



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

Weekly Report - Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update

Date: 19 April 2012

SNOTEL SNOWPACK AND PRECIPITATION SUMMARY

Snow: [Snow Water-Equivalent](#): River basins over the Pacific Northwest are maintaining their high SWE values this week while the opposite is true for the southern basins. As basins in the Northern Tier States reach their climatological SWE peaks, their percentages will increase statistically if their melt-out date is delayed even without additional snow accumulation. Please keep this in mind in the coming weeks if and when these percentiles continue to increase (Fig. 1). The 3-[Day Snow Depth Change](#) ending this morning shows some increases over the Yellowstone region. Elsewhere, especially over the Sierra, Big Horn, southern Wasatch, and Southwestern Ranges, snow is melting out quickly (Fig. 1a).

Temperature: [SNOTEL](#) and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly showed values above normal over the Pacific Northwest. Cooler temperatures influenced the remainder of the West and especially over southern Utah and southwest Colorado (Fig. 2). ACIS [7-day average temperature anomalies](#) show the greatest positive temperature departures scattered over Western High Plains and into the eastern slope of the Rockies ($>+8^{\circ}\text{F}$) and the greatest negative departures over parts of the Southwest ($<-6^{\circ}\text{F}$). This pattern reflects persistent ridging over the Central US and troughing over the West Coast (Fig. 2a).

Precipitation: [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts for the period ending yesterday shows the wettest areas over the Sierra and northern California Coastal Mountains (Fig. 3). However, in terms of percent of normal, California, parts of the Southwest, Pacific Northwest, and Northern Rockies experienced a wetter week on average. The precipitation pattern over the Interior West is starting to reflect convective precipitation (Fig. 3a). Since the start of the [2012 Water-Year](#) that began on 1 October 2011, the seasonal moisture has favored northern Wyoming, parts of Montana, and the southern Washington – northern Oregon Cascades. Drier the normal conditions reign over most of the southern half of the West. A slight category improvement is noted over northwest Colorado this week (Fig. 3b). Since the start of [April](#), the influence of La Niña is waning over parts of the Pacific Northwest. However, some basins have been fortunate to receive some thunderstorm activity. It should be noted that precipitation over the Southwest is usually quite low in April so any rainfall will reflect higher percentages very quickly (Fig. 3c).

The West: In Colorado, D1 and D2 conditions were expanded across north-central parts of the state, and a small area of severe drought (D2) was added to Crowley County in the southeast. In contrast, the area of D2 over extreme southeastern Colorado was trimmed back, indicating slight improvement. Severe drought was also expanded from western Colorado into eastern Utah, and from eastern Nevada into western Utah. Little to no precipitation has fallen over these portions of Utah. During the past 30 and 60-days, PNP values range from 10-25 percent of normal. Central Utah is faring much better, having received 0.5-3.0 inches of precipitation in the past 30 days. In California, beneficial late-season precipitation has resulted in a general 1-category improvement across the northern half of the state, and western sections of the southern half of California. Precipitation amounts of 1-4 inches (locally heavier) in the past week have been observed over most of the state. Dryness and drought has been increasing in

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

coverage and intensity across portions of the Southwest. As a result, moderate drought (D1) was expanded across northeastern Arizona into northwestern New Mexico, while severe drought (D2) was expanded from northeastern Arizona to the New Mexico border. **Author:** [Anthony Artusa, Climate Prediction Center/NCEP/NWS/NOAA](#)

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 (S, L)** drought include widespread crop/pasture losses and shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and wells creating water emergencies. The possible impacts associated with **D3 (S, L)** drought include major crop/pasture losses and widespread water shortages or restrictions. Possible impacts from **D2 (S, L)** drought are focused on water shortages common and water restrictions imposed and crop or pasture losses likely. The possible impacts associated with **D1 (S, L)** drought are focused on water shortages developing in streams, reservoirs, or wells, and some damage to crops and pastures (Figs. 4 through 4c).

Soil Moisture

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

Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)

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

U.S. Historical Streamflow

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

Fire Conditions

Fig. 8 comes from the [Predictive Services](#) (USFS) facilitates integration of comprehensive climate, weather, situation and fuels information in geospatial format.

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>.

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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/

Micheal L. Golden

Deputy Chief, Soil Survey and Resource Assessment

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

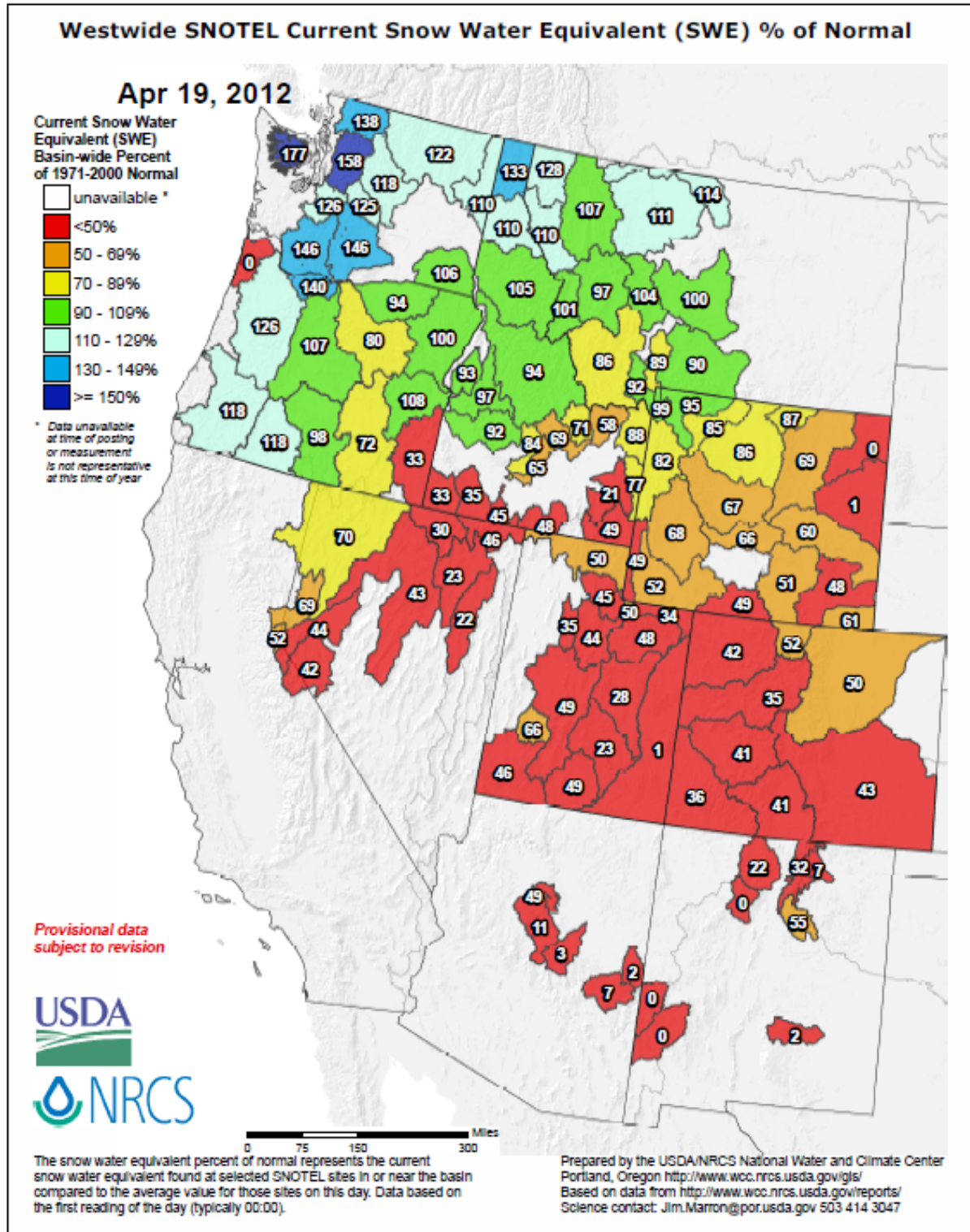


Fig. 1: Snow Water-Equivalent: River basins over the Pacific Northwest are maintaining their high SWE values this week while the opposite is true for the southern basins. As basins in the Northern Tier States reach their climatological SWE peaks, their percentages will increase statistically if their melt out date is delayed even without additional snow accumulation. Please keep this in mind in the coming weeks if and when these percentiles continue to increase.

