



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

Date: February 12, 2009

Subject: February 1, 2009 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 February 1, 2009.

OVERVIEW

Significant surpluses in snowpack exist over much of the Rockies, AZ, NM, southwest UT, northeast NV, and over southwest and northern Alaska. Large deficits dominate much of CA, northern WA, and southwest NM (Fig.1). Western snowpack experienced increases during the past month over the Great Basin (NV), parts of the Northern and Central Rockies (CO, WY, MT, and ID), Northern Cascades, and much of Alaska and decreasing values over most of the West Coast States and the southern half of the Southwestern States as shown in Fig. 2.

In a typical winter La Niña, the Western States usually experience above normal precipitation north of latitude of 41 degrees N. However, this year, the La Niña has been causing just the opposite results. Since October, precipitation has been exceptionally higher than expected over the Lower Colorado Basin and parts of the Central Rockies. Relative dryness has occurred over much of CA, most of OR, southern AZ and NM, and much of Alaska (Fig. 3).

As of February 1, 2009 the spring and summer streamflow forecasts are calling for well below normal values (<70%) over the Snake River Plain (ID), Sweetwater River (WY), Upper Columbia River (WA and Canada), western Nevada, and over southeast Arizona. Above normal values (>110%) dominate the Central and Southern Rockies, southern UT, and along the Powder-Tongue Rivers (WY and MT) (Fig. 4). During the past month, the spring and summer streamflow forecasts have increased significantly across the eastern half of NV, western UT, the Northern High Plains (WY & MT) (Fig. 5). Significant decrease forecast flows are noted over the Upper Columbia Basin (Canada), southern OR, and over AZ and NM.

The Western States show the following average statewide reservoir levels: above normal (AZ WA and WY) and below normal (ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT) (Fig. 6). Colorado is near normal. California data is not available at this time but is expect to show much below normal capacity.

SNOWPACK

On February 1, 2009, western snowpack is above the long-term average over much of the Rockies and below normal over much of the West Coast States (excluding the Oregon Cascades), and much of Alaska as shown in Fig. 1. 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>.

Snowpack increased in the central interior of the West and northern Idaho but decreased over much of the 4-Corner States (south of 40N), and Oregon (Fig. 2).

SEASONAL PRECIPITATION

Preliminary seasonal precipitation is above normal, >130% of average, throughout the higher elevations of the southeast California, southern half of Nevada, central Utah, and over the western High Plains (north of 37N) including much of Montana as shown in Fig. 3. Precipitation is well below normal, <70% of average across the much of central and Northern California, southern Arizona and New Mexico.

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> http://www.hprcc.unl.edu/maps/current/index.php?action=update_product&product=PNorm

SPRING AND SUMMER STREAMFLOW FORECASTS

Abundant snowfall during January has resulted in streamflow forecasts (>110% across the 4-Corners region and Powder-Tongue River Drainages. Forecasts (<70%) are noted over the Snake River, Sweet Water, Upper Columbia Rivers, Klamath Rivers, and drainages over southwest Arizona and southwest New Mexico as shown in Fig 4. Forecast improvement since January is noted over the Great Basin, and the Central and Northern Rockies. Forecast deterioration is noted over Arizona, New Mexico, southern half of Oregon, and the Columbia River in Canada (Fig. 5).

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

RESERVOIR STORAGE

As of February 1, 2009, reservoir storage by state is shown in Fig. 5. Nevada is reflecting the worst storage and Arizona has the best storage. California data is not available as of February 10. Reservoir storage graph can be viewed at: <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/cqibin/resvgrph2.pl?area=west&year=2009&month=02>.

