



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



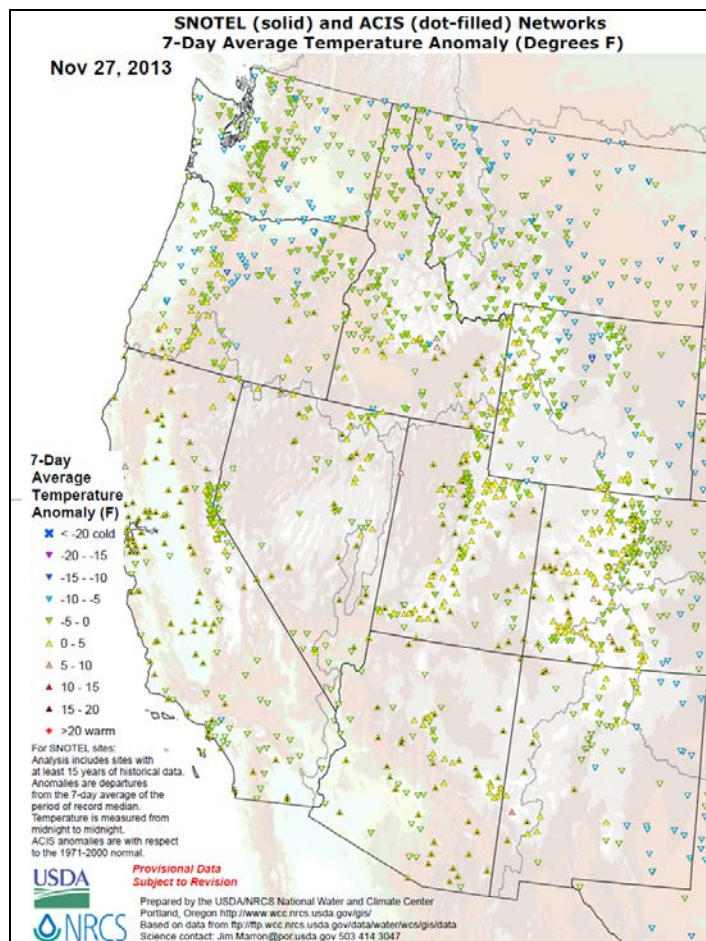
Weekly Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update

November 27, 2013

| | | | |
|--|----|---|----|
| Temperature..... | 1 | Complete National Drought Summary | 11 |
| Precipitation..... | 3 | More Information..... | 12 |
| Snow | 6 | Drought Outlook..... | 13 |
| Weather and Drought Summary | 7 | Supplemental Drought Information | 14 |
| Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN) | 10 | | |

Specific to Thanksgiving and major holidays that fall on a Thursday, the U.S. Drought Monitor is released a day early. For this special, pre-Thanksgiving release, the valid time on the U.S. Drought Monitor map remains 7 am EST on Tuesday.

Temperature



SNOTEL and ACIS [7-day temperature anomaly](#) map shows temperatures within 5 degrees of normal, with the exception of even colder departures across the northern and eastern peripherals of the West.

Click map to enlarge and see latest available update.

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

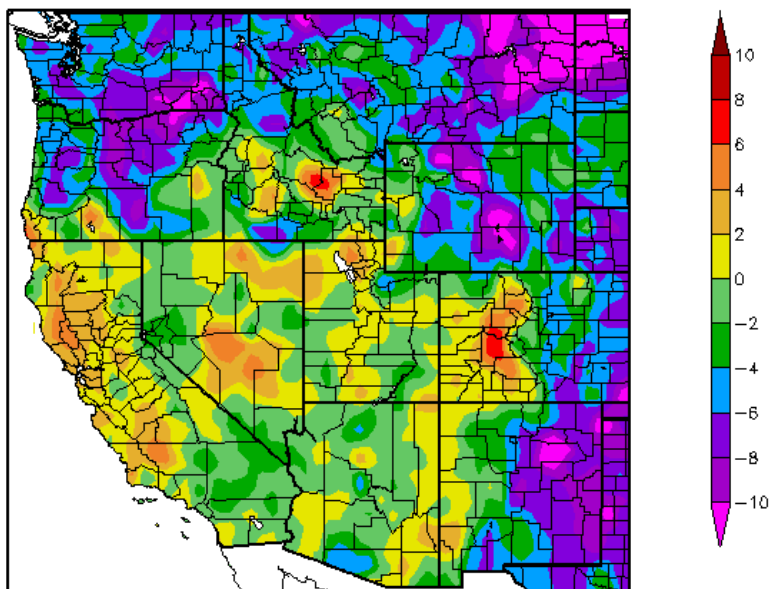
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Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

[ACIS](#) 7-day average temperature anomalies, ending November 26, show the greatest positive temperature departures occurred over central Idaho and west-central Colorado ($>+6^{\circ}\text{F}$). The greatest negative departures occurred over the northern and southern High Plains and southeast Washington and northeast Oregon ($>-10^{\circ}\text{F}$).

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

Departure from Normal Temperature (F) 11/20/2013 – 11/26/2013



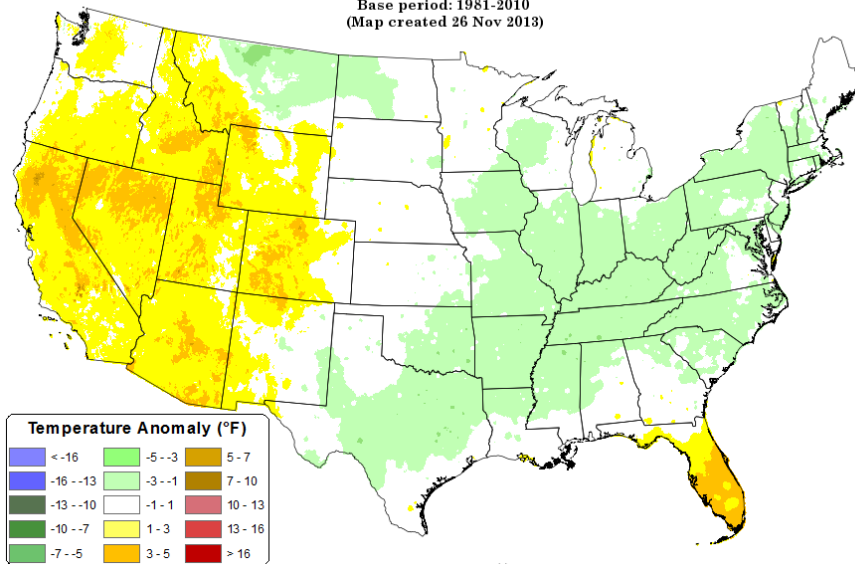
Generated 11/27/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Daily Mean Temperature Anomaly: 01 November 2013 - 25 November 2013

Period ending 7 AM EST 25 Nov 2013
Base period: 1981-2010
(Map created 26 Nov 2013)

This preliminary PRISM temperature map contains all available network data, including SNOTEL data, and will be updated periodically as additional data become available and are quality controlled. See remarks in **red** below for more details.



Copyright (c) 2013, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University

Thus far, November has been a warm month across the West with departures from the long-term average exceeding 5°F in several states; eastern Montana has been the exception with colder departures. The Eastern half of the country has had cooler departures while Florida is a standout with warmer than normal temperatures.

The PRISM anomaly map above is calculated from the entire monthly average. For example, an autumn month would have more positive anomalies in the early part of the month and more negative anomalies in the latter part of the month (as temperatures cool). This may explain differences with ACIS data which use actual daily climatology, whereas PRISM uses the monthly climatology divided by the number of days in the month. This bias reverses in the spring months with warming occurring during the latter part of month. These differences become less noticeable toward the end of these months.

