



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

Weekly Report - Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update Date: 8 September 2011

SNOTEL SNOWPACK AND PRECIPITATION SUMMARY

Temperature: [SNOTEL](#) and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly shows above normal departures over the 4-Corners States and the Cascades and below normal departures generally elsewhere (Fig. 1). [ACIS](#) 7-day average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures over central Arizona (>+8°F) and the greatest negative departures over northeast Washington and south-central Idaho (<-4°F) (Fig. 1a).

Precipitation: [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts for the period ending yesterday shows the heaviest precipitation over the Southwest (Fig. 2). In terms of percent of normal, this is also reflected over this same region (Fig 2a). The [Southwest Monsoon](#) as of 1 September has delivered 75% of its typical amount of precipitation. For the [2011 Water-Year](#) that began on 1 October 2010, the greatest deficits are found over the extreme southern reaches of the Southwest. Areas with the highest values are found over the Great Basin, Cascades, Sierra, and parts of Northern and Central Rockies (Fig. 2b).

Overview: For most of those under the influence of drought as depicted by the U.S. Drought Monitor this week, the weather across the country last week can be summed up as either very hot or very wet. On the heels of Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee brought very beneficial rains to the Gulf Coast and Southeast before hooking up with a cold front from the west that brought copious rains up and down the Appalachian Mountains from Georgia to southern Pennsylvania. Oppressive heat and fires were the story in the country's mid-section and southern Plains as no relief was seen there this past week. In a bit of cruel irony, it was the strong and persistent winds of Lee, which just missed the mark of the drought's epicenter in Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico, that fanned the large number of fire outbreaks in Texas.

The West: It was a relatively quiet week across most of the West. The Four Corners region was above-normal temperature-wise, but the Pacific Northwest enjoyed unseasonably cooler weather. The common denominator is that the entire West saw very little in the way of precipitation. This has led expansion and introduction of D0 into southern Nevada as seasonal and year-to-date totals are now lagging behind the curve and vegetation has been stressed. Water supply is in very good shape region wide though. New Mexico continues to deteriorate the most given the inactive monsoon season thus far leading to an expansion of D3-D4 in the southwestern corner of the state. Author: Mark Svoboda, National Drought Mitigation Center

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

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

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. 3 through 3d).

Soil Moisture

Soil moisture (Figs. 4a and 4b), 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 5 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. 6) 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

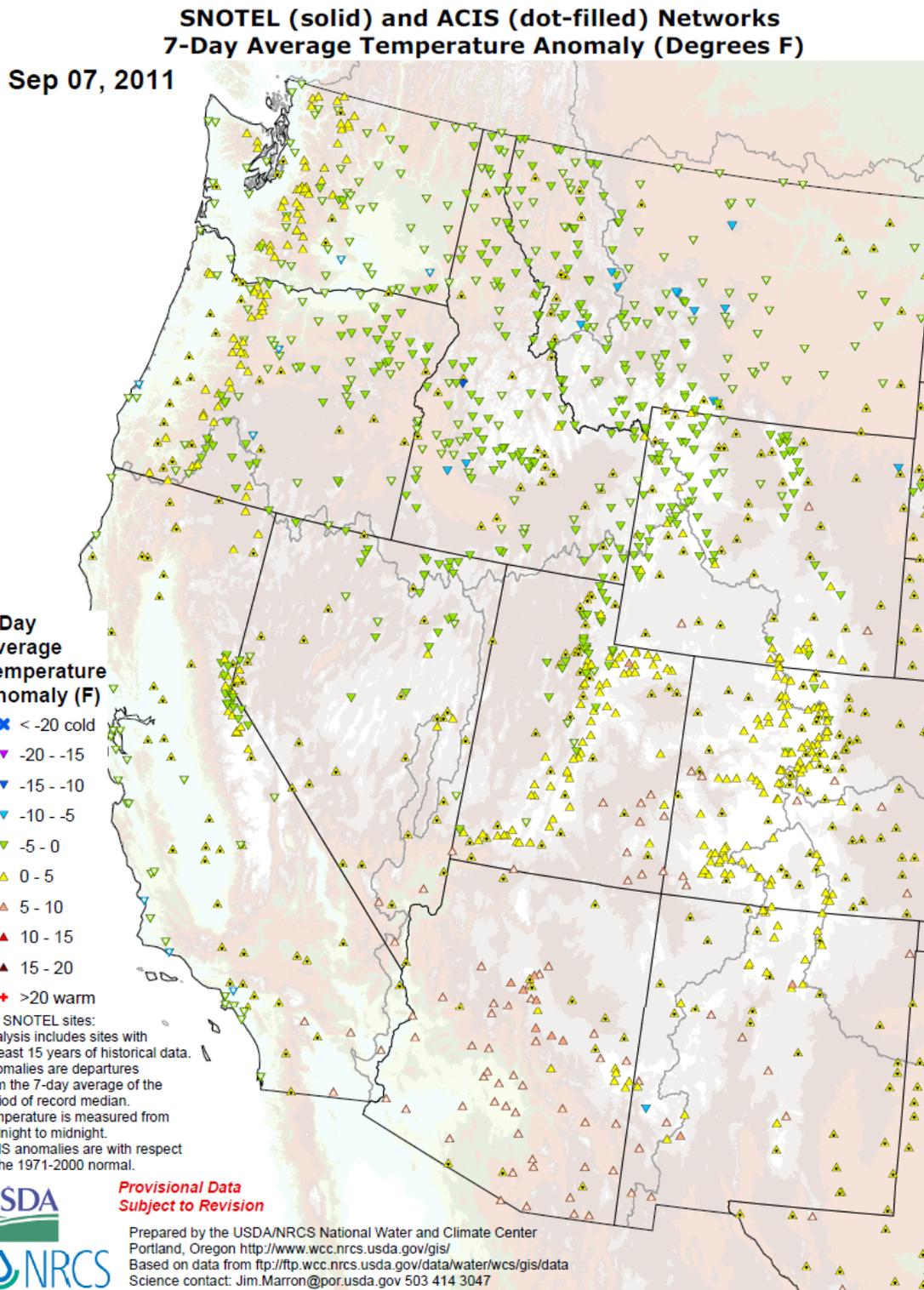
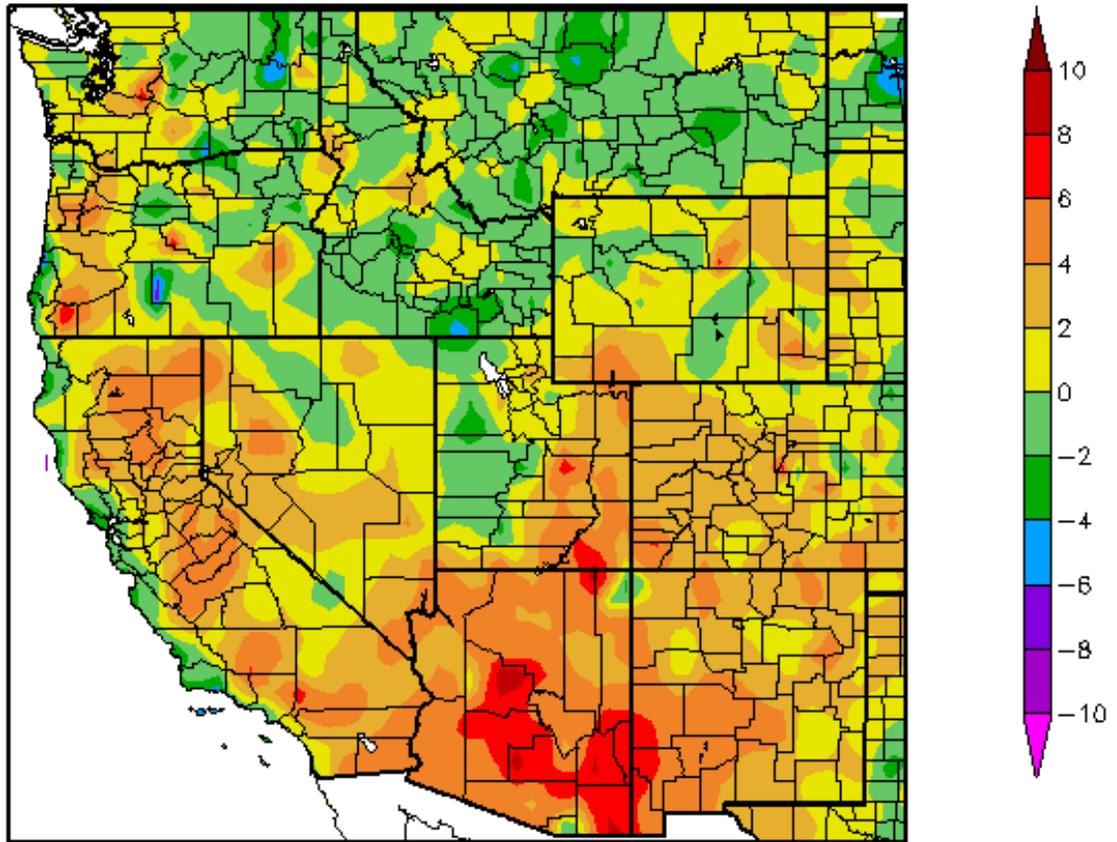


