



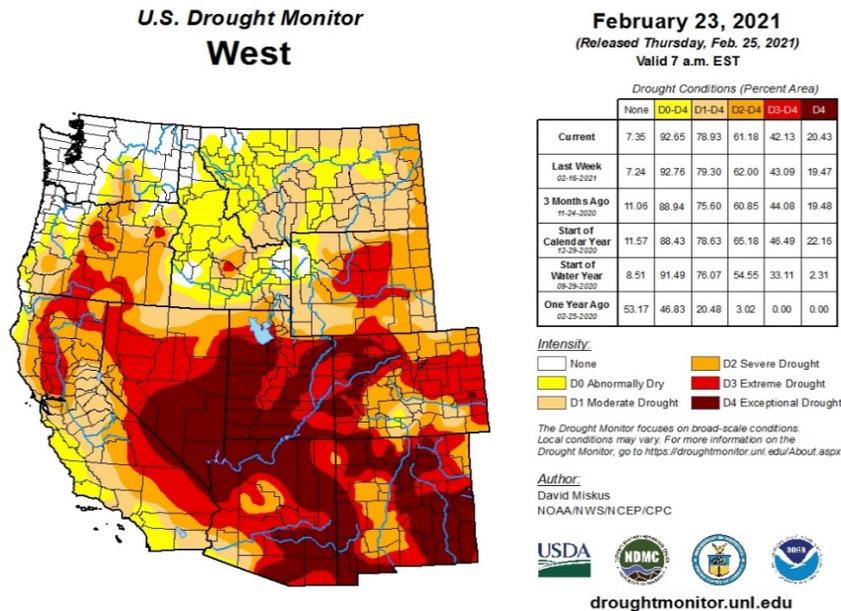
Water and Climate Update

February 25, 2021

The Natural Resources Conservation Service produces this weekly report using data and products from the [National Water and Climate Center](#) and other agencies. The report focuses on seasonal snowpack, precipitation, temperature, and drought conditions in the U.S.

Snow	2	Drought	10
Precipitation	4	Other Climatic and Water Supply Indicators	14
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Long-term drought conditions continue in much of the West

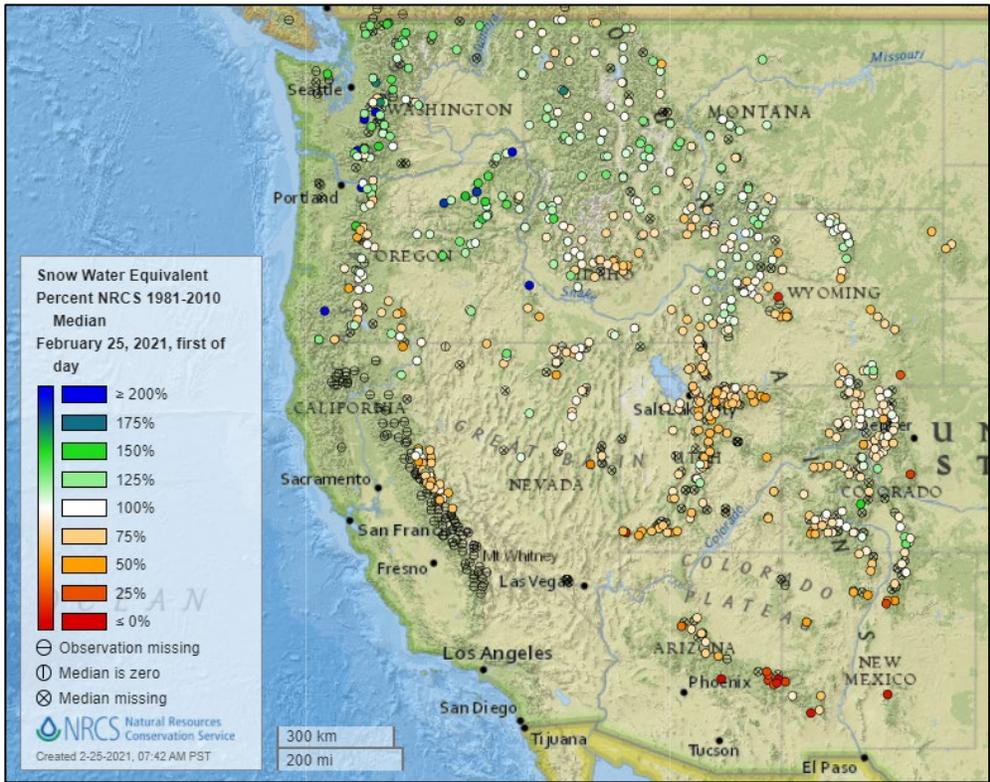


Much of the West continues to experience drought conditions through last week the winter and as spring approaches. Currently, 79% of the region is categorized in moderate-drought-or-drier conditions. Most of the drought is long term, with fall and winter precipitation lagging normal water year amounts. Exceptional-drought designations were expanded in central Nevada this week. Total drought conditions for the U.S. and Puerto Rico increased slightly to 38% this week.

Related:

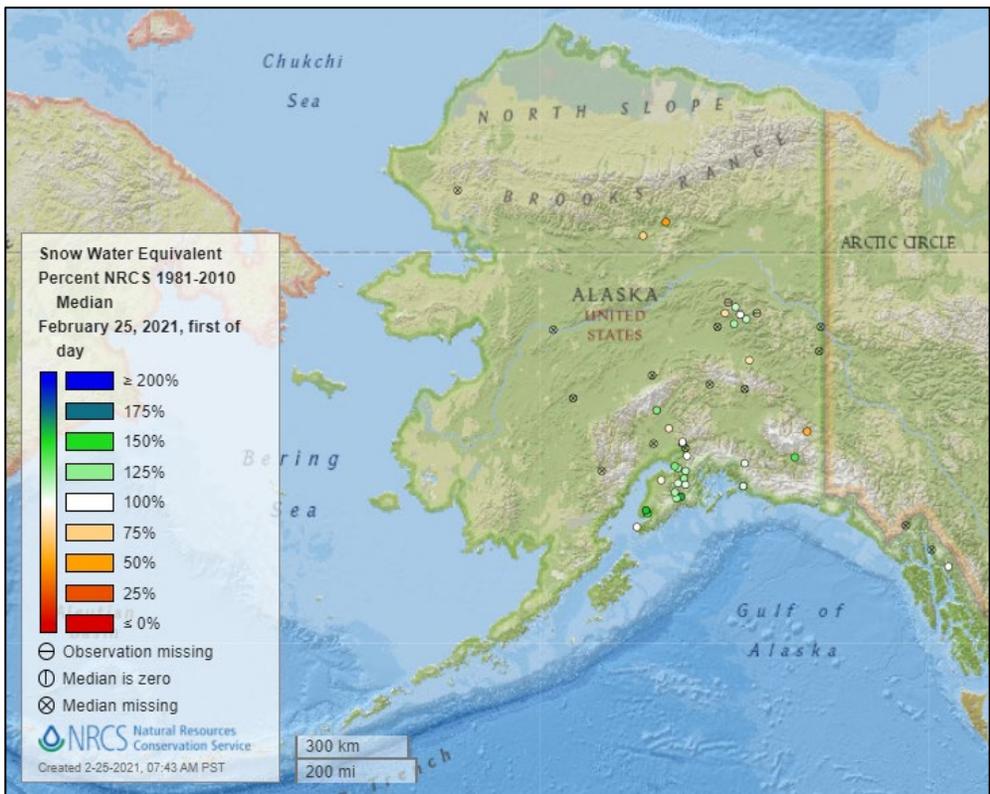
- [Drought-stricken West holds out for more than just dry snow](#) – KTAR News (AZ)
- [Short-term climate modeling forecasts drought for Southeast US](#) – Phys.org
- [Drought - January 2021](#) – NOAA
- [California drought, dry conditions causing concern for farms and agriculture](#) – KXTV (CA)
- [Red alert sounding on California drought, as Valley gets grim news about water supply](#) – Sacramento Bee on MSN.com (CA)
- [Historic drought and insufficient snowpack signal possible water trouble ahead](#) – KSTU (UT)
- [Dry conditions across Colorado cause concern for upcoming wildfire season](#) – Fox31 Denver (CO)
- [How much did last week's snow help ease drought across New Mexico? Not much, experts say.](#) – Las Cruces Sun-News on MSN.com (NM)

Snow



[Snow water equivalent percent of median map](#)

See also:
[Snow water equivalent values \(inches\) map](#)

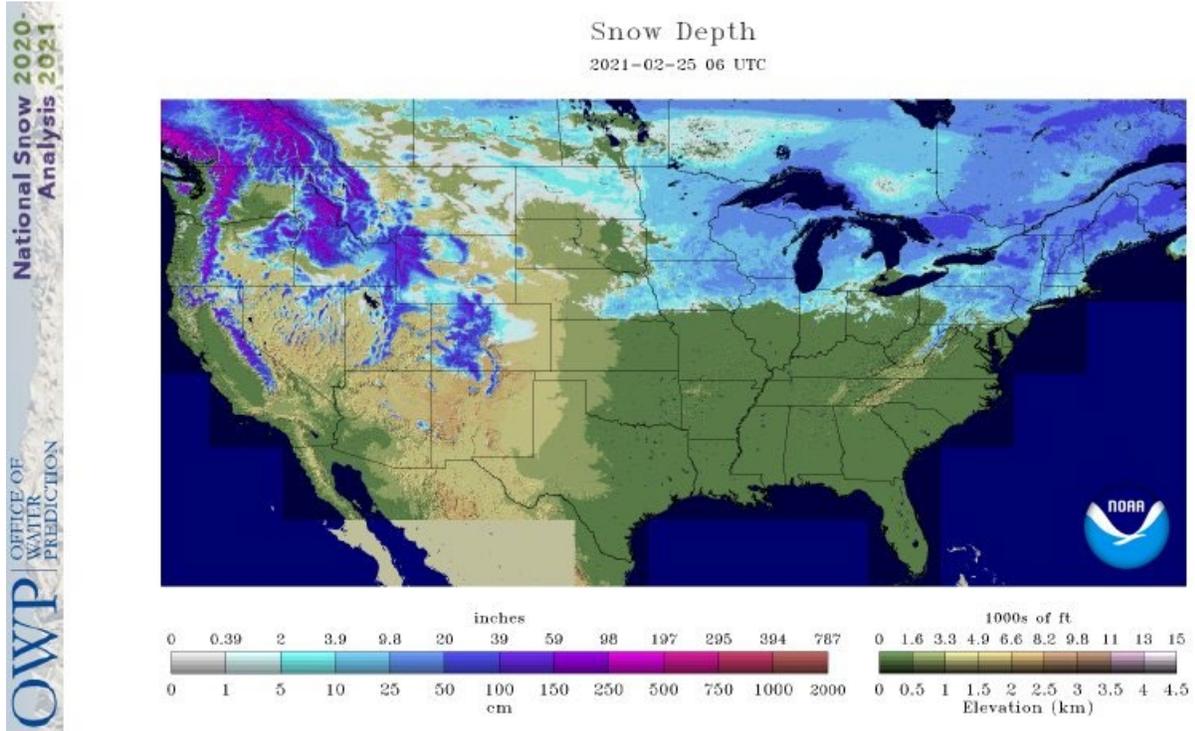


[Alaska snow water equivalent percent of median map](#)

