



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

Weekly Water and Climate Update Thursday, May 14, 2015

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Glacier lilies blooming on the Cox Valley snow course in the Olympic Mountains in northwest Washington where there would normally be 80” of snow. This long term snow course has never been snow-free on May 1.

Photo by Bill Baccus, Olympic National Park, April 29, 2015.

National Outlook: “A series of fast-moving storms will continue to emerge from the western U.S., maintaining unsettled, showery conditions across the majority of the nation. Five-day rainfall totals could reach 1 to 3 inches across a broad area covering the Plains, Midwest, mid-South, and northern Intermountain West, while 2- to 5-inch totals may occur in parts of Montana. Scattered, locally heavy showers can be expected as far south as southern California and the Four Corners States. Only a few areas, including the central High Plains and the Atlantic Seaboard, will remain mostly dry. During the weekend, a return to warm weather

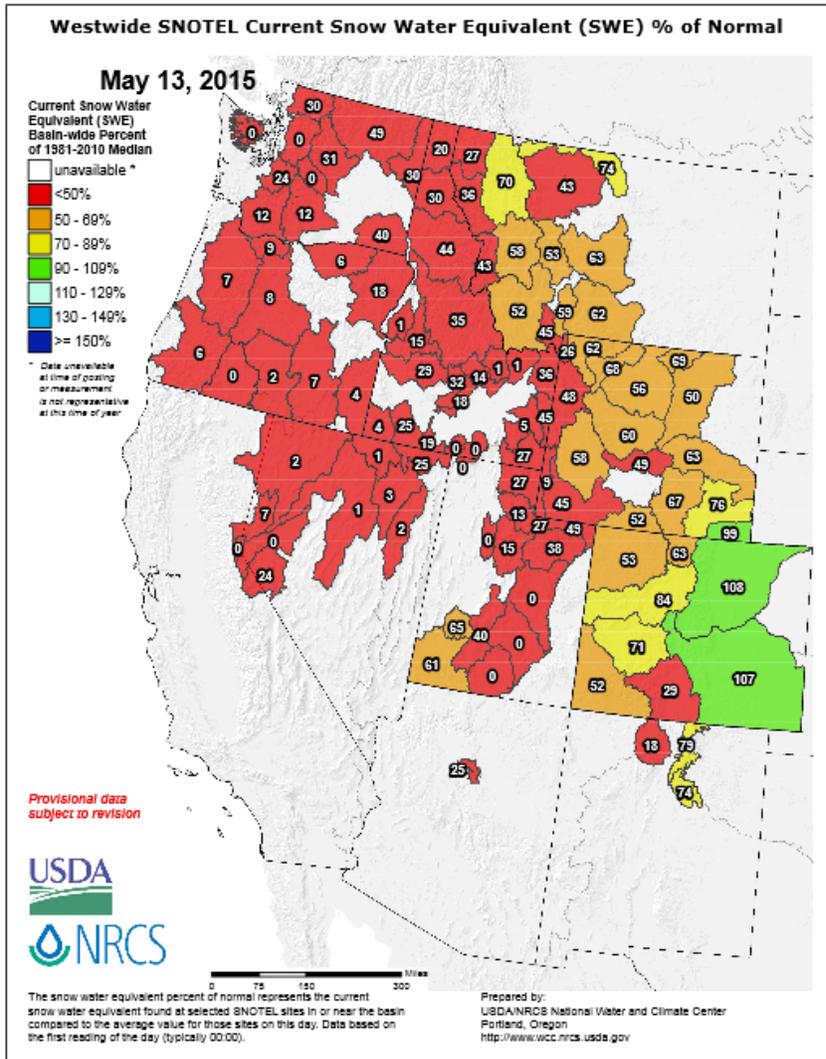
across the eastern half of the U.S. will contrast with unusually cool conditions from the Pacific Coast to the High Plains. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for May 19 – 23 calls for near- to above-normal precipitation nationwide, except for drier-than-normal conditions in much of the Midwest. Meanwhile, near- to below-normal temperatures in a broad area from California to the Northeast, including the Plains and Midwest, will contrast with warmer-than-normal weather in the Southeast and Northwest.”

Contact: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB, Washington, D.C. (202-720-2397)
Website: <http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/pubs/Daily/TODAYSWX.pdf>

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Snow



The [Westwide SNOTEL Current Snow Water Equivalent \(SWE\) % of Normal map](#) shows large snowpack deficits in many basins (red areas) where the snowpack, if it still exists, is in full melt. The lowest snowpack, as compared to normal, occurred in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, California, Arizona, most of Utah, and scattered areas in other states. Some areas have zero SWE at this time. Below normal snowpacks (orange and yellow areas) are located in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, northern New Mexico, and southwest Utah

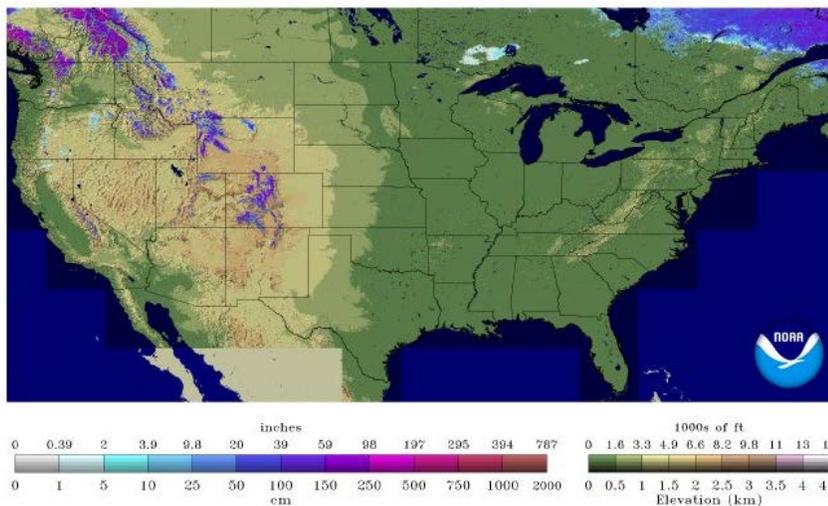
The snowpack conditions are near normal in southeast Wyoming and eastern Colorado.

There are no areas in the West reporting above average conditions.

National Snow 2014 Analysis 2015

Snow Depth

2015-05-14 06 UTC



The snow depth map as reported from the [NWS NOHRSC](#) for May 14, 2015, shows a slight increase in snow cover from last week. Snow now covers 2.1% of the continental U.S. This includes snow that is primarily in the highest mountains in the West.

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Precipitation

In the West, the SNOTEL [precipitation percent of normal map](#) for May shows a pattern of generally dry conditions in the northwestern states and wet conditions in the southwestern states. The wet conditions are in much of Wyoming, southeast Idaho, most of Utah, Colorado, Arizona, most of New Mexico, and along the border of Nevada/California and in eastern Nevada (blue areas).

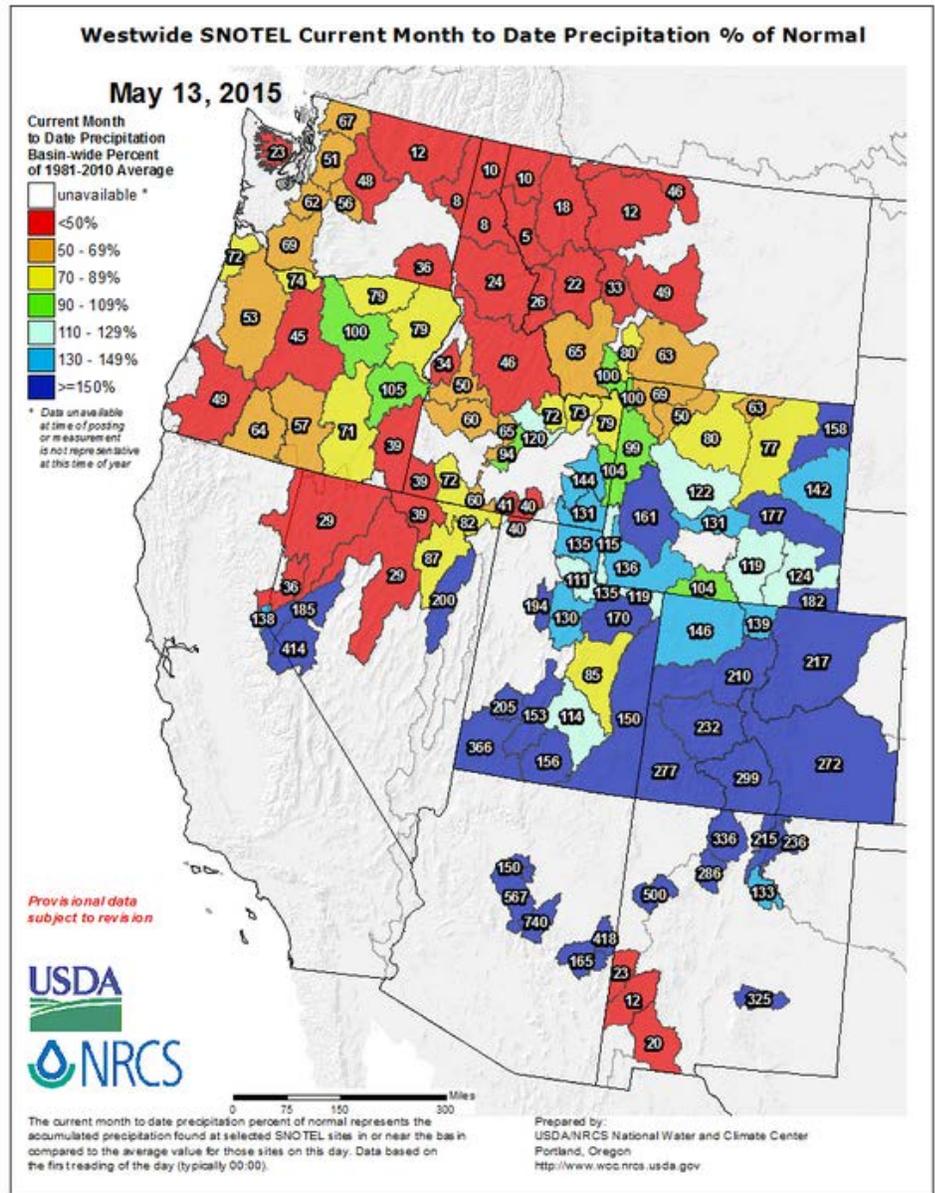
Near normal conditions were reported in a few scattered parts of Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming (green areas).

Less than normal precipitation in May was reported in northern Wyoming, central Utah, much of Oregon, western Washington, southern Montana, southern Idaho, and northeast Nevada (orange and yellow areas).

Very low precipitation was reported in Washington, Oregon, Montana, northern California, and northwest Nevada, much of Idaho, northwest Utah, and southwest New Mexico (red area).

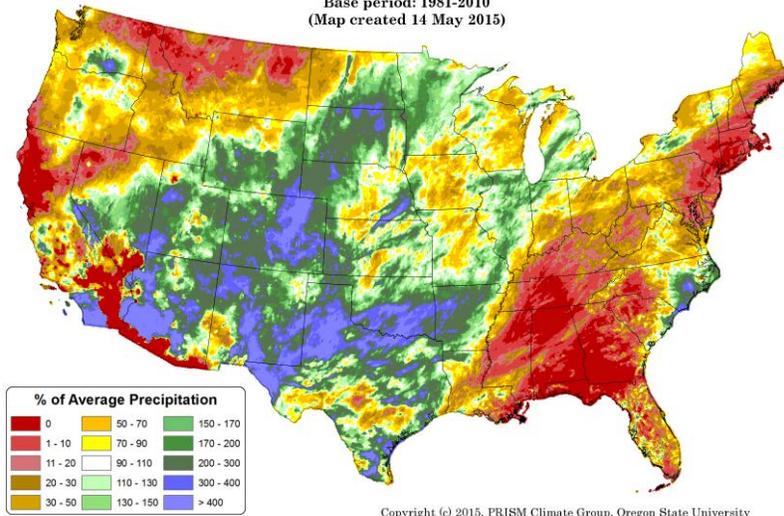
At this time of year, percent of normal may be exaggerated in normally low precipitation areas.