Fig. 1: **SNOTEL** and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly shows above normal departures over the 4-Corners States and the Cascades and below normal departures generally elsewhere.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
9/1/2011 – 9/7/2011



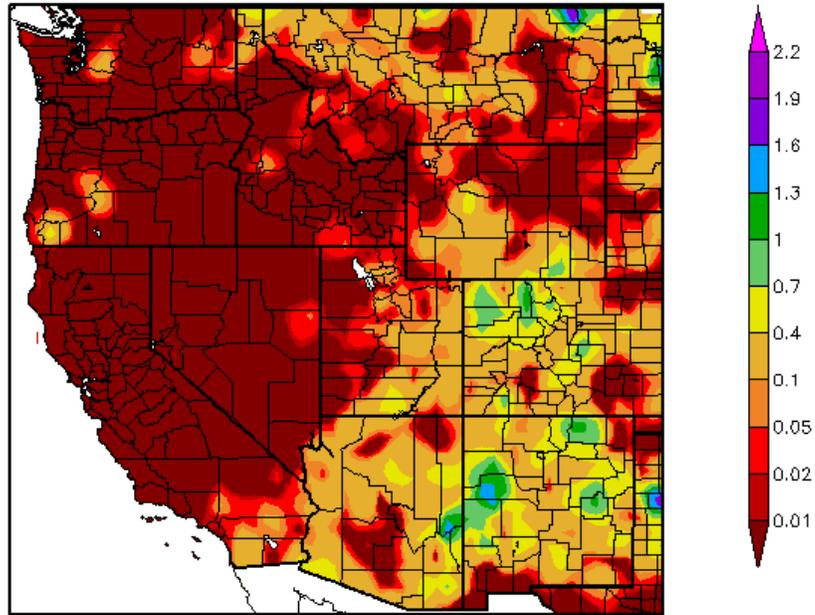
Generated 9/8/2011 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 1a: [ACIS](#) 7-day average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures over central Arizona ($>+8^{\circ}\text{F}$) and the greatest negative departures over northeast Washington and south-central Idaho ($<-4^{\circ}\text{F}$).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

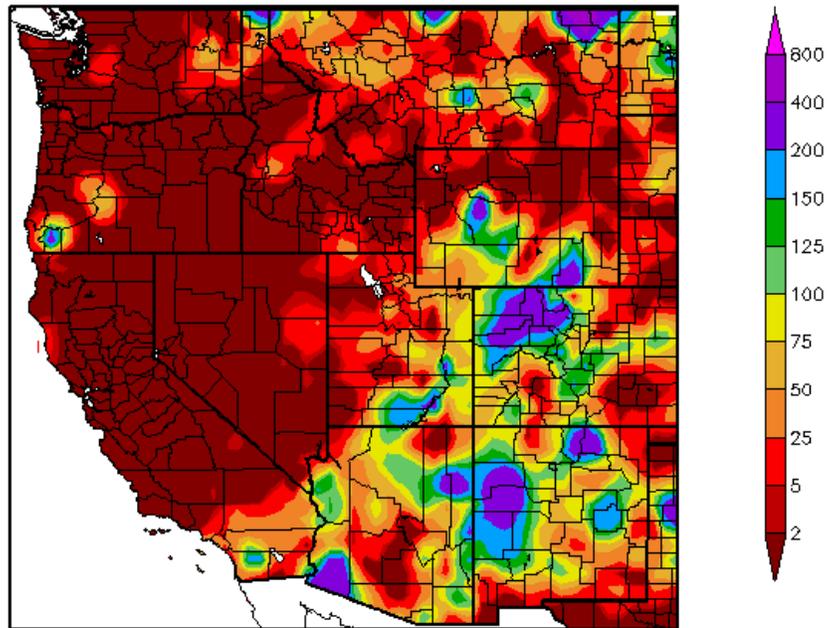
Precipitation (in)
9/1/2011 - 9/7/2011



Generated 9/8/2011 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
9/1/2011 - 9/7/2011



Generated 9/8/2011 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 2 and 2a: [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts for the period ending yesterday shows the heaviest precipitation over the Southwest (Fig. 2). In terms of percent of normal, this is also reflected over this same region (Fig 2a). The [Southwest Monsoon](#) as of 1 September has delivered 75% of its typical amount of precipitation.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

