March 2015 Climate Summary for Southwest Lower Michigan

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Overview

March 2015 was cooler than normal, with precipitation and snowfall values below normal.

The first week of March 2015 saw temperatures below normal with freezing rain, sleet, snow and rain. After a little lake effect snow, temperatures rose to above normal levels for the next week and a half with the weather makers missing the area. As the dry weather continued for most of the next week, temperatures again fell below normal as arctic air again pushed in. This arctic intrusion brought back freezing rain, sleet, snow and rain to end the month.

The average temperatures for March (Figure 1) were around to a little below freezing. At the major climate sites of Grand Rapids, Lansing and Muskegon (Table 1), the values were all between 32 and 33 degrees. These temperatures are 2 to 3 degrees cooler than normal (Figure 2). There were few daily record temperatures in March 2015.

Precipitation totals varied from half an inch up to an inch and a half across Southwest Lower Michigan for March 2015 (Figure 3). This was 1 to 2 inches below normal, with the greatest shortfalls across the South (Figure 4). The 1.05 inches of precipitation recorded in Grand Rapids for March 2015 was the 9th driest March on record, while the 0.74 inches in Lansing was the 7th driest on record. Muskegon was not a top ten finisher.

Snowfall in March 2015 (Figure 5) ranged from 2 to 5 inches across much of Lower Michigan. This was about half of normal snow totals with northern areas seeing the greatest deficit (Figure 6).

The main weather during March 2015 was non thunderstorm wind gusts of over 40 mph a couple times during the month, and some minor ice accumulations near the beginning and again near the end of the month.

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Table 1. Reported temperature, precipitation and snowfall amounts for March 2015 at the primary climate stations in Southwest Lower Michigan and departures from normal.

Location		Average Temperature (°F)	Precipitation (inches)	Snowfall (inches)
Grand Rapids	Observed	32.4	1.05	3.2
	Departure from Normal	-3.2	-1.32	-5.1
	Normal	35.6	2.37	8.3
Lansing	Observed	32.7	0.74	1.9
	Departure from Normal	-2.4	-1.32	-5.1
	Normal	35.1	2.06	7.0
Muskegon	Observed	32.2	1.13	4.0
	Departure from Normal	-2.8	-1.12	-5.0
	Normal	35.0	2.25	9.0

