



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

Weekly Water and Climate Update Thursday, May 7, 2015

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End of season snow survey at Mores Creek Summit, north of Idaho City in the Boise River Basin. Ron Abramovich, NRCS Water Supply Specialist is pictured.

Photo by: Aviva Braun, Meteorologist, NWS Boise, Idaho

National Outlook: A storm system currently centered over the Red River Valley of the North will drift northeastward into Canada. Meanwhile, a new storm emerging from the western U.S. will become the late-week focus for heavy rain and locally severe thunderstorms. The Plains, already battered by Wednesday's severe weather outbreak, could experience additional strong thunderstorms—especially on Saturday. Five-day rainfall totals could reach 1 to 3 inches across central portions of the Rockies and High Plains and 2 to 4 inches from the southeastern Plains into the Great Lakes region. Higher totals, approaching 6 inches, are possible in eastern Oklahoma and northeastern Texas. Meanwhile, a slow-moving low-pressure system east of the Carolinas could become a

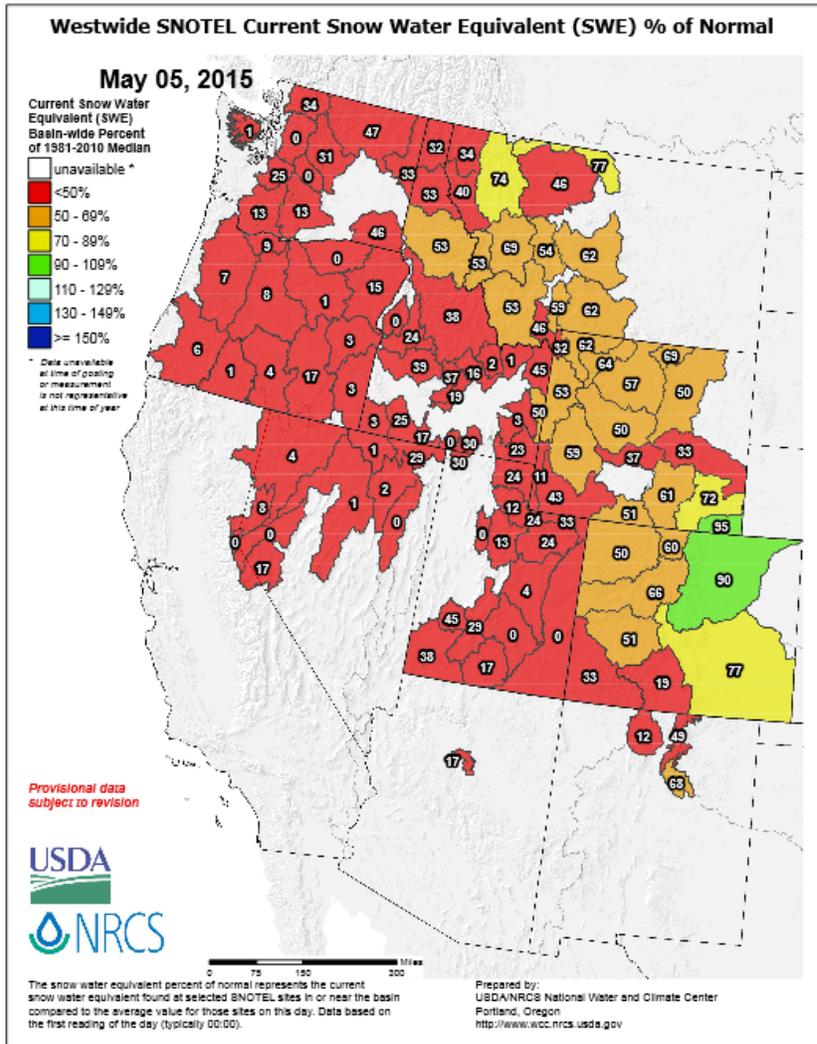
tropical storm later this week, with heavy rain possible in coastal areas. Elsewhere, cool air will gradually settle across the central U.S., while warmth will continue in the East and return to the Northwest. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for May 12 – 16 calls for near- to below-normal temperatures across the majority of the country, while warmer-than-normal weather will be confined to the Northwest and portions of the Atlantic Coast States. Meanwhile, above-normal precipitation across the Intermountain West and the nation's southern tier will contrast with drier-than-normal conditions in the Midwest and neighboring areas, including the mid-South.

Contact: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB, Washington, D.C. (202-720-2397)
Website: <http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/pubs/Daily/TODAYSWX.pdf>

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

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Snow



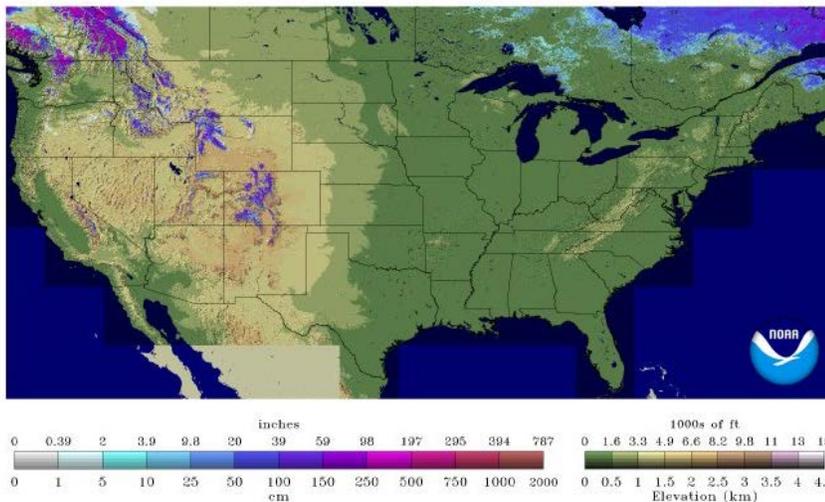
The [Westwide SNOTEL Current Snow Water Equivalent \(SWE\) % of Normal map](#) shows large snowpack deficits in many basins (red areas) where the snowpack, if it still exists, is in full melt. The lowest snowpack, as compared to normal occurred in most of Washington, all of Oregon, Nevada, California, Arizona, most of Utah, much of Idaho, and scattered areas in other states. Some basins have zero SWE at this time. Below normal snowpacks (orange and yellow areas) are located in eastern Washington, Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, northern New Mexico, and northwest Utah

The snowpack conditions are near normal in one basin in southeast Wyoming and one basin in northeast Colorado are near normal.

There are no basins in the West reporting above average conditions.

National Snow 2014 Analysis 2015
 NOHRSC

Snow Depth
 2015-05-07 06 UTC



The snow depth map as reported from the [NWS NOHRSC](#) for May 7, 2015, shows a decrease in snow cover from last week. Snow now covers 2.0% of the continental U.S. This includes snow that is primarily in the highest mountains in the West.

Precipitation

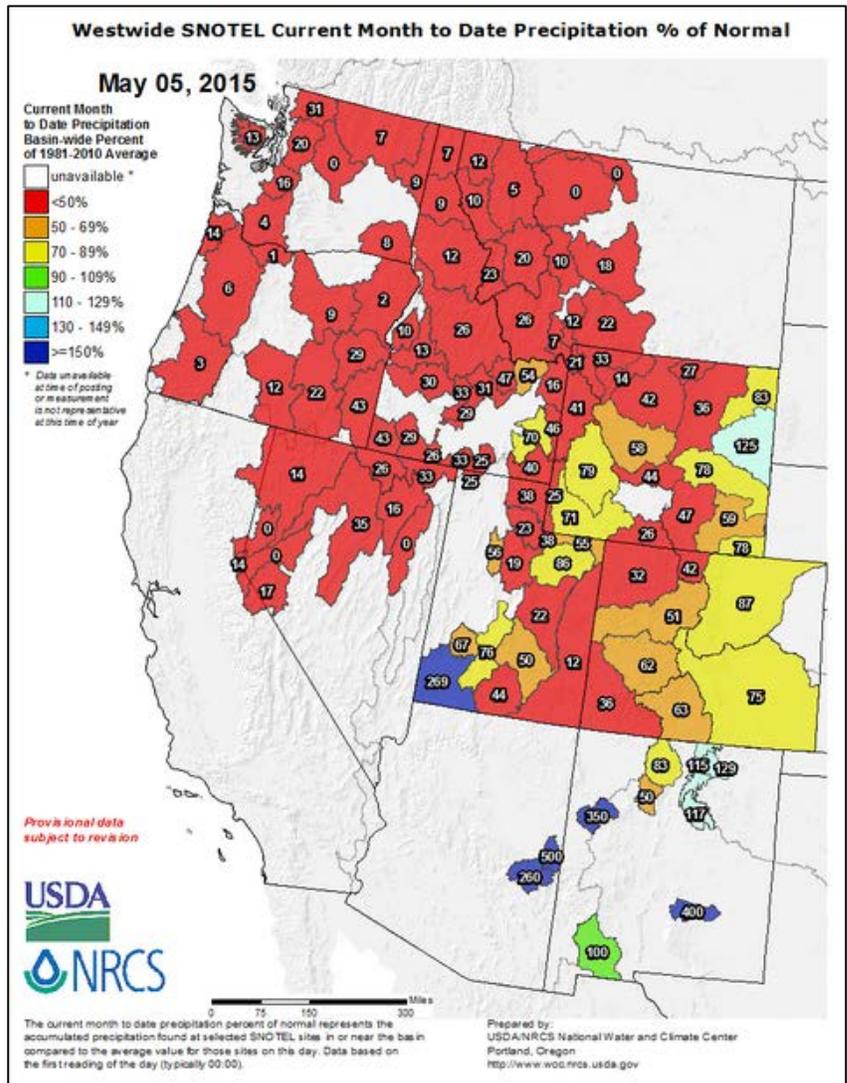
In the West, the SNOTEL [precipitation percent of normal map](#) for early May shows a pattern of dry conditions in the northern states and wet conditions in the southern states. The wet conditions are in eastern Wyoming, southwest Utah, Arizona, and much of New Mexico (blue areas).

Near normal conditions were reported only in southern New Mexico (green areas).

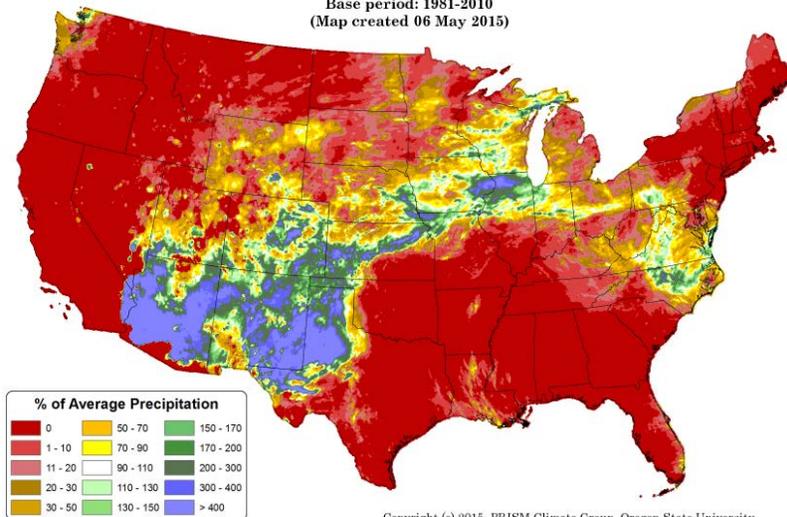
Less than normal precipitation in May was reported in many parts of Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, and southwest Idaho (orange and yellow areas).