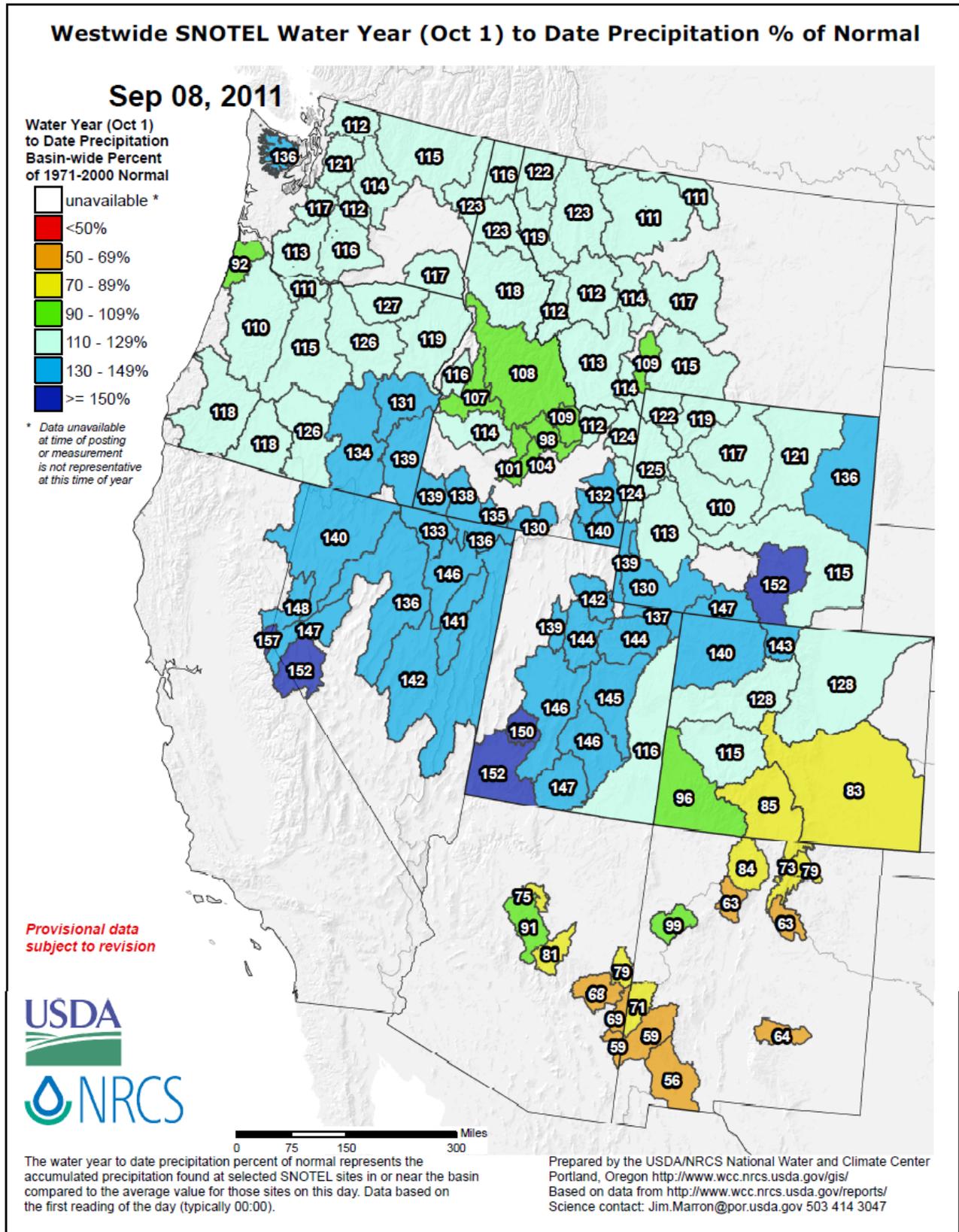


Fig 2b: For the **2011 Water-Year** that began on 1 October 2010, the greatest deficits are found over the extreme southern reaches of the Southwest. Areas with the highest values are found over the Great Basin, Cascades, Sierra, and parts of Northern and Central Rockies.

U.S. Drought Monitor

September 6, 2011
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

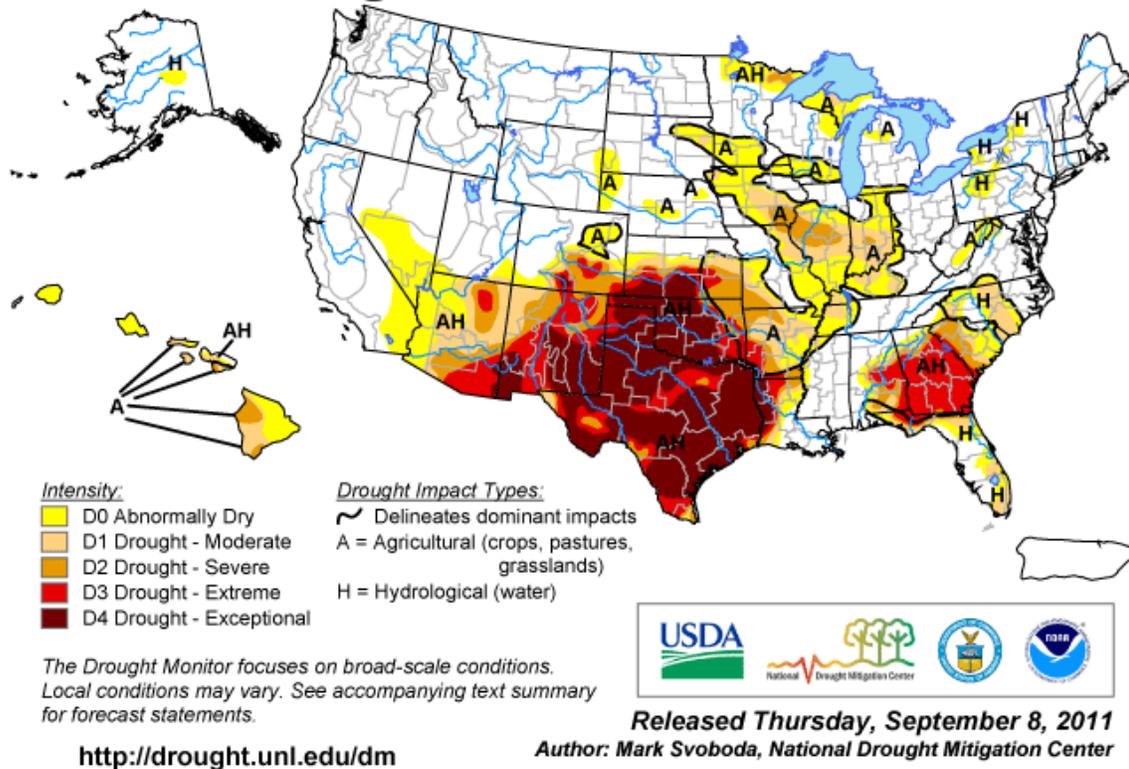


Fig. 3: Current [Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are found over extreme southeast Arizona, New Mexico, south-central Colorado, Texas, Oklahoma, and western Louisiana.