Click on most maps in this report to enlarge and see the latest available update.



Weekly Water and Climate Update

Total Precipitation Anomaly: 01 May 2015 - 13 May 2015
 Period ending 7 AM EST 13 May 2015
 Base period: 1981-2010
 (Map created 14 May 2015)



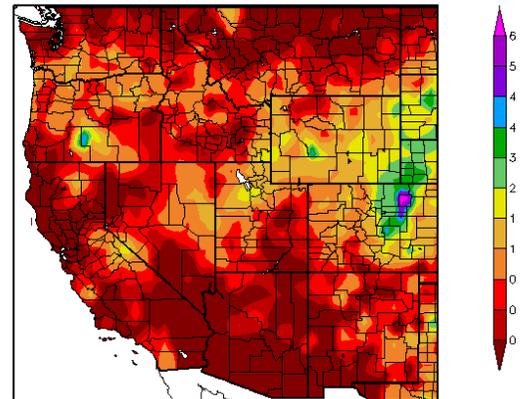
So far in May, the national total [precipitation anomaly](#) pattern reveals some higher than normal precipitation, across the Southwest and Great Plains areas of the U.S. Areas that saw abundant precipitation include southern California, southern Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and western Texas northeast to Arkansas. Additional moisture fell in North Carolina. There was little or no precipitation in parts of the West, the South, and the Northeast (red and dark orange areas).

This preliminary daily PRISM precipitation anomaly map contains all available network data, including SNOTEL data, and is updated periodically as additional data become available and are quality controlled.

The [ACIS 7-day](#) total precipitation map for the western U.S. shows high precipitation in eastern Colorado and Wyoming. The highest precipitation was reported in eastern Colorado. Light and widely scattered precipitation also was reported in all western states.

Little to no precipitation was reported in scattered areas of the West this week (dark red). The two largest contiguous dry areas covered an area along the northern border with Canada and in southern California to southern New Mexico.

Precipitation (in)
 5/7/2015 - 5/13/2015



Generated 5/14/2015 at HPRCC using provisional data.

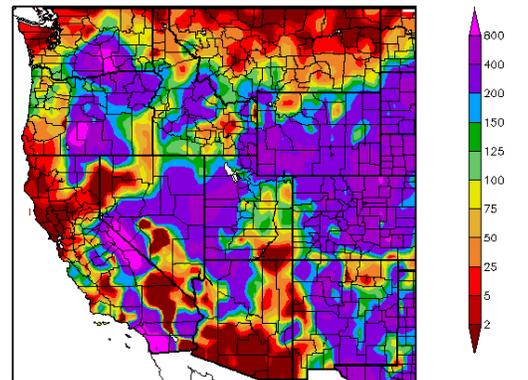
Regional Climate C

This ACIS percent of normal [map](#) of the West for the last seven days shows that precipitation was above normal across much of the Southwest. The highest percent of normal precipitation fell in southern California, central Oregon, and central Washington (magenta areas).

Very dry conditions for the week were reported in widely scattered areas of California, Nevada, Arizona, Washington, northern Idaho, and northern Montana (red areas).

Percent of normal precipitation may be exaggerated in areas where the average for this seven-day period is at or near zero.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
 5/7/2015 - 5/13/2015

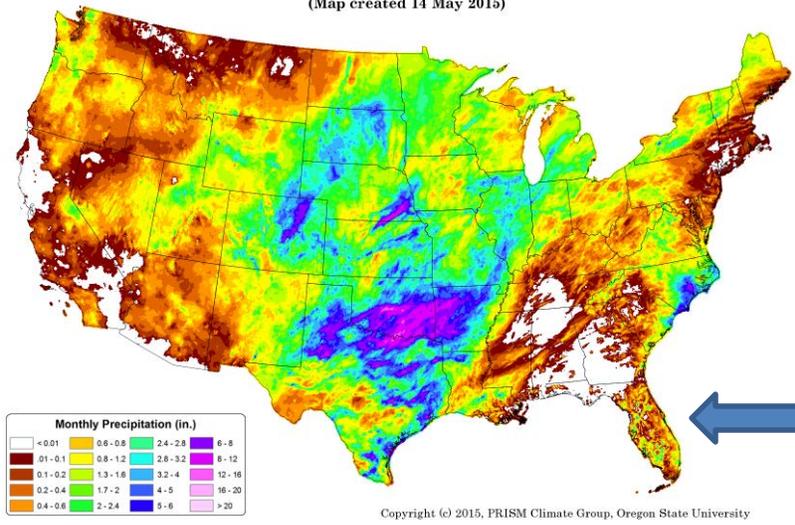


Generated 5/14/2015 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Center

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Total Precipitation: 01 May 2015 - 13 May 2015
 Period ending 7 AM EST 13 May 2015
 (Map created 14 May 2015)



Monthly Precipitation (in.)			
<0.01	0.0-0.8	2.4-2.8	6-8
0.1-0.1	0.8-1.2	2.8-3.2	8-12
0.1-0.2	1.3-1.6	3.2-4	12-16
0.2-0.4	1.7-2	4-5	16-20
0.4-0.6	2-2.4	5-6	>20

Copyright (c) 2015, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University

For May 2015, the [total precipitation](#) across the continental U.S. was heaviest in the southern Great Plains, inundating much of the worst D4 drought areas in Texas and Oklahoma. Precipitation also fell elsewhere in the Great Plains, southern and eastern Texas, and southeast North Carolina. In contrast, much of the West, the South, and the Northeast were mainly dry.

See [Go Hydrology](#) for current and forecast conditions over southern Florida.

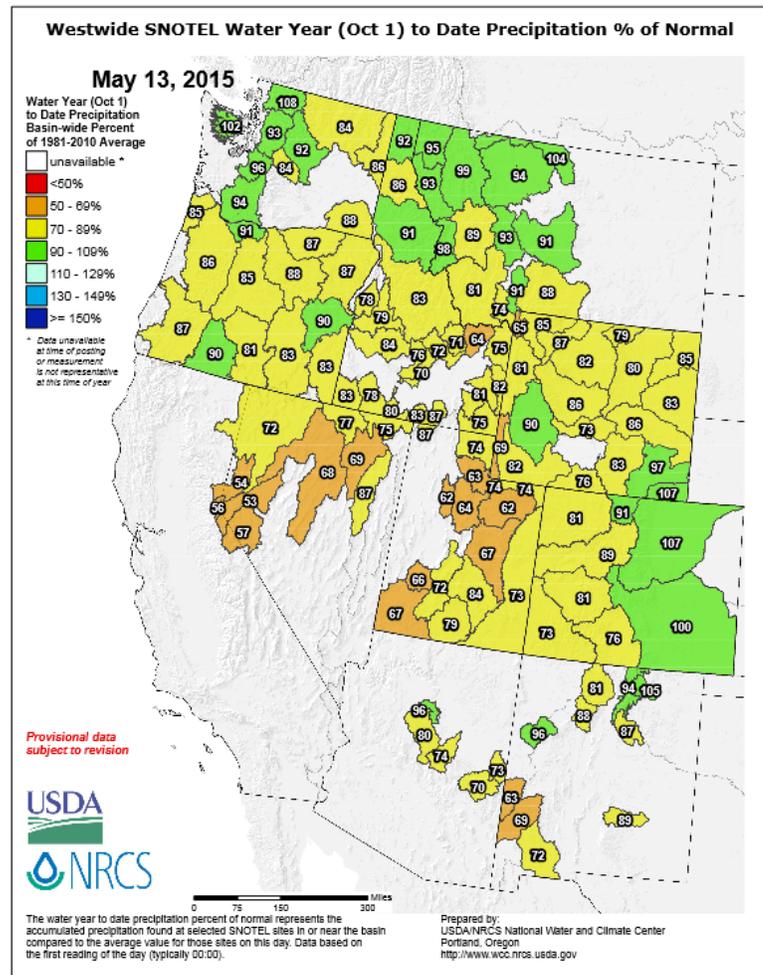
For the [2015 Water Year](#) that began on October 1, 2014, there are no basins in the West that are reporting much above normal precipitation.

Many areas across the West have near normal conditions for this part of the Water Year (mapped in green). This includes most of Montana, parts of Wyoming, eastern Colorado, western Washington, parts of Oregon, northern Idaho, and small areas in Arizona and New Mexico.

Several areas in the West have less than normal precipitation for the Water Year. These include basins in Idaho, Wyoming, western Colorado, Utah, California, Nevada, Arizona, most of New Mexico, Oregon, and a few in Washington and Montana (mapped in yellow and orange).

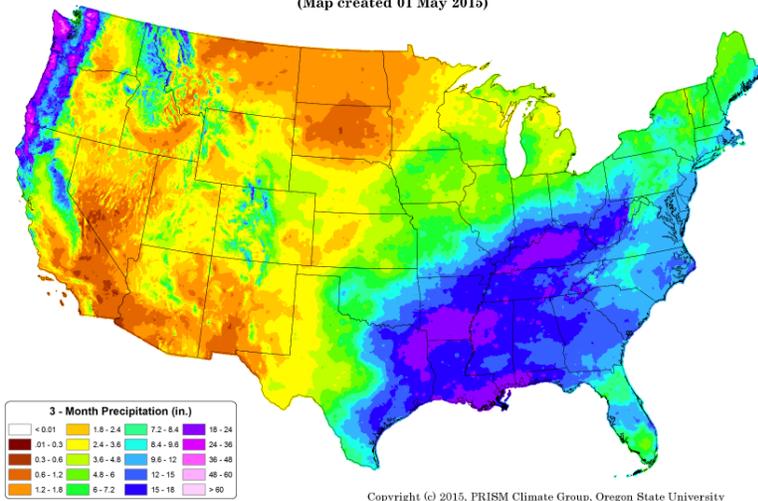
No basins are reporting less than 50% of normal at this time for the Water Year (red area).

As the Water Year advances, it becomes more difficult for river basins to change bin categories.



Weekly Water and Climate Update

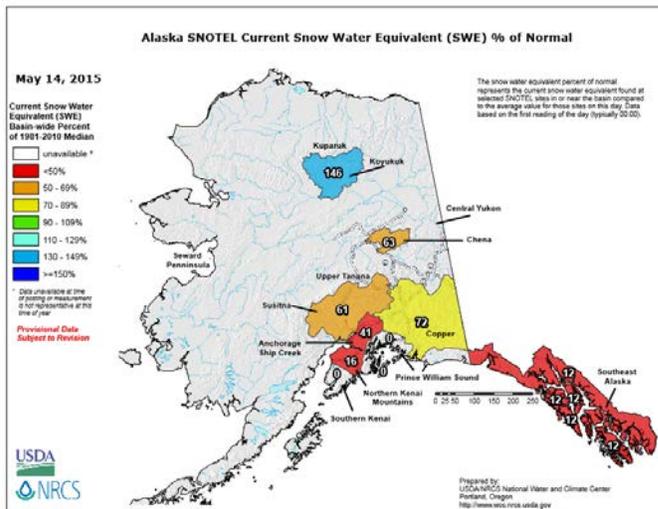
Total Precipitation: February 2015 - April 2015
 Period ending 7 AM EST 30 Apr 2015
 (Map created 01 May 2015)



The national map of the [three-month period](#) (February - April) shows that the southcentral region of the nation received precipitation from 2.4 inches to greater than 18 inches. Parts of the West, especially along the Pacific coast and in the mountains, also received significant precipitation. The highest amounts over 48 inches were recorded in Washington.

