 also illustrates a reduction of from five to greater than 15% in forecasted streamflow in Arizona and New Mexico.

Specific state streamflow summaries can be obtained from the Internet location - http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/cgibin/bor.pl

## RESERVOIR STORAGE

As of March 1, 2007, reservoir storages are above seasonal averages in Idaho, Nevada and Washington, slightly below seasonal averages in Arizona, California, Colorado, and Oregon, and below seasonal averages in Montana, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming (Fig. 6).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

The National Water and Climate Center Homepage provides the latest available snowpack and water supply information. Please visit us at http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov

/s/ DANIEL MEYER
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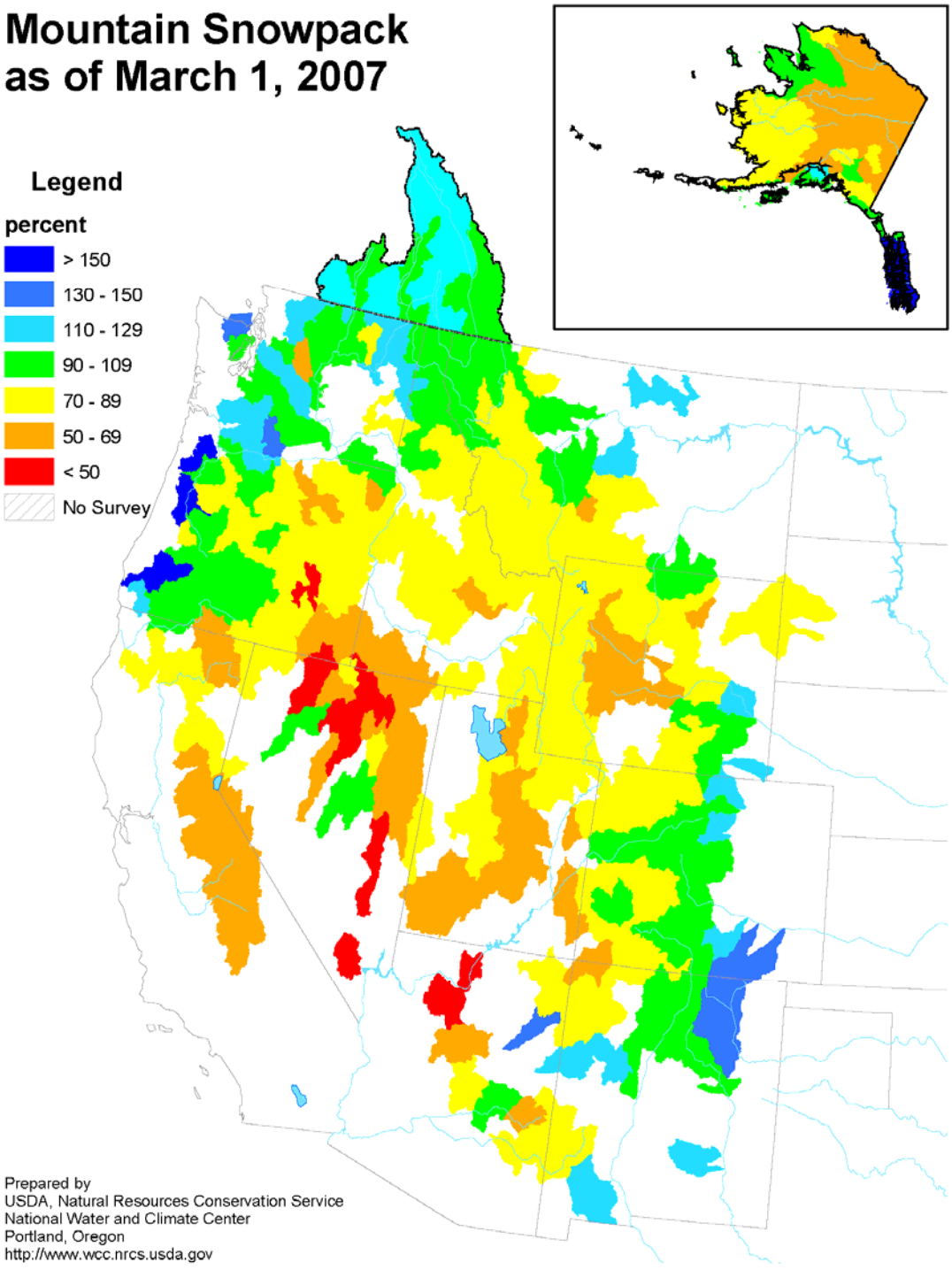