Headline Agriculture News

- Aug 31, Oklahoma. [Agriculture Losses from Drought Top \\$2 Billion](#)
- Aug 31, East central Illinois. [Drought affects pumpkin crops](#)
- Aug 31, Southeastern Alabama. [Drought conditions spell doom and gloom for area farmers](#)
- Sept 1, Atlanta, Georgia. [Drought conditions worry metro farmers](#)
- Aug 28, Southeastern North Carolina. [Drought devastates crops](#)
- Aug 29, Southern Plains. [Drought, high demand makes hay hard to find](#)
- Aug 30, West Texas. [Drought slams W. Texas cotton](#)
- Aug 28, Texas. [Dry Season: The Texas Drought of 2011](#)
- Aug 26, Oklahoma. [Great drought taking toll on Oklahoma cotton](#)
- Sept 2, Iowa. [Heat, drought lower some predictions for Iowa corn](#)
- Aug 30, Texas. [Without rain soon, spinach, other fall vegetable crops may be at risk](#)

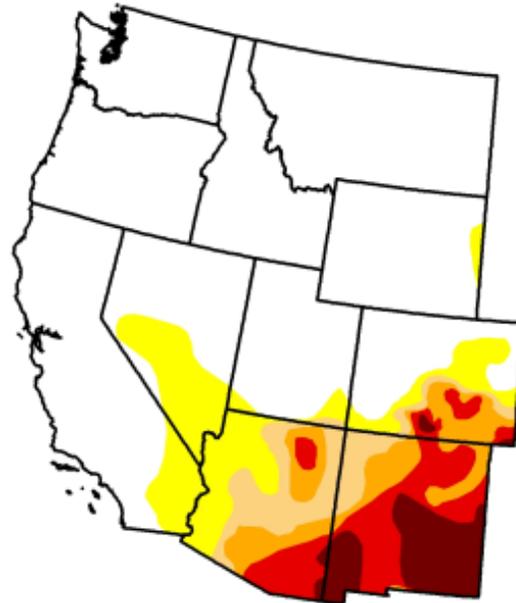
U.S. Drought Monitor

West

September 6, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Current | 70.06 | 29.94 | 19.69 | 14.94 | 10.00 | 4.23 |
| Last Week (08/30/2011 map) | 74.10 | 25.90 | 19.67 | 14.88 | 9.24 | 3.43 |
| 3 Months Ago (06/07/2011 map) | 78.60 | 21.40 | 17.94 | 13.92 | 9.57 | 4.74 |
| Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map) | 73.26 | 26.74 | 11.98 | 0.89 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Start of Water Year (09/28/2010 map) | 62.50 | 37.50 | 8.14 | 0.56 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| One Year Ago (08/31/2010 map) | 74.73 | 25.27 | 6.34 | 0.55 | 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.



Released Thursday, September 8, 2011
National Drought Mitigation Center,

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>

Fig. 3a: Drought Monitor for the [Western States](#) with statistics over various time periods. Regionally there were no significant drought condition changes this week.

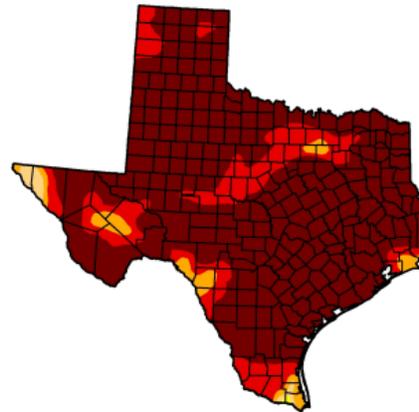
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

U.S. Drought Monitor

Texas

September 6, 2011
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 | 99.01 | 95.68 | 81.06 |
| Last Week (08/30/2011 map) | 0.00 | 100.00 | 99.92 | 99.01 | 95.04 | 81.08 |
| 3 Months Ago (06/07/2011 map) | 1.97 | 98.03 | 96.53 | 94.05 | 85.41 | 57.83 |
| Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map) | 7.89 | 92.11 | 69.43 | 37.46 | 9.59 | 0.00 |
| Start of Water Year (09/28/2010 map) | 75.57 | 24.43 | 2.43 | 0.99 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| One Year Ago (08/31/2010 map) | 51.29 | 48.71 | 11.50 | 0.68 | 0.00 | 0.00 |



Intensity:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p> D0 Abnormally Dry</p> <p> D1 Drought - Moderate</p> <p> D2 Drought - Severe</p> | <p> D3 Drought - Extreme</p> <p> D4 Drought - Exceptional</p> |
|---|---|

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

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



Released Thursday, September 8, 2011
National Drought Mitigation Center,

Fig. 3b(1): Currently, 81% of [Texas](#) is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought. Over 95% of the state is in D3 and D4 drought! No changes are noted this week.

U.S. Drought Monitor

Oklahoma

September 6, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

| | Drought Conditions (Percent Area) | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
| Current | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 85.44 | 69.15 |
| Last Week (08/30/2011 map) | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 96.64 | 85.37 | 69.15 |
| 3 Months Ago (06/07/2011 map) | 22.11 | 77.89 | 69.26 | 42.32 | 33.11 | 9.90 |
| Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map) | 13.82 | 86.18 | 47.90 | 1.50 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Start of Water Year (09/28/2010 map) | 66.28 | 33.72 | 4.21 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| One Year Ago (08/31/2010 map) | 42.29 | 57.71 | 36.20 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |



Intensity:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p> D0 Abnormally Dry</p> <p> D1 Drought - Moderate</p> <p> D2 Drought - Severe</p> | <p> D3 Drought - Extreme</p> <p> D4 Drought - Exceptional</p> |
|---|---|

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

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



Released Thursday, September 8, 2011
National Drought Mitigation Center,

Fig. 3b(2) Currently, 81% of [Oklahoma](#) is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought. Over 85% of the state is in D3 and D4 drought! No changes are noted this week.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

U.S. Drought Monitor

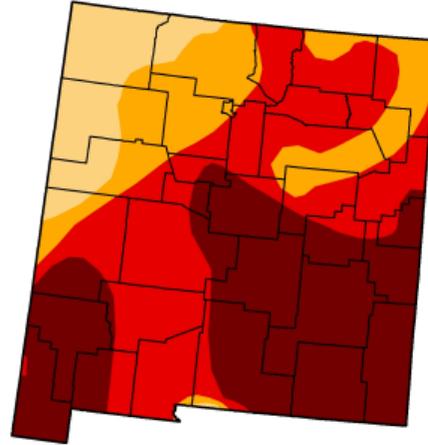
September 6, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

New Mexico

| | Drought Conditions (Percent Area) | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
| Current | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 89.27 | 72.19 | 38.37 |
| Last Week (08/30/2011 map) | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 88.63 | 64.88 | 30.90 |
| 3 Months Ago (06/07/2011 map) | 0.75 | 99.25 | 93.98 | 87.35 | 67.91 | 44.53 |
| Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map) | 6.16 | 93.84 | 40.40 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Start of Water Year (09/28/2010 map) | 76.66 | 23.34 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| One Year Ago (08/31/2010 map) | 80.04 | 19.96 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 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.

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



Released Thursday, September 8, 2011
National Drought Mitigation Center,

Fig. 3b(3): Currently, 38% of **New Mexico** is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought. Over 72% of the state is in D3 and D4 drought; an increase of 7% this week!

U.S. Drought Monitor

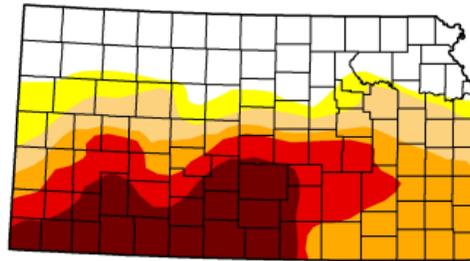
September 6, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Kansas

| | Drought Conditions (Percent Area) | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
| Current | 28.64 | 71.36 | 62.33 | 49.90 | 31.86 | 17.46 |
| Last Week (08/30/2011 map) | 27.92 | 72.08 | 62.31 | 49.78 | 31.86 | 17.46 |
| 3 Months Ago (06/07/2011 map) | 23.44 | 76.56 | 57.35 | 35.82 | 12.67 | 1.05 |
| Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map) | 17.82 | 82.18 | 43.85 | 3.48 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Start of Water Year (09/28/2010 map) | 83.23 | 16.77 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| One Year Ago (08/31/2010 map) | 89.93 | 10.07 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 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.

