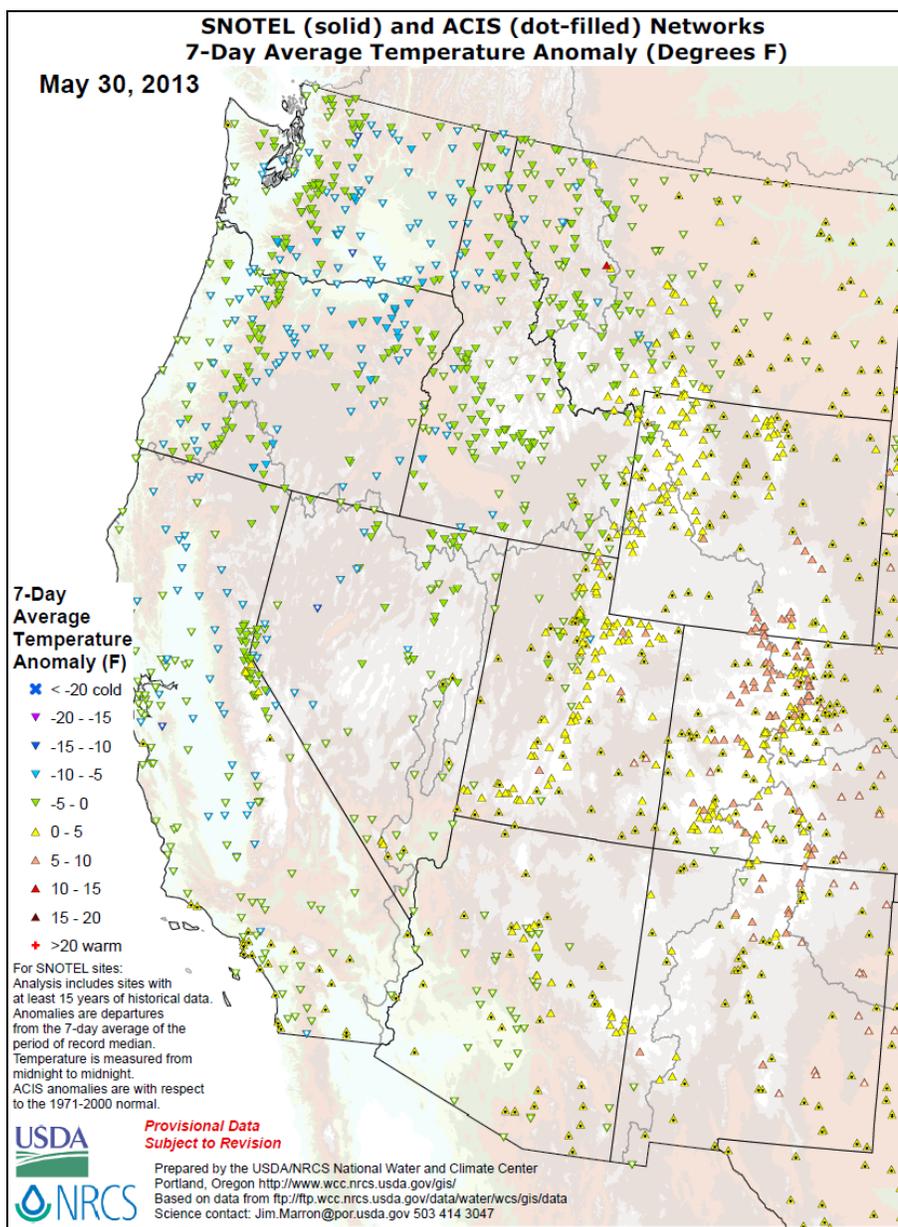




Natural Resources Conservation Service
 P.O. Box 2890
 Washington, D.C. 20013

Weekly Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update, 30 May 2013
 (Most figures are clickable to enlarge and update)

Temperature

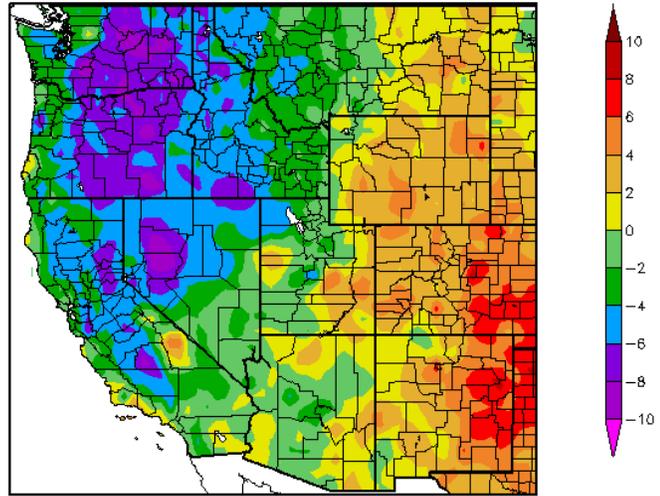


[SNOTEL](#) and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly ending today reveals temperatures were as much as 10°F below normal across much of the interior of the Northwest and California. Temperatures were as much as 10°F above normal across much of the High Plains and northern Colorado.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
5/23/2013 – 5/29/2013

[ACIS 7-day](#) average temperature anomalies, ending yesterday, show the greatest positive temperature departures over the eastern plains of New Mexico and southeastern Colorado (>+6°F). The greatest negative departures occur over scattered areas in the Great Basin and Pacific Northwest (<-8°F). This map currently does not use SNOTEL data, but is expected to later this summer.



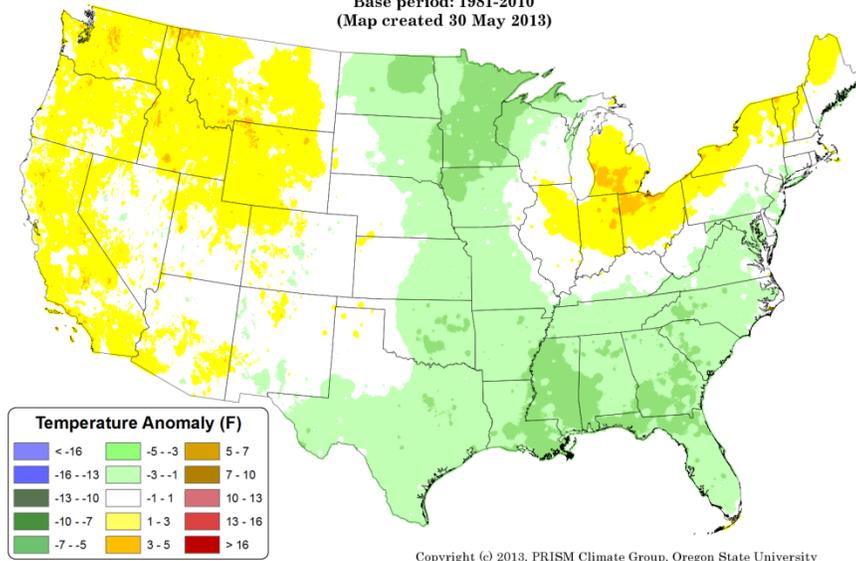
Generated 5/30/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

For more figures, see the Western Water Assessment's Intermountain West Climate [Dashboard](#). See the [Westwide Drought Tracker](#) for more related maps.

This new, preliminary [PRISM](#) temperature map, updated daily, will be readily available to the public by early fall. It contains all available network data, including SNOTEL data, and will be updated periodically as additional data become available and are quality controlled.

Daily Mean Temperature Anomaly: 01 May 2013 - 29 May 2013
Period ending 7 AM EST 29 May 2013
Base period: 1981-2010
(Map created 30 May 2013)



Copyright (c) 2013, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University

In this current map, the Western states had near normal temperatures. The mid-section of the nation has modified significantly since the first half of May and is now reflecting fewer negative temperature departures.

