



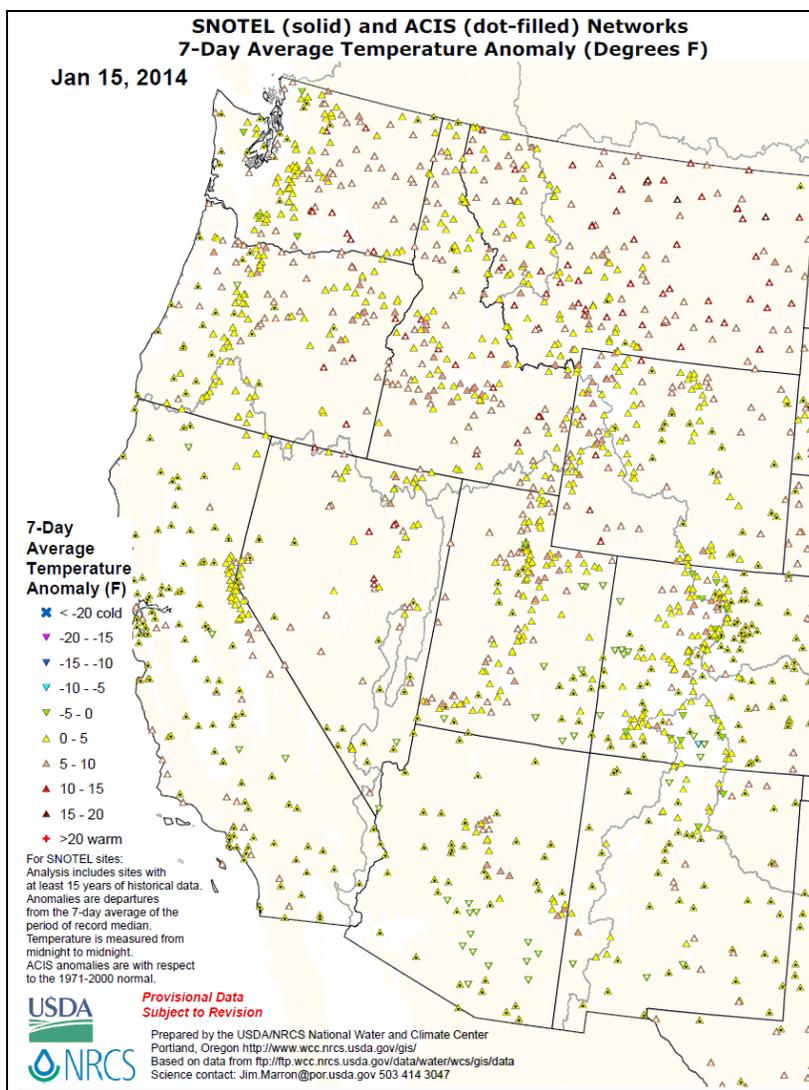
Natural Resources Conservation Service
 P.O. Box 2890
 Washington, D.C. 20013

Weekly Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update

January 16, 2014

Temperature.....	1	National Drought Summary for January 14, 2014.....	12
Precipitation.....	3	State Activities	14
Snow	6	More Information.....	14
Weather and Drought Summary	7	Latest Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Outlook	15
New Feature: Changes in Drought Monitor Categories	10	Drought Outlook.....	16
Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)	11	Supplemental Drought News.....	17

Temperature



SNOTEL and ACIS [7-day temperature anomaly](#) map shows temperatures above normal across the entire West as strong high pressure dominates the week.

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

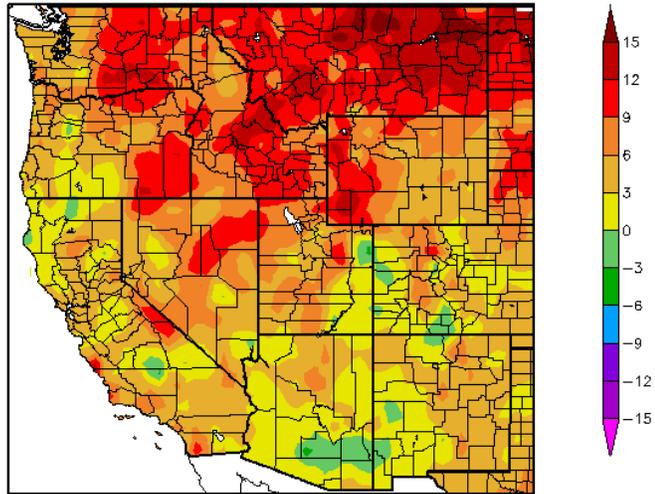
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

[ACIS](#) 7-day average temperature anomalies, ending January 15, show the greatest negative temperature departures over southern Arizona (<-3°F). The greatest positive temperature departures occurred over northern Montana (>+15°F).

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

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
1/9/2014 – 1/15/2014



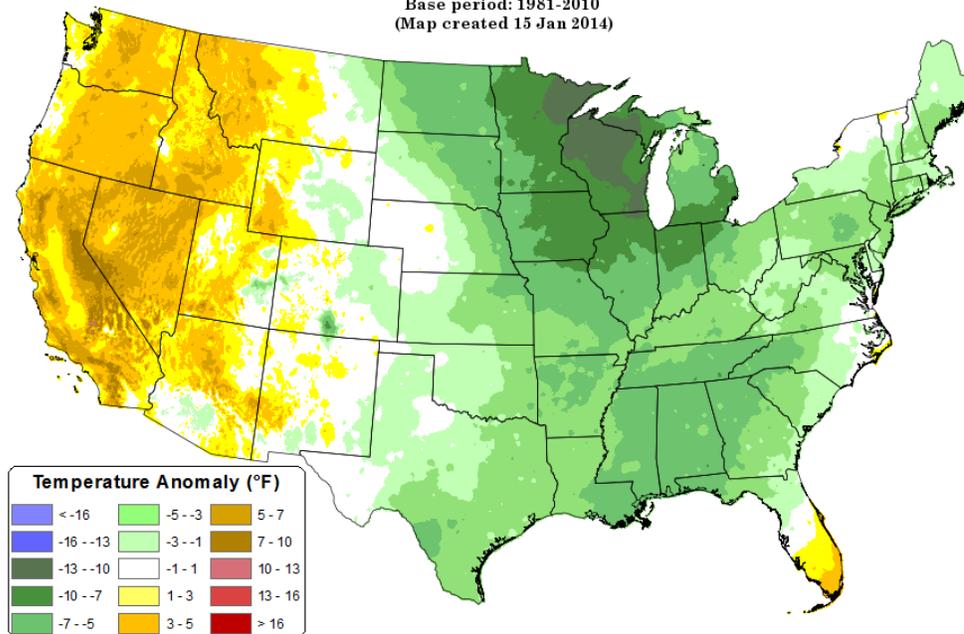
Generated 1/16/2014 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Daily Mean Temperature Anomaly: 01 January 2014 - 14 January 2014

Period ending 7 AM EST 14 Jan 2014
Base period: 1981-2010
(Map created 15 Jan 2014)

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.



Copyright (c) 2014, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University