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/ NOLLER HERBERT
Director, Conservation Engineering Division

Mountain Snowpack as of February 1, 2009

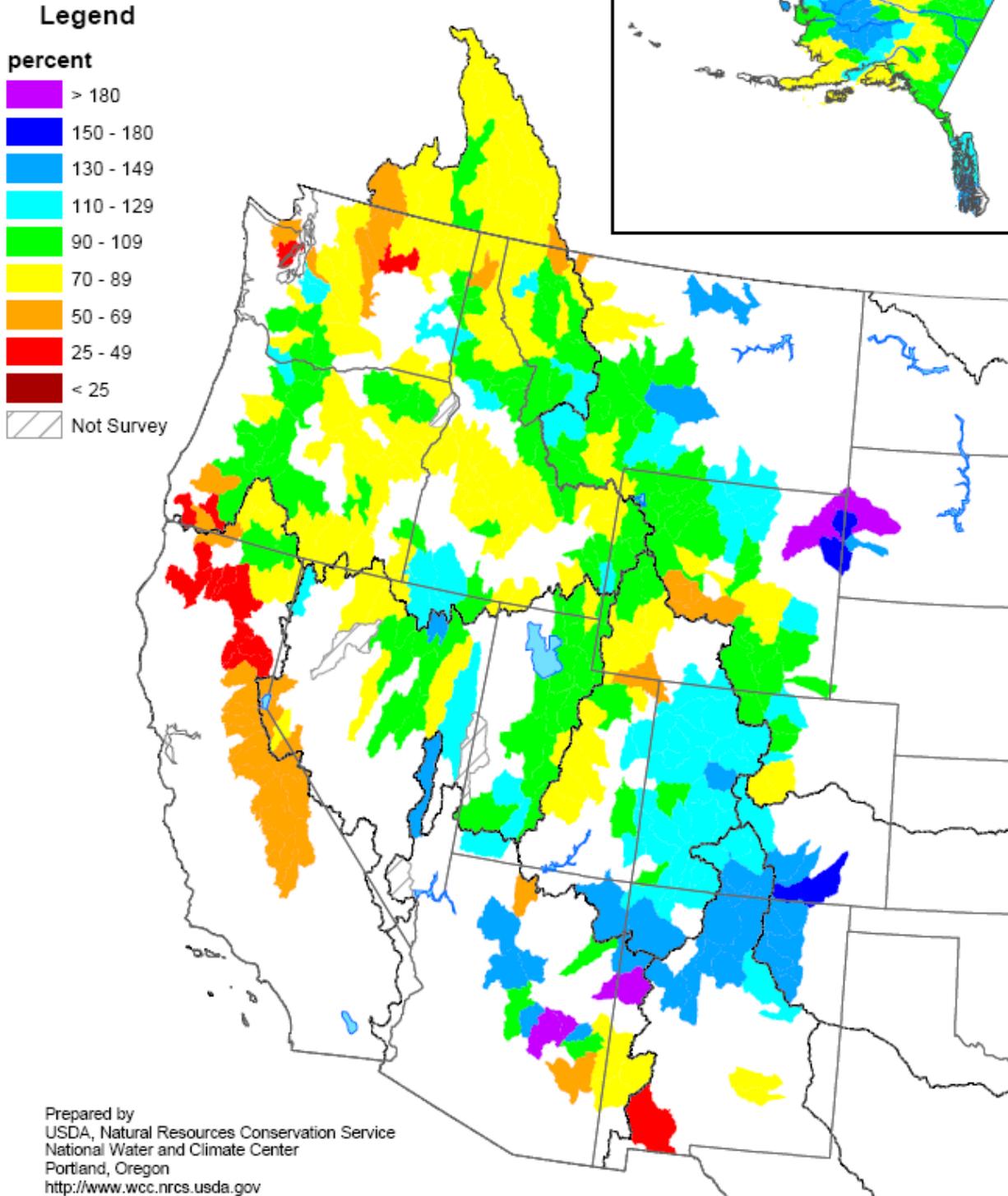


Fig. 1. Mountain Snowpack, February 1, 2009

<ftp://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/support/water/westwide/snowpack/wy2009/snow0902.gif>

