

MARCH
2013

VOLUME VI
ISSUE 2

SERVING NWS SKYWARN SPOTTERS,
CO-OP OBSERVERS & COCORAHS OBSERVERS

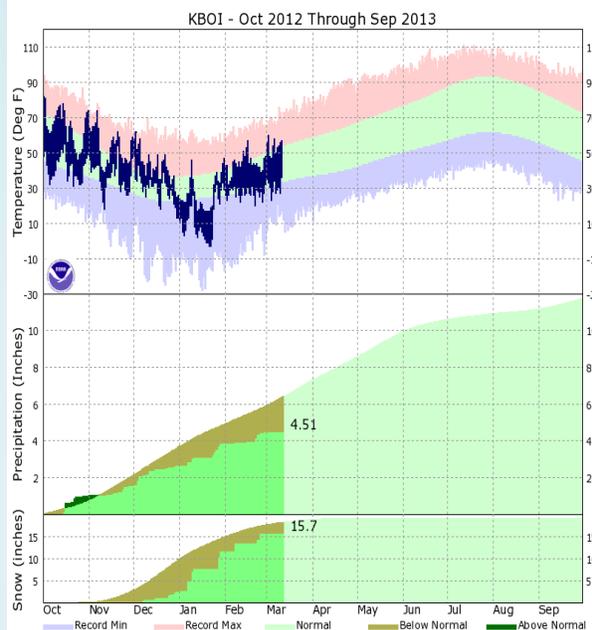
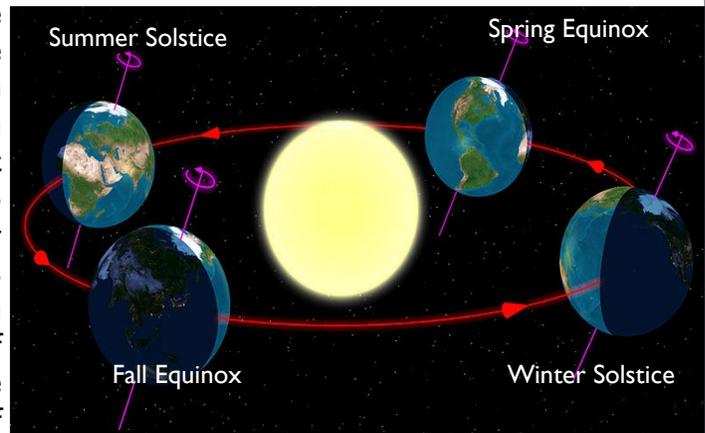
Sage Winds

National Weather Service - Boise, Idaho

www.weather.gov/boise

Spring Forecast To Arrive Right On Time

Spring in the northern hemisphere begins on March 20th when the Vernal equinox arrives at 11:02 GMT or 5:02 AM Mountain Daylight Time. At this point, the sun will be located directly over the equator and all points on earth will receive an equal amount of daylight and nighttime. However, days will grow longer a bit longer each day as the earth orbits the sun and more and more of the northern hemisphere becomes illuminated. Of course, temperatures have already begun to warm since January, which is the climatologically coldest month of the year in Idaho and Oregon.



January, 2013, was much colder than normal due to a strong temperature inversion which was caused when high pressure moved in over the snow-covered ground. Since that time, February and March have been close to normal. The graphs on the left show temperature and precipitation traces at Boise since October 1st. This winter has also seen below normal precipitation. These same types of graphs can be viewed for Baker City, Burns, Ontario, McCall, Jerome, and Twin Falls in the Climate portion of our web site at www.weather.gov/boise.

24-HR SPOTTER HOTLINE: 1-800-882-1428



**TREASURE VALLEY SEVERE WEATHER SPOTTER TRAINING COURSE
TO BE HELD AT COLLEGE OF WESTERN IDAHO**

WHEN: Tuesday, April 16th, 2013, 7:00 to 9:00 pm

WHERE: CWI—Nampa Campus

**Micron Center for Professional Technical Education
5725 E. Franklin Road, Nampa—just off the Garrity exit.**

The community is invited to attend a Severe Weather Training Workshop sponsored by Ada City-County Emergency Management, Canyon County Emergency Management, and the National Weather Service. The class will be held at the College of Western Idaho, Nampa Campus, Micron Center for Professional Technical Education, located at 5725 E. Franklin Road, Nampa. Everyone is invited. If you are a current weather spotter, firefighter, law enforcement specialist, land management employee, emergency services technician, transportation operator, outdoor recreationalist, or just purely a weather enthusiast, this training workshop is for you. Training will include definitions and climatology of severe weather, training on cloud and storm recognition, weather reporting procedures, storm hazards and safety tips. This will be a great opportunity if you would like freshen up your spotter training and can make it to the course in Nampa. We will try to arrange additional spotter courses in Baker County, Valley County and Boise County later this year. Please check our web site for more information on classes in your area. <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/boi/awareness/skywarn.php>