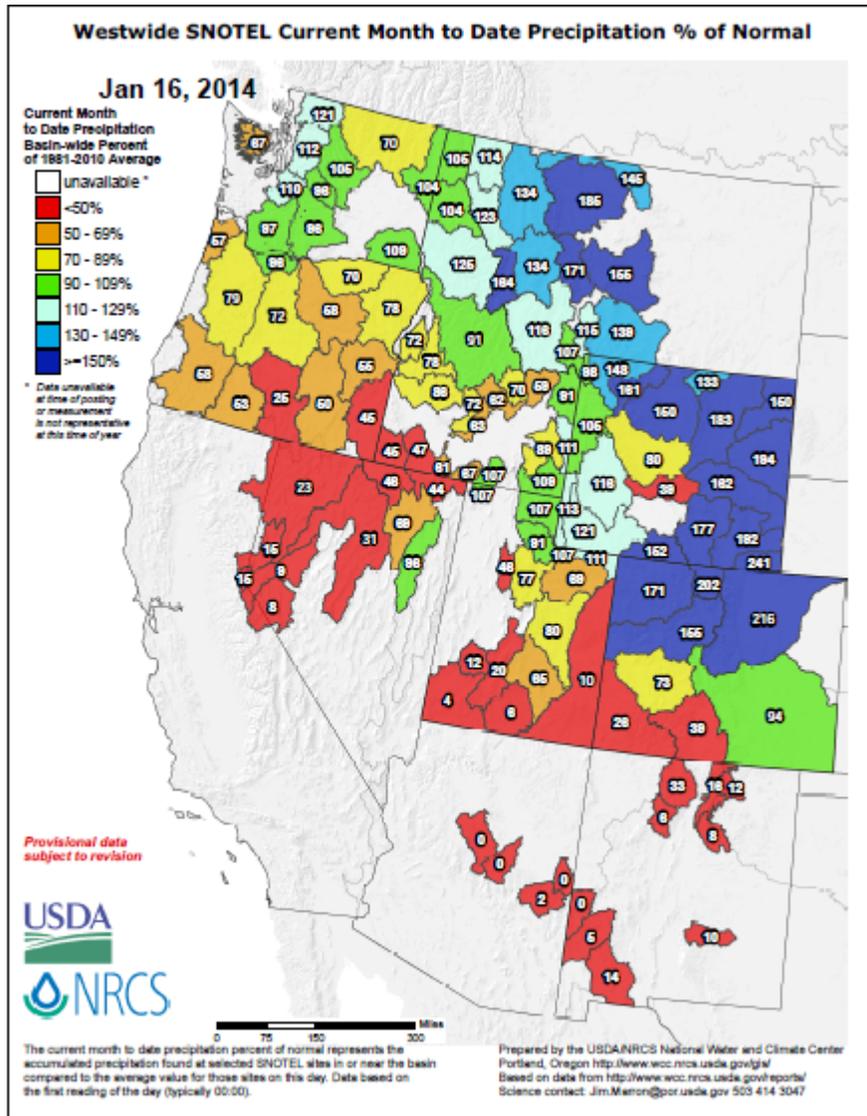
For the first half of January, it has been very cold over the western Great Lakes (<-10°F departure). Warmer than normal temperatures have occurred over the western half of the western states, particularly over the Sierra Nevada (>+7°F).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Precipitation

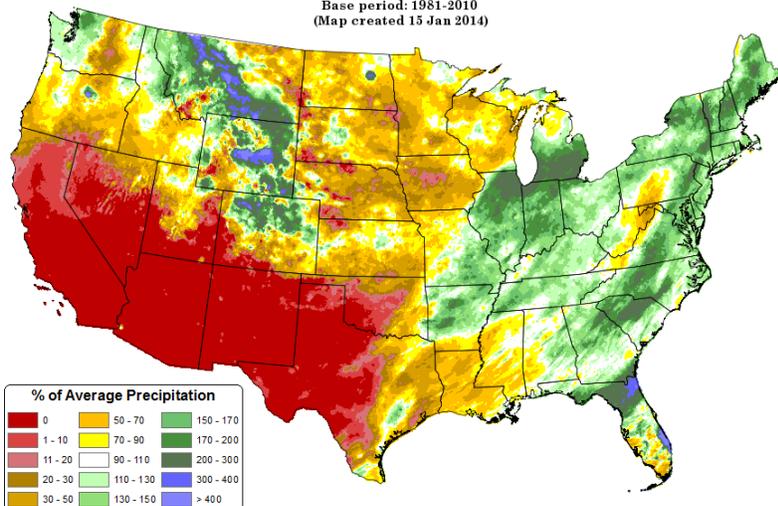
SNOTEL [month to date](#) precipitation percent of normal shows that the central and northern Rockies and northern Cascades have received abundant moisture. Significant deficits dominate the remainder of the West; especially over the southern Cascades, Sierra Nevada, Great Basin, Four Corners region, Arizona, and New Mexico.

Note that it takes only a few winter storms to help increase values to near normal over the Southwest, whereas it requires more storms to have the same impact over the Pacific Northwest.



Click on images to enlarge and get latest available updates

Total Precipitation Anomaly: 01 January 2014 - 14 January 2014
 Period ending 7 AM EST 14 Jan 2014
 Base period: 1981-2010
 (Map created 15 Jan 2014)



← Thus far, January precipitation has been a story of haves and have-nots. Moisture has favored the Eastern Seaboard, central Great Lakes, and the northern half of the Rockies. Elsewhere, with the exception of western Washington, little precipitation has fallen; especially over the western and southwestern states into Texas.

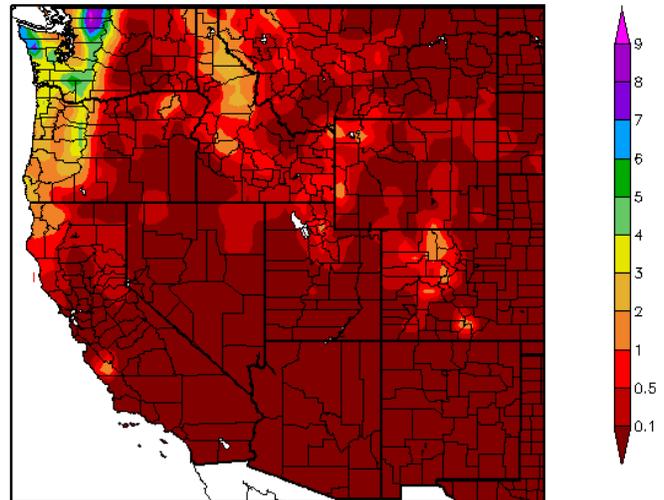
This preliminary daily PRISM precipitation contains all available network data, and is updated periodically as additional data become available and are quality controlled.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

[ACIS 7-day](#) average precipitation amounts show another week with very limited precipitation across the West. Washington state has bucked this trend with precipitation exceeding nine inches over the northernmost Cascades during the past weekend. →

As the latest winter storm moved east, northern Idaho was able to pick up over three inches of moisture along with hurricane force winds near mountain tops.

Precipitation (in)
1/9/2014 - 1/15/2014



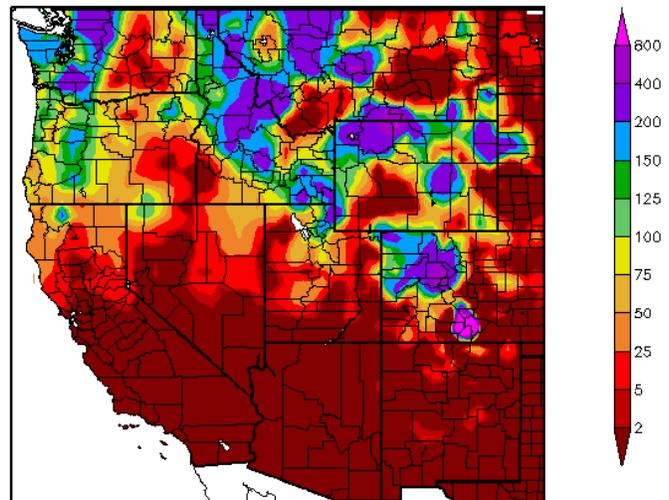
Generated 1/16/2014 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

This [map](#) shows that the bulk of precipitation by percent of normal occurred across scattered regions of the Rockies and Northern Tier states. Areas with little, if any, precipitation included most locale south of 38°N (excluding much of western Colorado) and over the western High Plains.

Note that these ACIS maps reflect only low-elevation stations, where precipitation is typically light this time of year.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
1/9/2014 - 1/15/2014