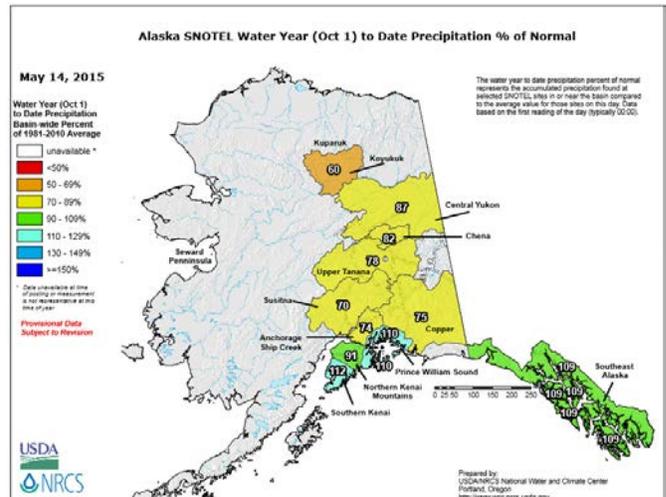
In contrast to the eastern U.S. and Pacific coast, parts of the West, the northern Great Plains, and much of the Midwest received totals of less than 2.4 inches.

Alaska Snow Water Equivalent & Precipitation Conditions



The [Alaska SNOTEL current SWE percent of normal map](#) shows below normal conditions across most of the state, with the exception of the Koyukuk, which is above normal. The areas with much below normal or no snowpack are from the Chena basin south to the coastal areas. See the [Alaska update report](#) for individual station data.

The [Alaska SNOTEL Water Year to Date Precipitation Percent of Normal](#) map shows near to above normal conditions for the Prince William Sound and Southern Kenai basins. Near normal conditions are reported for the northern Kenai Mountains and southeast Alaska. Interior Alaska is reporting drier than normal conditions. This is in contrast to the poor snow conditions due to warm temperatures across southern Alaska. See the [Alaska update report](#) for individual station data.

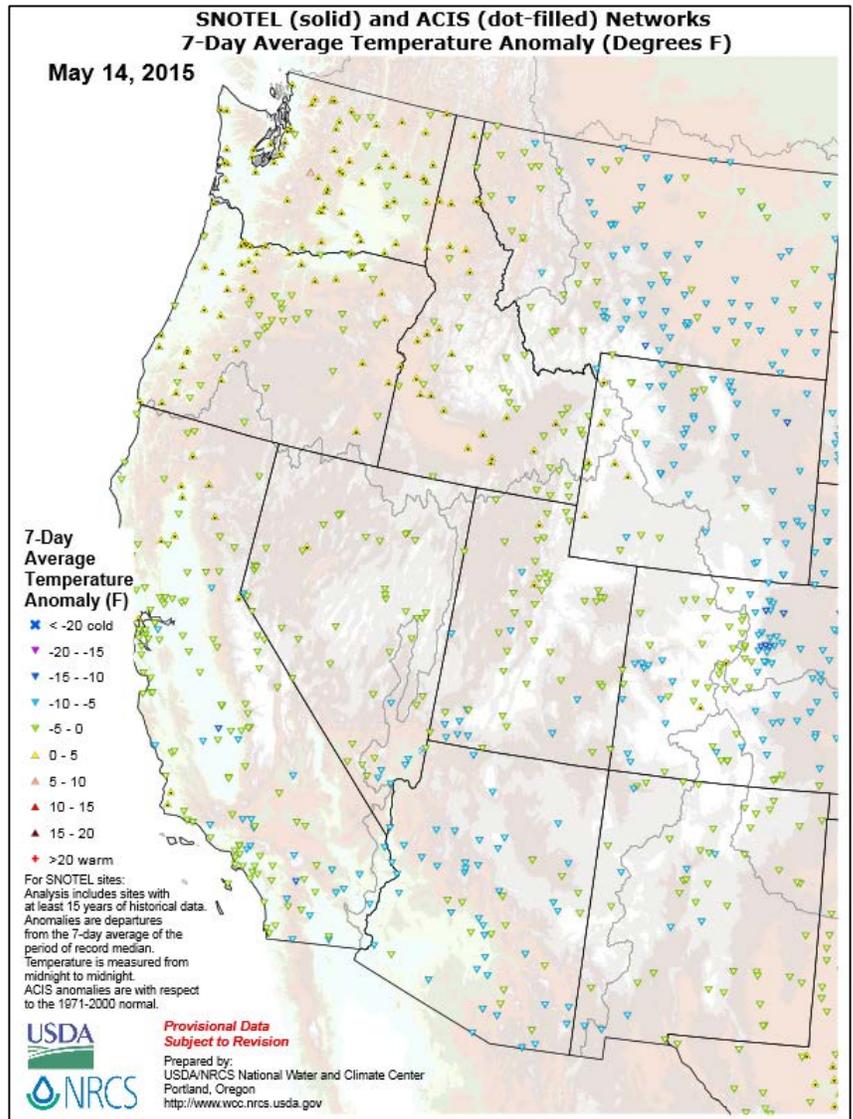


Weekly Water and Climate Update

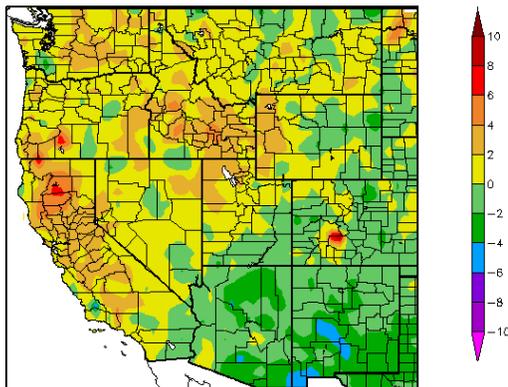
Temperature

The SNOTEL and ACIS [7-day temperature anomaly](#) map for the western U.S. shows much of the West was near normal. There was one station in western Washington with high temperature anomalies in the **+5 – 10** degrees F range.

There were many cool anomalies in the eastern Rockies, the Southwest, and southern California. The coolest anomalies were in eastern Colorado, one in eastern Wyoming, one station in southern Montana and two in southern California in the **-10 – 15** degrees F range.



Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
4/14/2015 – 5/13/2015



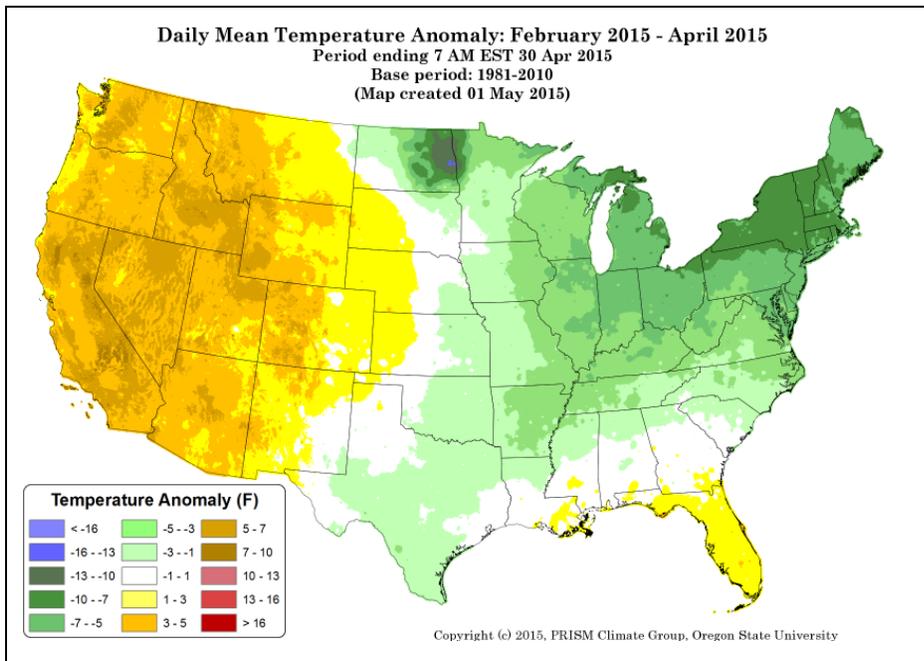
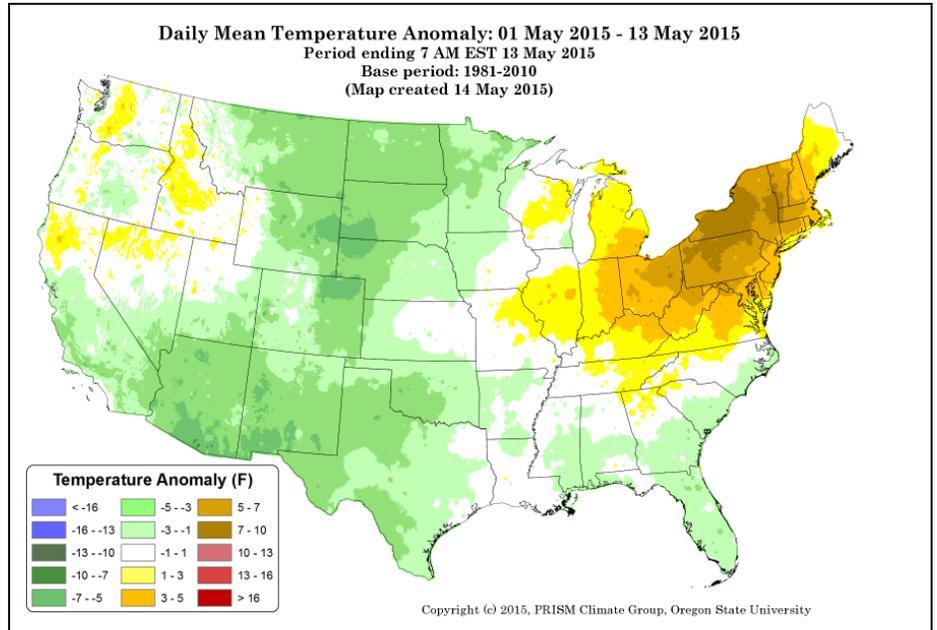
The [ACIS](#) map of the 7-day average temperature anomalies in the West ending May 13 shows that the region had a near normal week. The greatest positive temperature departures occurred in California, Colorado, and Oregon, with the highest anomalies (>+6°F). The largest negative temperature departures were in southern New Mexico and southern Arizona (<- 4°F).

Also, see [Dashboard](#) and the [Westwide Drought Tracker](#)

Weekly Water and Climate Update

This preliminary [PRISM](#) temperature map contains all available network data, including SNOTEL data, and will be updated periodically as additional data become available and are quality controlled.

For May 2015, the national daily mean temperature anomaly [map](#) shows a cool region from the Southwest to the northern Great Plains, with southern Arizona reporting the largest cool anomaly ($< -7^{\circ}\text{F}$). In contrast, above normal temperatures were recorded primarily in much of the Northeast, with the largest departures in eastern Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, western Vermont, and western Massachusetts and ($> +7^{\circ}\text{F}$).



The February - April national daily mean temperature anomalies for the U.S. in this [climate map](#) shows the West and Southeast had above normal temperatures ($> +7^{\circ}\text{F}$). The northern Plains and the Northeast reported normal to slightly cooler than normal temperatures for this period, with the coolest temperatures in a large area covering most of the Midwest and the Northeast. The coolest anomalies were in the Red River of the North basin in North Dakota and Minnesota ($< -13^{\circ}\text{F}$).

Weather and Drought Summary

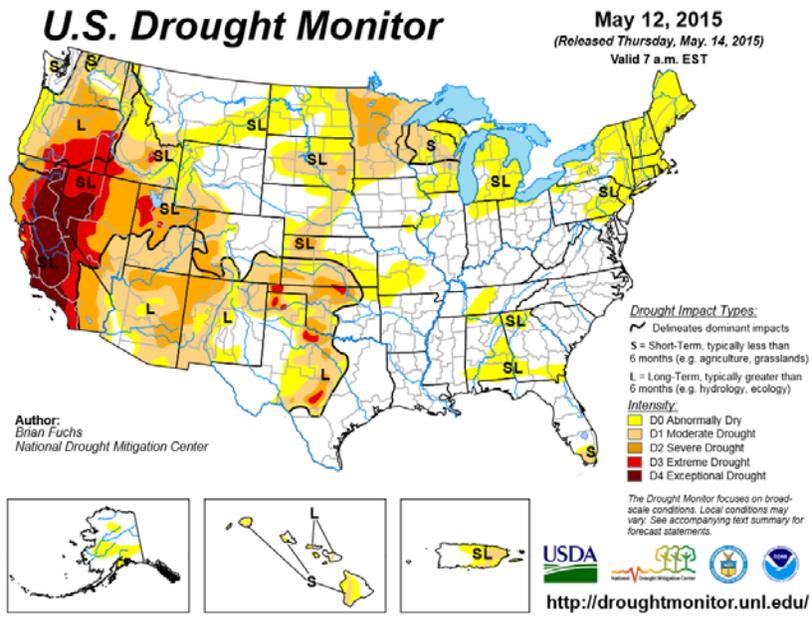
National Drought Summary – May 12, 2015

The following **Weather and Drought Summary** is provided by this week’s NDMC Drought Author, Brian Fuchs, National Drought Mitigation Center.

