



Drought in the NW Climate Hub Region

Alaska continues to receive spring rain and snowfall thus remaining free of drought and dry conditions state-wide.

Abnormally dry conditions (D0-yellow) have expanded in southern Idaho and a small area exists in northern Idaho. In central Idaho moderate conditions (D1-tan) have expanded, whereas severe drought conditions (D2-orange) have slightly shrunken since last month.

This week, extreme drought (D3-red) conditions exist in southwestern Oregon and northern California. Jackson County Board of Commissioners have declared drought. In the last month, severe drought conditions (D2-orange) are affecting more of western Oregon and central Washington and Oregon. The extent of abnormally dry (D0-yellow) and moderate drought (D1-tan) expanded in Oregon and Washington including across much of the Olympic Peninsula and throughout most of eastern Washington.

Report of drought declaration in Jackson County Oregon.



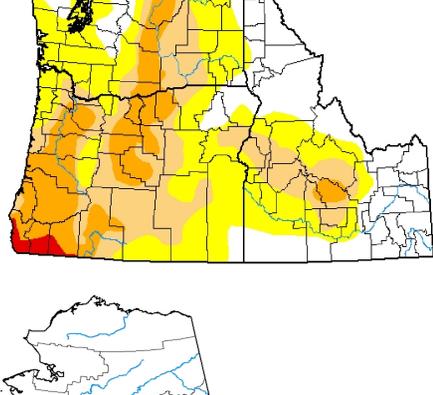
U.S. Drought Monitor

April 21, 2020

USDA Northwest Climate Hub

(Released Thursday, Apr. 23, 2020)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

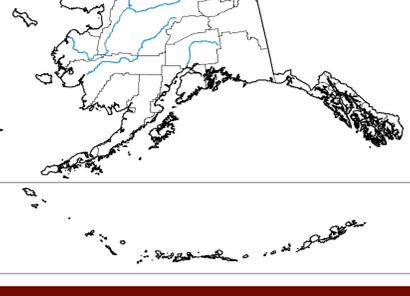
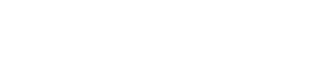


	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	78.45	21.55	11.44	4.92	0.28	0.00
Last Week 04-14-2020	79.71	20.29	10.27	4.18	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 01-21-2020	73.58	26.42	8.36	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12-31-2019	70.58	29.42	7.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2019	88.75	11.25	3.91	1.40	0.61	0.00
One Year Ago 04-23-2019	67.73	12.27	3.47	1.35	0.00	0.00

Intensity:
 None (White), D0 Abnormally Dry (Yellow), D1 Moderate Drought (Tan), D2 Severe Drought (Orange), D3 Extreme Drought (Red), D4 Exceptional Drought (Dark Red)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author: Brian Fuchs, National Drought Mitigation Center



Wildfire season has begun

Due to dry, warm, and windy conditions throughout Oregon and Washington, fire experts are requesting that seasonal burns be halted and urge strong caution be exercised to reduce fire ignition risks. As of mid-April, Washington state has fought over 160 wildfires and nearly 30% of the fires burned west of the Cascades. Rain this week will help reduce fire ignition risks.

Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for May 2020 is **NORMAL**

Oregon preparing for an early fire season

Information

- Asian Giant Hornet: What Outdoor Workers Need to Know**, a fact sheet outlining risks and prevention tactics for this hornet, a toxic, invasive species discovered in 2019 in Whatcom County, Washington. The potent venom of the Asian Giant Hornet is considered to be more toxic than local bees and wasps. A few hornets can destroy an entire honeybee hive in a few hours. **Check out Hornet Watch**, a mapping effort to track hornet sightings.
- Where's the Beef? Science You Can Use Bulletin** (throwback) maps and explains potential limitations to cattle production on western rangelands due to a variety of intensifying challenges due to climate change like heat stress, vegetation change, and increased variability of forage availability from year to year.
- Science You Can Use, Tools Edition highlights the new rangeland condition prediction tool, ST-Sim.** The tool allows managers to ask "what if" questions based on various climate and landscape conditions under different management applications. Simulating multiple possible realities can help inform management practices and producer decisions.
- Invasive grasses pose previously unrecognized threat to forests.** According to a new study, climate change, wildfire, current thinning and prescribed burning practices could collectively compound the threat of invasive grasses, push past tipping points and irreversibly transform forests to grasslands. Researchers note several strategies to address challenges in the Northwest, including increased communication and research, and reliable mapping and monitoring. **Full article**
- Post-Fire Native Species Seed Mixes Are Effective at Keeping Out Cheatgrass in the Great Basin.** The results of the first long-term study comparing seed mixes in the Great Basin indicates that native species mixes are effective at keeping out invasives like cheatgrass after fire. This could be good news for rangeland managers in Idaho and Oregon facing cheatgrass challenges as well as increasing risk of frequency and intensity of wildfire.
- Wildfire Risk to Communities**, a new tool that provides wild fire risk information at the community, county, or state level using a simple search and dropdown menu to understand, explore and reduce wildfire risk. There are risk maps for "risk to homes", exposure type, wildfire likelihood and vulnerable populations. Also find resources for understanding and reducing risk.
- What Climate Change Means for Northwest Wildfires.** A comprehensive review of wildfires in the Northwest indicates that future climate conditions will increase wildfire potential in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and western Montana. The study concludes that warmer, drier forests are expected to be particularly vulnerable and provides adaptation insights.
- Study: prescribed burns, thinning helped Carlton Complex forests recover.** An article discussing the success of fuel treatment investments to post-mega fire recovery, in the context of the Carlton Fire Complex that burned hundreds of thousands of acres in Washington in 2014.
- Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation in Southwest Oregon**, is a vulnerability study conducted for federal lands in Southwest Oregon. The report identifies how climate change will affect water resources, fisheries, vegetation, wildlife, recreation, and ecosystem services in the Rogue River National Forest, Umpqua National Forest, Bureau of Land Management Districts in Medford and Roseburg, and the Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve.
- Indigenous Knowledge Identifies Climate-Driven Impacts on Berry Production in Alaska**, a recent, collaborative study examines climate impacts like permafrost thaw on culturally and ecologically important berry-producing plants in coastal Alaska. Observations from indigenous communities identified changes in berry habitat, fruiting cycles and abundance.
- AgHortOutdoor Webpage from the Kenai Peninsula District.** The new site features resources and links for farms and gardens and includes weather and climate reports, soil tests, grazing calculators, a compendium of coronavirus information addressing farm and food safety and more.

Collection of regional climate vulnerability studies

The Northwest Climate Hub has gathered regionally-specific, climate change vulnerability studies by tribes, agencies, and partners that address rangelands, agriculture, forestry, Northwest, and Alaska-specific climate change-related challenges and adaptation strategies.

COVID-19 related information and programs

- USDA Programs in the Local Food Supply Chain.** COVID-19 is posing challenges all along the food supply chain. Check out this fact sheet noting programs from different USDA agencies that are available to producers, processors, distributors, and markets. Get more information about each program by clicking on the program name.
- FAQs Related to COVID-19 Impact on the Fruit and Vegetable Industry-** seven helpful questions and answers that address relevance to the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act.
- Alaska's Farmers Markets to Stay Open this Summer-** markets will operate differently due to coronavirus concerns with measures to increase distances between vendors and limit the number of shoppers per booth. Organizers and vendors are working together to innovate and adapt, with the unintended consequence of revitalizing Alaska's Farmers Market Association.