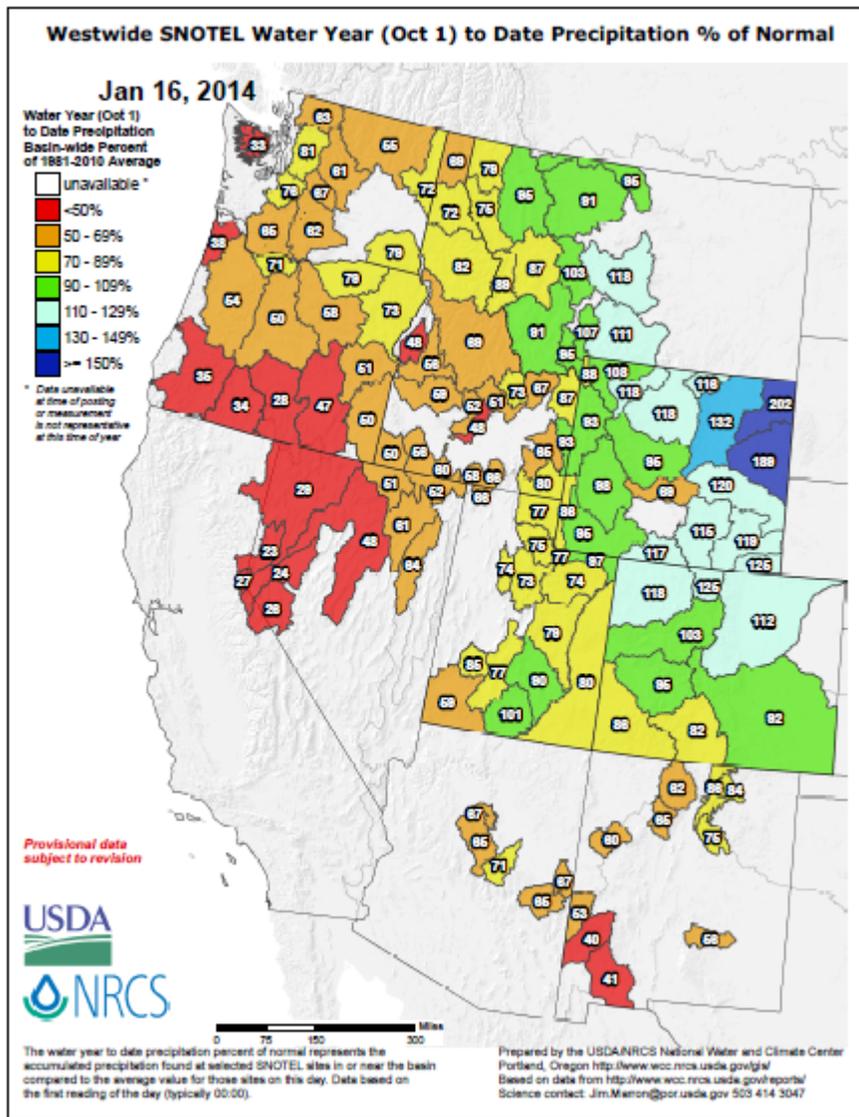
Generated 1/16/2014 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

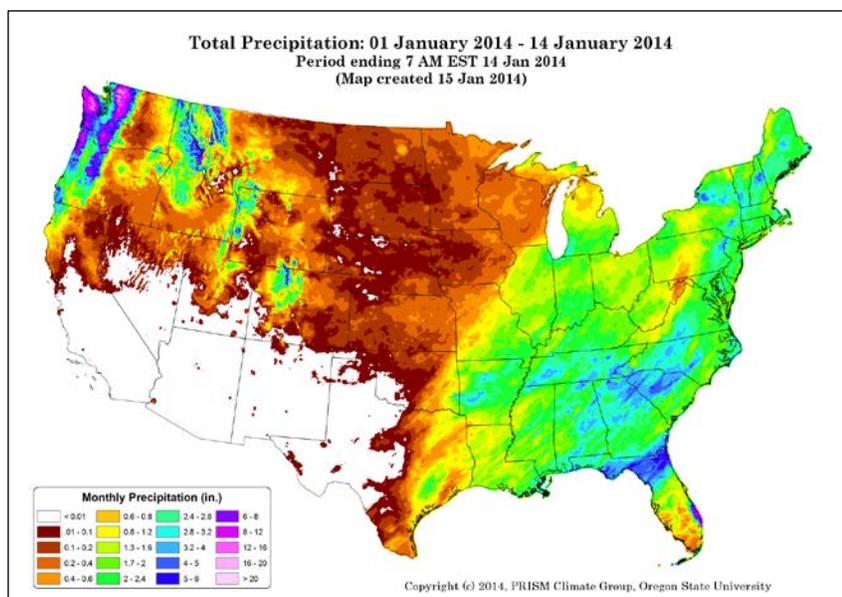
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

For the [2014 Water Year](#) that began on October 1, 2013, the neutral ENSO pattern is quite dry over the western half of the West including Arizona and New Mexico. Areas east of the Continental Divide have fared better.

- [After California's driest year on record, water experts push conservation](#) - Jan 5
- [Drought hurting county's cattle ranchers](#) - Jan 10
- [Drought impacting California cattle ranchers, farmers](#) - Jan 9
- [California may rely on more gas-fired generation due to drought](#) - Jan 10
- [Dry weather leads to fire restrictions on region's BLM-managed lands](#) - Jan 9
- [Brown meets with drought task force, pledges help](#) - Jan 9
- [Drought emergency declared in Mendocino County](#) - Jan 8
- [Catholic bishops pray to relieve dry California](#) - Jan 7
- [Local Religious Groups Pray for Rain](#) - Jan 9
- [Feeble snowfall leaves some resorts high and dry](#) - Jan 9
- [Drought prompts deep cuts in American River flows](#) - Jan 7
- [Water agency urges halt to outdoor watering](#) - Jan 10
- [State snow survey reveals low water content](#) - Jan 6



Click image for latest available update

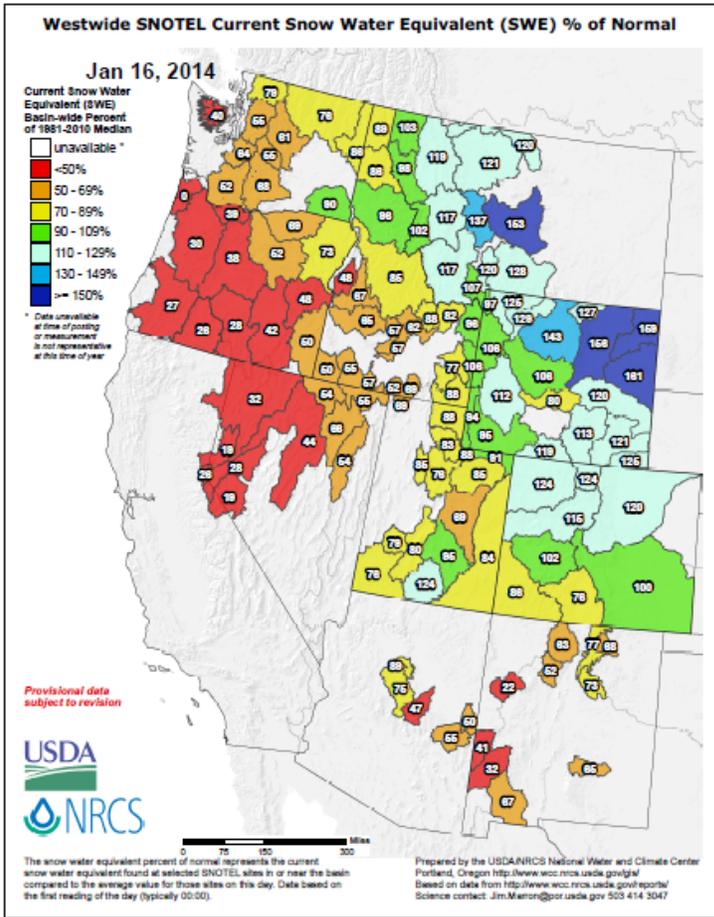


In this PRISM map, preliminary data show the **total precipitation** amount (rain and snow water equivalent) through the first two weeks of January. Resolution for this PRISM map is 4x4 km.

What is most striking about this map is the complete lack of precipitation across the southern half of the West. Despite what appears to be abundant moisture over the Washington Coastal Ranges and Cascades, these totals are actually very close to the long-term averages.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Snow

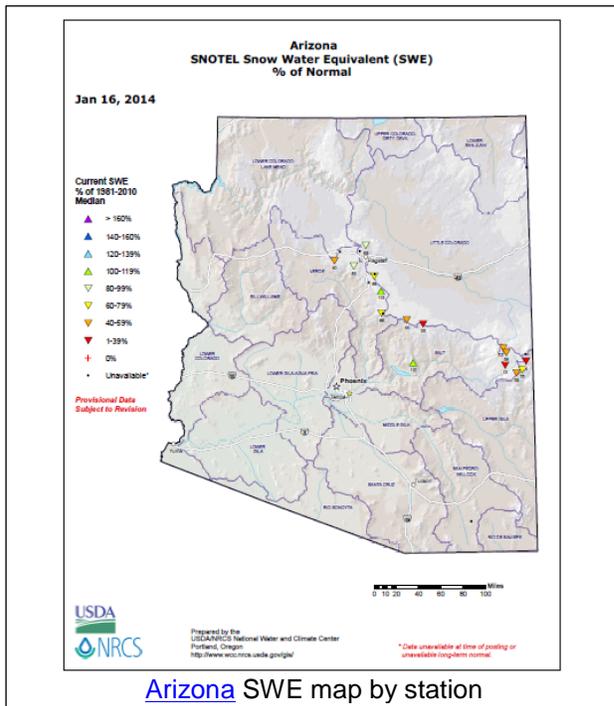


[Snow Water Equivalent \(SWE\)](#) values are doing better east of the Continental Divide and in parts of southern Utah.