2009 Mountain Snowpack Change between January 1 and February 1

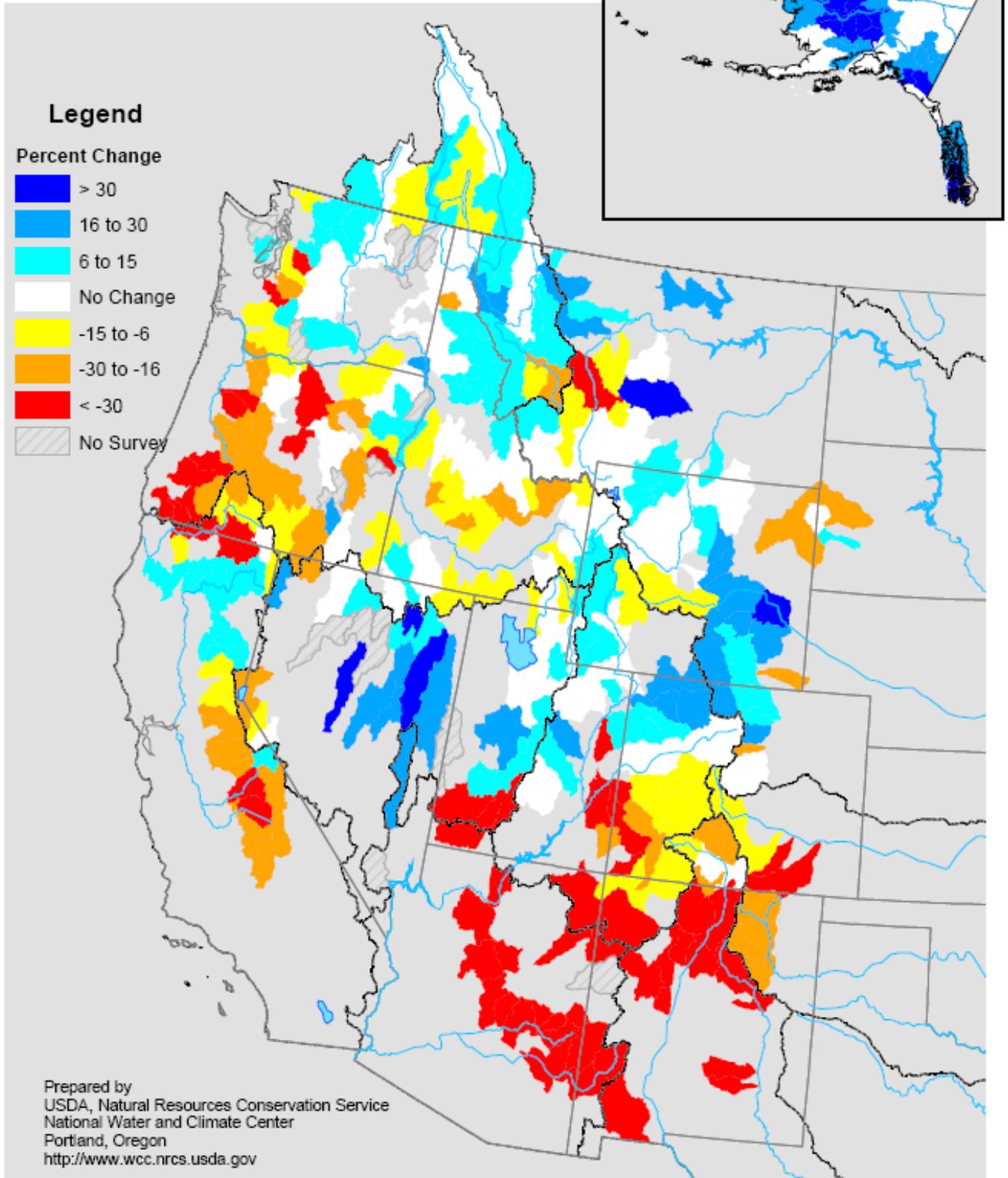


Fig. 2. Mountain Snowpack Difference between, January 1 to February 1, 2009.

