



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

Weekly Report - Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update

Date: 21 February 2013

SNOTEL SNOWPACK AND PRECIPITATION SUMMARY

Temperature: [SNOTEL](#) and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly ending 21 February shows generally warmer than normal conditions across the Northern Tier States and cooler over Utah and Colorado (Fig. 1a). [ACIS](#) 7-day average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures over north-central Montana ($>+9^{\circ}\text{F}$). The greatest negative departures occurred over the Uinta Mountains of Utah ($<-15^{\circ}\text{F}$) (Fig. 2a). Since the start of February, warmer than average temperatures dominate Montana 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 for the period ending yesterday show very little precipitation has fallen with the exception of over an inch over the Bitterroot Mountain of Montana-Idaho and the Olympic Mountains of Washington (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 Northern Rockies, Bootheal of New Mexico, and Northern-Central region of the Great Basin (Nevada). [SNOTEL month to date](#) precipitation percent of normal for February shows a very dry month thus far with notable exceptions: Wyoming's North Platte Basin and northeastern basins, as well as two eastern slope basins in Montana (Fig. 2c). For the [2013 Water Year](#) that began on 1 October 2012, moisture surpluses continue to favor the northernmost regions of the West. Significant deficits persist over much of Colorado and New Mexico and have essentially remained unchanged this week despite some wintery weather transiting the area. Utah has continued to show increasing deficits since the beginning of 2013 (Fig. 2d).

Snow: The [7-day snow depth changes](#) for the week showed some snow depth increases over the Front Range of the Rockies including the Bighorn Mountain of Wyoming. However, much of the West saw decreases of up to a foot (Fig. 3a). As for [snow-water equivalent](#), the largest deficits continue over much of much of Colorado and New Mexico. Most basins remained within 5% of last week's values despite a winter storm moving through the Four-Corner States. However, values have actually decreased by more than 5% over the Washington and Oregon Coastal Mountains and Cascades even though some unsettled weather moved over the region (Fig. 3b).

Week in Review: Over the last 7 days, the most active area for precipitation was in the southeast United States where areas of southern Georgia and South Carolina recorded over 2 inches of rain, with locally heavier amounts of close to 3.50 inches in Georgia. A winter storm over the southern Plains brought wet snow to much of the panhandle of Texas and into portions of Oklahoma. Areas of southern Florida received up to 2 inches of rain.

The West: Some precipitation in central Arizona did allow for a small area of improvement this week as the current area of D0 was expanded in the central portion of the state. The start of the calendar year has been very dry for much of California, especially the northern portions of the state. The good start to the water year with early precipitation has been followed by a dry

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

pattern over the last few months. As impacts to the dryness start to develop, a new area of D0 was introduced this week along the coast and to inland locations. The new area of D0 was labeled short-term because of the nature of the dryness. Author: Brian Fuchs, 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 (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>.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

For More Information

The National Water and Climate Center (NWCC) Homepage provides the latest available snowpack and water supply information. Please visit us at <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>. This document is available from the following location on the NWCC homepage - <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/water/drought/wdr.pl>. Reports from 2007 are available online 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

SNOTEL (solid) and ACIS (dot-filled) Networks 7-Day Average Temperature Anomaly (Degrees F)

Feb 21, 2013

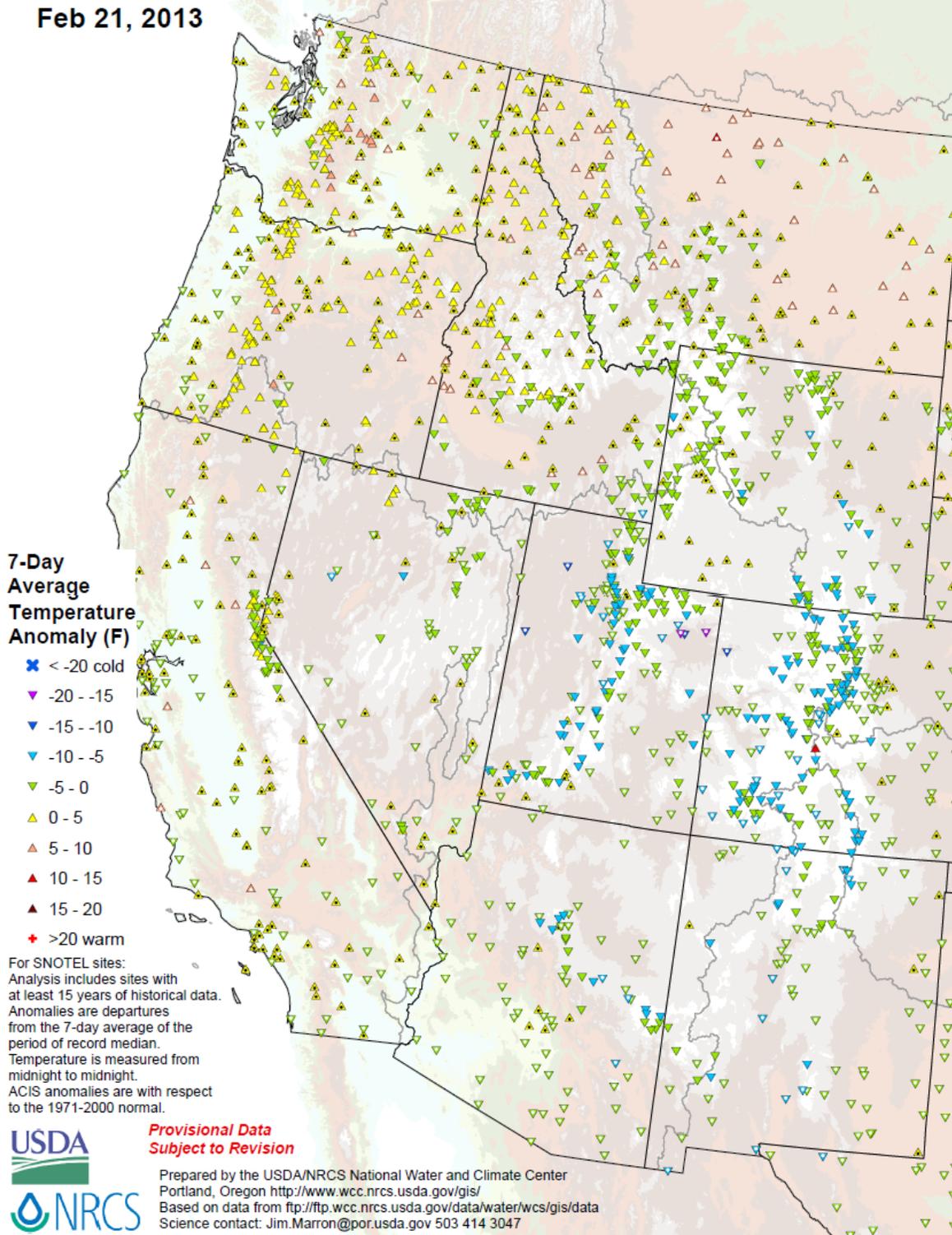
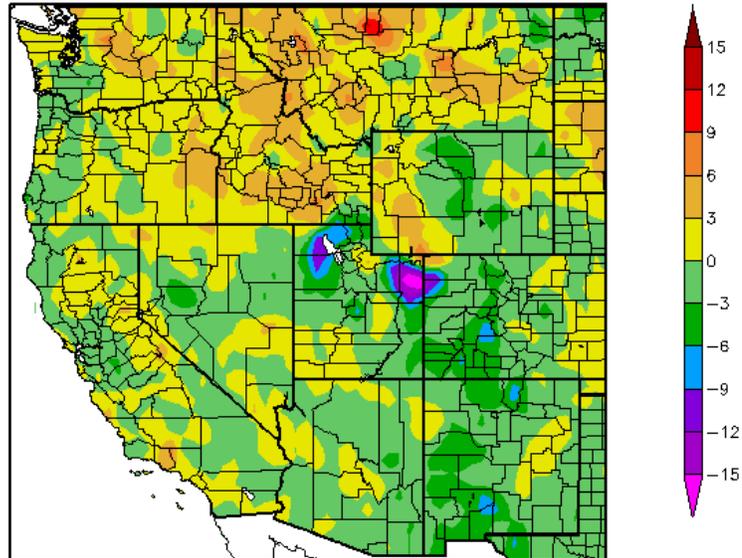


