



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

Weekly Report - Snowpack / Drought Monitor Update **Date: April 24, 2008**

SNOTEL SNOWPACK AND PRECIPITATION SUMMARY

Snow: During the past week, despite cooler than average temperatures, the sun has helped reduce snow cover over all but the Cascades and Northern Rockies. Since last week, the preliminary April-July streamflow runoff forecast has dropped over the 4-Corners States although parts of the Northern Rockies continue to show some increase forecasted streamflow predictions (Fig. 1). Snow-water equivalent percent as of 23 April shows well above normal values continuing over the Cascades and Coastal Ranges (WA & OR) and to a lesser extent over Colorado. There was some increases over Montana since last week (Fig. 1a).

Temperature: For the past seven days, average temperature anomalies ~10 degrees F below average over the Pacific Northwest and the Northern Rockies to near normal over the extreme Southwest (Fig. 2). The greatest negative temperature departures occurred over Montana (<-12F) and the greatest positive departures occurred over southern New Mexico (>+3F) (Fig. 2a).

Precipitation: Preliminary precipitation totals for the 7-day period ending 22 April shows an abundant amount of precipitation falling over the northern West Coast, the Montana Rockies, and Colorado and New Mexico Rockies while very little precipitation fell across the remainder of the West (Fig. 3). Seasonal precipitation (rain & snow water equivalent) as a percent of normal for the 2008 Water Year that began on October 1, 2007 shows above normal totals over much of Colorado, northern New Mexico, central Arizona, and the Oregon Cascades (Fig. 3a).

WESTERN DROUGHT STATUS

The West: With the exception of broad areas of average to above-average precipitation in Colorado and Montana, most parts of the western U.S. received little to no precipitation during the past week, and the hydrological drought conditions affecting the West were largely unchanged. This was reflected in the absence of changes in the depiction for all but small parts of Montana, northwestern Utah and southern Idaho.

Severe drought (D2H) was removed from northwest Utah and southern Idaho to better reflect local observations and analysis of drought conditions in the area. According to local experts, a large part of this area is remote and non-essential as a water source and comprised in part by a salt desert with a small range that does not hold snow for any length of time. The improvement from D2H to D1H reflects conditions that are similar to surrounding D1H areas.

Conditions remained unchanged in Wyoming as the week was largely dry and windy with the exception of isolated pockets of precipitation. In the southwestern quarter of the state where severe drought (D2H) predominates, snowpack continued to drop rapidly but snow water equivalent values remained above average in most locations. Snowpack in the northeast dropped to normal to slightly-above-normal, and snowpack in south-central areas (Upper North Platte and Little Snake) also continued to decrease. Temperatures in much of the state, particularly the northern half, were above normal while areas in the south were generally cooler than average.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

In Montana and other northwestern states below average temperatures helped hold snowpack in place with amounts increasing in some locations where heavy snow fell during the past week. Better than average snowpack conditions in western Montana supported a ½ county eastward shift in the D0H line west of the Continental Divide. Conditions deteriorated in Silver Bow County in southwestern Montana from D0 to D1H where 30- to 60-day precipitation amounts have been less than 50% of average. **Author:** Jay Lawrimore, National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

A comprehensive narrative describing drought conditions for the nation can be found at the end of this document.

DROUGHT IMPACTS DEFINITIONS (<http://drought.unl.edu/dm/classify.htm>)

The possible impacts associated with **D4 (H, A)** drought include widespread crop/pasture losses and shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and wells creating water emergencies. The possible impacts associated with **D3 (H, A)** drought include major crop/pasture losses and widespread water shortages or restrictions. Possible impacts from **D2 (H, A)** drought are focused on water shortages common and water restrictions imposed and crop or pasture losses likely. The possible impacts associated with **D1 (H, A)** drought are focused on water shortages developing in streams, reservoirs, or wells, and some damage to crops and pastures (Figs. 4, 4a and 4b).

SOIL MOISTURE

Soil moisture (Figs. 5 and 5a), is simulated by the [VIC macroscale hydrologic model](#). The detailed, physically-based VIC model is driven by observed daily precipitation and temperature maxima and minima from approximately 2130 stations, selected for reporting reliably in real-time and for having records of longer than 45 years (and various other criteria).

OBSERVED FIRE DANGER CLASS

The National Interagency Coordination Center provides a variety of products that describe the current wildfire status for the U.S. - <http://www.nifc.gov/information.html>. The latest Observed Fire Danger Class is shown in Figs. 6 shows the current active wildfires across the West - <http://geomac.usgs.gov/>.

U.S. HISTORICAL STREAMFLOW

This map, (Fig. 7) shows the 7-day average streamflow conditions in hydrologic units of the United States and Puerto Rico for the day of year. The colors represent 7-day average streamflow percentiles based on historical streamflow for the day of the year. Thus, the map shows conditions adjusted for this time of the year. Only stations having at least 30 years of record are used. Sub-regions shaded gray indicate that insufficient data were available to compute a reliable 7-day average streamflow value. During winter months, this situation frequently arises due to ice effects. The data used to produce this map are provisional and have not been reviewed or edited. They may be subject to significant change.

http://water.usgs.gov/cgi-bin/waterwatch?state=us&map_type=dryw&web_type=map.

STATE ACTIVITIES

State government drought activities can be tracked at the following URL:

<http://drought.unl.edu/mitigate/mitigate.htm>. NRCS SS/WSF State Office personnel are participating in state drought committee meetings and providing the committees and media with appropriate SS/WSF information - <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/cqibin/bor.pl>. Additional information describing the products available from the Drought Monitor can be found at the following URL: <http://drought.unl.edu/dm/>

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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