See also:
[Alaska snow water equivalent values \(inches\) map](#)

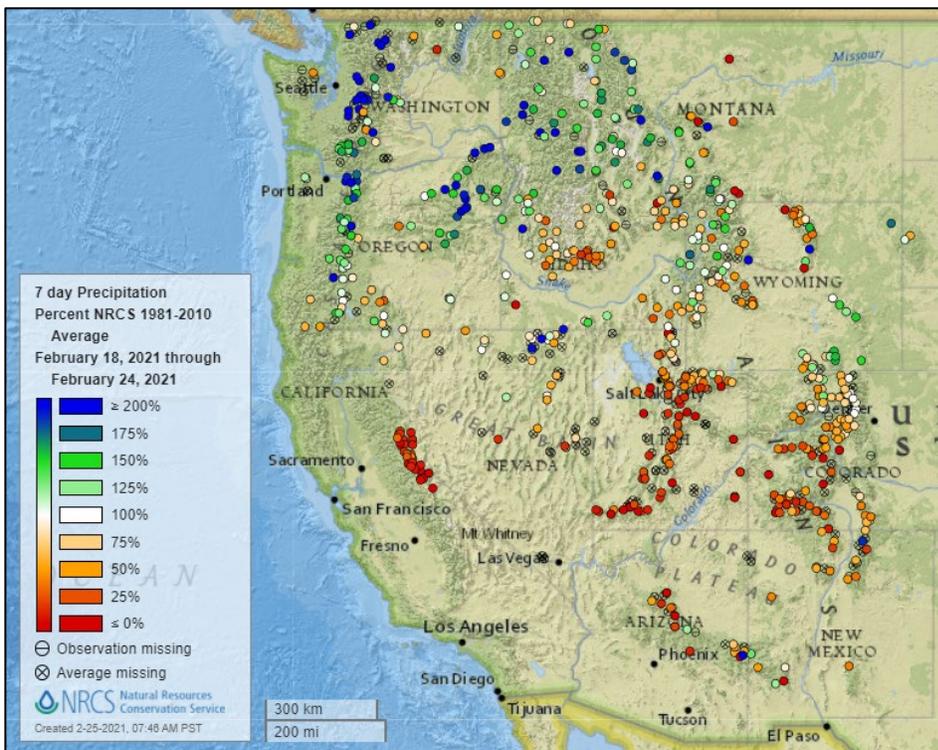
Current Snow Depth, National Weather Service Snow Analysis

Source: NOAA Office of Water Prediction



Precipitation

Last 7 Days, NRCS SNOTEL Network

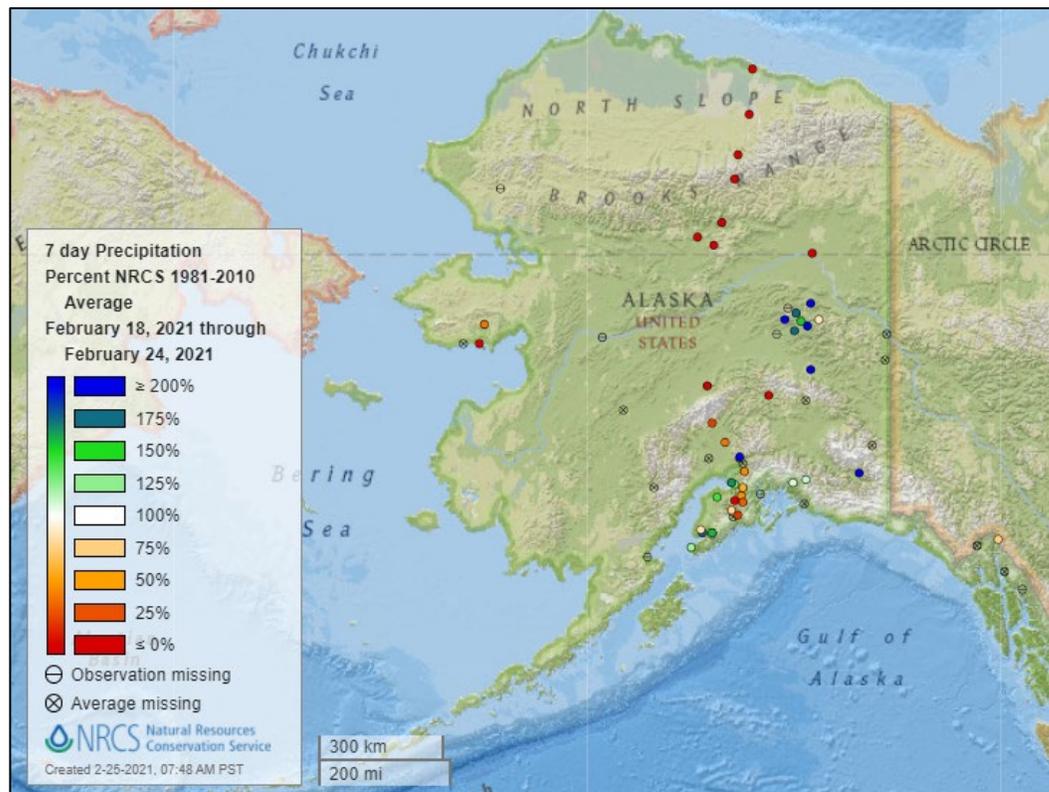


[7-day precipitation percent of average map](#)

See also:
[7-day total precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)

[Alaska 7-day precipitation percent of average map](#)

See also:
[Alaska 7-day total precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)



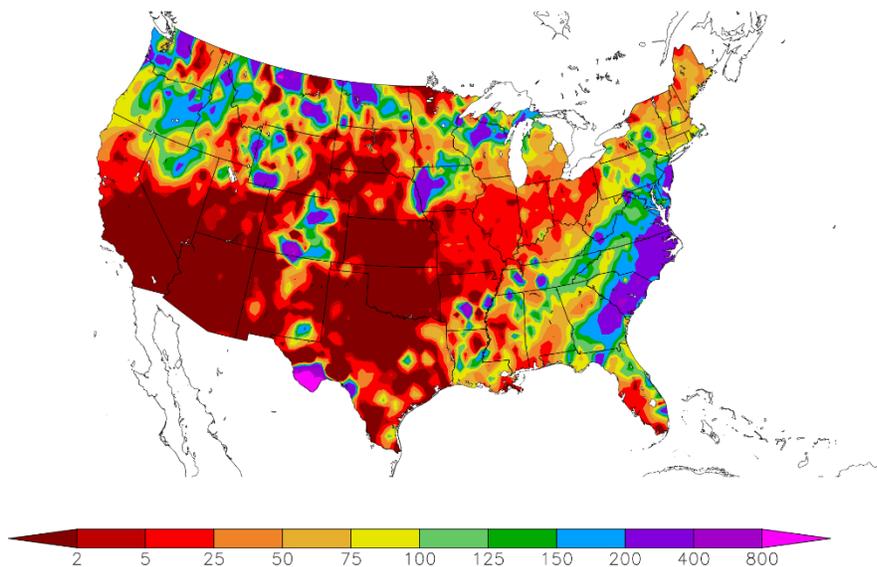
Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day precipitation percent of normal map](#) for the continental U.S.

See also: [7-day total precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
2/18/2021 – 2/24/2021



Generated 2/25/2021 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

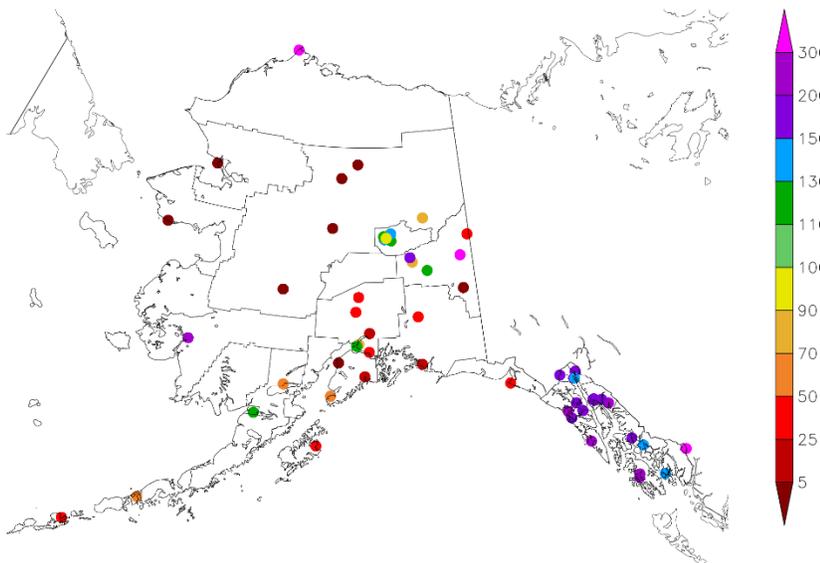
Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day precipitation anomaly map](#) for Alaska.