Very low precipitation was reported in Washington, Oregon, Montana, California, Nevada, most of Idaho, parts of Wyoming, parts of Utah, and western Colorado (red area).

Click on most maps in this report to enlarge and see the latest available update.



Total Precipitation Anomaly: 01 May 2015 - 05 May 2015
 Period ending 7 AM EST 05 May 2015
 Base period: 1981-2010
 (Map created 06 May 2015)



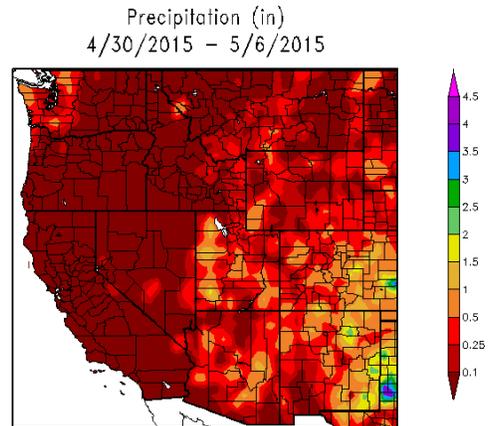
In early May, the national total [precipitation anomaly](#) pattern reveals some higher than normal precipitation, primarily across the southwest U.S. Areas that saw abundant precipitation include Arizona, New Mexico, and western Texas northeast to northern Illinois. Additional moisture fell in the mid-Atlantic states. There was little or no precipitation in most of the West, the South, and the Northeast (red and dark orange areas).

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

Weekly Water and Climate Update

The [ACIS 7-day](#) total precipitation map for the western U.S. shows the high precipitation in Colorado and New Mexico. The highest precipitation was reported in southeast Colorado. Light and widely scattered precipitation also was reported Arizona, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and Washington.

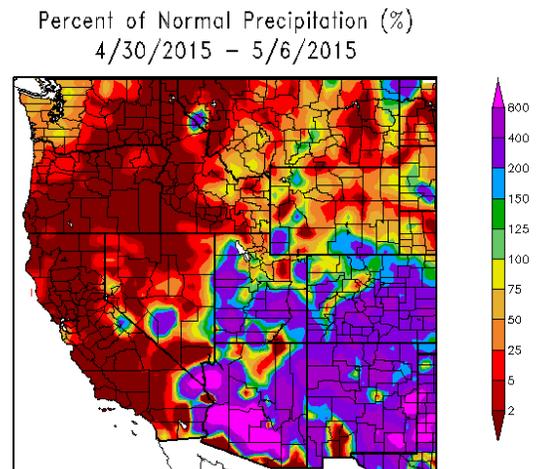
Little to no precipitation fell in many areas of the West this week (dark red). The largest contiguous dry area covered an area in California, Nevada, Oregon, eastern Washington, Idaho, and northwest Montana.



This ACIS percent of normal [map](#) of the West for the last seven days shows that precipitation was above normal across much of the Southwest. The heaviest percent of normal precipitation fell in southern Arizona and southeast New Mexico (magenta areas).

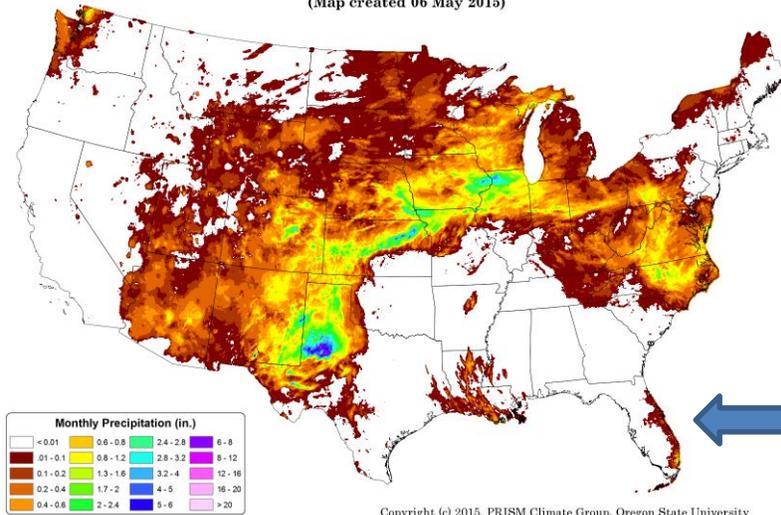
Very dry conditions for the week were reported in widely scattered areas of California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, with a few scattered dry areas elsewhere (red areas).

Percent of normal precipitation may be exaggerated in areas where the average for this seven-day period is at or near zero.



Weekly Water and Climate Update

Total Precipitation: 01 May 2015 - 05 May 2015
 Period ending 7 AM EST 05 May 2015
 (Map created 06 May 2015)



For early May 2015, the [total precipitation](#) across the continental U.S. was heaviest in the Southwest from New Mexico and Texas to southern Illinois and east to the mid-Atlantic states. Scattered precipitation also fell elsewhere. In contrast, much of the West, the South, and the Northeast were mainly dry. Many states saw no precipitation for the early May period.

See [Go Hydrology](#) for current and forecast conditions over southern Florida.

Copyright (c) 2015, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University

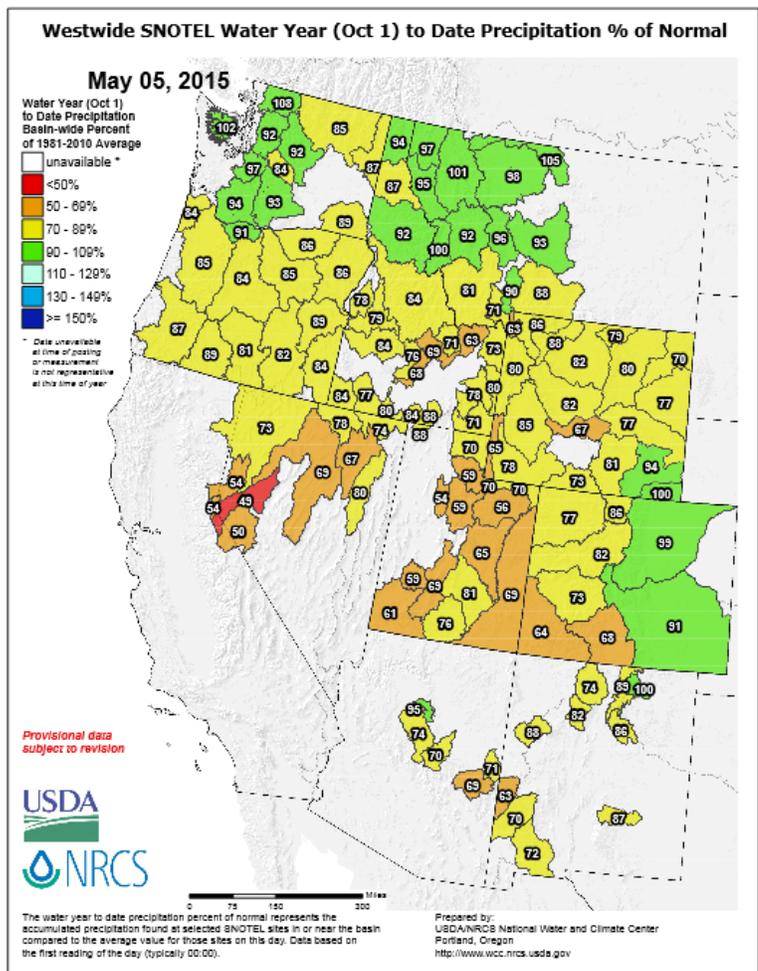
For the [2015 Water Year](#) that began on October 1, 2014, there are no basins in the West that are reporting much above normal precipitation.

Many basins across the West have near normal conditions for this part of the Water Year (mapped in green). These conditions include most of Montana, parts of Wyoming, eastern Colorado, much of Washington, parts of Oregon, northern Idaho, and small areas in Arizona, and New Mexico.

Several areas in the West have less than normal precipitation for the Water Year. These include basins in Idaho, Wyoming, western Colorado, Utah, California, Nevada, Arizona, most of New Mexico, Oregon, and a few in Washington and Montana (mapped in yellow and orange).

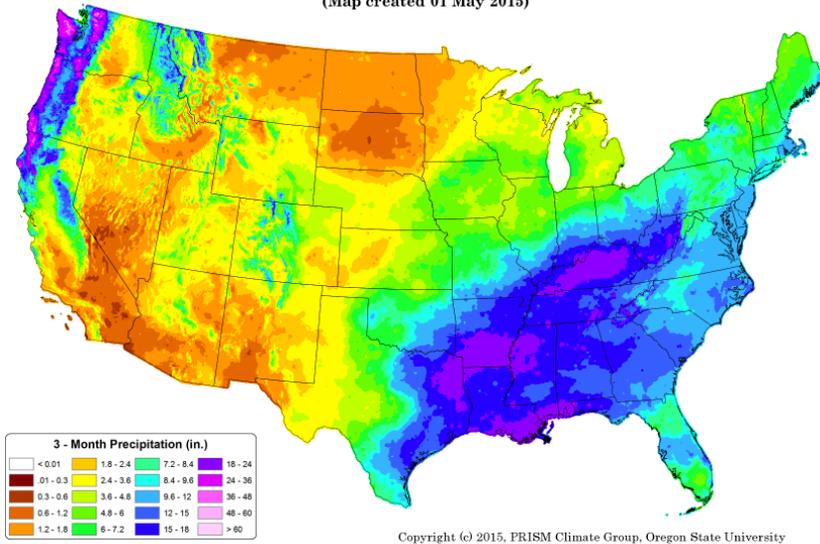
One basin on the Nevada/California border is reporting less than 50% of normal at this time for the Water Year (red area).

As the Water Year advances, it becomes more difficult for river basins to change bin categories.