USDM Map Services: contains [archived maps](#)

“For the contiguous 48 states, the U.S. Drought Monitor showed 34.61 percent of the area in moderate drought or worse, compared with 37.79 percent a week earlier. Drought now affects 67,727,982 people, compared with 72,236,554 a week earlier.

For all 50 U.S. states and Puerto Rico, the U.S. Drought Monitor showed 28.96 percent of the area in moderate drought or worse, compared with 31.61 percent a week earlier. Drought now affects 68,822,176 people, compared with 72,683,826 a week earlier.”



[Current Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are across CA, and NV.

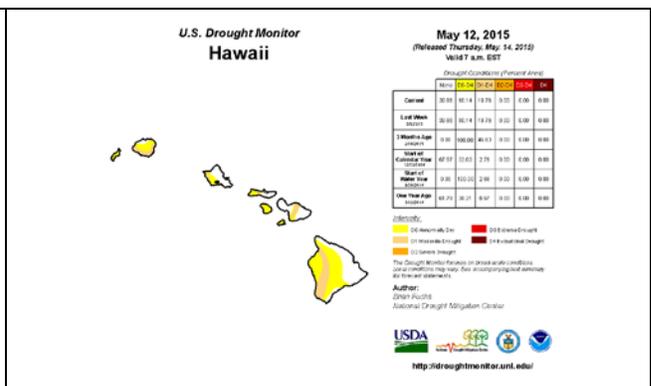
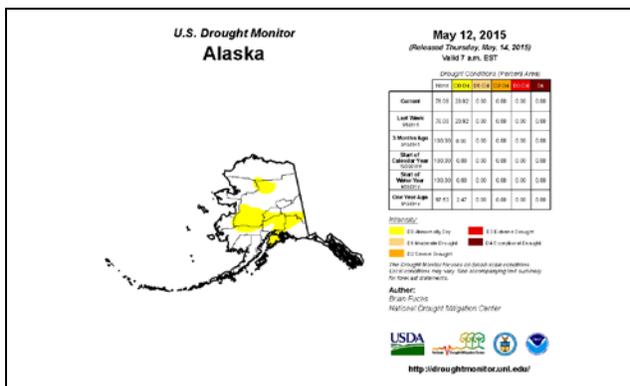
The latest [drought indicator blend and component percentiles](#) spreadsheet is a great resource for climate division drought statistics. This link is for the latest [Drought Outlook](#) (forecast). See [climatological rankings](#).

For more drought news, see [Drought Impact Reporter](#).
New: [ENSO Blog](#).

Drought Management Resources:

- ✓ <http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/Drought/AgInDrought.pdf>
- ✓ [Watch AgDay TV](#)
- ✓ [Drought Impacts Webinar Series](#)
- ✓ [NIDIS Quarterly Climate Impacts and Outlook](#)
- ✓ [The Spring 2014 edition of DroughtScope](#)
- ✓ [U.S. Crops in Drought](#)

See: Latest Drought [Impacts](#) during the past week.



“The [49th](#) and [50th](#) States show normal to moderate drought conditions. There was no change in Alaska or Hawaii this week. A comprehensive narrative describing drought conditions across other parts of the nation can be found toward the end of this document. For drought impacts definitions for the figures that follow, click [here](#).”

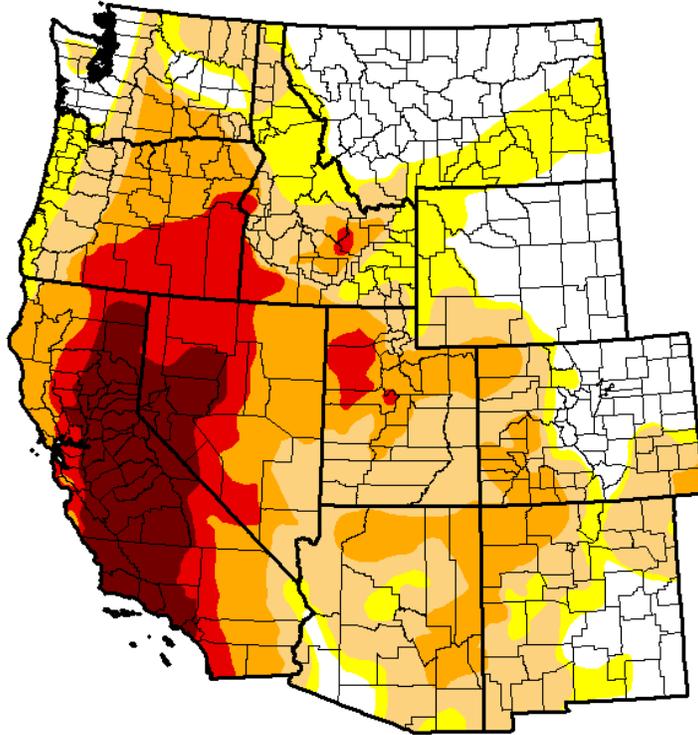
Weekly Water and Climate Update

U.S. Drought Monitor West

May 12, 2015

(Released Thursday, May. 14, 2015)

Valid 7 a.m. EST



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	22.69	77.31	63.10	38.04	17.54	7.95
Last Week <i>5/5/2015</i>	23.35	76.65	63.22	39.05	17.54	7.95
3 Months Ago <i>2/10/2015</i>	30.41	69.59	52.65	30.63	17.10	6.96
Start of Calendar Year <i>12/31/2014</i>	34.76	65.24	54.48	33.50	18.68	5.40
Start of Water Year <i>9/30/2014</i>	31.48	68.52	55.57	35.65	19.95	8.90
One Year Ago <i>5/13/2014</i>	31.18	68.82	60.82	47.37	19.96	4.70

Intensity:

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

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

Author:

Brian Fuchs
National Drought Mitigation Center



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

There was an increase in D0 areas in the West this past week. The drought-free area, D2, and D3 decreased. There was no change in D3 and D4.

Click to enlarge maps

Risk Management Web Resources

Drought Monitor for the [Western States](#). Drought Impact Reporter for [New Mexico](#), [California Data Exchange Center](#) & [Flood Management Intermountain West Climate Dashboard](#)
[California Sierra Nevada-related snow pack](#)

U.S. [Impacts](#) during the past week:

WA - [Yakima Basin junior water right holders now looking at 47 percent](#) – May 4

U.S. - [U.S. Rains Rescue Kansas Wheat From Second Drought Disaster](#) – May 4

WA - [Bad fire season expected on both sides of Cascades](#) – May 4

NH - [Brush fires rage in Concord and Canterbury, scorching dozens of acres across region](#) – May 5

WEST - [USDA Announces \\$235 Million Available For Innovative New Conservation Partnerships](#) – May 5

Weekly Water and Climate Update

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

U.S. Drought Monitor California

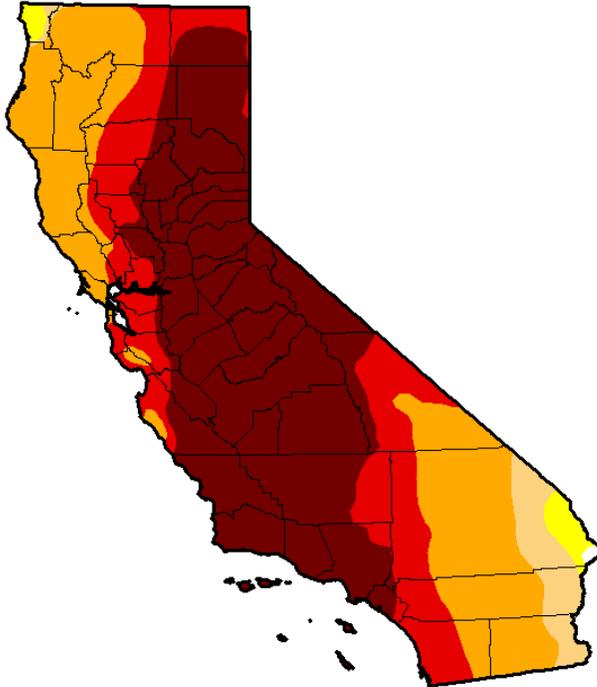
May 12, 2015

(Released Thursday, May 14, 2015)

Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.14	99.86	98.28	93.91	66.60	46.77
Last Week <i>5/3/2015</i>	0.14	99.86	98.28	93.91	66.60	46.77
3 Months Ago <i>2/10/2015</i>	0.16	99.84	98.10	93.44	67.46	39.99
Start of Calendar Year <i>12/30/2014</i>	0.00	100.00	98.12	94.34	77.94	32.21
Start of Water Year <i>9/30/2014</i>	0.00	100.00	100.00	95.04	81.92	58.41
One Year Ago <i>5/13/2014</i>	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	76.68	24.77



Intensity:

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

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

Author:

Brian Fuchs

National Drought Mitigation Center



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

There was no change in California for the week. D4 covers over 46% of the state.

[CA Drought Information Resources](#)

[Drought News from California:](#)

[Drought prompts Starbucks to move bottled water production out of California](#) – May 8

[Cal Fire Reports Worst Fire Conditions on Record This Season](#) – May 5

[‘Don’t Do Anything Stupid’ — Fire Officials Send Strong Message During California Drought](#) – May 4

[California Drought Kills 12 Million Forest Trees Since Last Year](#) – May 4

[California needs to turn down the tap, state OKs historic cuts](#) – May 5

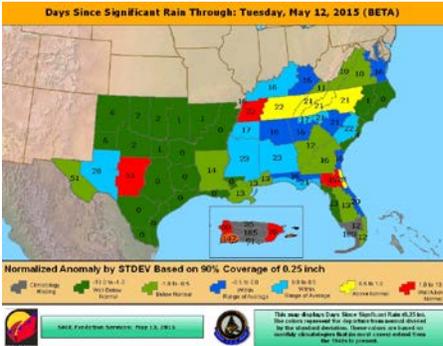
[Another early opening for Tioga Road, Yosemite’s major east-west route](#) – May 3

[Drought forces California farms to stop pumping river water](#) – May 1

[Reduced Russian River Flows Approved by State Water Board](#) – May 1

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Texas Drought [Website](#).
 Texas Reservoirs.
 Texas Drought Monitor Coordination
 Conference Call: on Monday's 2:00
 PM - 3:00 PM CST

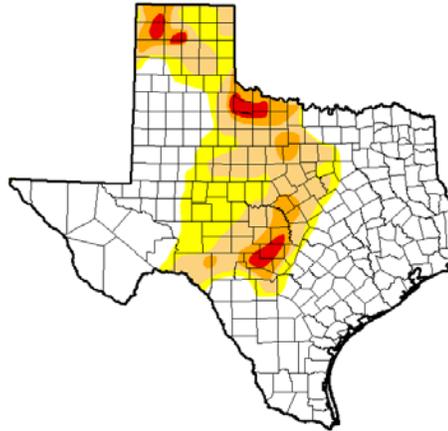


[Days since Significant Rain Summary](#)

Texas had D-4 Exceptional Drought **removed this week**

U.S. Drought Monitor Texas

May 12, 2015
 (Released Thursday, May, 14, 2015)
 Valid 7 a.m. EST



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	64.42	35.58	22.75	7.69	1.93	0.00
Last Week 5/5/2015	59.68	40.32	29.55	15.50	5.48	1.88
3 Months Ago 2/16/2015	43.30	56.70	39.19	24.71	13.21	4.48
Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2015	34.37	65.63	44.68	25.73	11.70	3.17
Start of Water Year 9/26/2014	28.92	71.08	48.95	29.54	11.26	2.69
One Year Ago 5/13/2014	0.02	91.10	73.05	56.10	39.89	20.73

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

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

Author:
 Brian Fuchs
 National Drought Mitigation Center



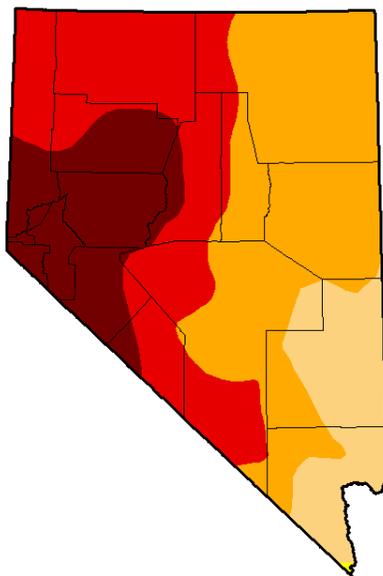
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

There was a substantial decrease in all drought categories in Texas this past week. D4 was removed. The drought-free areas increased this week.

