



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

Weekly Report - Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update

Date: 17 November 2011

SNOTEL SNOWPACK AND PRECIPITATION SUMMARY

Snow: [Snow Water-Equivalent](#) (SWE) for this time of year is still statistically unreliable. However, the lack of moisture over the Northern Tier States of the West with La Niña is often delayed until the beginning of the calendar year as is currently occurring. The high values over the Southwest are an artifact due to a rare storm transiting through the region during the past week (Fig. 1).

Temperature: [SNOTEL](#) and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly shows temperatures were within $\pm 5^{\circ}\text{F}$ (Fig. 2). [ACIS](#) 7-day average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures over parts of the Northern High Plains and the Central Front Range in Colorado ($>+8^{\circ}\text{F}$) and the greatest negative departures over northwest New Mexico ($<-8^{\circ}\text{F}$) (Fig. 2a).

Precipitation: [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts for the period ending yesterday shows the greatest totals over NW Washington (Fig. 3). However, in terms of percent of normal, part of southern California and the Desert Southwest experienced significant precipitation. Other areas of the Rockies also had good percentage gains despite having total amounts under two inches (Fig 3a). With the start of the [2012 Water-Year](#) that began on 1 October 2011, a pattern of wetter and drier areas across the West are beginning to emerge. The typical slow onset of La Niña moisture for the Northwest (Washington and Oregon) is consistent while above average precipitation elsewhere across the West continues to be somewhat of a surprise (Fig. 3b).

The West: Although precipitation has been heavy (2 inches or greater, liquid equivalent) in the Cascades and Coastal Ranges of Washington and the Bitterroots of northern Idaho, relatively light rains (near 0.5 inch) have fallen this past week across eastern Washington state. Some negative impacts of late summer and autumn precipitation deficits (up to 5 inches for the past 90 days) to the winter wheat crop were reported in the Spokane area. Accordingly, the abnormal dryness (D0) region in northeastern Washington was extended southward to include Lincoln County. No changes in the drought depiction were made this week to south-central Oregon. In the Southwest, recent rains (within the past 2 weeks) have not been enough to justify any improvements in the regional drought depiction, but it was enough to temporarily offset further degradation. Author: Anthony Artusa, NOAA/NWS/CPC

A comprehensive narrative describing drought conditions for the nation can be found at the end of this document.

Drought Impacts Definitions

The possible impacts associated with **D4 (H, A)** drought include widespread crop/pasture losses and shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and wells creating water emergencies. The possible impacts associated with **D3 (H, A)** drought include major crop/pasture losses and widespread water shortages or restrictions. Possible impacts from **D2 (H, A)** drought are focused on water shortages common and water restrictions imposed and crop or pasture losses

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likely. The possible impacts associated with **D1 (H, A)** drought are focused on water shortages developing in streams, reservoirs, or wells, and some damage to crops and pastures (Figs. 4 through 4b).

Soil Moisture

Soil moisture (Figs. 5a and 5b), is simulated by the [VIC macroscale hydrologic model](#). The detailed, physically-based VIC model is driven by observed daily precipitation and temperature maxima and minima from approximately 2130 stations, selected for reporting reliably in real-time and for having records of longer than 45 years (and various other criteria). Another good resource can be found at: <http://www.emc.ncep.noaa.gov/mmb/nldas/drought/>.

Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)

Figure 6 provides supplemental data on soil conditions (moisture and temperatures at various depths from 2 inches to 80 inches. For more information about SCAN see ([brochure](#)).

U.S. Historical Streamflow

This map, (Fig. 7) shows the 7-day average streamflow conditions in hydrologic units of the United States and Puerto Rico for the day of year. The colors represent 7-day average streamflow percentiles based on historical streamflow for the day of the year. Thus, the map shows conditions adjusted for this time of the year. Only stations having at least 30 years of record are used. Sub-regions shaded gray indicate that insufficient data were available to compute a reliable 7-day average streamflow value. During winter months, this situation frequently arises due to ice effects. The data used to produce this map are provisional and have not been reviewed or edited. They may be subject to significant change.

State Activities

State government drought activities can be tracked at the following URL: <http://drought.unl.edu/mitigate/mitigate.htm>. NRCS SS/WSF State Office personnel are participating in state drought committee meetings and providing the committees and media with appropriate SS/WSF information - <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/cgibin/bor.pl>. Additional information describing the products available from the Drought Monitor can be found at the following URL: <http://drought.unl.edu/dm/> and <http://www.drought.gov>.

For More Information

The National Water and Climate Center Homepage provide the latest available snowpack and water supply information. Please visit us at <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>. This document is available from the following location on the NWCC homepage - <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/water/drought/wdr.pl>. Reports from 2007 are available on-line while ones from 2001-2006 can be acquired upon request.

This report uses data and products provided by the Interagency Drought Monitor Consortium members and the National Interagency Fire Center.