Weekly Water and Climate Update

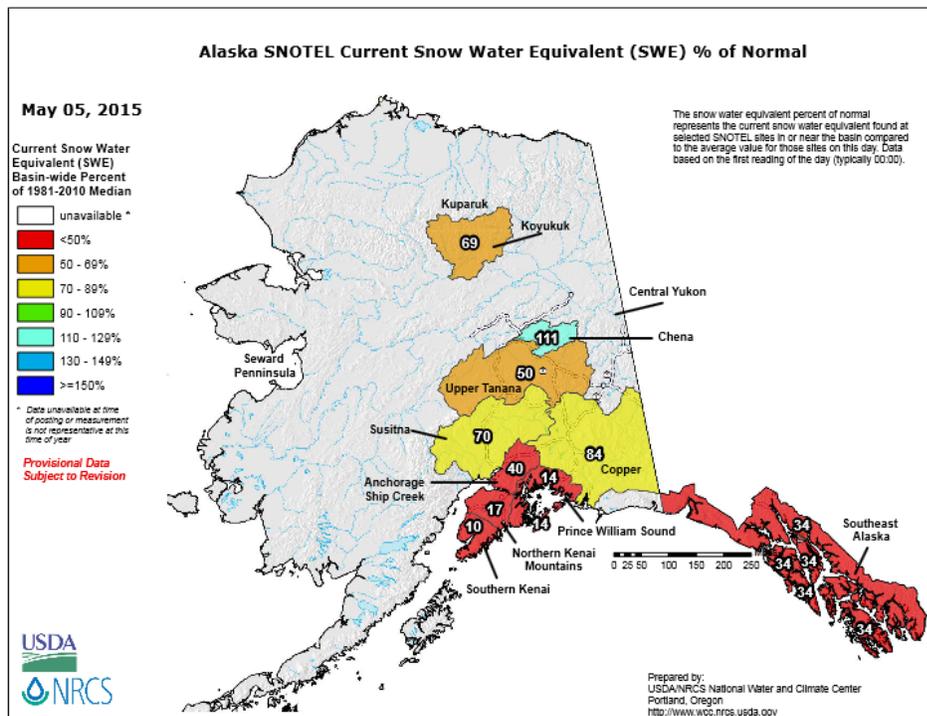
Total Precipitation: February 2015 - April 2015
 Period ending 7 AM EST 30 Apr 2015
 (Map created 01 May 2015)



The national map of the [three-month period](#) (February - April) shows that the southcentral region of the nation received precipitation from 2.4 inches to greater than 18 inches. Parts of the West, especially along the Pacific coast and in the mountains, also received significant precipitation. The highest amounts over 48 inches were recorded in Washington.

In contrast to the eastern U.S. and Pacific coast, parts of the West, the northern Great Plains, and much of the Midwest received totals of less than 2.4 inches.

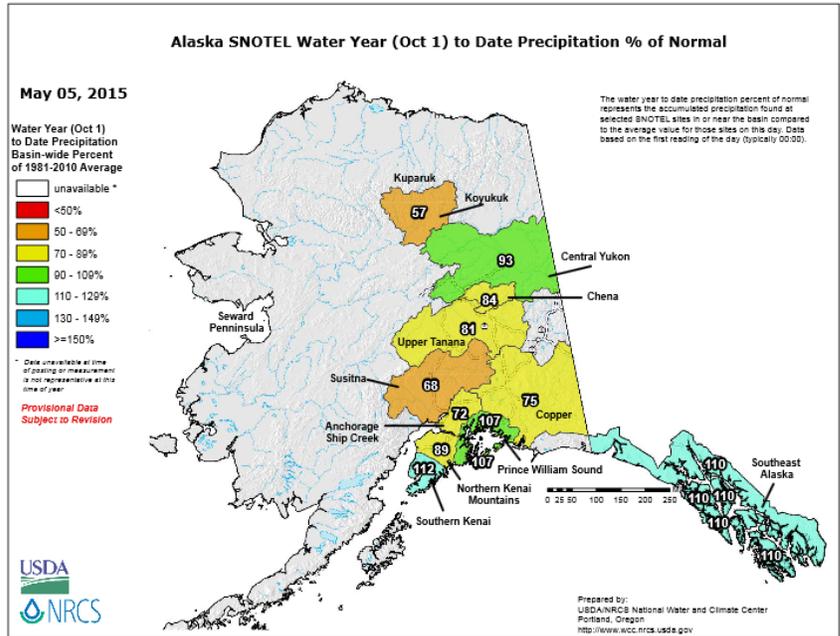
Alaska Snow Water Equivalent & Precipitation Conditions



The [Alaska SNOTEL current SWE percent of normal map](#) shows below normal conditions across most of the state, with the exception of the Chena Basins, which are above normal. The areas with much below normal snowpack are on the Kenai Peninsula, Prince William Sound, Anchorage/Ship Creek, and southeast basins. See the [Alaska update report](#) for individual station data.

Weekly Water and Climate Update

The [Alaska Water Year to Date Precipitation Percent of Normal](#) map shows near to above normal conditions for the southern and southeast parts of the state. Near normal conditions are reported for the central Yukon in interior Alaska. Much of the remainder of interior Alaska is reporting drier than normal conditions. This is in contrast to the poor snow conditions due to warm temperatures across southern Alaska. See the [Alaska update report](#) for individual station data.

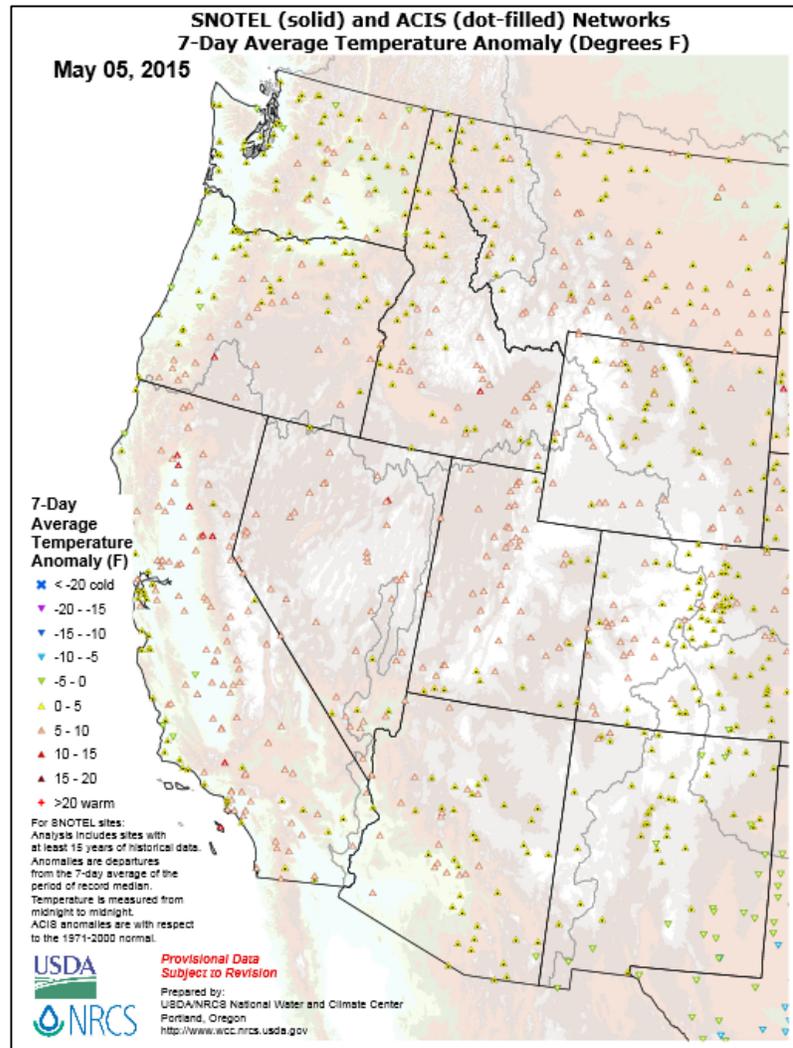


Temperature

The SNOTEL and ACIS [7-day temperature anomaly](#) map for the western U.S. shows much of the West was near normal. There were a few stations in northern California, one in southwest Oregon, and one in central Idaho with high temperature anomalies in the **+10 -15** degrees F range.

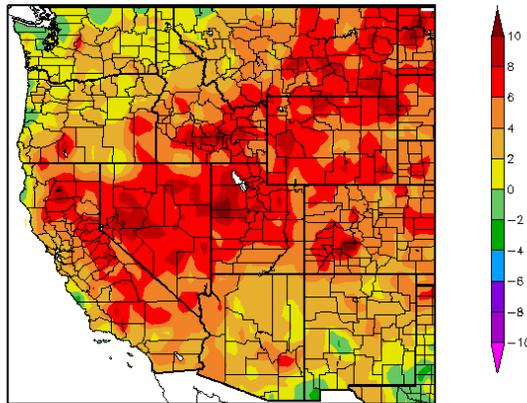
Most of the West reported near normal temperatures for the week.

There were no stations reporting cool anomalies.



Weekly Water and Climate Update

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
4/30/2015 – 5/6/2015



The [ACIS](#) map of the 7-day average temperature anomalies in the West ending May 6 shows that the region had a warmer than normal week. The greatest positive temperature departures occurred in many states, with the highest anomaly ($>+8^{\circ}\text{F}$) occurring in west central Utah. The largest negative temperature departures were slightly less than normal in southern New Mexico ($<-2^{\circ}\text{F}$).

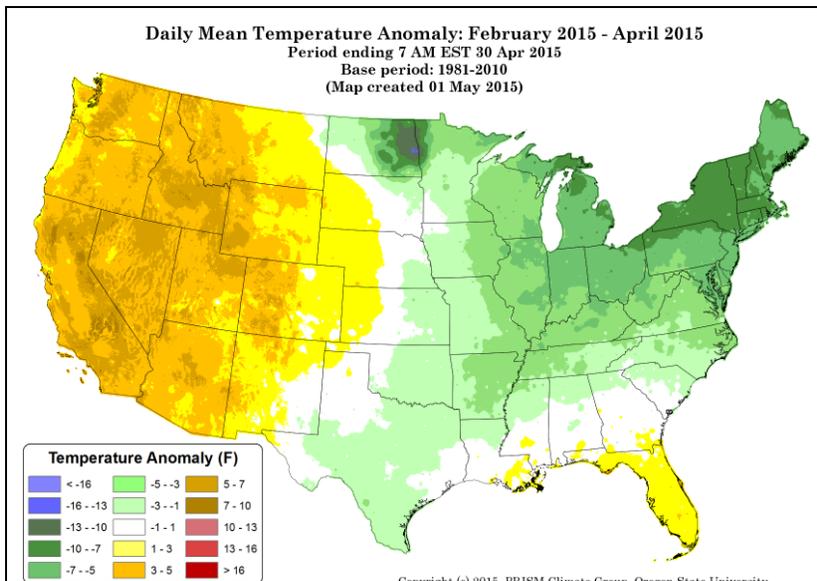
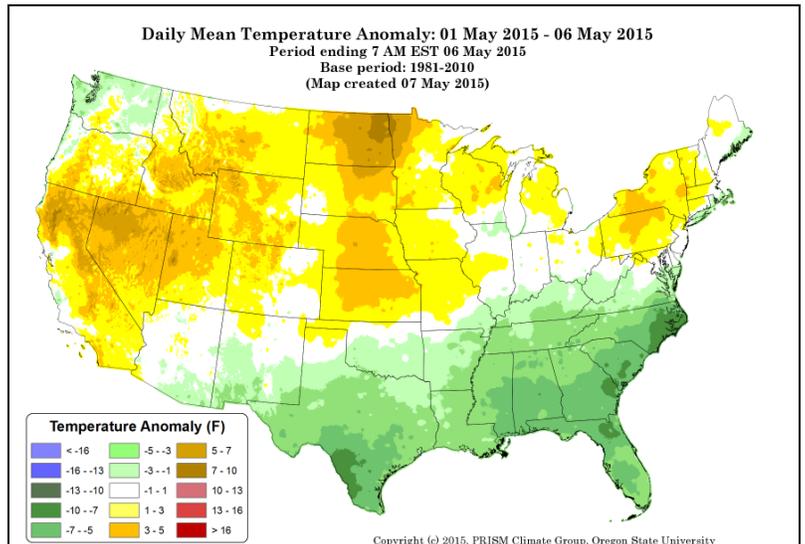
Also, see [Dashboard](#) and the [Westwide Drought Tracker](#)

Generated 5/7/2015 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

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.