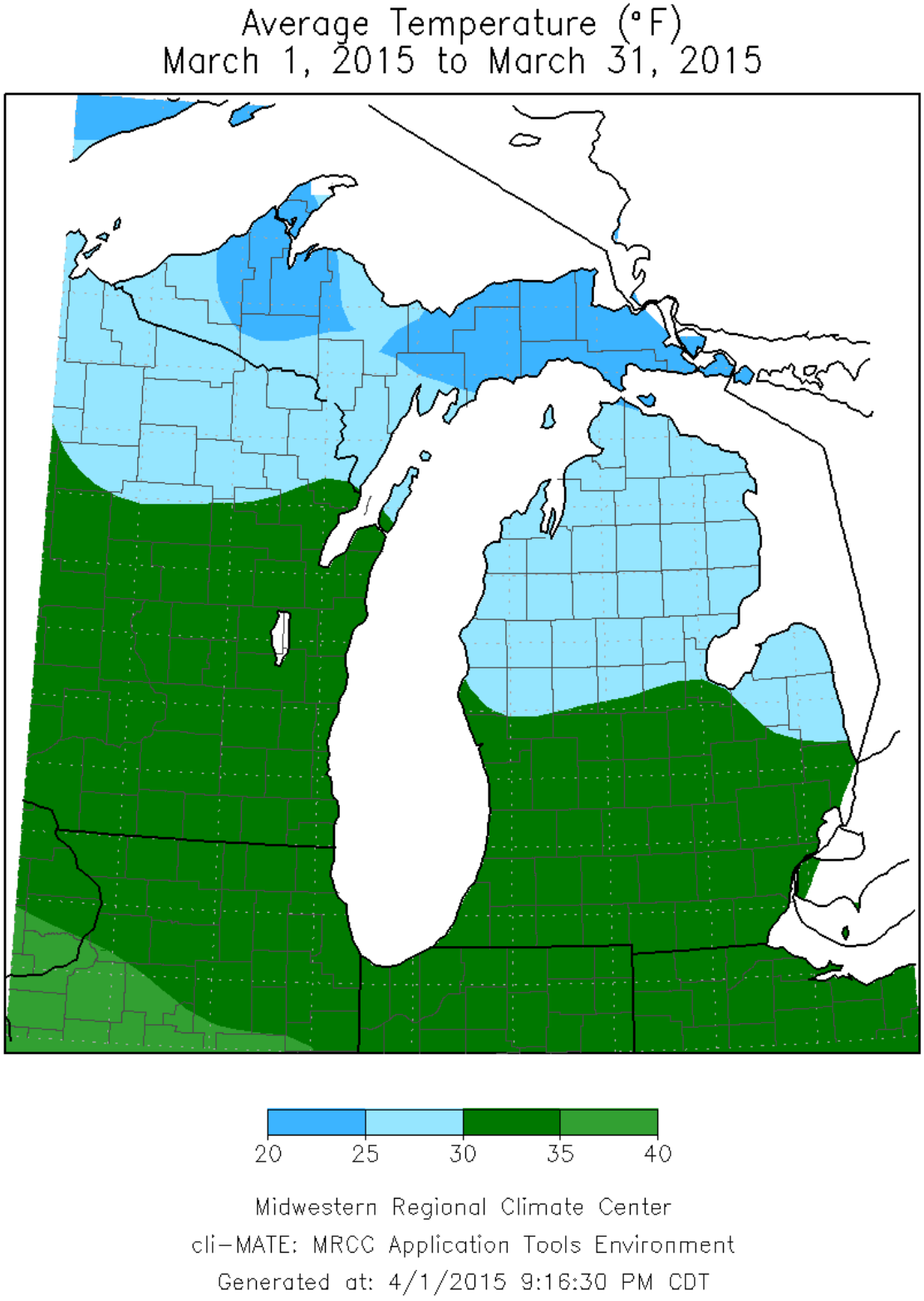

Figure 1. Average temperature (°F) for March 2015.