Fig. 1a: **SNOTEL** and ACIS 7-day temperature anomaly ending 21 February shows generally warmer than normal conditions across the Northern Tier States and cooler over Utah and Colorado.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
2/14/2013 – 2/20/2013

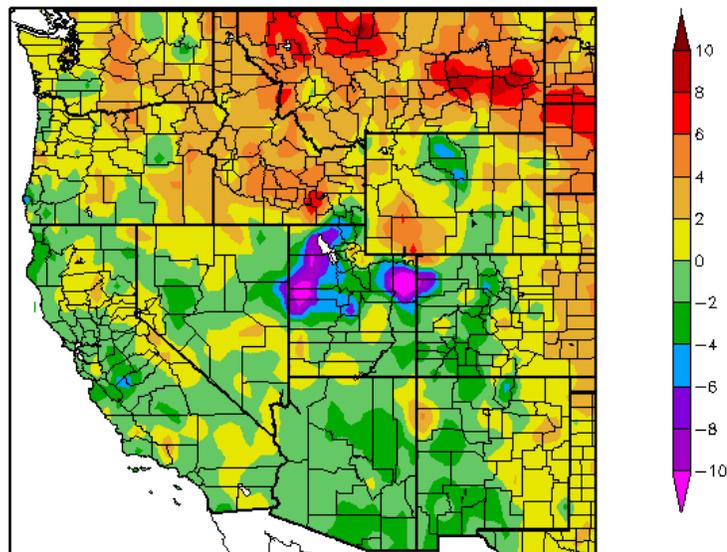


Generated 2/21/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 1b: ACIS [7-day](#) average temperature anomalies show the greatest positive temperature departures over north-central Montana (>+9°F). The greatest negative departures occurred over the Uinta Mountains of Utah (<-15°F). For more figures, see the Western Water Assessment's Intermountain West Climate [Dashboard](#).

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
2/1/2013 – 2/20/2013



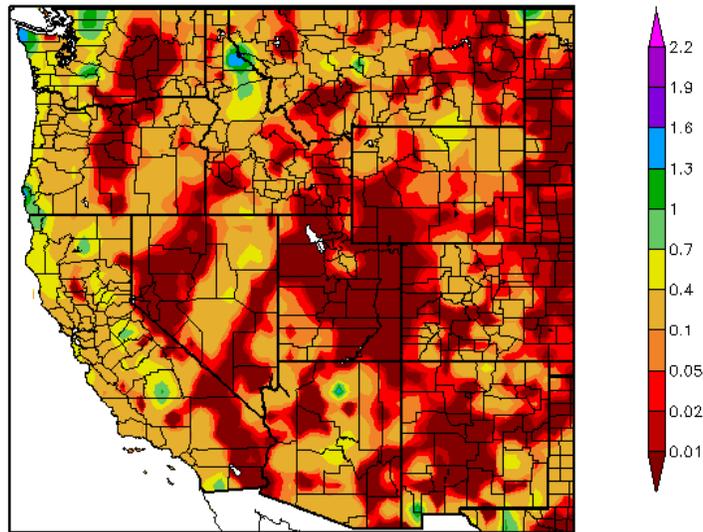
Generated 2/21/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 1c: Since the start of February, warmer than average temperatures dominate Montana 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

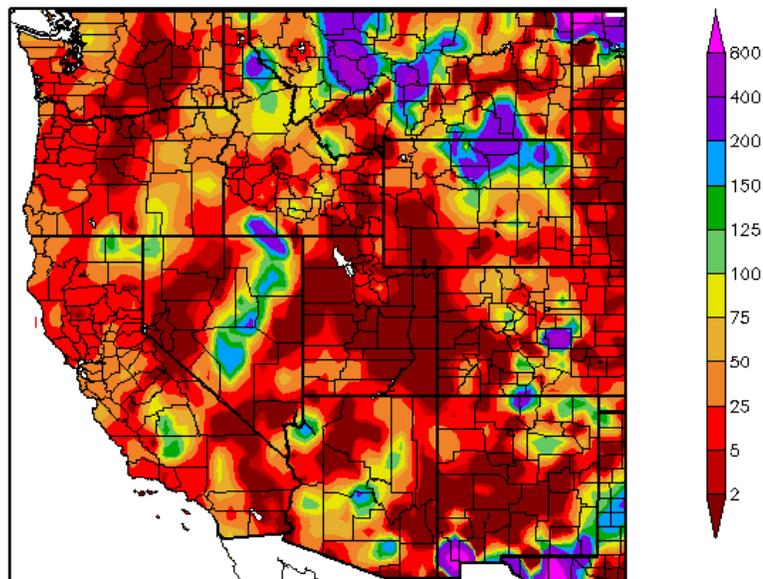
Precipitation (in)
2/14/2013 - 2/20/2013



Generated 2/21/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
2/14/2013 - 2/20/2013



Generated 2/21/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Fig. 2a and 2b: [ACIS](#) 7-day average precipitation amounts for the period ending yesterday show very little precipitation has fallen with the exception of over an inch over the Bitterroot Mountain of Montana-Idaho and the Olympic Mountains of Washington (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 Northern Rockies, Bootheal of New Mexico, and Northern-Central region of the Great Basin (Nevada).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