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

/s/ NOLLER HERBERT
Director, Conservation Engineering Division

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

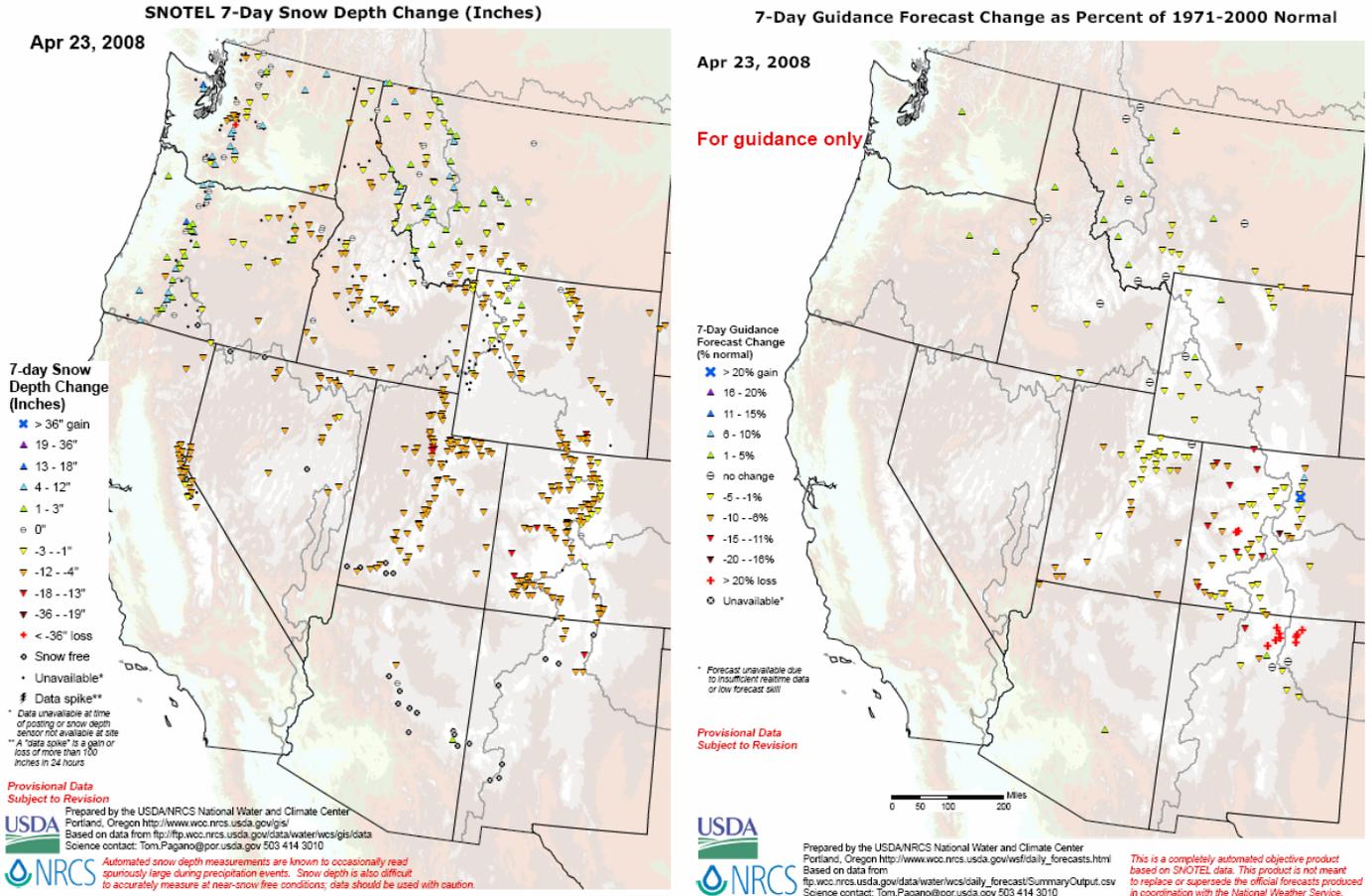


Fig. 1. During the past week, despite cooler than average temperatures, the sun has helped reduce snow cover over all but the Cascades and Northern Rockies (left figure). Since last week, the preliminary April-July streamflow runoff forecast has dropped over the 4-Corners States although parts of the Northern Rockies continue to show some increase forecasted streamflow predictions (right figure). Note: Area basin preliminary forecasts for the Sierra and Cascades are not made.
Refs: ftp://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/data/water/wcs/gis/maps/west_snowdepth_7ddelta.pdf
ftp://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/data/water/wcs/daily_forecast/maps/west_dailyfcst_7daych.pdf

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

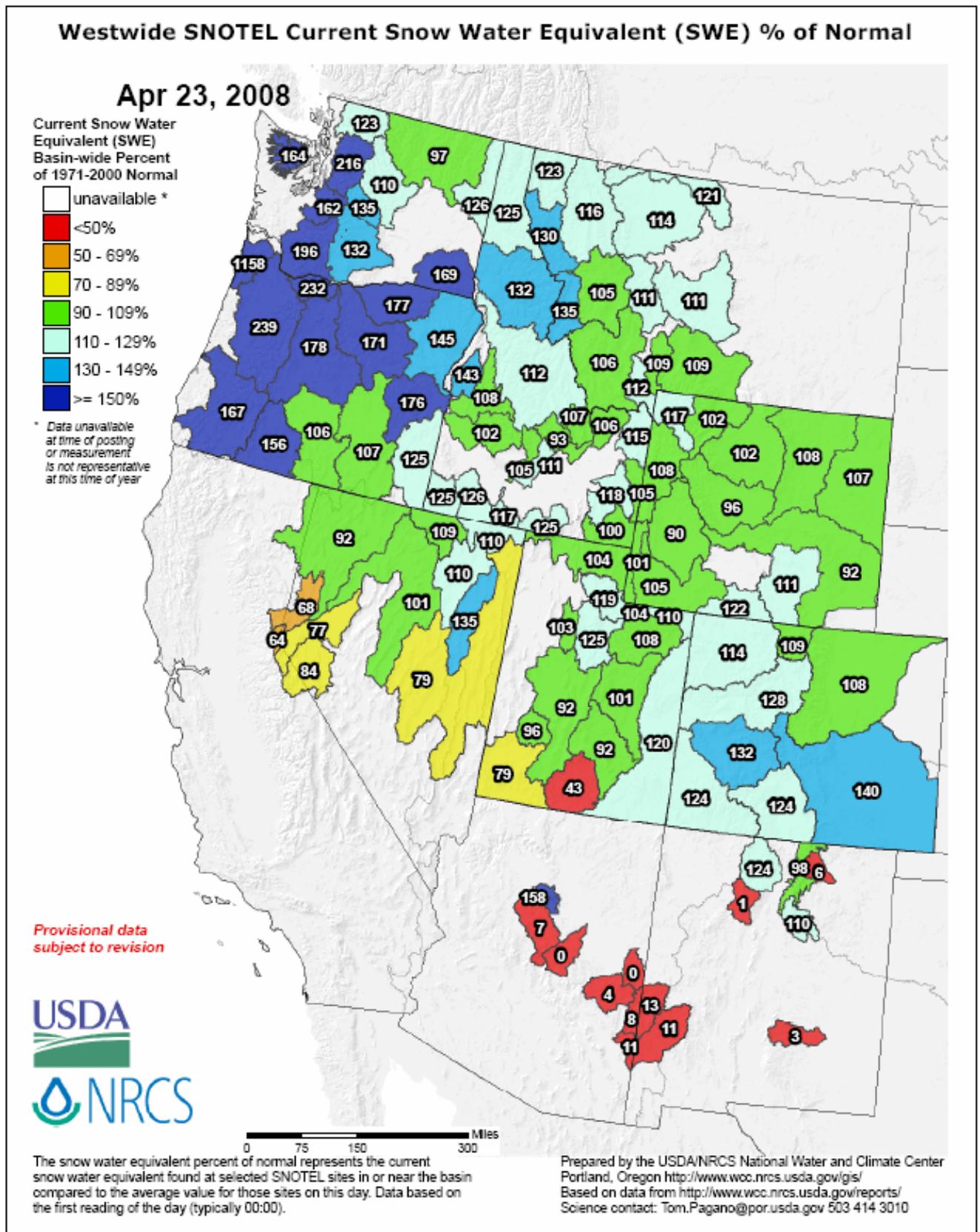


Fig. 1a. Snow-water equivalent percent as of 23 April shows well above normal values continuing over the Cascades and Coastal Ranges (WA & OR) and to a lesser extent over Colorado. There was some increases over Montana since last week.

Ref: ftp://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/data/water/wcs/gis/maps/west_swepctnormal_update.pdf

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report
SNOTEL (solid) and ACIS (dot-filled) Networks
7-Day Average Temperature Anomaly (Degrees F)