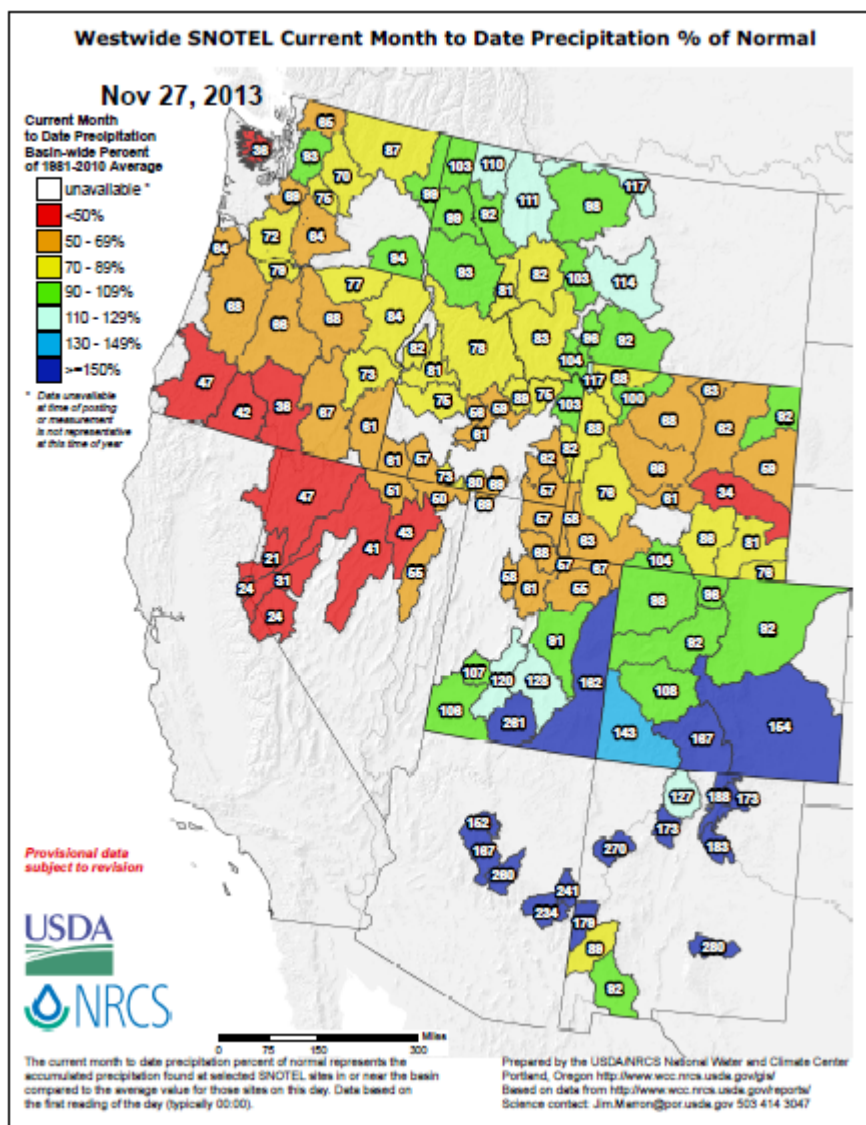
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Precipitation

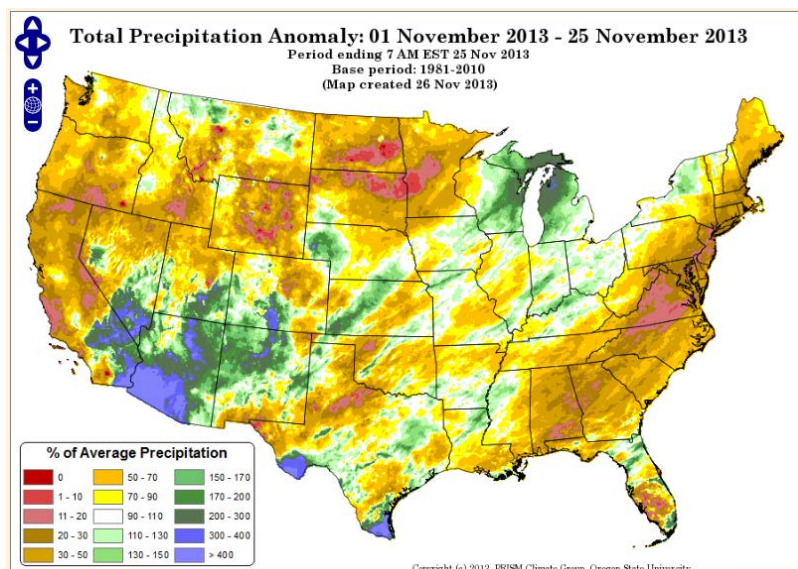
SNOTEL [month to date](#) precipitation percent of normal (through November 27), shows scattered abundant moisture across the northern tier states of the West, but many basins in the interior states still have not received much in the way of precipitation.

An upper level low moving slowly across the Southwest earlier this week brought much-needed moisture.

Active weather across the Pacific Northwest and Northern Rockies is expected next week and should help improve current deficits.



Click image to enlarge and get latest available update



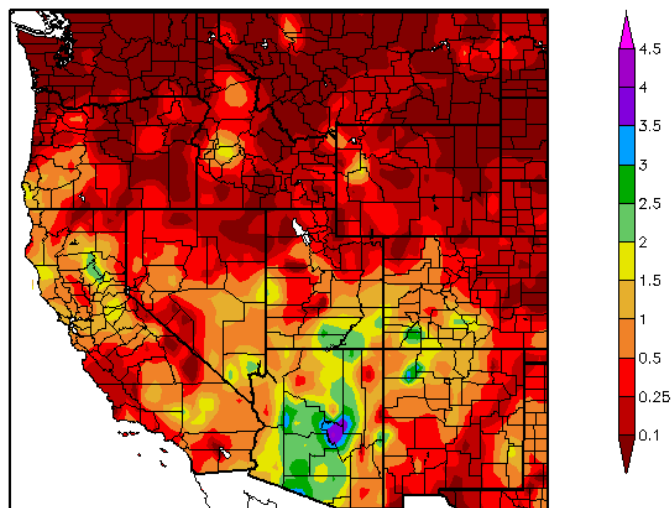
Thus far, November [precipitation](#) has been largely absent across the U.S. with the exception of parts of the Southwest, southern Texas, central Plains, and the upper Great Lakes. The greatest deficits exist over parts of central and northern California, the Dakotas, Virginia, and central Florida.