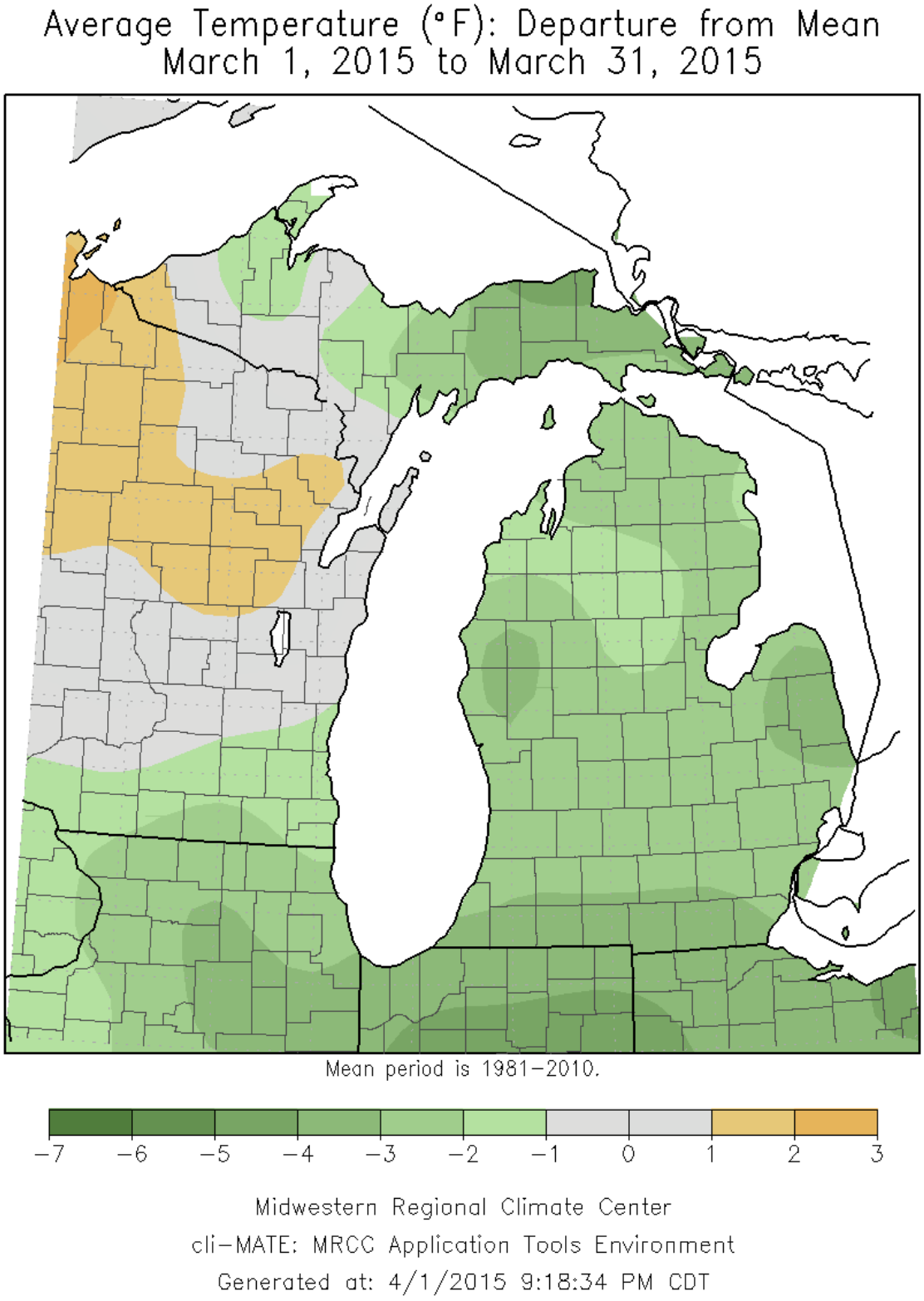

Figure 2. Average temperature departure from normal (°F) for March 2015.

