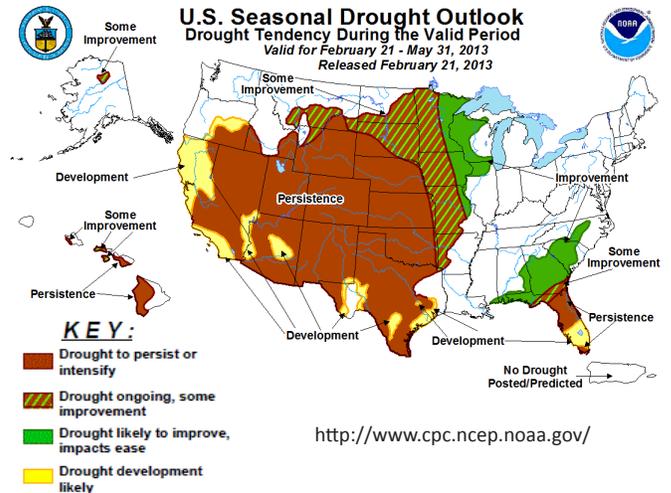
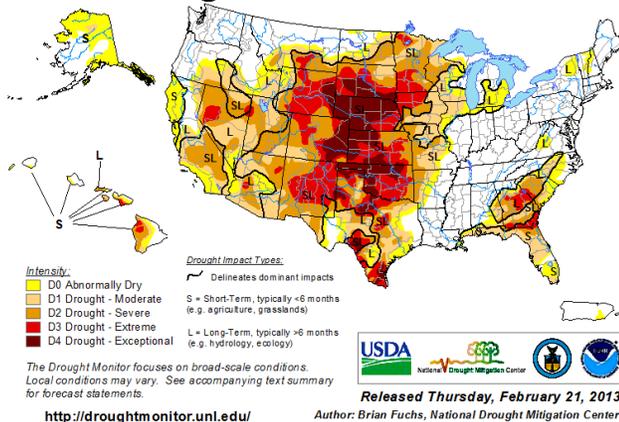


Current Drought Conditions and the Seasonal Drought Outlook

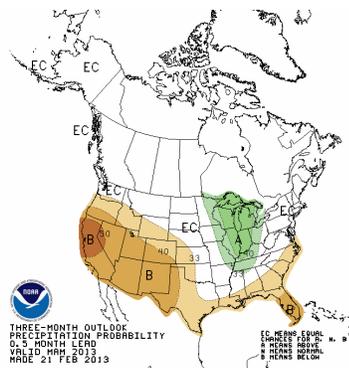
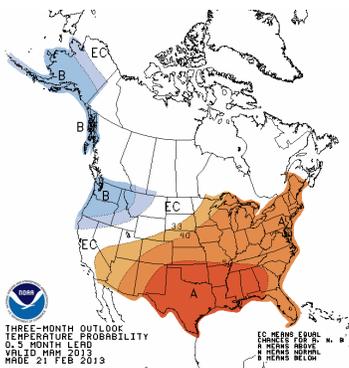
U.S. Drought Monitor February 19, 2013



Much of the central U.S. is still in the grip of long-standing moderate (D1) to exceptional (D4) drought, while recent rain has brought relief to the southeast U.S. Abnormally dry (D0) to exceptional drought (D4) conditions exist over 67% of the contiguous U.S., which, although still serious, is a slight improvement since fall 2012. The 2012/2013 drought has serious implications for agriculture, navigation, recreation and municipal water supplies, costing the nation at least \$35 billion in economic losses.

Drought will persist or intensify in much of the current drought-stricken area (brown shading). Improvement is anticipated in Minnesota and surrounding areas (green and hatched shading), and much of the southeast. This designation of improvement, however, does not imply elimination of drought, just a possible easing of conditions. Drought is anticipated to persist or develop in Florida.

Temperature, Precipitation and Wildfire Outlooks



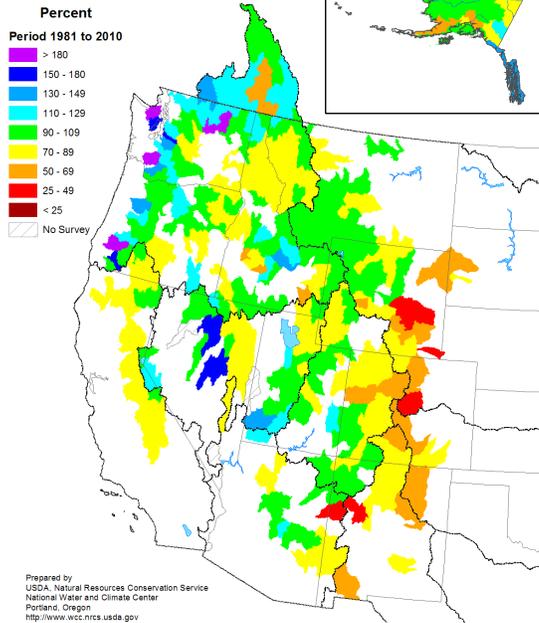
Warmer-than-normal temperatures are anticipated over much of the U.S. over the next three months. In the northwest, extending northward into Alaska, cooler temperatures are expected. "EC" indicates temperatures have equal chances of being below normal, normal or above normal.