Seasonal Precipitation, October 2008 - January 2009

(Averaged by Hydrologic Unit)

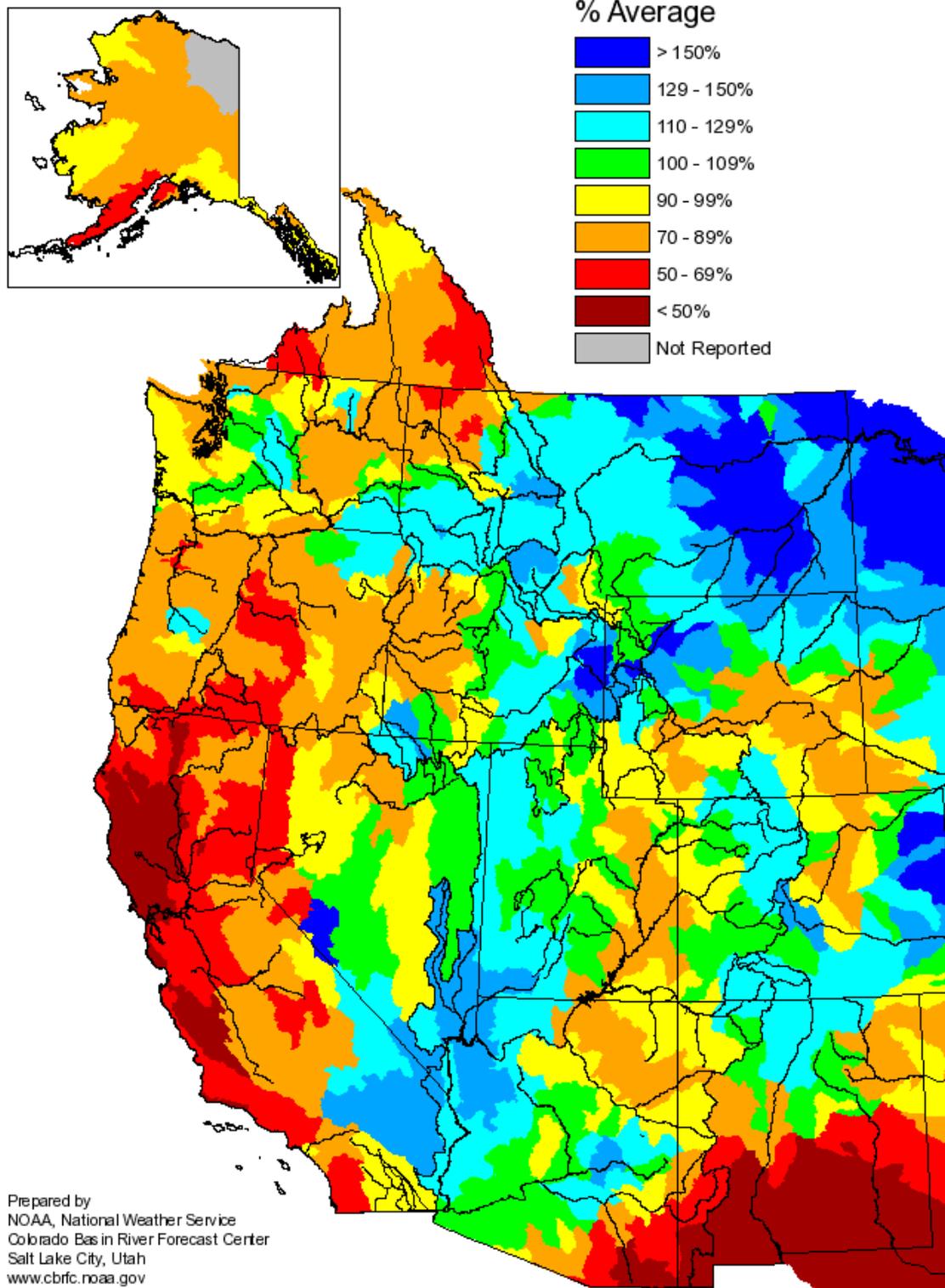
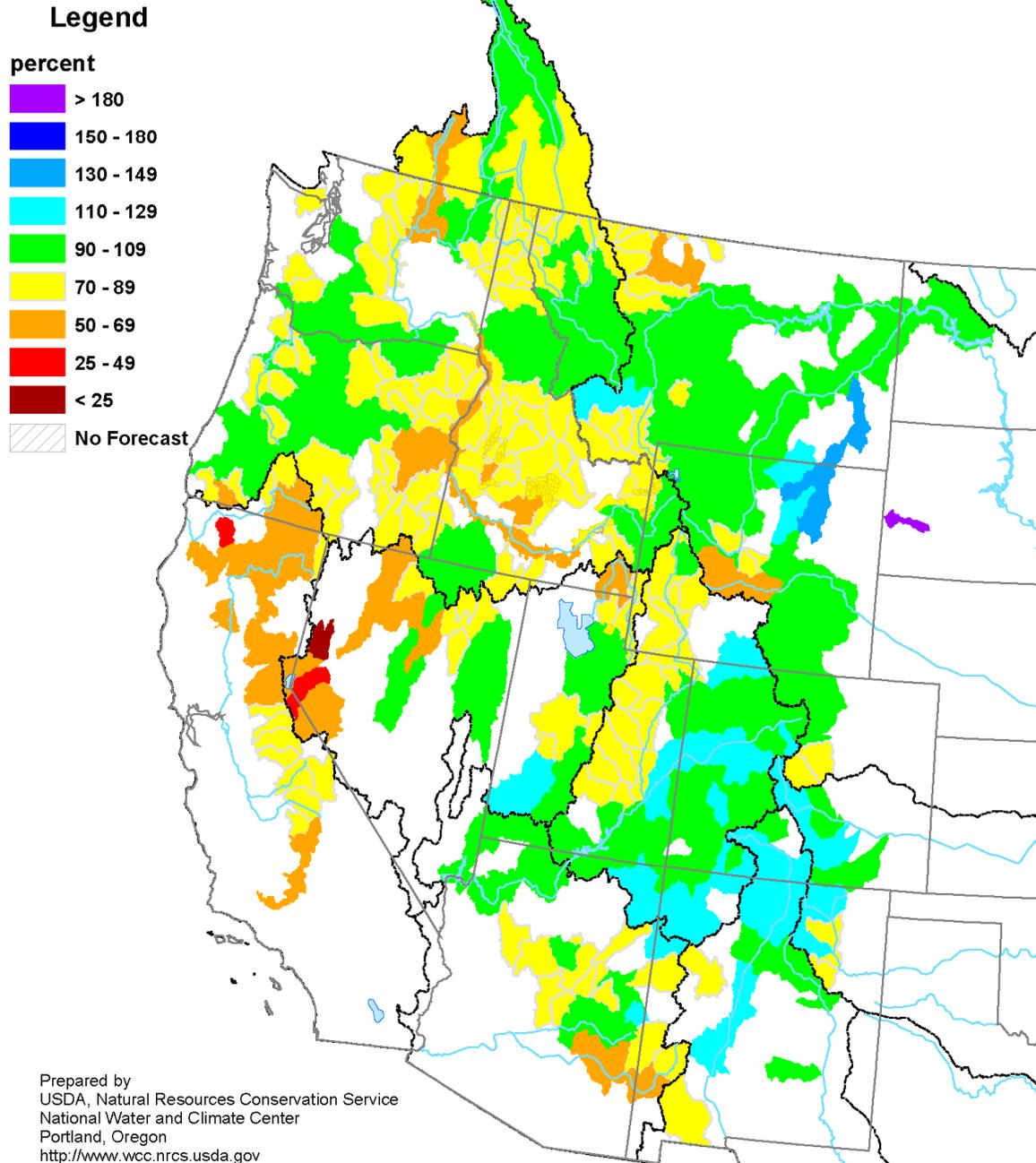