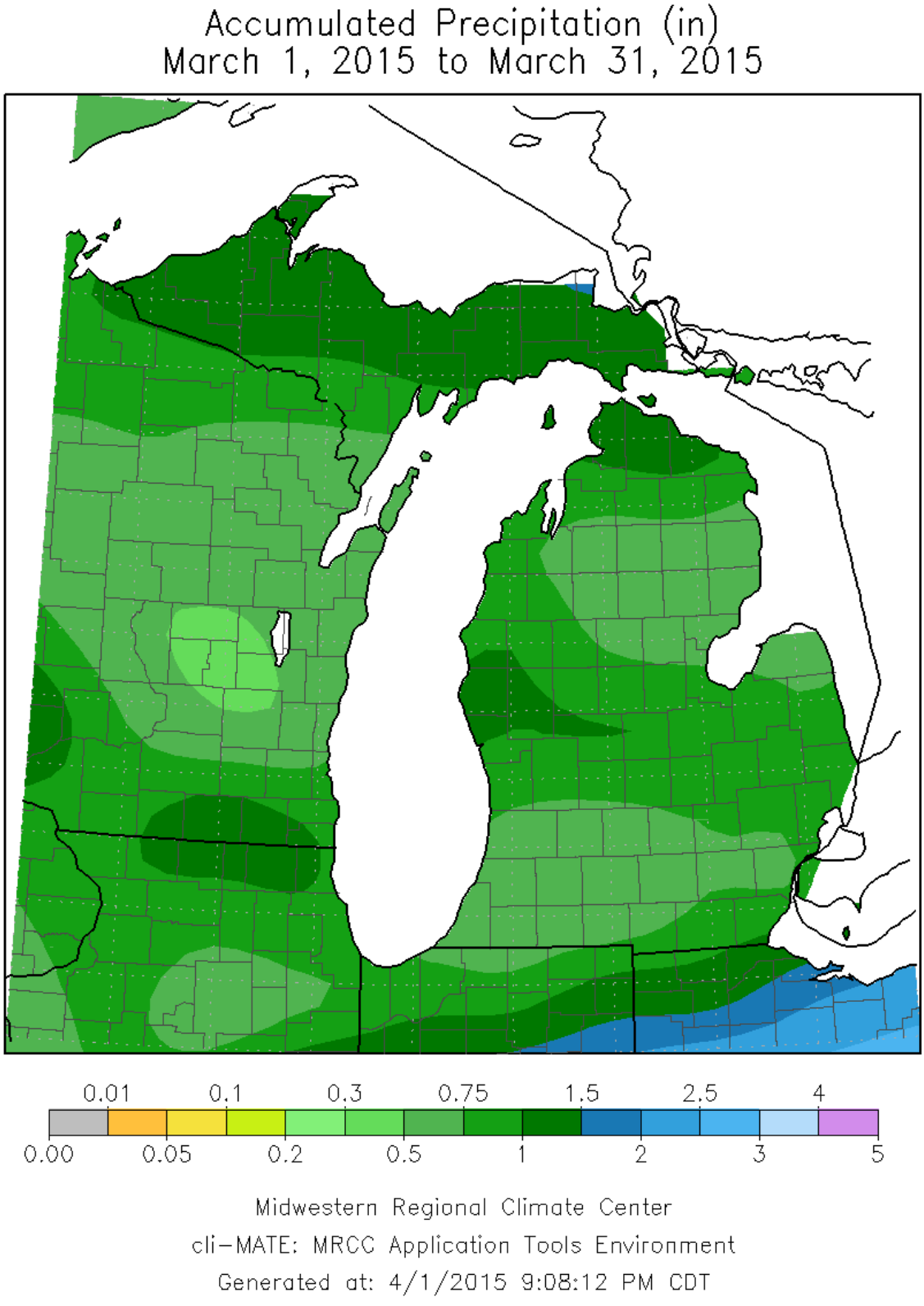

Figure 3. Total precipitation (in inches) for March 2015.