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

U.S. Drought Monitor Nevada

May 12, 2015
 (Released Thursday, May, 14, 2015)
 Valid 7 a.m. EST



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	99.93	87.00	49.21	18.38
Last Week 5/5/2015	0.00	100.00	99.93	87.00	49.21	18.38
3 Months Ago 2/16/2015	0.00	100.00	99.93	63.19	47.96	17.43
Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2015	0.00	100.00	96.98	68.25	48.38	11.89
Start of Water Year 9/26/2014	0.00	100.00	97.04	69.89	48.38	11.89
One Year Ago 5/13/2014	0.00	100.00	100.00	87.03	38.73	8.24

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

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

Author:
 Brian Fuchs
 National Drought Mitigation Center



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

There was no change in Nevada for the week.

Nevada Drought News:

[Fire officials warn Sandoval of difficult summer – May 5](#)

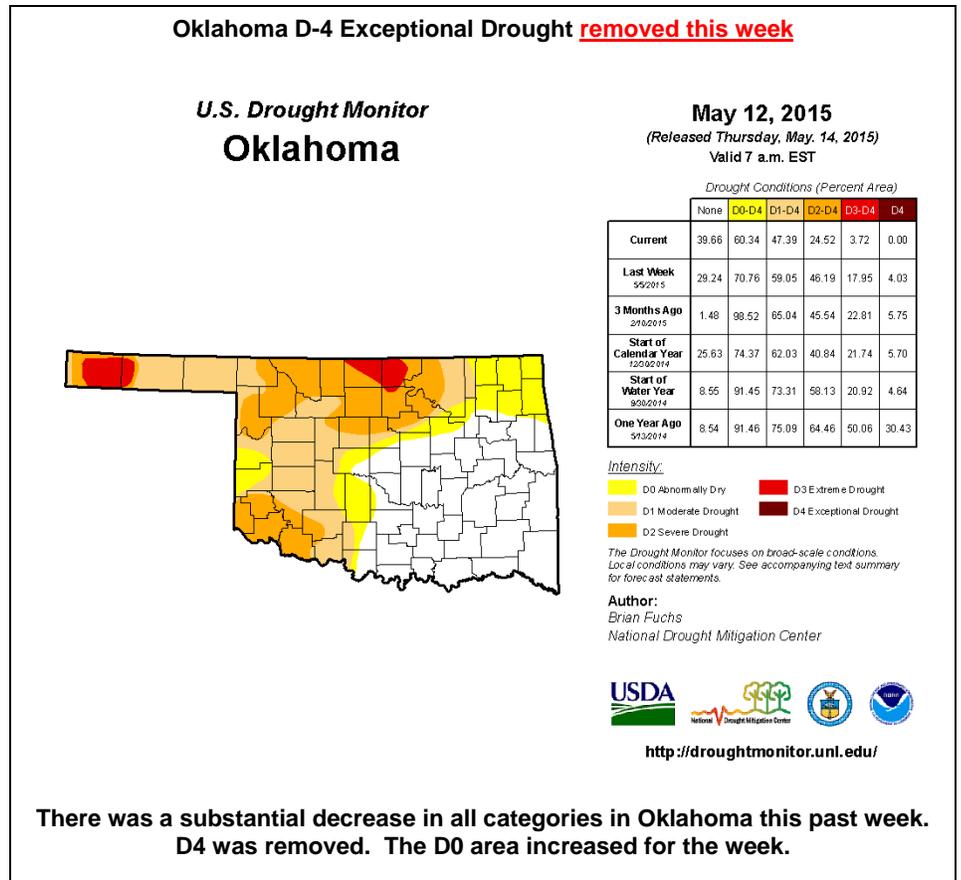
[Drought prompts closure of popular off-leash area at Rancho San Rafael in Reno – May 5](#)

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Related Area News:

[2014 Kansas Drought Report and Summary](#)

- [Past 30 days precipitation totals](#)
- [Past 30 days precipitation percent of normal](#)
- [Calendar Year precipitation totals](#)
- [Calendar Year Precip percent of normal](#)
- [Short Crop ET](#)



U.S. Population in Drought

Number of people in each drought category in the U.S. for the week ending May 5, 2015

Week	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
2015-05-12	153,879,440	151,518,014	67,727,982	43,010,635	31,379,746	20,564,132
2015-05-05	164,356,795	141,040,660	72,236,555	46,528,524	31,936,475	20,766,279

Population figures affected by drought in the U.S. Drought Monitor website show that, for this week, more than 67,000,000 people in the United States were in a drought-affected area, which is a decrease by over 4.5 million people from last week.

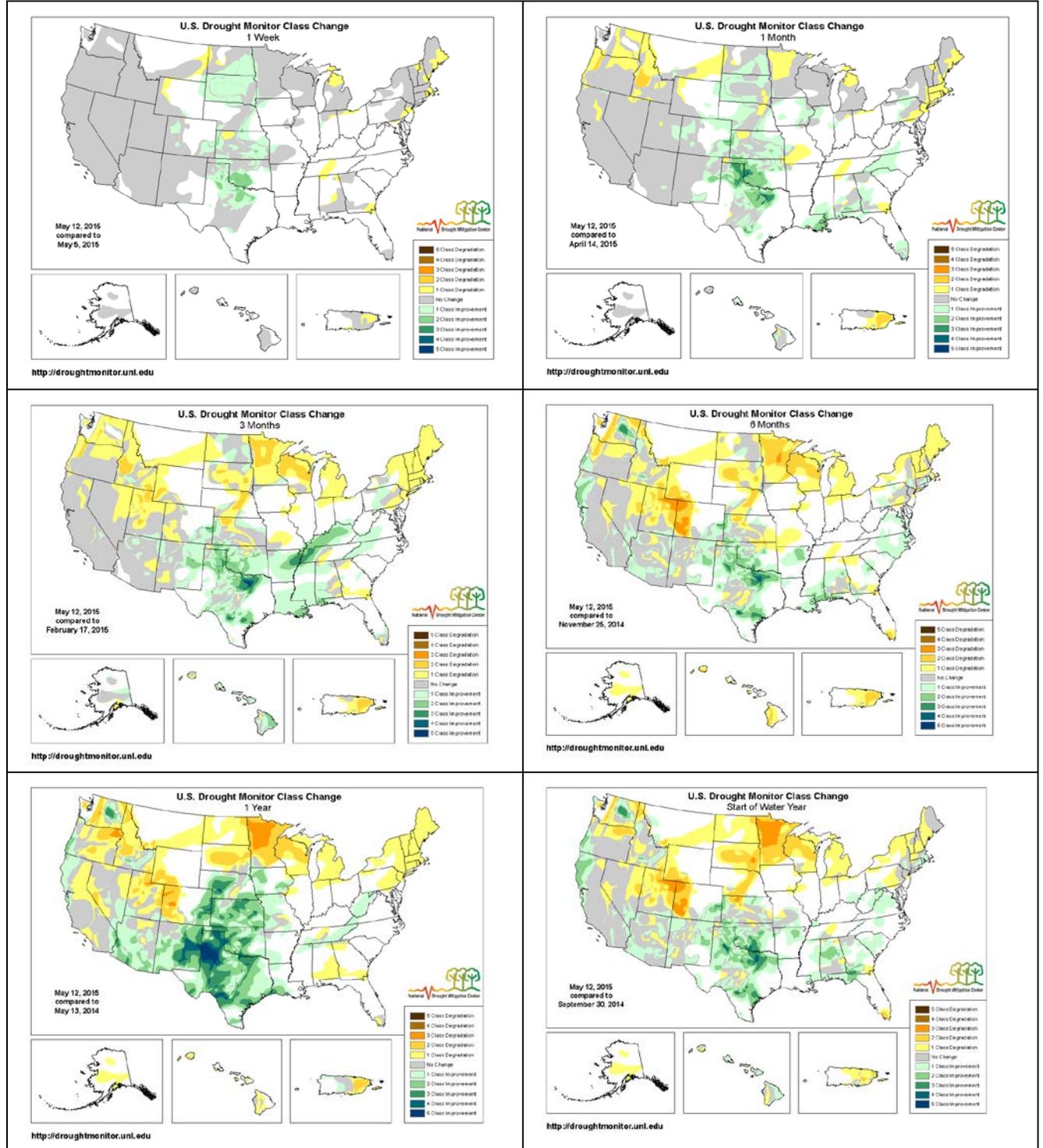
Population Statistics Methodology:

The U.S. Drought Monitor population statistics are calculated at the county level, and aggregated to the state, regional, and national levels. The population densities have been calculated for each county. The proportion of the physical area of the county that is in drought is multiplied by the uniform population density in order to obtain a number for each county. The county values are then summed at the state, regional, and national level.

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Changes in Drought Monitor Categories

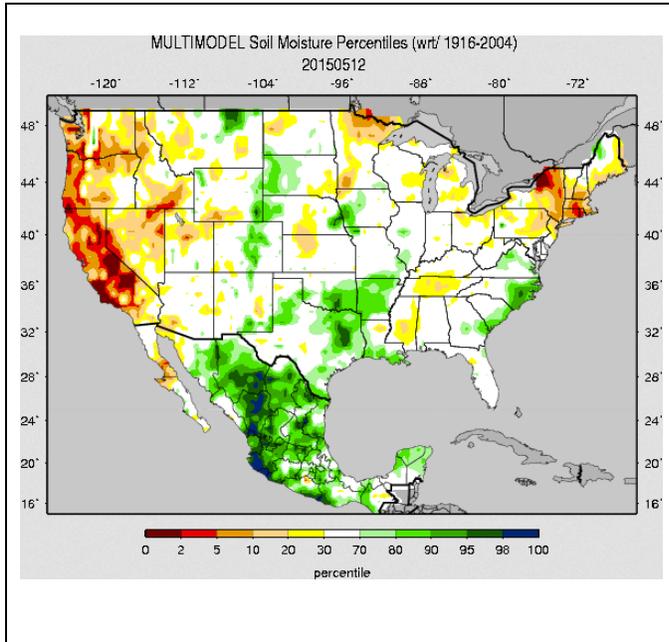
Over Various Time Periods



Click on any of these maps to enlarge. Note how the conditions over the upper Great Plains and the central Rockies have degraded between 6 to 12 months (middle right to lower left maps). However, also note that, since a year ago, conditions over parts of the Great Plains, the Southwest, and the Pacific coast states have improved (lower left map).