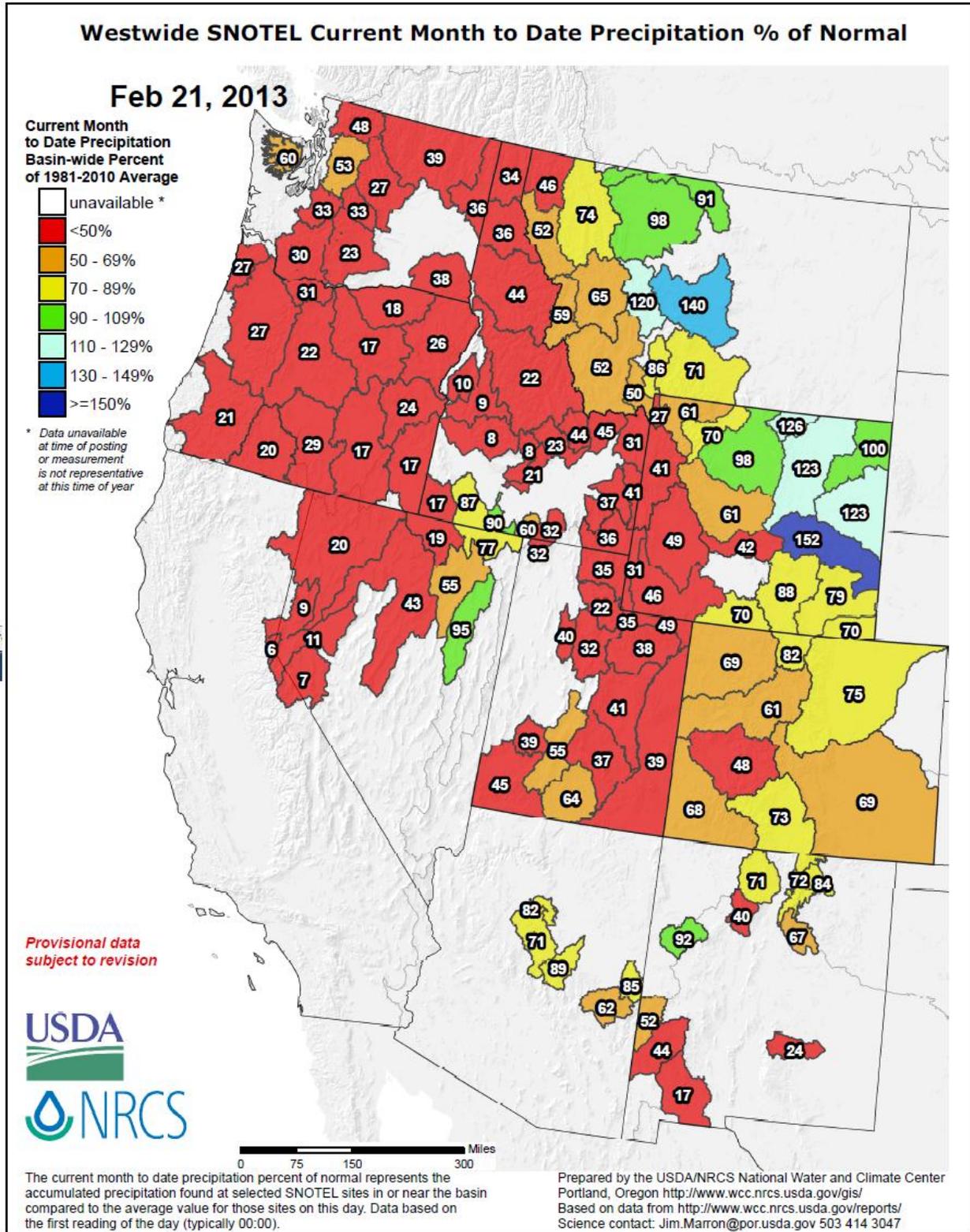


Fig. 2c: SNOTEL month to date precipitation percent of normal for February shows a very dry month thus far with notable exceptions: Wyoming's North Platte Basin and northeastern basins, as well as two eastern slope basins in Montana.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

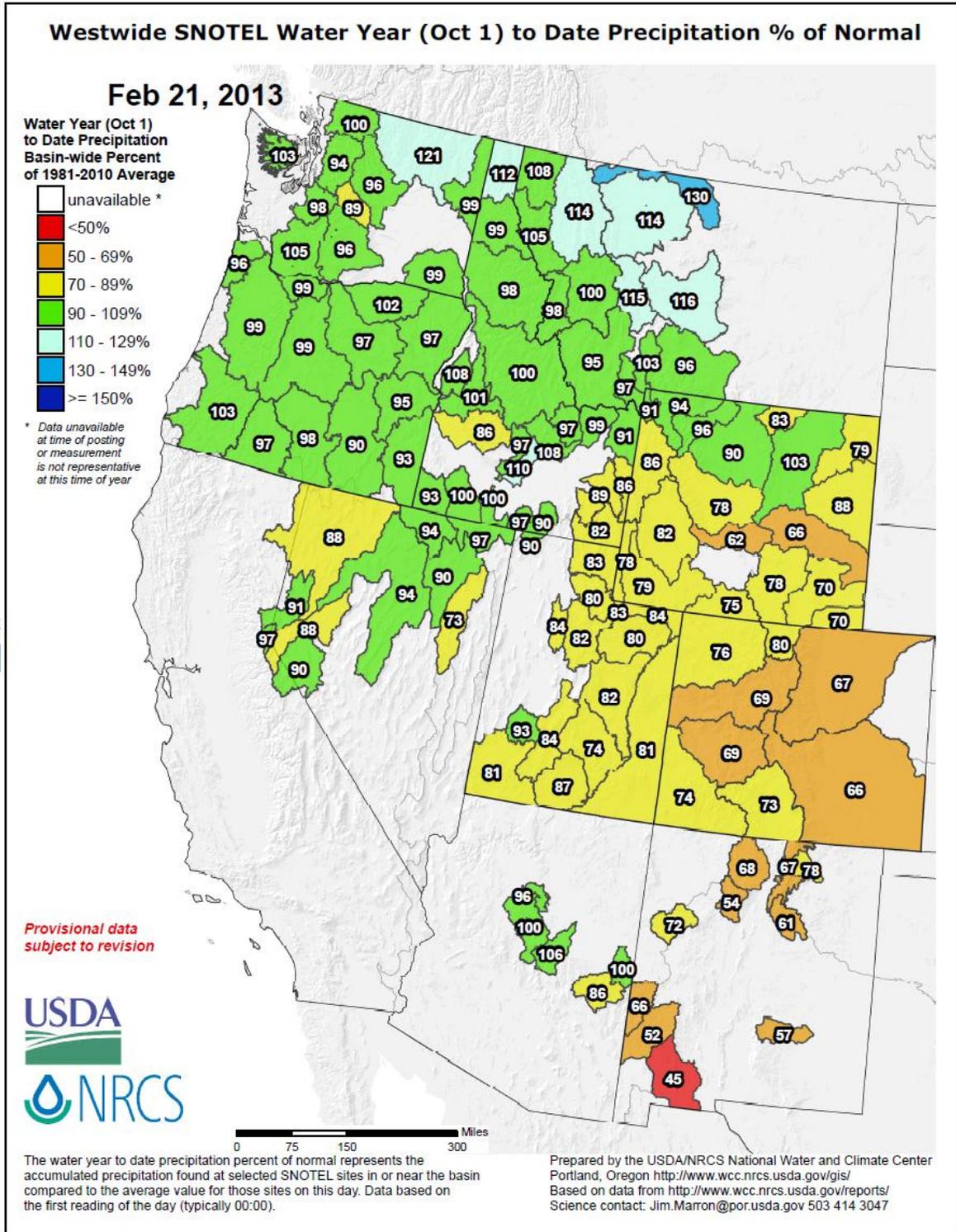


Fig. 2d: For the 2013 Water Year that began on 1 October 2012, moisture surpluses continue to favor the northernmost regions of the West. Significant deficits persist over much of Colorado and New Mexico and have essentially remained unchanged this week despite some wintry weather transiting the area. Utah has continued to show increasing deficits since the beginning of 2013. For additional information, daily reports by SNOTEL sites can be acquired by clicking [here](#).

