

Drought in the NW Climate Hub Region

Since late August, dry and drought conditions have expanded throughout the NW region. In Alaska, abnormally dry conditions (D0-yellow) have expanded across most of the Seward Peninsula and North Slope. Also, moderate drought (D1-tan) has developed in Kotzebue and east of Kotzebue Sound. Abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions have persisted in southcentral Alaska. In Oregon, drought conditions have worsened with an expansion of extreme (D3-red), severe (D2-orange) and moderate (D1-tan) drought throughout the state. Only the northeastern corner of Oregon has received normal precipitation to date. The northern Idaho panhandle has moderate drought (D1-tan) and the rest of the panhandle is experiencing abnormally dry conditions (D0-yellow). Extreme drought (D3-red) conditions are occurring in central Idaho along with severe and moderate drought and abnormally dry conditions. The majority of Washington is currently experiencing abnormally dry conditions with more area experiencing moderate (D1-tan) and severe (D2-orange) drought conditions. Extreme drought (D3-red) conditions have developed in central Washington.

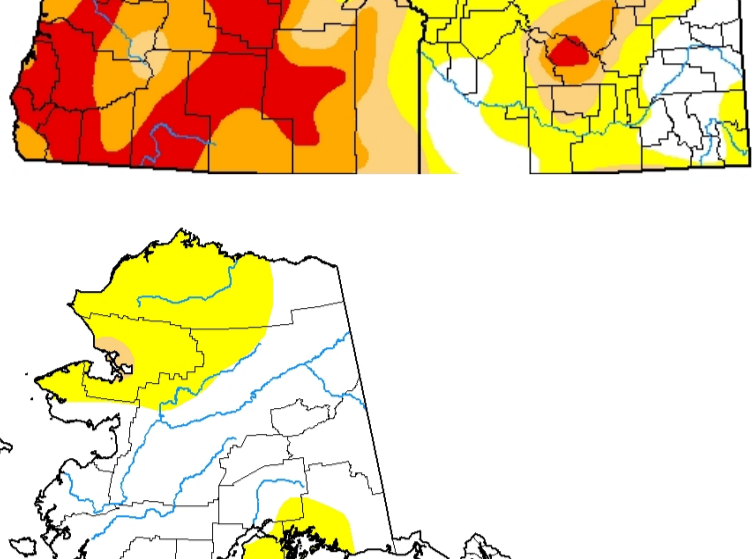
Drought maps are published every Thursday. Get information about the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), submit data via the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow (CoCoRHAS) network, or report drought impacts and observations by clicking icons below.



U.S. Drought Monitor

September 22, 2020
(Released Thursday, Sep. 24, 2020)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

USDA Northwest Climate Hub

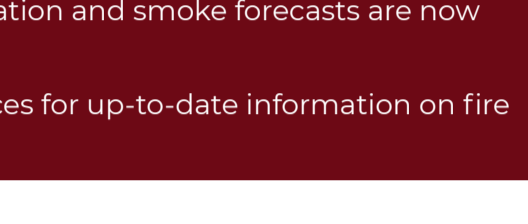


	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	53.40	45.60	16.04	9.89	4.64	0.00
Last Week 09-15-2020	54.79	45.21	14.93	8.91	3.71	0.00
3 Months Ago 06-23-2020	81.14	18.86	12.90	6.75	0.56	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12-31-2019	70.58	29.42	7.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2019	88.75	11.25	3.91	1.40	0.61	0.00
One Year Ago 09-24-2019	81.45	18.55	8.27	1.86	0.61	0.00