See also: [7-day total precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
2/18/2021 – 2/24/2021



Generated 2/25/2021 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

Month-to-Date, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

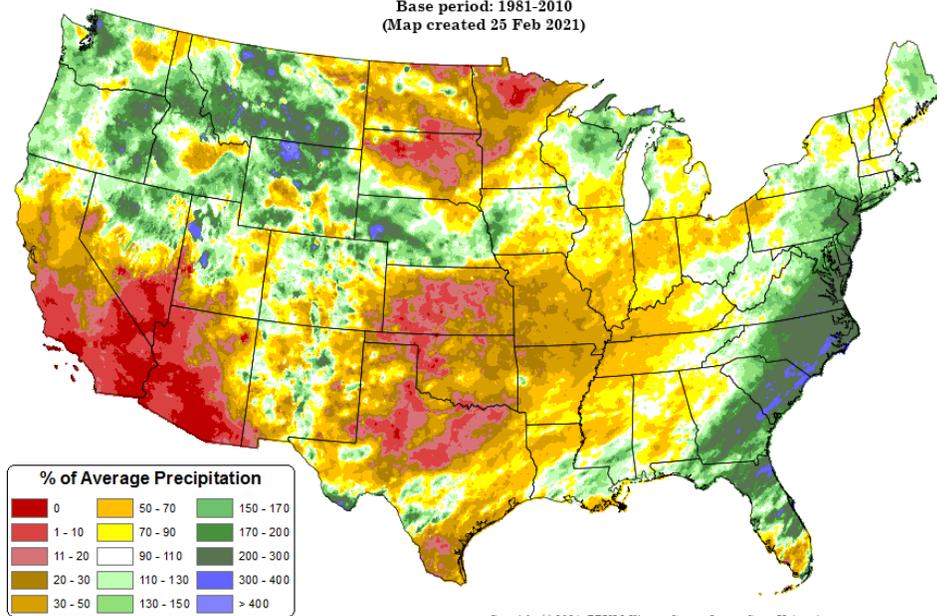
Total Precipitation Anomaly: 01 Feb 2021 - 24 Feb 2021

Period ending 7 AM EST 24 Feb 2021

Base period: 1981-2010

(Map created 25 Feb 2021)

[Month-to-date national total precipitation percent of average map](#)



Last 3 Months, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

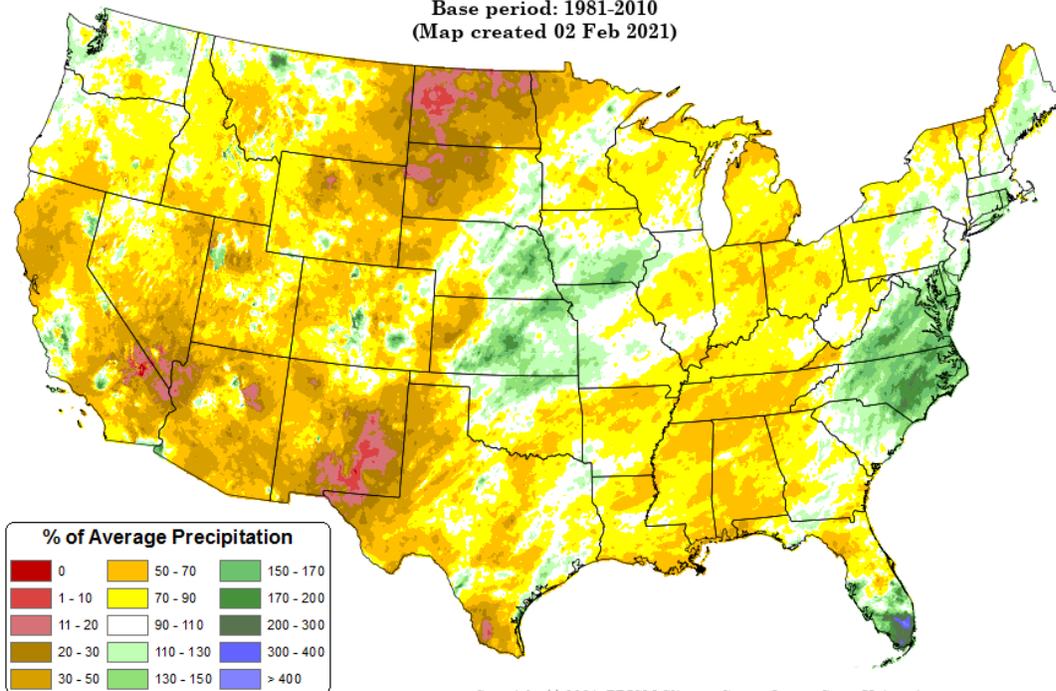
[November through January precipitation percent of average map](#)

Total Precipitation Anomaly: Nov 2020 - Jan 2021

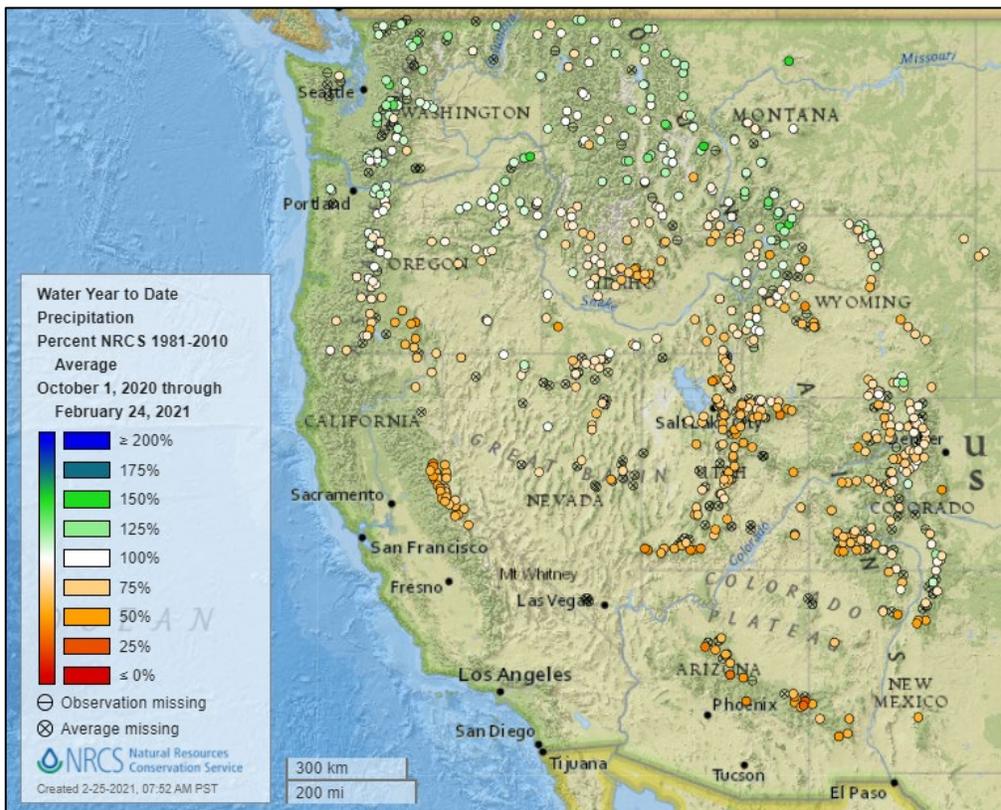
Period ending 7 AM EST 31 Jan 2021

Base period: 1981-2010

(Map created 02 Feb 2021)

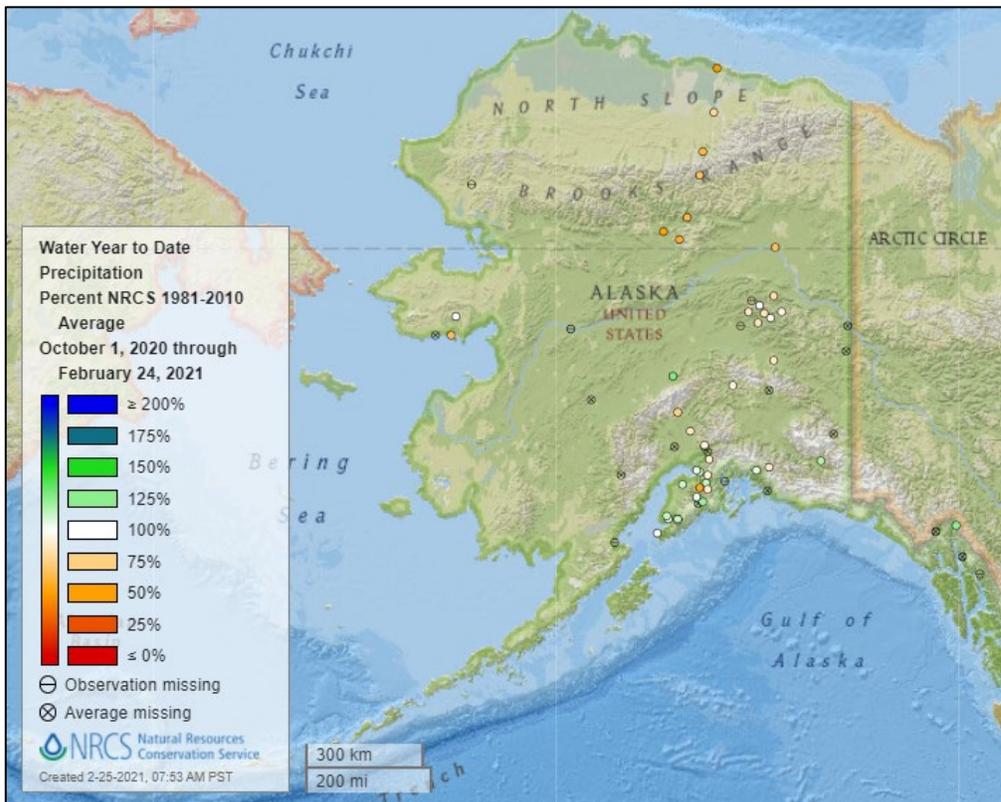


Water Year-to-Date, NRCS SNOTEL Network



[2021 water year-to-date precipitation percent of average map](#)

See also:
[2021 water year-to-date precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)