SNOTEL 7-Day Snow Depth Change (Inches)

Feb 21, 2013

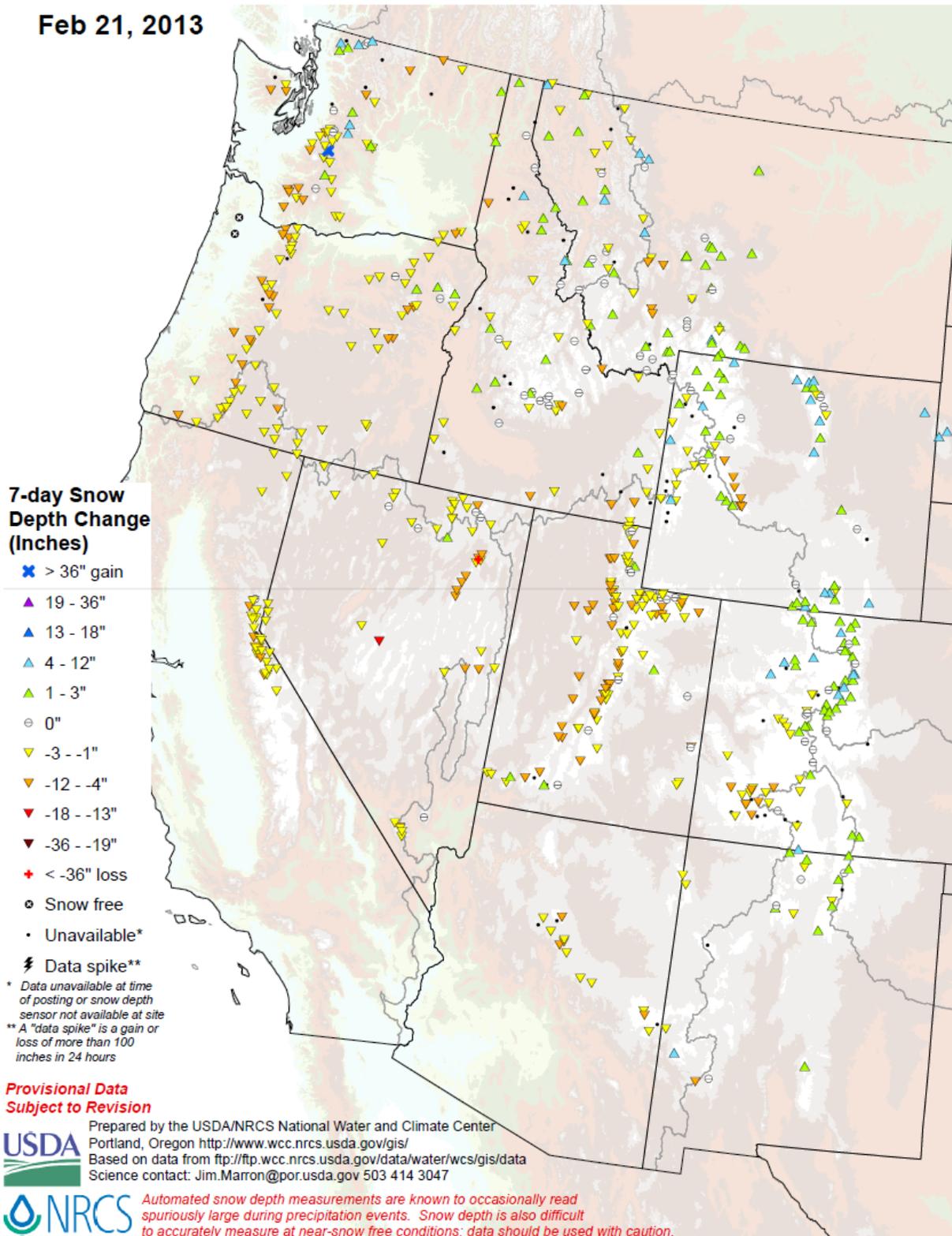


Fig. 3a: The 7-day snow depth changes for the week showed some snow depth increases over the Front Range of the Rockies including the Bighorn Mountain of Wyoming. However, much of the West saw decreases of up to a foot.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