/s/

Douglas Lawrence
Deputy Chief, Soil Survey and Resource Assessment

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

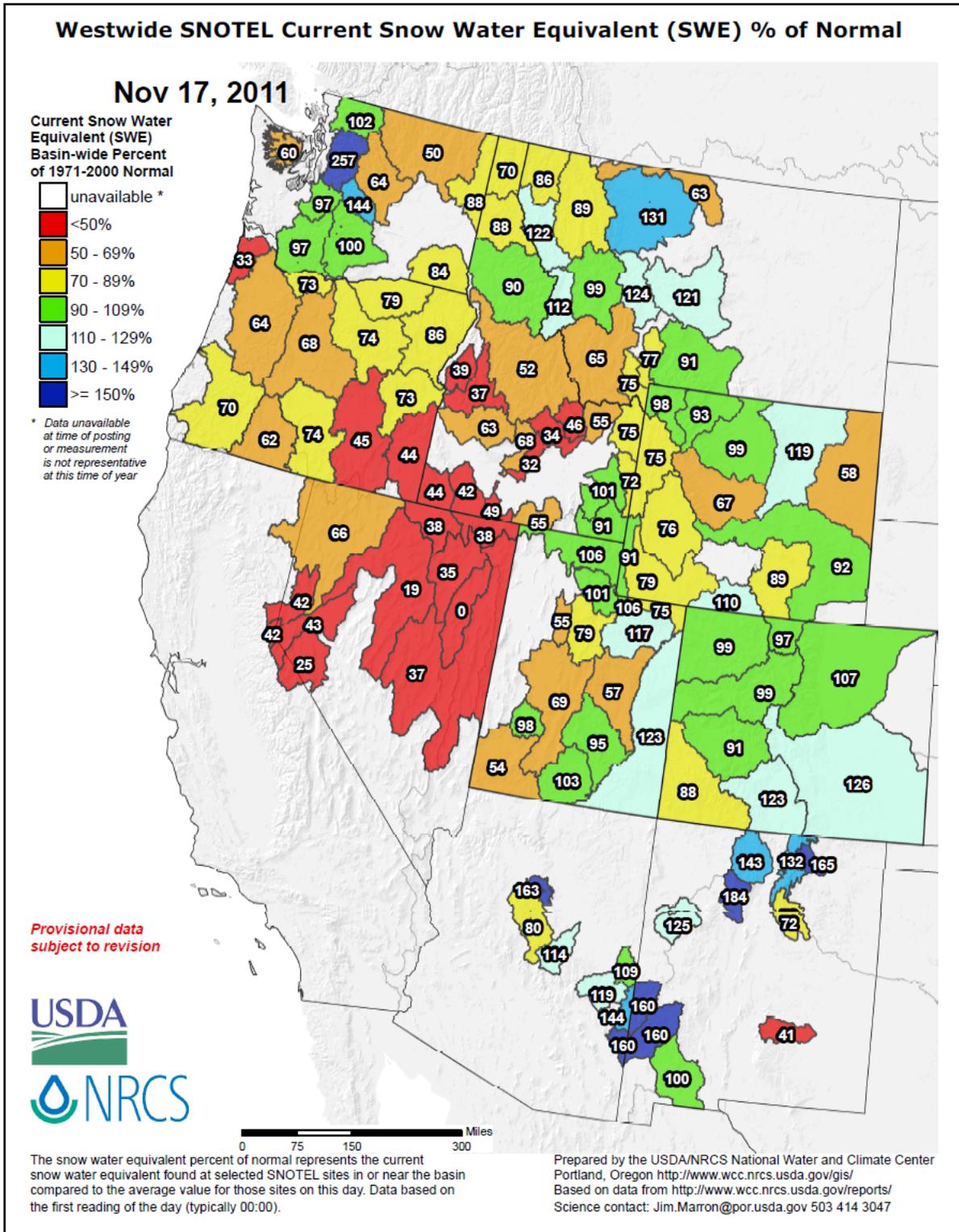


Fig. 1: Snow Water-Equivalent (SWE) for this time of year is still statistically unreliable. However, the lack of moisture over the Northern Tier States of the West with La Niña is often delayed until the beginning of the calendar year as is currently occurring. The high values over the Southwest are an artifact due to a rare storm transiting though the region during the past week.

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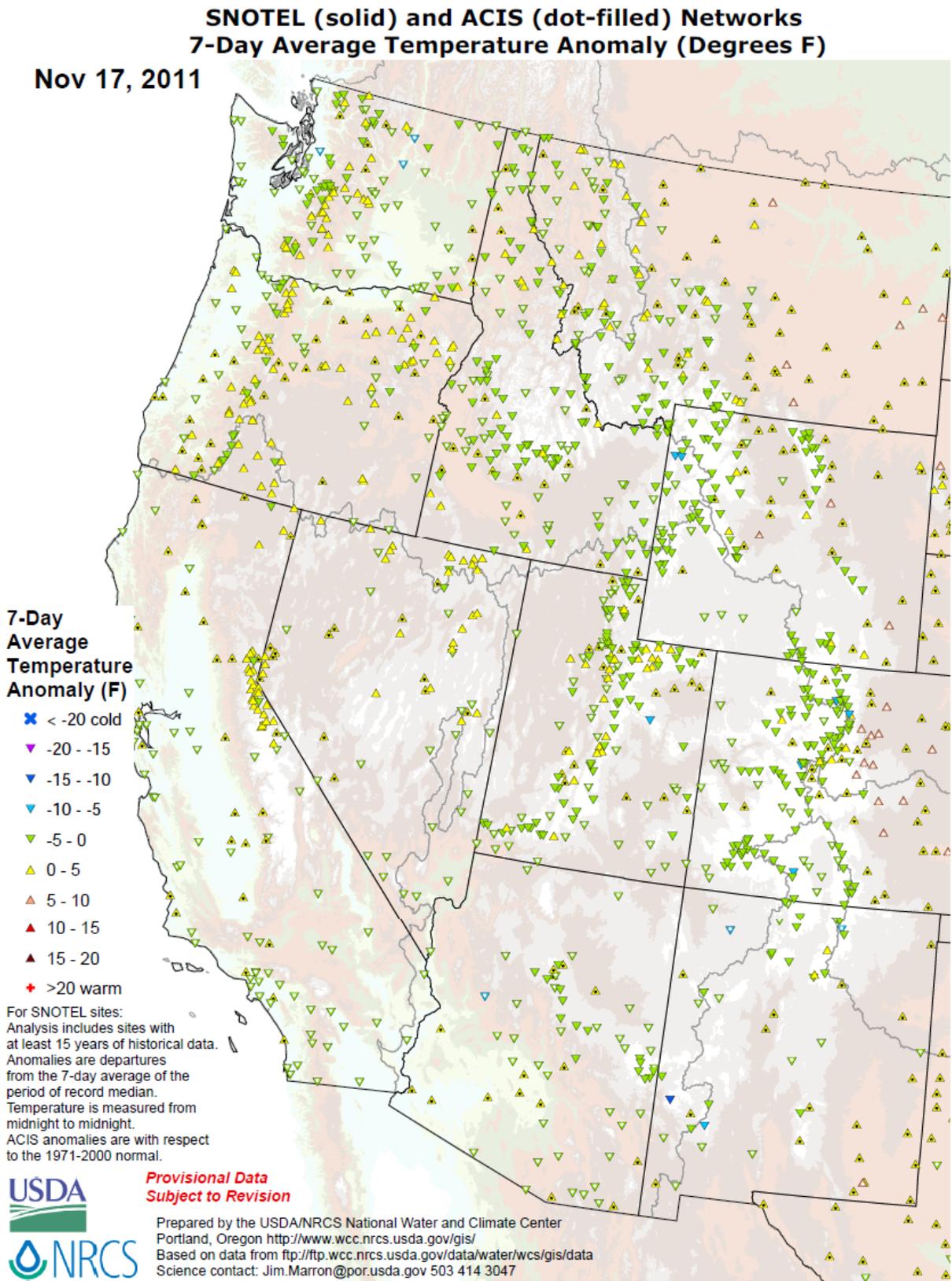
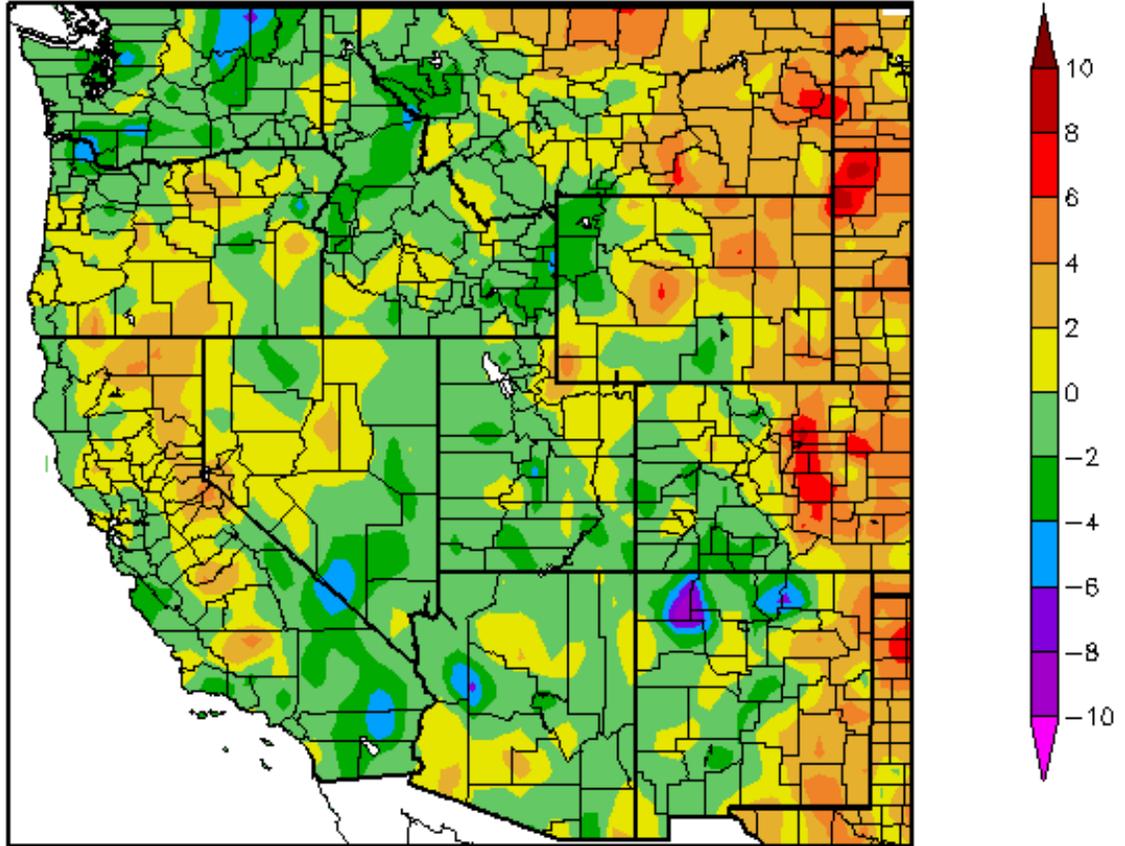