Apr 23, 2008

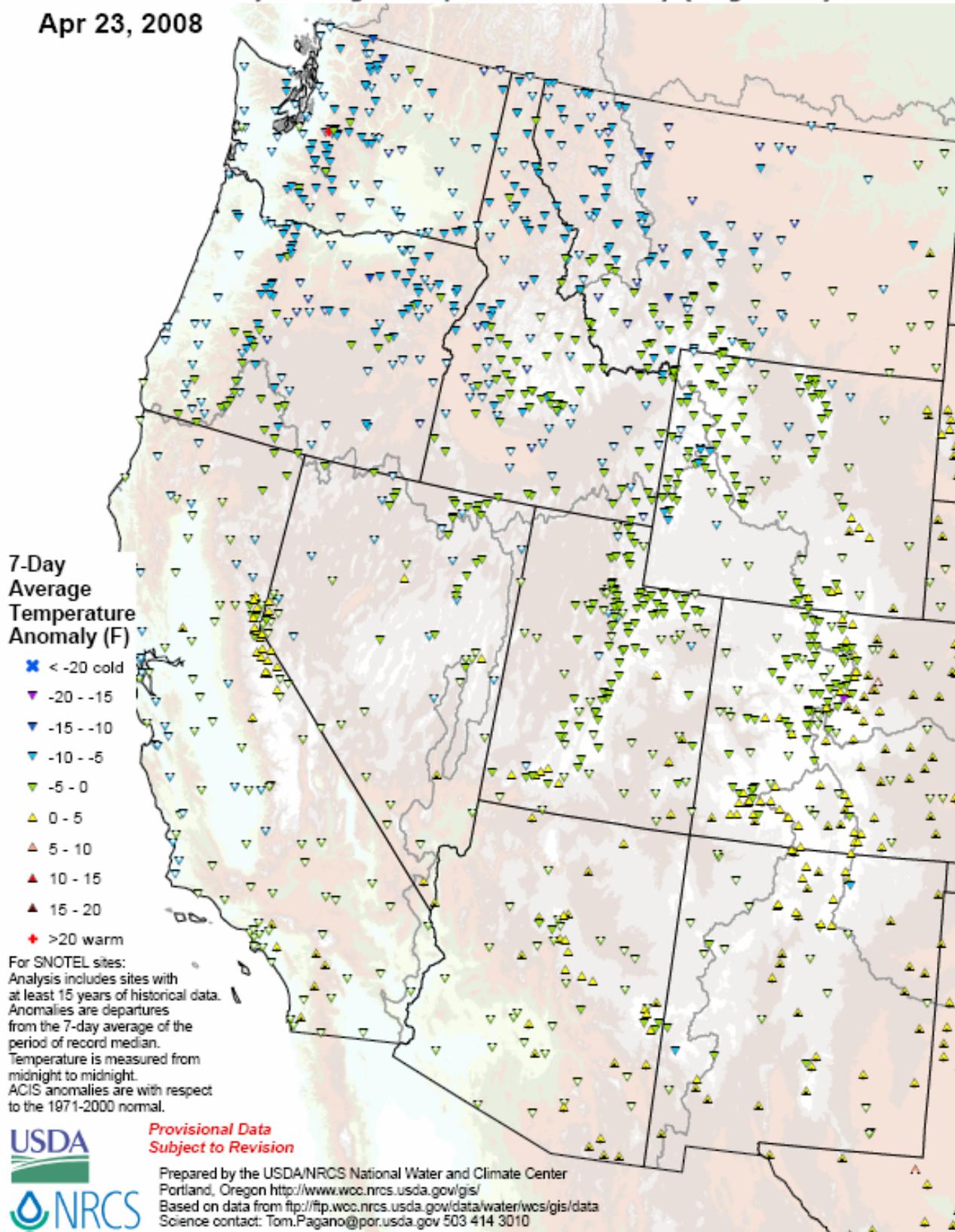
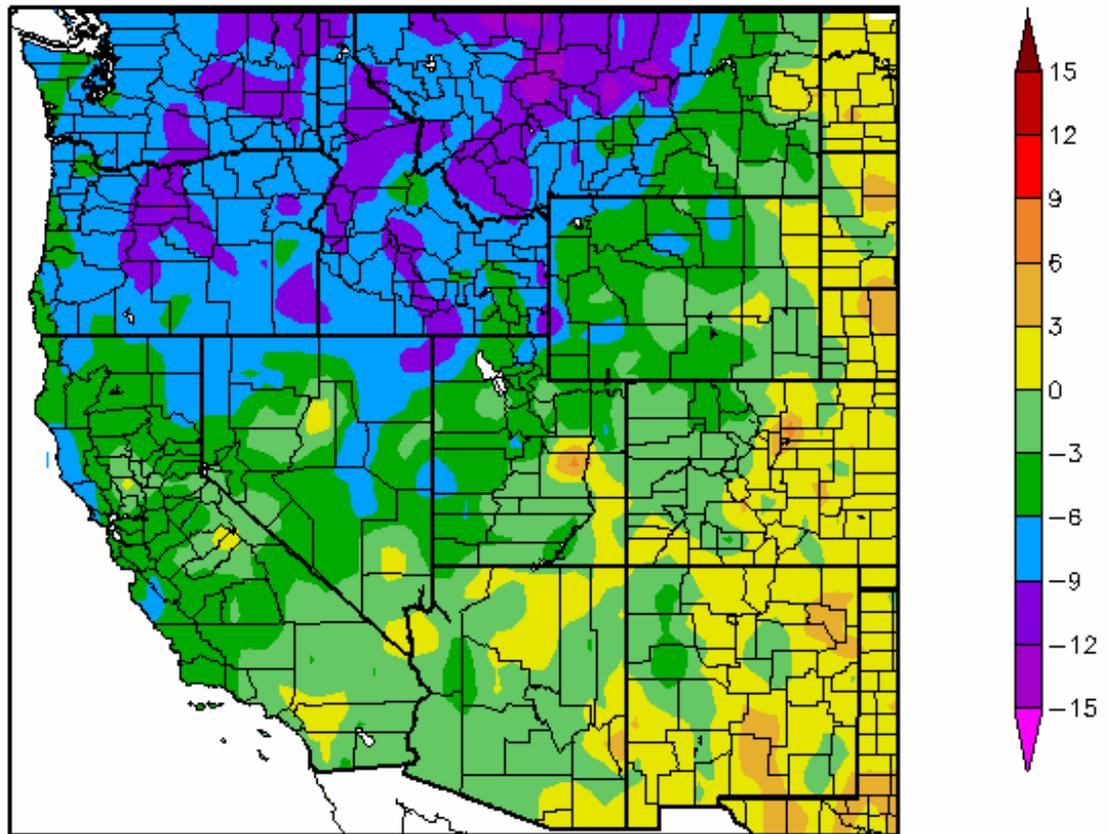


Fig. 2. SNOTEL & ACIS 7-day station average temperature anomalies were ~10 degrees F below average over the Pacific Northwest and the Northern Rockies to near normal over the extreme Southwest. Ref: <ftp://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/data/water/wcs/gis/maps/WestwideTavg7dAnomalyAcis.pdf>