Weekly Water and Climate Update

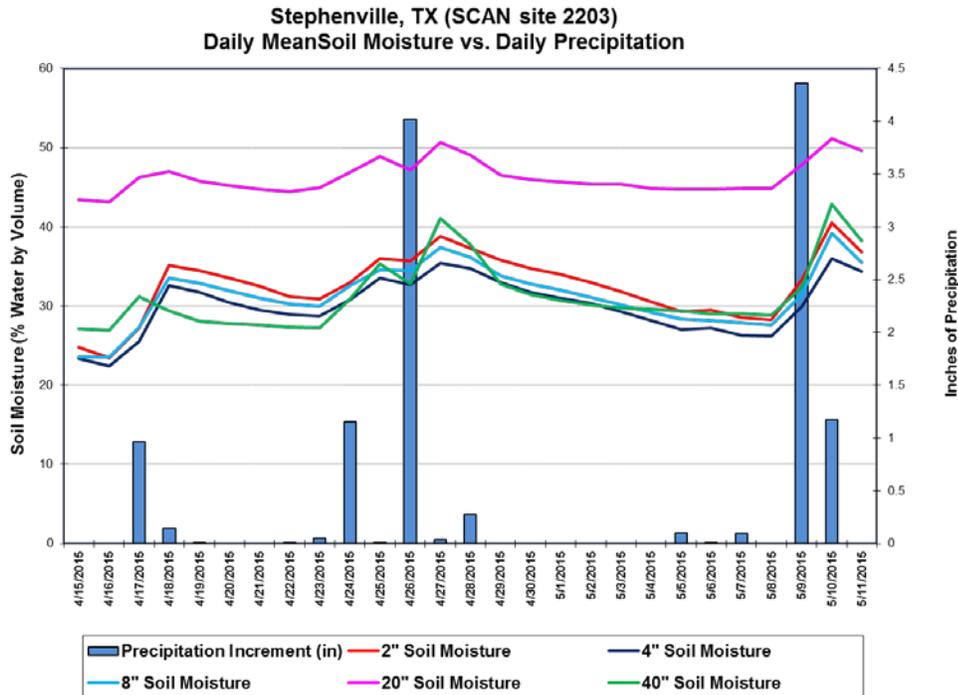
Soil Moisture



The national soil moisture model ranking in [percentile](#) as of May 12, 2015, shows dryness over most of the West, the Southwest, the northern Great Plains, and the Northeast. The driest areas were in California, Nevada, western Oregon, western Washington, southern Idaho, northern Minnesota, northern New York, and southeast Connecticut. Additional drier than normal conditions are scattered across areas in many states. Moist soils dominated areas of northeastern Montana, eastern Wyoming, parts of Nebraska, much of Texas, southern Louisiana, Arkansas, western Iowa, much of Oklahoma, and eastern North Carolina. Slightly moist soils were also scattered elsewhere in the U.S.

Useful Hydrological Links: [Crop Moisture Index](#); [Palmer Drought Severity Index](#); [Standardized Precipitation Index](#); [Surface Water Supply Index](#); [Weekly supplemental maps](#); [Minnesota Climate Working Group](#); [Experimental High Resolution Drought Trigger Tool](#); [NLDAS Drought Monitor](#); [Soil Moisture](#)

Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)

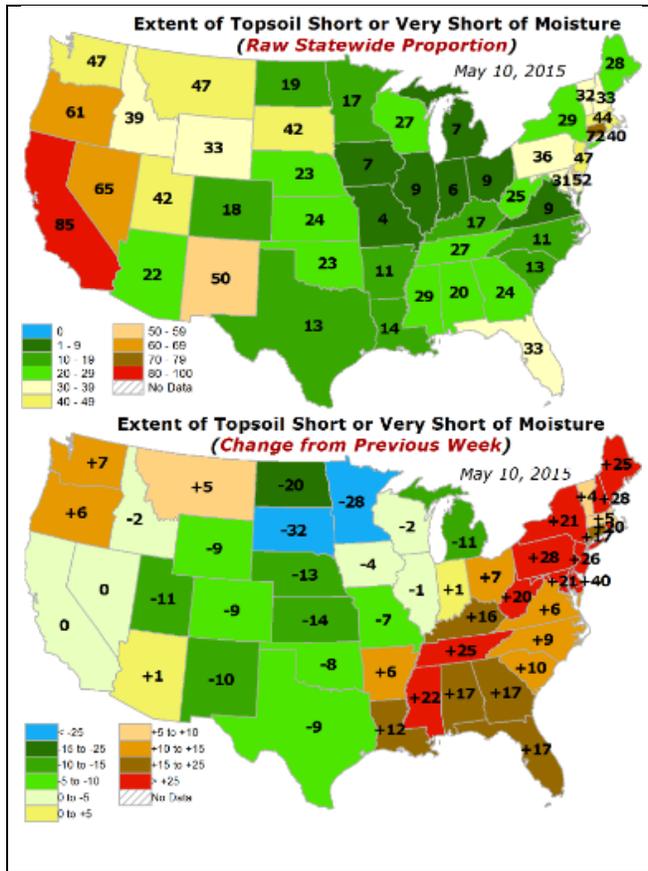


This NRCS resource shows soil moisture data for the last month at the [Stephenville \(SCAN site 2203\)](#) in Texas. The area had several, large precipitation events in the last 30 days, with the largest one in the last week (blue bars). This rainfall resulted in an increase in soil moisture at all sensors, followed by a decline after the last precipitation event, as high soil moisture decreases.

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 Water and Climate Update

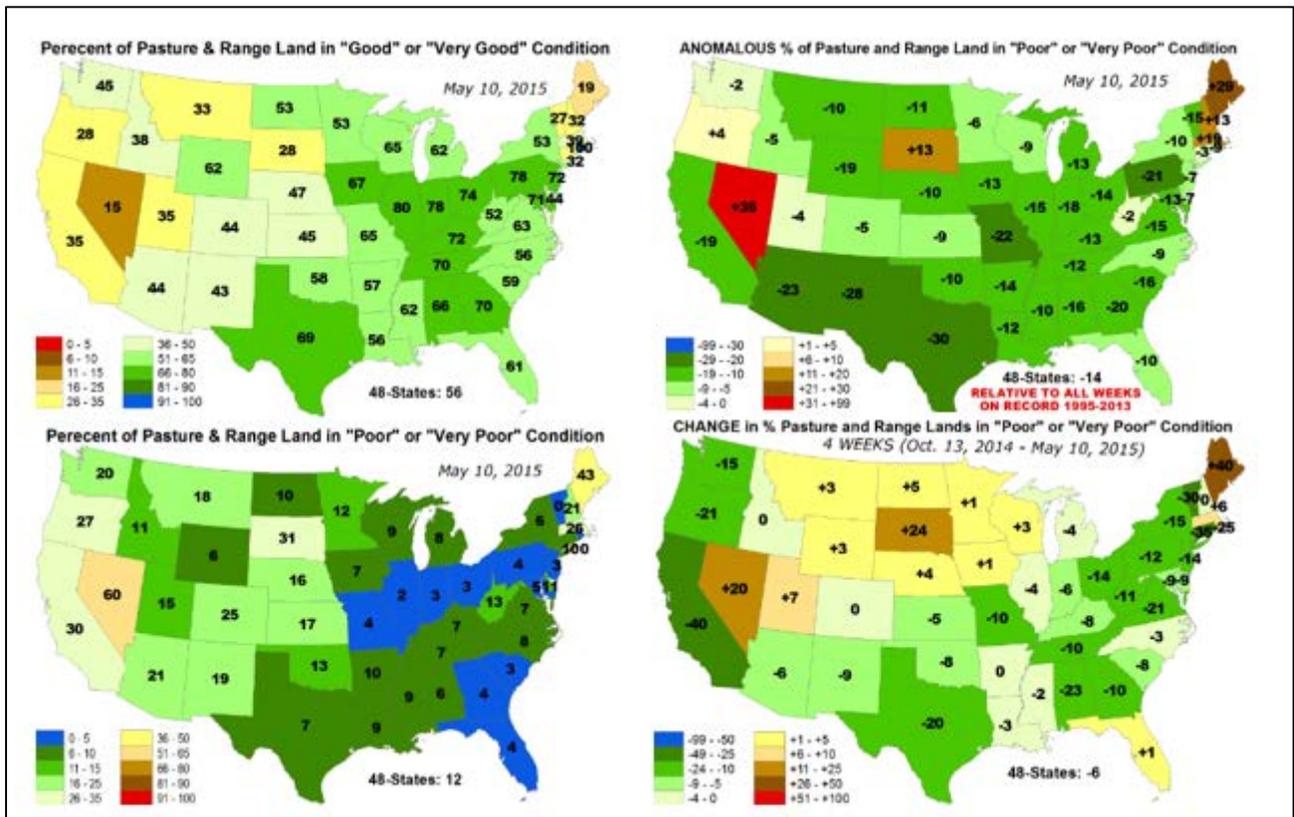
Topsoil and Pasture & Rangeland National Conditions



↳ **Topsoil Moisture** is exceptionally poor (top) over California, Nevada, Oregon, and Connecticut with values representing more than 60% poorer conditions than the median for this time of year. Locations in the northern Great Plains to the Southeast have good soil moisture conditions.

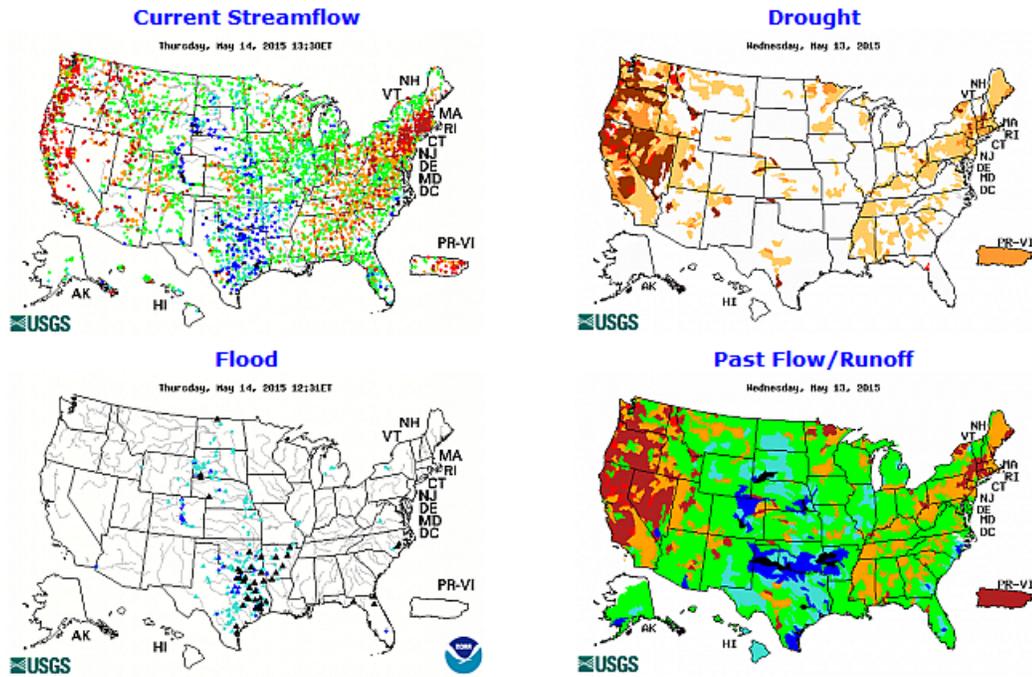
Good topsoil moisture dominates the center of the U.S. (bottom panel). Minnesota and South Dakota show the largest topsoil moisture increase for the week, whereas the East and some of the West were drying out.

↪ **Pasture and Rangeland across the U.S.** Many of the states east of the Mississippi River are doing well, as noted below. These conditions also extend across the northern Great Plains and northern Rockies. Pasture and rangelands are stressed over California, Nevada, and the Northeast. Condition changes have varied widely over this past week.



Weekly Water and Climate Update

Streamflow



Gages in several regions of the U.S. are reporting much above normal streamflow. There are many gages at flood stage centered in the lower Mississippi tributaries and southern U.S. this week. These include six gages in Texas, seven in Oklahoma, one in North Dakota, two in South Dakota, two in Nebraska, five in Arkansas, five in Oklahoma, twenty three in Texas, one in Louisiana, two in North Carolina, and four in Florida.

National Long-Range Outlook



[Click map to enlarge and update](#)

Currently the Upper Midwest part of the map has not been calculated for the long range flood outlook (dark gray dots).