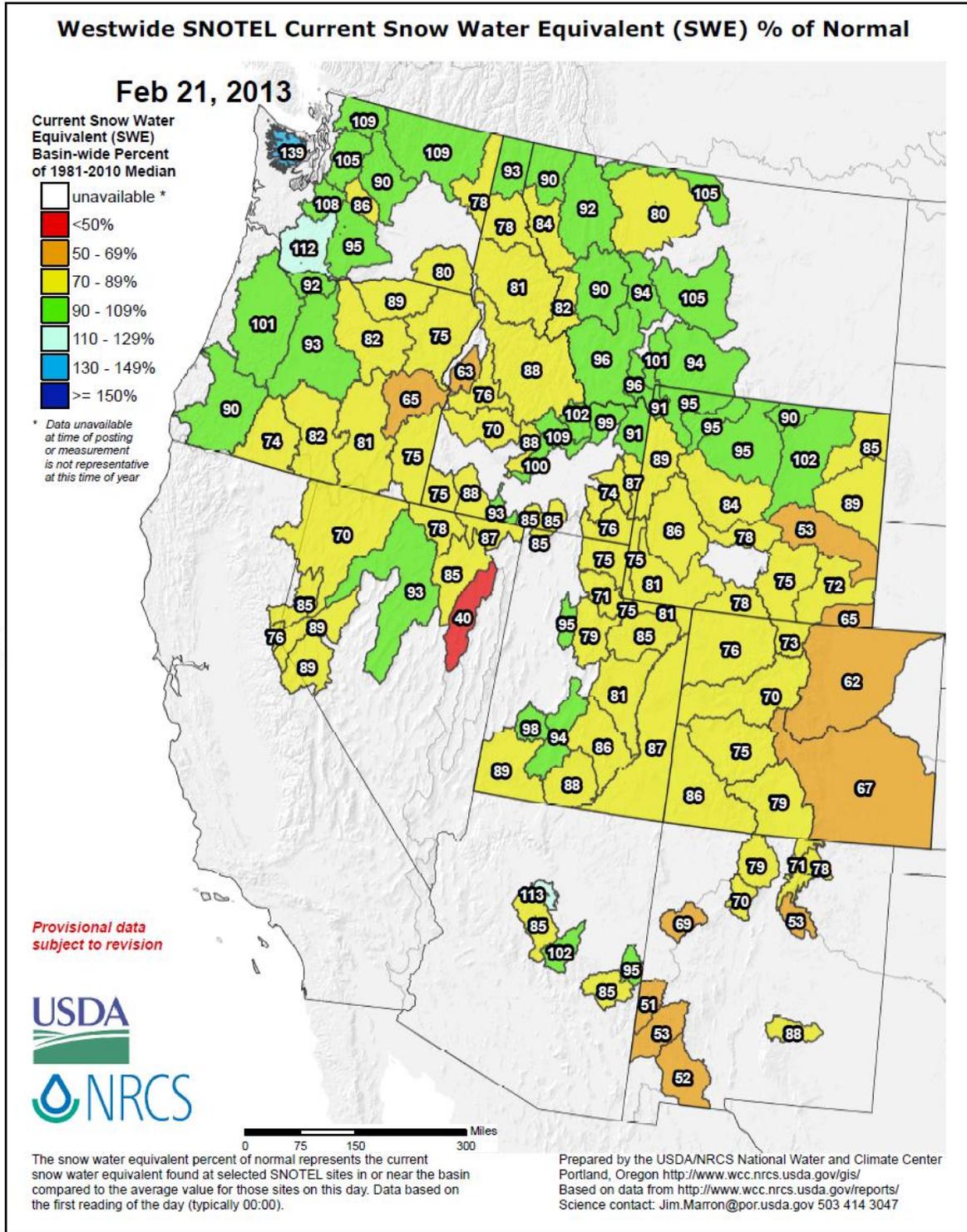


Fig. 3b: Snow-Water Equivalent (SWE): Largest deficits continue over much of much of Colorado and New Mexico. Most basins remained within 5% of last week's values despite a winter storm moving through the Four-Corner States. However, values have actually decreased by more than 5% over the Washington and Oregon Coastal Mountains and Cascades even though some unsettled weather moved over the region. 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

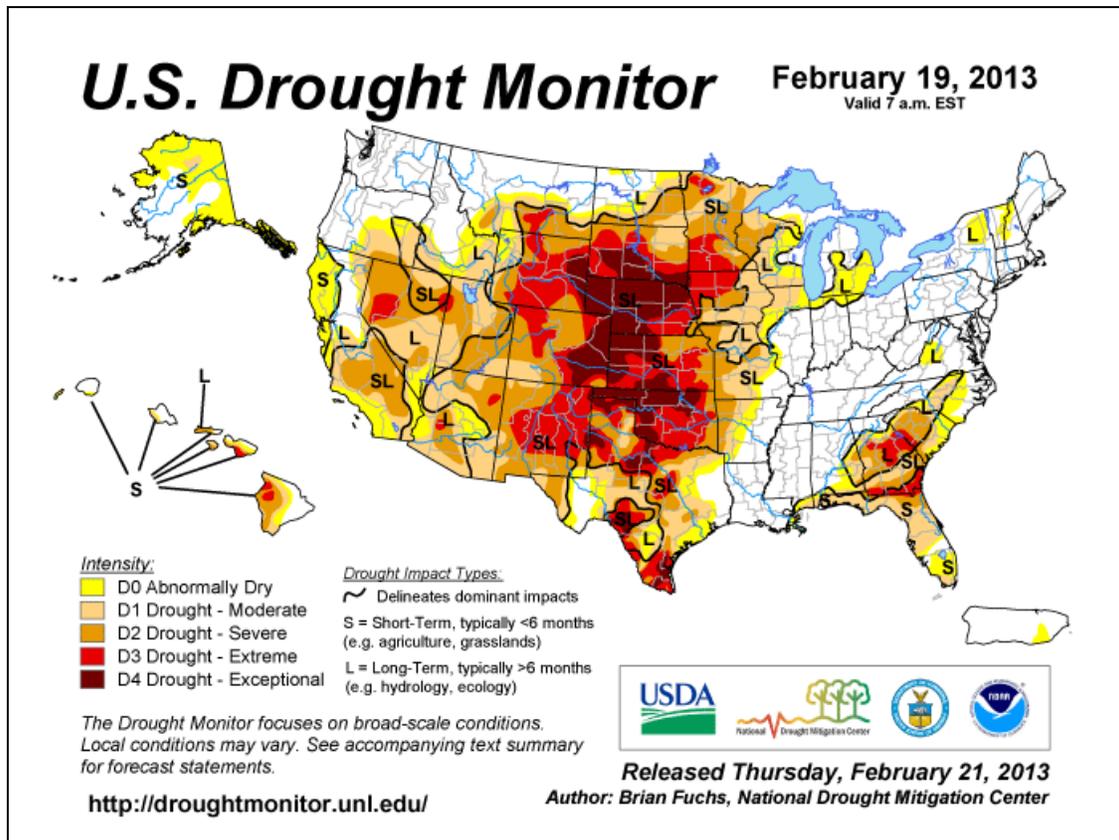


Fig. 4: Current [Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are scattered across the western Corn Belt of the Plains into southeastern Colorado and Wyoming, easternmost New Mexico, and southward into Texas. For more drought news, see [Drought Impact Reporter](#). Click for 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

[Cattle Disappearing Amid Drought Signals Beef Rally: Commodities](#)

<http://washpost.bloomberg.com/Story?docId=1376-MI6GW807SXKX01-73NT7EPRH4QDIA7OV731G7N4U7>

Feb 14, **U.S.** The number of cattle in the U.S. fell to 89.3 million as of Jan. 1. The USDA expects that domestic beef output in 2013 will fall to the lowest level in 8 years, while per-capita supplies will likely fall to the lowest level since 1970.

[Drought joins U.S. farmers in the field for spring planting](#)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/14/usa-agriculture-idUSL1N0BE7BY20130214>

Feb 14, **Great Plains, western Corn Belt.** With drought expected to persist in the Great Plains and western Corn Belt, the winter wheat, corn and soybean crops are under threat without some substantial rain. The 2012 drought was the second worst drought on record in the U.S., with the drought of 1934 holding the title as the worst widespread drought.

Water Supply & Quality

[Call on North Platte rights as drought intensifies](#) - Feb 7, **Wyoming**

[Corps says Missouri River will be low, but navigable](#) - Feb 14, **Missouri River**

[Drought worries may force water conservation](#) - Feb 14, **Iowa**

[Rep. Basin irrigation use up significantly during 2012](#) - Feb 13, **Southern Nebraska**

U.S. Drought Monitor

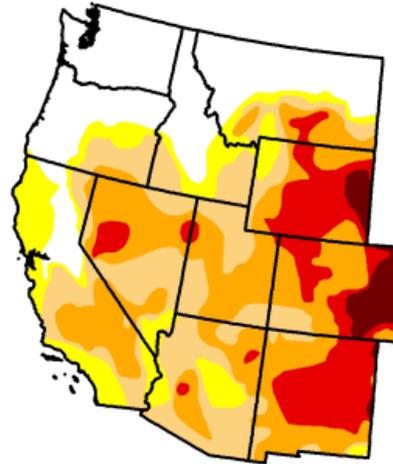
West

February 19, 2013
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	23.76	76.24	64.34	41.81	15.89	3.15
Last Week (02/12/2013 map)	26.33	73.67	64.77	41.81	13.38	3.15
3 Months Ago (11/20/2012 map)	18.30	81.70	72.33	43.17	16.92	1.83
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 (02/14/2012 map)	33.22	66.78	40.87	10.32	2.56	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.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, February 21, 2013
Brian Fuchs, National Drought Mitigation Center

Fig. 4a: Drought Monitor for the Western States with statistics over various time periods. Note some deterioration in 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
- California also hosts a statewide water conditions page at:
http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water_cond.html which has links to precipitation, reservoir storage, snowpack, runoff, and summary reports.