For early May 2015, the national daily mean temperature anomaly [map](#) shows a cool region over much of Texas to the Southeast, where several areas reported the largest cool anomaly ($<-7^{\circ}\text{F}$). In contrast, above normal temperatures were recorded primarily in much of the West and northern Great Plains, with the largest departures in northern California and northeast North Dakota ($>+7^{\circ}\text{F}$).



The February - April national daily mean temperature anomalies for the U.S. in this [climate map](#) shows the West and Southeast had above normal temperatures ($>+7^{\circ}\text{F}$). The northern Plains and the Northeast reported normal to slightly cooler than normal temperatures for this period, with the coolest temperatures in a large area covering most of the Midwest and the Northeast. The coolest anomalies were in the Red River of the North basin in North Dakota and Minnesota ($<-13^{\circ}\text{F}$).

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Weather and Drought Summary

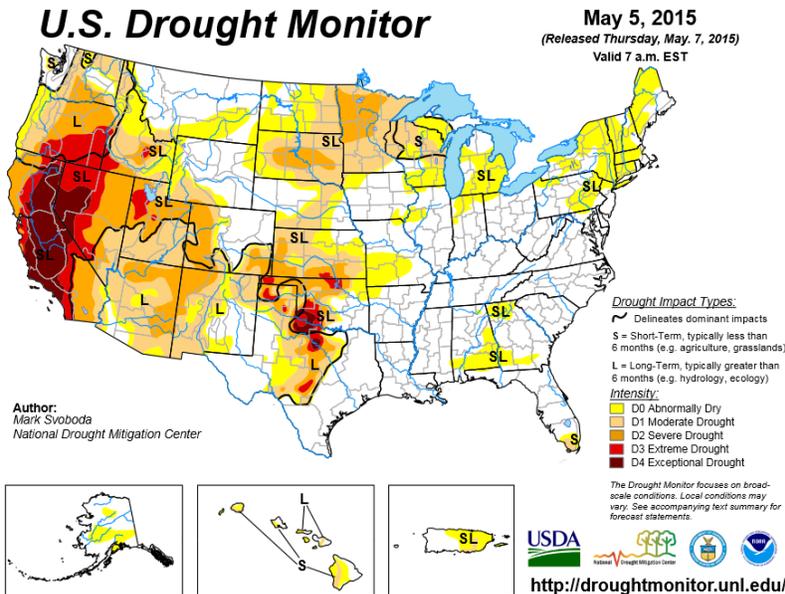
[National Drought Summary](#) – May 5, 2015

The following **Weather and Drought Summary** is provided by this week's NDMC Drought Author, Mark Svoboda, National Drought Mitigation Center.

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

“For the contiguous 48 states, the U.S. Drought Monitor showed 37.79 percent of the area in moderate drought or worse, compared with 37.41 percent a week earlier. Drought now affects 72,236,554 people, compared with 73,703,377 a week earlier.

For all 50 U.S. states and Puerto Rico, the U.S. Drought Monitor showed 31.61 percent of the area in moderate drought or worse, compared with 31.30 percent a week earlier. Drought now affects 72,683,826 people, compared with 74,051,306 a week earlier.”



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

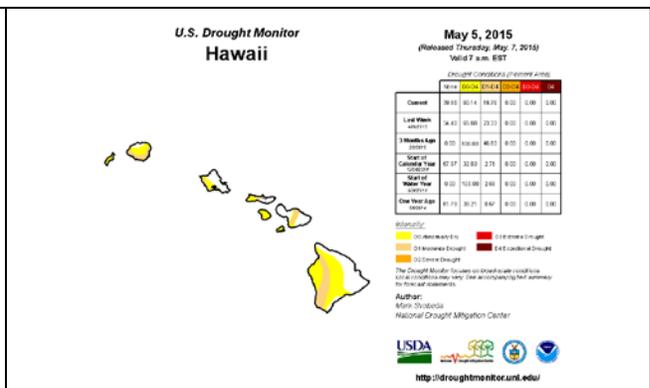
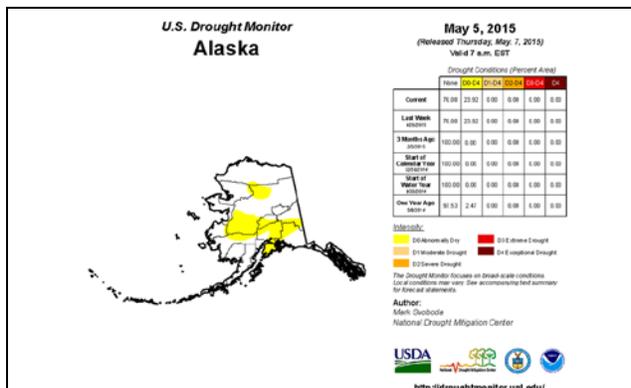
[Current Drought Monitor](#) weekly summary. The exceptional D4 levels of drought are scattered across CA, NV, TX, and OK.

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](#).
New: [ENSO Blog](#).

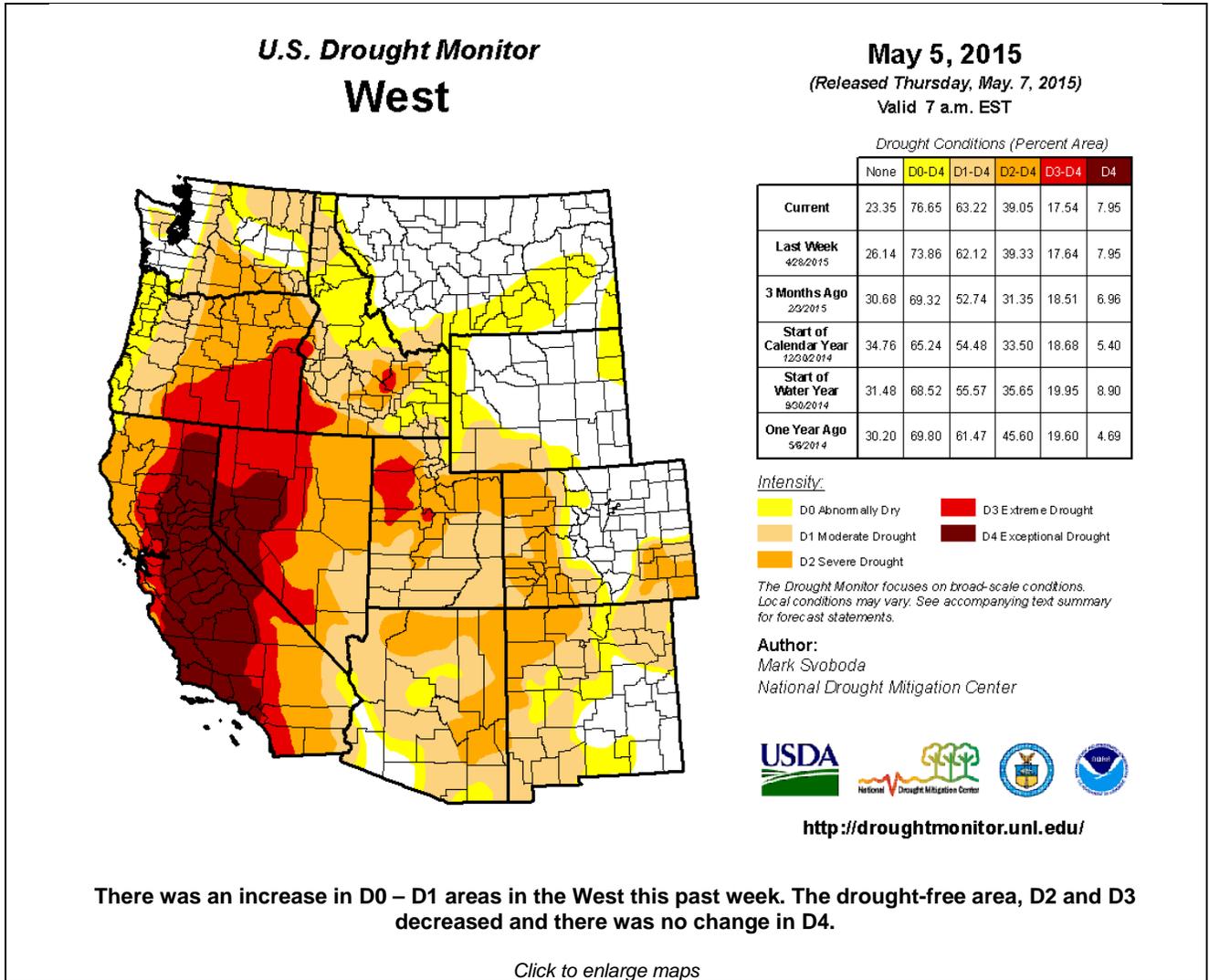
Drought Management Resources:

- ✓ <http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/Drought/AgInDrought.pdf>
- ✓ [Watch AgDay TV](#)
- ✓ [Drought Impacts Webinar Series](#)
- ✓ [NIDIS Quarterly Climate Impacts and Outlook](#)
- ✓ [The Spring 2014 edition of DroughtScope](#)
- ✓ [U.S. Crops in Drought](#)



“The 49th and 50th States show normal to moderate drought conditions. There was no change in Alaska and there was a decrease in D1 and D0 in Hawaii this week. 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 that follow, click [here](#).”