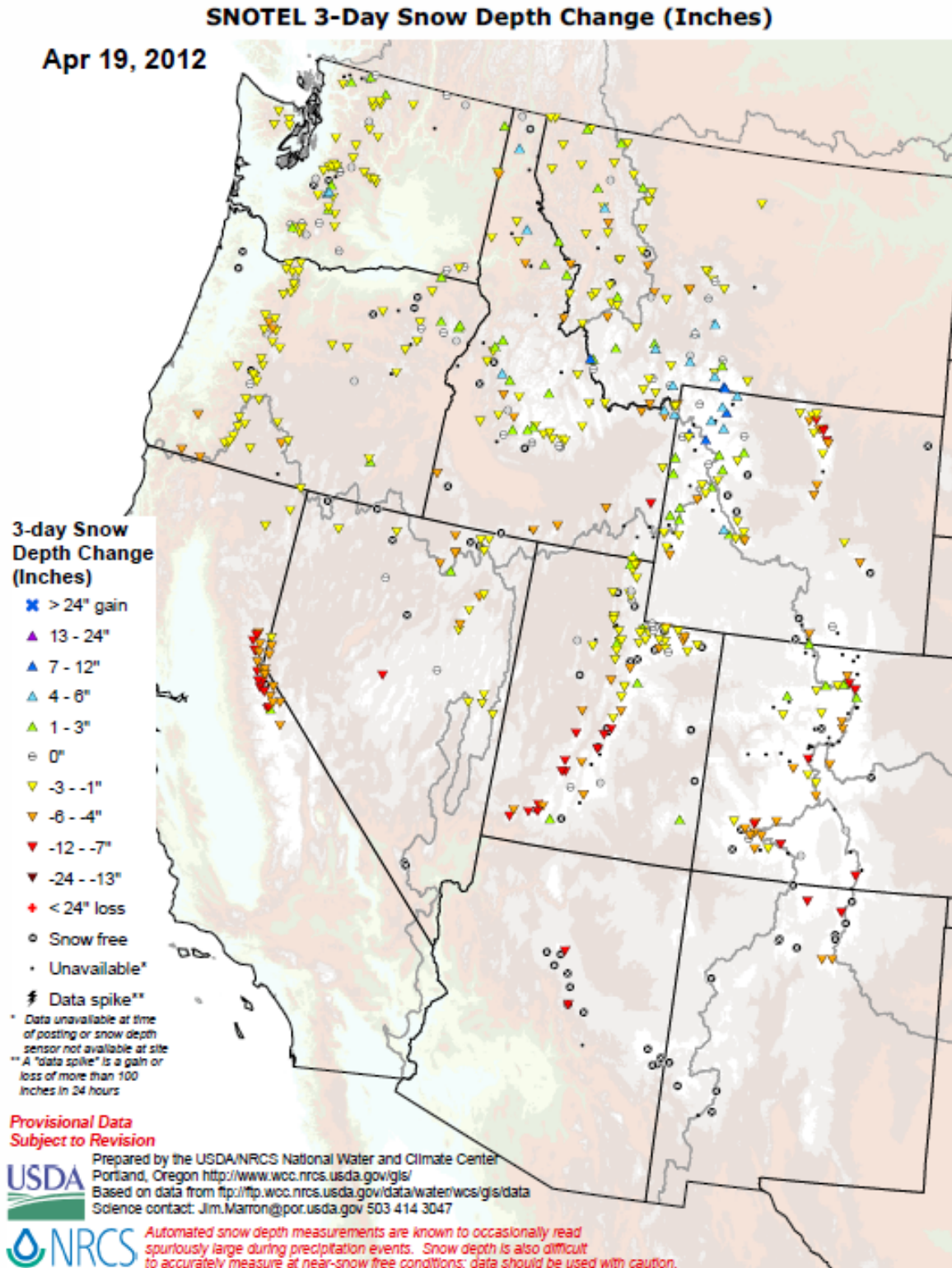


Fig. 1a: 3-Day Snow Depth Change ending this morning shows some increases over the Yellowstone region. Elsewhere, especially over the Sierra, Big Horn, southern Wasatch, and Southwestern Ranges, snow is melting out quickly.

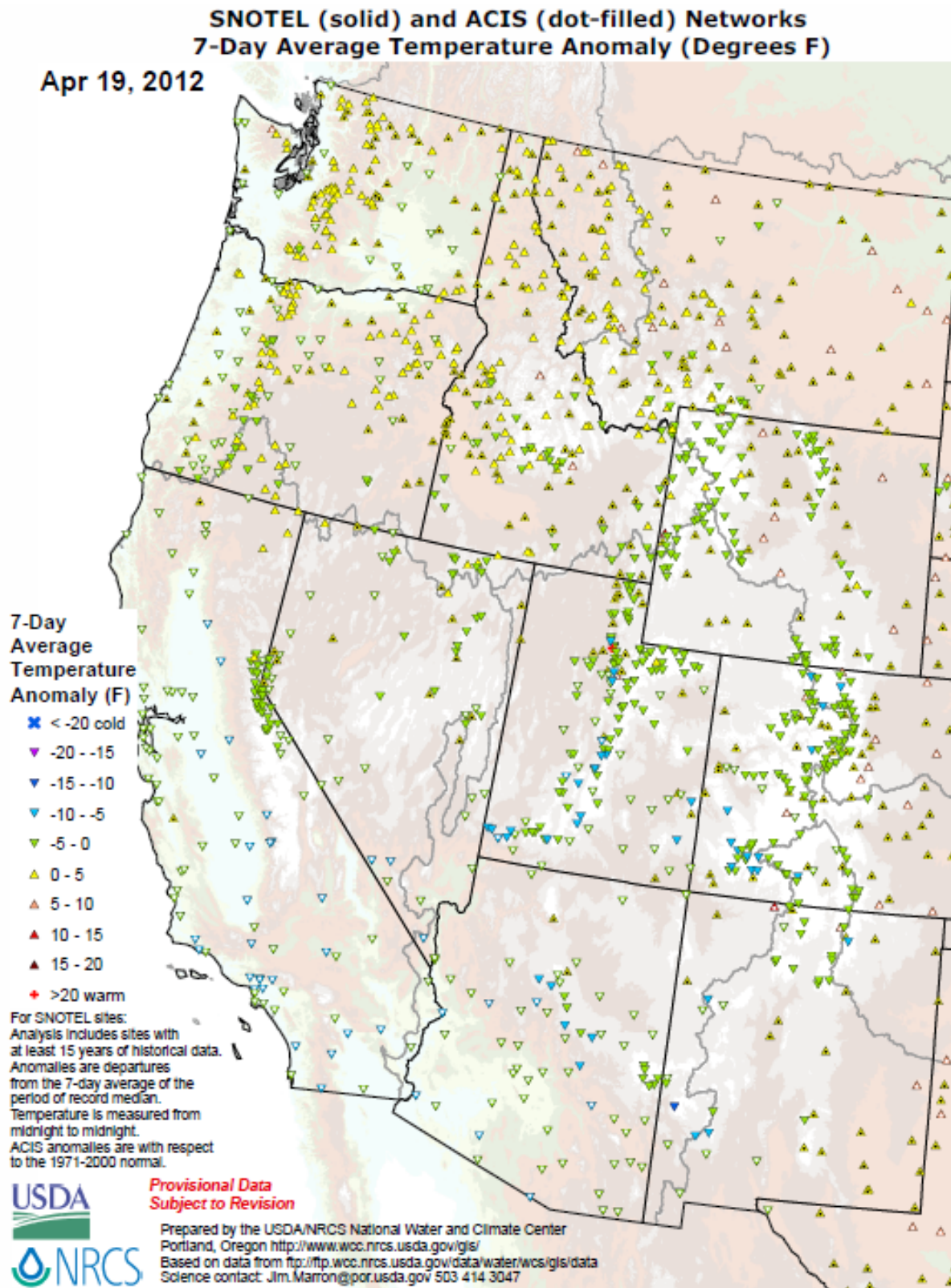
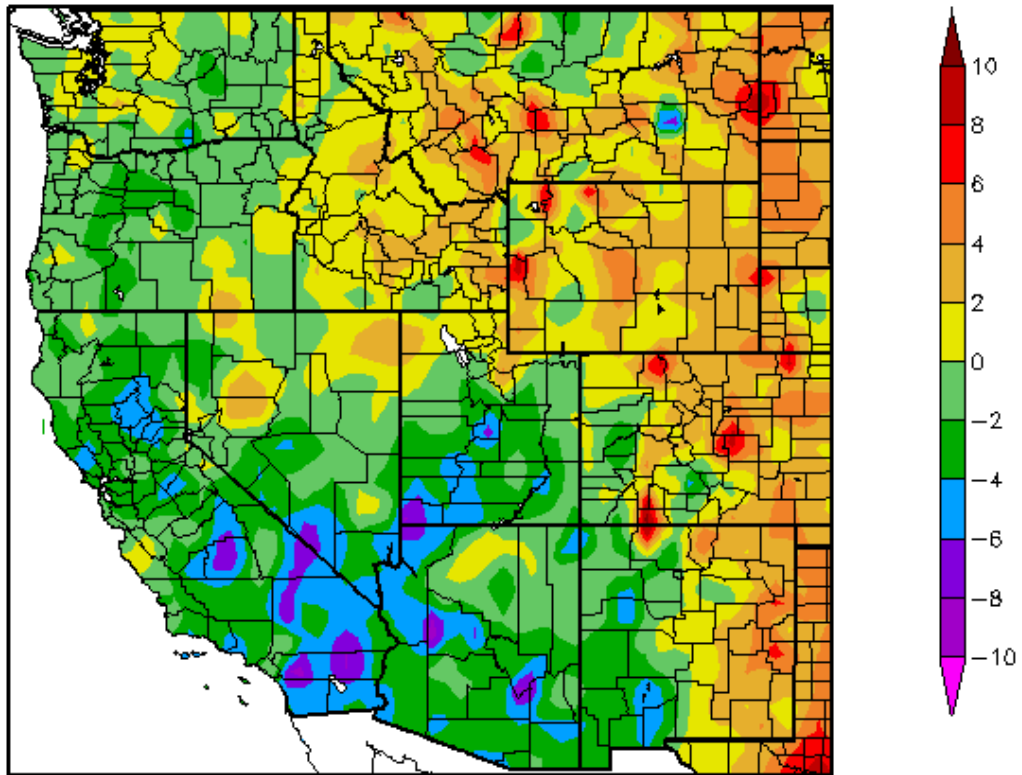


