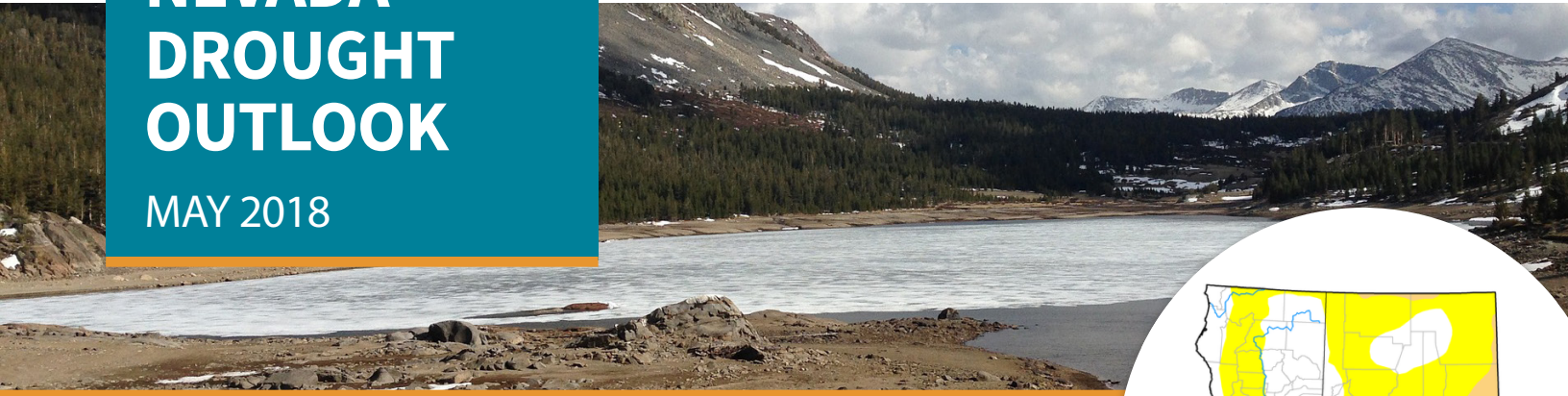


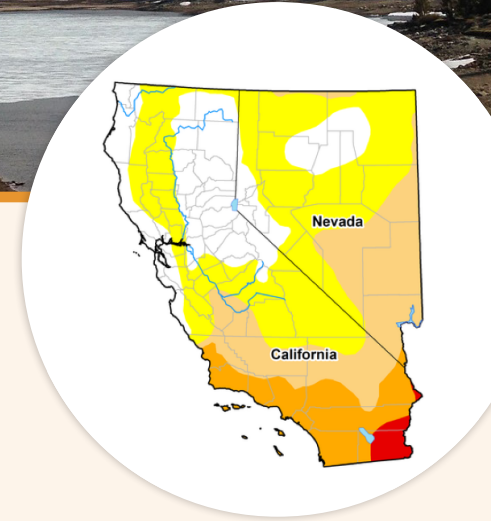
CALIFORNIA-NEVADA DROUGHT OUTLOOK

MAY 2018



Current Drought Conditions

Although April-May brought wetter-than-normal conditions to northern California-Nevada, drought conditions have slowly continued to worsen in the southern portion of the region. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, moderate to severe (D1-D2) drought expanded over the past two months. This includes the expansion of severe drought into San Diego and Riverside counties of southern California, as well as moderate drought throughout southern Nevada. As of May 29 (Fig. 1), ~35% of California-Nevada was in moderate-extreme drought and ~41% was abnormally dry.

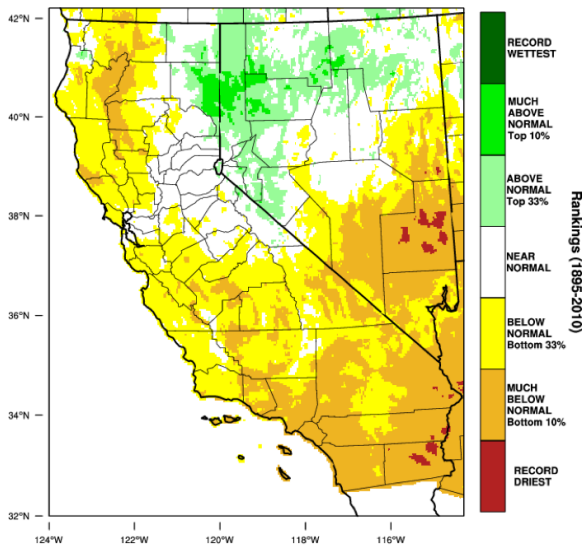


▲ Fig 1. U.S. Drought Monitor for May 29. Source: droughtmonitor.unl.edu

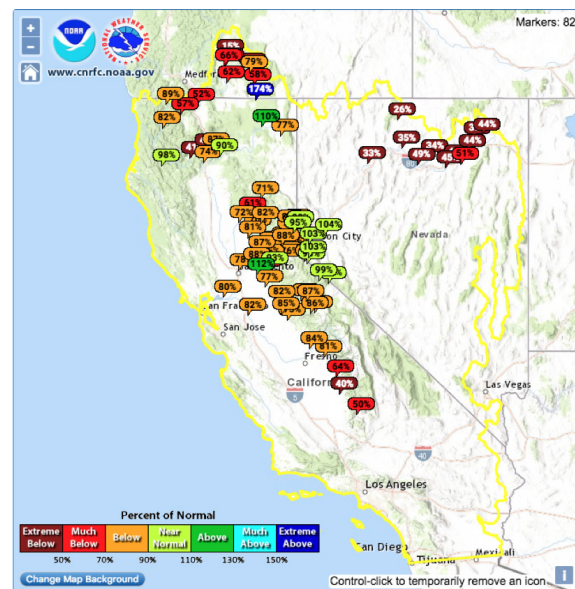
Regional Climate Update

While spring precipitation was above normal in some parts of California-Nevada, water year totals at the end of May remained well below normal. Most of southern California-Nevada received <25%-70% of the 1981-2010 normal water year precipitation, with just pockets of northern California and Nevada receiving above-normal precipitation (Fig. 2). April temperatures left California-Nevada warmer than normal, counter to the cooler-than-normal coastal temperatures in May. Snow water equivalents (SWE)