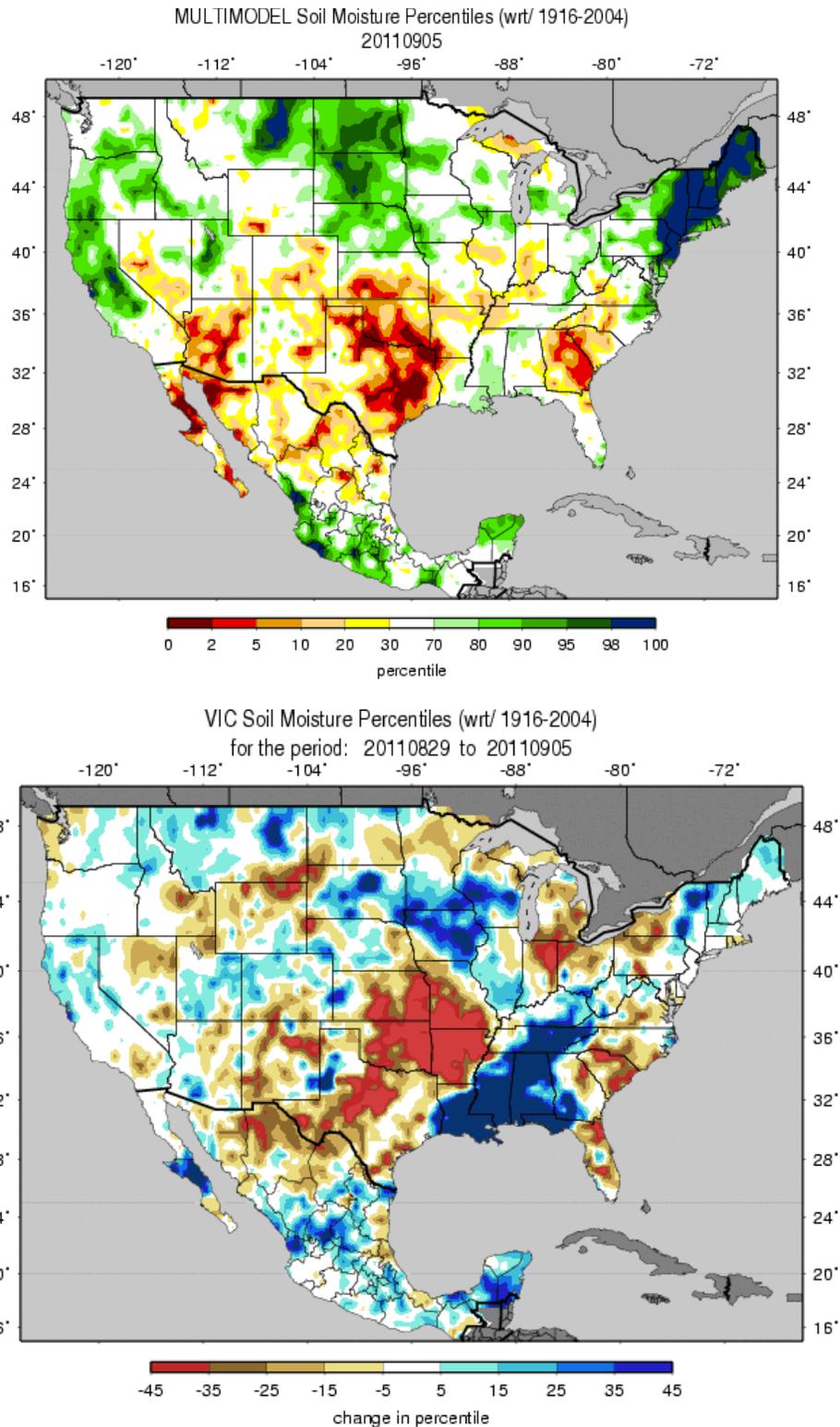
<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



Released Thursday, September 8, 2011
National Drought Mitigation Center,

Fig. 3b(4): Currently, 17% of **Kansas** is experiencing “Exceptional” D4 drought. ~32% of the state is in D3 and D4 drought. No changes are noted this week.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



Figs. 4a and 4b: Soil Moisture ranking in [percentile](#) as of 5 September (top) shows accumulated moist conditions over of New England due to Tropical Storm Irene. During the week, the impacts from Tropical Storm Lee are obvious over the Central Gulf States and into the Southern Appalachians. A significant drying [trend](#) is noted over the Southern and Central Plains.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)

Station (2041) MONTH=2011-08-09 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
Thu Sep 08 07:13:41 PDT 2011

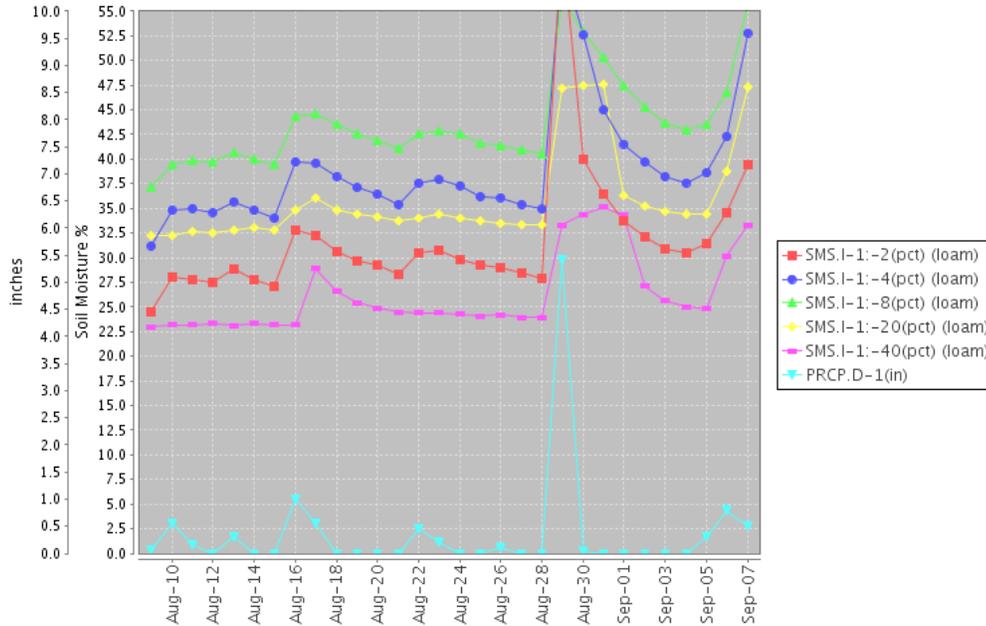


Fig. 5a: This NRCS resource shows a site in [northern Vermont](#) with saturated soil through all depth as a result of Tropical Storm Irene's 5.5" of rain on 29 August.