Fig. 2: SNOTEL and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly showed values above normal over the Pacific Northwest. Cooler temperatures influenced the remainder of the West and especially over southern Utah and southwest Colorado.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
4/12/2012 – 4/18/2012



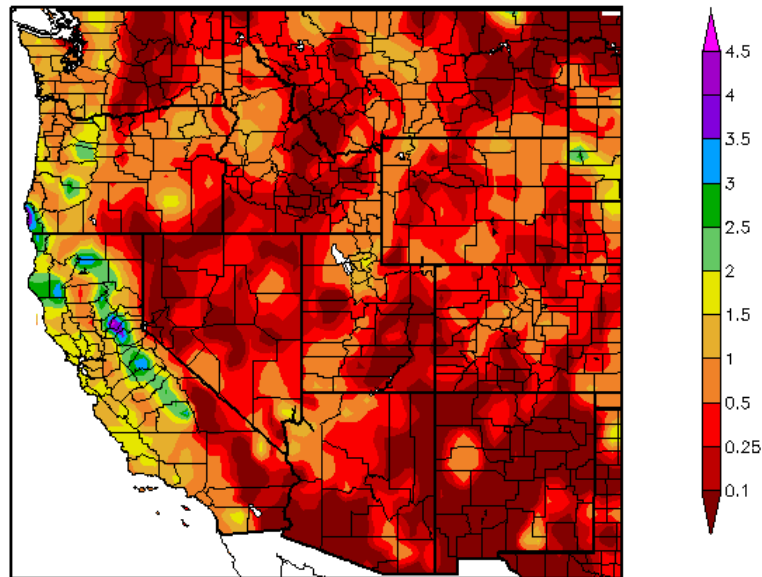
Generated 4/19/2012 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 2a: ACIS 7-day average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures scattered over Western High Plains and into the eastern slope of the Rockies ($>+8^{\circ}\text{F}$) and the greatest negative departures over parts of the Southwest ($<-6^{\circ}\text{F}$). This pattern reflects continued ridging over the Central US and troughing over the West Coast.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

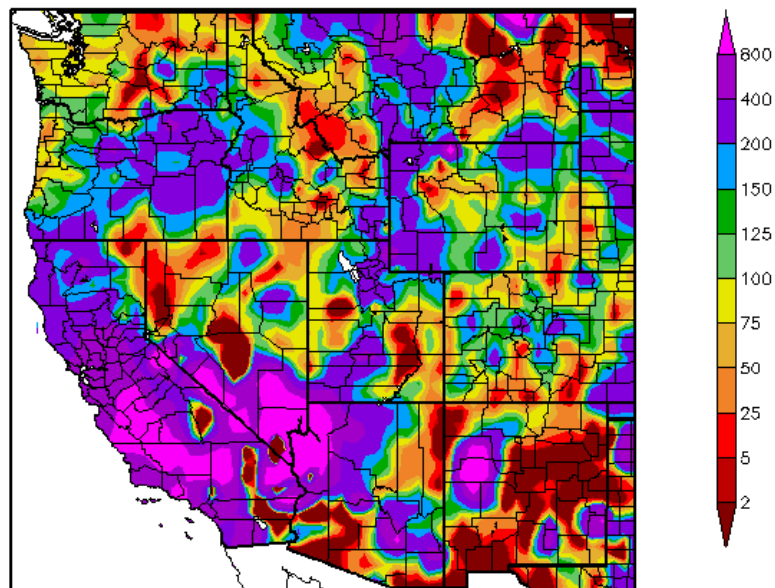
Precipitation (in)
4/12/2012 – 4/18/2012



Generated 4/19/2012 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
4/12/2012 – 4/18/2012



Generated 4/19/2012 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 3 and 3a: [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts for the period ending yesterday shows the wettest areas over the Sierra and northern California Coastal Mountains (top). However, in terms of percent of normal, California, parts of the Southwest, Pacific Northwest, and Northern Rockies experienced a wetter week on average. The precipitation pattern over the Interior West is starting to reflect convective precipitation.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