Weekly Water and Climate Update



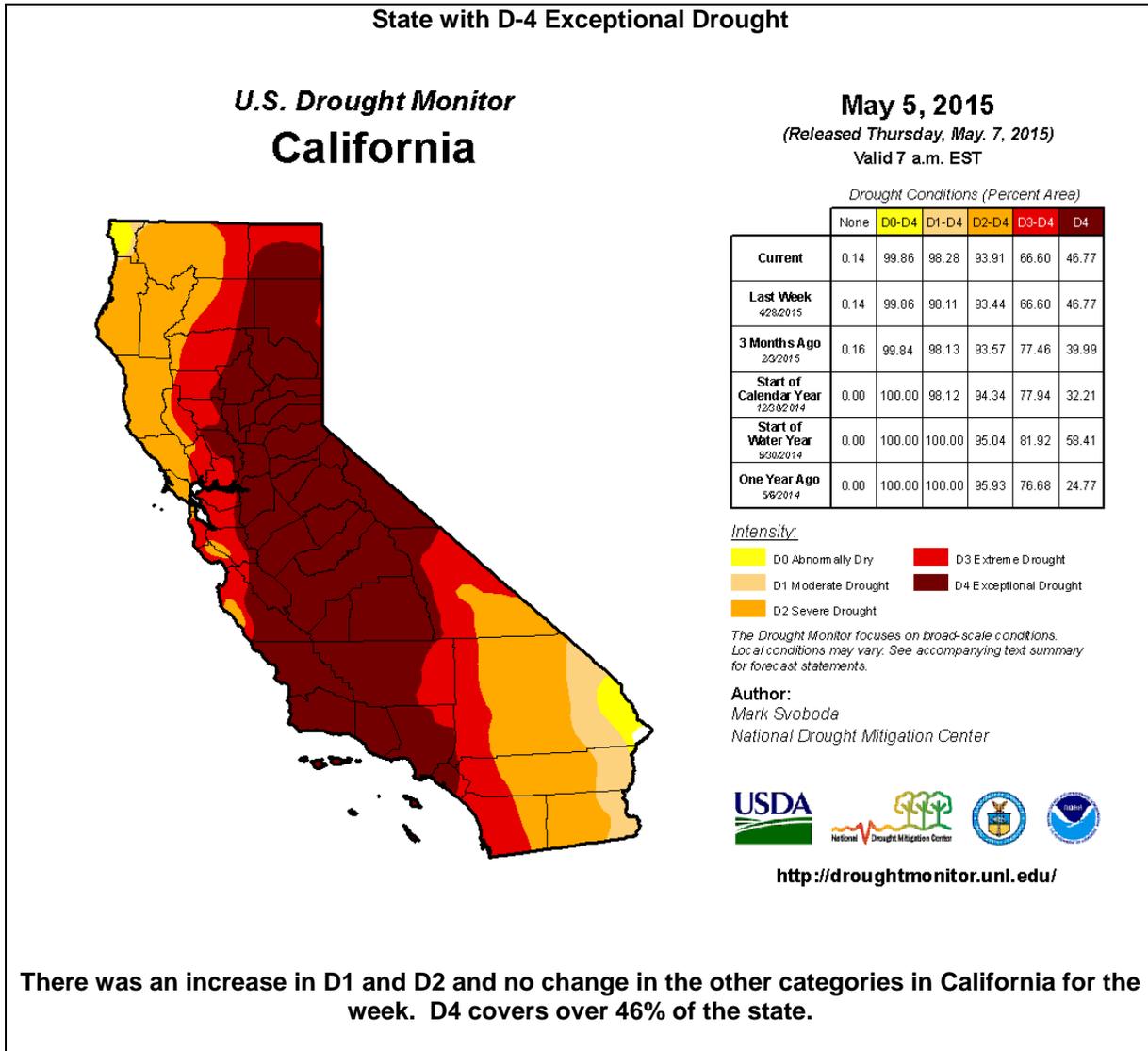
Risk Management Web Resources

Drought Monitor for the [Western States](#). Drought Impact Reporter for [New Mexico](#), [California Data Exchange Center](#) & [Flood Management Intermountain West Climate Dashboard](#)
[California Sierra Nevada-related snow pack](#)

U.S. [Impacts](#) during the past week:

- KS - [Disease, drought harming wheat crop](#) - Apr 28
- MT - [Ranchers from drought states turn to Montana for replacement cattle](#) – Apr 26
- ID- [SW Idaho Farmers Juggle Thin Water Allotments](#) – Apr 25
- WEST - [Drought may bring West Coast brownouts this summer: energy secretary](#) – Apr 27
- WA - [Fire officials anticipate "challenging summer"](#) – Apr 28
- WA - [Roza irrigators seek Sunnyside water to lessen hit of Yakima Basin drought](#) – Apr 28

Weekly Water and Climate Update



[CA Drought Information Resources](#)

[Drought News from California:](#)

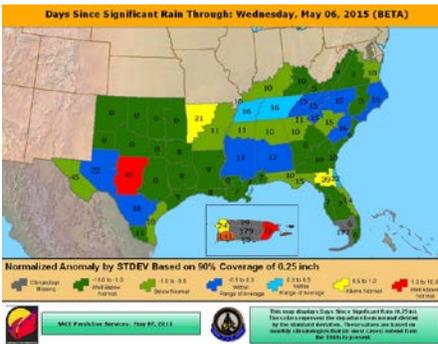
- [California's Central Valley Sinking Faster Than Ever Before As Farmers Drill For Water During Drought – Apr 26](#)
- [More fallowing expected as rice planting gets underway – Apr 29](#)
- [California snowpack survey canceled: 'Drought is severe' – May 1](#)
- [Amid low oxygen levels, Lake Tahoe trout relocation goes swimmingly – Apr 23](#)
- [California Senate Democrats call out Jerry Brown over water – Apr 30](#)
- [Governor proposes \\$10,000 fine for worst water wasters – Apr 28](#)
- [Critics take aim at Nestlé bottled water plant in Sacramento – Apr 25](#)
- [Drought Frames Economic Divide of Californians – Apr 26](#)
- [Part of Sacramento River closed to salmon fishing – Apr 28](#)
- [SAN JACINTO: Mud run canceled due to drought – Apr 27](#)
- [Yosemite's Half Dome opens three weeks early because of California's drought – Apr 30](#)

Weekly Water and Climate Update

[Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District offers to sell water to Bay Area – Apr 28](#)

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

Texas Drought News:
[Heavy rain boosts 2015 rainfall above average – Apr 27](#)

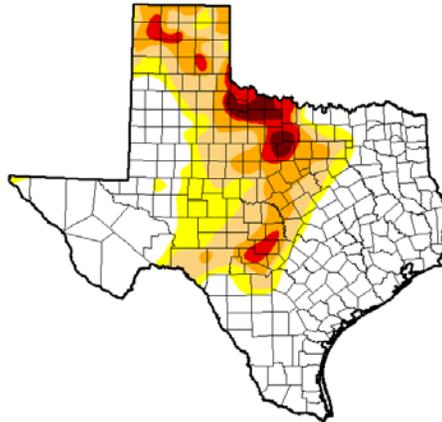


[Days since Significant Rain Summary](#)

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

U.S. Drought Monitor Texas

May 5, 2015
 (Released Thursday, May 7, 2015)
 Valid 7 a.m. EST



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	59.68	40.32	29.55	15.50	5.40	1.06
Last Week 4/26/2015	59.09	41.11	30.71	15.83	5.57	2.02
3 Months Ago 2/29/2015	43.52	56.48	38.57	22.76	11.24	2.82
Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2015	34.27	65.63	44.60	25.73	11.70	3.17
Start of Water Year 8/1/2014	26.92	71.08	48.95	29.54	11.26	2.89
One Year Ago 5/6/2014	5.11	94.89	83.35	65.13	46.17	21.26

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:
 Mark Svoboda
 National Drought Mitigation Center

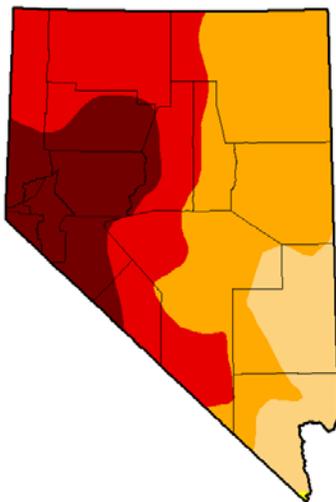
USDA National Drought Mitigation Center
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

There was a decrease in all drought categories in Texas this past week. The drought-free areas increased this week.

State with D-4 Exceptional Drought

U.S. Drought Monitor Nevada

May 5, 2015
 (Released Thursday, May 7, 2015)
 Valid 7 a.m. EST



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	99.93	97.00	49.21	18.38
Last Week 4/26/2015	0.00	100.00	99.93	97.00	49.21	18.38
3 Months Ago 2/29/2015	0.00	100.00	99.93	63.08	47.95	17.43
Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2015	0.00	100.00	96.99	68.25	40.38	11.99
Start of Water Year 8/1/2014	0.00	100.00	97.04	69.89	48.38	11.89
One Year Ago 5/6/2014	0.00	100.00	100.00	84.40	38.73	8.24

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:
 Mark Svoboda
 National Drought Mitigation Center

USDA National Drought Mitigation Center
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

There was no change in Nevada for the week.

Nevada Drought News:

[BLM: Lack of precipitation a bad sign for horses, cows – Apr 29](#)
[What Nevada has done to conserve water may serve as example for California – Apr 27](#)

Weekly Water and Climate Update

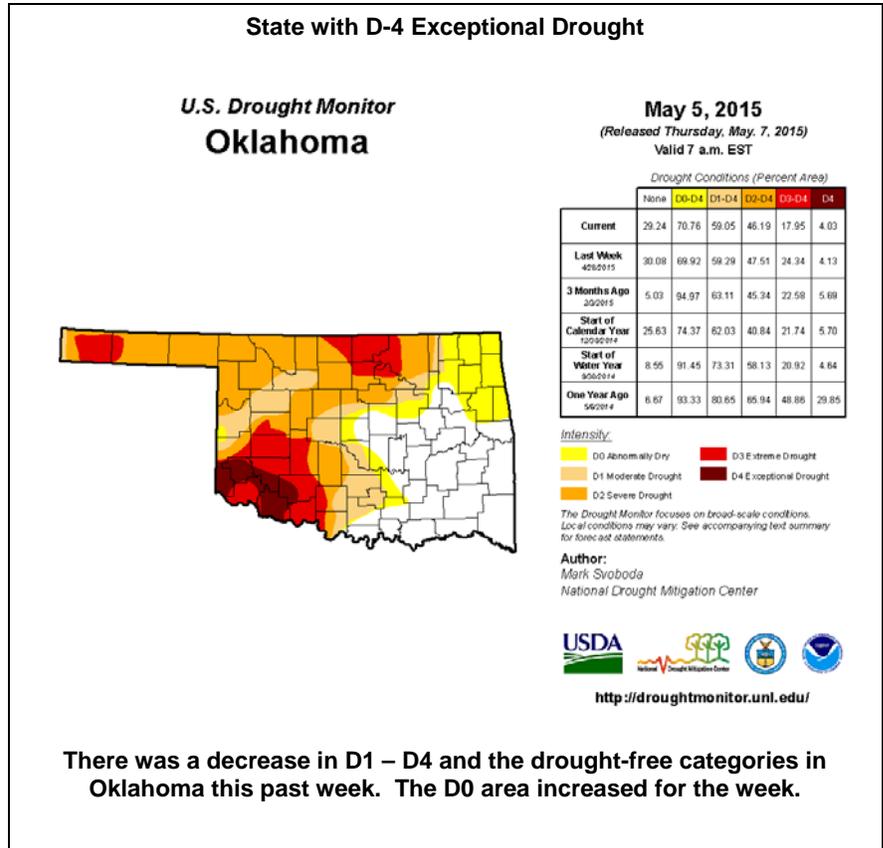
Related Area News:

[2014 Kansas Drought Report and Summary](#)

- [Past 30 days precipitation totals](#)
- [Past 30 days precipitation percent of normal](#)
- [Calendar Year precipitation totals](#)
- [Calendar Year Precip percent of normal](#)
- [Short Crop ET](#)

Oklahoma Drought News:

[From drought to flood, but the drought still persists – Apr 27](#)



U.S. Population in Drought

Number of people in each drought category in the U.S. for the week ending May 5, 2015

Week	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
2015-05-05	164,356,795	141,040,660	72,236,555	46,528,524	31,936,475	20,766,279
2015-04-28	189,226,124	116,171,331	73,703,378	46,240,047	32,006,639	20,770,733

Population figures affected by drought in the U.S. Drought Monitor website show that, for this week, more than 72,000,000 people in the United States were in a drought-affected area, which is a decrease by over 1.4 million people from last week.

