



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

**Weekly Report - Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update**

**Date: 14 February 2013** 

## SNOTEL SNOWPACK AND PRECIPITATION SUMMARY

**Temperature:** ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly ending 14 February shows generally warmer than normal conditions across the Northern Tier States and cooler over the Southwestern States (Fig. 1a). [ACIS](#) average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures over eastern Montana ( $>+9^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). The greatest negative departures occurred over northwestern Utah ( $<-12^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) (Fig. 1b). Since the start of February, warmer than average temperatures dominate the northern and easternmost regions of the West while persistent large negative departures remain entrenched over Utah, as has been the situation since the start of 2013 (Fig. 1c).

**Precipitation:** [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts (does not include SNOTEL data) for the period ending yesterday show very little precipitation has fallen with the exception of eastern Nevada where over an inch of water equivalent occurred (Fig. 2a). However, in terms of percent of normal, even a small amount of moisture reflects a high value since this time of year is usually quite dry (Fig. 2b). This statistical quirk is represented as scattered enhanced values across the interior West. SNOTEL precipitation percent of normal for February shows a very dry first half the month with one notable exception: Wyoming's North Platte Basin. The northeastern Great Basin is also near average (Fig. 2c). Since the beginning of the 2013 Water Year on 1 October 2012, moisture surpluses continue to favor the Northern Tier States and the Northern Sierra Nevada. Significant deficits persist over the Sweetwater-North Platte River Basins in central-southeastern Wyoming although percentages have increased by 15% this week. Much of Colorado and New Mexico have essentially remained unchanged this week despite some wintery weather transiting the area (Fig. 2d).

**Snow:** [Snow depth](#) changes for the week showed some snow depth increases over the Southwest, Great Basin, and scattered across Wyoming (Fig. 3a). As for [snow-water equivalent](#), the largest deficits continue over much of Colorado and New Mexico; increasingly so over the ~~southwesternmost~~ [southwestern most](#) mountains in New Mexico. Most basins remained within 5% of last week's values, except for eastern Wyoming where values increased by to 22% (Fig. 3b).

**Week in Review:** This US Drought Monitor week was dominated by two weather systems. The first system provided widespread moisture through the Southeast and mid-Atlantic before dumping large amounts of snow across New England. Unofficial totals include 33.5 inches in Glastonbury, CT, 24.9 inches in Boston, MA, 31.9 inches in Portland, ME, and 20.5 inches in Providence, RI. High winds also accompanied this storm with wind gusts up to 83MPH near the Atlantic coast in Massachusetts. According to the Storm Prediction Center, in the second storm event of the week, severe thunderstorms rolled through the South and Gulf States producing an estimated 19 tornadoes and numerous high wind and hail events.

**The West:** Improving snowpack conditions led to improvements in Extreme (D3) and Severe Drought (D2) conditions in the Four Corners area. Improvements were also experienced in Extreme (D3), Severe (D2), and Moderate Drought (D1) and Abnormal Dryness (D0) from

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## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

southern Montana, through northwest Wyoming and southern Idaho, and into southeast Oregon. In California, Severe (D2) and Moderate Drought (D1) conditions expanded north of Los Angeles. This week's Drought Monitor Author: [Michael Brewer, National Climatic Data Center, 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, water restrictions imposed, and crop or pasture losses. 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 up to 40 inches. For more information about SCAN see [brochure](#).

### U.S. Historical Streamflow

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

### **State Activities**

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

### **For More Information**

The National Water and Climate Center (NWCC) Homepage provides the latest available snowpack and water supply information. Please visit us at <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>. This document is available from the following location on the NWCC homepage -

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/water/drought/wdr.pl>. Reports from 2007 are available online while ones from 2001-2006 can be acquired on request.

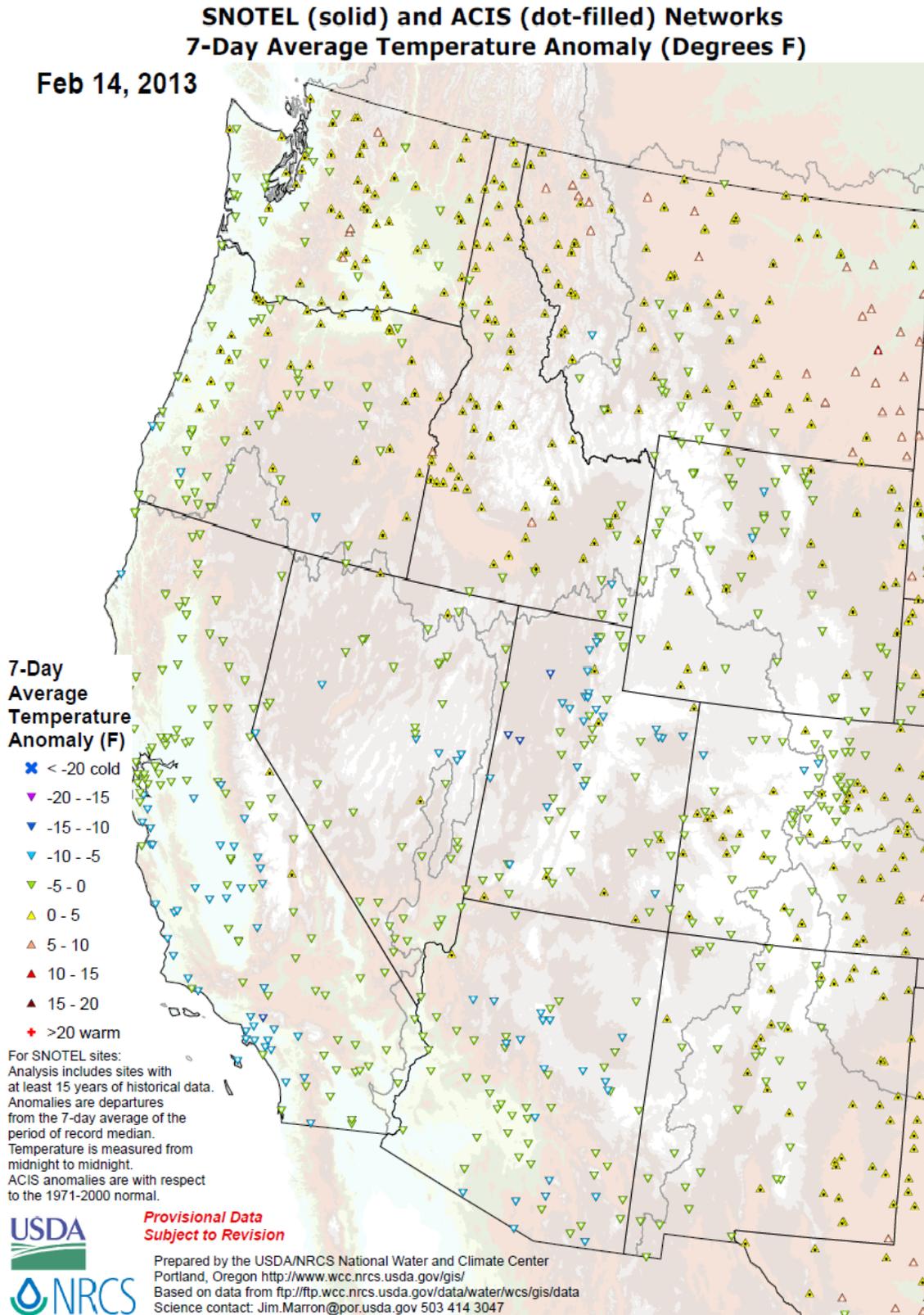
This report uses data and products provided by the Interagency Drought Monitor Consortium members and the National Interagency Fire Center.