**Figure 1. Mountain Snowpack, March 1, 2007**

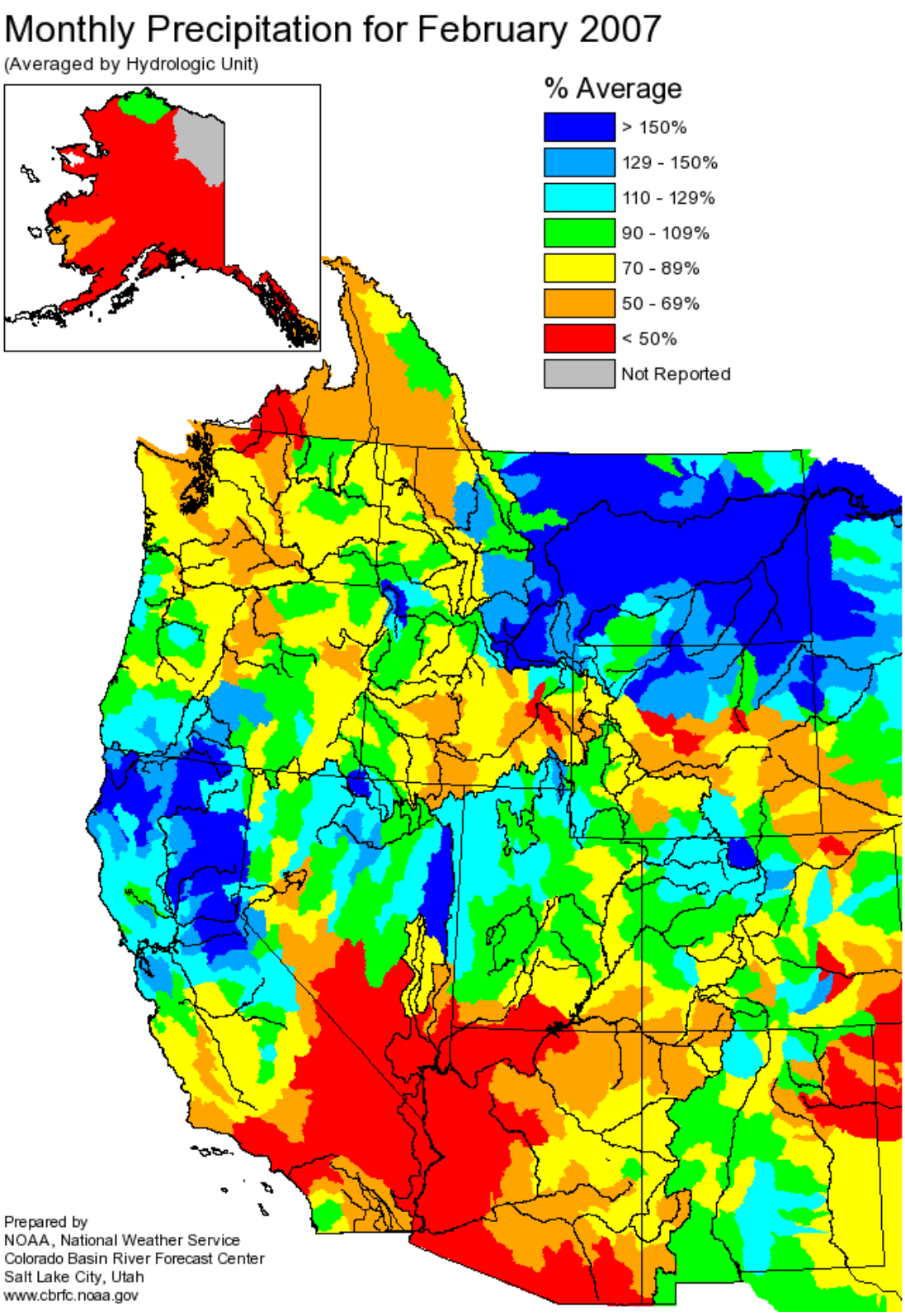


**Figure 2. Monthly