



Office of the Fire Chief
Andrew J. Duran

RESOLUTION NO. 04-18-2022-FIRE RESTRICTIONS

**A RESOLUTION DELARING A FIRE DANGER
IN SAN MIGUEL COUNTY**

Harold M Garcia
Chair-District 1

Janice C. Varela
Vice- Chair-District 2

Max O Trujillo
Commissioner- District 3

Martin Sena
Commissioner-District 4

Kenneth C. Medina
Commissioner- District 5

Joy Ausley
County Manager

WHERE AS, San Miguel County, is experiencing abnormally dry conditions, with very little moisture in the near future, Current Drought Conditions show San Miguel County in either D2-Severe or D3-Extreme Drought; and

WHERE AS, San Miguel County has determined based on current drought indices published by the National Weather Service Prediction Center that we expect Drought Conditions to persist; and,

WHERE AS, the National Significant Wildfire Potential Outlook indicated most of the Southwest is forecast to have above normal significant fire potential; and,

WHERE AS, fire restriction would prevent and reduce human caused wildfires, and implementing restrictions is necessary for the safety of the public; and,

WHERE AS, San Miguel County believes because of weather conditions, a fire danger exists and the provisions and requirements set forth in ordinance 03-09-99-ORD need to be implemented; and,

WHERE AS, the foregoing conditions have created an emergency which presents an immediate danger to the public health, safety, and welfare of the Citizens of San Miguel County, New Mexico, a resolution may be lawfully and immediately adopted as permitted be section 4-37-7(C), NMSA 1978, and otherwise provided by law.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that from this day forward, until August 9, 2022, unless otherwise modified or rescinded, that all open burning (burning of crop land, fields, range land, debris, burning slash piles, prescribed burning or weed burning) in in San Miguel County, New Mexico shall be banned throughout the unincorporated areas of San Miguel County, and the provisions of San Miguel County ordinance 03-9-99ORD are in effect, This ban shall prohibit any person from having, causing, starting, igniting and/or using open flame outside of a building, structure automobile, or other enclosed areas anywhere, throughout the unincorporated portions of San Miguel County.



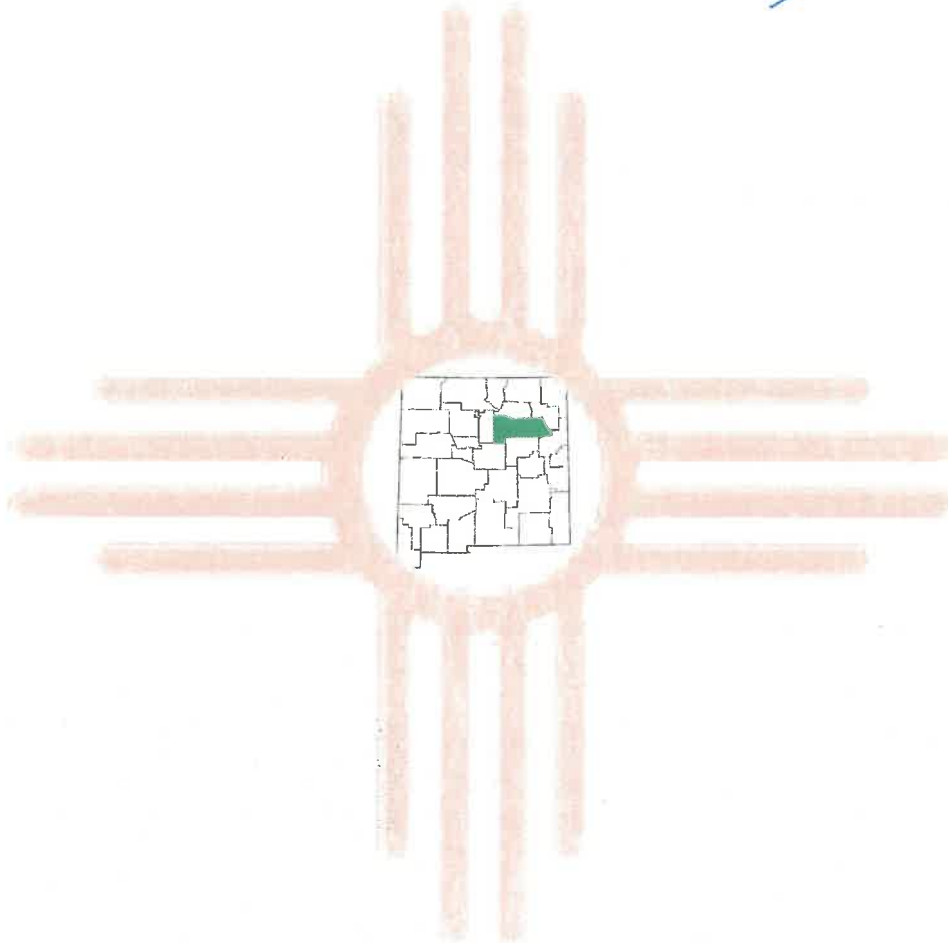
Office of the Fire Chief



Andrew J. Duran, Fire Chief



Jesus Romero, Deputy County Manager





National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook

Predictive Services
National Interagency Fire Center

Issued: April 1, 2022
Next Issuance: May 1, 2022



Outlook Period – April through July 2022

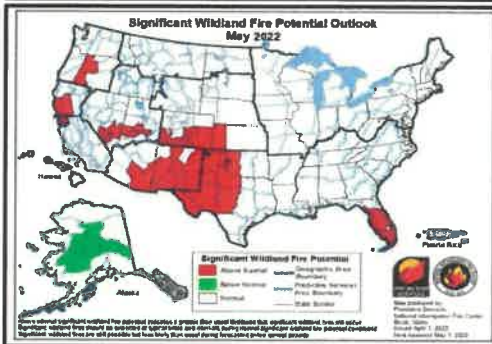
Executive Summary

The significant wildland fire potential forecasts included in this outlook represent the cumulative forecasts of the ten Geographic Area Predictive Services units and the National Predictive Services unit.



Fire activity continued to increase in March mostly across the Southern Area, Southwest Area, and the plains of Rocky Mountain Area. Year-to-date acres burned for the US is approximately 20% above the 10-year average, with nearly 90% of the acres burned coming from Southern Area, which is not unusual through March.

Most of the West, Plains, and Texas remain in drought, with areas of drought also along the Gulf Coast, in South Florida, and in the eastern Carolinas. Temperatures were mostly above normal on the West and East Coasts, with below normal precipitation across much of the West, northern and central Plains, Texas, and central Appalachians. Most basins in the West are reporting below average snow water equivalent (SWE), but Alaska has above normal snowpack and snow cover.