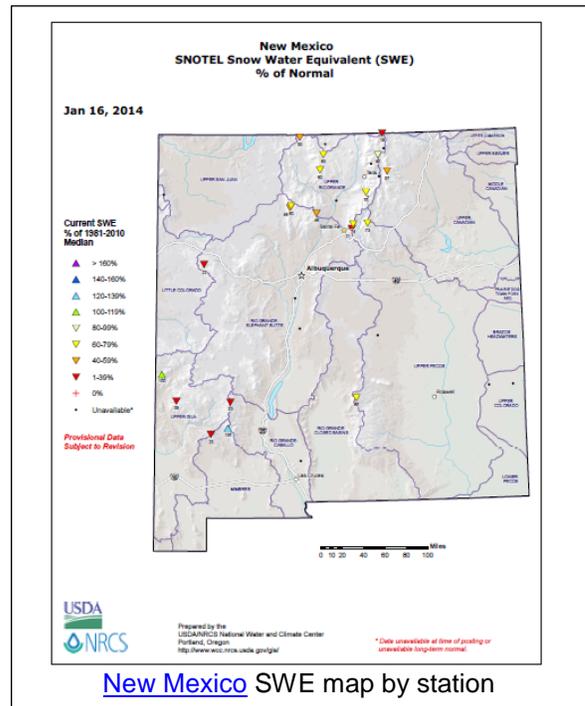
Conditions west of the Continental Divide and over the Southwest continue to deteriorate.

The all-important April 1 SWE date will best determine the water supply forecasts issued by the [National Water and Climate Center](#).

See latest [National Snow Analysis](#)



[Arizona SWE map by station](#)



[New Mexico SWE map by station](#)

SWE values in these states continue to rapidly decline. It has been nearly a month since the last weather system brought moisture to this region. *(Click maps to enlarge)*

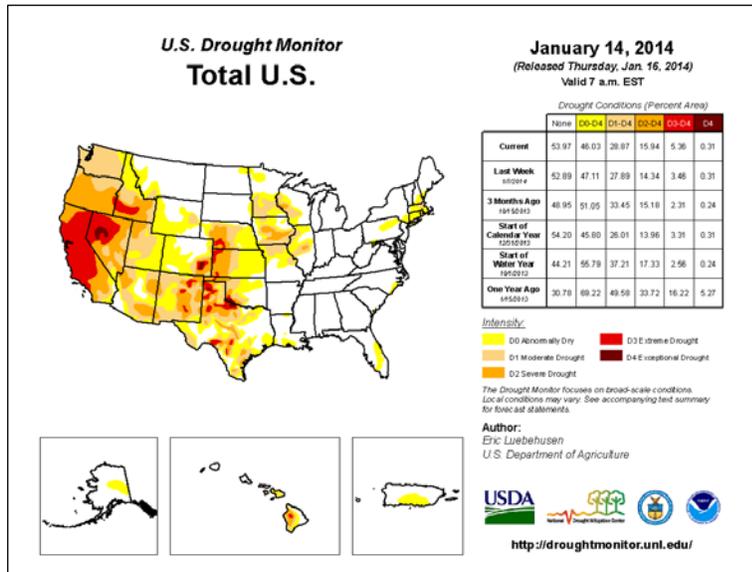
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Weather and Drought Summary

National Drought Summary – January 7, 2014

The following **Weather and Drought Summary** is provided by this week's NDMC Drought Author, Eric Luebehusen, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

[USDM Map Services](#): (contains archived maps)



[Current Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are scattered across NV, CO, TX, and OK.

The latest [drought indicator blend and component percentiles](#) spreadsheet is a great resource for climate division drought statistics. This link is for the latest [Drought Outlook](#) (forecast). See [climatological rankings](#).

For more drought news, see [Drought Impact Reporter](#).

Drought Management Resources (✓):

- ✓ [Watch AgDay TV](#)
- ✓ [Drought Impacts Webinar Series](#)

Latest Drought [Impacts](#) during the past week:

- [Corn pile biggest since 1994 as crop overwhelms use](#) - Jan 9, **U.S**
- [Like Year Before, Big Island Was Dry in 2013](#) - Jan 9, **Hawaii**.

Summary: By Eric Luebehusen, U.S. Department of Agriculture

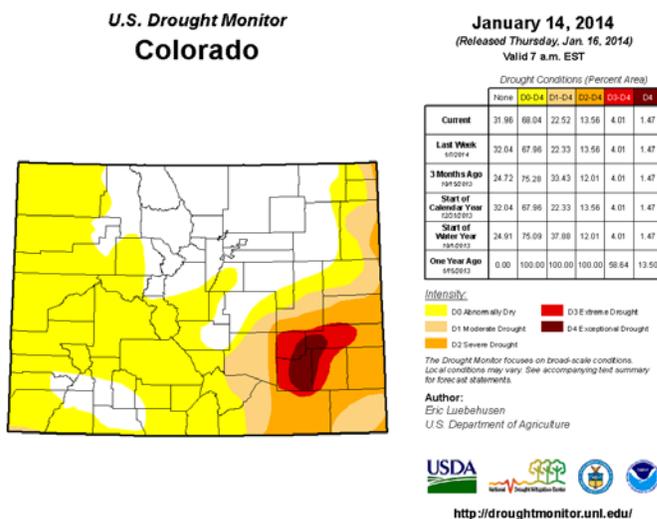
“An increasingly active weather pattern brought rain, ice, and some snow to the eastern half of the nation, with locally heavy rain observed over portions of the Southeast. In contrast, drought persisted or intensified across the west, where increasingly poor water-year precipitation and alarmingly meager mountain snowpacks continued.”

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](#).

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

- ✓ Drought Monitor for the [Western States](#)
- ✓ Drought Impact Reporter for [New Mexico](#)
- ✓ [California Data Exchange Center](#) & [Flood Management](#)
- ✓ [Intermountain West Climate Dashboard](#)
- ✓ [Great Basin Dashboard](#)
- [Colorado River Drought Forces a Painful Reckoning for States](#) - Jan 5, **Western U.S.**
- [City, business leaders look for solutions for Utah's drought](#) - Jan 9, **Utah**.
- [Mediocre snowpack shapes up in Rio Grande, expert says](#) - Dec 30, **New Mexico**

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought



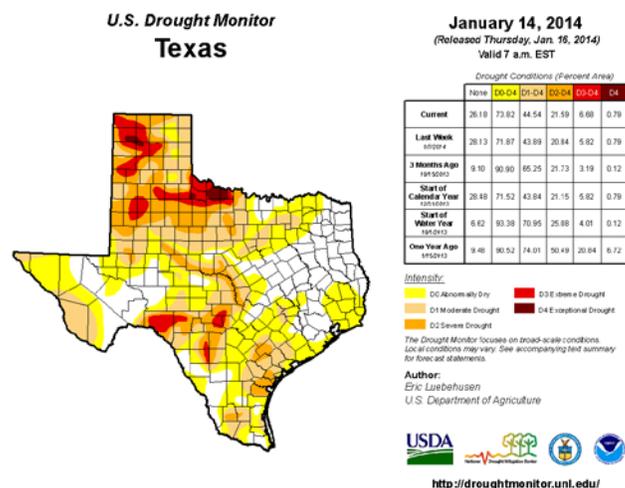
No changes have occurred during the past week.

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

- ✓ Texas Drought [Website](#).
- ✓ [Texas Reservoirs](#).
- ✓ [Texas Drought Monitor Coordination Conference Call](#): on Monday's 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM CST

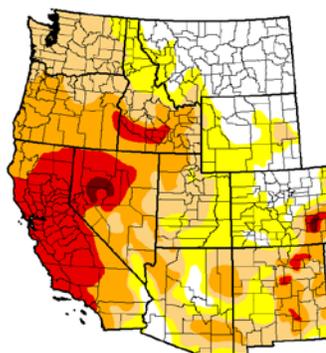
Texas Impacts during the past week

- [Texas ranchers hit hard by drought eye rebuilding](#) - Jan 4.
- [Lake Levels Decline Slightly As Drought Persists](#) - Dec 30
- [Wetter 2013 puts dent in persistent Texas drought](#) - Jan 4



Note some deterioration in D0 to D3 categories during the past week.