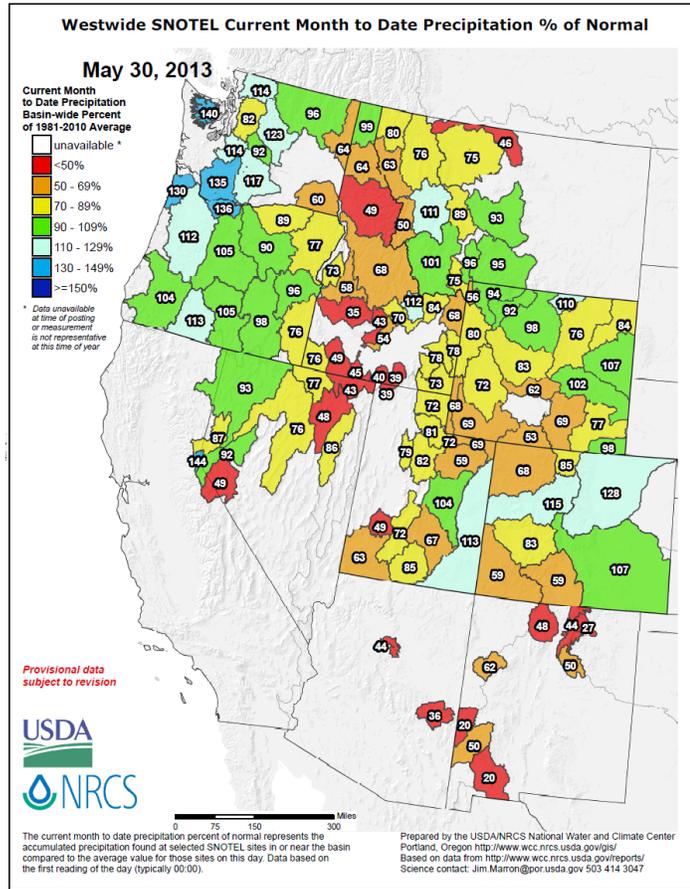
The eastern Great Lake States including northern New England have been somewhat warmer this month while the southern plains and much of the eastern seaboard have been cooler..

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

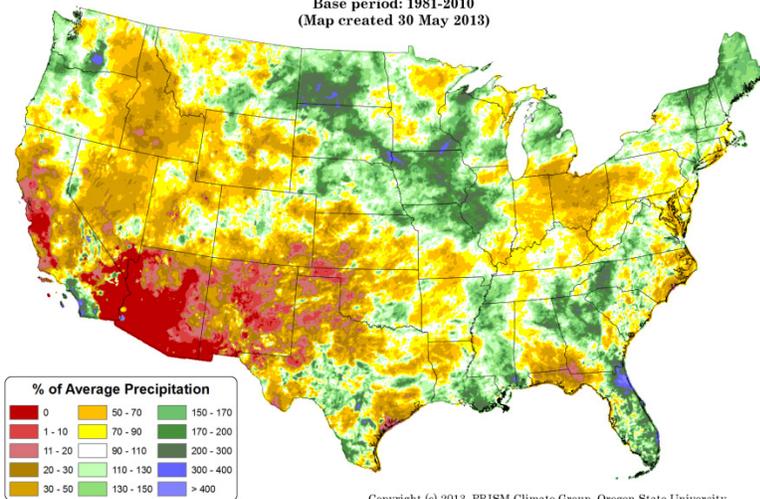
Precipitation

SNOTEL [month to date](#) precipitation percent of normal pattern shows significant precipitation the Cascades and from northeastern Colorado westward to eastern Utah. Another isolated basin in western Montana also experienced above normal May precipitation.

With the exception of near normal values over Oregon, northwestern Nevada, and parts of the eastern slope of the Continental Divide, the remainder of the West has experienced a dry month with large deficits.



Total Precipitation Anomaly: 01 May 2013 - 29 May 2013
 Period ending 7 AM EST 29 May 2013
 Base period: 1981-2010
 (Map created 30 May 2013)



This new, preliminary [PRISM](#) precipitation map, updated daily, will be available to the public by early fall.

It contains all available network data, including SNOTEL data, and will be updated periodically as additional data become available and are quality controlled.

In this current map, higher than normal amounts of precipitation have occurred from southern California northeastward through Utah and Colorado.

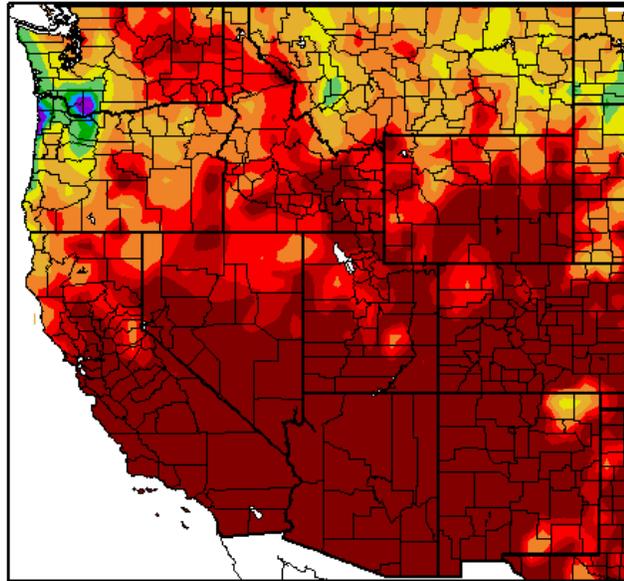
For May, the lack of moisture is apparent over the Southwest and much of California. The unusual occurrence of light precipitation over southern California reflects the statistical anomaly shown (blue). Parts of Oregon and Washington have significant precipitation this week, helping to boost totals above normal. The Upper Missouri River, New England, and parts of the Southeast have had above normal rainfall.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

[ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts for the period ending May 29 show significant precipitation across the lower Columbia River. The southern tier saw little if any rainfall.

This map currently does not use SNOTEL data, but is expected to later this summer.

Precipitation (in)
5/23/2013 – 5/29/2013



Generated 5/30/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

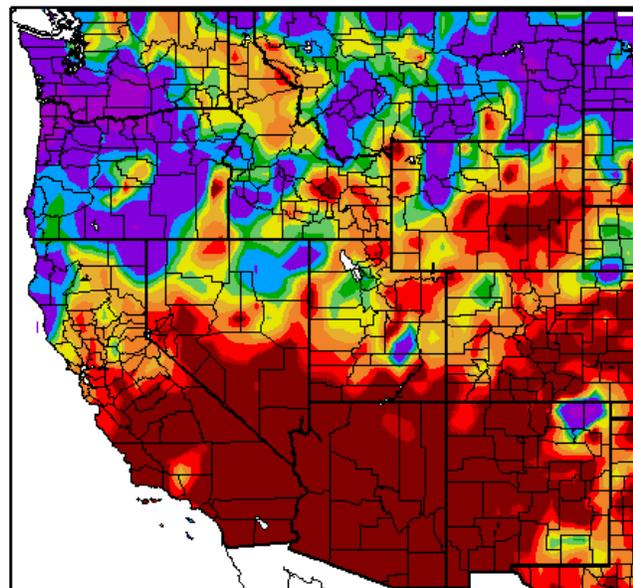
Regional Clir

In this [map](#), high amounts of precipitation are reflected in terms of very high percent of normal values over much of the northern tier states, but seriously lacking over the southern tier states, with the exception of northeastern New Mexico.

Note the gap in rainfall over northern and southeast regions of Idaho.