According to the National Weather Service, during the next three months there is a risk of flooding in much of the eastern U.S. The Southeast and the Midwest have gages with a slight to higher risk of flooding. Currently, **0** gages have a greater than 50% chance to experience major flooding; **20** gages for moderate flooding; and **79** gages for minor flooding.

These numbers represent no change in gages with a greater than 50 percent chance of minor flooding category since last week.

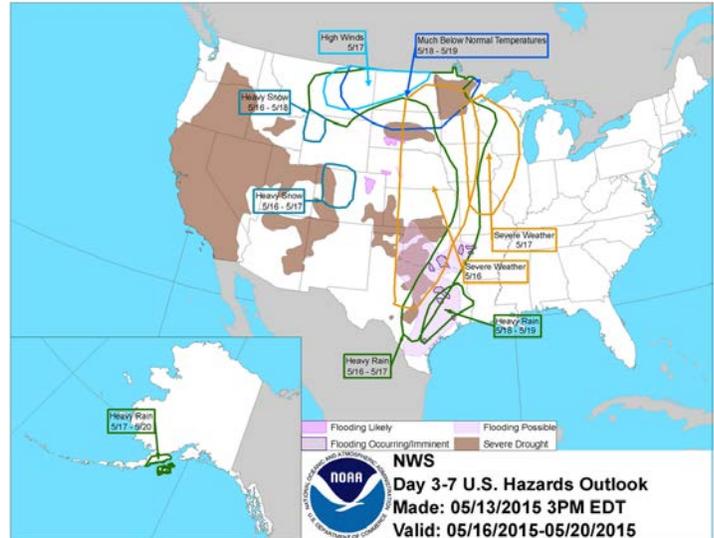
Weekly Water and Climate Update

National [Weather Hazards](#)

The National Weather Service map of national weather hazards for the next 3 – 7 days forecasts heavy snow in eastern Wyoming and Colorado (5/16-18). High winds are forecast from Montana to North Dakota (5/17). Much below normal temperatures are forecast from Montana to Minnesota ((5/18-19). Heavy rain is forecast from Montana to Texas (5/16-19). Severe storms are forecast for a large area of the Midwest (5/16-17). Flooding is occurring, likely, or possible in Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Nebraska, and South Dakota.

In Alaska, heavy rain is expected along the southwest coast (5/17-20).

Severe drought remains a large issue in much of the southcentral and western U.S.



[National Drought Summary for May 12, 2015](#)

Prepared by the Drought Monitor Author: Brian Fuchs, National Drought Mitigation Center.

Summary

“During the current U.S. Drought Monitor week, a series of storm systems moved out of the southwest and ejected onto the plains. With the Gulf of Mexico wide open, there has been ample atmospheric moisture feeding into these storms. Severe weather and record-setting rains were widespread on the front end, while areas on the backside of these storms recorded several feet of wet snow. The greatest precipitation amounts were recorded in Oklahoma, Arkansas, and north Texas, with widespread areas of 8-10 inches of rain. Portions of southeast Nebraska also recorded up to 10 inches of rain, with a swath of 6-8 inches from north central Kansas into southeast Nebraska. Many areas in the western half of the U.S. received 200-400 percent of normal precipitation for the week. Tropical storm Ana impacted portions of the southeast where 3-6 inches of rain fell along the coastal Carolinas. Temperatures for the week were above normal over the eastern United States with departures of 5-10 degrees above normal while the western half was cooler than normal with departures of 5-10 degrees below normal.

Great Plains

Most of the region had below-normal temperatures for the week, with the greatest departures (10 degrees or more) over portions of eastern Wyoming, western Nebraska and western South Dakota. Areas of eastern Kansas, eastern Oklahoma, and most of Texas were above normal for temperatures, with departures of 4-6 degrees common. The big story for the region was the torrential rains and severe weather. The widespread 2-4 inch readings across South Dakota resulted in 1-category improvement to the D2 and D1 conditions in the state. Much of the precipitation which did occur was snow. Snow amounts ranged from 12 inches in the plains of South Dakota to 16 inches in the Black Hills while portions of western Nebraska had up to 24 inches of snow. The improvements extended into North Dakota where D1 was improved in the southeast part of the state, while D0 was expanded over the northern and northwest portions of the state. There was a slight trimming of D1 and D0 conditions over Nebraska where the rains were enough to show improvements. The recent rains allowed for a large-scale 1-category improvement across southern Kansas and parts of southwest and west central Kansas. A small area of D2 was introduced into northwest Kansas where the recent rains have not been as substantial and conditions are worsening. In Oklahoma and Texas, large-scale 1-2 category improvements were made after copious rains of 6-10 inches or more were recorded. Most areas in Texas and Oklahoma were good out to 24 months, but some residual dryness was still evident at 36 months. D4 has been completely eliminated from Texas and Oklahoma for the first time since July 2012. With the short-term indicators all showing drought-free conditions, a substantial shift of the long-term delineation line to the north was made this week as only long-term issues are impacting the southern plains.

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico

No changes were made in Alaska and Hawaii this week. For Puerto Rico, conditions continued to worsen as precipitation and streamflow values all are declining and D0 and D1 conditions were expanded as a result.

Midwest/Great Lakes

Warmer than normal temperatures dominated the entire region outside of Minnesota. Temperatures were 9-12 degrees above normal over the eastern Corn Belt and 3-6 degrees above normal over the rest of the region. Minnesota was cool with temperatures 3-6 degrees below normal. Precipitation was below normal over the eastern portions of the region while portions of Missouri, Illinois, Michigan, western Wisconsin, and Minnesota were up to 4 inches above normal precipitation for the week. Changes made this week included an expansion of D0 across northern Ohio, northern Indiana and northern Michigan. In response to recent rains, some improvement was shown to the D0 and D1 regions of northwest Iowa as well as a full category improvement over all of western Minnesota.

Southeast

A warm and fairly dry week was observed over most the region. Temperatures were above normal throughout the area, ranging from 3 degrees above normal in the south to 6-9 degrees above normal to the north. Most of the region ended up the week below normal for precipitation except those areas along the coastal Carolinas that received 2-6 inches of rain associated with tropical storm Ana. D0 was expanded across southern Georgia and into extreme northeast Florida as well as southern and northeast Alabama. A new area of D0 was introduced into central Tennessee and northwest Alabama.

The Northeast

Warm conditions dominated the region this week, helping to finally bring spring conditions to the area. Temperatures were generally at least 4 degrees above normal, with portions of New York, Pennsylvania and western New England being 12-16 degrees above normal. Overall, dry conditions dominated the region, with only some of the northern extent of the region recording up to 1.50 inches of precipitation. Changes made this week included D0 being expanded across all of New England and southeastern Pennsylvania. D0 was also expanded across northern Maryland and northern New Jersey. While spring has been off to a slow start, the dryness is starting to develop into impacts that are short-term in nature while water supply is in good shape.

West

Cooler than normal temperatures along with scattered precipitation through the region this week allowed for some changes. The D0 in Montana was connected to the areas of D0 in the Dakotas. After another good week of rains and cooler temperatures, D0-D2 conditions improved in southeast Colorado. In west central Colorado, D2 was improved as well. Western Wyoming saw a large expansion of D0 while eastern Wyoming had improvements to D0.

Looking Ahead

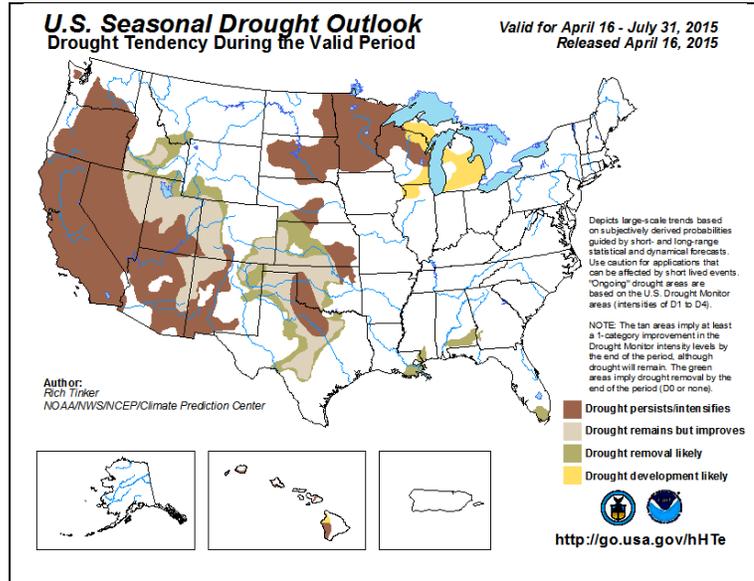
Over the next 5-7 days, temperatures over the eastern United States are anticipated to be above normal with departures of up to 6 degrees. Most of the rest of the United States will have temperatures at or below normal, with the greatest departures (up to 9 degrees below normal) over the west coast. An active pattern looks to continue over much of the plains states and into the southeast. Precipitation forecast amounts of more than 6 inches are being projected over east Texas and up to 3 inches through the Dakotas. The latest 7-day projections have precipitation chances over almost the entire country.

The 6-10 day outlooks show the likelihood of above-normal temperatures over the southeast, Pacific Northwest, and Alaska while there are above-normal chances of temperatures being below normal through the plains, Midwest and southwest. There are below-normal chances of precipitation over the upper Midwest and Great Lakes regions. A good portion of the United States has above-normal chances of seeing precipitation above normal, with the best chances over the southeast and Great Basin."

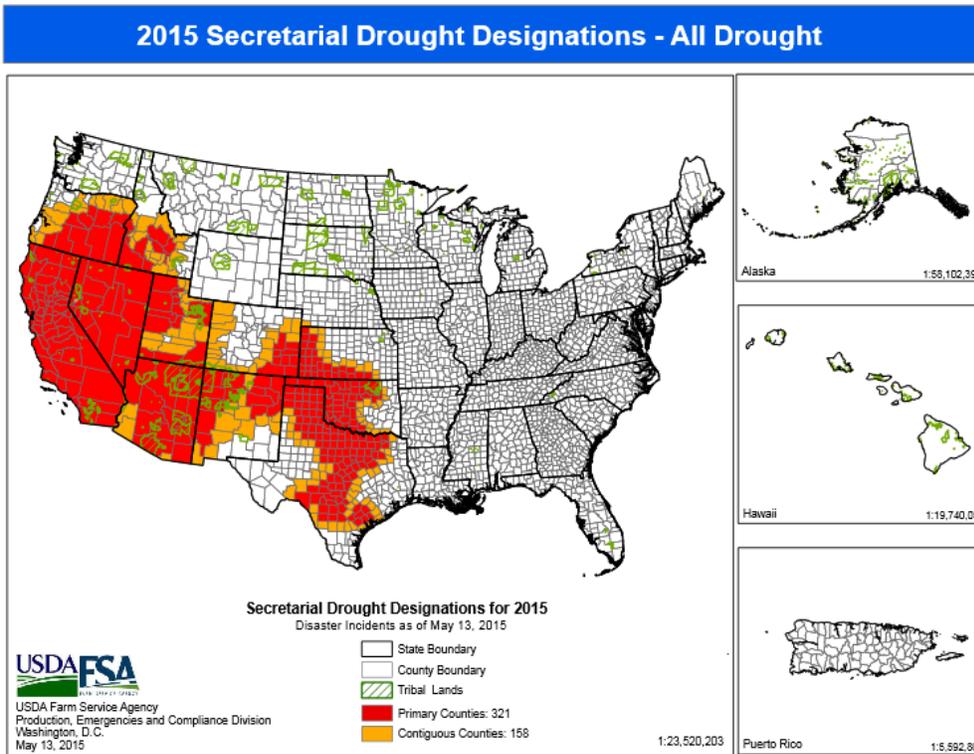
Supplemental Drought Information

National Seasonal Drought Outlook

Nationally, [drought](#) is expected to persist or intensify over much of the west and central U.S., including California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado, and Hawaii. Improvements are expected in parts of Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Nebraska. Drought removal is likely in parts of Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. The areas of drought that are likely to develop further are in the upper Midwest and Hawaii.