U.S. Drought Monitor West



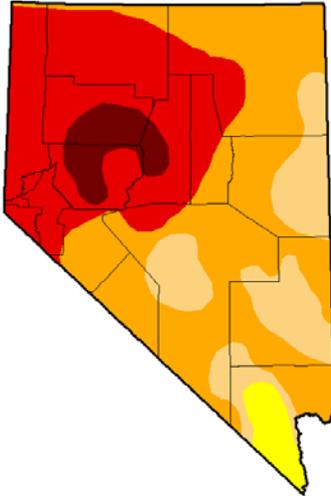
Note that there was a **3% increase** in D1 to D3 this week. **Click to enlarge**

“Despite the arrival of rain and high-elevation snow in the Northwest, drought persisted or intensified across the region. The most notable drought increases were from central California into the Pacific Northwest.” - Eric Luebbehusen, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

U.S. Drought Monitor Nevada



January 14, 2014

(Released Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014)

Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	96.80	80.30	38.17	5.37
Last Week 5/2/2014	0.00	100.00	96.81	80.30	28.55	5.37
3 Months Ago 10/15/2013	0.42	99.58	96.81	79.11	28.55	5.37
Start of Calendar Year 12/31/2013	0.39	99.61	96.81	77.65	28.55	5.37
Start of Water Year 10/1/2013	0.39	99.61	96.79	79.11	28.55	5.37
One Year Ago 1/5/2013	0.11	99.89	93.71	56.06	9.20	0.00

Intensity:

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

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

Author:

Eric Luebbehusen
U.S. Department of Agriculture



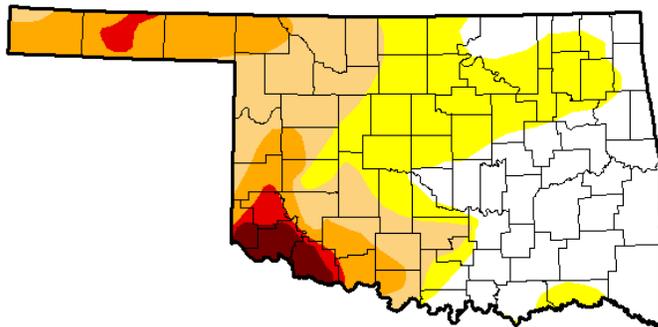
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Note: There was nearly a 10% increase in D3 during this past week.

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

U.S. Drought Monitor Oklahoma

Note: No changes occurred this past week.



January 14, 2014

(Released Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014)

Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	35.17	64.83	38.04	18.99	4.84	2.40
Last Week 1/7/2014	50.84	49.16	38.17	18.99	4.84	2.40
3 Months Ago 10/15/2013	41.83	58.17	36.85	14.90	4.42	1.45
Start of Calendar Year 12/31/2013	50.84	49.16	38.17	18.99	4.84	2.40
Start of Water Year 10/1/2013	21.74	78.26	43.00	17.62	4.42	1.45
One Year Ago 1/5/2013	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	91.80	38.86

Intensity:

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

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

Author:

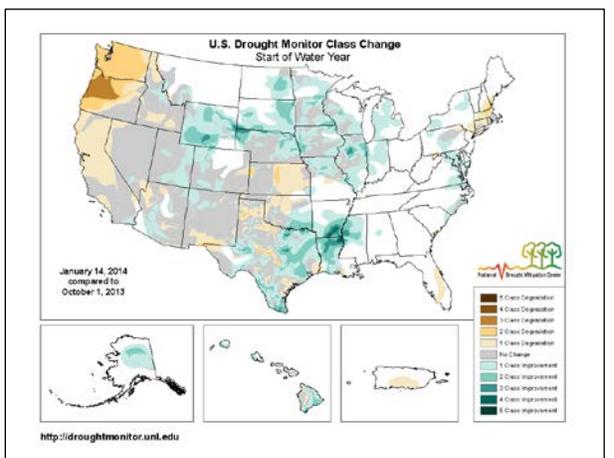
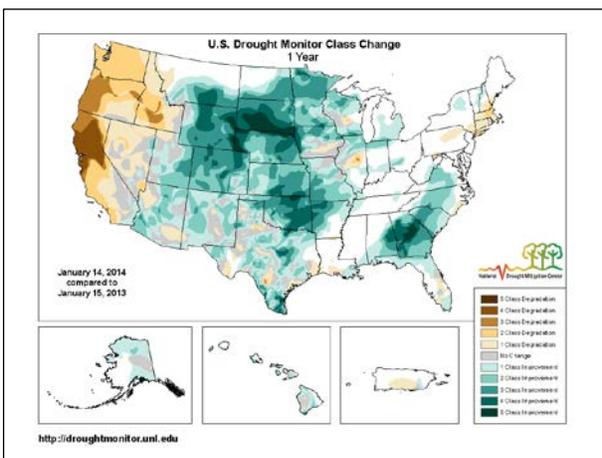
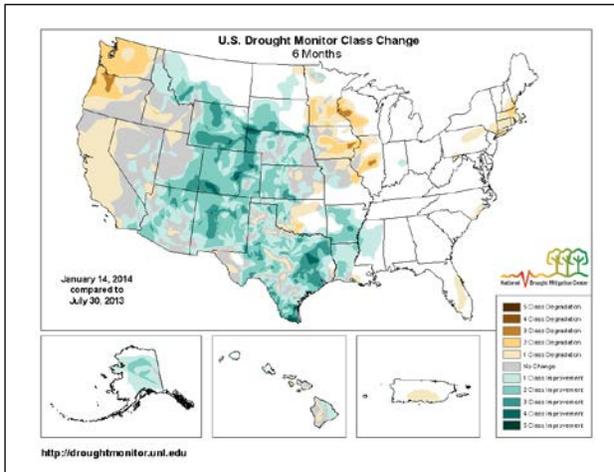
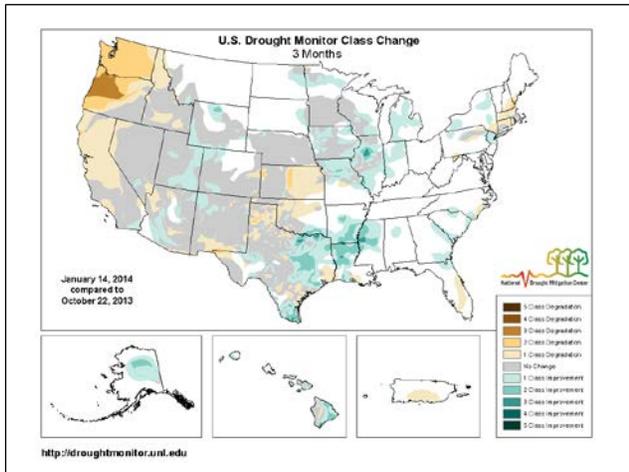
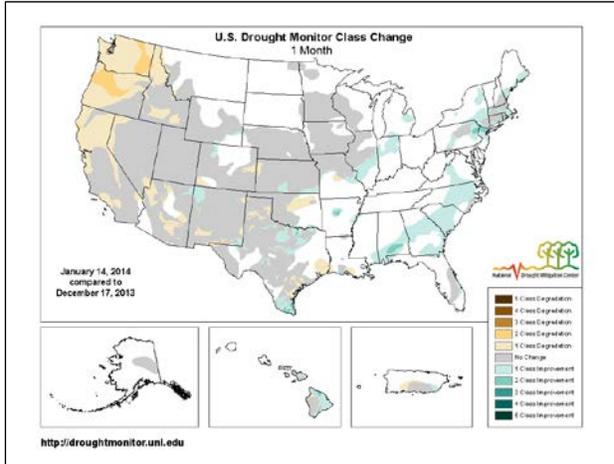
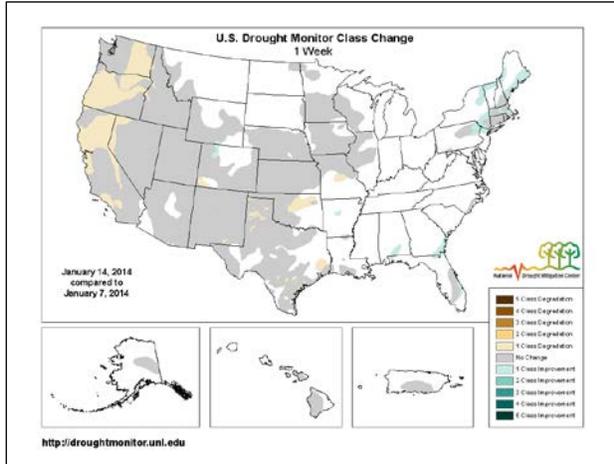
Eric Luebbehusen
U.S. Department of Agriculture