Fig. 2: SNOTEL and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly shows temperatures were within $\pm 5^{\circ}$.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
11/10/2011 – 11/16/2011



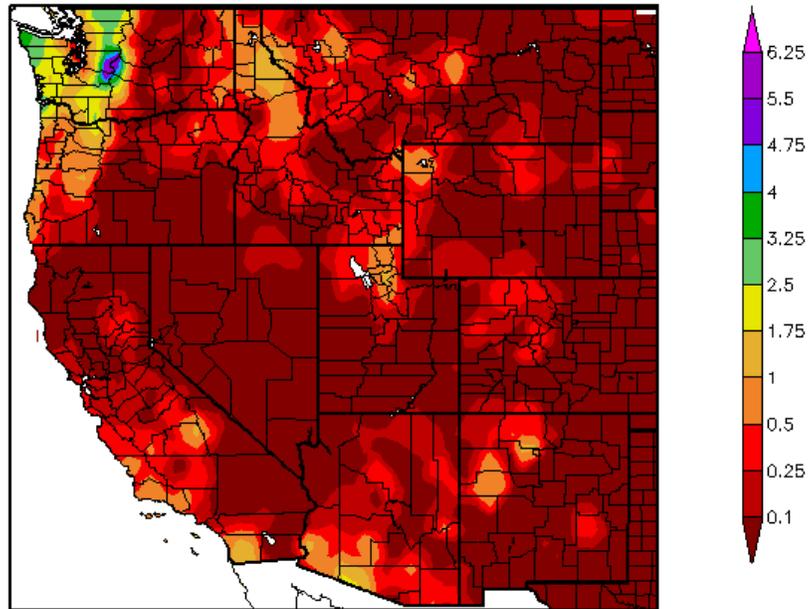
Generated 11/17/2011 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 2a: ACIS 7-day average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures over parts of the Northern High Plains and the Central Front Range in Colorado (>+8°F) and the greatest negative departures over northwest New Mexico (<-8°F).

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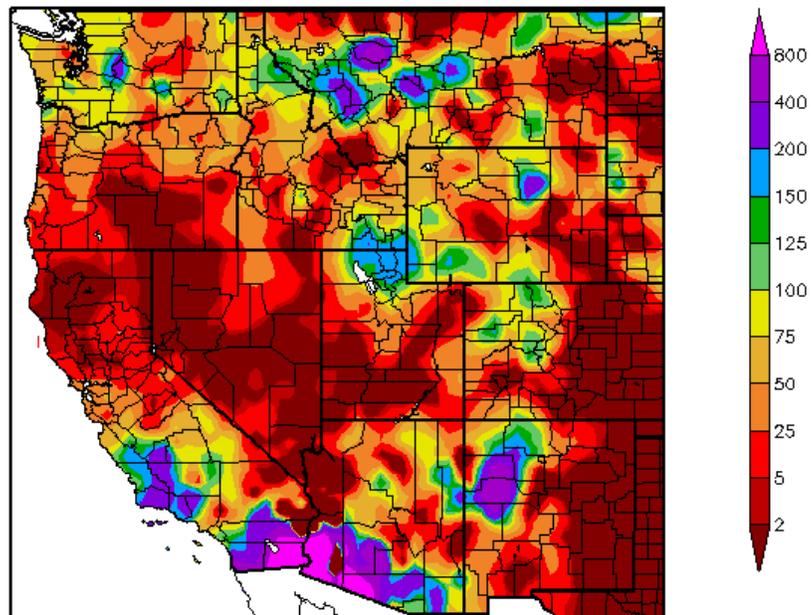
Precipitation (in)
11/10/2011 - 11/16/2011



Generated 11/17/2011 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
11/10/2011 - 11/16/2011



Generated 11/17/2011 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 3 and 3a: [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts for the period ending yesterday shows the greatest totals over NW Washington (Fig. 3). However, in terms of percent of normal, part of southern California and the Desert Southwest experienced significant precipitation. Other areas of the Rockies also had good percentage gains despite having total amounts under two inches (Fig 3a).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