Thunderstorm Winds Damage Rodeo Grounds

The first severe thunderstorm of the year rolled through the area on March 6th. An NWS storm survey estimated that a wind gust of 65 mph destroyed the announcer’s booth at the Meridian Lion’s Club Rodeo Grounds. In addition, four sets of grandstand bleachers were flipped upside-down by the storm and rolled over a fence into the middle of the rodeo grounds. This seemed



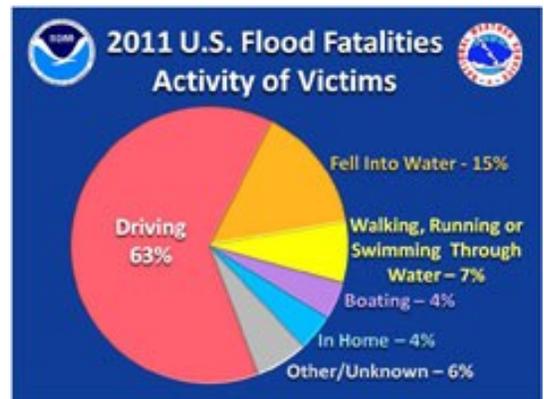
to be the worst of the damage caused by the storm which affected eastern Canyon County and the extreme western portion of Ada County. The gust front associated with the storm also produced an impressive looking shelf cloud which was photographed as it passed near the National Weather Service Office. Spotters are reminded to report storm damage to our spotter hotline (1-800-882-1428) when they see it.

Flood Safety Awareness Week

March 18-22, 2013

The National Weather Service has declared March 18 through March 22 as Flood Safety Awareness Week. In Idaho, Governor Butch Otter has also proclaimed this to be Flood Safety Awareness Week. The National Weather Service in Boise will focus on a different educational topic each day during the awareness week. One such topic is TADD (Turn Around Don't Drown), which is the National Weather Service campaign used to educate people about the hazards of walking through or driving a vehicle through flood waters.

Floods are one of the leading causes of weather related deaths in the United States and nearly half of these fatalities are vehicle-related. Most of deaths in motor vehicles occur when people attempt to drive through flooded roadways. Many other lives are lost when people walk into or near flood waters. This happens because people underestimate the force and power of water, especially when it's moving. Many of these incidents occur at low water crossings that are dry under normal conditions, but can become hazardous during flash flood events.