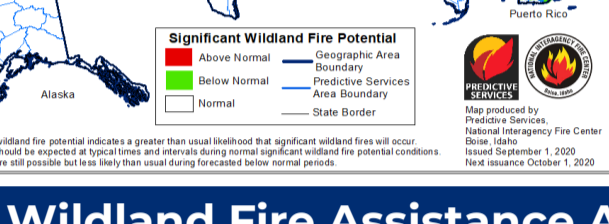
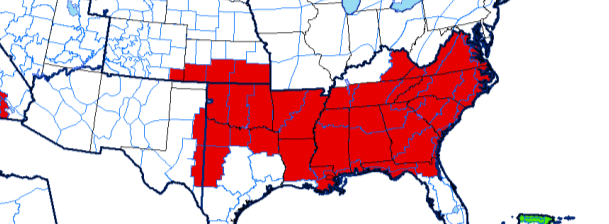
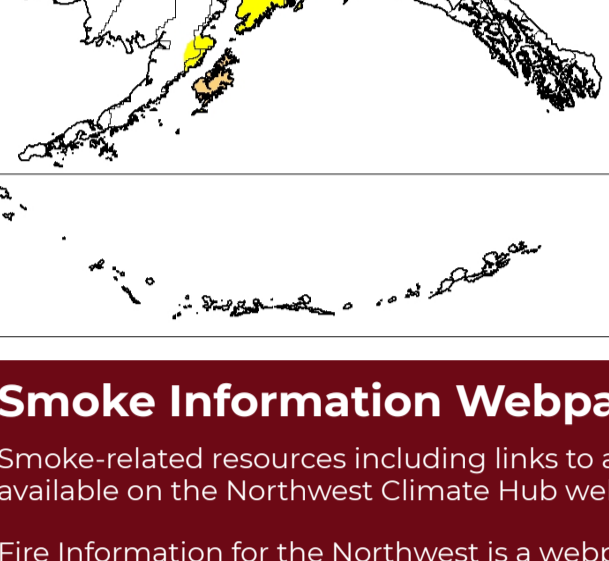
Intensity:
None, D0 Abnormally Dry, D1 Moderate Drought, D2 Severe Drought, D3 Extreme Drought, D4 Exceptional Drought

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



Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for October 2020

Alaska, Idaho, Washington and Oregon are projected to have normal wildland fire potential in October.

Normal wildland fire potential indicates a typical likelihood that significant wildland fires will occur.

Wildland Fire Assistance Available in Oregon

Individual Disaster Assistance from FEMA for Oregonians who lost their homes in Clackamas, Klamath, Linn, Lane, Douglas, Marion, Jackson and Lincoln counties are eligible to register and receive fire recovery funds.

More information on Individual Disaster Assistance and eligibility can be found here.

USDA Assists Farmers, Ranchers, and Communities Affected by Western Wildfires. The USDA Disaster site on Wildland Fire provides information and resources on the 2020 wildfire season, including links to assistance for farmers, ranchers and communities affected by wildfire.

Opportunity with the Northwest Climate Hub

The Northwest Climate Hub is accepting applications for a Postdoctoral Research Fellow to develop a compendium of existing rangeland management tools for land managers and ranchers in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. The postdoc will also assist in developing a synthesis on the state of knowledge regarding climate change impacts to rangeland management specific to the Northwest Climate Hub region. The synthesis may include aspects of socioeconomic, organizational structure, and/or biophysical sciences. **Applications are due 30 September.**

USDA Climate Hub Liaison Detail for NRCS Employees

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is soliciting applications from its employees as project liaisons to the USDA Climate Hubs. Selected employees are on detail for the calendar year, remain at their current duty station and under NRCS supervision and funding, and work full time directly with a specific climate hub on a focused project that provides benefits to both NRCS and the USDA Climate Hub. Interested NRCS employees should submit the following information to Mike Wilson at mike.wilson2@usda.gov on or before **1 November**.

Information

August 2020 was Third Warmest on Record for the U.S., and Dry Conditions Dominated the West. The climate summary from NOAA highlights extreme dryness and high temperatures that persisted throughout much of Idaho, Washington, and Oregon and contributed to extreme fire activity in the West.

Building a Regional Network Focused on Climate Change & Invasive Species in the Northwest The development of the Pacific Northwest Regional Invasive Species and Climate Change (PNW-RISCC) Network is underway. The goal is to establish a community of practice that helps resource managers prevent, detect, control, and monitor invasive species now and into the future.

How is Climate Change Impacting the Working Rangelands of the Pacific Northwest? Find the answer to this question in "Rangeland FAQ Series," a publication from the University of Idaho Range Center that addresses how the region's climate is changing and how those changes are impacting rangeland vegetation, wildfire, watersheds and stream conditions.

Monitoring Tool Assists Ranchers and Wildland Managers Facing Drought. Applications of the Rangeland Production Monitoring Service have expanded to include providing landowner access to program funds from forage loss and livestock damages, with the assistance of USDA agencies. The tool has also been used for targeted conservation and estimating rangeland wildfire potential.

Watering the Forests for the Trees: Water Yield and Changes in Forest Cover, an issue of Science You Can Use in 5 Minutes, highlights how scientists at the Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station challenged conventional wisdom about the influence of trees on water yield. Their extensive research review found watershed-specific differences and patterns specific to altitude, solar radiation exposure, and more.