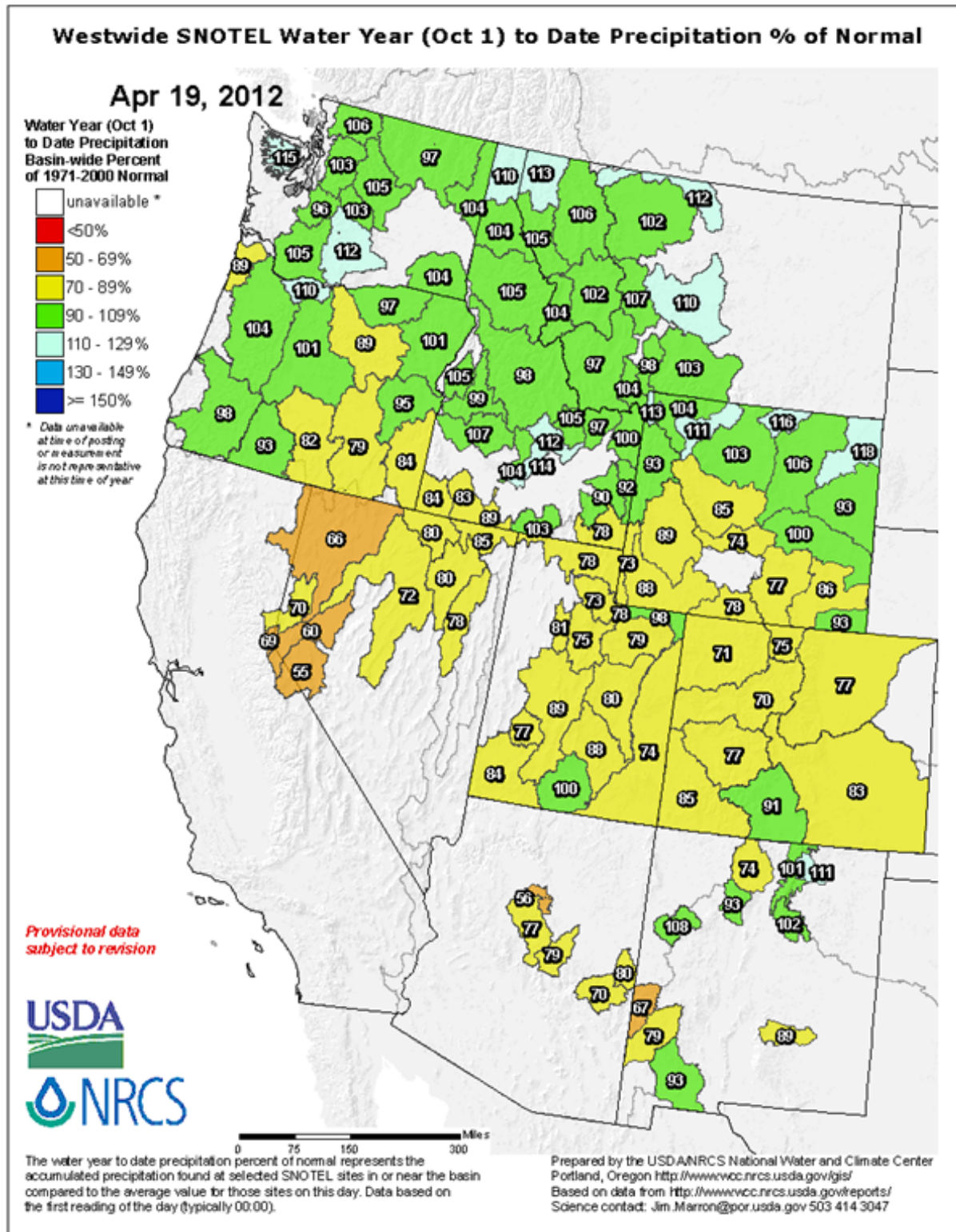


Fig 3b: Since the start of the [2012 Water-Year](#) that began on 1 October 2011, the seasonal moisture has favored northern Wyoming, parts of Montana, and the southern Washington – northern Oregon Cascades. Drier the normal conditions reign over most of the southern half of the West. A slight category improvement is noted over northwest Colorado this week.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

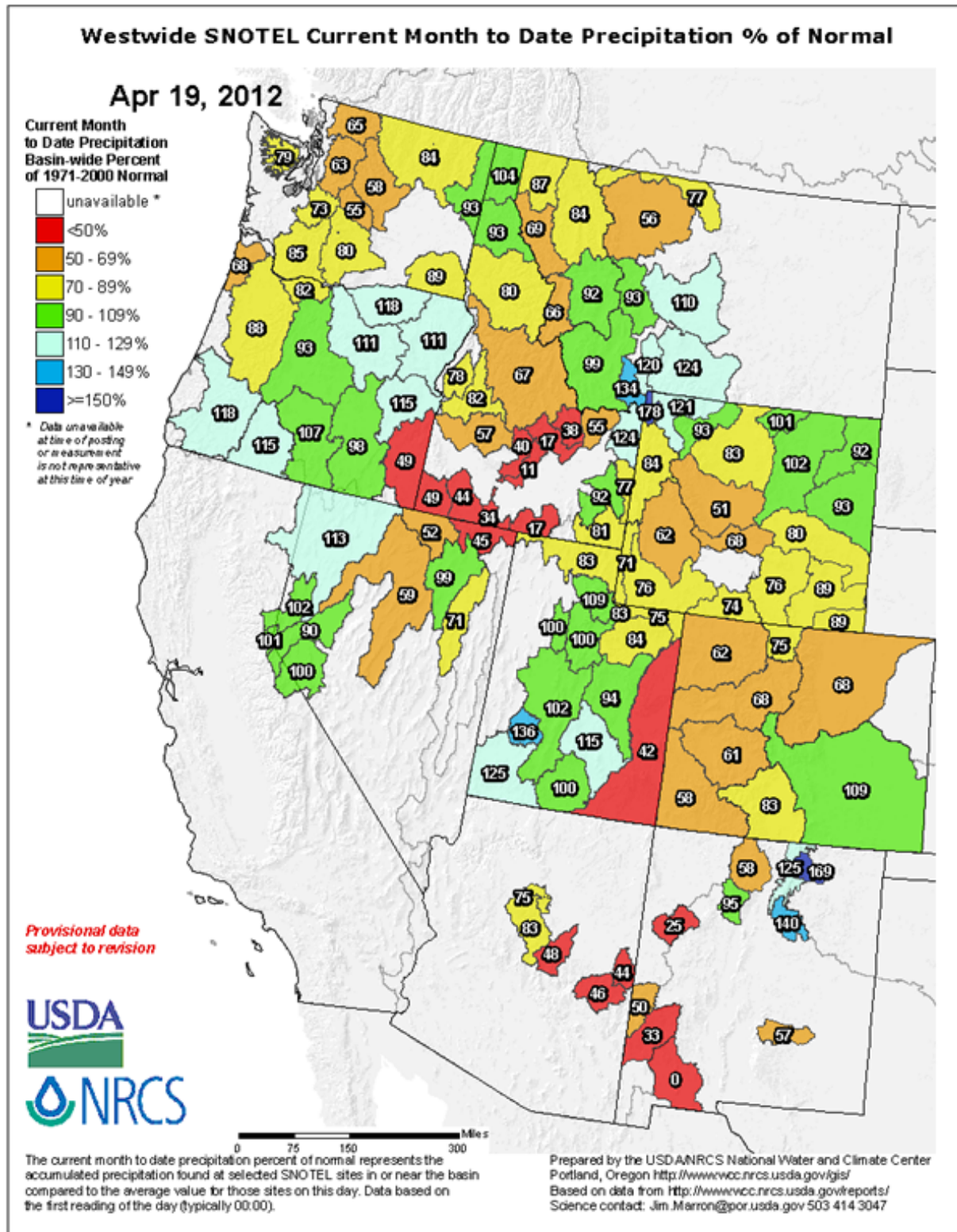


Fig 3c: Since the start of [April](#), the influence of La Niña is waning over parts of the Pacific Northwest. However, some basins have been fortunate to receive some thunderstorms. It should be noted that precipitation over the Southwest is usually low in April so any rainfall will reflect higher percentages quite quickly.