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

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

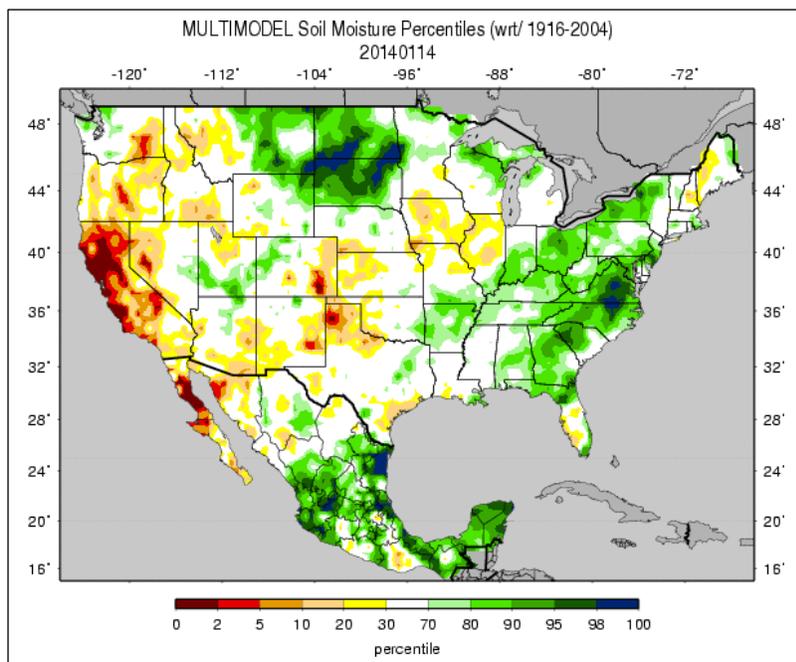
New Feature: [Changes in Drought Monitor Categories](#) (over various time periods)



Winter time changes to the drought monitor are usually minimal. However, over the past one to three months, drought conditions have significantly worsened over the Pacific Northwest.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Soil Moisture



Soil moisture ranking in [percentile](#) as of January 14 shows considerable dryness over California. Moist soils dominate the Northern Plains and many of the eastern states.

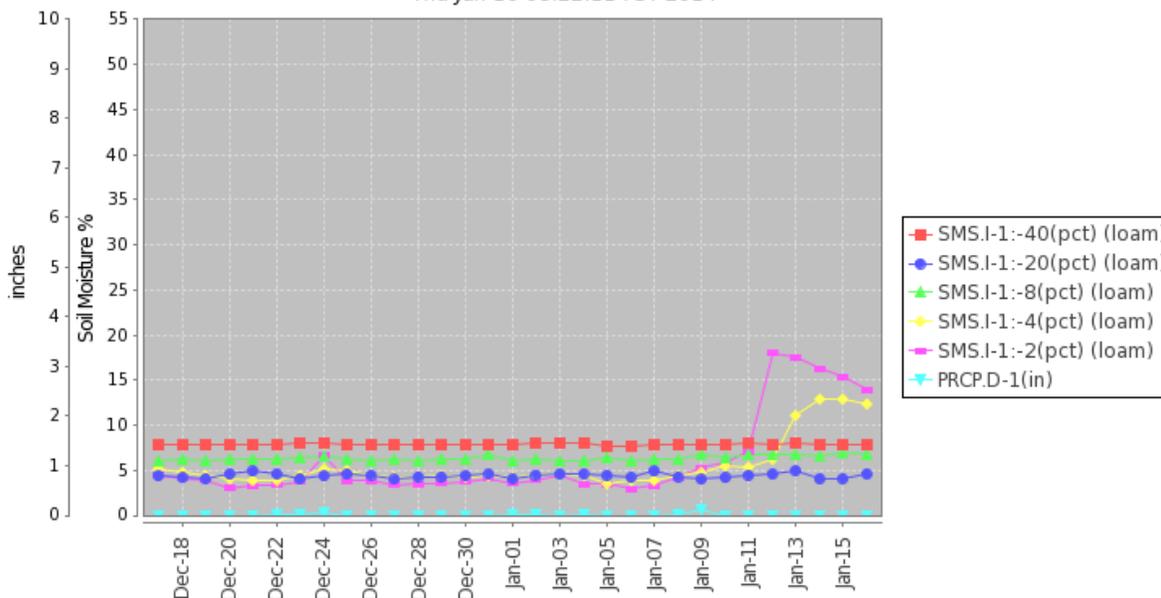
Useful Hydrological Links: [Crop Moisture Index](#); [Palmer Drought Severity Index](#); [Standardized Precipitation Index](#); [Surface Water Supply Index](#); [Weekly supplemental maps](#), [Minnesota Climate Working Group](#); [Experimental High Resolution Drought Trigger Tool](#); [NLDAS Drought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

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

Note: As the ground freezes, accuracy of measured moisture decreases.

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

Station (2021) MONTH=2013-12-17 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
Thu Jan 16 08:22:11 PST 2014



This NRCS resource shows soil moisture data at a SCAN site located in [southeastern Washington](#) with steady but dry soil moisture. Note last weekend's bump in top soil moisture due to a transiting winter storm.

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

[National Drought Summary for January 14, 2014](#)

Author: Eric Luebehusen, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Summary

“An increasingly active weather pattern brought rain, ice, and some snow to the eastern half of the nation, with locally heavy rain observed over portions of the Southeast. In contrast, drought persisted or intensified across the west, where increasingly poor water-year precipitation and alarmingly meager mountain snowpacks continued.

Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico

In Alaska, locally heavy precipitation (liquid equivalent of 2 to 6 inches, locally more) eradicated D0 (Abnormal Dryness) in southeastern portions of the state. In contrast, drought areas of the eastern Hawaiian Islands received mostly light precipitation, with no changes to the state’s drought depiction. In Caribbean, little if any rain fell on Puerto Rico’s D0 area, with light to moderate showers (0.50 to 2.50 inches) confined to southeastern portions of the island.

Central Plains

Rain, ice, and snow in eastern portions of the region contrasted with mostly dry weather on the central High Plains, where Severe to locally Exceptional Drought (D2-D4) persist. Much of the Central Plains’ Extreme Drought (D3) has received less than half of normal precipitation over the past 90 days, while precipitation totals in the D4 area of southeastern Colorado during the same period are less than 30 percent of normal (locally less than 20 percent). These same Exceptional Drought areas are also exhibiting extremely low (D4-equivalent) Standardized Precipitation Indices (SPI) dating back over the past 24 to 36 months, highlighting the ongoing long-term component to the central Plains’ drought as well.

Mid-Atlantic and Northeast

Rain, ice, and snow continued to chip away at lingering Abnormal Dryness (D0) and Moderate Drought (D1). Precipitation totaled 1 to 2 inches (liquid equivalent) from south-central Pennsylvania into northern New England, with locally higher amounts. However, longer-term deficits persist, with 180-day precipitation still less than 70 percent of normal from northeastern Pennsylvania into southern New England (some areas locally less than 50 percent).

Midwest

A pair of systems – the first of which brought a light wintry mix, followed by a second, warmer, wetter system – mostly bypassed the region’s western Moderate to Severe Drought areas (D1 and D2). However, light precipitation (less than an inch) fell on drought areas from eastern portions of Missouri and Iowa into Illinois and Wisconsin. Unfortunately, the moisture did little to reduce longer-term deficits; in particular, precipitation over the past 180 days has totaled locally less than 50 percent of normal from east-central Missouri into central Illinois, where D1 and D2 persist. Similar precipitation deficiencies are also noted across Iowa and along the Minnesota-Wisconsin border and environs. Not only was the precipitation during the period insufficient to reduce drought, but increasingly dry conditions led to an expansion of Abnormal Dryness in south-central Missouri (less than 50 percent of normal precipitation over the past 60 days). Impacts are generally minimal during the winter months, though subsoil moisture reserves remain limited in the worst drought areas.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Southeast and Delta

Moderate to heavy rain (1 to 4 inches) developed across the Southeast, although portions of the southern Coastal Plain saw notably lighter amounts. The rain facilitated the removal of several pockets of Abnormal Dryness (D0) across southern and eastern portions of the region. In Florida, moderate to heavy rain (locally more than 10 inches) erased D0 on the southeast coast. However, the rain was confined to the coast and immediate environs, so Florida's interior D0 areas continued the 90-day dry trend (30 to 50 percent of normal). In the Delta, light to moderate rain in southern portions of the region was not sufficient to ease Abnormal Dryness, while heavier rainfall (2 to 3 inches) in Arkansas facilitated the removal of D0 in central portions of the state. Areas along the central Gulf Coast continue to wrestle with short-term dryness, with rainfall totaling 70 percent of normal or less (locally less than 60 percent) over the past 90 days.