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
4/16/2008 - 4/22/2008



Generated 4/23/2008 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

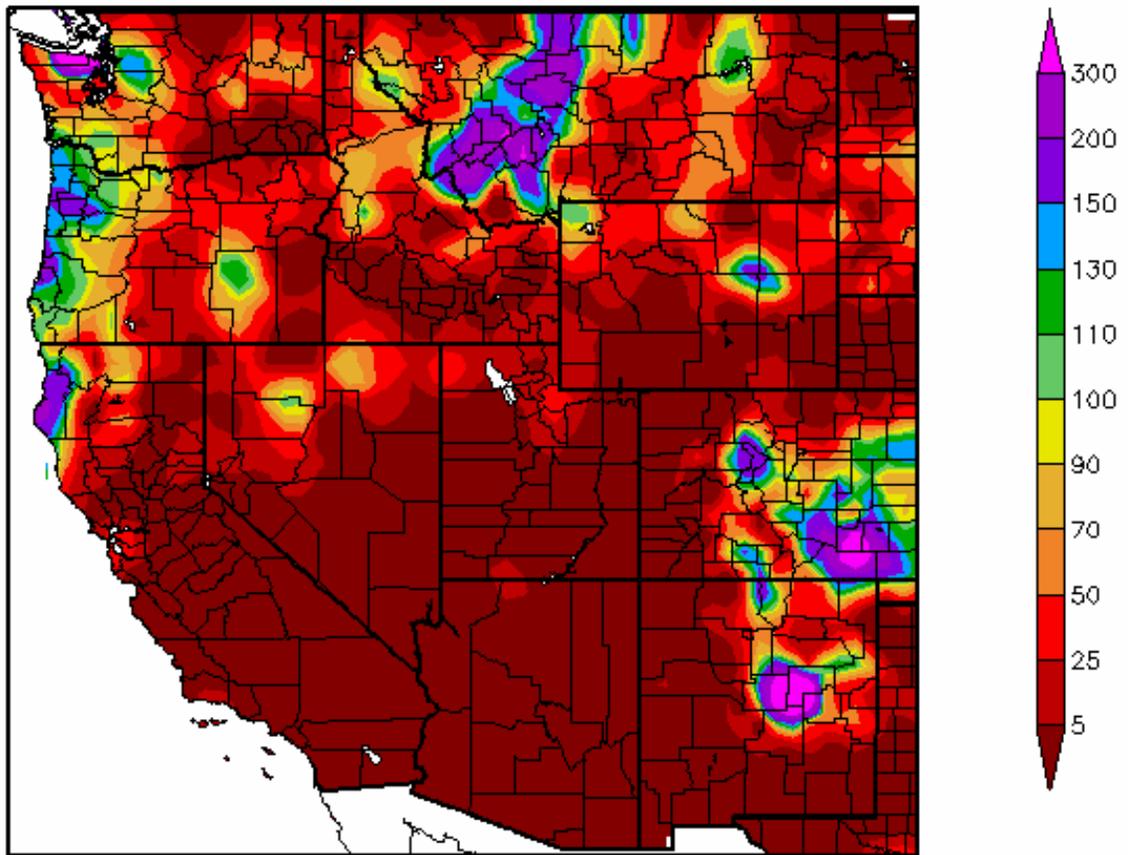
The Current Climate Summary Maps are produced daily using data from the Applied Climate Information System (ACIS). Stations used are from the National Weather Service Cooperative Observer Network (COOP), and the Automated Weather Data Network (AWDN). All near-real-time data are considered preliminary and should be used responsibly.



Normal refers to the 1971-2000 Climate Normal for the selected product.

Fig. 2a. ACIS 7-day average temperature anomalies: Greatest negative temperature departures over Montana (<-12F) and greatest positive departures over southern New Mexico (>+3F).
Ref: http://www.hprcc.unl.edu/maps/current/index.php?action=update_product&product=TDept

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
4/16/2008 – 4/22/2008



Generated 4/23/2008 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

The Current Climate Summary Maps are produced daily using data from the Applied Climate Information System (ACIS). Stations used are from the National Weather Service Cooperative Observer Network (COOP), and the Automated Weather Data Network (AWDN). All near-real-time data are considered preliminary and should be used responsibly.



Normal refers to the 1971-2000 Climate Normal for the selected product.

Fig. 3. ACIS 7-day average precipitation anomaly: Preliminary precipitation totals for the 7-day period ending 22 April shows an abundant amount of precipitation falling over the northern West Coast, the Montana Rockies, and Colorado and New Mexico Rockies while very little precipitation fell across the remainder of the West.

Ref: http://www.hprcc.unl.edu/maps/index.php?action=update_product&product=PNorm

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

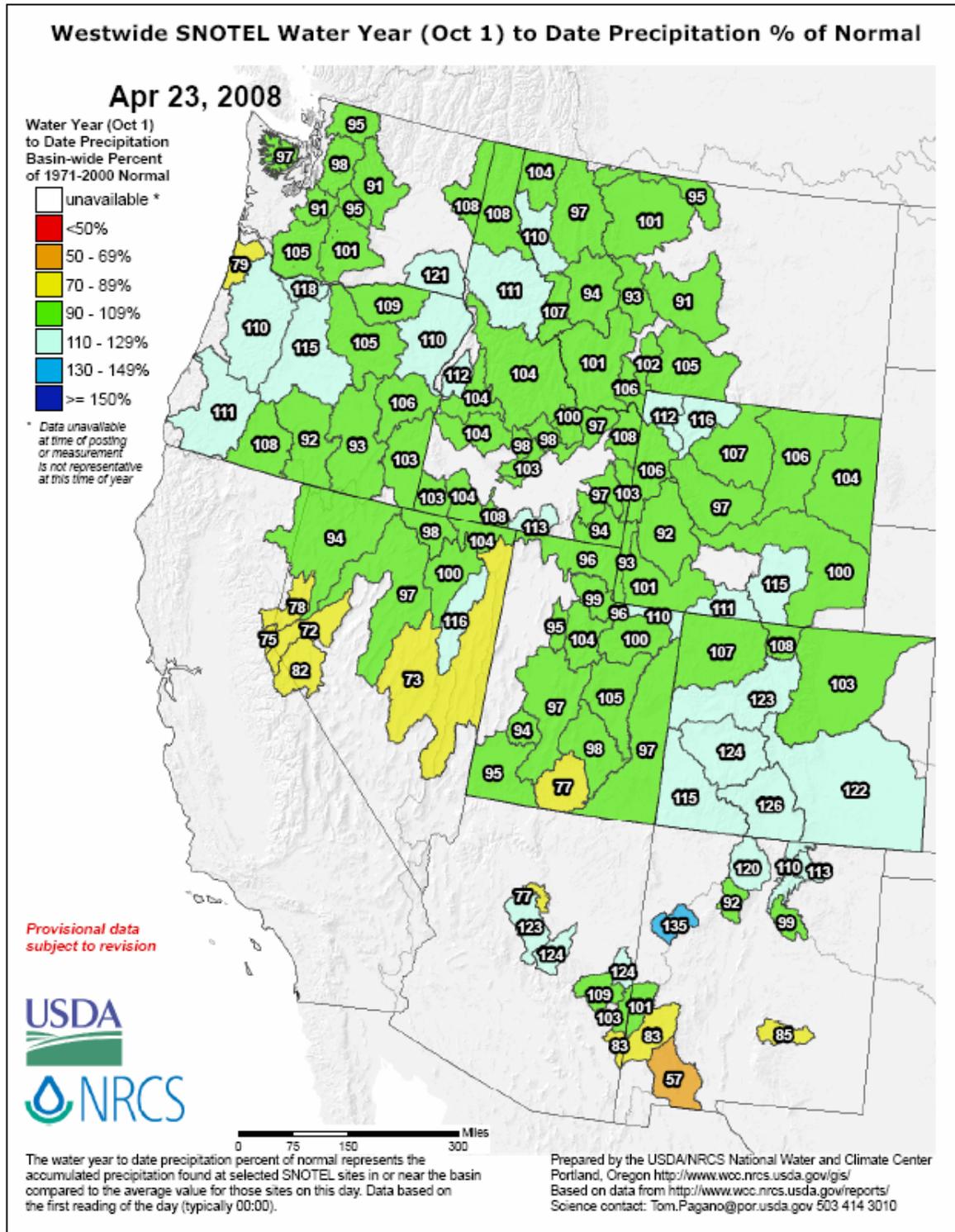


Fig 3a. Seasonal precipitation (rain & snow water equivalent) as a percent of normal for the 2008 Water Year that began on October 1, 2007 shows above normal totals over much of Colorado, northern New Mexico, central Arizona, and the Oregon Cascades.

Ref: http://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/data/water/wcs/gis/maps/west_wytdprecpcnormal_update.pdf

Note: A new basin-filled running monthly precipitation as a percent of normal map is now available at: http://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/data/water/wcs/gis/maps/west_mtdprecpcnormal_update.pdf.