/s/

Micheal L. Golden

Deputy Chief, Soil Science and Resource Assessment

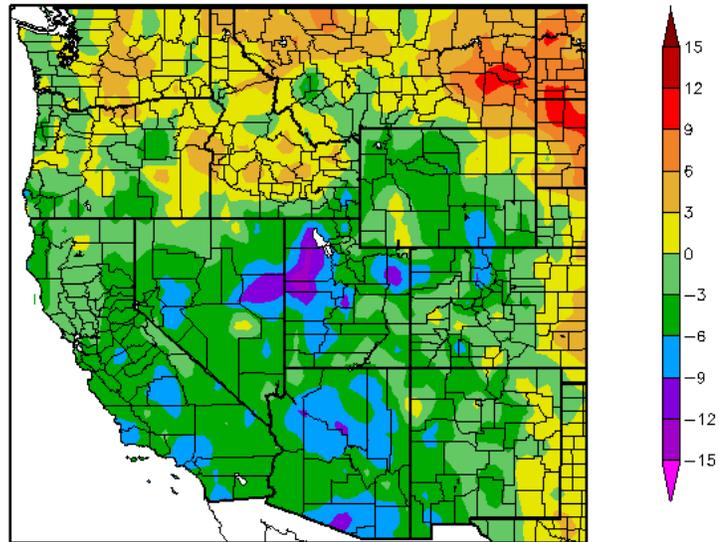
# Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



**Fig. 1a: SNOTEL and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly ending 14 February shows generally warmer than normal conditions across the Northern Tier States and cooler over the Southwestern States.**

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)  
2/7/2013 – 2/13/2013

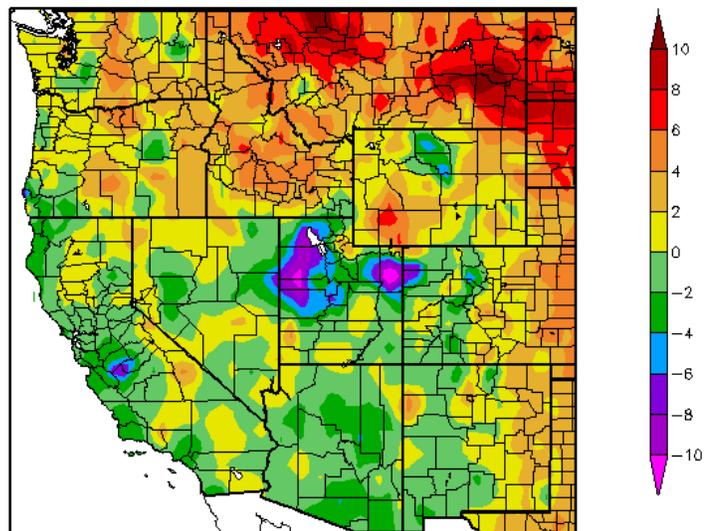


Generated 2/14/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

**Fig. 1b:** ACIS [7-day](#) average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures over eastern Montana (>+9°F). The greatest negative departures occurred over northwestern Utah (<-12°F). For more figures, see the Western Water Assessment's Intermountain West Climate [Dashboard](#).

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)  
2/1/2013 – 2/13/2013



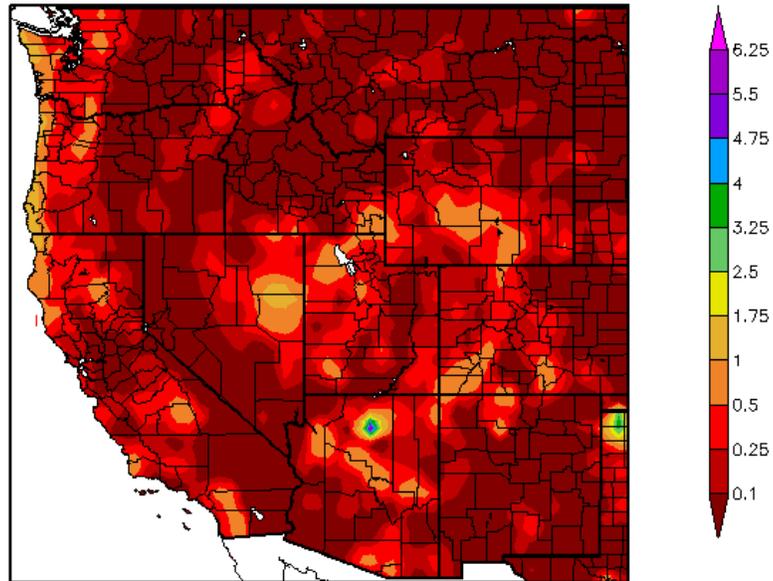
Generated 2/14/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

**Fig. 1c:** Since the start of February, warmer than average temperatures dominate the northern and easternmost regions of the West while persistent large negative departures remain entrenched over Utah, as has been the situation since the start of 2013.

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

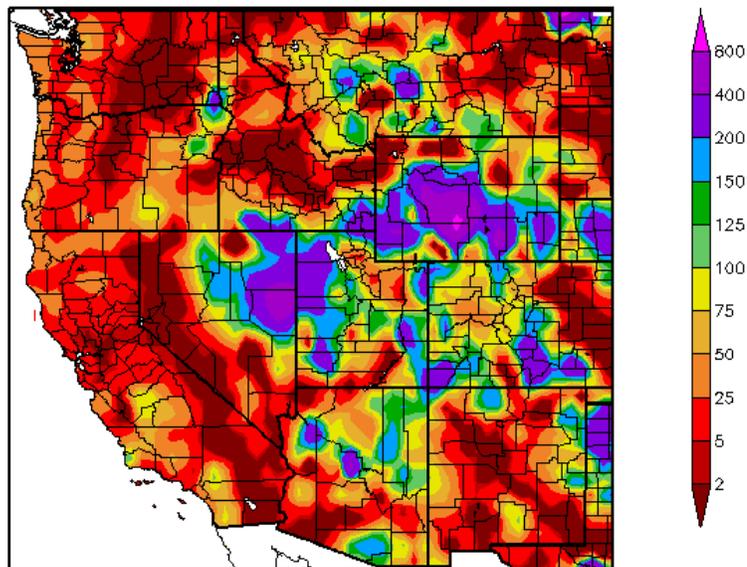
Precipitation (in)  
2/7/2013 - 2/13/2013



Generated 2/14/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)  
2/7/2013 - 2/13/2013