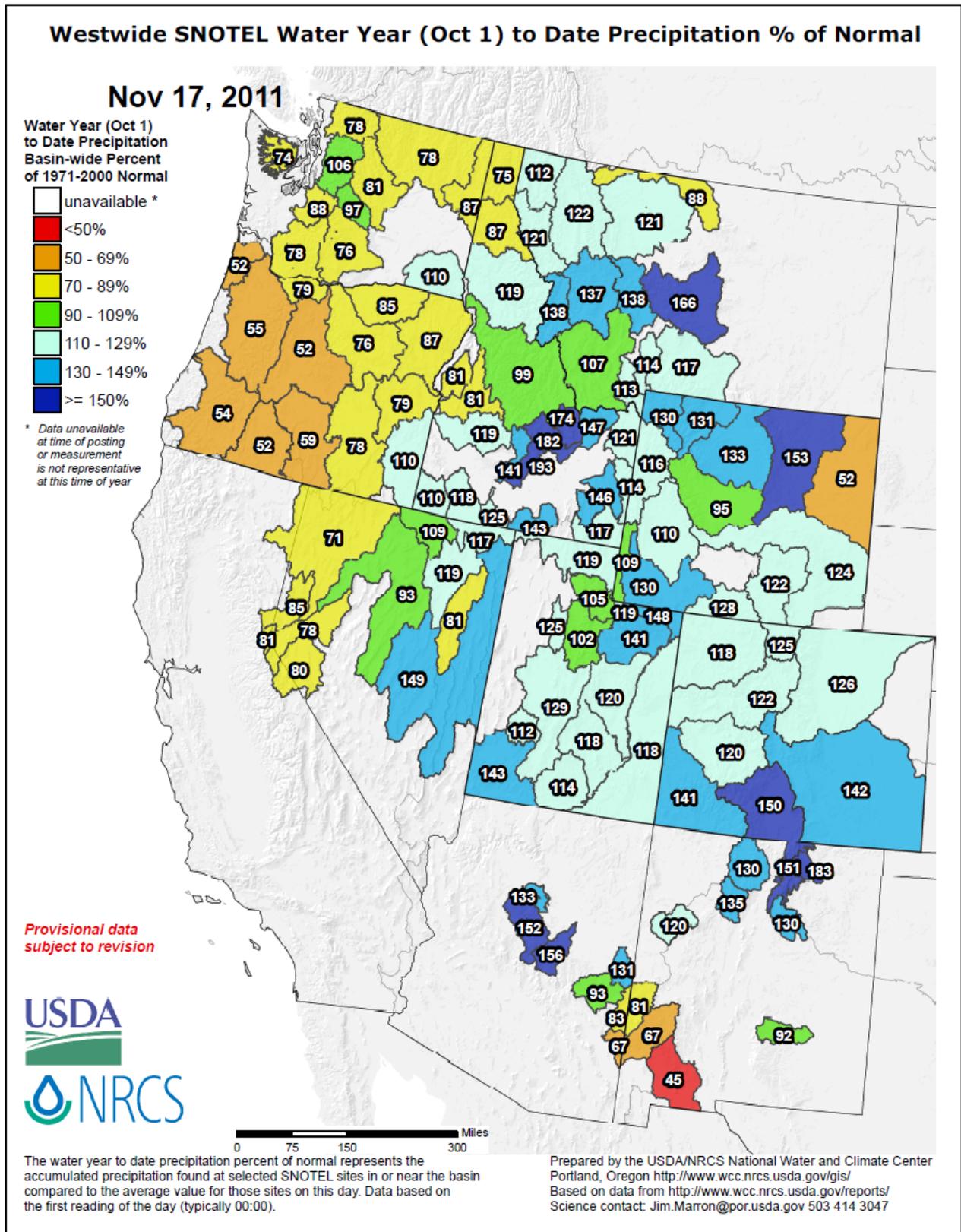


Fig 3b: With the start of the [2012 Water-Year](#) that began on 1 October 2011, a pattern of wetter and drier areas across the West are beginning to emerge. The typical slow onset of La Niña moisture for the Northwest (Washington and Oregon) is consistent while above average precipitation elsewhere across the West continues to be somewhat of a surprise.

U.S. Drought Monitor

November 15, 2011

Valid 7 a.m. EST

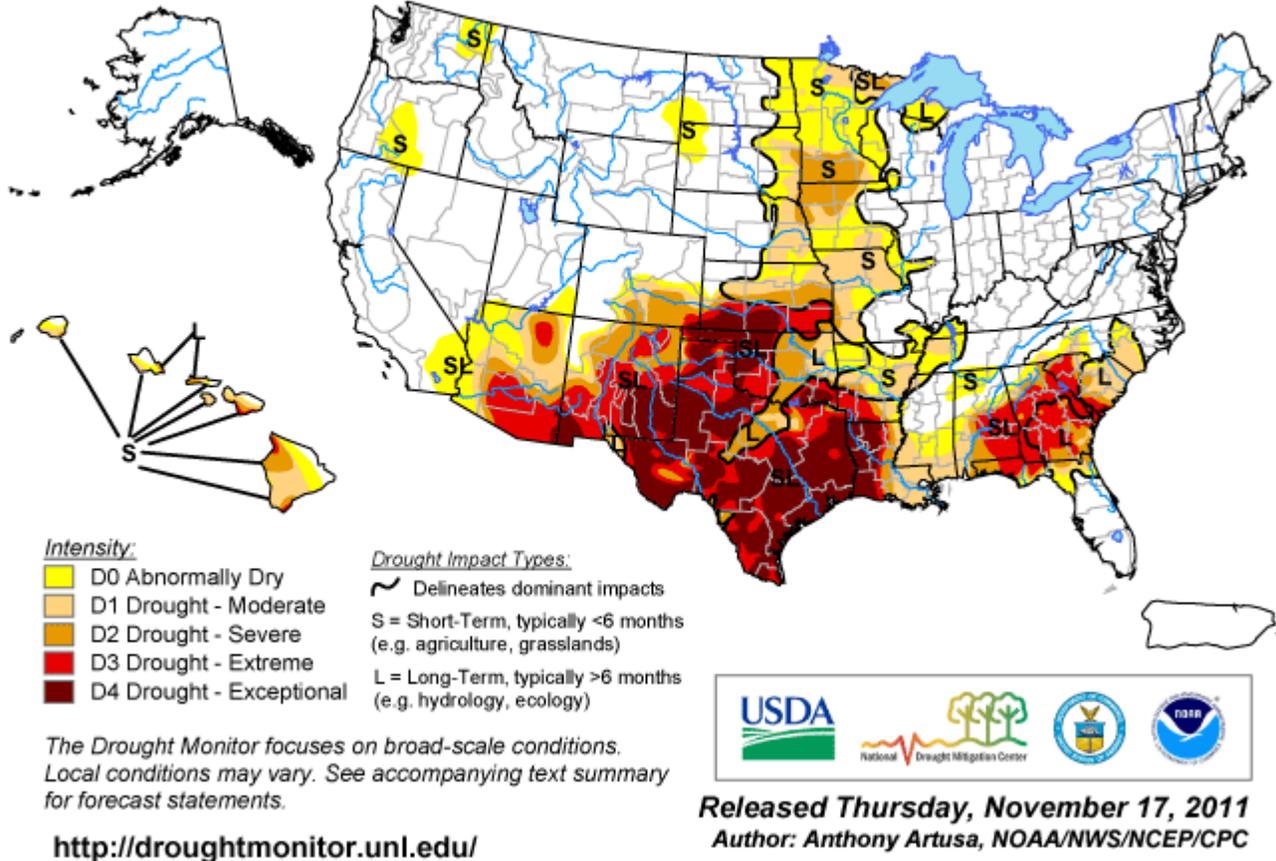


Fig. 4: Current [Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are found over extreme southeast Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and western Louisiana.