Southern Plains and Texas

Despite a pair of storms brushing the region, most of the core drought areas of Texas and the southern Plains remained dry. Rain, ice, and snow (0.25 to 1.50 inches) were limited to eastern-most portions of Texas and Oklahoma, offering little in the way of drought relief. Short- and long-term drought is prevalent from northern Texas into central Oklahoma, where 90-day precipitation has totaled 50 percent of normal or less (locally less than 30 percent of normal). Topsoil and subsoil moisture remained extremely limited across much of north-central Texas and neighboring portions of Oklahoma; soil moisture percentile rankings are in the 5th percentile or lower in the Extreme and Exceptional Drought (D3-D4) areas of the southern Plains. The drought continues to take a toll on Texas' winter wheat, which was rated 38 percent very poor to poor as of January 12. In southeastern Texas, areas that mostly missed the past week's 1-inch rainfall were included in the expanded D0 area (Abnormally Dry) to reflect drier-than-normal conditions over the past 60 days (50 to 60 percent of normal) and increasingly low soil moisture (10th percentile or lower).

Western U.S.

Despite the arrival of rain and high-elevation snow in the Northwest, drought persisted or intensified across the region. The most notable drought increases were from central California into the Pacific Northwest.

In northern portions of the region, a surge of Pacific moisture generated rain and mountain snow from the Cascades into the northern Rockies. Precipitation totals were highly variable, with 2- to 7-inch totals (liquid equivalent) in the northern Cascades contrasting with amounts generally less than 2 inches over southern portions of the range. Despite the moisture, the post-event statistics highlighted the intensifying drought in the region. The updated water-year precipitation totals stood at a meager 15 to 25 percent of normal in the Salmon Mountains of northwestern California, 25 to 55 percent in western Oregon, while northern portions of the Cascades (Washington) averaged 55 to 85 percent of normal precipitation for the water year. Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) in the Cascades of Oregon averaged 10 to 35 percent of normal, while the mountains of western Washington fared slightly better (30 to 60 percent of normal). Consequently, Severe Drought (D2) was expanded northward — despite the precipitation — to account for SWE rankings in the 15th percentile or lower (locally below the 5th percentile). SWE rankings in the eastern portions of Washington's Cascades are likewise mostly in the 20th percentile or lower (locally in the lowest 5th percentile), reflecting the abnormally warm weather which has resulted in much of the precipitation falling as rain. Moderate Drought (D1) was also expanded across the Columbia River Valley in northern Oregon and central Washington due to increasing short-term dryness (water-year precipitation at 20 to 45 percent of normal) and declining soil moisture.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Farther south, a disappointing water year continued, with warm, dry weather firmly entrenched from central and southern California into the Great Basin. Most notably, Extreme Drought (D3) expanded across much of central and northern California into northwestern Nevada. Water-year precipitation in most of the D3 area was now less than 20 percent of normal, with locales from the southern San Joaquin Valley to the Pacific Coast reporting less than 10 percent of normal. Mountain snowpacks in the Sierra Nevada continued to dwindle as well, with SWE averaging between 10 and 30 percent of normal (10th percentile or lower, with many locations now in the bottom 5th percentile). Soil moisture across the northern two-thirds of California remained in very short supply, with similar moisture shortages noted in northwestern Nevada.

In the Four Corners region, changes to this week's drought depiction were minimal. Minor increases were noted in D0 (Abnormal Dryness) across southwestern Colorado, while locally heavy precipitation (1 to 2 inches liquid equivalent, locally more) led to some D0 reduction in north-central Colorado. Otherwise the region remained mostly in a holding pattern with respect to drought intensification, with drought concerns most pronounced (water-year precipitation less than 50 percent of normal) from southeastern Arizona into central and eastern New Mexico.

Looking Ahead

Little — if any — drought relief is expected from the Plains to the Pacific Coast states, with precipitation during the upcoming monitoring period mostly confined to the northeastern quarter of the nation. A stronger-than-normal ridge of high pressure will span from the Canadian Rockies into the Southwest, maintaining dry, warmer-than-normal weather across much of the west. Temperatures will regularly top the 60-degree mark as far north as the central High Plains, and will exceed 80°F in the Desert Southwest. Farther east, a modest surge of cool air into the eastern one-third of the U.S. will be followed by another round of below-normal temperatures across the Midwest and East toward week's end. On Wednesday night and Thursday, a high-wind event can be expected across the northern and central Plains and the western Corn Belt, while blizzard conditions will affect the Red River Valley. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for January 21-25 calls for near- to below-normal temperatures from the Mississippi Valley to the East Coast, while warmer-than-normal weather will continue from the Pacific Coast to the Plains. Meanwhile, near-normal precipitation from the Great Lakes region into the Northeast will contrast with drier-than-normal conditions across the remainder of the country.”

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.

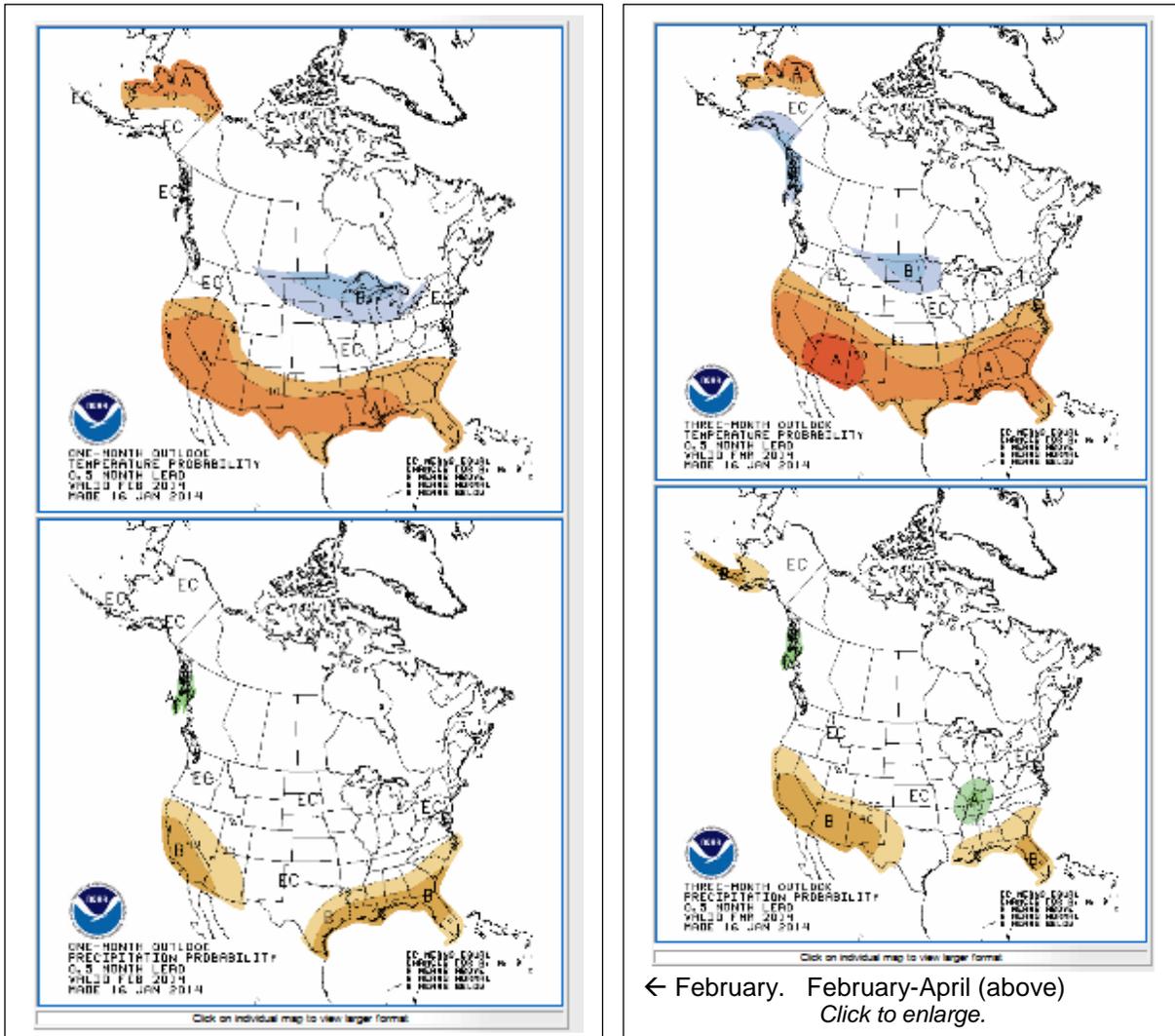
This report uses data and products provided by the Interagency Drought Monitor Consortium members and the National Interagency Fire Center.