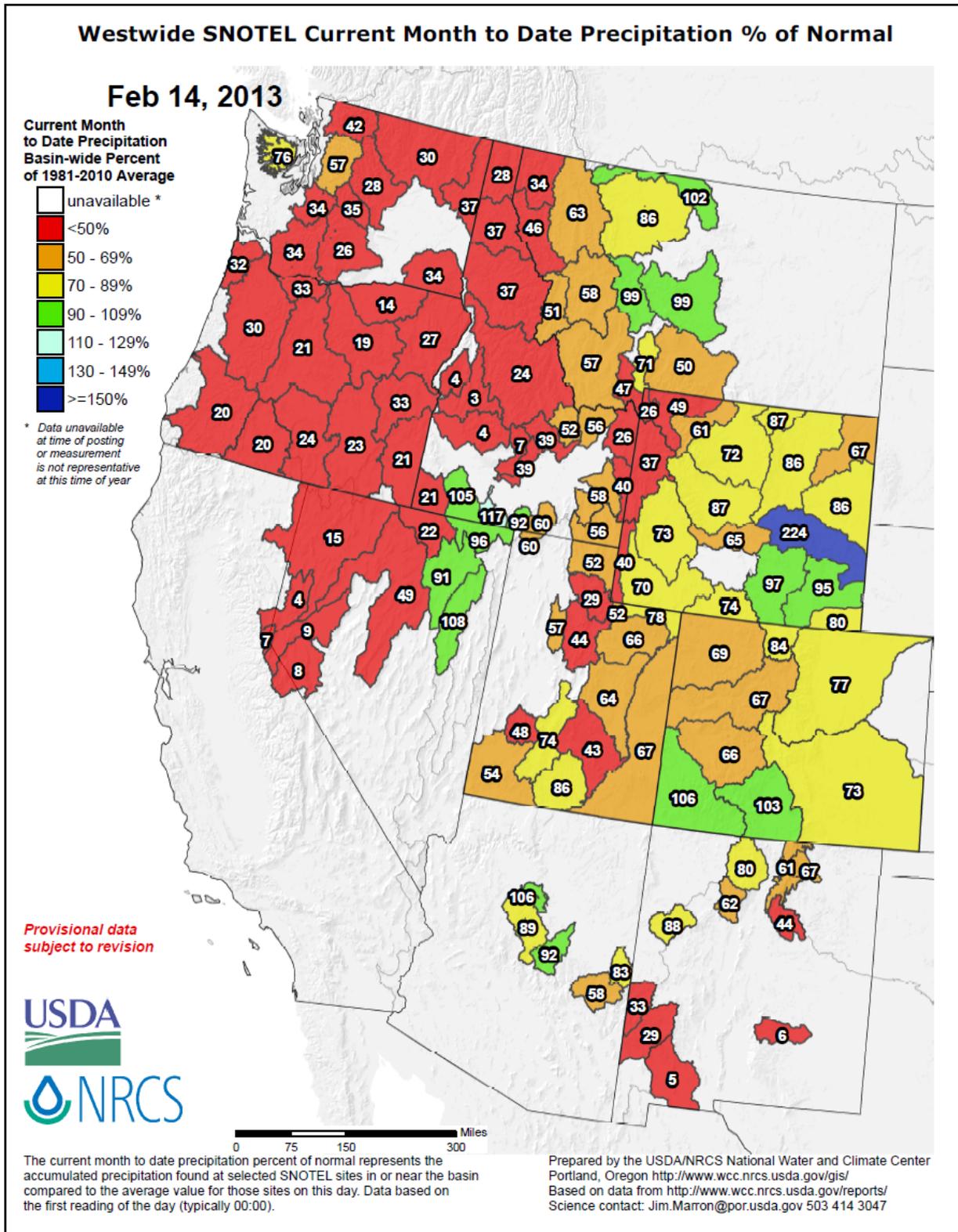


Generated 2/14/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

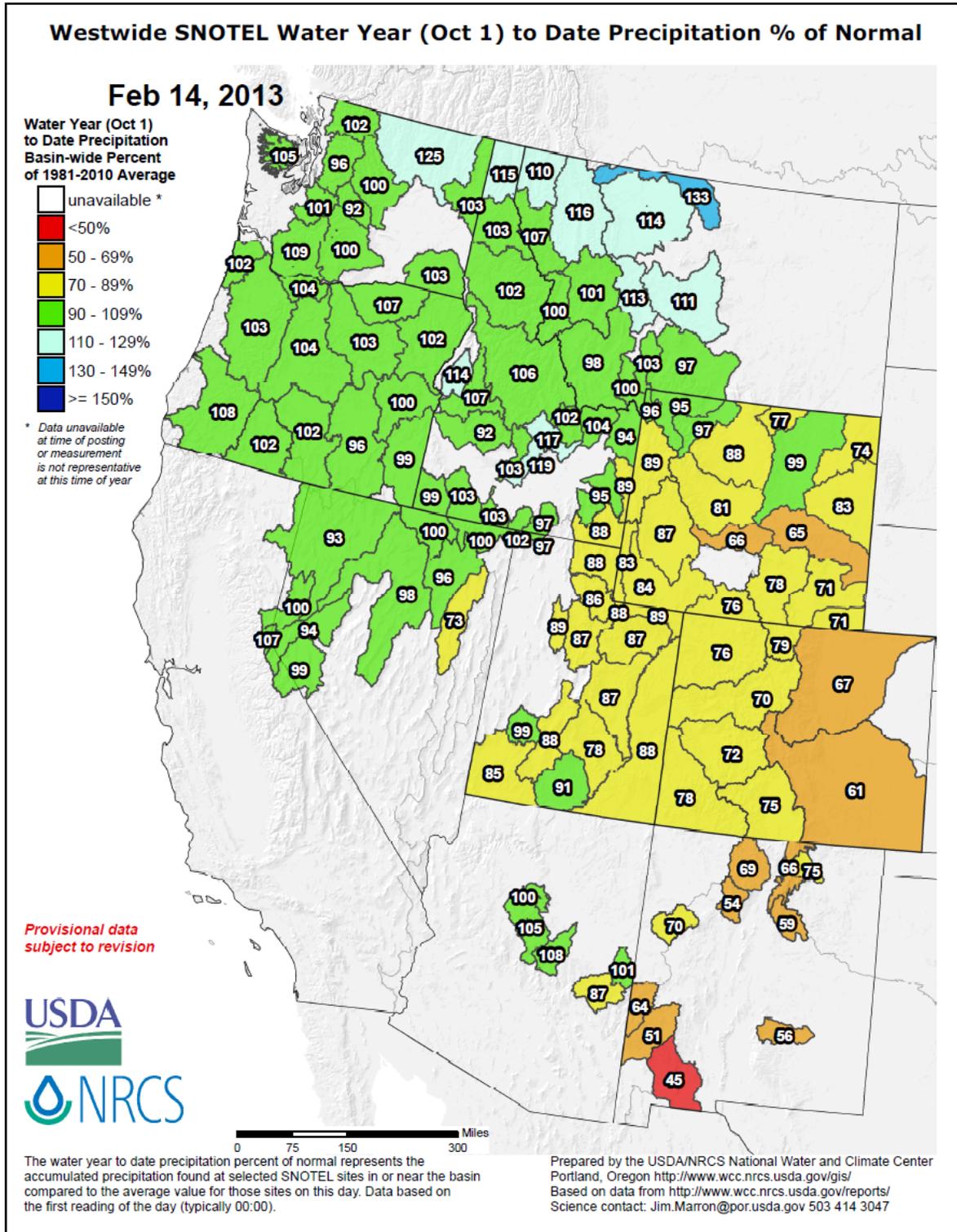
**Fig. 2a and 2b:** [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts (does not include SNOTEL data) for the period ending yesterday show very little precipitation has fallen with the exception of eastern Nevada where over an inch of water equivalent occurred (Fig. 2a). However, in terms of percent of normal, even a small amount of moisture reflects a high value since this time of year is usually quite dry (Fig. 2b). This statistical quirk is represented as scattered enhanced values across the interior West.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



**Fig. 2c: SNOTEL month to date precipitation percent of normal for February shows a very dry first half of the month with one notable exception: Wyoming's North Platte Basin. The northeastern Great Basin is also near average.**