[Drought Impact Reporter:](#)

Agriculture

[Cotton stalks causing problems for farmers in much of Texas](#)

Nov 6, Texas. Better Business Bureaus in Texas were receiving up to 75 percent more calls about foundation repairs than last year.

[Drought, hay shortage take toll on horses in Texas](#)

Nov 5, Texas. Equine rescue groups in Texas were overwhelmed with abandoned and surrendered horses since many owners were unable to feed and care for their animals with the high price of hay.

[Estimates for Kansas corn crop continue to drop](#)

Nov 9, Kansas. The USDA's estimated production of corn, soybeans and grain sorghum was revised downward by about 25 percent, compared to last year's crops.

[High cattle prices to continue, analysts say](#)

Nov 11, U.S. There were about 5 million beef cattle in Texas at the start of 2011, but there will likely be 4.5 to 4.6 million at the beginning of 2012.

[Native grass seed in short supply after drought](#)

Nov 8, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Fewer native grass seeds were harvested in southern Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas because drought limited grass growth. The seed shortage has resulted in higher prices for seeds used to plant Conservation Reserve Program acres and reseeding projects along roads.

[Oklahoma Wineries OK After Quake](#)

Nov 8, Central Oklahoma. Five wineries in Lincoln County lost all of their grapes this summer to freezing temperatures in February, drought and heat.

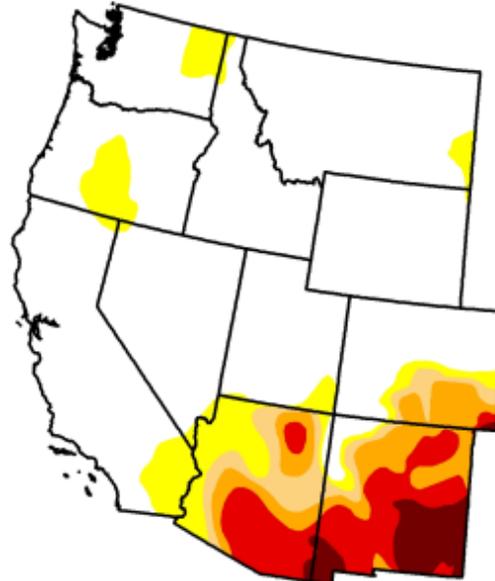
U.S. Drought Monitor

West

November 15, 2011
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Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	72.72	27.28	18.57	15.00	9.51	2.85
Last Week (11/08/2011 map)	73.00	27.00	18.55	14.96	9.50	2.88
3 Months Ago (08/16/2011 map)	75.03	24.97	18.93	15.21	10.62	4.65
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	73.26	26.74	11.98	0.89	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	66.72	33.28	19.04	14.99	9.30	3.81
One Year Ago (11/09/2010 map)	68.55	31.45	6.34	0.19	0.00	0.00



Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.



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<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

Fig. 4a: Drought Monitor for the [Western States](#) with statistics over various time periods. Regionally there was little change in drought condition this week.

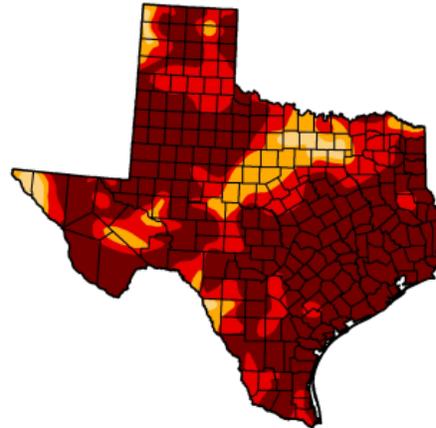
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

U.S. Drought Monitor Texas

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	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	97.57	88.76	65.11
Last Week (11/08/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	98.08	90.31	65.82
3 Months Ago (08/16/2011 map)	0.07	99.93	99.72	98.36	92.78	74.50
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	7.89	92.11	69.43	37.46	9.59	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.16	96.65	85.75
One Year Ago (11/09/2010 map)	51.83	48.17	21.54	4.83	0.00	0.00

Intensity:



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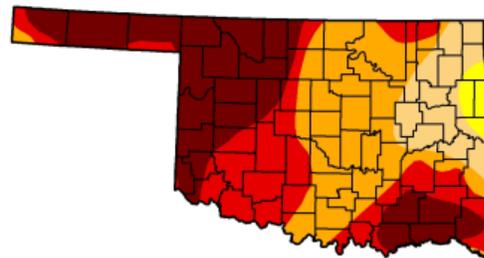
Fig. 4b(1): Currently, ~65% of **Texas** is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought. ~89% of the state is in D3 and D4 drought! Overall, this represents slight improvement this week.

U.S. Drought Monitor Oklahoma

November 15, 2011
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	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	97.33	85.25	55.39	31.77
Last Week (11/08/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	95.31	66.53	32.03
3 Months Ago (08/16/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	96.35	85.39	66.84
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	13.82	86.18	47.90	1.50	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	78.97	66.42
One Year Ago (11/09/2010 map)	50.08	49.92	5.66	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:



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Fig. 4b(2): Currently, over ~32% of **Oklahoma** is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought. Over 55% of the state is in D3 and D4 drought! This week saw significant improvements in D3 and D4.

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U.S. Drought Monitor

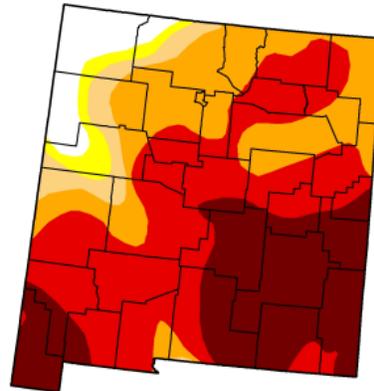
November 15, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

New Mexico

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	6.28	93.72	90.69	85.60	63.04	26.11
Last Week (11/08/2011 map)	6.30	93.70	90.73	85.62	63.05	26.41
3 Months Ago (08/16/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	92.66	77.07	42.39
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	6.16	93.84	40.40	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	96.40	88.99	69.61	35.13
One Year Ago (11/09/2010 map)	76.39	23.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional



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<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



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Fig. 4b(3): **Currently**, 26% of **New Mexico** is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought. Over 63% of the **state** is in D3 and D4 drought. Overall, this represents little change this week.