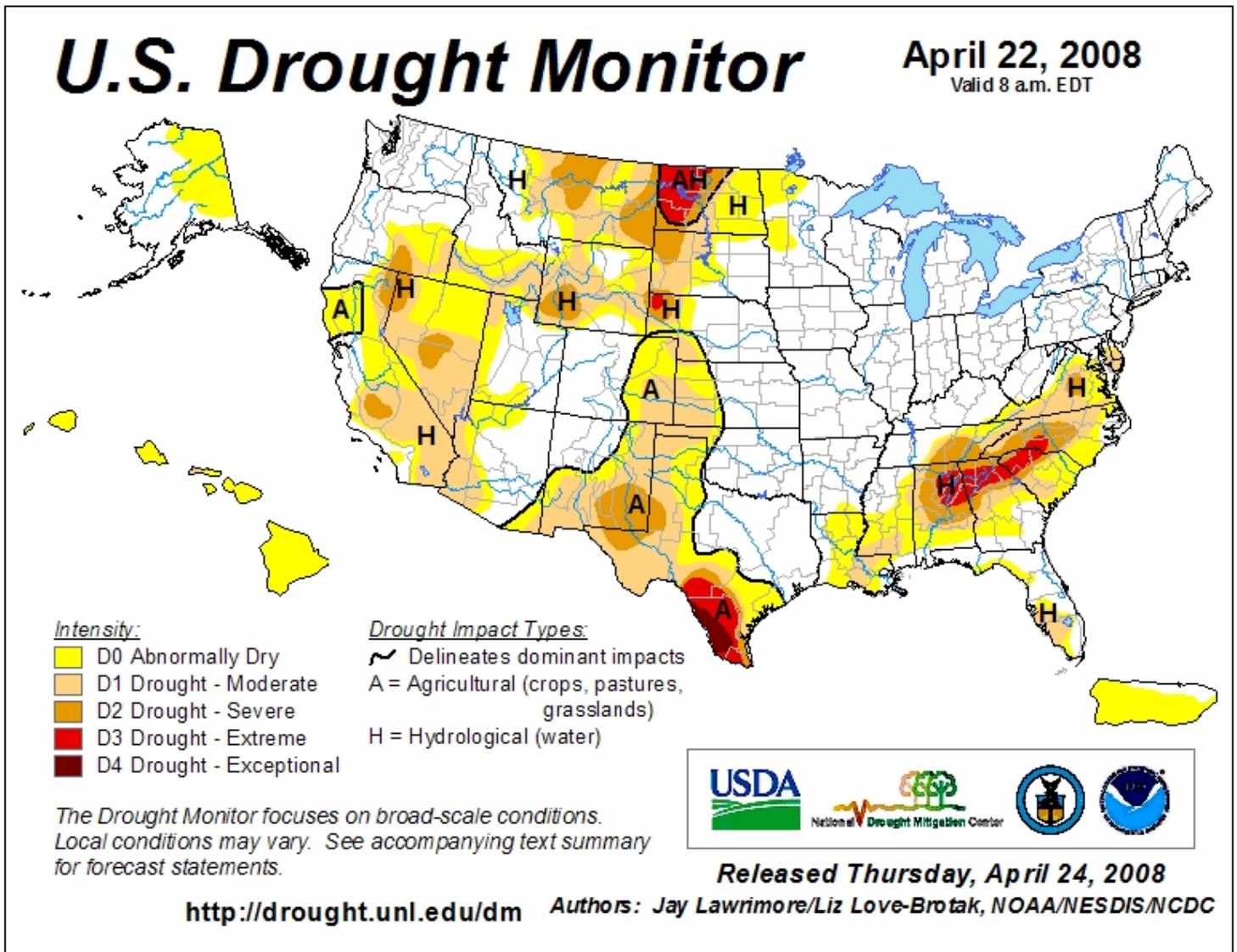


Fig. 4. Current Drought Monitor weekly summary.

Ref: National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) - <http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html>.

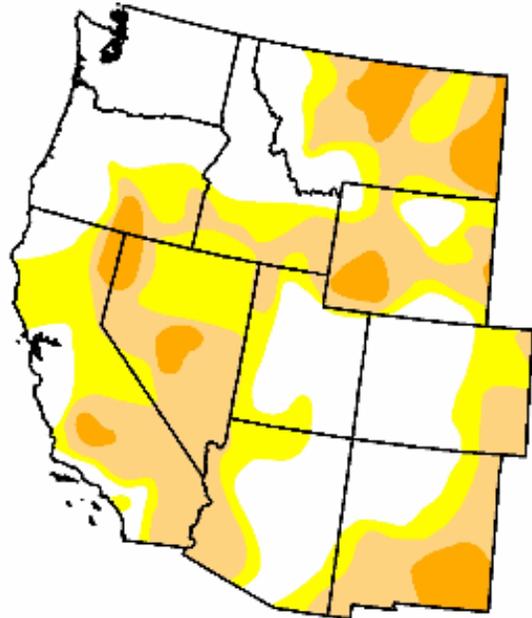
U.S. Drought Monitor

West

April 22, 2008
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	40.8	59.2	35.1	8.1	0.0	0.0
Last Week (04/15/2008 map)	40.5	59.5	35.0	8.4	0.0	0.0
3 Months Ago (01/29/2008 map)	31.7	68.3	44.6	20.9	0.0	0.0
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2008 map)	26.3	73.7	54.7	33.1	2.7	0.0
Start of Water Year (10/02/2007 map)	22.0	78.0	62.3	44.7	12.4	0.0
One Year Ago (04/24/2007 map)	28.5	71.5	51.5	22.1	6.8	0.0



Intensity:

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

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

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



Released Thursday, April 24, 2008

Author: J. Lawrimore/L. Love-Brotak, NOAA/NESDIS/NCDC

Fig. 4a. Drought Monitor for the Western States with statistics over various time periods. Note little change since last week. Ref: http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/DM_west.htm.

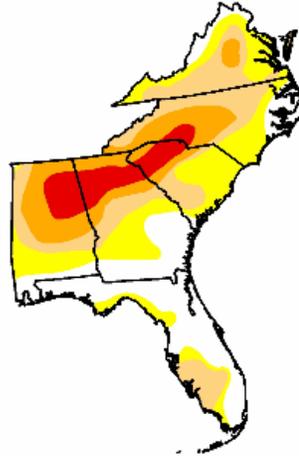
Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

U.S. Drought Monitor
Southeast

April 22, 2008
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	26.6	73.4	47.8	24.7	8.9	0.0
Last Week (04/15/2008 map)	29.0	71.0	50.3	29.3	8.9	0.0
3 Months Ago (01/29/2008 map)	7.3	92.7	72.8	57.8	39.2	21.3
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2008 map)	9.6	90.4	74.3	58.5	41.0	22.0
Start of Water Year (10/02/2007 map)	10.1	89.9	77.9	63.8	45.2	24.0
One Year Ago (04/24/2007 map)	31.3	68.7	57.2	28.5	8.5	0.0



Intensity:

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

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



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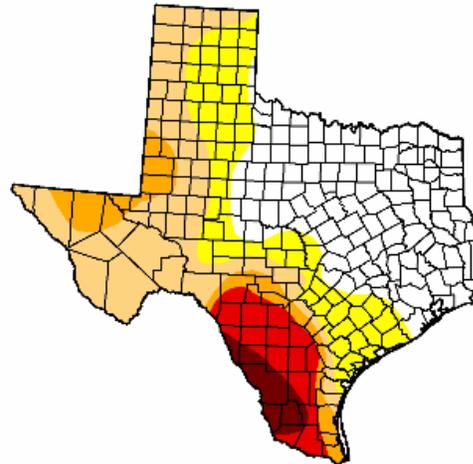
<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>