Fig. 3. Seasonal Precipitation, October 2008 to January 2009.

Ref: <http://www.cbrfc.noaa.gov/precip/qpe/maps/sum/map/westS200901.png>

Spring and Summer Streamflow Forecasts as of February 1, 2009



**Fig. 4. Seasonal Water Supply Forecasts - February 1, 2009
(Alaska not forecast in February).**

<ftp://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/support/water/westwide/streamflow/wy2009/strm0902.gif>

Change in Spring and Summer Streamflow Forecasts from January 1 to February 1, 2009

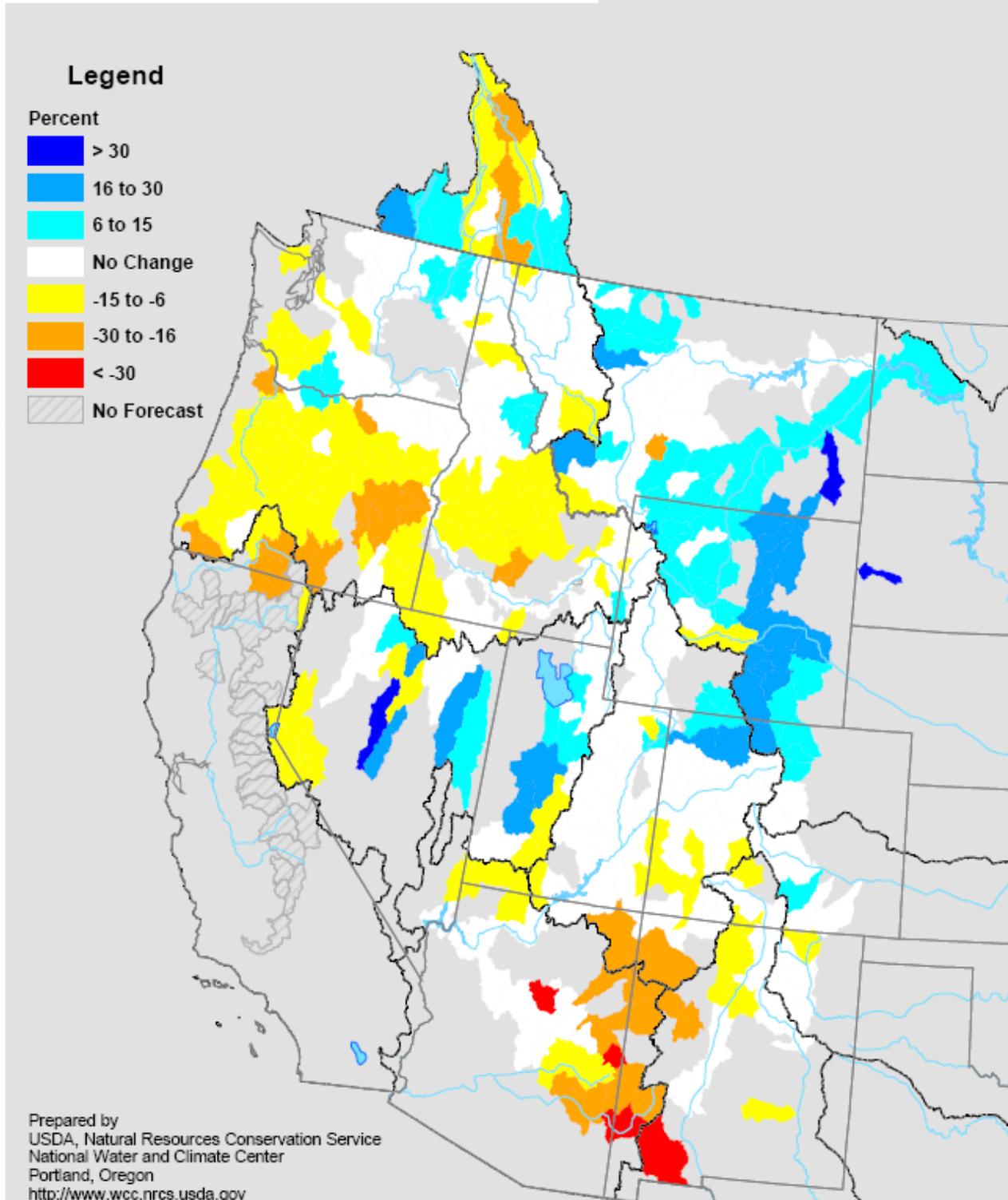