Station (2107) MONTH=2011-08-09 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
Thu Sep 08 07:17:04 PDT 2011

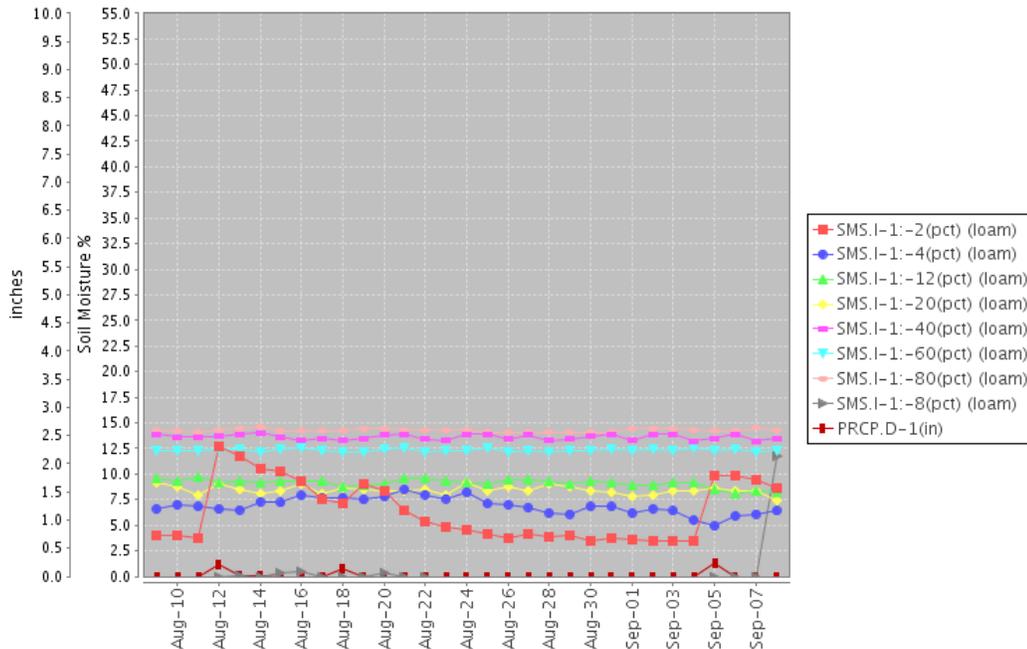
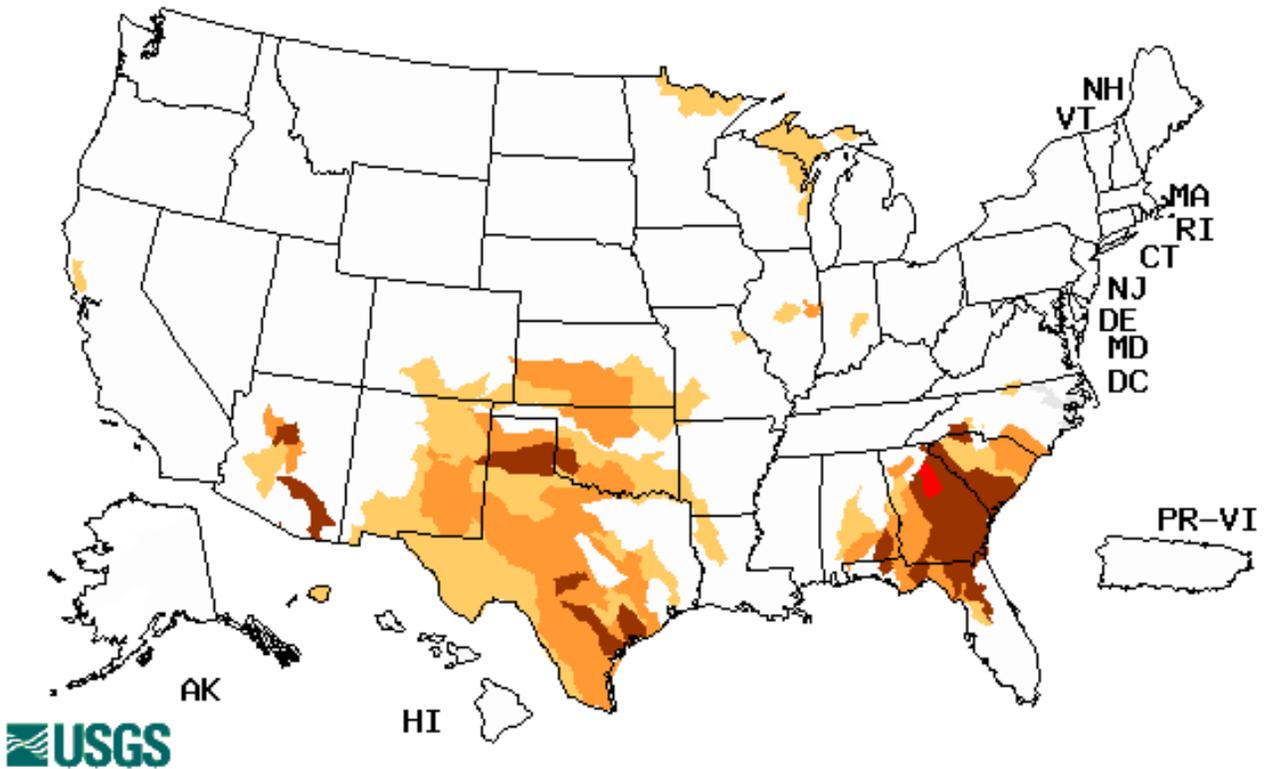


Fig. 5b: This SCAN station is located in [southeast New Mexico](#) shows near surface soil moisture fairly low with the occasional bounce with passing showers.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Tuesday, September 06, 2011