U.S. Drought Monitor
Texas

April 22, 2008
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	37.2	62.8	43.6	18.4	10.5	3.3
Last Week (04/15/2008 map)	36.2	63.8	45.0	18.4	10.5	3.3
3 Months Ago (01/29/2008 map)	23.9	76.1	24.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2008 map)	52.0	48.0	11.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Water Year (10/02/2007 map)	97.9	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
One Year Ago (04/24/2007 map)	84.7	15.3	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0



Intensity:

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

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



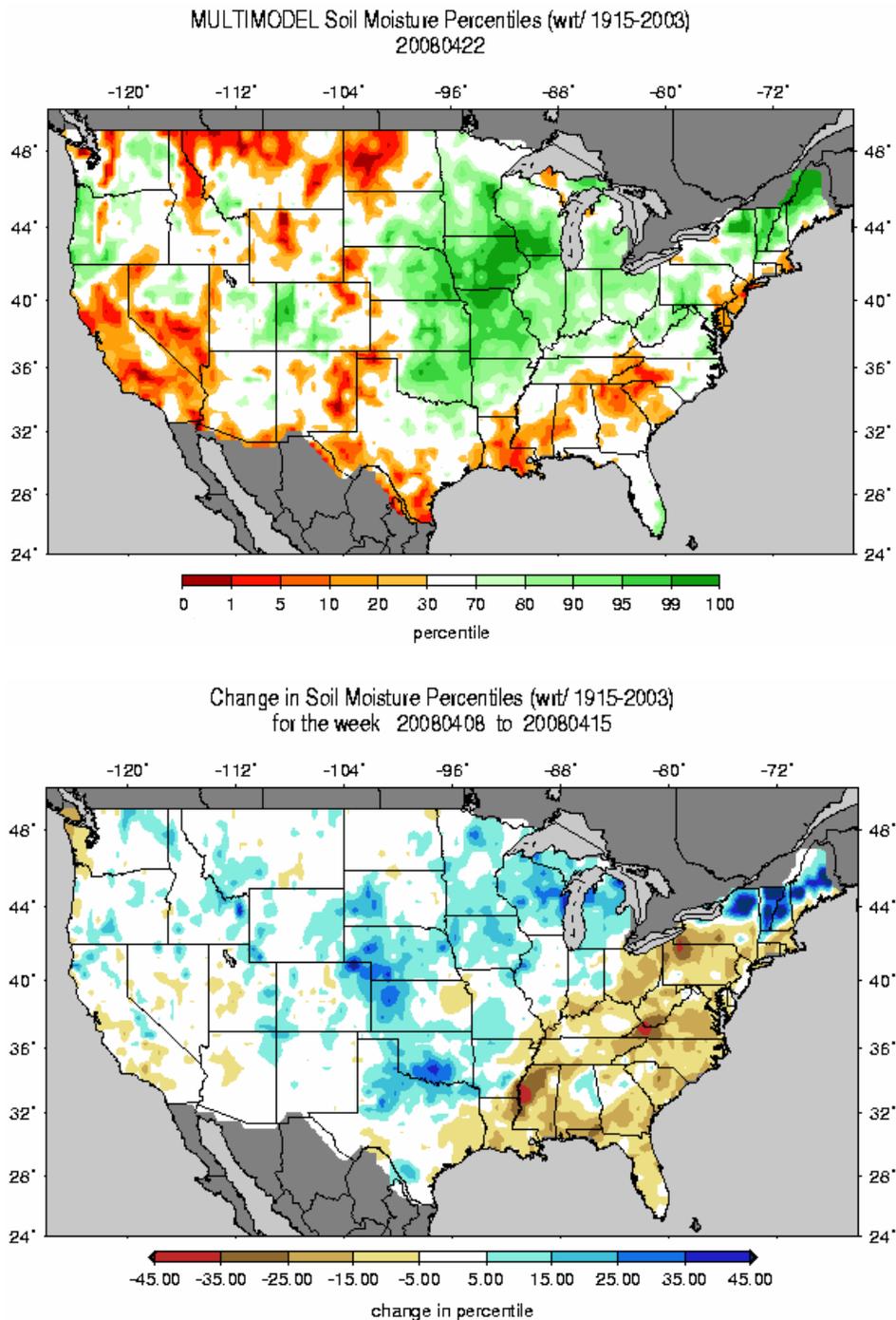
Released Thursday, April 24, 2008

Author: J. Lawrimore/L. Love-Brotak, NOAA/NESDIS/NCDC

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>

Fig. 4b: Drought Monitor for the Southeastern States and Texas with statistics over various time periods. Note little change since last week. Ref: http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/DM_southeast.htm

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report



Figs. 5 & 5a: Soil Moisture Ranking and change in percentile based on 1915-2003 climatology for this past week. The moist mid-West continues to dominate although drier soils over the West may be incorrect due to freezing temperatures (Fig. 5). Remark: In colder regions of the West, frozen ground suggests incorrect values or missing data (e.g. the Cascades are considerably wetter than depicted). Last week saw a decrease in soil moisture over the Upper mid-West but excessive moisture over the mid-Atlantic and New England States as noted in Fig. 5a.

Ref: http://www.hydro.washington.edu/forecast/monitor/curr/CONUS.multimodel.sm_qnt.gif
http://www.hydro.washington.edu/forecast/monitor/curr/CONUS.sm_qnt.1wk.gif