Dry Farming Gains Ground in the Northwest. The Northwest Climate Hub's Paris Edwards partnered with Amy Garrett of Oregon State University Extension on an article for AgClimateNet that discusses the expansion of dry farming in the Northwest, the next generation of innovative research to come, and more.

Oregon is in Drought- Here's How We Got There. An article from the Climate CIRCulator and Oregon State Climatologist Larry O'Neill provides background on the series of events that culminated in this year's drought. The events described are reflected in detailed reports submitted by agricultural and livestock producers through the Condition Observer Monitoring Reports and the Drought Impact Reporter.

Fall 2020 Highlights: Scenarios Network for Alaska + Arctic Planning (SNAP) This quarterly report highlights seasonally appropriate tools and data sets from the Scenarios Network for Alaska + Arctic Planning. These resources can help you prepare for colder weather across the state. For example, the Alaska Community Wind Data tool provides historical and projected wind information for 67 communities. Also, the Statewide Temperature Index Tool and Community Charts Tool provide high-resolution information on projected temperature shifts.

Webinars & Trainings

Monthly Series of West-Wide Rangeland Fuel Assessments. A series of recorded webinars analyzing current rangeland fuel conditions across the West will be available on the first Monday of each month. Forecasts are based on the new FuelCast model and hosted by Matt Reeves from the U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station. The 1 September session is available now.

2020 North American Forest and Conservation Nursery Technology Webinar Series, Wednesdays 10 am AKT/ 11 am PT. The webinar series, held each Wednesday through August and September, will cover a variety of North American nursery topics, including climate change and variability impacts on nurseries, fall planting, efficient water use, plant hydraulic physiology, and maximizing germination.

2020 Dry Farm Project Virtual Field Tour Series, Wednesdays 10 am PT. The Oregon State University Dry Farms Program is hosting field tours through August and September featuring a variety of elements from dry farming research projects. See the full schedule here.

Small Farm School 2020, Tuesdays & Thursdays September-November. Small Farm School is virtual this year and open to beginning and experienced farmers and small-acreage landowners. Topics will be introduced as webinars and include poultry, land care, marketing, flowers, and more.

Virtual Carbon Pricing in Indian Country Training Workshops, September-December. The Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN) is offering free virtual workshops that aim to create collaborative spaces to discuss and learn about carbon pricing mechanisms and are tailored to fit each interested individuals or organization. IEN will be offering these virtual workshops from September to December 2020. Click here to help inform content and the timing of these events.

Empowering Tribal Culture, Ecology and Food Systems, Wednesdays 30 September -28 October 11 am PT. This webinar series is held weekly and aims to support Indigenous communities' efforts to restore their land, reduce food insecurity, and increase economic opportunity through the production of native plants. The series will offer strategies Tribes can utilize to develop or improve food sovereignty initiatives and native plant propagation. **Registration is free.**

National Weather Service Alaska Climate Assessment Briefings, 16 October 12 pm AKT. This monthly webinar series by the Alaska Climate Assessment and Policy Center reviews recent climate and looks ahead at future climate projections. Register for the monthly webinar here.

Pacific Northwest Drought & Climate Outlook, 26 October 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 including a review of Northwest case studies on rangelands resilience.

Did you miss the August DEWS webinar? Check out a recording here.

Managing for a Changing Climate: Climate Models, Downscaling, and Assessments 5-30 October 2020. Join a four-week course to learn the basics of climate modeling and climate assessments, including how global climate models work, why and how to do downscaling, and an overview of key assessment reports. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend. **Registration is free and required.**

Local Food Systems Response to COVID

The U.S. Department of Agriculture launched a searchable database providing educational material and insights to assist local and regional food producers in adapting their market strategies in the current environment.

Funding opportunities

BLM National Interagency Fire Center Joint Fire Science Program Primary Announcement (Two Task Statements). Task 1 focuses on fire prevention strategies based on spatial and temporal distribution of different human-caused wildfire ignition sources of large wildfires. Task 2 aims to improve our understanding of changing fuel conditions from active management and fire suppression operations to reduce damages and losses. **Applications due 30 September.**

Western SARE Sustainable Agriculture Grant Programs. Grants are available to farmers & ranchers to improve sustainable production practices as well as for professionals & producers to integrate research and education around environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainable agriculture. **Applications due in November.**

The Community Forests and Open Space Conservation Program provides an opportunity for local governments, nonprofits, and federally recognized Indian Tribes to establish permanent tenure of community forests that will provide public recreation, environmental and economic benefits, and forest-based educational programs. Applicants are encouraged to work with their Forest Service Region and must also send an email to SM.FS.CFP@usda.gov to confirm submission. **Applications due 11 January 2021.**