[Alaska 2021 water year-to-date precipitation percent of average map](#)

See also:
[Alaska 2021 water year-to-date precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)

Temperature

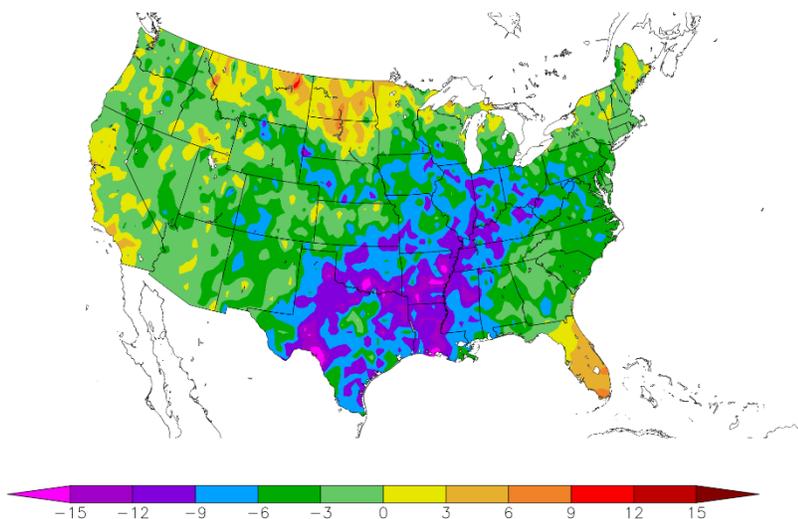
Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day temperature anomaly map](#) for the contiguous U.S.

See also: [7-day temperature \(° F\) map](#)

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
2/18/2021 – 2/24/2021



Generated 2/25/2021 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

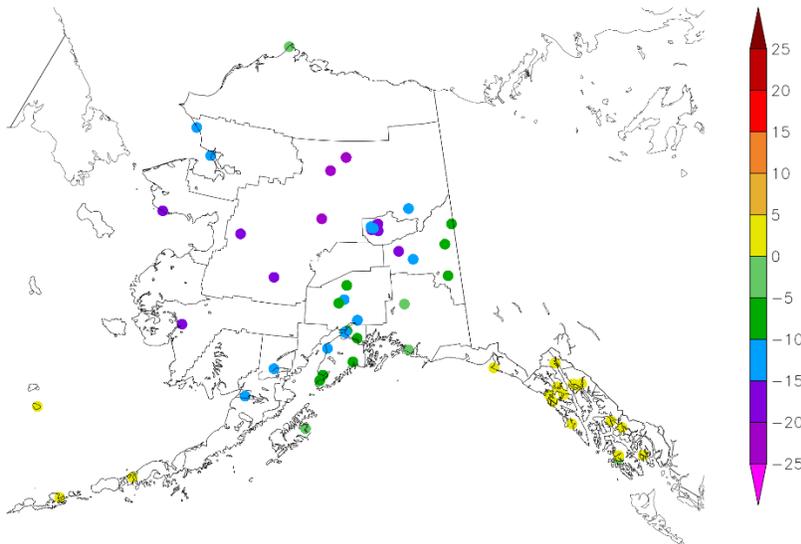
Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day temperature anomaly map](#) for Alaska.

See also: [7-day temperature \(° F\) map](#)

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
2/18/2021 – 2/24/2021



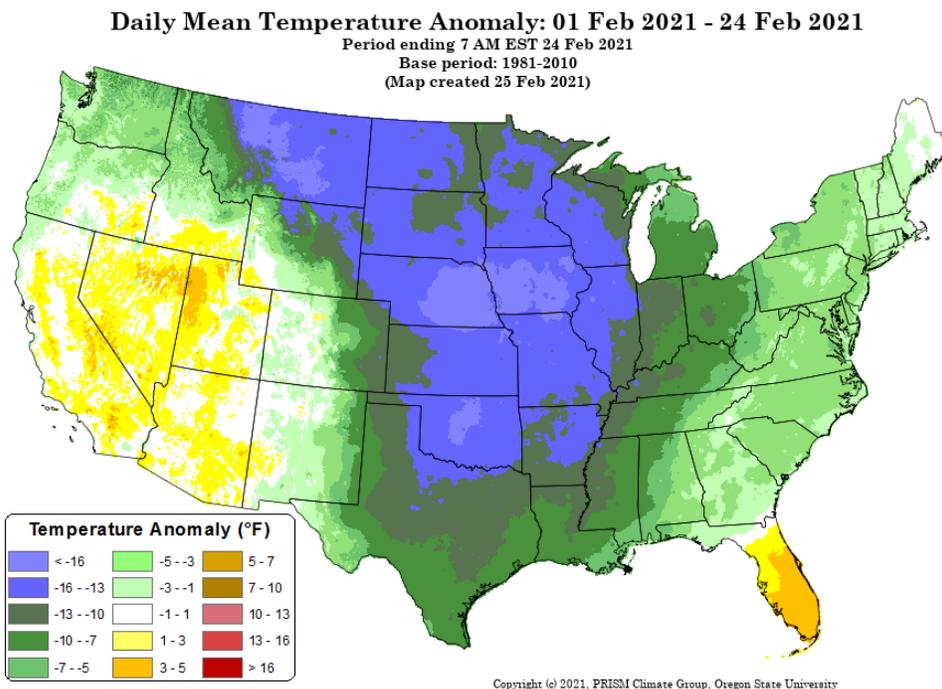
Generated 2/25/2021 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

Month-to-Date, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

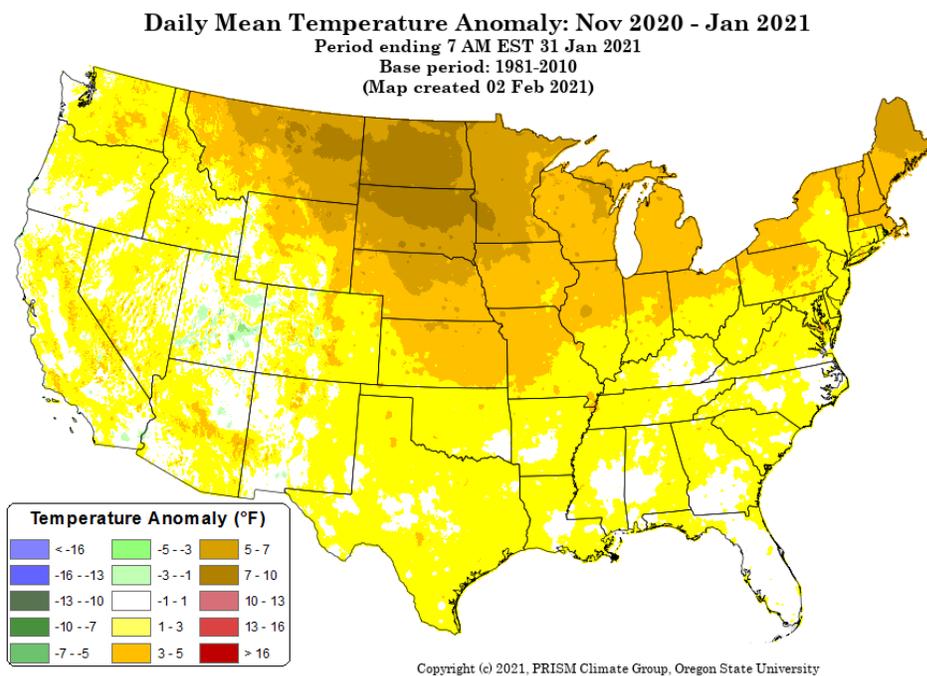
[Month-to-date national daily mean temperature anomaly map](#)



Last 3 Months, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

[November 2020 through January 2021 daily mean temperature anomaly map](#)



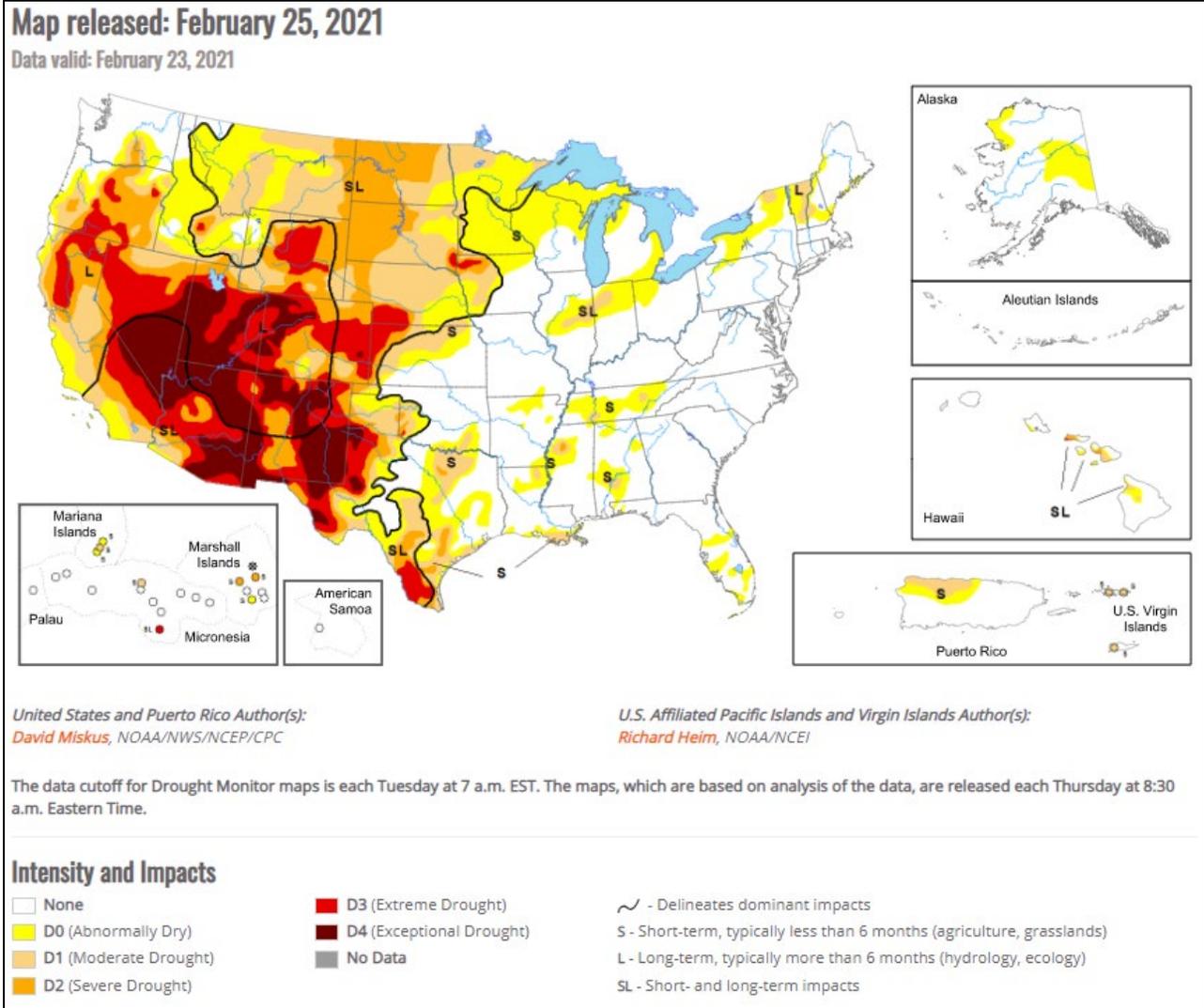
Drought

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#)