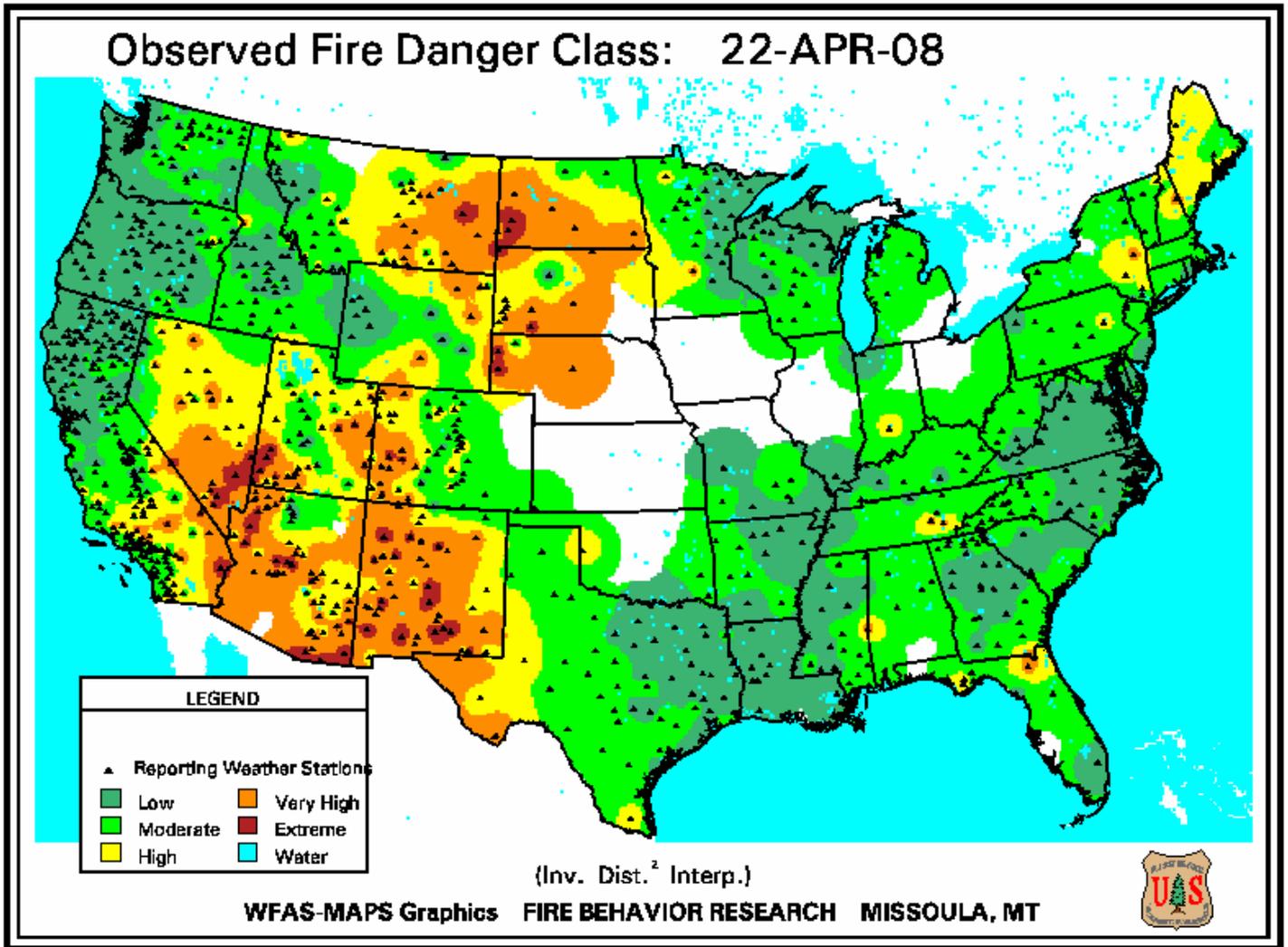


Fig. 6. Observed Fire Danger Class. Note general high fire danger over the Southwest and Northern Plains. Source: Forest Service Fire Behavior Research – Missoula, MT.

Ref: http://www.fs.fed.us/land/wfas/fd_class.gif

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

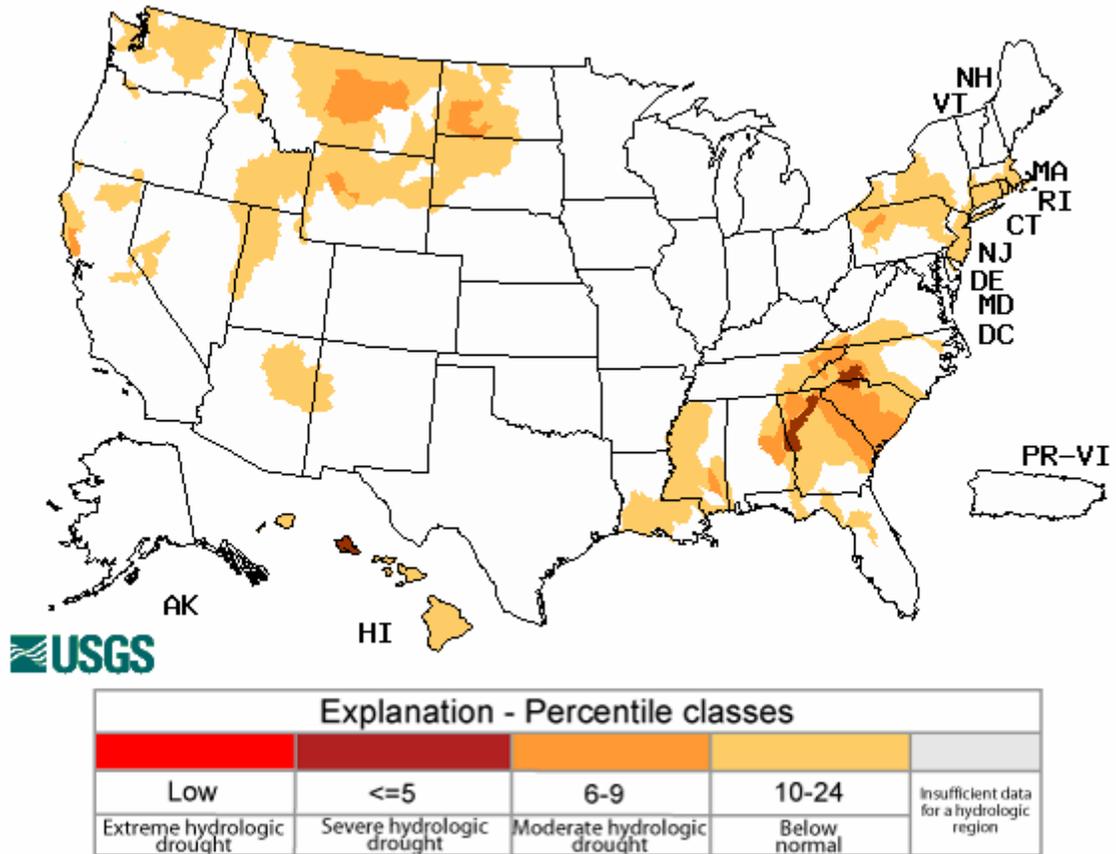


Fig. 7. This week's map shows no significant change over the West since last week. Values over the colder regions of the West and northern states are probably missing or are in error due to river icing and freeze-up although this is rapidly becoming a non-issue as we enter mid-spring. Ref: USGS <http://water.usgs.gov/waterwatch/?m=dryw&w=map&r=us>

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

National Drought Summary - April 15, 2008

The discussion in the Looking Ahead section is simply a description of what the official national guidance from the National Weather Service (NWS) National Centers for Environmental Prediction is depicting for current areas of dryness and drought. The NWS forecast products utilized include the HPC 5-day QPF and 5-day Mean Temperature progs, the 6-10 Day Outlooks of Temperature and Precipitation Probability, and the 8-14 Day Outlooks of Temperature and Precipitation Probability, valid as of late Wednesday afternoon of the USDM release week. The NWS forecast web page used for this section is: <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/forecasts/>.

National Drought Summary - April 22, 2008

The Southeast and Mid-Atlantic: Much of the Southeast received little or no precipitation for the second week in a row and conditions deteriorated in parts of every state from Louisiana to South Carolina. An exception to this was an area of heavy rainfall from eastern North Carolina to south-central Pennsylvania during the last two days of the period that resulted in one-category improvement across a large part of three states.

Moderate drought developed from coastal Louisiana to areas of southern Mississippi. With rainfall deficits greater than 3.0 inches during the past month, and totals less than 70% of average during the past 90 days, 7- to 28-day USGS streamflow has fallen below the 10th percentile in many locations and modeled soil moisture values are less than the 20th percentile. Although levels along the Mississippi River remained high due to recent weeks of heavy precipitation in the Midwest, low streamflow levels elsewhere in southern Mississippi reflected the continuing drier than average conditions.

In Alabama and Georgia where hydrological conditions in many areas had improved over the past three to four months in association with winter precipitation that was average to above average, another week of drier than average conditions led to deterioration in southern parts of these states. Precipitation totals 70% of average over the past 30 to 60 days and streamflow levels less than the 25th percentile supported a southward extension of D0 conditions from south-central Alabama to south-central Georgia. No changes were made in the moderate to extreme hydrological drought (D1H to D3H) conditions elsewhere in these states.

An expansion of abnormally dry conditions (D0H) occurred westward along coastal areas of the Big Bend of Florida as far west as Apalachicola following another week of below average rainfall. The area has been affected by totals less than 75% of average over the past one to three months. The abnormally dry conditions are reflected in USGS 7-day to 28-day streamflow values that are below the 20th percentile. Further south along the Florida Gulf Coast, D1H conditions remained in place from near Tampa to the Naples area on the southern Gulf Coast and Lake Okeechobee to the east. Although one-month to six-month rainfall totals are above average throughout much of the region, and soil moisture and fire danger conditions have improved significantly, long-term water supply problems remain in this area. The Southwest Florida Water Management District has continued its water shortage emergency for the Peace River basin and Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority. The water Authority has only 582 million gallons of water in storage compared to a total storage capacity of more than 7.9 billion gallons.