Climate outlooks indicate likely below normal precipitation from Texas through the southern Rockies and Great Basin, with above normal temperatures likely across much of the contiguous US (CONUS) through spring into summer. Indications for an active severe weather pattern this spring remain from eastern portions of the Plains into the Southeast and Ohio Valley, and critically dry and windy periods will accompany the severe weather for much of the Plains, especially the southern and central High Plains. The North American Monsoon is likely to arrive on time, but potential early moisture surges during June could result in lightning across the Southwest, Colorado, and the southern Great Basin.



Above normal significant fire potential is forecast across the eastern Carolinas for April and in South Florida through May. The southern High Plains will retain above normal significant fire potential into July, with much of the Plains forecast to have above normal potential by July after green-up and subsequent curing occurs due to anticipated warmer and drier than normal conditions.



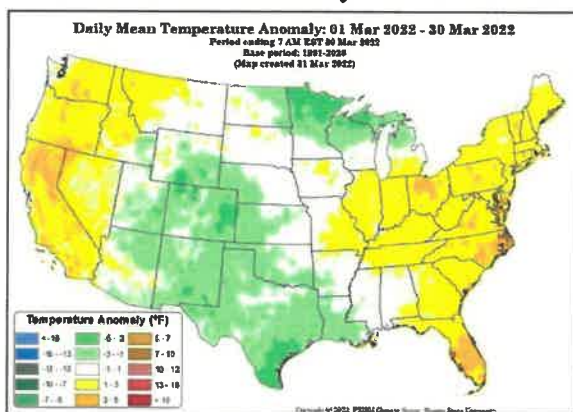
Most of the Southwest is forecast to have above normal significant fire potential in May and June, with potential increasing across southern and western Colorado and southern portions of the Great Basin. Above normal potential will likely expand from central Oregon to southwest Oregon and central Washington by July. Above normal significant fire potential is also forecast to increase across northern California from May into July, with rising potential likely along portions of the Sierra Front. Alaska is forecast to have below normal potential in its panhandle through April, with below normal potential expected across large portions of the Interior through May. Leeward locations of Hawaii are forecast to have above normal potential during June and July.

Past Weather and Drought

Most of the West, northern and southern Plains, and the central Appalachians received below normal precipitation in March. The most anomalously dry areas were across portions of the Desert Southwest, west Texas, and the Dakotas. South Florida and portions of the Mid-Atlantic, Coastal Plain, and southern New England were also drier than normal. Above normal precipitation was observed in portions of the central Plains extending into the Midwest and Great Lakes. Additionally, near to above normal precipitation was observed from east Texas into Alabama and across north Florida. The West and East Coasts had mostly above normal temperatures, with near to below normal temperatures in much of the southern and central Rockies, Plains, and western to northern Great Lakes.

Western CONUS snowpack continued to trend downward with almost all basins reporting below normal snow water equivalent (SWE) according to Natural Resource Conservation Service data. However, above normal snowpack and snow cover are being reported across Alaska. Overall, drought continues across nearly 90% of the West and much of the Plains, although a few areas did see improvement, including along the Front Range and High Plains in Colorado and portions of central and eastern Oklahoma. Much of Texas saw an increase and intensification of drought, with areas in Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas into the Mid-Atlantic mostly observing worsening drought conditions.

Fire activity continued to increase across the Southern Area, with the geographic area now at preparedness level four. Fire activity also continued to increase in the Southwest, California, and across the plains of the Rocky Mountain Area. Generally, periods of increased activity coincided with widespread dry and windy conditions from the Southwest through the Plains, with the most intense critical fire weather conditions of the spring observed on March 29 across the southern and central Plains. Additionally, post-frontal dry and occasionally breezy conditions led to increased fire activity across the Southeast. Overall, nearly half of the Predictive Service Areas in Southern Area are reporting energy release component values near or above the 90th percentile. On March 28, the national preparedness level increased to two due to the increased fire activity and forecast increases of above normal significant fire potential.



Weather and Climate Outlooks

La Niña conditions remain, with below average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) over much of the equatorial Pacific Ocean. SSTs are warming, especially over eastern portions of the Niño region. The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) forecasts La Niña to continue to weaken with neutral or weak La Niña conditions forecast into the summer. The strongly negative Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) has weakened in recent weeks as well. Overall, the spring predictability barrier has resulted in typical forecast uncertainty regarding large-scale teleconnection patterns through spring into summer.

Geographic Area Forecasts

Alaska: Below normal significant fire potential is expected in parts of Alaska during early spring, first in the northern Alaska Panhandle, and then through the Interior. In June, significant fire potential will become normal.

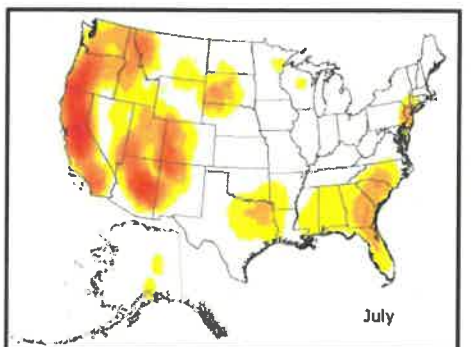
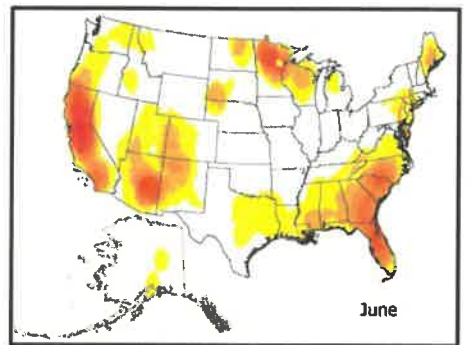
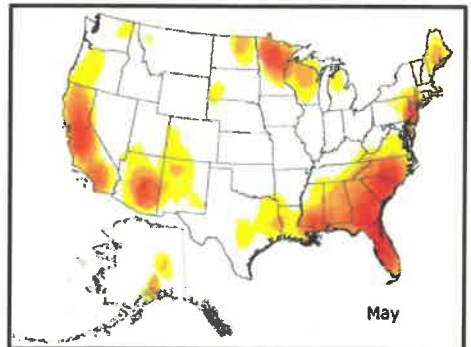
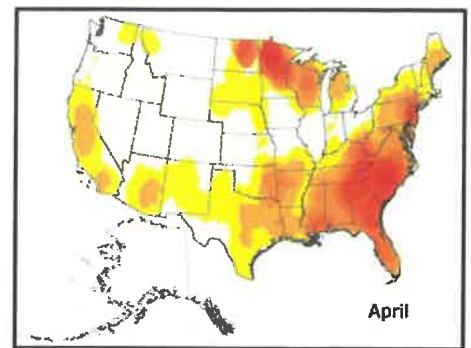
Snow covers the entire state, with very high snowpack through much of the Interior, the northern Alaska Panhandle, and higher elevations of Southcentral Alaska. The US Drought Monitor shows no drought in Alaska, and SWE is above normal in most areas. Fire activity in Alaska is non-existent, with a thick blanket of snow across most of the state. Deep snowpack and a cold temperature forecast indicate that few fuels will be snow-free prior to mid-April.