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

[U.S. Drought Portal](#)

Source: NOAA



Current [National Drought Summary](#), February 25, 2021

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

“After a frigid start to the period, especially throughout the middle third of the Nation where daily temperature anomalies were 30 to 40 degrees F below normal and readings dropped below -40 degrees F in Minnesota and 0 degrees F as far south as central Texas, temperatures finally moderated by week’s end. By Monday, highs had risen into the 40s- & 50s-degrees F in the Dakotas and 70s- and 80s-degrees F in Texas. Frequent Pacific storms battered the Northwest, and then tracked southeastward across the Northern and Central Rockies, dropping plentiful moisture on Washington, Oregon, northern California, Idaho, & western Montana, but missing most of the Southwest yet again. Storms also dropped widespread precipitation on much of the Southeast, mid-Atlantic, and coastal New England while most of the Midwest saw light frozen (snow, sleet, freezing rain) precipitation. Dry weather was observed across much of the Plains except in south-central Texas. Weekly temperatures averaged below to much-below normal throughout the lower 48 States except for central and southern Florida. Readings in Alaska remained below-normal except in the

Water and Climate Update

southwest and Aleutians, and significant precipitation was limited to along the southwest, southern, and southeastern coasts. Meanwhile, Hawaii experienced increased shower activity, especially on Kauai where some flash flooding occurred. In Puerto Rico, light showers persisted across eastern sections while the northwest remained mostly dry, and dryness/drought increased.

The ensuing 5 days (March 2-6) expects favorable odds for above normal precipitation across much of Alaska and in the Tennessee Valley and Carolinas. Subnormal precipitation should prevail across the North-Central States (northern halves of the Rockies and Plains and Great Lakes region) and along the western Gulf Coast, with Equal Chances (EC) elsewhere in the lower 48 States. Subnormal temperatures are likely in Alaska and the Far West, with above normal readings anticipated for the eastern two-thirds of the Nation (except EC for New England)."

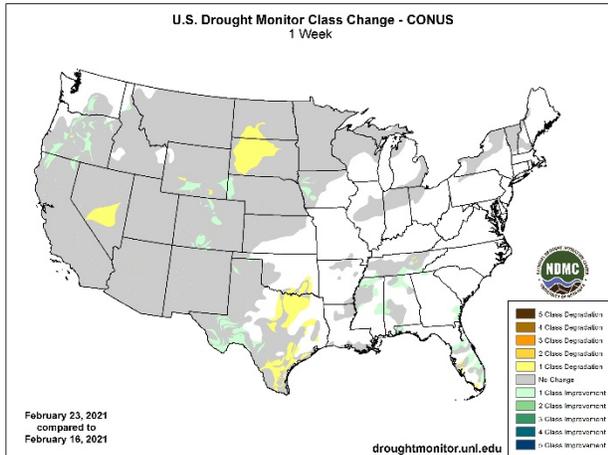
West

"Ample Pacific moisture and storms dropped decent amounts of precipitation on the Northwest, especially Washington, Oregon, northern California, Idaho, western Montana, and western Wyoming, with lesser amounts across northern Nevada, central Utah, northern and southern Colorado, and parts of New Mexico. The active Pacific storm track continued to benefit Washington, Oregon, and northern California, along with most northern and central mountains in the West. February 23 basin average SWEs continued to increase toward normal, with most basins in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, western Montana, and northwestern Wyoming at or above normal SWE. Accordingly, some slight improvements were made where recent surplus precipitation fell and the basins had SWEs exceeding 100%. With improvements made last week in northern Nevada and central Utah, and these areas still impacted from the failed Southwest summer monsoon, no changes were made this week, although the basin SWEs were up to 70-80% of normal as of Feb. 23. The light precipitation in New Mexico and eastern Arizona was not enough for any improvements this week. In California's Sierra Nevada, the Feb. 23 SWE stood at: North - 67%; Central - 72%; South - 50%; statewide summary - 65%. In contrast, central Nevada missed out on the recent storms, and with the failed summer monsoon, conditions have gotten worse, thus D4 was expanded to include central Nevada. In addition, the Impact Lines were adjusted to show that more of the drought in the West was long-term (L) since recent storminess had pushed the short-term indices into various wet categories, although the much drier in the short-term Southwest remained in SL."

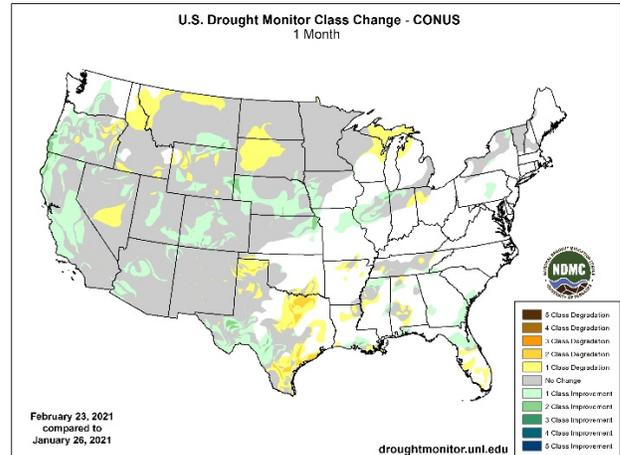
Changes in Drought Monitor Categories over Time

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

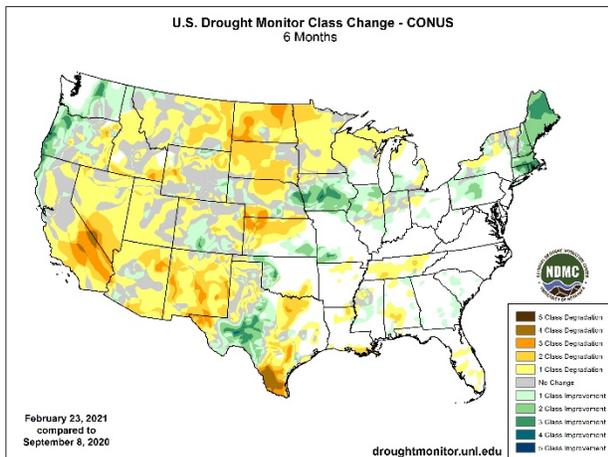
1 Week



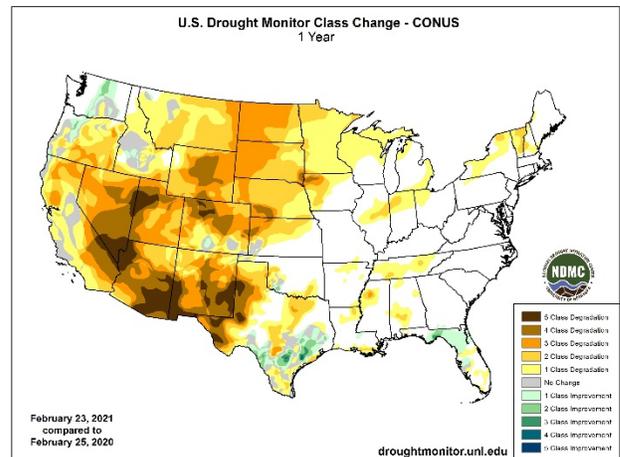
1 Month



6 Months



1 Year



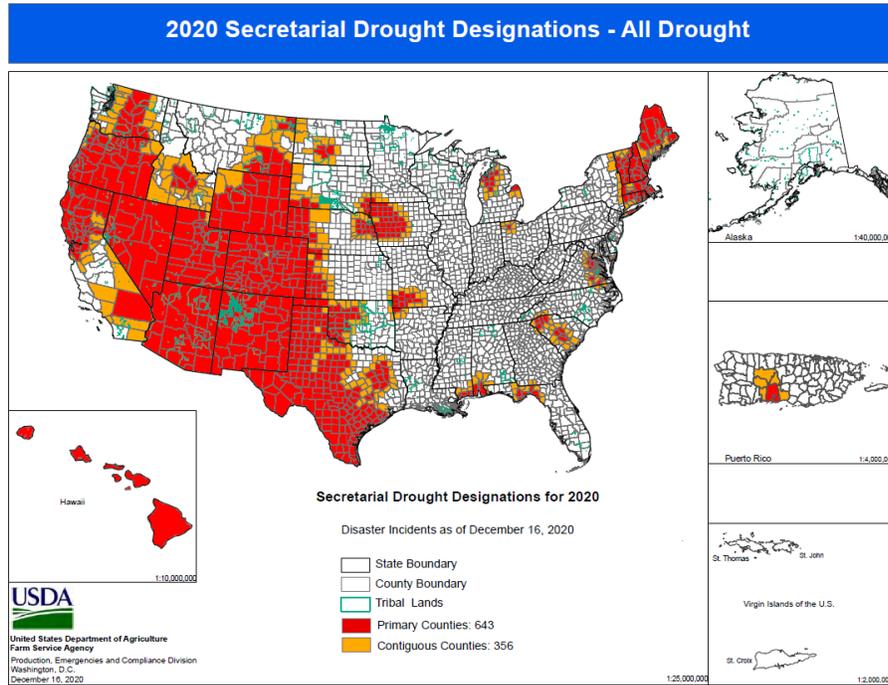
[Changes in drought conditions over the last 12 months for the contiguous U.S.](#)