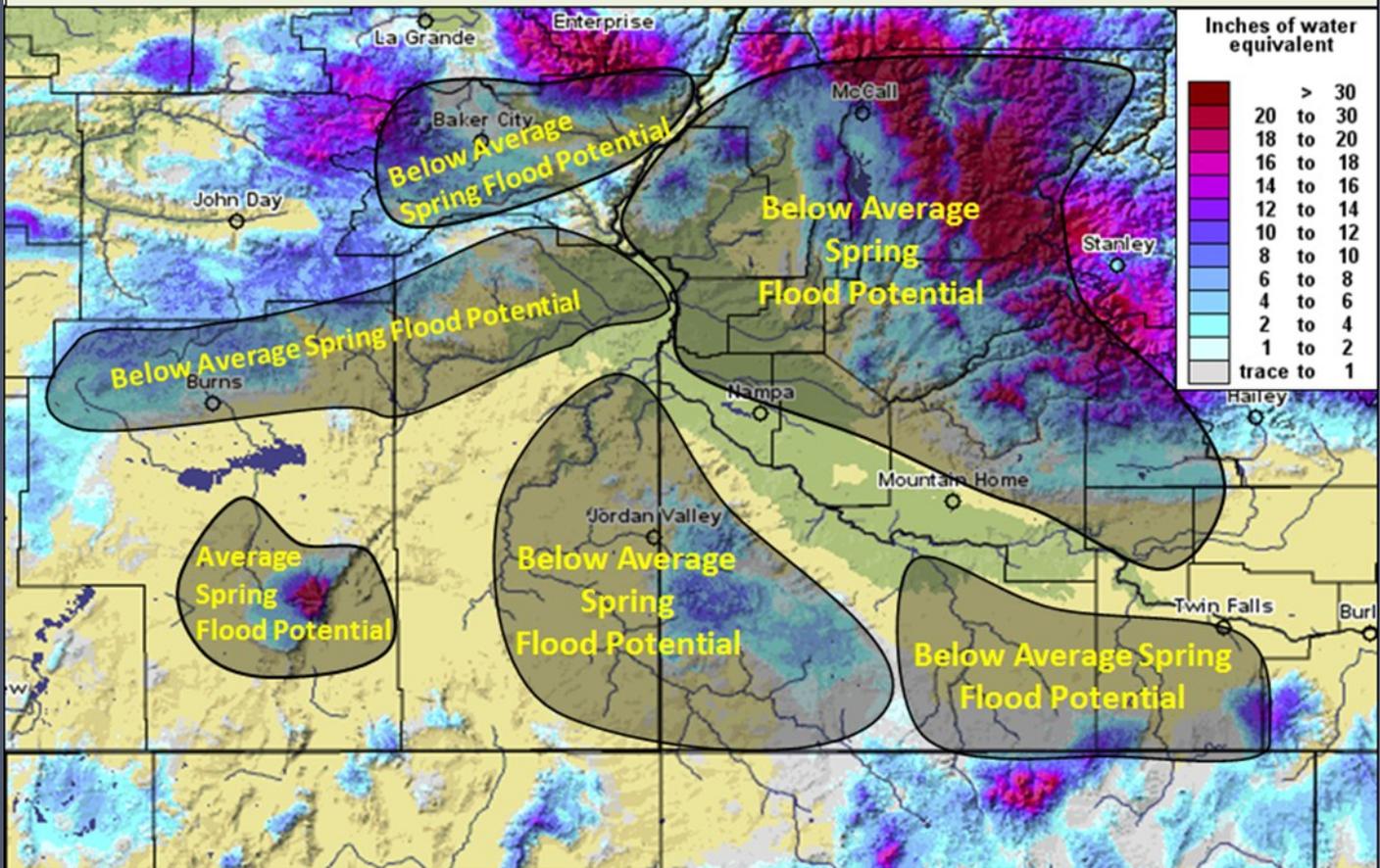
Additional topics that will be discussed during Flood Safety Awareness Week include types of flooding, flood risk and flood insurance, and the NWS' Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service. Flood safety resources to help you be prepared for and how to respond to flooding will be highlighted as well.



The National Weather Service Advanced Hydrologic Predictive Services (AHPS) web pages provides information on river flooding, including how high the river will rise and what areas will be flooded at a given river stage.



March 5, 2013 Snow Water Equivalent and Spring Flood Potential Outlook



The 2013 Water Year started off looking quite promising as a number of autumn storm systems brought abundant rain and mountain snow to southeast Oregon and southwest Idaho. However, abnormally high snow levels during many of these storms left a large snowpack deficit across lower elevations of many basins, especially the Weiser, Payette and Boise River Basins in southwest Idaho.

Low- elevation snowpack is very important in assessing flood potential. Snowpack across southeast Oregon and southwest Idaho is generally less than normal, especially across lower elevations. Therefore, the risk of spring flooding is currently below average for most basins. One thing to remember is that mountain snowpack in the area typically peaks around April 1, leaving several weeks to potentially boost our snowpack and change the flood potential outlook. Reservoirs across the region are carrying average to below average volumes of water, and based on the current snowpack situation there will be adequate reservoir space to accommodate the spring runoff.

One final note, spring flooding is often the result of spring rains combined with snowmelt. It is difficult to forecast specific rain storms, or rain on snow events more than 4 to 7 days into the future. Therefore, short range river forecasts should be monitored closely if a rain event occurs. Details regarding possible or actual flooding will be available in short term outlooks, flood watches, and flood warnings issued by the National Weather Service.

National Weather Service In The News

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NOAA Center for Weather and Climate Prediction in College Park, Md., home of the NWS Weather Prediction Center. (Credit: University of Maryland)