From the latest USDA/NASS weekly agricultural report, valid February 11-17, 2013...
http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/California/Publications/Crop_Progress_&Condition/index.asp

“Range and pasture conditions were reported to be fair to poor, as the lack of precipitation impeded grass and forage development... Supplemental feeding of livestock continued.”

“Irrigated grain fields benefited from warming temperatures. Dry land fields have emerged and were in need of rainfall.” Also see:
<http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/pubs/Other/MWCACP/Graphs/USA/allhay.pdf>
http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/pubs/Other/MWCACP/Graphs/USA/US_WheatWinter.pdf

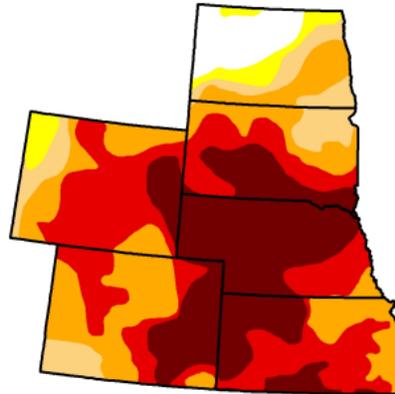
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

U.S. Drought Monitor High Plains

February 19, 2013
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	5.01	94.99	91.35	82.51	57.67	29.11
Last Week (02/12/2013 map)	5.01	94.99	91.35	82.51	57.64	29.19
3 Months Ago (11/20/2012 map)	1.20	98.80	93.88	84.32	55.94	26.28
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 (02/14/2012 map)	44.81	55.19	22.70	6.13	1.56	0.04

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, February 21, 2013
Brian Fuchs, National Drought Mitigation Center

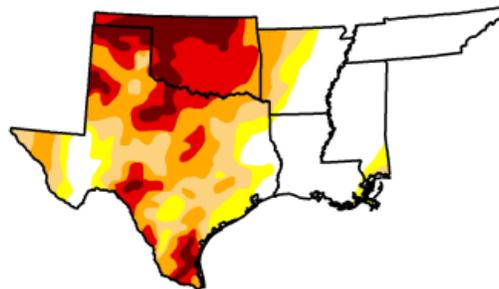
Fig. 4b: Drought Monitor for the [High Plains](#) with statistics over various time periods. No change for the week.

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:



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

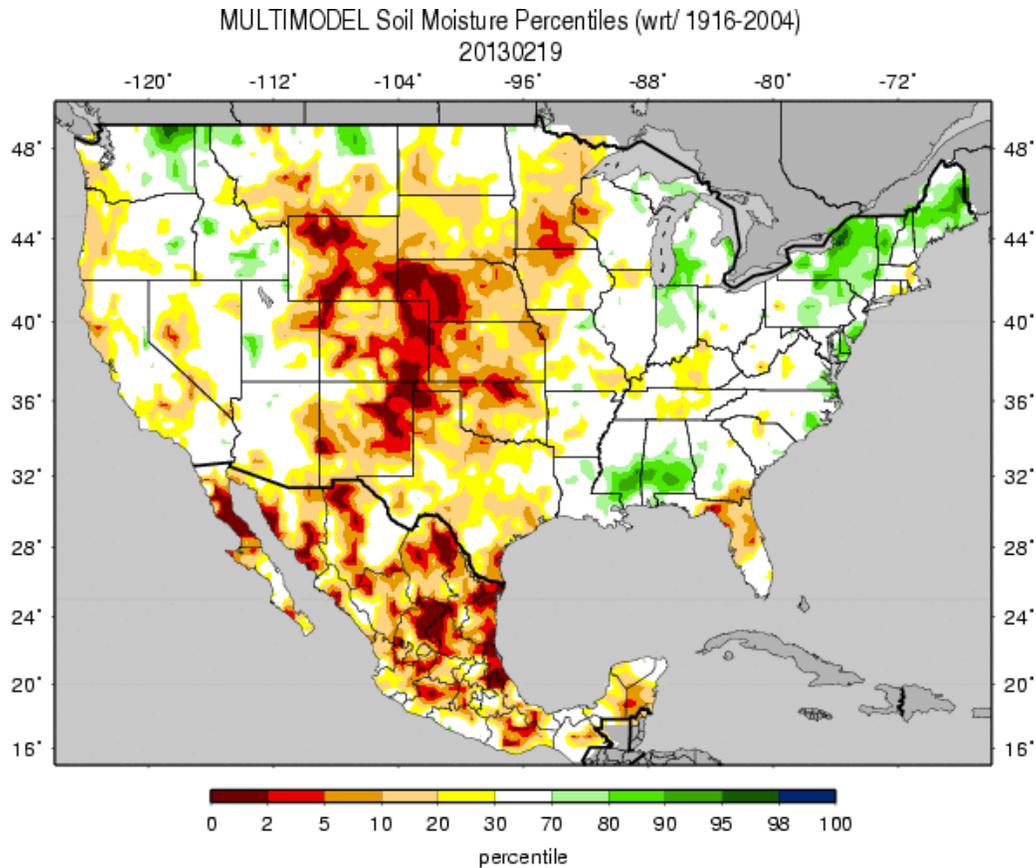
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



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 19 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 a major snow storm moved across the region two weeks ago. 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](#))

185) MONTH=2013-01-22 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
Thu Feb 21 08:15:27 PST 2013