Highlighted Drought Resources

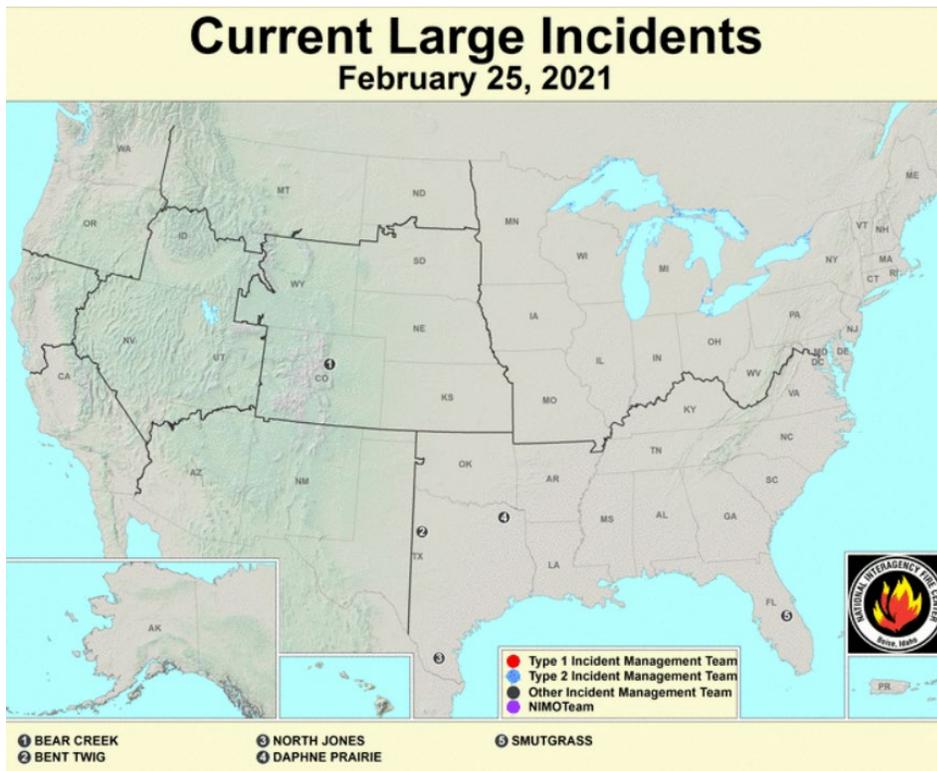
- [Drought Impact Reporter](#)
- [Quarterly Regional Climate Impacts and Outlook](#)
- [U.S. Drought Portal Indicators and Monitoring](#)
- [U.S. Population in Drought, Weekly Comparison](#)
- [USDA Disaster and Drought Information](#)

Secretarial Drought Designations

Source: USDA Farm Service Agency



Wildfires: USDA Forest Service Active Fire Mapping



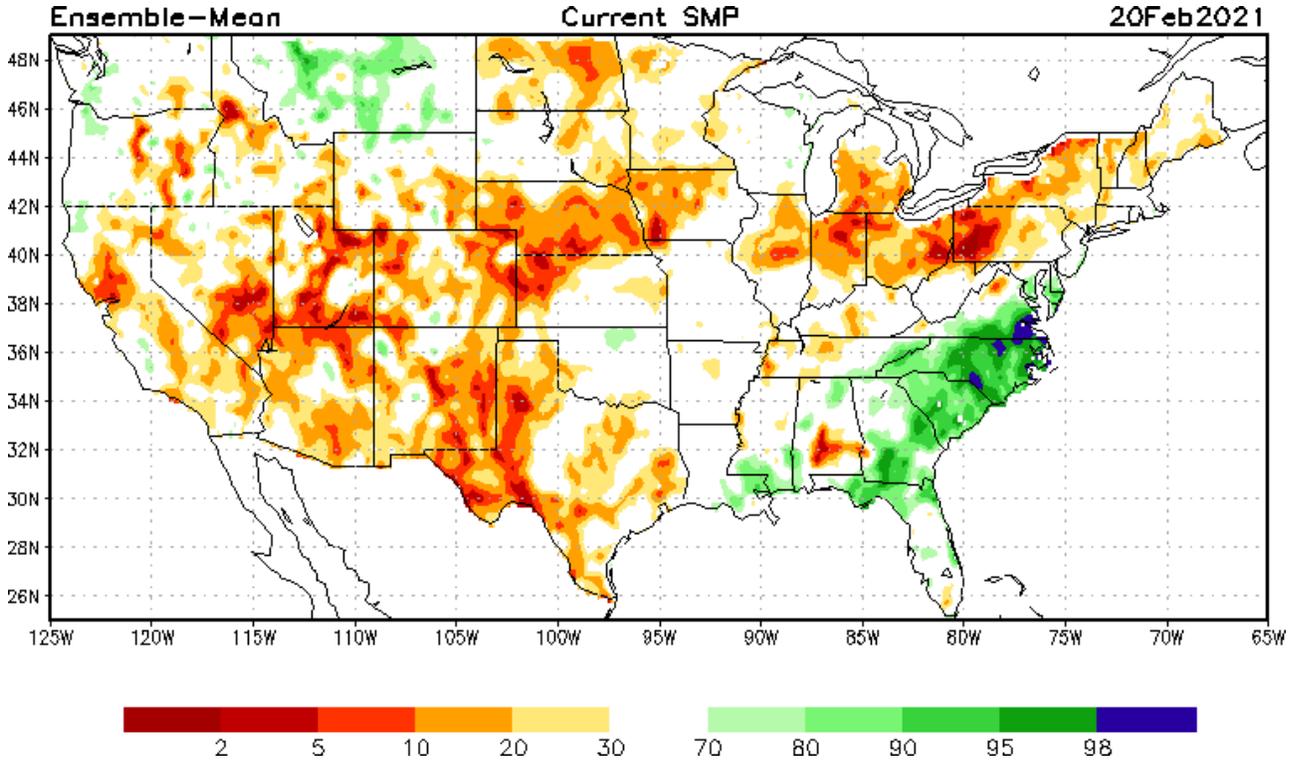
Highlighted Wildfire Resources

- [National Interagency Fire Center](#)
- [InciWeb Incident Information System](#)
- [Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook](#)

Other Climatic and Water Supply Indicators

Soil Moisture

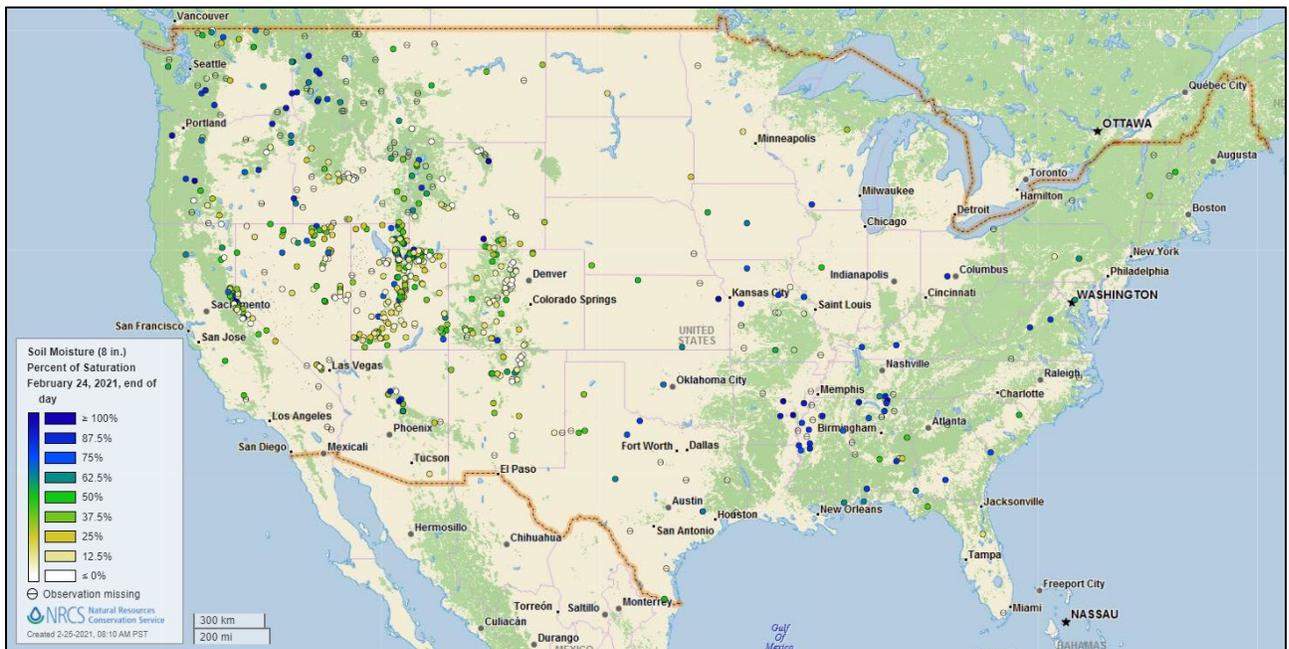
Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Prediction