Through April, expect temperatures to gradually warm, with rapid snowmelt beginning by the second week of the month. Climate Prediction Center (CPC) maps indicate increased chances for colder than normal temperatures during April in southeast Alaska, and a likelihood of wetter than normal conditions in the northwest. Combined with the heavy snowpack, a later than normal melt is expected for much of the Interior and the northern Panhandle.

Significant fire potential in the northern Panhandle will be below normal through April due to a heavy snowpack and a colder than normal spring temperature forecast. By May, most of the Panhandle snow will melt, and the area will return to normal fire potential. Below normal significant fire potential is forecast for much of the Interior in April and May due to an exceptionally deep spring snowpack. Once the snow melts and fuels begin to dry, there are no early indicators regarding the severity of fire season in June or July. Activity during this part of the season depends on the convergence of dry fuels, weather, and ignition sources. Therefore, the forecast is for a return to normal conditions during June. Normal significant fire potential is forecast for all other parts of the state throughout the spring and early summer.

Northwest: Significant fire potential is forecast to be above normal for portions of central Oregon April through June before expanding into central Washington and southwest Oregon in July. The rest of the Northwest Geographic Area is forecast to have near normal significant fire potential into July.

Temperatures were near normal for the geographic area during March. For precipitation, March brought more consistent rain and snowfall to western Washington, sections of eastern Washington, and northern



Normal fire season progression across the contiguous U.S. and Alaska shown by monthly fire density (number of fires per unit area). Fire size and fire severity cannot be inferred from this analysis. (Based on 1999-2010 FPA Data)

Oregon where monthly accumulation was average or better. Nevertheless, drought continues in central Oregon, southwest Oregon, and much of eastern Oregon, where accumulation of precipitation has lagged normal for more than a year.

Snow water equivalent values (SWE) at the end of March at upper elevation reporting basins are near normal for much of Washington except a bit below normal for the basins in central Washington. In Oregon, SWE values have gradually fallen below normal except in the vicinity of Mount Hood. SWE values are well below normal in southwest and central Oregon.

The geographic area had light initial attack activity with 35 wildfires burning approximately 130 acres. A couple of the larger fires were in central and southeast Oregon where continued drought intensifies. These fires responded to slightly warmer temperatures and clear skies with light winds to consume about 115 acres. The fires in Washington were widely dispersed and mostly less than an acre each. The passage of several fronts interrupted drying trends and cooler temperatures, with light to moderate amounts of precipitation that kept fire behavior and danger moderated.

Although many fire danger rating stations are still indicating snow cover, most of the geographic area's energy release component values remain near average. A slight amount of green-up is underway in the lower elevation valleys and basins. The upper elevations in the mountains are still holding a fair amount of snow around 3,000 ft., which is helping the larger fuels recover some moisture. The Columbia Basin and central and southeast Oregon have continued to miss most of the moisture that has worked its way across the geographic area. The dormant shrubs, cured fine fuels, and exposed litter are starting to carry fire as temperatures increase in these areas. A few fires around 50 acres in size have surfaced and been quickly controlled. The frequency and size of the fires should slightly increase as temperatures and daylight increase. The middle and upper elevations will continue to be moist enough to suppress large fire activity. Lower valleys and basins with pockets of fine fuel and drought stressed brush will continue to be at risk, especially during frontal passages.

Climate outlooks suggest that temperatures will most likely be cooler than normal over Washington in April, with no clear temperature anomaly foreseen for Oregon. Precipitation accumulation in April is likely to continue to be above average in western Washington and northwest Oregon but less than average elsewhere. For May through July, precipitation accumulation is likely to trend to average or less over Washington and most likely to be less than average over Oregon. Temperatures are most likely to trend at or above normal for the region.

Significant fire potential will be near normal for April, May, and June except in central Oregon Predictive Services Areas (PSAs) NW06 and NW07 where risk of significant fires is elevated due to persistent drought. For July, the elevated risk areas will expand to include southwest Oregon PSA NW04 and central Washington PSA NW05. The risk of significant fires in central Oregon will mainly be associated with dry and windy weather rather than lightning.

Northern California and Hawai'i: Significant fire potential is expected to be normal for all areas during April then above normal across the Bay Area, Mid Coast-Mendocino, and Sacramento Valley-Foothill Predictive Services Areas (PSAs) for May. Normal during April and May is defined as less than one large fire per PSA. A further expansion of above normal significant fire potential is forecast across most elevations during June and July. Normally during June and July, one to three large fires occur within each PSA. Significant fire potential in Hawaii is expected to be normal during April and May then increase to above normal for June and July across the leeward sides of the islands.

The weather pattern became a bit more unsettled during March compared to January and February, but below normal precipitation remained. Average temperatures were a little warmer than normal across central portions of the geographic area and generally a little below normal elsewhere. Moisture within the snowpack continued to decrease and was 40-50% of normal by the end of March. Dead fuel moistures experienced fluctuating trends but generally remained at or near historical lows across western and central PSAs. Curing of the herbaceous fuels became more evident across the lowest elevations as green-up moved up the slopes. The growing season was evident as high as 4,000-4,500 ft. by the end of March.

Winds were more equally distributed between onshore and northerly or easterly. The most notable gusty wind and low humidity period occurred March 10-12. Daily wildfire ignitions fluctuated wildly due to the changeable weather patterns with as many as 18 new ignitions on March 10. Two escaped prescribed burns were the largest at approximately 100 acres each. A mix of pile and landscape prescribed burns continued during March.

The weather outlook from April through July is for near to above normal temperatures and near to below normal precipitation. The weather pattern during April appears to be similar to what occurred in March and perhaps drier. May and June look to be warm and dry, with a weakening jet stream and an upper-level ridge remaining just off the California coast. Critically dry wind events, whether westerly or northerly, should occur with normal frequency from April to June. A robust monsoon season is expected to start up by July and a few northward moisture surges cannot be ruled out, which would provide heightened lightning ignition potential.

Drought conditions are expected to intensify during April, with periods of unusual dryness in the dead fuels, but live fuels will serve as initial barriers to fire spread as green-up gradually transitions farther up the slopes. Due to the early start to the growing season and ongoing long-term drought, typical seasonal curing across the lower elevations will occur earlier, therefore creating earlier than normal flammable dead and live fuel alignments and an early start to the main portion of the fire season. Herbaceous fuels should be mostly cured during May across the lower elevations, with shrub fuels becoming increasingly more flammable. This early curing process combined with unusually dry dead fuels will continue to move farther up the slopes during June and July and allow for the expansion of above normal significant fire potential farther north and east. The lighter overall grass fuel loading and lack of critically dry northerly and easterly wind events during July should allow some near coastal influenced areas to return to normal, although dead fuel moistures are likely to remain unusually dry at times.