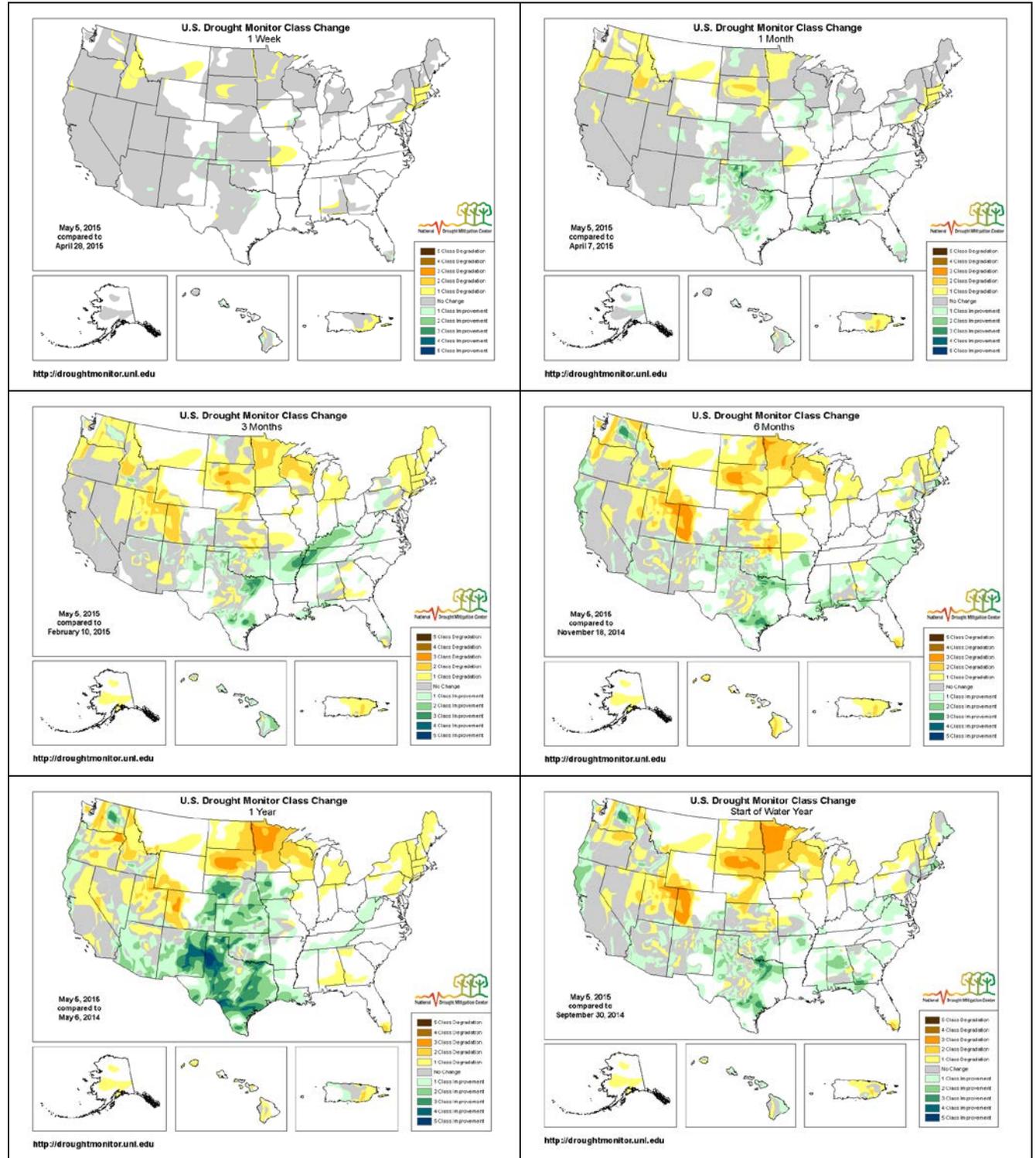
Population Statistics Methodology:

The U.S. Drought Monitor population statistics are calculated at the county level, and aggregated to the state, regional, and national levels. The population densities have been calculated for each county. The proportion of the physical area of the county that is in drought is multiplied by the uniform population density in order to obtain a number for each county. The county values are then summed at the state, regional, and national level.

Weekly Water and Climate Update

Changes in Drought Monitor Categories

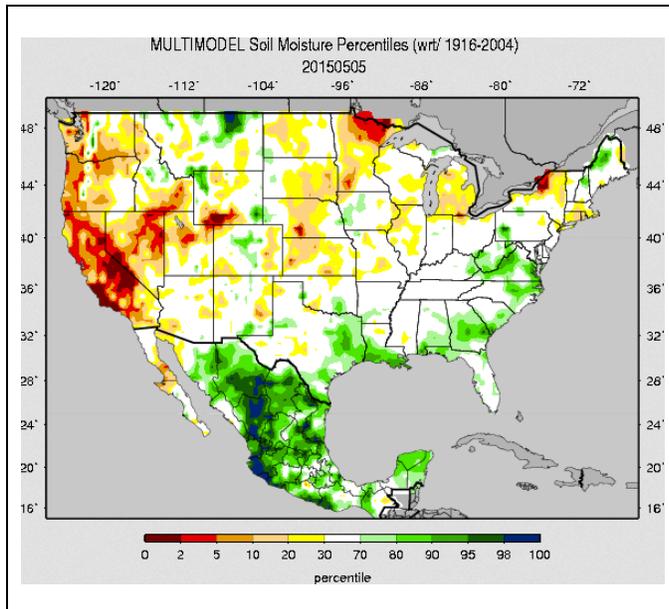
Over Various Time Periods



Click on any of these maps to enlarge. Note how the conditions over the upper Great Plains, and the central Rockies have degraded between 6 to 12 months (middle right to lower left maps). However, also note that since a year ago, conditions over parts of the Great Plains, the Southwest, and the Pacific coast states have improved (lower left map).

Weekly Water and Climate Update

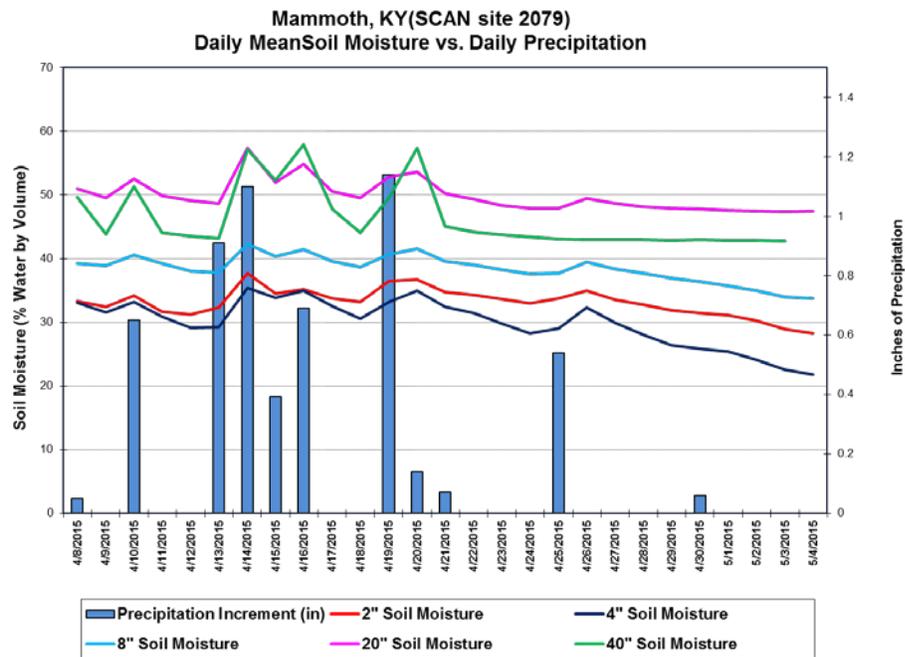
Soil Moisture



The national soil moisture model ranking in [percentile](#) as of May 5, 2015, shows dryness over most of the West, the Southwest, and the Great Plains. The driest areas were in California, Nevada, northern Utah, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, southern Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, and northern New York. Moist soils dominated areas of northern Montana, northwest Wyoming, east Texas, Louisiana, southern Alabama, Georgia, northern Florida, southeast Oklahoma, West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina. Slightly moist soils were also scattered elsewhere in the U.S.

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 Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)

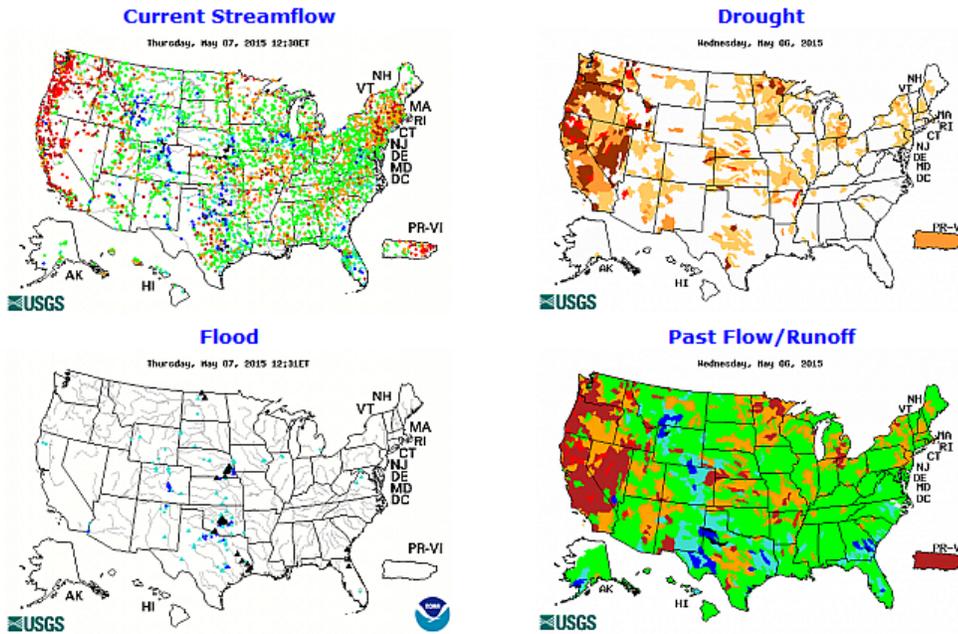


This NRCS resource shows soil moisture data for the last month at [Mammoth SCAN site 2079](#) in Kentucky. The area had several large precipitation events in the last 30 days and one smaller event recently (blue bars). This rainfall resulted in an increase in soil moisture from the large series of events at all sensors, with a noticeable decline since the last precipitation events as the high soil moisture decreases.