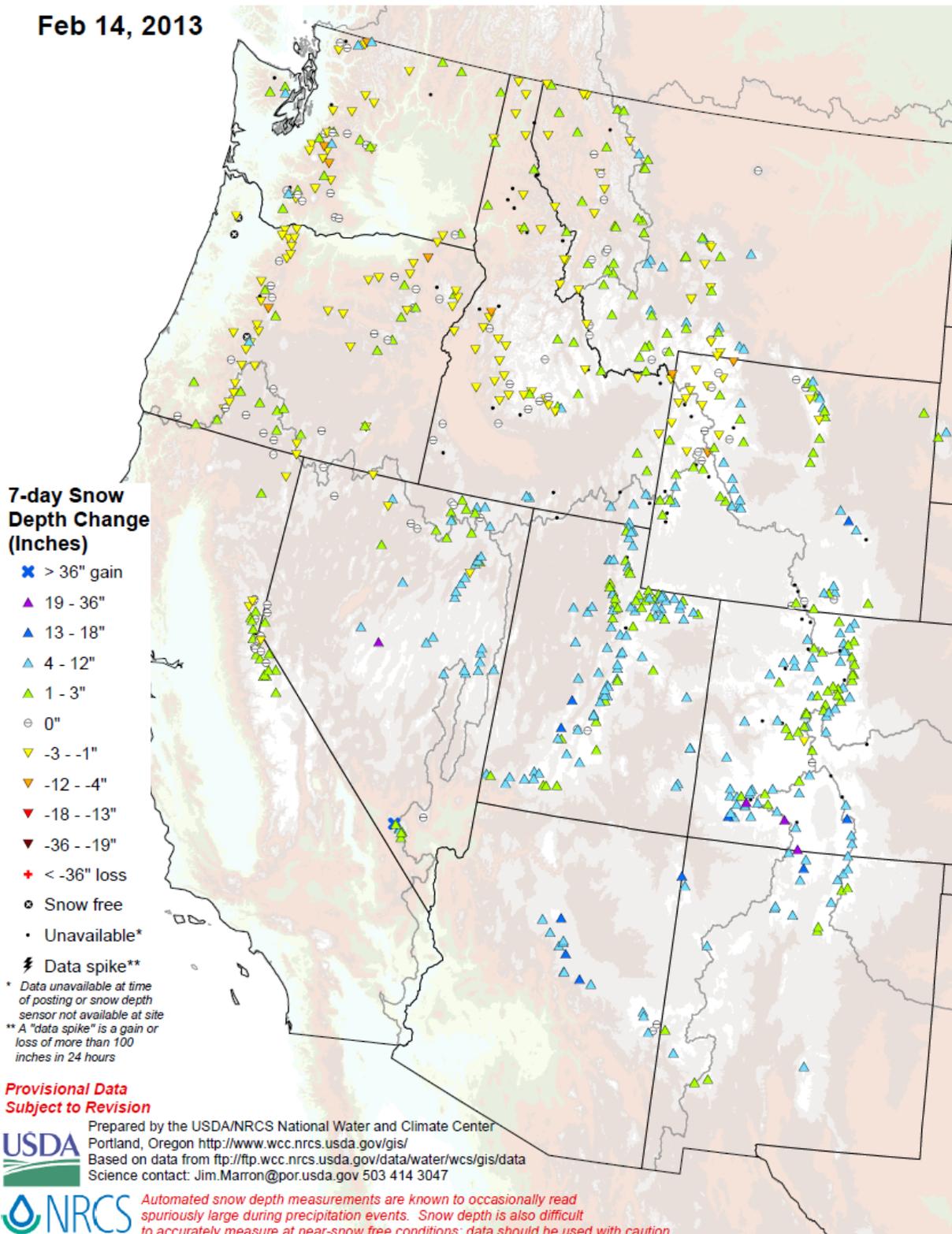
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



**Fig. 2d: For the [2013 Water Year](#) that began on 1 October 2012, moisture surpluses continue to favor the Northern Tier States and the Northern Sierra Nevada. Significant deficits persist over Sweetwater-North Platte River Basins in central-southeastern Wyoming although percentages have increased by 15% this week. Much of Colorado and New Mexico have essentially remained unchanged this week despite some wintery weather transiting the area. For additional information, daily reports by SNOTEL sites can be acquired by clicking [here](#).**

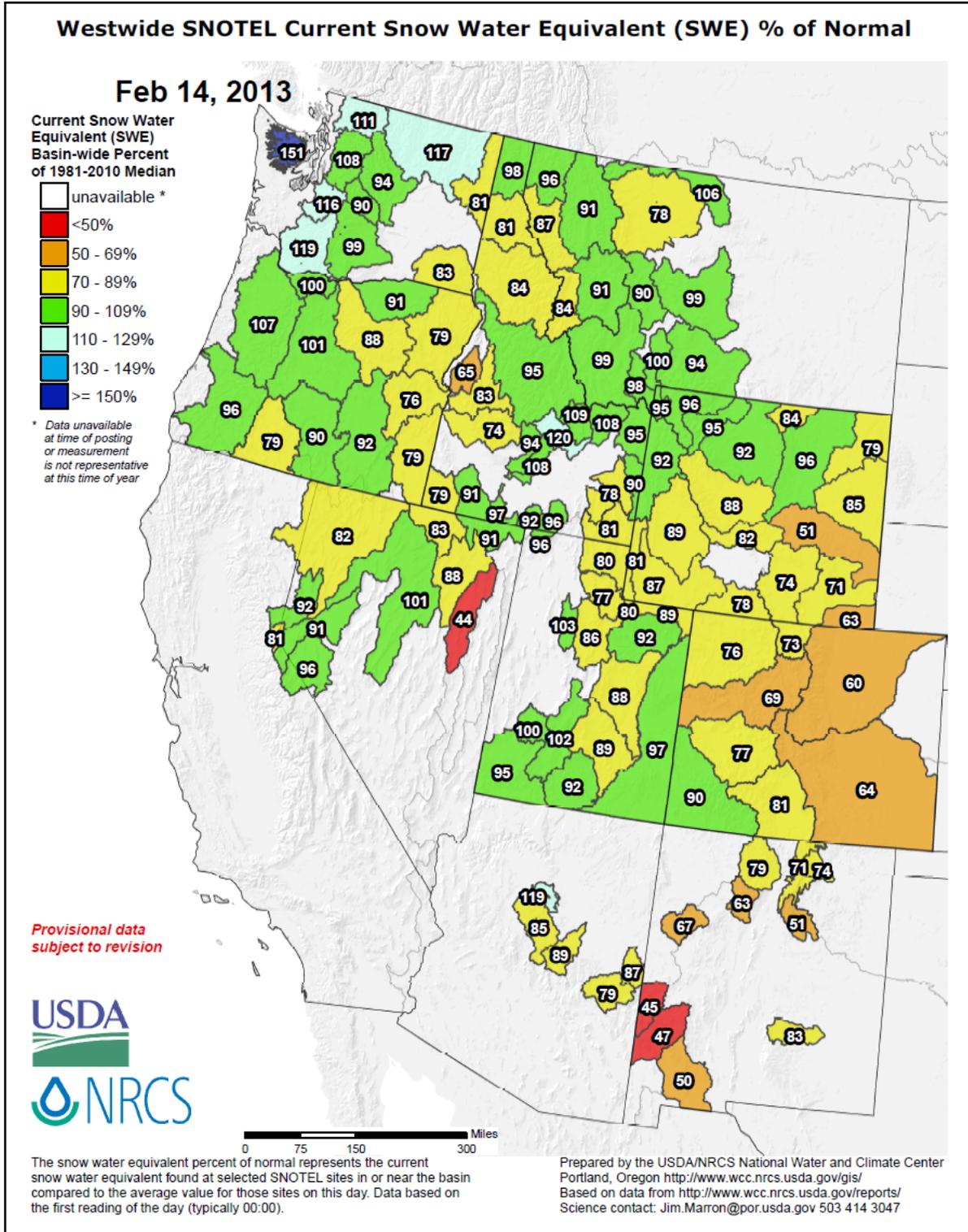
**SNOTEL 7-Day Snow Depth Change (Inches)**

Feb 14, 2013



**Fig. 3a: Snow depth changes for the week showed some snow depth increases over the Southwest, Great Basin, and scattered across Wyoming.**

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



**Fig. 3b: [Snow-Water Equivalent](#) (SWE):** Largest deficits continue over much of much of Colorado and New Mexico; increasingly so over the southwestern most mountains in New Mexico. Most basins remained within 5% of last week’s values except for eastern Wyoming where values increased by up to 22%. For expected snowfall amounts, click [here](#). A useful basin-by-basin assessment of SWE to date can be viewed by state [here](#) and [here](#).