U.S. Drought Monitor

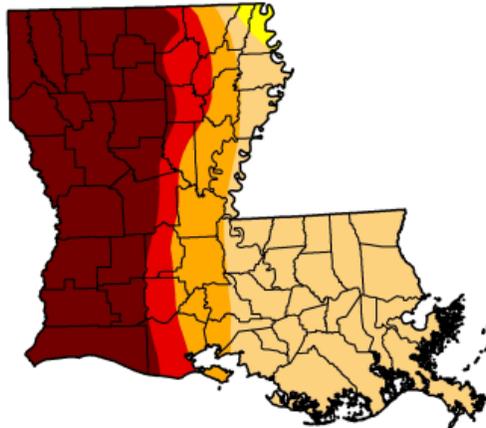
November 15, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Louisiana

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	99.11	63.55	50.11	40.67
Last Week (11/08/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	99.12	63.06	50.27	40.62
3 Months Ago (08/16/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	94.41	80.68	55.96	28.19
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	0.00	100.00	87.22	59.72	40.99	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	45.37	54.63	44.43	35.94	27.14	16.37
One Year Ago (11/09/2010 map)	27.12	72.88	59.84	50.04	25.13	0.00

Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional



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<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



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Fig. 4b(4): **Currently**, 40% of **Louisiana** is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought. Over 50% of the **state** is in D3 and D4 drought. Overall, this represents little change during the week.

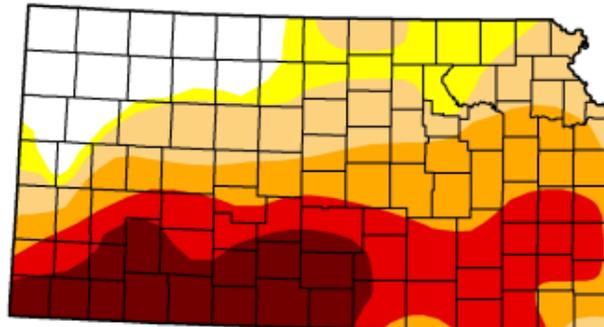
U.S. Drought Monitor

Kansas

November 15, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	14.39	85.61	76.21	57.21	36.47	15.39
Last Week (11/08/2011 map)	14.39	85.61	77.39	57.56	36.00	15.31
3 Months Ago (08/16/2011 map)	26.90	73.10	64.14	44.28	23.60	14.55
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	17.82	82.18	43.85	3.48	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	16.39	83.61	66.03	48.78	28.54	17.63
One Year Ago (11/09/2010 map)	58.58	41.42	11.33	0.00	0.00	0.00



Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional

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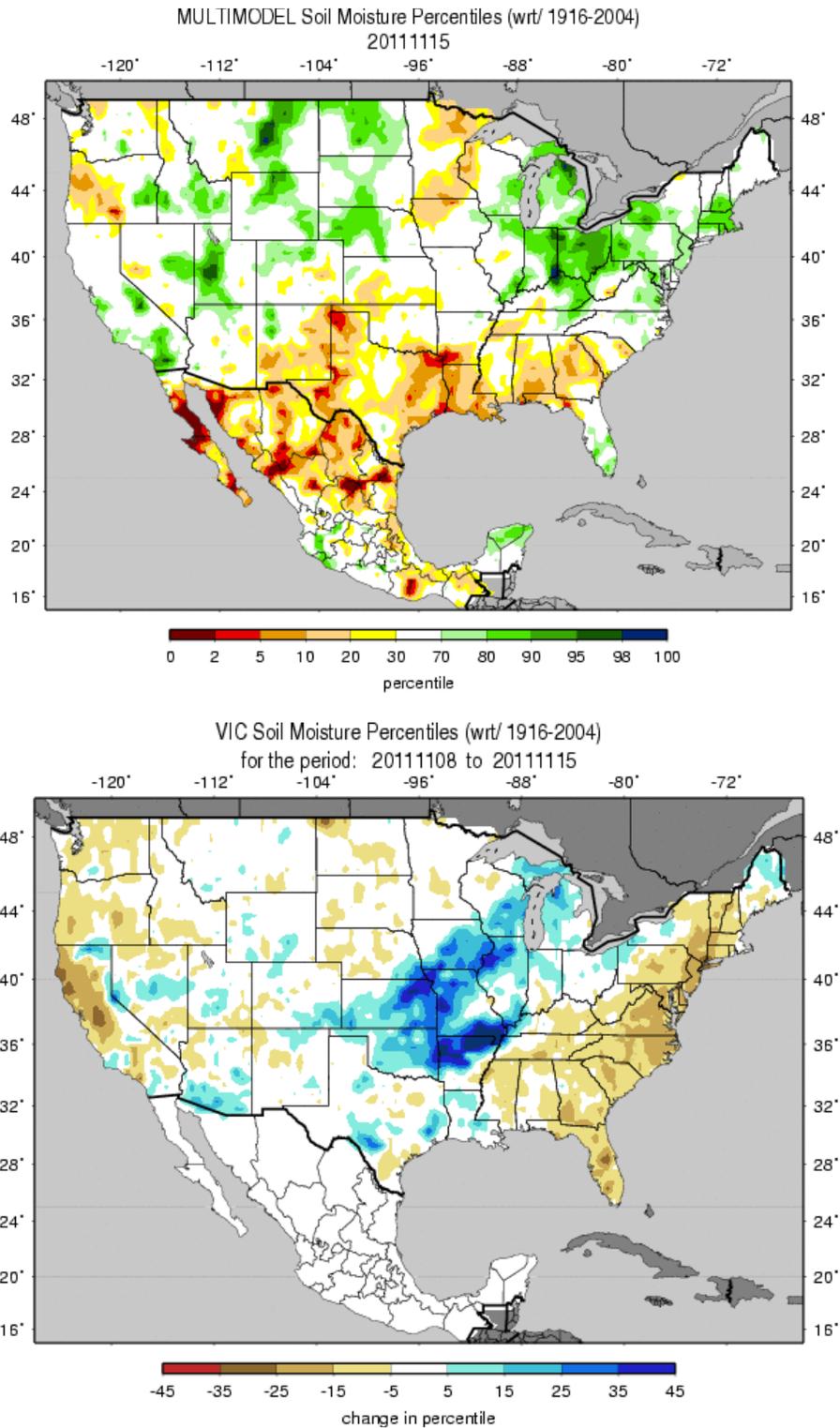


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Fig. 4b(5): **Currently**, 15% of **Kansas** is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought and 36% of the state is in D3 and D4 drought. Overall, this represents little change this week.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



Figs. 5a and 5b: Soil Moisture ranking in [percentile](#) as of 15 November (top) shows moist conditions over the Ohio Valley, and scattered across the Western States while the Northern and Southern Plains and the eastern Gulf States have the greatest deficits. [During the week](#), significant increases in moisture is noted over Central Mississippi River Valley while a drying trend is seen over much of the East and West Coast (Bottom).