/s/

David W. Smith
Acting Deputy Chief, Soil Science and Resource Assessment

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

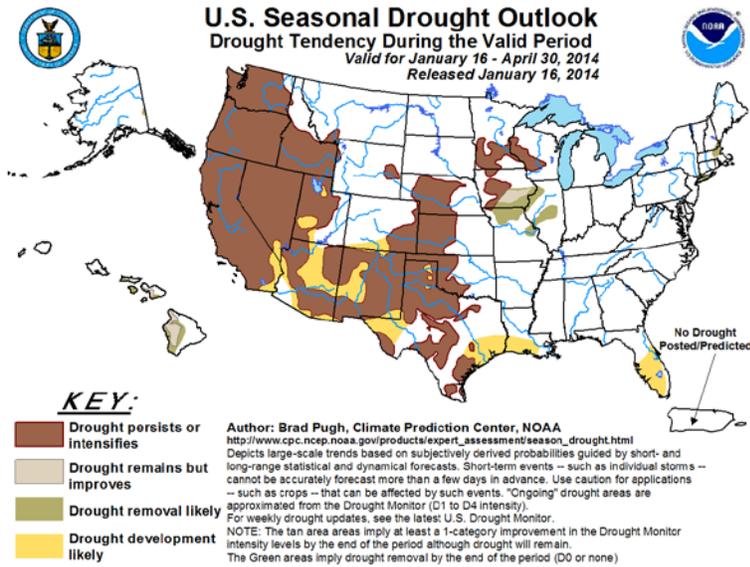
Latest Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Outlook ([Updated today](#))



Warmer (top maps) and drier (bottom maps) conditions than the average long-term climatology is suggested over the southern tier of the U.S. during the next three months.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

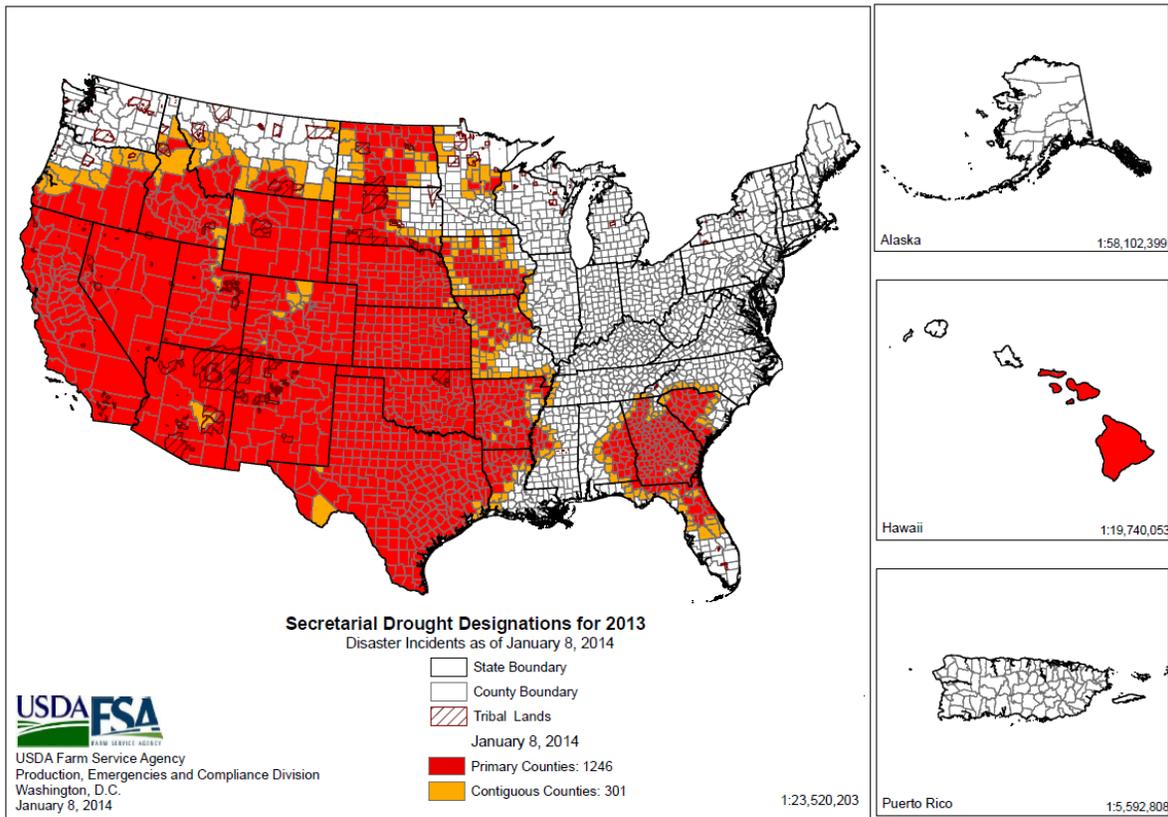
Drought Outlook



U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook through the end of April shows:

- Drought is expected to improve over the upper Mississippi River Valley. Persistent or worsening drought is expected over much of the western half of the nation (including southern Florida, but excluding the northern half of the Rockies).
- ✓ Also see: [National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook](#) (updated on the first of each month) 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 News

This is a collection of drought-related news stories from the past week. Impact information from these articles is entered into the Drought Impact Reporter. A number of these articles will also be posted on the Drought Headlines page at the NDMC website.

Much of the media attention was focused on California this week, in light of the recent bleak snow survey:

Drought in California



Image above from the Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership at <http://www.savingwaterpartnership.org/>

It's time to become stingier with water since those storms aren't bringing the needed snow. After the state's first snow survey of 2014, many water agencies are taking very seriously the scant snowpack of just 20 percent of average water content. Many water districts and communities are strongly urging water conservation and suspension of outdoor watering activities where possible.

In November, the State Water Project offered an initial allocation of just 5 percent of requested amounts, given the meager snowpack and low reservoirs. Parts of California get about half of their annual precipitation from December through February. Time is slipping away for storms to come and anxiety is rising.

Agriculture

Pastures remained brown and dry, leading ranchers to purchase hay for their livestock, despite the high cost of the hay since little grew this summer. Farmers also report that the lack of moisture has prevented germination or killed crops and vegetation. Crop plans were adjusted to accommodate smaller water supplies.

Fire

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection suspended burn permits in central California, due to dry conditions and a high number of wildfires for this time of year. The Bureau of Land Management also announced fire restrictions on public lands that it manages in El Dorado, Amador, Sacramento, Calaveras, Tuolumne and Mariposa counties since dry vegetation has increased the fire risk. High fire activity in Santa Cruz County led Cal Fire to keep extra crews and equipment on hand.

Recreation

Ski resorts in the Lake Tahoe area were hurting without adequate snow and some were closed until the area gets enough snow to open. Locals who expected to be working at the resorts are laid off and hoping for snow to bring more visitors. People who make their reservations months ago were still coming, but were doing more hiking and biking instead of skiing.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Energy

There is concern that with water supplies low, less hydropower will be generated in California this year, leading to more natural-gas fired power production and higher energy costs.

Praying for snow

Catholic bishops were encouraging the faithful to pray for rain to ease the drought and bring water for agriculture. Muslims also were seeking divine intervention to end the drought.

The "U.S. Crops in Drought" products will still be produced on a weekly basis, and can be viewed [here](#). Archived "U.S. Crops in Drought" files can be downloaded [here](#).

Other Tea Cup reservoir depictions:

<http://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/basin/> ← Upper Colorado

http://www.usbr.gov/uc/wcao/water/basin/tc_gr.html; ← Upper Snake

<http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/burtea.html> ← Upper Colorado

http://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/basin/tc_cr.html ← Upper Colorado

<http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/select.html> ← Pacific Northwest

<http://www.sevierriver.org/reservoirs/teacup-diagram-of-reservoirs/> ← Sevier River Water (UT)

See westwide [water supply forecast tables](#)