This map currently does not use SNOTEL data, but is expected to later this summer.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
5/23/2013 – 5/29/2013



Generated 5/30/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Clir

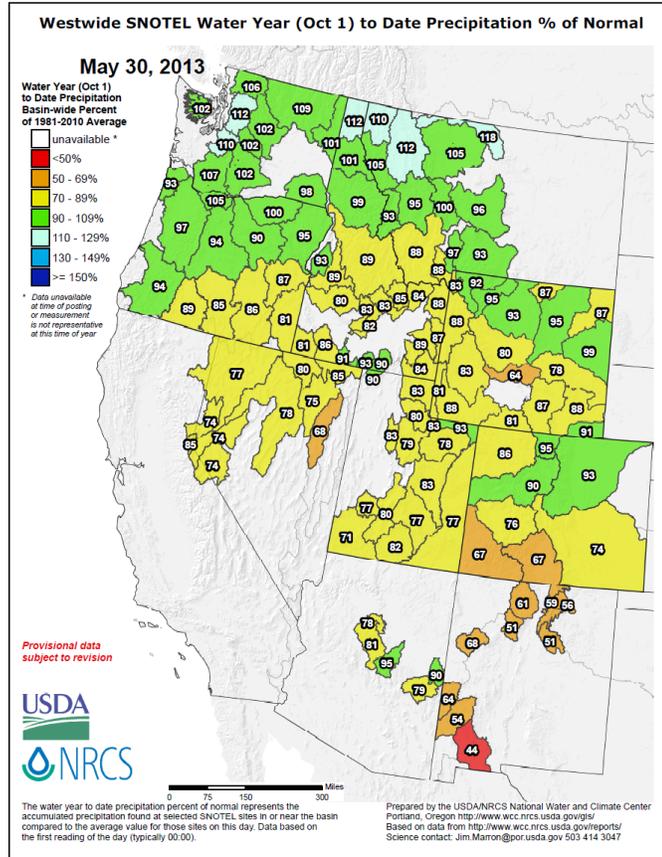
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

For the [2013 Water Year](#) that began on 1 October 2012, the pattern continues to resemble La Niña (i.e., wetter northern tier).

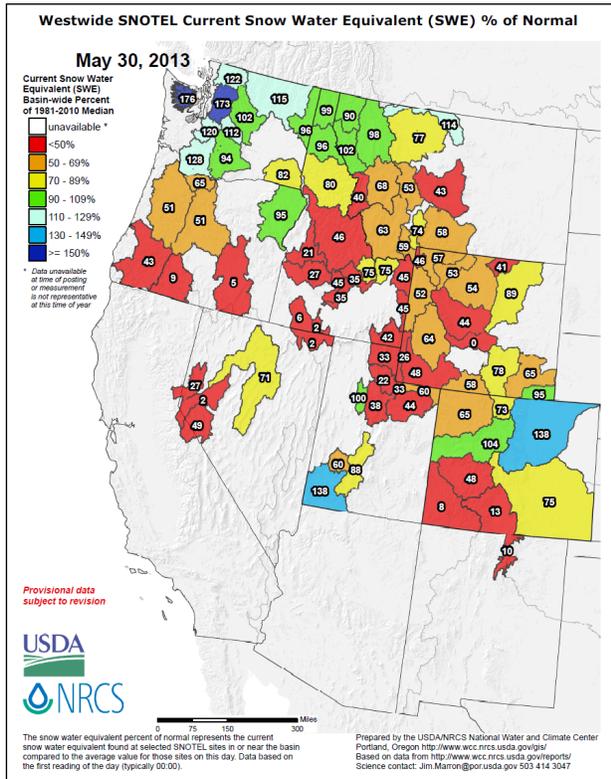
Parts of Arizona are still the exception for the southern tier with near normal amounts. Southeastern Oregon and northern Nevada have bucked this tendency over the northern tier states with lesser precipitation. Southwestern Colorado and all of New Mexico are experiencing considerable deficits.

In New Mexico, the past [two years](#) are the driest on record (i.e., since 1895).

For additional information, daily reports by SNOTEL sites are available [here](#).



Snow



Snow-Water Equivalent (SWE): Today's map shows high values* holding on in parts of Washington and northern Colorado.

A useful basin-by-basin assessment of SWE to date can be viewed by state [here](#) and [here](#).

* Exercise caution when using SWE values this late into the season. Actual small values of snow can mislead statistics when there is usually no measurable snow cover.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

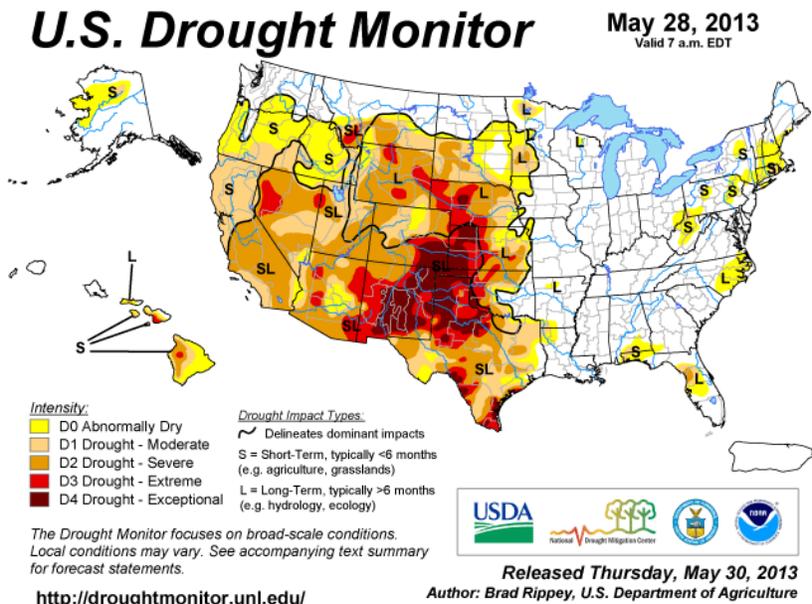
WEATHER AND DROUGHT SUMMARY

The following **Weather and Drought Summary** is provided by this week's NDMC Author: [Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)

Weather Summary: "Heavy rain returned to the northern Plains and upper Midwest late in the drought-monitoring period, further easing or eradicating lingering long-term drought and turning residual drought to flooding in some of the hardest-hit areas. By late May, minor to moderate flooding was underway at nearly 100 river gauges in the western Corn Belt, with major flooding occurring in a few locations. For example, the Skunk River near Sigourney, Iowa, crested 9.93 feet above flood stage on May 28, surpassing the March 1960 high-water mark by a little over seven inches. Similarly, the Little Sioux River at Correctionville, Iowa, climbed 6.27 feet above flood stage on May 28, the third-highest crest in that location behind 10.34 feet in June 1891 and 6.86 feet in April 1965. Local downpours also dotted the southeastern Plains, while a sustained period of heavy rain (and high-elevation snow) nearly eradicated dryness (D0) and drought (D1) from New York and New England. Meanwhile, little or no precipitation fell from California to the central and southern High Plains, further sharpening the gradient between drought and non-drought areas across the nation's mid-section."

The West: Only the northern tier of the region—mainly north of the existing areas of dryness and drought—received appreciable precipitation during the drought-monitoring period. On May 26, USDA reported that at least 40% of the rangeland and pastures were rated very poor to poor in five of the eleven Western States. New Mexico topped the list, with 91% of its rangeland and pastures rated very poor to poor, followed by Arizona (66%), Nevada (65%), California (55%), and Colorado (45%). Below-average statewide reservoir storage remained a concern in several Western States, including Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Oregon

A comprehensive narrative describing drought conditions for the nation can be found toward the end of this document. For drought impacts definitions for the figures below, click [here](#).



Current [Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are scattered across the western Corn Belt of the Plains into southeastern Colorado and much of New Mexico. For more drought news, see [Drought Impact Reporter](#).

The latest [drought indicator blend and component percentiles](#) spreadsheet is a great resource for climate division drought statistics. This link is for the latest [Drought Outlook](#) (forecast).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

See:

- Drought Monitor for the [Western States](#)
- Drought Impact Reporter for [New Mexico](#)
- [New Mexico](#) setting new records with drought
- [Federal, state, tribal Colorado River users to meet in San Diego about water supply concerns](#)

[Cattle starving on drought-stricken ranch](#)

May 24, **New Mexico**. Roughly 1,000 emaciated cattle and 25 dead cattle were found on a ranch in eastern New Mexico. Officials may seize the animals, who have little to nothing to eat, and the owner is being charged with cruelty to animals.