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](#).

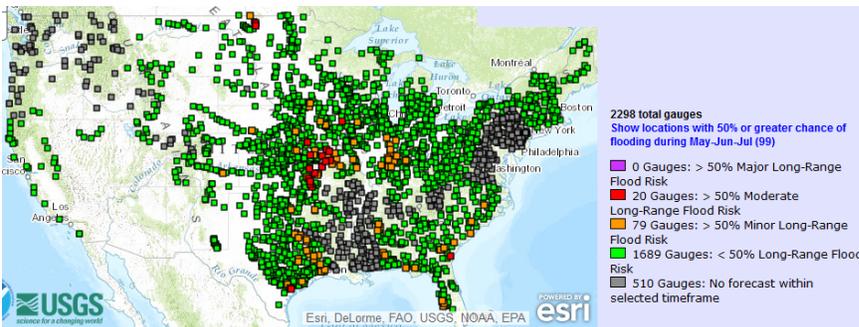
Weekly Water and Climate Update

Streamflow



Gages in several regions of the U.S. are reporting much above normal streamflow. There are many gages at flood stage centered in the lower Mississippi tributaries and southern U.S. this week. These include six gages in Texas, seven in Oklahoma, two in North Dakota, fifteen in Nebraska, one in Georgia, and four in Florida.

National Long-Range Outlook



[Click map to enlarge and update](#)

Currently the Upper Midwest part of the map has not been calculated for the long range flood outlook (dark gray dots).

According to the National Weather Service, during the next three months there is a risk of flooding in much of the eastern U.S. The Southeast and the Midwest have gauges with a slight to higher risk of flooding. Currently, **0** gauges have a greater than 50% chance to experience major flooding; **20** gauges for moderate flooding; and **79** gauges for minor flooding.

These numbers represent an increase in **23** gauges with a greater than 50 percent chance of minor flooding category since last week.

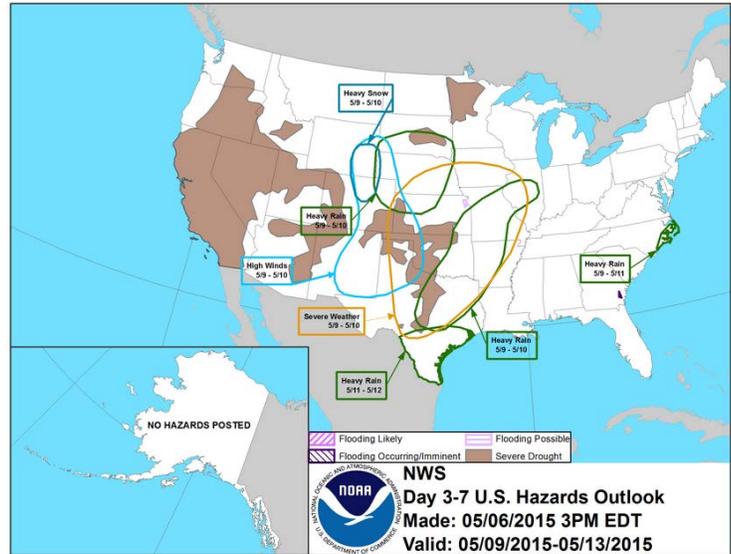
Weekly Water and Climate Update

National [Weather Hazards](#)

The National Weather Service map of national weather hazards for the next 3 – 7 days forecasts heavy snow in eastern Wyoming and Colorado (5/9-10). High winds are forecast from Wyoming to New Mexico (5/9-10). Heavy rain is forecast in three areas of the country: centralized over Nebraska and in the Midwest from Texas to Illinois (5/9-10), southern Texas (5/11-12) and coastal North Carolina (5/9-11). Severe storms are forecast for a large area of the southern Midwest (5/9-10). Flooding is occurring in southeast Georgia.

In Alaska, no hazards are posted.

Severe drought remains a large issue in much of the southcentral and western U.S.



[National Drought Summary for May 5, 2015](#)

Prepared by the Drought Monitor Author: Mark Svoboda, National Drought Mitigation Center.

Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico

“April was a relatively good month for drought recovery in Hawaii, with improvement of D0 and D1 noted across Oahu and the Big Island. There was some expansion, however, across Maui due to USDA reports of vegetation and pasture stress. The Big Island reflects a mixed bag with some reduction of D1 in the lower North Kona and South Kona districts coupled with degradation from D0 to D1 over the Pohakuloa, Waikoloa, Kawaihae and leeward North Kohala regions. The rest of the islands remain unchanged from last week.

After a very dry April, Puerto Rico just can't seem to shake this dry spell in early May, which is usually the time of year that they should be coming out of the dry season. (May and October are normally Puerto Rico's wettest months of the year.) As such, streamflows on the island are suffering and fires are becoming more of a concern as the much-needed wet season approaches. This has led to the expansion of D0 across all of eastern Puerto Rico and the Isla de Vieques as well. In addition, an introduction of D1 is depicted this week in the southeastern reaches of the island east of Ponce and situated around the Guayama region.

No changes were made to the Alaska depiction this week.

The Midwest

All but portions of Iowa, Illinois and northwestern Missouri saw a dry week and all but Indiana and portions of southern Missouri and Illinois recorded above-normal temperatures. As a result, D0 receded in eastern Iowa and expanded in northwestern Iowa. Expansion of D0 spilled out into central Missouri as well this week, where year-to-date rainfall is sitting at only 50-70 percent of normal.

Minnesota continues to bear the brunt of the early-year dryness. D1-D2 expanded this week to cover all of the northern counties and pushed eastward to cover more of the central part of the state, where deficits are running anywhere from 4 to 7 inches, dating back to October 1, 2014. As the dry spring persists, concerns continue with regards to the lack of soil moisture recharge, along with already-low streamflow and lower lake levels being reported virtually statewide.

The Northeast

Last week brought continued dryness coupled with warmer temperatures (4-6 degrees above normal). Precipitation deficits are beginning to accumulate to the tune of 3-6 inches (less than 50% of normal) over the past 60 days. This has resulted in an expansion of D0 across southeastern Pennsylvania, northern New Jersey, eastern New York, Massachusetts and Connecticut. Water supply and soil moisture conditions are generally in good shape given the short-term nature of the dryness.

The Plains

The best of this week's rains fell outside most of the primary drought areas in the, but some beneficial rains helped to continue the recovery process across parts of Kansas, western Oklahoma and western Texas. The lack of rainfall in South Dakota means D2 has advanced westward toward the Black Hills. While this has provided favorable planting conditions, it has also led to an early stress on range and pasture conditions across much of the northern Plains.

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Other changes worth noting this week are shown in western Oklahoma and north and northwestern Texas, including the Panhandle. This has led to a reduction of D1-D3 this week based on the favorable short-term pattern and prospects for future rains looking quite promising over the next week as well. These recent rains and the resultant short-term benefits (soil moisture, streamflows, rangeland conditions) means that the short-long term impact line (SL) has been pushed northward into the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles and a bit eastward into western Oklahoma as well. Long-term drought hangover impacts are still noted in those areas falling under the long-term (L) impact line designation, reflecting longer-term lack of deep soil moisture, tree stress, and below-normal groundwater and reservoir levels, which will need to continue to see recovery before this 5-year drought is truly broken.

The Southeast

A drier and cooler pattern settled in across the Southeast last week with the only heavy rains (3-4 inches) falling in the D0-D1 area in southern Florida. This led to some slight adjustments for the better to the D0-D1 there, but lingering seasonal dryness means the D0-D1 hasn't been totally eradicated. Expansion of D0 is noted this week in southern and southwestern Alabama, with D0 edging over into extreme eastern Mississippi and into a portion of the northwestern Florida Panhandle.

The West

On the heels of last week's favorable rains in eastern New Mexico, more modest rains, but rain nonetheless, fell again across eastern New Mexico, helping to continue pushing back the D0-D2 conditions found in the northeastern corner of the state. This relief hasn't stopped at the border, as southeastern Colorado shares in the improvement this week, with a chipping away of D0-D2. Streamflow levels continue to respond favorably, but surface water storage has a ways to go, with Elephant Butte remaining at only 19.9 percent full (based on conservation storage and conservation capacity) as compared to 18.5 percent this time last year. However, it is up from just six months ago when the reservoir was below 10 percent full.

To the west of New Mexico, Arizona's relatively favorable short-term precipitation led to the removal of the small D3 area found in the southeastern corner of the state. Long-term impacts and overall recovery are still lacking, heading into an important monsoon season, as D1-D2 conditions still cover over 80 percent of the state. The situation continues to deteriorate across northern California and Oregon as well. This is reflected by a slight expansion of D1-D2 to the west in extreme northwest California and extreme southwest Oregon. The northwest corner of Oregon also sees a bump downward this week with an expansion of D2 there.

Idaho has also taken a turn for the worse as the wet season winds down, with expansions of D0 across the Panhandle and central regions and of D1 in the west-central region of the state. Water supply forecasts continue to decline along with the early melt-out of an already below-normal snow pack. The D0 also expanded to the east into Montana along the Bitterroot Range. Speaking of Montana, this week's map reflects an expansion of D1 in the southwest corner along with a push eastward of the D0 into the southeastern corner of the state.

Looking Ahead

For the upcoming 5-day period, May 7-May 11, a large, slow moving system will churn out into the country's mid-section, bringing with it potentially heavy rains on the order of 2 to 4 inches. These widespread rains are forecasted along the Rocky Mountains Front Ranges of Colorado and Wyoming along with most of the Great Plains and into the Midwest. Temperatures are expected to be well above-normal in the Pacific Northwest (3 to 9 degrees F) and east of the Mississippi (3 to 9 degrees F). Well below-normal temperatures are likely (6 to 15 degrees F) in southern California, the Great Basin, the Rocky Mountain range and Front Range, the northern Plains and up into Minnesota and western Wisconsin.

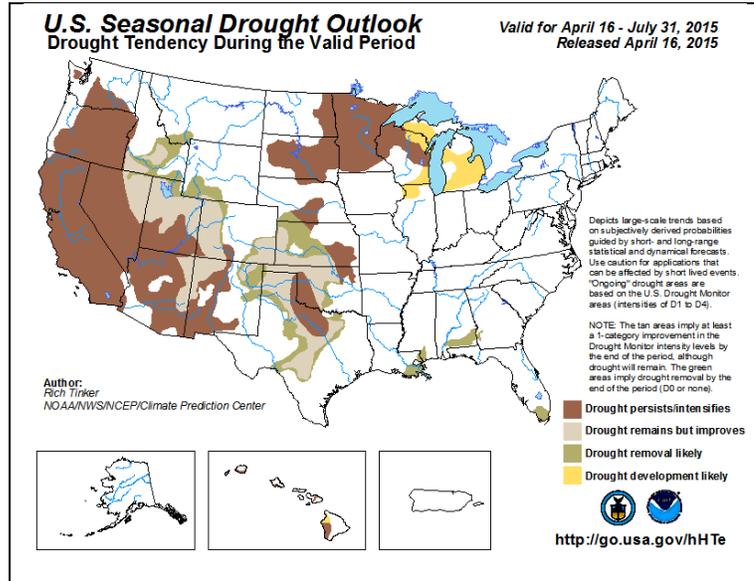
For the 6-10 day period, May 12-16, above-normal temperatures are expected across all of Alaska, the Pacific Northwest (including Montana) and the Atlantic Seaboard. Below-normal readings are expected for most of California, the Four-Corner region, the central and southern Plains and the Midwest. As for precipitation, below-normal rainfall is more likely in the northern and central Plains, the Midwest and Ohio Valley. The prospects for above-normal precipitation are located across the Great Basin, Desert Southwest, Texas and the Gulf Coast region."

