

## Drought in the NW Climate Hub Region

June precipitation slowed the expansion of dry conditions across much of the region. Since the end of May, widespread abnormally dry (D0-yellow) conditions in western and eastern Washington improved to normal conditions. Idaho also experienced improvements on the east side of the state. Reductions in moderate drought conditions (D1-tan) occurred in the Lemhi and Washington counties in Idaho. Improvements were less significant in Oregon, but areas in extreme drought (D3-red) in the southwest and northcentral regions reduced in size. Areas in moderate drought (D1-tan) east and west of the Cascades also receded slightly. Severe drought (D2-orange) expanded through the middle of the state.

Alaska continues to remain free of drought or dry conditions.



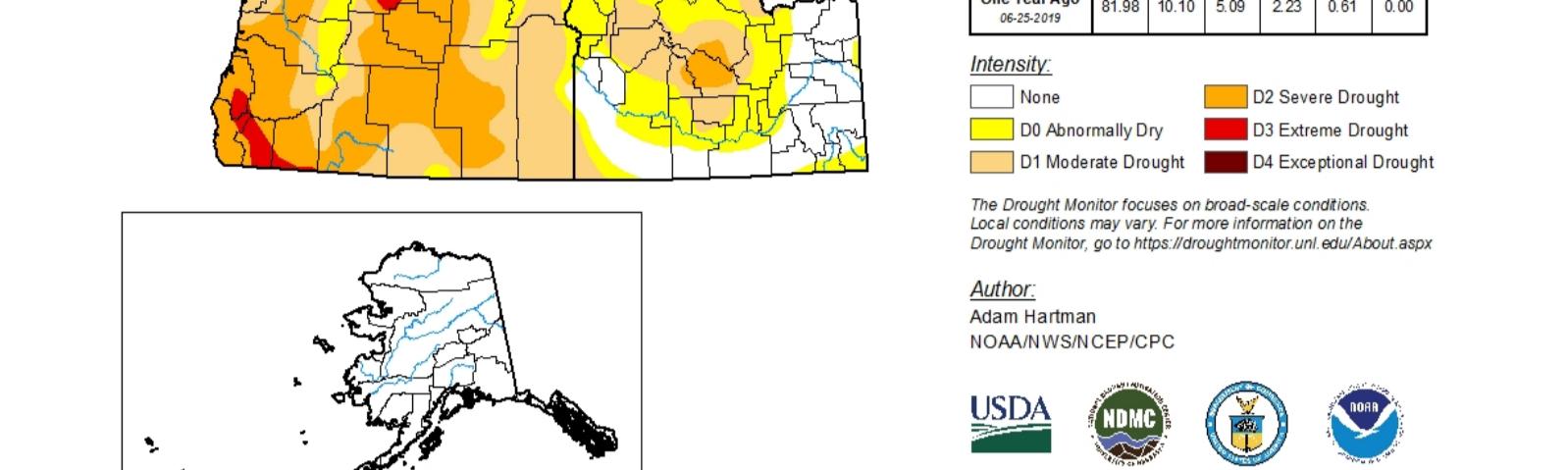
NIDIS Drought.gov  
U.S. Drought Portal



CoCoRaHS  
Community Rain Hail  
Snow Network

Drought Conditions & Impacts Reporter

U.S. Drought Monitor



### U.S. Drought Monitor

## USDA Northwest Climate Hub

June 23, 2020

(Released Thursday, Jun. 25, 2020)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	81.14	5.96	6.16	6.19	0.56	0.00
Last Week 06-16-2020	80.33	6.70	6.36	6.06	0.56	0.00
3 Months Ago 03-24-2020	83.45	7.18	8.23	1.14	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2020	70.58	22.31	7.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2019	88.75	7.34	2.51	0.79	0.61	0.00
One Year Ago 06-25-2019	81.98	10.10	5.09	2.23	0.61	0.00

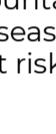
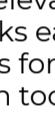
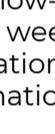
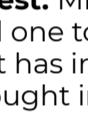
Intensity:

None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought	D4 Exceptional Drought
D2 Severe Drought	D3 Extreme Drought

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>

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[droughtmonitor.unl.edu](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

## Northwest State-level Drought Resources



Check out a new collection of state-level drought resources for Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington from a variety of state and federal sources. Summaries are included to guide users by helping to differentiate among the information sources available and clarify uses and benefits.



## Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for July 2020

Large portions of Oregon, Washington and Idaho are above normal wildland fire potential while Alaska is predicted to experience normal fire conditions according to the July's Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook from the National Interagency Coordination Center.

## New Northwest Climate Hub Director - Jessica Halofsky



Jessica Halofsky joins the Climate Hub us with over a decade of experience as an ecologist, specializing in fire regime and vegetation shifts in response to climate. As a scientist with the University of Washington, she focused on applied research of fire and disturbance ecology, vegetation dynamics, and climate change impacts and adaptation. Jessica has an extensive background working with land managers to address climate change and environmental threats, including engagement through a series of climate change vulnerability assessments throughout the West. Jessica is also the new director of the Western Wildland Environmental Threat Assessment Center (WWETAC) and is based in Olympia, Washington. Welcome Jessica!