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

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

[ACIS 7-day](#) average precipitation amounts for the period ending November 26 show the impact from the first winter storm to hit the Southwest. Arizona received the bulk of moisture with rainfall amounts exceeding 3 inches from Phoenix to the south and west. Snowfall hit northern New Mexico with amounts over a foot. →

Precipitation (in)
11/20/2013 – 11/26/2013

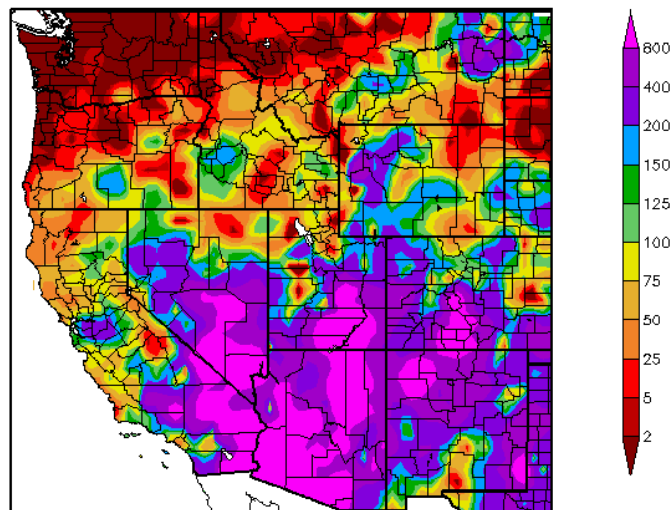


Generated 11/27/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

This [map](#) shows that the bulk of precipitation by percent of normal fell over the southern tier states of the West. As a result of a very slow moving low pressure center, drought conditions improved over some parts of the Southwest this week. →

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
11/20/2013 – 11/26/2013



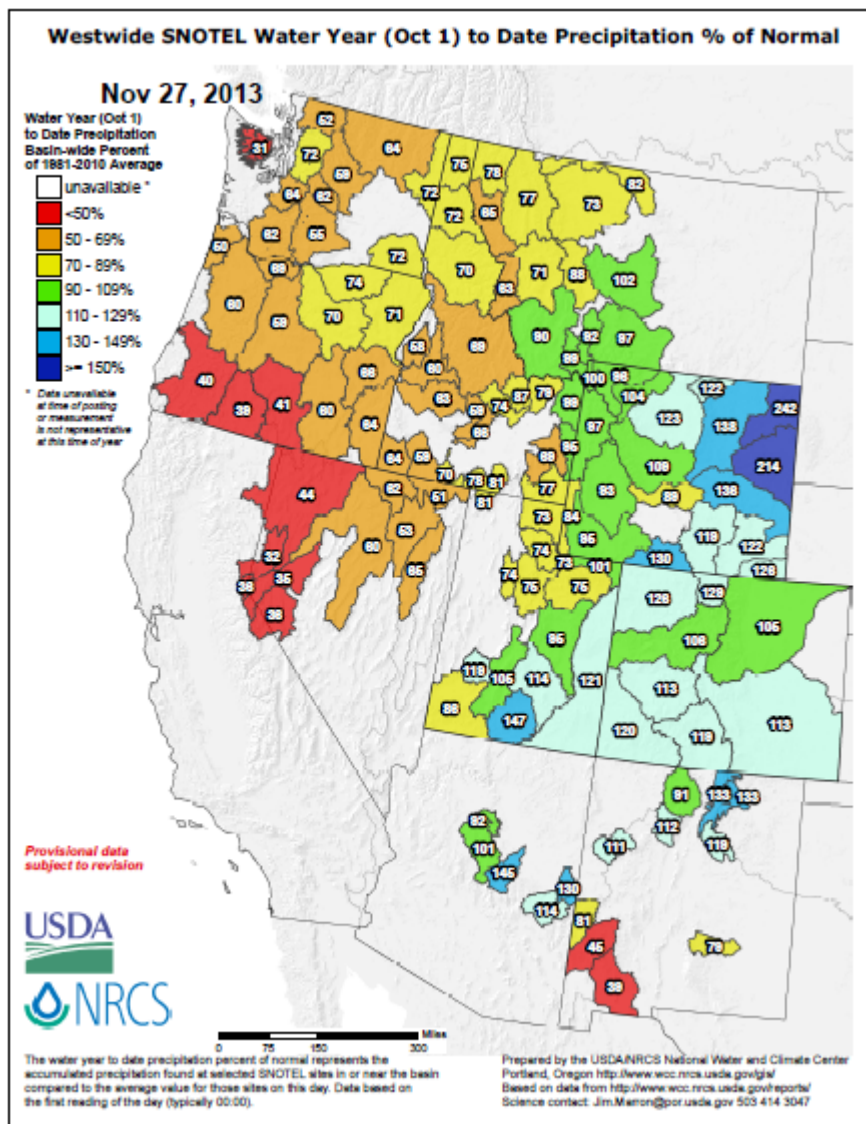
Generated 11/27/2013 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

For the [2014 Water Year](#) that began on October 1, 2013, the ENSO pattern thus far is starting to look like El Niño (e.g., drier northern tier and wetter southern tier of the West). However, [long range weather forecasts](#) are suggesting somewhat drier conditions over the southern tier states of the West and wetter conditions over the northern tier states.

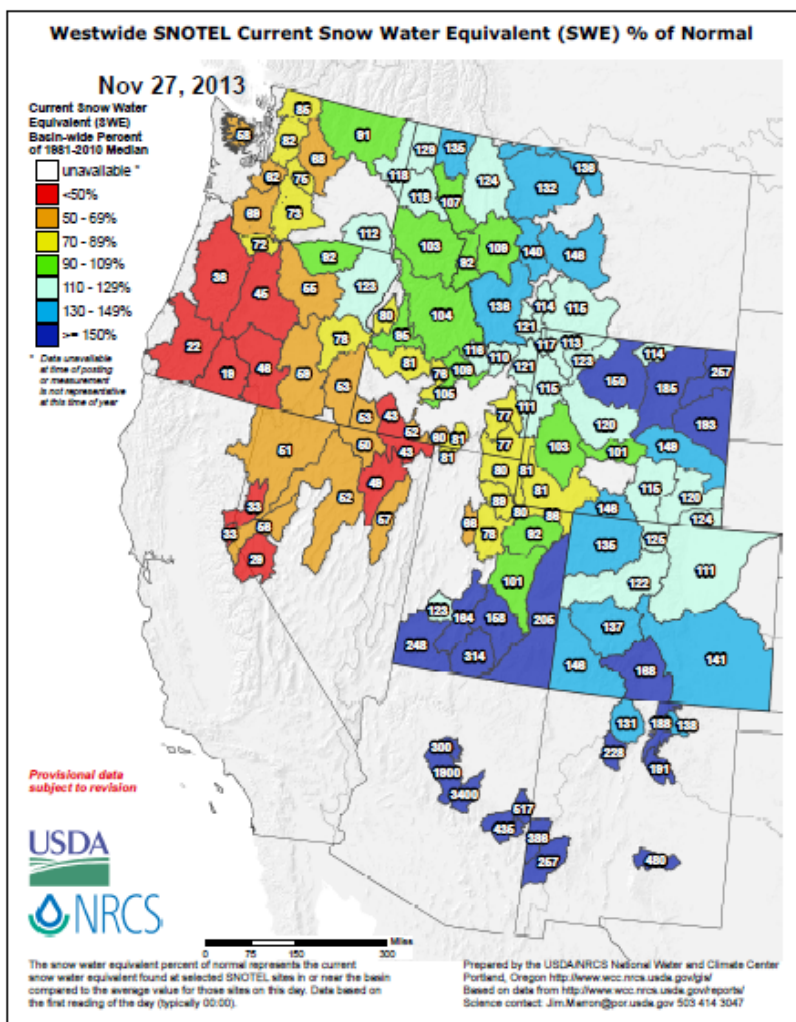
An active weather pattern is suggested in [recent weather forecasts](#), so the distribution of precipitation surpluses and deficits on this map are expected to change over the next few weeks.