[Modeled soil moisture percentiles](#) as of February 20, 2021

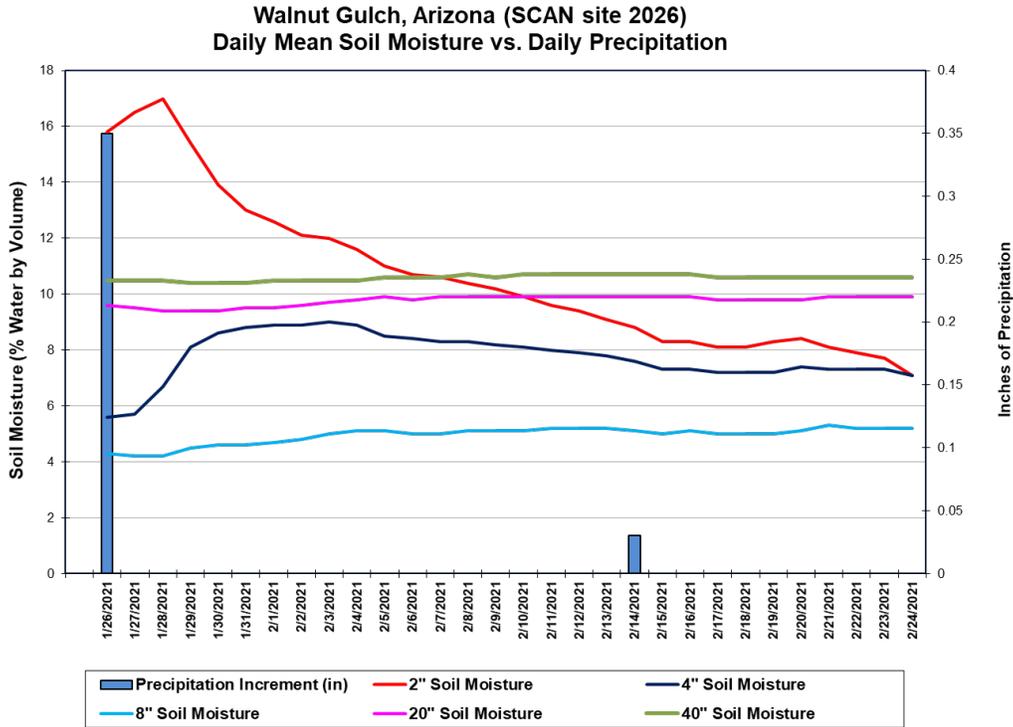
Soil Moisture Percent of Saturation

Source: NRCS SNOTEL and [Soil Climate Analysis Network](#) (SCAN)



Soil Moisture

Source: NRCS [Soil Climate Analysis Network](#) (SCAN)



This chart shows the precipitation and soil moisture for the last 30 days at the [Walnut Gulch](#) SCAN site in Arizona. Precipitation totaling 0.35 inches fell on January 26 and increased the soil moisture at the -2, -4, and -8-inch sensor depths. Accumulated precipitation for the 30-day period was 0.38 inches.

Soil Moisture Data Portals

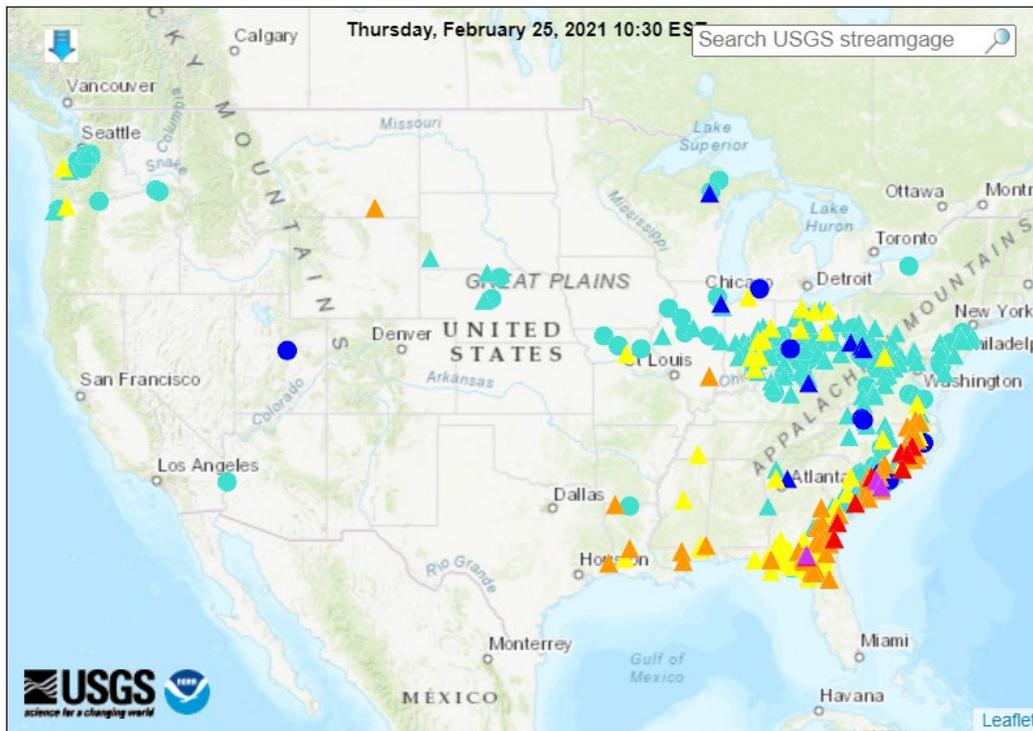
- [USCRN Soil Moisture](#)
- [National Soil Moisture Network](#)
- [NOAA Climate Prediction Center Soil Moisture](#)
- [NASA Grace](#)

Streamflow, Drought, Flood, and Runoff

Source: U.S. Geological Survey

Map of flood and high flow conditions

(61 in floods [major: 3, moderate: 10, minor: 48], 53 in near-flood)



Explanation - Percentile classes						
<95	95-98	>= 99	Above action stage	Above flood stage	Above moderate flood stage	Above major flood stage
△ Streamgage with flood stage			○ Streamgage without flood stage			

[WaterWatch: Streamflow, drought, flood, and runoff conditions](#)

Reservoir Storage

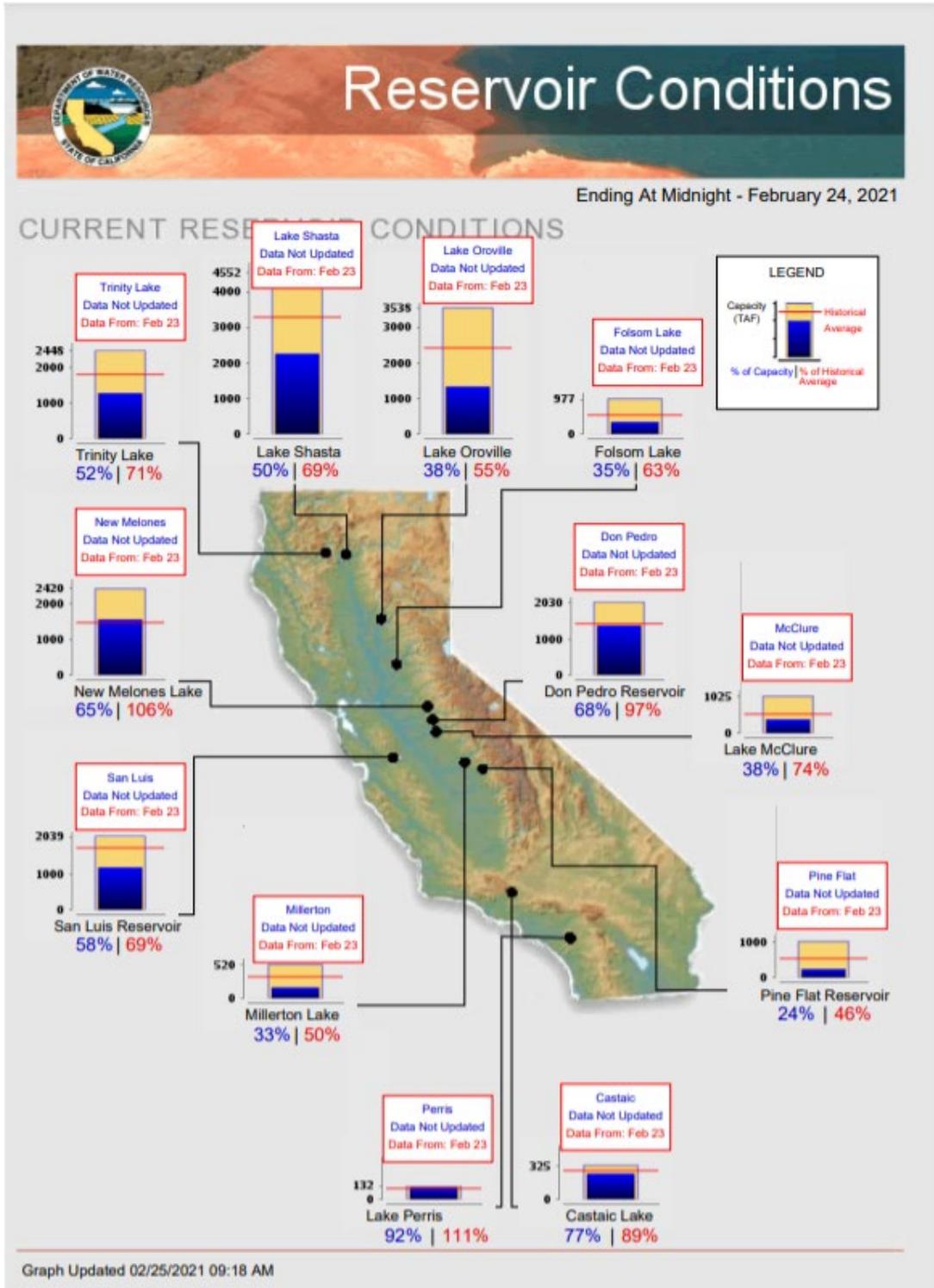
Hydromet Teacup Reservoir Depictions

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

- [Upper Colorado](#)
- [Pacific Northwest/Snake/Columbia](#)
- [Sevier River Water, Utah](#)
- [Upper Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas](#)

Current California Reservoir Conditions

Source: California Department of Water Resources



[Current California Reservoir Conditions](#)

Agricultural Weather Highlights

Author: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB

National Outlook, Thursday, February 25, 2021: “Rain will develop late today across the South, signaling the start of a period of wet weather. Five-day rainfall totals could reach 2 to 5 inches from northeastern Texas to the central and southern Appalachians. Areas outside that band of heavy rain, including Florida and the central Plains, will receive little or no precipitation. Meanwhile, stormy weather in the Pacific Northwest will linger into Friday, followed by a slightly drier regime. Other areas of the West, including California and much of the Southwest, will remain mostly dry into next week. Although the country will escape bitterly cold weather during the next several days, cooler air will overspread much of the West. Additionally, some chilly, blustery weather will affect the nation’s northern tier, especially early next week. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for March 2 – 6 calls for the likelihood of near- or above-normal temperatures nationwide, except for cooler-than-normal conditions in the Far West. Meanwhile, near- or below-normal precipitation across most of the country should contrast with wetter-than-normal weather from the Tennessee Valley eastward into Virginia and the Carolinas.”