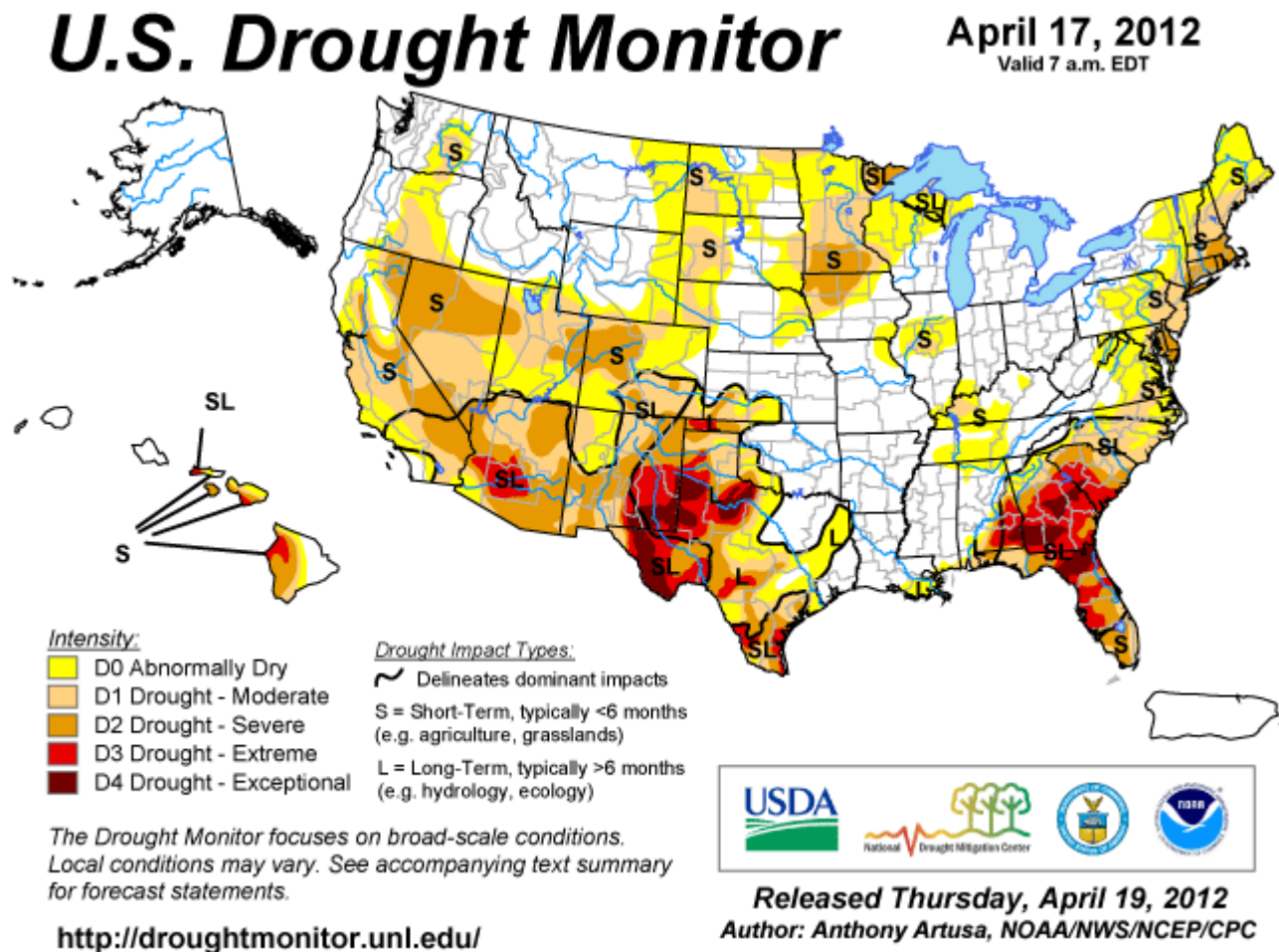


Fig. 4: Current [Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are found over southeastern New Mexico, much of western Texas and to a lesser extent over Georgia, southeast Alabama, and northern Florida. For more drought news, see [Drought Impact Reporter](#). Click for the latest statistics for [California Reservoirs](#).

Agriculture

[Doña Ana County farmers hope for best, but brace for worst](#)

April 9, **Southern New Mexico**. Since a smaller snowpack means less irrigation water for farmers in the Elephant Butte Irrigation District, more farmers are forced to rely on groundwater. The salinity of the groundwater is problematic for some.

[USDA Figures: Florida Orange Crop Drops by 1 Percent](#)

April 10, **Florida**. The drop rate for Florida Valencia oranges climbed to 19 percent as freeze damage, dry weather and citrus greening all contributed to stress the fruit trees, leading to the high drop rate.

Water Supply & Quality

[Cities, farms brace for drought](#) April 12, **Colorado**.

[Current drought shrinks Cape Coral's canals](#) April 11, **Cape Coral, Florida**.

[Early release of water to Mexico means less for US users](#) April 11, **El Paso, Texas**.

[Nashua River at 'extreme drought' stage, other area rivers almost as bad](#) April 11, **New Hampshire, Mass.**

U.S. Drought Monitor

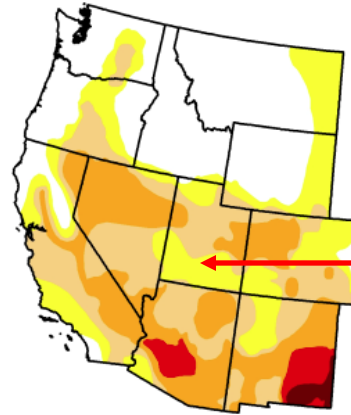
West

April 17, 2012
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	32.80	67.20	46.92	24.14	3.77	0.91
Last Week (04/10/2012 map)	31.33	68.67	48.44	24.87	3.77	0.93
3 Months Ago (01/17/2012 map)	36.17	63.83	29.46	11.40	2.68	0.77
Start of Calendar Year (12/27/2011 map)	48.49	51.51	20.05	12.22	2.67	0.78
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	66.72	33.28	19.04	14.99	9.30	3.81
One Year Ago (04/12/2011 map)	75.98	24.02	19.17	13.34	4.15	0.00

Intensity:

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



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, April 19, 2012

Anthony Artusa, Climate Prediction Center/NCEP/NWS/NOAA

Fig. 4a: Drought Monitor for the [Western States](#) with statistics over various time periods. Note no changes this week. Click for the latest issue of the [La Niña Tracker](#).



Utah Water Supply Outlook Report

April 17, 2012 - Update

General Summary

The hydrologic conditions across Utah watersheds have deteriorated since the release of the April 1 Water Supply Outlook Report. The rapid melting of existing snowpacks combined with extremely poor watershed runoff response over that period of time is a situation that water managers need to be aware of. Melting 30% to 50% of existing snowpacks over a 2.5 week period prior to this most recent storm with negligible runoff may portend much less efficient runoff for the remainder of the year as well. Dry soils may have taken much of that snowmelt but the hot, dry winds Utah has experienced over the past weeks may have also contributed to substantial snowpack losses. The storm of April 13 through 15 brought some snowpack to higher elevations and for a short time brought the melt to a stop. However, even with that addition of snow, some watersheds could be melted out by May 1 and there is a substantial probability that most will be melted out by mid to late May. What this means is – what runoff there is will be early with short duration, low peaks and low volumes. The majority of runoff may well be over in 2 to 4 weeks time depending on climatic conditions. Water managers across the state should be aware that the next 4 weeks will likely have the majority of what runoff occurs this year. It is not likely that higher flows will continue much past May this year. Closely monitor melting conditions at the NRCS Snow Survey web page at: <http://www.ut.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/> as well as current streamflow from the US Geological Survey at: <http://ut.water.usgs.gov/>

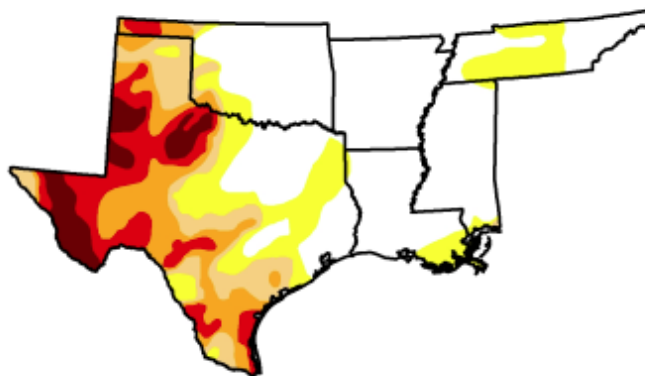
U.S. Drought Monitor

South

April 17, 2012
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	49.97	50.03	34.29	24.89	13.99	4.87
Last Week (04/10/2012 map)	48.52	51.48	35.14	27.33	16.18	6.78
3 Months Ago (01/17/2012 map)	28.56	71.44	65.03	52.77	37.37	13.27
Start of Calendar Year (12/27/2011 map)	26.47	73.53	69.01	54.81	39.11	17.15
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	18.34	81.66	76.26	70.61	63.67	53.77
One Year Ago (04/12/2011 map)	10.71	89.29	79.93	64.18	39.67	5.35



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, April 19, 2012
Anthony Artusa, Climate Prediction Center/NCEP/NWS/NOAA

Fig. 4b: Drought Monitor for the [South-Central States](#) with statistics over various time periods. Note some improvement to all categories this week.