Sea surface temperature (SSTs) anomalies surrounding the Hawai'ian Islands are above normal. Temperatures throughout the region are expected to be above average from April through July due to above average SST anomalies. Precipitation during March ended up drier than normal across most of the islands. The four-month weather outlook calls for near to above average precipitation in April and May, especially along the windward side of the islands as the trade winds are typically enhanced during a La Niña state. Precipitation results should trend drier during June and July with near to below normal values, although some uncertainties exist. Significant fire potential is projected to be normal during April and May despite persistent drought and some curing of the herbaceous fuels. Significant fire potential for June and July is forecast to be above normal across the leeward sides of the islands due to the likelihood of cured herbaceous fuels aligning with continued drought conditions.

Southern California: Significant fire potential will be near to a little below normal across the geographic area April through July.

Upper-level high pressure remained just off the California coast most of March, just like it did in January and February. However, a few upper-level troughs from the north brought brief periods of below normal temperatures. Overall, temperatures were above normal in March, with the greatest anomalies over the coastal areas. Just like in January and February, March had below average precipitation across the geographic area, but a late March storm did bring areas of heavier precipitation to central and southern coastal California. The snowpack in the Sierra has dropped to between 50% and 60% of average, and most of the geographic area received well below normal precipitation in March. Light to moderate Santa Ana wind events occurred throughout the month, with brief periods of strong westerly winds over the mountains and deserts ahead of each trough.

The drought is getting worse since precipitation has been well below normal since January. Most of the San Joaquin Valley as well as the deserts bordering Nevada and Arizona are now in extreme drought. The rest of central and southern California is mainly in severe drought, with the only exception of moderate drought continuing from the mountains westward south of Los Angeles County. Both the 1000-hr and 100-hr dead fuel moisture values remained below normal and broke record low values most of the month. The

curing phase of the fine fuels has started to begin. The live fuel moisture is now starting to decrease, but it remains well above normal. Usually, the live fuel moisture peaks in early to mid-April, so it is about a month ahead of schedule.

Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) are warming both over the Gulf of Alaska and Equatorial Pacific and are expected to continue to warm through the summer months. The SSTs off the West Coast have cooled to a little below normal, but computer models show that these SSTs will warm to a little above normal over the next several months. Thus, expect the upper-level area of high pressure to remain just off the California coast through the middle of June. This area of high pressure will continue to bring above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation to the geographic area. Upper-level troughs moving into the Great Basin and Desert Southwest from the Pacific Northwest will bring occasional Santa Ana wind events to southern California in April and May, but they will get weaker with time as the temperature gradient relaxes. The marine layer over the coastal areas should be shallower than normal in May and June. Even though temperatures will likely be above normal and precipitation below normal through mid-June, the potential for significant fires will be near to a little below normal due to well below normal fine fuel loading. The area of high pressure off the California coast will shift eastward across the Desert Southwest from the end of June into July, with the area of high pressure likely moving between the Four Corners area and the Great Basin. In this position, monsoon flow will push into central and southern California. There will likely be near to above normal monsoon shower and thunderstorm activity during the summer months. Even though temperatures will likely remain above normal this summer, expect near to a little below normal significant fire potential due to the shower activity from the monsoon.

Northern Rockies: Significant fire potential is forecast to be normal in the Northern Rockies Geographic Area for April. All of the geographic area is expected to remain with normal fire potential through May. In June, Predictive Services Areas (PSAs) along the southern edge of the geographic area may increase to above normal significant fire potential if spring rains do not materialize and temperatures are higher than outlooks suggest. For July, with ongoing drought, and the potential for it to continue, or worsen this summer, areas east of the Divide may have above average significant fire potential.

La Niña has continued to be a driving factor for the weather pattern this past month. The snow water equivalent values are near or above normal for most of northern Idaho and Montana, west of the Divide. East of the Divide, snow water equivalent values are lower, currently 70-80% of normal. In general, drought conditions have been holding steady for most of the area east of the Divide. Areas of north Idaho and most of northwest Montana have improved and have been removed from drought status. The end of March has seen above average temperatures in many locations, with thunderstorms for the first time this year in central Idaho and southwest Montana on March 28.

Eastern areas of the Northern Rockies Geographic Area have fuel moistures below average. Live fuels are covered with snow in most locations in the northern Rockies. East of the Rockies, the area has lost most of the snow cover, but previous snow cover had helped moisten fuels and reduced the fire potential through March, although some smaller fires were still reported. Fine fuels are still dry, but green-up is beginning. No significant fire activity is ongoing, with only periodic initial attack activity.

La Niña should continue for at least another couple of months, but forecast uncertainty remains for June and July. If La Niña begins to weaken as most guidance suggests, this may allow for a more moderate spring season with precipitation for a good portion of the geographic area. The possible exceptions could be southwest Montana, Yellowstone National Park, and southern Montana. While drought persists, cooler temperatures and periods of light rain on the fine fuels of southern Montana, east of the Rockies, and possibly into North Dakota, should help to keep near normal significant fire potential for May and for most of the geographic area in June. However, if there is a lack of rainfall and temperatures are warmer than outlooks suggest, this could allow for an early fire season. For now, significant fire potential is forecast to be near normal in May, while increasing potential is possible for PSAs 14 and 16 in June. By July, with it being the middle of fire season, ongoing drought, and already dry fuels, significant fire potential is forecast to be above normal for most PSA's east of the Divide. The exceptions are PSAs 17 and 18, which are not in a significant drought status, and have a good chance at remaining normal into the summer.

Great Basin: Significant fire potential will remain low (i.e., normal) through April. Significant long-term drought has improved but remains across much of the Great Basin. Despite late fall and early winter precipitation that could have increased the likelihood of a greater fine fuel crop in western Nevada into southern Idaho, recent drier conditions have stunted some of the grass growth. Therefore, shorter grass overall will limit fire potential at lower elevations. Weak storms are likely to move through the region in April, with drier and warmer conditions expected heading into the fire season. Snow melt is expected to occur earlier than normal, which will lead to a more rapid start to fire season in the higher terrain May through July.

Temperatures over the last 30 days have been near to just below normal across the Great Basin and well below normal across eastern Idaho into central Utah. Precipitation has been below normal in most areas, but pockets of near to just above normal precipitation occurred across eastern Nevada into western Utah. Over the past 60 days, nearly all the Great Basin has seen below normal precipitation.