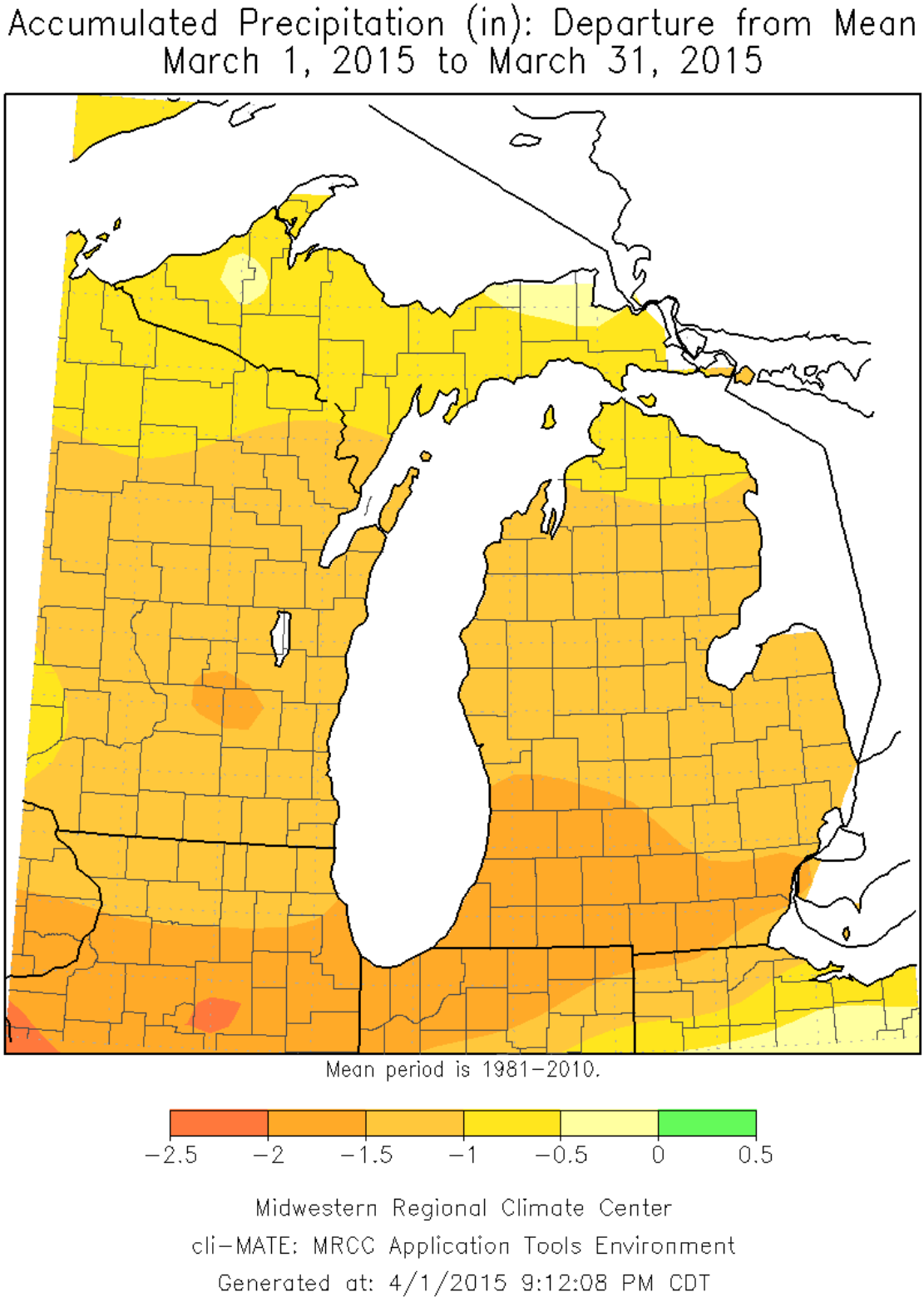

Figure 4. Precipitation departure from normal (in inches) for March 2015.

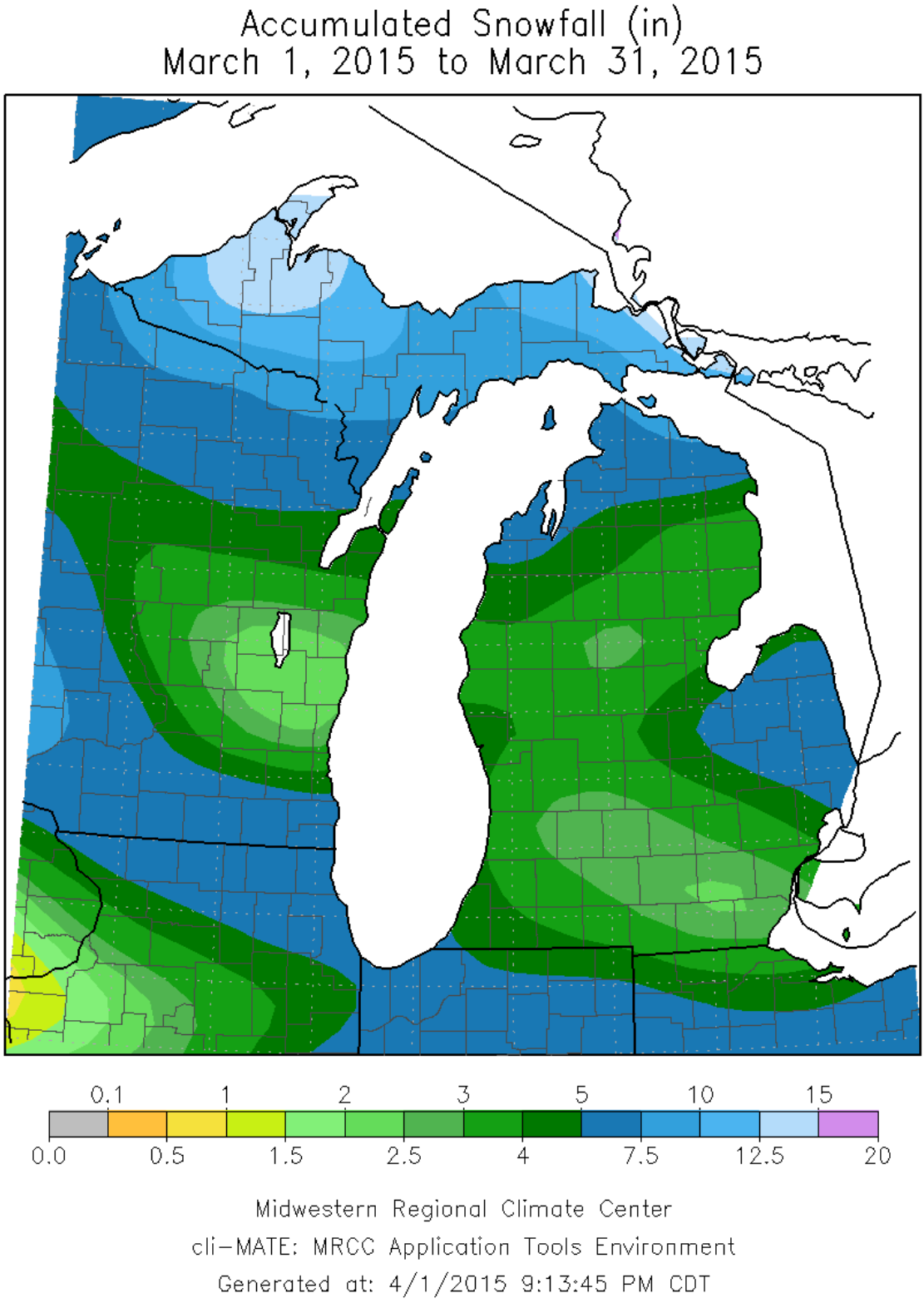

Figure 5. Accumulated snowfall (in inches) for March 2015.