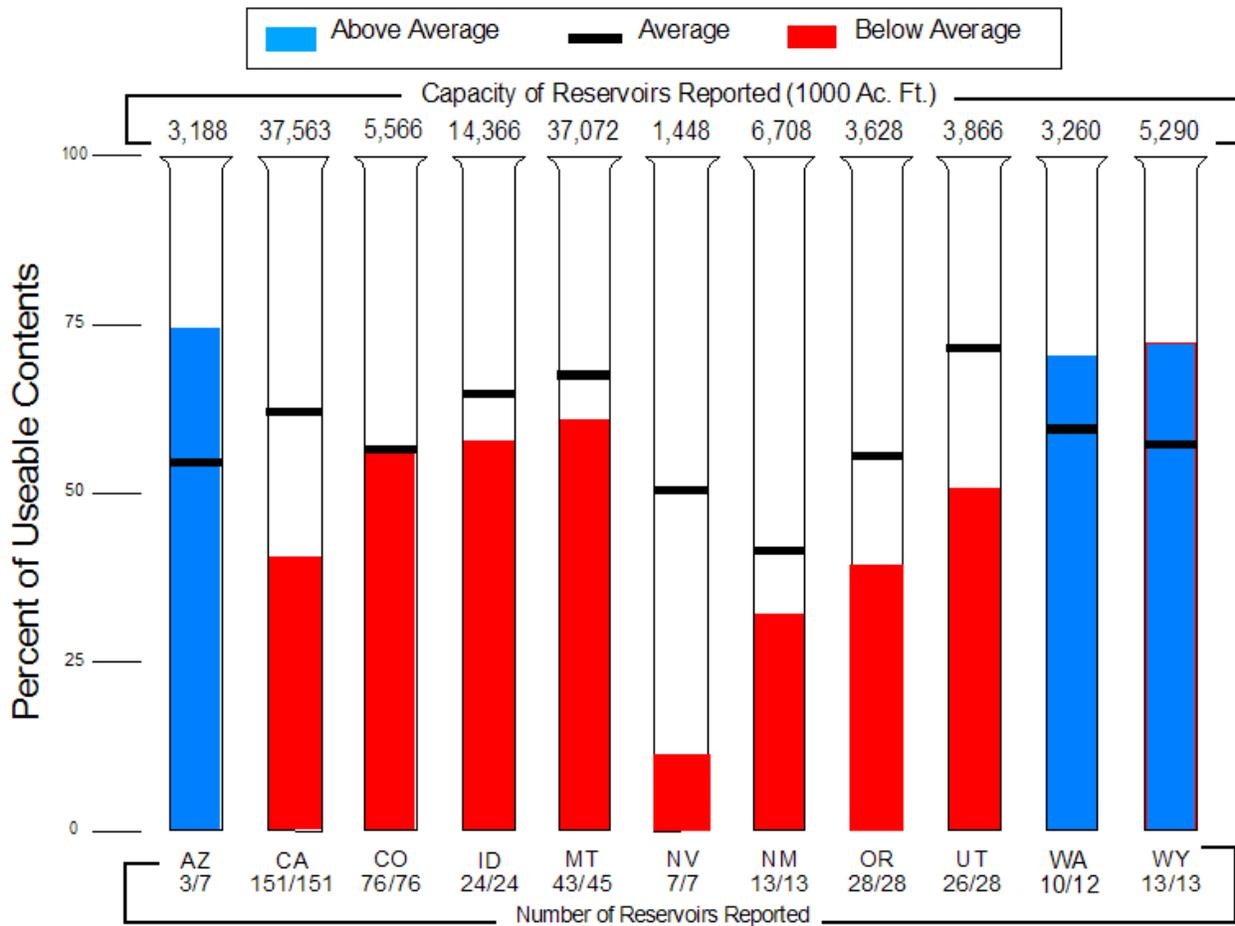


Fig. 5. Change in streamflow forecast between January 1 and February 1, 2009.
Note: California will be available later.

Reservoir Storage as of February 1, 2009



Prepared by: USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Water and Climate Center, Portland, OR
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>

Fig. 6. Reservoir Storage - February 1, 2009. California data not available as of 9 Feb.
 Ref: <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/cgi-bin/resvgrph2.pl?area=west&year=2009&month=02>