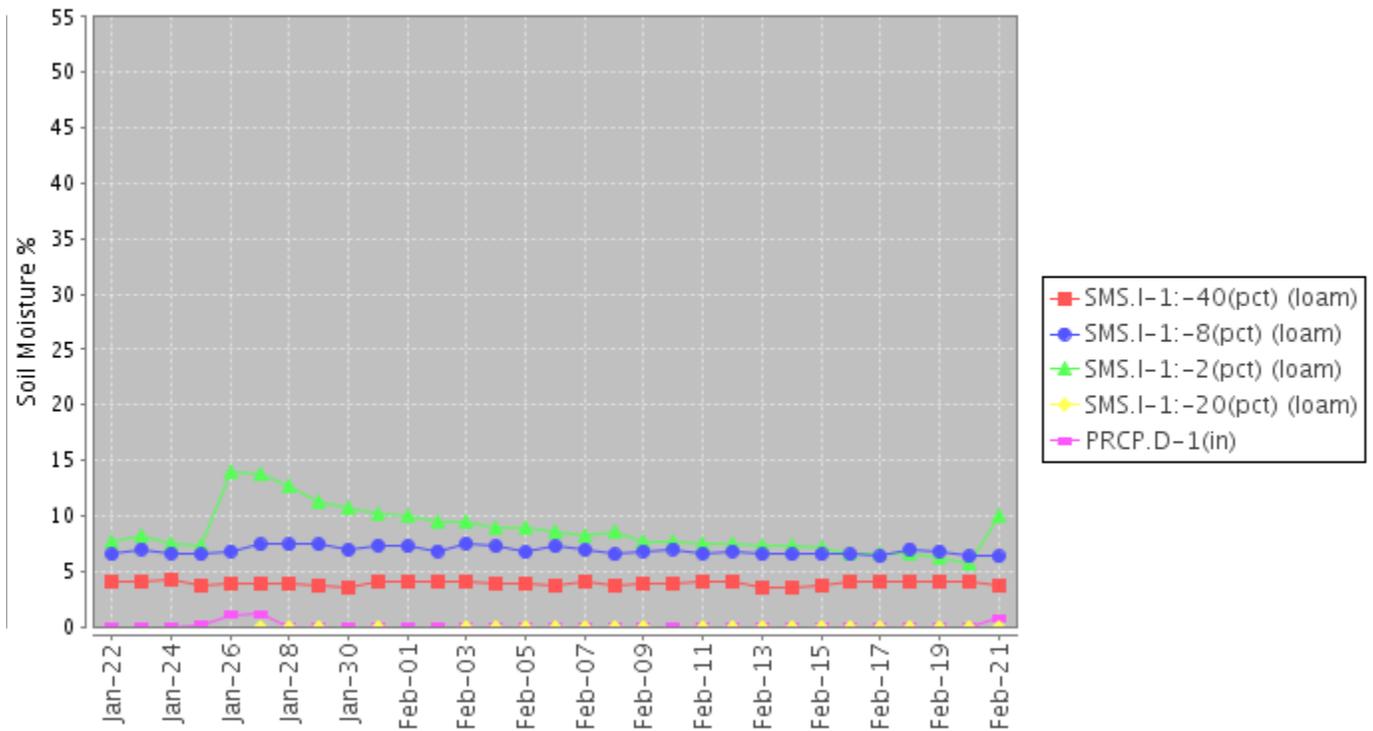


Fig. 6: This NRCS resource shows a site over [southern California](#) with low soil moisture values at all levels. However, caution should be exercised if soils are frozen. Moisture sensor accuracies become unreliable when the soil temperature falls below 32°F.

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.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

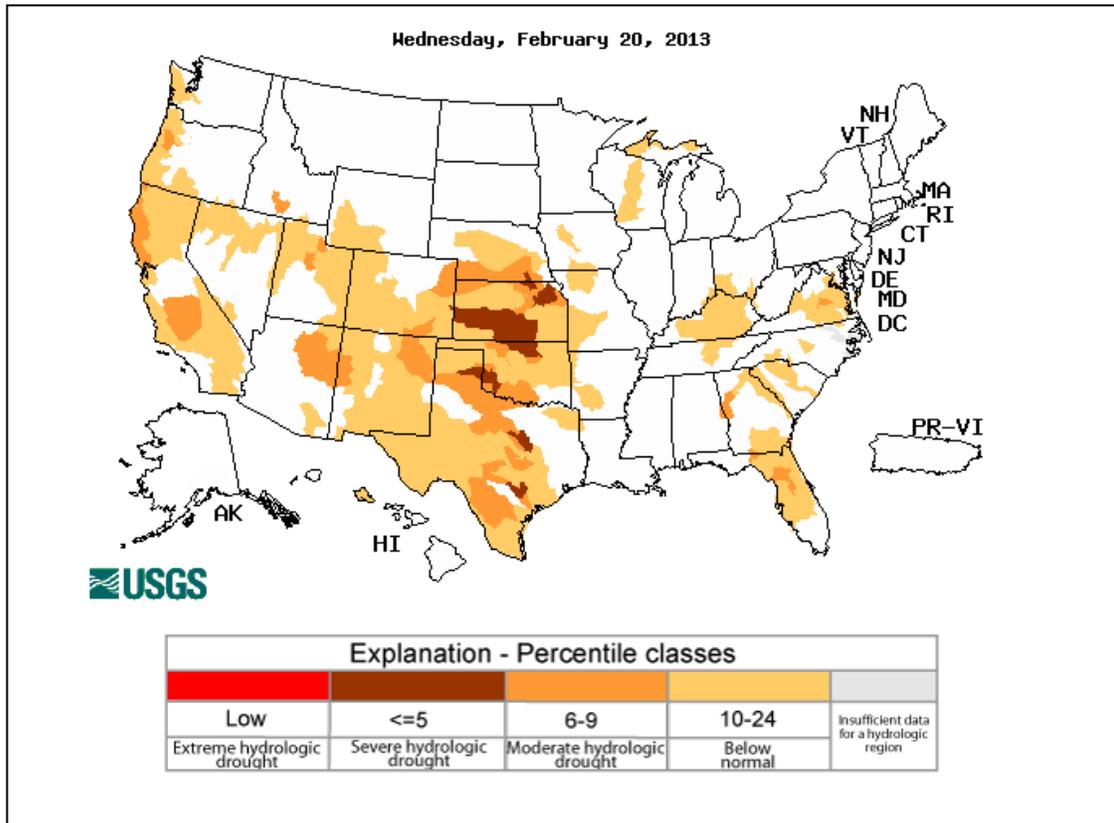


Fig. 7: Map of below normal 7-day average [streamflow](#) compared to historical streamflow for the day of the year. **Severe** conditions exist scattered over the Central and Southern Plains. As with soil moisture, streamflow data can be severely compromised by prolonged freezing temperatures. See the [USGS National Water Information System Mapper](#).