are also low for this time of year, with many areas across the Sierra Nevada and Nevada mountain ranges reporting <25% of median SWE, according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). California Nevada River Forecast Center (CNRFC) water supply seasonal volume forecasts are at- or below-normal in the central-northern Sierras and extremely-below-normal in the southern Sierras and eastern Nevada (Fig. 3).



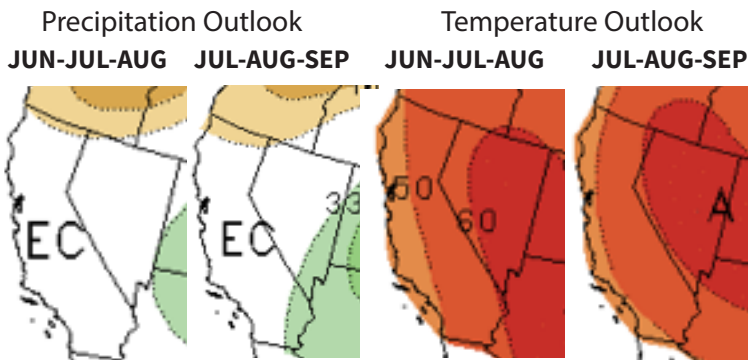
▲ Fig. 2. 10/1/2017 - 5/31/2018 Percentile Precipitation. Source: [WestWide Drought Tracker](http://WestWideDroughtTracker)



▲ Fig. 3. Percent of normal forecast ESP water supply seasonal volume. Source: <https://www.cnrfc.noaa.gov/>

Drought & Climate Outlook

The May 2018 Seasonal Outlooks produced by NOAA's Climate Prediction Center (CPC) favor equal chances of above, below, and normal precipitation across California and Nevada for June-July-August (JJA) and July-August-September (JAS) (Fig. 4) with drought forecasted to persist throughout the summer. Warm temperatures are also favored, with a 33-60% chance of above-normal temperatures over the region, with the greatest chances over Nevada. The National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook (Fig. 5) shows above-normal wildfire potential in June-July over southern coast and north-central California due to current drought severity coupled with the carryover of an above-average fine fuel growth from last year. In July, as the fuel moisture decline phase is expected to be steeper than average, significant portions of CA-NV are expected to have above-normal wildfire potential.



▲ Fig. 4. A = chances of above-normal; EC= equal chances of above, below, normal; B = chances of below-normal. Source: cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/

During April 2018, ENSO conditions in the tropical pacific returned to neutral as oceanic and atmospheric indicators related to La Niña continued to fade. The [NOAA ENSO alert system](#) status is currently a Final La Niña advisory with neutral conditions favored through September-November 2018.

About this Outlook

On May 29, 2018, NIDIS and its partners held this webinar as part of a series of drought and climate outlook webinars designed to provide stakeholders in the region with timely information on current drought status and impacts, as well as a preview of current and developing climatic events.

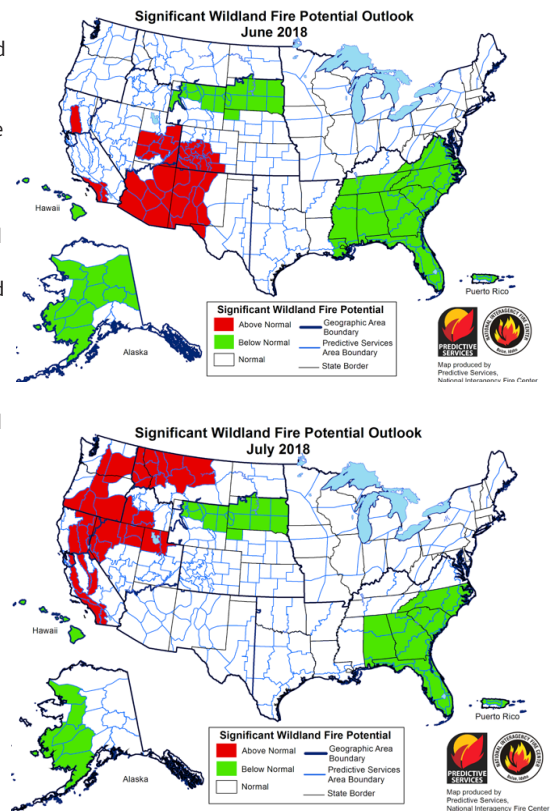
A video of and presentations from this webinar can be accessed here: <https://www.drought.gov/drought/calendar>



NIDIS & MAPP Launch “Story Map” Telling the Story of the Historic California Drought

In April, NIDIS and NOAA's Modeling, Analysis, Predictions and Projections program (MAPP) launched a Story Map that takes a look at the historic drought that impacted California from 2011 to 2017. This Story Map is a visual history of the drought, using images and graphs to provide an interactive and engaging experience. This webinar provided a walkthrough of the Story Map, with insights from NOAA and MAPP scientists. [Check out the Story Map!](#)

► Fig. 5. National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook issued June 1, 2018. Above Normal indicates a greater than usual likelihood that significant wildland fires will occur. Significant wildland fires should be expected at typical times and intervals during normal significant wildland fire potential conditions. Source: <https://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/outlooks.htm>



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