In southeast South Carolina, moderate drought (D1H) conditions were extended southeastward to encompass parts of the state where 7- to 28-day USGS streamflow values are below the 10th percentile. Rainfall totals have been less than 50% of average over the past 30 days and year-to-date precipitation totals are less than 70% of average in many locations.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

A slow moving upper level low brought heavy rainfall from northeastern North Carolina through eastern and northern Virginia into south-central Pennsylvania in the two days preceding the end of this USDM period. Many locations received more than their normal April rainfall in those two days resulting in significant reductions of D0 through D2 conditions. Changes reflect compromises between wet short-term conditions and lingering deficits at and beyond 12 months. Abnormally dry (D0H) conditions were pushed south of the Washington D.C. area in northern Virginia where two-day totals generally ranged from 2.0 to 4.0 inches. However, D0H and D1H conditions remain on the eastern shore of Maryland and southern Delaware where lighter amounts fell.

More than 4.0 inches of rain fell in a large area from Richmond, Virginia southward to the northeastern coastal Plain of North Carolina. Isolated locations reportedly received as much as 8.0 inches of rain. A one-category improvement occurred in large parts of the D1H and D2H drought areas of central and eastern Virginia and a two-category reduction was considered, but not made, in east-central Virginia where some of the highest rainfall totals occurred. This area has received higher precipitation amounts over the past three to six months and six to 12-month totals are near average. Improving conditions in central and eastern North Carolina led to a one-category reduction of D2H drought from parts of the Raleigh-Durham area northeastward to the Tidewater area of southeast Virginia. Moderate drought (D1H) also contracted along a southwest to northeast orientation in eastern North Carolina and the abnormally dry (D0H) designation was dropped along northeastern coastal areas of the state.

The Plains and Midwest: An inch or more of precipitation fell from parts of eastern Colorado to Wisconsin, much of it falling in drought-free areas. Sufficient amounts fell along the northeastern edge of moderate drought (D1A) areas for a minor southwestward shift of the D1/D0 line.

Amounts less than 0.5 inches fell in eastern North Dakota. The lack of significant precipitation in western areas of North Dakota contributed to further deterioration. Extreme drought (D3H) expanded west to the Montana border and severe and moderate drought (D2 and D1H) spread eastward through central areas of the state. Moderate drought (D1H) was also nudged eastward south of the border with South Dakota where precipitation amounts have been less than 50% of average during the past six months. For North Dakota as a whole, the past six months have been the driest on record with the western half of the state impacted the most, as reported by the North Dakota State Climatologist. Farmers are considering alternative livestock options including buying hay, hauling water, leasing additional pasture, and moving cattle to better grazing lands. Some farmers are looking into finding another state to move their livestock. There is a health concern related to "Dust Pneumonia", an acute infection in the lungs of cattle as a result of exposure to dust. State Water Commission is seeking for governor's disaster declaration in order to access funds for water emergencies. The Agricultural (A) impact designation was added to western D3 and D2 areas of the state where impacts are evident.

One inch or more of rain fell in drought-free areas of eastern Texas and along the eastern edge of drought-affected areas of southwest Texas allowing for minor reductions in D0 and D1A conditions in south-central parts of the state. Little or no rain fell in the core areas of extreme and exceptional drought and conditions remained unchanged elsewhere.

The West: With the exception of broad areas of average to above-average precipitation in Colorado and Montana, most parts of the western U.S. received little to no precipitation during the past week, and the hydrological drought conditions affecting the West were largely unchanged. This was reflected in the absence of changes in the depiction for all but small parts of Montana, northwestern Utah and southern Idaho.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

Severe drought (D2H) was removed from northwest Utah and southern Idaho to better reflect local observations and analysis of drought conditions in the area. According to local experts, a large part of this area is remote and non-essential as a water source and comprised in part by a salt desert with a small range that does not hold snow for any length of time. The improvement from D2H to D1H reflects conditions that are similar to surrounding D1H areas.

Conditions remained unchanged in Wyoming as the week was largely dry and windy with the exception of isolated pockets of precipitation. In the southwestern quarter of the state where severe drought (D2H) predominates, snowpack continued to drop rapidly but snow water equivalent values remained above average in most locations. Snowpack in the northeast dropped to normal to slightly-above-normal, and snowpack in south-central areas (Upper North Platte and Little Snake) also continued to decrease. Temperatures in much of the state, particularly the northern half, were above normal while areas in the south were generally cooler than average.

In Montana and other northwestern states below average temperatures helped hold snowpack in place with amounts increasing in some locations where heavy snow fell during the past week. Better than average snowpack conditions in western Montana supported a ½ county eastward shift in the D0H line west of the Continental Divide. Conditions deteriorated in Silver Bow County in southwestern Montana from D0 to D1H where 30- to 60-day precipitation amounts have been less than 50% of average.

Hawaii: Abnormally dry (D0) conditions remained intact across most of the state. The one exception was in the western half of Molokai where D1A was introduced to reflect slowly decreasing reservoir levels and the use of 10% voluntary water conservation.

Alaska: In areas of eastern Alaska where snowpack remained well below average there was no change to the D0 designation and other parts of the state remained drought free. Near Fairbanks, snow water equivalent was less than 60% of average while to the south near Anchorage, and outside the designated D0 area, snow water equivalent was above average as of 22 April.

Puerto Rico: The past week was generally drier than average across the island. Although short-term deficits have grown and groundwater and streamflow values reflect drier-than-average conditions on large parts of the island, no changes to the existing D0 conditions were made. With the transition to the wet season just beginning, any degradation in conditions would be premature.

Looking Ahead: During the next 5 days (April 22-28, 2008), the heaviest and most widespread precipitation (2.0 or more inches) is expected to fall largely in drought-free areas of the southern Plains and the Upper Midwest. Heavy rain (3.0 to 4.0 inches) may also fall along the Texas/Mexico border where extreme and exceptional drought conditions are present. Totals of approximately 1.0 inches are possible in drought-affected areas of western Virginia and lighter amounts are forecasted for other drought-affected parts of the Southeast. In Florida, rainfall is expected only along the Atlantic coast and western Panhandle. Odds favor little to no precipitation in the Southwest, while totals near or exceeding 1.0 inches are more likely in the Northwest from western Wyoming to the panhandle of Idaho and along coastal areas of Oregon and northern California.

The period is expected to begin with daily high temperatures generally 5-10°F above average in the eastern two-thirds of the nation while temperatures more than 10°F below average cover large parts of the western U.S. Temperatures are expected to moderate in the eastern half of the nation during the period while the area of below-normal temperatures pushes toward the central U.S. Near the end of the period, warmer-than-average daytime highs are expected to affect the West Coast while temperatures in the eastern third of the nation are near average.

Weekly Snowpack and Drought Monitor Update Report

The ensuing 5 day period (April 29 – May 3, 2008) is expected to be highlighted by high pressure over the Southwest and the Plains as well as the Aleutians and southwestern Alaska. The odds favor a trough over the eastern third of the nation, the Pacific Northwest, and northeastern Alaska and the Alaskan Panhandle. The ridge of high pressure over the western and central U.S. should produce warmer- and drier-than-average conditions for the Southwest and Plains states. Low pressure over the Gulf of Alaska should produce cooler- and wetter-than-normal conditions in the Pacific Northwest. Low pressure near the Great Lakes also favors cooler and wetter-than-normal conditions for that region.

Author: Jay Lawrimore, National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

Dryness Categories

D0 ... Abnormally Dry ... used for areas showing dryness but not yet in drought, or for areas recovering from drought.

Drought Intensity Categories

D1 ... Moderate Drought

D2 ... Severe Drought

D3 ... Extreme Drought

D4 ... Exceptional Drought

Drought or Dryness Types

A ... Agricultural

H ... Hydrological

Updated April 23, 2008