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Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)

Station (2039) MONTH=2011-10-18 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
Thu Nov 17 07:34:50 PST 2011

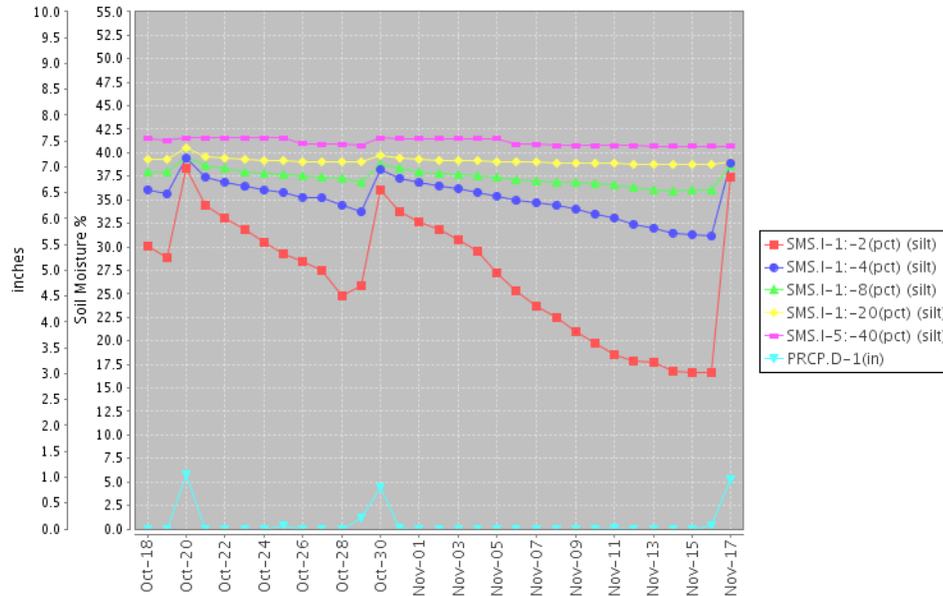


Fig. 6a: This NRCS resource shows a site over [northern Virginia](#) with a decreasing moisture trend until yesterday's rains (2" and 4" depths).

Station (2048) MONTH=2011-10-18 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
Thu Nov 17 07:37:45 PST 2011

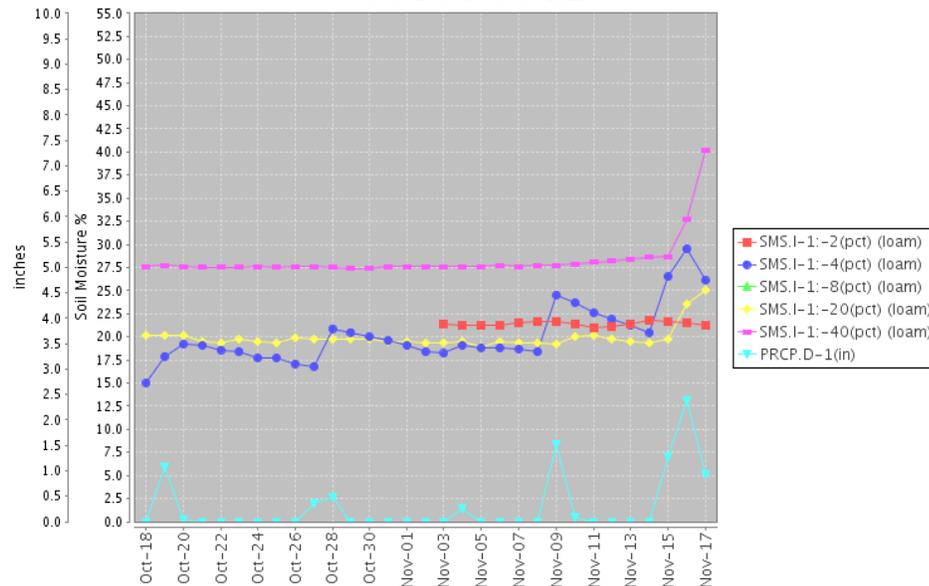
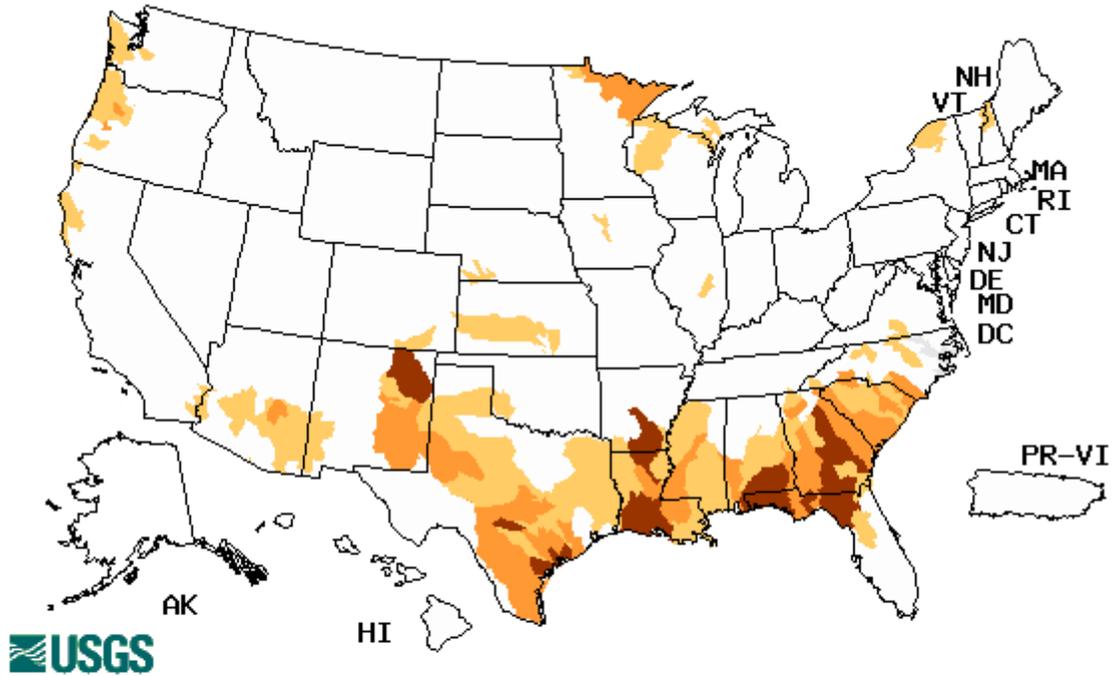


Fig. 6b: This SCAN station is located in [southeast Missouri](#) shows significant improvement of soil moisture due to recent significant rains. Note moisture has finally reached the 40" depth.

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Wednesday, November 16, 2011



Explanation - Percentile classes				
Low	<=5	6-9	10-24	Insufficient data for a hydrologic region
Extreme hydrologic drought	Severe hydrologic drought	Moderate hydrologic drought	Below normal	

Fig. 7: Map of below normal 7-day average [streamflow](#) compared to historical streamflow for the day of year. Severe conditions continue over parts of northern Florida, southern Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, and northeast New Mexico.