Precipitation, February 2007**

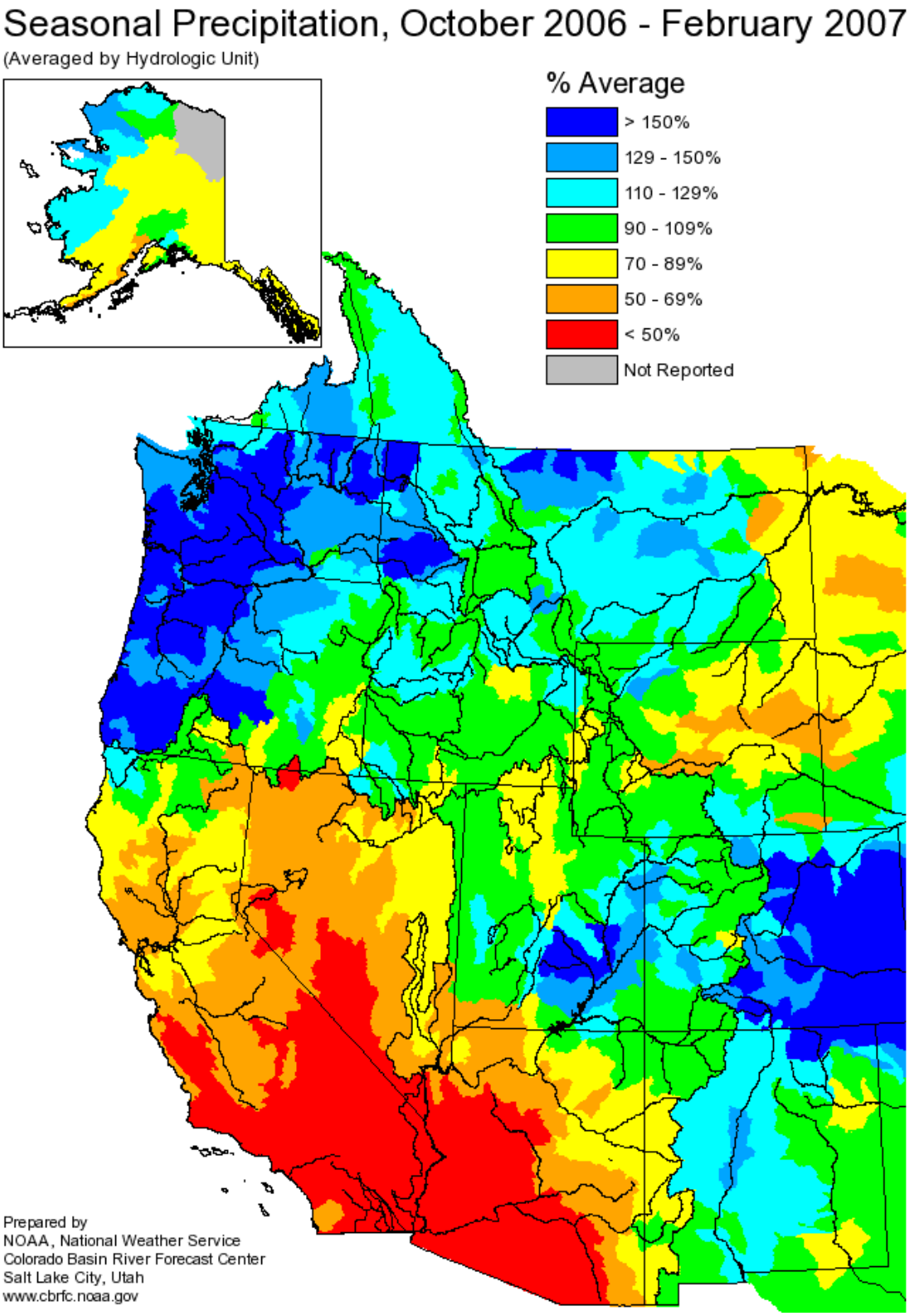


**Figure 3. Seasonal Precipitation, October 1, 