U.S. Drought Monitor

Southeast

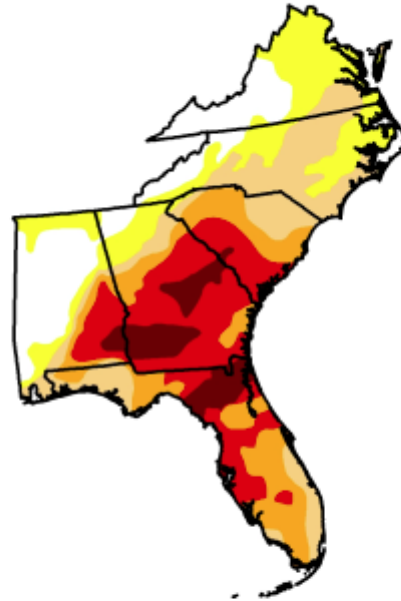
April 17, 2012

Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	17.04	82.96	63.56	43.54	27.65	7.14
Last Week (04/10/2012 map)	17.84	82.16	63.41	39.97	25.35	5.29
3 Months Ago (01/17/2012 map)	28.63	71.37	52.85	33.73	23.65	1.50
Start of Calendar Year (12/27/2011 map)	40.38	59.62	43.05	28.62	18.71	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	42.24	57.76	41.82	31.77	23.48	0.00
One Year Ago (04/12/2011 map)	30.65	69.35	48.75	15.15	4.60	0.00

Intensity:

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



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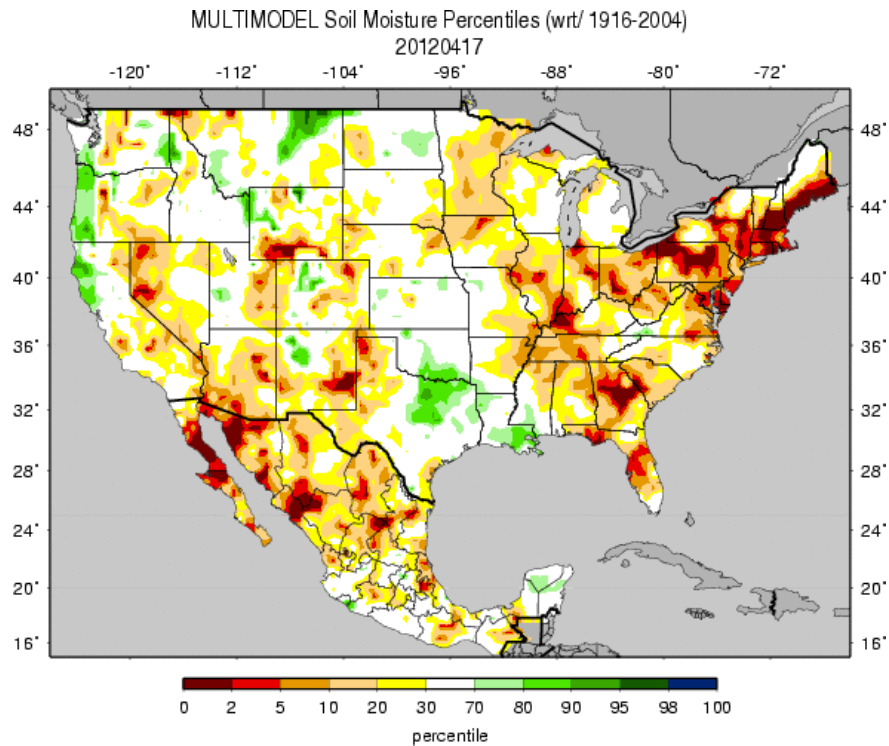


Released Thursday, April 19, 2012

Anthony Artusa, Climate Prediction Center/NCEP/NWS/NOAA

Fig. 4c: Drought Monitor for the [Southeastern States](#) with statistics over various time periods. Note some deterioration in the D2 to D4 categories this week despite the waning of the La Niña.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



Figs. 5: Soil Moisture ranking in [percentile](#) as of 17 April shows extremely dry conditions over an enlarging area of the Northeastern US. Also note the very dry conditions over parts of the Southeast. Note: Soil moisture this time of year is often unreliable due to frozen ground over the Northern Tier States. For example, conditions over the Washington Cascades and Panhandle of Idaho no doubt will reflect more moisture in the weeks due to abundant snow cover and subsequent runoff.

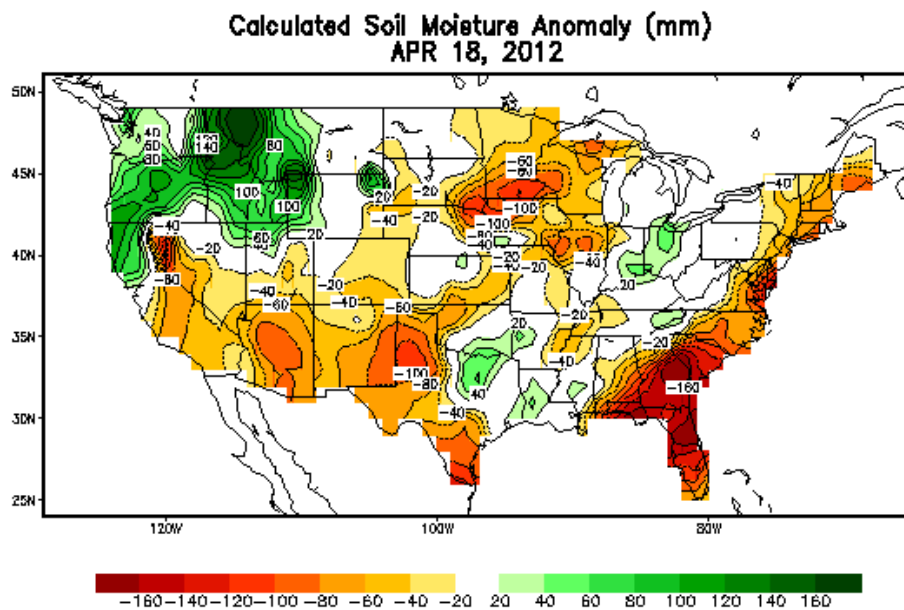


Fig 5a: The NOAA CPC [version](#) of the top figure reflects the missing moisture over the Cascades.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Soil Climate Analysis Network ([SCAN](#))

Station (2027) MONTH=2012-03-20 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
Thu Apr 19 08:30:31 PDT 2012