Wetter storms did occur in November and December across Nevada, Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming, which brought the snowpack to above normal. However, recent drier conditions and periods of warm temperatures have caused the snowpack to decrease. The snowpack has dropped to 60-80% of average across Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, and northern Utah, and near 90% for the southern half of the Great Basin, which is similar to where the snowpack was in March 2021. The drought has improved across Nevada, Utah, and the Arizona Strip from this time last year, but remains a concern. Severe to extreme drought is ongoing across the southern two-thirds of the Great Basin, with moderate to severe drought across Idaho and Wyoming. There are still pockets of exceptional drought in eastern Nevada. The recent and upcoming drier weather will likely allow the drought to persist or worsen over the next few months.

Fuel moisture has dropped to below normal across the southern half of the Great Basin due to warmer and drier weather. Rain that occurred in August into September 2021 over the eastern half of the Great Basin triggered some new areas of fine fuel growth. These fine fuels could add to the fine fuel load for the 2022 fire season in areas that were not compacted by snow. However, with minimal new fine fuel growth, this would likely take the fine fuel loading to near normal in some areas. Otherwise, carryover fine fuel loading remains low across most of Nevada, Idaho, and Wyoming, with little if any carryover expected heading into fire season. The one exception will be over southern Nevada where fine fuels will carry over from last year with near to just above normal fine fuel loading. Concerns about significant fine fuel growth over western Nevada have diminished due to very dry conditions the last few months. Any grass that does grow will likely be short and patchy. However, we will continue to monitor all fine fuel loading heading into fire season.

Overall fire activity remains low across the Great Basin and remains at preparedness level one. A few small fires occur at times, but they have been easily extinguished. Prescribed burning continues across the Great Basin.

La Niña continues but will likely weaken and possibly transition to neutral by the fire season. The short-term forecasts are calling for occasional storms to move through the region in April bringing periods of cooler and showery conditions, but warmer and drier conditions are expected in May.

Fire potential is expected to remain low (i.e., normal) through April but is expected to increase by May and June from south to north. This would be considered a normal progression at the onset of fire season. However, depending on the length of the warming and drying trend that is possible from late April through May, fire season may increase more quickly than normal or start earlier in the higher terrain over the southern half of the Great Basin. Above normal fire potential is possible as early as mid to late May and continuing into June in southern Utah, the Arizona Strip, and southern Nevada, especially at the higher elevations due to rapid snow melt and ongoing or intensifying drought. The pockets of above normal fine fuel loading in southern Nevada would also allow elevated fire potential in lower elevations in May and June. Considering the monsoon is expected to start on time, moisture will likely diminish the fire potential threat in far southern areas of the Great Basin by July, pushing the above normal threat north into the higher terrain of northern Utah and the Sierra.

Southwest: Normal significant fire potential is anticipated across most of the geographic area in April except for much of southern and southeast Arizona, portions of southern New Mexico, and the eastern plains of New Mexico. Areas of above normal potential are expected to expand farther north and west during May and June, then lower area-wide with the arrival of the monsoon during July.

Beyond most of central New Mexico, parts of the Four Corners, and far northern New Mexico, the Southwest Area has experienced drier than normal conditions over the past 90 days. As spring unfolds, the expectation is for the continuation of a general drier and milder trend, with some potential for larger storm systems to impact the geographic area from the west and northwest at times. However, backdoor cold frontal intrusions into eastern and northeastern portions of the geographic area could be more regular through early May. Despite this, high temperatures are expected to remain generally above normal into May, with drier than normal conditions overall. Some periods of cooler weather could arrive at times into the northeastern and eastern sections of the geographic area via the aforementioned backdoor cold fronts.

When not impacted by backdoor cold fronts and storm system passages, the geographic area will see increasing significant fire potential, which will begin to be of longer duration coincident with warmer temperatures, continued drier than normal conditions, and more frequent downslope wind events. Green-up will provide a barrier for a few weeks at varying elevations to fire spread but will eventually give way by later in April into May to cured fuels. Near record-to-record amounts of fine fuels in southeast Arizona across sections of southern New Mexico into the eastern plains of New Mexico could lead to large upticks in wind driven fire activity this spring. Much of the rest of southern Arizona will rise into above normal significant fire potential into May, with areas along and north of Interstate 40 in Arizona into northwestern New Mexico more than likely having the lowest potential regionally as both May and June arrive.

Heavier fuels will begin to become more available to burn later in May into June for most areas as significant fire potential expands farther north and west across the geographic area. The arrival of the North American Monsoon by early to mid-July will herald the end of the significant fire season for the Southwest Area.

Rocky Mountain: Above normal significant fire potential is expected to develop across portions of the Rocky Mountain Area (RMA) during from April through July due to the persistence and expansion of above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation during the outlook period. In conjunction with long-term precipitation deficits and ongoing drought, this warmer and drier pattern will continue to promote the availability of receptive fuels as well as rapid fire spread potential during wind events.

A waning La Niña climate signal continued to influence temperature and precipitation patterns across the RMA in February and March. Episodes of strong west to northwest flow promoted warmer, drier, and windy downslope conditions off the Laramie Mountains and Front Range eastward across the High Plains in late February and early March. The springtime transition of troughs moving from west to east across the RMA also brought periods of stronger southwesterly flow to the area during the latter half of March. Above average temperatures and below average precipitation continued to be observed across South Dakota extending south into western Kansas, accompanied by multi-day periods with afternoon relative humidity percent values in the single digits and teens.

Snow cover has been absent across the High Plains throughout the winter months. Much warmer and drier conditions in February and March promoted rising deficits area-wide, and an earlier onset of snowmelt across most of Wyoming and western Colorado. Severe to extreme drought prevails across the western half of the RMA. The precipitation deficits and abnormally warmer conditions observed east of the Divide have contributed to the moderate to extreme drought conditions now prevalent across South Dakota, Nebraska, western Kansas, and southeast Colorado.

Even though there have been temporary improvements across northeast Colorado, the Pike National Forest, and areas south of the Palmer Divide with recent precipitation events, energy release component (ERC) values remain above the 90th percentile at some sites. Areas of very dry, dormant fuels persist across southeastern Colorado, western Kansas, Nebraska, and South Dakota where ERCs have jumped up between the 80th and 90th percentile around the Black Hills and across the Nebraska Panhandle. Many

of the aforementioned areas display carryover of dormant grasses, and the fuel beds remain standing and vertically oriented due to the lack of snow cover over the winter months.