[Heading into summer, already parched](#)

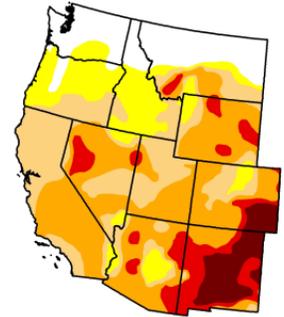
May 19, **Southwestern Colorado**. Ranchers were selling thin, bony cattle with bare patches on their skin at the Hi-Country Cattle Auction in Breen. One rancher was selling six purebred Limousin cattle because he does not anticipate having adequate water to grow hay for his livestock.

U.S. Drought Monitor

May 28, 2013
Valid 7 a.m. EST

West

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	13.91	86.09	71.11	47.04	15.04	5.99
Last Week (05/21/2013 map)	13.30	86.70	71.40	47.04	15.04	5.99
3 Months Ago (02/26/2013 map)	21.53	78.47	64.32	42.23	15.92	3.47
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	24.39	75.61	69.31	45.04	18.01	2.15
Start of Water Year (09/25/2012 map)	15.12	84.88	77.15	43.65	16.85	1.77
One Year Ago (05/22/2012 map)	30.25	69.75	52.87	30.72	4.66	0.00



Intensity:



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

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, May 30, 2013
Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture

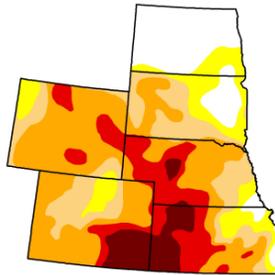
Conditions remain essentially unchanged from last week.

U.S. Drought Monitor

May 28, 2013
Valid 7 a.m. EST

High Plains

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	15.36	84.64	72.98	55.55	21.35	7.41
Last Week (05/21/2013 map)	11.10	88.90	76.75	60.09	25.05	7.62
3 Months Ago (02/26/2013 map)	4.66	95.34	91.34	82.51	56.77	26.68
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	1.54	98.46	93.01	86.20	60.25	28.99
Start of Water Year (09/25/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	98.91	83.80	61.28	24.35
One Year Ago (05/22/2012 map)	36.54	63.46	27.23	6.57	1.49	0.00



Intensity:



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

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, May 30, 2013
Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Conditions improved notably in all but D-4 this past week.

See [Kansas Drought Update](#).

[Farm income tumbles](#)

May 19, **Northwestern Kansas**. Drought dropped the annual farm income in the northwest Kansas Farm Management Association district in 2012 to \$288,000, in comparison with \$440,000 in 2011. The figure for 2012 is an estimate due to last-minute changes in the federal tax code, which delayed calculations of the final numbers.

[City may fine residents who use too much water \\$1,000](#)

May 22, **Wichita, Kansas**. City officials are considering a water plan that would fine water customers \$1,000 if they use more than 310 percent of their average winter water usage. The public supports the idea.

Drought Monitor for the [South-Central Region](#) with statistics over various time periods. Note some deterioration in the higher categories this week.

Check out the Texas Drought [Website](#). See [Texas Reservoirs](#).

[Drought Gobbles Up Texas Turkey Hunt](#)

May 20, **Texas**. The 2011 drought harshly stressed the turkey population, which prevented them from reproducing. Since drought conditions persist in the state, turkeys have not yet recovered from 2011 and are relatively scarce, although reproduction was better in 2012.

[Lake Travis levels down but not out since drought](#)

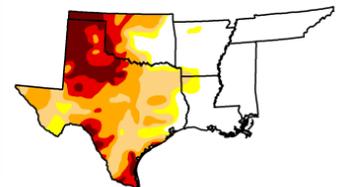
May 23, **Central Texas**. All public boat ramps on Lake Travis were closed, due to low water levels, which have effectively shortened the length of the lake from nearly 64 miles to 42 miles. The lake is at 39 percent of capacity.

U.S. Drought Monitor

May 28, 2013
Valid 7 a.m. EST

South

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	40.25	59.75	52.84	36.91	19.92	9.60
Last Week (05/21/2013 map)	37.32	62.68	54.02	40.67	21.43	10.51
3 Months Ago (02/26/2013 map)	36.37	63.63	54.44	40.13	19.33	4.18
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	21.18	78.82	63.69	50.50	32.80	10.98
Start of Water Year (09/25/2012 map)	24.13	75.87	66.61	51.50	29.86	9.11
One Year Ago (05/22/2012 map)	26.10	73.90	35.28	18.33	7.31	0.58



Intensity:



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

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

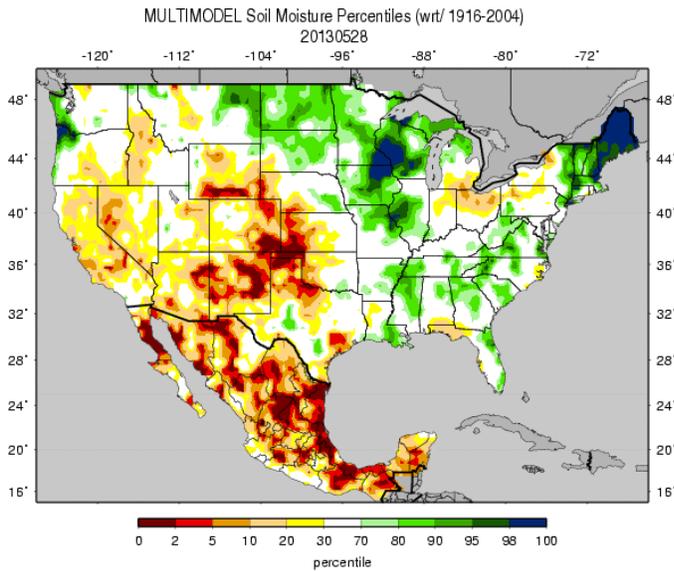


Released Thursday, May 30, 2013
Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Conditions improved across all categories this past week.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Soil Moisture



Soil moisture ranking in [percentile](#) as of 28 May shows significant dryness over the southwestern and southern high plains (including southern Wyoming), and lesser dryness across the northern Rockies, western Great Basin, California. Excess moisture is noted over western Washington, northwestern Oregon, northern Mississippi River, and Maine.

Note abundant moisture over Wisconsin and moisture over the Tennessee and lower Mississippi River Valleys.

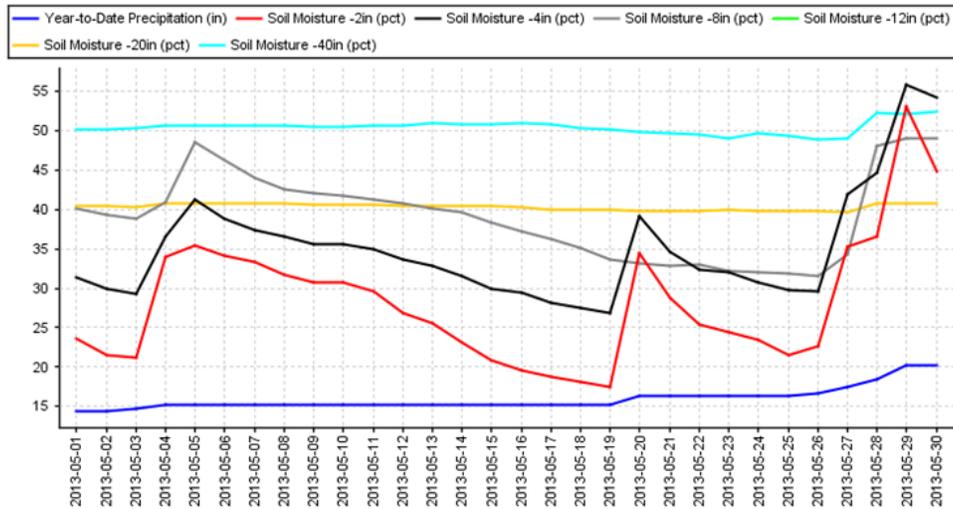
Useful Hydrological Links: [Crop Moisture Index](#); [Palmer Drought Severity Index](#); [Standardized Precipitation Index](#); [Surface Water Supply Index](#); [Weekly supplemental maps](#), [Minnesota Climate Working Group](#).

Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)

Missouri Site - Spickard (2047)

(As of: Thu May 30 09:02:56 PDT 2013)

Provisional data, subject to revision



This NRCS resource shows a site over [north-central Missouri](#) with very moist soils at all levels. Note recent significant rains.

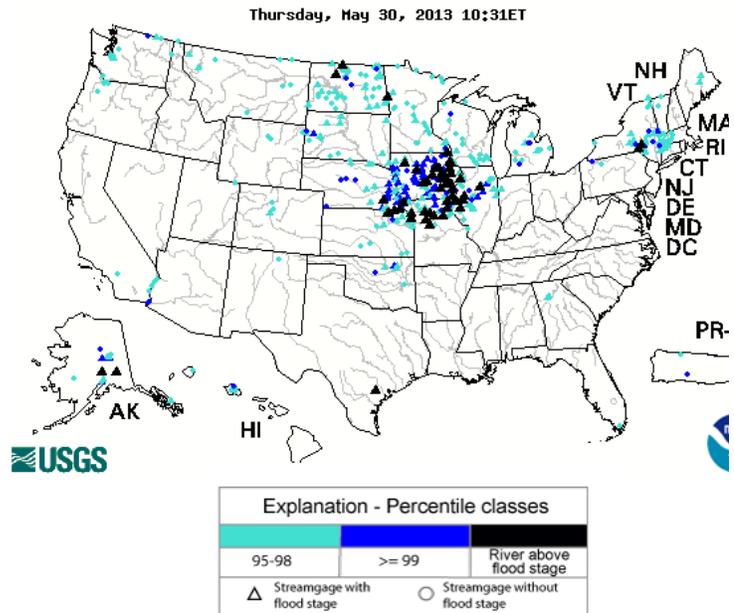
Useful Agriculture Links: [Vegetation Drought Response Index](#); [Evaporative Stress Index](#); [Vegetation Health Index](#); [NDVI Greenness Map](#); [GRACE-Based Surface Soil Moisture](#); [North American Soil Moisture Network](#); [Monthly Wild Fire Forecast Report](#).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

U.S. Historical Streamflow

Current map shows much of the northern Mississippi River, and to a lessening extent, the Red River (North Dakota) with high water.

See the USGS [National Water Information System Mapper](#).



Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

National Drought Summary -- May 28, 2013

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 following **Weather and Drought Summary** is provided by this week's NDMC Author: [Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)

Weather Summary: "Heavy rain returned to the northern Plains and upper Midwest late in the drought-monitoring period, further easing or eradicating lingering long-term drought and turning residual drought to flooding in some of the hardest-hit areas. By late May, minor to moderate flooding was underway at nearly 100 river gauges in the western Corn Belt, with major flooding occurring in a few locations. For example, the Skunk River near Sigourney, Iowa, crested 9.93 feet above flood stage on May 28, surpassing the March 1960 high-water mark by a little over seven inches. Similarly, the Little Sioux River at Correctionville, Iowa, climbed 6.27 feet above flood stage on May 28, the third-highest crest in that location behind 10.34 feet in June 1891 and 6.86 feet in April 1965. Local downpours also dotted the southeastern Plains, while a sustained period of heavy rain (and high-elevation snow) nearly eradicated dryness (D0) and drought (D1) from New York and New England. Meanwhile, little or no precipitation fell from California to the central and southern High Plains, further sharpening the gradient between drought and non-drought areas across the nation's mid-section."

The East: Heavy precipitation fell across New York and New England, starting on May 21 and ending several days later. Burlington, Vermont, received 7.47 inches of rain from May 21-26, accounting for 51 percent of its year-to-date precipitation of 14.73 inches. Cold air accompanied the Northeastern storm, resulting in some high-elevation snow accumulations. Vermont's highest peak, Mount Mansfield, received 13.2 inches of snow on May 25-26. In New York, a trace of snow fell on May 24—later than ever before recorded—in Syracuse and Binghamton. The previous record for Syracuse had been May 17, 1973; Binghamton had received a trace of snow on May 18, 1973 and 2002. As a result of the heavy precipitation, the coverage of moderate drought (D1) was reduced to a small area in southern New England. The coverage of abnormal dryness was also reduced substantially in New York and New England.

"Farther south, however, scattered showers were not enough to result in a significant change in the coverage of abnormal dryness (D0) and moderate drought (D1) in the central Appalachians. The same was true in the southern Mid-Atlantic coastal plain, where scattered showers and thunderstorms provided local relief from long-term precipitation deficits. Across the northern part of Florida's peninsula, locally heavy showers chipped away at dryness (D0) and moderate to severe drought (D1 to D2). In contrast, dry conditions persisted in southern Alabama and environs, allowing for some development of moderate drought (D1). In Dothan, Alabama, March 1 – May 28 rainfall totaled just 5.56 inches (45 percent of normal)."

The Upper Midwest: Major reductions in the coverage of dryness and drought occurred again. In Minnesota, Rochester's record-setting precipitation totals for May and March-May reached 9.52 and 19.16 inches, respectively. Rochester's previous records had been 8.41 inches in May 1982 and 15.87 inches in the spring of 2001. River flooding developed not only in the western Corn Belt, but also in parts of northern North Dakota. In Grafton, North Dakota, the Park River (4.20 feet above flood stage on May 23) rose to its highest level since April 1950, when the river crested 4.52 feet above flood stage. During the latest drought-monitoring period, the axis of heaviest precipitation (locally 4 inches or more) cut across southeastern South Dakota and northwestern Iowa, where some locations experienced two-category reductions from severe drought (D2) to lingering subsoil moisture shortages (D0).

The Great Plains: "The gradient between improving conditions and worsening drought continued to sharpen. Major improvements in the drought situation were noted across the northern half of the region. In South Dakota, the portion of rangeland and pastures rated good to excellent rose to 30% on May 26,

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

up 16 percentage point from a week ago. Similarly, South Dakota's rangeland and pastures rated very poor fell from 51 to 29% during the week ending May 26. Both of the change numbers (+16 and -22 percentage points, respectively) led the nation. Farther south, however, exceptional drought (D4) remained a fixture on the central and southern High Plains. Rain came too late for winter wheat in South Dakota (64% very poor to poor on May 26) and Nebraska (52%), and the maturing crop continued to suffer in parts of Texas (76%), Oklahoma (54%), Colorado (49%), and Kansas (45%). From late March to early May, several freezes further damaged an already drought-stressed wheat crop on the southern High Plains. As the drought-monitoring period progressed, local downpours developed in Texas. For example, San Antonio, Texas, endured its second-wettest day on record, with a 9.87-inch total on May 25. The only wetter day in San Antonio occurred on October 17, 1998, when 11.26 inches fell. Prior to May 25, San Antonio's wettest day in May had been May 31, 1937, when 6.82 inches fell."

The West: "Only the northern tier of the region—mainly north of the existing areas of dryness and drought—received appreciable precipitation during the drought-monitoring period. On May 26, USDA reported that at least 40% of the rangeland and pastures were rated very poor to poor in five of the eleven Western States. New Mexico topped the list, with 91% of its rangeland and pastures rated very poor to poor, followed by Arizona (66%), Nevada (65%), California (55%), and Colorado (45%). Below-average statewide reservoir storage remained a concern in several Western States, including Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Oregon."

Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico: "There were no changes to the depictions for Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico. Hawaii's western islands (Oahu westward) remain free of dryness and drought. However, islands from Molokai eastward are still experiencing significant drought in leeward areas. USDA reported that pastures on the northern portion of the Big Island (North and South Kohala Districts) have exhibited greening from rainfall received in the past few weeks. Some of Hawaii's heaviest rain fell in windward sections of the Big Island on May 25-26, when 24-hour totals included 3.79 inches in Glenwood and 3.57 inches in Piihonua. Meanwhile, little or no precipitation fell in Alaska's existing areas of abnormal dryness (D0) and moderate drought (D1). Alaska's late-arriving spring finally got underway, following a final round of cold, sometimes snowy weather. After breaking its May snowfall record (10.8 inches), Nome's temperature climbed to 53°F on May 25. It was Nome's first reading of 40°F or greater since October 13, 2012. Fairbanks (82°F on May 27) recorded its first 80-degree reading since July 26, 2012. Like last week, there was no drought (or dryness) in depicted in Puerto Rico."

Looking Ahead: "During the next 5 days (May 30 – June 3), an active weather pattern will cover the nation's mid-section. A slow-moving storm will drift northward into the Dakotas on May 30, then slide eastward into the Great Lakes region by June 1. Along the storm's trailing cold front, a multi-day severe weather outbreak can be expected across portions of the Plains, Midwest, and Mid-South. The cold front should reach the Atlantic Seaboard in early June. During the next 5 days, additional rainfall amounts could reach 1 to 3 inches on the northern Plains and 2 to 6 inches from the east-central Plains into the lower Great Lakes region, including the middle Mississippi Valley. In contrast, mostly dry weather will prevail from California into the Southwest and along the southern Atlantic Coast, except for heavy showers in southern Florida. Hot weather will prevail in advance of the storm, especially across the nation's northeastern quadrant, while cool conditions will trail the system into the Plains and upper Midwest. By early June, hot weather will develop in the Pacific Coast States."

"The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for June 4-8 calls for near- to above-normal temperatures nearly nationwide, although cooler-than-normal conditions will prevail in the Dakotas and along the Gulf Coast. Meanwhile, below-normal precipitation in the western Gulf Coast region and west of the Rockies will contrast with wetter-than-normal weather across much of the Plains, upper Midwest, and Atlantic coastal plain."

State Activities

State government drought activities can be tracked at the following URL: <http://drought.unl.edu/mitigate/mitigate.htm>. NRCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting (SSWSF) Program State Office personnel are participating in state drought committee meetings and providing the committees and media with appropriate SSWSF information - <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/cgibin/bor.pl>. Additional information describing the products available from

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

the Drought Monitor can be found at the following URLs: <http://drought.unl.edu/dm/> and <http://www.drought.gov>.

For More Information

The National Water and Climate Center (NWCC) Homepage provides 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 online. Reports from 2001-2006 are available on request.

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

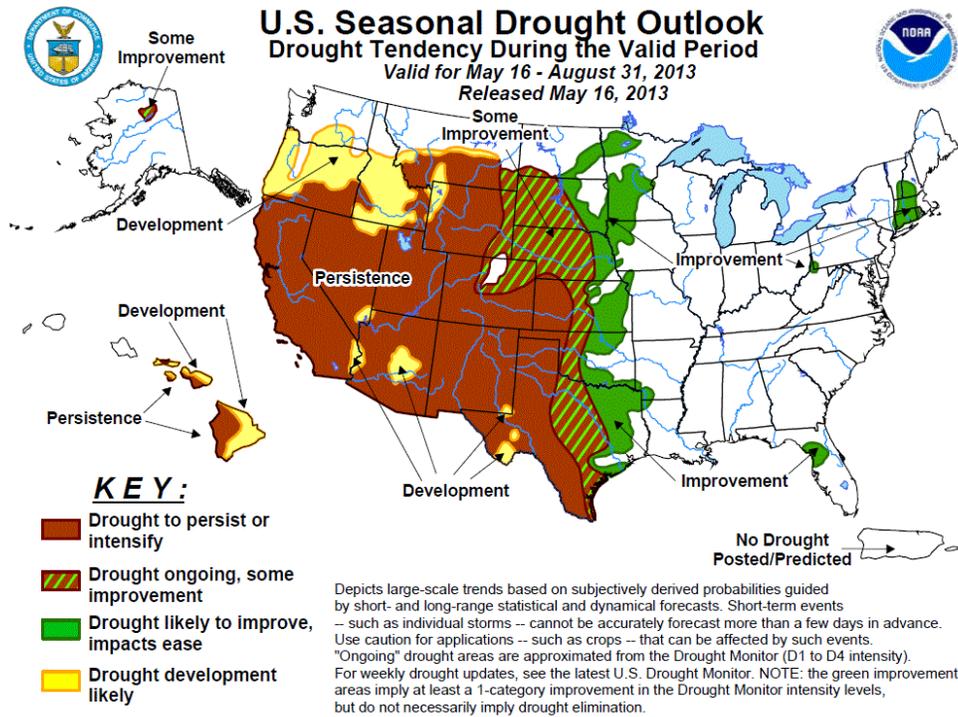
/s/

Micheal L. Golden

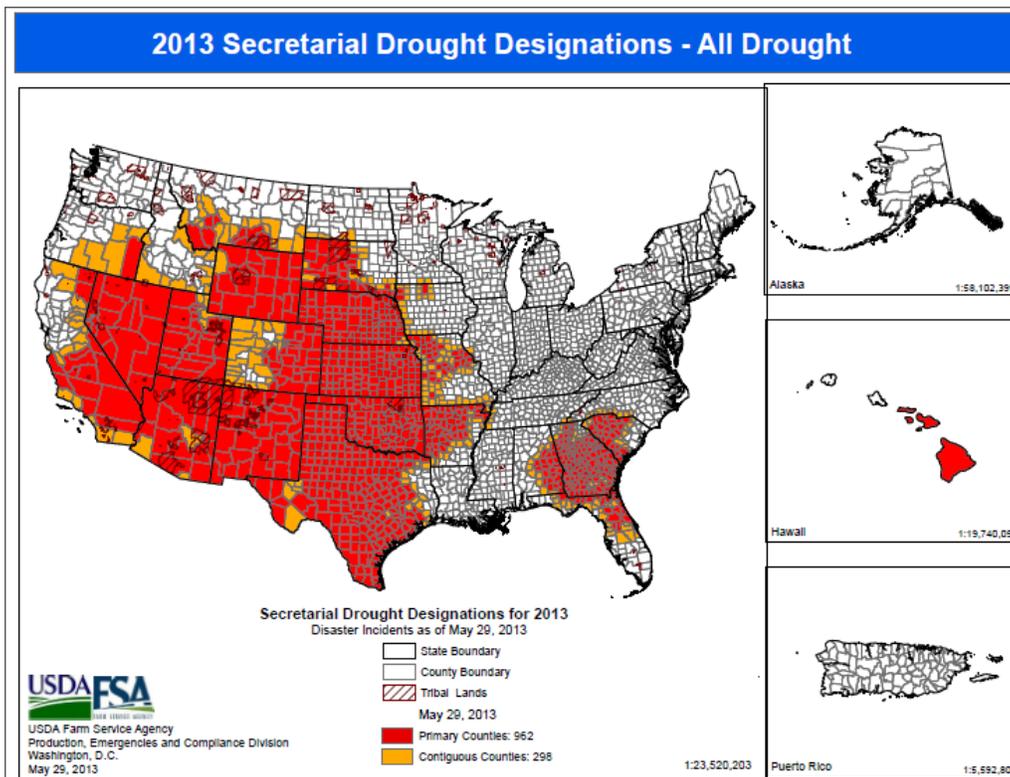
Deputy Chief, Soil Science and Resource Assessment

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Drought Outlook (Forecast)



U.S. Seasonal [Drought Outlook](#) as of 29 May. Note that there are no significant changes since the last update two weeks ago.



Refer to USDA Drought Assistance [website](#) and [National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service](#).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Supplemental Information

Following provided by: Brad Rippey, USDA Meteorologist, Office of the Chief Economist, World Agricultural Outlook Board, Washington, D.C.