2015 USDA Secretarial Drought Designations



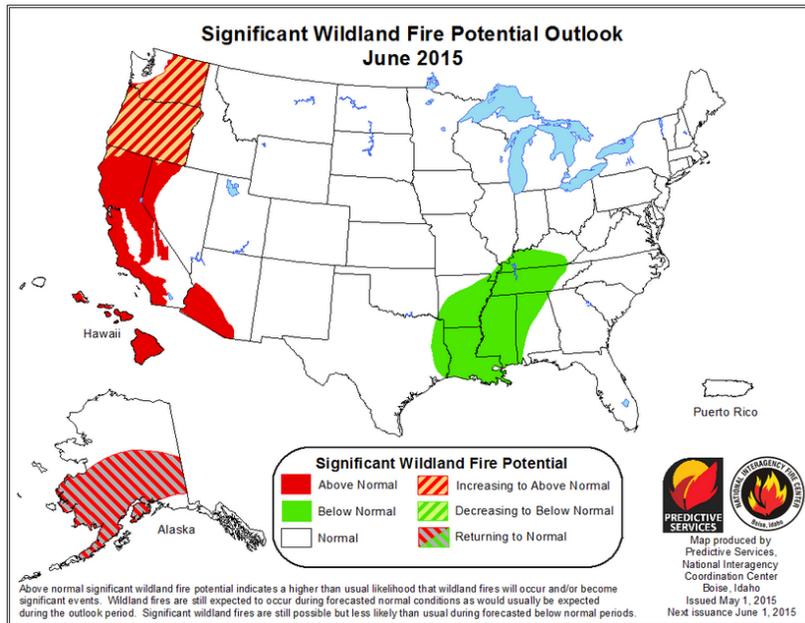
Refer to the USDA Drought Assistance [website](#) and [National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service](#).

Read about the [USDA Regional Climate Hubs](#).

[New useful resource: NASS Quick Stats](#)

Weekly Water and Climate Update

National Fire Potential Outlook



June Fire Forecast

In June, much of the U.S. is forecast to have normal [fire potential](#).

Below normal fire potential for June 2015 (in green on the map) is forecast for the southern U.S.

California, western Nevada, southwest Arizona, and Hawaii have above normal fire potential.

Oregon and western Washington have increasing to above normal fire potential for June. The southern half of Alaska is returning to normal fire potential.

Additional Maps

U.S. Maps PowerPoint presentation: <http://dmcommunity.unl.edu/maps/US-Maps.ppt>.

Regional zooms of ACIS station data percent-of-normal precipitation: <http://dmcommunity.unl.edu/maps/All-CONUS-ACIS-PNP.pptx>. National Water and Climate Center (NWCC) Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) maps: <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wsf/swsi.html>

Supplemental Drought-Agriculture News

Download [archived](#) "U.S. Crops in Drought" files.

The following is a collection of drought-related news stories from the past seven days or so. Impact information from these articles is entered into the [Drought Impact Reporter](#). A number of these articles will also be posted on the [Drought Headlines](#) page at the NDMC website. The list is compiled by Denise D. Gutzmer, Drought Impact Specialist at the National Drought Mitigation Center.

"Emergency regulations approved in California

The California State Water Resources Control Board approved a statewide emergency regulation on May 5, demanding an immediate 25 percent cut in overall potable urban water use as ordered by Gov. Jerry Brown on April 1. If these regulations receive approval from the Office of Administrative Law, they will take effect June 1. The board deemed the emergency regulations necessary after the public's poor conservation efforts reached 9 percent and reached just 3.6 percent in March.

California golf courses to limit water use

California golf courses that rely on private wells must reduce their water use by 25 percent or water no more than twice weekly per the governor's mandate for water restrictions. The golf courses are required to keep records of their water use and must share them with the state if asked.

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Water diversions to end in Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta

More than 2,700 junior water-rights holders along the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the Sacramento River were ordered to end diversions for the second year running.

Concern about the fire season, fire activity ramping up across U.S.

Fire officials in California warned the public to be careful with fire and “don’t do anything stupid” to inadvertently start a fire. In Washington, officials were preparing for a difficult fire season, and the Department of Natural Resources asked for an additional \$4.5 million to aggressively fight small fires to prevent them from growing. Nevada’s Gov. Sandoval was alerted that persistent drought, above normal temperatures and dry vegetation could lead to a “perfect storm” in terms of wildfires in the summer.

New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine have seen above normal fire activity and blame it on unusually dry conditions.

Roughly 12 million California trees lost to drought in past year

An April aerial survey performed by the U.S. forest Service found that roughly 12 million trees in California’s forestlands died within the last year due to extreme drought.

More early openings in California’s Yosemite National Park

Sparse snowfall in Yosemite National Park and early snow melt allowed Glacier Point Road, Tioga Road and Half Dome trail to open weeks ahead of schedule. Snow and ice normally impede travel into May.

Disdain for Starbucks’ water use prompted company to move operations

Starbucks announced its intention to move sourcing and production of bottled water brand Ethos Water to Pennsylvania where water supplies were not threatened by drought. The change came after an article in Mother Jones drew attention to Starbucks’ practices.

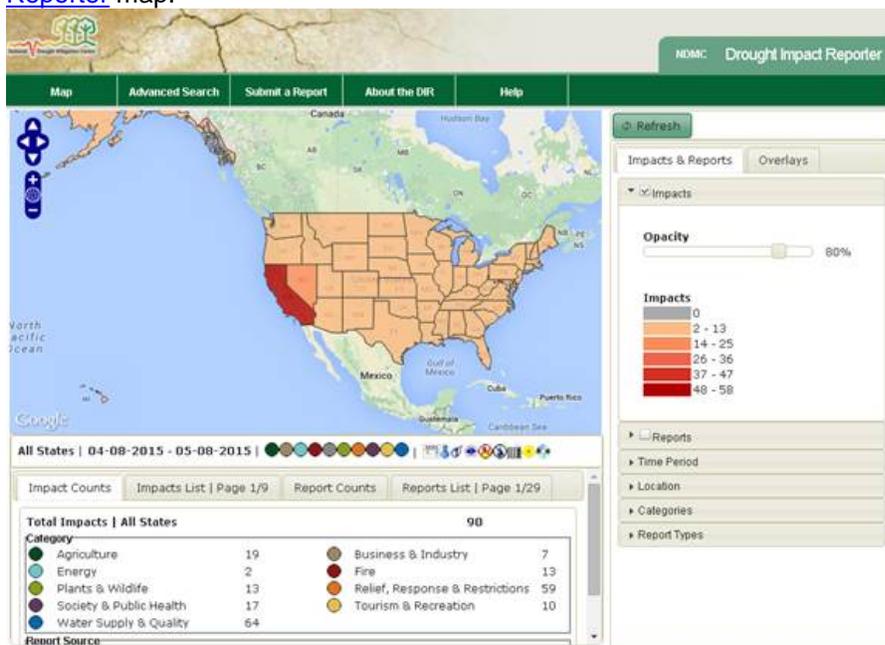
Worsening water outlook for Yakima Basin in Washington

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation told Yakima Basin junior irrigation water rights holders that their water allocation had fallen to 47 percent and could drop further to 38 percent in a worst case scenario. In March, the allocation was 73 percent, and in April, was downgraded to 60 percent.

Kansas wheat rescued from second year of drought damage

April rain fell in the nick of time to save the Kansas wheat crop after a dry winter caused the soil to crack and the plants to turn yellow. In 2014, drought caused the state wheat harvest to drop to its lowest level since 1989.”

News about issues in Nevada brought an uptick in impacts for that state, bringing change to the [Drought Impact Reporter](#) map.



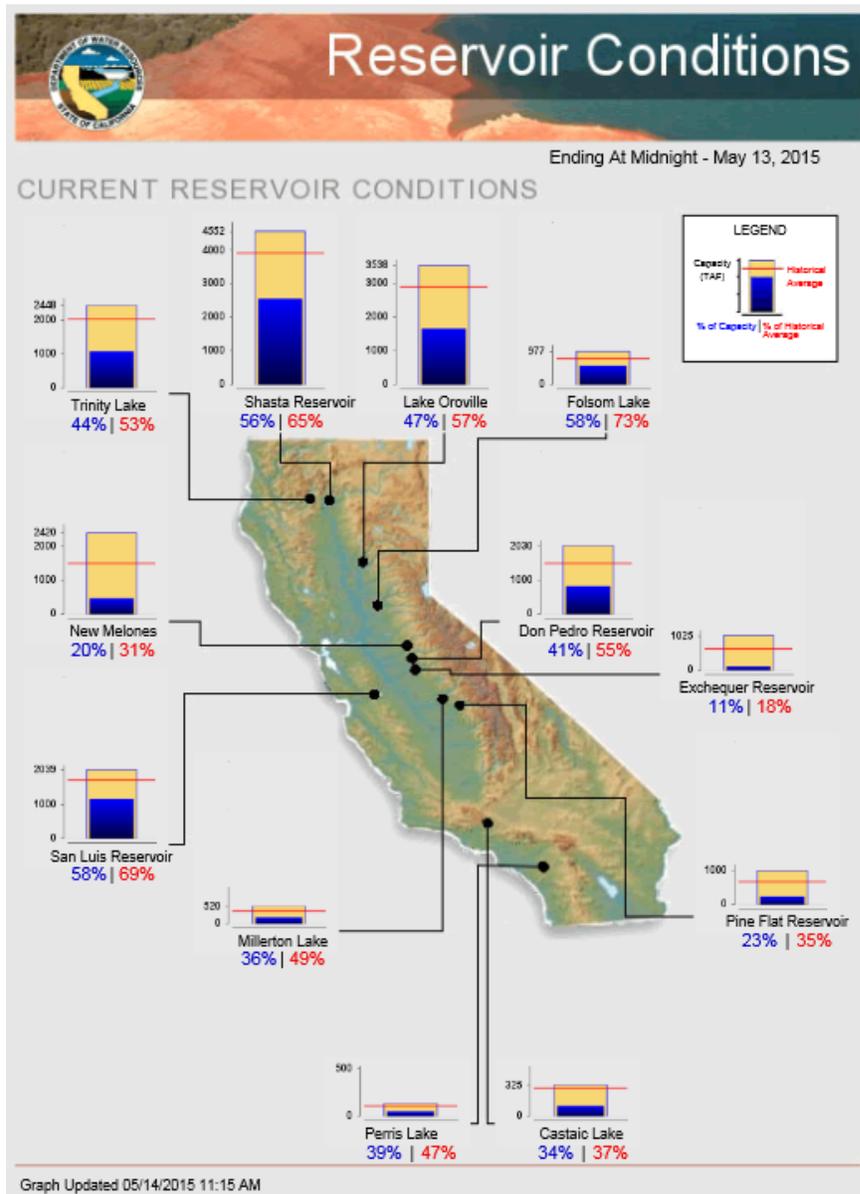
Weekly Water and Climate Update

Tea Cup Reservoir Depictions

- <http://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/basin/> ← Upper Colorado
- http://www.usbr.gov/uc/wcao/water/basin/tc_gr.html; ← Upper Snake
- <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/burtea.html> ← Upper Colorado
- http://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/basin/tc_cr.html ← Upper Colorado
- <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/select.html> ← Pacific Northwest
- <http://www.sevierriver.org/reservoirs/teacup-diagram-of-reservoirs/> ← Sevier River Water (UT)

California Reservoir Conditions

[California Major Reservoir conditions from the CA Department of Water Resources](#)



Weekly Water and Climate Update

State Activities

[State government drought activities](#) can be tracked through their drought plans. 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. Additional information describing the [tools](#) available from the Drought Monitor can also be found at the [U.S. Drought Portal](#).

More Information

The National Water and Climate Center (NWCC) [Homepage](#) provides the latest available snowpack and water supply information. This document is available [weekly](#). CONUS Water and Climate Updates 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/

David W. Smith

Deputy Chief, Soil Science and Resource Assessment