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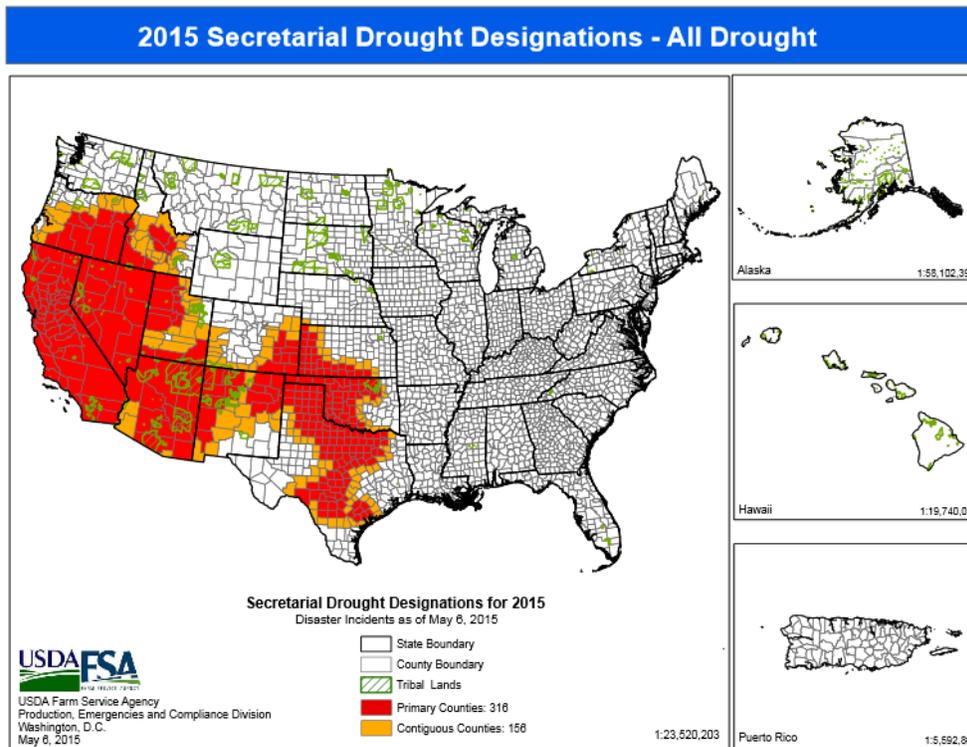
Supplemental Drought Information

National Seasonal Drought Outlook

Nationally, [drought](#) is expected to persist or intensify over much of the west and central U.S., including California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado, and Hawaii. Improvements are expected in parts of Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Nebraska. Drought removal is likely in parts of Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. The areas of drought that are likely to develop further are in the upper Midwest and Hawaii.



2015 USDA Secretarial Drought Designations



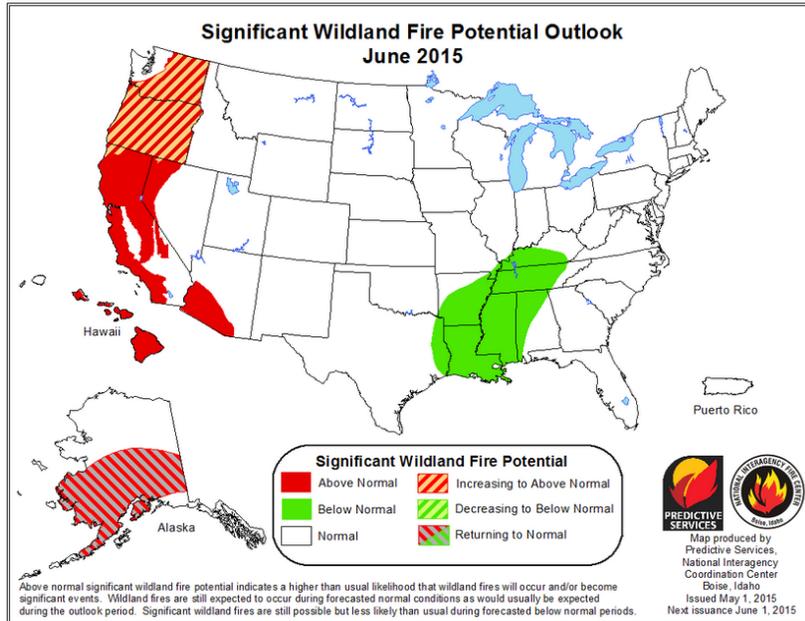
Refer to the USDA Drought Assistance [website](#) and [National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service](#).

Read about the [USDA Regional Climate Hubs](#).

[New useful resource: NASS Quick Stats](#)

Weekly Water and Climate Update

National Fire Potential Outlook



June Fire Forecast

In May, much of the U.S. is forecast to have normal [fire potential](#).

Below normal fire potential for June 2015 (in green on the map) is forecast for the southern U.S. California, western Nevada, southwest Arizona, and Hawaii have above normal fire potential. Oregon and western Washington have increasing to above normal fire potential for June. The southern half of Alaska has returning to normal fire potential.

Additional Maps

U.S. Maps PowerPoint presentation: <http://dmcommunity.unl.edu/maps/US-Maps.ppt>.

Regional zooms of ACIS station data percent-of-normal precipitation: <http://dmcommunity.unl.edu/maps/All-CONUS-ACIS-PNP.pptx>. National Water and Climate Center (NWCC) Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) maps: <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wsf/swsi.html>

Supplemental Drought-Agriculture News

Download [archived](#) "U.S. Crops in Drought" files.

The following is a collection of drought-related news stories from the past seven days or so. 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. The list is compiled by Denise D. Gutzmer, Drought Impact Specialist, at the National Drought Mitigation Center.

"Surveyors skipping the last snow survey in California's Sierra Nevada

Surveyors found no snow at Phillips Point on April 1, making a May 1 trip to the location pointless, given the dearth of productive storms in the past month. The last snowless April 1 survey occurred in 1941.

Possibility of \$10,000 fine for excessive water use

California Gov. Jerry Brown proposed fining the heaviest water users \$10,000 amid ongoing criticism of his administration for strict water conservation targets. The hefty fine was part of a legislative proposal that, if passed, would increase enforcement power of water departments that presently cannot fine their customers.

California Dems critical of state's pace to fund water projects

California's Democratic senators expressed their frustration with Gov. Jerry Brown's pace for funding water projects, urging that the state move quickly to get water projects started.

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California rice acreage to shrink further

The California Rice Commission anticipated more idled rice fields in 2015 than last year, due to reduced water allocations in the Sacramento Valley. In 2014, rice growers planted 23 percent less rice acreage than the previous year.

Active fire season on horizon for parts of the West

Washington fire authorities are not sure what to expect from the coming fire season, but are gearing up early for a difficult summer.

In California, Utah and likely other states, the parched landscape and recent fire behavior suggest an active fire season, prompting fire agencies to make preparations earlier than usual.

Predictive Services National Interagency Fire Center issued the [National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook](#) on May 1.

Downward slide in hydropower likely leading to brownouts

As hydropower production declines during California's epic drought, rolling brownouts are a definite possibility this summer, said the U.S. energy secretary.

Land subsiding at record rate in California's Central Valley

The Central Valley continues to sink at an incredible rate as farmers keep over pumping groundwater. Farmers' desperate demand for new wells has led some to pay out of state drillers two to three times the cost just to sink the wells sooner than local drillers can, due to the backlog in work requests.

Stretch of the Sacramento River closed to fishing to protect salmon

A 5.5 mile stretch of the Sacramento River was closed to salmon fishing on April 27. The California Fish and Game Commission proposed the closure to guard critical spawning habitat and eliminate stress and hooking deaths of winter-run salmon.

Sparse snowfall allows early use of Yosemite National Park trail

The Half Dome trail in Yosemite National Park will open three weeks early on May 3, after a disappointing winter of drought and low snowpack. The trail normally opens on May 23.

Mud run cancelled to conserve water

The 5K Jurassic Classic Mud Run to be held on May 16 was cancelled because preparation for the race would have required the use of thousands of gallons of water to turn the dry course into mud.

Ranchers head to Montana for replacement heifers

Cattle buyers from as far away as Texas and Tennessee have crowded into Montana auction arenas, seeking to purchase replacement heifers and rebuild their herds.

Since 2012, the cattle herd declined by 4.3 million head as drought forced ranchers to reduce herd size.

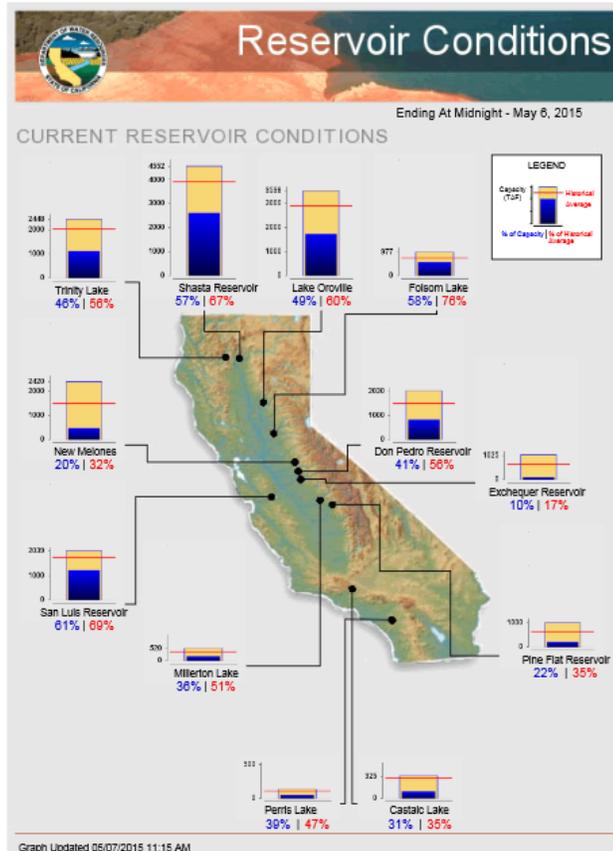
Tea Cup Reservoir Depictions

- <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)

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California Reservoir Conditions

[California Major Reservoir conditions from the CA Department of Water Resources](#)



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 Water and Climate Updates 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

Deputy Chief, Soil Science and Resource Assessment