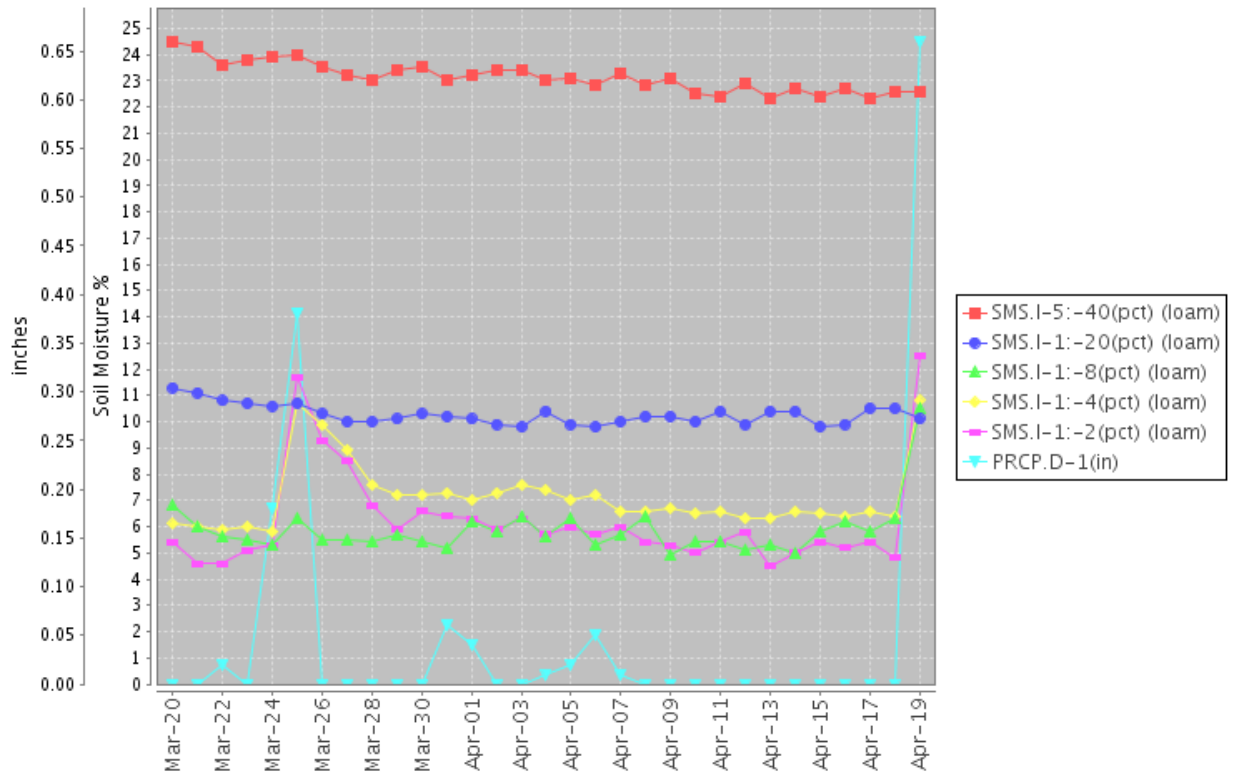
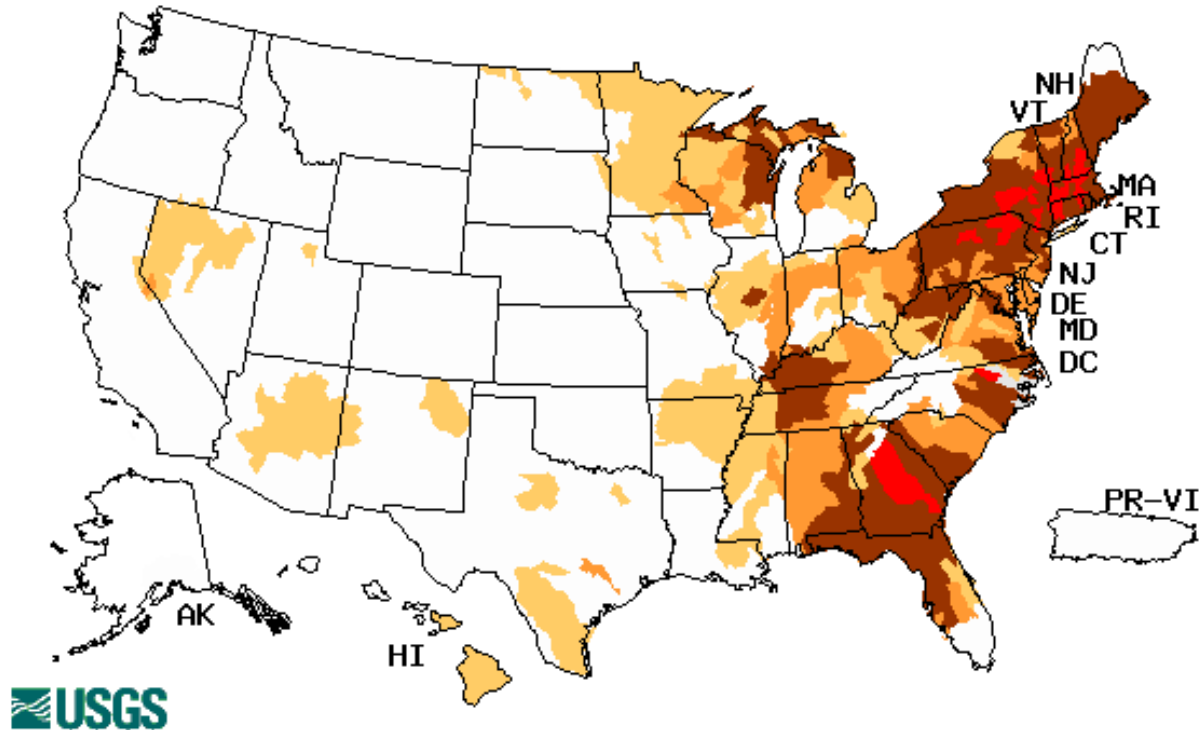


Fig. 6: This NRCS resource shows a site over [southern Georgia](#) with soil moisture responding to recent heavier precipitation.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Wednesday, April 18, 2012



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

Fig. 7: Map of below normal 7-day average [streamflow](#) compared to historical streamflow for the day of year. Conditions over parts of the Northeast and Southeast are experiencing **extreme** conditions this week.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

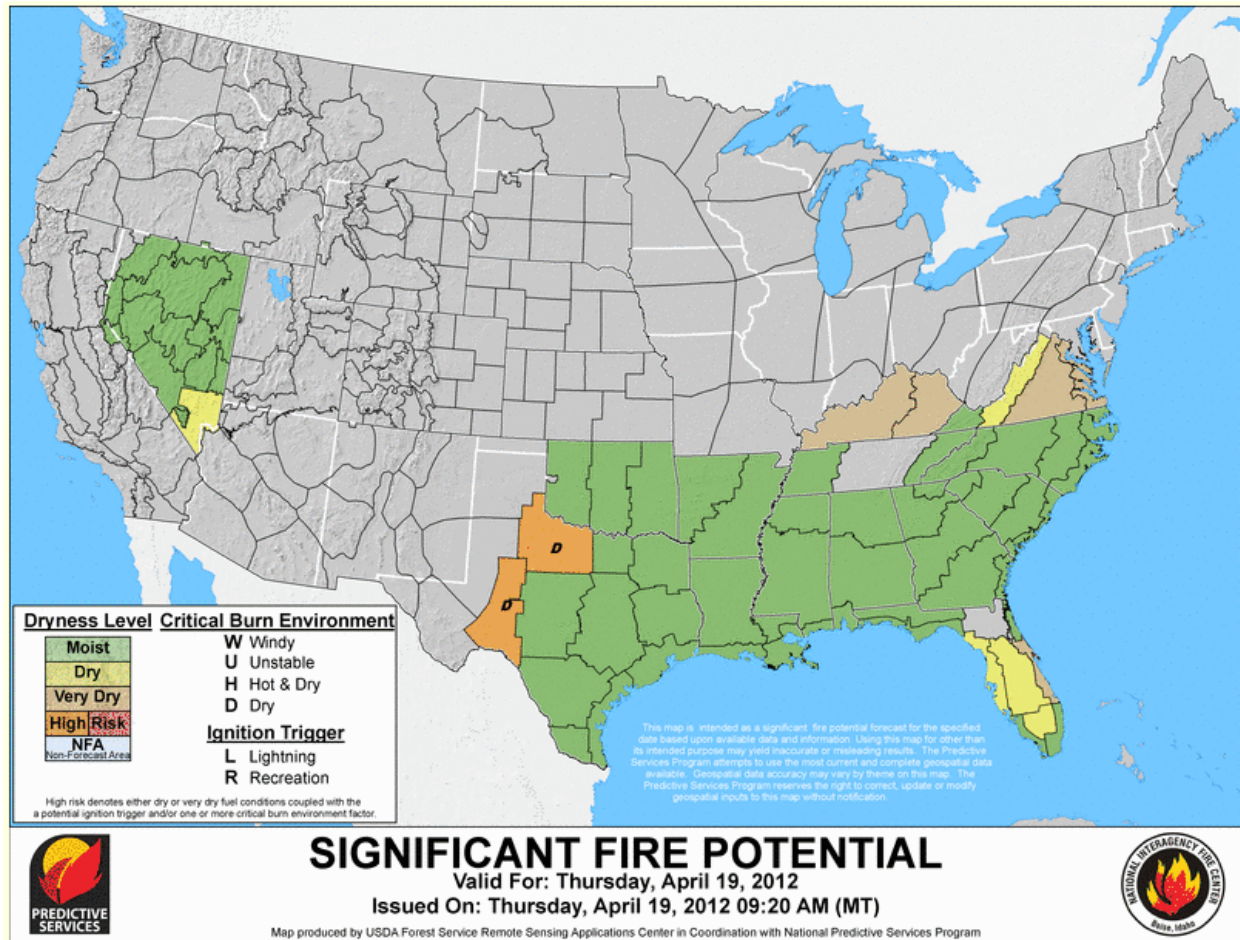


Fig. 8: [Significant fire potential](#) for today. This resource also provides forecasts out to 7 days.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