Much of the western U.S. and parts of the southeast are anticipated to receive below-normal precipitation. Above-normal precipitation is expected in the Great Lakes region and surrounding states. "EC" indicates precipitation amounts have equal chances of being below normal, normal or above normal. (<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>)

Periodic precipitation across the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys, central Gulf States and the mid-Atlantic will keep below normal significant wildland fire potential in much of the east. The seasonal increase in fire across Florida will be amplified to above normal significant wildland fire potential by ongoing very dry conditions. (www.nifc.gov)

Water Resources

Mountain Snowpack as of February 1, 2013



Snowpack

There is a wide range of snowpack amounts across the intermountain west and Alaska, with individual basins showing anywhere from 25% of normal to more than 180% of normal, as of Feb. 1, 2013. Several basins in Colorado, Wyoming and New Mexico show snowpack of less than 50% of normal. Oregon and Washington state have basins with well-above normal snowpack along the Cascade Range. (http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/snowcourse/snow_map.html)

Reservoirs

Reservoir conditions in the west are variable, with Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Oregon having below-normal reservoir storage as of Feb. 1, 2013. California, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Washington and Wyoming have above-normal or near-normal reservoir storage.

In the southeast, recent beneficial rains have eased reservoir conditions in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin, which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) put into drought operations in May 2012. The USACE 5-week forecast calls for further improvement in reservoir storage.

Rivers and Lakes

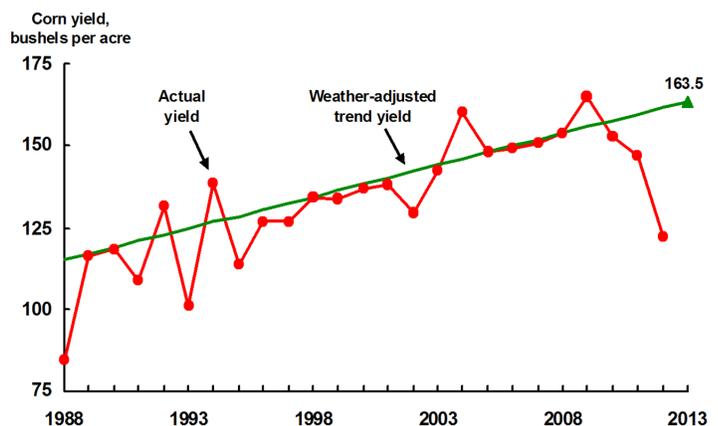
The impact of drought is being felt along the nation's rivers. The USACE is doing everything it can to maintain commercial navigation on the Mississippi River.

All of the Great Lakes are below long-term averages for this time of year and forecasts call for continued below-average lake levels.

Agriculture

The projected long-term weather-adjusted U.S. corn yield trend for 2013 starts at 163.5 bushels/acre.

- U.S. corn yield has declined each year since a record high of 164.7 bushels/acre was set in 2009 (corn yield was 152.8 bushels/acre in 2010; 147.2 bushels/acre in 2011; and 123.4 bushels/acre in 2012).
- The most important factors for a favorable U.S. corn yield in 2013 will be early planting and July weather.
- Corn, sorghum and the livestock sector, including hay production, were hit hard by the drought of 2012.
- If the drought persists, the hard red winter wheat crop, grown on the Great Plains, is at risk for abandonment and yield reductions in the spring of 2013.



Upcoming Events

NOAA/NWS Spring Outlook March 21, 2013

Keep up-to-date on drought conditions at the NIDIS Drought Portal - www.drought.gov

Outlook Partners

National Integrated Drought Information System

www.drought.gov

National Drought Mitigation Center

drought.unl.edu

DOI WaterSMART

www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART

DOI/Bureau of Reclamation

www.usbr.gov

USDA/Office of the Chief Economist

www.usda.gov/oce

USDA/NRCS National Water and Climate Center

www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov

National Interagency Fire Center

www.nifc.gov

US Army Corps of Engineers

www.usace.army.mil

NOAA/NWS Climate Prediction Center

www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov

NOAA/NWS/Missouri Basin River Forecast Center

www.crh.noaa.gov/mbrfc

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National Drought Early Warning Outlook | February 2013

www.drought.gov/portal/server.pt/community/reports

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