2006 to February 28, 2007**

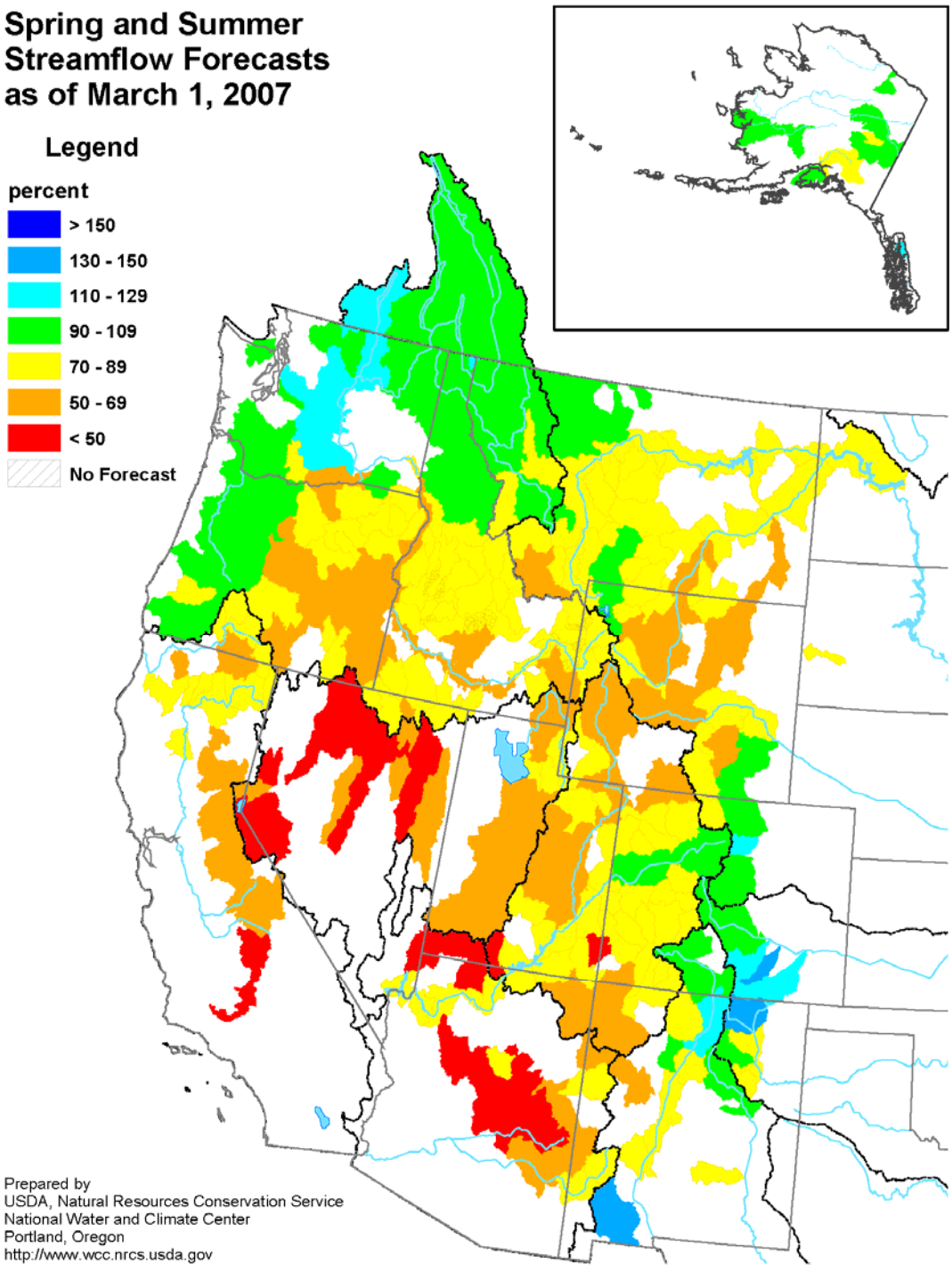


**Figure 4. Seasonal Water Supply Forecasts - March 1, 2007**

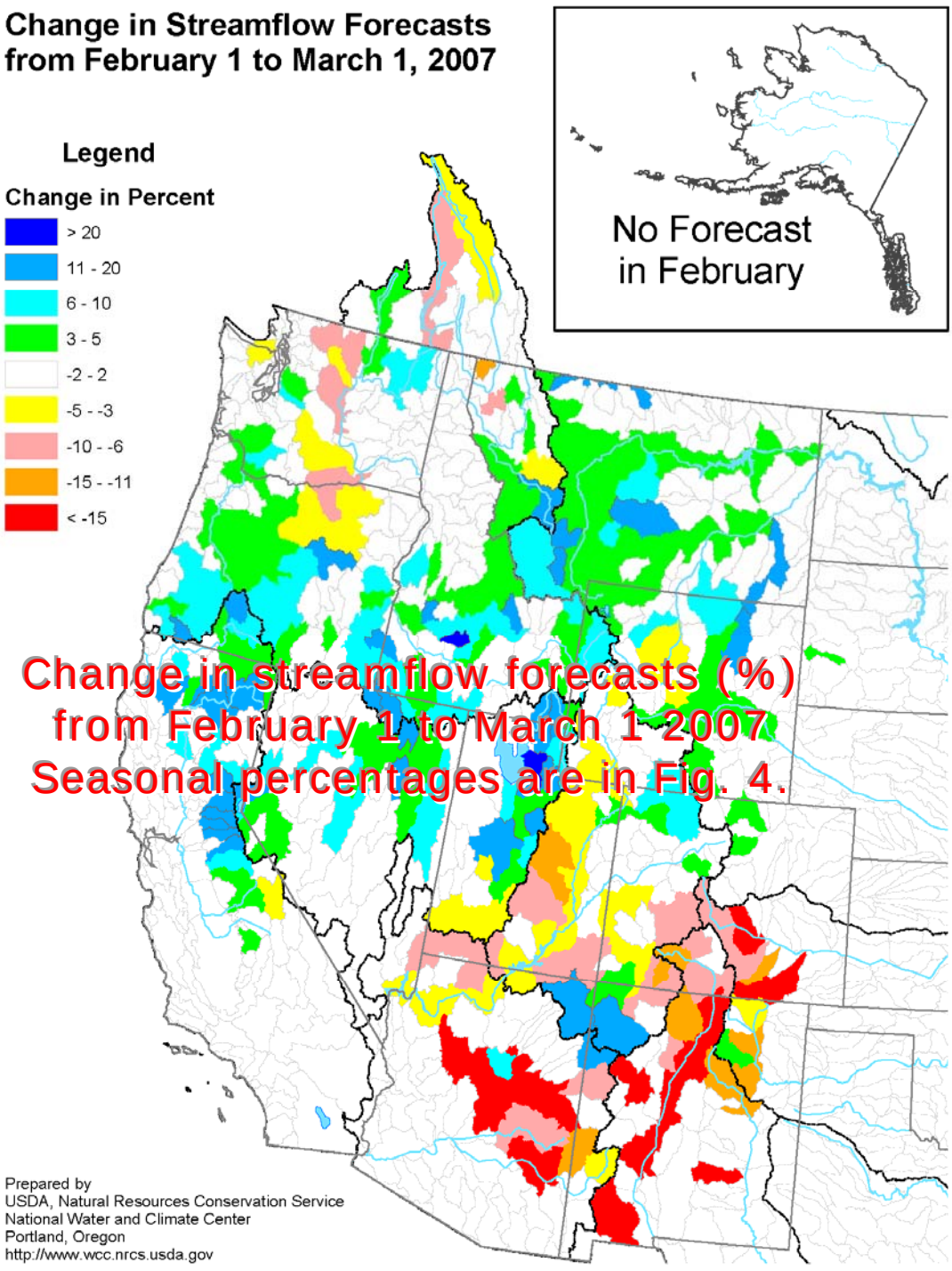


**Figure 5. Change in Seasonal Water Supply Forecasts, February 