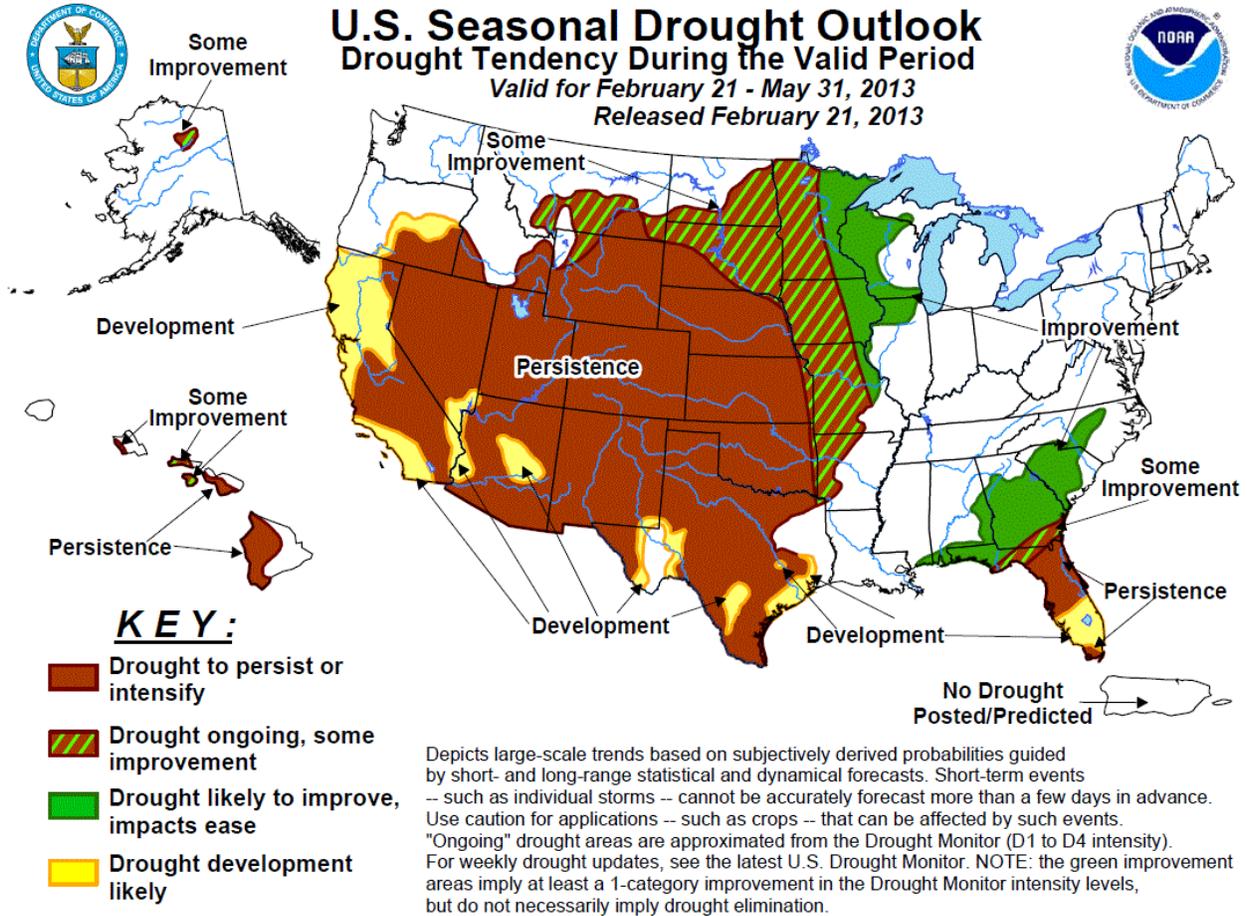


Fig. 8: U.S. seasonal [Drought Outlook](#) updated today, 21 February.

See the latest NOAA CPC [Seasonal Outlook](#), updated today, 21 February.

See USDA Drought Assistance [website](#).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

National Drought Summary -- February 19, 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/>.

Over the last 7 days, the most active area for precipitation was in the southeast United States where areas of southern Georgia and South Carolina recorded over 2 inches of rain, with locally heavier amounts of close to 3.50 inches in Georgia. A winter storm over the southern Plains brought wet snow to much of the panhandle of Texas and into portions of Oklahoma. Areas of southern Florida received up to 2 inches of rain.

The Northeast: Mostly light precipitation over the region during the last 7 days. Some lake effect snows in portions of New York were also observed. No changes were made to the lingering D0 regions in New England.

Mid-Atlantic: The northern fringes of the rains that impacted the southeast did make their way into the Mid-Atlantic states. Generally, precipitation was less than 0.50 inches for the week throughout the region, with no changes being made this week.

Southeast: A continued pattern of above normal precipitation continued in a large area from Louisiana into South Carolina this last week. The drought areas of central and southern Georgia and South Carolina improved by a full intensity level this week. The area south of here did not receive the beneficial rains and remained dry from southern Georgia into northern Florida. Because of the continued dryness, D3 and D2 conditions were pushed farther south into northern Florida and D1 was pushed into more of central Florida. In south Florida, much of the area of D1 was improved with decent rains being recorded over the last few weeks.

South: Areas of east Texas remained in a favorable weather pattern as widespread precipitation led to further improvements in the area. The D1 and D0 areas were pushed farther to the west this week. Improvements were also made in the Texas panhandle where a wet snow event helped to ease drought conditions somewhat with a category improvement to the areas of the greatest precipitation, with a tight gradient from D1 to D4 conditions still existing. Indicators showed dryness continuing in south Texas, where D2 and D3 conditions were expanded. In Oklahoma, some degradation was introduced into the far reaches of the panhandle this week after another long stretch without any significant precipitation in the region, and the lack of soil moisture is still problematic.

Midwest: The areas that did record precipitation this week generally had amounts less than 1 inch, with most areas receiving less than 0.50 inches. In and around the St. Louis area, some adjustments were made in both Illinois and Missouri based on field reports and current conditions. Even with precipitation, there has been a very slow response to pond and lake levels, and soil moisture at the deepest depths is still quite dry. In eastern Missouri, some D2 was improved to D1 while D1 was expanded to the east slightly. In Illinois, the D0 along the Mississippi River was expanded to the east and south.

The Plains: A continuing dry pattern that has enveloped the region most of the winter continued. No changes were made this week as the little precipitation did not allow for any improvements and the time of year did not dictate any degradation.

The West: Some precipitation in central Arizona did allow for a small area of improvement this week as the current area of D0 was expanded in the central portion of the state. The start of the calendar

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

year has been very dry for much of California, especially the northern portions of the state. The good start to the water year with early precipitation has been followed by a dry pattern over the last few months. As impacts to the dryness start to develop, a new area of D0 was introduced this week along the coast and to inland locations. The new area of D0 was labeled short-term because of the nature of the dryness.

Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico: No changes were made to Alaska, Hawaii, or Puerto Rico this week.

Looking Ahead: Over the next five days (February 20-24) the forecast for this period is to remain active with a series of storm systems moving out of the southwest and onto the Plains and Midwest. The precipitation associated with the period is from around 1 inch in Colorado and Nebraska to 1.50 inches in portions of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Kansas. The Southeast will remain wet, with projected totals of 2 to 5 inches over Louisiana and into the Carolinas. Temperatures during this time will be below normal over much of the United States outside of south Texas and along the Gulf Coast. Temperatures will range from 18 degrees Fahrenheit below normal in the central Plains to 6 degrees Fahrenheit above normal in Florida and south Texas.

The CPC 6-10 day forecast (February 26-March 2) anticipates a continuing cooler than normal pattern over much of the southern United States, with the greatest chance of below normal temperatures over the lower Mississippi River valley. The area with the best chance for above normal temperatures is in New England and the Great Lakes region. Precipitation chances are below normal over much of the Rocky Mountain and southwest regions while the east coast and southeast have above normal chances for above normal precipitation.

Author: [Brian Fuchs, National Drought Mitigation Center](#)

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 20, 2013

[USDA Highlights](#)

Highlights for the drought-monitoring period ending 7 am EST on February 12 include:

- Overall U.S. drought coverage decreased to 55.73% of the contiguous U.S., down 1.11% from last week and down 5.36% since the beginning of the year. The decrease came on the strength of heavy rain across the South and some snow in the upper Midwest. Snow on the southern Plains and rain across Florida's peninsula occurred after the end of the drought-monitoring period and will be reflected next week.

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- The portion of the contiguous U.S. in the worst category – D4, or exceptional drought – dipped nearly one-quarter of a percentage point (0.24%) to 6.61%. D4 coverage has ranged from 5 to 7% for 27 consecutive weeks (August 14, 2012 – February 12, 2013).

- The percent of hay in drought (57%) fell two percentage points, while winter wheat in drought was unchanged at 59%. Cattle in drought (67%) fell one percentage point. For the 32nd consecutive week (July 10, 2012 – February 12, 2013), drought encompassed more than two-thirds of the domestic cattle inventory.

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