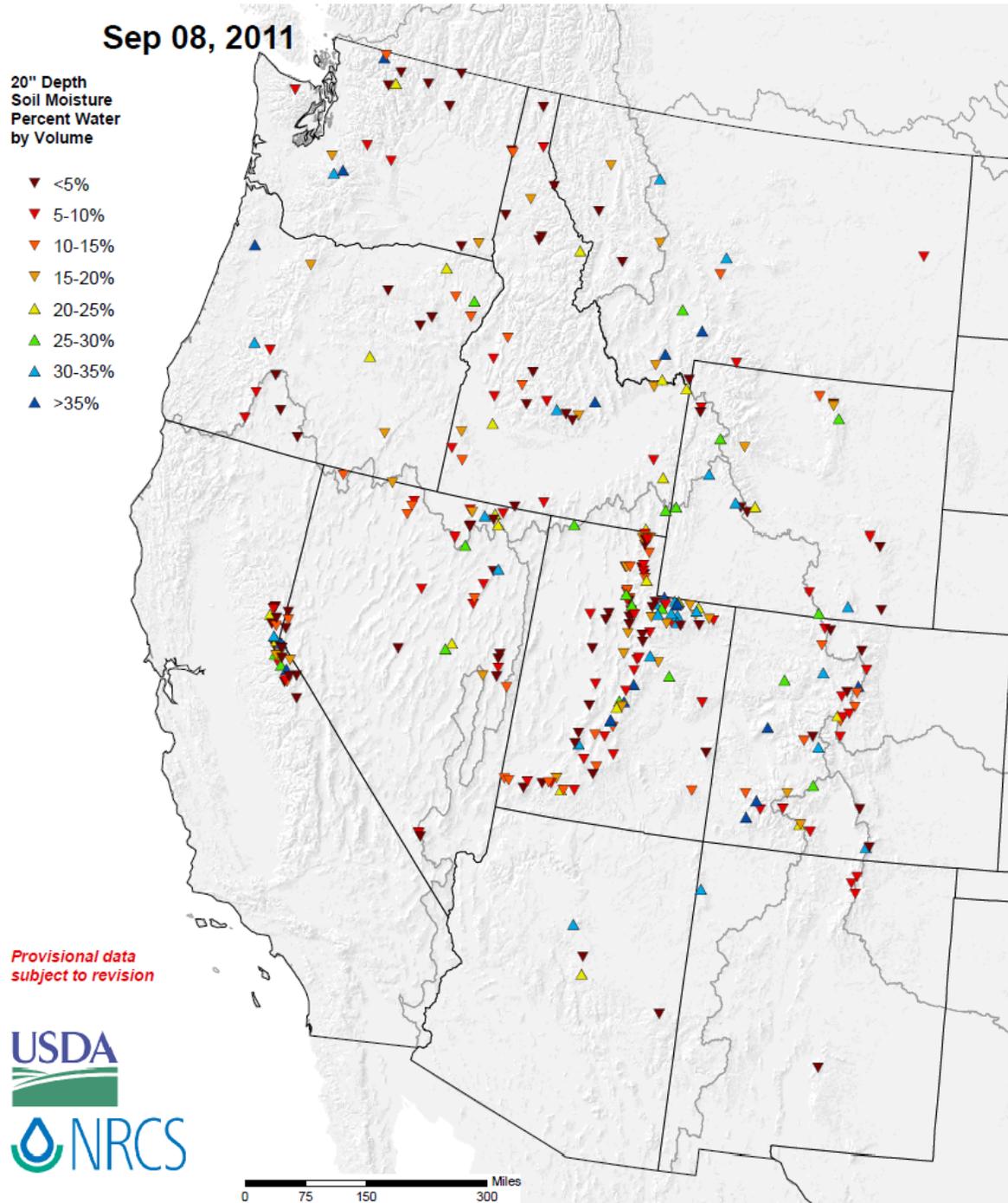


| Explanation - Percentile classes | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|---|
| Low | ≤ 5 | 6-9 | 10-24 | Insufficient data for a hydrologic region |
| Extreme hydrologic drought | Severe hydrologic drought | Moderate hydrologic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

Fig. 6: Map of below normal 7-day average [streamflow](#) compared to historical streamflow for the day of year. Georgia is experiencing extreme conditions.

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Westwide SNOTEL Current 20" Depth Soil Moisture % Water by Volume



Data based on the first reading of the day (typically 00:00).

Prepared by the USDA/NRCS National Water and Climate Center
Portland, Oregon <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/gis/>
Science contact: Jim.Marron@por.usda.gov 503 414 3047

Fig. 7: [SNOTEL Soil Moisture](#) at a depth of 20" reveals many sites have below average moisture.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

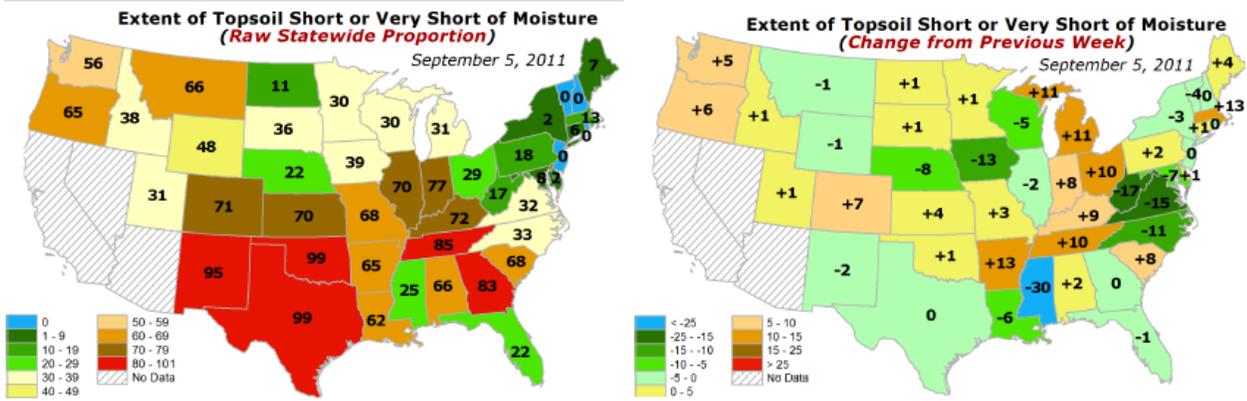


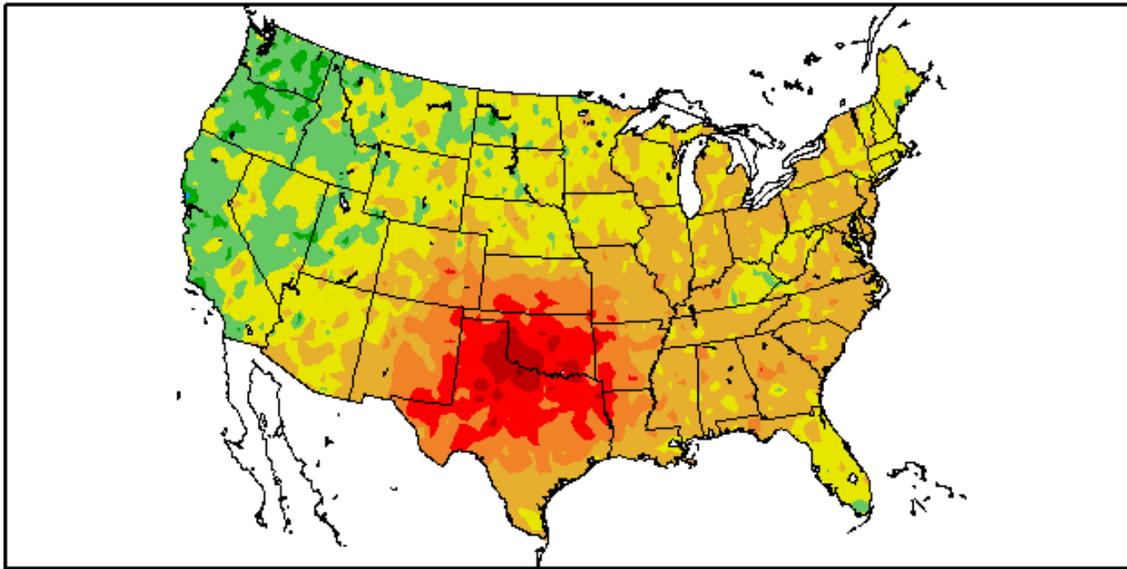
Fig. 7a: Current [top soil](#) condition and changes for the past week. Clearly Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico have extreme soil moisture deficits. However, Georgia and Tennessee have joined these ranks this week.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Special Report

With the climatological end to summer last week, it seems timely to review the past season in terms of temperature departures from the long-term average.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
6/1/2011 – 8/31/2011



Generated 9/5/2011 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Excessive heat dominated Texas and Oklahoma while coolness ruled over the Pacific Northwest, parts of California, and the Great Basin.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

National Drought Summary -- September 6, 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/>.