The “Ag in Drought” file that had been previously posted each week by NDMC’s Brian Fuchs is now available at: <http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/Drought/AgInDrought.pdf>

Highlights for the drought-monitoring period ending 7 am EDT on May 21 include:

- A major storm system produced heavy rain across the upper Midwest and portions of the northern and southeastern Plains, easing or eradicating drought. The storm, which spent several days crossing the north-central U.S., also helped to spawn the tragic tornado that swept across Moore, Oklahoma, on May 20. However, rainfall associated with the storm largely bypassed the southern High Plains, where drought continued to intensify. The Southwest also remained dry during the drought-monitoring period.

- Overall U.S. drought coverage fell 1.59 percentage points to 46.07%, and has decreased during 26 of the last 34 weeks. Drought coverage is down 15.02 percentage points since the beginning of 2013 and down 19.38 points from the record high of 65.45% on September 25, 2012.

- The portion of the contiguous U.S. in the worst category – D4, or exceptional drought – increased more than one-half percentage point (0.54%) to 4.94%. Compared to a week ago, there were increases in D4 coverage noted in New Mexico (44 to 45%), Texas (12 to 18%), and Oklahoma (10 to 11%). D4 coverage was unchanged or decreased slightly in Kansas (21%), Colorado (16%), and Nebraska (6%).

- As the gradient between drought and non-drought areas continues to sharpen, there are some interesting statistics for cattle and winter wheat. Half (50%) of the domestic cattle inventory was in drought on May 21, down two percentage points from a week ago to the lowest level since June 12, 2012. However, cattle in exceptional drought (D4) increased from 7 to 10% during the last week due to drought intensification on the southern High Plains. Similarly, winter wheat in drought fell two percentage points to 50%, while the portion of the crop in D4 climbed from 12 to 14%. For other commodities, hay in drought declined four percentage points in the last week to 37%; corn in drought dipped five points to 29%; and soybeans in drought fell five points to just 20%.

Following provided by: Kelly Helm Smith, Communication & Planning Specialist, National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Drought contracted overall but intensified in west Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico

Lincoln, Neb. -- Drought contracted in the nation’s midsection and in the north in the week that ended May 21 but intensified in the Texas Panhandle, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

The proportion of the 48 contiguous states in moderate or worse drought decreased to 46.07 percent from 47.66 percent a week earlier, while the proportion in exceptional drought, the worst category, increased to 4.94 percent from 4.4 percent the week before. Drought coverage is down from the record high of 65.45 percent on September 25, 2012, and has decreased in 26 of the last 34 weeks, noted Brad Rippey, this week’s U.S. Drought Monitor author.

Drought receded or eased in Minnesota, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, eastern Oklahoma, eastern Texas, and Montana. Drought intensified in the Texas Panhandle, southwest Oklahoma and in New Mexico.

“A major storm system produced heavy rain across the upper Midwest and portions of the northern and southeastern Plains, easing or eradicating drought,” Rippey said. “The storm, which spent several days crossing the north-central U.S., also helped to spawn the tragic tornado that swept across Moore, Okla., on May 20. However, rainfall associated with the storm largely bypassed the southern High Plains, where drought continued to intensify. The Southwest also remained dry during the drought-monitoring period.”

Rippey also observed, “As the gradient between drought and non-drought areas continues to sharpen, there are some interesting statistics for cattle and winter wheat. Half (50 percent) of the domestic cattle

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inventory was in drought on May 21, down two percentage points from a week ago to the lowest level since June 12, 2012. However, cattle in exceptional drought (D4) increased from 7 to 10 percent during the last week due to drought intensification on the southern High Plains. Similarly, winter wheat in drought fell two percentage points to 50 percent, while the portion of the crop in D4 climbed from 12 to 14 percent. For other commodities, hay in drought declined four percentage points in the last week to 37 percent; corn in drought dipped five points to 29 percent; and soybeans in drought fell five points to just 20 percent."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported May 19 that at least 40 percent of rangeland and pastures were rated very poor to poor in seven of the eleven western states, Rippey said in narrative accompanying the map. New Mexico topped the list, with 98 percent of its rangeland and pastures rated very poor to poor, followed by Nevada (69 percent), Arizona (63 percent), Colorado (48 percent), Montana (47 percent), Wyoming (46 percent), and California (40 percent). In addition, he said, below-average statewide reservoir storage affected five Western states: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Oregon.

U.S. Drought Monitor authors synthesize many drought indicators into a single map that identifies areas of the country that are abnormally dry (D0), in moderate drought (D1), in severe drought (D2), extreme drought (D3) and exceptional drought (D4).

The U.S. Drought Monitor map is jointly produced by the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and about 350 drought observers across the country. This week's author was Rich Tinker, with NOAA's Climate Prediction Center.

The map is released each Thursday based on data through the previous Tuesday morning.

Statistics for the percent area in each category of drought are automatically added to the U.S. Drought Monitor website each week for the entire country and Puerto Rico, for the 48 contiguous states, for each climate region, and for individual states. U.S. Drought Monitor data online goes back to January 2000.

<http://drought.unl.edu/MonitoringTools/USDroughtMonitor/DroughtMonitorTips.aspx>

U.S. Drought Monitor map, statistics and narrative summary: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

Drought Impact Reporter: <http://droughtreporter.unl.edu>

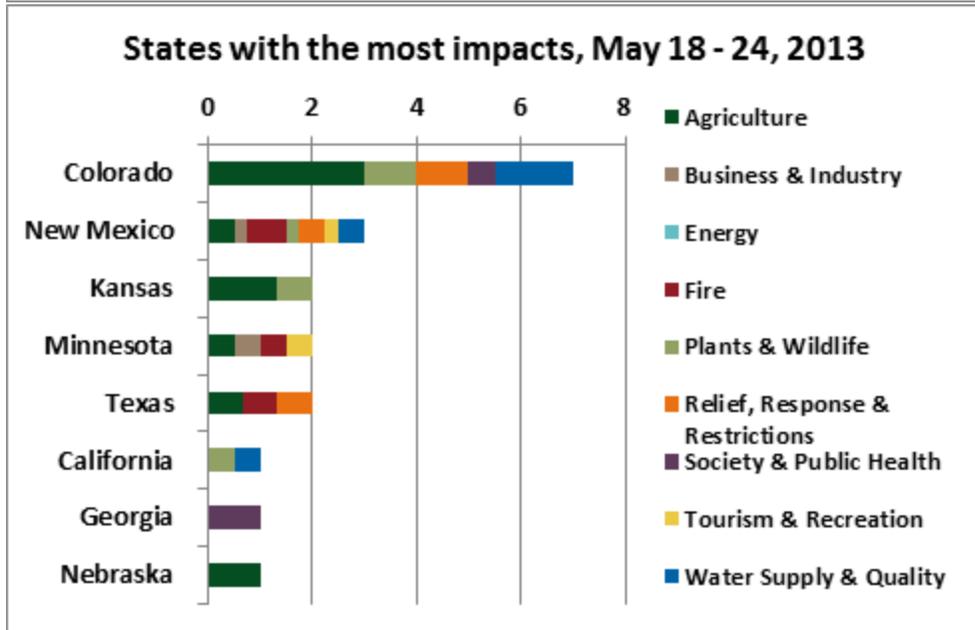
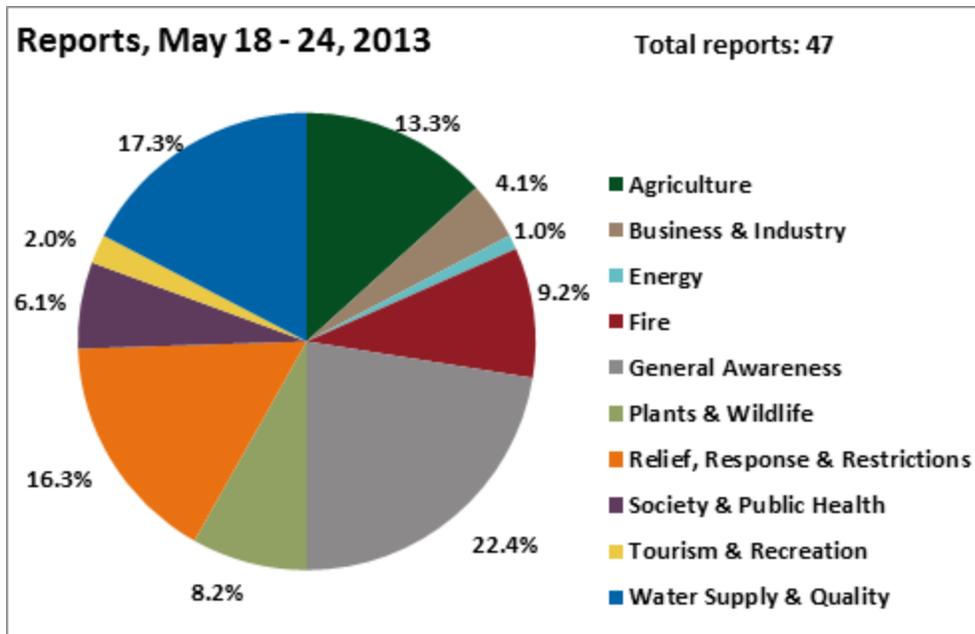
USDA's weekly "Agriculture in Drought" analysis:
<http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/Drought/AgInDrought.pdf>