Click image for latest available update

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Snow

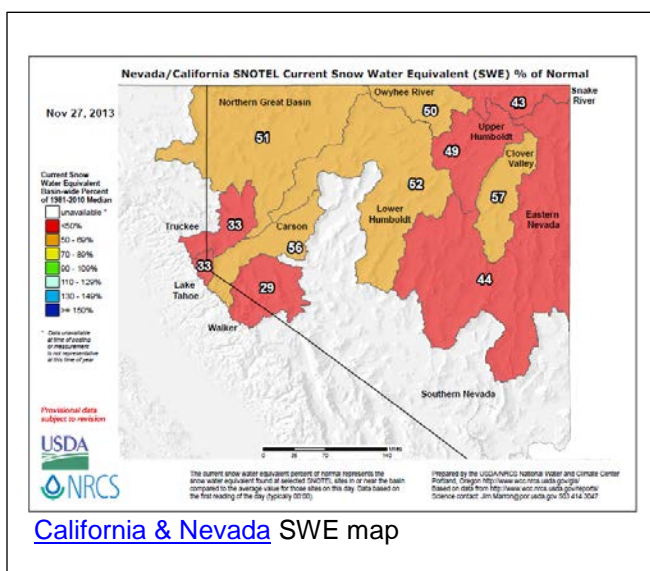


Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) values are off to a good start over much of the western states with the exception of the Cascades, Sierra, and Great Basin mountains.

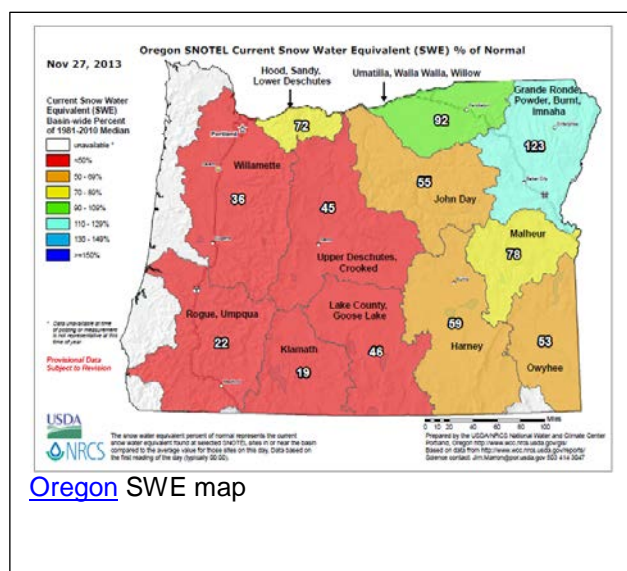
Conditions over the Pacific Northwest are expected to improve during the next two weeks as an active weather pattern develops over the region.

The all-important April 1 SWE date will best determine the water supply forecasts issued by the [National Water and Climate Center](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wcc/).

See latest [National Snow Analysis](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wcc/).



[California & Nevada SWE map](#)



[Oregon SWE map](#)

Larger deficits in SWE are occurring over these western states. Conditions need to improve soon in order to avoid falling into a permanent water deficit season or year.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

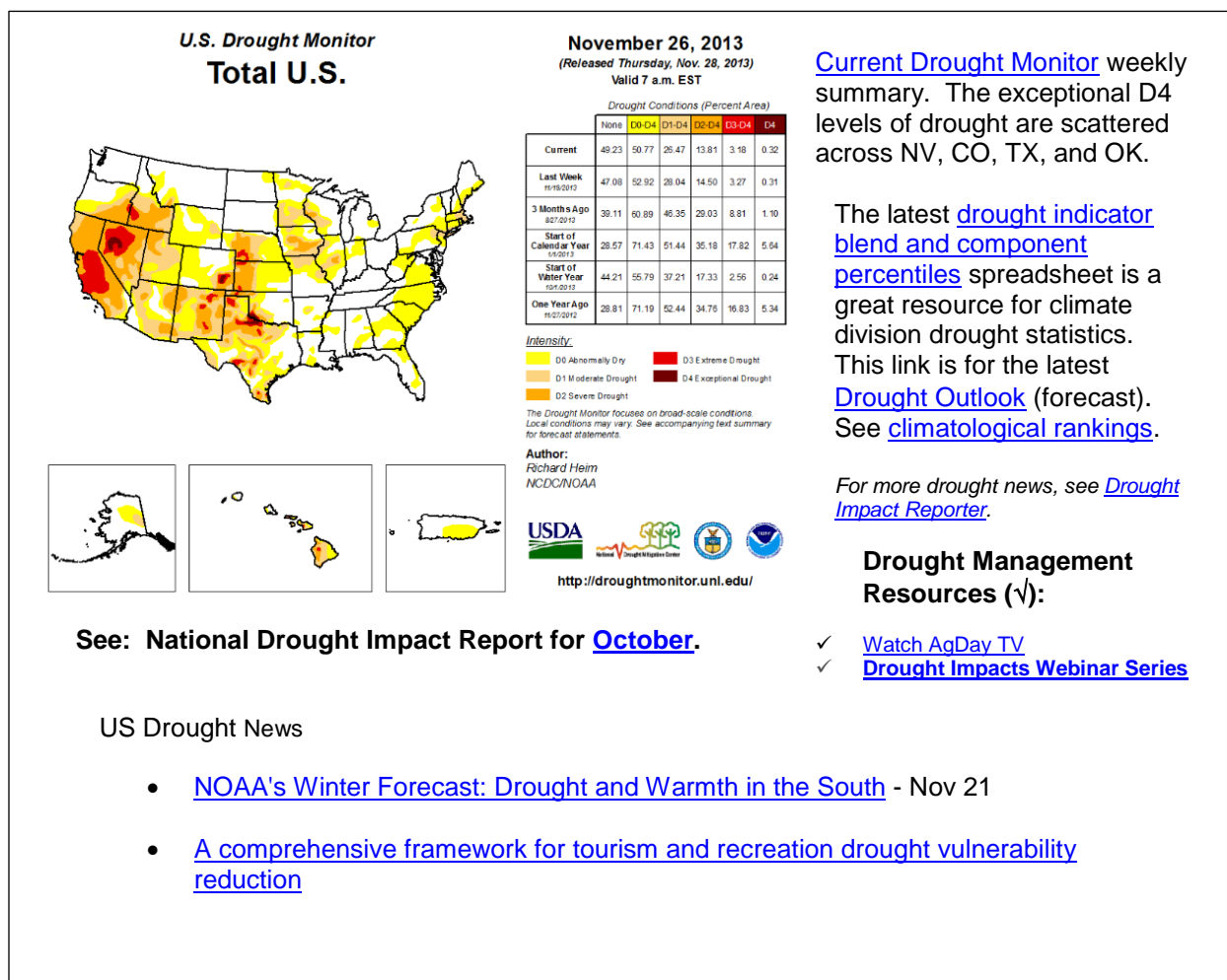
Weather and Drought Summary

National Drought Summary – November 27, 2013

The following **Weather and Drought Summary** is provided by this week's NDMC Drought Author, Richard Heim, NCDC/NOAA.

Important update: If you are currently displaying any of the U.S. Drought Monitor maps on your website, there is a new way of doing so. Visit the Map Service page for more information and also to obtain the appropriate HTML code. The old method will continue to work until **Monday, December 2nd** but will be discontinued beyond that point.

USDM Map Services: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/MapsandDataServices/MapService.aspx>



A comprehensive narrative describing drought conditions across other parts of the nation can be found toward the end of this document. For drought impacts definitions for the figures below, click [here](#).