Seasonal temperatures and residual snow cover will continue to keep significant fire potential low in most areas west of the Divide in April and May. Lower elevation sites across southwest and south-central Colorado and most areas east of the Divide will continue to warm up, and fine fuels are expected to display more of a mosaic in green-up conditions over the next several weeks. Given the antecedent dry conditions, any new grass growth in April will likely be short, patchy, and quick to cure out with the above normal temperatures expected across the RMA during May and June. With the warmer temps and the persistence of receptive fuel beds, lightning ignitions will likely increase over the next few months, especially over southern and western Colorado during late June and July with early arrival of monsoon thunderstorms.

Outside of deficits in snowpack and an earlier onset of snow melt across the mountains in Wyoming and Colorado, areas west of the Continental Divide still had some opportunities for prescribed burning. While across the Front Range Foothills and portions of South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas, there were several wildfires reported during periods of warm, dry, and windy conditions.

For the spring and early summer, the La Niña signal is still expected to maintain a warm and dry influence over the RMA. Climate models now indicate the likely demise of La Niña and a return to an El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral state by June. Even though the first part of April is expected to display a tendency for near normal temperatures and precipitation events across most of the area, the months of May and June are forecast with high confidence to become increasingly warm and dry, expanding northward and westward across the entire RMA. As such, an early snow melt is anticipated, with exposure of fuels earlier than average for the season.

The outlook for the RMA is for normal significant fire potential west of the Continental Divide, and most of Wyoming and eastern South Dakota through April. Above normal significant fire potential is forecast across portions of the High Plains extending northward to the Black Hills in April. Above normal significant fire potential is forecast across southern Colorado and western Kansas during May, with an expansion northward across Colorado that will also include eastern Wyoming and the Black Hills for June. Above normal significant fire potential will remain across northern and eastern Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska during the early summer months, encompassing most of Wyoming and portions of the Black Hills through July. With the onset of the monsoon, storms may produce more significant precipitation amounts and facilitate a return to normal potential across portions of western Colorado in July.

Eastern Area: Near normal significant fire potential is forecast across the Eastern Area April into July.

Thirty to 90-day soil moisture and precipitation anomalies were near to above normal across much of the Eastern Area towards the end of March. Drier conditions lingered over western Minnesota, parts of the central Great Lakes, the eastern Mid-Atlantic States, and north-central New England. Longer range drought conditions were indicated across the central and northwestern Great Lakes as well as far northern New England.

Periods of below normal temperatures are expected across the western tier of the Eastern Area in April and much of the geographic area in May. Above normal temperature trends are forecast over the southern tier in June and much of the Eastern Area heading into July. Near to above normal precipitation is expected over the majority of the Eastern Area April into June. Below normal precipitation trends may develop across the western half of the region in July, with wetter than normal trends remaining in place across the eastern half.

Near to above normal fuel moisture is forecast over the majority of the Eastern Area through the spring into the summer season. The spring fire season may begin later than normal across parts of the Eastern Area where above normal precipitation trends persist or come to fruition.

Southern Area: Above normal wildfire activity is forecast to persist across western Texas and Oklahoma throughout the period, with expansion into adjacent areas of Arkansas possible heading into summer.

Some improvement may occur across the mountains of west Texas by June and especially July as the monsoon season begins. The area of above normal potential across the Southeast has retreated somewhat from previous outlooks, mainly for the Carolinas, Georgia, and northern Florida due to recent rainfall. There is the potential to see an uptick to above normal activity over the western mountains of Virginia in April, but confidence there is low. Above normal significant fire potential is expected over most of the Florida Peninsula into May, then possibly subsiding as the rainy season begins.

Drought indicators have recently increased across areas from eastern Kentucky and far northeast Tennessee into much of Virginia given the tendency for recent storm systems to miss these areas. There are conflicting signals heading into April and May on whether this trend will persist, leading to lower-than-normal confidence. Given how rapidly fuels dried out in these areas the last seven to days of March, any continued rainfall deficit may be of greater concern, especially given a possible delay in green-up due to the period of chilly weather during first one to two weeks of April. A near normal spring fire season is currently forecast, but there may be a growing risk for significant wildfires for the latter half of April into May should dryness prevail.

Green-up is under way along the Gulf Coast, Florida, and coastal South Carolina. Precipitation over the past 30 days has been well below normal across drought-stricken west Texas into portions of western Oklahoma. Dry anomalies are also found along much of the Gulf Coast into the coastal plains of Georgia and the Carolinas, but several episodes of heavy rain have helped mitigate longer-term dryness across the Florida Panhandle and northern Florida Peninsula. Some short-term dryness has also been noted from western Virginia into the eastern half of Kentucky, in addition to the Ozarks. Heading into April, some of these areas may see abundant precipitation as La Niña maintains an active storm track from the Mid-Mississippi Valley to the eastern Great Lakes. However, there is a risk for drier than normal conditions in the Southeast and parts of the Appalachians as a ridge of high pressure remains established over the western Atlantic.

Fire activity has increased considerably across Texas and parts of Oklahoma the past several weeks, resulting in the Southern Area moving to preparedness level four. Fire activity has also been seen on occasion across the Gulf Coast and in western Arkansas. Severe to extreme drought has increased across Texas and diminished slightly over Oklahoma, but little to no drought improvement is expected through spring into summer. In fact, drought feedback may lead to a seasonal expansion of ridging and its associated hot and dry conditions from the Desert Southwest into the Plains with time. Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values are more than 500 across most of central and western Texas and Oklahoma and the southern half of Florida, with pockets over 700 in south Texas and southwest Florida. 100-hr dead fuel moisture is below 10% across the southwest one-third of Texas and ranges from 11-15% in central and north Texas. 10-hr fuels are still parched throughout west and south Texas, and recent dryness has also led to some of the finer fuels drying out across the Appalachians and Mid-Atlantic.