National Climatic Data Center's State of the Climate Drought Summary:
<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/drought/>

Seasonal Drought Outlook:
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/seasonal_drought.html

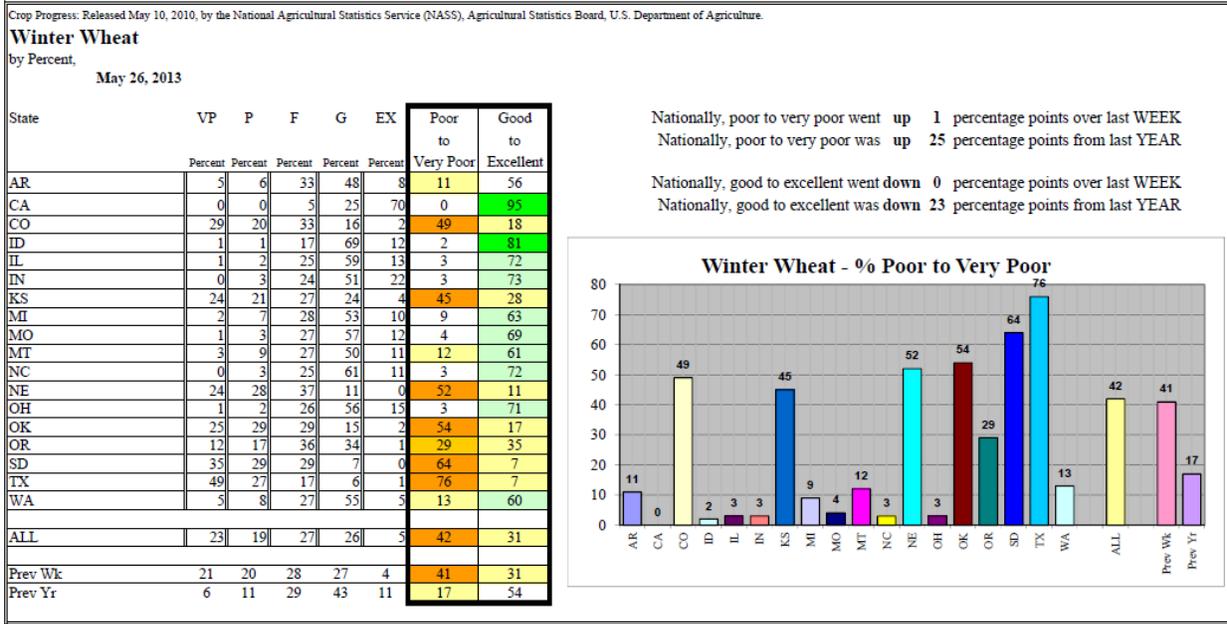
Drought, poor pasture growth and low water supplies in some areas ranchers culling their herds in South Dakota and Colorado. A herd of about 1,000 emaciated cattle in eastern New Mexico may be rescued by state officials since the owner has not provided feed after the pasture became nearly barren.

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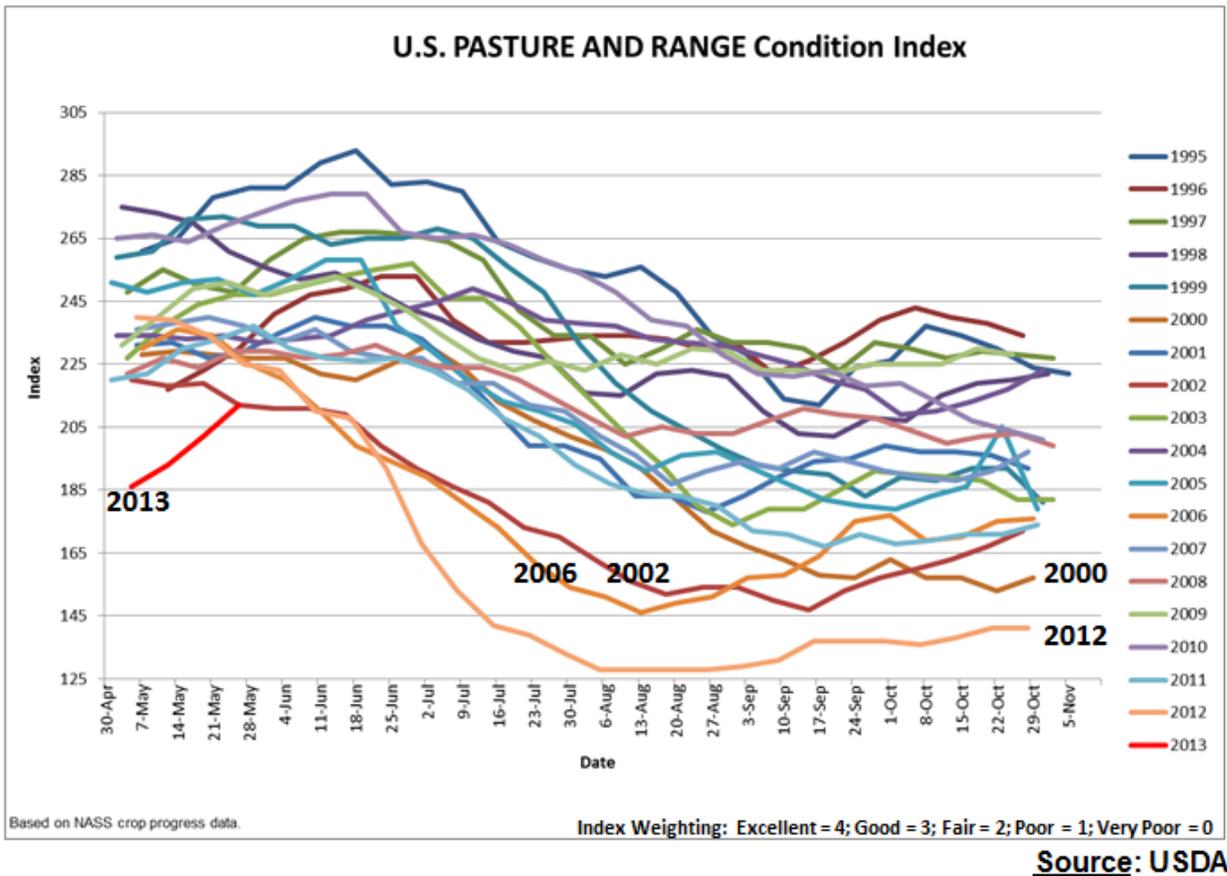


Because impacts may have more than one category, the category color is shown in proportion to the total number of categories selected overall for all of the impacts.

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Winter Wheat Status (courtesy of Eric D. Luebehusen, Meteorologist, USDA - World Agricultural Outlook Board)



U.S. Pasture & Rangeland Condition Index shows 2013 at the lowest level on record this far (red line).