National Drought Summary -- April 17, 2012

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

The Northeast and Mid-Atlantic: Precipitation continued to bypass most of the region during the past week. Over the last 90-days, 25 to 50 percent of normal precipitation (PNP) has fallen from northern Virginia northward into coastal Maine, with deficits generally between 4 and 8 inches, with 8-12 inch deficits in southern New England and Long Island. The early green-up of trees and vegetation was slowed by the cooler air of recent weeks, but yet many plants have begun to grow, extracting moisture from the soil. According to the USGS, stream flow levels were at near- or record lows for April 17 at 1-, 7-, 14-, and 28-day averages in much of New England and the mid-Atlantic. Most reservoirs, however, were near or at capacity due to the early-season snow melt and thaw, and to wetter conditions in the past (9-12 months ago). Based on considerations above, the AHPS 30-day precipitation deficit map, and local expertise, abnormal dryness (D0) was expanded westward across west-central Pennsylvania, as far as Elk and Jefferson Counties.

The Southeast: Very little precipitation was reported over the Southeast during the past week. AHPS 30-day precipitation deficits of 3 to (as much as) 5 inches are indicated over much of Georgia, Alabama, the Florida Panhandle, and southern Tennessee. One-category degradations were made in much of South Carolina, portions of eastern and southwestern Georgia, and both east-central and far southern Florida. Rainfall deficits of 8-12 inches over the past 180-days are prevalent across Florida, along with Keetch Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values in excess of 550-600 (700 in west-central parts of Florida). Abnormal dryness (D0) was expanded across both northern and northeastern Alabama. An exception to the widespread dryness was an area of moderate to heavy showers and storms (1.5-2.0 inches) along the southeast coast of Florida during the period.

Midwest: Substantial rains (generally 0.5 to 2 inches, locally up to 3 inches) fell across a large portion of the drought area across the upper Midwest/upper Mississippi Valley region during the past week. One-category improvements were made across northern Minnesota (D1 conditions giving way to D0). Minor changes in the direction of improvement were also made in western and southeastern Iowa. A severe weather outbreak last weekend was accompanied by strong, damaging straight-line winds, severe hail, and tornadoes, primarily concentrated across southern Iowa. Temperatures across the region during the past 7-days averaged 2 to 6 degrees above-normal, with the warmest anomalies over Wisconsin. According to the USDA, percent topsoil moisture rated short-very short compared to the 5-year mean was: Illinois (27 current / 7 for 5-yr mean), Minnesota (48/11), and Iowa (27/6). Slight improvements were made to the drought depiction in western Illinois due to recent rains, but abnormal dryness (D0) was expanded northward into northern Illinois amid rainfall deficits over the past 90 days (AHPS) of 1-4 inches and local reports of dusty fields. One-category downgrades have also been made in western and central sections of Kentucky.

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Northern and Central Plains: Precipitation amounts varied widely across the region, with amounts generally up to a half-inch observed over the High Plains, and up to 3.5 inches over the lower Plains. Recent heavy rains (up to 3 inches) in southeastern North Dakota justified removal of lingering D0 conditions, with 1-category improvements made over much of eastern South Dakota. In contrast, an expansion of moderate drought (D1) conditions was made in southwestern North Dakota, due to persistent dryness especially over the past 6-months. Moderate drought conditions were also expanded across western portions of Nebraska.

Southern Plains: Moderate to heavy showers and thunderstorms (1-4 inches, locally heavier) fell across portions of northern and central Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas, related in part to a severe weather outbreak which also affected portions of the Mississippi Valley during the past weekend. In northeast Oklahoma, Birch Lake is now slightly into its Flood Pool, while Skiatook Lake has risen by two feet (though capacity is still near 78 percent). The short-term wetness likely outweighs the long-term reservoir deficit in this case, and therefore the D0(L) area in Osage County in northeastern Oklahoma was eliminated. Slight improvements were made in western Oklahoma, though D2 conditions were maintained in extreme southwest parts of the state which are still contending with serious water supply and soil moisture issues. Beneficial wetness in western and southern sections of Texas warranted a number of slight alterations to the drought depiction in those areas.

The West: In Colorado, D1 and D2 conditions were expanded across north-central parts of the state, and a small area of severe drought (D2) was added to Crowley County in the southeast. In contrast, the area of D2 over extreme southeastern Colorado was trimmed back, indicating slight improvement. Severe drought was also expanded from western Colorado into eastern Utah, and from eastern Nevada into western Utah. Little to no precipitation has fallen over these portions of Utah. During the past 30 and 60-days, PNP values range from 10-25 percent of normal. Central Utah is faring much better, having received 0.5-3.0 inches of precipitation in the past 30 days. In California, beneficial late-season precipitation has resulted in a general 1-category improvement across the northern half of the state, and western sections of the southern half of California. Precipitation amounts of 1-4 inches (locally heavier) in the past week have been observed over most of the state. Dryness and drought has been increasing in coverage and intensity across portions of the Southwest. As a result, moderate drought (D1) was expanded across northeastern Arizona into northwestern New Mexico, while severe drought (D2) was expanded from northeastern Arizona to the New Mexico border.

Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico: In Hawaii, some windward locations on Maui, the Big Island, Oahu, and southern Kauai received 1-2 inches of rain, with most other locations reporting less than a half-inch of rain. Fortunately, most of the islands (except the Big Island) received surplus March rainfall, easing any further deterioration there. On the Big Island, however, many northern and leeward locations have reported less than 25 percent of normal rainfall since January 1. Kona coffee growers indicated that leaves are starting to shrivel on their trees and berries are starting to fall. The main hope for the Kona coffee belt is that it is the only area in the state with a summer rainfall maximum. No changes to the drought depiction for Hawaii were deemed necessary this week. There were no drought conditions noted in Puerto Rico and Alaska.

Looking Ahead: Over the next five days (April 19-23), a frontal system is expected to move across the central and eastern US, with an area of low pressure forming along the southern portion of the front over the central Gulf Coast. As the low pressure center tracks northeastward into the Carolinas and Virginia, it is forecast to intensify. As a result, heavy rain (2.0 to 3.5 inches) is expected to significantly mitigate the current drought situation over the East Coast

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

states. To the northwest, across the Great Lakes and Midwest, moderate to heavy rain (1.5 to 2.0 inches) will help alleviate some of the dryness/drought over the Midwest and upper Great Lakes region. Frontal activity is also forecast for the West Coast, though most of the associated precipitation is likely to fall across the coastal portions of the Pacific Northwest, which are currently not experiencing drought problems.

The CPC 6-10 day forecast (April 24-28) has favorable odds of above-normal precipitation across much of the northern border states, and across western sections of southern California. Chances for subnormal precipitation are likely for most other areas of the lower 48 states. Wetter than normal conditions are likely for most of mainland Alaska, with near-normal precipitation amounts expected elsewhere. Temperatures are forecast to be above-normal for most areas in-between the Intermountain West and the Appalachians, as well as for eastern Alaska. Odds favor below-normal temperatures across the West Coast, peninsular Florida, and western Alaska.

Author: [Anthony Artusa, Climate Prediction Center/NCEP/NWS/NOAA](#)

Dryness Categories

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

Drought Intensity Categories

D1 ... Moderate Drought

D2 ... Severe Drought

D3 ... Extreme Drought

D4 ... Exceptional Drought

Drought or Dryness Types

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

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

Updated April 18, 2012

For the latest seasonal forecasts by the NOAA CPC released today, [click here](#).