Overview: For most of those under the influence of drought as depicted by the U.S. Drought Monitor this week, the weather across the country last week can be summed up as either very hot or very wet. On the heels of Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee brought very beneficial rains to the Gulf Coast and Southeast before hooking up with a cold front from the west that brought copious rains up and down the Appalachian Mountains from Georgia to southern Pennsylvania. Oppressive heat and fires were the story in the country's mid-section and southern Plains as no relief was seen there this past week. In a bit of cruel irony, it was the strong and persistent winds of Lee, which just missed the mark of the drought's epicenter in Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico, that fanned the large number of fire outbreaks in Texas.

Mid-Atlantic and Northeast: Soaking rains on the order of 4-8 inches or more fell across a good portion of the region bringing 1- to 2-category improvements to the D0-D1 areas in eastern Kentucky, western North Carolina, southern, western and northern Virginia, West Virginia's southern, eastern and Panhandle regions, western Maryland, Pennsylvania and western/upper New York. Some pockets of D0 do remain in northern Pennsylvania and western New York. The rains of Lee served as a balancing act of sorts for these regions in general as the heaviest rains from Hurricane Irene fell mostly to the east of Lee's rains in and around the coastal areas.

South Carolina, however, missed out on the tropical moisture leading to a slight push of D3 northeastward along the Georgia border and within the Savannah River Basin region. The past 2 to 4 months have been extremely dry and impacts are being reported in alfalfa and pasture conditions along with stock ponds going dry. According to USDA, nearly 70% of South Carolina's topsoil condition is at the "short" or "very short" level and 45% of pasture and range land is still in the "poor" or "very poor" condition categorization.

Southeast and Delta: Tropical Storm Lee made a major mark from eastern Louisiana across Mississippi and into western/northern Alabama and northern Georgia as well. Much of southeastern Louisiana, Mississippi and western Alabama are now drought free. Rainfall totals frequented 5 inches or more in many of these areas and led to some improvement in western and northern Louisiana with a 1-2 category improvement. Western Alabama and northern Georgia also saw marked improvement on the order of 1-2 categories. That said, the recent core of intense D3 remains intact across eastern Alabama, Georgia and parts of the Florida Panhandle. Speaking of, the western reaches of the Florida Panhandle also heavy rains and subsequent improvement on the map this week. This also helped out down the coast of FL where D0-D2 were pushed north and eastward off the coastal counties.

Ohio Valley and Midwest: Southern and eastern Kentucky saw the bulk of the benefit from TS Lee with large areas of improvement from D2 to D1 or D0. Eastern Tennessee and eastern

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Kentucky, in particular, are now drought free as they also saw rainfall totals greater than 5 inches. Pockets of D0-D1 remain across western Tennessee and Kentucky, however. Elsewhere in the Midwest, rains of 1-4 inches led to some improvement in parts of southeastern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa where the D0 has been reduced this week. Moving west from there though, southwestern Minnesota saw an expansion of D0 as the northern Minnesota on the heels of hot temperatures and dryness have led to a push westward of D0 along with the introduction of D2 in the Arrowhead region. Further south, southwestern Missouri has remained very dry the past few months and has experienced well above-normal temperatures leading to expansion of D2 there.

Northern and Central Plains: Just a few changes this week after some recent intense heat followed by a nice break from the heat later in the period. It has also been very dry for some leading to expansion of D0 in east-central South Dakota. A small pocket of D1 has also been introduced this week in that same region given the trend. To the south in Nebraska and Kansas, D0 expands slightly in the Nebraska Panhandle connecting up with the D0 in western South Dakota after above-normal temperatures have been combined with a lack of any rainfall. Another area of D0 has developed in central Nebraska as a result of late season heat and dryness has caused some concerns on pastures, corn and soy beans as we head into harvest. In Kansas, D2 now fills in the southeastern corner as it connects up with the new D2 in northeastern Oklahoma and southwestern Missouri as mentioned above.

Southern Plains: Conditions continue to remain bleak in Oklahoma and Texas with very little help being seen on the horizon after the near miss of Tropical Storm Lee. The only change of note in Oklahoma, as noted above, was in the filling in of D2 completely within the northeastern corner as it meshes with the expansion of D2 in southeastern Kansas and southwestern Missouri given the oppressive heat, high winds and lack of any significant rains the past few weeks.

Texas also sees very little change this week with only a small area of the Texas Panhandle moving from D2 to D3. The big story has been the fires in Texas though, which were fanned by the backside winds of TS Lee. Year-to-date, 18,719 fires have burned over 3.5 million acres resulting in 2,897 structure losses according to the Texas Forest Service. The 3.5 million total Texas acres burned represents over 50% of the national total acres burned. In addition, 96% of Texas's pasture and rangelands are rated as "Poor" or "Very Poor" while Oklahoma shows 90% in this category.

The West: It was a relatively quiet week across most of the West. The Four Corners region was above-normal temperature-wise, but the Pacific Northwest enjoyed unseasonably cooler weather. The common denominator is that the entire West saw very little in the way of precipitation. This has led expansion and introduction of D0 into southern Nevada as seasonal and year-to-date totals are now lagging behind the curve and vegetation has been stressed. Water supply is in very good shape region wide though. New Mexico continues to deteriorate the most given the inactive monsoon season thus far leading to an expansion of D3-D4 in the southwestern corner of the state.

Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico: In Alaska, cooler temperatures that past several weeks, coupled with good rainfall has led to a reduction of D0 leaving a small remnant in the Fairbanks region.

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In Hawaii, persistent dryness has led Moderate Drought (D2) to expand on the Big Island and has been introduced to Maui this week. In addition, D0 conditions now cover all of Molokai and have been introduced and cover all of Oahu and Kauai as low rainfall has dried things out and brush fire incidents are on the rise in these areas. Pasture condition also continue to worsen on the Big Island and Maui leading to substantial forage losses for ranchers.

Puerto Rico remains unchanged this week.

Looking Ahead: The next 5 days (through April 11) are calling for a pretty quiet week across most of the West in what has been a relatively quiet monsoon season two-thirds of the way in. Another disturbance in the Bay of Campeche in the southwestern Gulf of Mexico seems to be revving up and could press northward over the coming days bringing a chance for more relief to the southeast as a potential Tropical Storm. It is too early to tell exactly where though. Florida, the upper Midwest and the Northeast are also good candidates for ample precipitation during this period. Temperatures are expected to be slightly below-normal (1-3 degrees) for the entire southern half of the country with the northern third expected to see readings 3-9 degrees above normal.

The CPC 6-10 day forecast (September 13-17) is calling for better chances of above-normal temperatures across the western half of the United States and most of Alaska as well. Parts of the Southeast (AL, MS), Ohio Valley (TN, KY, IN, OH) and eastern Great Lakes regions are expected to be below-normal. As for precipitation, the eastern seaboard from Florida to Maine could see above-normal rainfall as can the Intermountain West and Great Basin. Below-normal amounts are still likely across Texas and southern Oklahoma along with the Pacific Northwest and across the northern tier states from Montana to Minnesota. Alaska is also showing better odds of above-normal precipitation.

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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

A ... Agricultural

H ... Hydrological

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