Summary

"A series of cold fronts brought cooler and wet weather to parts of the Midwest through southern Plains early in this U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) week, while a slow-moving upper-level low pressure system generated rain and snow over the southern tier states from California to the Gulf of Mexico. Precipitation was below normal for most of the Pacific Northwest, northern Plains, and Midwest, and the entire Northeast and Atlantic seaboard. Above-normal precipitation dominated the Southwest, southern and central Rockies, much of Texas, and the Lower Mississippi Valley. The upper-level weather system

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

was moving across the Gulf states and poised to move up the eastern U.S. at the end of this USDM week.

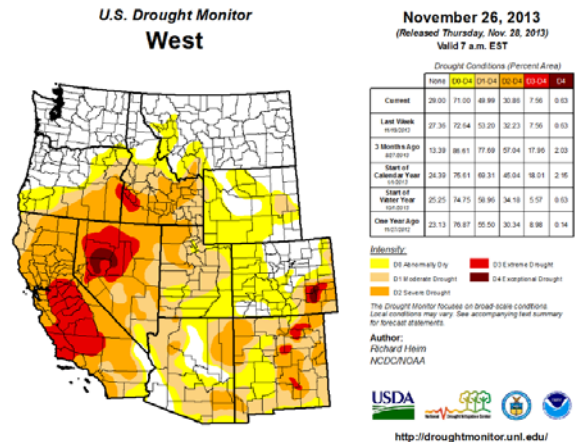
The West: A series of cold fronts brought cooler and wet weather to parts of the Midwest through southern Plains early in this U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) week, while a slow-moving upper-level low pressure system generated rain and snow over the southern tier states from California to the Gulf of Mexico. Precipitation was below normal for most of the Pacific Northwest, northern Plains, and Midwest, and the entire Northeast and Atlantic seaboard. Above-normal precipitation dominated the Southwest, southern and central Rockies, much of Texas, and the Lower Mississippi Valley. The upper-level weather system was moving across the Gulf states and poised to move up the eastern U.S. at the end of this USDM week." - Richard Heim, NCDC/NOAA

"During the past week, SNOTEL [temperatures](#) within 5 degrees of normal with the exception of even colder departures across the northern and eastern peripherals of the West. SNOTEL [snow](#) depths increased by up to a foot across the western mountains with the exception of the Cascades where snow decreased by a few inches. For the 2014 Water Year SNOTEL [precipitation](#) deficits exist generally west of the Continental Divide. The Southwest mountains of Arizona and New Mexico also have surpluses due to the copious amounts of moisture from this week's first winter storm." – Jan Curtis, NRCS

- ✓ Drought Monitor for the [Western States](#)
- ✓ Drought Impact Reporter for [New Mexico](#)
- ✓ [California Data Exchange Center](#) & [Flood Management](#)
- ✓ NIDIS [Upper Colorado River Regional Drought Earlier Warning System](#)
- ✓ [Intermountain West Climate Dashboard](#)
- ✓ [Great Basin Dashboard](#)

Western Drought News:

- [Cal Fire extends fire season staffing in San Mateo County amid low rainfall](#) - Nov 19, **San Mateo County, California.**
- [Calif. drought worst since 2007](#) - Nov 21
- [Drought: New Mexico governor proposes \\$2 million for water research](#) - Nov 22, **New Mexico.**
- [Calif. water atlas seeks to clarify water issues](#) - Nov 16, **California.**
- [USGS Study: 1200 Square Miles of Central Valley Land Is Sinking](#) - Nov 22, **Central Valley, California**

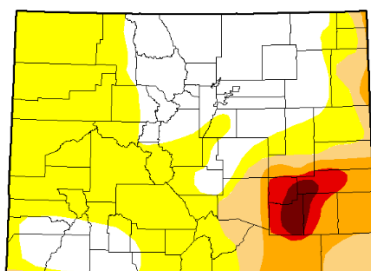


Note that there some deterioration in D3 this week.

- ✓ [Southwest Climate Outlook November 2013](#)
- ['Dire' prediction for state water allocation](#) - Nov 20, **California**

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado



November 26, 2013
(Released Thursday, Nov. 28, 2013)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

| | Drought Conditions (Percent Area) | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
| Current | 32.04 | 67.96 | 20.95 | 12.01 | 4.01 | 1.47 |
| Last Week 11/19/2013 | 26.04 | 73.96 | 21.01 | 12.01 | 4.01 | 1.47 |
| 3 Months Ago 8/27/2013 | 1.91 | 98.09 | 93.81 | 59.05 | 22.17 | 2.48 |
| Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2013 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 95.06 | 53.47 | 13.48 |
| Start of Water Year 10/1/2012 | 24.91 | 75.09 | 37.88 | 12.01 | 4.01 | 1.47 |
| One Year Ago 11/27/2012 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 93.27 | 51.05 | 12.56 |

Intensity
 D0 Abnormally Dry D3 Extreme Drought
 D1 Moderate Drought D4 Exceptional Drought
 D2 Severe Drought
 The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.
 Author:
 Richard Heim
 NCDONIAA



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

No changes have occurred during the past week.

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

[Can planners stop drought harming the tourist dollar?](#) - Nov 18, Research from the University of Colorado

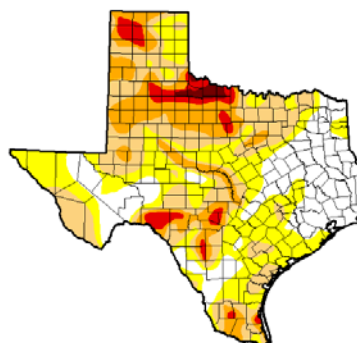
State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

- ✓ Texas Drought [Website](#).
- ✓ [Texas Reservoirs](#).
- [Bankruptcy Looms for Farmers as Drought Restrictions Continue](#) - Nov 20, Lower Colorado River in Texas near Gulf Coast
- [Drought hurts sugar cane harvest](#) - Nov 18, South Texas.
- [Texas Rice Farmers May Go Without Water For 3rd Year](#) - Nov 19, Lower Colorado River in Texas.
- [How LCRA River Restrictions Are Affecting Oyster Harvesters In Matagorda Bay](#) - Nov 20, Matagorda, Texas.

[Texans Look Beneath the Surface for Water](#) - Nov 19, Texas

[Must See Photos Show Just How Devastating the Drought Has Been on Wichita Falls Water Sources \[GALLERY\]](#) - Nov 21, Wichita Falls, Texas.

U.S. Drought Monitor Texas



November 26, 2013
(Released Thursday, Nov. 28, 2013)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

| | Drought Conditions (Percent Area) | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
| Current | 23.81 | 76.19 | 47.17 | 21.23 | 5.06 | 0.96 |
| Last Week 11/19/2013 | 18.91 | 81.09 | 50.60 | 24.45 | 6.89 | 0.78 |
| 3 Months Ago 8/27/2013 | 2.82 | 97.18 | 87.88 | 66.12 | 19.34 | 2.74 |
| Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2013 | 3.04 | 96.96 | 87.00 | 65.39 | 35.03 | 11.95 |
| Start of Water Year 10/1/2012 | 6.62 | 93.38 | 70.95 | 25.00 | 4.01 | 0.12 |
| One Year Ago 11/27/2012 | 6.10 | 93.84 | 80.01 | 54.47 | 24.00 | 7.63 |

Intensity
 D0 Abnormally Dry D3 Extreme Drought
 D1 Moderate Drought D4 Exceptional Drought
 D2 Severe Drought
 The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.
 Author:
 Richard Heim
 NCDONIAA



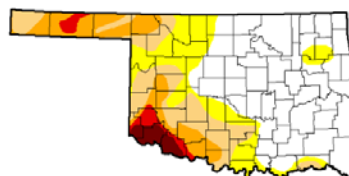
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Note slight improvement in D2 to D4 categories during the past week.