1 to March 1, 2007**

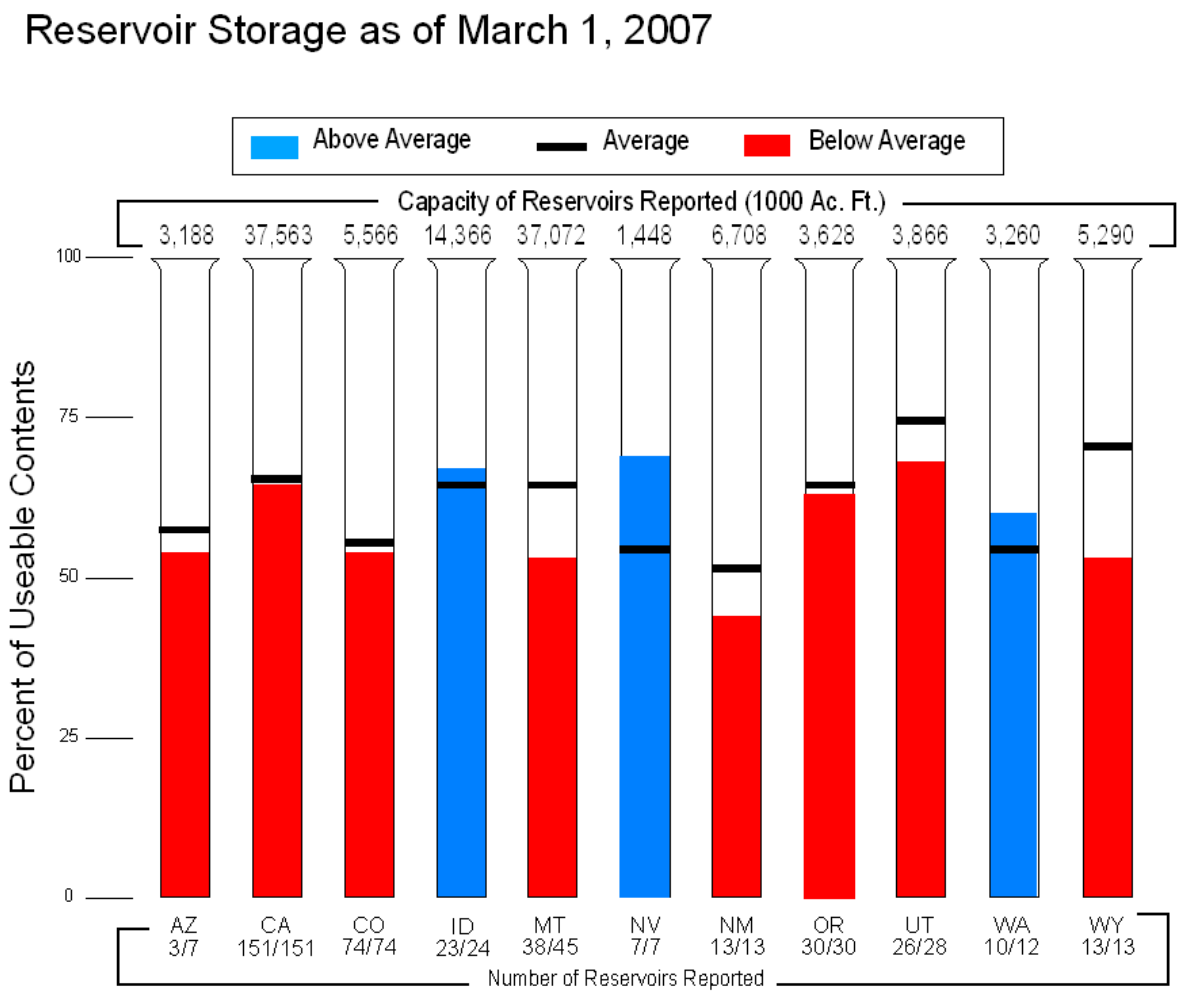


**Fig. 6. Reservoir Storage - March 1, 2007**