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National Drought Summary -- November 15, 2011

The discussion in the Looking Ahead section is simply a description of what the official national guidance from the National Weather Service (NWS) National Centers for Environmental Prediction is depicting for current areas of dryness and drought. The NWS forecast products utilized include the HPC 5-day QPF and 5-day Mean Temperature progs, the 6-10 Day Outlooks of Temperature and Precipitation Probability, and the 8-14 Day Outlooks of Temperature and Precipitation Probability, valid as of late Wednesday afternoon of the USDM release week. The NWS forecast web page used for this section is:

<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/forecasts/>.

The Northeast and Mid-Atlantic: Light to moderate rains (up to 2 inches) fell across much of New England, central and western New York, and northwestern Pennsylvania, with little to no rainfall elsewhere. With adequate precipitation, and near to above-normal stream flows, no changes were made to the regional drought depiction for this week.

Southeast: Precipitation was on the light side (0.5 inch or less) across the region during this past week, which resulted in a 1-category deterioration across portions of west-central North Carolina, extreme western South Carolina, and both northeastern and southwestern portions of Georgia. In South Carolina, soil moisture conditions fell to 11-percent very short, 45-percent short, and 44-percent adequate, and there was an average of 6.4 days suitable for fieldwork.

Statewide topsoil moisture conditions in nearby Georgia were similar; 16-percent very short, 43-percent short, 38-percent adequate, and 3-percent surplus, with an average of 6.2 days suitable for field work. Farther west, abnormal dryness (D0) was expanded slightly into extreme northeastern Alabama (northern Jackson County) and the neighboring counties of Lincoln and Franklin in southern Tennessee. Short-term (3-month) and especially long-term (9-month) SPI maps, as well as the Lowest of the Drought Indicator Blend Percentiles clearly show the persistent dryness/drought across the Southeast, as do low USGS stream flow percentiles.

Lower Mississippi/Ohio Valleys: Widespread heavy rains (2-5 inches) were reported over north-central and northwestern Arkansas this past week, which helped boost stream flows. Much of this region has seen a 1-category improvement, from moderate drought (D1) to abnormal dryness (D0). Over nearby parts of extreme western Kentucky, light to moderate rains (up to 1.5 inches) have helped eliminate moderate drought conditions (D1), leaving a small remnant of abnormal dryness (D0).

Midwest: Recent storms have significantly replenished surface water supplies across this region, and have also helped to recharge soil moisture after the recent harvesting. Agricultural impacts in western Illinois are virtually undetectable, with corn and soybeans at 97 and 98 percent harvested, respectively. A sharp delineation exists between areas like western Illinois and southeastern Iowa which received beneficial precipitation, and the much drier conditions of northwestern Iowa, northeastern Nebraska, eastern South Dakota, and southern Minnesota. For these latter areas, short-term (3-month) SPI values reveal substantially worsened conditions during this period, most notably centered over southern Minnesota and extreme eastern South Dakota. A continued lack of rain also warranted a one-category deterioration (from D0 to D1) over the remainder of Cook County in extreme northeastern Minnesota.

The Central and Southern Plains: Widespread dryness persisted across large portions of Texas, though fairly scattered light to moderate showers (up to 1 inch) fell across parts of south-

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central, northern and eastern Texas. Minor adjustments were made to the Texas drought depiction in these areas. In addition, a slight upgrade was made in the extreme northwestern part of the Panhandle, with conditions improving from D2 to D1. In Oklahoma, October through early November rains have replenished soil moisture in most of the state except primarily for west-central/northwestern and southeastern Oklahoma. In the past two weeks, a number of reservoirs in eastern Oklahoma have rebounded substantially. Along the Red River however, places like McCurtain County, still suffer from 3-month precipitation deficits ranging from 6-12 inches. Along the northern border, the area of extreme drought (D3) in southern Kansas was extended southward into northeastern Osage County, and northern portions of Washington and Nowata Counties in Oklahoma. Skiatook Lake (Osage County) has not seen an increase of inflows like the other lakes farther east and south, and sub-soil moisture is still extremely dry. Two-month precipitation is running around 60-percent of normal, as this region has missed much of the autumn rains. In east-central Kansas, moderate rains (0.5 to 2 inches) fell this past week, but surface water supplies remain in serious condition.

The West: Although precipitation has been heavy (2 inches or greater, liquid equivalent) in the Cascades and Coastal Ranges of Washington and the Bitterroots of northern Idaho, relatively light rains (near 0.5 inch) have fallen this past week across eastern Washington state. Some negative impacts of late summer and autumn precipitation deficits (up to 5 inches for the past 90 days) to the winter wheat crop were reported in the Spokane area. Accordingly, the abnormal dryness (D0) region in northeastern Washington was extended southward to include Lincoln County. No changes in the drought depiction were made this week to south-central Oregon. In the Southwest, recent rains (within the past 2 weeks) have not been enough to justify any improvements in the regional drought depiction, but it was enough to temporarily offset further degradation.

Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico: The Alaska panhandle experienced heavy precipitation (2 inches or greater, liquid equivalent) during the past week, while light precipitation (up to 0.5 inch) was reported over south-central Alaska. Stream flows across the state are near to above normal, so no changes were made to the drought depiction. In Hawaii, rainfall amounts were generally light, except for northeast facing (windward) slopes, where heavy showers dropped 2 to 3 inches of rain. The east Oahu area in D2(L) is now under a mandatory 20-percent restriction on water use from the Waimanalo Reservoir, up from 10-percent earlier. Water levels have dropped from 60 feet in the middle of May 2011 to around 22 feet this week. Puerto Rico reported mostly moderate to heavy rains (1-4 inches) during the week. No alterations were made this week to the drought depiction for Hawaii or Puerto Rico.

Looking Ahead: Over the next five days (November 17-21), temperatures are expected to drop as much as 15-20 degrees below normal across the northwestern quarter of the lower 48 states, and rise 10-15 degrees above normal from the southern Great Plains to the Great Lakes region. Moderate precipitation (0.5 to 2 inches) is anticipated from northeastern Texas and eastern Oklahoma generally eastward and northeastward to the mid-Atlantic region.

The CPC 6-10 day forecast (November 22-26) continues to show the influence of a trough over the western CONUS and a ridge over the eastern CONUS. Temperatures are predicted to be above normal for nearly all areas east of the Rockies, and near to below normal west of the Rockies. The best chances for above-median precipitation are in the West, and from eastern Oklahoma northeastward through the mid-Atlantic region. The best chances for below-median precipitation are over the southern Rockies and southern High Plains, most of the central and northern Plains, and over the southern Atlantic Coast region.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

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Dryness Categories

D0 ... Abnormally Dry ... used for areas showing dryness but not yet in drought, or for areas recovering from drought.

Drought Intensity Categories

D1 ... Moderate Drought

D2 ... Severe Drought

D3 ... Extreme Drought

D4 ... Exceptional Drought

Drought or Dryness Types

S ... Short-Term, typically <6 months (e.g. agricultural, grasslands)

L ... Long-Term, typically >6 months (e.g. hydrology, ecology)

Updated November 16, 2011

For the Latest [NOAA CPC Seasonal Outlook](#) released this morning.