U.S. Drought Monitor Oklahoma

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

Note no changes occurred this past week.



November 26, 2013
(Released Thursday, Nov. 28, 2013)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

| | Drought Conditions (Percent Area) | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
| Current | 52.65 | 47.34 | 30.90 | 15.93 | 4.92 | 2.40 |
| Last Week 11/19/2013 | 50.19 | 49.81 | 30.97 | 15.93 | 4.92 | 2.40 |
| 3 Months Ago 8/27/2013 | 39.80 | 60.20 | 30.01 | 10.44 | 0.89 | 0.54 |
| Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2013 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 93.00 | 93.00 | 94.89 | 37.06 |
| Start of Water Year 10/1/2012 | 21.74 | 78.26 | 40.00 | 17.62 | 4.42 | 1.45 |
| One Year Ago 11/27/2012 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 93.00 | 90.64 | 30.50 | 34.44 |

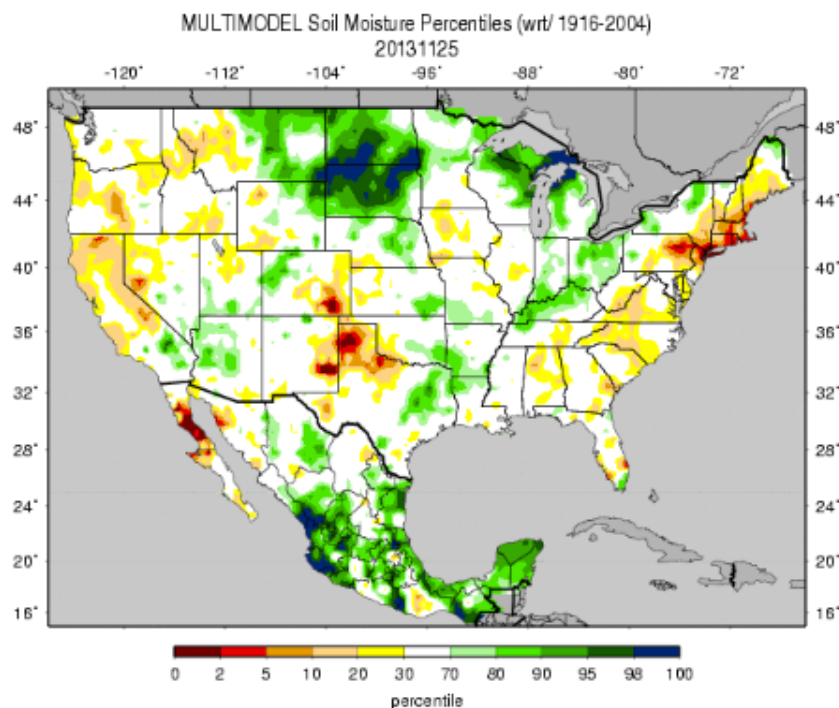
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 The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.
 Author:
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 NCDONIAA



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

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Soil Moisture



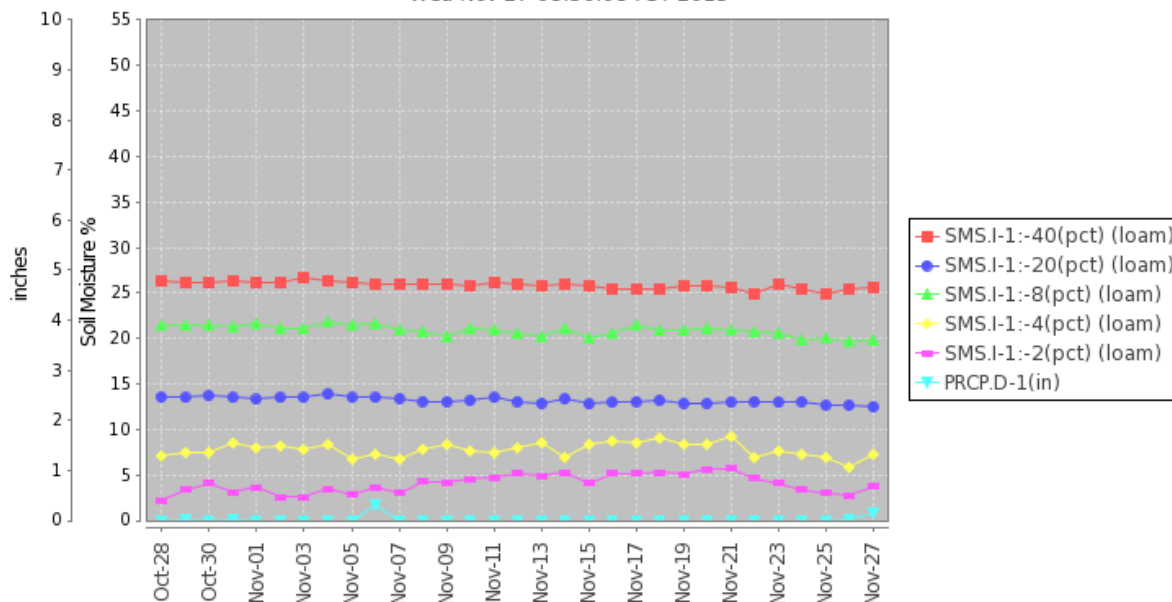
Soil moisture ranking in [percentile](#) as of November 25 shows considerable moisture over the northern Great Plains and northern Great Lakes. Excessive dryness is noted over the panhandle of Texas, southeast Colorado, and southern New England.

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

[Soil Health-unlock your farm's potential](#)

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

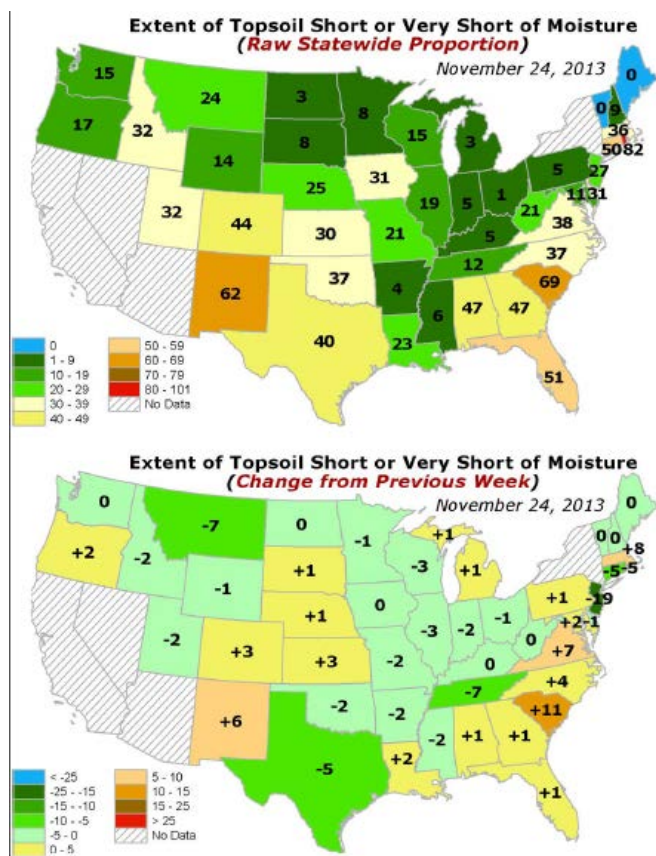
Station (2006) MONTH=2013-10-28 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
Wed Nov 27 08:56:08 PST 2013



This NRCS resource shows a site over the panhandle of Texas. [Soil](#) conditions vary considerably with depth

Useful Agriculture Links: [Vegetation Drought Response Index](#); [Evaporative Stress Index](#); [Vegetation Health Index](#); [NDVI Greenness Map](#); [GRACE-Based Surface Soil Moisture](#); [North American Soil Moisture Network](#); [Monthly Wild Fire Forecast Report](#).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



This late season topsoil moisture map reveals that most of the nation has adequate moisture conditions going into winter. However, the southern Rockies, Texas, and the Southeastern states are not fairing as well. Arizona, California, and Nevada are not reporting.