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. This pre-disaster hazard mitigation program replaces the existing Pre-Disaster Mitigation program and will provide \$500 million for mitigation planning and projects nationwide. All Alaska Native Tribes with an active Hazard Mitigation Plan are eligible to apply. **Applications open 30 September and are due 29 January 2021.**

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Foundational and Applied Science Program. Grant funds are available in six priority areas that aim to advance knowledge in fundamental and applied agriculture sciences. Priority areas include plant or animal health, production, and products; food safety, nutrition, and health; bioenergy, natural resources, and environment; agriculture systems and technology; and agriculture economics and rural communities. Research-only, extension-only, and integrated research, education and/or extension projects are eligible. **Applications due 29 July 2021.**

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program is a low-interest financing option for producers who want to build or upgrade facilities (barns, tanks, cold storage, etc.) to store commodities, including grains, fruits and vegetables, and aquaculture. Upgrading and improving facilities can improve infrastructure resilience and business opportunity.

Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program. This program provides for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage to households and businesses in rural areas, including Tribal lands and communities of 10,000 or less. This opportunity may be particularly helpful to Alaska communities experiencing infrastructure damage from permafrost thaw. **Applications are accepted year-round.**

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements. Applications are open and are accepted year-round at your state USDA Rural Development Energy office.

Podcast Highlights

Botany Brew podcast interviews USGS plant ecologist Dr. Janet Prevéy about her research on the implications of changes in the timing of the huckleberry life cycle in the Northwest.

Your Forest podcast tackles Living with Fire with Mike Flannigan. Listen in to hear about how we got here, why fires are rampant today, and how we learn to live in this new reality.

Good Fire, a podcast series on Indigenous fire stewardship, touches on regionally relevant topics like the connection between fire and water quality, and fire ecology and Indigenous knowledge.

Western SARE's podcast **Fresh Growth: Approaches to a More Sustainable Future from Western Ag Practitioners** interviews farmers and ranchers on their innovative sustainable practices. Find a variety of topics, including biodiversity, regional food hubs and conservation.

Conferences & Workshops

Virtual International Conference on Rangeland Ecology and Research, 24-25 September San Francisco. The conference provides a platform for exchange of research results and shared experiences on all aspects of rangeland ecology and research for an interdisciplinary audience of researchers, practitioners and educators involved in innovations, trends, and practical challenges.

University of Idaho Rangeland Center Virtual Fall Forum 1-2 October. The theme of this year's forum is Review - Reimagine - Reposition and will feature talks on rangeland plant communities, changes in ranching across generations, restoration and more. Attendees include ranchers, land managers, and producers and content aims to foster reflection, discussion, and innovation.

National Tribal Leadership Climate Change Virtual Summit 13 October. The first in a series of virtual sessions will gather Tribal leaders and citizens to discuss Tribal climate policy and climate change implications for Tribes, First Nations, and Indigenous communities. Tribal policy experts will also present a Tribal analysis and discussion on the key pillars of the action plan from the House Select Committee on Climate Crisis "Solving the Climate Crisis: The Congressional Action Plan for a Clean Energy Economy and a Healthy, Resilient, and Just America." The Summit and virtual sessions' goal are to formulate and advance a proactive, tribally-led national climate policy agenda. This event is free and open to all. **Registration is required and closes 10 October.**

Oregon-Washington Water Year Meeting 28 & 29 October. This online meeting will recap precipitation and water conditions from 1 October 2019 - 30 September 2020 as well as provide an outlook for the 2021 water year. At this meeting participants can share information on flooding and drought impacts and actions taken to minimize these events. In addition to hearing from forecast experts, both days will include time for discussion and peer-to-peer learning. Participation from a wide range of sectors including utilities, agriculture, and forestry is encouraged. **Registration is now open.**

Idaho Water Year Meeting 5 & 6 November, Save the Date. This online meeting will recap precipitation and water conditions from 1 October 2019 - 30 September 2020 for Idaho. Registration information will be available in next month's NW Climate Hub newsletter.

Virtual ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meeting 8-11 November. This year's conference, titled Translating Visionary Science to Practice will feature talks on soil science, soil biology, food security and more. Click here to register.

Idaho Water Quality Workshop 9-11 February 2021. This meeting will be online. Featured presentations include nonpoint source pollution, PFAS in ground water and fish bioassessment. There is currently a call for presentations and **abstracts are due 30 October.**

Local Food Systems Response to COVID

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

To unsubscribe email holly.prendeville@usda.gov