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

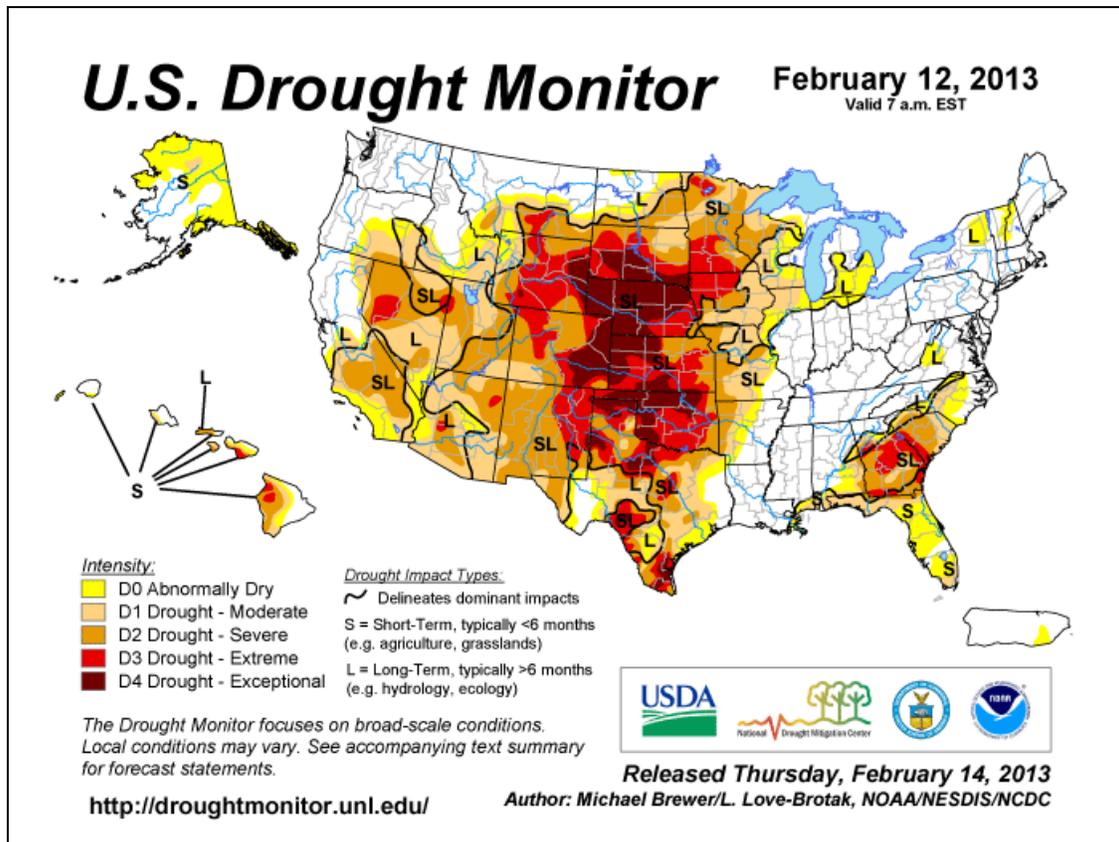


Fig. 4: Current [Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are scattered across the western cornbelt of the Plains into southeastern Colorado and Wyoming, easternmost New Mexico, and southward into Texas. For more drought news, see [Drought Impact Reporter](#). Click for the latest statistics for [California Reservoirs](#). The latest [drought indicator blend and component percentiles](#) spreadsheet is a great resource for climate division drought statistics. See Fig. 8 for the latest [Drought Outlook](#) (forecast).

For an interesting website on Lake Mead drought update, click [here](#).

### Agriculture and Drought in the News

[Drought level in Beaufort County worsens to 'moderate,' hurts fishing industry](#) - Feb 7, Bluffton, SC

### Water Supply & Quality in the News

[2 Great Lakes hit lowest water level on record](#) - Feb 7, Lakes Huron and Michigan.

[City's water supply looks bleak](#) - Feb 7, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

[Dire decline: Farmers prep for possible 'worst' water allotment ever](#) -Feb 4, Southern New Mexico

[Fort Collins restrictions could cut watering to 2 days a week, cap public fountains](#) - Feb 7, Fort Collins, CO

[Stage 3 water restrictions begin at midnight](#) - Feb 5, Wichita Falls, Texas.

### [Texas wrangles with 2 states over water](#)

Feb 5, **Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma**. There are legal squabbles over the rightful owners of water in the Red River and the Rio Grande River. Texas feels that it is entitled to some of the water in the Red River, but Oklahoma says that its state law prohibits the sale of Oklahoma water to Texas. Texas also wants more water from the Rio Grande River and feels that New Mexico is keeping more than their fair share.

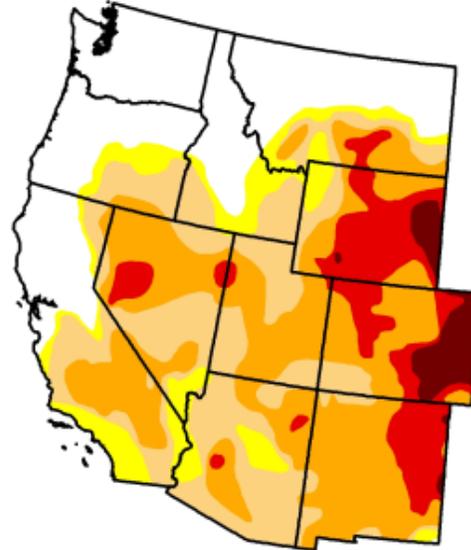
# U.S. Drought Monitor

## West

February 12, 2013  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	26.33	73.67	64.77	41.81	13.38	3.15
Last Week (02/05/2013 map)	23.73	76.27	66.52	44.01	15.72	3.15
3 Months Ago (11/13/2012 map)	18.61	81.39	72.16	41.56	16.23	1.80
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	24.39	75.61	69.31	45.04	18.01	2.15
Start of Water Year (09/25/2012 map)	15.12	84.88	77.15	43.65	16.85	1.77
One Year Ago (02/07/2012 map)	32.79	67.21	41.53	11.06	2.83	0.83



*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, February 14, 2013  
Michael Brewer, National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

**Fig. 4a: Drought Monitor for the Western States with statistics over various time periods. Note slight improvement in D2 and D3 this past week.**

In California, there are cooperative snow surveys made up of 35 or so utilities, water agencies, government agencies and the Department of Water Resources. The NRCS is one of the cooperating agencies. Through this cooperative, California has over 200 manual snow surveys and has a similar number of snow pillows. With this data they publish a Bulletin 120 every month from February through May which provides a forecast of April through July runoff. We provide daily snow reports through the California Data Exchange Center (which also posts the Bulletin 120 at

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/snow/bulletin120/index2.html>) through the following links:

- Current PAGE6 report: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/PAGE6>
- Current DLYSWEQ report: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/DLYSWEQ>
- Current Regional Snowpack Plots: [http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/PLOT\\_SWC](http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/PLOT_SWC)

California also hosts a statewide water conditions page at:

[http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water\\_cond.html](http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water_cond.html) which has links to precipitation, reservoir storage, snowpack, runoff, and summary reports.

# Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

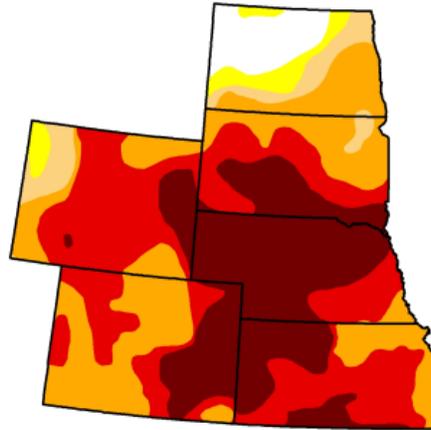
## U.S. Drought Monitor High Plains

February 5, 2013  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	4.79	95.21	92.08	87.25	60.61	29.19
Last Week (01/29/2013 map)	4.79	95.21	92.08	87.25	61.29	27.02
3 Months Ago (11/06/2012 map)	0.03	99.97	96.46	83.94	57.54	27.24
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	1.54	98.46	93.01	86.20	60.25	26.99
Start of Water Year (09/25/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	98.91	83.80	61.28	24.35
One Year Ago (01/31/2012 map)	40.21	59.79	23.28	6.33	2.22	0.04

**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://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, February 7, 2013  
Michael Brewer, National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

Fig. 4b: Drought Monitor for the [High Plains](#) with statistics over various time periods. D4 conditions increased by 2 percent for the week.

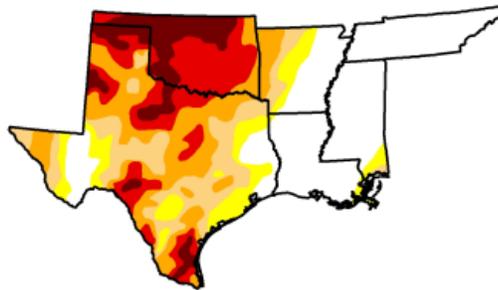
## U.S. Drought Monitor South

February 5, 2013  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	34.65	65.35	55.82	41.66	23.91	9.20
Last Week (01/29/2013 map)	31.46	68.54	56.21	41.73	24.00	8.59
3 Months Ago (11/06/2012 map)	29.13	70.87	54.00	37.59	21.68	6.61
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	21.18	78.82	63.69	50.50	32.80	10.98
Start of Water Year (09/25/2012 map)	24.13	75.87	66.61	51.50	29.86	9.11
One Year Ago (01/31/2012 map)	32.32	67.68	61.19	50.60	35.37	14.32

**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.

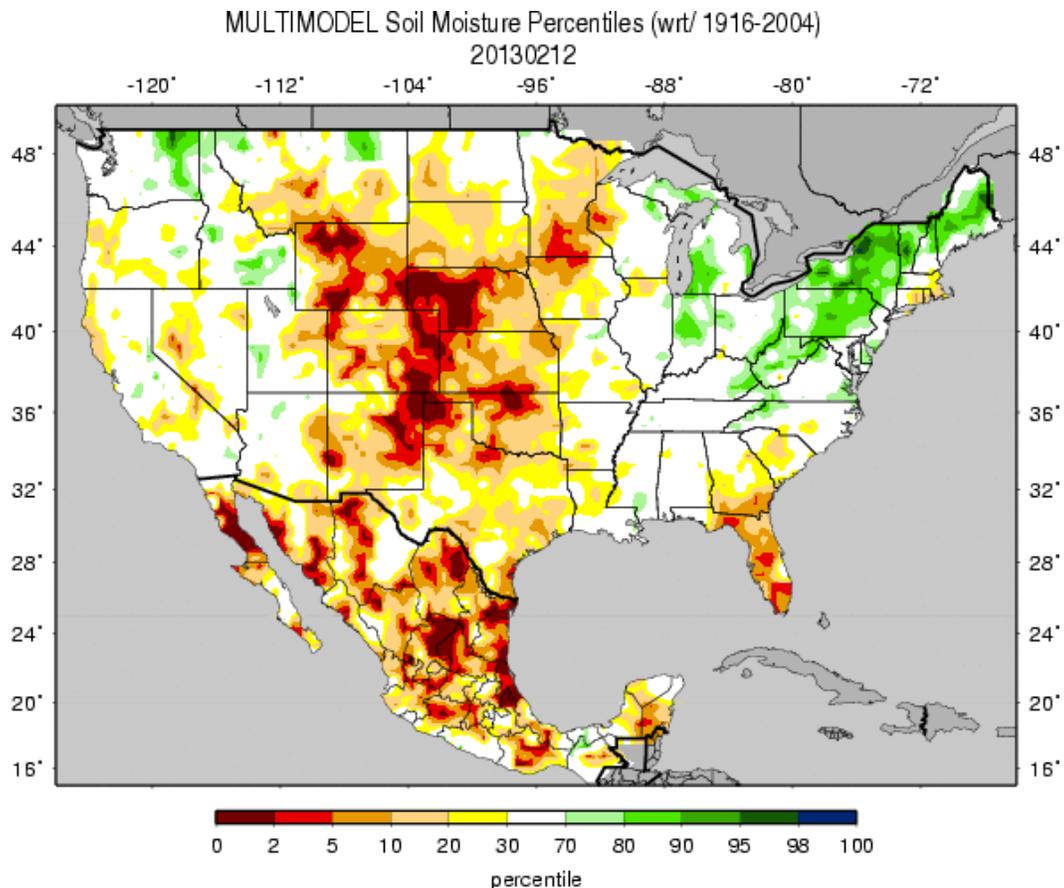
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, February 7, 2013  
Michael Brewer, National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

Fig. 4c: Drought Monitor for the [South-Central Region](#) with statistics over various time periods. Note some creep in D4 over the past 7 days. Check out the Texas Drought [Website](#).

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



**Figs. 5:** Soil moisture ranking in [percentile](#) as of 12 February shows dryness scattered across the Western Plains, much of the Rockies, and over New Mexico. Note persistent moisture over New England and the Appalachian Mountains this week after last week's major snow storm across the region. Freezing soils will distort actual moisture values, making them less than reliable over the Northern States.

### *Useful Hydrological Links:*

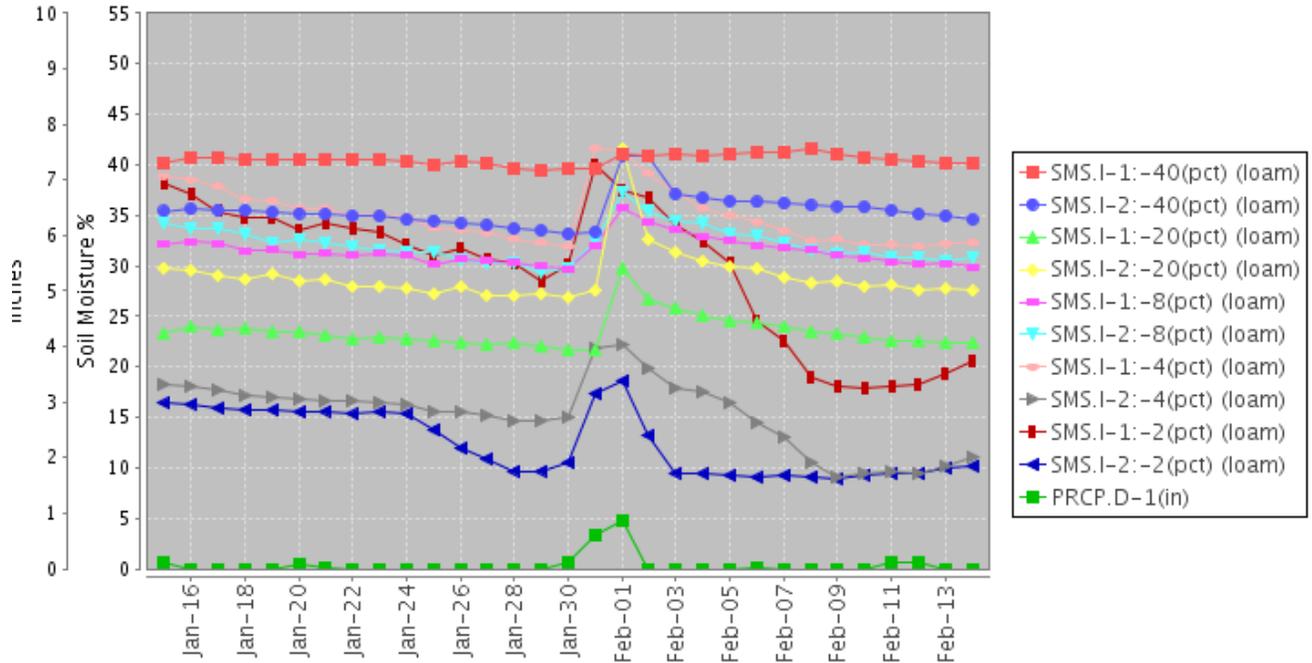
USDA western U.S. mountain snow water content anomaly map.