Outlook Objectives

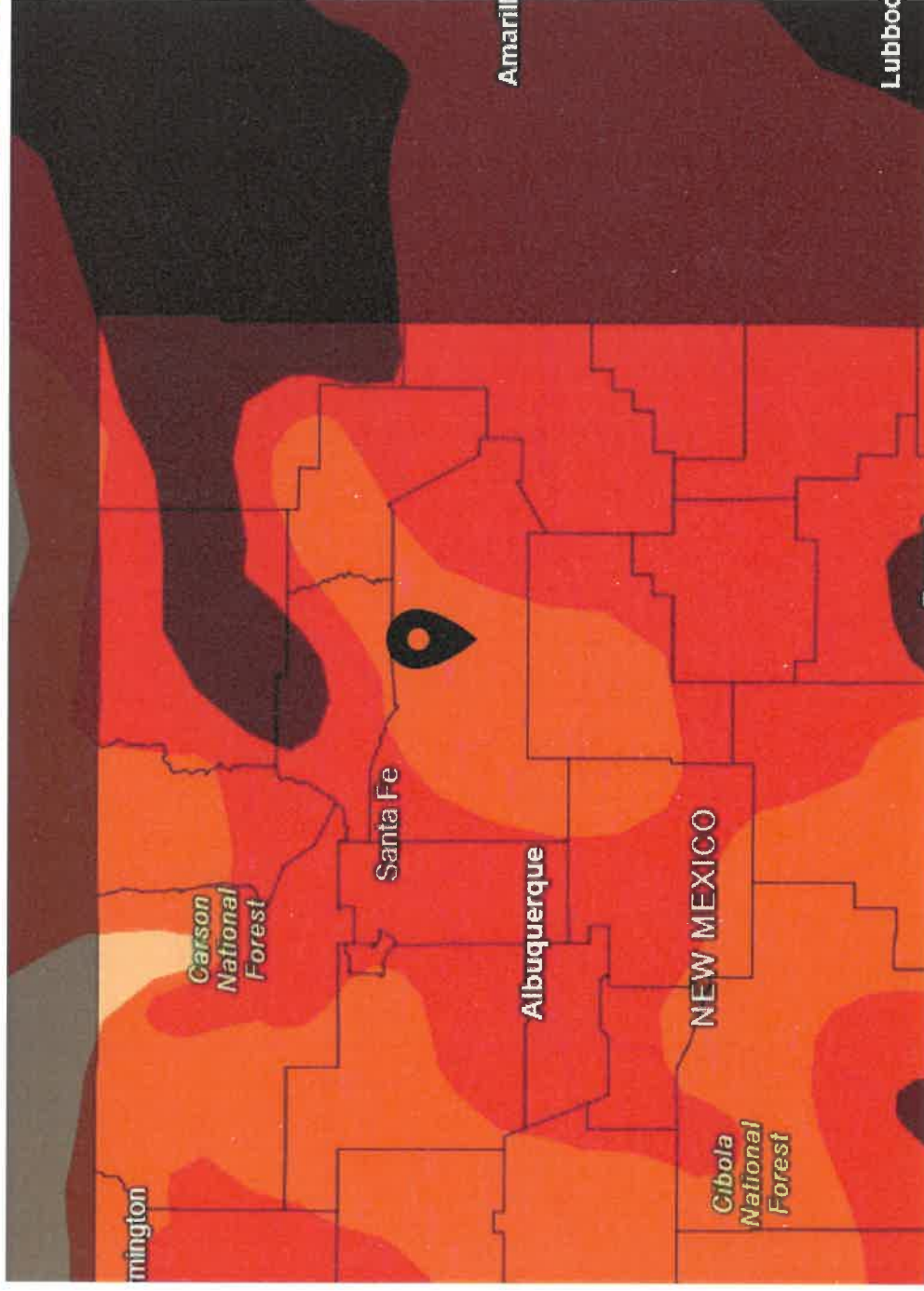
The National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook is intended as a decision support tool for wildland fire managers, providing an assessment of current weather and fuels conditions and how these will evolve in the next four months. The objective is to assist fire managers in making proactive decisions that will improve protection of life, property, and natural resources, increase fire fighter safety and effectiveness, and reduce firefighting costs.

For questions about this outlook, please contact the National Interagency Fire Center at (208) 387-5050 or contact your local Geographic Area Predictive Services unit.

Note: Additional Geographic Area assessments may be available at the specific GACC websites. The GACC websites can also be accessed through the NICC webpage at:

<http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/predictive/outlooks/outlooks.htm>

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor for San Miguel County



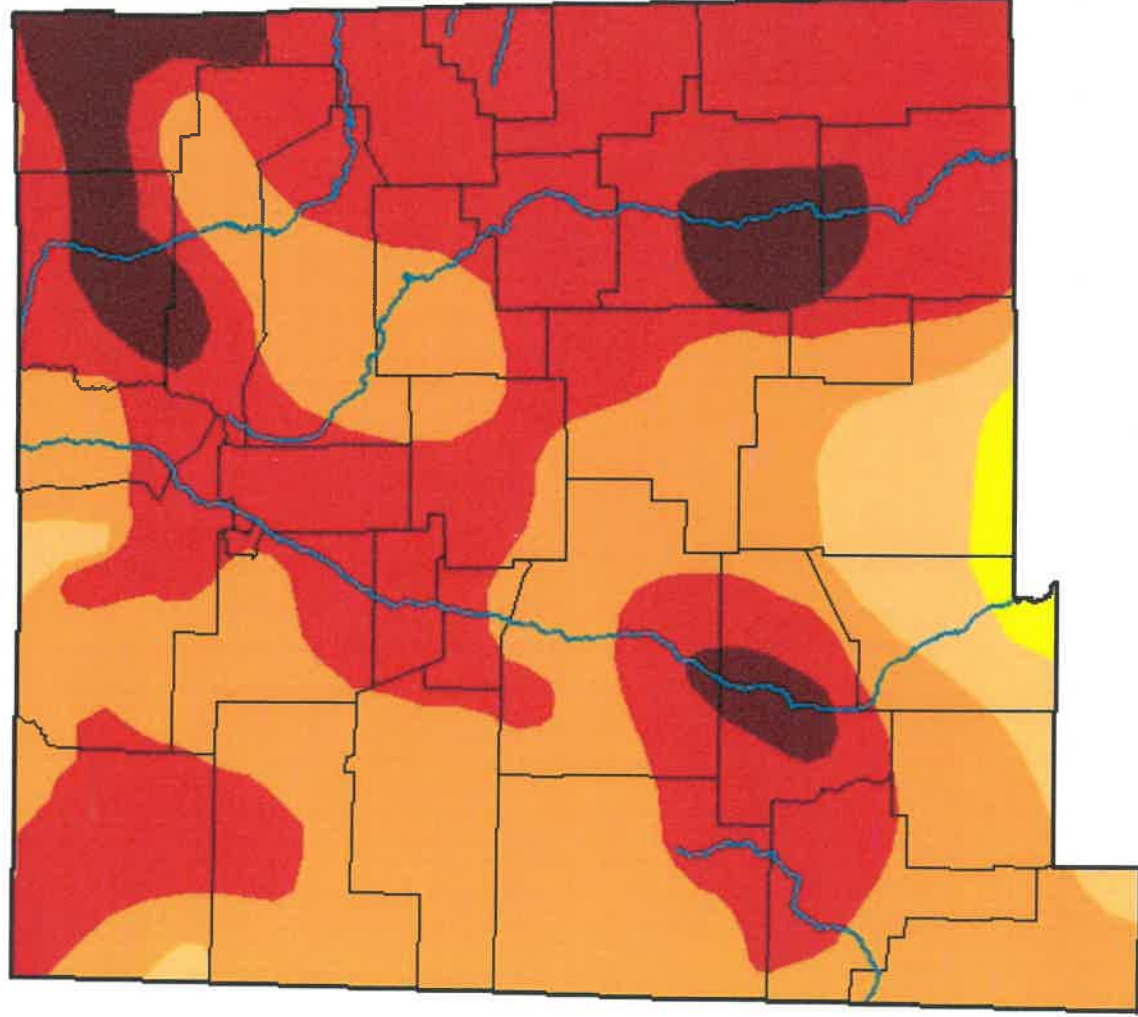
Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA
Updates Weekly - 04/12/22