Climate adaptation leadership awards for natural resources

This award recognizes outstanding and exemplary leadership by individuals, agencies, businesses, students, and youth (18 and under) working to advance natural resource adaptation to climate change. Up to eight nominees will be selected. **Nomination submissions are due by 15 May.**

[Nomination form](#)

Funding opportunities

- The Farm Loan Discovery Tool** can be used to help farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners USDA finance their businesses. Explore the resources below to learn about funding programs that may meet your current business needs.
- USDA Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program** supports sustainable rural economies recovering from disaster through e-connectivity, technology, workforce training and other strategic innovations. Funds are available to communities with a Major Disaster Declaration from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Guidance is available if requested **before 27 April. Electronic applications due 30 April by 9pm PST. Paper applications due 5 May by 4pm local time.**
- Tribal Wildlife Grants Program** funds are available to benefit wildlife and habitat that are of cultural or traditional importance to tribes, including species that are not hunted or fished. Support can include planning for conservation, management actions, research, natural history studies, habitat mapping or preservation, field surveys and population monitoring, conservation easements, and public education. **Applications due 4 May 2020 by 8:59pm PST.**
- Pollution Prevention Grant Program** provides funds for technical assistance to businesses and facilities to develop and adopt pollution prevention practices. Technical assistance can include information, training, or tools. Documentation and case studies required with the funds will be used to highlight and share prevention strategies. **Applications due 30 April *extended**
- Farmers Market Promotion Program** provides funding for projects that enhance direct producer-to-consumer markets and increase access to agricultural products. Activities may include outreach, training, and technical assistance to farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, online sales or other direct producer-to-consumer opportunities. A 25% match is required. **Applications due 11 May.**
- Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials Funding.** The Natural Resources Conservation Service CIG program offers national and state-specific technical and financial assistance to producers to help compensate for any risks associated with implementation of new conservation practices, systems and approaches. Trials require evaluation of conservation practices from the system and farm levels, and should focus on one of the following areas: irrigation technology, precision agriculture, or soil health demonstration trials. **National program applications due by 11 May 2020.**
- State CIG funding application due:** Idaho - 8 May Oregon - 8 May Alaska - due 15 May
- USDA Local Food Business Promotion Program** provides funding to develop, coordinate and expand local and regional food business through strategies like feasibility studies, market research, training and technical assistance. The goal of this program is to increase access to and availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products. A 25% match is required. **Applications due 11 May by 8:59pm PST.**
- Source Reduction Assistance Grant Program** supports research, investigation, study, demonstration, educational and training to help business and facilities find cost-savings while reducing their environmental footprint in the face of more frequent extreme weather events. **Applications due 15 May *extended.**
- USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program** support efforts to increase the competitiveness of specialty crops, including fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture). Support is available to enhance sustainability, pest and disease control, conservation-focused research, and nutrition education. **Applications due 27 May.**
- USDA NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Alternative Funding Arrangement (AFA).** This program is an extension of the classic RCPP that allows for greater flexibility and "out of the box" projects limited to 15 awards. Project areas can include innovative approaches to leverage the federal investment in conservation, projects that use pay-for-performance conservation approaches, or large-scale infrastructure investment projects that generate conservation benefits for agricultural producers and nonindustrial private forest owners. **Applications extended to 29 May 11:59pm EDT.**
- Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) Expansion for Moisture and Drought** open 23 March. WHIP+ covers losses of crops, trees, bushes, and vines that occurred as a result 2018-2019 disaster events. WHIP+ covers losses of include sugar beet and milk losses, and quality reduction. **WHIP+ Factsheet**
- Renewable Resources Extension Act-National Focus Fund Projects (RREA-NFF)** Funding for forest and rangeland sustainability projects that address one of the following priority areas: 1) Regional/National Projects: The Nexus of Critical Forest and Rangeland Resources Issues, Innovative Approaches to Program Delivery, and Current Knowledge about Non-Formal Adult Education, 2) Ensuring of New Knowledge to Forest and Rangeland Owners and Managers. **Applications due 28 June.**