USGS (U.S. Geological Service) [observed streamflow](#); NOAA Climate Prediction Center (CPC) modeled runoff [anomalies](#) and [percentiles](#); VIC (University of Washington Variable Infiltration Capacity macro scale hydrologic model) [1-](#), [2-](#), [3-](#), and [6-month](#) and [water year-to-date](#) runoff percentiles; NLDAS (North American Land Data Assimilation System) modeled streamflow [anomalies](#) and [percentiles](#); NLDAS model runoff [anomalies](#) and [percentiles](#); USGS groundwater observations ([real-time network](#), [climate response network](#), [total active network](#)); USDA snow water content observations for the West (SNOTEL station [percentiles](#) and [percent of normal](#), SNOTEL basin [percent of normal](#) and [percent of average](#)) and Alaska ([SNOTEL station percent of normal](#), [SNOTEL basin percent of normal](#)); USDA reservoir storage as [percent of capacity](#).

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

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

on (2042) MONTH=2013-01-15 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision  
Thu Feb 14 08:04:31 PST 2013



**Fig. 6:** This NRCS resource shows a site over [southern Vermont](#) with top soil moisture responding to the end of January precipitation event. However, caution should be exercised if soils are frozen. Moisture sensor accuracies become unreliable when the soil temperature falls below 32°F.

#### Useful Agriculture Links:

USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) [observed soil moisture conditions](#), [departures and percentiles](#), and comparison to [5-year average](#) and [10-year average](#); the Palmer [Crop Moisture Index \(CMI\)](#), which intensified during the month in the West and Lower to Mid-Mississippi Valley (weeks [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)); CPC modeled soil moisture [anomalies](#) and [percentiles](#) for end of May, and [soil moisture anomaly change](#) compared to previous month; CPC's Leaky Bucket model [soil moisture percentiles](#); NLDAS modeled soil moisture percentiles for the [top soil layer](#) and [total soil layer](#); VIC modeled [soil moisture percentiles](#), and [soil moisture percentile change](#) compared to previous month; USDA observed [pasture and rangeland conditions](#); [Vegetation Drought Response Index \(VegDRI\)](#); the NOAA/NESDIS satellite-based [Vegetation Health Index \(VHI\)](#); the USGS agro-hydrologic model ([Soil Water Index](#), [Water Requirement Satisfaction Index](#)); Selected SNOTEL Sites (measured [2"](#), [4"](#), [8"](#), [20"](#), and [40"](#) soil moisture depths); Monthly [SCAN Report](#) from Utah.

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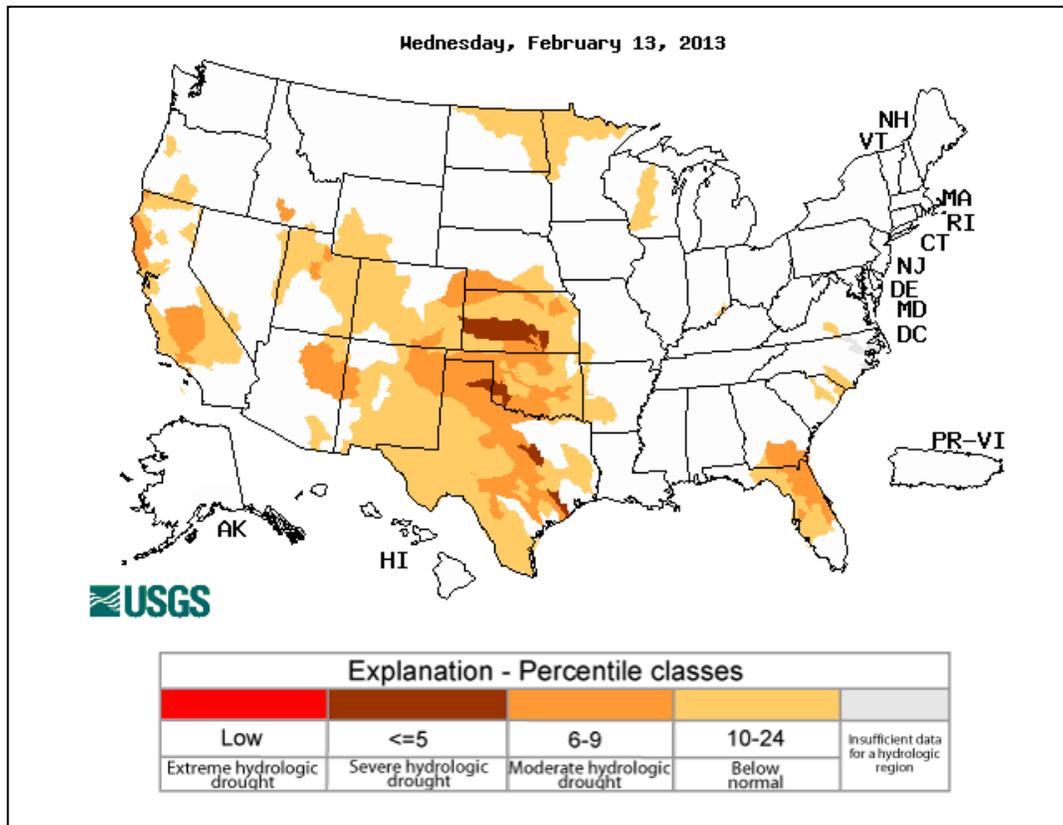


Fig. 7: Map of below normal 7-day average [streamflow](#) compared to historical streamflow for the day of the year. **Severe** conditions exist over south-central Kansas, northern Texas/southern Oklahoma, and scattered across eastern Texas. As with soil moisture, streamflow data can be severely compromised by prolonged freezing temperatures. See the USGS [National Water Information System Mapper](#).