## Information



**Water Supply Reports.** Find June water supply reports for Oregon, Idaho, Washington and Alaska with updated basin-scale outlooks on this season's snowpack status and water availability.

**Oregon**   **Idaho**   **Washington**   **Alaska**



**Assessing the U.S. Climate in May 2020.** Highlights of May climate conditions from NOAA includes information about record-breaking May temperatures in Nome, Alaska as well as May 2020 being the sixth driest on record for Alaska, with record-setting low precipitation in parts of the North Slope and Central Interior regions. Find maps and information on drought in the west.



**Drought Emerges Across the Pacific Northwest in Spring 2020.** Check out this time-lapse map of drought development from February to May across the U.S. and a discussion of how below-average precipitation contributed to drought conditions in Oregon and Washington.



**Are There More Multiyear Snow Droughts in Our Future?** An article from the Agriculture Climate Network highlights research on the future likelihood of consecutive years of low snowpack in the Northwest. It also explores seasonal changes in the timing of peak snowpack, which influences the timing and volume of streamflow through spring and summer.



**Snow Drought: Current Situation and Impacts in the West.** Mid- to low-elevation mountain snowpack across Oregon, Washington, and Alaska melted one to four weeks early this season due to warm temperatures and low snowpack. Early snowmelt has implications for drought risk. Find further information, including maps and links to snow drought information tools.



**Drought Less Predictable Under Declining Future Snowpack.** A study in Nature Climate Change suggests that snowpack losses due to climate change will reduce the ability to measure seasonal water storage and thus limit reliable drought monitoring. Lower elevation mountain ranges in coastal areas, like those found in the Northwest, are particularly vulnerable to losses and drought prediction challenges.

**Full article**



**New Forest Landscape Model Predicts How Management Policies Affect Future Wildfire Impacts.** A new model, LSim, simulates forest management over time and predicts how management decisions in the short term influence the impacts of future wildfires. An accelerated forest restoration scenario for the Deschutes National Forest was simulated in LSim to study how it might affect future wildfire. Click here for key findings and model details.



**Forestry as a Natural Climate Solution: The Positive Outcomes of Negative Carbon Emissions.** This Science Finding highlights recent discoveries about the volume of current and future carbon storage potential in Alaska's forests. Find out how management decisions influence storage potential.

Additional information on estimates of carbon storage and emissions by state.



**Nature's 'Slow Lanes' Offer Hope For Species Feeling Heat of Climate Change.** A ScienceDaily article summarizes recent research that looks at the confluence of disturbances like drought, insect outbreaks, and fire in forests and how these interact to influence forest refugia. The study aims to expand understanding of refugia and provide insight into adaptations and vulnerabilities that inform future management.

The full article can be found in a special issue on refugia research.



**Farms Under Threat, State-Based Webinars.** State-specific webinars from the American Farmland Trust address threats to farmlands for 28 states. An overview of state policy and spatial analyses are provided, along with a demonstration of an interactive website where state-level information can be explored and downloaded.

**Idaho**   **Washington**

**Upcoming!** Oregon Wednesday 1 July 10-11 am PT. Register here

## Northwest Drought Workshop



The Northwest Climate Hub and National Drought Mitigation Center are hosting a virtual workshop on 28 & 30 July. This event is aimed at USDA agency staff and federal partner's including Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Watershed Councils, University Extension, Tribes, and other state and federal agencies. The objectives of these workshops are to get a better sense of drought and how it's monitored, impacts of drought and interconnections in Oregon, Washington and Idaho, and how USDA programs are affected by drought. Panelists and peer-to-peer learning will include agriculture, forestry, and rangelands.

## Recorded Webinars



**Impact of Anthropogenic Warming on an Emerging North American Megadrought.** The webinar discusses research that suggests 2000 - 2018 were the driest 19-year period since 800 CE. The severe and persistent 21st-century drought in the Southwest has led to comparisons with medieval megadroughts and raised questions about the role of human-caused climate change.



**Biochar from Forest to the Farm.** This is the third in a series of webinars on biochar from the US Forest Service and covers animal bedding, irrigated lands, high value crops, and improving forest soil with biochar.



**Drought Decision-Making Tools You Can Use.** Learn about the Integrated Water Portal and The Climate Toolbox, including how the Climate Toolbox is currently used by managers in Washington. These tools support drought monitoring and drought decision-making across the lower 48 states.



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## Podcast Highlight



**California Burning: Solutions to California's Wildfire Problem.** What can we learn about adapting to increased wildfire from our neighbors to the south? Check out this podcast series on wildfire from National Public Radio that covers the history of fire in California, including indigenous fire management practices, and addresses the collision of dense population centers with increasing intensity and frequency of wildfire due to climate change.



**Wildfires in Western Washington, A Different Animal, Tuesday, 30 June, 6-8 pm PT.** This webinar will address what forest fire looks like west of the Cascades. Other topics covered include how wildfire behavior and forest fire ecology are unique to this region, how climate change is influencing the risk of catastrophic fires, and implications for forest management.



**Pacific Northwest Drought & Climate Outlook, 24 August, 11 am PT.** 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.



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