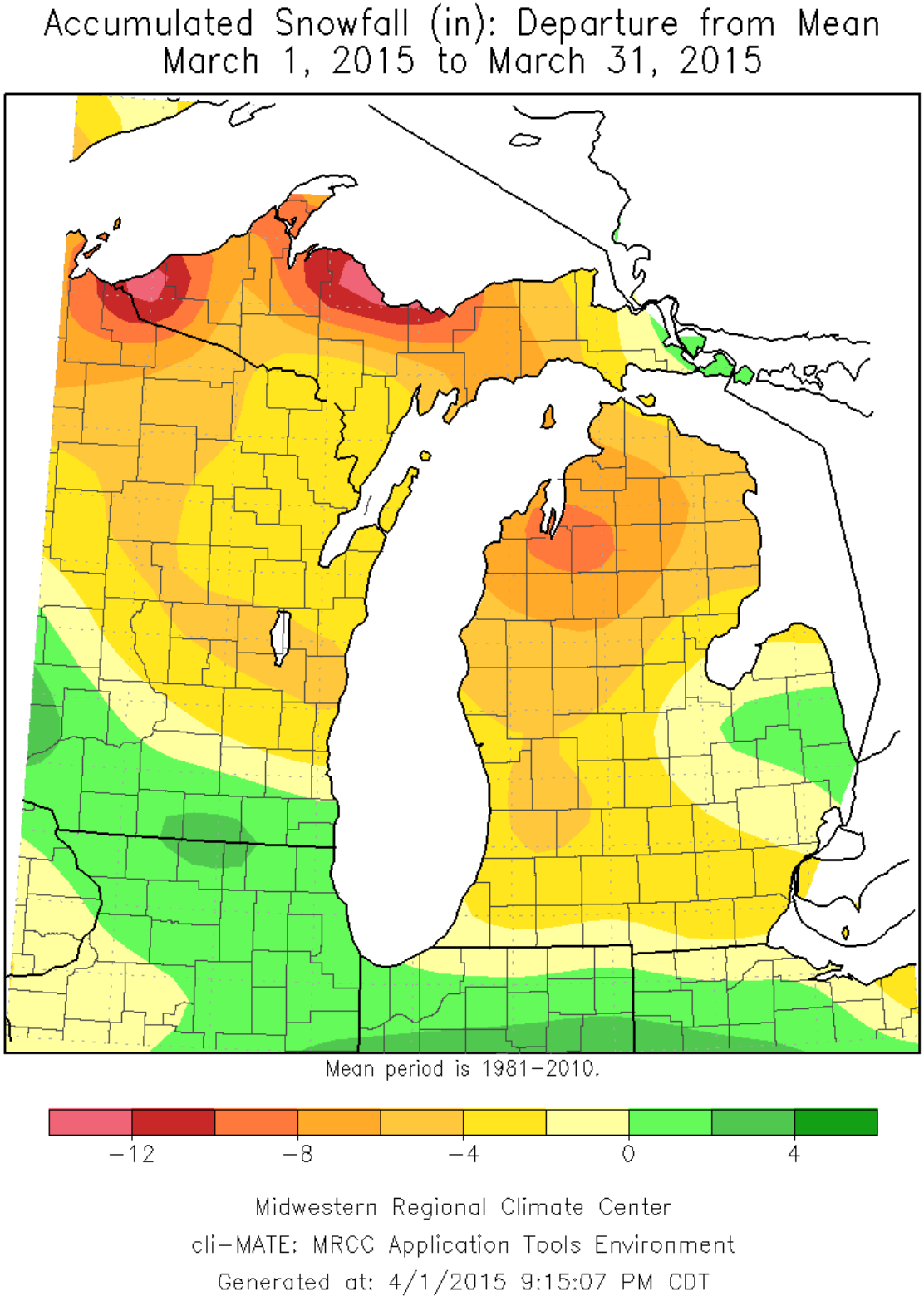

Figure 6. Snowfall departure from normal (in inches) for March 2015.