Last week, the greatest moisture deficit increases occurred over South Carolina and New Mexico. The greatest moisture increases occurred over New Jersey.

Complete National Drought Summary

The following complete **Weather and Drought Summary** is provided by this week's NDMC Author: Richard Heim, NCDC

Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico

"The northeast coast of Puerto Rico had several inches of rain during the last 7 days, but the southeastern portions of the island have been dry, with rainfall departures ranging from 2 inches for the month-to-date to over 8 inches for the last 90 days and over 12 inches for the last 180 days. D0, with an SL impact designation, was added to southeast Puerto Rico to reflect the largest precipitation departures, at short and long time scales, and below-normal streamflow. Most weather stations in Hawaii were drier than normal for this week, but no changes were made to the map depiction. Above-normal precipitation fell over the panhandle of Alaska, but reservoirs continued low in the southern panhandle, while the precipitation pattern was mixed over the interior D0-D1 area, so no change was made

Midwest and Plains

An inch or more of precipitation fell across parts of the Midwest, locally in southern Iowa, southern Illinois, and parts of Missouri. D1 was trimmed slightly in northern Missouri. Although a few half-inch precipitation reports were received, most stations in northeast Kansas were much drier this week, compounding longer-term (month-to-date and 6-12 month) departures, so D0 was extended across northeast Kansas and slightly in northwest Missouri.

The Northeast

Frontal precipitation falling over West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania was below normal this week, with the weekly deficits compounding deficits over the past 60 to 90 days. D0 was expanded into southwest Pennsylvania and the northern half of West Virginia to reflect these deficits, low streamflow,

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

and drying soils. An impacts area reflecting short and long-term impacts was added to coastal New England and northern New Jersey to reflect very low streamflow and dry soils. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) rated November 24 topsoil as short or very short of moisture for 82% of Rhode Island, 50% of Connecticut, and 36% of Massachusetts.

The South

Widespread 2-4-inch+ rains in Alabama early in the week were supplemented by additional rain at the end of the week, with 2-5 inches, or more, falling in northern Louisiana to central and northern Mississippi. D0-D1 shrank in southern Arkansas, D0 was carved up in Louisiana and Mississippi, and D1 was eliminated in Mississippi. The spots of D0 and D1 which remained in those states reflected longer term (90-day) dryness. Widespread 1+ inches of precipitation contracted D0 in southeast Oklahoma. In Texas, the heaviest rains (5+ inches) fell over drought-free areas, but widespread 2+ inches of precipitation occurred over drought areas, shrinking D0-D4 in many parts of the state. D4 expand in north central Texas, near Wilbarger County, reflecting persistent dryness, especially at long time scales. An impacts area reflecting short and long-term impacts was added to the South, centered on the Texas panhandle, to reflect both short-term and long-term precipitation deficits as well as agricultural and hydrological impacts. According to the November 24 USDA Crop Progress and Condition report for Texas, 70-85% of the topsoil in the panhandle districts was short or very short of moisture. Although recent rains benefited pastures, 28% of wheat, 30% of range and pasture land, and 32% of cotton, statewide, were rated in poor to very poor condition. The USDA report for Oklahoma noted 50% of subsoil and 37% of topsoil rated short to very short of moisture, and for New Mexico 62% of topsoil moisture was short to very short.

The Southeast

Widespread 1.5-3.0-inch rains shrank D0 in the northern half of Alabama and eastern Tennessee and deleted the D1 oval in northern Alabama, while in southwest Alabama the D0 was trimmed where 1-2-inch rains fell. D0 was contracted along parts of eastern and southern Florida where locally heavy (3+ inch) rain fell.”

State Activities

[State government drought activities](#) can be tracked through their drought plans. NRCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting (SSWSF) Program State Office personnel are participating in state drought committee meetings and providing the committees and media with appropriate [SSWSF information](#). Additional information describing the [tools](#) available from the Drought Monitor can also be found at the [U.S. Drought Portal](#).

More Information

The National Water and Climate Center (NWCC) [Homepage](#) provides the latest available snowpack and water supply information. This document is available [weekly](#). CONUS Snowpack and Drought Reports from 2007 are available online. Reports from 2001-2006 are available on request.