Weather Hazards Outlook: [February 27 – March 03, 2021](#)

Source: NOAA Weather Prediction Center

U.S. Day 3-7 Hazards Outlook

[About the Hazards Outlook](#)

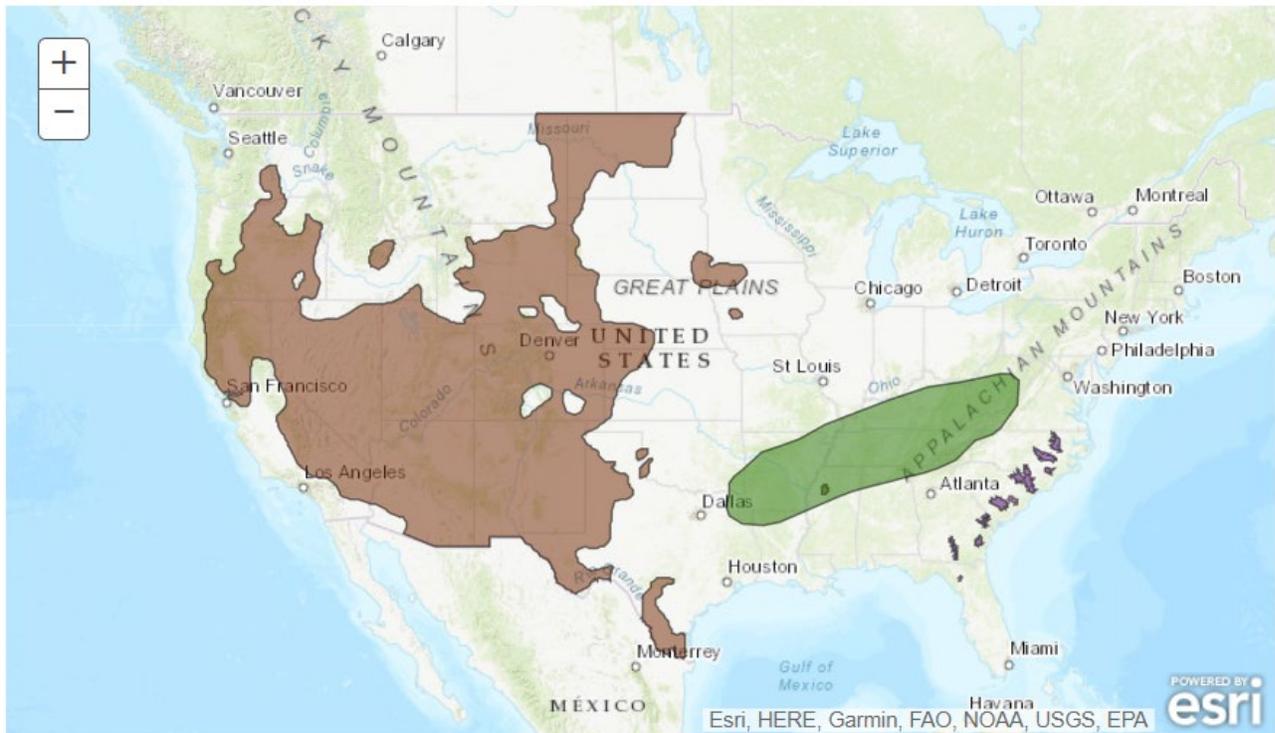
Created February 24, 2021

NOTE: These products are only created Monday through Friday. Please exercise caution using this outlook during the weekend.

Precipitation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Temperature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Legend			
	Flooding Likely		Excessive Heat
	Flooding Occurring or Imminent		High Winds
	Flooding Possible		Much Above Normal Temperatures
	Freezing Rain		Much Below Normal Temperatures
	Heavy Ice		Significant Waves
	Heavy Precipitation		Enhanced Wildfire Risk
	Heavy Rain		Severe Drought
	Heavy Snow		
	Severe Weather		

Valid February 27, 2021 - March 03, 2021

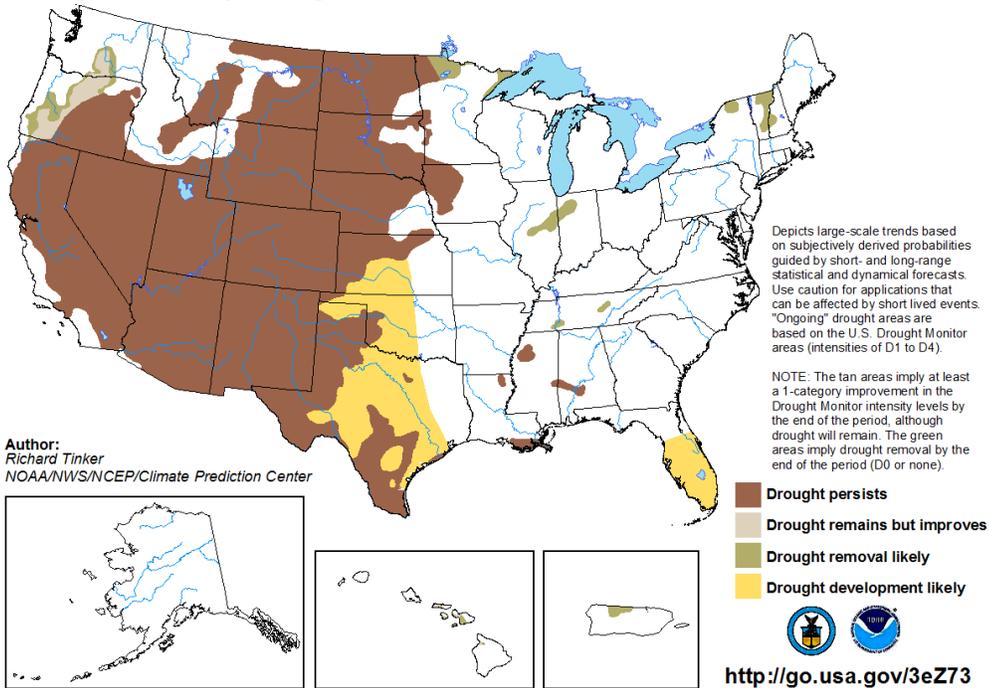


Seasonal Drought Outlook: [February 18 – May 31, 2021](#)

Source: National Weather Service

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook
Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for February 18 - May 31, 2021
Released February 18

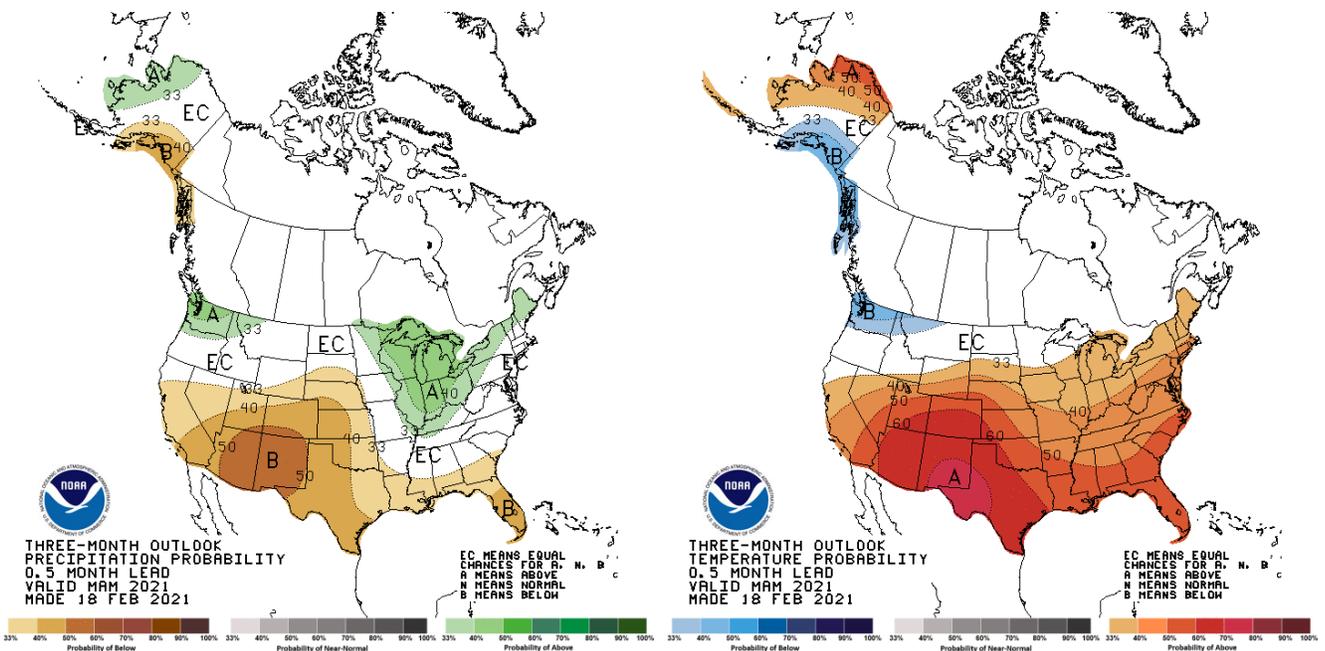


Climate Prediction Center 3-Month Outlook

Source: National Weather Service

Precipitation

Temperature



[March-April-May \(MAM\) 2021 precipitation and temperature outlook summaries](#)

More Information

The NRCS [National Water and Climate Center](#) publishes this weekly report. We welcome your feedback. If you have questions or comments, please [contact us](#).