[Drought.gov](https://drought.gov)







U.S. Drought Monitor

New Mexico

April 12, 2022
(Released Thursday, Apr. 14, 2022)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



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>

Author:

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CPC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP

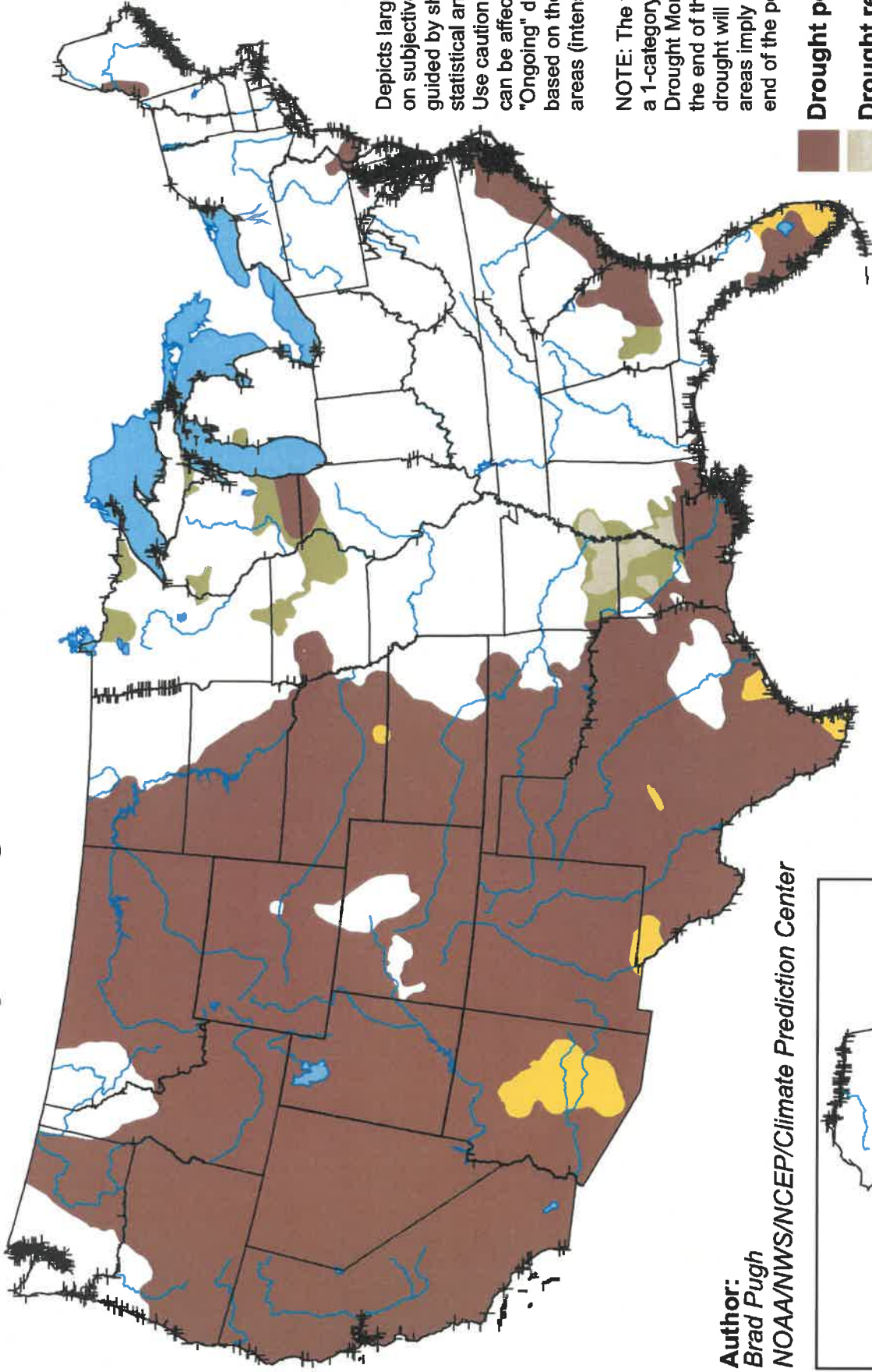


droughtmonitor.unl.edu

U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook

Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for April 2022
Released March 31, 2022

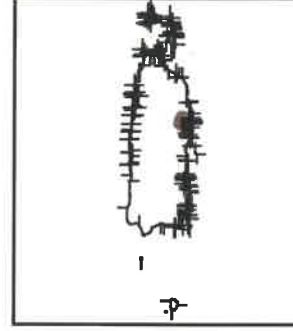
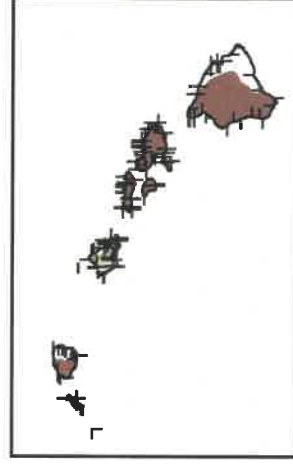
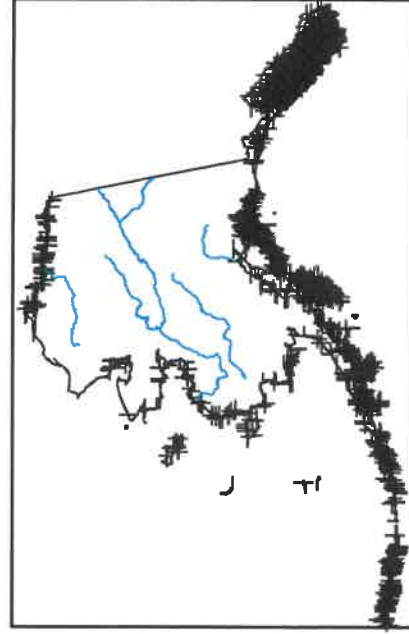


Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to D4).

NOTE: The tan areas imply at least a 1-category improvement in the Drought Monitor intensity levels by the end of the period, although drought will remain. The green areas imply drought removal by the end of the period (D0 or none).

-  Drought persists
-  Drought remains but improves
-  Drought removal likely
-  Drought development likely

Author:
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<http://go.usa.gov/3eZGd>