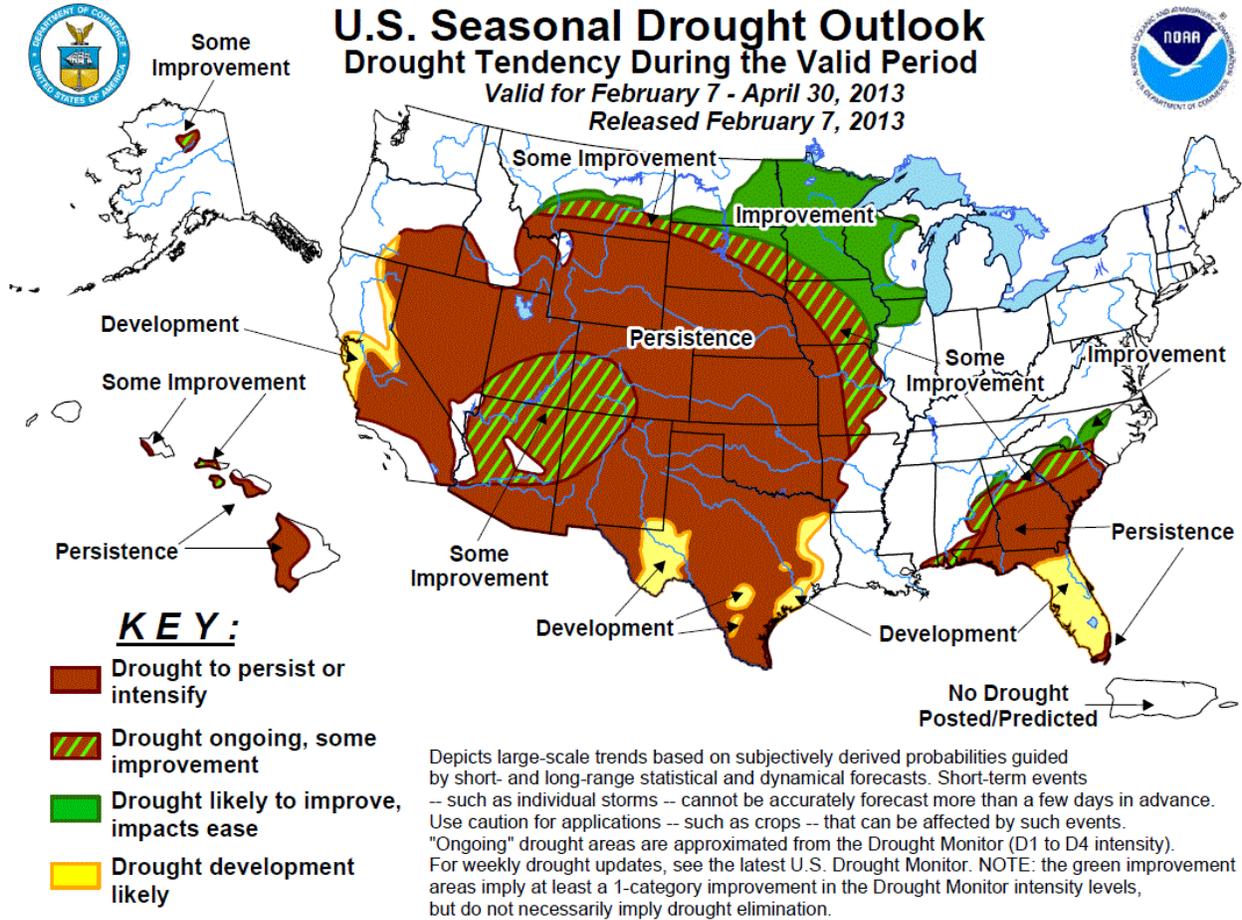


Fig. 8: U.S. seasonal [Drought Outlook](#) updated on 7 February.

**See USDA Drought Assistance [website](#).**

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

### National Drought Summary -- February 12, 2013

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

This US Drought Monitor week was dominated by two weather systems. The first system provided widespread moisture through the Southeast and mid-Atlantic before dumping large amounts of snow across New England. Unofficial totals include 33.5 inches in Glastonbury, CT, 24.9 inches in Boston, MA, 31.9 inches in Portland, ME, and 20.5 inches in Providence, RI. High winds also accompanied this storm with wind gusts up to 83MPH near the Atlantic coast in Massachusetts. According to the Storm Prediction Center, in the second storm event of the week, severe thunderstorms rolled through the South and Gulf States producing an estimated 19 tornadoes and numerous high wind and hail events.

**The Southeast:** The Southeast has seen rain fairly consistently throughout this US Drought Monitor week. Multi-day rains across Alabama and Georgia have put a significant dent in the drought conditions there. In Georgia, Exceptional Drought (D4) was eradicated and areas of Extreme (D3), Severe (D2), and Moderate Drought (D1) and Abnormal Dryness (D0) were all reduced there and in Alabama. One significant aspect of the storms this week was severe weather on February 10. This event brought and estimated 19 tornadoes to the area as well as a large number of wind and hail events.

In North Carolina, areas of Moderate Drought (D1) and Abnormal Dryness (D0) were reduced due to the precipitation. Conversely, South Florida continues to receive below normal precipitation and saw a small expansion of Moderate Drought (D1).

**The Northeast and Mid-Atlantic:** The Northeast was hit by a major winter storm this week. As mentioned previously, widespread two foot and greater snowfall was experienced throughout the region. Hundreds of flights were cancelled and thousands were delayed due to the snow. Numerous roads were closed throughout the area. Hundreds of thousands of homes lost power during the storm and one death has been attributed to it. While snow fell across the region, it largely missed the areas of Abnormal Dryness (D0). These areas remained relatively constant with a slight repositioning in New York and a minor improvement in New Hampshire. Conditions in the Mid-Atlantic remained unchanged.

**The South and Southern Plains:** Improvement was made this week in Extreme Drought (D3) in eastern Oklahoma and Kansas. There was also improvement in Severe (D2) and Moderate Drought (D1) and Abnormal Dryness (D0) across eastern Texas while areas of southern Texas and the Panhandle saw small expansion of Exceptional (D4), Extreme (D3), and Severe Drought (D2).

**The Central and Northern Plains and Midwest:** Conditions continued to improve in the Upper Midwest and Northern Plains. Widespread snowfall in the eastern Dakotas and across Minnesota led to improvements in Extreme (D3) and Severe Drought (D2) conditions in that area. Additionally, southwest Missouri saw some improvement in Severe Drought (D2)

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conditions.

**The West:** Improving snowpack conditions led to improvements in Extreme (D3) and Severe Drought (D2) conditions in the Four Corners area. Improvements were also experienced in Extreme (D3), Severe (D2), and Moderate Drought (D1) and Abnormal Dryness (D0) from southern Montana, through northwest Wyoming and southern Idaho, and into southeast Oregon. In California, Severe (D2) and Moderate Drought (D1) conditions expanded north of Los Angeles.

**Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico:** Drought conditions remained unchanged in these areas this week.

**Looking Ahead:** During the February 14-18, 2013 time period, there is a suppressed probability of precipitation across nearly the entire US, with the exception of isolated locations along the East Coast focused mainly in northern New England and in south Florida. Temperatures are variable throughout this time period. Initially, above normal temperatures are expected from the Ohio Valley through the Southern Plains and along the West Coast. These temperatures are expected to migrate eastward and by the end of this period, the above normal temperatures will have moved from the West Coast, across the Rockies, and into the Great Plains once again.

For the ensuing 5 days (February 19-23, 2013), the odds favor below normal temperatures throughout the entire West as well as across Alaska. Above normal temperatures are favored in the South and in the lower Mississippi River Valley. Above normal precipitation is likely from roughly the east side of the Rocky Mountains to the East Coast. The far Southwest and the West Coast are likely to see below normal precipitation. Alaska is generally expected to see above normal precipitation with the exception of the far northwest part of the state and the Anchorage area.

**Author:** [Michael Brewer, National Climatic Data Center, 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 February 13, 2013*

## Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

### USDA Highlights

Highlights for the drought-monitoring period ending 7 am EST on February 5 include:

- Overall U.S. drought coverage decreased to 56.84% of the contiguous U.S., down 0.84% from last week and down 5.81% in the last ten weeks. Last week's decrease came on the strength of widespread precipitation across the eastern half of the U.S. and parts of the Southwest.
- However, the portion of the contiguous U.S. in the worst category – D4, or exceptional drought – rose nearly one-half percentage point to 6.85%. D4 coverage has ranged from 5 to 7% for 26 consecutive weeks (August 14, 2012 – February 5, 2013).
- The percent of hay in drought (59%) and winter wheat in drought (59%) were unchanged from a week ago. Cattle in drought (68%) fell one percentage point. For the 31<sup>st</sup> consecutive week (July 10, 2012 – February 5, 2013), drought encompassed more than two-thirds of the domestic cattle inventory.

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