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

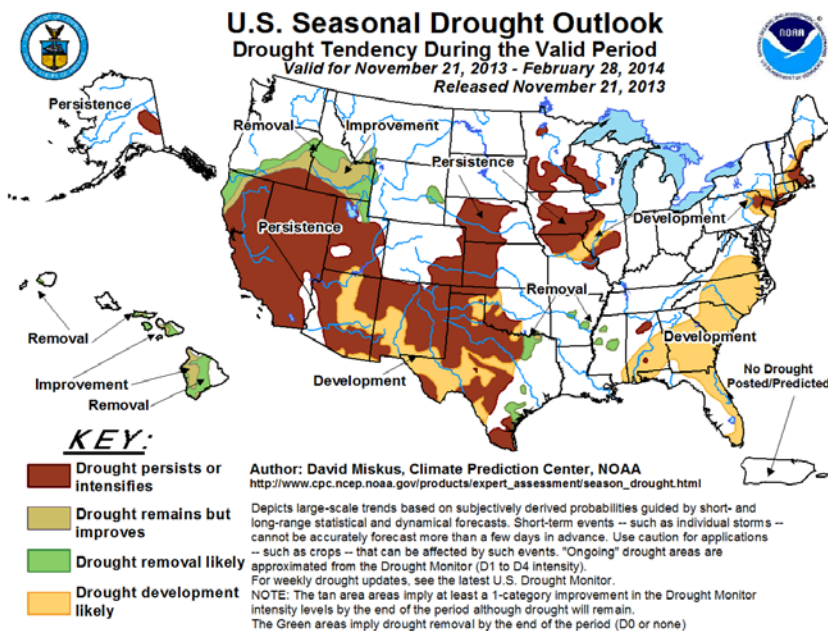
/s/

Micheal L. Golden

Deputy Chief, Soil Science and Resource Assessment

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Drought Outlook

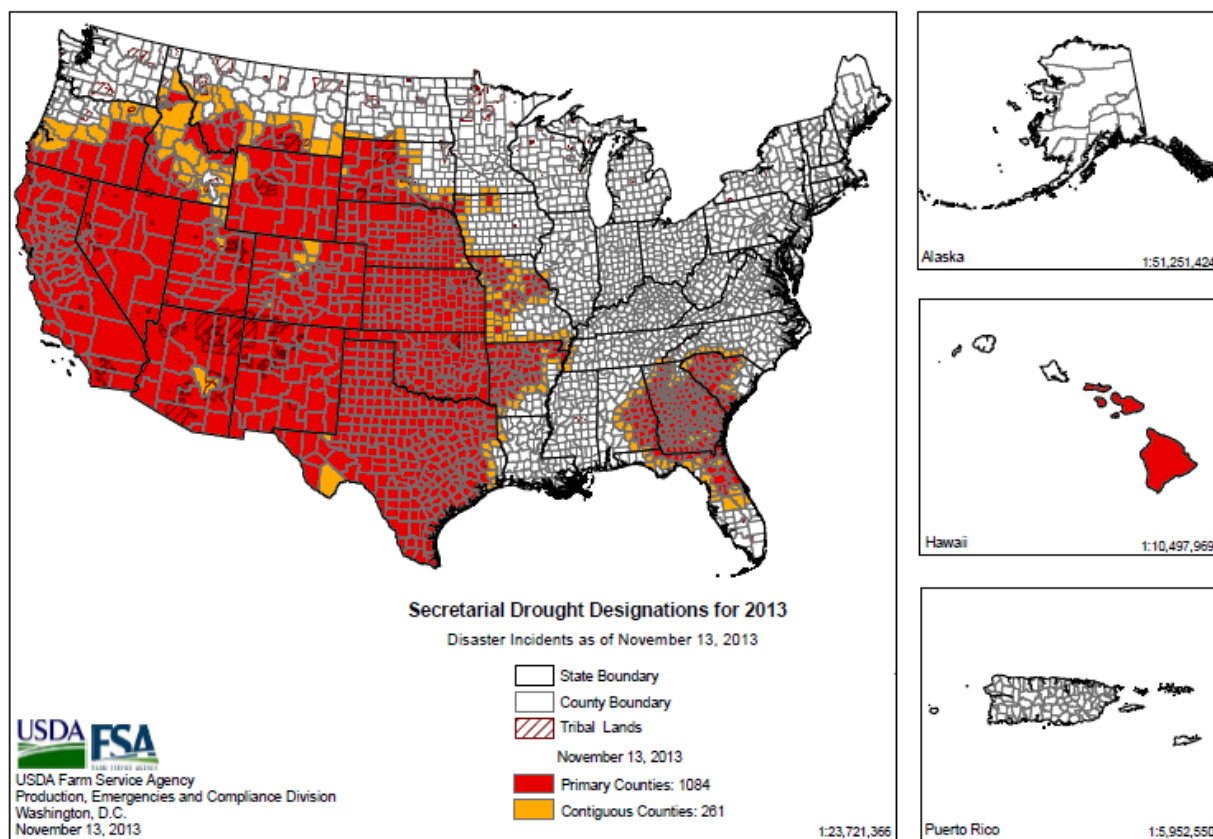


U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook for **December through February** shows:

- Drought is expected to improve over parts of northern California to southern Idaho. Elsewhere, drought is expected to persist over much of the Great Basin, Southwest, southern Rockies, the Upper Mississippi River Valley, and south-central Plains. Drought is expected to develop over much of the east coast states, including Alabama.

✓ Also see: [National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook](#) (updated on the 1st of each month) and contains a nice content summary of the previous month's conditions.

2013 Secretarial Drought Designations - All Drought



Refer to the USDA Drought Assistance [website](#) and [National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service](#). Read about the new [USDA Regional Climate Hubs](#).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Supplemental Drought Information

The “Ag in Drought” file that had been previously posted each week by NDMC’s Brian Fuchs is now [available](#). Archived files are also [available](#).

“ Well-placed storm systems continued to reduce the coverage of U.S. drought, with just 30.57% of the Lower 48 States in drought on November 26. This is a decline of 1.88 percentage points from a week ago and represents the smallest U.S. drought coverage since December 27, 2011.

- Based on the definitions of drought employed in the production the U.S. Drought Monitor, historical U.S. drought coverage should average near 20%. The last time contiguous U.S. drought coverage was below 20% was December 14, 2010.

- Precipitation associated with the storm currently affecting the eastern U.S. is only partially reflected in this issuance of the U.S. Drought Monitor. Since appreciable precipitation fell in the East after the cutoff time (7 am EST on Tuesday), further reductions in the coverage of abnormal dryness (D0) and moderate drought (D1) should be expected next week. In advance of the storm, on November 24, USDA/NASS reported that topsoil moisture was 69% very short to short in South Carolina. Other Southeastern States with substantial topsoil moisture shortages before the storm hit included Florida (51% very short to short), Alabama (47%), and Georgia (47%).

- Hay in drought (21% of the production area) and cattle in drought (34% of the U.S. inventory) each declined one percentage point from a week ago. Winter wheat in drought also declined one percentage point to 30% of the production area. USDA/NASS reported that 93% of the U.S. winter wheat had emerged by November 24, five percentage points better than last year’s drought-affected crop. Most of the wheat crop is faring well – rated 62% good to excellent on November 24 – but dryness remains a concern on the southern High Plains. For example, 28% of the winter wheat in Texas was rated very poor to poor on November 24, up from 5% five weeks ago.

- Weather outlook: For the remainder of today, precipitation will gradually change from rain to snow before ending across the eastern U.S. By Thanksgiving Day, dry weather will prevail nearly nationwide, with cold weather from the Plains to the East Coast contrasting with mild conditions in the West. Thanksgiving morning freezes can be expected as far south as the central Gulf Coast. Northern New England—as well as areas downwind of the Great Lakes—will experience some lingering snow on November 28. Mostly dry weather will continue through the weekend, except for some showers in the Northeast and Northwest, with mild air spreading as far east as the High Plains. Early next week, a surge of very cold air will arrive in the Northwest.” - Provide by Brad Rippey, USDA

Noteworthy topics in the news this week:

California State Water Project initial water allocation

The California Department of Water Resources announced its initial water allocation of 5 percent, based on present reservoir levels. Water allocations often start low and increase throughout the winter as storms bring snow that eventually fills reservoirs. Lake Oroville, the largest reservoir belonging to the State Water Project, held just 41 percent of capacity, with a historical average of 66 percent.

Lower Colorado River Authority in central Texas passed emergency plan

The Lower Colorado River Authority board approved a plan that would allow them to keep 1.1 million acre-feet of water in the Highland Lakes before sharing water with downstream users. Previously, Lake Buchanan and Lake Travis had to contain at least 850,000 acre-feet, or 42 percent of capacity, before water would be released, but persistent drought made the board realize that the lakes needed additional time to recover from drought. The Texas Board of Environmental Quality must approve the plan before it takes effect.

Since lakes Buchanan and Travis were at 36 percent of capacity, it seems unlikely the lakes will fill enough to allow rice farmers to receive irrigation water in 2014 for the third consecutive year of not receiving water.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Extended fire season staffing in California

Cal Fire officials have kept fire season staffing in San Mateo County through Nov. 25, due to ongoing dangerous fire conditions. The cost of maintaining readiness to fight fires longer than originally planned is \$126,000.

The San Mateo-Santa Cruz Cal Fire unit has responded to 344 fires that charred 152 acres in 2013, which was considerably higher than fire statistics from 2012 when 296 blazes burned about 33 acres. So far, 2013 has been one of the driest years on record in California.

Additional trucks respond to brush fires in southeastern Florida

The drier than normal weather led St. Lucie County officials to set up a brush fire task force. Whereas fire fighters usually take one brush truck to respond to a brush fire call, they now respond with two brush trucks, an engine and a tanker to be sure to get the fire under control before it grows.

Other Headlines: [Firefighters react to fast starting dry season](#) - Nov 18, **Treasure Coast, Florida**; Their first map of California Water Rights is available at <http://projects-ca.statewater.org/water-rights>. Be sure to zoom in for a more detailed view.