Webinars

- Pacific Northwest Drought & Climate Outlook 27 April 2020 11am PST.** The Pacific Northwest Drought Early Warning System hosts a series of region-specific, drought and climate outlook webinars to provide timely information on current drought status and impacts, a preview of current and developing climatic events, and special topics including a brief tutorial on using Climate Toolbox for register and how to report drought conditions and impacts. **27 April** - click to register **22 June** - click to register **24 August** - click to register
- Northwest River Forecast Center Water Supply Briefing 7 May.** Monthly water supply briefings held January through late spring on the first Thursday of each month.
- Understanding Regional Linkages Between Production, Agriculture, Air Quality, and Climate 18 May 3pm PST.** This webinar is for producers and agriculture managers and will highlight the intersecting challenges between production agriculture, air quality and climate. Rising global demand for goods requires increased productivity in a changing climate. The talk, hosted by the USDA Southwest Climate Hub and CLIMAS, will examine air quality impacts to food safety, security and production into the future.
- Managing for Forest Resilience University of Idaho Extension 21 May 6-8:30pm PST.** The intended audience is forest managers of north-central Idaho forests. The webinar will address challenges like root disease, bark beetles, climate change, wildfire, high stand densities, simplified forest structures and age compositions, and altered species composition. Content will focus on forest management approaches that can simultaneously address multiple stressors, while providing economic and ecological benefits.
- Biochar from Forest to the Farm 21 May 8am PST** will cover biochar relevance to animal bedding, irrigated lands, high value crops, and improving forest soil. This content is relevant to agriculture and forestry land managers. Presentation by Jim Archuleta, Forest Service Pacific Northwest Wood Innovations Coordinator.
- National Weather Service Alaska Climate Assessments and Policy:** a monthly webinar series on Fridays at 12 pm AKT by the Alaska Climate Assessment and Policy Center that reviews recent climate and looks ahead at future climate predictions. Click each date below to register for the monthly webinar. **22 May** - click to register
- Adapting to Human Health Impacts of Climate Change**, a series of free, online trainings available through the Tribal Climate Health Project. Interactive trainings are held on the 3rd Tuesday each month at 10:00-11:30 (PST) from January-August 2020. Trainings will provide steps, tools, templates, case studies, and other resources to help attendees and their communities build adaptation strategies. Recordings will be available online.

Conferences, Workshops & Trainings*

*Visit websites for updates as many events are being rescheduled or moved to an online format.

- Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership 2020 Annual Conference Went Virtual!** Video recordings and additional materials from the April conference are now available.
- Soil and Water Conservation Society's 75th Annual Conference 26-29 July Des Moines, Iowa.** The conference theme of "Expanding Horizons: Where Conservation Meets Innovation" inspires 12 focal topics including soil health, applied data in agriculture, water resources, monitoring, and more.
- The 2020 National Soil Moisture Workshop 12-13 August National Agricultural Library in Beltsville, Maryland.** This workshop brings leaders in soil moisture research and development together in an interactive workshop to exchange ideas and enhance collaborations. **Abstracts due 1 June. Registration due 1 August.**
- 31 August-4 September in St. Paul, Minnesota.** Tribal submissions for seven Generational and social tracks are requested. Topics include climate-related impacts, assessments, tools, adaptation, mitigation, actions, and the intersection of western science and adaptation strategies with Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge. The conference is open to all US tribal nations and indigenous peoples across the world, with an emphasis on including elders and youth. Oral and poster presentations due 1 May, *extended. **Registration opens soon.**
- Tribal Climate Camp September 8-12 2020 Anchorage, Alaska.** Applications are now being accepted for the 2020 Tribal Climate Camp that support teams of tribal leaders, climate change coordinators, planners, and program managers to build skills, gather information, and develop tribal policy needed to address climate change impacts. **Check out a video on the 2019 Tribal Climate Camp**
- Save the Date: Western Forest and Conservation Nursery Association and the Intertribal Nursery Council Joint Annual Conference 22-24 September Santa Fe, New Mexico.** This year's theme is "Seeds, Seedlings, and Outplanting in Dry Environments."
- Agroforestry in the Pacific Northwest Workshop Eugene, Oregon 2020** is postponed until **14-16 October.** The workshop is intended for technical assistance providers, extension staff, and anyone else who works with farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners to promote agroforestry in the Pacific Northwest. Click here to view the schedule.

To receive the USDA Northwest Climate Hub monthly newsletter via email, **signup by clicking on this box and providing your contact information and areas of interest on the form.**

